

renewal

FAITH FOR A NEW SEASON ■ SYNOD 37

Report from Presbytery of Carpentaria



Summary

The Presbytery of Carpentaria taking in the northern part of Queensland is filled with people of deep faith and commitment to serving God's people in their communities. We are committed to building up our congregations and strengthening connections with the wider church. We seek to find new ways to engage in mission and new ways of funding what is yet to be realised. Our challenges will always relate to isolation and supporting people who live outside of the regional centres. We are seeing the first fruits of the work in training new leaders and the growth of numbers attending local worship services. We continue to be committed to being in relationship with one another and working together to grow God's Kingdom.

Context

Carpentaria Presbytery takes in a multitude of communities, cities and regions with dry tropics, wet tropics, and the dry west of North Queensland. Livestock, Sugar Cane, Vegetables, Minerals, Coal and Ore are key parts of many of our communities.

In some areas, rain is measured in metres and others in millimetres. Roads are decent in the dry for most areas and off limits to most in the wet. Much of our planning and activities are determined by the seasons and when the most people can gather.

But when we gather there is worship, there is prayer and there are genuine relationships being formed or renewed. The Holy Spirit revives us and challenges us to keep making disciples, helping those in need and offering God's word of hope to all.

Priorities

Commitment to support and resource those in Indigenous communities

We give thanks for the people of the Cape who remind us again and again that God is present and active amongst the people. As much as we seek to support through ministry and property matters, our lives are enriched by those who openly share their culture and their faith with us.

Exploring ways to resource new mission through property development and new income streams.

We are actively exploring the opportunities that vacant land and new growth areas might provide. Social and low-cost housing is one option that is being explored. New partnerships with others for mission growth are also part of this work.

Equipping lay leaders

We continue to seek out those who are looking for training in lay preaching, potential ministry agents of the future and meeting the requirements of safe ministry and code of ethics and good governance of congregations and property.

Where possible we look to provide face to face opportunities for this learning to take place as internet and phone coverage remains unreliable in many parts of North Queensland.

Plentiful focus

- A number of years ago, the idea of building some type of housing on Thursday Island (TI) including a long overdue new manse began to take shape. After many different conversations, and challenges, with the help of the Business Development Unit and Synod Property, the idea became a proposal to build low-cost housing which would not only help the housing shortage on the Island but also offer rent at a lesser amount to make it more affordable for those in greatest need.

We have also been able to fulfil a long-time hope and that is to build a new manse which will make living on TI so much more comfortable.

While soil has not been turned yet on this project, we are excited about what this will mean for the Thursday Island congregation and the community.

- One of the exciting things that has occurred is the way in which different congregations are seeking to connect with their community and other congregations. Some of the highlights include a monthly café for aged care clients and families to have a morning out with good food and entertainment, a mobile BBQ trailer which goes out each week to feed the homeless and to offer friendship and conversation, support to refugee families, the exploration of an Outside School Hours centre for a community that does not have one and the ongoing pastoral support to farm workers from the pacific islands who spend months if not years away from loved ones.
- Each month, the Presbytery Ministers from each Presbytery, along with the Moderator and the Director of Mission UnitingCare meet together for the Presbytery Synod Interface (PSI). This is a time that continues to prove invaluable for all involved.

Challenges

Our biggest challenge will always be supporting congregations to find new leaders including ministry agents to live and work in regional and remote communities.

We also face, as all presbyteries do, the financial cost of what we do and the ways in which we seek to fund it. To this end we are committed to exploring all property and congregation ideas that will increase finances for the work of the Presbytery.

Greener Shoots - possibilities and opportunities

The way in which each congregation is trying to look beyond themselves to the community from which they come is inspiring new ideas and new connections.

We are thankful for the support and commitment given by UnitingCare through the work of Connect100 to resource and support new ministry opportunities with local agencies and congregations. This has given focus to a long-hoped for reconnection to the aged care centres and community health support work that was begun many years ago.

We continue to be inspired by our ministry agents from around the world who work in regional and remote communities. We have seen hundreds come to Christ through nightly prayer meetings held in remote communities such as Napranum and Aurukun. We watch and learn from them about what it



means to be servants of God as they care for their people and as they become valued members of these communities.

Proposals to the 37th Synod

It is proposed that the 37th Synod receive this report.

Contact for report questions

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