

ANNUAL REPORT 2026

Gungahlin Uniting Church and Community Centre

108 The Valley Avenue Gungahlin ACT

Tel: 02 6242 5001

Email: office@gungahlinuniting.org

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INTRODUCTION

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

Our values are:

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

Our 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

Our activities reflect our values and mission.

FROM OUR CHURCH COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

John McKenzie

As I reflect on 2026, I am struck by the resilience, generosity, and faithfulness of our congregation. This has been a year of significant change for the Church Council, yet also a year marked by growth, renewed energy, and deepening commitment across our community.

We began the year with a newly elected Church Council and soon found ourselves navigating several unexpected transitions in membership & leadership. I am deeply grateful to those who served previously and those who stepped forward - whether through election or co-option - to ensure continuity, stability, and shared wisdom during a period of upheaval. These changes, while challenging, revealed the strength of our community and its willingness to serve whenever needed.

Alongside these transitions, Church Council continued its work to strengthen governance and clarity through policy development. The addition of new policies relating to social media and external communications reflects our desire to communicate responsibly and faithfully in an increasingly complex world.

One of the most significant milestones this year was the appointment of Marike Jago as the Younger Generations Pastor. This position is the fruit of years of prayer, discernment, and dedicated effort - from the Growing Young initiative to the ongoing work of the Young People's Ministry Team. Marike has already begun forming meaningful relationships with our youth and encouraging their involvement in the life of our church. I am thankful for the generous support of the Uniting Church Synod of NSW & ACT and for the creative fundraising efforts within our congregation, including the memorable lamington initiative that produced an impressive 1,230 lamingtons.

Throughout the year we also welcomed new members from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Their presence enriches our worship, challenges us to grow, and reminds us of the ongoing call to be a community where all people can explore faith and encounter God's grace.

We continued to offer opportunities for connection and learning, including a six-week Zoom Bible study series, and we participated once again in the National Church Life Survey - an important tool that will help shape our future direction.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our volunteers, ministry teams, and leaders. Your willingness to serve, encourage, and share the load is what makes Gungahlin Uniting Church vibrant and welcoming. I also want to express particular gratitude to Rev. Hugh Park for his passion, commitment, and pastoral leadership

throughout the year. His guidance continues to nurture our community and strengthen our mission in Gungahlin.

This Annual Report offers only a glimpse of the many ways God has been at work among us. I invite you to read the following pages with gratitude and hope, celebrating the contributions of so many who help us live out our calling as followers of Jesus. May these stories inspire us as we look toward the year ahead, trusting that God will continue to lead us in faith, service, and love.

2026 Church Council Members

Elected / continuing at 2025 Annual General Meeting	Current serving members
Ben Ram (Chairperson)	John McKenzie (Chairperson)
Robert Shelton (Treasurer)	Robert Shelton (Treasurer)
Reeba Nasim (Secretary)	Reeba Nasim (Secretary)
Colin Christian	Colin Christian
Narelle Dodd	Renée Buchannan
Renée Buchannan	Umesh Jayasinghe
Lyle McCormack	Matthew Phythian
Matthew Phythian	Lyle McCormack
	Margaret Reason
	Cate Wilkinson

Membership updates through 2026

January 2026
Ben Ram (Chairperson - on leave)
Narelle Dodd (Acting Chairperson)

February 2026: Co-opted members
John McKenzie
Margaret Reason

March 2026
Ben Ram resigned

April 2026
Narelle Dodd resigned
John McKenzie (Chairperson)

April 2026: Elected through special Congregation Meeting
Umesh Jayasinghe
Cate Wilkinson

FROM OUR MINISTER

Rev. Hugh Park

Looking Back

In my Annual Report in November, 2024, I wrote: *'As we reflect on the past 9 months since my induction at GUC, I am grateful for the ways God has guided and blessed our church community. I've been constantly amazed by how many people are eager to take on important roles in our congregation. For me, this year has been one of growth, learning, seeking, and resilience, as many of us have answered Christ's call to serve both our church and the wider community.'*

Today, as I look at all that has unfolded since then, I firmly believe that God has faithfully answered those very prayers and fulfilled the vision we shared together back in 2024. As I approach three years together at GUC, I'm filled with deep gratitude when I look back on our journey. God has been so faithful, continuously guiding, inspiring, and blessing our church family every step of the way.

Over this past year, it has been a true joy to see our congregation grow in both quality and quantity, especially as we have welcomed new faces almost every Sunday, who have settled warmly into our church family. We are also delighted to welcome Marike Jago as our pastor for the Young Ministry, a wonderful answer to our prayers for many months. I have every confidence that together with her, we will broaden our outreach and continue nurturing the next generation.

Worship

Worship remains at the very heart of our life together at GUC, made possible through the dedication of so many faithful volunteers. I am deeply grateful to everyone who contributes: our tech and computer team, the music team, worship leaders, scripture readers, prayer leaders, All Age Talkers, and many others, especially to Margaret Reeson, Chris Dodd and Andrew Johnson for sharing God's Word and leading Communion for us. Equally vital are those who serve behind the scenes: our greeters and welcomers, flower arrangers, morning tea hosts, and communion helpers. It has been a true joy and privilege to see new members regularly leading us in scripture reading and prayer during worship. The ministries led by our Oasis and Billabong teams on Sundays continue to be a special blessing to our children, youth, and junior members. Together, your gifts bring warmth, beauty, and vitality to our worship each week.

Diverse Ministry

We simply cannot overestimate the deep commitment of our dedicated volunteers who serve so faithfully across our diverse ministries beyond Sunday services. To highlight just a few, our gratitude goes out to those leading our Wednesday Playgroup, Boys' and Girls' Brigades, Home groups, Bible studies; Food Pantry volunteers; Church Life Worker, Safe Church person, Property and Maintenance team, Creative Worship team; Email Prayer Chain, and many others. It also goes without saying how deeply grateful I am for our

committed Church Council members, who meet almost every month to pray, discuss, and make wise decisions for the life of our congregation.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral care has been a central priority for us this year. Working alongside those keen on pastoral care, we've focused on ensuring that our elderly, sick, isolated, and new members feel truly known and connected. Through hospital visits, home visits, and relaxed coffee catchups, I've been able to build deeper relationships and support our church family where they need it most.

I am always so grateful for those who quickly give me a heads-up when someone needs pastoral support. Without their watchful care and thoughtful communication, I wouldn't be able to reach our church family with the timely support they need.

Challenges

Despite the growth in diversity, we face challenges around building a stronger sense of belonging and consistency among new members. We might systematically need to strengthen our follow-up with new visitors to help them integrate more fully into the life of the church.

GUC is a beautiful multicultural and multigenerational church, which naturally means we bring diverse perspectives and preferences to our shared life, including our Sunday worship. For example, our musical styles and familiar songs vary across age groups: our younger members often connect with contemporary worship and music, while our senior members treasure traditional hymns. In our collective worship, I believe we are called to graciously enjoy each other's 'cup of tea' as we praise God together. The Apostle Paul also encourages believers to embrace humility, unity, and selflessness by valuing others above themselves (Phil. Ch. 2)

Looking Forward: Our Goals for the Coming Year

To Build a More Proactive Cross-Cultural Community: Growing a welcoming, cross-cultural worshiping community where every generation—from our youngest children to our oldest members—finds a place to belong, grow, and serve together through our common faith in Christ.

In the Uniting Church, we believe every member is an 'individual minister' who is called to serve God both inside our church walls and out in the wider community. I praise the Lord for the privilege of serving God and building His Kingdom alongside so many dedicated 'ministers' in our congregation. May God bless us and our shared ministry, so that we may continue to be a rich blessing to the world, and especially to the Gungahlin community!

Yours in Christ,
Rev Hugh Park

FROM OUR YOUNGER GEN PASTOR

Marike Jago

First Orientation & Connections

The past few months I have spent familiarising myself with different groups committees and individuals. I attended the young people's ministry team meeting, creative worship team meeting, church council budget meeting and was part of the Multicultural Night as well as Sunday Services and was delighted to be officially commissioned as Pastor on 20 September.

I have met some volunteers and clients from the food pantry and have been visiting playgroup each Wednesday for part of their sessions and ran a little music session with the children and parents at their last session in term 3 as part of their multicultural lunch. Being part of Billabong and Atlantis groups and being introduced to the Girl's and Boy's Brigade teams has been great as well. It's also been lovely to meet the Friendship group that meets fortnightly on a Wednesday and the volunteers that run the café during food pantry and play group.

It's been helpful catching up with Rev Hugh fortnightly and Alison T in the office to discuss further church & ministry matters.

I also recently attended Finna 's baby shower (Kawalay Family).

Conferences & Training

I attended the Common Grace Conference in the middle of August as part of my ongoing training and was a lobby group leader on the last day speaking to MP's (one of them Andrew Leigh) about a fairer youth justice system in our country which is an issue predominantly affecting our First Nations Young People.

Upcoming Younger Generations Services/Events

Youth-Led service on 25 October 9.30 – This service will be a service led by the Billabong/Atlantis Age Group and include sharing about Uniting Youth Camp (UYC). The youth will be leading together with me/the team.

Messy Church – Christmas on 29 November 9.30 (1st of Advent) – this will be a creative family service exploring the Christmas Story with craft, activities and a short celebration time with a message and carols/songs followed by food. We have started discussing this with Billabong and Liz from Girl's Brigade/Oasis leader was present at the first discussion as well.

Carols and Snags, Sunday Evening, 13 December – This event is organised by Jess Marchant together with the creative/music team

Regional Work

Next Gen Band Camp

End of August, John, Jess and I took 2 Canberra young people (1 from GUC) to the Next Gen Band Camp in Sydney which was a great experience for all sharing and learning new skills and songs and a good chance to get to know one another better.

Uniting Youth Camp

Together with Aimee and Ollie from Kippax UC and our fabulous bus driver, Rob, I joined 13 young people from Canberra (and 4 from Wagga, we picked up on the way in Goulburn) on our journey to the Great Aussie Bush Camp site at Tea Gardens where this year's UYC was held. 7 young people from GUC were in attendance. The theme was SEEK, based on the Jeremiah passage "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.".

It was a great opportunity to get to know our Canberra young people and the GUC members especially as some of them were in my small group and all of the GUC girls were in my activity group. They all seemed to have a great time and joined in with the activities, house cup, discussion and worship and even performed dances/songs at the Taste and See night (which is a bit of a Godly talent celebration show). Our Synod's Moderator Elect, Pablo Nunez was the guest speaker and gave encouraging and thought-provoking messages and many of our youth said they were encouraged in their faith. The youth seemed to gel very well and closer friendships seemed to be established especially between the GUC girls. I enjoyed many chats with them as well which was a highlight.

CBR Region Combined Youth Service, 14 Nov

The next Canberra Region Combined Youth Service will be held on 14 Nov at Yarralumla UC from 3.30-7pm.

Mark B from GUC will be running a woodworking (lantern making) activity on the day. John M has kindly contacted Simon to help with sound. Some of our young people will hopefully be part of the worship band with the support of GUC music team members (such as Jess, John, Mark and Rory) who are keen to support the event.

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 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.

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 and liaise with trades people who attend our site.

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 and liaise with our donors and supporters.

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

MINISTRY REPORTS

Music Team

Jess Marchant

The GUC Music Team comprises a dedicated and talented group of musicians who play an important role in enriching our Sunday services through music, singing and worship. Throughout 2026, the team has supported congregational worship, special events, youth initiatives and the development of emerging musicians. We are grateful for the generosity, enthusiasm and musical gifts each member brings to our community.

Our Music Team (Music Director: Jessica Marchant)

- **Bass:** John McKenzie
- **Clarinet:** Chung Kim
- **Drums:** Mark Butson and Prince Jyubeh
- **Guitar:** Adnan Isaac
- **Lead Guitar:** Rory Anderson
- **Piano/Keyboard:** Lindy Baldwin, Alison McKenzie and Yoo-Mi Kim
- **Keyboard:** Sia Kim
- **Violin and Vocals:** Rose-Mary Faulkner-Schwartz
- **Vocals:** Renee Buchanan, Brooke Kilah, Jessica Marchant, Cate Wilkinson and Vanessa Yule

Events and Musical Highlights

Rock with the Flock

The continuation of *Rock with the Flock* brought contemporary music, energy and enthusiasm to the GUC community. Special thanks to John McKenzie for his leadership, bass player and technical and IT coordinator. We also thank Simon Fisher for generously providing his time and equipment to support the audio production. Their contributions helped make both events successful and established a strong foundation for future performances.

Multicultural and Welcome Dinner

The Music Team supported this event with a diverse repertoire and welcomed musical performances from other congregation members, who shared songs in their cultural languages. The evening was a wonderful celebration of cultural diversity, music and community connection.

Singalong & Snags

Hosted by Jessica Marchant, *Singalong & Snags* was another successful community event, featuring Christmas carols, games, sausages and plenty of festive cheer. The event provided a joyful opportunity for fellowship and celebration through music.

Christmas Singing Group

Led by Jessica Marchant and Alison McKenzie, the Christmas singing group rehearsed and performed, sharing the spirit of Christmas with a selection of a seasonal song.

Repertoire Development and Music Resources

In 2026, the team began using SharePoint to organise and share repertoire and musical arrangements, improving accessibility and preparation for services.
Thank you to John McKenzie for coordinating weekly set lists and preparing songs in appropriate keys and arrangements, and to Chris Martin for his flexibility with musical arrangements and congregational lyric slides.

The team has continued developing a core repertoire of approximately 40 songs, focusing on singable keys and consistent arrangements that enable confident musicianship and meaningful congregational participation. This ongoing work will continue into 2027, supporting engaging worship and strengthening the team's musical resources.

Youth and Community Engagement

GUC musicians supported Canberra Region Youth Services events at Wesley, Gungahlin and Yarralumla Uniting Churches, with assistance from Marike Jago. We thank everyone who contributed their time and talents to these services, which encourage and connect young people within the Uniting Church community.

Musicians also contributed to the inaugural Uniting Church Youth Band Camp. John McKenzie facilitated an Audio Workshop, Jessica Marchant led a Vocal Workshop, and

Marike Jago organised GUC youth participation and presented a message. These contributions encouraged musical development, confidence, fellowship and connection to Christ.

Encouraging Congregational Musicians

We are delighted to see emerging youth musicians developing their skills, including Matthew on piano, Sophia on drums, and Natalie, Zioni, Tamara and Noah through singing. We also welcomed congregation members who participated in rehearsals and services. Thank you to Rory Anderson for assisting on guitar, Marike Jago on vocals and Alison Tweedie on piano. Encouraging musicians of all ages strengthens our community and creates valuable opportunities for participation, learning and fellowship.

Acknowledgements and Looking Ahead

The Music Team sincerely thanks Chris Martin and our dedicated sound engineers for their ongoing technical support, as well as everyone who contributes their time, expertise and encouragement behind the scenes. We are grateful to all team members for their commitment to Sunday services, special events and community initiatives throughout the year. Looking ahead to 2027, we hope to continue developing our musical resources, encouraging emerging musicians and sharing the joy of music across the GUC community, enriching worship and supporting spiritual growth.

May God continue to bless our Music Team with unity, inspiration and joy as we share our musical gifts in worship and service. May our music glorify God, strengthen our faith and bring hope, connection and blessing to the GUC community in 2027 and beyond.

Playgroup



Cassandra Nokham – Coordinator

Playgroup started back in February 2026 when school started back.
We are on every Wednesday of the school term.
The whole year has had steady numbers of approximately 19 families attending.
Playgroup is for babies up to the age of 5 years before they go to school. We have a variety of ages.

We have continued with free play both inside and outside, singing and story time for those who want to join in. Families were invited to bring a book from home for us to read. Parents who wished to provide a craft activity did so which was helpful. The morning tea roster also continued.

Once again, our committed helpers from GUC were on hand to make tea and coffee for our parents and carers. We welcomed Josephine to the team and Lily, Shirley, Margaret and Helen continued to help. I am very grateful for these helpers! Thanks too to Alison. It was lovely to welcome Marike in September who pops in to say hello to the families as well.

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 adult's entry.

We haven't charged a fee this year as we didn't need to make any large purchases and had some money left over which helped pay for the adult's admission to go to the indoor play centre. A small fee will be requested this term for our end of year party and book given to the children.

In term 3 a parent suggested a lunch where we could try some of the traditional dishes from the countries that our families come from. It went very well with dishes from Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Japan, Sierra Leone, France, Germany and Fairy Bread from Australia!
We will have an end of year party like last year.

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.



Spreading the new mulch in January ready for a year of safe play

Oasis

Liz Warren, Jenelle Martin & Lyle McCormick

Oasis has had another wonderful year, with Lyle, Liz and Jenelle leading the group. We are grateful for the continued encouragement and support of the wider church community as we seek to create a warm, welcoming space where children can grow in their faith, learn about Jesus and build a sense of community.

Throughout 2026, Oasis has mostly followed the lectionary, creating a strong connection between the learning of the children and the wider church. As adults have explored the Bible through the Sunday sermon, the children have explored many of the same themes and stories in age-appropriate, engaging ways at Oasis. This has helped the children feel connected to the whole church community and encouraged conversations between children and adults about what they have been learning.

In Term 1, the children explored stories and teachings from the Gospels of Matthew and John. We explored what it means to be the salt of the earth and the living water that Jesus offers, as well as the Transfiguration, Jesus being tested in the wilderness and the importance of humility. Through stories, activities, games and discussion, the children were encouraged to think about how these teachings connect with their own lives and their relationship with Jesus.

Term 2 saw the children continue exploring stories and teachings from the Gospels, focusing on Jesus' life, ministry, and the lessons we can learn from his actions and teachings. We explored stories of Jesus' miracles, his interactions with others, and how he demonstrated love, compassion, and faith. Through stories, activities, games and discussion, the children were encouraged to consider how these teachings apply to their own lives and how they can grow in their relationship with Jesus.

In Term 3, we focused mainly on the Gospel of Matthew. We explored some of Jesus' well-known miracles and parables, including Jesus feeding the 5,000, healing the daughter of a Gentile woman and the parable of the unmerciful servant. We also explored what it means to have faith as small as a mustard seed. These stories gave children opportunities to consider faith, compassion, forgiveness, persistence, and trusting in God.

Term 4 we will explore the wonders of God's creation during the first half of the term, before turning our attention to Advent in the lead-up to Christmas. During part of the term, Oasis will join with Billabong as the children and young people prepare for the Advent service.

This year marks Liz's final year leading Oasis. Over the past 30 years, Liz has had the privilege of leading Oasis on numerous occasions, making a valued and lasting contribution to children's ministry. We are deeply grateful for her faithful leadership, dedication, and the care she has shown in creating opportunities for children and young people to grow in faith and build meaningful relationships within our church community.

Billabong

Elizabeth Phythian & Lynne Butson



Billabong is our youth program for those in year 6 and up. We meet on a fortnightly basis during term time during the 2nd half of the service. In 2026 we had 13 'Billabongers' joining in our activities.
This year we:

- Learned about lent as part of planning for and delivering the Palm Sunday service
- Took a look at what the bible says about our role as stewards of God's creation and created a 'Caring for Creation' tree
- MC'd Rock with the Flock
- Were thankful for Patsy Coleman joining us in Billabong to share her knowledge of Frontier Services. We then cooked and served the BBQ at our Frontier Services Sunday Great Outback BBQ
- Continued to collect and sort lids from plastic bottles for Lids4Kids
- Attended and participated in 2 Presbytery Youth Services
- Served on the GUC morning tea roster (once each term). We always baked up a storm so we could serve freshly prepared morning tea goodies.
- Took part in a GUC youth led service, which included highlights from the September/October Uniting Youth Camp (7 of the Billabongers attended this camp)
- Prepared for the Advent Sunday Messy Church Service







Girls' Brigade

Liz Warren – Captain

Girls' Brigade is one of the ministries through which GUC seeks to reach into our Gungahlin community and beyond. It provides opportunities to connect with school-aged girls and, through them, their families. We aim is to provide a welcoming environment where every girl is valued, encouraged and accepted for who she is, regardless of her family's church connections.

We began the year with 16 girls, and a further seven girls have joined us throughout the year. Around half of our girls have some form of church affiliation. Many of those who don't are attracted to Girls' Brigade because they appreciate our values and ethos. We value the

opportunity to build relationships with girls and families from a range of backgrounds and to offer them a place where they belong.

At the end of last year, we said goodbye to some girls who had been part of our company. While we miss them, we understand that Girls' Brigade sometimes must make way for the demands of school and other activities as girls grow and their commitments change.

Each year, our girls undertake age-appropriate achievement work designed to develop life skills, confidence, social skills, personal growth and leadership. This year, our Cadets (Kindergarten to Year 2) have explored Art Appreciation, Safety, Games and Science. Our Juniors (Years 3–5) have investigated Global Citizenship and what it means to be a global citizen, alongside activities in Science and Creative Arts. Our Seniors (Years 6–8) have been Walking with Purpose, learning about Board Games and exploring the communities to which they belong.

Our Pioneers (Years 9–11) have studied Astronomy, which has included planning and running two evenings of activities for our Cadets. They also have opportunities to undertake further leadership training offered by Girls' Brigade ACT. We have two Young Leaders in Year 12 who are discovering what it means to be a Girls' Brigade leader and the responsibilities and opportunities that come with the role.

In previous years, our attendance has dropped by around 50% during the colder months. This year our attendance has remained stable over the colder months.

To help maintain the girls' engagement and enthusiasm, we organise special evenings throughout the year, including activities that introduce them to the wider Girls' Brigade movement around the world. This year, we began with a Young Leader from another Canberra company sharing insights from the triennial Girls' Brigade International Conference and the plans being developed for the future of Girls' Brigade. We also hosted a fun Mother's Day evening for our Brigade mums, providing an opportunity for them to join in and connect with one another.

The girls particularly enjoyed our annual Town Centre photo scavenger hunt and our second annual UNO Tournament. We also planned a Saturday visit to the National Capital Exhibition but unfortunately had to cancel this event.

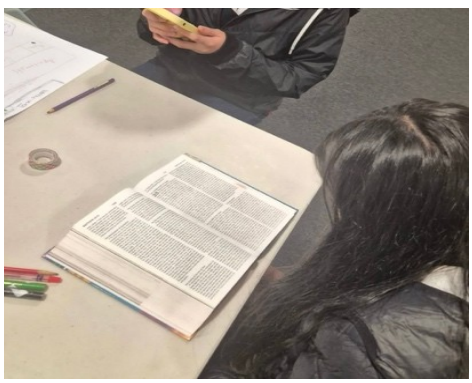
One of the highlights of the year was our annual GUC Girls' and Boys' Brigade service. Several families joined us, which was especially encouraging given that many attend other churches or do not attend church at all. I am grateful for the opportunity this service provides to welcome these families into our church community, and I greatly appreciate our congregation's support and good humour as we gather for what is usually a lively and somewhat chaotic service

We are thankful to Aurora Gungahlin Rotary for its generous donation towards the purchase of resources for Girls' Brigade. This support helps me provide engaging and worthwhile activities for the girls and contributes to the ongoing work of this ministry in our community. We also thank GUC for their support by keeping us in their prayers, as well as to Bianca for answering our call for a Chaplain. We are looking forward to having her join us soon on a regular basis. We would love women from GUC to join us in leading our girls. Thank you to Gungahlin Salvos for generously hosting us each week. Many thanks to Barbara, Lily, Fiona and Emma for your continued commitment and dedication to our girls and this ministry.











Boys' Brigade

Billy Cook

Theme: Engage, Explore, Encounter and Expand

The Boys' Brigade (BB) aims to develop boys and young people into responsible, confident and caring individuals through a balanced programme of Christian faith, leadership, discipline, physical activities and community service. Through our activities, we seek to help our boys grow in character, build lasting friendships and develop a sense of responsibility towards their families, church and community. Last year, we focused on the values of **Obedience, Reverence, Discipline and Self-Respect**. These values provided a strong foundation for our boys to grow in character and understand the importance of living by positive principles.

This year, our theme has been **Engage, Explore, Encounter and Expand**, drawn from the BB UK Faith Journey model. Through this theme, we have encouraged our boys to engage actively with their peers and community, explore new ideas and experiences, encounter challenges and opportunities for spiritual growth, and expand their skills, understanding and relationships. Throughout the year, we have sought to bring this theme to life through our weekly programmes, outdoor adventures, practical activities, fellowship nights and devotional sessions.

Term 1 – Engage

During Term 1, our focus was **Engage**, encouraging the boys to get involved, participate actively and build connections with one another through shared experiences.
We kicked off the year with a range of exciting activities, including a bike ride, canoeing and a team-based *Catch the Leader* activity.

The bike ride encouraged the boys to challenge themselves physically while enjoying the outdoors together. Canoeing provided an opportunity to develop coordination, communication and cooperation, while *Catch the Leader* challenged the boys to think strategically, work as a team and exercise their leadership skills.

Through these activities, the boys were encouraged to engage with their peers, step outside their comfort zones and contribute actively to the group. Term 1 provided a positive

start to the year, establishing a strong foundation of teamwork, friendship and participation as we began our journey through this year's theme.

Term 2 – Explore

In Term 2, we moved on to **Explore**, encouraging the boys to discover new things, learn about our heritage and broaden their understanding of the world around them.
One of our key activities was learning about the history of the Boys' Brigade. This helped the boys understand the organisation's origins, its Christian foundations and the values that continue to guide BB members today. We also organised a scavenger hunt, which included a walk to a local Aboriginal heritage site. This gave the boys an opportunity to explore their local surroundings, learn about the area's cultural heritage and appreciate the history of the place in which we live. The scavenger hunt also encouraged teamwork, observation and problem-solving as the boys worked together to complete the challenge. Other highlights included a fire pit night, which provided a relaxed setting for fellowship and conversation, and a fun Nerf gun night that brought plenty of excitement, friendly competition and opportunities to practise teamwork and strategy.

Overall, Term 2 was a blend of learning, exploration and fellowship. Through these experiences, the boys were encouraged to look beyond the familiar, discover new perspectives and develop a greater appreciation for both the history of the Boys' Brigade and the local community.

Term 3 – Encounter

In Term 3, our focus was **Encounter**, encouraging the boys to encounter new challenges, deepen their relationships with others and reflect on how their faith can influence the way they live. The term featured a variety of activities that challenged the boys and provided opportunities for personal growth. Our night hike encouraged perseverance, teamwork and confidence as the boys navigated the outdoors together.

We also held a special Father's Day programme featuring games and a father-and-son UNO competition. This provided fathers and sons with an opportunity to spend quality time together, strengthen their relationships and enjoy some friendly competition.

Leadership development was another important part of the term, with some of our boys participating in a state-run leadership course. This provided an opportunity to develop their

leadership abilities, learn from others and consider how they could take greater responsibility within the Boys' Brigade and their wider communities.

There was also plenty of fun and fellowship throughout the term. Our laser tag night gave the boys an opportunity to enjoy some friendly competition, while our Bring a Friend Night encouraged them to invite others to experience the Boys' Brigade and become part of our community. Throughout Term 3, these activities helped the boys encounter new experiences, develop their leadership skills, strengthen important relationships and reflect on their faith.

Term 4 – Expand

As we move into Term 4, our focus is **Expand**, encouraging the boys to build on what they have learned throughout the year, develop new skills and continue growing in confidence, character and faith. Our five-week programme includes a variety of practical, physical and team-based activities. We begin with a **Mini Drill Competition**, giving the boys an opportunity to practise their drill skills, coordination, teamwork and discipline in a friendly competitive environment.

In Week 2, we will run **Sense of Urgency Games**, including *Captains on Deck*. These activities will encourage the boys to listen carefully, think quickly and respond promptly to instructions while working together.

Week 3 will focus on **Knot Tying**, allowing the boys to develop practical skills, patience and precision through hands-on learning.
In Week 4, **Team-Building Games** will provide opportunities to strengthen communication, cooperation and trust as the boys work together towards common goals.

Finally, Week 5 will feature **Soap Carving**, encouraging creativity, patience and practical skills through an engaging hands-on activity.

Beyond our weekly programme, two important events will bring our year to a close. Our **Annual Awards Night** will provide an opportunity to recognise the boys' efforts, achievements and contributions throughout the year. Our **End-of-Year Family BBQ** will bring together boys, families and leaders to celebrate the year, strengthen relationships and enjoy fellowship as a BB community. Through these activities and events, we hope the

boys will continue to expand their abilities, discover new interests and appreciate the importance of teamwork, perseverance and service.

As we reflect on the year, we are grateful for the commitment and contributions of our leaders, whose time, energy and dedication have made our programmes possible.
Our sincere thanks go to **Bruce**, **Philip**, **Josh, Alistair, Caleb** and **Mathew** for their faithful service, guidance and encouragement throughout the year. Their willingness to give their time, organise activities, lead devotions and support the boys has been invaluable to the life of our company.

We would also like to thank our church leadership, parents and families for their continued support and partnership. The encouragement and involvement of our wider community play an important role in helping our boys grow and thrive.

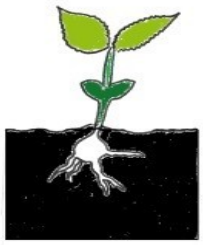
Most importantly, we thank our boys for their participation, enthusiasm and willingness to take on new challenges throughout the year. From bike rides and canoeing to leadership courses, night hikes and fellowship nights, each activity has provided opportunities for learning, growth and the development of lasting friendships.

As we look back on the year, we can see how our theme of **Engage, Explore, Encounter and Expand** has shaped our programme. We have encouraged the boys to engage with one another, explore their history and surroundings, encounter challenges and reflect on their faith, and expand their skills and understanding through new experiences.

As we look ahead to the coming year, we hope to continue building on this foundation and helping our boys grow into responsible, confident and caring young men who live out their faith and contribute positively to their families, church and community.
Thank you to everyone who has been part of our Boys' Brigade journey this year. We look forward to another year of learning, fellowship, service and growth together.

COMMUNITY & 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 13th anniversary of the work of the Mustard Seed food pantry. This work has allowed so many opportunities for our church over this time. Week-in week-out we have made it possible for those who are struggling to make their dollar stretch further and we faithfully serve others each week. 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. At times, the work can be chaotic, busy, tiring and unrelenting. It can also be rewarding, fulfilling, satisfying and life-giving. Most weeks it is a combination of all those things.

We have a dedicated team of twenty volunteers who spend time each Wednesday and Thursday assisting and serving. This year we welcomed Vanessa and Natalie to the Thursday evening team. We continue to be very grateful to Ngaire and Tam who offer so much behind the scenes support each Wednesday. And I would like to acknowledge and thank Ngaire who also serves as team leader every Thursday evening- thank you Ngaire. Each week we serve between forty and fifty people throughout our morning and evening opening times. Our volunteers engage in bubbly, light-hearted conversations through to the more serious and heavy-ladened 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. This year has been a bit of a tough one for our team with many dealing with our own health challenges, as well as the health of family members. There are several of us who are supporting family who are unwell and who have or are receiving treatment, or who have travelled to support family members with major life events; it's been a turbulent time for our small team. The collective contribution of our volunteers is both incredible and invaluable. Not only for what they do, but who they are is a gift to others. We wouldn't have a pantry without the team.

We have lovely days meeting with our customers. We talk with many of them, some are travelling well and we rejoice with them, but for many health and other hardships are all consuming, but all are grateful for the help the pantry is to them. Sharing the day talking with many of our customers sometimes leaves our heart breaking for some and feeling encouraged by others. 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.

This year a new initiative began between Northside Community and Salvation Army offering free community lunches. The free lunch runs simultaneously to our Thursday day opening and is proving to be very popular amongst our customers as well as others.
We continue to source most of our food from Foodbank in Sydney. Most Wednesday's we receive two pallets of food delivered by Roadmaster. 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.

Please take time to pray for our friends of the Food Pantry. Many have tough things they are struggling through. Pray that they may know God's presence is with them, for peace that comes in "letting go"; for a restfulness of the body and mind and that feet are moved to where they need to be.

Mustard Seed Food Garden

Janette Jakab & Alison Tweedie

What an incredible year it has been at the Gungahlin Uniting Church Food Garden! One year ago, we started out using around three garden beds that were filled with some pretty tired, poor-quality soil. Fast forward to today, and we are happy to have twelve thriving beds of fresh herbs and vegetables.

The Food Garden and the Food Pantry are tied together in a wonderful, closed-loop cycle. Any out-of-date or spoiled food goes right into our compost systems, transforming into nutrient-rich soil that breathes new life back into the garden beds. In return, the garden produces an abundance of fresh, healthy food that goes straight back to support the food pantry and its customers. These fresh vegetables and herbs are free to pantry customers which means they have access to no cost healthy foods. This year we started planting more flowering plants and built an insect hotel to attract bees to the garden.

None of this would be possible without our amazing team:

- **Alison** our composting expert, works her magic with her knowledge around how to layer waste to make the most beautiful soil.
- **Chris** keeps everything alive by handling the most important job of all - watering. Chris turns up almost every day of the year and has a wealth of knowledge around Biodynamic gardening and is often asked for his advice.
- **Janette** is out there every Thursday morning weeding, planting, planning improvements and harvesting fresh food for the pantry.
- Matt supports the food garden with mowing and whipper snippering and other construction tasks.

Our star crops this year have been spring onions, spinach, parsley, kale, and rocket—with each one contributing between 50 to 100 bunches to the food pantry. We're constantly surprised at how God makes our garden produce more than we would expect.

Beyond the harvest, one of the greatest highlights has been getting to know the wonderful food pantry community. Many of our customers and their children wander into the garden for a friendly chat, to admire what's growing, or to pitch in with weeding and raking autumn leaves for the compost. It has been truly rewarding to watch our community share and enjoy this special space together.


Bee
hotel











SMALL GROUPS

Tea and Talk

Elizabeth Phythian

Tea & Talk – or T&T – continued in 2026 with our lovely monthly catchups at the Gungahlin Lakes Club coffee shop. Gathering on the first Friday of the month, T&T is an opportunity for catching up with, and getting to know, other GUC community members over a cuppa.

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.

This year, our attendance numbers each month ranged from 10 to 18, 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, maintenance and improvements of the building and grounds of the GUC facility, and also the manse. The Property Team consists of Mark Butson, Alison Tweedie, Mark Phythian and Colin Christian.

2026 improvements/repairs include:

- **Garden Make-over** : Due to a reduction in volunteer gardening resources, the condition of the Church gardens had deteriorated and significant pruning, weeding, plant removal and re-planting, mulching and general restoration was carried out by a contractor. The work returned the gardens to a standard that can be more easily maintained on an ongoing basis.
- **New Path** : A new 23m long path was installed by a contractor from the public footpath to the area near the bike racks, providing safe pedestrian and wheelchair access from the footpath to the Church's paved area. This will eliminate the need for visitors to use the car park when accessing the Church entrance.
- **Re-painting the Kitchen**
- **Replacement Air-Conditioner** : the air-conditioner in the Multi-Purpose Room failed and was replaced
- **Store-Room Water Leak** : a leak in the store-room ceiling was fixed and damaged plaster was replaced
- **Dish-washer Repair** : leaky water-pump repaired
- **Managing fire protection and alarm systems**
- **Managing annual inspection of roof anchors**
- A huge thanks to Alison Tweedie for being there early and managing the Tradies !
- And an even bigger thanks to Mark Butson for all the hours of labour, time and efforts put into the jobs that need doing around the property. His knowledge and abilities are a real gift to our community and save us a lot of time and money.

Bookings, Building Hire and Cleaning

Alison Tweedie

Throughout 2026 GUC has had four main and regular tenants hire the building- Navitas, Girl Guides, Pointe2Pointe Dance, 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.

The Property Team, headed up by Mark Butson 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. This past year there was a big focus on overhauling the church gardens and the constructing of a new path leading to lead off the street, up through the garden and arriving at the main entrance, this has helped with the safety for people arriving on foot from the town centre by bus or tram.




BIGW





FINANCIAL REPORTS

The following pages contain the unaudited financial reports.

Budget Variance

UCA - UNITING CHURCH GUNGAHLIN

For the year ended 30 June 2026

	ACTUAL	2026 OVERALL BUDGET	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %	ACTUAL LY
Trading Income					
Congregation - Direct Deposits	97,354	95,300	2,054 ↑	2% ↑	87,636
Congregation - Plates	33,565	32,400	1,165 ↑	4% ↑	29,647
Fundraising FYPF	4,165	4,200	(35) ↓	-1% ↓	2,330
Hall Hire	125,047	105,500	19,547 ↑	19% ↑	104,385
Interest - UFS	7,431	8,446	(1,015) ↓	-12% ↓	9,078
Other/Sundry Income	-	457	(457) ↓	-100% ↓	457
Residential Properties Cost Recovery	2,053	4,700	(2,647) ↓	-56% ↓	4,460
Total Trading Income	**269,616**	**251,003**	**18,613**	**7%**	**237,993**
Gross Profit	**269,616**	**251,003**	**18,613**	**7%**	**237,993**
Other Income					
Food Pantry - Sales/Income/Donations	49,168	50,900	(1,732) ↓	-3% ↓	50,226
Total Other Income	**49,168**	**50,900**	**(1,732)**	**-3%**	**50,226**
Operating Expenses					
Accounting & Tax Fees	9,848	8,911	937 ↑	11% ↑	8,908
Audit Fees (External)	-	250	(250) ↓	-100% ↓	250
Casual Preaching Fees Ministers	-	100	(100) ↓	-100% ↓	100
Cleaning	16,302	19,380	(3,078) ↓	-16% ↓	18,464
Donations	-	306	(306) ↓	-100% ↓	306
Educational materials (excl mission)	318	192	126 ↑	66% ↑	191
Electrical Repairs & Maintenance - Building	45	640	(595) ↓	-93% ↓	640
Entertainement/Hospitality Costs (Non Staff)	477	204	273 ↑	134% ↑	205
Food Pantry - Other expenses	597	388	209 ↑	54% ↑	390
Food Pantry - stock	34,572	34,996	(424) ↓	-1% ↓	34,994
Food Pantry Salary and Wages	15,639	15,952	(313) ↓	-2% ↓	15,954
Food Pantry Superannuation	1,952	1,829	123 ↑	7% ↑	1,826
Handyman Repairs & Maintenance - Building	17	27	(10) ↓	-37% ↓	27
Health & Safety	-	11	(11) ↓	-100% ↓	11
Insurance Premium- General	3,583	3,867	(284) ↓	-7% ↓	3,867
Local Mission Support	674	3,100	(2,426) ↓	-78% ↓	1,823

	ACTUAL	2026 OVERALL BUDGET	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %	ACTUAL LY
Ministers Benefits	46,259	45,600	659	1%	45,237
Ministers Superannuation Expenses	10,584	10,800	(216)	-2%	10,188
Ministry Stipends	57,821	57,600	221	0%	55,597
Office Photocopy & Printing Expenses	2,728	2,613	115	4%	2,613
Office Supplies	373	16	357	2,232%	16
Other Property Costs	700	650	50	8%	650
Other/Sundry Expense	20	397	(377)	-95%	396
Pest Control	300	150	150	100%	150
Postage, Freight and Courier	-	300	(300)	-100%	301
Presbytery Levies	14,000	14,000	-	-	10,800
Rates - Council	3,260	2,980	280	9%	2,980
Recruitment/Agency Fees	800	-	800	-	-
Repairs & Maintenance - Equipment	1,349	8,508	(7,159)	-84%	8,508
Repairs & Maintenance - Fire Alarm	1,316	1,321	(5)	0%	1,324
Repairs & Maintenance - Ground Maintenance	614	-	614	-	-
Repairs & Maintenance - Painting	1,300	-	1,300	-	-
Replacement Fittings Repairs & Maintenance - Building	5,045	223	4,822	2,162%	223
Rubbish Removal	5,203	5,006	197	4%	5,006
Salaries & Wages - Annual Leave Provision	2,571	(4,789)	7,360	154%	(4,786)
Salaries & Wages - Long Service Leave Provision	183	224	(41)	-18%	224
Salaries & Wages - Support Staff	15,639	20,400	(4,761)	-23%	18,754
Sanitary & Wash Room	873	153	720	470%	152
Security Expenses	522	520	2	0%	522
Software Licences	27	276	(249)	-90%	279
Stationery	48	251	(203)	-81%	250
Sundry Staff Expenses	14	-	14	-	-
Superannuation - Support Staff	1,951	1,800	151	8%	1,873
Supervision Fees	-	375	(375)	-100%	375
Support Fund Levy Expense	3,600	3,600	-	-	3,600
Synod Charges	3,000	8,000	(5,000)	-63%	3,600
Telephone & Fax & Internet Charges	1,470	1,214	256	21%	1,214
Training (non staff)	-	40	(40)	-100%	40

	ACTUAL	2026 OVERALL BUDGET	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %	ACTUAL LY
Training & Development (Staff)	-	83	(83) ↓	-100% ↓	83
Utilities - Electricity	9,027	7,984	1,043 ↑	13% ↑	7,985
Utilities - Gas	1,742	2,057	(315) ↓	-15% ↓	2,058
Utilities - Water	2,448	2,395	53 ↑	2% ↑	2,395
Workers Compensation	1,794	70	1,724 ↑	2,463% ↑	70
Worship & Music	995	1,219	(224) ↓	-18% ↓	1,220
Total Operating Expenses	**281,598**	**286,189**	**(4,591)**	**-2%**	**271,851**
Net Profit	**37,186**	**15,714**	**21,472**	**137%**	**16,368**

Budget Variance

UCA - UNITING CHURCH GUNGAHLIN

For the year ended 30 June 2027

	2027 OVERALL BUDGET FY 27	ACTUAL LY
Trading Income		
Congregation - Direct Deposits	105,000	97,354
Congregation - Plates	37,500	33,565
Fundraising FYPF	10,000	4,165
Grants - Mission	60,000	-
Hall Hire	125,047	125,047
Interest - UFS	7,432	7,431
Residential Properties Cost Recovery	2,800	2,053
Total Trading Income	**347,779**	**269,616**
Gross Profit	**347,779**	**269,616**
Other Income		
Food Pantry - Sales/Income/Donations	50,000	49,168
Total Other Income	**50,000**	**49,168**
Operating Expenses		
Accounting & Tax Fees	9,850	9,848
Audit Fees (External)	800	-
Cleaning	17,968	16,302
Educational materials (excl mission)	319	318
Electrical Repairs & Maintenance - Building	45	45
Entertainement/Hospitality Costs (Non Staff)	477	477
Food Pantry - Other expenses	596	597
Food Pantry - stock	34,570	34,572
Food Pantry Salary and Wages	15,642	15,639
Food Pantry Superannuation	1,955	1,952
Handyman Repairs & Maintenance - Building	17	17
Insurance Premium- General	3,583	3,583
Local Mission Support	674	674
Ministers Benefits	46,260	46,259
Ministers Superannuation Expenses	10,584	10,584
Ministry Stipends	57,816	57,821
Mission FYP	69,300	-
Office Photocopy & Printing Expenses	2,728	2,728
Office Supplies	373	373
Other Property Costs	700	700
Other/Sundry Expense	20	20
Pest Control	300	300
Presbytery Levies	14,000	14,000
Rates - Council	3,260	3,260
Recruitment/Agency Fees	800	800
Repairs & Maintenance - Equipment	1,350	1,349

	2027 OVERALL BUDGET FY 27	ACTUAL LY
Repairs & Maintenance - Fire Alarm	1,314	1,316
Repairs & Maintenance - Ground Maintenance	614	614
Repairs & Maintenance - Painting	1,300	1,300
Replacement Fittings Repairs & Maintenance - Building	5,045	5,045
Rubbish Removal	5,202	5,203
Salaries & Wages - Annual Leave Provision	2,572	2,571
Salaries & Wages - Long Service Leave Provision	183	183
Salaries & Wages - Support Staff	15,642	15,639
Sanitary & Wash Room	873	873
Security Expenses	520	522
Software Licences	25	27
Stationery	48	48
Sundry Staff Expenses	14	14
Superannuation - Support Staff	1,955	1,951
Support Fund Levy Expense	3,600	3,600
Synod Charges	3,000	3,000
Telephone & Fax & Internet Charges	1,473	1,470
Utilities - Electricity	9,027	9,027
Utilities - Gas	1,742	1,742
Utilities - Water	2,447	2,448
Workers Compensation	1,794	1,794
Worship & Music	995	995
Total Operating Expenses	**353,372**	**281,598**
Net Profit	**44,407**	**37,186**