

**DIGEST of PRESBYTERY OF NORTH EAST VICTORIA MEETING
SATURDAY 20th November 2021 – a Zoom meeting**

Worship led by Rev Denise Naish: Rev Denise reflected on John 18:33-37. Jesus is a King who meets us where we are at.

Toby Lyng, Development Manager Uniting Housing outlined the project planned to replace the 16 Social Housing units in Wangaratta with 44 1 and 2 bedroom apartments. They will know in May/June if the project has been approved.

Anne Turnbull gave details of the 'mainly music' programme begun at Wangaratta in 2020. Covid meant they could no longer meet so Anne in Nov/Dec 2020 introduced a "Messy Nativity Trail" (based on the book of the same name)...in Wangaratta with the cooperation of local shops. It was a great success and has been organised for this year too. Knitted sheep are hidden in shops, children need to find and name them and complete a coloured picture. More details are available from Anne.

Mark Geraets, Principal Scots School Albury gave a snapshot of his background... mind blowing... Having worked in Education in New Zealand, the Solomon Islands, Bangladesh, Switzerland and South Korea - working with students from very impoverished backgrounds to those from very privileged families, before accepting the Principal role at Scots School –Scots has seen increased enrolments from 399 students in 2019 to 546 in 2021 and even more interest for 2022. Rev Beth Bear, previous Scot's chaplain, will commence as Minister at St David's in 2022 and Samm Menzies has been appointed to the role of Pastor at Scots. Scots is strengthening its relationship with St David's congregation. The school believes in holistic learning- providing the students with a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular experiences. Emphasis is placed on their acquiring soft skills – with the emphasis on creativity, critical thinking, communication, character, citizenship and collaboration.

Being a Welcoming Church – The meeting viewed part of Mat Harry's video presentation "Can Your Church Improve Its Welcome?" – available on Youtube. Some points: Check your website – this is where most new people have first contact with your church – what will they learn about you? – it is there to serve new people not the congregation! when a newcomer attends it is most important that they are followed up by a lay person in the next 36 hours...they are more likely to return(85%) ... if the minister contacts them they are 50% less likely to return. **All are urged to watch the video.** Zoom workshops on "Developing a Culture of Welcoming" will be held in Feb 22 – Wed 2 Feb 7:30-8:30 pm (4 weeks) or Thurs. Feb 3 2pm-3pm.

All Reports were considered – Rev Tony Davies PMPC and M is happy for his report to be shared widely with congregations. **Rev Richard Franklin** stressed that Congregations should be working on the issues relating to ESM and a progress report will be required by March 2022. This does not mean that everything needs to be completed by then.

PRC – Robert Lees' verbal report included thanks for those who had been a part of the team over the last 2 years. **Tanya Walker** was congratulated on being accepted as a candidate for ministry, **Nagambie Congregation** is working towards being recognised as a Faith Community, **Rev Alan Lockwood and Rev Rachel Franklin** were thanked for their Pastoral Care Support during Tony's leave. Robert stressed that all Ministers, including active retired ministers are required to complete Ethics training. New guidelines have been developed for organising Supply Ministry - it is important that the PRC be involved in this – Church Councils cannot organise this on their own.

Notices: Graham Brown advised that Scripture in Schools NSW has been funded for 2 more years.

James Carter who is leaving to settle in Camperdown was thanked for his work as a Lay Preacher

Joan McRae was thanked for her 60 years as a Lay preacher

Rev Veronica Bradley has accepted a call to Foster in Gippsland.

Election results – all who nominated were elected – Rev Gereldine Leonard to be Chairperson 2022-2024. Rev Denise Naish is retiring at the end of January 2022 and is thanked for her contribution to the PFAC and PRC Committees. Her **service of release will be at 2:30pm, Jan 30th at St Stephen's Wodonga.** All welcome. Helen Collins