

ST MICHAEL'S UNITING CHURCH



CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2022

At the September meeting of the Council, the following items were among those reported and discussed:

Strategic Planning

Following adoption of Strategic Mission Goals for 2022- 2024 at its last meeting, Council approved the formation of a Working Group led by Ann Kinnear to develop a plan for implementation of the goals. The Council and Minister look forward to presenting the goals and facilitating community discussion at the next congregational meeting scheduled for Sunday 20 November.

St Michael's Day

Council was pleased to note that arrangements are well in hand for a joyous St Michael's Day. There was discussion of the date for St Michael's Day (which is the same weekend as the AFL Grand Final holiday), and the Council agreed to revisit this when preparing for next year.

Climate Action

The Uniting Church in Australia has for some time identified Global Warming as an issue of great concern and has developed a range of policies and actions which, until now, St Michael's has not pursued.

The Council has asked Brian Smith to convene a Working Group to provide recommendations to Council on:

An environmental management plan for St Michael's that will contribute to the achievement of the Uniting Church target of net zero emissions by 2040.

Ways in which St Michael's can influence community opinion (within and beyond St Michael's) for positive climate action.

It is recognised that other churches have already undertaken work on this issue, and we need to link with and learn from them.

Council Elections

A call for nominations will be issued in the next two weeks.

An Open and Affirming Congregation

In response to the initiative taken by the Uniting Church LGBTIQ+ Network (Uniting Network), a group led by Val Gill and Dr Chris Phillips will progress the actions required for St Michael's to be recognised as an Open and Affirming Congregation.

Finance Report

The performance remains strong, although it was noted that offerings continue to be below budget. The balance sheet is healthy. The Council is preparing to use some of the available funds and seek other outside funding to finance heritage building maintenance and the planned revitalisation work.

Property Report

The Conservation Management Plan, a comprehensive document which guides the development and maintenance programs for our heritage building and is an essential component of our efforts to raise funding from external organisations, is approaching completion.

Stage 1 – history and context – is complete.

Stage 2 – building condition report – is almost complete.

Stage 3 – maintenance plan – needs further work.

It was identified in the CMP that the external steps to the church and balustrades are suffering degradation through ground water absorption and other contributing factors is a major priority for attention.

The Council in conjunction with the Presbytery and Synod will form a governance group – called the Project Control Group (PRG). The purpose of the PRC is to manage the delivery of capital projects and large planned maintenance projects. It will undertake stewardship of all building project work, including financial management and scoping of projects.

Church Services

The newly set up children's corner located in the Narthex is working very well. Heaters were installed for warmth and comfort. Parents of young children have expressed appreciation that there is now a comfortable space for children in which parents can still hear the service.

Staff

The Council noted with concern the resignation of Justine O'Loughlin, Administration Manager, for personal reasons. Justine was a very able contributor to the work of St Michael's and finding a replacement for her will not be easy. In the current climate it will likely take considerable time. The Council acknowledged that this would have an impact on the Minister and the office staff, and that there may be delays in responses to enquiries from time to time. The Council asks for your understanding.