

GLEN WAVERLEY UNITING CHURCH

MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

Held in the Church on Sunday 28th July 2024 - following 10:00am worship.

A printable version of these minutes is attached here.

Minutes

1. Welcome

The chair (🌐JohnSnare) welcomed members of the congregation, sought and received approval to record the meeting for the purpose of assisting with preparing the meeting minutes, and reminded those in attendance on the protocol for using the orange, yellow and blue cards.

2. Prayer

IanFerguson opened the meeting in Prayer.

3. Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held on 19th November 2023

The minutes of the November meeting of the congregation are at CongMeetingMinutes20231119. These minutes were confirmed by consensus.

4. Election of Church Councilors

The chair reminded the congregation that a report of the election of Church Councillors on March 17th is at CongMeetingReport20240317

The chair advised that, with the support of the current Church Council, it is planned to hold and election for the 2025 Church Council in March next year following a similar timeline to that followed this year. Details on the CongregationalPage.

5. Congregation Annual Report

Recently, it has been the practice of the Glen Waverley Uniting Church to present reports

concerning its activities and operation at meetings of the congregation on a few occasions throughout the year. Knowing that not everyone can attend these meetings, a report for 2023 was published as a special edition of Kingsway. It is hoped that this approach makes information about activities within our congregation available to more people. The annual report edition of Kingsway is available attached [📎](#)here.

The chair sought feedback from members of the congregation both at the meeting and at any time. There was no discussion at the meeting and informal feedback suggests that an annual report is a good idea. The chair advised that it was his intention to publish a similar annual report for 2024 early in 2025.

6. Reports and Recommendations

6.1. Ministry Team Report

IanFerguson and ChrisWaddell gave a report of the highlights of the year so far from their perspective.

Ian gave an update on his health and thanked the congregation for their support during his unexpected health challenges. His highlight is working with the ministry team.

Chris highlighted his involvement with the badminton group, the involvement of children during Sunday worship followed by their enthusiastic Sunday School activities, Thursday morning pancakes at Glen Waverley Secondary College where they make 200-250 pancakes for both the students and staff, and the solid Friday evening youth group. Chris advised that the Sunday 5pm activity is about to be re-launched.

6.2. Church Council Report

AlisonClarkson, chair of ChurchCouncil presented the Church Council report

6.2.1. Church Council members

Alison introduced members of GWUC Council in 2024, with those present coming forward so that everyone could see who they are: GeorgeAbraham, RyanChan, LorraineChee, AlisonClarkson (Chair), VidaFoo, DavidFraser, SusanKarloly, DavidMorgan (Secretary), WendyPepper, AnneNewton, MartinWojak.

All new members have settled in and are making valuable contributions to the work of Council as well as being involved in other groups at GWUC.

Alison reminded the congregation that it is not too early to think about nominating for CC in 2025. Any member of Council would be happy to anyone thinking of making themselves available as a church councillor in 2025.

6.2.2. Strategic thinking and forward planning!

Alison informed the meeting that Church Council is reviewing the revisioning work commenced in 2022. See [FleshingOutTheVision2021](#) focusing on the world we live in, not the world we have come from.

This planning complements current strategies of UCA Assembly and VicTas Synod.

6.2.3. GWUC Open Day

An open day was held on Saturday June 22, 2024 with theme: What is the Church? The was an exhibition of symbols in Room1, the main church, and the sacred space, offering an insight into what it means to be church. If you missed that day, leaflets are available on the stewards' table. The next exhibition, 'Christian Traditions of Christmas' will be on Saturday 7 December, 2pm - 5pm.

Many thanks to SusanKarloj for designing and setting up the exhibition.

6.2.4. Devotion at aged care facilities

For many years GWUC members have led devotions at Nursing Homes in the Monash area. Currently JanClear leads monthly devotions at six facilities - Nellie Melba, Waverley Valley, Weary Dunlop, Menarock and Hansworth. Each service consists of 1-2 hymns/songs, prayer and a short message. AlisonClarkson assists with devotions at two retirement villages, Peppertree Hill and Oaktree village, 2 - 4 times a year.

If you feel you are able to assist with this community outreach, please contact JanClear or AlisonClarkson.

6.2.5. Neighbouring Sunday

On Sunday July 21st we invited members of local Muslim, Hindu and Bahai communities to share information about the philosophy and ideas of their faiths. (This is part of the 'Connecting with our local community' part of our vision.) Alison was struck by the comonality on matters concerning caring for others and peace among humanity.

6.2.6. Multi-cultural Christmas Celebration

Advance notice was given that on Sunday 8 December there will be a multicultural Christmas celebration including participation by Didgerido Australia, the Korean Cultural Centre, and the Indonesian Extravanganda (presenting the nativity story in traditional Indonesian costumes).

6.3. Church Council Worship Time task group Report

IanFerguson gave an update on the work or the 'Worship Time Task Group' set-up by Church Council. Ian summarised the process by which the congregation has been consulted over the last month or so. Responses are now being analysed and summarised. The results will be presented to the congregation in early August before are report and recommendations are taken to Church Council for their consideration.

6.4. Congregation Outreach Projects for 2024

AnnetteWojak presented the report of the Congregation Outreach Projects selection committee. Using the procedure for selection Congregation Outreach Projects (CopOverallProcedure) updated earlier this year, the Congregation Outreach Projects

Selection Panel (Margaret Fraser, Annette Wojak, David Morgan) - drawn from members of the Outreach and Social Justice Mission Group - presented a report and recommendations concerning projects to receive funding from the proceeds from this year's fete in October based on the following report.

6.4.1. COP Selection Panel – Report to Congregational Meeting, 28 July 2024

Making decisions about Congregational Outreach Project (COP) recommendations on behalf of the GWUC congregation has been both exciting and daunting!

Due to a series of Covid-19 disruptions to COP selection and the annual fete during 2020-2022, this was the first time since 2019 that COP fund recommendations have been fully made on the basis of applications submitted by members of the congregation. In 2023, fete funds were disbursed based on the 2021 selections, but only 4 of the 5 projects remained eligible.

Early in 2024, the newly formed Outreach and Social Justice Mission Group (formerly the Outreach Mission Group) was asked by Church Council to oversee the 2024 COP process and to appoint three members to become the COP Selection Panel.

The COP Selection Panel needed to quickly revise and update the COP procedures and to re-educate the congregation and build enthusiasm for the process. The assessment criteria, guidelines and the application form were all advertised. A COP Sunday service was initiated in May, with support from the new ministry team. The speakers and posters provided evidence and ideas for what COP can achieve, and what benefits our annual fete proceeds can offer the recipients.

We were encouraged when we started to receive applications after this long break. We received six applications with a total request of \$35,000. Following initial discussions with the applicants, one application for an overseas project was withdrawn as ineligible and another application modified the initial amount requested, bringing the total requested to \$25,000.

Applications for the five remaining projects were thoroughly checked and further researched. Applicants were offered the opportunity for further discussions with the Selection Panel. All these projects were considered worthy and deserving of funding.

The COP selections required careful comparison of the assessment criteria, projected outcomes, alignment to UC mission and ethos, long- and short-term benefits, numbers of people to benefit, the needs to be met and GWUC's connection with each project.

We are pleased to present the projects recommended to receive 2024 COP funding.

Asylum Seeker Program (Uniting VICTAS), Education Support (Inclusion) Program

Congregation Applicant: Robin Pope

Asylum Seeker Program caters for the needs of asylum seekers in Melbourne, by organising specific projects and providing a safe and welcoming space for them at the Welcome Centre in Brunswick. There they can be assisted with food and essential items, housing, access to legal advice, referrals to employment, education, health and counselling services. Funds would assist families to cover the 'additional' costs of education in the public school system which they are unable to meet, such as uniforms, shoes, books, laptops, lunch food, school excursions, school holiday programs and out-of-school camp.

The aim of the program is not just to address the financial hardship that the families experience, but also to improve their emotional and social wellbeing, and enable them and their children to make community connections.

Choir of Hope

Congregation Applicant: Noelle Gibson

The Choir of Hope is a singing group for women in the Monash community and surrounding areas. Deb Leigh conducts the choir which meets weekly at GWUC for practice and morning tea together. It is a place of connection for women who understand the experience of family violence or abuse, isolation or disadvantaged background. The choir offers a place of fellowship, healing, restoration of relationship and trust. Funds would assist in the purchase of sheet music, music folders, t-shirts for performances and hospitality costs. The choir enables members to grow in self-confidence and feelings of self-worth, through shared music and togetherness.

Kids Under Cover, Scholarship Program

Congregation Applicant: Susan Karoly

Kids Under Cover is dedicated to preventing and ending youth homelessness, through their Studio and Scholarship programs. They support vulnerable young people aged 12-25, who may be homeless or living in an overcrowded home. Studios provide medium-term accommodation, when installed in a family or carers backyard to help ease tensions in the home. The Scholarship Program encourages young people to stay engaged with education and job training by providing financial assistance for essential items. Funds would support young people with education related items such as IT equipment, books, public transport tickets, excursions and school camps. This support helps put them on the same playing field as their peers and gives them a greater connection to their education and school community.

Uniting World, Fiji - Disaster Readiness Climate Change (Pacific Region) Program

Congregation Applicant: Russell Crawford

UnitingWorld, through the Disaster Readiness Climate Change Program, is supporting partner churches to prepare vulnerable communities for, and reduce the impacts of, climate change and related natural disasters. Training is provided to support local church leaders and their community to map out disaster and climate risks and develop action plans to increase preparedness and resilience to disasters like rising water levels, floods and cyclones. Funds would assist to expand the scope of this project in Fiji and help prepare additional vulnerable communities. The project comprises community-based risk assessment and contingency planning, training networks of disaster response chaplains and resourcing partner churches with Christian theology that gives hope and inspires faith-filled action.

GWUC Welfare

Congregation Applicant: Remoun(Ray) Abdou

GWUC Welfare provides welfare assistance to people in our local community in the form of food and groceries to those facing food insecurity, supermarket and pharmacy vouchers to assist with essential items, and support with education-related expenses. Clients include people who are disadvantaged, homeless, suffering from mental and physical illness,

asylum seekers and refugees. Funds would enable purchase of additional groceries and vouchers to reach more individuals in need, and to ensure ongoing support for students. Welfare aims to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those they serve and to address pressing needs in the community.

PROJECT	REGION	PEOPLE TO BE ASSISTED	SPONSOR
Asylum Seeker Project, Education support	Melbourne	Families	Robin Pope
Choir of Hope	Local	Individual Women	Noelle Gibson
Kids under Cover scholarships	Victoria	Youth, 12-15yrs	Susan Karoly
Uniting World Disaster readiness	International, Fiji	Communities	Russell Crawford
GWUC Welfare	Local	Families or Individuals	Remoun(Ray) Abdou

PROJECT	REQUEST	\$20,000	\$22,000	\$24,000
Asylum Seeker Project, Education support	\$6,000	\$4,500	\$5,000	\$5,500
Choir of Hope	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$2,500
Kids under Cover scholarship program	\$5,000	\$4,000	\$4,500	\$5,000
Uniting World Disaster readiness	\$6,000	\$4,500	\$5,000	\$6,000
GWUC Welfare	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
TOTAL	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$22,000	\$24,000

A brochure containing information about COP 2024 Recommendations is attached [📄](#) here.

The following resolutions were considered.

Resolutions

a. all profit from the 2024 Fete is to be distributed to Charity

b. the charities presented to the meeting shall participate in the distribution of 2024 Fete profits

c. the charities will receive funding as presented to the meeting

d. that the Outreach and Social Justice Mission Group is to advise the Congregation of the final allocation to all charities, in the first available Bulletin after the Fete profit is finalised

Approved by consensus as a group

7. Other Business

There was no other business.

8. Benediction

The chair closed the meeting in prayer.

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