



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Gungahlin Uniting Church and Community Centre

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INTRODUCTION

Gungahlin Uniting Church adheres to the Basis of Union of the Uniting Church in Australia.

Our activities reflect our values, which are:

- to share the love of Christ with each other and our community
- being inclusive, accepting and welcoming to all people
- being generous and caring for others
- being informal and friendly
- being open to new ideas
- nurturing spiritual growth
- commitment to community outreach and social justice

Our Churches mission priorities are

- Providing a safe and welcoming place for worship and gathering
- Caring for each other
- Caring for our community
- Growing our church community
- Encouraging lifelong Faith Formation

FROM OUR CHURCH COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

Alison McKenzie

2025 has been a year of growth and development. Rev Hugh Park and his wife, Yoonhee, have brought warmth and excitement to Gungahlin Uniting Church through their passion for people, their warm welcome shown to newcomers, and encouragement of children's participation. As a result, GUC has continued to grow in 2025.

We established a Grow Young team to focus on how we could be more effective in reaching and retaining our young people. Guided by Rev James Aaron from the Synod Pulse team, we explored what it means to become more intentional about building relationships with young people and developing effective ministries with them. Following on from this program, I am delighted that GUC was successful in our application for funding for a young people and families' minister. I am excited and thankful that significant funding has been made available to GUC over a four-year period for this new role. I am very grateful for Bronwyn Asquith and Narelle Dodd's leadership in this work, and the efforts of everyone in the Grow Young team and look forward to GUC identifying the right person to fill this new position.

We also put effort into our music team to enhance our ability to lead worship through song. Along with the team's musical leadership in GUC's morning services, we trialled a 'Rock with the Flock' event with a program of contemporary Christian music, trivia questions and BBQ. Feedback showed it was a resounding success, and more events are being planned, with invitations to be extended across the Presbytery. Several members of the music team also attended a 'Word in Song' music conference delivered by Emu Music and built confidence to try new approaches to worship music. I am excited by the enthusiasm, inspiration and opportunities provided by the music team in supporting our GUC ministries.

I am extremely grateful for the volunteers who keep all our services and activities running so well, and particularly for those who take responsibility for overseeing each functional area: assisting in our worship services, our children's programs, hospitality and pastoral care, food pantry and cafe, the food garden and church property.

I would like to thank all the members of this year's Church Council - Rob Shelton (treasurer), Reeba Nasim (secretary), Rev Hugh Park, Renee Buchanan, Josephine Deo, Narelle Dodd, and Colin Christian. Rob Shelton, Colin Christian, and Rev Hugh Park will continue on Church Council in 2026, and I pray they and incoming members will continue to discern God's will for GUC in the year ahead.

FROM OUR MINISTER

Rev. Hugh Park

A Year of Steady Growth and Deeper Connection

As the year draws to a close, let's take a moment to appreciate the journey. Building on the significant expansion of 2024, this year has been a period of vibrant and steady growth. Our congregational bonds have been continually strengthened and encouraged, and the GUC family is now more cross-cultural, age-diverse, and flourishing than ever.

Congregational Expansion and Outreach

One of the most encouraging statistics this year is the steady expansion of our community. We were delighted to welcome approximately 15 new people who have joined our regular worship services and activities this year. This is a clear sign that we're catching the right waves right now. This is thanks to the ministry of the Holy Spirit and also the diverse gifts provided by many of us. We are also very grateful for those new members who brought us blessings.

Investing in the Future: Young Ministry

A major highlight of the year was the success of our application for the Synod's Growth Fund. This funding marks a significant start for a new ministry aimed at youth and young families, and it's a testament to our church's commitment to the next generation. I pray this grant will allow us to invest robustly in programs and activities that support our young people and young families.

Unity in Health and Care

While we celebrate our growth, we also acknowledge the challenges some of our members have faced. Two of our members passed away this year. This is a huge loss to us but a blessed gain to God our Father in heaven. We are also aware that several of our cherished elderly members continue to struggle with health issues. In these moments of difficulty, however, our unity has shone through and they are always in our prayers.

A New "Buddy Programs"

Our Pastoral Carers Team is currently developing a new initiative called the "Buddy Program." Its core purpose is to ensure every new member quickly feels a strong sense of belonging and real friendship. We achieve this by connecting new members with a current member or family for regular, intentional meetups.

The Program will also help new members learn about our ministries and encourage current members to be proactive and welcoming throughout the week.

Conclusion

In Acts chapter 2, there is a story about a new faith community. “All the believers were together and had everything in common. Every day, they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

The early church was defined by deep commitment and radical sharing. They regularly gathered for teaching, fellowship, prayer, and sharing meals in their homes. This generous, communal life led to their daily growth and earned them favour with the wider community.

Several ministers at the Presbytery told me they heard GUC is growing fast. They were right. I believe that this year and last, we've seen numerical growth, achieved key financial goals for our future, and, most importantly, grown closer as the people of God. If we join firmly together, hand in hand, with gratitude and anticipation for what the Lord has in store for us next, I'm sure what happened to the church described in Acts 2 will happen to us again. May God continue to bless us and our ministry, so we will always be a blessing to the world!



FROM OUR CHURCH LIFE WORKER

Alison Tweedie - Administration & Encouragement

Church Life Worker- Administration & Encouragement is a diverse role with three main areas: 1) Church Administration; 2) Bookings & Building Manager; 3) Oversight of the Mustard Seed Food Pantry.

In the area of Church Administration my role is to prepare the *Bulletin* each week, prepare church rosters, create name tags for newcomers, keep our congregational database up to date, keep our *Safe Church Volunteer Register* up to date, produce the *Church Contact Directory*, collate the annual *Volunteer Forms*, and prepare the Annual Report each year. I work closely with the Treasurer and Benkorp, our bookkeeping service, to help oversee invoices and other small financial matters from week to week.

I organise the annual “Test ‘n’ Tag”, keep a log of keys and security practices, and liaise with trades people for site visits. I also attend to emails and enquiries, order supplies for the kitchen, bathrooms and office and many other day-to-day tasks as well as more seasonal tasks throughout the year. I am often the face that welcomes and greets people who drop by our building throughout the week with a range of enquiries and needs, from the simple to the more complex. I also work closely with our minister Hugh supporting him in his role.

As Bookings & Building Manager I liaise with our current tenants and organise any new or one-off events that happen in our facility. In this role I liaise with our church cleaner and with the Church Property Group on maintenance issues.

My role as the Mustard Seed Food Pantry co-ordinator involves preparing and managing the rosters, orientating and training new volunteers and enabling and encouraging our team. Each week I place a food order with Foodbank, update our customer database and make Membership Cards for new customers. Throughout the year I attend Foodbank Forums, speak with community groups about the work of the pantry, liaise with our donors and supporters, and each Friday I send an email updating our team on the happenings from the past week.

My days of work are spread over Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, totaling 20 hours per week.

MINISTRY REPORTS

Music Team

Mark Butson

The Music Team comprises of...

Pianists:

- Alison McKenzie,
- Yoo-Mi Kim,
- Lindy Baldwin,
- Margaret Reeson



Singers: Jessica Marchant, Vanessa Yule, Cate Wilkinson, Renee Buchanan,
Brooke Kilah;

Bass: John McKenzie; Guitar: Adnan Isaac; Drums: Mark Butson & Prince Jyubeh

Clarinet: Chung Kim; Violin/singing: Rose-Mary Faulkner-Schwartz

We have a great team of dedicated and talented musicians who play a vital role in each Sunday's Service. 'Singalong & Snags', hosted by the talented Jessica Marchant, was another big hit this year with Christmas carols galore, games & sausages complete with lashings of Christmas bling! The Christmas singing group rehearsed and sung "Christmas Songs of Joy" lead by Jessica Marchant and Alison McKenzie. The GUC Vocal Trio contributed multiple singing performance pieces throughout the year with Margaret Reeson on piano and Rob Shelton, Chung Kim and Jessica Marchant singing. Another highlight of this year was the inaugural 'Rock with the Flock', an event full of contemporary songs. Matthew Phythian showed his mastery at being the MC and trivia host and also played piano on one of the songs. A huge thanks to John McKenzie for being the driving force behind the show and being music director, tech and IT guru (as well as playing bass of course). Who knows, there may be a 'Rock with the Flock 2' on the horizon?

This year some of the Music Team also attended a conference "Word In Song" presented by Emu Music. The conference covered subjects including song selection, vocal technique, rehearsing & music for small gatherings with some valuable insights gained and a chance to connect with other church music teams.

We are delighted to see some wonderful budding musicians - pianist Matthew, drummer Sophia & singers Natalie and Zioni. We hope they continue to contribute their youthful enthusiasm to our services.

The Music Team thanks the ever-reliable Chris Martin and the 'sound engineers' on the desk for their continuing support.



Playgroup

Cassandra Nokham - Coordinator



Playgroup started back in February 2025 when school started back. We are on every Wednesday of the school term. The year started off busy with quite a big group and a number of new families starting. We had several Family Day Care Educators join which made the group a bit different as it meant that the group was very big but including the community was difficult as our numbers were high. I had to look at how to solve this in term 2. In term 2 however the issue solved itself and we only had two groups coming so our numbers were easier to manage. We have had a waitlist for majority of the year. Playgroup is for babies up to age 5 before they go to school. We have a variety of ages. We have continued with free play both inside and outside, singing and a story for those who want to join in. Parents who wished to provide a craft activity did so. The morning tea roster continued, bought by the parents and our committed helpers from GUC, were on hand to make tea or coffee to our parents and carers. We welcomed Helen to the team and Lily, Shirley, Yoonhee and Margaret continued to help. At the end of term 2 we went on an outing to the indoor play centre in Mitchell. We had enough money to pay for the children. We have charged \$10 per family per term which has helped to pay for these excursions and will help pay for end of year celebrations. At the end of 2024 we held a Christmas party where I provided food using funds and gave a gift of a book to each child using the funds. 2025 has been another great year for Playgroup. I am very grateful for our GUC helpers who still support Playgroup by making tea and coffee for the parents and carers and who are a support to myself and to families. Thanks also to Alison. Once again it has been wonderful to see the friendships that have come out of Playgroup - both children and parents. Playgroup continues to be a great community service and is a place where people are welcomed and included in line with GUC's values

Oasis

Liz Warren

Oasis has had a fantastic year under the leadership of Liz Warren and Jenelle Martin, with the continued encouragement and support of Sung Sim – for which we are truly grateful. We aim to create a warm and welcoming space where children can grow in faith and community.

Each week, Oasis has welcomed a consistent group of children, with our highest attendance reaching fifteen. It's been wonderful to see such steady engagement and excitement from the kids throughout the year!

Term 1 kicked off with our continuing journey through the books of the Bible, turning our focus to the New Testament. Each week we explored a group of books and highlighted a key story from one of them. We wrapped up the term with a fun and challenging New Testament Escape Room, where we solved codes and puzzles that reinforced what we had learned about the books of the New Testament.

Term 2 saw us journey through the Gospel of John, following the lectionary and diving into some of Jesus' most powerful miracles. From the Miraculous Catch of Fish to Jesus healing a sick man, we explored what it means to follow Jesus, how we can grow in prayer, and the depth of Jesus' love and compassion.

Term 3 continued our journey through the book of John, with occasional forays into the Psalms and New Testament letters. We explored topics such as praying for others, both those we know and those we don't, what it means to be a disciple of Jesus, and how we can be welcoming to everyone. We were also delighted to welcome Lyle to Oasis as a helper.

Term 4 will continue the Gospels of John and Luke, leading into preparations for a shared Christmas celebration with Billabong. As the season of Advent approaches, we'll reflect on the true meaning of Christmas – celebrating the hope, peace, joy, and love that Jesus brings into our lives.

Billabong

Elizabeth Phythian & Lynne Butson

Billabong met on a fortnightly basis during term times throughout 2025. This group is for our young people who are in years 6 to 10 at school and offers a combination of biblical, practical and social activities. We've had 13 young people attending on and off across the year.

In term 1 we had a pizza and movie night as a social activity and watched the movie 'Unsung Hero'. Through the term we then explored the values of faith, hope and love, which were themes of the movie. We also participated in a short drama in the Palm Sunday service, about Jesus riding into Jerusalem.

In term 2 we learned about Pentecost and made a Pentecost banner. We invited members of the congregation to write, in their first language, the words 'Holy Spirit' on the banner. Thank you Sia (Korean), Reeba (Urdu), Cindy (Chinese), Zioni (Tamil), Carina (German) and Shirley W (Welsh) for your contributions. Billabong then gave the kid's talk on Pentecost Sunday, explaining Pentecost and the meaning of the features of the Pentecost banner.



On the 31st of May, some of the Billabongers attended and took part in GUC's 'Rock with the Flock' by MC'ing, teaching actions to 'My Lighthouse' and participating in the band.



On the 21st of June, 7 young people from GUC participated in the Canberra Uniting Youth and Family workshops and Worship Service. The music, drama (ably led by our very own Jessica Marchant!) and craft workshops fed into a high energy worship service with the theme 'What is God like for us?'. Read more in the Spring 2025 edition of [Insights](#) (pages 38-39). Another youth service is planned for November.



We commenced Term 3 with exploring God's will for us to care for our planet and all of creation. This provided an introduction to practical ways we can look after our environment. As part of a school project Matthew introduced [Lids4Kids](#) - collecting plastic bottle lids that are too small to put in our home recycling bins to save them from going to landfill. GUC now has a collection bin in the foyer which congregation members can place their lids from home. The plastic lids must be washed, have foam/silicon/rubber inserts removed, be larger than a 10c coin and smaller than a credit card. Billabong will take the responsibility for sorting the donated lids into colours before they are delivered to Lids4Kids to be recycled.



During the September/October school holidays, 6 of our Billabongers attended the 4 day Uniting Youth Camp 2025 at Yurramundi NSW. From all accounts, it was an amazing faith-filled, fun and joyous time where great friendships and memories were made.



In term 4, we will be working towards running the Advent Service, in collaboration with Oasis.

Across the year, each term as an act of service, Billabong has taken a turn on the morning tea roster and each time we have baked something to serve for morning tea. We were also very fortunate that Shirley Holm generously made us aprons, both to look the part as budding cooks, and keep our clothes clean! Thank you, Shirley!





Girls' Brigade

Liz Warren - Captain

Girls' Brigade in 2025 has been a year of both loss and growth. At the end of 2024, we farewelled two valued leaders, Carrie Warren and Lorelle Bakker. Carrie began her Girls' Brigade journey in 2006 as a girl and continued as a leader from 2019. Lorelle joined the leadership team in 2017, at a time when the company needed extra support. She initially committed to three years, but—as often happens—stayed much longer, blessing us with her faithful service and care. We also had to say goodbye to Shirley Williams, who had been our Chaplain since 2017. We miss her happy presence at Brigade.

This year, we were delighted to welcome Emma Butt, a Brigade mum, as the leader for our Year 6-8 girls, and Alex Tinning, a former Brigade member, who returned to take on a leadership role.

We have said goodbye to several girls and their families due to moves and school pressures—some of whom had been part of Brigade for many years. We miss their presence greatly. At the same time, we have welcomed new girls and their families, including two who joined us after attending our Brigade and Besties night. One family expecting to be posted away from Canberra instead received a posting here, allowing them to stay for a couple more years—much to our delight.

Girls' Brigade is a worldwide organisation that partners with local churches to meet the needs of girls and their families, while encouraging them to serve their communities and grow in faith and life skills.

This year, our girls have continued to learn lifelong skills in age-appropriate and engaging ways:

- Cadets (Kinder to Year 2) spent time learning about safety and fun in the kitchen, cooking for others—including making chocolate chip biscuits for their families. They also “travelled” around Australia and the world, exploring different places and cultures.
- Juniors (Years 3 to 5), led by Barbara and Lily, explored the science of sound, learned about friendship, and enjoyed a variety of creative and thoughtful activities.
- Seniors (Years 6 to 8), led by Emma and supported by Jordanna and Alex, enjoyed crafts and discussions on life skills, money management, teamwork, and how God calls us to use our gifts wisely. They also joined with the Pioneers for combined activities.

- Pioneers, guided by Fi and supported by Alex and Jordanna, focused on Living Skills—developing CVs, learning about budgeting, teamwork, and critical thinking. They applied these skills by organising special company nights and taking on leadership roles. Many girls also attended leadership courses through Girls' Brigade ACT. Two of our Pioneers are currently applying for their Pioneer Pin, the highest Girls' Brigade award in Australia. We wish them every success as they prepare for their interviews and assessments.

Throughout the year, we've enjoyed many memorable whole-company fun nights—including a UNO Tournament, Brigade and Besties night, Parents-and-Girls Quiz Night, walks to McDonald's, a Gungahlin Town Centre scavenger hunt, and other creative events organised by Barbara, Lily, Fi, Emma, and our Pioneers.

Many thanks to Fi, Barbara, Lily, Alex, Jordanna, and Emma for their leadership at Girls Brigade. Also thank you to GUC for your prayerful support.

Boys' Brigade

Bruce Warren - Captain



The aim of The Boys' Brigade is “the advancement of Christ’s Kingdom among Boys, and the promotion of habits of Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, Self-Respect, and all that tends toward a true Christian manliness.” At its heart, Boys' Brigade seeks to offer a supportive Christian environment where boys and young men can grow in faith, develop strong character, and learn valuable leadership skills. It also serves as a meaningful outreach of the church into the wider community.

In 2025, our program was structured around four of the key habits drawn from the Boys' Brigade Objective: Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, and Self-Respect. Each term focused on one of these themes, with activities and devotions carefully designed to explore and reinforce the value in a practical and meaningful way.

We began the year by looking at the habit of obedience. Obedience, in the Christian context, is not simply about following rules. Rather, it flows from a relationship with God that is built on faith, trust, and love. During term 1, we helped the boys explore this deeper understanding of obedience—seeing it as a response to God’s grace and a way of aligning their lives with His will.

Throughout the term, our activities provided numerous opportunities for the boys to practice obedience in action. Events such as canoeing, a bike ride, a scavenger hunt, and a coastal camp gave space for listening, cooperation, and following instructions. One of the highlights was our Nerf Gun Night, which combined fun with structured rules and teamwork, allowing boys to understand obedience in a light-hearted yet meaningful way. In Term 2 we moved onto the habit of Reverence. Reverence is about more than just showing respect; it is a posture of awe and humility before something greater than ourselves. Recent scientific research highlights the benefits of awe—often synonymous with reverence—including increased happiness, improved mental health, deeper humility, and a greater sense of connection with others. This term, we explored the “eight wonders of life” that evoke awe: the moral beauty of others, collective movement, nature, visual design, music, spirituality, big ideas, and the experience of beginnings and endings in life. To bring these concepts to life, we shared Communion with Hugh, celebrated our mothers with a special Mother’s Day Breakfast, enjoyed music around a campfire, and held an evening of art and construction. One particularly engaging session involved extracting DNA from fruit, helping the boys experience the wonder of creation through hands-on science.

In the July school holidays, two of our Seniors, Lyle McCormick and Tim Bielenberg, attended the Queensland Boys’ Brigade Leadership Course. They returned with new insights and energy, having gained a lot from the experience.

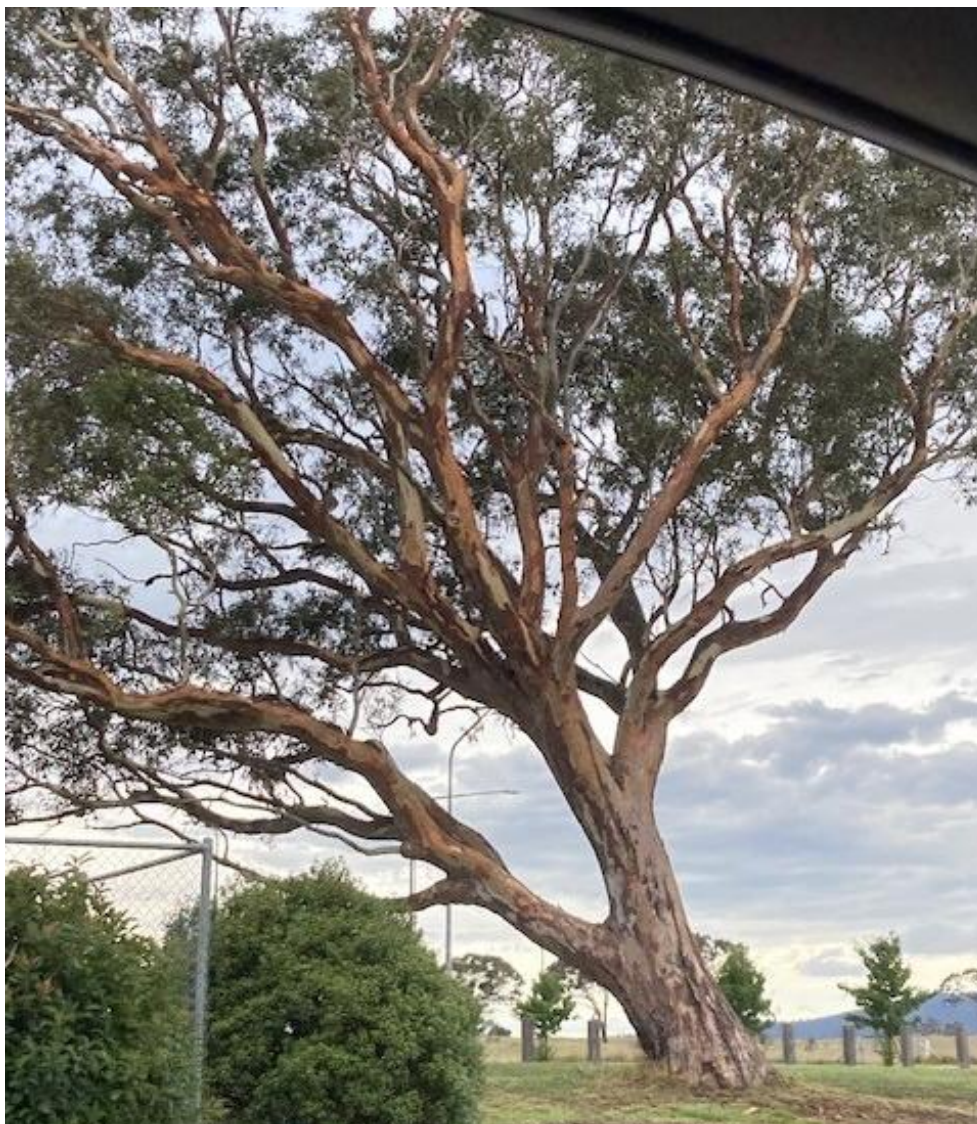
In Term 3, we turned our focus to Discipline—a quality that is essential for spiritual growth and maturity. Christian discipline is rooted in a desire to become more like Christ, shaped by His example and empowered by the Holy Spirit. We looked at how discipline builds resilience, encourages self-control, and helps us make wise, godly decisions.

This was reflected in our activities throughout the term. The obstacle course challenged the boys to persevere through difficulty, while the Stanford University marshmallow experiment offered a simple yet effective lesson in self-control. A night hike gave us the chance to talk about decision-making and reducing risky behavior, while a board games night became an effective tool for teaching fairness and integrity. Our drill competition helped improve concentration, focus, and emotional regulation. Other highlights included a sleepover for our Anchors and Juniors and a console gaming night for our Seniors. We concluded the term with a trip to McDonald’s—a fun reward, but also a moment to reflect on how discipline shapes our everyday choices and responsibilities.

In Term 4, we will focus on the habit of Self-Respect. From a Boys’ Brigade perspective, self-respect is about recognising our God-given value and living in a way that reflects dignity, maturity, and purpose. It is not about pride, but about understanding who we are in Christ and treating ourselves and others with honour. We will explore how self-respect

contributes to the development of true Christian manliness. We will conclude the year with our end of year awards night and end of year celebration.

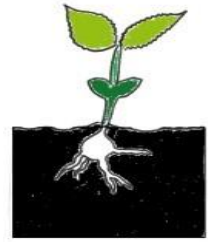
I would like to take this opportunity to thank the team of leaders and volunteers who made this year possible. Billy Cook, Phil Monley, Alistair Buchanan, Thomas Bielenberg, Mike Capelletti, Mathew Bielenberg, Mathew Swan, Caleb Warren, Tim Bielenberg, Eli Atyeo, and Lyle McCormick have all contributed their time, energy, and care to ensure the boys had a safe, engaging, and Christ-centered environment to grow. After more than ten years of leading the Gungahlin Boys' Brigade, I am stepping down as Captain. Billy Cook will be taking over leadership of the group, and I look forward to continuing in a mentoring role as he steps into this responsibility. I will be continuing at Boys' Brigade with an emphasis on leading the Senior boys each week.



COMMUNITY AND MISSION

Mustard Seed Food Pantry

Alison Tweedie



The Mustard Seed Uniting Food Pantry provides low-cost nutritional food to people who need a helping hand. We continue to open between 11am-1pm and 6pm-7pm on Thursdays. In June this year we quietly acknowledged the 12th anniversary of the work of the Mustard Seed food pantry. This work has allowed so many opportunities for our church over this time. We are creating and are leaving a mark in the wider community through our connections and friendships which can never be measured or fully known. This is the mystery and “magic” of our work.

We have a committed and dedicated team of twenty volunteers who spend time each Wednesday and Thursday assisting and serving. Each week we serve between forty and sixty people throughout our morning and evening opening times.

Our volunteers engage in bubbly, light-hearted conversations through to the more serious and heavy-laden conversations with people who come by each week.

There are always good connections and conversations, information provided, and practical assistance given to those we encounter. We all sense that even though we only see people for a short period of time and can only assist in a small way we are making a difference in the lives of those we see each week.

Our customer base is reflective of the greater Gungahlin area where over 40% of people living here were born overseas. Roughly half of our customer base are people from non-English speaking backgrounds who have a minimal understanding of the English language. We recently found a creative solution to the challenge. One way in which we did this was to have some friends and with the help of technology, such as Chat GPT, translate written information about the pantry into both Arabic and Chinese.

We continue to source most of our food from Foodbank in Sydney.

Most Wednesday's we receive two pallets of food delivered by Roadmaster. Some weeks these pallets contain more than 500kg of food. We also receive deliveries of fruit, vegetables and bread through Ozharvest and Second Bite who pick up from local supermarkets. Each week the Wednesday team receive, unpack, price, shelve, sort and

move hundreds of kilograms worth of stock and fresh produce. The range and amount vary from week to week but most weeks our customers receive a good amount of free fresh produce.

It has also been a blessing to the work of the pantry to have Janette in the Mustard Seed food garden most Thursday mornings harvesting the produce we grow to enhance and add to our free bags of mixed fruit and vegetables.

Most weeks our friends John and Liz from the Crace Organic Community Garden deliver vegetables they have grown and picked to also add to our offerings.

Our own church community continues to provide donations through the *Giving Basket*, which is part of our weekly Sunday offering. Thank you to the GUC community for gifts of money, food, time, prayer, clean egg cartons and shopping bags.

There is much good news and many stories to share each week surrounding the work of the food pantry. Most weeks we see people and hear stories that remind us that what we are doing makes a difference. It is always lovely to hear the difference we make in the lives of those we meet each week. We always need to be on the look-out for signs of life and ways to connect. I recounted one such observation I had to the team earlier this year in one of my Friday emails: "Each week there is a growing community of people who gather outside the food pantry up to an hour or more before opening time. Some do this to ensure they are first in first served, while for others it has become a place of community where a cup of tea or coffee and a donut, bowl of soup or toasted sandwich can be shared sitting around the BBQ picnic table, or a table in the foyer or even a wander around the food garden and surrounds. From my observations and overhearing bits and pieces of conversations I can tell there is genuine care and interest in each other. It happens at the evening opening session too. Organic conversation and friendships happen in the cool of the evening on the bench seats outside the pantry. It's lovely to arrive for an evening shift with people not only standing around waiting but chatting while they wait. This life-giving aspect of the food pantry can be overlooked. Measuring outcomes or accurately counting the benefits of the food pantry cannot be found in numbers or statistics, income or expenditure. The social and community impact of our work can never be fully measured. Each week on the church Bulletin's front cover we read of our church values- Welcoming of the Stranger, Inclusive of all People, Sharing the Faith Journey Together, Friendly Community and Socially and Environmentally Just- what better way to practically demonstrate all these than through our work each week at the food pantry. Yes, we serve people and meet people's need for food, but it is good to be reminded that we also journey alongside people, and they journey with and look out for each other too. What a privilege it is to be able to create this space as an opportunity to make community flourish".

At times, the work of the pantry can be chaotic, busy, tiring and unrelenting. It can also be rewarding, fulfilling, satisfying and life-giving. Some days it is all these things.

One recent Thursday a lady who is deaf, does not speak English or able to communicate in Auslan (Australian sign-language) but who is a regular attendee of the pantry arrived to do her shopping. As she was paying for her items we could see she was in distress. It became clear as to why when she pulled her clothing back to reveal her bare shoulder which was covered in a large black bruise. We suspected she may have had a broken collarbone, shoulder and arm, which we also suspect she had been putting up with for a number of days. This woman was in unbelievable pain. With no car, no form of communication and for other reasons had not been able to attend a hospital. Our team responded in the only way we could and took her to the hospital and put her on the road to recovery. It was a privilege that this woman trusted us to get her to where she needed to be. We waited with this lady until she was seen by a doctor and her son was able to arrive.

There are always plenty of signs to remind us that each week we touch people's lives in far more ways than just providing food and entering money into a till.

The space we provide each week gives us the opportunity to connect and create community. Grace and beauty can be found everywhere. The beauty of life is looking for us, and it finds us when we least expect it. Each week we walk away changed and all the richer from our interactions with each other.

I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I needed clothes and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?'

And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.'

Matthew 25:35-40 NRSV





Mustard Seed Food Garden

Mark Phythian, Alison Tweedie & Janette Jakab

We continued to meet on the first Saturday of each month except during winter.

The garden is attended to most days by a small group of people who water, and most Thursday mornings Janette is on-site to pick fresh produce to distribute through the food pantry.

Through fundraising we have been able to purchase soil. We have been making our own fertilizer this year through composting, we have six compost bins on the go. There have also been repairs required to the garden beds given they have now been in use for around 10 years. Thanks to Mark, Chris, Matt and Janette who have invested much effort into the beautification and ongoing work required.

Anyone is welcome to come along, so if you are free on one of our Saturday get togethers, please come along!



SMALL GROUPS

Pastoral Care & Home Groups

Within the community at Gungahlin Uniting Church our Pastoral Care Ministry emerges in many real and spontaneous ways, aiming to build a culture of respect and care for one another. This ministry encompasses the spiritual, physical, social, emotional, and mental support of all members of the church. By providing a network of care, we seek to ensure that the expressed needs of individuals and families are met with compassion and supported by a dedicated team of people.

Home Groups are part of our Pastoral Care Programme.

Currently we have a total of five home groups, each group has a leader and co-leader. The activities of each group are many and varied and they may be social, creative, spiritual etc depending on the makeup and interest of the group members. Each group plan and organise their own activities and each member contribute in fellowship in any way that they are able. The following information has generously been shared by the leaders of each group.

Group 1 Leader Renee Buchanan

Our group has a number of busy families with busy kids so we look to organise a range of activities that are economical, friendly and fun and we attend when our busy life/work balance allows us to do so. The group has been able to join for coffee and I have also promoted our programs within the group's "what's app chat" and made suggestions. We plan to have a BBQ now that the weather is getting warmer.

Group 2 Leader Alison McKenzie

Our home group meets every six weeks for social activities. This year we have played pickle ball, eaten fish and chips by the lake, held a scavenger hunt, and a 'Memory Night' when we each brought and talked about a precious item from our past. This year saw the wonderful addition of several new people. The group is now larger and livelier than ever, and we continue to build friendly, supportive relationships with each other. When times are tough, we are there for each other, providing a listening ear and help through a crisis.

Group 3 :Leader Heather Lamb

Our home group, coordinated by Heather, has met eight times over the past year. We generally have around eight people attending but have had as many as seventeen. Our group has expanded in size, making it more difficult to plan for meals at homes. We have enjoyed: several bring and share meals at church plus a quiz, a picnic at Lake Ginninderra, fish and chips at Yarralumla, local Chinese restaurant lunch, and a trip to the theatre is being planned

Group 4 leader Margaret Reeson

Our Home Group has met seven times during 2025, so far. As several of us have mobility issues, we have met in one of the local Clubs or at the homes of either Carina Moeller or Margaret Reeson. Several of this group have had significant health issues during the year, as well as bereavement, and it has been good to be able to support each other. We welcomed some new members and were sad to farewell Arthur and Janet Langford-Smith as they left for Victoria. In this group, we take it in turns to be host and contact other members

Group 5 Elizabeth Phythian

Our Group Is known as Synergy and we have a number of young teenagers as part of our mix. We are also blessed to have a couple of Interstate families in our group, so we are able to enjoy some lovely drives out through the country NSW to enjoy an evening meal or two. Our gatherings have a strong tradition of centring around food, which has continued this past year. Whether it be over a potluck dinner or afternoon tea in one of our homes, we have shared laughs and conversations and always left with our hearts (and tummies) fuller! Making sure we avoid the Kangaroo population at night,

The Pastoral Care coordinating team wish to thank all the Home Group leaders and co leaders for their involvement and commitment to this Pastoral Care ministry at GUC.

Spice Kids

Jean Terbeth

Spice Kids, a lunch gathering for adults meets after church on the 5th Sunday of the month.

Pub Group

John McKenzie

The Pub Group is a social gathering where we share meals at various venues—mainly across Gungahlin, though we occasionally venture further afield to enjoy restaurants recommended by attendees.

It's a time to unwind from daily life, share stories, and support one another regardless of our circumstances. The group is open to everyone, welcoming people of all ages and backgrounds. While our gatherings are typically small (around 10 people), we're always eager to meet new faces.

This year, we continued meeting at our regular spot—The George Harcourt Inn—while also exploring new venues and supporting the local community. Our culinary adventures included Raiders Gungahlin, Belconnen Soccer Club (McKellar), Casey Jones & Myanmar Corner (Casey), and the China Tea Club (Lyneham).

Looking ahead, we aim to keep discovering fresh places to eat while deepening our connections and making newcomers feel truly welcome. After all, good food and good company are best when shared.

We meet every second Wednesday, usually around 6:30 pm, though we're flexible with both timing and venue. The best way to stay in the loop is through the Pub Group WhatsApp chat, where we confirm each week's location, time, and numbers.

To join the WhatsApp group, simply scan the QR code shown on the slides before the church service (and at the right). Alternatively, feel free to catch up with John McKenzie—bass player in the music team—after church for more details.



Tea and Talk

Elizabeth Phythian

T&T is an opportunity for catching up with, and getting to know other GUC community members over a cuppa.

This group meets on the first Friday of the month at the Gungahlin Lakes Club coffee shop. The invitation to attend T&T is extended to all who attend GUC - anyone is welcome to join us! Reminder emails are sent to those who attend the group, and details of upcoming T&T's are included in the weekly bulletin.

T&T is an opportunity for catching up with, and getting to know, other GUC community members over a cuppa. This group meets on the first Friday of the month at the Gungahlin Lakes Club coffee shop.

This year, our attendance numbers each month ranged from 12 to 19, and the Lakes Club coffee shop area provided us with the flexibility to arrange as many chairs and tables as we needed. The venue also provides a great setting for the conversations, laughs and catch-ups that T&T is well known for. (PS The morning tea menu is also quite delicious!)

If you have not previously joined us, and would like to, please keep an eye on the bulletin for details of our next T&T gathering.



PROPERTY, MAINTENANCE AND BOOKINGS

Property Team

Mark Butson

The team deals with matters relating to property management and maintenance of the building and grounds of the GUCCC facility, and also the manse. The Property Team consists of Mark Butson, Alison Tweedie, Mark Phythian and Colin Christian.

The Property Team is responsible for:

- Regular removal of green waste - Mark Phythian has made multiple trips to the Green Waste Recycling Centre disposing of the accumulation of garden waste from around the GUCCC property
- Mowing the lawn - thanks to Mark P and Colin
- Weeding and pruning - thanks to Mark P and Colin
- Managing fire protection and alarm systems
- Managing annual inspection of roof anchors.
- 2025 repairs/improvements include:
 - Repairs to the damaged water tanks (holes in tanks caused by vandalism)
 - Installation of steel security fencing and a lockable gate around the water tanks - to securely fence off the area - thanks to Colin Christian and Bruce Warren for their great help with the job
 - Removal of shrubs around the water tanks
 - Re-finishing of lectern, table and font timber
 - Re-varnishing of the outside of the timber feature window in the worship area
 - Painting of external sections of the food-pantry
 - A huge thanks to Alison for managing the Tradies that work at GUC!





Bookings, Building Hire and Cleaning

Alison Tweedie

Throughout 2025 GUC has had five main regular tenants hire the building- Navitas, Girl Guides, Pointe2Pointe Dance, GROW mental health support group and the Canberra Korean Church. We have good relationships with our tenants, and they are very happy with the high standard of our facility.

As well as these groups, there are or have been several other regular users of the building including Boys' Brigade, Playgroup and the Mustard Seed Café. The building has been well utilised by both the Girls' and Boys' Brigade groups not only for their weekly meetings but with many other activities such as sleepovers and training and leadership sessions. Many homegroups also like the ease that the building offers when having their homegroup gatherings.

We continue to host special one-off events for our church members, including birthday parties, weddings and funerals. We also continue to host workshops and events run by Presbytery and other organisations when needed.

It can be challenging at times keeping the building clean, in good order and ready for each use. There are many people who come and go through our doors each week. There is equipment that requires on-going maintenance and attention. We have many service providers that attend our site regularly such as our fire maintenance company, a waste removal company, sanitary bins provider and many other services that go along with the maintenance and legal obligations of owning a building. We also engage the services of a security company to monitor the alarm system and regularly call upon our painter, plumber and electrician.

We continue to engage a professional cleaning company to keep our building clean. Cleaning is done twice a week on Tuesday and Friday afternoons.

Mark Butson, Mark Phythian and Colin Christian have attended to many maintenance and repair jobs around the GUC building, spending time on practical fixes as well as administrative tasks such as engaging service providers and researching parts and products. They have kept up with the mowing of the lawns that needs doing on a regular basis, as well as ensuring the playground area has enough 'soft fall' woodchips and when needed have ordered more and spread it out. There is a need for working bees to happen on a more regular basis so our church grounds and gardens can be neatly maintained. The property group does its best, but it is a large job that with many hands would help to make the load lighter.



FINANCIAL REPORTS

The following pages contain the unaudited financial reports:

- Profit & Loss - Summary Actual vs Budget Variance
- Comparative Balance Sheet
- Profit & Loss - Budget FY 26

Profit & Loss - Summary Actual vs Budget Variance

UCA - UNITING CHURCH GUNGAHLIN

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	ACTUAL 2025	BUDGET 2025	VARIANCE AUD	2024 ACTUAL
INCOME				
FUNDS				
Funds - Donations	-	-	- —	542
Funds - Offerings	119,613	116,300	3,313 ↑	104,871
Total FUNDS	119,613	116,300	3,313	105,413
Financial Income	9,078	8,600	478 ↑	8,641
Property Income	108,845	105,000	3,845 ↑	99,318
Other Income	457	-	457 ↑	-
Total INCOME	237,993	229,900	8,093	213,373
Gross Profit	237,993	229,900	8,093	213,373
Less Operating Expenses				
Employment Costs				
Staff Salaries & Wages	16,065	29,500	(13,435) ↓	31,273
Minister's Stipend	114,623	116,800	(2,177) ↓	64,011
Other Staff Costs	628	1,800	(1,172) ↓	1,511
Total Employment Costs	131,316	148,100	(16,784)	96,795
Property Costs				
Property Costs - Property Operating Costs	40,362	36,400	3,962 ↑	36,832
Property Costs - Repairs & Maintenance	10,722	12,100	(1,378) ↓	26,300
Total Property Costs	51,083	48,500	2,583	63,131
Professional Fees	9,158	10,200	(1,042) ↓	600
Donations & Grants	306	-	306 ↑	-
IT and Telephone Costs	1,493	3,400	(1,907) ↓	1,790
Meeting and Conferences	-	300	(300) ↓	968
Insurance Expenses	3,867	4,500	(633) ↓	4,255
Initiatives & Programmes	1,823	4,900	(3,077) ↓	32
Other Expenses	4,022	4,400	(378) ↓	3,335
Church/Mission Expenses	1,220	500	720 ↑	1,212
Levies and Charges	14,400	14,400	- —	12,516
Total Less Operating Expenses	218,688	239,200	(20,512)	184,633
OPERATING PROFIT / (LOSS) Before Non-Operating Items	19,306	(9,300)	28,606	28,740

	ACTUAL 2025	BUDGET 2025	VARIANCE AUD	2024 ACTUAL
FOOD PANTRY				
Food Pantry Income				
90005 - Food Pantry - Sales/Income/Donations	50,226	48,400	1,826 ↑	48,427
Total Food Pantry Income	50,226	48,400	1,826	48,427
Food Pantry Expenses				
90705 - Food Pantry Salary and Wages	15,954	15,700	254 ↑	15,547
90710 - Food Pantry Superannuation	1,826	1,800	26 ↑	1,710
90715 - Food Pantry - stock	34,994	30,300	4,694 ↑	30,328
90720 - Food Pantry - Other expenses	390	1,600	(1,210) ↓	1,574
Total Food Pantry Expenses	53,164	49,400	3,764	49,158
FOOD PANTRY PROFIT / (LOSS)	(2,937)	(1,000)	(1,937)	(731)
Depreciation and Amortisation				
Fixed Assets Depreciation	-	-	- —	5,375
Total Depreciation and Amortisation	-	-	-	5,375
TOTAL NET PROFIT / (LOSS)	16,368	(10,300)	26,668	22,634

Comparative Balance Sheet

UCA - UNITING CHURCH GUNGAHLIN

As at 30 June 2025

	30 JUNE 2025	30 JUNE 2024
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash and Short Term Investments		
Cash with UFS		
11005 - UFS Main Account #37339	9,422.57	24,772.70
11010 - UFS Direct Giving #34744	173,108.45	164,529.77
11015 - UFS Food Pantry #92370	8,198.63	26,800.97
11020 - UFS Self Help 100037436	34.91	16.59
Total Cash with UFS	190,764.56	216,120.03
Cash with Westpac		
11100 - Westpac Petty cash #444629	401.95	500.00
Total Cash with Westpac	401.95	500.00
Term Deposits		
UFS		
12000 - UFS Fixed term 2 #44182	19,666.45	18,826.38
12005 - UFS Fixed term 4 #44516	19,663.76	18,826.00
12010 - UFS Fixed term 3 #44517	19,322.85	18,541.87
12021 - UFS FTI Mission #93790	20,443.62	-
Total UFS	79,096.68	56,194.25
Total Term Deposits	79,096.68	56,194.25
Minister's Benefit Expense Accounts		
11605 - UFS MBF #89145	30,320.96	3,627.23
Total Minister's Benefit Expense Accounts	30,320.96	3,627.23
Total Cash and Short Term Investments	300,584.15	276,441.51
Other Current Assets		
13105 - Accounts Receivable Control Account	25,311.10	9,271.00
Total Other Current Assets	25,311.10	9,271.00
Total Current Assets	325,895.25	285,712.51
Non-Current Assets		
Fixed Assets		
Land		
14610 - Church Grounds	400,000.00	400,000.00
14611 - Manse #2 Land	371,000.00	371,000.00
Total Land	771,000.00	771,000.00
Buildings		
14615 - Church Buildings	3,112,348.83	3,111,087.92
14625 - Building improvements - Food Garden	-	7,058.73

	30 JUNE 2025	30 JUNE 2024
14630 - Provision for Depreciation Building Improvements - Food Garden	-	(7,058.73)
Total Buildings	3,112,348.83	3,111,087.92
Plant, Furniture & Equipment		
14645 - Computer Hardware	-	10,604.58
14650 - Accumulated Depreciation on Computer Hardware	-	(10,604.58)
14655 - Furniture and Fittings	-	113,554.24
14660 - Accumulated Depreciation - Furniture and Fittings	-	(113,554.24)
14675 - Plant & Equipment - Play Equipment/ground	-	14,460.65
14680 - Accumulated Depreciation Plant & Equipment - Play Equipment	-	(14,460.65)
Total Plant, Furniture & Equipment	-	-
Total Fixed Assets	3,883,348.83	3,882,087.92
Total Non-Current Assets	3,883,348.83	3,882,087.92
Total Assets	4,209,244.08	4,167,800.43
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
21005 - Accounts Payable - Control	2,037.84	-
Employee Benefits Payable		
21625 - Annual Leave Provision	10,166.74	14,952.87
21635 - Long Service Leave Provision	5,214.37	4,990.64
Total Employee Benefits Payable	15,381.11	19,943.51
Minister's Benefit Expense Liability		
22355 - Min Wright Benefit Liability	0.24	0.24
22360 - Min Park Benefit Liability	30,320.97	4,589.11
Total Minister's Benefit Expense Liability	30,321.21	4,589.35
Other Current Liability		
21230 - GST	2,518.45	(88.68)
21250 - PAYG Clearing Account	2,733.00	3,472.00
Total Other Current Liability	5,251.45	3,383.32
Total Current Liabilities	52,991.61	27,916.18
Total Liabilities	52,991.61	27,916.18
Net Assets	4,156,252.47	4,139,884.25
Equity		
Retained Earnings		
Current Year Earnings	16,368.22	22,634.27
30020 - Current Years Surplus/(Losses)	(14,266.26)	(14,266.26)
30015 - Retained Earnings	2,801,172.79	2,778,538.52
Total Retained Earnings	2,803,274.75	2,786,906.53
Reserves		

	30 JUNE 2025	30 JUNE 2024
30029 - Asset Revaluation Reserve	1,352,977.72	1,352,977.72
Total Reserves	1,352,977.72	1,352,977.72
Total Equity	4,156,252.47	4,139,884.25

Profit & Loss - Budget FY 26

UCA - UNITING CHURCH GUNGAHLIN

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	ACTUAL FY 25	BUDGET FY 26
INCOME		
FUNDS		
Funds - Offerings	117,283	127,700
Funds - Fundraising	2,330	4,200
Total FUNDS	119,613	131,900
Financial Income	9,078	8,446
Property Income	108,845	110,200
Other Income	457	457
Total INCOME	237,993	251,003
Gross Profit	237,993	251,003
Less Operating Expenses		
Employment Costs		
Staff Salaries & Wages	16,065	17,635
Minister's Stipend	114,623	117,600
Other Staff Costs	628	628
Total Employment Costs	131,316	135,863
Property Costs		
Property Costs - Property Operating Costs	40,362	41,275
Property Costs - Repairs & Maintenance	10,722	10,719
Total Property Costs	51,083	51,994
Professional Fees	9,158	9,161
Donations & Grants	306	306
IT and Telephone Costs	1,493	1,490
Insurance Expenses	3,867	3,867
Initiatives & Programmes	1,823	3,100
Other Expenses	4,022	4,024
Church/Mission Expenses	1,220	1,219
Levies and Charges	14,400	22,000
Total Less Operating Expenses	218,688	233,024
OPERATING PROFIT / (LOSS) Before Non-Operating Items	19,306	17,979
FOOD PANTRY		
Food Pantry Income		
90005 - Food Pantry - Sales/Income/Donations	50,226	50,900
Total Food Pantry Income	50,226	50,900
Food Pantry Expenses		
90705 - Food Pantry Salary and Wages	15,954	15,952
90710 - Food Pantry Superannuation	1,826	1,829

	ACTUAL FY 25	BUDGET FY 26
90715 - Food Pantry - stock	34,994	34,996
90720 - Food Pantry - Other expenses	390	388
Total Food Pantry Expenses	53,164	53,165
FOOD PANTRY PROFIT / (LOSS)	(2,937)	(2,265)
TOTAL NET PROFIT / (LOSS)	16,368	15,714