

## **AGM – Rector’s Report 2024**

Together we seek to be

*joyfully trusting following and sharing Jesus*

### **How did we engage our Community?**

- Our ESL and Food pantry and ministries enable us to connect with the Community in 2023. We provided support and assistance to those in need, including the elderly, the unemployed and those with limited English. On the basis of the number of people attending, we decided in late 2023 not to continue the ESL ministry in 2024.
- We have also engaged the community by teaching 500-600 kids through SRE (School Scripture). And through our Christmas and Easter services and Carols event.
- Friday Playtime Group, Friday Kids Club and RAYG enabled us to connect with the community. Friday Kids and RAYG regularly have invitation and bring a friend nights. On ongoing challenge is to help the people we connect with through these ministries join us for Sunday Services.

### **How did we evangelise our Community?**

We ran a number of Men’s and Women’s connect events during the year to try and provide pathways for people to become connected with the MHAC community. We also hosted newcomers afternoon tea for those who have visited our services.

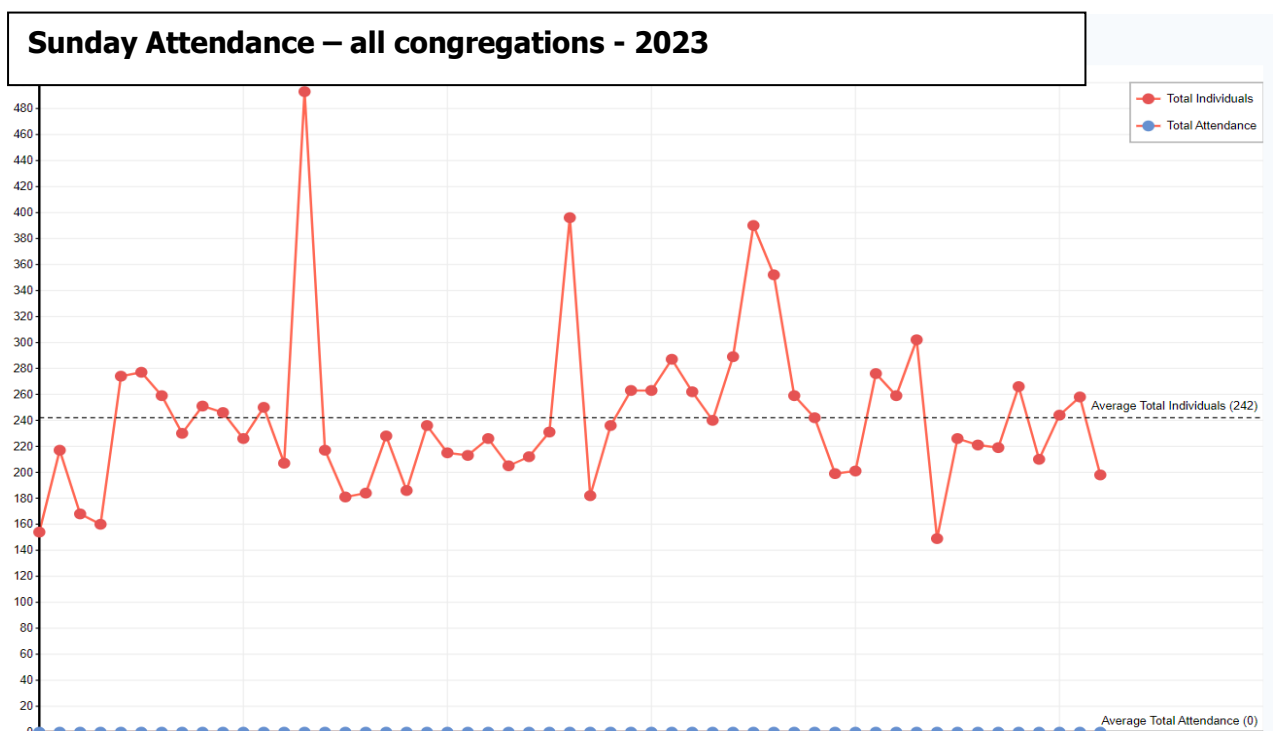
- When it comes to Joyfully sharing Jesus – we lacked sufficient numbers to regularly run Hope Explored, even after our Mission Cycles in April and August.
- Our faithfulness and fruitfulness in sharing Jesus needs to be a focus for prayer in 2024,

### **Establishing & Equipping**

- Our Sunday services are the main way that we seek to establish believers in the faith through the preaching and teaching of the word of

God. During 2023 we preached through the opening of Luke’s gospel, a short series on the Cross, 2 Corinthians, Ecclesiastes, a Partnership series on the Resurrection and Colossians.

- The growth that we saw in all our congregations in 2022 (coming out of COVID) slowed in 2023. Yet we still saw solid attendances at our three congregations over the course of the year. All our congregations have welcomed new people and seen them become part of our church. Whatever else we do as a church family, our gathering together to sin, pray, listen to God’s word, hear it taught and to encourage each other – this is core to who we are.



- In September, people from all congregations took time out to listen to Keith and Sarah Condie from the Mental Health and Pastoral Care Institute to learn about Mental Health and the Christian Life. We were blessed by their time with us and the opportunity to think about how Christian faith intersects with mental health challenges.
- The annual Equip women’s conference was held online and watched by women at church – the Men’s Katoomba Basecamp conference was attended in person.
- Throughout 2023 we continued our regular pattern of meeting twice each term to support and equip our small group leaders.

- In 2023 we continued to focus on re-building our sense of community by continuing our practice of congregational suppers and lunches each month. Additionally, prayer points from each congregation has become a feature of the church family news so that we can be praying for each other.

## **Staffing**

Our ministry staff contribute significantly to the health of our church family.

### Sarah

In January 2023, we were greatly blessed to have Sarah Barber join us in the role of Children's Minister. She's been doing a fantastic job. We've seen her work with the Kids at our special family Services, Holiday Kids Club and Christmas Eve Kids Service. Less visible is the excellent work she has been doing in the training and recruitment of Leaders. We brought Sarah on because we received a special contribution funding her position for two years. My hope and prayer is that over the next twelve months that we will continue to grow so that we can keep her.

### Amy

Amy Bosker continued in her role as Ministry Team Assistant. She has recently changed her hours so that she is now working on Mondays and Thursdays rather than the three days previously worked. She has been a great help to our team and pioneered some helpful improvements in the way that things are managed. We've also been tremendously blessed by her singing and leadership of the 10am Music Team – a role that she has regrettably resigned recently as she has received medical advice to rest her voice.

### Thora

Thora Marsh continued her work of overseeing the RAYG youth Ministry and Women's ministry at MHAC. The Connect Events and Outreach Events of our Women's Ministry have been highlights in the last twelve months, with several excellent gospel events that were sold out. In addition, Thora also coordinates our Women's Ministry Team, our women community Group Leaders, digital

ministry as well as meeting with women one to one for training, discipleship and pastoral care.

### David

David Philpott continued to oversee our Community Group Leaders Ministry, Wisdom in Leadership development, Young Adults Ministry and Training and Equipping Ministry including the PTC course. In addition to these responsibilities, Dave also co-pastors our three congregations and looks after our special events like Carols and Big Day In. In the coming year, David will also be leading a Mission Partners Team. This team will be specifically tasked to keep us aware of and praying for our Mission Partners.

### Nich Powell

We have also been blessed this year, to welcome Nich Powell on the staff team as a Student Minister. Nich is with us on a volunteer basis and helps out with the Sunday Kids Program at Hammondville, 6pm congregation and is also a community group leader.

### **The Body of Christ**

The work of the staff team is not to do all the work of mission and ministry. But to equip and encourage, to admonish and discipline and teach and correct such that the body of Christ is equipped for the work of mission and ministry.

What we do as a church family happens because Christ is at work amongst us. Christ's body is built as we, members of his body, exercise the gifts and capacities that God has given in loving service of one another.

With that in mind, thanksgiving is central to any reflection on good things that have happened (Colossians 2:6-7). So, let's be overflowing with thanksgiving for those who have served in mission and ministry in 2023 – in the flower arranging, in the singing, in the cleaning, in the administration, in the training, in the preaching, in the praying, in providing food, in serving on creche, in the kids ministry, RAYG ministry, Community Group Leaders Ministry, Food Pantry and ESL leaders, for those who have prayed and given and served and sacrificed – all for the glory of Jesus – we thank God for you. Your service is why we're meeting today – because we are a body – the body of Christ.

We particularly give thanks for our staff team, for the wardens who have served us over the last twelve months: Jeanette, Paul and Lance. Particular thanks are also due to Lance for his years of service as our Parish Warden. We also give thanks for Parish Council: Terri Cartmer, Ross Cotter, Balu Daniel, Daniel Henderson, Kerrie Oxlade, Ben Nugteren, Yvette Sathiakumar and Jeremy Vickers.

### **Looking ahead for 2024**

This is our Annual General Meeting for 2024 and yet, already, the first quarter for the year is almost over! That's one of the reasons we have the Partnership Dinner in November to consider our plans for Mission and Ministry over the Coming Year. For an occasion like the AGM it's important to reflect on what the coming year will bring.

### **What sort of church do we want to be?**

- We're committed to joyfully trusting, following and sharing Jesus.

Our Sunday services, our mid-week ministries all that we do in mission and ministry is aimed at that end. However, it's always important to ask is it possible that we could do be more effective, more fruitful?

- If you have ideas about how we can **grow** in joyfully trusting Jesus we want to hear from!
- If you have ideas about how we can **grow** in joyfully following Jesus – we want to hear from you!
- If you have ideas about how we can grow in joyfully sharing Jesus – we want to hear from you!

### **How are we seeking to be sharing Jesus?**

God is a missionary God – he sent his Son to seek and save the lost. As his fellow workers, we want to be a church that is sharing Jesus, engaged in the mission God, to bring people from every tribe, nation, people and language into the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The way that we seek to do that is through our Connect Events, Gospel Events and Christianity Explored as well as equipping people to be individually sharing Jesus. But the key thing is our hearts. Do we want people to come to know the Lord. Do we want his name to be hallowed?

At each of our prayer breakfasts this year, we're praying about our hearts for mission, our eagerness to be involved, our willingness to sacrifice, our courage and conviction in speaking about the Lord Jesus.

We want to see people converted to Christ through our church. We want to pray for conversions and speak for conversions and have hearts that long to see people converted.

### **How are we building a sense of belonging?**

Trusting and following Jesus is not a solo activity, Church is a team sport. We want everyone at MHAC to experience a sense of community, a growing sense of belonging. We want church to be a place where people can contribute, where all are involved in serving Christ's people and involved in his Mission. We're working hard to make it simpler for people to be involved in particular ministries. Our congregational suppers and lunches, our church weekend away this year, our mid-week community groups all foster that sense of community, that we belong to each other as the body of Christ.

### **How are we maturing people in the faith?**

We want to see everyone at MHAC growing in their walk with God – how does that happen? So that people grow in faith, we want to encourage everyone at MHAC to invest in the five means of growth:

1. Attending one Sunday Service regularly
2. Participating in a community group regularly
3. Serving in a ministry regularly
4. Maintaining personal habits of prayer and bible reading
5. Sharing Jesus joyfully as we have opportunity.

We want everyone to feel that they are growing in their knowledge and love of God over the year. Participating in these means of growth is the way we get there.

## **Sunday Services**

Finally, it's important to say that we want Church to be inspiring – for it to be the most spiritually significant time for you each week. I'm convinced that Church on Sunday is critical to your Spiritual life and our life together. We want to encourage you to be diligent in attending – but we also want you to want to come! We want the preaching to be good, the singing to be good, the Bible reading and prayer time to be good, the morning tea to be good.

Because nothing in your week or mine is as important. We worship together: hearing the word, singing and praying, we encourage each other face to face, to keep running the race. It is where we hear the word taught and explained by those Christ has appointed to bless his people.

Thankyou for your partnership in joyfully trusting, following and sharing Jesus over the last year and as we look ahead to our plans for mission and ministry in 2024.