

The Northern Synod is an amazing space. As I begin this report I am mindful of my understanding of call and its capacity to sustain me. In the middle of my first visit to the Kimberley Region I have met with faithful people in Kununurra, Broome, Derby and Mowanjum. The glorious dry season weather has kicked in, people have a skip in their step and we are eating soup. What a privilege and how easy it is to be 'present' at this time of year!

As we prepare to gather as the Synod, to reconnect as PPNA and NRCC, to work together and to explore how we understand our roles and responsibilities, I give thanks to God for you all. Each one is a blessing, gifted and called to live and work and be disciples of Jesus in this special part of God's world.

### **Strategic Plan**

PPNA has made a good start to the year. In March we did some intentional work on the Presbytery Goals. You will find the draft Strategic Plan, which the PPNA Executive has helped refine into the one page document, attached to my report. During our presbytery meeting, I hope we can affirm and adopt the Strategic Plan.

There is great clarity in the mind of the Pilgrim Presbytery about the importance of our relationship with NRCC and a desire to continue to build empowering and life giving partnerships. At the 1994 Assembly of the Uniting Church, members affirmed a Covenant Statement read and signed by the President and the Chairperson of UAICC. In 2007 the Northern Synod made a similar commitment here in the north. We hope that 2017 will be the beginning of some more intentional activity around repentance, reparation and reconciliation.

As a presbytery we know that strong and enriching relationships already exist between individuals, through the work of Coordinate, the activities of some congregations, agencies and schools. However we are mindful that significant work still needs to be done. We look forward to transforming conversations around sovereignty and treaty. Planning has begun in preparation for combined minister and pastor retreats in 2018. There is a growing need for Pastor and Lay Preacher training and opportunities for cross cultural mentoring of leaders in our congregations. There are also people working in our presbytery whose roles cross over presbytery boundaries. Our Nungalinya teachers (Lee and Helen) and Dean (Tony) work hard to provide training opportunities. Our Youth & Young Adults and Communications Resource Worker (Jemma) supports and encourages youth in both presbyteries and will soon begin to collect and publish stories about life and witness from both presbyteries. Our Social Responsibility Resource Worker seeks to

encourage and resource, through advocacy and partnership, congregations across the Synod. Further we hope that some other carefully planned shared events will provide renewed energy and commitment to the special relationship NRCC and PPNA share.

### **Leadership and Equipping Congregations for Ministry**

PPNA also has strong clarity about our desire to resource remote and isolated areas. Regular pastoral visiting, equipping leadership and understanding who we are as Uniting Church will be the key themes. During my visits in the second half of 2017 I would like to meet with Church Councils to facilitate some continuing education around UCA polity and ethos. PR&PC will continue to work intentionally with congregations to discern their leadership needs. We will spend some time during our June Presbytery meeting looking at a number of PR&PC tasks, both as a way of sharing what the committee's work involves and to help review its processes.

The third area of significant work the presbytery is seeking to do in the next few years is to intentionally explore and hear from non congregationally based church leaders. We will do some mapping around chaplaincy in the presbytery and how we might create supportive connections between this work and congregations. At one of our presbytery gatherings next year I hope we will be able to hear about some of the significant work being done and the challenges facing Uniting Church involvement at Nungalinya, chaplains based in schools, hospitals, Correctional Centres, the Armed Services and our Patrol Ministers and Pastors. It would be great to include NRCC Educators, Assistant Teachers and Support Workers in some of these conversations.

### **Special Things**

Ministers and Lay Leaders from our Indonesian Congregations, (Indonesian Missionary UC and Philadelphia UC) have long shared their gifts and skills, culture and faith with the Synod. At our June meeting PPNA will receive a Proposal to amalgamate these two congregations into one, the Karama Indonesian Uniting Church. They are seeking to show unity as they work together to be a strong Christian witness in these communities.

In March PPNA conducted two days of Pastor Training for our 13 Pastors. It was an important time of resourcing, mentoring and relationship building. Day three of the pastor training will be held just prior to this meeting our Presbyteries and Synod. It will predominantly be on Sacraments in the UCA. The final part of this years training will be in September at the Ministers and Pastors Retreat when the Rev Dr Andrew Dutney will share his love and passion for the Basis of Union and upskill us in all

matters related to Uniting Church Polity and Ethos. In 2018 we will focus on how we might offer such training to ministers and pastors in NRCC in a series of combined training events and ensuring that our Lay Preachers also receive training opportunities.

Over the last three months PPNA has conducted staff reviews. I have met with the three members of staff, talked about their work, reflected with them about how successful they are in those roles and how we might change their position descriptions to better serve the needs of the presbytery.

New position descriptions have been prepared and there are three major proposals before the presbytery;

1. to reduce the hours of our Administration Support Worker from .6 to .4,
2. to increase the hours of the Youth and Young Adult Resource Worker from .2 to .4 and to add a new Synod funded area of .4 Communications to the brief, bringing the role up to .8,
3. and make no change to the .25 Social Responsibility Resource Worker position until the end of 2017 when it will be reviewed again, with the expectation that there will be a change of focus. Some of this has been brought about by the changes in the Assembly Resourcing Unit, details of which are unclear at this time.

## **Budget**

Such changes always make the 'bean counters' nervous! It is important that the presbytery takes seriously its responsibilities to ensure there is a sustainable resource base to support its ministries. We wish to thank the Finance and Property staff of the Synod for the competent and ongoing service which they provide. However it is important that each one of us takes some responsibility for understanding the money story.

At our presbytery meeting we will talk about congregational debt, resourcing exciting new missional projects, whether or not we had enough money in 2016, how the finances are tracking in 2017 and the details of our budget for 2018. A special thank you to Roslyn for her work on preparing the Budget papers in the absence of a treasurer.