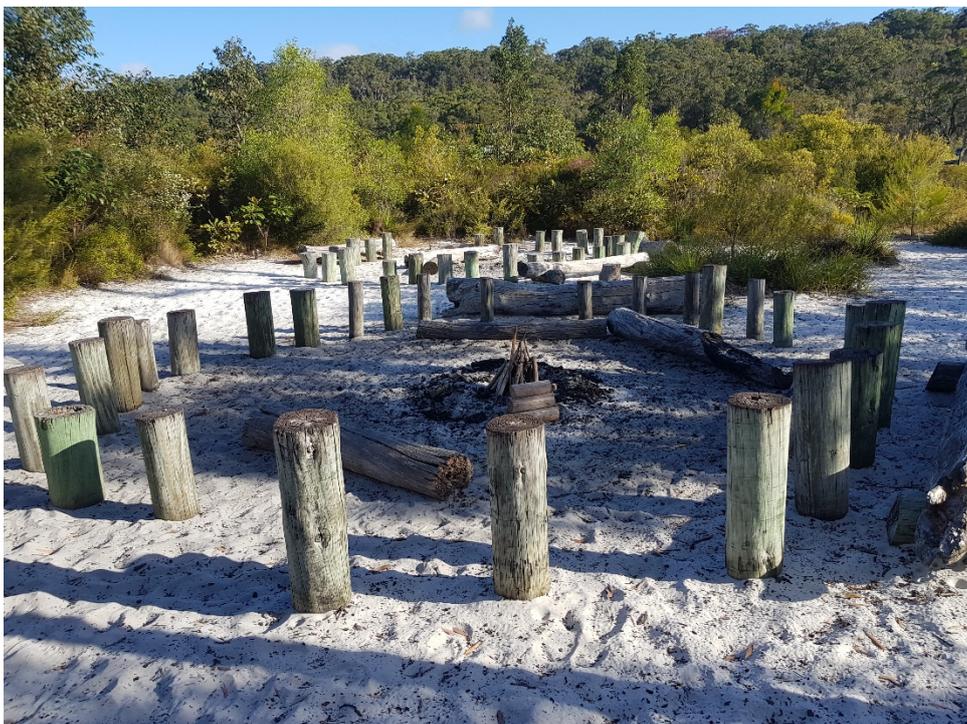




**34 SYNOD 2019**

**Report from**

# Mary Burnett Presbytery



Extending from the Glasshouse Mountains to Eidsvold and Burnett Heads, Mary Burnett Presbytery is a combination of urban centres and small rural communities.

The Presbytery wants to be focused on the mission Jesus call us to, of making disciples. Being a diverse Presbytery geographically, we are also a diverse Presbytery in the ways this mission is expressed locally through our congregations, agencies, chaplaincies and faith communities.

### **Focus since the last Synod**

A lot of our focus has been on supporting our ministerial and lay leadership pastorally after the division caused by the Assembly decision on same gender marriage. We've lost a number of key people in congregations and some have stepped back from leadership roles.

We have invested in a lot of our time and energy into creating a greater sense of collegiality in the Presbytery. New leaders have now stepped up and several new names have joined our Standing Committee and Pastoral Relations Committee.

### **Highlights:**

We have had a very successful retreat that scored a 96 per cent approval rating; building collegiality, acknowledging ministry agents for their hard work and feeling supported.

## **Priority Directions**

Our Presbytery Minister visits every congregation annually and shares in the Christ-centred worship, prayer and listening. Leading worship when invited, focusing a lot on discipleship and disciple-making.

The church plant at Bells Faith Community (0.5 plus 0.5 chaplaincy at Unity College) is growing, and new ministries like SurfChurch at Bargara are taking off.

A second cohort of ministry agents are nearing completion of the leadership course at Trinity College. One minister completed a D.Min in Missional Leadership. The leadership course has fed back into the Presbytery with people stepping up to the challenges of leading at Standing Committee and Pastoral Relations Committee level. We have three people in POD and one candidate in training.

The Presbytery's Mission and Strategy group will participate in a pilot engagement from the Synod Strategic Locations unit. We're looking at where-to next for growing congregations, what to do with a successful church plant, and at our vulnerable congregations' future. We want to be more strategic and less reactive when it comes to future rationalisation/amalgamation/planting in the Presbytery. The intention is to take on board the McCrindle, NCLS and Spirited Consulting results in our planning and discernment about our future. What does this mean for us in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd stages of congregational life?

The challenge is huge when it comes to connecting and engaging with a younger generation. Day camps are brilliant for rural communities. Some congregations have no children, whilst in Kawana there is a growing family ministry, 13 Year 6 children in a Maleny group, Messy Church in some places, a youth group in Cooroy and more than 30 young people attend worship in Bundaberg.

## Challenges/risks as we progress

We've identified that one of the major challenges for Mary Burnett is to move from a reactive style of operating to one we see as proactive. Often the reactive mode is the only option left by the time an issue comes to Standing Committee or Pastoral Relations Committee. The creation of a Strategy and Mission group is a step forward in addressing this concern.

Key areas are depopulation of rural areas, better use of resources (people and things), a major new hospital with a Uniting Church chaplaincy presence, building bridges between congregations and agencies, a ministry to retired ministers and spouses and so on.

## Proposal

It is proposed that the 34th Synod receive this report.

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## Contact for report questions

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