



Pilgrim Uniting Church

Annual Report 2023

Vision and Mission Statement

We are called by God to be a prophetic witness in the city of Adelaide so that new life and vitality will be generated in our city and its people.

In the spirit of reconciliation, Pilgrim Uniting Church acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Our Values

Pilgrim is committed to being a **faithful** and **engaging** Christ-centred church that:

- embodies authentic, active and faithful expressions of Christian faith and community and is a welcoming and hospitable community
- strives to balance faithfulness to the Christian Gospel with relevance to the communities it serves
- is non-judgemental in theology and lifestyle, affirms modern scholarship, and respects and celebrates diversity in ways that do not dilute or distort our essential Christian identity
- fosters commitment to social justice and care of creation/environmental sustainability as an integral component of Christian ministry and mission
- is committed to resourcing and nurturing spiritual growth through worship, learning, discipleship and witness
- engages with and contributes to the life and public discourse of the city of Adelaide in meaningful ways
- adheres to transparent and accountable procedures in relation to governance, decision-making and operations
- respects and promotes inter-faith and intercultural relationships.

Strategic Directions

Worship

Provide diverse forms of meaningful, engaging and hospitable worship that reflect Pilgrim's values and needs within our church community's changing internal and external environments.

Growing the Church and Reaching Out

Identify and facilitate opportunities for a diverse range of people, in the city of Adelaide and beyond, to connect with Pilgrim.

Provide a welcoming and hospitable environment to enable people of faith to experience God's love.

Encourage and support new and existing members to learn, grow and develop their faith.

Social Justice

Grow the theological understanding of systemic causes of injustice in the congregation and the wider church.

Continue to advocate for and support socially and economically disadvantaged people, and care of creation.

Continue to advocate for justice and reconciliation with First Peoples.

Identify and respond to ever changing social, ecological and economic issues.

Use our voice in the public arena to raise awareness of social justice issues.

Communication and Media

Raise the profile of Pilgrim's values and diversity of worship and communities, by ensuring effective communication with the congregation, the wider church and beyond.

Ensure optimum communication through the use of contemporary media and technology, and traditional means.

Ministers' Reflections

Jesus' words echo in our hearts: "By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another." As a diverse community, exploring faith and journeying together, we embody the name Pilgrim. What binds us is the abiding love that Jesus has called us to, shaping us into the Community of Christ.

Like most people, we are often asked how everything is going in our work. The questions we are most often asked include: How is the community? How is the ministry going at Pilgrim? How are the people there?

Answering these questions is both easy and difficult. Easy because Pilgrim is a vibrant community of people with diverse ideas about faith, life, and the world. However, it is also difficult as Pilgrim is always changing, growing, and adapting. We face new challenges each year, and God calls us to uncomfortable places. Yet, this is the essence of life-giving transformation.

Reflecting on our first full year in ministry at Pilgrim, we acknowledge significant changes in governance, addressing cultural shifts, and welcoming new staff. John's period of Long Service Leave was graciously covered by Rev Dr Sarah Agnew, and Pam Mitchell continued in her role as Pastoral Support Worker until the end of that time. We extend our heartfelt thanks to both Pam and Sarah.

Reading the 2023 reports, we discover the many ways God is actively shaping and enriching our community. The transformative presence of God reverberates within the fabric of our communal life, touching us through worship, nurturing our growth through transformative retreats and studies, and fostering connections via community gatherings and cluster groups. Within our public engagements, such as Sunday Night Tea, lounge ministry, open church, art exhibitions and organ recitals, God actively molds and enhances our collective life. It is in these diverse expressions of faith and creativity that we witness the tangible impact of God's transformative power within and beyond the walls of our community.

Together, as a Pilgrim community, let's make 2024 a year of deeper connection, understanding and love. May we continue to walk the Way of Christ, shaping our shared destiny with the love and grace that flows from God.

Blessings
John and Mark



Contents

Church Council	6
Governance Review	6
Social Justice	7
Finance and Budget	7
Church Membership	7
8.00am Morning Eucharist	8
9.30am Community Worship	10
Worship	10
Music	10
11.00am Choral Worship	11
Music and Evensong	12
Children's Ministry	13
Mission Development	15
The Church's Public Voice	15
Covenanting with First Peoples	15
Support for refugees and people seeking asylum	15
Climate Change action	15
Leadership for outreach and services to the community	15
Art Exhibitions	16
Music on Flinders	16
Open Church	16
Open Lounge	17
Sunday Night Tea	17
Ministry Development	20
Operations	22
Human Resources	22
Work, Health and Safety (WHS)	22
Income Sources	22
Property Management	23
Governance Support	23
Financial Management	23
Pilgrim Foundation	24
History, Heritage and Archiving	25
Leadership in 2023	26
In Memoriam	29

Church Council



Front Row: Meredith Edwards, Di Russell, Mark Hewitt

Back Row: Cynthia Randell, Pam Mitchell, Dianne Watters, Beth Prior, Denise Griffen, Judith Raftery, John Hughes

Missing: Susan Miller, Trudie Jackson

The Uniting Church in Australia (UCA) Regulations requires that 'the Church Council shall give priority in its life to building up the Congregation in faith and love, sustaining members in hope, and leading the Congregation to a fuller participation in Christ's mission in the world.' (3.1.2) Pilgrim Uniting Church Council fulfilled this during 2023 in the following ways:

Governance Review

Early in the year, Church Council began a review of responsibilities and governance structures, with the aims of better aligning its practices with UCA Regulations and increasing clarity and transparency.

Following the resignation of Susan Miller in March, Council adopted a revolving chair for its 2023 meetings. Revised Terms of Reference for Church Council and for Chair and Secretary of the Congregation were shared at community meetings and

approved at the November Meeting of the Congregation.

Also, the Ministers and Church Council led Pilgrim Congregation on an intentional journey to change inappropriate behaviours coming from negative approaches that were incongruent with a loving community. Council reaffirmed and required Pilgrim people to act in accordance with the Safe Church Policy and Codes of Conduct.

Social Justice

With Social justice being a key strategic priority for Pilgrim, Church Council affirmed in April the decision of the UCA's National Assembly to support the YES Vote in the Voice Referendum. Council approved Pilgrim's active advocacy for this cause.

Climate Justice was also to the fore. In June, following a comparative analysis of environmental ratings and financial costs, Council agreed that Pilgrim change energy providers as soon as practicable.

Throughout the year, Council approved expenditure of funds from the social justice budget. These approvals covered increased costs for Sunday Night Tea. Donations were made to Uniting World projects in Maluku and Timor Leste, and to a ministry project in the Fiji area in recognition of the contribution of visiting preacher, Rev James Bhagwan. Financial support was approved, on application, to congregation members' participation in the Raising our Tribal Voice for Justice: An Indigenous Theological Revolution conference, held Melbourne in early 2024.

Finance and Budget

Church Council noted that offerings were consistently below budget throughout 2023, with an increased reliance on donations. A 'Tap and Go' electronic donation post was installed in the church. A stewardship program was held in the last quarter of the year. Council approved the use of a mission and ministry styled budget to enhance the Congregation's understanding of income and expenditure. This budgeting model was introduced at the November Meeting of the Congregation.

At the AGM of the Pilgrim Foundation in May, Church Council approved the election of Jon Miller and Cynthia Randell as Directors of the Board for a term of three years, along with the appointment of HLB Mann Judd as auditors.

Church Membership

Church Council approved the adoption of a document outlining the definitions of Membership, Member-in-Association and Friendship and approved a liturgy to welcome new members.

This liturgy was first used in the November combined service of the Congregation. Church Council gratefully acknowledges Pilgrim's entire Congregation, volunteers and staff for their commitment to and achievements in ministry, mission and service in 2023.

8.00am Morning Eucharist



Front Row: Ruth Lyddon, Mark Hewitt, David Mitchell, Margaret Boyce, Pam Mitchell, Gwenda Kerley, Beth Prior, Ann Rogers

Back Row: Jijo Sebastian, Rhonda Williams, Christine Boyce, Sue Mann, John Hughes, Diane McGee, Judy Arnold, Brian Arnold, Trevor Rogers

The 8.00am community continued to worship in a circle at the front of the church. Attendance has been consistently good, averaging close to 20 each week with as many as 30 on occasion. New members have joined the worship and the service is available on Zoom which supports those who are not always able to attend in person.

Our two ministers, Mark Hewitt and John Hughes, serve the 8.00am Community well, and Vikki Waller has filled in on occasion. Pastoral support is another strong feature of this community. Counsel and guidance are valued in times of grief and ill health.

Pam Mitchell provided important pastoral support when John Hughes was on leave. Services are enhanced by musicians who accompany singing; Jenny Ward, Norm Inglis, Ann Rogers and Gwenda Kerley are thanked for their creative contributions.

The formalities of 8.00am community meetings are facilitated by reports being distributed prior to the meetings and contributions from those members who are on Church Council or a major committee. Community lunches are either held in a hotel venue or in a community member's home.

Connections within our community and with other Pilgrim communities are important. 8.00am community members are grateful for the opportunity to be involved in retreats, Bible studies and other whole-church activities but getting together after our services remains a special time. Post-worship refreshments are enjoyed, either in the courtyard of the Adina Hotel or in private area inside the venue, if the weather dictates.

One of the ministers joins the group most weeks, affording opportunities to keep up to date on the variety of happenings in each other's lives.

So too, these gatherings allow time for discussion about issues pertinent to 8.00am as well as keeping us informed of the varied work of Pilgrim and the wider church.

People from other communities and those who wish to join a Pilgrim community or are visitors to the city are welcome to experience the 8.00am service.



9.30am Community Worship

9.30am community members value the strong social justice focus that arises out of our worship. They appreciate the varied issues that arise from diverse interests, and there is a sense that the group is outward looking. There is a strong feeling that the community is supportive of each member, in terms of their social justice commitments as well as creating space where members can be nurtured. The social interactions which occur during the after-worship refreshments and in cluster groups are enjoyed. It has been said that we find our tribe at 9.30am.

Worship

The 9.30am service is hosted by a welcoming community who endeavour to communicate God's word in fresh and challenging ways, always striving to bring hope and healing in our current context.

9.30am worshippers have enjoyed the contribution of lay people in the planning and conduct of worship. Rev Mark Hewitt and Rev John Hughes continue to inspire, encourage and assist those planning services to source inspirational liturgy, music and art. Mark Hewitt's art, through photography, painting and sculpture have added a new dimension to our worship. During John's absence, Sarah Agnew's poetic style was appreciated.

Highlights for 2023 included:

- Lent resources supported by art and liturgy from "A Sanctified Art";
- Taize style services on 5th Sundays
- the Season of Creation in September which included stories and ideas from
- *Yarta Wandatha* by Rev. Dr. Auntie Denise Champion

- the focus on Indigenous issues and culture
- Spring Festival
- Advent series drawing on *Sacredise Liturgical Resources*.
- Special highlights were the baptisms

Music

We are blessed with fine musicians, and we give special thanks to our music coordinator Norm Inglis and pianists Jenny Ward and Judy Homburg.

We never fail to be delighted by Pilgrim's exceptionally fine piano and organs and the splendid music acoustics of the building. On a few occasions when we held Taize style services, these were enhanced by the subtle beauty of the chamber organ added to the mix.

Our resources are stretched fairly tightly these days, but our pianists, singers and instrumentalists have been very dedicated and contributed generously in supporting our music. Given that our team (and there's always space for new instrumentalists and singers) are not all with background experience and training, Tuesday morning rehearsals helped greatly in preparing for fluent delivery on the Sunday following, enhancement of the atmosphere both in the church and beyond, and the added bonus of being a lovely team building exercise.

We are grateful to the collaborators at the video and audio console who negotiate the whims of technology in the ongoing quest for excellence.

We were well served by our song books: *Songs for the People of God*, *Songs for Pilgrims*, *Here's A New Day*, *Another New Day*, *Sing my Soul*, *Hymns for Times and Seasons* and *Together in Song*. Within these are many of fruits of Pilgrim's poetic and musical creativity over decades, influenced by the use of contemporary language, progressive theology and concern for social justice. One senses a widespread thirst for this kind of content, which is not easily found

elsewhere. Our ministers have introduced us to some new repertoires as well.

The 9.30am community thank our Ministers and lay people for their skills, dedication, patience, goodwill and loyalty in providing support through worship, pastoral care and community building. Particular thanks to Peter Russell, Rose Milton-Head, Raelene Telfer, Greg Bassani and David Davis for their audio-visual and live-streaming.



11.00am Choral Worship

The 11.00am community continues to enjoy worship with a strong emphasis on liturgy and music. During the year, an 11am Worship Committee was formed under the leadership of Rev John Hughes. Its purpose is to look for ways of improving the quality of worship experiences.

The regular attendance (excluding the choir) at the 11.00am service remained in the low to mid 20s in 2023 and we have been pleased to welcome several new worshippers who regularly make the 11.00am service their home. Attendances at special services such as Easter Sunday, the Christmas Eve Carol service and Christmas morning were exceptionally good with the highest attendances since the COVID epidemic began and services were curtailed.

Streaming of 11.00am and Evensong services continues to provide access for people affected by mobility, health or transport issues.

There is a small band of operators under the oversight of Chris Bridge who ensure that services are streamed and we thank them. Thought is being given to how we might provide additional support such as pastoral care to this group of worshippers.

A number of community members give outstanding service as readers, welcomers, communion preparers and assistants and their continued support is much appreciated.

Dean and Jenny Drilling, Barbara Francis and the Graham and Jan Moseley make sure that pastoral support is available to regular attenders and former attenders.

Jenny Ward continues to provide wonderful support for children who come to the service.

Barbara Francis and Denise Griffen ensure that tea and coffee are available after the service in the lounge. They also provide support for the community lunches and their helpfulness is much appreciated.

Music & Evensong

2023 was another challenging, yet ultimately rewarding, year for Pilgrim's Music Ministry team.

The Choir returned to Pilgrim in February, having completed a second, highly successful cathedrals tour of the UK. They sang services in Westminster Abbey, York Minster and Lincoln, Hereford, Worcester, Salisbury, and Canterbury Cathedrals to considerable acclaim.

Service Highlights for the year included the Easter Day service when Mozart's Mass in C major K.220 was sung with orchestra, a performance on the morning of December 24th, again with orchestra; of Francesco Durante's Magnificat, and two combined Evensongs with the Choir of St Peter's Cathedral. The Christmas weekend was particularly busy, with the above-mentioned Durante performance being followed by the usual three Christmas services; all of which saw an encouraging increase in attendance.

Evensongs, again, provided a monthly highlight for all involved. The Choir enjoys not only singing these services but also the socializing that takes place afterwards.

We welcomed world-famous organist Thomas Trotter to Pilgrim in August. Thomas played for a weekend of services as well as presenting a brilliant solo recital during his time with us.

We have enjoyed having our Organ Scholar, Val Estrella with us in 2023. It has been particularly pleasing to witness his musical development and we have been grateful for the support and encouragement that he has received from the congregation.

The running of a successful music program such as Pilgrim's is a challenging and complex task. It would be impossible to achieve what we do on a weekly basis without the dedication of our Choir members, who turn up at least twice a week to rehearse and sing for services. Pilgrim is also extremely fortunate to have a fine group of choral scholars contributing to its weekly services. Their dedication, professionalism, and leadership throughout 2023 was exemplary.

Members of the Choir continued to organise publicity and fundraising, as well as assisting with preparations for rehearsals and services. While our Choir Librarian, Sean Tanner, was away for much of the year, Susan Brooke-Smith took care of the weekly library duties, a significant commitment.

Chris Bridge continues to do an enormous amount of work for Pilgrim's music ministry, both seen and unseen. In addition to his role as Assistant Organist he coordinated our social media site and the livestreaming arrangements for 11.00am and Evensong services.

The organists enjoyed and appreciated getting to know and working with our ministers who have been a great support to us.

Children's Ministry

From the beginning of the year, Children's Ministry met during 11.00am Choral Worship on the first Sunday of each month to enable children to join family members and the community in sharing Holy Communion. The group, under the leadership of Jenny Ward, now also meets on the third Sunday each month. There are 5 children involved from 3 families.

The main program is designed to contribute to children's development by:

- helping them feel, and know, they belong in the Pilgrim Community
- designing their experience at church to be a happy time, where they can have fun, talk and share with other children and adults
- teaching something of the basis of our faith seen in the life of Jesus and the Gospel stories.

When they gather in the West Chapel area, they can be part of the community at worship, sensing the rhythm and pattern of the liturgy, hearing the richness of music and word, and absorbing the peace and serenity of a sacred space.

On 'high' occasions, such as Christmas and Easter which attract more families, activities are provided in the West Chapel area for a larger group of children. Visitors who have come to both hear superb music and share the faith celebration are welcomed.

Resources built up over previous years are invaluable. Support offered by the Ministry Development Committee is valued, as is that from parents in encouraging their children to attend. Expressions of appreciation are regular. A particular thanks to Jenny Ward for her work in this field of ministry.



Mission Development

The work of the Mission Development Committee has social and earth justice at its heart.

There are 5 spheres of our work, in line with Jesus' teachings in outreach to our world:

- **The Church's Public Voice** through which we clarify and express our Christian values around public issues, in line with Uniting Church of Australia policies and priorities. Our committee links with community groups such as Homelessness SA, Justice for Refugees SA and the Anti-Poverty Network.
- **Covenanting with First Peoples** in which we aim to help our congregation to grow in understanding of the history, cultures, languages and aspirations of Australia's First Peoples. Our work in this field is in collaboration with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC). This work is led by the Walking Together as First and Second Peoples group.
- **Support for refugees and people seeking asylum** through Pilgrim's Circle of Friends which supported two refugees with their living costs. Church members are generous in their support of the Christmas and mid-Winter stalls, along with individual end-of-financial year donations.
- **Climate Change action** in collaboration with Synod's Environmental Action Group and the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change. This group starts by acting locally in recommending that our church uses energy providers

with green credentials. It also advocated for Church Council to investigate the possibility of solar rooftop panels.

- **Leadership for outreach and services to the community** such as Open Lounge and Sunday Night Tea.

A major focus of our work, led by the Walking Together group, was continued awareness-raising of *The Uluru Statement from the Heart* and its call for the inclusion of an Indigenous Voice to Parliament in the Australian Constitution. This commitment was in line with the Uniting Church Assembly and Synod position, which called for support for a YES vote in the referendum.

The Walking Together group, with funding from the Presbytery of Southern SA ran workshops with community groups and members of our congregation, and other congregations. and produced documents to explain the call for a Voice. The church hosted a number of events to support both the legislated SA Voice to Parliament and the referendum on a national voice called for October. A weekend forum with Professor Anne Pattel-Gray led thinking in the *Theology and Spirit of Truth*.

Pilgrim Church also hosted and recorded Rev Tim Costello and Noel Pearson in their historical call for justice through a Voice to Parliament.

While the referendum was not successful, our work on other aspects of *The Uluru Statement*, such as truth-telling, continues. We look forward to updating our strategic plan and Terms of Reference in 2024, in line with the process for the wider strategic plan for Pilgrim.

Art Exhibitions

Pilgrim Uniting Church, as a place of worship and reflection, has again been enhanced by curated Art Exhibitions. The exhibitions, across the year, reflect on a world of joy, a world of pain and a world of possibility. At times, they soothe and at other times they confront the viewer. Just as each artist draws upon diverse palettes, so too do they reflect diverse experiences and perspectives on the world we share.

Displays, curated by Rev Vikki Waller, included:

- *Retrospective: a creative journey* by Camilo Esparza Garcia
- *Colourful Diversity* by the Wild Fibres Artists Group
- *If these walls could talk*, using our History Boards set out as a self-guided tour, that Pilgrim features in the History Month Festivals
- *Oceanic Soiree* by Elizabeth Solich
- *The Season of Creation: celebrating Spring*, pictures of flowers provided by members of the congregation
- *Caring for Our Planet*, a SALA Exhibition display of 21 works by 12 artists from the 14th Solar Art Prize exhibition.
- *October Reflections* by Annette McRae.
- *Telling Truth* by Colin Clarke
- *Sunrise and Sunset*, photographs by Josie Joyce.

In intervening months, Pilgrim's History Boards were on display.

Music on Flinders

In 2023, the Music on Flinders program continued its legacy of creating and facilitating a vibrant pop-up live music concert every Monday during the warmer months on the forecourt of the Church.

The program celebrated 11 years of bringing a splash of creativity, colour and community to Flinders Street on Mondays at lunchtime.

The program was filled with talented and accomplished musicians who performed a variety of music genres including folk, jazz, country, rock and pop. Contributing to the program, with this eclectic mix of live music performances, were six bands, two trios, nine duos and eight soloists.

Kathy Pike continued in the role of program coordinator and curator, and Geoff Hurst, Peter Farley, Bruce Skinner and Peter Cranwell continued their service as volunteers helping out with sound and equipment.

The Adelaide youth disability sector continued to embrace the Music on Flinders program with an increase in the regular attendance of young adults living with a disability accompanied by their carers. The organisations that brought in young people to enjoy the free lunchtime concerts included Vibrant Care Australia, Inspired Options, Campability, KNH Quality Time Services and My Best Life Disability Service.

Open Church

Open Church continues to be an important part of the mission and ministry of Pilgrim Uniting Church.

Approximately 15 volunteers keep the doors of the church open Monday to Friday from 12.00 to 2.00pm.

Open Church is not held on public holidays and is closed from Christmas through to mid-January.

The average number of visitors per week in 2023 was 24 including city workers, locals, tourists and those wishing to stay and pray.

Open Church operates in conjunction with the Open Lounge, Organ Recitals and Concerts, Art Exhibitions and Funerals during the week.

Many of our volunteers are now ageing, so we are always seeking new volunteers to assist in this vital ministry. Sometimes (approximately 4 or 5 times a month), we have been unable to open the church.

We will continue to operate this program and pray that all those who enter the church are welcomed and feel both peaceful and energised. We hope they may return and perhaps become a part of our Pilgrim family.

Open Lounge

The Open Lounge hospitality program continued through 2023 to offer a safe, welcoming place for social contact and a warm drink.

We thank the volunteers: Andrew Clarke, Sue Dunn, Judy Eland, Ann Rogers, David Walton and Ros Wilson who have been consistently building non-judgemental relationships with simple care.

Thanks also to the volunteers who step into the gaps: Helen McIntosh and Pat Button, and particularly thanks to Dianne Watters who provided oversight and assistance.

During 2023, the Lounge was opened on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, offering coffee, tea and cordial during the summer months with the addition of a 'Cup of Soup' during the cooler months. Many Pilgrims generously donate the packs of soup.

The Lounge offers a place for a chat and social contact, whether or not people choose to engage. Regulars are greeted by name and there is always a welcome for new visitors.

For some, it is an opportunity to catch up with friends, exchange news with the volunteers, or seek assistance. For others, it is a place to have a warm drink and a biscuit or two, knowing that there are other people close by. Some read, some rest, but the hospitality is appreciated by all.

Sunday Night Tea (SNT)

SNT continued to be a significant component of Pilgrim Church's mission to the City of Adelaide in 2023.

Some two and a half thousand appetising and nutritious meals were served in Pilgrim Centre to appreciative guests experiencing homelessness, disadvantage or social isolation.

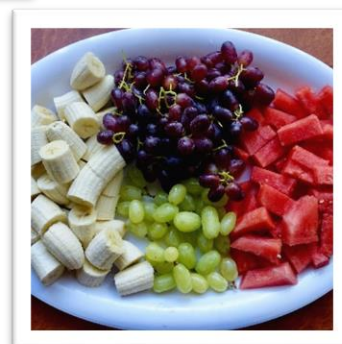
Pilgrim continued to provide the majority of funding for food in 2023. Ongoing support from the Rotary Club of Adelaide enabled monthly pasta and chicken nights; both very popular with guests. Norwood Bakers Delight donated much appreciated fresh bread each week and generous donations from Redback Express and individual Pilgrims assisted in meeting rising costs.

SNT volunteers preparing home-made soups, salads and cakes also contributed significantly to containing the cost of food. Overall volunteer numbers remained stable in the low seventies, with some retirements and some new faces.

We were pleased to welcome the Minister for Human Services, the Honourable Nat Cook, in April to observe SNT in action – but she insisted on serving to the delight of the volunteer team and guests.



Tasty and nutritious food is offered each Sunday night





Just one of the 7 teams who prepare and serve meals on Sunday nights in the Pilgrim Centre

Music on Flinders



Ministry Development

The role of this committee is broad ranging with key foci being pastoral care, discipleship, community development and assistance in preparations for the worship and life of the three Sunday worshipping communities so they each inspire those attending. We acknowledge the expertise and insight of Pam Mitchell and the deeply experienced and practical, Helen McIntosh. We thank the retiring co-Chair of the Ministry Development Committee, Denise Griffen, for her conscientious, caring work for over 4 years. She diligently reported to Church Council, and tied in the agendas to those of the Church Council. Denise, with Noel Holmes as Co-chair from mid-2023, led discussion and actions to inform and guide the work of the committee, with reflective processes aided by discussion papers from Rev John Hughes.

2023 work included:

- reviewing Cluster Group membership, including meeting with 'Pastoral Partners' and group leaders to review the effectiveness of this form of pastoral support and facilitate effective and inclusive engagement
- establishing Terms of Reference for 9:30am and 11:00am Worship Working Groups
- organisation of 'Combined Services' and Congregational meetings (e.g. dates, communion servers, on-door greeters and morning tea servers)
- supporting the 11.00am Music leadership, promotion of the organ scholarship proposal and budget bid through negotiation with Church Council
- supporting the formation of a group to consider 11.00am attendance and filling of ministry roles
- supporting 'Sharing your journey' small group meetings held monthly after the 9:30am morning tea
- replacing 'Circle of Prayer' with monthly prayer lists published in the Newsletter as a way of sustaining Pilgrim as a community of prayer, and building a sense of connection across the whole congregation
- planning Advance Care Directive forums
- considering the pastoral care needs of members who can no longer attend worship services
- supporting the Children's Ministry program
- scheduling Community Meetings about Church matters, seeking members' input
- determining the principles for the Elizabeth Tolhurst bequests to focus on assisting aging members of our church communities
- coordinating the distribution of celebratory birthday cards
- production of an Open Church information flyer about services
- updating of the Church directory.

Important achievements:

- offering a successful and well-attended Winter retreat (*Co-creators with Christ*) and planning a Summer retreat called *Finding God in the Ordinary*
- facilitating the annual NAIDOC service and coordinating Parliament Opening and Christmas services, and a Pacific Islander link through the Reverend James Bhagwan's service
- Baptism and Communion coordination.

We have a continuing agenda to inform potential members of Pilgrim Uniting Church through information packs and Open Church; and consideration of how the church can be flexible to both support families with young children, and those members who are aging and less mobile.



Sharing and amplifying ideas at the Winter Retreat



Operations

The Operations Committee is responsible for supporting Pilgrim Uniting Church's current and future goals for Ministry and Mission. In 2023, committee members met together as required, often in smaller sub-groups, but work continued between meetings and reports were provided to Church Council meetings.

Human Resources

Julie Bradley continued her reduced administration hours, mainly working on Mondays but filling in when required. Genevieve Bassani was given a second 6-month contract and then, when Genevieve's contract ended and Sarah Dzeba resigned to undertake further study, Vicki Eager was employed in an Administration & Media Officer role, a permanent position which commenced in September.

Robyn Boyes, our Business Manager, left us in early October so we engaged an accountant on an hourly basis, working with Di Russell, to ensure that financial responsibilities were properly addressed while we sought a replacement person.

Jill Morris was recruited in late December as Administration and Financial Manager but was only able to join us in late January 2024.

Jijo Sebastian continued as the regular caretaker and cleaner. Peter Mann joined us to fill in for Jijo during December and January. Tim Lee continued to undertake caretaking for weddings and at other times when Jijo or Peter were unavailable. All these staff contributed extensively to the work of the Operations Committee.

Work, Health and Safety (WHS)

This aspect of operations involves developing, implementing, and reviewing policies and procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of our employees and volunteers. All WHS policies were reviewed and approved in the first quarter of 2023. No policy changes were deemed necessary. Safety certification of electrical items was completed early in the year and maintenance issues that had the potential to create WHS issues were dealt with before incidents occurred (e.g. installing nosing on the stairs in the Pilgrim Centre). WHS and Safe Church reports to Church Council were included in Operations Reports.

Income Sources

Our main income sources include:

- distributions from the Pilgrim Foundation
- offerings increasingly through electronic means (\$130,100)
- interest from the Virtual Manse scheme
- dividends and franking credits from Pilgrim's investments managed by the Foundation.
- leasing, hiring and sharing of our property
- general donations
- specific donations (e.g. those through the National Trust of SA for maintenance of the church building
- bequests made directly to the church (in 2023 we received a significant bequest from Elizabeth Tolhurst's estate to support ageing people's needs).

Property Management

A major property inspection was undertaken in January. Minor property maintenance and upgrades to the Church and Pilgrim Centre were prioritised and managed. We found an appropriate property to rent as a Manse for Rev John Hughes.

Church lighting continued to be an issue. Minor repairs were undertaken but the decision was made to pursue a major upgrade.

This process started early in the year but was not completed by the end of the December because it involved so many external bodies and personnel due to Pilgrim's heritage status.

In addition to engaging a lighting engineer and our heritage architect to advise us we needed to get Synod approval, as well as Plan SA and Adelaide City Council and state heritage approvals.

We are grateful for the support of Peter Dungey in steering us through these required processes. Work will occur in 2024, once tenders have been received. Investigation of the possibility of installing solar panels on the Church roof was deferred for consideration in 2024. We also identified the need to provide better disability access (parking/seating) inside the Church, another project, possibly for 2024, if finances permit.

Governance Support

Church Council decided that we only needed to review existing policies when changes were required.

Our Code of Conduct documents, based on those provided by Synod, were modified for volunteers who were not Pilgrim people (e.g. Sunday Night Tea volunteers).

Safe Church checks and monitoring of records was ongoing, including Vulnerable Persons or Working with Children Checks for Sunday Night Tea volunteers.

Information Technology and audio-visual maintenance and upgrades occurred where necessary. Access to our website was obtained so that we could more readily make required changes. New IT policies will be required in 2024.

Financial Management

Sound financial management and the financial viability of Pilgrim was achieved by:

- ensuring prompt payment of accounts and following up receipts from sales
- providing regular financial reports to Church and Council and responding to their requests for financial information
- involving the whole of Church Council and all stakeholders in the annual budget process and sharing with the Congregation a way of looking at the budget through a Mission and Ministry lens
- managing the auditing of the financial accounts for both Pilgrim Church and the Foundation by HLB Mann Judd
- liaising with the ATO regarding refunds of GST payments and Franking Credits for both the Church and the Foundation.

Pilgrim Foundation

Board of Directors

The directors of the Pilgrim Foundation met 8 times during the year to review the financial position of the Foundation and to make decisions regarding the investment and management of shares held by the Foundation for the benefit of the Pilgrim Uniting Church, the Muriel James Fund and the Stow Music Fund.

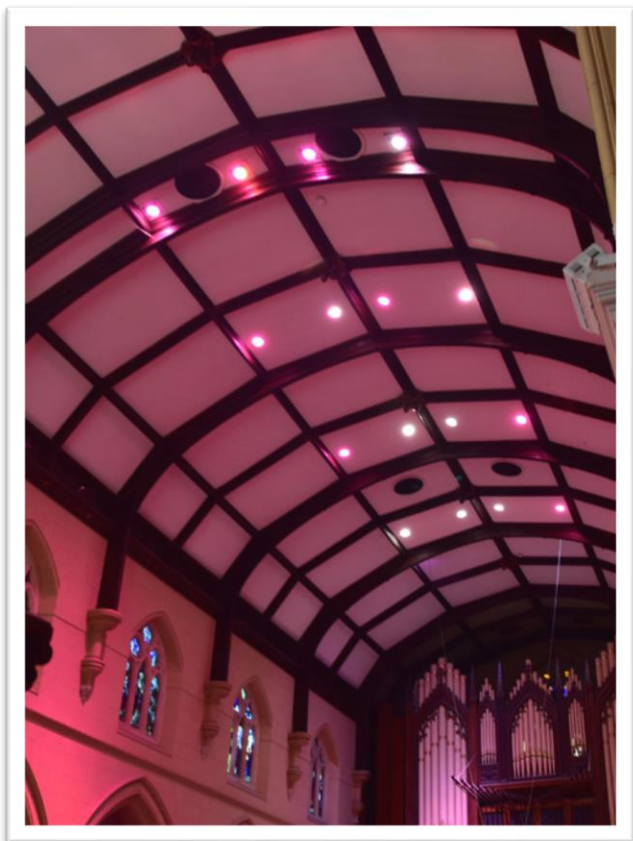
The Directors approved the distribution of funds to the General Church Fund (\$307,125) the Muriel James Fund (\$10,064) and the Stow Music Fund (\$108,293) for 2023, to further the mission of the Church. The directors thank Tony Hawkins from Ord Minnett for his continued valuable advice to Directors enabling a strong return on and growth of funds.

They also thank Robyn Boyes for her management of Foundation administrative processes and attendance at meetings as the Church's Executive Officer.

Finally, the congregation thanks the Foundation Directors for their considered input and diligence in ensuring the best possible financial returns for the Foundation investments.

Future Bequests

Supporters of Pilgrim Uniting Church are encouraged to contribute to its future by making provisions in their wills for bequests to the Pilgrim Foundation Incorporated. Bequests can be made in the form of cash, fixed interest securities, shares and property however, legal advice should always be sought when making a Will.



The current lighting in Pilgrim Church.

An external company has been engaged (in consultation with Pilgrim Uniting Church) to undertake a tender process for a complete upgrade of the lights in 2024

History, Heritage and Archiving

The work of the 'Archive Committee' has been hampered by health challenges for its members during the year. Nevertheless, when possible, the painstaking work of sorting and collating documents and other information from many sources; investigating and making decisions about their value; cataloguing, digitally recording, photographing and preserving them has continued.

Our criteria for retention include legislative requirements as well as the way in which the item informs and interprets the history of Pilgrim Uniting Church, the two founding churches, and the people. In addition, church minutes, membership rolls, and registers of baptisms and marriages from Pirie Street Methodist Church have been transferred to the Uniting Church History Society.

An exhibition of photographs and items of interest has been provided during the SA History Month of May; conversations have been held with visitors from Stow's church of Hadley, UK, as well as more local enquirers. We have enjoyed a valued collaboration with the Pilgrim Art Exhibition curator, Rev Vikki Waller, in displaying our information panels about Pilgrim and Pirie St Methodist churches. These have proven to be interesting to visitors, especially those during Open Church.

We invite you to 'spot the difference' in the following four (of seven) early depictions of SA's first Congregational Chapel built by Rev. T.Q. Stow in 1837 on the Torrens flat.



Leadership in 2023

Church Council

Peter Dungey (interim member June 2022 to March 2023)
Meredith Edwards (March 2023-)
Denise Griffen (retired December 2023)
Rev Mark Hewitt
Rev John Hughes
Trudie Jackson (resigned 6 July 2023)
Susan Miller, Chairperson (resigned 19 March 2023; *sadly, Susan died on 30 September 2023*)
Pam Mitchell (resigned November 2023)
Beth Prior (Secretary)
Judith Raftery (March 2023-)
Di Russell (Treasurer)
Dianne Watters (retired December 2023).

Ministry Development Committee

Carol Dungey
Joy Germein
Denise Griffen (Co-chair)
Noel Holmes (Co-chair)
Rev John Hughes
Peter Kelsall
Helen McIntosh
Pam Mitchell
John Pederson
Colin Telfer.

Flowers

Meredith Edwards
Kate Everett McDougall
Denise Griffen (Coordinator)
Vicki Hagan
Marelle Harisun
Rose Milton Head
Raelene Telfer (Coordinator)
Jenny Ward
Helen Warman.

Mission Development Committee

Graham Brice
Andrew Clarke
Allen Edwards
Meredith Edwards
Joy Germein
Marelle Harisun
Rev Mark Hewitt
Ruth Lyddon
Dianne Watters (Chair).

Walking Together as First and Second Peoples

Andrew Clarke
Allen Edwards
Meredith Edwards
Marelle Harisun (Chair)
Rev Mark Hewitt
Di Russell
Peter Russell
Ruth Lyddon
Dianne Watters.

Art Exhibitions

Vikki Waller (Curator).

Music on Flinders

Peter Cranwell
Peter Farley
Geoff Hurst
Kathy Pike (Program coordinator)
Bruce Skinner.

Open Church

Judy Bunney
Pat Button
David Davis
Judy Eland
Joy Germein (Coordinator)
Nim Labrooy
Ruth Lyddon
Warren Mossman
Ann Rogers
Joan Tennant
Vikki Waller
David Walton
Brian Ward
Chris Ward.

Open Lounge

Pat Button (reserve)
Andrew Clarke
Sue Dunn
Judy Eland
Helen McIntosh (reserve)
Ann Rogers
Dianne Watters
David Walton
Ros Wilson.

Pilgrim Circle of Friends #27

Bronwen Blight
Andrew Clarke
Meredith Edwards
Margaret Chittleborough
Libby Hogarth (Chair)
Josie Joyce
Helen Warman
Dianne Watters.

Sunday Night Tea

Coordinators:

Carol Dungey
Peter Dungey.

Thanks go to the many meal volunteers and security.

Leading the groups are:

Barbara Dawe
Allen Edwards
Meredith Edwards
Cam Grant
Michael Loffler
Sharon Tilley
Carol Dungey.

Operations Committee

Brian Arnold
Sue Heathcote
Jon Miller
Di Russell (Convenor)
Peter Russell
David Walton
Robyn Boyes (Business Manager).

Pilgrim Foundation

Blair Badcock
Alan Nankivell (Chair)
Justin LaBrooy
Jon Miller
Cynthia Randell
Andrew Wilkins.

History, Heritage and Archival

Christine Boyce
Margaret Boyce (Convenor)
Brian Ward
Chris Ward.

8.00am Music

Ann Rogers
Gwenda Kerley
Norm Inglis
Jenny Ward.

9:30am Music

Genevieve Bassani (Flute)
Don Bell (Guitar and Singer))
Graham Brice (Percussion)
Margaret Chittleborough (Recorder)
Ruth Farrent (Percussion)
Ed Gower (Recorder)
Jenny Hamper (Cello)
Michael Heathcote (Singer)
Noel Holmes (Singer)
Judy Homburg (Piano)
Norm Inglis (Conductor)
Alison McDougall (Singer)
Peter Muller (Singer)
Colin Telfer (Singer)
Jenny Ward (Piano).

11:00am Music & Evensong

Choir

Olivia Arcangeli
Will Barrett
Bronwen Blight
Susan Brooke-Smith
Janet Buchan
Lisa Catinari
Riana Chakravarti
Deanne Dooland
Mark Egelstaff
Emily Filmer
Annie Fisher
Connor Fogarty
Barbara Francis
Liz Francis
Tiffany Gaze
Nola Gibbons
Cassandra Humble
Sue Irvine
Bill Jackson
Louise Jackson
Peter Jackson
Trudie Jackson
Richard Jones-Parry
Emily Kelsall
Richard Knowling

Theo McCall
Alison McDougall
Louise McGee
Vicki McGregor
Suzanne Pederson
Martin Penhale
Cynthia Randell
Amelia Roberts
Mary-Anne Roberts
James Scott
Sean Tanner
Colin Telfer
Andrew Turner
Matt Winefield.

Organist & Choir Director, Peter Kelsall
Assistant Organist, Christopher Bridge
Organ Scholar, Val Estrella

Staff

Genevieve Bassani (Administration Officer)
Robyn Boyse (Business Manager)
Julie Bradley (Administration Officer)
Jijo Sebastian (Caretaker/Cleaner)
Sarah Dzeba (Promotions)
Vicki Eager (Administration & Media Officer)
Tim Lee (Caretaker)
Peter Mann (Caretaker).

Editorial Team

Vicki Eager
Meredith Edwards
Denise Griffen
Rev Mark Hewitt
Beth Prior
Di Russell.

In memoriam

Alison Kinsman (11.00am)

30 April 2023

Dina (Puck) Van Adrighem de Jong (8.00am)

26 May 2023

Susan Miller (8.00am)

30 September 2023



Thank you

Pilgrim Uniting Church is blessed
to be greatly supported by the contributions
of our generous volunteers
whose hearts beat in service to others.

We are all grateful for the many volunteers
who share their time, skills and knowledge
in helping to sustain Pilgrim
as a healthy and resilient community,
making significant contributions to the
quality and vibrance of our Church



Pilgrim
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