



Generate Presbytery Report

In January of 2020 when we felt God calling us to a year of **Courage** we had no idea just how courageous we would need to be.

Sir Winston Churchill said “Fear is a reaction. Courage is a decision.”

It takes courage to continue to hope in the midst of a crisis. It takes courage to lead through uncertain and difficult times. It takes courage to find new ways of doing ministry and mission. It takes courage to ask tough questions of our own discipleship. And it takes courage to allow some things to die so there is energy and room for new things to grow.

Despite the difficulties of this year we have been so proud of the courage shown by leaders and congregations across Generate Presbytery.

Our chaplains have had an enormously difficult task working in ever changing agencies, with anxious staff and people. We are so thankful for the way they have loved, cared for and been Christ with people this year.

Leaders throughout the presbytery have seen waves of change in the way they engage with ministry and mission. There has been countless hours, thinking, planning and praying. We have seen new skills emerge, wider people in the congregation engaged in caring for each other, tech or Sunday resourcing and so much more. We are thankful for the outstanding leadership in this space and we are praying that leaders throughout the Synod will know God's rest and refreshment.

We are thankful for the work of our Hub Leaders who, even throughout COVID, continued to support congregations who were undergoing consultations, pastoral issues, or looking to reshape.

And we are thankful for the countless people across the presbytery who encourage, participate, share and support each other. We are the presbytery together. We are so thankful that so many contribute their skills, experience, time and passions so generously.

1. COVID-19

While we didn't anticipate what 2020 would bring, we can certainly see the fingerprints of God in redeeming and using it for God's glory. Many congregations went online for services and connection. Everything from zoom parties, kids' ministry times, streaming services, small groups, church council meetings to online Alpha courses. Others created church at home packs and delivered them. Pastoral care and prayer groups were set up and members continued to engage with and encourage each other.

Early on the Generate Standing Committee noted the financial pressures that COVID would have on congregations and halted the 2% Presbytery contribution for three months. This along with the government and pause on the Synod's portion of the MSF has helped our congregations weather the financial uncertainty

of this year. Generate's finances were also well supported during this time and a surplus in 2020 will help to ensure good financial stewardship as we all recover in 2021 and beyond.

While most congregations have started meeting again, there are some who are waiting for COVID Safe requirements to reduce before they return to worship services. The COVID Crisis and Synod Property Reports have also been an opportunity for a few congregations to consider their missional viability into the future. For some this has meant having conversations about closing and contributing to the missional life of other congregations. For others they are dreaming about different ways of doing ministry.

2. Presbytery Meetings

Since the November 2019 Synod meeting Generate has had 3 Presbytery meetings. The first in November 2019 was focussed on establishing the structure and support systems we would need as a new presbytery. At this meeting our Hubs were created and staffing was approved.

In March 2020 we gathered at Seeds UC for a day of worship, resourcing, prayer, food and more. We were privileged to hear Tim Hanna share around the courageous leadership of Jesus.

In October 2020 we met as a presbytery in 5 hubs. Leaders from across each hub gathered for worship, prayer, heard input from Rev Dr Graham Humphris and updates on the presbytery. We met for business via zoom and then each hub participated in resourcing around some key needs of the churches and leaders in that hub.

3. Growing

This year has seen Generate Presbytery grow from a new emerging council finding its feet into a movement structured around our key focus areas of seeing people come to faith in Jesus Christ, growing passionate disciples, raising courageous leaders and planting and renewing churches.

3.1 Task Groups

Task Groups are working to explore the ways in which we can press into our four focus areas.

3.1.1 Media and Resourcing

During the COVID lockdown the Media Task Group's work in creating the Easy Sunday Dropbox and helping to support congregations who were looking at going online was incredibly helpful.

3.1.2 Church Planting Task Group

Generate's heart it to see churches planted and renewed. Church planting falls under the authority of the Presbytery and as such a task group has been set up with experienced planters to help think strategically

about church planting, work with planters and ensure that as a Presbytery we continue to look for the new thing that God is calling us to do.

The Church Planting Task Group processed and approved the Journey Adelaide Faith Community in the heart of the city and is currently progressing conversations with a Zimbabwean community that has begun online during COVID, are looking to become a Faith Community in Generate and to begin meeting together somewhere centrally. There are exciting times ahead.

3.1.3 Leadership Pipeline

The Leadership Pipeline Task Group has been considering how we raise courageous leaders for the future of the church. This includes how we help those entering into ministry leadership with support and training as they are apprenticed by experienced leaders, how we support the work of formation that our candidates are undertaking and even how we help those leaders who have the call and capacity to lead teams of leaders grow into the roles ahead of them. The Task Group has developed some rich tools to help us raise courageous leaders and we can't wait to see this start to roll out in 2021.

3.1.4 Renewal Task Group

There is an enormous need to renew churches. The congregation has a spiritual and regulatory responsibility to be sharing the gospel, growing disciples, raising leaders and ordering itself in a healthy missional way. We know that many congregations are struggling with the size of their membership, the capacity of aging leadership and how to reach those who don't know Jesus. We want to help with this. We are in the beginning stages of setting up a task group that will look at how we can best help renew congregations and consider their future.

3.2 Hubs

In March this year our 5 Hubs were established and supported with Hub Leader staffing to build team, resource and support congregations and leaders geographically.

These hubs are:

- Eyre Peninsula
- Mid North
- Adelaide and North
- Adelaide and South
- South East

The hubs have begun meeting together around particular needs, resourcing and encouragement and we recently hosted our October 2020 Presbytery meeting across the 5 hub locations.

3.3 Staff

Generate has been supported by the continued placement of the Chairperson Rev Dr Graham Humphris and the additional placement of the Secretary Rev Stephanie Tai along with the appointment of our Administration Assistant Eloise Scherer. The October 2020 Presbytery meeting also approved the employment of Rev Barry Littleford as the Chair of the Generate PRC.

Surgery in the middle of 2020 saw Rev Dr Graham Humphris on leave for 2 months. During this time Rev Stephanie Tai was Acting Chairperson. We praise God for Graham's full recovery and clean bill of health.

3.4 Congregations

Despite the challenges of COVID this has been a productive year for our congregations. We have heard reports of missional changes, baptisms, people coming to faith, new leaders taking on ministry roles, MOW and MOD candidates approved, celebrate the ministry contribution of retiring ministers, held JNC's, reviews and much more. We have celebrated the rich ministry of the Mount Pleasant Congregation as it closed and were excited to celebrate the planting of a new Faith Community in Journey Adelaide. We also welcomed Driver River and Port Vincent into Generate Presbytery.

There is a growing sense of belonging and participation throughout Generate as leaders across churches engage with each other, support one another, pray for each other and participate in the life of the presbytery.

4. What's Next

Above it all there are many positive signs and great opportunities. We certainly are on an adventure of joy. The future will hold challenges as we continue to build Generate with a clear mission, strong relationships and agile structures. While 2020 has taught us to hold lightly our plans for the future, we can be sure that God will continue to call us to keep our purpose in front of us... we exist to see people come to faith in Jesus Christ, to grow passionate disciples, to raise courageous leaders, and to see churches planted and renewed.

Blessings

Rev Stephanie Tai

Generate Secretary