



Report from Calvary Presbytery

Context

Calvary Presbytery is the regional Queensland body of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAIACC). It oversees seven Indigenous congregations. In the Cape York and Gulf region this includes the congregations of Mapoon, Napranum, Aurukun and Mornington Island, for which the Uniting Church is the main church in each community.

The rural/urban and metropolitan Congress congregations are Gordonvale, Townsville and Zillmere (Brisbane).

Each congregation has its own leadership team of Indigenous lay leaders, with an ordained minister or pastor supporting the church and the community at Mornington Island, Mapoon and Zillmere.

Ministry/congregational life data

Area covered (sq/kms)	Queensland	No. of pastors (Stream A)	1
Population	n/a	No. of pastors (Stream B)	0
No. of congregations recognised as such by Presbytery	7	No. of lay ministry teams	2
Faith communities	0	Placements No. of congregational placements FTE	F/T: 1 P/T: 2
Ecumenical communities	0	No. of non-congregational placements FTE	F/T: 1 P/T: 0

No. of 'cluster' arrangements	0	No. of joint placements FTE (i.e. ministry agents, support staff, total number of people)	F/T: 0 P/T:
Total weekly worship attendance across Presbytery	200	Presbytery staffing FTE (i.e. ministry agents, support staff, total number of people)	1.5
Percentage of congregations in the Presbytery with Sunday children's and youth ministry with over 15 average attendance	30%		

Report

Response to the identified priorities of the 31st Synod:

1. Worship gatherings that can include people who have never attended worship or belonged with church

There have been evangelical outreaches conducted at Napranum and Aurukun over the last 18 months, with many new baptised members attending church as a result. Church attendance is growing at Mornington Island and steady in Mapoon, Gordonvale, and Townsville. There has been a decline at Zillmere, but hopefully this issue is being addressed.

2. Making faith sharing a priority for the Uniting Church

Bible study and fellowship groups are important in our congregations. There are strong children and youth ministry programs at Mapoon, Napranum and Townsville.

3. Church planting

Ministry to the Mapoon community was enhanced several years ago with the appointment of a minister and youth worker to the community. After a gap of two years, Calvary has been able to place a half-time minister at Mapoon, in cooperation with the Weipa congregation and the North Queensland Presbytery. The community is looking forward to the building of a new church and manse for which the Assembly has committed to conduct a national building appeal. The Mapoon congregation is a small but active group of children and youth.

4. Formation for ministry

The UAICC has a strong commitment to the equipping and training of Indigenous ministry leaders. It began its own program of ministry and leadership training in 2004 but no longer runs its own program. Instead, students are encouraged to enrol with Nungalinga College in Darwin or other suitable colleges or training providers. Calvary Presbytery currently has three people enrolled with Nungalinga College and is encouraging more to become involved.

5. Resource sharing urban/rural

The majority of congregations of Calvary Presbytery are totally dependent on the Queensland Synod for the provision of ministry resources. Congregations are small and poor. While the Presbytery has some capital reserves available for repairs and maintenance, it is going to need a further injection of funds to build a new manse at Aurukun now that the old mission houses have

been demolished. The building of a new church and manse at Mapoon will require significant funds from the wider church—estimated at \$1.2 million. Resource sharing that involves Calvary is an expression of covenanting and is a vital part of the relationship of the wider church to ministry with First Peoples.

6. Children, youth, young adults and family ministry as a priority

The congregations of Calvary are committed to furthering their ministry amongst all age groups.

Key achievements/initiatives

The Presbytery has expended this year over \$400,000 of its own capital reserves on essential renovations and repairs to the Zillmere and Napranum manses, and the re-roofing of the Mornington Island church. But there is still another \$2 million required to build the church/manse at Mapoon, a new manse at Aurukun, and further renovation work on the church at Mornington Island. The Presbytery does not have these resources and so appeals to the wider church for this essential capital support.

Challenges/risks as we progress

The Presbytery is grateful for the resourcing that the Synod has committed in the last year to enable ministry in our congregations and communities.

However, we have been challenged by the lack of people who have expressed an interest or desire to minister in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Despite advertising nationally, we have not been able to find any ordained Uniting Church ministers willing to be placed at Napranum and Aurukun (priority placements).

Issues to be addressed

A key issue is how we are able to attract people to minister in the remote Aboriginal communities of the Cape and Gulf region. Whilst we acknowledge that there are limitations for many ministers and their families in being available for placement in these communities, we would hope that there may be some clergy or experienced pastors willing to serve God and the church in this kind of ministry.

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