

ST MICHAEL'S UNITING CHURCH



CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2021

St Michael's Church Council has continued in its work during COVID lockdowns. The July Council meeting was held "in person" but on the afternoon we met another lockdown was announced. For the August meeting we were back on Zoom interacting with one another like a re-run of Hollywood Squares!

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Aware of the impending lockdown, Council tentatively rescheduled the AGM for after the service on Sunday 17 October. We hoped that by then sufficient people would be able to attend in accordance with government and COVID guidelines.

Appointment of Executive Assistant and Administration Manager

We are delighted to announce that Susan Kane has been appointed as Executive Assistant and Administration Manager to assist Margaret and members of Council with their work. Susan brings to this position extensive administrative experience in the corporate and not for profit sectors and is keen to commence her role. Please extend her a warm welcome if you have occasion to contact the Office.

Mingary-Cairnmillar Counselling Service

The Council's Mingary Committee recently held its inaugural meeting. It was a pleasure to welcome psychologists Gabriele Buzatu (St Michael's member) and Helen Bruckner (external) as members. Laura Beckett chairs the Mingary Committee. Other members in attendance were Cheryl Power Deputy Chair, Dr Margaret Mayman and Maree McDonald acting as Secretary to the Committee.

Elise Wald, Cairnmillar's Director of Clinical Services provided a comprehensive report describing the successful implementation of the new management structure. Counselling continues to be offered by telehealth. Counsellors and clients are looking forward to the time when face to face counselling can resume.

The possible expansion of the service to include group programs with a focus on mental wellbeing is an exciting opportunity.

Proposed Works to 120 Collins Street

It was reported that proposed works on the foyer and podium of the 120 Collins Street office tower may commence in October this year. Synod Property Services and Council have been in consultation with Investa to note key issues which are likely to impact St Michael's Walk and other issues relating to the church building. Negotiations with Investa are continuing to address these issues.

Conservation Management Plan (CMP)

The completion of the CMP is currently on hold pending the completion of a building compliance report commissioned by Synod Property Services. It is anticipated that once this report is received that the CMP will be finalized by Purcell architects which will provide the church with an important blueprint for our vision for the future of the church and for works to the building fabric.

What's in a Name?

The Council considered a proposal to rename the Deaneries as Committees of Council and Deans and Deputy Deans as Chairs and Deputy Chairs. Dr. Mayman noted that the usage of Dean and Deanery at St Michael's varied from commonly held church and academic understandings. Consequently, explanation is constantly required when speaking with newcomers to St Michael's or communicating with external stakeholders. Members of the Council responded warmly to the proposal, and it was adopted unanimously. Council Committees are considering the Committee names and since the meeting Household has decided on Property as its new name.

Our Vision for a Just Australia

The Council received the UCA Assembly document "Our Vision for a Just Australia." The document notes sixteen key issues that will contribute to the building of a just and compassionate Australia as we emerge from the pandemic. The Council commends it to the congregation for consideration and recommends its use as the basis for St Michael's discussion program when we are able to meet together for after-church programs. Read more or download here: <https://uniting.church/a-vision-for-a-just-australia/>

Council Committee Reports

The Chair of Church Services Cheryl Power noted that the Online Service continued to be viewed weekly by between 350 and 470 people and that it was an important commitment of the church. We thanked Dr. Mayman for her support for the online gathering which is a crucial support for many members of the St Michael's Community.

Peter Anderson Chair of the Property Committee noted that due to recent storm damage a contractor had inspected the roof along St Michael's Walk and to the north and they had reported that the condition of the roof is not yet critical and where it was appropriate that only spot repairs need to be undertaken.

Lyndell O'Brien noted the excellent feedback through the Contact and Care contact people regarding themes for St Michael's Day and that systems were being developed for the reopening of the church when government guidelines permit access to the church.

Lorraine Woolley noted the success of the Sunday Zoom Cuppa sessions which provided people with an opportunity to catch up and to meet new people. The recent six-part Searchers Beyond Belief program featuring Professor Marcus Borg, held on Wednesday evenings, was so successful that repeat sessions had been scheduled.