



Croydon Uniting Church

Annual Report of the Life and Mission of the Congregation, 2017

Presented at the Annual General Meeting, 4th March 2018

Theological Affirmation

We believe that God is at work in creation and society to renew and unite all things, bringing abundant life. In the life, teaching, actions, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth we see God most clearly. Jesus brings in the kingdom of God which is the manifestation of God's purposes of restoration, turning creation right-side-up. The Holy Spirit is God at work today in our lives and in the world, creating new communities of love and justice.

We believe that the church, with all its imperfections and failings, is called to be a sign and agent of God's renewal. The church is called to worship, witness and serve as a fellowship of the Spirit. In worship, we celebrate who God is and what God does, and are ourselves renewed for witness and service. In witness, we proclaim who God is by our words and actions. In service, we demonstrate God's inclusive, compassionate love in practical action.

Having prayerfully discerned God's call on this congregation, we commit ourselves to the following.

Mission Statement

Following **Christ** as **intentional disciples**,
Walking **together** in **fellowship** with **all peoples**,
Seeking **community**, **compassion** and **justice** for **all creation**.

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Croydon Uniting Church

Annual Report of the Life and Mission of the Congregation 2017

This is a report of the life and ministry of Croydon Uniting Church; within these pages a passionate, active, forward-looking community of God's people is represented. 2017 has been a year where much work towards the future has been discussed, as well as a year for celebrating the community that is present now.

Numerically, at the end of the 2017, Croydon Uniting Church consisted of 121 confirmed members, 7 members-in-association, 18 people who are baptised but not confirmed, and 44 adherents, with approximately 38% of the total attending worship on any given Sunday.

We thank God for the leadership of Rev. Bronwyn Daniels who concluded 9 years of ministry at Croydon on March 26, 2017 to follow a Call to East Kew Uniting. A wonderful celebration and lunch was enjoyed by many, the 'pastoral tie' was severed by Presbytery Minister Mr Dan Wootton, and gifts were presented. Graham McKern took many excellent photos of the day, and as further gift, a photo album was also presented to Bronwyn.

We have been immensely blessed by the ministry, insight and sheer enthusiasm of our supply ministers during 2017: Rev Ainslie Bos and Rev Dr Robert Bos. Officially, they have worked half-time between them, but they have seemed to be ever-present! Their report is found on p. 15

Worship is an integral part of our community's life, and Ainslie and Rob have lead our worship with care, grace and careful discernment. We are also thankful for our active lay preachers and lay worship leaders from within the congregation, but we have also been blessed by guest worship leaders (lay and ordained) from further afield. Under Ainslie and Rob's care, the monthly Pastoral Care service has continued to flourish and is a vibrant community in its own right.

We recognise that creative worship takes time and gifts to lead, and we thank all those involved in leading our 10:00 am Sunday morning worship, our monthly Pastoral Care Services and our occasional special services held throughout the year. There are Organists, Choir, Band, Bible Readers, Prayers of the People leaders, and those who assist leading worship at Aged Care Facilities, as well as the array of "behind the scenes" rosters that enhance our worship experiences – such as those involved in Cleaning, Flowers, Communion Preparation, Stewards, Greeters, Data Projector, Sound, Morning Tea and more.

This report is organised into the following sections: ***Vision and Mission, Spiritual Matters, Caring for the Congregation, Leading and Planning for the Congregation, Serving the Community, Connections with Other Churches, and Administration, Finance and Property***. This is broadly the organisation of each meeting of the Church Council, which concentrates our focus firstly on our ministry and formation as a Christian community, then moves to our engagement with the wider world in ministry and mission, and the stewardship of our many assets (people, property and finances) which enables us to be people of God in this place at this time. The Church Council holds our vision, and the guiding mission goals formed during 2015, in its thoughts and deliberations at all times.

Vision and Mission

We commenced 2017 with a vision statement and mission goals formed during 2015.

Our Guiding Vision

We at Croydon Uniting Church with God's grace and guidance will witness and proclaim the good news of God's love through Jesus Christ to the local and wider community.

We will focus particularly on:

- **Our prayer life, contemplation and discernment**
 - **Pastoral care of the frail and aged**
- **Ministry with children, youth and their families**
- **Actively serving the local and wider community**

The "Mission Development Group" (MDG) was appointed by Church Council on October 2016, charged with the exploration of a range of feasible options for further focus and development, feeding into the property planning and design processes. The MDG was a group of people associated with Croydon UC who have the gifts and skills to explore and consider a range of 'missional strategies': Caitlin Reid, Carolyne Chandler, Chris Mellerski, David Chandler, Jacqui Nicholls, John McDowell, Keith Amos and Nick Walter, with external consultant Rev Ric Holland as facilitator and Mrs Joanne Boldiston as secretarial support. The Mission Development Group made its final report, and was thanked and discharged, in March 2017, and a summary was presented at the 2017 AGM. Its work has been instrumental to facilitate our further work to plan mission and ministry in the congregation. The 'spider diagram' which summarised the work of the MDG, and a written interpretation of it is found on p. 34

By the time we had farewelled Bronwyn, moved through Easter, and helped Ainslie and Rob settle in, it was time to turn our attention to the stages that might follow the MDG report. Inspired by the Vision and Mission Principles of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, together with the work of the MDG, Kerry Shearer and Charles Pople drafted a Strategic Plan, which was refined by the Executive and then by Church Council over June and July. On July 25, 2017 the Church Council resolved to endorse this Strategic Plan and to commend it to the congregation for approval, and it was approved on August 6, 2017.

Mission Statement

Following **Christ** as **intentional disciples**,
Walking **together** in **fellowship** with **all peoples**,
Seeking **community**, **compassion** and **justice** for **all creation**.

Strategic Objectives

1. Share the Good News of Jesus Christ by nurturing followers of Christ in life giving communities
2. Respond in compassion to human need
3. Live justly, seek justice for all and care for creation
4. Listen to each generation and culture so as to live out the Gospel in fresh ways
5. Pursue God's mission in partnership
6. Ensure future sustainability by faithful stewardship of our resources

To help us consider our mission and ministry more generally, and to focus on the particulars of the Strategic Plan, a retreat weekend was held on the weekend of August 18, 19 and 20. Titled 'bursting to share', our leader was **Rev Dr Julian (Jools) Hamilton** from Ireland. A palpable buzz of excitement circulated the slightly-crowded community room as pizzas were shared on the Friday night; a smaller group continued to meet throughout Saturday. The weekend was regarded by some as one of the best things the church has done for many years. Sunday saw the largest crowd at worship for the year, led by the group who had met during Saturday, with Jools preaching. It was the highlight of the year for many. Plans were made for an abbreviated retreat day in early 2018.

We had planned for Supply Ministry of three days per week; Ainslie and Rob (together) offered two and a half days, so the Church Council decided to develop a 'media and communications project' specifically to address elements of objectives 1 and 4. In October, Council then appointed **Mr Adrian (Age) Greenwood** – former Synod Ministry to Young Adults worker – to work with our young people on several projects that would commence prior to Christmas and then extend in to 2018.

Spiritual Matters

We are thankful for the small but faithful **prayer group** and prayer chain which continued to meet to anchor or service and witness in prayer.

Our **CFYM (Children, Families and Youth Ministry)** continued in 2017 with **YUCC** (Youth of the Uniting Church in Croydon), **Sunday STEPS** (Stories Told, Experienced Practised and Shared), and **Music Together** all continuing throughout the year. **KUCA Club** (Kids of the UCA) and **FREET** (Families and Friends Exploring and Eating Together) have been in recess.

Playgroup continued to serve the local community over two sessions each week, which Jacqui Nicholls continues to lead. We thank her for her enthusiasm for the role, which is much appreciated.

In a volunteer capacity, Carlyne Chandler continued as CFYM Co-ordinator, ably supported by Mary Birch in her vital role as Administrative Support for CFYM. Mary's work includes the co-ordination of the **Music Together** program, our outreach program run in-conjunction with *UnitingCare Connections* (agency for young children and their parents). After 16 years of operation, the decision was taken to discontinue Croydon Uniting Church's *Music Together* at the end of 2017. *Music Together* will continue to operate from the *Connections* office, but it was becoming difficult to sustain Croydon volunteers, the deep connection with *Connections* and large enough group of attendees to maintain viability. Croydon's involvement in *Music Together* had started in 2001 as a 'community project' initiated by Ellen Prior; after the Priors moved elsewhere, co-ordination soon fell to Carlyne Chandler, and then increasingly to Mary Birch over the last 10 years. Thanks to all of the volunteers over the 16 years and a special thanks to Elaine Tankard who has been a steadfast and invaluable volunteer for the last several years.

Caring for our Congregation

Pastoral Care is also an integral part of our community, and our congregation places great importance on caring for those in and without its midst. A dedicated team of

Pastoral Carers support the Church Council and its Elders to live out this responsibility, and to keep regular contact with all our Church family through phone calls and visits. To all those involved we give our thanks. The **Pastoral Care Committee** oversees this vital component of our congregation.

During 2017 we have continued to develop our response to the important **Safe Church** Initiative of the Uniting Church and our obligations to the Keeping Children Safe legislation. These documents are available on Congregation's website, <http://www.croydon.unitingchurch.org.au/info-brochures/ethical-practices/>

Our congregational life was further enhanced by several energizing events: a men's breakfast in October, a craft event in November and a 'light entertainment' occasion, also in November. The long-established tradition of Christmas carol singing, visiting the homes of people less able to get up and around, continued. Evening Fellowship continued to meet and provide great opportunities for fellowship, and the History Group has continued to represent the past to us, and care for our records. Reports from the **Evening Fellowship** and **History Group** can be found beginning on pages 18 and 20.

The **Memorial Garden Committee** continues to exercise responsibility with diligence and care for this part of our Church Property and its important place in the hearts of particular members of our congregation. A full report from the Committee is included on page 22.

Leading and Planning for our Congregation

2017 has been a busy year for our **Church Council**, which met on 13 occasions throughout the year. A significant component of all Church Council work this year has been around planning for our future as a Uniting Church community in Croydon. Aably led by our **Church Council Executive** (Rohan Pryor, Carlyne Chandler and Paul Chandler, assisted by Ainslie and Rob Bos) we have sought to guide the congregation in the next stage of planning for our life for now and into the next five to ten years and beyond. We have spent time discerning, dreaming, worrying, thinking, talking and suggesting possible processes and steps to help us all think about strategy, membership, leadership, ministry and assets (including property, income and reserves).

Rohan Pryor, Paul Chandler, Kerry Shearer and Charles Popple were appointed by the Church Council as representatives to the **Project Control Group** in 2015, which also includes the consultants and Synod and Presbytery Representatives. The Property Development is detailed below. The **Mission Development Group** was formed towards the end of 2016, and their work has already been noted.

Leadership responsibilities though this strategy and review period have placed great demand on key leaders and we acknowledge and thank the Church Council Executive, Project Control Group and Elders/Church Councillors for their continuing commitment to leadership at Croydon Uniting, and for their willingness to share their gifts and time in these various roles.

Appointing a minister in the Uniting Church involves a complex mixture of mission and gifts, finances and future projections, and includes decisions by a local congregation and its Church Council, Presbytery, and the Synod and Assembly placements processes. The usual starting point is a "Mission Study", usually undertaken by the

Presbytery Minister – Ministry and Education. The opening months of 2017 saw two Presbytery Ministers either on leave or on secondment, which greatly held up the commencement a mission study for Croydon and several other congregations.

As we waited, the Mission Development Group reported in March, painting a picture of the mission directions for Croydon into the future. As we further waited, we progressed to a Strategic Plan that was adopted by the congregation in August. Both of these documents would help fast-track the Mission Study when it was finally able to commence. The Strategic Plan was also crucial for identifying if there were similarities in mission directions and complementarity of ministry needs between Croydon and Croydon North, alongside the suggestion from Bronwyn Daniels to consider a shared Call with Croydon North UC (see *Connections with other churches*, below for more detail).

It is highly unusual for a minister within the congregation to undertake its Mission Study, but, being short-staffed, and with Rob Bos' considerable experience, Presbytery authorised Rob to conduct the Mission Study. The work of the MDG and the Strategic Plan, already developed, proved to be invaluable in this process. The Mission Study was tabled with Presbytery on September 7, and Rob and Paul Chandler were invited to speak to it on October 12. It was accepted shortly afterwards; this was the formal go-ahead to commence thinking about a Profile of a new minister and a Call. Rob has been known to observe that few congregations have invested so much detailed thinking about mission and the future in such a short space of time.

This timing co-incided well with that of Croydon North Uniting, and the two congregations commenced their detailed collaboration on Profile and Call. Following formal congregational approval on December 17 for a joint Call to Croydon and Croydon North, at the meeting of December 19, the Church Council appointed Rohan Pryor, David Collett and Jo Lewis as the CUC representatives on the Joint Nominating Committee (JNC). Rev Andy Tiver, from Ringwood North, is the Presbytery-appointed chair to the JNC, and Mr Ifa Naitoko is the other Presbytery-appointed representative. The Croydon North Uniting representatives are Alan McKenzie, Sue McKenzie, and Jeanette Adderley.

To move from a Strategic Plan being approved in August, to a Mission Study completed in October, agreement to fund ministry through sharing a placement in December, and a Profile by February is to have moved at lightning speed. Rohan Pryor, in particular, was instrumental in co-ordinating the rapid development and successful tabling of the Profile.

The congregation now waits patiently and prayerfully.

Serving the Community

A significant part of our outreach and mission continues to be **Helping Hand**, serving those in need in the local Croydon community. We continue to thank Connections for the use of the space we use to run this important and vital program, and we thank the many volunteers (both from within the church community, and from beyond – including past Helping Hand clients) who staff Helping Hand, as well as those who assist with tasks such as the Bread collection. The financial support coming through donations at the after-church trading table has been a valuable contribution. We are delighted that Dianne Bull has continued in the role of co-ordinator. The co-ordinator is remunerated

through a series of donations, and to expedite the payment arrangements, in late 2017 the Church Council agreed for those payments, for 2018, to be from the funds reserved for Helping Hand in the Church's accounts.

Once again, the challenge for the Helping Hand Support Committee continued to be securing funding to continue this work, and we thank the Helping Hand Support Committee for their continuing efforts. The major thrust of work by Committee members has been working with Rotary colleagues to establish an Unincorporated Joint Venture to enable Rotary Charitable Services to obtain tax deductible donations and grants on our behalf. Much groundwork has been done, and there is confidence that actual applications and receipts of such funds will proceed in 2018. Reports from both the **Helping Hand Support Committee** and our **Helping Hand Co-ordinator** paint a more detailed picture of this important outreach project beginning on page 23.

A **trading table** continues to operate, sharing produce from individual's gardens, thanks to Lois Munro, Meron Allen and Chris Hill. While it's purpose is to gather donations to support Helping Hand, it is a focus of community-building in its own right, with quite a buzz around the table each Sunday.

A key area of concern for the Croydon Uniting community is Social Justice, and we thank once again the Social Justice Committee for their important role in ensuring this is an area of our attention, and for identifying ways we can respond. Asylum Seeker Support is also part of this, and we thank all the work undertaken in both these areas. A report from the **Social Justice Committee** on page 26 provides further information.

The Presbytery Mental Health Ministry Project was again in our thoughts as Evening Fellowship and the Congregation both contributed \$500 (\$1000 in total) to its continuing work.

An outreach activity sponsored by our congregation is **Croydon Parish Players** (CPP). They successfully produced the musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* and the play *Stories in the Dark*, both of which received excellent feedback from those who attended. During 2017 they once again donated funds to Helping Hand, Chaplaincy and other worthy causes, a key part of their outreach to the wider community. The Church Council Executive has continued to meet with the CPP key committee to strengthening our relationship, and to manage the impact of the property changes on CPP operations.

Chaplaincy at the local schools, Croydon Primary and Melba College, continued to be actively supported with donations from a small number of members covering our church's considerable donation of approaching \$9000 towards supporting the Chaplains at both schools and many in the congregation supported other fundraising events throughout the year. We appreciate the long-continued dedication, effort and diligent support of Bruce and Carole Turner on the local Chaplaincy committee (who manage both funding and support for the two chaplains) and we again thank them for this important work in the community. A report is to be found on page 27.

We also recognise the role of our Lay Preachers, Organists and others in supporting worship at places beyond our congregation, including Walmsley Retirement Village and other congregations further afield.

Connections with Other Churches

As a congregation in the **Yarra Yarra Presbytery**, the Presbytery continues its work as a council of the UCA with responsibility for a large regional area. David Collett has continued to regularly attend Presbytery meetings as our representative, and Presbytery representatives have worked alongside us in our Strategy Process throughout the year.

As a member of the **Outer Eastern Cluster of UCA Churches** we again shared in combined worship on the UCA Anniversary and on Easter Day (Dawn Worship). We continue to hold the other cluster congregations (Croydon North, Lilydale, Montrose and Mooroolbark) in our prayers as we all grapple with what the future looks like for our individual congregations and as a cluster of UCA congregations in the Outer East.

As members of the **Maroondah Fellowship of Churches**, we hosted a meeting during the year and we thank those who regularly participate in this on our behalf, including Mary Birch, Shirley and Tom Maddern, and Meron and Fred Allen.

We continue to host the **Chin Christian Church, Melbourne (CCCM)**, a Baptist community which meets in our buildings, and thinks of this site as 'home'. A five year plan was developed in late 2016 and affirmed by both congregations in 2017, and the Executives continue to meet regularly. CCCM enthusiastically contribute to grounds and cleaning rosters. We have been pleased to be able to continue to offer a 'home' and our support to them, as they focus their own energy on supporting their people as they settle in Australia as refugees. The 5-year agreement is on page 37.

Both Croydon Uniting Church and **Croydon North Uniting Church (CNUC)** 'know each other' through various connections. We are both enveloped within the same Outer Eastern Cluster; CNUC was originally a 'church plant' of the Croydon Congregational Church in Croydon Rd; CNUC has, from time to time, been in the same Parish arrangements as CUC since union; and we both have 'Croydon' in our name. More recently, Rev Bronwyn Daniels was the Presbytery-appointed chair of the Joint Nominating Committee as they sought to call a part-time minister there, and Russell Davison was also a presbytery representative on that Committee. At the opening of 2017, Bronwyn and Russell saw a possibility: maybe Croydon and Croydon North could collaborate closer; maybe there could be a call to a full-time minister across both.

With Bronwyn and Russell's encouragement the CUC Executive commenced a series of meetings with CNUC Executive. These were very productive conversations, identifying similarity in mission directions and ministry needs. By the October meeting of Church Council, our mission study process had concluded and discussions with CNUC continued to be sufficiently warm, and the timelines for both congregations were lining up nicely. A Call to a full-time minister across both congregations was proposed and endorsed by both Church Councils. With a joint Profile under active development, this was formally proposed to the Congregation on December 17, and agreed to. Furthermore, the congregation gave its assent to the proposal to utilize the Jefferies bequest to fund the CUC contribution to this ministry (0.5 FTE). (The effect of this is to isolate the continued uncertainties around funding, caused by the property project being incomplete, from that of Calling of a minister, and thus accelerating the Call process.) Croydon and Croydon North now look forward to a period of greater friendship and collaboration.

Administration, Finance and Property

Once again we are supported in our work by Peter Mitchell in the role of **Office Secretary**. His work includes the diligent management of bookings for church building use, the preparation of the many documents that require regular and occasional preparation and assisting the minister, along with the many other tasks that arise in our church's daily life.

The **Property Management Committee** has continued to meet diligently. We thank the committed members of the Property Management Committee as we recognise the different circumstances they have worked under during our strategic and property review process. Whilst less practical action was required of the PMC during this last year, they nevertheless continued to attend to routine matters: repairs to heaters, fences, vacuum cleaners, windows, the unblocking of toilets, replacement of globes, to name but some. The pressing need for repairs to several areas of the roof has been taken up by the Project Control Group in order to manage any impact on architectural design and to source funds from the overall property project. We are continually grateful for those who undertake roles on cleaning and grounds rosters and for our employed cleaners, Seni and Suka Seviua, and our employed 'supplementary' lawn-mowers, Stuart and Roderick Norman. The work of all these people leads to a property which is presented as well cared for.

The finance of the church has been carefully monitored by the Church Council. With prudent spending, the result by the end of the year was a modest surplus (enhanced by the finalisation some property of rent, described below). Regular offerings were 10% down compared to 2016, due to death and transfers. This highlights the need for the property redevelopment project, as our capacity to make large expenditure on maintenance of buildings, without impacting future ministry and mission, is diminishing each year. **Statements of Income and Expenditure** are found on page 28.

Graham and Maggie McKern continued as **Stewardship Co-ordinators** in 2017, with a Program taking place in early 2017. The use of video clips on 'imagineering' over several weeks and Graham and Maggie's professionalism was much appreciated. Carole and Bruce Turner continued as envelope recorders.

The **generosity** of the congregation cannot be underestimated (refer to page 28). And so the over-\$1100 collected for the Christmas Bowl was contributed during Christmas services and individual donations from within Croydon Uniting. In addition, over \$7700 for Asylum Seekers and over \$5800 for Helping Hand, and over \$800 (ea) was donated two causes close to the heart (and work) of Ainslie and Rob - Operation Hope (Kurdistan Refugees) and the Amritsar Girls' Hostel in India. Indeed, over \$22,000 for various appeals was collected, which is 22% above offering, or over \$120 for every adult (and in addition to this, there are the substantial gifts to the wider community from Evening Fellowship and Croydon Parish Players).

The **property redevelopment project** has been underway since late 2014 with the first meeting with the Presbytery Discernment Partners in November of that year. The funding for the feasibility study (which was a loan from Presbytery of Yarra) and the Croydon Uniting representatives on the Project Control Group were approved in October 2015. Following briefings to the congregation, on June 6, 2016 the Church Council resolved to proceed with the option that involved the sale of the manse at 49 Croydon Rd, and demolition and subdivision of the land where the hall currently stands.

The next stages of the process were the development of a full project plan, and to approve the sale of the manse at 49 Croydon Road. On August 24, 2016, the final level of approval (Synod Property Board), was received for proceeding with the business case. The Project Control Group has been working hard on developing the business case since that time: whilst a protracted process, there has been a key milestone or decision on average every 2 weeks.

49 Croydon Rd was sold on October 29, 2016 for \$825,000, and the loan from the Presbytery of Yarra Yarra that had funded the feasibility study was repaid. *Resolution Property Group* were contracted as Development and Project Managers, though their tenure lasted only until August 2017, with the role then being absorbed by UCA Property Services (Ms Rina Neustroski). At the end of January 2017, *Millar Merrigan* were appointed for surveying, engineering, arbor, and subdivision design, and immediately commenced work on a draft subdivision plan which was received by Church Council at the end of March for pre-lodgement meetings with Maroondah Council.

However, there was a sequence of delays which meant that the actual subdivision plan was not lodged until the end of June. By September, Maroondah Council advised that further revisions would be necessary, and by late October they had decided that the planning permit should be displayed. To the end of 2017, the project is awaiting a Council permit. To be clear: seeking the planning application was a process that was originally flagged to commence in mid March and conclude by mid August. April to June were effectively 'lost months', with a process restored through a change in consultant who worked towards the end of October as a final date. Further delays through Council processes have extended the date by at least a further four months. In the 2016 Annual Report, "August 2017" was the advertised date for exiting from the hall. To accommodate the delays, this was revised during the year to "November 2017"; no-one foresaw the further delays that have unfortunately occurred. Maroondah Council approval is mission-critical for approval of the business plan for the project, and the PCG remains committed to advancing on the timelines as quickly as possible. We must note with appreciation the excellent work that has been done by the UCA Property Services Development Managers (initially Quintin Mansell, and since June 2017, Rina Neustroski) to keep everything moving on these timelines and for their liaison with Maroondah Council and the local community.

The architectural design is logically an 'implementation step' that would be developed *after* project approval, but the PCG has taken the opportunity to have this developed concurrently because it is of considerable interest to the congregation, and it will lead to a better scoping of the project costs. *Katz Architecture* was appointed in March, and by September concept designs became available to the PCG. These were presented to the Church Council in September and then to the congregation on November 26 (and again on December 17).

Detailed work on pricing the project has continued, obtaining quotations, seeking market appraisals from real estate agents, and engaging a quantity surveyor. Along with the concept designs, some indicative figures were presented to the Church Council in September, and in October the Church Council made a 'commitment to proceed' with the project. Once Maroondah Council approval is obtained, it should be straightforward to move towards project approval. It is unfortunate that the originally-indicated date of August 2017 has been missed, but it is reasonably likely that there will be some 'action' in the first quarter of 2018.

The ever-shifting deadlines have had implications for hall use. Earlier in the year, it was thought that the Croydon Parish Players play would be their last use of the hall; as it happened, they were able to use it for rehearsal and construction for the musical. They said their good-byes then, and decamped during November. Other renters have progressively exited during the year, in several cases 'making good' on outstanding fees, leading to a significant boost to property income!

In Memory

In recognising the achievements and events of 2017 we also remember the lives of those people who have died in the last 12 months. We give thanks for their lives shared with us, and have ongoing memories of the times that they spent in our Church community. We pay tribute to them for the contributions that they each made to the life of this church and beyond.

We remember Walter (Wally) Rowson, Elisabeth Stolk, Alistair Munro, Len Crawl, Alan Hinds, and Kenneth MacDonald who have been a lively presence in the congregation over many years, and also Ken Beavis and Peter Locke who had retained a strong association through their spouses.

In Conclusion

Croydon Uniting Church consistently demonstrates its commitment to fellowship, spiritual discernment and formation, worship and working for the community through its diverse, vibrant and active community. Its varied and busy life and mission live out its strong sense of call to be God's people in this place, to show Christ's mission in care and concern for not only those in the church community but beyond.

As we continue to wrestle with these challenges of strategy, membership, leadership, ministry and assets we aim to open ourselves to look with new eyes and to listen to God's call to continue to be a people *Making a Difference* - living as a faithful and called people in this time and place.

Carolynne and Paul Chandler
Co-Secretaries, Church Council

CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP 2017

all Church Council members are Elders

Adele Allen
 Meron Allen
 Keith Amos (*elected at 2017 AGM*)
 Carolyne Chandler (*Co-Secretary*)
 Paul Chandler (*Co-Secretary and Convenor of Finance Committee*)
 David Collett
 Bronwyn Daniels (*ex officio – Minister of the Word, until March 2017*)
 Jill Davison
 Chris Hill
 Stephen Honey
 Don Marsham
 Peter Mitchell
 Charles Popple
 Rohan Pryor (*Chairperson*)
 Kerry Shearer
 Bruce Turner
 Barney Wilson
 Valerie Wilson
 Concluded term at 2017 AGM: Kay Yen
 Ainslie Bos (*observer – supply minister, from March 2017*)
 Robert Bos (*observer – supply minister, from March 2017*)

CHURCH COUNCIL AREAS OF OVERSIGHT 2017

Bold are Church Councillors

Congregational Office Holders

Russell DAVISON (*Chairperson – Congregation*)

Keith AMOS (*Secretary – Congregation*)

Church Council Executive

Bronwyn DANIELS (*Minister until March, 2017*)

Rohan PRYOR (*Chair - Church Council*)

Carolyne CHANDLER (*Co-secretary - Church Council*)

Paul CHANDLER (*Co-secretary - Church Council and Convenor - Finance Committee*)

Church Council Employees

Mary BIRCH (*CFYM Admin Assistant – casual max. 4 hrs per week*)

Peter MITCHELL (*Office Secretary – 12 hrs per week*)

Jacqui NICHOLLS (*Playgroup Co-ordinator – 6 hrs per week*)

Dianne BULL (*Helping Hand Co-ordinator – 1 day per week*) FUNDED BY OUTSIDE DONATIONS

Project Control Group

Charles POPPLE

Kerry SHEARER

Paul CHANDLER (*Co-Secretary – Church Council and Convenor – Finance Committee*)

Rohan PRYOR (*Chairperson – Church Council*)

Mission Development Group

Rev. Ric HOLLAND (*Convenor and Facilitator*)

Joanne BOLDISTON (*Admin Support*)

Carolyne CHANDLER

Keith AMOS

David CHANDLER

Caitlin REID

John MCDOWELL

Chrissy MELLERSKI

Nick WALTERS (*Croydon Parish Players President*)

Jacqui NICHOLLS (*Playgroup Co-ordinator*)

Worship Committee <i>Minister as convenor</i> Carolyne CHANDLER David COLLETT Don MARSHAM Jill DAVISON Sandra MCDOWELL John MCDOWELL	Pastoral Care Committee <i>Minister as convenor</i> Adele ALLEN Annette BURNS Jill DAVISON Jo LEWIS Lois MUNRO Mary BIRCH Meron ALLEN Shirley MADDERN
CFYM Committee Carolyne CHANDLER (CFYM Co-ordinator) Chris HILL Jacqui NICHOLLS Janet YEN Kiran OATES PRYOR Convenor) Mary BIRCH	Social Justice Committee David COLLETT (Convenor) Ann POYNTER Francis LITTLE Isla MacLEOD Margaret ROBERTS Phil DABORN Shirley MADDERN
Helping Hand Support Committee Ewan GALLOP (Convenor) David COLLETT (Secretary) Dianne BULL (Helping Hand Co-ordinator) John McCABE Lyn DAVIES	Outer Eastern Cluster of UCA Churches David COLLETT
	Maroondah Fellowship Of Churches Representatives Mary BIRCH Meron ALLEN Shirley MADDERN Tom MADDERN
Croydon Parish Players Committee of Management Nick WALTER (Chairperson) Jenn WALTER (Vice-Chairperson) Tanya BUTLER (Secretary) Mark COLLARD (Treasurer) Donald MARSHAM (Liaison - Church Council) Jo BLANNIN Gill COLLARD Robyn DALTON Fiona ROSEL Michael ROSEL	History Group Peter WALKER (Convenor) Jenny MILNE (Archivist) Annette BURNS Francis LITTLE Ron LAUSSEN Russell DAVISON
Social Committee in recess	Chaplaincy (CUC Representatives) Bruce TURNER Carole TURNER

<p>Evening Fellowship</p> <p>Adele ALLEN (President) Chris HILL (Vice-President) Mary BIRCH (Secretary) Annette BURNS (Assistant Secretary/Pianist) Fred ALLEN (Pianist) Meron ALLEN (Treasurer)</p>	<p>CFYM Leadership</p> <p>KUCA Club in recess in 2017</p> <p>YUCC Rohan PRYOR Sandra MCDOWELL</p> <p>Sunday STEPS Carolyne CHANDLER (CFYM Co-ordinator) Geoff COOMBES (<i>Busy Bags</i>) Kiran OATES PRYOR Sandra MCDOWELL</p> <p>Playgroup Jacqui NICHOLLS (Co-ordinator) Chris HILL</p> <p>Music Together Mary BIRCH (CFYM Admin Assistant)</p> <p>CFYM Admin Support Mary BIRCH (CFYM Admin Assistant)</p>
<p>Memorial Garden Committee</p> <p>Barney WILSON (Convenor and Internment Officer) Judy McCLINTOCK (Recorder/Treasurer) Ernie FRANKLIN Jenny MILNE (Secretary)</p>	<p>Property Management Committee</p> <p>Ron LAUSSEN (Convenor) Fred ALLEN (Secretary) Barney WILSON Donald MARSHAM Jim SETFORD Mary BIRCH Shirley MADDERN Tom MADDERN Valerie WILSON</p>
<p>Finance Committee</p> <p>in recess</p> <p>Treasurer Role</p> <p>Paul CHANDLER Valerie WILSON</p>	<p>Safe Church</p> <p>Chris HILL The Church Council Executive as Safe Church Contact Person</p>
<p>Stewardship Management 2017</p> <p>Graham McKERN (Co-Convenor) Maggie McKERN (Co-Convenor) Bruce TURNER (Recorder) Carole TURNER (Recorder)</p>	

CROYDON UNITING CHURCH 2017

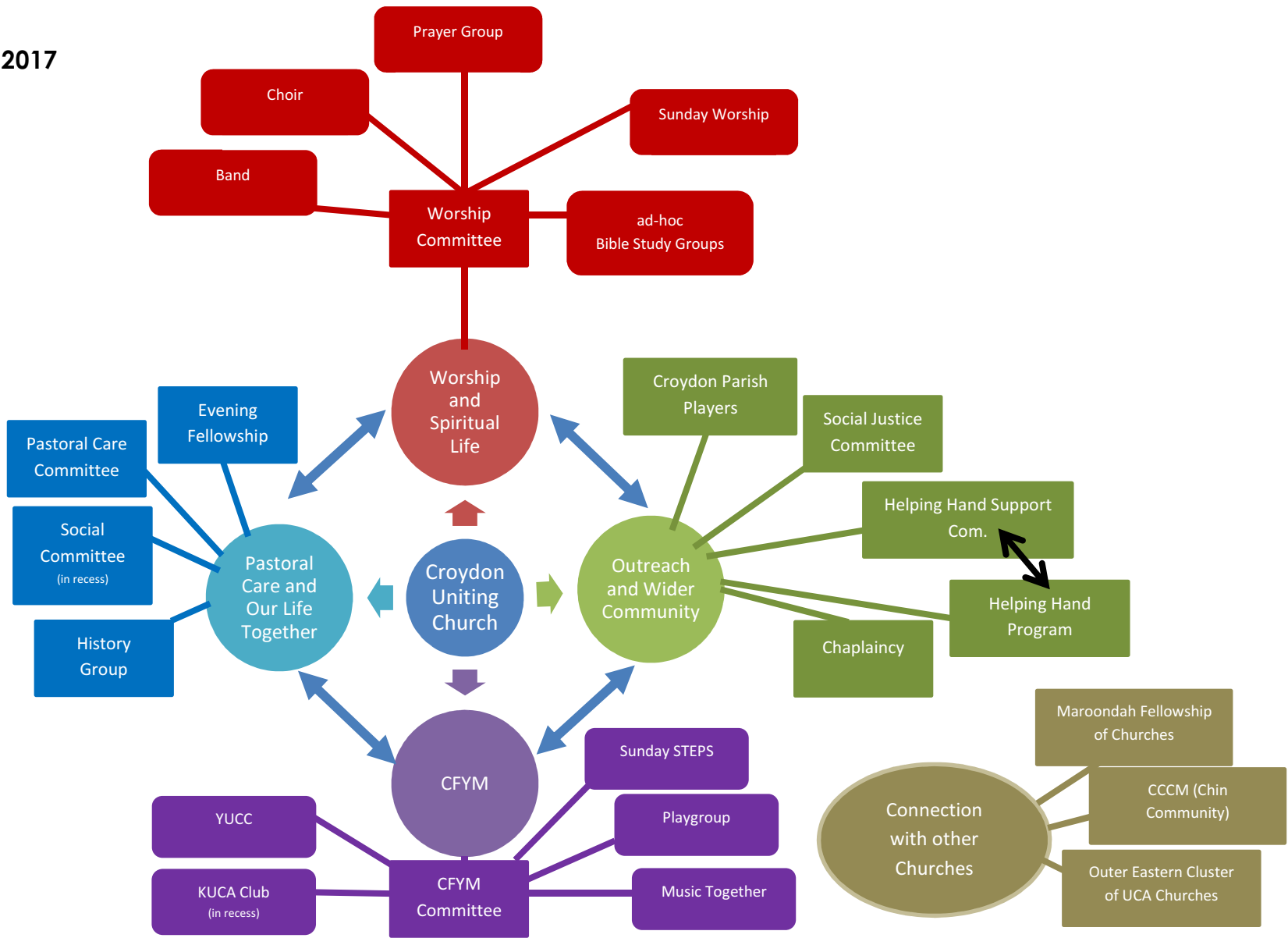
What we look like....

Circles are “areas” of our Church’s Life

Rectangles are Church Council Committees or Groups with “Structure”

Rounded Corner Rectangles are Groups or Key Activities

The STONES at the bottom are the Councils or Groups which lead or support our life as a faith community.



Led and Supported by



Croydon Uniting Church

Supply Ministers' report 2017

We are so grateful for being given the opportunity to minister along with you in this Congregation and community. You have welcomed us into your homes and many of you have opened your lives and hearts to us. We have come to appreciate the work many of you do in supporting family members and friends, as well as the contributions you make to the wider community.

When we were invited to come, we were asked to major on pastoral care. In so doing, we have come to know something of the pastoral care you also offer each other. It is a great team effort. The pastoral care team is doing wonderful and important work. In all this we have rejoiced in the movement of God's Spirit in our midst. Thank you all.

Sunday worship is also a great team effort, with many different people using their gifts, often quietly behind the scenes. We have appreciated the opportunities for leadership that has offered us also and thank you to the worship committee and to Peter Mitchell for advice and support.

We have very much enjoyed the monthly Thursday worship. The 20-25 participants share worship informally around tables, celebrate birthdays and other joys and concerns and always appreciate the superb afternoon teas. Perhaps you're modelling the church of the future!

There have been some great opportunities to care in the wider community:

- The play groups
- Music Together
- Worship services with Adele at Lionsbrae and with Shirley at Mingarra
- The craft afternoon
- The interment services
- The Christmas activity prior to the 7.30 Christmas Eve service
- Meeting with reps from other churches preparing to offer meals and beds for those sleeping rough in winter.

The Advent Studies proved to be a time of great enrichment, as people shared insights linking the Scriptures with everyday life.

In these, we are already implementing elements of the Strategic Plan. No doubt we will continue to find creative ways of implementing the vision contained in it. The work Adrian Greenwood is doing with us represents another element of the implementation. The Strategic Plan will also inform the JNC and discerning God's will for a new minister or ministers.

It has been great to welcome some new attenders in 2017.

It is also gratifying to journey with a couple of people exploring future ministry.

Thanks, too, to the Church Council and the Executive for allowing us to share your exciting struggles together.

The foundation is set. The building blocks for future growth and ministry are in place. There is an attitude that we can do many things, we can try new things, we are open to possibilities that may come our way. The retreat with Jules Hamilton opened up some new possibilities to energise us into the future.

We are in good heart. We are confident. There is opportunity for new leadership to emerge to take on leadership roles. We are both excited and saddened about Rohan's new appointment, but this will provide an opportunity for others to step into leadership.

So, at this point in our journey, Croydon UC needs to hold fast, to be strong inwardly, to follow interests and passions, to be unafraid whether initiatives "succeed" or fail. (Trying, indeed, is never failure.)

We all hold to a narrative that shapes our perceptions of ourselves and guides our actions. Is our narrative one of: "We are too old?" Or is it "What I engage in may be different from before, but I am still useful. God has much in store for me, and if it is God initiated, then the activity I engage in will be both joy to me and blessing to others"?

So, are our expectations directed by the past and what was, or are we focused forward on the future and all that is to come? The narrative we tell ourselves will shape the spirit of the community of faith at Croydon. So, let's make it one characterised by joy, thanksgiving, a sense of adventure, a capacity to dare to dream, one where we feel secure enough to follow God's call to us individually while being appreciative of everyone's contributions – those seen, but even more so, those unseen. With God's help, 2018 will be a year as remarkable as we dare to make it.

We look forward to journeying through Lent to Easter with you.

Rev. Ainslie and Rev. Dr Rob Bos, January 2018