



ST STEPHENS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
51 Neil Street, Toowoomba

3rd – 5th November 2023

Presbytery Standing Committee (PSC) Report, 14th June to 30th October 2023

Members: Rev Adam Tipple (Chairperson); Allison Kahler (Secretary); Ps Jenny Noble (Treasurer); Rev Yvonne McRostie (Presbytery Minister); Rev Marius Kruger; Kath Warner; Sharon Baker; Rev Rob Callow (Resource Minister)

Meetings: 25th July, 26th September

Scheduled Meetings: 28th November

Please pray for:

- All those affected by bush fires in our region.
- For public hospital chaplaincy. Give thanks to God for the ministry of Rev Jenny Potter, and pray that as a whole church we will work together to continue a presence in this space.
- For the new Moderator Rev Bruce Moore and the new General Secretary of the Qld Synod, Rev Dr Adam McIntosh.
- God to raise up leaders and for people to hear the call to Presbytery leadership roles.
- Give thanks for the ministry of Rev Yvonne McRostie and her discernment to continue ministry in the Downs as Presbytery Minister.
- Give thanks for the significant ministry of Marg Thorpe as Pastoral Care Coordinator at Toowoomba Base Hospital. Marg concludes in this role in the next month, and we thank God for her.

Since our last meeting in July we have had significant decisions made in the life of the church that have caused pain and grief. The decision of the Synod Standing Committee (SSC) to cease funding public hospital chaplaincy from July 2024 will significantly impact our region.

The Presbytery Standing Committee sent a letter to the General Secretary, Rev Heather den Houting, which was shared with the SSC, outlining the significant pain that this decision had caused, the wide reach of this ministry in our region, and our belief that the SSC should have consulted with the full meeting of the Synod regarding this decision.

While the decision is unlikely to be rescinded, we believe that the wider church has been able to give the SSC some strong feedback as to how people are feeling, particularly through the recent meeting of the Synod, where significant time was spent discussing this issue.

We recognise this is a difficult time for Rev Jenny Potter who serves as the hospital chaplain at Toowoomba Base Hospital, and I encourage you all to pray for and support Jenny during this time.

The PSC decided to bring forward a review for Rev Yvonne McRostie as our Presbytery Minister. The PSC greatly values Yvonne's work and we wanted to see if we could have some clarity regarding the future, given that Yvonne will soon be entering into her 5th year in this role. We are pleased to share that Yvonne continues to discern a call to serve in this placement beyond the 5 years, and we look forward to continuing working with Yvonne in this role.

We have also been blessed to have new Ministry Agents join the Presbytery, so we welcome and give thanks for Ps Jennie Feldmeier, Ps Cynthia Taafe and Ps Peter Cole.

On a personal note, this is the appropriate time to indicate to you that I will not be seeking re-nomination as Presbytery Chairperson at our February 2024 meeting. My term of 3 years concludes in February, and I thank God for the blessing and privilege it has been to serve the church in this way. My discernment is that three years is a good stint alongside a fulltime ministry role, and it is now right for me to focus more of my time and energy into my family and into Lifeworks.

If you are interested in nominating for the role of Presbytery Chairperson, which will be elected at our February 2024 meeting, please speak with me in the first instance, as I would be very glad to assist you in making that discernment and explaining what is involved as part of the role.

I would like to thank our PSC members for the contribution they have made since our last meeting, and our Property Committee, who have brought energy and wisdom in this area of the Presbytery's life. Truly this has been an answer to prayer.

Other significant matters that the PSC have attended to since the last meeting are covered below in the dot points, with supporting documents available with the reports for the November meeting. If you would like more information about any of these matters or other PSC work, questions on notice for our November meeting will be helpful.

Please note that financial matters will be covered in detail as part of our Treasurer's Report, and property matters as part of our Property Report.

Significant Matters

- Following up from our June Presbytery Meeting we have asked for expressions of interest for a committee to look at a Presbytery Fundraising role.
- We communicated the Presbytery's request to extend Mission Development Fund (MDF) mission plan deadlines for those who have money in MDF accounts, to the SSC. This request was turned down, so we are working with those congregations that will be effected to ensure that their funds are ringfenced for an appropriate time so they may form a competent plan.

- We endorsed the Warwick Killarney Uniting Church Housing Opportunity Project submitted to the Finance and Property Board.
- The Presbytery Office renovations have been completed.
- We met with representatives from Synod and Uniting Care to discuss incorporation.
- The service of closure for Ravensbourne church happened in August. We give thanks to God for that community of faith.
- We continue to work on the Position Description for the Presbytery Administration Assistant and hope to advertise this soon.
- Agreed to continue to support the Pastoral Care Coordinator Position at Toowoomba Base Hospital with an \$8500 contribution for the 23/24 financial year.

Recommendations

1. That this report be received.

Report Submitted by:

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If you have questions, please email before the meeting.