

ST MICHAEL'S UNITING CHURCH



CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATE OCTOBER 2022

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

Council Elections

Arrangements for the Council elections on Sunday November 20 are well in hand.

Online Services

The Council considered the current provision of on-line services, noted that they remained very popular and discussed some changes that may make the experience of communion more inclusive for online viewers.

Resignation

The Council reluctantly accepted the resignation of Neil Blood from the Council and the Chair of the Programs Committee with effect from the 31 December. The Chair of Council thanked Neil and noted that he had made a major contribution in planning and promotion of Programs during his term on Council.

Mingary Cairnmillar

The Memorandum of Understanding between St Michael's and Cairnmillar has now been finalised. It sets out in clear terms the linked objectives as well as the separate roles and responsibilities of the two bodies. Council also approved the revised terms of reference for the Mingary-Cairnmillar Committee which clarify its role in overseeing the relationship with Cairnmillar.

Finance Report

Performance continues to be ahead of budget. Council discussed the offerings which continue to be below budget. Council agreed to communicate to the congregation the significance of offerings for the church's mission and ministry.

St Michael's has invested much its capital in the UCA Growth fund with very satisfactory results to date. However, it was noted that the fund, like almost all other investment funds, has been adversely affected by the recent turmoil of the global financial markets and that this will affect future interest earnings for the congregation which supports our operating budget.

Council Committees

Property

There have been several frustrating delays in receiving the advice commissioned from our consultants and legal adviser. Council will continue to press for more timely responses.

Church Services

The UCA Assembly has undertaken an initiative, 'Dignity and Hope for All' in support of older people. The Church Services Committee has invited one of our older members to share with the congregation a reflecting on the significant issues facing older people at a future service.

Contact and Care

The Contact and Care Committee has been examining how we might create more opportunities for connection within and between our 'in person' attendees and those who watch online.

Programs

The after-church activities continue to be well supported. On December 11 St Michael's member Dr Irene Rezenbrink, a social worker and expressive arts therapist will present 'Welcoming the Image: An Introduction to Art Therapy.'

Council Working Groups

Environmental Action

Council agreed to approve development of an action plan which will contribute to the UCA National Climate Action Plan for achieving net zero emissions by 2040 by focussing on reducing St Michael's carbon footprint, encouraging members to take positive and urgent action, and seeking to collaborate with inner city churches and the City of Melbourne on actions to address climate change.

Open and Affirming Project

The next step in responding to the Uniting Church LGBTIQ+ Network's program to recognise congregations that are open and affirming of LGBTIQ+ people will be a meeting after church on October 30. The purpose is to acquaint the congregation with the goals and to workshop actions that might be taken by St Michael's.

Strategic Planning

The group led by Ann Kinnear will now be working on implementing the strategic goals recently agreed by Council. While the votes are being counted at the 20 November Council Election meeting, the congregation will be briefed about the goals and there will be an opportunity for discussion.