



**May  
2021**

A ministry of the  
Presbytery of  
Central  
Queensland

# Welcome

## OUR VISION

*To enable and support congregations and agencies in being a witness, a sign,  
and an instrument of Christ in their community.*

Dear Presbytery members,

The CQ Way can be long, rough and sometimes circuitous. But always the CQ Way has a beautiful, diverse outlook: straight brown dusty roads where you can see for miles, tropical rainforest lined roads with each bend providing an even more breath-taking vista, industrial sites, beaches and colourful crops of agricultural fields. We are blessed to live in this part of the world.

The Fortuner and I have become great travelling companions with thousands of kilometres in each other's company over the past few months. I have had the privilege of being part of church council meetings, joint nominating committees, worship, consultations and quite a few cups of coffee.

Through many conversations there has been the building of bridges, mending of fences, celebrating progress, sharing struggles and pastorally supporting people in their journey of faith. I have been given the privilege of being the face the Presbytery (which is bigger than one person) in so many facets of congregational life.

As I travel around our Presbytery, I am constantly reminded of the passage from John 17: 18 'I sent them into the world, just as you sent me into the world'. Our purpose in the world is the continuation of the mission which Jesus had from God, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and strength and to love your neighbour as yourself. We go forward knowing that the church is not an orphan in the world, the creation of religious imagination but founded in the mission handed from God through Christ to the church.

I look forward to the continued building of God's kingdom in Central Queensland. As always, may we keep Christ in the centre of our lives and our hearts.



**Blessings**  
**Rev. Scott Ballment**  
**Presbytery Minister**

## **REV. ANDREW GILLIES' INDUCTION**

Induction of Rev. Andrew Gillies  
into the  
Parish of Rockhampton South

Friday night 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021  
South Rockhampton Uniting Church



### **MINISTRY SERVICES:**

Rev. Suzy Sitton has accepted a call to the Proserpine/Whitsunday congregation.

We will advise the arrangements for her Induction Service closer to the date, which should be sometime in September.

# Suzy's Snippets....

## **Greetings**

I have been reflecting on the Capricorn Coast congregations engagement with Uniting World's 7 days of Solidarity (a celebration of our Global Neighbours) during the last week of April. Each day from 18th-25th April we read the story of God changing the world through one of our partner churches. We have prayed with the people of Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, North India, Zimbabwe, Vanuatu, Sri Lanka, and South Sudan.

On Sunday 25th April we celebrated God's faithfulness and re-committed ourselves to God's Global Mission.

We also thought about our families, extended family, neighbours and friends and decided on an action plan to do something to encourage them, to help them feel safe and cared for.

I invite you to extend that action plan across the Presbytery. Consider the CQ families in each of our regions and think about our extended CQ Presbytery church family. Write a short note of encouragement to someone.

This theme of solidarity with our global neighbours can also be the theme for our Presbytery.

from the  
Deputy  
Chair

## **Solidarity with CQ families.**

Each church family engaging with the community around it to discover what will encourage, and bring healing and wholeness to the areas of distress and anxiety that Christ calls us to see and to respond to, as his agents today.

The Gospels assert the news that life can begin anew, that communities can be reorganised regenerated, revitalised. As you hold onto the reality of Christ, see your future, your mission, your reason for being as you join Christ in bringing newness, vitality and hope to all the nations.

Grace and peace

*Rev. Suzy Sitton*



# “Getting to know”

# Peter Coombes

During 2020 my wife Jenny “suggested” that I could put my hand up for the Presbytery Treasurer’s position. God does work in ways we don’t necessarily understand, because despite thinking I had too much to do and too little skills, I was moved by God at the Presbytery Retreat in July to say “okay Lord, here I am”.

During my adult life I have been an Army Officer, initially as a medical scientist, then a generalist officer involved with personnel management, logistics, training and operational work, including three deployments overseas. We purchased a farming business when I left the Army for something different and stability for our children through high school. Along the way I increasingly engaged with community groups, taking on treasurer roles in a kindergarten, Parents and Citizens at a Primary School and in due course President of this type of group. Occasional employment with Census and elections kept my mind active, especially when I took on the role of District Manager for one Census.

Just before we arrived in Longreach a position was advertised and it clearly was God’s will that I got the job. It started part time, went to full time with assisting with training junior doctors, then back to part time for the rest of the role – coordinating university health student placements in the Central West and managing a training centre as well as student accommodation facilities in Longreach and Barcaldine. Since I started there has been an increase of over 100% in student placements and soon we will have an accommodation facility in Blackall to manage. Looks like a full time workload looms!

We came to Longreach because Jenny took a late in life calling to full time ministry, leaving our farm business near Murgon. I continued active roles in the Uniting Church, RSL Sub – branch,

Lions and one or two other short term community activities. Sometimes I think I must be crazy for doing this, especially helping organise the Longreach’s Christmas Street Party with COVID restrictions in 2020!

We have three adult children living in the south east corner of Queensland and look forward to seeing their grandchildren (there’s only three at the moment).

Some good came out of the COVID restrictions in 2020, one of them being the online meetings using a platform called Zoom. It has been quite useful to get together with congregation treasurers across the Presbytery to find out what is working etc. This is definitely an enjoyable part of the position.

We (Sheri, the Presbytery Admin and I), have converted to an online electronic accounting package called Xero. We think we have a handle on its use, enabling better information to be produced for meetings. Other areas that we are working on are resolving the telephone bills, getting the accounts audited and helping congregations transition, including financial assistance from UCA Queensland Synod from the Combined Presbytery Mission Pool that we all contribute to.

I enjoy helping people, and it is always better to share a problem.

Presbytery  
Treasurer





## PRESBYTERY PROGRESS

At our meeting last month, we invited Dr John Frederick, Scott Guyatt and Rev. Dr Adam McIntosh to explore with us the possibilities of our way forward.....together.

Members of presbytery contributed, through small group discussions and individual participation.

Collation of the responses has been distributed and we will build on this at our next meeting.

We look forward to the journey .....  
.....together.  
So, who's ready to go?



Reflecting our connections



Recently Debra Boon, Care Manager for Callide Valley, Gladstone, Monto, and Moura Community Services received an award to celebrate 30+ years with Bluecare. Debra is a member of the Uniting Church and has been committed to increasing awareness of the relationship between Bluecare and the local congregation.

This is achieved by sharing the story of the Church's mission with staff at a local level, within Bluecare more widely in Central Queensland, and in the local community.

Congratulations and thank you Debra for your dedication to your vocation, the people who work alongside you, and the many individuals, families and communities.



Congratulations!

# Walking Walking

## WALKING FOR THE KIDS

Northside Mackay Uniting has a growing number of children attending, and so a plan is underway to construct a play area for the children. The fence is up, and plans have begun, and so has the fundraising. In order to kickstart fundraising for the play area, Northside recently held a fundraising walk around Mackay – 33km around Mackay, visiting Iona West, Armitage and St Pauls along the way.

We walked on Easter Saturday, and thankfully the weather was perfect. We left Northside at 10:15am, had lunch at Iona West (thanks to the Iona West crew for supplying and hosting lunch), dropped in on Armitage and St Pauls before returning at 6pm at Northside for reception at the finish line and a BBQ dinner to celebrate. Thanks also to those who organised and catered dinner.

Only 4 four did the entire walk, but close to 20 people participated in at least one section. Everyone came out unscathed except me (Rev Wayne), but I'm pleased to report I've recovered from the damage.

At last report, income had passed \$12,000 with more still trickling in.

It was a long, inspiring day. The children are worth that and much, much more. We look forward to the play area being completed, along with the hope of the growth continuing.

Such is the adventure of church, you never know what will happen next.

**Rev Wayne (Northside Mackay)**



## Safe Ministry with Children (SMC) Update

April 2021

*Thank you to congregations for your great response to the General Secretary request for 2020 Annual Audit. Please remember, if you have not yet adopted the Synod Safe Ministry with Children Policy for 2021 at your Church Council meeting, please add this item to your next Agenda.*

*A resolution was passed at our last presbytery, somewhat hesitantly, that we could continue to actively search for a Safe Ministry with Children Coordinator.*

*A resource to help us in our quest -- [Position Description](#)*

## Assistance for a Needy Emerald Family



In late January this year a home in Emerald burnt to the ground in just a couple of hours. The family lost everything including their car and camper trailer. It was the home of Chelsi, the manager of the Lifeline shop in Emerald and her family. Chelsi was well known to many of the Emerald Uniting church congregation as they volunteer there on a weekly or fortnightly basis.

As soon as the news became known the church sprang into action. Cash donations were collected and given the family the next day (and over the next couple of weeks). A member of the congregation became the coordinator of the town's response to the devastation on Facebook, arranging for the collection and distribution of donated items. Close contact was maintained with Chelsi as to what the family needed. Items were collected and delivered to the family in their new rental home. As much as possible the family were insulated from the well-meaning but often overwhelming (and sometimes just plain nose) response to their loss. The children's names were not given out (just their ages and sexes so appropriate items could be offered).

The response to the family's loss by the whole town was so beautiful to see. Other churches also became involved with various donations as well as the schools the children attended: the student councils and P&Cs donated new uniforms and school requisites to the children. Other schools had fundraising ventures for the family.

A family in the congregation was able to loan them a car for the time that they were without a vehicle and our whole congregation was delighted to hear the news Sunday (7<sup>th</sup> March) that they had just that week taken possession of a replacement vehicle. It's a sign that things are slowly returning to normal for Chelsi and her family. They have of course been central to our prayers over the past five and a half weeks. They have been overwhelmed by the love and support that they have been offered by the whole town but especially by the members of our church.

(contributed)



# Uniting Church in Australia ASSEMBLY

## From the General Secretary, Colleen Geyer:

At its meeting on 30 January 2021, the Assembly Standing Committee (ASC) gave its approval for a shortened 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly meeting in an **online format in July 2021**.

Putting the safety and wellbeing of members of the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly first was the key driver in making this decision. When considering the risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic ASC Members believed that meeting face-to-face could not be planned with sufficient certainty.

The 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly will therefore take place **online from 17-18 July 2021**.

The decision for a shortened meeting was taken with a view to reconvening in a face-to-face Assembly meeting in 2022.

The triennial Assembly is a highlight in the life of our Church, when members across all our councils gather in worship, give thanks for God's blessings, build community and discern the direction of the Holy Spirit.

These are things that are, of course, easier face-to-face and heart-to-heart. Some Assembly members may feel some sense of loss at not being able to do so.

Please be reassured that, despite the restrictions of the current circumstances, work is already well advanced to ensure that the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly meeting will be an accessible, joyful and hopefilled event.

I will provide more details regarding the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly in the coming weeks in a timely and transparent manner. At this stage, I expect the business of the shortened Assembly meeting to be finalised at the March ASC meeting.

## **ANNUAL REPORTS**

Thank you to those congregations who have sent in their Annual Reports to the Presbytery office.

If you haven't this year, please follow the recommendation from the Facilitation Group at the Emerald Presbytery.

**"At the mid-year Presbytery Meeting all congregations are reminded to present and submit their Annual Reports including audited financial statements that were presented to their AGM. This is a step towards enhanced corporate story and mutual accountability in Christ.**

**20.03.A.5 with consensus"**

## **2021 PRESBYTERY MEETINGS**

**12 – 14 March 2021**

Sarina

**23 – 25 July 2021**

Live-in PCYC Lammermoor

**25 – 28 July 2021**

Ministry Leaders Retreat at The Haven  
Rev. Prof James Haire, leading.

**12 – 14 November 2021**

St. Andrew's Yeppoon

# Remembering with love



Wonderful news during the year of one particular bundle of joy who has blessed their family..

Sheri and Rodger Holland welcomed grandbaby 6 – Sidney William on the 12<sup>th</sup> February and patiently wait for number 7 in July!

Please let us know if you are eagerly waiting or have just celebrated!

**We give thanks to God and celebrate the lives of the wonderfully faithful servants who are now at peace and enjoying God, and we hold them in our hearts.**

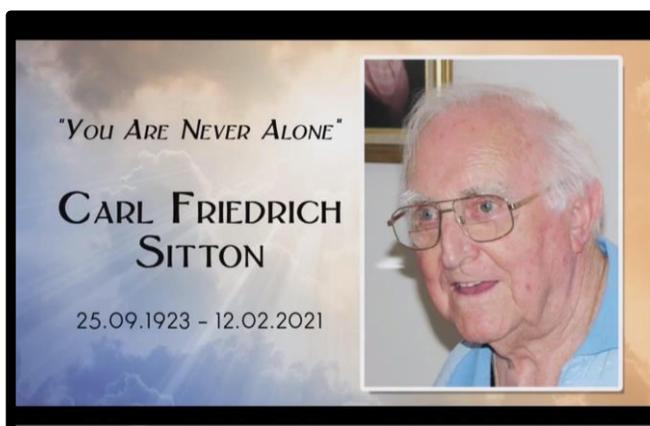
We were advised recently of the passing of Mrs. Dell Williams, wife of Rev. John Williams on the 17<sup>th</sup> April and that her funeral service will move from the Albert Street Uniting Church on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April at 10am.

It is intended that the service will be Live Streamed so please contact the presbytery office for further details.

Hilton Wilkings, from the Capricorn Coast Congregation passed away in May; his funeral set down for Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May at 10am.

Hilton managed the Cool Waters Complex at Cooe Bay and was proactive within our presbytery community in a number of ways. The 1997 redevelopment of the Lorikeet Avenue site to build the Uniting Church and Blue Care Capricorn Gardens and associated retirement village just a couple with which Hilton was connected.

**Suzy's Dad, Margo's husband, Stan's Father-in-law**



We also acknowledge the passing of John Couper, brother to Collette Louttit and brother-in-law to Rev. Glenn Louttit who passed away earlier this year in February.

# Rural and Mission Ministry Canberra

Recently I was able to attend the Uniting National Rural Gathering at St Clements Retreat Centre, Galong, NSW. While the early mornings were a bit chilly – the hospitality was warm and generous.

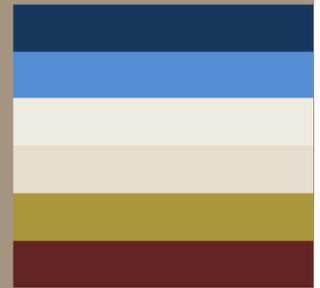
The event was organised by the Saltbush Ministry Team in NSW/ ACT Synod. People from four Synods were able to attend in person, with others from WA and New Zealand joining in from time to time on Zoom.

During the course of our conversations, it didn't take long to realise that there is a deep commitment to encourage, equip, and be present, in rural congregations.

The threads of the conversations wove a familiar pattern to that which we have been exploring in Central Queensland over the past few years. More importantly, the discussions were not centered around what we don't have, but what we do have, and how best to utilise these gifts in specific contexts.

You can find out more about the ministry of Saltbush [here](#)

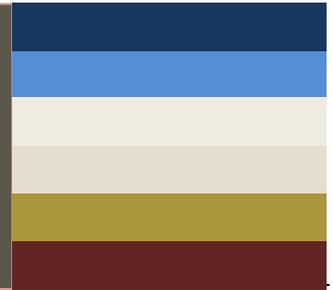
**Donna Muston**  
Rural Mission Ministry



# Presbytery contacts...



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Safe Ministry with Children Co-ordinator

Available

## Pastoral Relations / Standing Committee

*Rev. Scott Ballment (Chair)*

*Rev. Suzy Sitton*

*Rev. Glenn Louttit*

*Peter Coombes*

*Rev. Jenny Coombes*

*Rev. Wayne McHugh*

*Sheri Holland*

*Donna Muston*

*Rick Thomson*