ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

1. Messages from our Pastors
   - ✓ Graeme Tutt, Senior Minister
   - ✓ Sam Stamos, Pastor (Compassion & Advocacy)
   - ✓ Helen Wright, Pastor (Creativity & Justice)

2. Church Council - by Trevor Thomas, Chairperson
3. Financial Statements (year ending 30 June 2018)- Tim Everist
4. Who's who at Newtown Mission

NEWTOWN MISSION
A congregation of the Uniting Church in Australia

We are a welcoming community committed to passionate worship of Jesus Christ, with alive biblical teaching and the transformation of lives through outreach, discipleship, compassionate care, and advocacy, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

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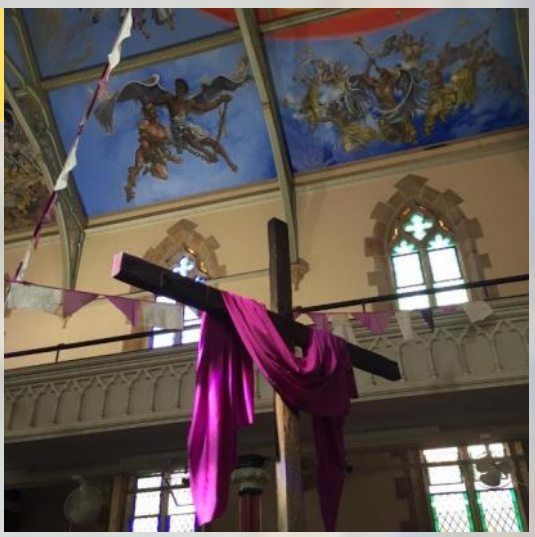
Rev Graeme Tutt, Senior Minister



"The basic fact of today is the tremendous pace of change in human life." ~ Jawaharlal Nehru

Those words resonate with me as I look back on a busy year at Newtown Mission. We are living in a wired, digital world where change is all around us. For the church today it's not an easy time as we grapple with changes that mean our faith and way of life is often criticized and rejected, where our opinion is not valued or respected and where varied perspectives on how to live swirl around us.
In these times it's not always easy to know how to be or what to do. We at Newtown Mission are part of that like everyone else, working out what things to change and what to hold on to, what aspects of our life and beliefs are just culture and what are integral, what to let go and what to hold on to.

"You can endure change by pondering His permanence." - Max Lucado

Remembering God is not just a psychological comfort, though it is that, but is our frame of reference. The Trinitarian God of Scripture is the one whose love, goodness and holiness are always for the world, so as we walk these paths of change we hold on to "Jesus is Lord" as our foundation, and live from there. That doesn't guarantee that we'll always agree or come to the same answers, but holding fast to Jesus as the centre we follow our call to mission.
Part of our response to change was a new logo. Our ''branding' is a small thing in some ways, but it does say something to the world that's important, as long as our reality matches our ímage'. In this case we put Jesus and the cross at the centre, with the circles being both Trinitarian and also open to the outside!

"In the city, strangers seldom meet beyond daily functions. Instead, they brush by with a haste and preoccupation that so defines a century of 'too little time'." — Joshua Krook.

"The pace of change means that relationship is more important than ever before." ~ Dave McLaughlin

Mission grows out of being a community. I love looking around at Newtown and seeing all sorts of people talking to each other in the Chapel after a Gathering or across a table at the Jordan Café or sharing a creative workshop at Annandale. It's a microcosm of God's universal community and a powerful living out of the way Jesus ate with people of all types. A highlight of being together as a community was our 'Rejuvenate Day'. The experience of Tongan people leading 'Palangi' folk in a choir item, of varied ages joining in a drumming workshop, plus Biblical and teaching workshops, was energizing and genuinely rejuvenating. We look forward to more in 2019.

Rev Graeme Tutt, Senior Minister

"We can only change the world if we have a heart for the world and deliver the message for the world. We can only change the world if we evangelize the world."- Jerry Falwell

There are a variety of ways we share the story of Jesus as Lord and invite people to know him – some are about being in and going to the world, connecting with people where we live; others are intentional spaces and situations where conversation is possible. Maintaining the passion for sharing Jesus' story is a vital part of our life together.
At Newtown we've seen the growth of the 'Glory Garden' outreach that invites people to share spiritual experiences and experience God in prayer, along with the opportunities to share Jesus through the Jordan Café relationships. Through ACAC there are relationships through shared projects like Creative Conversations, along with the powerful shared journey of Artist's Way.
This year we marked the 10th anniversary of the Revelation Ceiling. It is still a feature of Newtown that attracts people through the door; our regular 'ministry' around this is currently done by people from other churches.

"In worship an increased power steals its way into the heart sanctuary, an increased compassion grows in the soul. To worship is to change." - Richard J. Foster

As much as mission is our calling, it grows out of a living relationship with God that's expressed in worship as a community. Our regular public gatherings – Sundays at Newtown, Thursday nights before the Community dinner, Tongan worship at Tempe and monthly on Saturdays at Annandale – are a crucial part of our life. They are each different in style and culture but aim to share the same 'DNA' of worship, openness to the Spirit, growth through the Bible and connection with each other.
It's a wonderful gift to have such diversity of expression with the same heart, which reflects the passion and commitment of those who invest themselves in leading music, speaking from the Bible, praying for others, doing the practicalities of serving and setting up, praying for people and just being there!

A highlight of our Gatherings this year was the growing connection with Aboriginal Christians that was expressed through us hosting some of the leaders of the Grasstree Gathering in March, then having Brooke Prentis speak in NAIDOC week and return later in the year with Aunty Jean Phillips. This growing relationship is significant for us as we discern what God is wanting to do in our nation.

Rev Graeme Tutt, Senior Minister

"Things change. And friends leave. Life doesn't stop for anybody." — Stephen Chbosky

We farewelled Brian Unterrheiner, with Sue and Ash, at the end of 2017 after 12 years of deeply committed and visionary leadership of the Compassion ministry. Brian's love for people as a reflection of his love for Jesus enabled him to develop the Café ministry as a community of safety and friendship where people found a spiritual home and a safe place to belong. The transformation of the Compassion ministry from a soup-kitchen' serving devon sandwiches to a 'café' serving hundreds of full meals every week is a testimony to Brian's work.
During 2018 we also farewelled Sue Jones who retired as Kitchen Co-ordinator, having given over 10 dedicated years to the Mission after initially arriving for lunch one day!
Wei Hsien Heng finished as Office Manager in March. Hsien made a great contribution to the life of the Mission through her efficient and friendly organisation and outstanding management, as well as her involvement in the Thursday Chapel worship and the Compassion ministry.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." — Margaret Mead

Being part of changing the world in Jesus' name requires leadership! Church leadership is a significant commitment of time and energy and brings burdens of responsibility as well as joys. We thank our Elders and Church Council, under the leadership of Trevor Thomas as Chair, as they have worked hard to oversee the life of the Mission in all its aspects. This has meant addressing significant issues ranging from budgets and staff to property development, worship, mission and the meaning of marriage. Amidst the complexities of these discussions there has been a spirit of grace and openness as discussions are held and decisions reached.

The staff team are a committed, passionate and fun group of people. As noted above there have been changes during the year, with Sam Stamos returning to the Mission as a pastor and Rahul Dougall beginning in May as Operations and Development Manager. They join Helen Wright and I in our pastoral roles, along with Steve Ticknell, who stepped up to the Kitchen Co-ordinator position, and Dave Kailomani in his vital role as AV Co-ordinator. They, and their families and mine, serve us with courage and joy.

"Love can change a person the way a parent can change a baby- awkwardly, and often with a great deal of mess." — Lemony Snicket, Horseradish

Much of what people do is not seen by everyone, as it is not 'up front' or visible. Parts of being a community are informal and not registered on balance sheets, attendance lists or program details. I'm thinking of things like making cups of tea, washing up, moving chairs, playing music, donating money, cooking meals for people, leading a small group, praying with someone, teaching kids in the hall, getting together for coffee, meeting to pray, minding people's children, sending encouraging emails & texts, reading the Bible, meeting in homes … all that & much more is going on all the time at Tempe, Annandale & Newtown, and in many places between & beyond! It's what makes a community. It's all of us being open to God and others, so I thank you for who you are and what you do!

Sam Stamos, Pastor (Compassion & Advocacy)

The team coming back from mid-year break

There is so much to give thanks to God for! It has been an incredible, encouraging yet challenging year for the Compassion Ministry and my first year as Pastor. But we remember that God has been faithful here at Newtown Mission for decades, for generations and He continues to be faithful to this day. For many of us, including myself, we see it as a gift and an honour to join with God in His work and ministry through the Compassion Ministry here at Newtown Mission.

First up, I have to thank the Team. I get to work with many wonderful people each-and-every day! As a Team, we have had to work through a number of changes and challenges throughout the year, but we can always share a tear and a laugh. The Team are so hardworking! And they have a huge heart for the Community that they serve. It has also been great to see members of the Team are stepping into Leadership! I feel honoured and privileged to work with such a great bunch of people and I know the Community really appreciate them. I definitely could not have made it through the year without you and I look forward to 2019! On behalf of the Church, I would like to thank: Steve Ticknell (Kitchen Coordinator), Sini McDonald, Juan, Elle, Dave H., Jo, Donna, Petal, Tema, Tanya, Jenny, Graham, Andrea, John W., Paul K., Simeon, Ben, Derek, Tim, Johannes, Michael, Josh, Lina, Elizabeth and all the others who join us and give their time.

Also, a BIG thank you to Judy, Kim, Gabi, Simone, Amy, Alec, Steve H., Lynne, Rod and Sal – who also share their time at the Café and who have been a significant support of the Ministry, my family and myself.

Jordan Café

The Jordan Café is flourishing, and lunchtimes can be very busy. Fridays are the busiest day of the week where we would consistently get over 100 people for lunch and even up past 150. Tuesdays and Wednesdays can also be very busy. We continue to provide meals and other services to help people. But, it is so much more than that; we want it to be a safe, warm and loving place where there are opportunities for people to experience God's presence and love. This happens while the Community sees the Café as their space. To help grow this atmosphere we have made a couple of small changes. One such change is running a lunchtime Bible study on Tuesday and Wednesday in the hall during lunch. The Bible study would have to be one of the many highlights of my week. It is an excellent opportunity to ask questions, share how we are going and support each other in prayer.

We continue to be supported by our great partners, such as OzHarvest, Bread of Life, Youth Off the Streets, St Stephens' Uniting Church, Newtown Neighbourhood Centre and Homeless Persons Legal Services. We have also struck up new partnerships with Newington College, St Pius Primary School St Andrew's College (University of Sydney), St Paul's College (University of Sydney) and Churches throughout Sydney.

Sam Stamos, Pastor (Compassion & Advocacy)

Lunchtime Bible Study

All of these partnerships create opportunities to serve and support the Community both short term and longer term.

We continue to provide opportunities for service through Revenue NSW, Drug Court, Parole and Probation, Work for the Dole and Centrelink programs. The Homeless Persons Legal Services (Corrs Chambers Westgrath) continue to provide invaluable legal advice on Fridays and we have joined together on other initiatives (e.g. research into the criminalisation of homelessness). Our fantastic hairdresser Wanda Kluke continues to come in once a month to provide haircuts and she has started bringing Brittany along to help out. They are brilliant and we thank them. It is all happening.

Thursday Nights

Thursday Nights are always a very special night. Chapel starts at 6 pm, it starts slow but mid-way through it seems to fill up and it is difficult to find a seat. We want Chapel to be a time when the Community can be engaged with the things of God, the Gospel, as well as contribute. We have a sharing (open mic.) time, which is encouraging and always a little risky. *Keep it short, sweet, clean, please.* There are announcements, worship, a message and then a time of prayer. Chapel is a space for the Gospel to ring out into the Community, for the love of God to be known, for the life of Jesus to be experienced and for the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit to be known. After Chapel, we all head over to the Hall for a very yummy meal cooked from scratch. Dinner is table service which adds to it feeling quite special. Dinner also provides the opportunity to chat about Chapel and to pray.

Some of the regulars

Please continue to pray for and support the Compassion Ministry. There is always a lot going on and there is a lot of joy and blessing that flows into, and from, the Ministry and the Community. Even in the midst of crises, hardship and evil. People are doing it tough, they are struggling and we are called to walk with them and it is a privilege. We continue to depend on God, to seek God for the Community, their lives and transformation. We are more than a Community, we are a family and we do this together in God and with God. On a personal note, Kim, the twins (Elisabeth and Josiah) and I have loved being back at Newtown Mission, and the Café. People have welcomed us, they have embraced us and we feel very loved and supported.

Thank you. God Bless.

-Pastor Sam
Pastor (Compassion & Advocacy)

Helen Wright, Pastor (Creativity and Justice)

The beginning of the calendar year often includes a number of us heading south to a small village in Tasmania to be part of Faith and the Arts Summer School. It's a similar space (though longer and more intense!) to our July retreat and our monthly gathering at The Meeting Place. In Jan 2018 I was acutely aware of a growing sense of celebrating what God is doing among us at Newtown and Annandale, as we shared our story and served people out of what we've learnt along the way. People from all over the country gather looking for community that celebrates creativity and sees it as a vital part of joining in God's mission in the world. I'm incredibly grateful that that is a reality of our ongoing lives together at Newtown Mission and Annandale Creative Arts Centre.

2018 marks our second year of Mission Nights gatherings at 5 on Sundays as we've been finding our feet with rhythms of gathering, getting to know each other and understanding who God is calling us to be in Newtown. It's been a joy to have a number of people join us over the past 12 months who've stuck around and really value being a part of the type of community we're seeking to be. I'm so encouraged thinking about how I see people continually holding space for others to meet with God and be stirred to live lives of mission, walking with Jesus. It's been a beautiful thing to see people step into new ways of contributing and growing in gifts as we learn to grow together.

This year during Lent I was able to facilitate a small group of people in developing habits of mission with BELLS. It was great to go deeper with people and encourage each other to continue to grow and step out in blessing others, eating with people, listening to the spirit, learning Jesus and seeing ourselves as sent people. We then regrouped with our Wed night small group with some new people joining. This has continued to be an important and life giving space for people to land, connect, ask hard questions as well as stir each other to live lives with Jesus and for others.

As I look back over this year I'm thankful for a deepening journey in our understanding of and relationship with Aboriginal people. It was great to support and be part of The Grasstree Gathering with Aboriginal leaders visiting our Newtown gatherings and sharing their story. This then led to an ongoing connection and friendship with Aboriginal leader Brooke Prentis as we collaborated on an exhibition for NAIDOC Week in the Newtown Chapel and included Brooke in our Creative Conversations forum at ACAC. I was also able to join Brooke for Surrender Adelaide who have developed a great model of giving space for Aboriginal voices in a conference context. I look forward to what God opens up next in this space as we seek to be part of the healing that needs to take place in our land.

Once again we held a course of The Artists Way for 3 large groups meeting fortnightly from May - Sep (2 at ACAC and 1 at Lentil as Anything, Newtown). I continue to be blown away by the stories that come out of these groups. Stories of people exploring the possibility of God, finding a creative passion they didn't know they had and overcoming huge emotional blocks.

Helen Wright, Pastor (Creativity and Justice)

People are valuing the opportunity to go deeper in what creativity is all about in authentic community, journeying with others. This has been such a great way to serve and bless local artists and those keen to explore what creativity looks like in their lives. And many realising they can't do it alone.

Platform Shorts continues to be a gift to the dance community providing space for dancers to create new work and do that with a process for feedback. 2018 was our best year yet in terms of a growing connection among the dancers and good processes for encouraging development. We have however felt our people resources are too stretched to run this next year (summer 18/19) but hope to regather a team for 2019/20 if the energy is still there to see it continue.

This year our Creative Conversations program took a different form with a hope to go deeper and challenge ourselves around some of the bigger picture issues around the arts and social justice. Instead of a themed event, we held a forum and workshops around The Role of Creativity in Social Transformation. It was so great to connect with a broad range of teachers and workshop facilitators in the arts and advocacy worlds. A particular joy was to see facilitators from refugee backgrounds and Aboriginal voices as part of the mix of who we were learning from. I'm thankful for further fruit from years of connection with Sydney Fringe, the Asylum Seekers Centre, Parliament on King and the artists who've been part of Creative Conversations. Some particularly poignant individual conversations after the events remind me that God is at work in the unseen places as we seek to open up conversations about seeing justice come in this world and what the artist can bring to that.

ACAC continues to be a blessing to artists of different disciplines as the spaces get used week in and week out for classes, rehearsals and performances. Not everyone who crosses our paths sticks around. But many see something special going on, as people seeking to embody divine love and grace journey in creativity together, and they just keep coming back for more. On a personal note, a good part of this year included the challenge of a fractured foot with surgery and recovery. I'm extremely thankful for Graeme and Sam stepping into gaps where needed, as well as lots of others helping to make things work in my absence and immobility. It's always a good experience to remember we are a body who need each other and sometimes you just literally need someone to be your hands and your FEET!

I write these reflections at the end of a week retreat in the desert just out of Alice Springs. I'm so thankful for our community that encourages and supports time out to be with and listen to God, and he's been saying lots. And as I did in Tasmania, I have found myself telling our story to new and old friends and I'm so thankful for the unique and wonderful things God has been opening up among us. As one new friend said to me "What I take from this conversation is, 'Wow, God's really at work in Sydney'.'' Yes, God really is at work!

- Helen Wright
Pastor (Creativity and Justice)

Church Council
Trevor Thomas - Chairperson

The Church Council's role is to oversee the practical administration of Newtown Mission's many ministry endeavours and to keep the lights on in the buildings, food in the Compassion Ministry pantry, and ensure the staff are resourced and supported in their work.

The work of the Church Council over the past year has been well served this year by seemingly seamless transition of Church Administrators from Hsien Heng to Rahul Dougall. We thank God for the faithful and diligent work of Hsien over many years, and equally for His provision of such an enthusiastic, gifted and hard-working new office manager in Rahul.

Rahul has worked closely with Church Treasurer Tim Everist to enhance the administration and accounting procedures, transition the Church accounts to Xero and manage the commercial and residential property rental portfolios with great acumen.

The Staff team have worked well together, and the mutual support and encouragement has been a blessing for all of us to witness in action.

Apart from the business and administration, Church Council has participated in several Presbytery activities, initiating a Life and Witness Consultation, as the next step in the 21st Century Property Plan for the Newtown Campus, and more recently meeting with Presbytery representatives to discuss the ways in which we can collaborate more effectively.

Church Council is a voluntary role, that takes significant time and care, and I am very grateful for the Council members who give generously of their time and abilities to serve the Mission in very practical ways. We are all very grateful to God for the staff and for the long history of mission in Newtown that provides such a "great cloud of witnesses" as we sit down to prayerfully plan for the future that God has for us in this place.

The Council, along with Elders, has also been involved in a careful and deliberate process of reflection on how best to respond to the Same Sex Marriage legislation – bearing in mind the unique missional context in Newtown, our longstanding commitment to Biblical Theology and Jesus' prayer that we might be a unified body. This process continues and will involve more meetings, discussion, prayer and consultation in the months ahead.

Please remember to keep the Church leadership in your prayers,

Yours in His love,

Trevor Thomas

Chair

Treasurer's Report 2017-18 -Tim Everist

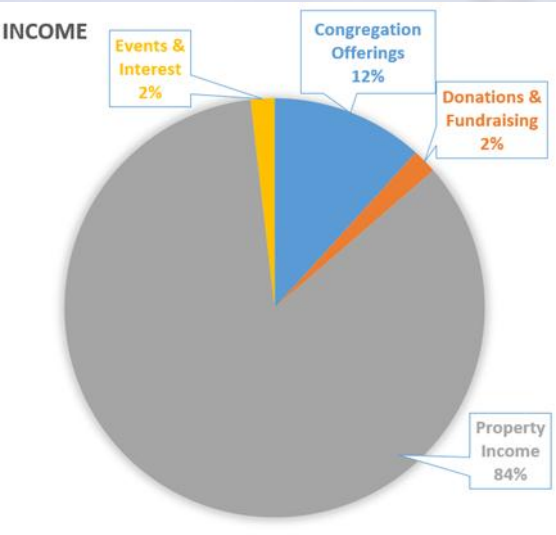
This year we have enlisted the services of Benkorp to help us with some of our finance processes. Benkorp has migrated our older version of MYOB to the cloud-based XERO which now gives everyone easy visibility to the accounts, including having receipts and invoices attached directly to transactions, making it particularly simple when it comes to audit time. Benkorp also manages: batch payments to suppliers, payroll management, ATO submissions, and accounting assistance with the audit. All processes and payments are still authorised by Newtown staff.

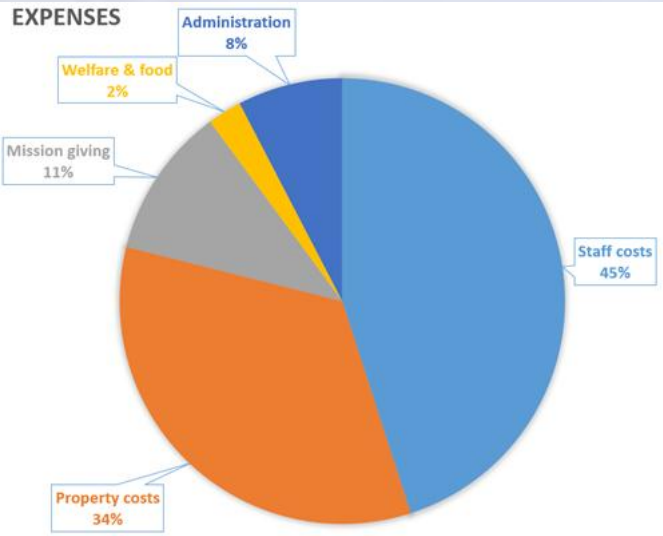
We also changed our auditor to Pascoe Whittle Chartered Accountants. The audit has been completed.

	2018-19 Budget $	2017-18 Actual $	2017-18 Budget $	2016-17 Actual $
Congregation Offerings	107,717	105,446	123,261	122,396
Donations & Fundraising	16,352	17,021	50,500	56,028
Property Income	827,672	760,117	722,940	754,674
Events & Interest	13,957	16,513	3,984	10,979
Total Income	**965,698**	**899,097**	**900,685**	**944,077**
Staff costs	386,141	380,268	423,257	355,069
Property costs	368,916	286,099	301,404	255,158
Mission giving	97,324	92,557	90,316	83,807
Welfare & food	22,435	21,036	20,738	21,029
Administration	90,648	64,407	64,941	62,522
Total Expenses	**965,464**	**844,368**	**900,656**	**777,585**
Operating Profit	**234**	**54,729**	**29**	**166,492**

Treasurer's Report 2017-18 -Tim Everist

2017-2018 Actuals





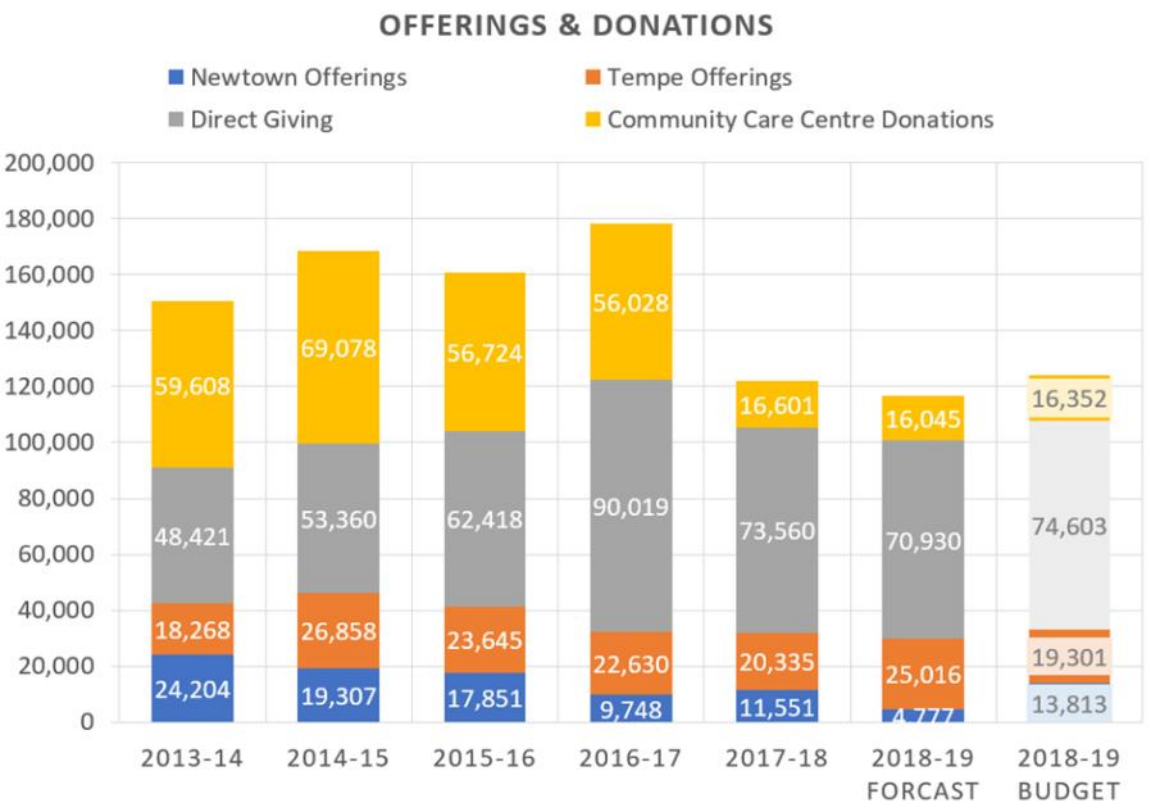
	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Budget
Income		
Congregation Offerings	Offerings down $17k / 14%	Budget reduced by 14% to match.
Donations & Fundraising	Donations to community care centre down $39k / 70% from previous year due to change in tax deductable status.	Budget reduced to match. But hoping to setup an arrangement with a like-minded organisation who will accept donations on our behalf and pass them on.
Property Income	We had low vacancy levels so income was above budget.	Budget for 5% vacancy plus additional income for 38 Linthorpe St rental income.
Events & Interest		Events budgeted to be cost neutral.
Expenses		
Staff costs	Under budget	Budget for current staff levels including increases.
Property costs	Spent less on contractors for the building project than had budgeted for.	Standard property costs plus $30k for commercial floor repair, $25k for chapel beam repairs & $30k for property consultants.
Mission giving	Spent just over 10% of total income	Budget for just over 10% of income
Welfare & food	Local welfare support and food for Jordan cafe	
Administration	On budget	Additional budget for expenses towards Evangelism and outreach. Extra accounting costs for Benkorp.

Treasurer's Report 2017-18 -Tim Everist

Balance Sheet

	2017-18 $	2016-17 $	2015-16 $	2014-15 $
Current cash accounts	86,863	107,948	131,732	99,299
Investment Accounts	336,212	264,538	139,411	85,970
Land	23,431,000	17,915,000	17,915,000	15,270,000
Buildings & Contents	15,269,500	13,874,500	13,874,500	13,874,500
Accounts Receivable	35,009	42,265	20,290	26,182
ASSETS	**39,158,583**	**32,204,251**	**32,080,933**	**29,355,951**
Employee Provisions	35,925	66,167	56,313	54,168
Accounts Payable	16,694	10,915	25,491	29,617
Accrued expenditure	5,500	5,500	17,038	19,034
Borrowings	0	0	42,848	112,850
Other	40,521	21,525	6,873	4,674
LIABILITIES	**98,640**	**104,107**	**148,564**	**220,343**
NET ASSET	**39,059,943**	**32,100,144**	**31,932,370**	**29,135,608**
Asset Revaluation Reserve	35,058,633	28,147,633	28,147,633	25,502,633
Accumulated Funds	3,946,581	3,952,511	3,784,737	3,632,975
RETAINED FUNDS	**39,005,214**	**32,100,144**	**31,932,370**	**29,135,608**

Treasurer's Report 2017-18 -Tim Everist



2017-2018 was the first year that the Community Care Centre operated without tax deductable status. There was an expectation that there would be lower donations than normal however it ended up being a $39k / 70% reduction from 2016-2017. On top of this there was also a drop in congregation offerings of $17k / 14%. This drop meant we had to rely a lot more on property income than previous years. We have adjusted the budget this year in-line with the reduction, however we are hoping that the levels increase so we are in a better position to support our services, community, cross cultural partners and to be more financially stable as we get closer to the building project. One option that we are actively looking into is to partner with another like-minded organisation in an auspice agreement. This is an agreement where an organisation that has tax deductable status takes donations on our behalf and then passes the funds onto Newtown Mission. The funds would only be able to be used for specific reasons such as the alleviation of poverty. Having this agreement will make it easier for us to approach businesses for support and run fundraising campaigns for specific purposes.

How can you support Newtown Mission?
General Donations (these donations are anonymous in the bank)
Acct Name: Newtown Mission
BSB: 634 634 Account No: 1000 25904

Community Care Centre / Jordan Care Donations
(no longer tax deductable as of 1/7/2017)
Acct Name: Newtown Mission Community Care Centre
BSB: 634-634 Account No: 1000 47429

Who's who at Newtown Mission: 2017-18

Elders
Katrina Breuker
Tim Farrell
Cathy Middleton
Greg Nance
Jude Powell-Thomas
Alec Sewell
Sam Stamos
Trevor Thomas
Manu Tupou
Graeme Tutt
Helen Wright
Rod Yule

Pastors
Graeme Tutt – Senior Minister
Sam Stamos – Pastor (Compassion & Advocacy)
Helen Wright – Pastor (Creativity & Justice)

Staff
Rahul S Dougall – Operations & Development Manager
Tevita Kailomani – Audio-Visual Co-Ordinator
Steve Ticknell – Kitchen Co-ordinator

Church Council
Katrina Breuker
Rahul S Dougall (non-voting, Minutes Secretary)
Tim Everist (Treasurer)
Tim Farrell
Greg Nance
Dian Neligan (Safe Church)
Steve Pocknall
Alec Sewell
Sam Stamos (non-voting)
Trevor Thomas (Chairperson)
Manu Tupou
Graeme Tutt
Helen Wright (non-voting)
Rod Yule

Contact Newtown Mission at office@newtownmission.org.au or call (02) 9519 9000.
Facebook– NewtownMission