



---

*..ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN SHARING THE LOVE OF  
JESUS WITH ALL PEOPLE....*

# MALENY UNITING CHURCH

## ANNUAL REPORT 2014

*Presented to*

Congregational Meeting

15 March 2015

---

## Table of Contents

	<u>Page No</u>
Minister .....	2
Leaders Council .....	3
Joint Mission Team .....	4
Outreach .....	5-6
Pastoral Care .....	7
Know Your Bible .....	7
Treasurer .....	8
Prayer .....	9
Prayers Around the Candle .....	10
Christian Meditation .....	10
Children and Families .....	11
Ladies' Friendship .....	12
Small Group meeting at Roger Smith's.....	13
Men's Group .....	13
R&R and MUCR Book Clubs.....	14
Ecotheology.....	15
Mission.....	15
Administration.....	16
Property .....	17
Ecumenical Men's Breakfast .....	18
Mission Goals (Appendix) .....	19

## Minister

Throughout this year, the Gospel of Matthew has been the primary source of inspiration for worship, challenge and encouragement in our congregations. The overarching theme of the Gospel of Matthew is "God is with us" for it is introduced as both our experience of Jesus Christ (1:23) at the beginning of the Gospel and as the hope for the future at the end of the Gospel (26:20).

First, some Biblical background on this theme. In the Creation Story, God the Creator is present inside the creation as well as outside it as its source. In Genesis, it is impossible to understand the creation, the human creature, life and purpose without God present with us, sustaining and engaging with us. God speaks to Abraham. God appears to Abraham, Moses. People are delivered from the violence and oppression of slavery into a new future in which they were to live according to the principles of love: in a love relationship with God, and in a love relationship with others.

However, the journey into nationalism, kingship, warfare and the making and sustaining of enemies misappropriated the relationship of God with his people, and "God is with us" became a war cry (Isaiah 8:10). The prophet then calls the people to a new future in which "every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, as fuel for a fire – for unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:5,6). Immanuel is thus no longer a war cry but a declaration that we have returned to the way of God, to live according to the principles of peace. And it was this notion that was claimed by the early followers of the risen Christ.

Those who had met Jesus, recognized that Jesus was indeed "God with us – Immanuel". The early church also lived in a time of violence, military occupation, oppression and persecution, yet they recognized that God was with them, that God's way was one of non-violence, that it was impossible to make sense of life without realising that God is with us, sustaining and engaging with us because of his ultimate mercy and grace.

And so we discover the beauty of relationships, the joy of community, the greater strength of non-violence and forgiveness, and the richness of life lived knowing God is with us. During the months that I have been among you, I have been richly encouraged and honoured to have experienced your fellowship. It has been abundantly clear that God is with you and has called you and formed you and sustained you in your witness to his grace.

Thank you for your harmonious partnership with one another. Thank you for your commitment to others whether in Solomon Islands, Palmwoods, North India, or Tonga. Thank you for your hospitality, grace and inclusion of people of different abilities, status, health, language, history, political persuasion and thought. Thank you for your commitment to mission and witness as evidenced in support of community care, chaplaincy, festivals, children's ministry, fun days, care of aged people. Thank you for your accountability in using the gifts God has given you to serve in the community as leaders, healers, mercy givers, administrators, artists, musicians, teachers, helpers, carers, evangelists, artisans, providers of hospitality, honest workmen, managers of people and managers of the environment. Thank you for the beauty you have revealed. Thank you for your commitment to each other, to the gathered community and to the Lord Jesus Christ – Immanuel.

**Rev Ian Stehbens**  
**Minister of the Word**

*(This report was provided for The November 2014 to February 2015 issue of The Vine)*

## Leaders Council

2014 began with several changes to the Leaders Council. Three members' terms were up, and four more were elected. The council members are Bob Philpot, Fran Guard, Dorothy Tietze, Nancy Baker, Val Clarkson, June Eather (secretary), John Benn (chair), and Our Minister.

Rev. Peter Overton was our Minister until March, when he finished his time with us. He felt called to Casino in N.S.W. as a resource minister. We wish him well and God's blessing in his new role.

We were blessed to have Rev. Ian Stehbens ministering to us until the end of October. Rev. Ian majored in visitation, contacting many who have an affiliation with our church, and many people appreciated his visits. He has once again joined the ranks of the 'Retired'. We were all blessed by his ministry in our area.

We must thank Rev. Bob Philpot for 'filling the gap' so capably while our Joint Nominating Committee was interviewing potential candidates for a permanent 'Minister of the Word'. Thankyou to our JMC

2015 began in a very positive way with the induction of Rev. Catherine Solomon on 17th January. Several Uniting Church dignitaries, a number of other church representatives, community members and members of our own congregation attended the service, welcoming Rev. Catherine and husband Andrew to Maleny and the Blackall Range. We pray God's blessing goes with her as she finds her way into the hearts and lives of our church people and our community.

We have had our first Leaders Council meeting for the year, where Rev. Catherine outlined some of her goals, and we discussed some of the issues we face in our quite large Cluster.

We pray for God's guidance in every aspect of our church life – for Rev. Catherine, for our church leaders, for the many group leaders and members, and all those people who work towards the efficient running of our church, strengthening the "Body of Christ" in this place.

God bless all your endeavours.

**John Benn**  
**Chairman**

-----

**THE SYNOD THEME FOR 2015:**

**The Year of Living the Gospel**



## Joint Mission Team

The Interim Ministry Exercise report prepared by Rev Graham Dempster in 2014 recommended that a Joint Mission Team be established to develop broad mission goals that touch all four churches.

The report indicated that all four churches had a number of things in common:

- all want to be meaningfully involved in their local community;
- all are committed to ecumenical endeavour;
- all want to have greater contact with families and children;
- all have good pastoral caring systems in place;
- all hope to see the other churches flourish as the local gathering of God's people;
- all desire to be working within Synod guidelines e.g. *Together on the Way*

The Joint Mission Team consisted of Jean Beech, Colin Brewer, Bob Eather, Allan Gillespie, and Murray Robertson (chair). Its task was to develop a set of common missional goals, with the Joint Management Committee then taking responsibility for enunciating these broad goals, including '*Together on the Way*', and each church then deciding on how it meets those goals in its local context.

The team drew on the existing congregational goals in the Montville and Maleny congregations, the *Together on the Way* materials, input from Presbytery, as well as consulting widely with the congregations at strategic stages of the process. At the time of developing these goals, the Palmwoods congregation was at a critical point of internal transition and it was decided that they continue to do so, unencumbered by additional tasks.

The set of agreed Missional Goals provides a vision for ministry and mission, and has been embedded into our Blackall Range Profile and endorsed by Presbytery.

The next step will be for each congregation to put these goals into practice. The team recognises that our ability to achieve our mission goals will depend on our resources and energy, but let us be "open to new ways, new ideas and new directions" as we take some small steps into an encouraging future.

**Murray Robertson**  
Chairman



## Outreach

**Our mission goal is TO BE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN SHARING THE LOVE OF JESUS WITH ALL PEOPLE.**

We do this as we CONNECT with others to share with them the Good News of salvation that comes to us by God's grace through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. "...go into all the world.."

This report highlights the Outreach activities that we have used this year in response to this goal.

### **Mothers Day**

Between 9 and 11 am on Mothers Day, a group of men, led by Bob Eather, gave out approximately 350 chrysanthemum as thanks to women for being mothers, grandmothers, aunts, daughters and all their valued roles in our community. Flowers were also handed to the ladies working in the nearby shops. (Thanks Ray). The site outside the MCU building against IGA was ideal for ready access to the people walking the street.

There were looks of delight when ladies discovered it was a gift which was received with thanks; most flowers were affixed to lapels or in their hair, worn proudly. This made it easy to identify who had already been given flowers.

At the debrief after the event, all our group found the highlight was the delight in the recipients' eyes when it registered this was unconditional giving, making us feel we were touching many hearts.

Some men, while we were giving the flowers, either ducked up to the flower shop to buy flowers with guilty looks on their faces, or asked for a flower to give their better half.

A few people came back later to ask who we represented and to thank us for our gift.

### **Maleny Christmas Street Carnival**

For the third year Maleny Church distributed around 900 pieces of cake and 250 balloons at the street carnival. This year, reorganised cutting and wrapping reduced the time taken by the crew to 1.5 hours. Thanks Douglas for organising the plastic bags and punching the cards.

All cakes and balloons were donated. This year the organising committee requested a food licence or an exemption. We were able to get an exemption. Many thanks to Bob Eather and his team of willing helpers who cut and wrapped the cake, operated the stall between 6 and 8pm and distributed the cakes and balloons to the crowd.

### **National Day of Thanksgiving**

The church was invited to join other churches for an outreach on the National Day of Thanksgiving, when community volunteers are recognised. Despite the rain, the fun day in the park proved to be a success. Our church stall contained activities for the children (Bob Grice and Murray) to keep themselves entertained, we handed out resources and gifts from Blue Care, and the Kangra team (Paul and Lyndall Moore) had cards on sale. There was plenty of opportunity to engage in conversation with adults and children alike.

## Christmas Tree Festival

In 2014, the Christmas Tree Festival partnered with the Blackall Range Care Group (BRCG) which provides a wide range of client-based services across the Blackall Range community. Fund raising from donations and sale of trees meant that the Festival was able to present a cheque for \$1500 to the BRCG. This is the largest amount raised since the first festival in 2012. It just keeps growing.

The theme of any "Christmas Song or Carol" attracted many and varied interpretations and all were unique in their own way. From the humorous to the more serious, they all reflected the love and joy that comes at Christmas. With over 600 visitors we feel that the festival makes a real impact on our community. It was especially heartening to have four other churches as well as our own Montville and Palmwoods churches represented. A truly ecumenical event. The tree sales in Maple Street provided opportunities for conversation and outreach.

Thea Caffin, CEO of the BRCG, was delighted with all aspects of the festival. Volunteers and clients had fun building their "Aussie Jingle Bells" Tree, complete with the thunder box. Many clients and families also enjoyed a visit to the festival.

Thea said that the donation will be used to fit out a storage space with shelving and lining, in the Maleny Office behind the Maleny Hospital. Thea added that the BRCG continues to expand, especially in the Maleny area where 60% of the 900 clients are now living. The donation will enable staff and volunteers to continue to provide this valuable service in the Maleny area.

The trees also provided a fitting service for the inspirational and well attended Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services.

But above all the festival was a time when our church could reach out with love and compassion to our Maleny community, "sharing the love of Jesus with all people"

I would like to thank all members of the committee, plus members of the congregation and the wider community, who put in so much time and energy and prayer to make this festival a unique outreach into our community.

## Murray Robertson and Bob Eather

-----

### Our Gospel Values

As we are part of the Uniting Church in Queensland sharing in God's mission in the world, we will be guided by values that derive from and give expression to God's reconciling action in Jesus Christ.

In response to God's grace, we are called to live out these values:

**Faithfulness, Compassion, Humility, Truthfulness, Justice.**

These gospel values will inform our lives as individuals and as the community of the Uniting Churches on the Blackall Ranges in Queensland.

## Pastoral Care

We thank God for the privilege of serving Him in this way. We seek to keep contact with people by sight, voice and in person. We maintain a meal bank, so food is available when someone is sick or in need.

Hospital visits are done but it would help if I was informed when someone is sick or in hospital as the hospital does not do this.

In the past year, some have needed a lot of extra care and support, even our pastoral care team members.

**There is an opening for anyone to join if they feel they can serve God in this way.** We meet quarterly to review and support each other and only have a set number of people to care for.

Care has extended much further than the small team as many have offered help of transport, cooked meals, and spending time with the 'cared for' while the carer takes time off or goes shopping. Lawns have been mown and households moved and cleaned. So much I do not know the half of it.

Thank you all for a very busy year. We look forward to a new year 2015 where God may direct all we do and say.

**Dorothy Tietze**  
**Convenor**

## Know Your Bible

The ladies' study group in our church is a Know Your Bible (KYB) Group.

We meet in the church building on Friday afternoons from 1.30 – 3.30.

We have ladies from other churches in Maleny as part of our group – from the Anglican Church and Church on the Rise. We study books prepared by KYB International.

The current subject we are studying is "The Person of Jesus".

Our numbers are growing steadily and if you would like to be part of this group, please contact Annette Grice, our overall coordinator (5494 3640), or Dorothy Tietze, one of our leaders (5494 3486).

Thanks to our member Lyn Baker for co-ordinating our entry to the Christmas Tree Festival, and to her helpers.

**Annette Grice**  
**Co-Ordinator**



## Treasurer

Reporting on the Maleny financial position is complicated because the three Blackall Range Uniting Churches operate a combined bank account and share the cost of ministry, administration, Synod charges and the Manse. The sharing is done in proportion to the total offerings received from the respective congregations in the preceding three years. (Maleny's share in 2014 was 61%).

Maleny/Kenilworth, Montville and Palmwoods congregations are responsible for approving their own annual budgets. The three budgets are then combined to give the operating budget for the Blackall Range cluster.

Synod requires an annual financial report for the Blackall Range entity and the accounts have to be approved by an independent auditor. The **Blackall Range Accounts** for 2014 show a **decrease of \$16,585** in our cash position. This depletion of funds was due to expenses incurred at the Manse – totalling \$28,000. (Payments for maintenance and capital works at the Manse are made from our Reserves and not from our Operating Account.)

Income and expenditure transactions for the Blackall Range are allocated to the relevant churches, so that regular financial reporting can be done against the budgets for the respective churches. The **Maleny Summary of Cash Flows**, for the Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014, is as follows:

<b>CASH INFLOWS FROM NORMAL ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Budget 2014</b>	<b>Actual 2014</b>
Offerings – Maleny	58,500	62,512
Offerings – Kenilworth	1,500	1,926
Blue Care Payment for Erowal Chaplaincy***	5,490	4,427
Hall Hire	2,500	2,170
Garage Sale and Concert	3,000	4,443
Solar Power Credits	3,000	3,010
Sundry Income	<u>1,000</u>	<u>2,795</u>
	<b>74,990</b>	<b>81,283</b>
<b>CASH OUTFLOW</b>		
Stipend including "on-costs"***	42,700	38,515
Mission & Service Fund***	8,174	8,113
Outreach Activities	1,100	1,234
Cleaning	4,500	4,120
SCRC & UnityWater	1,000	737
Electricity Charges	1,200	1,089
Insurances	2,800	2,837
Postage, Telephones and Printing***	3,599	3,533
Repairs and Maintenance	4,000	2,744
Catering and Morning Tea Supplies	1,000	760
Sundries	2,200	1,868
Donations	<u>1,500</u>	<u>5,160</u>
	<b>73,773</b>	<b>70,710</b>
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>1,216</b>	<b>\$10,573</b>

(\*\*\* Indicates 61% share of actual total income/cost)

**The Surplus** is largely attributable to the Blue Care payment (no longer applicable) and the fact that we only had part-time ministry in 2014. We face a much greater challenge in 2015; so don't be misled by this surplus.

**Roger Smith**  
Treasurer

## Prayer

Each Sunday when our Welcome to Worship is projected on the screen, we see our commitment to be a prayerful, listening church.

This is recognition that prayer needs to be at the centre of who we are, where we are going, and everything we do.

All our efforts, no matter how sincere, will come to little unless God is in them. Hence the importance of consistently and earnestly seeking His guidance, His resourcing and His help.

It is now three years since we have had a Prayer Champion to lead us in making prayer a priority for our congregation. Together with a small band of folk who agreed to form a prayer team, I have sought to hold the reins on an interim basis. However, we urgently need a Prayer Coordinator if we are to fully embrace our vision of being a prayerful, listening church.

Throughout the year I have issued prayer bulletins by email every three or four weeks and to ensure all major initiatives and events have been covered by prayer. Prayer has also been an important part of our church services, the meditation group, small groups and our various meetings. I have also taken the opportunity to preach on the subject of prayer and to encourage the setting aside of time daily for reflection on God's word and prayer.

However, more needs to be done to strengthen this vital prayer ministry and, in particular, a Prayer Coordinator would be able to help us in the following areas:-

- Keep prayer constantly before the congregation by encouraging us in our personal devotions and prayer and providing training and resources to help folk of all ages in our quiet times.
- Arranging regular prayer gatherings so that appropriate time is spent in corporate prayer for our minister, church leaders, our programmes and events, specific outreaches, specific ministries, our sister congregations and other churches, missions such as Kangra, and for wider issues.
- Setting up prayer vigils for specific activities and outreaches or for national or international emergencies and disasters.
- Establishing a prayer chain which can be activated quickly in the event of an urgent request for prayer.
- Promoting and coordinating the weekly prayer slips in the pews and ensuring prayer requests are actioned and appropriate information is passed to the Pastoral Care team and our minister.
- Coordinating a roster of leaders available to pray with folk after a service and promoting the availability of this ministry.

Spontaneous prayer is wonderful and to be encouraged, but effective prayer needs to be focussed, earnest, consistent and persistent. Prayer is not for just when we feel like it – we are commanded to pray. Jesus set us the example and if it was necessary for Jesus, how much more for us. Prayer is fundamental and vital for us as individuals if we are to lead joyful and meaningful lives and for our church if we are to be the witnesses we are called to be to the Good News of the Gospel.

*"The prayer of a righteous man (or woman) is powerful and effective". James 5 v 16.*

**Bob Grice**  
**Acting Prayer Co-Ordinator**

## Prayers Around the Candle

When the Gulf War ended in 1991, we realised there was still much misery, hate and resentment. So we decided to continue the weekly prayer group in my home.

As we had previously done in Maleny Uniting Church, we lit a candle and prayed together for half an hour. We added a globe of the world to prod our memories.

We are still praying for people involved in many different conflicts in various parts of the world as well as for local people and their needs.

Participants may bring house guests and many friends have participated in our gatherings over the years.

If you are interested in further information, please ring Moyra Jones, Phone 5494 2661.

*"Lighting a candle is a symbol;  
of light and hope,  
of light and warmth.  
Our world needs them all" Anonymous.*

**Moyra Jones**  
**Prayers around the Candle Co-Ordinator**

## Christian Meditation

We have now entered our fifth year as a group. We gather every Wednesday at 8.30 a.m. in the church to share a time of stillness, silence and simplicity before God.

We first hear a reflection recorded by a variety of Christian leaders of various denominations. The reflections we have heard in the previous twelve months have been: *Meditating as a Christian; Letting go, Letting God; Aspects of Love 1, 2, and 3 ; The Essential Teaching; The Teaching of Jesus on Prayer; Wisdom and Transformation; The Contemplative Executive; and, Peace, not as the World Gives.* Our time of silence follows for 20 minutes, and ends with music and a prayer. The time together usually ends before 9.30.

The group celebrates overseas travel of any of its members, with a morning tea at the church, on their return, where we hear reports of their journeying. As well, we have fallen into the habit of sharing coffee in town after 9.30. This practice began with our sense that one of our members who was constantly caring for an ill spouse, could do with some light-hearted 'down time'. And so it has evolved. We extend a welcome to any who would care to join us for either or both, the meditation time and coffee at MapleThree.

The operative word is 'welcome' to share time in the presence of our faithful God, and enjoy the friendship of the group.

**Adrienne Dempster,**  
**Leader**

## Children and Families

Despite the fact that the age of the great majority of our congregation is over 65, there is a heart to see more families with young children as part of our church family – and this has consistently been reflected in our priorities and the prayers of our prayer team.

No church in Maleny has a vibrant children's or youth programme, The Combined Churches Primary School Kids Club no longer functions and the Combined Churches Youth Group was put in mothballs in the middle of last year. There are many children and young people in Maleny, as evidenced by school enrolments, but there is an acute shortage of parent type Christian leaders to run children's programmes and attract young people.

Having said this, there has remained a faithful ministry to families and children in our church for the small (but at last growing) number of families and children associated with us. In summary, the past year has seen:-

- Consistent prayer for God to send families and children into our church.
- The offering of Kids Biz every Sunday during the church service for primary-aged children.
- A regular Kids' slot in all our church services when children are present.
- Two well attended Fun Day outreaches at Easter and September school holidays where contact was made with a large number of families and where the Gospel message was shared with the kids.
- Support for chaplaincy at both Primary School and High School through financial contributions and representation on Chaplaincy Committees.
- Involvement in Religious Education teaching and reading assistance at Maleny Primary School.
- Continuing to provide an equipped cry room for families with babies attending services and other meetings at the church.
- Provision of activity bags for small children during church services.
- Maintenance of a Kids' Corner in the church where children can play and read during church services and meetings.
- Provision of a covered fenced area adjacent to the hall where children can play during church activities.
- Contribution of a Fun Day Tree at the Christmas Tree Festival.
- Giving out of balloons to children at the Christmas Street Carnival.
- Involvement of children from time to time in church services and in the Christmas Eve pageant.
- Increased visitation to families during the year by our ministers.

The Children and Families Team met recently with our new Minister. Catherine has had significant experience as a Families and Children's Pastor and we are looking forward to working with her to further develop our ministry in this important area. Please thank God for the delightful families we currently have and continue to pray that we will gain the critical mass necessary to attract more families and children to fellowship together with us. Pray that we will be welcoming and that we will be relevant to the issues that are important to them at this stage of their lives. This may well involve commencing some parallel ministries which we will all need to affirm and support, even if it takes us a little out of our comfort zones.

*"Suffer the little children to come to me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven".*

**Bob Grice**  
Leader

## Ladies Friendship

The third Thursday of the months February to November sees an ever expanding group of Ladies meeting from 9.30 to 11.30am.

Usually the venue is the Maleny Church Hall but occasionally the venue changes, for example in April it was an outdoor setting for a special Maundy Thursday celebration and in September a visit to Erowal for a morning of entertainment.

Our aim is to provide women an opportunity to share things that are important to them and to learn from guest speakers about the many varied facets of life.

Practical support is given by keeping frozen meals ready for distribution.

Talented ladies created beautiful quilts for the Kangra Hostel in North India.

The Friendship Group's Christmas tree showcased the fact that together we can shine like stars.

We are not a fund raising group but when some worthy recipient is brought to our notice we enthusiastically find ways to support. One novel way was by self-catering for our Christmas breakup and donating the value of the meal to the "Make a Child Smile" project.

Distribution of surplus monies resulted in \$90 to Faith McKinnon for Religious Instruction materials; \$80 for McKay Patrol Avgas; \$80 to Jennie Girard – Uniting World – Serving in Mission.

In 2015 our small coins will support the Neighbourhood Centre who provide breakfasts for children who come to school still hungry. We will call it the Vegemite Fund.

All women in the Cluster are welcome to attend and just occasionally men are invited!!

This year's programme on pink paper is available, and is summarised below:  
Contact Nancy 54942961 or Marnie 54999394 for more information.

**Proposed Program 2015** 9.30 – 11.30 at Maleny Uniting Church Hall, unless stated:

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Feb 19    | Getting started and planning our year  |
| March 19  | KANGRA update  |
| April 16  | Guest Speaker: CHRISTOPHER ANDREWS ( <i>Open Invitation</i> )<br>Topic: Current programmes at CHERBOURG. |
| May 21    | Bring a Friend to a BIG PINK CUPPA at Heather Jones' Gallery   |
| June 18   | Practical Participation Day as our UC Anniversary Celebration approaches                                 |
| July 16   | Guest Speaker: WENDY FERGUSON (Christian Counsellor)<br>Topic: Relationships ( <i>Open Invitation</i> )  |
| August 20 | DOUBLE DELIGHT for the CLUSTER<br>Two venues: Blackall Range Care and Montville Uniting Church           |
| Sept 17   | PLEASANT MORNING @ Erowal  |
| Oct 15    | Guest Speaker: KATE STEWART, Occupational Therapist<br>Topic: A look at FORENSIC MENTAL HEALTH           |
| Nov 19    | Pre-Christmas Event (details to be advised).   |

**Nancy Baker**  
Leader

## **Small Group meeting at Roger Smith's**

This small group was founded by Brian Ross a few years ago and continues to be regularly attended by 7 to 10 people. This group utilises a variety of material (book excerpts, movie clips, songs, bible verses, etc) to generate lively and open discussion around current topics, issues and questions.

Most of 2014 sessions revolved around the Bonsai analogy to Christianity: The Japanese art of bonsai gardening can be compared to the common approach to Christianity today – that is a candy coated pretend everything is fine faith that folks walk aimlessly in and a very stunted, contrived and internally weak rendition of what God intended us to be. The wires that shape a bonsai tree have a similar effect to the invisible wires that tend to shape and control our lives. These invisible yet very effective 'wires' come from a variety of sources and unless and until we choose to cut those wires, we tend to be controlled by them. Throughout the year we explored and examined what 'wires' control and stunt our spiritual growth.

Later in the year the theme changed to "A Near Life Experience" and that theme has continued into the commencement of our 2015 meetings. This theme examines how we can create habits that generate and maintain spiritual highs or so called mountain top experiences. We often are intrigued with 'Near Death Experiences' but perhaps just as intriguing are 'Near Life Experiences' – those moments when we feel most alive and connected to ourselves, God, people, nature, earth and the universe.

**Glen Gill**  
**Facilitator**

## **Men's Group**

In 2014 the Men's Group (Band of Brothers) met on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays of every month. We alternated between studies from the DVD series "Towards Belief" and outdoor activities.

The study series followed Australian pastor and host Karl Faase as he travelled around Australia, U.K. and U.S.A. to interview authors, lecturers and leading theologians about belief blockers to Christian faith and Church involvement. There were ten episodes on the DVD's, covering topics such as "Suffering", "Church Abuse", "Science and God" and "Homosexuality". As a trial, we met at the Neighbourhood Centre in an effort to encourage acquaintances who might be reluctant to step inside a church.

We had a range of outdoor activities including fishing trips to Pumicestone Passage and Borumba Dam, a couple of games nights and some landscaping work at the Church. This consisted of a path and stairs down to the Obi Obi Creek (with a viewing seat) and commencement of the amphitheatre construction.

**Roger Smith**  
**Co-Ordinator**

## R & R Book Club

Our book club is at full capacity at present, with eight ladies meeting on the first Thursday of each month at the home of our wonderful host, Ann Brooker. Ann always makes us most welcome, and we are very grateful she is willing to have us all for morning tea, a friendly chat and a book report.

We have read and discussed books on a variety of subjects over the past 12 months, from biographies, mysteries, war stories, and tales of African lady detectives, to the impossible lives of the poor in India. We saw the world of many different countries and customs, and the challenges faced by some of the characters concerned.

Although we cannot all make it to book club each time, there is always a book waiting to be read, and the ladies have been very generous in sometimes reading a book that perhaps is not to their liking. My thanks to the ladies for this. Maybe that is the good thing about book club – you get to read books you would not normally choose yourself.

Happy reading!

**June Eather**  
Co-Ordinator

## MUCR Book Club

We have eight members in our club and we meet at people's homes on the first Thursday of each month. We have a cuppa and a chat to start with, and then we have lively discussion on our book. The conversation has been known to stray at times from the topic at hand! We are a group of friendly ladies who have got to know each other better through our participation in this book club.



We read a wide range of books in 2014. Not every book selected appeals to everyone, but the ladies are gracious in accepting and reading the books provided, even though the book may not be to their individual taste, or they may have already read it.

The stand-out book for the year for most of the ladies would probably have been 'The Book Thief' by Markus Zusak.

Looking forward to another year of the same,

**Karin Ellemor**  
Co-Ordinator

*(Before making these reports, I would like to say that we would love to have new people in the groups with fresh energy and vision for both mission and/or ecotheology. Fran.)*

## **Ecotheology**

Ecotheology year has been quiet, with some planting and weed control on the western end of the property.

Contact with Lake Baroon Catchment Care has been maintained, as they have committed a lot of funds to fencing the southern side of Obi Creek, to protect the creek bank, from Erowal to Walkers Creek. This has included, at their cost, extensive fencing and control of invasive weeds, work we could not have done with our limited resources. Bob Philpot has been the coordinator with LBCCG.

The goals of the group remain:

- 1. To help the church develop an understanding of the interrelatedness of ecology and theology.**
- 2. To promote care of the environment – globally, locally and within the congregation.**
- 3. To encourage eco-sustainable action in the local church and community.**
- 4. To develop an interest in the care of God's creation for people in every stage of life.**

**Frances Guard  
Leader**

## **Mission**

The major focus for the last year was to achieve our goal of raising \$350,000 Capital fund to support 50 places for girls at Kangra Hostel, in North India. Amazingly, due to hard work and generosity of many people, this goal was achieved before the middle of the year.

We give grateful thanks to all involved.

As well, the women of the church and community combined to create 36 beautiful quilts, for the girls at Kangra Hostel. This represented a huge amount of work and commitment.

Finally, a group of four members of Maleny Church and three others travelled to India, taking all the quilts with them in August. They spent 3 days with the girls in Kangra, and presented each girl with a quilt, which will be their own to keep. This was a most moving experience for them and us. As there are currently only 22 girls in residence, the remainder of the quilts will be kept for future gifts as new girls come into the Hostel.

We give thanks to God for the opportunity to serve our neighbours in this way, and look forward to continuing the relationship with our partners in the Church of North India.

We need to remind ourselves that our goals have been as follows, and that these may need to be adjusted as we look ahead in 2015:

- 1. To encourage the church to keep an outward focus, by prayer and practical action as well as financial support.**
- 2. To maintain an on-going partnership with our sister church (CNI), and the rural ministry of the McKay patrol.**

**Frances Guard, Leader**



## **Administration**

I seem to find myself saying something along these lines each year as I compile my report BUT I am amazed, and very grateful to all who so willingly contribute their time and their skills to the whole Administration area. Because of you our church and the parish, in the area of Administration, keeps ticking over like clockwork. I have listed below the wide area that Administration covers. Once again this year THANK YOU to all who contribute to Administration, your efforts are very much appreciated.

In 2014 the Church Office [which is really the Cluster Office] was opened on a Tuesday morning and Pat Dunn volunteered to assist with this. At the moment our new minister, Rev. Catherine, is assessing this whole area. The Tuesday office is open from 9.00am for approximately 1½ – 2 hours and is staffed by a team of volunteers.

In Administration we cover a broad range of activities in the life of our Maleny U.C. and the Cluster as a whole. We keep the congregations of Maleny, Montville, Palmwoods and Kenilworth properly informed through the Weekly Notice Sheet and The Vine. The Congregational Directory for the whole Cluster is a much used means of communication and I'm sure is valued by all of us who regularly use it.

The activities listed below require many volunteers and some of you may not think that you are part of the Administration Team but your contributions are really very valuable and most appreciated.

- The Church / Cluster Office opening on Tuesday and Friday mornings
- Preparation of the Weekly Notice Sheet
- The Vine – our newspaper for the whole Cluster
- The Congregational Directory, also for the Cluster
- The Roster of tasks for all worship services at Maleny U.C.
- Copyright obligations for our congregation and the Cluster
- Publicity of events is another of the responsibilities of our Team
- Preparation of the Annual Report for the Maleny U.C.
- Purchasing photocopy paper, envelopes, stamps and other office requirements.
- Keeping labels available for mailout purposes.
- Changing the banners to match the lectionary for the current Sunday.
- Children's Packs are kept up to date for Sunday services at Maleny

**Communicating** with our church families and with our communities is of vital importance to the ongoing work of our Uniting Churches here on the Blackall Range. We cover a wide area of responsibilities and if you feel that you would like to help in any of the areas I have mentioned please phone me on 5435 2595.

**A sincere Thank You to all my Team who do such a wonderful job.**

**Merilyn Milton**  
**Co-Ordinator**

## Property

It is pleasing to see the construction of the amphitheatre between the church and Obi creek. This will be an asset for outdoor activities. Thank you to all the willing guys for this work.

A new LED floodlight replaces the bollard light adjacent to the Life Line bin. An external power point has been installed on the verandah near the kitchen.

A mowing roster has been implemented. Thank you, Peter Callaghan, for doing the roster and organising the induction of the team.

We are looking at extra storage which can be constructed on the end verandah near Ben Bryce Park. This would have easy access from the sliding door onto the verandah near the sanctuary. The size of this room would be 2600x3600 (2.6mx3.6m).

The toilet area is in need of painting, as is the prayer room. This will not cost much if we use voluntary labour.

It has been suggested that it would be good to have some extra lighting near the road in front of the church to light up the sign and for lighting up for the Christmas tree Festival. We need to be aware that anything placed on the grassed area beyond the concrete kerbing is actually on the road reserve and is illegal for the electrician to go beyond the boundaries of our property.

It has come to my attention that the PA speakers installed in the hall, kitchen & family room are not compatible with our new system. They do not give out a clear sound and are not able to increase volume. This will need looking into for costing of supply and installation of replacement speakers if needed.

Thank you to all who do work in keeping the building and grounds in good condition.

**Malcolm Baker**  
**Co-Ordinator**

-----

### **Our Vision:**

To be a prayerful listening church; to be organised for mission; and to be theologically informed.

### **Our Mission:**

To be actively engaged in sharing the love of Jesus with all people

## Ecumenical Men's Breakfast

2014 was another successful year, with five breakfasts being held in Maleny and Montville.

Rev Ian Stehbens addressed a Breakfast on issues of peacekeeping in the world's troublespots.

In 2015 a similar programme will be conducted, each with an interesting guest speaker on topics ranging from translating the Bible into an indigenous language to issues with youth work conducted by The Shack at Nambour.

We welcome Church on the Rise joining the Ecumenical group this year.

The set dates for 2015 are as follows:

SATURDAY MARCH 7 .....	Catholic Church, Maleny
SATURDAY APRIL 18 .....	Anglican Church, Maleny
SATURDAY MAY 16 .....	Church on the Rise, Maleny
SATURDAY JUNE 20 .....	Uniting Church, Maleny
SATURDAY AUGUST 8 .....	Range COC Montville
SATURDAY OCTOBER 17 .....	Presbyterian Church, Maleny

**Stan McCallum**  
Co-ordinator

-----

## Uniting Church "VISION 2020"

This Vision arises directly from the Call and Gospel Values statement adopted by the 28th Synod in May 2010.

In response to the call of Christ, in the light of Holy Scripture and the *Basis of Union*, the Uniting Church in Queensland is committed to:

**Uniting in Christ**  
**acting with love**  
**living with hope**  
**witnessing in faith**  
**working for justice**

**MISSION GOALS (21 July 2014)****APPENDIX**

Our call	In response to the call of Christ, in the light of Holy Scripture and as we are a part of the Uniting Church in Queensland, we in the Blackall Range congregations are committed to: <b>Uniting in Christ, acting with love, living with hope, witnessing in faith, working for justice</b>
GOSPEL VALUES	As we are part of the Uniting Church in Queensland sharing in God's mission in the world, we will be guided by values that derive from and give expression to God's reconciling action in Jesus Christ. In response to God's grace, we are called to live out these values:  <b>Faithfulness, Compassion, Humility, Truthfulness, Justice.</b>  These gospel values will inform our lives as individuals and as the community of the Uniting Churches on the Blackall Ranges in Queensland.
Our Vision	To be a prayerful listening church; To be organised for mission; and to be theologically informed
"slogan"	"..growing Faith...sharing Hope"
Our Mission	To be actively engaged in sharing the love of Jesus with all people
Our Mission Goals	
<b>Worship</b>	<b>Worship</b> We grow in our relationship with God by worshipping faithfully in ways that are relevant to all, and which focus on God our creator, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit.  <i>"...come, follow me."</i>
<b>Connect</b>	<b>Connect</b> We connect with others to share with them the Good News of salvation that comes to us by God's grace through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.  <i>"...go into all the world..."</i>
<b>Share</b>	<b>Share</b> We come together in fellowship, to share our common faith, to celebrate our unity in diversity in Christ, growing in faith and equipping us for mission.
<b>Care</b>	<b>Care</b> In practical ways we demonstrate the compassion of Christ to all people, and we care for the world by using its resources wisely.  <i>"...when he saw the crowds he had compassion on them..."</i>
<b>Serve</b>	<b>Serve</b> We serve God to deliver God's Mission by responsibly using the resources that God has given us: human, financial and physical.  <i>" use (your gifts) to serve one another, as good stewards of God's grace:"</i>