

# ANNUAL REPORT

ST MICHAEL'S NORTH CARLTON | 2022

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*PROCLAIMING CHRIST, BUILDING COMMUNITY,  
SHARING HOPE, SERVING OTHERS*



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## VICAR'S REPORT

STEVE W

It's been a year of gradual recovery from the widespread impact of the global pandemic. Confidence has grown steadily among our church members when **re-engaging with church services, meetings, and events in person**. Yet, there are many who have expressed their thankfulness for our commitment to **keep livestreaming our worship services** and many of our events. Perhaps the most telling sign that we are returning to near normal operations is the increasing number of enquiries about hall hire and the great numbers of people coming to midweek events and activities, including our Princes Hill Playgroup.

It's been a year of finding ways to recover and be reenergised personally too. I'm so grateful for the provision of annual leave and was able to take 4 whole weeks leave in September. I'm very thankful to The Rev'd Chris A for stepping up as interim vicar during my absence.

I'm more appreciative of the privilege of annual leave having become a grandfather this year (twice!) This new phase of life for Penne and me has reinforced the importance of protecting my day off once a week (Friday) more diligently.

I'm an early riser, and that's when my best work is done **praying** for our church community and listening and learning from the Scriptures. I have been encouraged on many mornings this past year by reading the Gospel of John and some other devotional materials based on that Gospel. I've been reflecting anew on the wonder of God coming to us in Christ and so personally engaging with people, dwelling among us in all our joys and strife. I hope you too have found helpful ways this year to wonder at God's grace to us in Jesus in these challenging times.

### Leadership

It's been a challenging year again and I'm so thankful to God for the many generous, talented, servants of God in our various positions of leadership at St Michaels.

**Parish Council (PC)** – It's been a pleasure to work with this year's Parish Council. The PC has been **Anne W (w), John S(w), Mary Ann L, Peter S, Barbara W, and Jack V**. Though small when compared to previous PC's the quality of discussion, collaboration, and decision making has been high. We have kept the practice of meeting via Zoom for 10 meetings for the year. This allows people flexibility in their diary and spread of energies as we all adjust to the new world in which we live. I wish to highlight the many hours of service given by **Peter S** who has served six consecutive years on PC as **honorary treasurer**. Peter has helped the PC to have clarity about our financial circumstances in challenging times indeed. I also wish to acknowledge the very helpful work done behind the scenes each month by our **bookkeeper, Kerryn M** (paid casually as required each month). Kerryn lives in NSW and does the bookkeeping online and serves the treasurer and wardens by doing the more complicated tasks that help us to track our finances and comply with government regulations. I'm thankful to **Anne W** for chairing our PC meetings each month with energy, efficiency, and grace. On her watch, our meetings have been around 1hr 15min in length,

and have included quality discussions on important topics in the life of our church. This representative approach to leadership in Anglican parishes is a vital part of the well-being of our ministries and mission. Many thanks too to **John S** who has managed many maintenance and restoration projects at the church site and the vicarage this past year.

**Staff** – “Staff” at St Michael’s this year refers to those paid for certain roles to serve and strengthen the congregation’s ministries. The Staff at present (including me) is:

**Kim M** (Assistant Minister) – May 2022 marked 3 years for Kim as part time (4 days pw) Assistant Minister. Parish Council offered Kim a **new contract for 3 days pw** with a view to funding and supporting her in that capacity through to September 2023. The principle behind such a decision has been a continuing vision to make more meaningful connections with those that meet on our church site through the week. With a reduction in hours since May due to financial restraints in our budgeting this past year, Kim’s position description has been re-fashioned to have an even **sharper focus on mid-week ministry**, not Sundays. Kim works Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays in her role, building relationships with and serving people regularly on site for **hire group activities** and for the Princes Hill **Playgroup**, the latter being our own ministry, coordinated by Catherine M. I’m grateful to God for Kim’s collegiality in ministry, for her creativity, and her passion to see people thrive, and for her servant heart.

Kim and Hany both take part in Sunday worship services in various ways, but I encourage you to recognise her staff hours as those times she is serving people on site mid-week who may never otherwise be part of a traditional church community of faith. I continue to hope and pray that the good favour that has been expressed toward us that is due in no small part to Kim’s ministries, will grow into many more opportunities for God’s purposes in the year ahead.

One of the key responsibilities Kim has continued to cover has been the management of our **Safe Church** compliance. We are so glad for her expertise and efforts in these matters and now can say that all those who take part in rostered ministries of the church have the appropriate training and accreditation required of us by the State Government of Victoria. The growth in healthy and safe culture in our church and the positive reputation building we have seen in the local community because of Kim’s work in this area should not be underestimated. Kim has been ably supported in the administration and record keeping by **Shelley K** who has given time most Tuesday mornings at the church office, for which we give much thanks too.

**Rhonda E** (Office Assistant) – After Emma S took other employment in July 2021, we began searching for another paid part-time office assistant and did not advertise until late in the year. Upon putting the position description online, one of our church members, Rhonda, applied formally for job and was welcomed into the role by Parish Council. Rhonda comes to the 8-hour pw position with a wide range of experience, qualifications, and skills, having

worked in roles such as accounting and school teaching. Rhonda began working in our church office in the second half of 2022. She swiftly oriented herself to the regular tasks of managing ministry rosters, managing invoices and payments, ordering supplies, preparing Sunday service slideshows, updating our website and YouTube channel, publishing our weekly online news bulletin (email), and much more. Rhonda works in our church office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

**Mia D** (Playgroup Assistant) – After the departure of Catherine W from our staff last year we fashioned a new position focussed solely on supporting our volunteer playgroup team led by Catherine M. Mia lives locally and is currently studying to do social work. She comes to our staff on recommendations from people in our playgroup community. Mia arrives at the church site on Tuesdays and sets up the foyer, the Williams Hall, and the lawn ready for the families to arrive by 10am each week. She then assists in the administration of playgroup donations and record keeping on the day, as well as helping to build good relationships with the parents and carers that attend.

**Other leaders** – We are blessed with many church members who offer their time and gifts to lead ministries and formally serve our church community in a great variety of ways, including small group hosting/leading, serving on various ministry rosters, maintenance of our church site, representing and promoting our mission partnerships, and so much more. While I wish I could thank all of you by name and wish I could record here all that you do with gratitude to God, I can only mention my thanks to a few in this report for brevity's sake:

The Rev'd **Chris A** for sharing the ministry of presiding at Holy Communion and as part of the preaching team;

**Dianne S** for sharing the ministry of preaching regularly on Sundays through the year, and with the departure of Catherine W last year, taking on the role of coordinating Sunday Kid's Church;

**Catherine M** for giving up her work hours each Tuesday morning to coordinate and lead the team of volunteers and staff for the Princes Hill Playgroup;

**Janette A** for her leadership of the Reconciliation Action group this past year;

**Alex P** for managing the Sunday ministry rosters for our 5.30pm services since the departure of Emma S from our church office. She has kept contact with those who present the bible readings, prayers, and serve in other ways on Sunday nights, coordinating their ministries throughout the past year;

**Christine H** for the efforts made above and beyond her regular leadership of the Vox Populi Community Choir to prepare and lead our choral singing of carols at Christmas services and events each year;

**Cindy S** for many occasions early on Sundays or other days of the week helping to clean or set up our church site ready for services and events, and for the many ways she supports the church staff and PC.

## Numbers

Church leaders who say numbers don't matter are kidding themselves! Keeping track of who is with us in our worshipping community is, and always has been, important. The Bible shows how from the beginning Christians **coming together for worship and encouragement regularly** helps the church to flourish and grow (e.g., see Acts 2:42-47). With the pandemic came a huge reduction in numbers attending Sunday services and other events. Our numbers attending Sunday services have increased a little in the second half of this year, averaging around 35 at 10am and around 10 at 5.30pm. This is still well below pre-pandemic numbers. I hope we can find new ways to encourage more regular attendance at services and events by all our members as the next year progresses. It's been encouraging to see our 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month 5.30pm **supper nights** well attended this year. This is largely due to the pastoral work of our Assistant Minister in and around that congregation.

Via our **livestreaming** we still see around 8-12 screens watching 10am church in real time, and around 6-8 screens watching 5.30pm services in real time. Then there are more people each week who watch the service recording a day or two after Sundays – about 30 more watchers for 10am and around 20 more for 5.30pm services each week.

We have celebrated only two baptisms this year; however, there seems to be an appetite for **Baptism** and **Confirmation** in the hearts of some at present. I'll make a date for the bishop to join us on a Sunday close to Easter and will offer a course in the early New Year to help people prepare. Do let me know if you would like to chat about this opportunity.

On the theme of people re-engaging "in person" our **Maundy Thursday** dinner was very encouraging, with over 55 people attending. Recently too, an event with speaker Valerie Browning in our Williams Hall gathered over 60 for dinner. And, we've seen more than 40 children, plus their parents/carers, each Tuesday in the last month at **Playgroup**.

These are all signs of a refreshed sense of the importance of "in person" encouragement that comes from being the Church.

## Music Ministry

In 2022 we've continued to utilize our library of video worship music at 5.30pm services. On the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month at 5.30pm services, however, we have had **live worship music** to add that dynamic to the monthly supper and celebration of Holy Communion on the same day. Many thanks go to Kyria and Sam for their music ministry on those days in particular.

Early in the year, though, we were able to welcome the **return to live music at our 10am** Sunday services, provided by 5 different bands. Our thanks go to all the musicians that have returned to the ministry as we see many people greatly encouraged in their faith when being led when singing God's praises. Our bands have included: Cindy S, Dianne S, Steve M, Jacqui W, Christine H, Peter H, Greg , Sam H, Chris A, Viju A, Deepa J, and Janette and Andrew A. On some Sundays we have chosen to use our videos for worship music as we ease back into regular rostering of bands.

Many thanks go to the people behind the scenes supporting our music ministry and worship services who operate the sound, lighting, and **livestreaming**, including Sam E, Kyria W, Dianne S, Cindy S, Peter S, Lachy W, Hany M, and Anne W.

### **Money**

The finance report will show a **steady income** from offerings, but not a growing set of figures. We have seen a rapid increase in hall hire requests and bookings in the past 3 months which bodes well for recovering this important income supplement and community engagement. But hall hire only accounted for around 5% of total income in the past. We are reliant on regular offerings from our members and generous donations from time to time from those who can do so if we are to fund the staffing we desire and support our properties and ministries. Our **monthly income still lags** our proposed monthly target for the new budget period (1 Oct '22 – 30 Sept '23).

This church financial year poses a challenge to our continuing vision/action plan. By God's grace we need to **see an increase** in our **monthly giving** (we need around \$2K per month more in offerings) right now, and throughout this financial year, if we are to continue this course we have been on. We entrusted our path and goals to God in prayer 5 years ago and built up a healthy savings account so we could put some of those savings to work to seed staffing strategically for growth. The pandemic no doubt dented the pace of progress we might have otherwise seen from our plans. Yet, there have been good signs in the new relationships that have been built with people in the local community around our church site. But this is, in my opinion, the year ahead in which we must either meet our budgeted income by offerings and hall hire without using our savings. If we don't see the increase in offerings we need, a change of strategy will be necessary to reduced staffing costs and ministry expenditure. Let's pray for God's provision and each of us prayerfully consider our financial commitment so that we may continue to present the Gospel to new generations in the context we have by our service and our words. The time will come for the Parish Council to pause in 2023 and prayerfully prepare and present a new vision/action plan to the congregation, including a suitable financial plan to support its goals and strategies.

### **Finally**

I thank our God for the wonderful experience it continues to be to serve at St Michael's as Vicar. I am energised afresh by God's Spirit and so encouraged by the grace and generosity of our congregations.

Steve Webster—Vicar



## ASSISTANT MINISTER

KIM M

What a privilege to be able to plan events again! When surrounded by lists for all the upcoming activities recently I reflected this isn't a chore, rather it's a delight after two years of restrictions. To bless our community here in Princes Hill and surrounds with opportunities of meeting in person to have fun, sing carols and hear the Christmas story. I must admit that when working in a team towards a goal I am energised, and there's nothing more energising than planning fun and celebrating at Christmas.

Today is warmer with no rain and playgroup was full of people relieved to be outside and socialising. There's genuine excitement with all our families about the Kid's Fiesta and Playgroup Christmas party coming up very soon. Many of whom have never been to our Fiesta before. All the staff and volunteers who work with children here at St Michael's are busy planning for these two events. Planning crafts, buying Christmas gifts, harnessing volunteers, mending nativity costumes, advertising, organising the Christmas story and carols. Not to mention a jumping castle, ice-cream truck and sausage sizzle to entice the masses.

Although we've been open all year, I feel I have less to mention in this year's report. I guess it feels more about re-establishing relationships in person with our community. Taking the time to listen and be present. Today my role at Playgroup was to relieve a parent from her 5 week old crying baby for an hour, while mum drank her whole coffee, played with her toddler and was listened to by other mums who know the struggle of two young children.

Being present onsite means you see people and people see you. Just like when you're working in your front gardens at home and neighbours walk by and stop to chat, the same thing happens here: whether it be a car accident and all the neighbours rush out to help; a grandma and child come by asking to use the toilet because they see me in the garden; the weekly chats with parents on ballet days and the relationships built up over months and years at playgroup; or having hundreds of people come through our site to vote on election day who get to see us from the inside out. Being open again is such a blessing and the community just love being here.

One family who used to come to playgroup were holding a kids' birthday party in the local park but enquired to have it here because it's such a peaceful place. We're getting many families asking us about holding birthday parties here. We hope to increase families hiring our hall and look to provide a booklet with clear instructions and processes for all aspects including safety, cleaning and recycling.

For the season of Lent I ran contemplation sessions reflecting on the series, Hope and the Nearness of God, through the Pray as You Go app, based on the book *Hope and the Nearness of God* by Teresa White. Several people from church came to participate in the guided reflections and stayed to chat over afternoon tea. It was a lovely way to get to know people better as we continued learning what it felt like to meet up in person.

I trialled some Wednesday morning sessions in term 3 for parents to come with children to read and share morning tea. It was hard to get consistency with winter ailments still around and many parents becoming busy again going back to work. I'm open to revisiting something next year however there are already many good programs for babies and toddlers at local libraries and the zoo.

One of the opportunities I'm still working towards is to increase the use of the Wells Room across the whole week. Time was spent cleaning from top to bottom and paring back the toys to make it a calm, clear space. Plans for a library with mural and shelving have been drawn up by Jacqui W and it would be good to find a time to present these ideas. We're developing a vision for our north-west corner that involves the Wells Room, Bible Garden and small courtyard. Places for contemplation, learning, reading, prayer, guided reflections to listen to and photo montages of the year round garden for access onsite or from home.

First Sunday Suppers have continued this year and been the highlight of the month for the 5.30pm service. It's where we celebrate the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday of the month followed by a large supper after church. Thanks to everyone who made soup, sausage rolls and other delights brought throughout the long winter season where suppers became weekly to keep up morale! It's been great having our Bendigo and Ballarat chapters visit each month and we recently had Mel from Brisbane back in person. Our 5.30 family extends to London and for a time Canberra. Live-streaming being just as important now as it was during lockdowns.

### **Child Safety**

Thank you to everyone who has completed the required Child Safe training levels this year. It was a mammoth effort and I can't express how grateful I am for your willingness and generosity of time as we asked you to help keep St Michael's a safe place.

As a state wide mandate for all people and organisations who work and volunteer with children, and therefore requirements for all within the Anglican Church, it's important that we comply fully in order for us to continue engaging with children and families. For me, as I've said many times to whoever will listen, it's so much more than merely complying. The Child Safe Standards set a clear framework for us to work towards creating safe places for all children and vulnerable adults. I think of everything through the lens of mission, and being able to say that our church fully complies with no hesitation is a gift to our community. In fact, it is a privilege and a blessing to be known as a church the community can trust. I will always push hard for us to maintain this and therefore I am beyond grateful to be part of a church community who are also committed.

We were able to send through to Kooyoora a complete list (at that moment in time) of who has undertaken all the required training and signed the relevant documentation; however, this is an ongoing

process. Volunteers are added to our rosters, WWCC's & Police checks come up for renewal throughout the year and as the Child Safe Standards evolve, so must we.

All those on rosters have completed Level 1 - Safe Ministry Essentials

All those working directly with children have completed Level 2 - Safe Ministry to Children & Young People.

All those on Parish Council, those who head up areas of ministry and staff have completed Level 3 - Safe Ministry Implementation for Senior Leaders.

In April this year I was able to send out to our playgroup families a list of all that we do as a church community to maintain the safety of children and families.

The newsletter included:

- Our child safe statement: "St Michael's Anglican Church North Carlton is committed to child safe practices. The care, safety and welfare of children are embedded in our policies & practices which reflect a commitment to zero tolerance of child abuse."
- Catherine M as our Child Safe Coordinator as a point of contact within a team of people.
- Kooyoora as the independent organisation overseeing the professional standards system for Anglican churches. They handle complaints, screening, redress and training.
- All playgroup volunteers have completed levels 1 and 2 of the child safe training, have current police & WWCC, completed Clearance for Service & signed Statement's of Commitment.
- Catherine M and I updated our CPR training this year,
- Mentioned the positions of our 3 first aid kits.
- General Safety - volunteers wear name tags, gates closed at all times, hand sanitiser & sunscreen.
- Weblinks for child safe information and contact details for: Kooyoora, St Michael's and the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

The noticeboard near the ramp has been updated to show a bit more clearly posters outlining our commitment to being a safe church, especially child safety. This was important to update in time for election day voting with hundreds of people coming through and standing long enough to read about who we are and what we stand for.

### **Sports Chaplaincy**

In the last 12 months there have been 3 football seasons: 2 AFLW and 1 VFLW.

For AFLW season 6 at the beginning of the year I was involved at training sessions from September and then because of COVID last summer, I was given responsibility for sitting with and getting to know the families and friends of the players and staff.

Because staff couldn't mix between AFLW and VFLW due to covid I was able to attend all training and games for the whole of the VFLW season. They started training in November 2021 with their home and away season beginning in February 2022 and finishing the end of June. They were a joy to be with as

they juggled university, work, families and striving to get picked each week. Of course they again loved my half time oranges and end of game protein slice.

At the beginning of the season I offered to run mindfulness sessions using the well known techniques of deep breathing and visualisation. The Headspace app offers sessions for training and preparing for game days, so I signed up for a yearly subscription and used their resources. However the players preferred my voice to the ones in the app and I ended up speaking the Headspace content in the sessions instead.

My role of Chaplain across the whole women's program at Carlton has changed. The openness for chaplaincy from the leadership in the Women's Program has shifted and at present I'm now more remote and involved from a distance. This has been incredibly disappointing but I remain on good terms with many players and staff and continue to be in touch through social media and when I see people at games.

I'm yet to find out if I'm able to be involved in the next VFLW season which will start back this week for early pre-season training.

In the meantime I delight in planning our Christmas events.

Thank you to everyone for your ongoing support and encouragement throughout the year. Having our city reopened has meant a year of coffees, lunches and invitations to home groups for dinner. I look forward to many more opportunities to gather and hear your stories.

It's a privilege to work alongside Steve who takes time to teach, guide, challenge and stretch me as a person and in this role. Thank you for sharing your wisdom and having fun along the way.

Blessings

**KIM M**

## **CHURCH WARDENS**

**ANNE W & JOHN S**

It is the Warden's general responsibilities to provide oversight and maintenance of the Buildings/ Property, Finances, and General Good Order for Worship at St Michael's. As Warden's for the past 12 months, we (John S and Anne W) with the willing support from Parish Council and others, have endeavoured to fulfil these responsibilities. It has been pleasing to see St Michaels gradually return to face to face worship, (including communion, morning tea and live music), whilst maintaining an online presence and opportunities to participate. As we moved into a ? "post-COVID" era, there continued to

be ongoing challenges (and opportunities) that required thoughtful prayer and agility to respond.

**Maintaining Buildings / Property** (current Care & Maintenance; Future Planning)

Maintenance Church/Halls tasks over the past 12 months included

- Replacing the Vacuum Cleaner in Nickson Hall & the dishwasher in Williams Hall. This dishwasher is used regularly by play group and church members during events, and we were thankful for the donor who offset some of the costs.
- Replacing the guttering above office door and getting the Pilot light (for Nickson Hall gas heater) cleaned and tested, ensuring it remains working and safe to use.
- An electrician repaired the stage lighting in Williams' hall, and replaced all the globes with LED high lumens, energy efficient, low wattage globes. Some areas of the church building (eg office, toilets) was eligible for the free LED swap-over/replacement program, which was completed. All of the above strategies will contribute to energy efficiencies within church building.
- Upgrading the PA system (at back of church) which was limited in its ability to support return to live music in church in conjunction with livestreaming. An opportunity presented where St Michaels was able to trial a 16 channel unit (with blue tooth function and easy to use controls/software) and purchase at a discounted price.
- Vicarage maintenance tasks included
- Replacing a failed split system (as it was cheaper to replace than repair)
- Significant investment in undertaking maintenance/repair of the upstairs Sash windows. Of particular note, the upstairs study window had visible signs of rotting, and leaked when it rained. The work has been completed to a very satisfactory standard, and has much improved the living conditions of the upstairs rooms at the vicarage. We particularly acknowledge the work of John S in co-ordinating the contractors undertaking this work and his due diligence to the quotes and quality of work undertaken.
- We are aware the sash windows on the ground floor will need similar work undertaken in the future.

Sincere thanks to the volunteers who have tended the garden across the year, including, but not limited to

- John S patched/seeded part of the lawn and co-ordinated the removal of a dead tree.
- Laurie S for trimming the hedge
- Audrey L, Greg D & Kim M for attending to the different gardens and keeping the weeds at bay.
- Cindy & Dianne S for clearing the gutters above the Williams Hall entrance
- All those who contributed to the lawn mowing roster.

## **Finances**

Sincere thanks to Peter S, for his diligent and timely finance reports, and insights into managing St Michaels's finances

- Confirmed works were completed and final payments released for engaged in previous financial year (repair to Manhole cover & AV equipment)
- Treasurer co-ordinated the Financial Audit with Auditor.
- Completed a Vicarage Inspection to consider/plan what might be required to bring property up to diocesan standard should a new Vicar/tenant be required to move in. Main areas identified as requiring work to bring property up to diocesan standard include new carpet, Window restoration on a ground floor windows (in addition to those being progressed currently) and some patch and paint in areas.
- Finance committee prepared the FY22/23 budget, cognisant of a number of competing financial demands which may impact on levels of cash reserves, and will need handover to incoming Treasurer:

Vicarage Inspection Report (& estimations of future upgrade); Ground floor sash windows (future Smith Trust application ~2024/2025); Front Picket Fence maintenance (preparation & painting); Tree surgeon (for trees at rear of vicarage); Foyer locks (replacement barrels).

## **Good Order**

Public Worship Operations:

- Holy Communion and morning tea was gradually re-introduced from May, live music in church as re-commenced in July.
- Congregation started to return to in-person worship (within COVID rules) throughout year. Livestreaming of services has continued as a valuable addition to corporate worship and ministry.
- When in person attendance numbers are low (15-20 @ 10am; 5-10 @ 5:30pm), livestreaming is utilised (20 screens @10am; 8-10 screens @ 5:30pm). Further views/catch ups occur each week post service.
- We are thankful for Chris Appleby offer to provide part time locum cover during Steve's recent leave

Child Safety Compliance

- Kim's role has been tasked to lead the Safe Church team (for registering and reporting) and her Position Description has been updated to reflect this change. Kim has undertaken a significant amount of work to drive this work, ensuring compliance with Diocesan requirements is maintained and people who participate in various ministries are supported to complete their required level (1-3) of mandated Child Safe training.
- The Volunteer Register has been submitted to the Diocese, and is now in a maintenance mode. Lockable filing cabinet has been purchased for secure storage of Child Safety

documentation, and Safe Church & Child Safety has been added as a standing item to Parish Council agenda

- The Wardens would like to thank and acknowledge Kim's work in this area.

#### Office and Hall Hire Operations

- With Personnel changes, we farewelled Catherine W, and welcomed Rhonda E into the vacant role of Office assistance / Parish secretary, and Mia D into the Playgroup Assistant role. Both are making a significant difference in their respective areas.
- During these staff vacancies, we are thankful for Shelly K who volunteered to attend church office weekly to help with office admin, Child safety compliance, Playgroup admin, and became part of the safe Ministry team.
- The Dance school return to Hall Hire arrangements in term 1, and there continues to be enquiries for occasional hall bookings
- The cleaners returned to weekly service in Jan, and assisted in implementing a new/separate bin (landfill & recycle) system. Thanks to Cindy for sourcing the actual bins.
- Safety Compliance Inspection was completed in August, with all recommendations (including evacuation practice) have been actioned.

With blessings  
Anne W & John S  
Church Wardens

## PARISH COUNCIL

ANNE W

St Michael's Parish Council meets with Vicar regularly to govern matters of evangelism, discipleship, and pastoral care in the parish. Grounded in our mission of Proclaiming Christ, Building Community, Sharing Hope, and Serving Others, we have worked collaboratively over the past 12 months, enabling St Michael's to evolve and transform as the community around us has done.

There were a number of key issues that passed through Parish council over the past 12 months. With the resignation of Catherine W, Parish Council assisted in **determining a staffing model and structure** that could meet the needs and priorities of St Michael's, within the budget/financial constraints. Determining the vision for support required in key areas (office management, ministry and outreach/playgroup) underpins how St Michael's delivers its mission over the current planning cycle. We were pleased to be able to extend Kim's tenure, and to welcome Rhonda E and Mia D to the staff during this year.

There was also considerable effort put into co-ordinating the **Vicarage upstairs window restoration**. Significant time was spent sourcing qualified tradespeople who could assist, and co-ordinating the work to take place during Steve's planned leave (to cause minimal disruption). Parish Council are aware that the remaining sash windows require attention, however, resolved to attend to the urgent needs (i.e., those that were leaking/letting water in) this year with the plan to seek funding support for the restoration of the other windows in the future. We are grateful for the expertise provided by David W into this restoration with regards to the glass thickness to maximise safety and insulation.

Monitoring income and expenditure across the 12 months contributed to the **Budget planning process** that occurred, working, with the treasurer to develop a budget that could reflect our current priorities, and anticipated future needs, with the projected available funds.

There was also work required in support for the **Safe Ministries compliance** requirements, which included all of Parish Council completing level 1 & 3 training modules and supporting Kim in her task to roll this out across our Church body. We were also pleased to appoint Catherine M as St Michael's Child Safety Officer.

On the matter of public worship, we considered the **gradual return of face-to-face activities** within our corporate worship – including Holy Communion, morning tea and live music. Parish Council is grateful for everyone who has stepped into these spaces on the roster and contributed to make St Michael's a welcoming and engaging place to worship.

One of the great privileges of Parish Council is the **opportunity to serve the church** with an amazing group of people. Parish Council holds an important and vital role within the life of St Michael's, as it works with the Vicar to steer the ship through calm and choppy waters alike. If you are interested in becoming involved, please talk to Steve, or members of the new Parish Council - we would be delighted to welcome you aboard. There are also many other ways you could be involved, including joining an action group, becoming a Synod Representative, or standing for the Incumbency Committee. Please don't be shy.

Over the past year, Parish Council has included Mary Ann L, John S (Warden), Peter S (Treasurer), Jack V, Barb W, Steve W (Vicar), and Anne W (Warden). Special thanks must be extended to Peter S for his work as treasurer, and to Jack V and Mary Ann L for their assistance with the minute taking.

Anne West—Chair, Parish Council

## AREA DEAN'S REPORT

STEVE W

I have been the Area Dean of Coburg Deanery in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne since January 2021.



The area dean's role is essentially pastoral care for Anglican clergy in an area of the Melbourne Diocese under the direction of the bishop. It's a significant, honorary responsibility that offers service to many parishes in the inner north and west of Melbourne. The parishes included in the scope of the deanery include:

Suburb/area	Parish or organisation	Vicar/Locum	Other clergy & authorised ministers
MOONEE PONDS	St. Thomas'	The Ven. Vanessa Bennett (Archdeacon)	
DAREBIN SOUTH	St. James' Thornbury All Saints	New appointment soon	
MORELAND	St. Augustine's	The Rev Angela Cook	
ABERFELDIE	St. Andrew's	The Rev'd Michael Danaher	
ASCOT VALE	All Saints	The Rev'd Andrew Esnouf	
COBURG	Holy Trinity	Fr Farag Hanna	
STRATHMORE	St. Aidan's	The Rev'd Glen Wesley	
PASCOE VALE / OAK PARK Holy Trinity	Holy Trinity	The Rev Jenny Inglis	
TRAVENCORE	St. George's (Flemington)	The Rev Richard Murray	
COBURG WEST	St. Alban's	The Rev Christine Silvester	
BRUNSWICK WEST St John Chrysostom	St. John Chrysostom	New appointment soon	
BRUNSWICK	Christ Church	The Right Reverend Lindsay Urwin The Rev'd Jack Lindsay	
ESSENDON	Christ Church	The Rev George Kirreh	

Deanery meetings are held monthly, moving to different parish sites, on the second Thursday of the month. The meetings include sharing in worship, learning from Scripture together, prayer, sharing a meal, and some formal discussion relating to matters relevant to clergy in our deanery.

Steve Webster - Area Dean of Coburg

## FINANCES

PETER S

### Actual results for FY 2021/22

It has been another challenging year, with our income again unpredictable, more unexpected maintenance expenses, Covid-19 restrictions and changes in office staffing.

Our income this year was \$253,362, down from \$297,035 last year. Of this, approximately 92% was direct debit giving, 4% was hall hire, 3% was special one-off donations and 1% was donations for play group.

Our expenditure was \$282,407, down from \$311,941 last year. Of this, 55% was for staff. Other expenses included 6.2% on our annual gift to other agencies and missionaries with whom we partner, 5.1% on building maintenance and 12% as our contribution to the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne to support the wider mission of the Church.

We made a net loss of \$29,044 and held \$107,183 of cash in the bank at 30th September 2021.

In summary, our financial report for the financial year 2020/21, actual vs budget, results were as follows:

Our giving was 3.2% above budget (though we had budgeted for a deficit).

Hall hire was 20% above budget.

Staff costs were substantially above our original budget as we decided to reappoint the assistant minister, albeit at three rather than four days per week, and to replace the office assistant.

The following is a summary of our income:

Children's Ministry	\$ 100.00
Donations	\$ 7,500.00
Giving	\$ 233,381.46
Hall Hire	\$ 9,624.00
Interest	\$ 169.43
Playgroup	\$ 2,587.16
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 253,362.05</b>

The following is a summary of our expenditure:

Assessment	\$ 32,888.31
Maintenance	\$ 14,383.68
Ministry	\$ 9,862.78
Missions	\$ 17,419.79
Office	\$ 34,104.05
Staff	\$ 156,596.54
Utilities	\$ 13,828.12
Capital Improvement <sup>i</sup>	\$ 3324.50
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$ 282,407.78</b>

### Budget for FY 2022/23

Each year the parish council forms and adopts a budget to support the ministry objectives for the year ahead on behalf of the congregation. It is reported to the annual meeting and communicated to the congregation alongside any vision/action plans to encourage giving required to meet the proposed expenditure targets. The budget helps the parish council and staff to keep expenditure (and, to some extent, income) on track in expenditure through the year. A summary of our budget forecast for the 2022-23 financial year is set out below.

Budgeted Income:

Children's Ministry	\$ 100.00
Giving	\$ 233,381.46
Hall Hire	\$ 12,000.00
Interest	\$ 169.43
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 248,238.05</b>

Budgeted Expenses:

Assessment	\$ 32,772.00
Maintenance	\$ 22,500.00
Ministry	\$ 7,376.28
Missions	\$ 17,419.79
Office	\$ 34,104.05
Staff	\$ 156,059.50
Utilities	\$ 13,828.12
Capital Improvement <sup>i</sup>	\$ 16,551.66
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$ 300,611.40</b>

<sup>i</sup> A one-off urgent repair to the vicarage windows.

This budget assumes a modest increase in hall hire but no change in overall offertory from the 2021/22 year. An increase in our giving of \$2985 per month (~15%) would be required to meet our forecast regular expenditure.

This budget adopted by the parish council includes the office assistant role and the assistant minister for three days per week.

This budget projects another **deficit**, which we will again need to cover by drawing upon our cash reserves if income does not rise through the next year to meet the expenditure targets. We will monitor our income and expenses closely over the coming year and may adjust these settings if our finances require.

See the Vicar's Report above for further information about the rationale that shapes this budget.

Peter Summers—Honorary Treasurer.

## PLAY GROUP

CATHERINE M

We have had an excellent playgroup year, despite early mask wearing and the ever present threat of Covid. Many new families started and have become part of the fabric of the place each Tuesday morning. The average number of children attending each week has been in the 30s, often quite a different 30 then the week before.

We miss Catherine W who left us to go to London and we were without help for Term 1. Thankfully, Steve found and appointed Mia D to help us every Tuesday morning from Term 2 onwards and she has been a lovely addition to our team.

Each member of our team has completed the Safe Ministry to Children course and we regularly alert the families to the church's emphasis on this area of our service.

Despite many weeks of cold and rainy weather, we have been able to enjoy playgroup in the hall and, most weeks, outside. We provide toys and safe spaces for children to play and for their carers to relax. This is sometimes the only time of the week that parents are able to have a hot cup of tea and chat to a friend without interruption from their children.

Activities have included planting seeds and seedlings, making a Spring mural, eating delicious fruit and vegetables for Nutrition Week and having lots of outdoor activities for an especially energetic group of 4 year old boys.

Gillian B has been a fantastic help preparing morning tea for the kids and cleaning up afterwards. Shelley K has been equally helpful organising our admin.

Janette A and her teaching expertise has been invaluable especially when it comes to small children painting! Kim's pastoral care of the families continues to be exemplary.

The Christmas Fiesta on 11 December and our playgroup Christmas party on 13 December will be highlights for us.

Thank you for your continued prayers for our playgroup families and for us

Catherine M - Playgroup Coordinator

## RECONCILIATION ACTION GROUP

JANETTE A

Reflecting on the past year and charting the path of our work as the St Michael's RAP group is a rewarding and sometimes surprising task. Rewarding as we see how God has led us, guiding our inquiry into how to be His people who are engaged with issues of Reconciliation. Surprising as we notice, once again, how faithful He is in His guidance, through bringing people together from whom we learn, and who can renew our inspiration through offering new possibilities for action and relationship.



The 2021-2022 year began as Melbourne was emerging from lockdown #6,543... well, maybe not quite but it felt like that! The RAP group initiated a church service on Dec 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021, entitled "A New Day" to celebrate the coincidence of Advent with the cessation of lockdown, utilising some resources from our partner, **Common Grace**, notably a song "It's a New Day" recorded by Rev. Helen W and Brooke P.

Brooke P stepped down as CEO of Common Grace in the New Year. Our financial partnership with Common Grace continues, with a new National Director, Gershon N, appointed in June 2022. We are looking forward to a possible visit from Gershon to St Michaels next year. This year we were able to enjoy a visit to St Michaels from Bianca M, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice co-ordinator in June. On Nov 26th, the RAP group is meeting with Safina S, artist and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Christian consultant to Common Grace, and Jane K, Creation and Climate Justice Co-ordinator with Common Grace. The capacity to deepen our relationship with Common Grace is so much greater now that lockdowns are over and travel is possible! The RAP group is looking forward to discovering some new directions for the reconciliation work of St Michaels through yarning with Common Grace. Also, we encourage everyone at St Michaels to visit the Common Grace website, utilise their devotional materials, and to consider individually supporting their work for Indigenous justice, climate justice and reconciliation. There are opportunities provided by Common Grace to participate in zoom prayer meetings, led by Indigenous Christian leaders such as Aunty Jean P, which I have personally found deeply moving. To not just pray for, but to be prayed for, is a profound act of partnership and God-led ministry.

NAIDOC week 2022 was celebrated at St Michaels on July 3<sup>rd</sup> through a multi media cultural immersion! The RAP group published a variety of resources prior to the service for St Michael's members to explore and the service became a time of encountering and celebrating Indigenous perspectives, faith and truth.

On Saturday August 13<sup>th</sup>, the RAP group organised a workshop "Listening to the Statement from the Heart" led by Brooke P. This was a 'sell-out' event with nearly 60 people attending from St Michaels as well as a number of churches and the community. What an experience to be led in an engaging and knowledgeable way into considering the history and potential impact of the Statement from the Heart. Further possibilities for future events and workshops are being explored.

Early in 2022, the RAP members were invited to attend an inaugural meeting of local churches and faiths to investigate how we might work together to support the **Victorian Yoorrook (Treaty) Commission**. Rev. Ray G from Church of All Nations initiated the meeting. Some RAP members attended and a 'watch this space' decision was made, as the Yoorrook process was only just beginning.

Since then, the Yoorrook Commission has released a draft report, and a new ecumenical meeting is planned (Nov 22<sup>nd</sup>) to discuss what 'we', as local people of faith might do to show our support for this process of reconciliation. St. Michael's RAP will be hosting this meeting, and by the time of the AGM, we may have some ideas to put to the congregation regarding possible action.

The members of the RAP group farewelled Hannah Y and Julian M as they left St Michael's at the start of the year, and thank them for their leadership and work in encouraging everyone to engage as widely as possible with issues of reconciliation. The 2022 RAP group members, Barry M, Denise N, Sharyn Y, Andrew A, Peter S, and Mary Ann L, have all continued reading, watching, praying, writing, and responding to God's call on us to be alert and active participants in His work, faithfully bringing their concerns, knowledge, and inspiration to the St Michael's community. Sharyn has recently set up a library for books that members of the RAP and others have found helpful in learning more about Truth, Treaty and Reconciliation. We invite anyone to join us in the coming year as we go further down the road with, and toward, our Indigenous brothers and sisters.

Janette A, Chair 2022.

## **SPORTS CHAPLAINCY—CFC MEN'S TEAM**

### **STEVE W**

I've served as honorary chaplain for the Carlton AFL men's team since 2004. Since pandemic restrictions were lifted in Victoria, I have resumed attending some training sessions and I have been present in the

players rooms on game days for home matches. The role of chaplain in sport is undergoing change in the face of many challenges across different codes. This is perhaps, in no small part, due to the poor reputation the Church has in our time in the news media and public opinion. There is a willingness still at Carlton FC to include me for the practical help I can give and for the culture of service and grace I can promote, but I will work hard this year ahead to carve out opportunities for spiritual and pastoral words and acts of service to be part of my contribution to the role. I appreciate the prayers of those who are committed to Gospel ministry in public spaces like the sporting arenas of our city. Many thanks to those who pray and offer me encouragement along the journey.

Steve Webster

## **WALKING GROUP**

AUDREY L

Opportunity for fellowship, fresh air and fitness followed with a cuppa has attracted many church and community members, friends and neighbours, to join St Michael's walking group, started over twenty years ago by Roslyn L. We walk Tuesday mornings. And yes, most walkers turn up even in cold, rainy weather!

Some now start their walk at 8:00am from a designated place to explore the streets and lanes and the beautiful parkland near St. Michaels. They enjoy coffee around 9:15am at a nearby cafe.

Other walkers prefer a slower, shorter walk. They gather at 8:30am for a stroll to meet and socialise with the earlier group at the cafe.

We enjoy meeting people and making new friends so if you'd like to join us, please email St. Michaels office@stmichaelsnc.org.au so the walking group can contact you with Tuesday's departure locations.

Audrey L

## **CONTEMPLATION AND BIBLE GARDEN REPORT**

GREG D

The garden has continued to develop and mature. The space provides the opportunity to pause, enjoy and reflect.

As some of the plants mature it has been necessary to prune the growth.

This year, for some reason the almond tree produced a plentiful crop but all of the maturing almonds have vanished. It is highly likely the almonds proved irresistible to some hungry being. I suspect possums!

There has been a problem in finding a good spot for the fig tree such that the branches will spread and provide shade for any person who may choose to sit on the basalt bench.

Currently the fig tree planted near the lane way continues to struggle ( I suspect too much competition from the ficus hedge cover) while the one in the large pot is quite vigorous. The issue is where to next for the fig tree?

Before Christmas it would be good to move the grape vine to the west facing wall adjacent to the old

exit, spread a good layer of mulch over the garden and to restore the automatic watering sys

On a related matter, seed from a memorial tree, a small flowering gum which had died, planted in memory of 'Murgie', was collected and successfully germinated. The seedling is now 50 cm and needs to be planted out.

Greg D

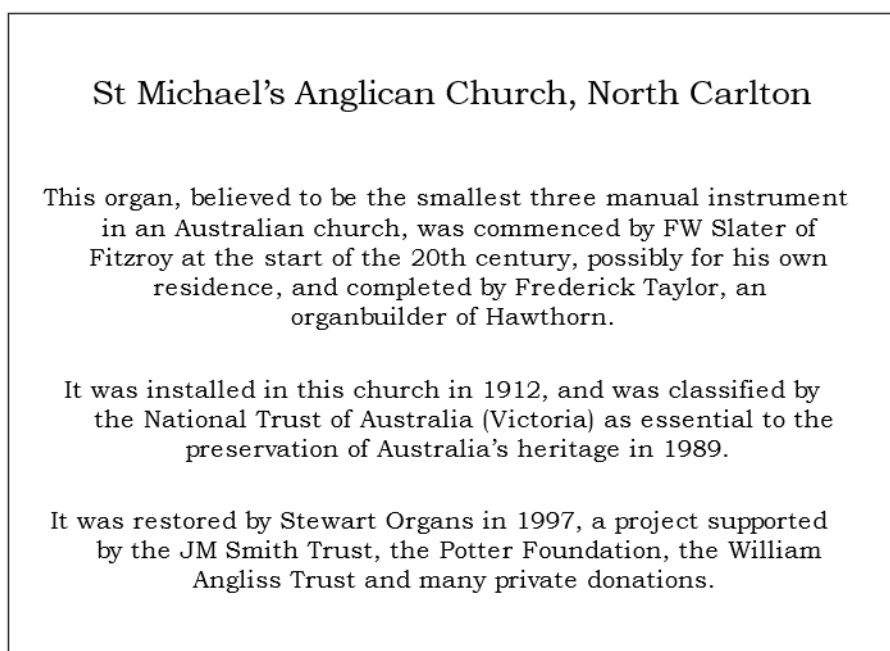
## NATIONAL TRUST: PIPE ORGAN

STEVE M

### Pipe Organ report (supported by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria))

The last year has been a pretty quiet year for St Michael's pipe organ, but with the return of live music I'm sure you will hear it more later this year and into 2023.

Here's what the plaque on the right hand side of the organ says – it's a great brief summary.



The organ restoration was supported by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), which established a tax -deductible account which remains open and enables tax deductible donations to support organ maintenance.

**All** organ maintenance costs since the restoration have been met from donations, mostly from parishioners. This account currently holds \$1,045.08 which is enough for roughly 12-18 months' tuning in normal circumstances.

While the organ is in good condition generally, the accumulation of dust and dirt internally since the



restoration has got to the point where thorough cleaning is becoming increasingly necessary. It would be useful to install a covering that will catch dust and delay the need for the next cleaning, but not impede sound from the instrument. This is a task for an experienced organ builder maintainer and Campbell Hargraves who has tuned the organ for some years is well positioned to do it. Virtually all of the 749 pipes need to be removed, everything vacuumed and the pipes replaced, each in its correct position. This would also enable repairing or replacing anything that is identified as requiring it. It appears that this is likely to cost in the region of \$20,000.

Pipe organs can be played successfully by pianists with playing skills at AMEB grade 4 and above.

I am more than happy to provide an initial familiarisation session or two to any pianists interested in having a try on the organ. The pedals are not essential, and in my opinion are not as hard to play as they might look! They are just scaled up keyboards with 'black' and 'white' notes suitably sized for feet. Have a closer look next time you're nearby! If you're interested in having a go, or just a closer look, please get in touch. I have also compiled a two page "How to play the organ" document which explains what all the knobs do, and which ones to use for whatever sound you're after.

Steve M

## **KID'S CHURCH**

**DIANNE S**

It's been a mixed year for kid's church with quite a bit of change throughout the year.

We have a small number of families connected into kid's church, including grandchildren who can't come regularly but love the kid's learning time when they do.

During 2021 I introduced a weekly 'self-learning' email sent to the families and continued this through the first 3 terms of 2022. With people entering health and safety protocols at various times, plus the busy lives of our families, this helped the children to remain connected and engaged in learning more about their faith even when they couldn't be on site on a Sunday. These included a theme, key points, memory verse, prayer, activities and kid's talks.

Term 3 saw changes in circumstance for our regular families and meant we 'played it by ear' for planned lessons, while maintaining the email engagement and having activities at the back of the church. We kicked off again in person in term 4 but are conscious of now having quite a small group on a weekly basis.

As inevitably happens, kids grow up and a number are now in high school and have remained with the adult congregation during the sermon time. One of the great joys of teaching kids church is to see young people decide to confess their faith for themselves.

Please pray for our child and youth activities for next year, especially for those who are exploring baptism or confirmation. Please pray for families with children to join our worshipping congregation.

### What we learned

Our Sunday learning program used material sourced from Christian Education Publications. For the age of most of the children we focussed on material suitable for ages 8-11. Teachers adjusted up or down depending on who was in sessions each week.

An important principle of learning and engagement in kid's church is for children to be involved in decision making.

This year the kids chose to learn:

Term 1 People of faith – faith filled followers from Hebrews 11

Term 2 The hope of the nations – God's plan of salvation

Term 3 followed the sermon series The Gospel and Justice and Colossians Complete in Christ

Term 4 God is faithful – Daniel and Isaiah

### Thank you

A big thank you to our kid's church teachers, Janette, Jacqui, Shelley, Cindy and Dianne for your ongoing commitment to helping children of St Michael's grow in understanding and faith.

### Child Safety

At the beginning of the year all teacher's completed Level 1 and 2 child safety training through the Diocese of Melbourne. As Sunday school leader, Dianne also completed level 3 training. I was also really pleased with the way members of the congregation who participate in ministries at St Michael's also completed level 1 training. It means a lot to see how much you all care about creating a safe community in which our children can learn and grow.

## SYNOD OF MELBOURNE DIOCESE

STEVE WEBSTER

The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne has a synodical system of governance. This means that people in our congregations get a say in how we structure ourselves as churches across the greater cities of Melbourne and Geelong, and in how we engage with each other and the wider community. Vicars, like me, and many other licensed clergy of the diocese get to have a say and a vote at synod meetings. Each parish church is able to have at least two lay synod members too, elected by their congregations for 3 years at a time (the duration of each Synod). We have just completed the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of this current Synod. Dianne Shay and Noelene Horton were our elected synod representatives for this 3-year period. This means, early in the New Year the Archbishop will send a mandate around so that new reps can be elected in each parish church for the new Synod to begin next October for a 3-year period. I'm so grateful for the service Dianne and Noelene have given to us and to the diocese as our elected representatives.

Some of the roles and responsibilities of synod members include electing Archbishops, electing members of Diocesan Council, electing members of other diocesan committees and representatives on wider church bodies. They also make decisions in many important areas, such as:

- Establishing how clergy are appointed to – and removed from – parishes, and how parishes function in terms of their finances, property and office-bearers.
- Ensuring children and vulnerable people are protected in church and church-related activities.
- Monitoring and reviewing diocesan finances and budgets, and the oversight of diocesan property; and
- Encouraging and sometimes implementing change in areas such as who can be ordained (Melbourne Synod was a pioneer in the women's ordination movement, for example), and in ecumenical relationships.

Synod also comments on issues and concerns in Australian society from a Gospel perspective, such as care of the environment, education, justice, and refugees.

Sometimes described as the Church's "parliament", Synod conducts its business on a model based on the Westminster parliamentary system, like that followed by Australia's federal and state parliaments. This helps to provide a representative model of governance for the Church and to keep us accountable publicly regarding our beliefs, guidelines, practices, and decisions for change.

The global pandemic necessitated new legislation to allow synod meetings to be held online. This year we met online on the three evenings (12 – 14 October) and met in person on the Saturday 15 October, with more than 600 people in attendance at St Paul's Cathedral in the CBD. Motions passed at synod this year included:

- A new Archbishop Election Act
- An act to enable Authorised Anglican Congregations to be able to have equal lay representation at synod in the same way traditional parishes can
- A motion on "Balancing the Diocesan Budget"

- A call for Archbishop in Council to form a strategy for better allocation of assets of the church to ensure that the word of God is preached and the sacraments duly administered in compelling and outward-looking congregations throughout the diocese. This included important conditions relating to the dispossession of Aboriginal people from the land
- A motion relating to the diocese's work for the prevention of violence against women – welcoming the Family Violence Policy, Procedures and Guidelines – and encouraging parishes and agencies to make use of these guidelines.
- A motion relating to gender equity and gender disparities, passing a motion committing to targets for representative equality within leadership and governance at all levels in the diocese
- A motion regarding pathways for the continuing professional development of clergy, and the next generation of vocational ministry.

Please prayerfully consider whether committing to this one week per year for the next 3 years as our parish representative might be something you can offer when the election comes around in the New Year.

## Contact Us

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The church office is only open occasionally.  
Contact the vicar or a churchwarden for church site  
access.

[www.stmichaelsnc.org.au](http://www.stmichaelsnc.org.au)