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November 2026

Mary Burnett Presbytery

witnessing the love and transformation of Jesus

Reflection - Ps Graham Huth

Remembering, Renewing, Moving Forward



Greetings Mary Burnett,

For those who may have not received the news, the recent Queensland Synod in Session agreed to the Presbytery Capacity proposal, and thus the number of Presbyteries will be reduced from seven to three as of July 2027. In doing so, Mary Burnett Presbytery as a whole, will join with Moreton Rivers Presbytery to form a brand-new Presbytery that will initially be called Wide Bay Brisbane. This decision marks the beginning of a significant new chapter in the life of our church, one that will likely trigger a mixture of emotions for many of us. There is anticipation and hope, but I am also aware of some uncertainty as familiar structures and relationships begin to change.

For me, the story of Joshua appearing in the Lectionary readings this week is very timely. The narrative around the gathering of the people of Israel at Shechem (Joshua 24:1-25) speaks with remarkable relevance.

Joshua had led the people through a season of immense change. They had left behind the wilderness years and entered a new future in the Promised Land.

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Join us on Facebook

Presbytery Webpage

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UCA Qld Synod Webpage

Please submit newsletter articles to the admin officer at admin@maryburnettpres.org.au by 26th of the month.

But Joshua was old and he knew his days were numbered; further change for Israel was coming. Standing at this threshold, Joshua did not begin by talking about organisational structures or future plans. Instead, he invited the people to remember. He recounted the story of God's faithfulness through generations: God's call to Abraham, God's deliverance from Egypt, God's guidance through the wilderness, and God's provision along the way.

Only after remembering God's faithfulness did Joshua challenge the people to renew their commitment to God and step forward into the future with confidence.

There is wisdom in that pattern for us today as we enter into a time of transition.

As we prepare for this new beginning, we are also invited to remember. We remember the generations of faithful disciples who have worshipped, served, and witnessed throughout the life of Mary Burnett Presbytery. We remember congregations that have faithfully proclaimed the gospel in towns and communities across our region. We remember ministers, lay leaders, elders, presbytery officers, and countless volunteers whose commitment has nurtured faith and strengthened the church's mission.

Most importantly, we remember not simply what we have achieved, but what God has done among us.

The God who has sustained congregations through changing communities, economic challenges, natural disasters, and periods of uncertainty is the same God who now leads us into a new chapter. Our confidence for the future should not rest on new structures, plans, or resources, but on the faithfulness of God.

Joshua's call echoes down through the ages: "Choose this day whom you will serve." In every generation, God's people are invited to renew their trust and commitment. This moment of transition offers us the same opportunity. As new Presbyteries begin to take shape, I challenge us not simply to adapt to this change, but to reaffirm our faith in the God who journeys with us, as is stated so clearly in the Basis of Union.

The future may not be clear, but neither was the future of the people of Israel as they faced life without Joshua. What enabled them to move forward was not certainty about tomorrow, but confidence in the God who had been faithful yesterday.

As we move toward this new beginning, I challenge us to remember God's faithfulness, renew our commitment to Christ's mission, and step forward with courage, trusting that the God who has guided us thus far will continue to lead us into the future.

Many blessings,

Pastor Graham Huth

Graham's Diary

November

4 JNC (BNoC) - Gayndah

5 PRSC (Zoom)

6 BNoC Support Team meeting - Wondai

13 - 15 Presbytery Meeting - Bundaberg

17 Presbytery Ministers Workshop

18 PSI

19 Placements

28 Synod Selection Panel

I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.

– Mother Teresa

Presbytery Meeting Dates 2026

Save the dates now!

13th - 15th November - Bundaberg

1 Corinthians 12:12

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

Is God calling you to serve Presbytery?

The Pastoral Relations and Standing Committee needs new members to guide the Presbytery through the upcoming changes and God's Kingdom

Mary Burnett Online Services

Buderim - YouTube

Bundaberg - YouTube

Caloundra - Facebook

Cooroy/Pomona - Facebook

Hervey Bay - YouTube

Gympie Uniting Church - YouTube

Kawana Waters - Facebook

Apologies if I've missed anyone, please let me know.

Pastoral Relations & Standing Committee

2026 Meetings

Submissions accepted for consideration up to 1 week before meeting.
(Z = Zoom)

5 Nov (Z)

3 Dec (F2F)

39th Synod in Session

Sent out as a praying church: highlights from the 39th Synod

Five days of worship, honest conversation and hope – and a celebration of the people who make ministry happen



Members from across Queensland didn't arrive at the 39th Synod with easy answers. They came with big questions – about renewal, local ministry and the next generation – and a shared commitment to bring them before God together.

Under the theme 'Renewal: Praying Without Ceasing', Moderator Rev Bruce Moore invited everyone to "listen deeply and prayerfully and discern God's will together". Over five days, that's exactly what they did.

It began with thanks

On Thursday 22 October, the Celebration of Ministries Service at Albert Street Uniting Church honoured ministers who have retired, welcomed those newly ordained and remembered, with gratitude, those who have died since the last Synod. It was a beautiful reminder that renewal is built on generations of faithful service.

The next evening, members gathered at C3 Powerhouse on the Sunshine Coast to worship together and ask God for wisdom, patience and direction for the days ahead.

Listening well to one another

Members considered proposals to bring Queensland's seven presbyteries into three and strengthen the resources behind them – all with one simple hope: better support for our congregations, faith communities and ministry leaders. In Yarning Circles, they talked openly about what this could mean, including the uncertainty that change can bring.

Other proposals looked at how appointments and elections are made, and how the Church might use artificial intelligence (AI) wisely in ministry and mission.

Learning to see again

In the Norman and Mary Millar Lecture, Rev Toby Thomas gently invited congregations to notice what God is already doing in their neighbourhoods. Rather than reaching first for programs, he spoke of curiosity and compassion – listening to our communities, recognising the gifts people bring and making our traditions more accessible.

Young leaders, here and now

Some of the most energising moments came from younger voices.

Read more at the Synod's Stories & News Page/Synod in Session

(Source Uniting News 3/11/26)



Renewal Prayer Gathering

As we long for God to make all things new, we remember God's goodness in the past; the glimpses we have had of God breaking through in new and beautiful ways throughout our lives, and across history. We remember these moments, and we lift up our voices in prayer asking that God would open our eyes to what God is doing in the world now and our minds to imagine what could be done.

Join us every **Tuesday night** as we gather **online**, from **7-730pm** (Qld time), in prayer to thank God for the new life we have experienced and ask that we might be part of the ongoing work God is doing now in renewing all things.

To join us simply use this link
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81994146488?pwd=VDcrd1dCbjluaHZQR3JsM0wySGdWUT09

If you are unable to join us, you might like to join us in this prayer during the week

Prayer

God of steadfast love,
we give you thanks, for you are good
and your love never fails.
We remember the times we have wandered through dry places,
far from home, hungry and thirsty,
with no path to follow and no water in sight.
Yet when we cried out, you heard us,
gave us water and bread,
and brought us to a place of rest.
We recognise that same dry ground in our lives and in our church.
Where we are parched and empty,
bring streams of water.
Where we are barren,
make us fruitful again.
Replant us, and help us to grow,
that we may join you in gathering the hungry
and filling them with good things.
Renew your church, Lord,
that your world may know the steadfast love
that found us, restored us, and has never failed.
Amen

(Source – Uniting News 27/10/26)

Code of Ethics Training - Friday 13 November - 1pm

The next Code of Ethics Training will be at Bundaberg UC on Friday 13 November from 1.00pm. It will be led by Rev Bruce Johnson who will cover the following aspects of the Code.

1. What are the theological foundations of the Code of Ethics and why do we have one?

2. How can the Code of Ethics enhance our faithfulness as minsters of the gospel?

3. How do we recognise and respond to a possible breach of the Code?

4. What has changed in the new version of the Code of Ethics that will come into force on January 1 2027?

Even if you are not due to attend a Code of Ethics refresher, you may find it helpful to participate.

Supervision

All ministry agents are required to have a Professional Supervisor.
Regular guided reflection on your ministry sharpens your ministry and is healthy for you, your family and congregation/place of ministry.
Please ensure that your signed supervision covenant is up to date (and kept up to date) and that you have sent a copy to the presbytery administrator.

Professional Supervision Covenant forms are available on the Presbytery website.

Have you read any good books recently?

Email your review to me at admin@maryburnettpres.org.au





The records of the British Admiralty testify that James Bartley, an apprentice seaman on a whaler, was swallowed by a whale in February, 1891, some two hundred miles east of the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic. He survived the ordeal and this is his amazing tale.

It was his first whaling voyage and he was aboard the whaling ship **Star of the East**.

The lookout spotted a huge sperm whale half a mile off the port bow and gave the cry 'There she blows!' The ship's sails were slackened and soon her small boats were lowered. A deadly race began between the **Star of the East** and the immense whale.

Young James BartIey was in the first longboat to reach the side of the prey. They crept up from the rear, so near that the harpooner leaned over and rammed his weapon deep into the whale's vitals. As the stricken beast sought to free itself of the harpoon, Bartley and the other oarsmen rowed frantically to get out of reach of the massive flukes, the two-pronged tail which threshed the water to foam in the whale's agony.

The whale sounded and eight hundred feet of heavy line streaked out of the line tub before he ended his dive. Then an ominous slacking in the line signaled the monster was going to surface. But where? The oarsmen readied themselves to pull for their lives. Without warning there was a splintering crash which sent the longboat spinning into the air. The whale thrashed about wildly, snapping at the men and the wreckage with its huge jaws as the water turned to a bloody froth before he sounded again. Another longboat picked up the survivors of this encounter, but two men were missing - one of them the young apprentice, James Bartley.

The wind now deserted the **Star of the East** and for hours she lay becalmed, wallowing in a light swell. Shortly before sunset, the now dead whale floated to the surface a few hundred yards from the ship. In a longboat, the crew hastily fastened a line to the whale and the winch brought it to the ship's side. The hot weather climate made it imperative that the whale be cut up at once. Having no means of raising it to the deck, the men took their flensing spades and peeled off the blubber as they slipped and slid along the immense back of this giant mammal.

Late that night, working by lantern-light, the tired crewmen removed the stomach of the whale and slowly winched it to the deck for flensing. They were startled to notice movement inside the large sack, movement that looked like something living and breathing. The captain called the ship's doctor who made an incision in the tough flesh. And out slid the doubled up missing sailor, James Bartley, as if he were suffering from severe stomach cramps. He was alive, but unconscious.

The doctor ordered Bartley drenched with sea water, a treatment which restored his consciousness but not his reason, for he babbled incoherently.

Confined to a cabin for several weeks and bound so he could not injure himself in his wild floundering, Bartley gradually regained his senses. Within a month he was able to relate what had happened to him in his terrifying experience.

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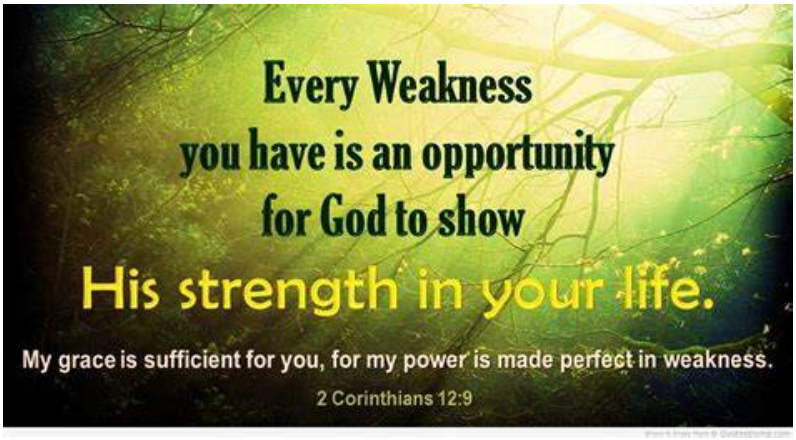
Bartley said that as he was cast into the water from the long boat he saw a tremendous mouth open over him and he screamed as he was engulfed by it. He then felt sharp stabbing pains as he was swept across the teeth and then slid feet first down a slimy tube that carried him to the whale's stomach. He could breath, but the hot, fetid odour soon rendered him unconscious and the last thing he remembers was kicking as hard as he could at the soft, yielding stomach. Finally, he lapsed into unconsciousness until he again came to his senses almost a month later.

As a result of his fifteen hours inside the whale's stomach, Bartley lost all the hair on his body and was blind for the rest of his life. His skin was bleached to an unnatural whiteness that gave the appearance of being bloodless, although he was healthy.

James Bartley never made another trip to the sea and settled down to shore life as a cobbler in his native city of Gloucester, England. He died eighteen years after his remarkable survival and terrifying adventure.

On his tombstone in the churchyard at Gloucester is a brief account of his experience at sea and a footnote, which says: James Bartley -1870-1909 - A Modern Jonah

Article provided by Rev Dr Peter Hall



Please pray for our chaplains

- Ps Theo Masselos (Buderim PH)
- Rev James Stevenson (Buderim PH)
- Ps Kristen Porter (Buderim PH)
- Rev Keren Seto (St Stephens)
- Ms Donna Hamill (St Stephens)
- Ps Jim Hall (Bli Bli/Gympie)
- Mr Craig Doherty (Sunrise Beach)
- Mr Peter Robertson (Hervey Bay)
- Mrs Helen Cifuentes (Caloundra/Maleny)
- Ps Peter Sutcliffe (Bundaberg retirement living)
- Ps DongWoo Oh (Bundaberg aged care)





November

1 All Saints Day

22 Reign of Christ Sunday

25 Nov - 10 Dec 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence

29 Nov - 19 Dec Advent

December

25 Christmas Day

Click here for the Uniting Church Assembly 2026 calendar.

Presbytery Office

Maroochydore Uniting Church
6 Millwell Rd
Maroochydore
Mon - Fri 9am - 3.30pm



Drop in for a cuppa *Except - PRSC face to face meeting days - see page 3 for dates

Presbytery Postal Address

Mary Burnett Presbytery

PO Box 1635

Sunshine Plaza
4558



Uniting World



Christmas is coming! UnitingWorld's Christmas cards come in four Advent designs, in packs of eight for $15, with recycled paper envelopes. Designed and printed in Australia, every pack sold helps UnitingWorld's church partners in the Pacific, Asia and Africa support families facing poverty and the impacts of climate change. Order yours today!



This Advent, inspire generosity by hosting an **Everything in Common gift stall** or including UnitingWorld in a retiring offering. Everything in Common gift cards represent donations to many of our vital projects. **Register your gift stall here**

This year we also have **Everything in Common retiring offering envelopes.** If you can't run a stall or if some people in your congregation would prefer to give in this way, let us know and we can send as many as you need. Email: **info@unitingworld.org.au** or ring **1800 998 122**

Church Council Updates?

If your church council members or Presbytery Reps have changed please don't forget to inform Kylie, at admin@maryburnettpres.org.au to ensure your church council is kept informed.

Also, for compliance with ACNC, complete the change of key person form which needs to be sent to both directory@ucaqld.com.au and admin@maryburnettpres.org.au. Synod will use this form to update the ACNC (Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission) register. Change of Key Persons Bulk form is available on the Presbytery Website.

Kylie Aalbers

Presbytery Administration.

Congregational Training Funds

Did you know???

Congregations can apply to Presbytery for funding to train members!

Areas of training could include, but are not limited to

Church Governance – Leadership – Team Building – Mentoring

Preaching – Teaching – Leadership of Small Groups

Evangelism – community connection – Outreach

Administration – Book Keeping – Organisational Systems

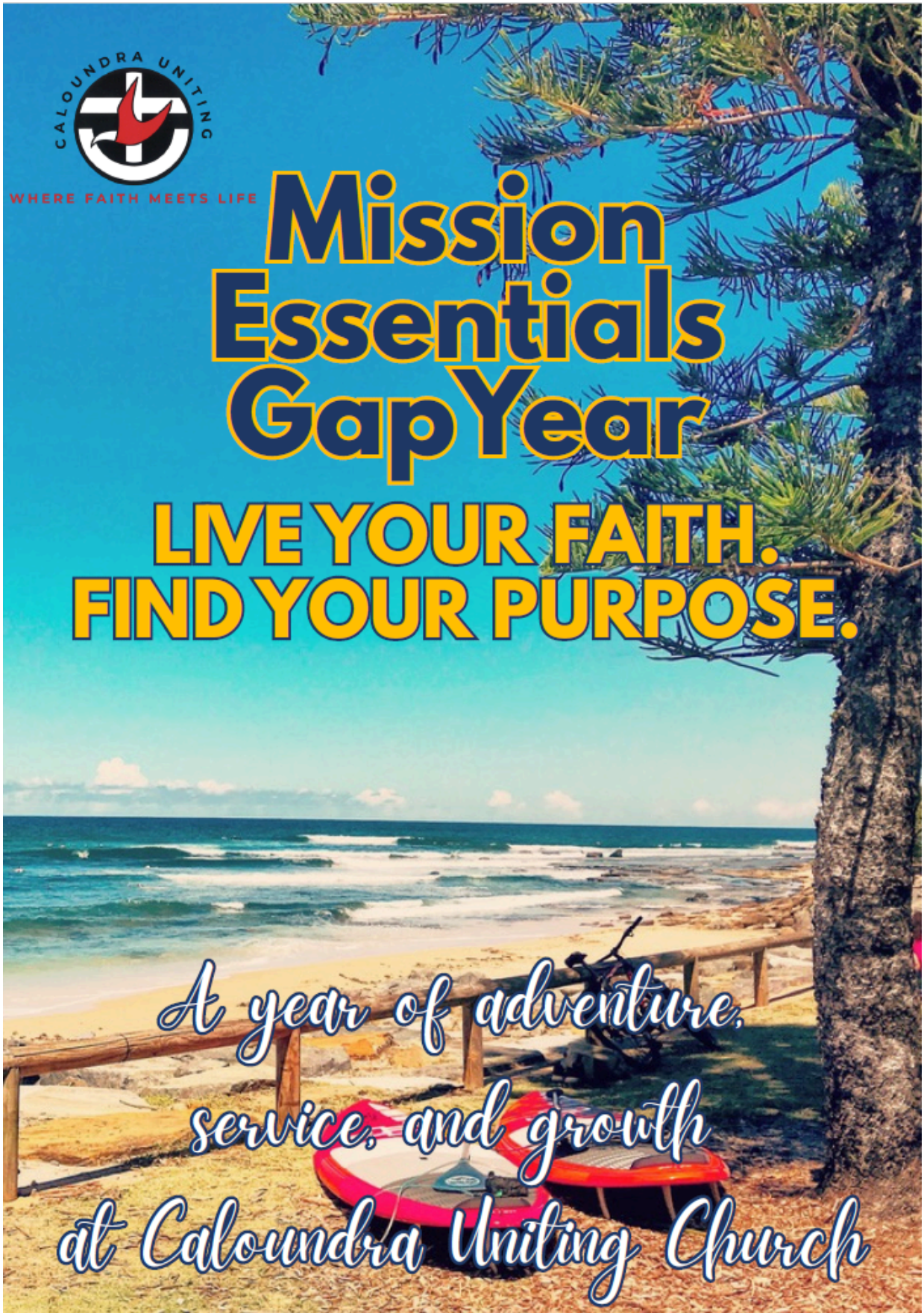
Music – Audio-Visual – Technical

Pastoral - Care Essentials course

Congregations within the Mary Burnett Presbytery can apply for up to $500 per year for training.

Forms are available on the Presbytery Website, under Resources, Forms. Alternatively you can email Kylie - and request a form be emailed to you.

Kylie Aalbers
admin@maryburnettpres.org.au


CALOUNDRA UNITING
WHERE FAITH MEETS LIFE
Mission Essentials GapYear
LIVE YOUR FAITH.
FIND YOUR PURPOSE.
A year of adventure,
service, and growth
at Caloundra Uniting Church

Dates for your Diary

2026 Presbytery Meetings Start time: 9.00am

14 November - Bundaberg UC

Business meeting Saturday 9am

2026 Pastoral Relations & Standing Committee
(Venue subject to change)

5 Nov (Zoom)

3 Dec (Gympie)

Start time: 9.30am (Gympie) or **1-3pm** (Zoom)

Submissions accepted for consideration up to 1 week before meeting.

SAFE MINISTRY TRAINING

- Ministers - 13 Nov - Bundaberg

Psalms 18:31-32

"The Lord alone is God; God alone is our defence. He is the God who makes me strong, who makes my pathway safe."

Quote

The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook.
William James

CODE OF ETHICS TRAINING

- Ministers - 13 Nov - Bundaberg

INDUCTIONS, COMMISSIONINGS, SERVICES OF CONCLUSION

- 20 Dec - Conclusion - Ps Alan Mulcahy - Cooroy/Pomona UC
- 17 Jan - Decommissioning - Kumbia

FINANCE, INVESTMENT & PROPERTY (FIP) MEETINGS

- 19 November 2026 Last one for 2026.

Synod

- May 2028

Assembly

- 8th - 13th July 2027



www.maryburnettpres.org.au
Are your details on our website correct?
Please email changes to admin@maryburnettpres.org.au

MARY BURNETT PRESBYTERY

WHO ARE WE?
The Presbytery, as a Council of delegates from congregations and agencies, are disciples witnessing the love and transformation of Jesus in order to better serve our ministry agents, congregations and other places of ministry within its bounds.

Presbytery Contacts

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0400 300 267

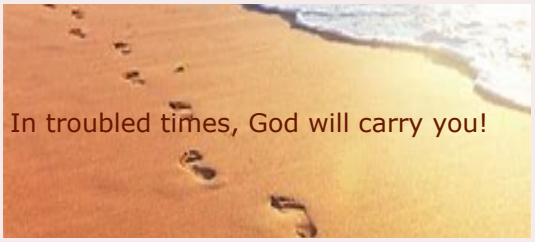
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Kylie Aalbers - admin@maryburnettpres.org.au

Safe Church (Safe People, Safe Environment)
Vacant

Professional Supervision Coordinator
Period of Discernment Coordinator
CEM Coordinator



PASTORAL RELATIONS STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Ps Graham Huth
Mr Peter Coombes (Pres Chair)
Mrs Naomi Cavalli (Secretary)
Mr Johan Frank (Treasurer)
Mrs Wendy Jensen (Property)
Mrs Kylie Aalbers (Admin, Property)
Rev Neil Storey
Ps Steven Fincham
Rev Nathan Barton
Mr Eamon Dunne

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WORK DAYS

Grahams day off varies, according to his schedule. Please leave him a message if no answer, and he'll get back to you when he's able. Kylie - Mon-Thu, Naomi Tue-Fri Thank you.