

## Presbytery report to Synod 2023

The WA Presbytery continues to evolve in line with the changing needs of our congregations and as our finances continue to diminish. Synod members may remember that a few years ago the Presbytery took an enormous financial hit with the loss of a significant level of funding from Synod to perform our regulated and critical functions. Since then, our funding has continued to dwindle, and the amount from congregational Mission and Service contributions is also declining, primarily due to the increased constraints that many congregations are experiencing themselves. Thankyou to those congregations who have been able to increase their direct contributions to Presbytery it is very much needed and appreciated. Meanwhile the small staff profile that we have continue to work over and above and the numerous volunteers that undertake the bulk of the work required remain the backbone of our Presbytery.

Our committees, staffed by volunteers, continue to undertake huge levels of work as we continue our journey as a Church.

### Staffing changes

In the last 12 months we have seen significant changes within the office. Rev Anne Wright and Rev Christine Sorensen completed their contracts with CEDAL and we welcomed Rev Cathie Lambert and Rev David Kriel into the newly formed positions at the Perth Theological Hall. Leanne Hall, Admin support for CEDAL moved on and was replaced with the lovely Mahshid Zadeh. We appointed Ps Julie Ridden in the revised UnitingGen role, Rev Chris Crause and Rev Lorraine Stokes have both served in supply for the Presbytery Minister (Pastoral) position and Rev Chris Crause is now undertaking supply in the Presbytery Executive Officer role. We are still seeking for these permanent roles to be filled and would appreciate your prayers that we will find suitable people for these important roles in the life of our Church. The Rural and Remote Minister position is still unfilled and we have been looking at creative ways to ensure the role becomes an attractive option for someone passionate in this area of Ministry. We farewelled our long-term Presbytery Admin Officer Amanda Badenhorst who has moved to Queensland to be with her family, although she remains part-time working remotely for the PRC. We are hopeful that we have found someone to fill the vacant Presbytery Admin role.

### CEDAL

CEDAL has been undertaking a significant amount of reform within the space of lay and ordained training. Late last year CEDAL undertook a review of its staffing structure to meet changed requirements as well as our constrained finances. CEDAL has also been reviewing its overall vision and mission, its plan for the future and revitalised its strategic

plan, especially focusing on ministerial formation, lay education, and continuing education for ministry agents.

As part of this review CEDAL has explored collaboration with other Synods and as a result has established a collaborative arrangement with the University of Divinity for theological education, particularly but not exclusively developing a MOU with Pilgrim Theological College in the Synod of Vic/Tas.

Thanks to Rev Claire Pickering who stood down as Chair of CEDAL and to Dr Karen Flowers for taking on the role.

### PRC

PRC's work is dominated by responding to concerns that arise within congregations where the Presbytery can assist, and meeting the regulated requirements for congregational Life and Witness reviews and JNC's. PRC have consistently put the call out for new people to consider putting their hand up to do this work as a huge level of work currently falls on the shoulders of few volunteers. In addition to this PRC has been proactive in proposing improved processes for Presbytery to deal with the issue of Ministerial Placements beyond 10 years, assessing the Culture of Call within the Church, and the matter of Professional Supervision.

PRC and CEDAL have also undertaken joint work, reviewing the training for pastors, sacraments training and making other changes to training for ordained ministers.

Thanks to Rev Ivan Clark who stood down as the Chair of PRC and to Sue Strutt for stepping into the role.

### Thrive

Thrive has been proactive producing documents and videos to assist congregations with mission planning and has delivered the Mission Shaped Ministry training. Thrive has also assessed congregations mission plans as part of the process of assessing applications to access Embargoed funds.

The huge body of work which was undertaken was the 25 Year Mission and Property Strategy for the WA Presbytery. This Strategy, approved by the Presbytery, will be the foundational document as we discern the missional uses of Church properties as we move forward as a Church. The next step is a 2 year process of mutual listening with congregations, planning for which has commenced.

Presbytery also resolved to separate the property and mission functions of the Committee due to the enormous workload of both functions, but also in recognition of the significant overlap between issues around property and pastoral matters which are the responsibility of PRC. This new structure will take effect 1 January 2024.

Thanks to Rev Greg Ross for all his work as Chair and to Yvonne Robinson who has stepped in when Greg has taken well earned leave.

## CMC

CMC has continued the important work of overseeing Period of Discernments with an increasing number of people preparing for the ministry of lay preacher. CMC have also been working to promote a sense of call to ministerial positions.

## UnitingGen Network

UnitingGen has been meeting regularly and is open to everyone who is interested in creating valuable connections. A regular newsletter is produced which serves as a resource for all congregations. Thanks to Rev Kim Francis and Ps Julie Ridden for their work on this network.

## Rural and Remote Network

The Rural and Remote Network has also been meeting regularly via Zoom and is open to everyone who is interested. Regional and metro based people participate and this has enabled valuable connections between regional congregations but also enabled connections with metro congregations. In particular it has been great to see metro participants using the Network to hear firsthand of some of the challenges and to give practical support where this is requested. Thanks to Yuko Tonai-Moore and Richard Hugman for their work.

## Multicultural Network

The Multicultural Network was established by the Presbytery for the express purpose of facilitating cross cultural relationships across the Presbytery. PSC are currently reviewing the Network to see the best way to ensure this can occur and to meet the needs of the multicultural congregations and faith communities.

## Other work

In addition to the work of the Committees and Networks there has been much other work in which the Presbytery has been involved such as the review of the Resources Commission and the Council for Mission. There have been discussions about how to improve the processes between PRC and Placements. A critical issue for the Presbytery is to address how we store our documents and records and how to ensure we have one, affordable system that is easily Review of the Resources Commission and the Council for Mission.

We have also undertaken an extensive review and upgrade of our Rules, huge thanks to Rev Des Cousins for all his work on this.

## Ordinations/Commissionings/Inductions

Since the last Synod we have inducted Rev Hannes Halgryn into Fremantle Wesley, Rev Mark Bell into Willetton and Sungeun Jang at the Korean congregation.

We have recognised the end of placements of Rev Margaret Tyrer at Claremont, Rev Mark Bell at Willetton, Rev David Kriel at Trinity North and Rev Ian Tozer at Floreat.

Rev Erica Payne has been recognised as a Uniting Church Minister at Dongara. Ps Marilyn Price has been commissioned as a Pastor at Mandurah and Ps Julie Ridden has been commissioned as a Pastor within the Presbytery.

Finally, Reuben Edmonds, Samuel Annan and Ana Lea'aetoa have all been approved by Presbytery to be ordained.

### Thanks

Thanks to Ps Marilyn Price who finished her 4 year term as Treasurer and to Janine McDonald for stepping into the role.

Huge thanks to all those who work so hard on all of our Committees.

A massive personal thankyou to Rev Bev Fabb as Secretary who does an amazing job and without whose help I simply wouldn't be able to manage the workload.

Peace and Grace

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