

# The 2019 Olive Harvest

Annual Reports  
Brunswick  
Uniting Church



Just like these olives each report is unique, contributing its own tantalizing flavour to our 2019 story.

Annual General Meeting - Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2020

# The Olive Harvest – 2019 Annual Reports of the Brunswick Uniting Church congregation.

The reports in this document give a detailed picture of the ministry, mission and life of the Brunswick Uniting Church congregation for the year 2019.

The Annual General Meeting of the congregation will be held after worship on **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2020.**

The meeting will be chaired by Kate Scull (Chair of the Congregation).

Minutes will be taken by Saide Cameron (Secretary of the Congregation)

Please take the time to read the reports prior to the meeting where they will be formally received by the congregation.

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# Minister of the Word

## Worship

The worship of God and the proclamation of the divine Word continued to be the foundational activities of my ministry this year.

Some highlights:

- I attended and helped lead the Nourish Easter services for children. A delight.
- I conducted 3 Baptisms. Always a precious part of my ministry.
- I led a special naming ceremony and affirmation of baptism for a couple whose wedding I conducted in 2018. They are transgender men in transition and wanted a ceremony to acknowledge and mark their male identities for their families.
- Season of Creation – our period of worship focusing on creator and creation.
- Our LGBTIQ Solidarity service was a great occasion - powerful stories, deep engagement and lots of visitors.
- As always, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Advent and Christmas were special and rewardingly creative times. I particularly enjoy the teamwork that goes into the planning and leadership of these services.

## Pastoral Care

**Weddings** – This year the EXPLOSION in our wedding ministry continued.

Year	Number of Weddings
2013	2
2014	3
2015	3
2016	2
2017	5 (1 same sex couple)
2018	5 (2 same sex couples)
2019	7 (3 same sex couples)

Clearly most of this growth can be accounted for by same sex couples catching up on their marriage rights – something which delights me and is a good affirmation of the way this congregation engaged with the Marriage Equality question. 7 weddings are still not many compared to some other churches, however weddings are quite time consuming, involving multiple meetings over months and any increase means I don't have as much time for other things. I am very happy to spend time on weddings, particularly in the light of the marriage equality changes, and with the support of Church Council will make them a continuing priority.

**Funerals** – I conducted 2 funerals in 2019, participated in another, attended 4 or 5 more for the families of congregation members and 2 for members of the Indonesian congregation. Conducting Funerals is not a big part of my ministry in Brunswick, however in 2019 there were a couple of tragic deaths among our families which had significant impact on the congregation and on me. I find any funeral demanding, but it is also very rewarding to engage with people at this raw and real time in their lives.

## Discipleship and Education

I see helping to nurture and grow the faith of others as a vital part of my ministry. Some highlights:

- participation in the Church Council's Gifts and Graces task group which helped people discern God's call to them through the church.
- a new faith discussion group, "Talk Faith", which met monthly in the latter part of the year and will continue in some form in 2020.
- a faith exploration and confirmation series for young people (16-22 yr olds) met over pizza and had very stimulating conversations about the big questions. At least 2 of the participants will be confirmed early in 2020.
- a series of Worship seminars which led to some rich participation in prayer writing and worship.

## Ministry Team

A major dynamic of 2019 was the change in our ministry team. We farewelled Janet WK, Janet H and Valentina from their interim roles and welcomed Dave aboard as our new Children, Youth and Young Adult Pastor. For me this meant working to consolidate the new team, supporting the three interim ministers (who continue as members of the congregation), and learning to work with Dave as he established himself in the new role. This has been a joy. The new team is working creatively and effectively with regular team supervision from Jennie Wegner.

The lack of diversity in the team (3 straight white men), is a significant issue for the congregation. The team itself is very sensitive to this, as is the church council, and it is being addressed in a number of ways. So far these have included: intentional consideration and rostering of diverse “upfront” leadership roles in worship and other places; diverse representation in other leadership roles (e.g. congregational chair, church council chair) and committees; female supervision for the ministry team; consultation with experts on how to nurture the involvement and leadership of people from diverse backgrounds.

## Wider Church

Some highlights of my work beyond the congregation included:

- Synod Creative Design Team which met through the year to help the Synod do its work in efficient and creative ways.
- The Synod meeting itself which I attended as a voting delegate. Highlights there included presentations by First Peoples, a resolution to allow UCA hospitals and aged care agencies in Victoria to offer Voluntary Assisted Dying under the new Victorian legislation, and discussion about reimagining property for mission.
- I worked with the Indonesian congregation to plan the Ecumenical Pentecost service.
- Carlynne’s ordination was a great celebration.

## Justice

**Creation** – 2019 saw growth in our response to the climate crisis as a congregation. For me this included some small support for the new Climate Action Group which I hope to increase in 2020. Season of Creation worship and assistance with the curation of the “Let the Earth Speak” art exhibition were creatively engaging tasks. I also created a solo movement piece for the “Let the Earth Speak” performance night which nurtured my dancing spirit.

**Asylum Seekers and Refugees** – The mission of our congregation and my own ministry continued to be occupied by the plight of asylum seekers and refugees. I attended a number of Love Makes A Way actions. And I gave support to a number of members of the congregation who were facing immigration issues. These included writing many letters of support and attending 2 immigration interviews. These were the first times I had been invited to give evidence at interviews and it was a helpful experience for me to see the inside of the process. More importantly, one of those interviews led to the granting of a visa, and one of the letters helped in having an appeal against an unfavourable result upheld.

## Continuing Education and Self Care

I continued to participate in my weekly dance group, I holidayed regularly, photographed and bushwalked. All of which feeds me physically and spiritually and helps me deal with the stresses of ministry.

I was stimulated, educated and fed at the following events:

- an intensive course on Luke’s Gospel at Pilgrim College (begun in 2018 and concluded in 2019).
- the Festival of Homiletics – a preaching conference for a week in May in Minneapolis Minnesota USA.
- the CTM Preaching and Lectionary Conference for two days in November.

## Thanks

Thank you to all who have helped and supported me in my ministry this year. In particular thanks to the Ministry Team Dave, Peter, Janet WK, Janet H, and Valentina, to Shawn for his leadership of the Church Council, to Saide for her work as Congregational Secretary and invaluable administrative support, to Church Councillors, committee conveners and members, property booking and maintenance folk, liturgists, music co-ordinators and musicians, worship roster participants, and pastoral care volunteers. And thank you to the God who calls us together into a community of justice, love and peace.

Ian Ferguson

# Olive Way Outreach Ministry

Having completed the review conducted by Tim Budge and Olive Way participants the previous year, this past year was aimed at consolidating the 9 key recommendations that emerged from that. This formed the basis of my reports to the Steering Committee and a significant part of my focus for the year. As a refresher, these 9 recommendations were:

1. Developing Olive Way as a hub.
2. Reviewing the day of the lunch (with a possible shift to a Tuesday)
3. Developing stronger links with other agencies in the local area (eg. Brunswick Salvos)
4. Develop the pastoral support for guests
5. Create more opportunities to link Olive Way with the life of the Brunswick Uniting congregation
6. Better ways of tracking guests
7. Find opportunities to support volunteers (eg. Training)
8. Tackle and monitor disruptive behaviour
9. Strengthen opportunities for guest's ownership and control.

I will comment on these throughout the current report where I can.

## Numbers

We have had a steady number of people through the doors of Olive Way over the past year with days varying according to what is being offered at other similar centres. Our year started fairly slowly and then fairly quickly accelerated into a much more frenetic pace. Our busiest day of the year was 72, our biggest lunch numbers were 54. On average we had around 28 people per day, and 30 at the Wednesday lunches.

## Volunteers

We have been blessed with a wonderful core of kitchen volunteers who have been absolutely steady in their commitment throughout the year. We are very grateful for the time and effort they put in. The current team are Beverly Evans, Melody Lieberman, Sergio Molina, Helen Burnham, Julie Perrin (host), Hannah Beilhartz, Sergio Molina, and Val Remedios. Shortly before heading to the UK for my annual leave we were joined by Dom, a trained chef, who has added an extra dimension in the main kitchen. Along with Hannah and Peter Murphy, this little team have made some great meals together. Barry Cook, after many years of involvement, stepped back from his hosting role in the latter half of the year. I have been amazed at Barry's tenacity in sticking in there for the long haul, and grateful for the many years of service he has given to Olive Way. Our guests still regularly ask after him. Thanks Barry!

Unfortunately we have not had a lot of success in recruiting people other volunteers to the 'Host' role despite numerous expressions of interest. This role was created to help spread the pastoral coverage we are able to offer at Olive Way. Nonetheless we will continue to keep attempting to recruit to this important role.

Training was a significant focus for our volunteers this past year. I felt it was important that as many as possible were able to receive the training as this helped build the camaraderie and confidence amongst the team. Training areas included Active Listening (this was a workshop conducted by Andy Calder), First Aid, and Food Handling (both at Brunswick Neighbourhood House). We will continue to look for ways to support our volunteers and build the team in the coming year.

We have also been a bit more intentional about having more regular volunteer catch ups and gatherings and will continue to do so in the year ahead.

## A change of title

As many of you will be aware, my position title changed in May of last year from 'Coordinator' to 'Pastor'. This did not mean a significant change in my regular duties but was more intended to reflect what the position was and what it was intended to do. Some of you will be aware that the earliest iteration of Olive Way was overseen by the deacon (Richard Arnold) and was changed to coordinator only later. So this change in title was aimed at recalibrating the position to its original intent as an embodiment of the gospel and to share the gospel through the way relationships are developed and participants are honoured and included.

## Satellites

Always around Olive Way there are a number of different activities aimed at helping further enrich the lives of our participants. These include the writing group (currently on hiatus), Sydney Road Opera Company, Olive Arts, and ArtsAccess. Towards the end of the year we were joined by **Orange Sky** laundry. While they are more typically described as a service they have added something to the mix around Olive Way. They are crewed by a friendly and compassionate team of volunteers who take the time to sit and chat with their clientele. It has been a wonderful addition to our Wednesdays.

**SROC** has continued to roll along under Damian Coleridge's guidance. Over the past year they have written and performed several plays such as *Get Rid of It: A Room by Room Guide to Decluttering*, *In the Waiting Room*, as well as commemorating a day of remembering and a day of letting go during Olive Way hours. Damian's unique ability to draw out the stories and help the participants weave them into a musical narrative is an extraordinary gift. We are grateful for his continuing participation. We are also aware that Damian will be retiring from his role at the end of this year and I will be exploring options to help it continue to find expression in the coming years.

Whilst the **Olive Arts** will have their own report within BUCArts, I will briefly comment on them from an Olive Way perspective. I believe strongly that places like Olive Way has the capacity to help empower its participants. Art has the ability to draw out expression and enable people to give voice to the hidden places within. It has been extraordinary to see what has emerged from our participants. The compassionate and tender leadership provided by Ann Soo and Leanne Salau and the team they have built has enabled this to happen. I am grateful for their continuing involvement.

## Staffing

Both Peter Murphy and myself had a review in the past year. My review was conducted by Richard Arnold, Peter Murphy's was conducted by myself. These were done in a positive spirit and have helped highlight areas that are working well and areas for improvement. The reviews also helped recalibrate the roles and enable both of us to prioritise our responsibilities. Whilst it was recommended that we consider changing the day for our lunch day (due to other meals being offered at Salvos on Wednesdays), it turned out to be a lot more complex than initially thought. For the time being at least we have decided to keep it on Wednesdays.

## Christmas Lunch

We were approached by the Brunswick Salvos towards the end of the year to see if we were interested in combining our Christmas season activities. I leapt at this possibility. We decided that the Christmas lunch/end of year celebration was the best way to combine. Planning began in September before I went overseas. We decided that BUC was the best venue given the larger gathering space. We had around 120 people, plus staff and volunteers on the day. It went very smoothly and it turned out to be an enjoyable day, accompanied by the Salvos brass band, carolling, SROC, and even Santa turned up. We hope that we will be able to work again with the Salvos in 2020 as well.

## Final words

A big thanks to the team, Bev, Sergio, Julie, Hannah, Dom, Helen, Peter, Melody, Barry, and Val. Thanks also for the wisdom and guidance of the Steering Committee, Richard Arnold (chair), Mikul Denison, Kimberly Frazer, Kirsty Bennet, and Ann Soo. I am grateful for your support. Thanks also to the amazing congregation at BUC for your prayers and ongoing financial commitment to Olive Way, this ministry exists because of it.

**Peter Blair, Olive Way Pastor and the Olive Way Steering Committee**

## Children, Youth & Young Adult Pastor

With a focus on grace, God's grace, I'm grateful in 2019 for:

- A most fantastic handover in to this role by Janet Watson-Kruse, Valentina Satvedi and Janet Hogan;
- Such great children, teens and young adults to hang out with, and hopefully help to encourage in a life of faith;
- Working in a team with Ian and Peter, and with the Church Council and so many committed and capable BUC people;

- The worship space and the Brunswick environs, including the amazing, eclectic bunch of people who pass through our doors throughout the week;
- The dynamism of our growing youth group;
- The Student House community, and the way it continues to evolve and grow;
- Caitlin Mullen and her terrific directing of the Christmas Pageant;
- The Sunday Morning Program – the legacy built by Julie Perrin, Philip Potter and many others over the years, and the chance to steward this program in to the future;
- Graeme Galloway, Ann Soo, Louise Marson and all those involved in the mural project;
- Laurie Bonney, our Property maintenance man, who, among many talents, got the church bell ringing again;
- Working with the worship committee, especially seeing the way Amelia Ware’s vision for the Advent tree grew before our eyes;
- The spirit of generosity and hospitality at the heart of BUC;
- Holidays, bodysurfing, and the chance to hang out with family and friends, and to rejuvenate.
- The life of Jesus, the Nazarene, this obscure person from a distant age and land who continues to inspire me in the adventure of faith.

Already looking forward to 2020.

Grace and peace

**Dave Hall, Children, Youth & Young Adult Pastor**

## Church Council

Church Council is pleased to reflect on what we have achieved in 2019 by way of this Annual Report. This is also an excellent opportunity to look again at our Goals to ensure we are focused on what we have discerned to be our core mission at Brunswick Uniting Church.

### Ministry

Our first two goals are to maintain Sunday morning worship as the central branch of our life together and to continue the missional programs and activities that are underway.

**BUC now has a Ministry Team of three to care and minister to us and the community around us:**

- **Ian Ferguson** – our Minister of the Word since 2013.
- **Dave Hall** - Pastor to our Children and families, Youth and Young Adults (CYYA), called by the Congregation in February 2019 and commissioned during a Presbytery-led worship service on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2019.
- **Peter Blair** – Olive Way Pastor, (previously Olive Way Co-ordinator since 2017). Peter’s commissioning as Pastor, also on 5 May, reflects the true role that he plays at Olive Way – a form of ministry “beyond the gathered congregation” equivalent to that of an ordained Deacon.

It has been encouraging and impressive to see Dave and Peter growing into their roles, and the Team working very well with each other and with leaders across BUC.

A sincere thanks to our three interim staff members who held the CYYA ministry so beautifully through 2018 and the first part of 2019: Janet Watson Kruse, Janet Hogan and Valentina Satvedi.

### Growth

Another goal is to manage growth intentionally, focusing on sustainability and celebration of growth over raw numbers. Some highlights that relate to this on-going goal:

**Merri Street Project** – A recommendation was accepted to consider repurposing our Merri Street property. (See The Merri Project Team’s report for details.)

**Diversity** – We have adopted as a goal the intentional promotion of leadership of diverse people in the congregation.

Following on from this there emerged:

- a task group to consider ways of ensuring we are more welcoming of diversity, including visible signs of welcome. We are looking into what opportunities there may be to install statements or

symbols of welcome designed to reassure all visitors that we are a safe church for people of all identities; and to establish further concrete goals at the Leaders' 2020 retreat;

- a task group to liaise with First Nations peoples, beginning with the Wurundjeri WoiWurrung council in early 2020;
- a service to celebrate LGBTIQ people, including an acknowledgment of past hurts at the hands of churches;
- strengthening our relationship with BUIC through regular meetups with the BIUC elders and exploring new areas of cooperation;
- ensuring that women continue to be prominent in leadership at BUC; and
- a decision in December 2020 to appoint Co-Chairs of church council, with no more than one joint chair to be male.

**Climate Crisis** – Church Council welcomed the formation of the Climate Action Group in late 2019 and rejoices in its energy. We strongly endorsed its proposal of the to declare a Climate Crisis and to develop a plan of action to respond to this crisis. (This proposal was adopted by the Congregation in November) The care and protection of Creation is at the heart of our faith and we will be working with the Climate Action Group to develop and implement a meaningful action plan.

**Conflict Management** – We reviewed Presbytery guidelines relating to recognising and managing conflict. While conflict is inevitable in a lively community, we want to be on guard to identify kinds of conflict that threaten the life and mission of the church.

Part of being a safe church is creating confidence and reassurance among all the members of our community-of-communities that there are policies and strategies in place to respond to challenging behaviour concerns in a caring and deliberate way.

### **Reports, reports and more reports!**

In order to manage the incredibly vibrant and busy BUC community there needs to be a way to manage our reporting protocols. While we don't want to be overwhelmed by reports, they are critically important to the wellbeing and management of our community.

One further goal of Church Council is to ensure we have a cycle of goal setting and reflection. We are also called on to prompt committees and other groups to undertake this type of reflection regularly.

**Reporting Task Group** – Recently our Reporting Task Group considered what kinds of information is most relevant to Church Council as well as to the whole Congregation, and ways to reduce doubling-up and other pressures. Currently we are trialling a revised approach.

### **Money Matters – It Really Does**

Council is continually reviewing our finance goal, which is to maintain a sustainable pattern of income and expenditure.

Earlier this year direct credits to BUC were below the budgeted amount. Thanks to our intrepid Treasurer of the day, Linda Wannan, Council, and subsequently the Congregation was made aware of this. Our Congregation responded graciously. This income is now back on track.

### **Thanks, Farewells and Welcomes**

Church Council wishes to acknowledge and thank each and every member of BUC congregation, members of committees, extended community, regular visitors and those who have attended only once or twice. A special mention to our Congregation Secretary, the tireless Saide Cameron.

*There is no Brunswick Church without you all!*

More particularly, we would like to note the following regarding those that make up Church Council:  
A big shout out and thanks to:

- Daniel Broadstock, Church Council Secretary – retired from CC;
- Linda Wannan, Treasurer – retired from CC;
- Shawn Whelan – retired as Chair of CC (to remain as interim Treasurer); and
- Kimberly Fraser – retired from CC.

Church Council is supported by and relies upon the wisdom and ministry provided by:

- Ian Ferguson;

- Peter Blair; and
- Dave Hall

A sincere welcome to new members of CC:

- Joel Hallinan;
- Jessica Kvensakul; and
- Maxine Loynd.

And thanks to the generosity of those Elders who remain on Church Council for another year:

- Shawn Whelan, Interim Treasurer;
- Claire Foley, Secretary;
- Gwen Arnold;
- James Balsillie;
- Karlien Kok;
- Helen Rowe; and
- Amelia Ware

There will be the announcement of our two Co-Chairs after the Leaders' Retreat in early February.

We look forward to the coming year – 2020 – a Year of Clear Vision. We look forward to the challenges and opportunities of this year.

**Claire Foley, Secretary of Church Council 2020**

## Worship Committee

During 2019 we paid attention to and followed the rhythm and flow of the liturgical calendar. We listened to stories that we know so well and through Ian's preaching asked 'what are do these familiar stories say to us now in our time?'. The creative energy that underpins all that we offer as a worshipping congregation flowed through our singing, praying, listening and responding. We know ourselves to be blessed by the creative gifts of so many people and blessed in turn by all who open their hearts in response.

### **Hopes & Dreams**

We set four goals to shape our thinking and planning for 2019 and offer here our reflections on these goals.

We committed to **nurturing new liturgists and prayer leaders**. We offered a series of workshops on 27<sup>th</sup> June ('Why worship?' with Stephen Burns, Professor of Liturgy at the Centre for Theology and Ministry), 11<sup>th</sup> ('Writing prayers' with Saide Cameron and Peter McKinnon sharing their processes for writing prayers) & 18<sup>th</sup> July ('Sensory prayer', with Ian Ferguson, an opportunity to explore how we engage our senses in worship). Ian wove the prayers written by participants in the second workshop into a beautiful liturgy (14/7). Mentoring for new liturgists and ongoing support for regular liturgists was offered.

We committed to **nurturing our young people, children and teenagers**. See 'Children in worship' further on for details. Also we finally achieved our very long term goal of shortening the lectern by engaging Clancy Moore, of Quail Wood Design, to shorten it by 10cms. This occurred in January 2020.

We committed to **seeking ways to intentionally engage all our senses in worship**.

Recognizing that we are sensory beings we sought out opportunities to continue to move beyond listening and looking to enrich our experience of worship. Passing the peace is a familiar and mostly comfortable way of engaging our sense of touch. We featured rosemary for Good Friday to heighten our sense of smell. We offered many opportunities for movement through the invitation to write on cards for Maundy Thursday, All Saints Day and Blue Christmas and place them on installations, exploring the Refugee Week and Let the earth speak exhibitions, gathering in circles or coming forward to receive bread and juice in our celebration of Holy Communion. This latter is a familiar engagement with our sense of taste. Increasingly our liturgists are inviting worshippers to breathe together as we prepare to pray. The Advent-Christmas tree installation was a glorious opportunity to engage our sense of sight!!

Finally we sought to **embrace and enrich our daily worship life**. We noted that people from within and far beyond our congregation read the Sunday Prayers and sermons posts.

Our reflections on these goals have shaped our goals for 2020, which are available at the conclusion of this report.

### **Liturgical Seasons**

As always the liturgical calendar shaped our worship. We offered an invitation for others to join us to plan worship for Lent and Holy Week and were delighted to welcome Jim Kilpatrick, Ken Morrison and Jenne Perlstein for Lent and later Claire Foley and Valentina Satvedi-Leydon for Holy Week. Jenne then joined our committee. In response to the lectionary readings, the theme of Respect being explored within the Olive Way community and to events in our world we adopted the theme of Respect for worship with listening as a posture that we take in the call to show respect. This theme was also explored with the wider community at the Sydney Road Street Party and opened our worship space to visitors. We listened to the voices of the vulnerable as expressed in Royal Commissions being held. Our worship during Holy Week offered a pilgrimage of story moments, which allowed us to respond and honour the contemporary stories we had listened to during Lent. We marked these story moments with a beautiful polished stick carved by Colin Hunter. We are thankful to Graeme Galloway for the loan of the painting used for Good Friday and Easter Day story moments.

During the long season of Pentecost we embraced the 'Let the earth speak' exhibition and offered a Seasons of Creation around it from 22/9-20/10. Ian's sermons offered reflections on a sequence of readings from Job 28:12-27; 39:1-30. Amelia Ware created an Indigenous Seasons installation around the Cross with accompanying words offered alongside the Acknowledgement of Country each week.

During Advent we focused on the Advent themes of hope, peace, joy and love. A tree, designed by Amelia Ware, grew week by week, standing first as a symbol of hope, then being draped by the green of peace, with flowers added for joy and fruit for love. We are grateful to the Olive Pesto and Sunday Morning Program communities for contributing their creativity to the tree. The Advent litany and song were written by Saide Cameron and Shawn Whelan respectively. As the season moved from Advent to Christmas we continued to focus on hope, peace, joy and love as the gifts of Christmas. The pageant 'Climate of Hope' saw three wise climate scientists going on a journey in the search for a new king and solutions to the climate crisis. Blue Christmas, Christmas Eve & Christmas Day were each an opportunity to celebrate the birth of Christ and we concluded the year listening a series of stories that highlighted the story of Jesus and his family becoming refugees.

### **Preachers**

Ian's preaching continued to inspire us as he explored God's Word with us offering story, personal reflection and intellectual rigour. We appreciated the way in which his preaching brings the ancient texts to life in response to the issues of our time. We reflected on spirituality, following Jesus, the Beatitudes, loving your enemies, journeys of transformation, hope, forgiving sins, costly grace, miracles, wisdom, refugees, baptism, discipleship, God as creator, poetry particularly in Isaiah.

We appreciated the preaching of: Graeme Garrett (6/2), Sunny Chen (13/2), Peter Blair (20/2), Geoff Thompson (7/4), Valentain Satvedi-Leydon (12/5), Fiona Bottcher (19/5, 3/11), Sunny Chen (26/5), Saide Cameron (7/7, using worship resources provided for Synod Sunday), Julian Hamilton (4/8), Colin Hunter (11/8), Kirsten Parris (27/10). We also appreciated reflections prepared by Saide Cameron for Blue Christmas and Christmas Eve.

We offer our thanks to Janet Reus-Smit for presiding over our celebration of Holy Communion (7/7-Synod Sunday) and (3/11-All Saints Day).

### **Children in Worship**

Children's Times during worship throughout the year were beautiful opportunities for exploring the stories of our faith with the younger people. A beautiful highlight was a visual telling of the Transfiguration with Ann Soo and Janet Watson Kruse shown on screen live. We enjoyed circle dancing and curly questions, special guests (eg Janet as Simon-Peter and Daniel as Saul-Paul), retelling the stories, learning Eastern Anmatyerre language words, thinking about being a light in the darkness, trying out postures of prayer, dreams and visions, loving your enemy and of course the Advent themes of hope, peace, joy & love.

We have continued to seek out opportunities to engage children in the work of worship including lighting candles, setting the table for Holy Communion, collecting the communion glasses, reading the Bible,

offering the Acknowledgement of Country, ringing the Church Bell, leading the Advent litany and of course the Pageant – we are so very grateful to Caitlin Mullen-Beagley for her ongoing passion for working with our young people to bring the story to life.

### **Special Events**

On the first Sunday of each month we both celebrate Holy Communion and offer All Age Worship, which sees the children engage in wonderfully creative activities in the Gathering Space.

As always, the year began with commissionings and blessings: Commissioning and Blessing of the Sunday School Program (3/2) followed by residents of the Student House program (24/2). Re-elected Elder (Daniel Broadstock) and newly elected elders (Kimberly Fraser and Amelia Ware) were commissioned for their role (2/3).

It was an absolute joy to celebrate Carlynne Nunn's Ordination (16/3) - a wonderful service, strong and positive, not churchy but clearly a service of importance and significance; rituals were held lightly and with reverence. Ian's words of welcome, Avril Hannah-Joan's sermon and Carlynne's response gathered everyone into this joyful celebration of Carlynne's calling to ministry.

We worshipped with our ecumenical neighbours on Palm Sunday (14/4) and for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on Pentecost Sunday (9/6) at St. Ambrose Catholic Church and at BUC hosted by the Brunswick Indonesian UC congregation

Dave Hall and Peter Blair were commissioned as our Children, Youth and Young Adult Pastor and Olive Way Pastor respectively at a service (5/5) officiated by Rev. Sani Vaeluaga, Presbytery of Port Philip West with the sermon offered by Rachel Kronberger.

The theme for church camp (26/5) was Listening: Listening to ourselves...listening to each other...listening to the Earth...listening for the voice of God. During worship we listened and responded to Jesus' gifts in John's gospel.

Janet Watson Kruse concluded her role as our Children & Families coordinator during a celebration of ministry at Church Camp (26/5). We similarly celebrated the ministries of Janet Hogan and Valentina Satvedi Leydon as Youth Support worker and Student House Support worker during worship (2/6) as they concluded their time in these roles.

We offered a number of services during the year that offered a more reflective space: Maundy Thursday (18/4), 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays (30/5 focusing on postures of prayer & 29/9 focusing on the exhibition) and Blue Christmas (15/12) and again received feedback that people appreciate the space offered.

We were delighted to welcome our President, Dr. Deidre Palmer to worship (3/3) and to receive her thoughts on the work being done through the Assembly. We acknowledged Refugee Week with an exhibition and engaged with this during worship (23/6), reflected on mission with respect to the Merri Project (28/7), enjoyed Blessing the Bikes (20/10) and celebrated Richard Collard's 65 years of ministry (10/11).

On Christ the King Sunday (24/2), the final Sunday in the liturgical year we participated in a Service of Solidarity during which we heard from people within our congregation who identify with the LGBTQI+ community.

### **Music Ministry**

Natalie continued her support of the music ministry with her Lectionary Singer blog spot. Elaine Potter supported the musicians throughout the year and organized and conducted the beautiful and inspiring Advent and Pageant choir.

Natalie has begun the process of uploading our second collection of BUC authored songs to our website. She began working with Shawn Whelan and together they have identified an appropriate copyright license to support the songwriters. It is our intention to make our songs freely available to the wider community.

### **Membership**

During 2019 we celebrated and grieved with, welcomed and farewelled a number of people.

We welcomed new Student House residents (24/2) Charlotte Pitt and Oliver Sun (?/11). A Welcoming Ceremony (18/3) gave us the opportunity to formally welcome Philippa Hamilton-Smith, David Miller,

Maxine, Clementine and Harriet Loynd, Conrad Wasko, Josh Bodestaff, Melvin Tan, Clare Keogh and Vivienne Webb and later (15/9) Priscilla Manthey, Evan Bassani and Joanne van Ravenswaaij.

We rejoiced with Steph Gesling and Matt Whitty at the birth of their first son Joshua Whitty (17/5)

We celebrated the infant baptisms of Jacob Ly, son of Tonia Beggs (16/6), Joshua Whitty, son of Steph Gesling and Matt Whitty (21/7) and Arwin Talebi, second son of Alireza & Sahar Talebi (22/12).

With great joy we celebrated the wedding of Nili & Hamid (14/9).

We prayed for, and with, congregation members as they grieved the loss of loved ones: Rachel & Caitlin Mullen-Beagley for Rachel's father Bill (9/1), Maggie Somerville for her son Julian (14/1), Glenice & Barry Cook for Glenice's step-mother Ruby (18/1), Deb Blackmore & Mikul Denison for Deb's step-brother Darren (29/1), Richard & Gwen Arnold for Gwen's mother Doris (8/3), Andrew & Jill, Emily, Adam and Hamish, Meg & David, Charlie and Fergus Moorhouse for Andrew & David's father Harry (22/7),

We farewelled: Carlynn Nunn (16/3) following her ordination, Brianna Bartley (5/5), Bethany Davey and Elizabeth Stoel (7/7), from the Student House Program, Cassie de Filippo (17/11) at the conclusion of her PhD, Daniel Broadstock (22/11) as he prepared to teach in England for at least 12 months. Margaret Dyson requested formal transfer of membership to the North Essendon congregation (4/10).

### **First Nations**

We worked with the Justice and Mission Committee to present a proposal to Church Council '*That the Council approach and engage with the Wurundjeri – Woiwurrung Tribe (Elders to Elders) in order to develop an intentional relationship with the First Nations peoples.*' We are grateful to Jenne Perslstein for her leadership in the preparation of this proposal. The proposal was accepted and Jenne is now a member of the task group to take this forward.

### **Meditation and Prayer**

We continue to provide a sand bowl located in the west side alcove for people to light tapers for personal prayer during the last hymn, after worship or during distribution of Holy Communion on 1<sup>st</sup> Sundays. A meditation time is also offered on Tuesday mornings alongside the Olive Way program.

### **Rosters**

More than forty people participate in our Sunday morning worship rosters. Throughout any year people join and leave the roster. All these contributions enrich our worship of God and breathe new life into 'who we are' as a community. Everyone's contributions, whether up front or behind the scenes, are all part of the 'work of worship'. Extensive guidelines are available to support all participants in their tasks. To ease the pressure on the morning tea roster 'Bring a Plate to Share' morning teas were offered mostly on the first Sunday of the month in the second half of the year

### **Goals for 2020**

**Offer worship every Sunday and for festivals and in response to the world** and in doing so we want to ensure that we provide opportunities for questions and doubts to be explored.

We remain committed to **nurturing new liturgists and prayer leaders.**

We want to **include, interact and engage with our young people in worship** by checking in with what the young people want and in collaboration with Dave Hall, CYYA pastor.

We hope to **explore age specific services during the year** including the familiar Nourish series.

We want to **offer multi sensory experiences during worship** building on what has been offered in 2019.

We will seek to **ensure that diverse voices and representations are heard and seen during worship** by taking notice of who is 'up front', engaging with the Olive Way community, continuing to ensure that our choices of music are gender and culturally diverse.

And finally we plan to **explore daily practices of faith.**

### **Conclusion**

The worship committee (Ian Ferguson, Saide Cameron, Natalie Sims, Kirsty Bennett, Helen Burnham, Jenne Perlstein and Amelia Ware) enjoys meeting together, reflecting on and planning worship, and seeking new ways to engage the congregation in active participation in worship. We welcomed Dave

Hall, CYYA Pastor, as an occasional member to our committee from June. We always enjoy welcoming new members to the committee; please let us know if you are interested.

In 2019, as a committee, we have supported and challenged the congregation to explore personal faith and discipleship, to be engaged in the world, to work for justice, peace and reconciliation, to bear witness to Christ's presence in the world and to give voice to God's love for all creation.

**Saide Cameron**

## Table Church

Table Church meets on a Sunday evening, in different people's homes, usually on the fourth Sunday of the month. "Church" in this case involves a gathering together, a simple liturgy, yummy soup, bread and wine and a chance to share highlights, lowlights and a chance to remember and pray for people and situations which need prayer, or as the liturgy has it, "those who need love, light and peace". Numbers vary from month to month, from just a dedicated handful up to eighteen people. Everyone is welcome!

How does one write about Table Church over the last year? Probably best to let those at the table express themselves on this topic:

*"Sometimes table church has a lot of people gathered around the table, other times we are few. However many, it is always a wonderful way to end – or begin – a week. I'm always amazed at how the food just works out – it just seems to come together nicely."*

*"My first and only table church was welcoming and very interesting. First impressions – excellent!"*

*"Food and prayer are great resources in building a close, caring community."*

*"Informal but prayerful."*

*"I relate much more meaningfully with the issues of pain and distress that people sometimes raise in this loving, caring small group. I remember them and can continue to pray for them."*

*"LITURGY: What has been done has been done. What has not been done, has not been done. LET IT BE! I often remind myself of this insight when under pressure."*

*"An opportunity to become closer to the many folks I identify with at Sunday service. Warm and welcoming."*

*"Table church reminds us of the needs of others and care for each person. I can centre on highlights and share news."*

*"Great opportunity to form closer relationships with people from church as we share fellowship over a simple meal together. More people should join."*

*"Supportive."*

*"I love it. Thanks a lot. There's nothing quite like getting to know people in a home."*

*"Table church is a wonderful way to reflect on the week/month in an enjoyable way with other people."*

*"I really love meeting others from BUC in such a relaxed (not that it is not normally relaxed) evening meal. I also like seeing the different artefacts in the different homes."*

### ***Why don't you join us at Table Church in 2020?***

**From: Meredith, Joanne, Astrid, Emily, Indra, Anna, Anne R, Helen, Mal, Jamie, Jenny H, Colin, Gus, Linda W, Nicole, Linda F, David, Tim.**

## Pastoral Care Committee

As a church we value welcoming all, caring for each other and nurturing the faith and community of people at Brunswick Uniting Church (BUC). During 2019 Pastoral Care has continued offering pastoral care in these ways, to the individuals and groups who make up BUC. It comprises four teams of people in the Ministries of Hospitality, Compassion and Community and in the oversight Pastoral Care Committee.

## **Hospitality Ministry**

The Hospitality Team consists of Jane Allardice, Sheila Calwell, Ray Cameron, Ian Ferguson, Graham Lawrence, Michael Rigby and Clare Keogh. In offering hospitality to newcomers in cooperation with our congregation the Hospitality Team is responding to Romans 15:7 *Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.*

The focus of the hospitality team is:

- nurturing a culture of welcome for visitors and those who are wondering about joining our community and
- providing connection points and pathways to belonging.

We do this by:

- engaging with newcomers on Sunday morning and
- journeying with those who want to connect with the congregation in an ongoing way.

We seek to

- Build relationship with newcomers
- Introduce them to others.
- Expose them to the opportunities for involvement at BUC

In 2019 we recorded 40 encounters with individuals and families visiting our worship for the first time. This is not an exhaustive list of everyone who came - some people prefer to slip away after worship without engaging. About 50% of those recorded returned on subsequent occasions and a high proportion of those have gone on to become regular attenders.

We conducted two formal Welcoming Ceremonies in 2019 - opportunities for people to claim BUC as their home church. We welcomed 16 individuals at these ceremonies.

As a team we stress that hospitality is the task of the whole congregation. We are pleased to note that BUC is generally experienced as a welcoming place and there are many individuals within the congregation who go out of their way to welcome and engage with strangers.

Something that helps many newcomers to enter more deeply into belonging is joining groups or activities beyond Sunday morning (or even during worship). Some examples of groups that newcomers have engaged with this year include: the Mulling Group, the Art group, the Out and About group, Olive Way volunteering, Table Church, music roster, faith development group.

At our bimonthly meetings, the Hospitality Team shares experiences, sets a roster, updates our Newcomers List, and plans ways to help people move into belonging. This year we began to work on a welcome pack to give to new arrivals.

We look forward to welcoming others as we are welcomed by God in Christ in 2020.

**Ian Ferguson**

## **Compassion Ministry**

The Compassion Team of Gwen Arnold, Dani Chamberlin, Glenice Cook, Ian Ferguson and Leanne Salau worked throughout the year to meet the needs of those within our congregation who were experiencing some form of crisis.

The team continues to meet on a monthly basis with electronic communication when required between meetings.

This year has seen a varied number of tasks fulfilled. We continued to meet with those in need, visit where necessary. Provide meals when needed. When it was felt appropriate we were able to refer to others who we felt could best meet the need presenting.

We were able to cater for funerals where requested and we were delighted to be able to give Nili a Wedding Reception Afternoon Tea.

Through the personal donation of a Church member and matched by the UCA Share Appeal we have been able to offer regular Food Vouchers, in the first instance to three, but now two Refugees who attend our Church. This has provided invaluable support to those not entitled to Government assistance.

We have maintained the Prayer Group who continue to pray on a daily basis for those who have made requests. This has offered much comfort to many.

On behalf of the Committee I thank all those who have assisted us throughout the year.

**Glenice Cook**

## **Community Ministry**

Tess Alston, Saide Cameron, Kristin Dahl, Ian Ferguson and Karlien Kok met in the first half of the year as the Community Team for our Pastoral Care Ministry.

Our goals for 2019 were

1. Maintain our overview of the group life of the congregation
2. Engage people in the community activities of the congregation

After much discussion we launched an Appreciative Enquiry during worship on 3<sup>rd</sup> February to coincide with the first of our Café Style morning teas. The survey was made available through a Survey Monkey and asked four sets of questions followed a series of demographic questions relating to age, gender and areas of involvement in the life of the congregation:

1. Where and when in the life of the congregation does pastoral care happen for you?  
Remember a time when you've had a supportive caring conversations, either being cared for yourself or caring for another.
2. Where are the places that you connect with others in the congregation?  
Where do you experience joy in connecting with people?  
Remember a time when you felt most connected, engaged, supported.
3. Tell us about a group or committee that you are part of where you experience pastoral care.  
What makes this care possible in this context?
4. Are there any gaps, new groups or ways of connecting that you would like to see develop?  
Makes three wishes for the community life of our church

We were pleased to receive 67 responses but noted that only one person in the 13-18 age group responded. The majority of the respondents were female and in the 56-70 age group. Our initial report to Council concluded that there are lots of ways of connecting, time is a pressure for some, worship and morning tea are key to pastoral care and connection but not for everyone. Unfortunately we did not meet in the second half of the year and were unable to provide any further analysis, conclusions or recommendations.

We maintained oversight of and celebrated the many and varied ways in which our congregation gathers. Gatherings included weekly, monthly and annual events and other special one-off events. This group life is at the heart of our Pastoral Care model.

We have particular oversight for the following:

- **Cafe Style morning teas** were held on 3/2,. These offer a different and often more relaxed way of enjoying conversations after worship.
- **Congregation Lunches** were held on xx occasions after worship – a Sausage Sizzle following a working bee (17/2), Bring a plate to share lunch after the AGM (24/2), Soup & rolls following a working bee (2/6), Lunch at Marcella's (7/7), Soup & rolls following the Merri Project Consultation Lunch (28/7), Pot luck Lunch following Welcoming Ceremony (15/9), Sausage Sizzle following working bee (13/10), Pastries & Fruit lunch following Congregational meeting (24/11).
- **Marvelously Munchable March dinners** were hosted over the weekend 29-31/3 with 28 people attending 3 Meals.
- The **Church Camp** was held at the very familiar Adekate Campsite over the weekend of 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> May April. The theme 'Listening' followed on from our Listening during Lent. We had slightly smaller numbers than in previous years however all who came enjoyed the bush setting and the company, laughter, food, conversation, board games, netball, werewolves, archery, music and worship. Our thanks to Anthony Hinds, Courtney Rohde and Shawn Whelan for their coordination. Save the date 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

We also assisted with special events: Carlynne Nunn's Ordination (16/3), Commissioning for Dave Hall and Peter Blair (5/5), Pageant rehearsal dinner (24/12).

Many of the activities of our congregation are hosted and facilitated or supported by other committees (Worship, Discipleship & Education, Justice & Mission, Children, Youth & Young Adult) and groups.

- Highlights included: Pool Party at the Matthews (23/2), Good Friday lunch (19/4), Easter Breakfast (21/4), Mulling Movie FUNdraiser (7/9)
- Olive Arts Collective, Olive Pesto, BUC Cycle, Out & About, Saturday Coffee, Book Club, Sacred Harp, Love Makes a Way, Mulling, Climate Action all provide opportunities for people to participate in activities that are meaningful, enriching and enjoyable.

**Saide Cameron**

### **The Pastoral Care Committee**

Two of the goals of the Pastoral Care Committee for 2019 were to provide a place where the three Pastoral Care Ministries of Hospitality, Compassion and Community could connect as a whole and secondly, to monitor how Brunswick Uniting Church (BUC) was tracking with our Pastoral Care of the congregation. Jane Allardice, Tess Alston, Glenice Cooke, Ian Ferguson and Leanne Salau met several times in 2019 to oversee the three Ministries of Pastoral Care with these sentiments in mind.

The Pastoral Care Committee organised a joint meeting for all those in the Ministry teams in February 2019. The focus was a period of learning in relation to Listening and Respect, led by Ian. This was a similar theme intended for the upcoming Lenten season. Both small group and whole group discussions followed, yielding some pertinent questions and discussion points on respect in certain circumstances.

The Committee also reviewed the BUC Directory each 6 months in relation to Pastoral Care, developed the budget for Pastoral Care for 2019, responded to Church Council requests for feedback on reporting requirements and provided suggestions to the Discipleship and Education Committee for training/workshops to run.

Overall during 2019 the Hospitality, Compassion and Community teams functioned well and we are looking forward in 2020 to hold a more formal review of the Pastoral Care offered.

On behalf of Pastoral Care Sheila Calwell has written many cards in 2019 to different people in the congregation for celebrating joyous occasions such as births, marriages, baptisms and for offering sympathy and support on the death of family or friends. Thank you Sheila for your constancy and pastoral care in writing these cards for our congregation members.

The people in the three Ministries were intentional and committed about their pastoral care roles with a firm belief that pastoral care is a fundamental aspect of our faith. The Pastoral Care Committee thanks them for their continued commitment to the congregation in this area.

Pastoral care touches all aspects of our life together at BUC and we continue to delight in the rich and varied life of our community of all ages and cultures and in our relationships with each other.

**Jane Allardice**

## **Children and Youth Committee**

2019 has been a big year! By January the joint nominating committing was already in full swing to find a full time Pastor for our children and youth position. I would particularly like to thank the committee members for their dedication and excessive time given to this task, namely Claire Foley, Colin Hunter, Ron Rosinsky (Coburg UC minister) and John Buckley (Presbytery and convener of the JNC). We were very excited when Dave Hall (former Chaplain at Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School) accepted our call as BUC Children, Youth and Young Adults Pastor. Dave commenced in May in the 0.9 role, practically allowing for working full time during the term and having time with his family over the holidays.

The excitement of having Dave coming onboard was equally matched by our sadness to farewell an amazing trio of women who not only held the space of the children and youth role but made it flourish with their hard work, dedication and intellect. We thank Valentina who focused work with the student house, Janet Hogan much loved as the youth group leader and Janet Watson-Kruse coordinating and leading the Sunday morning program and preschool catch ups. All these amazing women contributed greatly to their roles, leaving them in amazing shape. Their grace, insights and ability to bring people and communities together was and is outstanding. We are privileged that all have continued to be part of our life-giving community.

**THE CYYA 2018 Committee wall of fame:**

<b>STAYERS</b>	<b>Sadly, left us during 2019 program</b>	<b>New</b>
Catherine Drimmel	David Moorhouse (Minute taker)	Dave Hall
Claire Foley (to be farewelled early 2020)	Janet Watson Kruse (interim worker)	
Chris Emanuel	Janet Hogan (interim worker).	
Tim Winkler		
Anita Brown-Major		

At the end of 2019 we sadly farewelled David Moorhouse. David has been on the committee for so long no one can even remember when he started. We thank David for his amazing and continued work, for completing all the minutes, fixing all our IT problems, sorting out the finances and bringing the most amazing wine to the meetings (which is why the rest of us joined the committee).

We are always on the lookout for new CYYA committee members! Claire Foley has indicated she will be taking on other roles in 2020 and with David’s absence we are looking for several more bodies to help fill the gaps. I assure you they are quick meetings with lots of food! We are also trialling some day time meetings and ability to use ZOOM or skype in to allow for increase access to the committee.

**Student house** – please refer to separate report from the Student House Committee

**Youth Group** kicked off with a bang with a beach camp at the start of the year. We have significant volunteer support from Chris E, Josh, Jacqui M and Genevie M. The combination of Fairfield Uniting kids, BUC and general community has seen the youth group grow with a total of 23 kids attending the final pool party in December. The first 6 months of 2020 has already been planned and there are exciting times ahead.

**SMP** – Our numbers have steadily grown, week to week, with a minimum of 10 children and maximum of 30 over the year. Significant growth has been seen in the secondary school age group (maybe the hot choc and Tim tams have something to do with this). Bringing in a professional artist (Graeme Galloway) to help paint the youth hall mural has been a highlight for many of the kids. Sourcing volunteer teachers and assistance continues to be an ongoing push – if you hear this calling please contact Dave or a committee member.

**Olive Pips** – There have been a number of babies born in 2019 and we are thankful for each and everyone of them. Olive Pips has been re-energised and we particularly thank Nagma for her help in coordinating these activities.

We thank Caitlin Mullen for stepping up again and writing and directing this year’s Christmas pageant. This has involved hours of planning and patient work with a strong and central focus on our children. This, in combination with Saide and Dave has produced another amazing Christmas Pageant.

Ian ran some faith exploration sessions with a few young people aged 16 to 22. These were a great success, and a couple of young people intend to be confirmed in the Christian faith in 2020. We are also hoping to run these faith study sessions again in 2020, hopefully at the Student House – for those aged 16 to 22 (approx.)

Safe church policy and procedures have held us in good stead this year with numerous background work being completed. I particularly like to thank Helen, Claire, Janet WK, Dave and Ian for their significant work in this area. It is always work that goes on unseen, can be stressful, tricky, but very rewarding to see the strong policy and procedures work to ensure we have an ongoing safe environment for all.

The committee would like to thank the wider church community and in particular the support and encouragement of the finance committee to spend our budget (something we hadn’t done in the last two years). We would like to particularly thank Linda who has helped redirect funds when we then overspent our budget. This has allowed significant training in godly play techniques and other education opportunities, increased spends on youth group (allowing greater participation), murals, guest SMP paid leaders and many other CYYA activities. We have not taken lightly the grace of our community focusing on our youth and putting our children and youth in the forefront of our community life.

Finally, it has been now over 5 years since the church commissioned Julie Perrin to complete the “Pathways to the River” BUC children and youth review. In 2020 we will see the CYYA complete another full review cycle of our activities. We are grateful to have Dave complete this process with guidance from Tim Winkler from the committee. We look forward to getting the whole communities’ input and hearing the voices of what our children and young people think.

Blessing to all.

**Anita Major, (Chair of CYYA)**

## Student House Committee

Throughout 2019 we welcomed new residents Charlotte Pitt, Jean Saker and Oliver Sun into the community.

In May we farewelled Valentina Satvedi from the Student House Support Worker role – Valentina’s commitment, focus and investment during her time in the role was acknowledged and had been greatly appreciated by both the committee and the Student House community. Following this, we welcomed Dave Hall as the new CYYA pastor, into the Student House Support Worker role – a role that Dave has already poured an incredible amount of time, effort and care into.

Other changes to the community included some additions to the committee and departures from the Student House Community. Into the committee we welcomed Amanda Lees, who is showing to be an extremely valuable member, as a past resident of the Student House Community, her insight is greatly appreciated by the committee and the Student House Community. We also changed up the model a little and invited two members from of the Student House Community to stand on the committee as full members – Samantha Scicluna and Quilan Goff have been a core part of helping ensure the Student House Committee is both more responsive to the needs of the residents and able to develop key leaders in each of the houses. From the Student House Community, we also farewelled Elizabeth Stoel, Giovanni Young, Brianna Bartley and Bethany Davey – please keep these wonderful people in your hearts as they continue to embark on their respective new stages of life.

Throughout the year, the committee worked with Dave to refresh student house documentation that would help aid us in decision-making and setting expectations with the students – this is something we will continue doing throughout 2020. Over 2019 we continued to maintain:

- Monthly dinners with the extended community with the alternating fortnight being a private dinner time for the students
- Working bee sessions throughout the year
- Promotion of key activities in the life of BUC for Student House residents to attend.

There were also many connections made between the students living and learning together in the houses, and engagement with Brunswick Uniting more broadly. Students were involved in youth group, Sunday Morning Program, Olive Way, Christmas Pageant, Sunday morning worship and The Olive Arts Collective. The Student House Committee is excited to keep ensuring that residents are involved and embedded in the life of Brunswick Uniting going forward, and explore new ways of involvement.

Looking ahead to 2020, we are planning to conduct a review into the Student House Program itself, what it could look like in the years to come, what shape it would take and how we can ensure it fully supports the missional priorities of Brunswick Uniting. The Committee is getting ready to welcome new students, with Hannah Friebel, Robert Sargeant and Sasha McGuigan all moving in at the end of January. We have also received a number of new applications. Although it’s looking like we will have more applicants than available rooms, we will look to provide as many opportunities to be a part of the community as we can throughout 2020.

We will begin 2020 with the retreat in beautiful Anglesea, which we are all looking very forward to.

**James Balsillie**

## Culture of Safety

BUC is active and committed to the safety of all people involved in the activities of BUC including children and young people, and adults in our community who may be vulnerable for any reason. Helen Rowe continued as the BUC Culture of Safety Contact Person to inform Church Council and Leaders of policy updates and to receive confidential reports of concerns about the safety of children and vulnerable adults. Concerns are handled according to a Synod process adopted by Council.

An annual review of programs and activities identified Appointed Leader roles as identified by Church Council and all roles having direct contact with children and young people. Records of Working With Children Check cards are maintained. In 2019 a process began for VIT registered teachers and early childhood professionals to have their WWCC card status acknowledged in the Synod database and local records. Gratitude is extended to Claire Foley who assisted CYYA committee with Culture of Safety issues for part of the year until the appointment of the Children's and Youth Pastor.

The broader role of Synod Safe Child Project Officer in Port Phillip West Presbytery, held by Helen Rowe for 3 years, concluded on 31 December. Synod has enabled on-line access for all congregations for Progress Reports and a WWCC database, both developed throughout the Project.

We are committed to listening to children and young people and encouraging their age-appropriate participation in decisions that affect them. We remain diligent and committed to the reason we do this work – our children are precious.

**Helen Rowe**, (Culture of Safety Contact)

## Justice & Mission Committee

Members of the Justice & Mission Committee (Gwen Arnold, Richard Arnold, Abi Benham-Bannon, Kirsty Bennett, Meredith Budge, Saide Cameron, Leanne Salau and Ann Soo) enjoyed meeting together in each other's homes over shared meals during the year. Meredith stepped down from the committee in June and we thank her for the five years she has participated in this committee.

We carried through our goals from 2018:

- Encourage, enable and support the BUC community in engaging in environmental and social justice issues (both within church and wider community)
- Provide support to related committees and programs in their endeavours and ongoing function.
- Actively think about how we are being inclusive and promoting diversity in the BUC community
- Continue to actively think about how we are ensuring equality and equity in the BUC community

During 2019 we:

- found great satisfaction in supporting our many related programs and committees (Olive Way, BUC Arts, Olive Arts, FUNdraising, Food Co-op, Stewart Lodge, Climate Action Group, Love Makes a Way, Asylum Seeker Welcome Centre) with respect to representation and reporting
- participated in the Sydney Rd. Street Party
- participated in rallies including Palm Sunday Peace Rally, School Strike, Climate Action, Love Makes A Way,
- co-ordinated Tower Room Window displays
- worked with the FUNdraising committee to support awareness and raise money for a reduced number of programs and projects, *see also FUNdraising annual report*
- collaborated with the Worship Committee to present a proposal to the Church Council that we seek to develop a relationship with First Nations people
- enjoyed attending performances offered by SROC (Sydney Rd. Opera Company) throughout the year, our thanks to Damien Coleridge and Gus Argote for their energy and commitment.

The **Olive Way Steering Committee** (Richard Arnold (chair), Kirsty Bennett (JAM representative), Peter Blair (Co-ordinator) and Ann Soo, Kimberly Fraser, Mikul Denison) continued to meet and support the Olive Way community. The full Olive Way Committee including Peter Murphy (our cook), Alex Philips, Gus Argote, volunteers and guests also met during the year. The Olive Way Review report was presented after worship on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March with a printed booklet incorporating the artwork from the Respect project. Training for volunteers was offered: First Aid, Safe Food Handling, Listening Skills.

The Olive Way received a Community Award from the City of Moreland; our thanks to Deb Blackmore for the nomination. The Olive Way joined with the Brunswick Salvation Army to offer the annual Christmas event.

**Olive Way Pastor:** Peter Blair met with Geoff Thompson to assist in his preparation to meet the core competencies for recognition as a Pastor. Following a meeting with Amanda Mullen, supported by Kirsty Bennett we received an email on 3<sup>rd</sup> April: *At PRC yesterday Peter was confirmed as having satisfied the requirement of Core Competencies for Pastor, as set down by the Assembly in Regulations 2.2.2. PRC affirms the commissioning of Peter into the non-placement of Olive Way Co-ordinator.* Peter was subsequently commissioned at a service on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May, presided over by Sani Vaeluaga, former chair of Presbytery

The theme for our congregation's contribution to the **Sydney Rd. Street Party** (4/3) was Respect, following on from the 2018 Respect postcard project and linking in with the theme for Lent. Our congregation provided a range of ways to engage including an opportunity to contribute to the conversation about respect with our Rainbow on the street, handing out the postcards made for the Olive Way Respect project, in the Olive Way, an invitation to explore our spaces including visiting the Youth Hall to enjoy artworks made by the Olive Arts Collective and make a Respect postcard to take home together with afternoon tea (slices & biscuits) and an open worship space with the Studio Walk art in the Gathering Space hosted by the Worship Committee.

The **BUC Arts Committee** had another busy and creative year including development of role descriptions, offering collage work for exhibition at the Centre for Theology and Ministry in February, supporting Olive Pesto to host World Wide Knit in Public Day, supporting Priscilla Manthey to offer her series 'Mechanics of the Eye', hosting a very moving exhibition for Refugee Week including works from Naser Moradi, Johnny Salameh and Migrant Mothers, hosting our own amazing exhibition 'Let the earth speak', from 27<sup>th</sup> September to 6<sup>th</sup> October which included Opening and Performance nights. *See also BUCArts Annual Report*

The majority of our art & craft programs are now held in the Youth Hall with access to the storage sheds greatly enhancing the amenity of the space and storage of resources. The Worship Committee, Olive Arts and ArtStop program and the AWSC use the three sheds.

The **Olive Arts Collective** and **Olive Pesto** group provided support for artists and crafters respectively to create beautiful works using a wide variety of mediums. We are grateful to the leaders who have provided such generous support to ensure that people of all ages and abilities have the opportunity to explore and share their creativity.

Our collaboration with the Arts Access ArtStop 21 program continued. **Olive Arts leaders** offered their time as volunteers for the first term of the ArtStop program. In light of planned changes to the funding for ArtStop in 2020 the second term was held independently of Olive Arts with the OAC meeting on Thursdays.

Our thanks to members of the **Olive Pesto group** who contributed to the Advent Christmas Tree installation for worship and to the Christmas Bowl Appeal stalls.

Our engagement with **climate change actions** became an increasing priority through the year commencing with promotion of external events, participation in the School Strike and Earth Hour, installation of the Care for Creation banner on our building and fence and responding to an invitation to declare a Climate Emergency. An action group was formed and subsequently presented a proposal to 'Declare a Climate Crisis' to the Congregational Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November. The proposal was accepted. Planning is now taking place to develop a comprehensive plan by May 2020. This will encompass the four commitments which are incorporated in the Declaration of Climate Crisis.

The **FUNdraising Committee** had a rest from major events this year. We are grateful to Susan & Wayne Matthew for generously hosting 'Let's Play', a Backyard Band Party, which supported the CYYA ministry (\$508), Kate Kirkwood for her generous donation to the ASWC following two Brooch Days (\$1,800 and \$1689) and the Mulling Group for hosting a movie night (\$530 to Olive Arts and \$660 to Harrison homelessness services). Helen Burnham hosted to Op Shops with the first providing seed funding for the exhibition (\$985.30) and the second for CYYA creative activities (\$955.50). Stalls after worship for the Lent (\$640.05) and Christmas Bowl Appeals (\$2,465.55) provided our congregation with the opportunity to contribute to identified projects and programs.

Our relationships with residents and staff of **Stewart Lodge** has been significantly low key this year with the main focus being on residents who participate in the Olive Way program. We organized the Stewart Lodge Carols, held 18/12 and provided residents with \$30 Savers gift cards offered in hand written Christmas cards using images offered by Olive Arts artists.

The **Tower Room Window displays** continued to offer the wider community insights into who we are and what we care about as a congregation. In 2019 the displays included: Respect postcards display, Belonging using Camilla Paz's artwork 'Melburnians',

During the year we also invited Tim Molineux, Synod Social Justice officer to speak with us, contributed to the Merri Street Project, explored opportunities for advocacy and community actions, sought solutions for appropriate use of our compost bins, responded to an invitation to support actions in relation to public housing.

We continued to seek volunteers to support our programs and in particular the Olive Way and members for the Olive Way Steering, BUC Arts and JAM committees.

We are confident that we have provided substantial support to our related committees and the offering of programs which encourage inclusion for people in varying ways. There is much to celebrate as outlined the body of this report. FUNdraising activities, public actions, messages offered through the Tower Room window, the welcome offered by the Olive Way program and all the programs that provide engagement alongside the Olive Way, our relationships with Stewart Lodge, Love Makes a Way and the Asylum Seeker Welcome Centre speak of a richness that is difficult to capture in only a few words. Our congregation is greatly blessed, abundantly generous and creative, welcoming and inclusive.

**Saide Cameron**

## **BUC Arts**

The **BUC ARTS committee** is a small group namely, Ann Soo, Saide Cameron, Leanne Salau, Simone Alesich and Rev Ian Ferguson. Saide holds the role of BUC ARTS co convenor administration and Ann's role is as BUC ARTS co convenor creative lead. BUC ARTS is under the auspice of the **Justice and Mission Committee**.

In September 2019, we hosted our vibrant biennial Arts Festival inclusive of visual and performance offerings punctuated by an uplifting opening night and a performance night to remember.

The timely and thoughtful theme **Let the Earth Speak** was a contribution from Simone Alesich. We were inspired by the readings from Isaiah; the sense of God creating something fresh and new in all of us. This theme became the springboard to all the artful offerings during the exhibition when spirit was expressed in many forms.

Receiving over 85 works / performances from 50 artists transformed our church spaces and unified all the communities within our larger community. It was an exhibition that challenged, celebrated, lamented and honoured our connection with the earth. We were spurred on by powerful speeches from artists Frances Tapalelu and Phil Kreveld leading us into a time of contemplation and action. This exhibition is one that not only nourished but propelled us forward to strive and advocate for our earth's survival.

### **Worldwide Knit in Public Day**

With the support of Linda Wannan-Edgar (Olive Pesto lead), The Olive Pesto Craft Connection and a magnitude of volunteers, we hosted for the third time, Melbourne's largest Worldwide Knit in Public Day. With over 108 knitters clicking their needles and bringing bags of completed items for KOGO (KNIT ONE GIVE ONE) charity, the day was an example of grass roots generosity, love and the power of community making a difference in people's lives.

We were delighted to have Andrea Zilberman of KOGO deliver an empowering and uplifting audio-visual presentation that was loaded with stories about how knitted items play their part in caring for people and communities throughout Australia. She also spoke about what it means for those who knit and crochet for KOGO and the commitment and care invested in each item and the power of giving and at times, to transform lives.

Olive Pesto continues to thrive by meeting monthly and continue to harness beautiful handcrafted items for KOGO throughout the year. In 2020, WWKIP will be on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June and we look forward to once again spearheading another successful and welcoming space for knitters in Melbourne.

### **Collage Workshops and Life Drawing Workshops with Priscilla Manthey**

Priscilla Manthey offered her experience as a practising artist and art teacher to the BUC community and beyond. The collage workshops early in 2019 drawing large numbers to the youth hall were facilitated by Ann Soo ( BUC Creative Lead) The amazing results from the group were then exhibited at CTM (Centre of Theology and Ministry) for a month and in addition, an article and video interview featuring Ann, Priscilla and Chris Rowntree was crafted for the Uniting Church Crosslight magazine. Priscilla's fascinating approach combined both a deep knowledge of art history with encouragement of robust and experimental art making. The collage results resonated with individual creativity and vitality.

In the latter half of the year, Priscilla and Ann joined forces again to gather a group focusing on drawing entitled Mechanics of the Eye. Once again, these workshops were extremely well attended. Drawing as a form of meditation was the intention of these workshops and under Priscilla's guidance, participants drew from life and used simple materials paper and pencil only. Some of the results were astonishing but equally, the workshops were about process and paying attention to the art of seeing, observation and tracking with the eye.

This year, Priscilla has been endorsed by JAM to continue running these workshops in a series of blocks and we anticipate as much success as in 2019.

This is an example of the BUC ARTS committee supporting artists and creatives in getting workshops up and running for the enjoyment of the community.

In 2020, we are encouraging proposals from other creative members of our congregation who wish to share their skills with the BUC community. So far, we look forward to a project from Tonia Beggs in dance and Graeme Galloway in painting.

### **World Refugee Day**

Yearly, **World Refugee Day** is an important day to acknowledge given commitment to welcome and inclusion at Brunswick Uniting Church. In 2019, we had the privilege of artwork loaned to us from **Melbourne Artists for Asylum Seekers** that spoke powerfully to stories and experiences of those still in detention and others who are continuing their resettlement journey.

We were struck by the powerful work of Johnny Salameh's installation named 'The Dictator', the lyrical beauty of scratch artworks by the Migrant Mothers from AWSRC and the poignant and charged works of Nasir Moradi who is in detention at Broadmeadows Detention Centre. The works spoke in ways that words are not able to express. A special evening honoured and upheld World Refugee Day when art became the dominant language and unified us all in common humanity.

### **Olive Pesto Craft Connection**

Olive Pesto is the vibrant and inclusive craft group that meets in the Youth Hall every second Saturday of the month. The group grew from the impetus created by World-Wide Knit in Public Day in 2017 and has thrived ever since. It has a healing mission for the both participant "makers" and the recipients of the handcrafted items. Our commitment to KOGO (Knit One Give One) non-profit organisation is an example of this reciprocity in giving and receiving.

Our activities are not limited to yarn-craft, though many activities are yarn-related we have also done felting, sewing boomerang bags and helping create large installations.

Olive Pesto starts for a new year of connection and creativity on Sat 8 February, 2020 plans are yet to be finalised, but will definitely include the "World Wide Knit in Public Day" in June, and making items to be distributed by KOGO, for LMAW and other groups in need.

The group is led by Ann Soo, Linda Wannan-Edgar Natalie Papworth, Leanne Salau and Glenice Cook, and newsletter editor is Helen Rowe.

### **The Olive Arts Collective**

The Olive Arts Collective enjoyed its' third year of operation with the church's mission at the heart of its values and actions. The OAC has been operating EVERY week since August 2019 focusing on

community and connection through creativity and friendship. Ann Soo and Leanne Salau continue to hold this space that has thrived since its inception.

The Youth Hall is the home for the OAC on a Wednesday morning and everyone is welcomed warmly at the door and found a seat at the table. We value the importance of comfort and hospitality so the environment for creativity can then flourish. Donations have ensured that materials are available so participants have choice and control in their creative pursuits. We are grateful for the support of Phil Kreveld and Graeme Galloway, our volunteer art mentors who inspire and ground us each week. The process of art making is as important as the product; the friendships made, the joy of community and care.

Here are the words from our artists describing their experience of OAC:

**HONESTY, DIGNITY, CREATIVE, FRIENDLY, EXCELLENT, GOOD FUN, AWESOME, LOST FOR WORDS, JOYOUS, FANTASTIC, BUSY, POSSIBILITY WITH IMPROBABILITY, FUN, CELEBRATORY, SAFE ENVIRONMENT, NURTURING, HAPPY, PEACEFUL ATMOSPHERE.**

We look forward to another exciting year to hear the murmurings of creativity and spirituality in our congregation and in our wider church community. BUC ARTS would like to thank everyone for their support and enthusiasm in 2019

**Ann Soo, BUC ARTS Co-convenor,**

## Love Makes A Way North group

In 2019 our Love Makes A Way group continued to meet monthly, organising and participating in various events to advocate for compassionate asylum seeker policies as well as exploring new ways of engaging people of faith in these issues (see below). We continue to hold faith, prayer and nonviolence at the core of all that we do and find strength and hope through our supportive community. We hope and pray that the new year brings justice and freedom for all people seeking asylum.

We would also like to thank Brunswick Uniting Church for its incredible support not only this year, but throughout the years since the founding of our group – thank you for the generous offerings (space, printing etc!) and collaborations that support us in this work.

### **Sydney Rd Street Festival, Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March (outside Brunswick Uniting Church)**

- Singing, storytelling, visual presence, 'mythbuster' fliers, sandwich boards
- Engaged a range of people from churches and choirs, as well as off the street
- Worked in collaboration with Brunswick Uniting Church (many thanks to BUC for generous hosting and support).

### **Presence at rallies, including Palm Sunday**

#### **Church resources**

- Created and distributed slide show presentations and other resources aimed at engaging congregations in issues relating to people seeking asylum through storytelling, music (Norwesterlies' 'Five Years'), connecting through prayer and engaging in action
- Shared with various congregations around Melbourne, with aim of empowering leaders within those congregations to engage their communities

#### **'Vote with Heart' Flash Sing, April**

- Election focused flash sing
- Kooyong electorate
- New songs adapted by Phil Hudson

#### **Post-election meeting: liturgy and prayer**

- A space for reflection, debrief and prayer for our group after the federal election

#### **Silent Action (vigil), 30<sup>th</sup> July**

- 'Six Years Too Long' for people in detention
- Stood in a circle of silent prayer at various points in the CBD, with signs to raise awareness and call for action.

- Encouraging people to relate the issue back to their own lives, to consider just how long six years is. E.g. 'I spent 6 years: working in a job I enjoy, raising a child who's now a confident and happy teenager... What about you?'
- Engaged new people who had not attended our actions before.

### Home to Biloea campaign

- Supported by bringing our skills and ethos in nonviolence to actions, as was requested and valued by the campaign.
- Provided a prayerful presence at the anti-deportation action at the airport, when there was an attempt to deport the family (who then ended up on Christmas Island). Our group provided a presence of protest along with other individuals and groups there, and created a space of prayer in a time of heightened emotions and uncertainty (both for ourselves and others who joined us).
- Had a presence at the court case the day following the attempted deportation, showing public support.

### Letter Writings, 13<sup>th</sup> October

- Organised letter writings within congregations, calling on senators to vote against the repeal of the Medevac legislation
- 55 letters written

### Carols for Compassion, 20<sup>th</sup> December

- Carols singing 'with a difference' outside St Paul's Cathedral and Flinders St Station
- Adjusted lyrics by Phil Hudson (assisted by Abi Benham-Bannon) such as 'I'm dreaming of a kind Christmas' and 'Oh come let all be welcomed, and free'.
- Very successful and high energy despite weather challenges, with 13 participants (both LMAW regulars and new faces) and multiple people joining off the street at various times.
- Engaged people on the day, as well as others through Christian media such as the Melbourne Anglican newspaper and UCA social media.

**Abigail Benham-Bannon**



*Six Years Too Long Silent Action, Photo by Ian Ferguson*



*Home to Biloea Anti-deportation action, outside airport hangar, photo by Frances Penington*



*Medevac letter writing*



*Carols for Compassion (joined by two enthusiastic passers-by on the left), photo by Ian Ferguson*

# Brunswick Uniting Food Co-Op

In 2019 we got back on our feet. Our intentional focus on Member Liaison and welcome the previous year proved to be effective in engaging new members. The Committee was revitalized and monthly rosters filled. Monthly distribution days are friendly and enjoyable.

The sense of community and shared values amongst members is a positive experience. Food Co-op is run by its Members (volunteers) and reports to JAM Committee periodically. Food Co-op Mission Statement and Values resonate with the principles of the BUC Climate Action Plan.

## Highlights

- An active new Committee formed with representatives from BUC and the wider community.
- Key roles were shared. Ashley took over from Kathleen doing monthly volunteer roster co-ordination. Helen handed over Treasurer role to Tess. Helen convened Committee meetings.
- Abi continued as Purchasing Officer also co-ordinating volunteers receiving bulk products.
- Provided orientation for volunteers in team leader and computer roles.
- Purchased extra weighing scales to speed up distribution process.
- Received a small grant for sustainability education.
- Offered three workshops – Beeswax Wraps demonstrations and Veggie Gardening workshop.
- Provided information and support for two neighbouring food co-ops starting up.
- Supported the Indigenous Hospitality House financially and in kind.

## Membership

Current membership is 72 households – 33 BUC and 39 wider community.

Membership remains capped since early in 2019 when monthly distribution days peaked at 48 orders. Average monthly attendances became steady at around 35 households with some days quite busy due to large orders. Members volunteer at least twice a year for distribution of bulk products. Food Co-op operates each month for 2.5 hours.

## Operations

The paid Purchasing Officer model was fully funded through member subscriptions. A small product mark-up and member subscriptions also cover wastage, consumables and equipment.

Wheeled trolleys were purchased to reduce manual handling of bulk product bins.

All bulk packaging was recycled appropriately.

## Acknowledgements

We are grateful to BUC for the use of storage space and adjacent room to operate monthly.

Thanks to our volunteer product receivers - Julie Heller, Christine Hornby, Helen Rowe and Ashley Hurrell (and her parents) and to Abi Benham-Bannon for coordinating bulk purchases.

Thanks to Kathleen Kemp who did monthly rosters for 2.5 years.

The committee would especially like to thank Helen for her continued efforts this year. In addition to above, she has convened all committee meetings, kept up member communications via email and Facebook especially during times of change, liaised with the church, and various other essential admin tasks to ensure the co-operative has kept running smoothly. And best of all, she's always ready to welcome people on distribution days.

## 2019 Committee

Valentina Satvedi-Leydon, Tess Alston, Geoff Thompson, Helen Rowe, Abi Benham-Bannon, Julie Heller, Ashley Hurrell, David Cook, Hannah Goh, Kathy Faulkner, Mei Sun, Lucia Rosano, Gabrielle Pestinger.

(submitted by various members)

## FUNdraising

The FUNdraising – putting the FUN back into FUNdraising – committee (Saide Cameron, Glenice Cook and Jessica Kvanskul) took a break from big events in 2019. Two more low key events were offered that that were definitely fun and gave the congregation the opportunity to support the CYA ministry, Olive Arts and Uniting Harrison. Op Shops and after worship stalls filled out the rest of our calendar.

## Godly Play

Susan and Wayne Matthews hosted a Backyard Band party at their home in Greenvale on 23<sup>rd</sup> February. We enjoyed swimming, tennis, an absolutely sumptuous BBQ with copious salads, icecream from the Icicle Tricycle and dancing with covers band 'Terry Towelling and the Tank Tops. We raised **\$508** to support the training of Godly Play practitioners and the development of resources.

## Lenten Appeal

Stalls were offered after worship on 7<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> April raising approximately **\$640.05** through sale of preserves, Easter treats, Op Shop and plants. Thanks to Saide Cameron, Glenice Cook, Natalie Papworth, Leanne Salau and Linda Fisher for their contributions.

## BUC Arts Exhibition

Helen Burnham hosted the first of two Pop-up Op-shops for the year from 28<sup>th</sup> April-26<sup>th</sup> May. This is an opportunity for the congregation to offer quality clothing and household goods and in turn to buy something preloved to take home. Remaining items are offered at reduced cost or free to Olive Way and Asylum Seeker Welcome Centre clients. All remaining stock is then donated to local Op Shops. This first OpShop raised **\$985.30** as seed funding for the BUC Arts biennial exhibition.

## Asylum Seeker Welcome Centre

Kate Kirkwood (daughter of Julie & Peter McKinnon) regularly hosts Brooch Days, the first of which was held in our hall and the second in Brisbane. The fundraising component of these events resulted in Kate donating **\$1,818** and **\$1,689** respectively to the ASWC. This money was used to support the Driving Program.

## Uniting Harrison and Olive Arts

The Mulling group hosted a Movie Night on 7<sup>th</sup> September. We enjoyed mulled wine, fresh popcorn and icecream from the Icicle Tricycle and watched Bohemian Rhapsody. Interval offered the opportunity for movie goers to participate in two games – team karaoke and a lip synch and air guitar playoff. The **\$1,190** raised was distributed to Uniting Harrison homelessness services (**\$660**) and the Olive Arts Collective program (**\$530**).

## CYYA art programs

Helen Burnham's hosted her second Op Shop from 20<sup>th</sup> October to 10<sup>th</sup> November. **\$955.50** was raised to support activities within the Sunday Morning program that had a particular art focus, for example the preparation of a welcome sign from the car park into the rear of our property. Linda Fisher offered a plant stall to accompany the Op Shop on two of the Sundays.

We noted that on this occasion there was an excess of goods donated, some of which were not suitable for our setting. Preparation for future Op Shops will include guidelines for appropriate items for donation.

## 2040 Film Screening

The BUC Climate Action group screened the film 2040 on 31st October. Linda Wannan invited the audience to offer donations in response, which would be used to provide training to empower young people in advocacy and taking action. Amount raised - **\$204.40!!**

## Stewart Lodge Gift Bags Appeal

The Justice and Mission Committee organized Stewart Lodge Carols which was held on 18<sup>th</sup> December. Residents received a \$30 gift card from Savers. The congregation was invited to offer donations to cover the cost of the gift cards after worship on 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> December. A total of **\$670** was raised.

## Christmas Bowl

The work of the Christmas Bowl was promoted with the support of the Worship and Communication committees. A variety of opportunities to contribute to this work was offered.

- 2,465.55 Christmas Preserves, Bake & Craft Stalls
- 3,010.90 Donations (Bowl during worship services)

A total of **\$5,476.45** was raised for the Christmas Bowl. (This is \$1,678.25) less than in 2019.

## Conclusion

The FUNdraising committees having decided to take a rest year did not set any specific goals for the year. We were pleased that even in spite of this there were activities and events that called on the gifts, skills and generosity of our congregation.

We thank everyone who has offered their time and energy in this way.

In 2019 a total of **\$10,629.70** was raised and donated by our congregation with an additional **\$3,507** donated to the ASWC through Kate Kirkwood's Brooch Day events.

Reflecting on the year the Justice and Mission Committee agreed that holding one major event in the year was a reasonable goal. Look out for details in the coming year.

**Saide Cameron**

## Discipleship & Education Committee

We took a slightly different approach in 2019. Following a review of our 2018 work and of the 2019 Lenten Studies, new directions and focuses were developed. These included:

1. Work with and support other groups in the things they are planning. We aren't the only ones with good ideas. This means leaving space in the calendar to respond as needed and liaising with other groups such as worship committee and pastoral care to assist their work.
2. Investigate opportunities for small group activities. "Small group discussions" was a recurrent theme that we had encountered in a number of places. There are already some small groups currently running such as Mulling and Table Church, and we have a number of interested and able people in the congregation who can lead or support small groups. It doesn't all have to be on Ian's shoulders.

So ...

- We supported the Worship Committee in inviting Rev Stephen Burns for a seminar on liturgy and follow up workshops on prayer.
- Explored options for the continuing of *With Love to the World* and concluded that personal subscriptions were the most effective way. With contemporary ways of applying for and paying, the group approach was no longer necessary.
- Assisted the Merri Project group with congregational consultation about our missional values and visions. Our response to their "blue sky visioning" included a wish for a comfortable and hospitable group space that was fully equipped and required minimal set up when people wanted to use the it.
- A couple of sessions of a faith development group for young people aged 17-21 were run, with at least one participant seeking confirmation. Our expectation is that this group will continue into 2020.
- A Talk Faith group met monthly three times. Notable features were the range of backgrounds of the participants, what they were looking for from a small group connection and the diversity of their theological positions.

### And what for 2020?

- We are discussing how the small group work could be developed and expanded, especially looking at our areas of theology, bible studies and pastoral care.
- There are possibilities about supporting important changes in the First Nations community in 2020.
- Being involved in the development of on-line learning hubs and lay-leadership work being undertaken by Synod
- Responding to the current social and wider community context as it unfolds.

Lots of interesting stuff to look forward to.

**We are looking for new committee members to join us.**

**Meg Orton**

## Mulling

Mulling is a group of younger adults who meet to explore faith, spirituality and community. Members take turns to arrange activities and host events. This year we were fortunate to welcome several guests, including Dave Hall who shared a little of his faith journey and life experience.

JANUARY Sewing afternoon - hosted by Simone Aliesch

FEBRUARY BBQ and lawn games at Temple Park - Maggie Haines

MARCH Lent Reflection - Amelia Ware

APRIL *Our Vision for a Just Australia*, UCA Federal Election Resource - Emily Evans  
 MAY The Enneagram - Kimberly Fraser  
 JUNE *Who am I? What is Happening?* - Daniel Broadstock with Dave Hall.  
 JULY Christmas in July - Michael Rigby  
 AUGUST Dinner before attending the Northey Lecture at BUC: *Citizens of Heaven: Identity, Inclusion and the Church* by Rev Dr Samuel Wells - Amanda Lees  
 SEPTEMBER Mulling hosted a Movie Night in the BUC Hall, *Bohemian Rhapsody*  
 Funds raised: \$500 Olive Arts Collective, \$660 Uniting Harrison  
 OCTOBER Power, Sexuality and Justice – Tonia Beggs, Anika Jensen with Teash Taylor.  
 DEC Picnic at Princes Park - Emily Evans and Maggie Haines

We also enjoyed discussing our experience of community and family within the church with Anika Jensen and Teash Taylor, following their presentation of a paper they are working on called *Queering Covenant, a queer feminist critique and exploration of Ephesians 5: 22-33*. Their paper proposes that queer experiences can offer much to Christian community as they demonstrate models of relationships that challenge hierarchies and binaries. The ideas raised seemed especially pertinent as we entered the Advent season, filled with images of Jesus' arrival as a member of a family while also rejecting the traditional notions of family in his society.

We are always keen to meet new people, please join us in 2020 for more good times ahead!

**Amelia Ware**

## Presbytery

In 2020 Jamie Thom joined Kate Scull to fill Brunswick's two places as Presbytery Representatives in the Presbytery of Port Phillip West. The first Presbytery-in-Council meeting we attended together was held in May at the Narana Aboriginal Cultural Centre in Grovedale near Geelong, as happens now once a year. Other Presbytery meetings are held at Hoppers Crossing and we usually car share and have interesting conversations there and back. Jamie is still getting used to all the jargon and acronyms used by Presbytery. Kate enjoyed being back on Standing Committee in 2019, although she fears her main role there is being a grammar Nazi and asking impertinent questions until everyone would like to throw her out the window. The term continues for another year (failing defenestration). Jamie has been elected to the Mission, Strategy and Education Committee for 2020-2021 and recently attended his first committee meeting. The Mission, Strategy and Education Committee has a wide range of responsibilities including many shared with other committees making it quite confusing.

The last annual report detailed the transition Presbytery is undertaking regarding its staffing model and how the Presbytery remained understaffed, with two major roles unfilled (i.e. one presbytery minister placement and the Mission Development Strategist-eLM liaison position). Unfortunately these roles remained unfilled throughout 2019, which meant some prioritising of jobs had to happen and sometimes committees were so busy 'putting out fires' that less pressing matters got put on the backburner. So if you have noticed Presbytery taking a while to do something, apparently ignoring an email or the out-of-date state of our website... that is why. Having said that, we made considerable progress on some fronts with the aid of short-term, part-time employees who took on particular projects. For example, John Evans put in a herculean effort to gather our Presbytery's disparate, out-dated, contradictory and impracticable policies into one document and start bringing them all up-to-date with our current staffing model and practices. Also, Trang Vo managed to personally contact every congregation to ask about their mission and vision statements and what Presbytery support they could use. The database she developed will be an excellent tool for the incoming Mission Development Strategist and the Presbytery Ministers. And thank God, the Presbytery is starting 2020 with a full complement of staff, welcoming Rev Linley Liersch as Mission Development Strategist, and Rev Narelle Collas as our second Presbytery minister (joining Rev Jeanne Beale).

As always, a great joy and privilege of being on Presbytery was seeing people journey through Periods of Discernment (PoD) to candidacy and then to ordination. In 2020, we sent Karen Ellen's name to the Selection Conference following her PoD, approved Yoo Mi Park to be ordained as a Minister of the Word and Fi Bottcher as a Deacon, and celebrated the ordinations of Carlynn Nunn and Trang Vo.

**Jamie Thom and Kate Scull**

## Communications Team

### BUC Website

The website continues to be the wider community's window into the life of our congregation and we continue to receive many positive comments from newcomers about their experience with the website. Seventy seven members of the congregation have requested access to the Members section. It's easy to do and you might be surprised to find what you can learn if you have access:

<https://brunswick.unitingchurch.org.au/member-area/>

Sunday prayers and sermons are regularly posted. Special and Regular Events are posted on the Events Calendar. Ministry Stories and Our Stories are posted often enough to keep the home page looking fresh and up to date. A new 'Our Programs' page was added accessible from the Home Page. An 'Earth button' was also added to draw attention to acknowledgment of the Climate Crisis. A page for the Merri Project was added to the Members Section.

Dave Hall received training in order to maintain pages and prepare posts & events related to the Children, Youth and Young Adult Ministry. Daniel Broadstock continued to post the Sunday Prayers and received training for posting the Olive Press during my Long Service Leave and as an emergency back-up. This role is now vacant following Daniel's move to the UK for at least 12 months.

Extensive, step by step with photos, easy to follow guidelines are available for anyone who wishes to learn how to prepare posts and events. Training is also available. Committees are encouraged to nominate members to take on this responsibility.

### Newsletters

- The Olive Press (weekly newsletter offered in printed form and as an e-newsletter via Mail Chimp and on our website). There are 244 email addresses on the list for the Olive Press. Approximately 33-47% of subscribers open the email with anywhere from 8%-22% clicks on links within the mailout.
- The Olive Leaf (weekly worship sheet printed and on screen),
- The Olive Branch (monthly newsletter by email and printed).

**The Olive Branch** has two key sections – Meditations and News from the committees. Other sections include the Worship Calendar, Regular & Special Events, Reports from committees & Notices. Many stories from the Olive Branch are extracted and posted as stories and on linked pages on the website. A special edition of the Olive Branch for the Season of Creation was prepared. A similar special edition will be prepared for Advent & Christmas.

Meditations have been offered by members of the congregation:

- One Body, Many Members, Listening in the Wilderness, Remembering – An Easter Reflection, Why should we care about refugees?, Synod 2019, Creation in our Days - a prayerful reflection for the Season of Creation, Job and the Season of Creation, Christmas Today, *by Ian Ferguson*
  - Reflection on Matthew 18:3 and Being with young people at BUC, *by Janet Watson Kruse (Interim Children & Families worker)*
  - For all beings without speech, *by Julie Perrin*
- A number of people 'Shared their Faith' in this occasional section:
- Losing my religion, and the conversion therapy report, *by Anthony Hinds*
  - Carlyne's Ordination, *by Saide Cameron*
  - Conflict in Christian Community, *by Shawn Whelan*
  - The Catholic Rosary – A personal reflection, *by Claire Foley*

Special News stories (*written by Saide Cameron, unless otherwise indicated*) have included:

- 2018 Advent and Christmas worship
- Welcoming Ceremonies, 31<sup>st</sup> March and 15<sup>th</sup> September
- Holy Week 2019
- JNC News, *by Claire Foley*
- Commissioning service for Peter Blair (Olive Way Pastor) and Dave Hall (CYA pastor)
- Church Camp – Listening
- Celebration & Release from Ministry for Janet Watson Kruse
- Release from ministry – Janet Hogan and Valentina Satvedi-Leydon
- Pentecost Sunday
- Refugee Week

- World Wide Knit in Public Day
- Worship workshop series *by Saide Cameron, Jenne Perlstein and Amelia Ware*
- Merri Project
- In Memoriam, Dave 'Dicko' Dickson, *by Peter Blair*
- The Shed Project
- Mental Health Kit launch
- Olive Way Award, *by Richard Arnold*
- All Saints Day
- 65 years of ministry – Richard Collard
- Service of Solidarity

## **Publications**

Annual publications – the Olive Harvest (collection of Annual Reports) and Directory were produced and distributed on 10<sup>th</sup> February and 10<sup>th</sup> March respectively.

Other regular publications are the

- Olive Bite – a monthly welcome leaflet for newcomers & visitors
- A Community Map prepared by the Community arm of the Pastoral Care Ministry – a bright and colourful document provides information about the groups and activities of the congregation together with contact information and
- Bi-monthly Rosters which organize the participation of up to 40 families and individuals in leading, organizing & contributing to Sunday morning worship. Guidelines for these roles are produced on behalf of the Worship Committee and made available by email and on the website in pdf files.

## **Facebook**

The BUC Facebook Group provides another space to advertise events and share stories. The sermons and Sunday prayer posts are regularly shared from our website. We now have 198 members, an increase of 26. The BUC Facebook Page is administered by Ian Ferguson and Saide Cameron.

## **Leadership Photoboard**

Ken Morrison takes and provides photos for the photoboard which includes Ministry Team, Elders, Congregation leaders and First Aid Officers. The photos are also published on the Meet the Team page of the website. Both are updated as required throughout the year.

## **Membership**

Databases (dates of birth and membership details, roster participation, roles & responsibilities) continue to be maintained and details are provided on request for specific purposes. The database includes Council & Elders years of service. Church Council and the Pastoral Care Team found this information particularly useful for reviewing levels of engagement and participation in the life of the community. We are still hoping to transfer this database to our website.

## **Photocopier, Bookmarks, Postcards & more**

Various combinations of postcards, posters and Real Estate Boards (REB) have been produced to publicize, invite & engage people in a wide range of aspects of our community life including

- Church Council
- Worship (postcards, posters and REB for Holy Week and Christmas, Worship Workshop series postcards)
- Pastoral Care (Welcome card, Community Map, Compassion card,
- Justice & Mission (Olive Way 9 Key recommendations booklet, WWKIP Day postcards, poster & REB, Refugee Week postcard & posters)
- Community events (MMM Dinners, Church Camp)
- BUC Arts (Let the earth speak postcards, posters and REB)
- Discipleship & Education programs (Lent Study booklet, Talk Faith postcards & posters)
- Children, Youth & Young Adult events & activities (Nourish postcards and address labels, Padrig visit postcards)

## **Other tasks**

Various documents, invitations and Synod e-new were distributed via the church email group system. Links to the Christmas Bowl stories were included with the Olive Press mailing during Advent and Christmas.

Administrative tasks include:

- managing the Office 365 subscription used by the Ministry Team, Finance and the church laptop,
- maintaining & buying consumables for the photocopier,
- maintaining & managing copyright licenses,
- providing name tags,
- organizing and managing email groups.

A number of other tasks are managed as follows:

- The CYYA Pastor and the Hospitality Team now manage photo permissions. An opt-out approach is taken with respect to adults.
- The Website Team (Saide Cameron, Ian Ferguson, Shawn Whelan) oversee the presentation and content of the website with Ian contributing lots of fabulous photos.
- Christine Hornby prepares the printed Olive Leaf for worship; special thanks to Jacqueline Matthews who prepared the Olive Leaf during Christine's leave.
- Jane Allardice, Meg Orton and Lauren Reader prepare worship slides.
- Daniel Broadstock posted Sunday Prayers on the website.
- Naomi David, member of the Finance committee manages the Finance page in the Members Section.

Thank you to all these people. We hope to have a longer list of thank yous in the 2020 Report.

The bulk of the Communications work is undertaken and managed by the Communications Coordinator (*that's me!!*). It is highly desirable that we recruit people to take on specific tasks and diversify the work in this area of our ministry. If you have an interest in doing a task that is not upfront and that you can do in your own time at home please let me know. Training and guidelines will be provided.

**Saide Cameron**

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## Property Committee

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What a wonderful surprise it was to discover the bell in the Hall Spire, when all the pigeon poo was being cleaned out. With a bit of tender loving care, a new rope and chain, the bell has been sounding out again across Brunswick.

This year Andrew Gemmel has joined the property committee, so he's a most welcome addition and has hit the ground running. The other members are Ray Cameron, Jenny Hunter, James Clough and me (Andrew Moorhouse).

Having Laurie Bonney as the "go to" hands on handyman continues to work well. He is able to carry out repairs and maintenance, or organises quotes/ contractors, and this arrangement has enabled much work to be undertaken over the past year.

Repairs to the mortar on the foundations of the church and the exterior painting of the student houses were not able to be undertaken in 2019, and so these works will roll into the 2020 planned maintenance.

The property committee is sounding out interest for someone to take on the portfolio of overseeing the gardens and the volunteers who like to work in them. .

Formal condition reports on the church properties were undertaken in 2014-15, so it is time again to renew the condition reports in 2020.

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Listed below are the more significant jobs completed, (the many minor ones omitted), and at the end, the list of current activities.

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### Worship Space

- Fanlight above door made workable.
- Broken roofing slate tile replaced.
- Cupboard catches replaced.
- Entrance carpet steamcleaned.
- Heater programming restored.

## Occupational Health & Safety

- Defibrillator, Ventolin and EpiPen sourced and mounted in cabinet.
- First aid kits replenished.
- Defib initiated to be registered with Ambulance web site.

## Hall & Kitchen

- Gutters cleaned.
- Air fresheners installed in toilets.
- Large toilet paper dispenser installed.
- Dishwasher dispensing pumps serviced.
- Surplus hall bench seats sold.
- Gas heaters in hall repaired.
- Pigeon poo removed.
- Bell discovered and functionality restored.
- Rotten ladder in spire replaced.
- Bird grills in spire repaired, and bird spikes fitted.
- Door repairs after breakin.
- Sump pump access trapdoor rehinged.
- Climate action banner installed.
- West end door painted.
- Additional chairs and extra storage trolley purchased.
- Under floor vent fan replaced.
- Oven repaired.
- Operable door repaired.
- Cleaning cupboard rearrangements.
- Insulation installed on hot water PTR valves.

## Olive Way

- Olive Way hot water heater repaired.

## Gardens & Outdoors

- Replacement Recycle bins painted with BUC details.
- Exterior bench seats oiled.
- Lawnmowing.
- Lawn security spot lighting replaced.
- Sump pump replaced.
- Graffiti removed.
- Walkway maple tree removed.
- Role description for garden portfolio created.
- Lawnmower serviced.

## Youth Hall & Ministry office

- Storage sheds planned, permits arranged, constructed.
- Storage shed walls insulated.
- Ceiling panelling installed.
- Spare keys allocated.
- Door lock replaced.

## ASWC

- West side door made usable as alternate exit.
- Gate repaired.
- Leaky sink repaired.

## 4 Merri St Cottage

- Weeds on roof addressed.
- General maintenance

## Manse

- Graffiti removed.

## Bucknall Court (student houses and unit).

- Dishwasher repaired.
- Electrical lighting rearrangements inside.
- Security lighting upgraded with movement sensors.
- Smoke detectors replaced. Graffiti removed.
- Some bedroom carpets cleaned.
- Possum removed.
- Pest controllers engaged for moth problem.
- Carpet replaced in one bedroom.

## General:

- New Cleaning contract negotiated.
- Working bees Feb, June Nov.
- Routine Fire protection equipment checked.

## Current activities

- Stone capping and lintel repairs.
- 2nd fanlight being made functional.
- Addressing problem with emergency lighting.
- Bucknall Court exterior painting.
- Water tank pump replacement.
- Repairs to lock after breakin.
- Investigation for 3 phase powerpoint for Orange Sky mobile laundry service.
- Draft a plan for going carbon neutral.
- Reviewing Synod's OH&S inspection checklist.
- Mortar Foundation repairs.
- Preparation of planned maintenance list for 2020.
- Building inspection reports.
- Attend to church laptop display driver problem.
- Sound system has buzzing.
- Carpet steam cleaning in student houses.
- Working Bee: 16th Feb.
- Recruit another volunteer for lawnmowing.
- Carpet repairs in 4 Merri St.

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## Property Committee Profile

The Property Committee has responsibilities similar to those of a landlord for the Congregation's properties. These include the buildings on the Church site (Church, Hall, Youth Hall, ASWC), 4 Merri St (rental property), Manse and the student houses and unit at Bucknall Court.

The Congregation's properties are to enable us to live out our vision and mission as outlined in the working together set of documents.

The Property Committee undertakes the maintenance of the properties through a program of planned activities (as identified through periodic building reports), as well as unplanned items that arise that require short to medium term attention.

The property committee generally meets monthly. Invoices are forwarded to the Finance group for payments.

Particular thanks to Ray Cameron who has done the minute taking, agenda preparations and monthly reports.

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**Andrew Moorhouse**

## Bookings Officer

It is hard to imagine that we could get any busier at Brunswick Uniting, but we always seem to be able to find spaces of time, for new people and groups to use our spaces.

The Brunswick Uniting Church property continues to be a thriving space on both Sundays and during the week, being fully used by both the Uniting Church and Indonesian Uniting Church congregations, with our Urdu community continuing to meet once a month for worship.

The Asylum Seeker Welcome Centre once again operated from the ASWC building and made frequent use of the hall and youth centre. Lentara has had a very active year, using our facilities to run a variety of programs. It is seen as a safe space for all who enter into these programs. We were also able to provide a space, for a woman to come and run singing sessions for Lentara patrons, that have been healing and inspiring.

There were a large number and variety of bookings for one off and short term events. A myriad of concerts were held in the worship space. The Beethoven Festival returned to us and had a very successful concert season. The lovely Souffle Sisters choir keep returning, and The Tudor Chorists enjoyed another performance year.

We have had small and large choirs once again use our buildings, and they speak of the delight it is to be able to sing in our church. We now have a long standing choir that loves the Youth Hall.

The Olive Way and all of its offshoots continue to use our space for meeting together, creative writing, singing, Arts Access and the occasional heated game of ping pong.

The BUC Arts group, along with the Olive Pesto craft group, filled our premises with creativity, imagination and beauty. World Wide Knitting day, through open our doors and scores of people walked in.

We had the wonderful opportunity to hold two, same sex marriages this year, bringing to fruition a long held dream of our church.

Finally, our church is full of our own congregation booking our premises to do exciting, faithful things - the BUC Arts show this year was a highlight for all who attended.

Once again, I want to thank Alistair Hunter who is incredibly generous with his time and his talents.

**Julie McKinnon**, Property Booking Officer

## Congregation Secretary

Three meetings were held during the year – the Annual General Meeting in February and Congregational Meetings in February and November. Chair (Daniel Broadstock) and Secretary (Saide Cameron) of the Congregation attended to various other tasks throughout the year.

### Congregational Meeting

The Joint Nominating Committee for the role of Children, Youth & Young Adult Pastor requested that a Congregational meeting be held to announce the name of the candidate. The meeting, chaired by Daniel Broadstock, was held after worship on 10<sup>th</sup> February. Fifty-nine people attended with 4 apologies offered.

Joint Nominating Committee members were Anita Brown Major, Colin Hunter, Claire Foley from the congregation together with Presbytery representatives John Buckley (chair) and Rev. Ron Rosinsky (Coburg UC).

Anita shared the journey to the formation of the JNC acknowledging Julie Perrin, Anika Jensen, Caitlin Mullen, Janet Hogan, Valentina Satvedi and Janet Watson Kruse who had all served in paid roles in the CYYA ministry from 2015 and also Tim Winkler, Chris Emanuel and Claire Foley who had provided ongoing support in the interim period.

Colin outlined the process followed by the JNC and then announced Dave Hall, a member of our congregation, as the candidate for the position. Anita commented on the challenge of now having an all male Ministry Team and noted that the team would be supported by a female supervisor. The name was then put to a vote and the required majority was received to proceed to a call.

Daniel offered our thanks to the Joint Nominating Committee and to our current CYYA ministry team – Janet, Janet and Valentina – who would be concluding their terms after a time of handover at the end of May. We responded with an enthusiastic round of applause.

### Annual General Meeting

The AGM, chaired by Daniel Broadstock was held after worship in the church on 24<sup>th</sup> February. Forty eight people attended with twenty one apologies offered. The agenda items were presentation of the Olive Harvest (collection of Annual Reports), 2018 Finance report and 2019 Budget, an update from Council, election of Office Bearers for 2019 and offers of thanks.

**Annual Reports:** Thirty reports were presented by Daniel with opportunity for questions and comments. The Olive Harvest (collection of these reports) was accepted by consensus as were the Finance report and Budget presented by our Treasurer Linda Wannan and Council Chair Shawn Whelan.

**Council Update:** Shawn Whelan, Council Chair, provided updates on:

- the pathway being taken by Peter Blair to become our Olive Way Pastor
- an indication that plans were underway for the commissioning of Peter Blaire and Dave Hall
- the outline of the process to be followed for the Merri Project

**Election of Office Bearers:** The outcome of the election of office bearers for the congregation (February 2019 – February 2020) was as follows:

- Congregation Chair – Nominees: Kate Scull
- Congregation Secretary – Nominees: Saide Cameron
- Presbytery Representatives (2) – Kate Scull (at the meeting), Jamie Thom (after the meeting)

### **Congregational Meeting – Election of Elders**

The annual Congregational Meeting held after worship on 24<sup>th</sup> November was chaired by Daniel Kate Scull. Forty six people attended with eleven apologies offered. The agenda included Election of Elders, presentation of the Climate Crisis proposal, Council update and finally Recognition and Thanks.

The Agenda was sent out prior to the meeting accompanied by profiles of nominees for Elders.

**Election:** All ten positions on Council were vacant with ten nominations received. After votes were scrutineered by Ray Hardman and Mikul Denison all ten nominees were declared elected: Gwen Arnold, Claire Foley, Karlien Kok, Amelia Ware (re-elected for one year); James Balsillie, Helen Rowe, Shawn Whelan (re-elected for 2 years); Joel Hallinan (newly elected for one year), Jessica Kavansakul (newly elected for 2 years) and Maxine Loynd (newly elected for three years).

**Climate Crisis Proposal:** Members of the Climate Action Group (Richard Arnold, Shawn Whelan, Camilla Kasker, Linda Wannan and Shawn Whelan with apologies from Daniel Whelan and Astrid Gemmel) presented the declaration that: *'BUC recognises that we are in a state of climate crisis that requires urgent action for climate justice by all levels of government, business, the community, as well as by individuals.'* The proposal was put and received by consensus.

**Council update:** Shawn Whelan offered comments on

- the council's reporting processes
- Merri Project Blue Sky thinking
- preparations for the Leaders' Retreat in February
- Engagement with the indigenous community in response to a proposal from the Worship and JAM committees

**Thank you:** Words of appreciation were offered to Concluding Elders:

- Daniel Broadstock – 4 years, Secretary, Discipleship & Education Committee
- Linda Wannan – 3 years, Finance Committee, Treasurer
- Kimberly Fraser – 1 year, Olive Way Steering Committee

### **Other tasks**

#### **Secretary –**

- Regular tasks:
  - maintained the official roll of Baptized and Confirmed members and Members-in-Association,
  - maintained the record (including lengths of terms) of Council members,
  - organized the election of Council members (including preparation of & receiving nomination forms),
- Wrote letters of support (Mohsen Rahim, Bonita Best)
- Purchased a gift and card for Carlyne Nunn for her ordination.
- Reported break-ins to police and property committee as required.
- Liaised with Amanda Mullen (Port Philip West Presbytery) to organize the Induction service for Peter Blair (Olive Way Pastor) and Dave Hall (Children, Youth & Young Adult Pastor) was held on Sunday 5th May
- Completed the Synod Community Life Survey (23/6)
- Investigated issues regarding website hosting as requested by Presbytery.
- Provided oversight for the development of our sheds and organization of access to storage for worship and BUC Arts committees together with Arts Access and the Asylum Seeker Welcome Centre
- Liaised with the Property committee for extra working bees to clear the hall for painting of the floor (5/1) and returning the furniture (26/1); setting up the sheds and youth hall following completion of the project (27/7), clearing the West End (19/10)
- Liaised with users of the Youth Hall to recommend that a trolley of chairs be purchased with existing chairs to be removed and/or disposed of.

**Chairperson** – offering words of farewell, thanks and recognition as appropriate in the life of the congregation.

**Saide Cameron**

## Sacred Harp Singing

We continue to meet each month (1<sup>st</sup> Sundays) in the hall for singing and fellowship over a shared afternoon tea. There is now also a mid-month singing most months, hosted in singers' homes, and there have been spontaneous get-togethers when rural, interstate or international visitors are in town.

The Sacred Harp singings welcome people from across Victoria, coming both from the local area and as far away as Mildura to sing when they are in town. While we have a few singers from our own congregation, most of our singers come from elsewhere. Many are not church-goers, but (like us) find meaning and spiritual gifts in the music and in the community among the gathered singers. In this sense we believe this continues to be a valuable missional outreach of BUC, not an external hall-hiring group.

Our numbers this year remained solid, with 8-12 singers at each monthly singing, drawn from a pool of more than 50 people who come from time to time as well as regulars who come almost every month.

Highlights of the year included:

- Travelling to Gerringong, NSW, for the 4th Australian Convention (full weekend of singing) in January.
- Attending the first Kyneton All-Day Singing in March (hosted by former BUC member Lauren Reader)
- Hosting the 7th Annual Victorian All-Day Singing in July, which included 26 singers, from Victoria, Sydney and Canberra.

Visitors and newcomers are always welcome.

**Natalie Sims and Shawn Whelan**

## Saturday Coffee Group

On the first Saturday of the month there is a very informal coffee and chat at 2.30 p.m. at Marcella's just near the church on Sydney Road.

Sometimes there are only a couple of us and other times there may be eight or ten. It is a chance to catch up with people we may not catch at church and get to know what work and activities people participate in during the week

We chat about articles in the paper, current events, families, travelling, cooking, movies we have seen. All sorts of subjects are discussed and we don't always share the same view.

If you are free at 2.30 p.m. on the first Saturday of the month come along and join us! Talk to me at church, give me a call on 9386.1484 or just turn up and join us.

**Leanne Salau**

## BUC Cycle Club

The pattern of occasional bike rides after morning tea on Sundays has continued through 2019. The rides prioritise safety (hence riding mainly on established bike trails), friendship (lunch or coffee en-route), and exercise (25-30 km rides).

The highlight for the group each year is participating in the MS cycle as Hunter Clan with Colin Hunter as our venerable team captain. We delight in raising money for people with multiple sclerosis and their families and friends. During the year our ride destinations included Williamstown, the Capitol City trail and Merri Creek – Moonee Ponds circuit.

We liaise with Saide to ensure rides are scheduled when there are no competing church activities, around 4-6 weeks apart. New riders are always welcome, please contact me if you wish to participate.

**Ray Cameron**

## Out & About

The Out and About group is for mature adults with flexibility on weekdays, offering, friendship and company. Older adults and their friends met for weekday social meals or excursions throughout the year. Highlights were reliving our childhood experiences of the Myer Christmas windows at the Melbourne Museum, trips to Cranbourne Australian Botanic Garden and the Melbourne Tram Museum in Hawthorn and the end of year luncheon. Attendances vary from 5-15 according to individual availability or preference for the activity.

We welcomed several new people who have moved into Brunswick area and some recent retirees. Friendship and connection with others are important and valued within the group.

Members of the Out and About Group participate in wider activities of BUC including volunteering in activity programs or serving on rosters and Committees. We love the fact that BUC is multigenerational.

Helen Rowe

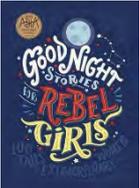
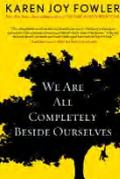
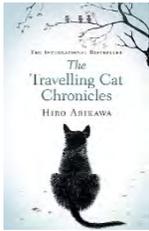
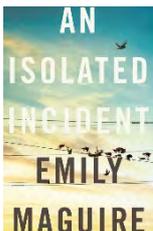
## Book Group

We are a dedicated group of 10 people, having welcomed two new members in February. The group is now at capacity in order that everyone has the opportunity to share their thoughts. The book club met monthly from February to November on Wednesday evenings, generally in the Youth Hall. For the first time this year, we took advantage of book club sets available through Moreland libraries.

We acknowledge with gratitude the leadership and dedication of our facilitator Jeanette Acland. In October this year, while Jeanette was having a well-earned break, Jill and Christine stood in as facilitators.

We'd also like to make special mention of the fact that three of our members contributed to the BUC *Let the Earth Speak* exhibition. Valmai contributed three floral arrangements, Jill had a 3 in 1 installation entitled *Refashioned: water, fire, earth ...* reflecting on words and their meanings in a time of climate crisis and Janet read some poetry including some she had written herself.

Here are the books we read in 2019:

<p>February</p>  <p><b>Good night stories for rebel girls</b> by Favilli &amp; Cavallo</p>  <p><b>We are all completely beside ourselves</b> by Karen Joy Fowler</p>	<p>March</p>  <p><b>Nakano thrift shop</b> by Hiromi Kawakami; trans Allison Markin Powell</p>	<p>April</p>  <p><b>Skylarking</b> by Kate Mildenhall</p>	<p>May</p>  <p><b>Danger music</b> by Eddie Ayres</p>	<p>June</p>  <p><b>The travelling cat chronicles</b> by Hiro Arikawa; trans Philip Gabriel</p>
<p>July</p>  <p><b>The first casualty</b> by Peter Grete</p>	<p>August</p>  <p><b>An isolated incident</b> by Emily Maguire</p>	<p>September</p>  <p><b>The Miniaturist</b> by Jessie Burton</p>	<p>October</p>  <p><b>Manhattan Beach</b> by Jennifer Egan</p>	<p>November</p>  <p><b>Hello, beautiful! scenes from a life</b> by Hannah Rayson</p>

Often, we finish book club with the reading of a picture book. Together we experience a whole story from beginning to end. Sometimes the books contain an important message and sometimes they are just for fun. They stimulate our minds, foster creativity and stimulate discussion.

In November, our final meeting for the year, we shared books we had read during the year that resonated with us, our top TV or movie viewing and/or a Christmas story. Here is what we came up with:

Books :	Top viewing
<i>The Dalai Lama's cat</i> by David Michie <i>Nickel boys</i> by Colson Whitehead <i>Never let me go</i> by Kazuo Ishiguro <i>Dark emu</i> by Bruce Pascoe <i>The last painting of Sara de Vos</i> by Dominic Smith <i>The hate race: a memoir</i> by Maxine Beneba Clarke <i>Things: a story of the sixties</i> by George Perec; trans David Bellos <i>The mosquito: A human history of our deadliest predator /</i> Timothy C. Winegard <i>The new Silk roads: the present and future of the world</i> by Peter Frankopan <i>Bangkok wakes to rain</i> by Pitchaya Sudbanthad <i>The labyrinth of the spirits</i> by Carlos Ruiz Zafón	<i>Her</i> by Garry Disher <i>Going home</i> by Archie Weller <i>Roger the jolly pirate</i> by Brett Helquist <i>The overstory</i> by Richard Powers  <i>Bluey</i> – charming ABC TV series for children <i>Total Control</i> – ABC TV series  <div style="background-color: #e1bee7; padding: 2px;"><b>Christmas stories</b></div> <i>Wombat divine</i> by Mem Fox; illus Kerry Argent <i>The empty stocking</i> by Richard Curtis; illus Rebecca Cobb <i>Drawing angels near</i> by Mimi Do; illus Garland Waller <i>A winter story</i> by Max Bolliger <i>Tea and sugar Christmas</i> by Jane Jolly; illus Robert Ingpen

We look forward to another enjoyable year of shared wisdom and challenging reading.

**Christine Hornby and Faye Findlay**  
on behalf of the BUC Book Club

## Treasurer

### Cash flow and Investment management.

In 2019 we continued banking with *ANZ Brunswick Branch* and holding investments in UCA Funds, renamed *U Ethical*. Read-only access to the BUC U Ethical accounts has been shared.

*Banking.* As in recent years, most of our bank transactions are online. Only 2 cheques were issued in 2019, and only because the payees requested a cheque. There has been a good uptake in regular online offerings. Also the bank account has been used more and more for FUNdraising events, sales and donations, as we have an increasingly-cashless society. These transactions are well-managed by the BUC FUNdraisers. While ANZ continues to upgrade its services, some, like 'no-teller deposits of coins and notes' are not used much by us for the Sunday collections, as these machines are often 'down'.

*Investments.* Our U Ethical investments have done well in 2019, in line with the stock market. More detail will be presented at the AGM. The funds invested were consolidated in August into a small amount in Cash and a higher proportion in Growth funds, based on advice from Finance Committee member Emanuel Datt.

### Staff 2019.

*Jacqueline Matthews* finished her one year contract period June; Jacqueline continues with her studies.

Council approved the change of Finance staff and hours to include a 24 hour per month Finance Coordinator and a 10 hour per month Finance Clerk. In September, *Abi Benham-Bannon* was appointed Co-ordinator and *Sasha McGrath* Finance Clerk.

*Abi* had worked with BUC Finance 3 years, first as Income Book-keeper, then Income and Projects Book-keeper. She has a degree in Social Geography from UniMelb and has now, at the end of 2019, a degree in dance at Deakin University. *Abi* has had a long association with UCA, is a member of BUC and actively involved in refugee action group LMAW Love Makes a Way.

*Sasha* has worked in a book-keeping role for a social service group in Sunbury for several years. She not only has a Maths degree from the University of Bogor, Indonesia, but has several certificates in accounting software products like Xero and MYOB Account Right. *Sasha* is a member of the BIUC (Brunswick Indonesian Uniting Church), and has interests in music and dance.

*Professional Development.* Despite the best of intentions, none was undertaken in 2019 by staff.

### Reports 2019

- To CYYA Pastor on *Student House accommodation fees* on the 9<sup>th</sup> of each month ensure that any follow-up is seen as a CYYA Pastoral Care, not a Finance, issue. This has worked well in 2019.
- In the monthly *Olive Branch*, have included offerings graphs, Finance-and-Mission-related crosswords and quizzes. These were well-received.
- To *Council* have been a full set of 'numbers' (Income and Expenditure Report), commentary on the numbers, plus a text report every 3 months, with only text reports in the two months in between. Recommendations by Finance to Council, and their outcomes, are in the Council DropBox.
- To *Committees* have been a full set of 'numbers' (Income and Expenditure Report), plus commentary on the numbers, every three months. Ad-hoc reports are also done on demand.
- To the *Congregation AGM* in 2019: the 2018 Annual reports of Income and Expenditure, the Balance Sheet as at 31/12/2018, plus explanatory notes. Assistance was given the Chair in producing the 2019 Budget report 'numbers'.
- To *Synod* (UCA VicTas), and regulatory body *ACNC*. Annual 2018 financial reports to these have been delayed while waiting for the 2018 financial audit.

### Audit

The audits for 2017 and 2018 were received December 2019. Recommendations are not major and will be addressed. We are actively seeking a new auditor with experience in NFPs.

### Meetings/ communications

All Council meetings in 2019 were attended by the Treasurer or her delegate. The Finance Committee met every two months, with many communications in between. *Mal Rowe* is thanked for his Secretary role.

### Financial accounting

*MYOB Essentials*, a web-based system, continued to be used for creditors (payments), debtors (income) and General Ledger (Income, Expenses and Balance sheet accounts, namely Assets and Liabilities). While *MYOB Essentials* is relatively easy-to-use, it has its limitations which are becoming more important as the Church expands its mission activities. There is an opportunity to upgrade to web-based *Xero* in 2020.

*Sunday collections* and banking have been well-managed by *Mal Rowe* and *Naomi David* using *Trello* and spreadsheets. *Graham Lawrence* developed a useful system which allows for screen signatures (if using the correct hardware). Our thanks also go to a large and growing group of Sunday collectors and bankers willing to be on a confidential roster. Collection helpers, not rostered, are much appreciated.

The *Fixed Asset register* has been developed and maintained by *Mal* aided by *Jacqueline*. *Insurance* matters related to thefts, burglaries, damage, have been well-managed by *Mal*, including final resolution of damage done by an *Olive Way* board striking a car parked on *Sydney Road*. There was 'paperwork' related to panel-beaters, *Synod* accounting and insurance companies. *Mal's* diligence saved us \$800.

*Land tax* continues to be a major expense which is not communicated to the congregations from *Synod* in a timely fashion. During the year, it is reported at this congregation level as an accrual to Budget by Finance. The concern about timeliness has been taken up with *Synod Accounting*.

*Dealings with Synod* accounting continue related to Payroll (issues only), authorisation of leave, and IOMF.

'*Uniting*' (the name of the 2018 merge of several UCA agencies). Financial dealings with *Uniting* have increased with substantial targeted donations received to purchase Food Vouchers from *Uniting*. These are administered through the Pastoral Care Committee. *Uniting* also manages projects for which other FUNdraising was done by the *Mulling* group in 2019.

## Management accounting.

In 2019 we continued to assist Chair, Council and Committees with

- 2019 Budget and preliminary 2020 Budget
- Analysis e.g. costings for Chair/JNC for new roles, e.g. (with Property Committee) energy use and cost analysis for Climate Action Group
- Projects e.g. participation in Merri Project Steering Group MPSG.

## 2019 Income and Expenditure Statement plus 31/12/2019 Balance Sheet

These will be distributed prior and presented at the Congregation AGM after Worship 23 February 2020, along with the Council's 2020 proposed Budget.

## 2020

I stand down as Treasurer after 4 years (Apr 2016-Dec 2019). The 2020 Interim Treasurer will be *Shawn Whelan*, who as Chair for the last 4 years has considerable church finance experience. Resources, policies, system and people are sufficiently in place to continue with appropriate financial management of the church and further developments while we, as a church, contribute to God's mission on this earth.

**My thanks** for their contributions and good working relationships with BUC Finance in 2019 go to:

- The Finance Committee: Tim Budge, Emanuel Datt, Naomi David and Mal Rowe;
- Staff: Jacqueline Matthews, Abi Benham-Bannon, Sasha McGrath
- Sunday Collectors: Mal Rowe, Graham Lawrence, Ray Hardman, Naomi David, Tim Budge, Emanuel Datt, and their many helpers
- Ministers, Council, Committees, congregation members, other parts of UCA, creditors and debtors.

**Linda Wannan**, BUC Treasurer

NB – Financial Statements will be made shortly before or at the AGM.

