



St Luke's Uniting Church Highton

Annual Report 2018



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Ministry Teams

Worship and Education

This Team is responsible for the oversight and facilitating conduct of worship activity at St Luke's and also for the discipleship and other Christian educational activities for our people and the community.

The Team has been very small and currently comprises: Lloyd Walker (Convenor), Linda Salamy, Sue Anderson, Judy Boehm, with Pam Seller, Malcolm John, Jenny Patchett and Robyn Hodge contributing when possible.

Group activities in 2017:

Worship

- Worship was shared across the St Luke's Community throughout 2017, at 9:30am on Sundays, as part of our Messy Church evenings, the second Thursday afternoon services, House Church and several other special services.
- We were blessed by a number of leaders and preachers, both Lay and Ordained from both within and beyond our community who kept God's Gospel of hope alive and challenging as it was shared, with a challenge to live it out.
- Sunday services have typically had around 70 people attending, with Messy Church (Fridays) drawing about 60. Increasingly our community is diversifying.
- Highlights of the year have included the Easter season, particularly the Maundy Thursday evening service that drew over 120 people, our cantatas, the special services during October for the Seasons of Creation, and our Café Church services, each of which has shared God's message in a different way.
- Music for Sunday has been coordinated by Malcolm John and Jenny Patchett and the Choir, with a number helping with preparation of the powerpoints. Messy Church music has been ably led by Robyn Hodge with contributions from the children who attend.
- During the year we struggled to have an ordained Minister available to lead Holy Communion for the first Sunday morning service and made the decision to move it to the third Sunday of the month. This is expected to continue through 2018.
- We welcomed Rev Paul Stephens on 11th February 2018, and are planning a period of reflection and preparation in the first half of the year. As the Congregation has agreed to a Regeneration Ministry, Paul will be sharing his time around the various places our Church (and more importantly, the Holy Spirit) is at work in our community and so we are planning to ensure others can take the lead on at least two Sunday morning services a month.



Maundy Thursday Big Messy Dinner!

- During 2018, we intend to restart the group preparing one or two new songs for use during Sunday worship each month to extend the congregational repertoire, as well as different ways to extend the involvement of members in worship leadership (including prayers).
- The Task Group that met during the latter half of 2016 exploring worship is likely to reconvene, and there is work underway to review the various projection and sound systems at St Luke's to ensure they continue to meet our needs.

Education & discipleship support

- St Luke's Community has a number of active groups developing disciples including: Kid's Church (3rd Sunday), House Church, various bible studies and small groups (notably including Trekkies), and increasingly some of our outreach groups include a Christian discipleship element.
- A key part of this work is providing resources to help people explore God's word, including bible reading guides as Christmas gifts to our young people, and mother tongue translations of the bible for some of our refugee families.
- We are working to involve some of the older children and young adults in the leadership of the Kids Church and Messy Church and would welcome your prayers and encouragement for this development opportunity, (and perhaps to let Judy B and Judy C take a break!).
- We continue to use the various elements within the Seasons of the Spirit and other resources, including a study on developing thriving families (Belonging & Becoming) for those with school age children.
- Paul will take an active role in linking some discipleship resources with his work in Regeneration Ministry, and a retreat is planned around mid 2018 for our leadership to explore some of the many opportunities to work with the Holy Spirit.



Full House at Trekkies

Lloyd Walker

Pastoral Connections

2017 was an exceptionally busy year for the Pastoral Connections Ministry Team members, of Carole Findlay, Barbara Murphy, Jenny Pooley, Judy Clark, Beth Allen, Valerie Grills, Joy Hicks and Pam Seller.

Pastoral Connections mission statement and terms of reference are the key for our ministry and are as follows – “To faithfully serve God, to support and encourage the Minister in placement and to share with other Ministry Teams in the provision of Pastoral Care to the congregation of St. Luke’s and the community.” We have tried to offer a balance of care and mission within our St. Luke’s community, as well as outreach into the surrounding community.

Following congregational endorsement during Rachel’s ministry, it was established that small groups were to be an essential part of our Pastoral Care network, and it is the responsibility of everyone in the congregation to care for one another.

While most pastoral care is done through our 27 small groups, with small group leaders keeping Pastoral Connections or the minister informed of any serious illness or injury, there are still a significant number of members who are shut-in, live alone, are in permanent care, confined to home because of illness or frailty or recently returned home following surgery. These people are visited and supported by the Pastoral Care team who provide transport to appointments, as well as the provision of meals and shopping.

We support and partner with, Mission Outreach who pastoral care and visit our refugee families.

Over the past 12 months, without a minister in placement, we have organised and catered for 7 funerals and continue to pastorally care for and support members of these families through their time of grief.

We have organised and led Mid-week worship services, provided supper/afternoon tea for Blue Christmas, Ash Wednesday, MND services, Singing the Classic functions, and provided Hot Cross Buns on Good Friday. In addition we have facilitated morning tea at Café church worship services, special morning teas at Advent and Pentecost Sunday services, baking for Garage sales held by Men’s Shed and our catering teams for funerals.

As part of our ministry we facilitate the setting up and serving of the elements at the monthly communion service plus organise and share with the minister at home communions when requested.

Prayer is an important part of our team’s portfolio. In 2017 we initiated the weekly prayer diary and along with maintaining a busy Sunday ‘Prayer Link’ we email out any urgent prayer requests received during the week.



Part of this ministry is to maintain the ‘prayer corner’ in the north east corner of the sanctuary where we offer private prayer for congregational members.

Another new ministry introduced in 2017 is a ‘Prayer Shawl ministry’. Shawls are knitted by congregation members, prayed over at our monthly meetings and delivered by team members to shut-ins, people in hospital, and bereaved families. One was even sent to England upon the death of the husband of a team members close friend, thus extending our ministry beyond our shores.

Other responsibilities shared by team members involve organising the annual picnic, coordinating Coffee & Chat, rostering people for Sharing the Journey, foyer connections and welcoming teams, providing Mother's Day flowers, ordering name tags and overseeing the weekly morning tea roster.

Another part of our responsibility is to maintain the small group register, provide information and updates for the Information Booklet and gather details and updates for the St. Luke's Roll and Directory.

As our community outreach, it is a joy to be able to work with St. John's Anglican church to support the 'Prison Biscuit Bake' which is held yearly and provides a gift of 10 homemade biscuits and a Christian message, for up to 10,000 prisoners who are being held in Victorian prisons.

Over-all, it was very busy during 2017 and as always it continues to be a privilege to serve the Lord through the above Pastoral Connections Ministry Team activities.

Report prepared by Pam Seller Pastoral Connections Team Co-ordinator.

Mission Outreach

Aim

to develop and maintain effective Christian mission outreach activities in and beyond our local community

Group members take part and are responsible for a range of activities -

- Rae Anderson: Distribution of material aid for refugees, Trading Table, Christmas Hampers
- Fair Trade, Emergency Food Pantry, Pillow Bank, , Ideas person
- Sue Anderson: Refugee Support, World Vision child, Admin
- Stella Cox : Food organisation and preparation
- Jean Daw: Convenor 2017, Repair Cafe, Bread run, Sewing Group, English Classes, Admin
- Pam Caddy (2017):
- Alison Lyons: Refugee support, food organisation and preparation, Christmas Hampers
- Ian Petersen: Men's Shed, Distribution of Material Aid
- Farhad Safarnejad: collection and distribution of material aid, Bread run, Repair Cafe
- Iris Speare: Uniting Barwon, Food Preparation, Christmas Hampers

**These people do more than this but this is a precis of their good works – apologies if I've left something out – team!

Highlights

- **Bread Delivery:** Baker's Delight Highton generously enabled collection of bread from their store on Monday and Tuesday evenings. On Mondays 3 families benefitted and on Tuesday 37 families. Excess was delivered to Uniting Barwon. Many requests for assistance occur during these bread runs.
- **Christmas Hampers:** 5 delivered to newly arrived families and many more throughout the city of Geelong through Uniting Barwon and St Luke's donations
- **Community Garden:** (Marlyn Court) - after 8 years the garden has been returned to its owners. During this time the trading table has flourished with the garden's produce. \$28 000 has been raised for church funds. We give grateful thanks to our growers, pickers and supporters. The garden supported newcomers from Sudan, Iran and Karen families who not only developed their gardening skills but also their English language.

- **Distribution of Material Aid:** 125 newcomer families received assistance with a variety of household goods – 14 ethnicities were represented. 133 families donated goods and the Men’s Shed repaired and refurbished furniture. Families are referred by Uniting Barwon.

- **Emergency Pantry:** we now focus on weekend emergency pantry support. During the week we direct people to Uniting Barwon.

- **English Speaking Classes:** discontinued in mid 2017. Team is looking at a better way of providing this activity. Attendance numbers dropped.



Fair Trade at the Trading Table

- **Garage Sales:** supporting Men’s Shed in providing Devonshire Teas at two of these in 2017.
- **General Trading Table:** After 10 years of trading in the hall every Sunday, the trading table will now continue in the Church foyer on a self service system. Fair-Trade products will be available here. On occasion the Sunday table may focus on special themes.
- St Luke’s continues as a designated **Fair-Trade Faith Community** with tea and coffee served in our kitchen, Men’s Shed and given as gifts to guest speakers at monthly House Church gatherings.
- **Letters of thanks:** over 150 letters of thanks have been written to families for donations of household items in the past 12 months. These items have been repaired and made ready for distribution to refugee families by Men’s Shed while kitchenware, bedding etc has been made ready for distribution by Rae Anderson.
- **Luncheons:** during 2017 we commenced ‘outreach’ luncheons for members of St Luke’s and those who are connected via the Sewing group, Refugee support etc. Two of these have been Roast luncheons and one a multicultural lunch on Refugee Sunday with meals of a distinctly ‘un Australian’ flavour provided by families originally from far away. Absolutely scrumptious – the taste buds are working overtime as I type! Between 70 – 80 people have attended each one.
- **Men’s Shed:** continue their outreach in the community, providing material aid to many and social interaction for each other. Bunnings Barbecues have been a great source of fundraising over the past year - see report for further detail.
- **Pillow Bank Pledges:** commenced in 2017. Strict health regulations on pillows exist so we can only provide new pillows to our refugee and asylum seeker people. April and November are the months where we call for monetary donations.
- **Roslyn Room:** used for the storage of material aid (linen and kitchenware). After 10 years of use we have outgrown our room and will move (with aid and aid for the move)



Sewing Group

into the Chapel.

- **Diversitat** refer up to 6 refugee families per week seeking material aid.
- **Repair Café:** commenced in August 2017 and has been a huge success with an enormous number of articles repaired. Many people from the community have come into our buildings perhaps for the first time - see report for further detail.
- **Sewing Group:** 20 ladies – average 8 – 10 per week. 8 ethnicities represented. Val England lead the the group with 8 ladies helping her . Another 10 St Luke’s ladies provided play group care This activity commenced in 2005
- **Social Issues:** (with Belmont) successful fair in September, Unitng World Famine in Sudan - gold coin coverage of African map
- **Uniting Barwon:** close relationship, some of our group volunteer, we advertise activities as applicable and support in any way we can
- **Uniting World Donations:** over \$600
- **World Vision:** After many years we decided to discontinue our child sponsorship. Our relationship with Chalermpon Inrana and his family was completed by World Vision and we decided to focus on educating children under the Uniting Barwon umbrella.

Fair Trade and General Trading Table income	2017	Since 2009
Fair Trade	\$497.20	\$16536.22
General Trading Table	\$3,364.00	\$28,233.30

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to Mission Outreach activities in 2017. There are just so many of you WONDERFUL people. We hope and pray you will be able to continue in whatever way you can in 2018.

We are conscious of the need for ‘a year of being’ given the added responsibilities so many people have shouldered during the past 12 months.

Our goals for 2018 continue as for 2017 with special emphasis on ‘taking care of ourselves’ - as well as others.

Rae, Sue, Stella, Jean, Pam, Alison, Ian, Farhad, Iris

Communications

The aim of the communications ministry team is to support the other Ministry Teams of St Luke’s by enabling timely and effective communication both within the church and to our surrounding community, enabling us to love God and love people as we strive to follow the way of Jesus.

In 2017, the team comprised of Robyn Hodge as Convenor, Des Bath as volunteer office administrator, Linda Salamy (Print Productions) and Christopher McAvaney (Information Communications Technology support), later Corrine Goldberg as staff and Kathy Smail as our “virtual” weekly news sheet editor.

2017 was an extremely challenging one for the team with the sudden illness of Des which left a large body of work to try and cover, with no opportunity for handover of systems and information. Council acted quickly to recruit a paid administrator commencing in September 2017 - Corrine Goldberg, who has been a conscientious and diligent servant of St Luke’s.

In October we engaged Kathy Smail to compile our weekly news sheet to assist the office in keeping up with the fairly demanding workload of our busy congregation! We quickly developed new insights into the amazing breadth of information Des held in this role and the competing demands he managed while looking after the administration of St Luke's for so many years. He is missed and the communications team, indeed the whole congregation, is grateful for his service.

We also wish to thank those church leaders who stepped into the breach when Des became ill, and ensured that messages and emails were answered and that the news sheet went out.

Despite these challenges, the team was able to implement some key online infrastructure which will hopefully make the work of information management and communications easier for those undertaking it in future. Highlights include:

- Setup of the Gsuite online administration system including email, storage and calendar services which can be accessed by volunteers without needing to be at the office computer.
- Ongoing updating of the St Luke's website including changing to a mobile-friendly theme, publishing a calendar of St Luke's activities and events, and establishing an email subscription service for the news sheet.
- Maintenance of the Facebook page and setup of other Social Media accounts and online directories so that people looking for a local church in Highton can find us easily and stay connected even when they can't make a Sunday service.
- Production of signage, posters and flyers for Messy Church, Repair cafe, and special St Luke's services over Christmas and Easter
- Administrative support for visiting ministers while the congregation was without a Minister in placement.

The goals for the team in 2018 are to

- Continue to update the website with fresh, relevant content that shares the gospel as we understand it to our wider community
- Recruit and train congregational volunteers in specific office administration roles
- Secure external church signage which is zero-waste and easy to update (fundraising may be required for this)
- To continue to use digital media to connect members and the wider community, including social media and online directories
- To explore opportunities to share administrative loads with other nearby Uniting Church congregations and thereby maximise our limited resources, both volunteer and financial.
- To continue to provide printed resources and publications for church and community members who require them

Robyn Hodge, Communications Team Convenor

Resourcing

- Barrabool Road manse – 3 rooms recarpeted, vinyl floor in laundry replaced and property re-let to a refugee family.
- Roslyn Road manse – vacated in January. Minor repairs carried out. Property re-let late in year to a refugee family.
- Car park lines replaced with white dot markers to delineate car parking spaces.
- Box guttering in roof above drive through at front door replaced.
- Retaining wall behind Men's Shed paint shop repaired.
- Exhaust fan in foyer toilet installed.
- Steelwork supporting signs (corner and Scenic Road) were repainted.
- Water damaged ceiling tiles in foyer replaced.
- Men's Shed paint shop veranda. Order placed with Oxley Garages. Awaiting Planning Approval from CoGG.
- Clean up day a success.
- Defibrillator, purchased and installed new battery and chest pads.
- Investigation into changing banking from CBA to Bendigo Bank and introducing Internet banking.
- Planning for Office upgrade.

Ian Pooley.

Small Groups

Environment Action Group

See separate report prepared by Claire Ziegler.

Ministries

Men's Shed

There are currently ~40 members of which 15-20 usually attend each week on Tuesday mornings, and 5-10 on a Thursday.

65 - 70% of members are from outside the St Lukes community although some may attend other churches in the area. Men work on their own or Men's Shed projects, others just meet and talk in the company of other men.

Projects Undertaken

With the support of Bunnings (supply of wood) we have made tables for Lazarus House (homeless daytime drop in centre), supplied Memory Boxes for Hope Bereavement Services, built Insect Hotels (a Bunnings request) and produced various items for other 3rd parties.

We continue to fix and finish furniture for donation to refugee families in the Geelong area (135 families were assisted in the last year with furniture and other household items).

Fund Raising

Apart from a nominal annual fee and a gold coin donation for tea/coffee, we run a monthly mid week BBQ at Bunnings Waurin Ponds and in 2017 raised \$11,640. We support the St Lukes Garage Sales (usually 2 per annum) selling 'trash and treasure' donated items not usually in demand by refugee families.

There are plans to enlarge the working area via expansion into the Scenic Room in the old chapel, and by erecting a verandah in front of both existing steel work sheds. These works will be self funded by Men's Shed.

Ian Petersen.

Repair Cafe

In August 2017 we commenced a Repair Café at St Lukes Highton.

The repair café provides a space and the help for people to repair items themselves - repair a zipper etc. In teaching people how to repair item we seek a more sustainable society, one that values the earth and its resources (and those overseas who make our things).

Shane Claiborne in Jesus for President writes: 'Jesus calls us to be peculiar but also engaged in the world we find ourselves in. We are to be relevant nonconformists. We are to develop countercultural habits and norms and live them in the midst of an insane world.'

The repair café is a small way of being counter cultural:

- of valuing the earth and resources God gave us rather than being part of the consumerist, throw away society;
- of valuing people, particularly older people and their experience and gifts;
- of seeking to connect and engage directly with our community as Jesus did.

Financially the café has been self-sufficient from the beginning with donations covering catering costs and miscellaneous items (glues, bike patches etc). We should also be able to purchase reusable signs with donations given.

Environmentally we have fixed over 100 items or 250kg of goods. These have ranged from treasured items (blankets from other countries with family connection) through to general kitchen appliances.

Socially we have connected with people from Geelong Sustainability and the general community who share a similar passion for reuse and the earth. The café also assist those from St Luke to put their own belief of caring for Gods creation into action that helps others. Connection has also been made with those who attend, with invitations to Messy Church given, and library books shared.

Overall the Repair Café has been a great initiative and success on many levels.

Financials for 2017		
Total Income (Donations)	\$354.40	
Total Expenses	\$260.13	(Starter Kit \$72 + A/Noon Tea + Misc)
Current \$ bought over	\$94.27	Using extra \$ for permanent corflute signs.

Michelle Walker.