



MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE BAPTIST UNION OF VICTORIA

Held at Reggio Calabria, Brunswick
476 Brunswick Rd, Parkville VIC 3055
20 October 2023

1. WELCOME, PRAYER AND WORSHIP

Union Council Chair, Mick Turnbull opened the meeting with a word of welcome and an acknowledgement of Country. Mick shared the scripture from Philippians 2:1-11. (NIV) and prayed for the meeting. Worship was led by Zomi Baptist Church Victoria worship team.

2. RECOGNITION AND WELCOME

Rev. Daniel Bullock, the Director of Mission and Ministries recognised and welcomed the new Faith Communities and one Micro church for 2023:

New Faith Communities

- Philadelphia Karenni Baptist Church (26/04/23)
- Good News Ministry Church (25/7/23)

Micro churches

- Growing Faith Church (13/9/23)

Representatives from each church went on to stage to receive their certificate of acceptance.

There were no new Constituent Church and no Mergers for this period. Closure of both Stawell Baptist Church and Cohuna Baptist Church were acknowledged.

Daniel prayed for all the new churches and new communities.

3. CELEBRATIONS AND WELCOME – ORDINATION

Rev Daniel Bullock welcomed Rev Beth Jackson to the stage to present the 2023 Ordinands who are to be ordained 28 October 2023. A video reel highlight for all candidates was presented to the members. Fred Mugambai was also acknowledged and recognised for his transfer of Ordination to the BUV. Ordinands were invited to stand at their tables while Rev. Beth prayed for them.

2023 Ordination Candidates:

- **Adam Bamforth** - Tottenham Baptist Church
- **Amos Van Sui Lian** - Lai Christian Church Melbourne
- **James Za Hlei Ceu** - Victorian New Creation Church
- **Junho Cho** - City Baptist Church
- **Sanpai Thin Tuep** - Matu Immanuel Church
- **Mandy Stark** - Syndal Baptist Church
- **Kimberly Smith** - Baptist Union of Victoria
- **Brendan Smith** - Crossway, Brighton
- **Megan Stock** - Hampton Park Baptist Church
- **Katherine Mattila Miller** - Beaumaris-Mordialloc Baptist Church

- **Yvonne Lindner** - New Community Ringwood

Ordination Transfer:

- **Fred Mugambi** - Kenya Assemblies of God

4. ASSEMBLY MEETING

Appointments:

Mick Turnbull, the Chair of Union Council addressed the Assembly and presented the appointment resolutions and explained the voting process using True Vote.

The Scrutineers to verify the votes were:

- Caroline Donald – Pathway Baptist
- Amos Van Sui Lian - Lai Christian Church Melbourne

There were four appointments to be voted on, all requiring simple majority vote. Mick then moved the following motions:

4.1 UNION COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

- **Rev Darryl Kilker** – nominated by Templestowe Baptist Church

Resolution: That Assembly re-appoint Rev Darryl Kilker as member of the Union Council of the Baptist Union of Victoria for a period of 12 months commencing 20 October 2023.

- **Mark Browning** – nominated by Syndal Baptist Church

Resolution: That Assembly re-appoint Mark Browning as member of the Union Council of the Baptist Union of Victoria for a further 3-year term commencing 20 October 2023.

- **Paul Holdway** – nominated by Union Council

Resolution: That Assembly re-appoint Paul Holdway as BUV Honorary Legal Advisor for a period of 12 months commencing 20 October 2023.

4.2 WHITLEY COLLEGE COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

Tim Worsam – Jointly nominated by: BUV Union Council & Whitley College Council

- **Resolution:** That Assembly appoint Tim Worsam as member of the Whitley College Council for a 3-year term commencing 20 October 2023.

Voting opened from 7pm – 8:40pm.

Computers were made available for voting for those delegates without smart phones.

4.3 FINANCE PRESENTATION

Debbie Uy, the Union Secretary addressed the Assembly and presented the 2023 forecast, followed by the presentation of the 2024 recommended Pastoral Stipends & Superannuation and the 2024 Membership fees:

4.3.1 THE 2023 FULL YEAR FORECAST

Debbie gave an overview of the 2023 forecast as follows:

2023 Full Year Forecast *(as at Aug 2023)*

	<u>2023 BUDGET</u>	<u>2023 FORECAST</u>	<u>VARIANCE</u>
			Fav/ (unfavorable)
Income	\$ 6,419,085	\$6,750,897	\$ 331,812
Expenses (-)	\$ 6,950,241	\$6,381,868	\$ 568,373
Church Devt. Fund (+)	\$ 271,488	\$ 136,370	\$ 135,118
Surplus / (Deficit)	(\$ 259,669)	\$ 505,399	\$ 765,068

With the 2023 Full Year operations Forecast (excluding revaluation gain on investment) The actual operating surplus as of September was \$432K with the forecast year end being \$305K.

2023 Full Year Operations Forecast *(excluding revaluation gain on investment)*



ACTUAL OPERATING SURPLUS
AS OF SEPT - \$ 432K



FORECAST – YEAR-END \$305K

4.3.2 PROPOSED 2024 PASTORAL STIPEND

The proposed 2024 Pastoral Stipend was to be voted by show of hands and was presented as follows:

Proposed 2024 Pastoral Stipend

Voting by: Show of hands - Simple majority required

Resolution: The BUV Assembly resolve to approve the recommended 2024 Stipend

Weekly Stipend	<u>2023</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>2024</u>
Cash (including Tax Exempt Benefits)	\$ 1,329	4.80%	\$ 1,393
Cash or manse allocation	\$ 410		\$ 470
	\$ 1,739	7.13%	\$ 1,863

Resolution:

The BUV Assembly resolve to approve the recommended 2024 Pastoral Stipend.

- **PASSED** -

4.3.4 PROPOSED 2024 PASTORAL SUPERANNUATION

The proposed 2024 Superannuation was based on the commercial rate of the Stipend. There will be a rate change by July 2024 from **11%** to **11.5%** and it was presented as follows:

Proposed 2024 Pastoral Superannuation

Voting by: Show of hands - Simple majority required

Resolution: The BUV Assembly resolve to approve the recommended 2024 Superannuation

Weekly Superannuation

2023	2024	2024
<i>(Jul-Dec)</i>	<i>(Jan-Jun)</i>	<i>(Jul-Dec)</i>
\$ 237.34	\$254.30	\$260.16

Resolution:

The BUV Assembly resolve to approve the recommended 2024 Superannuation.

- **PASSED** -

4.3.5 PROPOSED 2024 MEMBERSHIP FEE

The proposed 2024 Membership Fee was presented as follows:

Proposed 2024 Membership Fee

Voting by: Show of hands - Simple majority required

Resolution: The BUV recommendation is that the 2024 Church Membership fee be structured as presented.

2023 Church Income	Contribution
\$0 - \$96,876	2.75% of income (Minimum: \$150)
\$96,877 +	3.75% of income (Maximum: \$54,529)

Resolution:

The BUV Assembly resolve to approve the recommended 2024 membership fee structure.

- **PASSED** -

Mick thanked all members of Assembly for their participation and prayed for dinner. Mick then reminded the members that the voting for the BUV and Whitley Council nominees will open at 7:00pm.

True Vote opened for voting at 7pm

Baptist Financial Services and Baptist Insurance services were acknowledged as the generous sponsors for the Delegates dinner.

5 PANEL – 2023 UK STUDY TOUR

Rev. Daniel Bullock facilitated discussion among the panel members:

- Nathan Steer – Camberwell Baptist church
- Jenn Garavito Alarcon - Brunswick Baptist Church
- Sally Agostino – Southern Cross Community Church

Each panellist spoke about their UK trip experience and some of the key takeaways such as hospitality being a vital point of difference for our churches and their communities. Investing in the community by creating a space for people from all walks of life to come together to pray and reflect. Making wellbeing a focus as it can often be forgotten about. Making a conscious effort to take care of ourselves, will naturally flow into other parts of the church and community. The key take-aways were presented as follows:

Key takeaways

- Hospitality is vital
- Invest in community
- Wellbeing needs to be a focus
- Small or Large – it does not matter. Give it a crack
- Leadership pipelines for church planting and existing churches
- Prioritise Incarnation and relationships
- Evangelism needs explanation / definition
 - How are we, the church good news in the neighborhoods? As a disciple of Jesus, how am I good news to the people in my life?

6 VISION CASTING 2024

Rev. Daniel Bullock shared the 2023 BUV research insights/summary with the Assembly.

The overall research indicated that our churches and BUV are aligned with what the core priority of Mission.

The Flourishing Church Survey results indicated that our churches rated flourishing in spirituality, congregational engagement, structure, and process over 80%. The areas with a low percentage of churches reporting flourishing results were in evangelism, justice and leadership.

Overall, the research results suggested that despite signs of a general lack of hope within the wider community, with specific fears such as cost of living and mental health and anxiety, our churches are well placed to provide the right support to for the communities' wellbeing into the future.

Survey results were presented as follows:

Research Summary

- Improved state compared to last few years
- Alignment on our core priority – mission
- Flourishing Church Survey results indicate:
 - over 80% churches rated flourishing in Spirituality, Congregational Engagement and Structure and Processes
 - Areas with lowest % of churches reporting flourishing results were Evangelism, Justice and Leadership
- Mission, outreach and Evangelism clearly provide challenges or churches - Resources and training requested

Research Summary

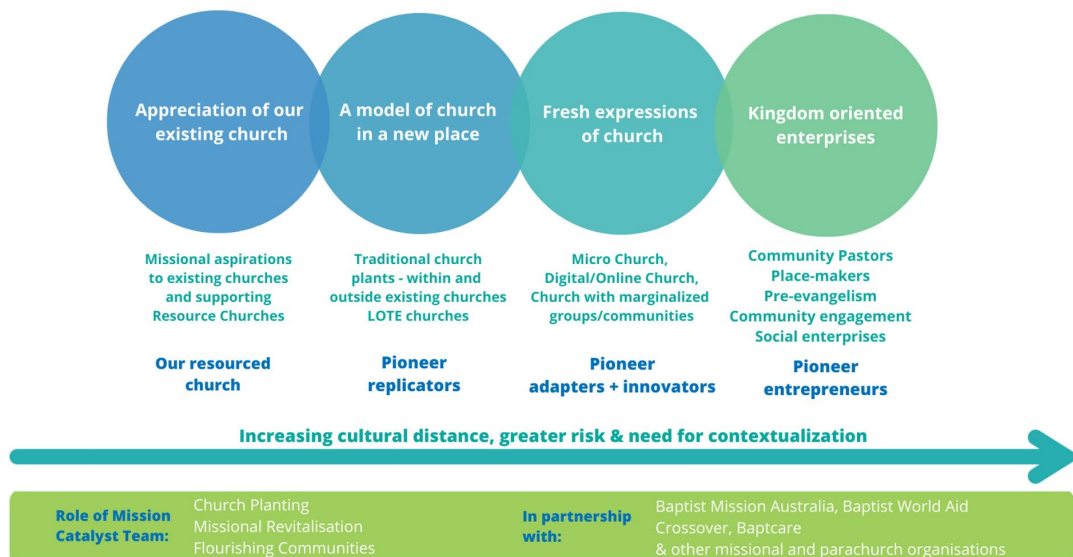
- Congregation sentiments – positivity, hope, enthusiasm, cautious optimism / anticipation
- Leaders more positive and excited but still times of exhaustion
- Churches mostly seen increase in total attendance, some balanced by decrease in frequency of attendance
- Churches making changes to stay relevant – more outward focus, prayer
- Wider community pain points – lack of hope, rising costs, mental health anxiety
- Overall churches are well placed to provide support to community wellbeing into the future

Daniel spoke about the BUV support hub’s priorities in relation to the 4 strategic focus areas being Mission, Leadership, Relationship and Health:

MISSION

- Promote an active concern for the wellbeing of society
- Resource and encourage churches to ‘Be and share the good news of Jesus’
- Develop comprehensive church planting strategy for the next 10 years

Mission Spectrum



Daniel talked about an initiative to fund church planting with partners, giving emphasis to **‘a lot of people giving a little makes a remarkable difference’**. Daniel emphasised the importance of planning for the future Baptist movement through Church Planting. The goal is to **have 1000 partners in 2024**. Daniel encouraged members of Assembly to scan the QR code that will provide the link to the information on how to become a partner in Church Planting. He encouraged everyone to take part in becoming a partner; from as little as \$2 per week, one can be a part of advancing God’s Kingdom together.

Funding Church Planting with Partners

"A lot of people giving a little makes a remarkable difference"

BUV together on mission

1000 partners in 2024

From as little as \$2 per week, you can join with us as we advance God's kingdom together

BUV CHURCH PLANTING PARTNERSHIPS

2024 and beyond

We need 1000 partners to help us reach every corner of Victoria.

Our state is growing rapidly - estimated population will be 8 million by 2033.

We want to see more churches planted, and more of God's kingdom at work in Victoria, particularly in growth areas.

Will YOU partner with us? All it takes is \$2-\$5 per week

A lot of people giving a little makes a remarkable difference

SCAN QR CODE TO PARTNER

We'll keep you updated on the impact your giving is having around Victoria

For more information, please contact **Andrew Naylor**, BUV Partnership Development Pastor
andrew.naylor@buv.com.au
buv.com.au

Funding Church Planting with Partners

Church Planting

The BUV has a desire to see an expression of church in every corner of Victoria. This will come about as we join with God and one another, Together on Mission. As we have seen with the response to our 2020 Bushfire Appeal, a lot of people giving a little, can make a remarkable difference.

For just \$2.30/wk (\$10/mth, \$30/qr, \$120/yr) including processing costs:

- 100 people can help support one church planter for one day per week
- 200 people can support an established church, plant a new church
- 500 people can support one church plant with new premise and equipment
- Imagine what 5,000 people could do!

We'd love you to partner with us to see more churches planted, more leaders equipped, and greater expressions of God's kingdom at work, particularly in the growth areas of our State by giving a small ongoing gift each week.

1 2 3

YEARLY QUARTERLY MONTHLY FORTNIGHTLY

WEEKLY ONE-TIME

\$ 2

Donating every week in **Australian Dollars** ✓

Next

LEADERSHIP

- Develop a comprehensive 10-year leadership pipeline

Support Hub Priorities

LEADERSHIP

Develop a comprehensive 10-year leadership pipeline

- Review current leadership development offerings
- Expand to ensure all lenses covered
 - Cultural – LOTE, Geographical (rural /regional / city), Women
 - Younger demographic
 - Digital
 - Innovation
- Collaboration with Whitley college and other mission partners
- Nurture the spiritual vitality of current BUV pastors and church leaders

RELATIONSHIP

- Bring the Union together in prayer and worship

Support Hub Priorities

RELATIONSHIP

Bring the Union together in prayer and worship

- Continue with Union-wide online prayer meetings
- Prayer Walk Week - 26th February - 2nd March 2024
 - During week – Prayer Walk your community and neighbourhoods
 - 2 March – Culminate with BUV led Creation Walk at various locations throughout Vic

Prayer Walk Week



26th February 2024



Creation Prayer Walk: 2nd March 2024

HEALTH

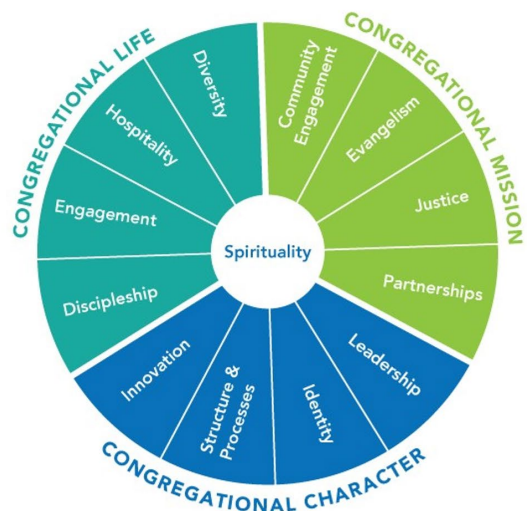
- Build on the Flourishing Churches Framework

Support Hub Priorities

HEALTH

Build on the Flourishing Churches Framework

- Set aside resources
- Identify flourishing church factors - contextually
- 2024 – Focus on the area of Congregational Mission



True Vote closed the voting at 8:40 pm.

7 TABLE DISCUSSION & DISCERNMENT

Rev. Daniel Bullock introduced the topics for discussion:

Community Wellbeing

- Pain Point Checklist

- 1. How can your community of faith engage in initiatives that could help to alleviate a challenge or pain point(s) and support the community to experience joy and a sense of connection?

- 2. How can your community of faith be good news to your community?

Feedback from some of the table discussions were shared to the members of Assembly.

8 QUESTION AND ANSWER

Mick Turnbull facilitated any questions or comments regarding any portion of the night from the Assembly.

There were no questions or comments from Assembly members.

9 CELEBRATIONS

Rev. Daniel Bullock presented a video regarding the Baptist Schools' Centenaries and facilitated a dialogue regarding the Community of Transfiguration's 50-year anniversary.

10 GOOD NEWS STORIES AROUND THE BUV

Rev Daniel Bullock facilitated an invitation for members of Assembly to share some good news stories from their community/ church or agency. Some of these stories were:

- This attendee returned to their hometown after being away for some time. During her visit she was reminded of her years as a student at a Baptist School. Upon reflection she felt grateful for the values that she learnt while being there.

- A member was approached by an atheist and was asked for a prayer. She was feeling sad, lonely, depressed, and lost and was in real need of some pastoral care and guidance. They talked and prayed together, and as a result from that day she is now a converted Christian and is a dedicated member of the Church.

- A regular face that attends the food centre at Dandenong BC attended one day and announced that he wanted to say a prayer. The church members weren't sure what to expect as this person can sometime be unpredictable with the things he says. In that prayer he shared that it was his late mother's birthday, a figure that was important and personal for him, and he thanked the Church for taking care of him and always keeping him in their prayers. The church was pleased and felt great encouragement to see the positive impact they have had in his life.
- A Sri Lankan refugee left behind his wife and son to move to Australia. When he arrived, he was detained in a refugee camp for 6 years. After leaving the camp he resided in a granny flat behind the main house of a Church member for 7 years. He was reunited with his son and recently was offered a scholarship at one of our BUV schools. He is now in the process of bringing his wife to Australia.
- Tiny Turtle's Playgroup has been operating successfully for 25 years. They continue to reach out to the community with positive feedback from parents.
- In the city, the homeless rates have increased post Covid. 29 young people have lost their lives from overdosing as of late. The city churches have become a central part of the conversation in the city with regards to how we can respond to this epidemic. The churches have been sought after for pastoral care which is a blessing.

11 DECLARATION OF BALLOT RESULTS

Mick Turnbull declared that the following resolutions were passed with support exceeding a simple majority:

For BUV Union Council Appointments:

- "That Rev Darryl Kilker be re-appointed as a member of the Union Council of the Baptist Union of Victoria for a period of 12 months commencing 20 October 2023". – **PASSED**
- "That Mark Browning be re-appointed as a member of the Union Council of the Baptist Union of Victoria for a further 3-year term commencing 20 October 2023". – **PASSED**
- "That Paul Holdway be re-appointed as BUV Honorary Legal Advisor for a period of 12 months commencing 20 October 2023". – **PASSED**

For Whitley College Council Appointment:

- "That Tim Worsam be appointed as a member of the Whitley College Council for 3 years commencing 20 October 2023". – **PASSED**

12 CLOSING

Mick Turnbull thanked all in attendance and closed the meeting in prayer.
Assembly meeting ended at 9:30pm.

Approved by:
Union Council
29 Nov 2023