



maleny
uniting



ANNUAL REPORTS
For Presentation to
Congregational Meeting
Sunday February 24 2019

Our Mission ... “*To be actively involved in sharing the love of Jesus with all People ... Growing Faith ... Sharing Hope*”

Our Values ... “*Faithfulness, Compassion, Humility, Truthfulness and Justice*”

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Discipleship

Connect Groups

Connect groups are small groups of people who meet together to have discussion with a Christian focus. Social interaction and friendship is established within these groups as people share with one another, and build each other up in their walk with Jesus.

In February 2018, eight Connect Groups were formed, based on the existing home groups with some new additions to the groups. Before Easter 2018, all groups discussed the Lent study "Agents of Grace". During the year, some groups met regularly or intermittently with their own material, and some had a recess. Later in 2018, a number of groups discussed the Advent Study, prepared by one of the Connect Groups.

Currently, a new Lent study for 2019 is being prepared by another Connect Group, and this will be available soon.

Christian Meditation Group

The group, which celebrated 8 years of activity in 2018, has over 20 on its active list, and averages a weekly attendance around 16-17. We meet in the church at 8.30 a.m. on Wednesdays to share a time of stillness, silence and simplicity before God. We have a reflection by various Christian leaders, then 20 minutes silence, ending with music and prayer. We finish well before 9.30 and repair to Maple 3 for a pastoral coffee. All are welcome.

Peter Uhlmann



Outreach

During 2018, our outreach programs continued to build bridges to our local community, and to mission projects further afield. These outreach projects reflect our shared mission of "proclaiming Jesus to all people, growing faith and sharing hope".

Ultimately it is not about programs and projects, but about transforming lives and building relationships.

Street Outreach

On Mother's Day, a team led by Bob Eather handed out flowers in Maple Street, resulting in many happy faces. Due to predicted inclement weather, the annual Maleny Street carnival was cancelled. This meant that our annual distribution of Christmas Cake and greetings did not occur. The cake was well received at the Christmas Tree Festival.

Primary School Support

We have continued our support of the primary school in several ways.

- (1) Faith McKinnon and Merilyn Milton are part of the weekly team providing Religious Instruction to the students. We also contribute financially to the supply of resources
- (2) Amity Green, Ron and Val Clarkson and Murray Robertson are part of the Mentoring Program conducted under the supervision of Chaplain Rebecca Francis.
- (3) Financial support came from the Garage Sale in August, and from the weekly trade table, \$5,120.

In 2019 our focus will turn to the Conondale School, for fund raising, although we will continue to support the Maleny School in other ways.

Erowal

Several of our members make regular visits to the residents at Erowal, the neighbouring Blue Care Aged Care facility. Working as volunteers they are able to help in many ways: sitting with residents who may not receive many visitors, helping with crafts and other activities, assisting residents to

get to special events, and assisting the chaplain with the regular church services. We greatly appreciate this work.

Christmas Tree Festival

Christmas Growing Up was the theme of the 2018 Christmas Tree Festival. This was the seventh time we had used this festival as part of our Christmas outreach.

As in previous years, the quality of the trees and displays was second to none. This reflected the very high standard of commitment and creativity from the tree contributors, both church-based and community groups, and included some first time trees. Community groups continue to give us strong support.

We shortened the number of days, but the overall attendance was the same: 1,000 visitors. Donations raised \$2,000 for the Maleny Neighbourhood Centre to continue its emergency relief program.

The opportunity to inform visitors of the true meaning of Christmas was well evident in many of the displays. As well, we distributed New Testaments, Christmas Gospel tracts, and a children's book about the nativity. Together with the Christmas Eve Pageant and Christmas Day Service, the Christmas Tree Festival has become a very important means of proclaiming the Christian message that is Christmas to all who come.

There are some changes ahead, with Murray and Robyn stepping aside from their leadership roles. Please be in prayer as we look to the future.

Interest Groups

Our Interest Groups cater for many tastes; they are an ideal way to welcome newcomers to our church.

The Band of Brothers continued to provide fellowship for 10-12 men. They enjoyed discussion, bbq's, fishing trips, and project work for worthy causes.

Two Book Clubs (17 members), meet monthly to discuss their books on a variety of topics: some good, others not so. Coordinators are Karin Ellemor and Jocelyn Brooker. As Jocelyn says: we come from "diverse backgrounds and personalities to analyse contents. Never a dull moment. We Chat, have a Coffee, and Care about each other."

Ladies' Friendship Group: Another good year for the group. We achieved our goal of offering monthly programmes which gave opportunities for deepening our friendships and expanding our knowledge of activities done locally and worldwide to spread the news of the gospel. Inspirational speakers included Jennie Girard from France, Jan Bergman back from India, Bob Philpot at the Big Pink Cuppa, and our own ladies who led devotional segments. Thanks go to those who prepared morning tea, shared craft talent, led singalongs and trivia quizzes, and worked to construct pencil cases for our Indian friends. Thanks also to everyone for the generous donation of items of school requisites for distribution by the Neighbourhood Centre. Special thanks to Jing for hosting our Pre Christmas-morning in her home. Changes are ahead with the plan to involve many more ladies in the running of the monthly activities.

The Boomers Group met on several occasions throughout the year and enjoyed times of fellowship together, being hosted at people's homes on three occasions and having afternoon tea at the Orangery. These occasions have provided the opportunity to build community and to welcome and get to know people who are new to our congregation.

Ecumenical Men's Breakfasts: Three were held in 2018, at the Anglican, Catholic and Uniting Churches. We had the companionship of members of the congregations of the Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Church on the Rise Churches, as well as men from our own Congregation. The 2018 attendance was lower than in previous years. Maybe it is time to review the breakfasts. Is it a viable venue for outreach to men in the churches and wider community? Thanks to Col Harding who was the coordinator in 2018.

Ecumenical Ladies' Breakfasts. Five breakfasts similarly provided a venue for ladies from different congregations to meet on a regular basis (i.e. the last Saturday of each second month). The breakfasts were successful and well attended with a variety of outstanding speakers, including the February one at the Uniting Church. Funds raised at the breakfasts went to local school chaplaincy.

Mission Project Dostana, Amritsar Girls' Hostel North India

From October 11 – 26, 2018, five members of the Dostana group from Maleny travelled to India where we were hosted by the Church of North India, Amritsar Diocese. The trip was part of an ongoing relationship the Dostana Group has with the church there to encourage the building of friendship through visitations back and forth. This trip followed on from a visit by five members of the Chruch of North India to South-East Queensland in July 2018.

The visit started in Amritsar, Punjab State, where the Dostana Group supports the Diocesan Girls' Hostel. This included worship at St Pauls Church, Amritsar where Rev Catherine Solomon preached in both their English language and Hindi services, with the help of a translator; spending the afternoon with the girls at the hostel; presenting with gifts made by the Ladies' Friendship Group at Maleny; participating in craft activities; watching the girls dances mainly in the popular Bungara Punjabi style.

The girls have grown a lot since we were there last year and seem far more settled since the hostel relocated in 2017. All in all they are simply delightful.

Uniting World, in partnership with the Church of North India, supports several education projects in villages around Amritsar. We visited one of these project villages with Om Prakash, the director. The partnership has enabled the construction of a church building in the village of Chak Bala, a small and very poor town barely a stone's throw from the Pakistani border.

After our time in Amritsar we then embarked on a week-long tour into neighbouring Himachal Pradesh, which is also covered by the Amritsar Diocese. Highlights included: the mountain town of Dalhousie, the Church of St Oswalt, Baklow, which had been burned down in a forest fire earlier this year; the historic Khyber House at Dalhousie, the chapel of Sadhu Sunder Singh, one of India's best known Christian missionaries, meetings with Rev Ajay Singh at Dharamshala, with Mr Vijay Kumar, the principal of Day Star School, at Menali; both had visited Australian in July. In Shimla we visited St Thomas school, then had dinner with Mrs Sunita John, the headmistress of prestigious Auckland House Girls' School, both Diocese-run institutions. The trip concluded in Delhi, with more sightseeing.

We would like to thank the CNI Amristar Diocese and all our friends there for their hospitality. Beyond the financial support for the hostel and other projects, the value of the Dostana relationship lies with this visiting exchange. We get to know each other better by actually being together in each other's homes, seeing each other's towns, schools and workplaces and worshipping in each other's churches. This way it is possible to truly make friends. Plans are already underway for another trip in September 2019, starting in the northern city of Srinagar so stay tuned for details. Condensed from information provided by Andrew Solomon.

Thanks

This report marks the end of an era for Maleny Uniting Church as we move to a new Parish structure. There will be changes ahead in the way we provide ministry and outreach in our Maleny community. On behalf of the congregation I would like to thank the many people who have worked hard in the above outreach areas. There are too many to mention names; but your passion and commitment to our outreach programs has not gone unnoticed, both in our church family and also in the wider community where Jesus has called us to focus. Many have been blessed and for this we give thanks to God.

Murray Robertson

Property

A BIG thank you to the volunteers who assisted with mowing, cleaning, gardening, building and grounds maintenance work and working bees in 2018. The volunteers give willingly of their time and resources, behind the scenes, to the upkeep of the building and grounds.

In 2018, we received two significant donations which allowed us to security screen and air condition the office and the Kidz Biz area. A big thank you to the donors.

Two working bees, one prior to the garage sale and the other prior to the Christmas Tree Festival, resulted in work completed in the gardens and general organising resources stored through the office and in sheds.

The building committee met twice in 2018. We planned and completed works extending and re-carpeting the stage, securing the whole building and commencing the key register, adding an emergency assembly point, painting yellow warning lines and re-writing the emergency evacuation plan. In addition, we worked on improvements to the sound system and hearing loop.

Unfinished work from 2018 including the establishment of a Disability Parking bay and other grounds projects which will be carried forward to 2019. Additionally, the Church Council approved works on the Mothers Room. This work will be undertaken in the first quarter of 2019. Safety of the congregation is a priority. This year a number of incidents were reported. The incidents were mainly related to the safety of people and security of property e.g. slips, falls, lights left on or windows/doors left open.

Identifying the things that cause accidents (hazards) is important, so we can rectify problems. This year, as the result of a fall, Malcolm ground the concrete entry area of the Church. Please help us by registering incidents and hazards in the Incident Book so we can investigate and rectify problems quickly.

Thank you to John Benn who was the leadership contact person for building and grounds during 2018 and thanks, too, to Malcolm Baker who continues to serve as Maintenance Coordinator. John retired from this role and the Church Council in December of 2018.

In 2019, we look forward to the new, one-Church Council being formed. Once formed, the current approach to property may change. No matter what, the effort of volunteers will continue to be of critical importance to the functioning of the Maleny Ministry location.

John Benn/Peter Callaghan



The Uniting Church in Australia
QUEENSLAND SYNOD

**Uniting in Christ | acting with love | living with hope|
witnessing in faith | working for justice**

Care and Prayer

Pastoral Care Ministry

The Pastoral Care team is co-ordinated by Dorothy Tietze who is a capable and caring member of our congregation. The members of this team have done their best in caring for those in need and also welcoming people into our church. However, they themselves are needing more care and so our numbers are dwindling. It was suggested that those of our congregation belonging to a Connect group could be cared for by that group. This is a work in progress.

The Meal bank has been faithfully maintained and letters are written to families a year after the funeral of a loved one.

We have a number of our people who volunteer at Erowal who are acknowledged here in this report: Dorothy Tietze, Fran Guard, Hazel Turner, Dorothy Morris, Muriel Wilson.

The Pastoral list is kept up to date and meetings are held quarterly to review how best to care for our congregation. A convenor has been appointed to report to Church Council.

At present we have nobody regularly visiting the hospital.

Lynn Ross

Grief Ministry

A new initiative of Church Council is a Grief Ministry Group. The idea is that this group of people meet (not for counselling) but more for support for each other. Those who have loved ones not with them any more sometimes ask questions of themselves about how they are feeling or re-acting. It is helpful to discuss how others may feel in similar circumstances. We will meet for coffee every few months or so. Bob Grice or Lynn Ross would be interested to hear from anybody who could be interested in this group.

Lynn Ross

Prayer Ministry

The Scripture Union Prayer Guide for February- April 2019 makes a thought provoking statement: "What if prayer is the work and ministry the result. What if prayer is not preparation for the battle but the battle itself".

There is much in our Bible that undergirds the truth of such a statement and yet most of us are so busy doing (even surviving) that our private and family prayer times are so often skimped or neglected. Each one of us needs to address this issue for the sake of our families, our marriages and ourselves, but there is also a corporate aspect to prayer.

During the past year our Church's corporate prayer ministry has included;

- A Tuesday morning group which meets for prayer and breakfast at Moyra's home each week at 7am.
- The weekly meditation group which meets each Wednesday at 8.30am for meditation and prayer.
- The monthly prayer group which meets at 8.30am on the first Saturday of the month.
- The prayer team which acts as a prayer chain to pray in our homes for people or events in circumstances of urgency and for a range of ongoing matters and people prompted by regular prayer bulletins.
- Prayer for others in our weekly Services of Worship.
- Connect groups who pray at each meeting, especially for one another and for needs known at the time.

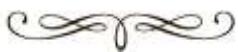
Ray Jones faithfully coordinated Prayer Ministry, convened monthly prayer meetings and circulated prayer bulletins during 2018 and Murray Robertson has stood in the breach since the end of the year. There is now the opportunity for one of our folk who God is calling to this ministry to take over the role and I would encourage anyone willing and with a passion for prayer to have a chat with Murray.

I believe that prayer is the engine room of all we are and all we do as a Church and as individual Christians. We cannot dictate to God. He is Sovereign and He knows what is best. However, what a joy and encouragement it is to see God answering our prayers that are in unison with His plan for our Church and our lives. Our job is to faithfully pray.

We need to be people of prayer.

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful" ... Colossians 4 : V 2

Bob Grice (For the Prayer Team)



Administration

In Administration we cover a broad range of activities in the life of our Maleny U.C. and the Blackall Range Uniting Churches as a whole. As we move into 2019 and the one congregation at three ministry locations, the work in Administration will be vital. This report, as in other years, is primarily a vote of **THANKS** for the wide-ranging areas that have been covered by a wonderful group of volunteers.

Jing Wang, who works in the Church Office on Tuesday and Thursday from 9am to 3pm, has really been doing a wonderful job. She is always so willing to assist wherever she can and along with her happy manner and dedication to the job has been a real asset in the Church Office.

During 2018 Muriel Wilson and Robyn Robertson, who have been editing Our Common Life for many years, and as we all know doing a superb job, finally handed this task to the Church Office. Sincere thanks goes to both of you for all your efforts and we, your church family, have been blessed by the way you have used your gifts.

Maggie and John Ginty have continued through 2018 in preparing our Rosters – this is a very time-consuming task. Thank you both for the grace and love you bring to this job, well done.

The New Vine edited by Rev. Graham with Muriel as the person who puts it all together has continued to grab our interest with interesting and noteworthy articles.

The Church Website continues to evolve into a tool for communicating on line with huge numbers of people who otherwise may not have known about what we do here at Maleny U.C. Thanks to all involved.

The Annual Reports this year have been compiled by Muriel and photocopied / emailed by Jing, thank you both.

There are so many other volunteers working quietly behind the scenes to keep our church operating smoothly. Those who are involved with church morn tea / flowers / communion prep./ hall bookings / door welcoming / prayer and bible reading / counting money etc, to name just a few. Our church roster is filled by all these wonderful people doing so many tasks to bring glory to Jesus. **Thank you each one** for the time and effort you put into your role within our Maleny Uniting Church. Our church could not run so efficiently without your valuable input.

Merilyn Milton

Youth and Families

At the Maleny Uniting church we have as a core of what we do as a church to welcome and reach out to youth and families. One of the changes this year has been Amity Green coming on board our Church Council and I personally look forward to her insight and energy to help our church become more effective in this area, particularly as we now get used to life without Catherine as our minister. Some of the activities are listed below.

Family Services

We had hoped to develop fortnightly services in 2018, but the lack of musicians and helpers saw us settle on monthly 4.30 services every third Sunday with a contemporary focus. It is such a joy to see the energy and enjoyment of the children in the services. Big thanks for all the helpers in the background and I would like to particularly thank Ray and Bev Jones for the effort they put into these and wish them well.

P1 Youth Group

This has been the big change this year as the opportunity came up to start the P1 youth group for second term of 2018. The crew of Catherine, Bob G, Faye Gledhill, Molly and myself started with the hope of 5 or 6 children, mainly girls, but the first night had 7 boys turn up and this has grown to having an average of 8 to 12 each night with a total of 20 on the books, almost equally split between girls and boys. It has been great to start to get to know some of the parents, most of whom have no involvement in a church. Most of the children had not opened a bible before coming.

Sadly we have lost Catherine, our coordinator, Molly to work overseas and Faye, so this will be a major challenge to continue. Please pray for a coordinator to appear for this important work to continue.

R.I. in Schools

Once again throughout 2018 Faith McKinnon and Merilyn Milton were part of a team who were accepted as Religious Instruction Teachers in the Maleny State School, they teach Year 2. Faith and Merilyn are your representatives from the Maleny U. C. and they count it as a real privilege to work in this area. The children are so keen to learn about how they are just so special to Jesus and how Jesus knows all about them and loves them unconditionally.

Often Religious Instruction at school is the only time many children get to hear about Jesus. Please pray for Faith, Merilyn and the whole team of R.I. teachers at Maleny State School.

Faith and Merilyn

Other Outreach

Our giving out of Mother's Day flowers does connect with families celebrating Mother's Day.

The Maleny Street carnival was cancelled this year because of weather forecasts, but has been very effective in touching families.

The Christmas Tree Festival also touches many families

Once again thanks so much to everyone who helped during the year.

Bob Eather