

**MINUTES OF THE
MEETING
PRESBYTERY OF THE DOWNS
24th – 26th February 2023
HIGHFIELDS COMMUNITY CHURCH**

ATTENDANCE

Rev Yvonne McRostie	Presbytery Minister	Allison Kahler	Presbytery Secretary
Rev Adam Tipple	Presbytery Chair	Jenny Noble	Presbytery Treasurer
Rev Willie Liebenberg	Central Downs	Cliff Forrester	Highfields
Kath Warner	Eastern Downs	Laurice Martin	Cambooya
Wilma Proudlock	Central Downs	Diane Cahill	Warwick/Killarney
Lyn Kajewski	Maranoa	David Cahill	Warwick/Killarney
Rev Rob Callow	Presbytery	Daphne Webster OAM	Oakey
Rita Wyse	Highfields	Rev Nathan Barton	ScotsPGC
Annie Baker	Middle Ridge	Les Adams	St Stephens
Sharon Baker	Middle Ridge	Barbara Betts	Blue Care
Rev Jenny Potter	Hospital Chaplain	Rev Kaye Ronalds	Granite Belt
Rev Kate Fraser	Middle Ridge	Beryl York	Maranoa
Sarah Hamlyn Harris	Granite Belt	Sue Case	Crows Nest
Rev Dylan Miegel	St Stephens	Naomi Bell	Highfields
Warren Midgley	PRC	Rev Ansie Liebenberg	Warwick/Killarney
Rev Marius Kruger	Highfields	Rev Dona Spencer	Bottle Tree RAM
Ps Alisi Manu	Dalby/Jandowae	Kerri Andrews	Lifeworks
Ian Darnell	Property Committe	Sandy Adams	St Stephens

Attendance via Zoom

Karen Dunmill	Goondiwindi		
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APOLOGIES

Jan Waller	Goondiwindi	Steve Drinkall	Synod
Joanne Evans	Oakey	Rev Hendrika DeNys	Cambooya
Yvonne Cornford	Central Downs	Ben Bryce	Cambooya

FRIDAY 24th February 2023

Launch of the Bottle Tree remote Area Ministry and induction service of Rev Dona Spencer

SATURDAY 5th November 2022

Worship

Led by Highfields congregation
Pastoral concerns and prayers for the people

NEW MEMBERS AND VISITORS

Welcome to new Members of Presbytery – Rev Dylan Meigel (St Stephens), Pastor Alisi Manu (Dalby/Jandowae), Rev Dona Spencer (Bottle Tree RAM),

Welcome to Visitors –

Rev Sharon Hollis (President of the Assembly), Rev Andrew Gunton (Moderator), Rev Heather den Houting (General Secretary), Vanessa Griffith (Synod), Rev Dr Peter Armstrong (Uniting Care), Scott Guyatt (Uniting Care), Sam McDonell (Uniting Care), Luke Tanks (Blue Care), Kyle Thompson (SCOTSPGC Principal), Vanessa Griffith (Synod), Kevin Griffiths (Synod).

2023.02.01 Resolved to associate, Scott Guyatt (Uniting Care), Sam McDonell (Uniting Care), Luke Tanks (Blue Care), Kyle Thompson (SCOTSPGC Principal), Vanessa Griffiths (Synod), Kevin Griffiths (Synod) Rev Dr Peter Armstrong (Uniting Care) with Presbytery

Consensus

2023.02.02 resolved to adopt the agenda

Consensus

ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

2023.02.03 Resolved to adopt the minutes of the Presbytery Meeting held at Central Downs (Pittsworth) dated 4th – 6th November 2022

Consensus

2023.02.04 Resolved to receive the Correspondence Register

Consensus

2023.02.05 Resolved to receive the distributed reports.

Consensus

Uniting Care Qld

Rev Dr Peter Armstrong

- Blue Care will be celebrating their 70th Anniversary. Looking for volunteers in congregations to champion the celebration.
- Following the Presbytery's concerns regarding Blue Care, Uniting Care/Blue Care is committed to ongoing conversation, this process will be ongoing,
- Presbytery Minister and Presbytery Chair have committed to meeting with the General Manager of Blue Care Toowoomba on a regular basis.

SCOTSPGC

Kyle Thompson Principal

- gave an overview of his journey to SCOTSPGC, has worked in both public and private educational settings in NSW and Qld with the most recent being BBC (Brisbane Boys College) before commencing at SCOTSPGC.
- The school has approximately 500 students currently, a number come from interstate and some from PNG
- The school had expanded its extracurricular activities from Sports, to show cattle and anything in between. It is hoped these activities develop the students to be well rounded individuals

BALLOTS FOR ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Nominations

Treasurer – Jenny Noble - 3 year term

2023.02.05 Resolved to appoint Kath Warner and Sharon Baker scrutineers
Consensus

Recommendations from Reports

Standing Committee

Delegation Policy

2023.02.06 Presbytery adopts the Delegation Policy for 2023. **Consensus**

Annual adoption of the child and youth Risk management strategy

2023.02.07 The Presbytery of The Downs is committed to providing safe places where people are cared for, nurtured and sustained and commits itself to the care, protection and safety of all people, particularly those who are vulnerable. We commit to ongoing compliance with requirements of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2020, the UCA National Child Safe Policy Framework 2022, and adopt the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod Safe Ministry with Children: Providing Safe Ministry Policy. We will ensure the implementation of procedures and resources to assist our congregations to meet and demonstrate its responsibilities under the Act.”

Consensus

Treasurer's Report

Question was asked from floor of the Presbytery regarding Containers for Change. In the absence of Remote Area Ministries (RAM) any funds have been placed into the Missional Dreams account. With the establishment of the Bottle Tree RAM any containers for change money will go alternatively between the Bottle Tree and Cunnamulla, Burke & Wills RAM.

Property Report

Currently awaiting for FIP board for approval to sell properties at Wandoan and Cunnamulla

Presbytery Chair vacating the chair to present the Standing Committee Report

2023.02.08 Resolved to allow Rob Callow to Chair the meeting

Consensus

Standing Committee report

- In addition the Policy for CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) was approved
- Discussion on General Secretary Position – (refer to correspondence sent to Synod Standing Committee) The Synod Standing Committee have determined the position of General Secretary does not need to be recognised as a placement. The requirements to be engaged in the life and witness of the Uniting Church, and to lead the mission and work of the Church and demonstration of this ability are key selection criteria of the position

MC3 Report

- Next meeting will be held in May
- Group has been working on how they will be working toward the mission of the church with proposals for mission they may receive

Presbytery Minister Report

2023.02.09 Resolved 1) That the Presbytery appoint Mr John Agnew as representative for Downs and Toowoomba Churches Together.

2) Presbytery appoint Mr John Agnew as representative for Toowoomba Interfaith Working Group. **Consensus**

Project Officer Report

Annie Baker was thanked for the work in undertaking the review of the Presbytery, this has included the work in the establishing of the Bottle Tree RAM and connecting with Saltbush

PRC

2023.02.10 That Mr David Prestridge (Lay); Mr Cliff Forrester (Lay) and Rev Willie Liebenberg (Ordained) be appointed as members of the Pastoral Relations Committee until February 2024 as per Reg 3.7.2(b).

Consensus

Close of Ballots

Ballots for election of officers closed 1:15pm

Highfields Community Church Story

- Frist commenced as a small group of families meeting
- Wanting to do church different - relevant, relational, relaxed and to connect with the community
- Group then became a Faith Community and then progressed to become a congregation
- Church has met at many locations in Highfields and have a permanent home at the old bowls club (The Hub), a Synod loan was taken out for the purchase of the building, which they are still paying down
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RESULTS OF BALLOT

Treasurer - Jenny Noble

2023.02.11 Resolved to destroy the ballot papers

Consensus

Presbytery budget/ CPMP conversation

- Thank you to the congregations for their prayerful considerations of the contributions to the CPMP, most congregations have been able to increase the contribution

- Presentation of budget - covers expenses of the running of the presbytery
- Revenue is required for mission
- Coalition of the willing - need to look for people in our congregations who have the skills to plan a road map and execute a plan of people, places, resources.
- Noted that this conversation cannot be completed within one presbytery meeting further ongoing discussion will be held at further Presbytery Meetings

Assembly News

Rev Sharon Hollis

- Act 2 – project whole of church project to discern the call of the Church into the future - no longer practical or fit for purpose
- unit established to support the work. Engagement, prayers for discernment of the church, local communities of faith, national identity, guidance and resources, theological culture and education
- Exploration phase – Act 2 web page resources and explanation of process, focus group, and regular zoom drop ins
- Prayer between Pentecost and anniversary of the church
- Collective discernment later in the year,
- Other Activities
 - Reference on the voice - proponent of the voice
 - Care of people of gender diversity
 - Lowering carbon footprint
 - National weekly update
 - Meet a uniting church person
 - Podcast

Synod News

- Resourcing review - discovering phase - structure and resources into the future,
- Website rebuild - under discussion
- Ministry matters unit - keeping and retaining ministry agents – following their journey from Ordination to retirement and beyond
- Trinity College -short courses and online courses available for students
- Discipleship – plenty - podcasts available, lent resources are available

Minutes of appreciation

Minutes of appreciation for Jenny Noble was presented by Barbara Betts

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Refer to appendages

Received with acclamation

Crows Nest IIM Story

Presented the final story of the IIM (Intentional Interim Ministry) on its conclusion

Outcomes – growth in parish, acceptance of change, 2 year plans for each congregation have been created, greater involvement in the activities of the Church

Recommendations – Flexibility in length of process, keep an eye on progress , watch and listen

2023.02.12 Resolved to adopt the recommendations

Consensus

Mission Moments

Granite Belt

- Sunday of mourning,
- Retreat Walk will be held at the end of April

Middle Ridge

- All are welcome to attend any groups/activities being held – these will be put onto the Presbytery website

Warwick

- Video presentation of what has been happening in the congregations

St Stephens

- Volunteers are required for the Winter Shelter

Cunnamulla Property

- Volunteer are required for a working party to travel to Cunnamulla for work on the property before going on the market

Central Downs

- Mainly music group in Pittsworth has been going well, a group in Millmerran has commenced

Lifeworks

- Carols night that was held was successful, looking at the possibility of turning into a multicultural event

Eastern Downs

- Currently looking at expanding the relationship with the Nobby school which is across the road
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Blue Care/Grief Loss Report

- A theanthropic grant has been applied for to assist with the coordination of the grief/loss groups, this is looking positive

Hospital Chaplaincy Report

- Care essential training is available to congregations/individuals who are interested

POD Report

- Currently there are no participants

General Business

Role for 37th Synod

2023.02.13 Presbytery authorises the Presbytery Standing Committee to receive and submit nominations from the presbytery region to be delegates at the 37th Synod in Session.

Consensus

Next Meeting Date

16th – 18th June – Middle Ridge

SUNDAY 26th February 2023

Worship with the Highfields Congregation

MINUTE OF APPRECIATION - Barbara Betts

Barb first came into my world in early 2011. She had just returned to Toowoomba after working in a rural consulting business with her husband for the previous 8 years.

“Did I have any need for a volunteer?” - well who says NO to a volunteer!!! Please send me your resume and let's have a chat. I was bowled over by this lady's credentials!! And when our then Mission Director asked me if I knew anyone who could “do” 6 weeks Supply whilst I recovered from surgery – it didn't take a split second to recommend Barb.

Blue Care, and the Uniting Church as a whole, have been blest by this lady's knowledge, experience prior to Blue Care, and loving personality. I personally have been mentored, supported, and allowed to grow into a more rounded Chaplain from having this lady's support, encouragement and teaching.

I asked others that have worked closely with Barb, for their input. Please allow me to read their responses. I won't name them – but she will probably guess who they are!!

Compassionate, empathetic, makes time for people listens deeply. Focused on facilitating outcomes to improve quality of people's lives, is motivated by seeing lives transformed eg passion for Grief and Loss course and working towards training facilitators across the state.

Loyal friend and steady companion - someone who travels with you through hard places in life....

Barb is a champion of and a champion for the Grief and Loss program not just here but through the whole state. She has enabled programs in numerous areas by training new facilitators and her passion for the program drives her to travel several hundred km weekly to run programs and support new facilitators.

Barb cares very deeply about the staff at Blue Care, the clients, and the community and although thwarted by policy and management she does everything in her power to bring Jesus love to all she meets through her care and support of each individual according to their situation.

Aside from Barb's utter dedication to Blue Care clients, I also admire her passion for supporting people on their Grief and Loss journey. Not just in her role of service delivery but behind the scenes in developing and reviewing material, and training grief and loss facilitators. Barb has the skills and competency to recognise and nurture appropriate facilitators, as well as the confidence to hold a difficult conversation with those who are not appropriate in this field. Kick your heels up Barb and enjoy whatever retirement brings.

Barb – to keep this to 500 words was nearly impossible – we have shared so many adventures, achieved to much both as Working Colleagues, and gradually become close friends .

On behalf of the Blue Care World – but especially the Downs Presbytery today – may I thank you for the peace and serenity you bring to every room you walk into. Yes – you have often said you are the duck under the water paddling madly – but to us watching and working with you – you have always presented Christ in a measured loving calm way!!!

And to have worked with me – I am sure you often needed that !!!

Blessings as you too go into Retirement from 12 years of Chaplaincy in Toowoomba and the South West.

Minute of Appreciation for Pastor Jenny Noble.

Jenny was Uniting Church Ministry Agent for Roma, Wallumbilla, Mitchell, Injune and Arcadia Valley for 4 years, from March 2019 until November 2022.

Jenny has a long-held passion for Ministry to people in Rural and Regional Queensland. For her, it is about building relationships in those local communities and coming beside people as they do life and faith together. Jenny is a compassionate person who cares deeply about what matters to people in her care. Jenny has many years of experience with the Uniting Church and the Presbytery of the Downs and has much wisdom to offer.

In her role as Ministry Agent she performed the usual functions of church services, weddings, funerals, baptisms and travelled regularly to all the rural communities under her care to support them in their faith journey. She regularly checked in at the Blue Care Centre in Roma, to see how the staff were travelling and visited people in the Aged Care Facility.

Some highlights from Jenny's ministry include –

- When unable to cross a flooded creek on their way to Taroom to conduct a funeral service, the family of the deceased person sent a mustering helicopter to pick Jenny up and fly her to Taroom to lead the service. She landed safely, if a little terrified.
- Jenny worked with the RSL in Roma to bless the grave of a gentleman who had died and been buried on a property 100 years earlier. He was a returned soldier who had gone missing on the property and was found deceased. As the gentleman had suicided, his grave was never consecrated and the present owner of the property, in his 80's, did not want to sell it or move on until that had been attended to.
- Blessing of the Plough at the Annual Roma Show.
- The beanie drive that Jenny instigated, to send to the people of Lismore and surrounds following the disastrous flooding there in the winter. She was amazed that they collected 340 beanies in 3 weeks. Jenny marvelled at the generosity of people at that time.
- Travelling, and lots of it, meeting with her people in their various places of work and worship.

- The caravan became a useful tool for that, so they could stay for longer periods of time and have people visit them at 'their place'. A hail storm in Injune brought that to an end with lots of damage and not repairable.
- The patient and unswerving support of David in her ministry, as she attended meetings, conducted funerals and weddings and participated in other gatherings. David shared the driving, and had plenty of books to read as he waited, and always had the kettle boiled for a cuppa when she was finished.

Some comments from the people she served:

- Jenny had been in the right place at the right time.
- Her experience of the bush was helpful in people accepting her in her Ministry role.
- People enjoyed meeting in Jenny and David's home because of their hospitality.

One compliment Jenny was given, was to thank her for being her authentic self. That is what endears people to Jenny. She is authentic, wears her heart on her sleeve and cares deeply for people and their situations.

We thank Jenny for her faithful commitment and ministry to the people of Roma, Mitchell, Wallumbilla, Injune and the Arcadia Valley.