



BENDIGO UNITING CHURCH NETWORK COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting held at 7.30pm on Tuesday February 2, 2016
at the Neale Street site of the Weeroona Uniting Church**

The role of the Bendigo Uniting Churches Network Council is one of shared visioning, planning, and information sharing informed by the BUCN Governance document.

DEVOTION: The Rev Susan Malthouse-Law led a reflection

CHAIR: Brian Davey **SECRETARY:** Judy Causon

ATTENDANCE: Di Esbensen, Gwenda Watson and Barbara Fordham (Central Bendigo), Raelene Hunt and Ian Stewart (Bendigo South), Max Ellery and John Watson (Strathfieldsaye), Susan Malthouse-Law and Richard Dole (Weeroona), Kate Fraser (Presbytery), Lex Milne (StrathHaven), Dean Shirley (UnitingCare Bendigo), Brian Davey (Chairperson and ELM), Judy Causon (Secretary)

APOLOGIES: Steve Weickhardt (Strathfieldsaye), Cynthia Page (ELM), Miriam Darlow (Hospital Chaplain), Laurie Preston Web Co Ordinator

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: The Minutes of the meeting held on November 3, 2015 were accepted.

BUSINESS ARISING:

Hospital Chaplaincy:

As the BOMAR grant application was unsuccessful, the following steps were taken:

- Letters were sent to congregations and clusters, seeking financial support for 2016, to enable the chaplaincy to continue. The suggestion of a monthly fund-raising luncheon was included.
- Contact was made with the relevant Synod department, seeking advice to alternative ways forward. These were not very productive.
- A \$5000 commitment was made by the presbytery and the Chaplain's time fraction reduced to 0.3, to facilitate its continuance.
- The presbytery authorized the BUCNC secretary to approach the North East presbytery, seeking permission to contact congregations in the Bendigo hospital "catchment area".
- An article will appear in the February edition of the presbytery "River of Life" newsletter, seeking support from congregations of the wider presbytery.

It is to be noted that the Chaplain has willingly accepted a change of conditions, understanding the situation and nevertheless committed to the work because of its value as a ministry.

The approximate cost for 2016 will be \$30,500 approx.

Responses from the Weeroona congregation and the Bendigo South Cluster Council were received and shared.

- Weeroona expressed concern about the ethics of raising money by means of a luncheon when the money raised comes from gambling. \$5000 has been allowed in the budget, if required.
 - *It was agreed that we invite congregations to take up the idea of fund-raising lunches if they wish.*
- The Bendigo South CC decided not to make a commitment at this time and sought information on "long-term planning to fund the position, the role of the Chaplain in the hospital, how the system works in the context of hospital management and with other chaplains from other denominations".

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- *Brian Davey will attend the next meeting of the BSCC to respond to these questions.*

Other commitments to date:

- Forest Street \$6000
- St Andrew's \$5000
- Eaglehawk \$750 and a commitment to fund raising

It was agreed that we ask the presbytery Treasurer, Ron Ratcliff, to provide a breakdown of contributions for 2015, to be circulated to members of this Council.

It was also agreed that we recommend to the presbytery that the presbytery take responsibility for gathering support and perhaps establishing a fund-raising committee for Hospital Chaplaincy and that this be an item for consideration at the next presbytery meeting. The BUCNC sees Hospital Chaplaincy as a ministry of the whole church and believes that a long-term plan is needed for the provision of this kind of ministry throughout the church. This is a matter that presbytery should raise at Synod.

Combined Service, 2016:

We have been advised that the Moderator-Elect will not be available for this year's combined service. As Rev Cynthia Page has links with the Centre for Theology and Ministry, she will be asked to try to secure a guest preacher from the CTM. A firm date will then be set for the service.

As the Assembly President Stuart McMillan has indicated to the Central Cluster that he is open to an invitation to come to Bendigo in 2017, an invitation will be sent by this Council for the 2017 combined service.

Sharing of Consolidated Information and Statistics:

Brian Davey has had no success in finding a means to access this information. It was suggested that an approach be made directly to local congregations, if such information is deemed helpful in the future.

Cluster/Agency Reports: Reports were circulated prior to the meeting. A summary is attached to these Minutes.

CORRESPONDENCE:

See Business Arising re correspondence in and out regarding Hospital Chaplaincy.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND SECRETARY FOR 2016:

As no nominations were received for either position, it was suggested that the responsibilities of chairing and minute taking be rotated. To date, the following commitments have been made:

- May 3 meeting and follow-up: Chair: Ralene Hunt Minutes: ?
- August 2 meeting and follow-up: No offers yet.
- November 1 meeting and follow-up: Chair: Gwenda Watson Minutes: Lex Milne

VISIONING AND PLANNING:

- **What is seen as the value/function of the BUCNC?**
 - A sense of belonging to the Uniting Church beyond the local congregation
 - Mutual awareness and support
 - Building relationships between congregations
- **What activities might we share together (in addition to the annual service)?**
- **Could this Council become a "ginger" group, to raise awareness in the community and act on important issues? This may be significant in an election year.**
- **Do above benefits require a formal quarterly meeting?**
- **Is it time to review the Governance document?**

It was agreed that those available should get together in a different context to "brainstorm" these questions and how to overcome the "lack of energy" in BUCNC meetings.

Kate Fraser will host a gathering over a meal at 6.30pm on Tuesday, March 1, at her home, 6 Alfreda Place, Golden Square. RSVP to Kate 0438525343

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, May 3, at Kangaroo Flat (to be confirmed)

CHAIR: Raelene Hunt

MINUTES: To be arranged

SUGGESTED MEETING SCHEDULE, 2016

Date	Venue:	Devotions:
Feb 2nd	Weeroona	Weeroona
May 3rd	<i>Kangaroo Flat</i>	Bendigo South
August 2 nd	ELM (Eaglehawk)	Eaglehawk
November 1st	Central Bendigo	Central Bendigo

HOSPITAL CHAPLAINCY FUNDING 2015

The Presbytery Treasurer, Ron Ratcliff, has provided the following information:

The cost of Hospital Chaplaincy for the year ended 31.12.2015 was \$39757.68 (twelve monthly payments of \$3313.14) Contributions received were as follows:-

Weeroona U.C.	10000.00	
Marong U.C.	300.00	
Forest Street U.C.	6000.00	
Long Gully U.C.	1000.00	
E'Hawk U.C.	400.00	
Bendigo South U.C.	5000.00	
Forest Street Evening Fellowship	500.00	
St. Andrew's U.C.	637.00	
St. Andrew's Adult Fellowship	200.00	<u>\$24037.00</u>

In addition Presbytery made a commitment of \$10000.00 towards the cost.

This leaves a short-fall for 2014/2015 of \$5720.68 (\$39757.68 less \$34037.00)

I suppose, in effect, the sum of \$5720.68 amounts to an informal subsidy by Presbytery of that amount for the year.

The cost on a yearly basis for 0.3 is around \$29800.00 per year.

Note that the Hospital chaplaincy is designated as a ministry placement within the presbytery and therefore the Chaplain receives a proportional stipend and is also expected to meet the requirements and obligations of a minister in placement.