

Presbytery Standing Committee

UPDATE



Issue 7/2021
September 2021

The Presbytery Standing Committee (PSC) met on the 14th of September 2021

The following information has been prepared for the use of members of Presbytery and distribution to Congregations within the Georges River Presbytery.

The Presbytery Standing Committee is continuing to meet monthly via zoom. It has been a blessing that we have been able to as the Presbytery Standing Committee continue this important work online, however like many of us, the constant zoom meetings are becoming increasing tiring.

At the meeting held on the 14th September 2021 the following was decided.

The Standing Committee received two nominations for the standing committee from Rev. Graeme Watkins and Elizabeth Havea. Both nominations were accepted and have been appointed to the Standing Committee for the period until 30th June 2022. The standing Committee would like to highlight that there are still further vacancies on the following committees:

Standing Committee – two (2) positions vacant.

Property Committee - three (3) positions vacant.

The Standing Committee received the following normal reports (as part of the oversight of the operations of the Georges River Presbytery):

The Mission & Leadership Presbytery Minister

The Business Manager

The Finance Report

The Property Committee Report

The PRC Report

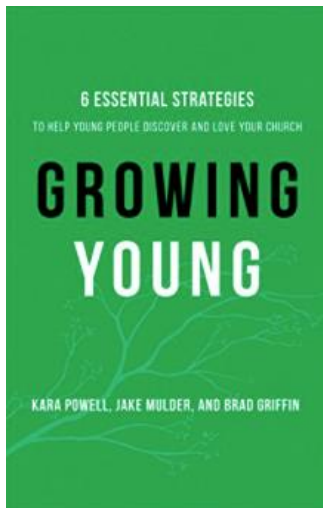
The Standing Committee also received the report on the development of the “Risk Register” for the Georges River Presbytery. The risk register will be reviewed at the October meeting of the Standing Committee, and then quarterly following this initial review. The risk register is one part of the ongoing governance and compliance work of the Presbytery.



Unleashing the Passion of Young People in Your Church Is Possible!

The presbytery is planning on hosting several learning cohorts to help churches within the presbytery to understand and engage with younger people. These learning cohorts are planned to be run from late 2021 & 2022 and will be based off the book “Growing Young” – 6 essential strategies to help young people discover and love your church. These will be run with the help of the Uniting Mission & Education (UME) – Pulse team.

Information about the book.



Churches are losing both members and vitality as increasing numbers of young people disengage. Based on ground-breaking research with over 250 of the nation's leading congregations, *Growing Young* provides a strategy any church can use to involve and retain teenagers and young adults. It profiles innovative churches that are engaging 15- to 29-year-olds and as a result are growing--spiritually, emotionally, missionally, and numerically. Packed with both research and practical ideas, *Growing Young* shows pastors and ministry leaders how to position their churches to engage younger generations in a way that breathes vitality, life, and energy into the *whole* church.

Training Opportunities for Mission:

'First Love Resources'

'First Love' is a simple step-by-step resource on how congregations and members can equip themselves to confidently share the gospel with others, essentially rebuilding the congregation through relationships in responding to God's mission in the local community. 'First Love' that can be found on the UME website: <https://ume.nswact.uca.org.au/resources/first-love/>

The advertisement is split into two main visual sections. On the left, a black and white photograph of a man with a beard, wearing a white head covering, is shown in profile with his hands clasped in prayer. Overlaid on this image is the text 'First Love' in large white letters, followed by a paragraph: 'First Love will help to grow a shared confidence in the Gospel. It is suitable for all life stages and everybody. It works different for each person. It is the frame for a conversation not a book to sell or hand out.' On the right, there is a 3D rendering of the 'First Love' book box set. The cover of the box set features the title 'First Love' in a blue script font, with the subtitle 'SIMPLE STEPS TO FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST' below it. The bottom half of the cover shows several hands of different skin tones joined together to form a heart shape.



Global Leadership Summit (GLS)

New Beginnings UC is hosting our Presbytery cohort of the Global Leadership Summit (GLS) that will be taking place 13th November 2021. The date for the GLS is subject to COVID19 restrictions being lifted. The Standing Committee has agreed to support a group of 10 members of 'Living Streams in Christ' (Presbytery Youth) to join the New Beginnings team. It will be a full-day event and the main speakers for the summit are highly experienced mission practitioners from various backgrounds who are making a difference in God's mission worldwide. If you would like to attend (numbers dependant) please contact [Rev. Simon Lee](#) - For further information about GLS click on: globalleadership.org.au



PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2021

Congratulations to those congregations who are working towards online services, Church Council meetings and fellowship gatherings on Zoom so no one is left behind in these physically distanced times. Help is available through the Presbytery Office if you are interested in expanding your Congregation's delivery.

Pastoral Care is so important in our congregations at present and many Ministers, Elders and Church Councillors and congregants are providing a network of care for the members of their congregations with new and traditional methods of connecting. When we ask others "Are you OK?" during the stressful times of lockdown and isolation we are playing our part as Jesus would have us do.

The **devotions** at the September PRC meeting were led by **Rev 'Oto Faiva**. His message, summarised for the Minutes, reminds us of the Uniting Church and our sense of welcome and belonging.

Mark 2:34-37: *welcome people who are different with open arms – care for them. In these 3 stories Jesus wants to change our minds and heart – it's a message of hope – a timely reminder. Uphold others in prayer – never give up – the Christian life is confidence in the Gospel - it is the power of God. The Uniting Church provides a sense of belonging – a focus on God – and we should share our faith and pastorally care for all people.*



- **Supply Presbytery Pastoral Relations Minister: Rev Graeme Olsen** has commenced his Supply role as Presbytery Pastoral Relations Minister (40%) on 1st September to share his pastoral gifts with the GRP ministers and congregations. It was great to see him on Zoom at the recent PRC meeting and we welcome his return to GRP which he knows so well.
- **Ethical Ministry Courses**- Ministers are required to update their Ethical Ministry Training each year and the Presbytery ensures this compliance. **Rev Nancy Brawn** has kept these records on behalf of the Presbytery as part of her Convenor and Facilitator role in the Ethical Ministry Committee. Thank you, Nancy.
- **Rev Young-Dae Lee of Jannali** has been elected as an **Ethical Ministry Facilitator** to join **Rev Nancy Brawn and Rev Graham Watkins** on this team. His experience in ministry with congregations in Sydney and an exchange in Canada will no doubt be helpful in this role.
- **Church Councils** are reminded of updating expired **Working With Children checks** and completion of Safe Church course regularly.
- **Life & Witness Training** (UME)(online) **Sat 25th Sept 10.00am -2.30pm** (RSVP required). Every Minister and 1 lay person is encouraged to attend.
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Congregations

New Beginnings (Cronulla) and **Rev Simon Lee** will have a Vital Ministry consultation soon (COVID restrictions permitting) led by Rev Alex Thomas & Rev Junmo Koo.

Grace Christian Church (Padstow Panania) has commenced a Placement Profile.

Rockdale Placement Profile is in the final stages of approval by PRC. Much work has been put into a Mission Plan followed by a Budget and Profile under the guidance of **Rev Dr Cameron Eccleston** and **Rev Dr Matagi Vilitama**. Most recently the RUC Church Council has met and approved the assistance of Presbytery with their planning. Rockdale Church Council and **Rev Martin Goodwin** appreciated the assistance of Presbytery in clarifying matters for their church’s future. **Richard Hanna** and **Greg McKay** have been instrumental in getting to this point especially with a manageable 5-year budget.



Mission planning is underway or completed in most of the GRP congregations. If assistance is needed, please contact the Presbytery office.

After thought

St Francis of Assisi would be pleased with the number of animals that attend GRP Church Zoom meetings. On Saturday we met “Sugar Plum” Goodwin in her thick white and ginger coat and a beautiful little brown dog whose name escapes me. Of course, “Minnie” Fyfe is a regular attender.

The Presbytery exists to facilitate, support, and empower congregations in the mission of Jesus.

Ruth Fyfe
GRP Pastoral Relations Committee
Chairperson

PROPERTY COMMITTEE UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2021

General

If anyone knows any reliable, accredited tradespeople, please let us know. We are compiling a directory to make it easier for Congregation Property Committees and Maintenance Teams (and the GRP Property Committee) to find suitable people. The tradespeople need to have a current ABN, Public Liability Insurance, and the appropriate licences for their trade.

Property Sales Progress

- The sales for the Penshurst UC complex and Riverwood complex were completed on 17 September and 21 September respectively.
- The purchasers of the Penshurst property wish to use the organ from Penshurst church.
- The Penshurst users will be accommodated at the Beverly Hills Church

Beverly Hills Church Complex

- Some permissible maintenance work has been carried out
- Lockable storage space is being organised for new users

Manse at Ercildoune Avenue, Beverley Park

- Maintenance including repainting and electrical work has been done to ready this property for the new Minister to be called to Kogarah from 1 November.

South Hurstville Church and Hall

- A report is being prepared to look at how this property fits into GRP’s Mission and Vision Strategic Plan.

House at 2a Yeran St, Sylvania

- All the roof tiles have been replaced as the old ones were crumbling due to salt spray



Rockdale

- A development committee has been established to assist Rockdale with the re-development project which will require Presbytery sign-off; six GRP members have been accepted onto Rockdale's Church Council to facilitate this.

MISSION, VISION AND STRATEGY UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2021

Intergenerational Ministry

Our aspirations to grow healthy congregations was featured in last month's UCA News. The article highlighted three different contexts in the National Church where intergenerational ministries are being practiced.

Our story touched on our vision and renewed focus on being intergenerational that led to the establishment of the Presbytery youth movement (Living Streams in Christ). I used my personal experience on the importance of having the whole family involved in the ministry of the Church and in God's mission. Click on the link and read more on the stories:

<https://mailchi.mp/nat/uc-national-news-18-24august-705704>



Mission During Pandemic - Bankstown District UC

Our own Rev Gaby Kobrossi has been proactive in responding to the needs of his community and the wider work of the Church. His congregation is at the heart of one of the most affected LGAs in NSW, a hotspot that has the highest cases per day (300) and has more than 9000 cases to date. Bankstown District Uniting Church's response to their suffering community is something that our GRP Presbytery is very proud of. With Gaby's leadership the volunteers has supported about 550 people every week with bags of food and essentials. They also include in the bags notes of encouragement and prayers as part of their pastoral care.



Please read more in the UCA News:

<https://uniting.church/hope-and-hospitality-in-a-covid-19-hotspot/>



The Rev Gaby Kobrossi has also put our Presbytery on the map in his work with the NSW Ecumenical to Council of Churches. This Council engages in dialogue to explore common ground in theology and practice, undertake joint action and advocacy in areas of shared concern in society, and promote the expression of ecumenism through their member churches. This is a vital element of these churches' commitment to seek a more complete communion with one another on the journey to rediscovering the visible unity of the Church. Gaby is now the Chairperson of the Middle Eastern Council which is an oversight council over all the congregations from different denominations around Australia. Interestingly, a former member of our Presbytery and former Moderator of the NSWACT Synod, Rev Myung Hwa Park, recently elected President of the NSW Ecumenical to Council of Churches.



Rev Dr Matagi J Vilitama re-elected as Advocate to the Being a Multicultural Church Circle (UCA Assembly)

The August National Assembly re-elected Matagi to another term as the advocate of UCA Assembly's Being A Multicultural Church Circle of interest. Matagi led the first meeting on Friday 24 September 2021 with the new panel members Pastor Milise 'Ofa Fojiakau (NSWACT) , Rev Sandy Brodine (VicTas), Rev Cyrus Kung (South Aust), and (apology from) Rev Dr Paul Dongwon Goh (VicTas). Pastor Levon Kardashian (Qld) also continued as a panel member from the last triennium.

The new team look to continue exploring theological topics around Covid-19, such as 'Inclusion and safety' (in light of the impending return to face to face worship), Grief and Lamentation, etcetera. A new overarching theme 'Church in 21st Century' is another area to explore through the lens of being a intercultural church. This theme gives us the opportunity to affirm and help strengthen the identity of UCA as a multicultural and cross-cultural church. Presbyteries are invited to contribute with pertinent topics for conversations in the Circle in the next three years. Members of our Presbytery are encouraged to join the Facebook page and contribute to the conversation.



Georges River Living Streams in Christ News (GRP LSiC)

Following the 'GRP Youth Hangout' on Sunday 24th September, LSiC have planned to run workshops to resource young leaders and mentors in their leadership skills. 'EnableU' workshops runs this school holidays.



Join an EnableU session to further enable your skills to help you in your ministry as a young leader in the community. Short workshops aimed for youth leaders, young mentors or anyone who would like to gain some extra skills in:

- Zoom meetings
- Maintaining Google Drive
- Online Engagement (Kahoot! & Blooket)
- How to run a meeting (Minutes, Agenda and Chairperson skills)
- and more workshop topics to come.

EnableU

A series of short workshops and presentations to help EnableU to be the confident leader you are!



ZOOM 'SCHOOL HOLIDAYS' SESSIONS

- WORKSHOP 1: MONDAY (27.09.21)
(ZOOM & GOOGLE DRIVE)
- WORKSHOP 2: WEDNESDAY (29.09.21)
(ENGAGEMENT: KAHOOT & BLOOKET)
- WORKSHOP 3: THURSDAY (30.09.21)
(MINUTES & AGENDA AND CHAIRING A MEETING SKILLS)

Morning Sesh

Starting at

10:30am

Evening Sesh

Starting at

06:30pm

ZOOM CODE

MEETING ID: 831 2287 8070

PASSCODE: ENABLEU

[HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/831](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83122878070)

22878070 (PASSCODE: ENABLEU)

Short workshops aimed for youth leaders, young mentors or people who want to learn the basics of different administrative and online skills

FOR MORE INFO. CONTACT @GRPLSIC





Pray for Me

LSiC have also decided to provide for the spiritual and mental wellbeing of the emerging generation by setting up a 'Pray for me' platform. Prayer requests are to be sent to the prayer team through this link: <https://grplsic.wixsite.com/prayforme>

"Again, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."
(Matthew 18:19-20)

Life and Witness Training

Close to 100 people participated in the Life and Witness training last Saturday with 26 from GRP. It was good to see our representatives from our Presbytery participating and the feedback we have heard thus far is positive.

The expanded material of Life and Witness Resources that included CALD, First Peoples and Emerging Generations is a result of the hard work done by the Presbytery Ministers and UME team over the last few months. We hope that the resources in the L&W Toolkit and Mission Plan Template Kit will be useful for consultation and mobilising missional Growth in our Presbytery and congregations. We also have several informed people now to call on for Life and Witness consultations soon.

Thank you to all in GRP who participated in the training.

Georges River Presbytery Legend



Georges River Presbytery is pleased to affirm Beryl Tyler as our Presbytery Legend this month, for her enormous and valuable contribution over many years. Please read the article on the GRP website <https://georgesriver.uca.org.au/grp-legends/legend-beryl-tyler/>.



Georges River Presbytery Workshop – Church Council’s Role in Safe Church

Does your Church Council understand its responsibilities regarding being a Safe Church? This workshop is to complement and supplement the Congregation Governance Toolkit put out by the Synod for the quarter October to December 2021, specifically on Safe Church.

Workshop - Plan:



- Introduction
- Synod initiative - focus for this Quarter
- 10 National Principles of Child Safety
- Audit Tool
- Resources available for Church Councils
- Sharing of ideas and plans
- 7:30 pm Thursday 7th October by Zoom
- Please register with Frencing admin.grp@nswact.uca.org.au

Come along to learn and / or to share with others how you manage to maintain a Safe Church.

NB If you have ideas about other workshops you would like, please contact the office.

Why is the Uniting Church supporting the School Strike 4 Climate movement?



(Photo: CSU Drummers and banner)



(Photo: UC Banner walking)

Over the last two years, hundreds of Uniting Church members have supported actions by the School Strike 4 Climate (SS4C) movement, calling for stronger action on climate change in Australia. They have made supportive signs (#BuildOurFutureNotGas), posted messages on social media, and stood with and marched alongside students when COVID restrictions allowed and joined them on-line when they did not. Congregations have acted as well, hanging banners with messages like *Act on Climate! Leave No One Behind*, using church noticeboards to create their own messages and integrating themes of creation care into worship. Standing with students in these ways is consistent



with the commitment of our Synod's Climate Action Strategy, created by a Synod resolution in July 2019. Part of that resolution read:

That the Synod:

- (ii) Support initiatives taken by young people in advocating for action on climate change, including the global climate strikes.



But other Uniting members and those in the wider church community might have wondered what all the fuss was about. Some may even have disagreed with the idea of a school strike. After all, shouldn't students be in school rather than taking to the streets in protest! Why are they so worked-up on this issue anyway?

(Photo: Gymea-Miranda Gillian Minto)

Now a special webinar, hosted by well-known broadcaster and journalist Julie McCrossin, [will explore why our church has taken this sometimes controversial position](#). In her lively and engaging style, Julie will interview some key players, across the diversity of the Uniting Church. They include our Moderator, a Headmaster of a UCA school, members of Christian Students Uniting and other adult supporters, representatives of our First Nations and Pasifika communities and most importantly, students from both UCA and public schools directly involved in the SS4C movement.

We'll hear about the different reasons they have for supporting the student's call for stronger action on climate, how their faith and personal values have led them to be involved in this movement and what they are hoping to achieve by adding their voice in support.

Whatever your views on the questions involved, don't miss this stimulating, informative and engaging evening, Wednesday October 6, 7.15 pm – 8.30 pm. You can [register](#) for the event by contacting Jon O'Brien on 0477 725 528 or jobrien@uniting.org

Engadine - Online conversation with Mark and Mary Hurst

Detail information regarding the event, please visit: <https://engadineuniting.church/worship-services-and-events/>

Zoom Link <https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUqce-orj0vHdHlHsTtNhuZi8bUdDlguwax>



Thursday 7th October
7.30-9pm online

Pacifism and Afghanistan

Does peace-making mean letting tyrants rule?

Using non-violence to bring about change

Join Anabaptists Mark and Mary Hurst in conversation to hear about their work in this area.
QandA included.

Georges River Presbytery Updates Newsletter will be published on Georges River Presbytery website monthly on the last Thursday of the month.

Please send in all content contributions via email to Admin.grp@nswact.uca.org.au by the Tuesday of the same week.

IMPORTANT DATES

5 th October	Pastoral Relation Committee Meeting
7 th October	Property Committee Meeting
12 th October	Standing Committee Meeting
14 th October	Mission and Strategy Meeting

Does anyone have a laptop or device that is in good working order but is no longer needed, please? Thanks

Please let us know by sending email to Admin.grp@nswact.uca.org.au

Thoughts for the Week

By Rev Graham Olsen.

My introduction to the Presbytery of Georges River was in 1984 when I commenced studying at the United Theological College. For those three years I was privileged to be a part of what was then the Mortdale Parish - with its three ministers and eight congregations. Since ordination, the majority of my ministry years have been in Parishes within this Presbytery, as well as serving in a number of different responsibilities within the Presbytery.

Having served as Supply Presbytery Minister several years ago, (a six-month term that became two years) I was a little surprised to be asked to consider this role once again.



Nevertheless, I am very glad to be here and look forward to walking with you and supporting the Ministers, congregations, and staff of the Presbytery in whatever way I can.

While this supply role is only part-time, can I encourage you to please contact me at any time should you or your congregation be in need of care or pastoral support. I am here for that specific purpose — even amid the current restrictions.

In Psalm 34:8 we read these words:

"O taste and see that the Lord is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in Him."

This call to taste the goodness of the Lord, stands in the centre of a Psalm that begins by blessing the Lord at all times and giving continual praise. It is a call to glorify the name of the Lord at all times, regardless of circumstance or situation, for He alone is worthy!

The reason behind the praise offered by the psalmist, is that he sought the Lord — and his prayer was answered. He was delivered from the fears and whatever else it was that troubled him. Living in this time of a global pandemic with an abundance of restrictions, seemingly endless lockdowns, being isolated from family and loved ones, unable to meet together as God's people and an uncertainty of what the future might look like — many people are experiencing increased levels of fear, anxiety, despair and other mental health issues. What will I do? How will I cope? What will happen if...? And of course, the big one — where is God in all of this?

Despite his many faults and failings, it's evident that through the challenging situations that David faced, he was prepared to focus his eyes on the God in whom he trusted and to give thanks to God for his deliverance from those who would do him harm.

Friends in Christ, the words of this Psalm have a strong word for us today as we walk a road we would prefer not to be walking. The God we serve is good! The God we serve is faithful! The God we serve is the source of lasting joy, for those who take refuge in Him.

Prayer

Gracious and loving God, thank you for your Word and the wisdom that it contains. Thank you that through Christ, we have tasted of your saving grace and can proclaim that you are good.

In the challenges of these days, help us to recognise your presence with us and your hand of protection over us. Thank you that not only are you our refuge and strength, but also our ever-present help in times of trouble, difficulty, challenge, or uncertainty. May we never lose sight of this, by always keep our eyes focused on you, our unchanging God!

We pray in the name of Christ our risen Lord. Amen.



Affordable Rental Housing Information Night

What is housing stress and who experiences it?

What is the level of housing stress in the Sutherland Shire?

How is social housing different to affordable housing?

How would increased affordable rental housing in the Shire benefit the community?

These questions and many more will be answered at the Sutherland Sydney Alliance information session

Learn more about affordable rental housing in the Sutherland Shire

MONDAY 18TH OCTOBER, 2021

Registration 6:50

Commencing 7:00pm sharp

Finish 8:00pm

Via zoom - link will be available closer to the date to registered attendees.

To register or for information email: snslade36@gmail.com

