



Morialta Uniting Church Annual Report

March 2019

This report is presented as just one part of a larger package designed to communicate effectively with the congregation and beyond. Please also consult our bimonthly magazine '**Morialta Vision**', available on our website at morialtauca.org.au, where additional information is also made available throughout the year.

At report time in 2018 we noted that we were benefitting from synergies between our vision and the ministry style of our then 'new' minister Bob Hutchinson and looking forward keenly to travelling on together. That journey continues fruitfully, now 18 months in, and is bringing us to a place where we feel confident to move towards making the decisions needed about our direction and priorities for mission into the future. This will be a major focus in 2019.

We see the **Chapel St properties** as community resources, and rejoice in the many groups who use them alongside us. We welcomed square-dancers, keep-fit groups, a physiotherapy research project, a Wee-care group sewing tiny baby clothes, recorder players, language learners and more. In 2018 we welcomed Victoria Braithwaite, 'The Family Cook', who hires our kitchen for her small business – but not on Wednesdays!

That's when Morialta's **Lunch on Chapel** program continues to provide a warm welcome and a delicious home-cooked lunch to all comers – with **bridge** or table games in the **Friendship Centre** to follow if desired. Other congregation-based groups include a growing **Tai Chi** group, an **Art Circle**, a **Woodwork Group** in our men's

shed, and **Coffee-n-Chat** on Friday mornings. Our **library** continues to source books to tempt our regular borrowers as well as droppers-in – including parents from our **two playgroups**.

Several other friendship- and fellowship-based activities are held within the life of Morialta Uniting. Each Monday a small group of men – the **Monday Boys** – diligently carry out garden maintenance around the church property and enjoy a cuppa after their labour. **Fellowship** continues strongly, holding its meetings in the daytime all year round now.

The **Student Accommodation Program** has been a significant part of our mission for 30 years and with the completion of two courtyard homes at 24 Chapel St we are in a strong position to carry it on for years to come. The houses were dedicated in November and eight students have now moved in. We await news of the sale of the College Drive manse to complete the project financing, and we record warm thanks to the project team that has overseen the work.

Morialta Uniting benefitted greatly from the gifts and grace of the retired ministers who call the congregation home – Rev. Christine Garner, Rev. Jenny Swanbury, Rev. David Purling, Rev. Doug Hosking and Rev. David Pill have generously supported the ministry offered by Morialta Uniting, and we are very grateful to them. Sharing in leading the monthly communion service we offer at Milpara is among their many contributions.

We also continued to appreciate the opportunity to participate in, and host, gatherings of the Urban Mission Network, which brought fresh perspectives and news of happenings in other active congregations.

Since its inception, our **Beyond Our Walls (BOW)** program has provided a worship resource for smaller congregations and faith communities as well as individuals who are unable to attend worship. Over the past seven years the whole service has been recorded once each month, while on the other Sundays the sermon and readings are distributed via YouTube. This service is only made possible because of the significant commitment of talented members of the congregation who operate cameras, mixers and other

equipment, and we thank them warmly. 2018 saw several purchases made to upgrade lighting and other equipment to support this ministry, and other activities in the worship space. The first Sunday evening of each month saw **Sp@ce**, a curated experience offering another way to explore and engage in worship.

It is good to be able to report on activities designed to nurture growth in faith and a sense of belonging to the Morialta Uniting community for our **children and young people** and their families. We continue to encourage participation in worship and worship leading (including AV and music), designated learning programs on Sundays that match attendance patterns, and weekend social activities. In 2018 our young people especially enjoyed shopping for youth-appropriate gifts and helping prepare hamper contents at UnitingCare.

While the congregation contributes generously to the finances required to support our mission, a number of **Community Building and Fundraising** events add to our resources. Among these is the Mighty Magill Market. Nearly 100 people worked to prepare or serve at the Market, and the \$10,000 raised was a significant fillip to Morialta Uniting's bottom line. Other events included the Kym Purling Trio concert, raising funds for Morialta programs as well as the Long Hai Centre in Vietnam.

The new verandah outside the Kooka Rooms has been a boon to all users of the site, and opened up new possibilities by providing a sheltered, dry outdoor space. The **playgroups**, **Sp@ce** and the **netball club** have been especially appreciative.

Morialta Uniting continues to value its relationship with the **Morialta Uniting Netball Club**, which had an increasing presence in the winter (21 teams) and summer (20 teams) seasons of the netball competition. We celebrate with them the resurfacing and upgrading of the netball courts, which are also home to our **social tennis club**. The Club continued its support for our **Beyond Morialta Mission Projects** (BMMP), donating the generous proceeds from its Mother's Day cake stall. BMMP projects supported in 2018 were behavior change for a healthier environment in Milne Bay, Papua; health and

nutrition education in Timor Leste; and supporting the work of the Northern Suburbs Dinka Speaking Faith Community, Adelaide.

Opportunities to 'delve deeper' were provided through four **Lenten Reflection groups**, one in a local café, and the church open for prayer throughout Holy Week – alongside the evening **Gateways** reading/discussion group fortnightly and **Gateways-by-day** several times a year.

Morialta Uniting maintained its focus on **social justice** in 2018, with a Lenten Reflection focusing on Australians Together, a bell-ringing action group highlighting KidsoffNauru, and our youth studying ways to act against modern slavery through checking the supply chains of businesses we use. Morialta Uniting has continued to support the Magill Interchurch Council, especially in supporting the Pastoral Care Workers in the local schools and Cavan Training Centre. From 2019 a revised structure will operate to maintain this support and to offer ecumenical hospitality at special worship services.

Morialta Uniting welcomed the decision of the UCA Assembly to hold two equal and distinct statements of belief on marriage, and both the Church Council and the minister are open to welcoming all people wishing to be married here. Our Synod representatives continue to be involved in ongoing discussions on the restructuring of presbyteries in SA.

Church Council has been working hard to address a number of issues in the life of the church. Work continues on tightening and streamlining processes so we can continue to comply with Synod requirements as the number of members able to contribute to management decreases. The aging of both people and premises contribute to the challenges we face. A number of people have recently been welcomed into the life of the congregation; families and individuals were acknowledged in a service early in 2018. A congregation-wide process for discerning our mission priorities into the future is planned for 2019. We move forward in hope and trust, seeking to join in with God's activity in the world.