|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| PPNA logo 50%.jpg | Presbytery  Minutes | Pilgrim Presbytery of Northern Australia Meeting held on 24 and 27 June 2017 at Kormilda College, Berrimah. |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Present**: | Felicity Amery  Salomo Bangun  Steve Bevis  John Buchanan  Yane Damanik  Wendell Flentje  Olive Frakking  Stephanie Gesling  Tony Goodluck  Emily Hayes  Peter Jones  Bette Lake | Lee Levett Olson  Joy Linton  Wendy Beresford Maning  Dharmi Marinus  Frits Mauboy  Thresi Mauboy Wohangara  Jherry Matahelumual  Lauren Merritt  Mary Nankivell  Chris Paine  Helen Paine | Louise Parkhill  Sarah Pollitt  Benjamin Quilliam  Helen Richmond  Sue Rhodes  Basil Schild  Bob Smith  Richard Telfer  Peter Wait  Jemma Whittaker  Minutes: Roslyn Henry |
| **Apologies** | Lief Fungalei  David Crawford | Reva Natigor  Christine Sinini | Andrea Bolten  Matthew Stewart |
| **Visitor** | Ms Marilyn Smith |  |  |

**1. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**The minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2017 be approved**.

***Consensus***

**2. Chairperson’s Report.**

**That the Chairperson’s report be received.**

***Consensus*.**

**2.1 Strategic Plan**

A number of comments/queries were made about the draft strategic plan:

. Item 2.4 – not clear what would be shared.

. Item 2 – confusion about the intention of the word focus used in this goal. Does focus mean priority. This could mean that the local congregations may be neglected

. Item 2.2 – the Presbytery does not need to provide all the training required. There are other organisations which could provide the necessary training.

. Is the mission statement quite robust enough? The sentiments are very admirable but there may need to be a little more to it when dealing with things like church membership for example.

. Item 1.1 – this item includes learning about the history of the land and the relationship of the church on that land.

. The document is a set of stated intentions rather than setting goals, which are very specific and can be measured. For example, who is responsible for the action and the timeline.

. Although the Plan is contained to one page, the content may be a challenge for members of the Indonesian congregations as English is their second language and they are not always aware of the history of the Uniting Church.

. Should we move towards goals for 1.2? The goal could be that we seek to know the land and history of the land on which we are on as well as the current position.

. Facilitate sharing as a discovery of what the polity of the Uniting Church is in its depth and what it might be. Polity discussions should not be dry things but a discussion between the Assembly, Presbytery and congregations. How do we put this in place in the year ahead?

. How do we do chaplaincy? Are chaplains acknowledged in the same way as pastors and ministers?

. To ensure equity there needs to be an understanding that remote ministries may need extra support but to ensure equity. Perhaps a different word needs to be used rather than ‘focus’.

**That the draft Strategic Plan be received and that it be acknowledged that this is a working document which may need to be modified from time to time;**

**And further, that the Presbytery Executive refine the document following the comments made at this meeting and that the document be submitted to the next Presbytery meeting.**

***Consensus***

**3. Social Responsibility Report**

Basil tabled his report and asked that members of Presbytery consider the four points raised in his report and provide feedback to him over the next few days. The four points were:

1. Re-invigorating the call to Covenantal Relationships between first and second peoples in our congregational communities.

2. Developing a network for the Northern Synod to regularly discuss Social Justice issues across the Synod.

3. Responding to the call received by the UCA around the time of last year’s Synod to support and pray for our sister church in Papua: Greja Kristen Injili Di Tanah Papua (GKI-TP)

4. Developing a poster resource to promote a deeper understanding of the social implications of the Gospel in our congregational communities.

The situation in Papua is complex and when the GKI-TP Moderator wrote to us about human rights matters in Papua it was an unusual letter to receive from him. We journey with them as we seek to dialogue with them and they seek a dialogue relationship with the Indonesian government which may overcome some of the controversies and allow them to function without the level of both economic and human rights abuses which have been happening.

Our Moderator has been to Papua in recent times. What we have discovered that the GKI-TP Moderator was under a lot of pressure at the time of writing the letter and that he did not fully endorse some of the sentiments in it. Rev Thresi, Rev Ji Zhang and President Stuart will be going to Japura in August to discover the political situation there at the moment. The National Council of Churches is also going to Papua in the first week of August.

**That the social justice report be received.**

***Consensus***

**4. National Youth Activities Officer**

**5 Position Descriptions**

That the Position Descriptions for the Administration Support Worker, the Social Responsibility Resource Person and the Youth and Young Adults and Communications Resource Worker be received.

***Consensus***

**6. Amalgamation of Congregations**

That the request for the Indonesian Mission Congregation and the Philadelphia Indonesia Uniting Church to amalgamate to become the Karama Indonesian Uniting Church be approved.

***Consensus***

**7. Congregations**

This year the Uniting Church in Australia celebrates 40 years since its inauguration in 1977. During this time work has continued on developing and maintaining the covenant with UAICC, including the Synod’s statement in1977.

Congregations were asked to inform members of the name of the country their congregation is located on, the language spoken and what activities they undertake in conjunction with Indigenous members of their society.

**8. Finance**

It was noted that in earlier years reserves were used to make up any shortfall; staffing changes in 2017 will cause an increase in expenditure; and the Synod grant has been reduced. It was also noted that congregations pay a levy which is not listed in Presbytery income. The levy goes into the Synod income stream and pays for services provided by the Synod to congregations.

The CBD grants come from the profits made by the Woolworths complex and are shared between Darwin Memorial, Synod and NRCC on a needs-based system. NRCC for example wanted a lecturer at Nungalinya and costs related to the employment of a lecturer comes out of the CBD profit. Darwin Memorial now has a second placement which is also funded from the CBD profit. Approximately $600,000 goes into an asset replacement fund and an amount comes out of the profits for the Synod budget.

**That a snapshot of the financial status of congregations form part of the financial report to Presbytery**

**That the financial reports relating to 2016 and the year to date be received.**

***Consensus***

**2018 Budget**

It was reported that a percentage of the costs for the Youth and Young Adults and Communications resource Worker will be paid for by NRCC, until such time as they can appoint an Indigenous youth person. It was unclear, however, as to whether the figures listed in the draft budget for 2018 reflected the total salary package for this position or just the proportion to be met by the Presbytery.

Following discussion the question arose as to whether Presbytery was prepared for a budget that asks for an increase from the Synod based on the ministry needs that it believes to be important for the Presbytery. As the Synod would be presenting its budget tomorrow which would show the amount that will be allocated to the Presbytery it was decided to return to this matter at a later session. It was noted that should the Synod allocation not be sufficient that this matter will be raised at the next FAPS Committee meeting.

**2018 Budget (part 2)**

The general consensus was that there was not sufficient detail in the draft budget for members to make an informed decision. Figures for any reserves were not listed and figures for some of the items were not clear.

Some of the problems for the Presbytery budget occur because our budget is developed after FAPS has finalised its budget. We need to prepare our budget before FAPS organises its budget.

While Presbytery cannot direct its representatives on the Synod Standing Committee it is important that the representatives feel they have the full authority of the Presbytery to discuss these issues at the Standing Committee meetings.

**That the Presbytery members elected to the Synod Standing Committee bring to the Committee the Presbytery’s request that there is more transparency in the budget.**

**And further, that the draft budget cannot be approved until the issues raised are clarified.**

**And further, that the 2018 budget be finalised by the Presbytery Executive**

**And further, that the Synod be requested to provide a grant which will give a balanced budget for 2018.**

***Consensus***

**9. Covenant Action Plan**

Basil provided some background on the current status of the Assembly’s and the Synod’s Covenant with Congress. It became clear during reports from congregations that there are some strong examples of hospitality occurring in terms of sharing food, shelter, clothing, prison visits and a safe space for activities. The question now becomes how can we do some of these things in partnership with Congress. What would it mean to do prison visits for example alongside NRCC where we actually give Congress part of the partnership and the directing.

The actual history of the world reconciliation comes out of the Greek City states and is the word Paul uses in restoring trade relationships. It is not about what we can offer but what we can receive. A practical example of that is in our Op Shops where Indigenous people can feel some worth and that what we are offering them is an opportunity to contribute.

How important is it that we tell our story through our own historical and cultural lens. We need to think about some of those things as we work towards identifying what might be some plans to encourage our congregations to be involved in. To give our finest bread we need to change the way we do church in the Northern Synod. What does the partnership mean? What does it look like when students from those communities come into Nungalinya College? Is it something that we could be more intentional about?

**10. Annual Review** **of Presbytery Minister’s Role**

Two members were sought to undertake a review towards the end of the year of the Presbytery Minister’s. Olive Frakking expressed interest in being involved in the review but a second person was not forthcoming.

**11 Elections**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Presbytery Executive** | |
| Members elected for a term of two years (year elected) | |
| Chairperson  General Secretary  Social Justice Network  Youth and Young Adults and Communications Resource Worker  ***Office Bearers***  Deputy Chairperson  Secretary  Treasurer  Convenor, Pastoral Relations & Placements Committee | Rev Felicity Amery, Ex-officio  Mr Peter Jones, Ex-officio  Rev Basil Schild, Ex-officio  Ms Jemma Whittaker, Ex-officio  Thresi  Mr Richard Telfer (2019)  Ms Olive Frakking (2019)  Vacant  Rev Dr Lee Levett Olson |
| Two members, elected by Presbytery  Proposing that we have four – still waiting to hear from the Indonesian Congregation | Dr Steve Bevis (2019)  Ms Gail Cresswell (2018)  Ms Joy Linton (2019) |
| Assembly | Rev Felicity Amery  Ps Richard Telfer  Ps Jemma Whittaker |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Pastoral Relations and Placements Committee** | |
| PPNA Chairperson  General Secretary | Rev Felicity Amery, Ex officio  Mr Peter Jones, Ex officio | |
| Convenor, elected by Presbytery |  | |
| Six people, elected by Presbytery  One from each region and at least two ministers and two lay people | Ms Judy Chesson (2018)  Rev Helen Paine (2019)  Ms Jemma Whittaker (2019) | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE | |
| PPNA Chairperson  Two Ministers  Swap Chris for Helen because of Chris’ illness. Agreed  Two Lay People | Rev Felicity Amery, Ex officio  Rev Helen Paine (2018)  Rev Dr Helen Richmond (2018)  Dr Wendy Beresford Maning (2018)  Mr Frits Momuat (2018) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES COMMITTEE** | |
| Two people from PPNA | Rev Felicity Amery (2018)  Vacancy |

**12 Pastoral Relations and Placement Committee Report**

The two of main tasks that fall to the Presbytery are the continuing education and preparation for ministries in the church, for example period of discernment, preparation for Ordination, and supervision of ministers. Placement matters are primarily the responsibility of the chairperson. Individual pastoral matters which arise with ministers and congregations is the role of the Pastoral Relations side of the Committee.

**That the Pastoral Relations and Placements Committee Report be received.**

**Consensus**

**13 Guidelines for Decisions about Proper Use of Money and Doing Good Business for God**

Table groups were asked to think about how this policy applies to them as an individual and to congregations. There is much to think about: the clothes we buy, the food we eat, the packaging; global trading; the ethics involved with work and employment -what’s fair and not fair; what we buy from overseas when we don’t know the working/living conditions of people working overseas. This is not a situation that Jesus would support. This is not a situation that Christ’s disciples would want. This document is like a sign post for us.

Table groups were asked to consider three questions: what are the implications if we took this seriously on the congregational finances? What implications would this have for individuals and families in a congregation and how could the church support personal finances for its member? Is there a role that the PR&PC could play to support this?

**Feedback**

We buy from shops such as Woolworths and Kmart because they are cheaper. If you want to stop buying products from Bangladesh stop buying them.

Start with Op Shops instead of buying clothing from Bangladesh.

Look at the implications of Fast Fashion versus the Slow Clothing Movement and I wondered if there is a role for Op Shops and what they might do. For example visible mending movement. What fees the Op Shops and are they assisting the fast fashion movement by accepting the clothes.

If we stop buying products from overseas, workers will not be paid.

Food wastage – education about what the *use by date* means.

This is a complex situation and the whole world economy is based on consumerism and exploitation of poor people who are working for very low wages. Some congregations are strongly committed to Fair Trade.

**14 Safe Church**

The Northern Synod has taken on its responsivity for the safe environment for congregation members, staff etc.

Refer to powerpoint.