

21 April 2021

PRESBYTERY STANDING COMMITTEE
UPDATE

Issue 2/2021 April 2021

The Presbytery Standing Committee (PSC) met on the 13th of April 2021.

The following information has been prepared for the use of members of Presbytery and distribution to congregations within the Georges River Presbytery.

The standing committee met for the first time in person at the new presbytery office after a year of zoom meetings; it was wonderful to be in the same room to discuss the business of the presbytery. With the chairperson Richard, currently on sick leave, the meeting was chaired by Simon Lee in an acting capacity.

Update information from the Standing Committee:

1. The Presbytery Pastoral Relations Minister position has yet to be filled. The JNC is continuing to work hard to find and have conversations with people for the role. The JNC would appreciate your continued prayers as they seek to fulfill this important position within the Presbytery.
2. Reports were received from the various committees and the Mission & Leadership Presbytery Minister.
3. The proposed budget was considered and will be presented at the next full presbytery meeting.
4. The standing committee authorized an urgent safety report into one of the properties under the beneficial stewardship of the presbytery.



PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE APRIL 2021

There are 25 Uniting Churches in Georges River Presbytery. Some have several worship services and locations operating under the one church name. **At present the PRC is assisting 3 Churches to call a Minister or Ministry Agent.** This involves conducting a Mission Audit, forming a Joint Nominating Committee (JNC), collating, and writing information on the Church Profile, gaining approval from Church Councils, gaining approval to fill from PRC and gaining approval to fill from ACOMP (the Synod Advisory Committee on Ministry Placements). ACOMP provides Ministers' names to the PRC and JNC. Conversations with each Minister can then be organised and God's will for the placement can be prayerfully and mindfully discerned by the JNC and the Minister. The Church Congregation has final approval when the JNC presents the name of the Minister. This can be a lengthy process and the dedication of the JNC members is appreciated by all at PRC as we endeavour to support GRP Ministers and congregations in God's Mission.

PRESBYTERY PROPERTY COMMITTEE UPDATE APRIL 2021

Some of the activities that the property committee has been involved with:

- Working with the Presbytery Business Manager, Barbara Moore
- Renovating the house at 1 Winter Place Oatley is almost finished. Three bathrooms have been renovated and internal painting has been completed. Tasks to be done are sanding of the downstairs timber floors, carpeting upstairs, window treatments and yard clean-up. Thanks to the volunteers that put out items for the council clean-up.
- Property Inspections of churches under Presbytery stewardship have been done for Mortdale church and hall and South Hurstville church and hall. The Mortdale property is in good condition, the South Hurstville property needs considerable work.
- Property inspections with Real Estate Agents for houses under Presbytery stewardship and approving work to be done.
- Working for the opening of the Presbytery office at 18 The Avenue Hurstville
- Clearing out the office at 2/ 598-602 Forest Rd Penshurst is almost complete. Archive material is to be sent to Synod Archives. Other records will be sent to the new office.
- Negotiating Fire contracts for all churches and halls under Presbytery stewardship for a cost of \$460 pa plus GST per site for 2 inspections per year. This includes a NSW Government report required by local Councils. If requested, congregations may be eligible to take advantage of this price by contacting the Presbytery Office.
- Managing COVID plans for hall and church hirers.
- General repairs and maintenance
- Recent heavy rains have caused roofs to leak at a few properties. Quotes are being obtained.
- The \$7,000,000 target for property sales is likely to be achieved: negotiations are progressing well.
- The property committee has provided input to the Presbytery Budget for 2021 – 2022.
- There is a NSW Government program to replace twin Fluorescent lights (and some other types of lights) with LED fittings for a cost of \$33 per site, the NSW Government pays for labour and materials. Beverly Hills is the first church in our Presbytery to be upgraded with other sites to follow. There are considerable energy and cost savings using LED fittings. Contact the Presbytery office for further information.



CROSS CULTURAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

As Presbytery struggles to fill the position of several committee, Standing Committee will be appointing contact persons for the Cross-cultural and Social Justice Committees. The contact persons will work with the Mission & Strategy Committee to take responsibility for issues and events concerning these two committees.

MISSION SHAPED MINISTRY 2021

'Mission Shaped Ministry' training is well under way. There is excitement in this training space and participants are finding it very useful. The learning is transformative with new understanding of what it means to be a church that is missional in its focus. For more information, contact the Mission and Leadership Minister.

MISSION & STRATEGY COMMITTEE MEETING APRIL 2021

Mission and Strategy Committee was held on the 15th of April at Lorne, our new Presbytery Office, Hurstville. There was a review of the first Presbytery Mission Day where the launching of the new logo and official opening of the new Presbytery Office took place. The Feedback Questionnaire is being prepared to assist improve future Presbytery events. There were discussions and planning for the next Presbytery Mission Day that will take place on Saturday, 26th of June. The event will focus on 'Growth' as a theme.

Part of the Mission & Strategy Commission's responsibility is the oversight of the Presbytery Multi-Cross-cultural ministry. A multicultural event is planned for the 31st of July as part of the UCA's anniversary. More details in the next Presbytery Update.

There has been some mission planning with congregations in the last few weeks and more will be done over the next few months.

Prayer meetings are scheduled for 9.30 am Monday to Friday, at the Presbytery office. Ministers, Elders, and Presbytery members are invited to lead the prayer meetings on Wednesdays, but all are welcomed to join the staff in the office or remotely any morning for prayers.



PRESBYTERY MISSION & GATHERING EVENT UPDATE



Presbytery Mission Day and Opening of the Presbytery Office 27th March

It was the first time Presbytery physically met after a year of Covid lockdown. The main goals of the gathering were to share some 'good news' stories about mission, to launch the new Presbytery logo/brand, fellowship, and to officially open our new Presbytery Office at Lorne, Hurstville.

The Presbytery Youth Movement, named 'Living Streams in Christ', shared a video presentation on the establishment of the new movement, who they are, their progress thus far and what they look to do. We heard some great Mission stories from the three congregations:

- Engadine UC shared how they are doing mission with the wider community; now employing a part time Community Engagement Coordinator to assist them in their mission. This initiative grew out of their mission plan a few months ago.
- New Beginnings UC shared using a hybrid presentation about a 'Building Discipling Communities' program. The outcome thus far has been very positive where more people, particularly young adults, are engaging with the gospel and giving their lives to Christ. New Beginnings have had frequent adult baptisms in the past months.
- Carlton-Ramsgate UC 'Glee' Youth Group shared their story about reviving the youth ministry and celebrating the wonderful results thus far.

The other highlight of the event was the official opening of our new office by the Synod representative Albert Olley and the local Member for Kogarah Christopher Minns. Both Albert and Chris spoke about community and collaboration. Former Presbytery Chairperson Rev Graeme Watkins led the event in worship.

The achievements would not have been possible without the leadership of Presbytery Chairperson Richard Hanna who, unfortunately was in hospital on the day recovering, led the team in preparation. A lot of hard work from our Presbytery staff, Hurstville City UC leadership team and families ensured the day was successful.

Special acknowledgment to the Misa family for donating some furniture and helping to maintain the grounds of our office. For the 'Welcome to Country' and for the artwork displayed in our office, we



thank the local Aboriginal Elder and artist Aunty Annette Webb from the Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation. We are endeavoring to develop a relationship and partnership with the local First People's community here in Georges River. We look forward to the next Presbytery Mission event on the 26th of June.



Mission & Presbytery Gathering save the date

26th June - Presbytery Mission Event: Growth

31st July - Presbytery Multicultural Event.



THOUGHTS by Rev Mary Pearson

As time moves on day by day, the events of Easter, however important they are to us as Christians, fade into the normal pattern of our lives. They remain a major event, a life changing happening, indeed a death changing happening, so Easter is always there for us, but our own lives take over the focus, as we get on with things. How do we continue to allow Easter to shape us? What do we learn of the response of Jesus' friends back then?

The gospel accounts are very familiar to us and we know about the grief, the fear, the anxieties, the questioning. We know that for these people there was the shock of knowing that their lives would never be the same again. For the, after everything they had experienced as they followed Jesus, there could be known going back to what had been their normality beforehand.

Perhaps one of the most important things for Jesus' disciples was the realization that they were not, could not be in control of things. All that had been taken away. Now they had to depend on discovering hour by hour, day by day, what God might be doing in and around them. Jesus appeared to them and confirmed for them that they were just beginning a new journey which they would carry on with the blessing of God's Spirit and with the deep peace that came from understanding that. This was something separate from the way in which they saw and experienced the Roman and Jewish authorities working. They knew now, that all that had been done to Jesus to try to put an end to his message had failed. It had failed because it was beyond the power of the authorities to control. This was a huge thing to grasp: that Jesus had handed over control, allowed himself to be totally vulnerable even to the point of death, and yet, those in control had not won. This was something that Jesus' disciples began to see was foundational for the way they were now to live – in trust. They knew they couldn't trust in their own strength, ability or power. They knew they were vulnerable, but now that was all right.

This is something that everyone grapples with, sometimes all the time. There are always things that make us feel vulnerable, times when we just want to take control over our lives to protect ourselves from the things that are happening around us and, often, the people who seem to be threatening us. In times of change this is especially powerful because we often cannot see a way ahead and prefer to look behind, because our memories can trick us into thinking that all was well "back then". In reality, every time has its challenges. In this Easter season, as it still is, maybe the way we continue to carry the Easter message within us is to recognize that when there is much that we cannot do, such a time is one when we can strip away our pretence of control and, in humility, place our trust in God again. That is certainly not a call to inaction. It is a call to re-focus on the One who is always working at the transformation of our lives so that we may ever more faithfully take up our role as Easter people, in humility, trust, and joyful freedom. It is what Jesus' disciples discovered as they went on, day by day.

*You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace
The mountains and the hills will break forth before you
There'll be shouts of joy and all the trees of the field
Will clap, will clap their hands.*



GRP LIVE STREAMING WORKSHOP



Live-streaming church services and other aspects of church life has become an important element of church in our world today. The Georges River Presbytery is holding a Live-streaming workshop in partnership NEW Beginnings Uniting Church. The workshop will be a hands-on look at live streaming in a church context, from a simple easily achievable setup to a larger more complex setup. This workshop is for those churches that want to start live-streaming or who have started live-streaming and want to go deeper.

Date: Saturday, 1st May 2021

Location: NEW Beginnings Uniting Church
2-6 Gosport Street, Cronulla NSW 2230

Time: 10am - 12noon

for registration, please email to admin.grp@nswact.uca.org or call 02 9579 4682.



Mortdale is appreciative of the support it is receiving from volunteers from other Congregations for its Opportunity Shop at 18 Morts Road, Mortdale.

They are looking for volunteers to help on *Thursdays*. If you can help, please contact the GRP Office.



WOMEN IN MINISTRY RETREAT 2021

WOMEN IN MINISTRY RETREAT 2021

23 – 26 May 2021

For Ministers, Pastors & Deacons
in the NSW/ACT Synod.

MY HEART'S DESIRE

A retreat for nurture,
spirituality, community and rest
through contemplation, creative expression,
journaling and conversation with Elizabeth Lee.

Elizabeth is a Spiritual Director, Retreat Facilitator,
and Pastoral Supervisor. She has a passion for
fostering human connection through deep listening
and for being a listening presence among the
fringes. She brings with her a diverse professional
background on which to draw from.

Online registration & more information
<https://women-in-ministry-retreat-2021.eventbrite.com.au>

Registrations Close 9 May 2021

IMPORTANT DATES

20 th April	Presbytery Workshop on License and Copyrights (via Zoom)
29 th April	Standing Committee Meeting (via Zoom)
30 th April	Nominations for Election close
1 st May	Live Streaming Workshop
4 th May	Pastoral Relation Committee Meeting
6 th May	Property Committee Meeting
11 th May	Standing Committee Meeting (via Zoom)
11 th May	Presbytery Meeting & Election at Lugarno UC
13 th May	Mission & Strategy Committee Meeting

