



Life and Witness of St Michael's Uniting Church

Earlier this year, the Presbytery of Yarra Yarra undertook a consultation on the Life and Witness of St Michael's Uniting Church. Life and Witness consultations can be initiated for a variety of reasons, but their primary purpose is to give expression to the work, ministry and collective discernment across the church, in order to strengthen the life and witness of congregations.

The consultation with St Michael's had a particular focus on current working relationships between Church Council, Minister, and Staff following a time of relational challenges relating to property conditions at the manse.

This was a thorough and careful process, and we are grateful for the good faith efforts of all who participated.

The findings of the Consultation Report were that:

- Working relationships between St Michael's Church Council and the Minister, and between the Administrative Staff of St Michael's Uniting and the Minister, were not sustainable or salvageable and that this was the view shared by all participants, including the Minister.
- All people interviewed provided feedback which indicated that the relationship between the parties was such that it would not be solved by continuing the relationship or trying to mediate the situation.

Consequently, on the recommendation of the Presbytery's Pastoral Relations Committee to the Presbytery Standing Committee, the placement of Rev Dr Margaret Mayman was concluded effective from 30 September 2025.

The Presbytery will support the Church Council to arrange Supply Ministry for the congregation. Dr Mayman continues to be under the pastoral care and oversight of the Presbytery of Yarra Yarra. As she discerns the shape her ministry vocation will take in the future, she will receive support from the Synod that is offered to Ministers Awaiting Placement, including provision of support from the Pastoral Assistance Committee.

We appreciate Dr Mayman's contribution to the Congregation, including navigating the significant challenges of ministry through the Covid lockdowns, leading video services that reached many people in and beyond the congregation; her creative leadership of worship, progressive and inclusive preaching that drew new people to St Michael's, and her support for the Council and Congregation as St Michael's was recognised as an Open and Affirming Church, developed an Environmental Action Plan, planned for the revitalisation of the church interior, and strengthened its connections with the wider Uniting Church.

The Presbytery wishes Dr Mayman well in the next phase of her ministry and know that she extends the same good wishes to the Congregation for the future of its mission and ministry, and to the Staff in their work to support St Michael's mission.

(If you have any further questions, please email the office via office@stmichaels.org.au)