

BARNABAS MINISTERIES INC. CHAIR'S REPORT MAY 2018

This is an interim reporting period, covering the half year period 1 July to 31 December 2017, in order to commence financial and reporting year on a calendar basis.

The second half of 2017 saw a focus on further developing matters identified at the February 2017 planning workshop, as discussed in the 2016-17 report.

While recognising the distinctive nature of Barnabas Ministries, and its underpinning philosophical approach to training, it is important that it is financially sustainable. So a major focus has been on finances – how programs are costed, and how financial information is recorded and presented.

A first step was to move to a financial year beginning 1 January, so that financial reporting is aligned with the calendar year basis of the training programs.

A second step of work was putting in place other changes that were recommended in the financial health assessment undertaken by Kathy Cave in late 2016:

- standardised costing rates for presenters etc (unless a case can be made for using a lesser rate)
- reporting by cost centre
- recording funds paid in advance separately and only bringing them to account in the year of expenditure.

The change of financial year necessitated revision of the BMI constitution (Rules) and the opportunity was taken to update and review the whole document in the current context in which BMI operates. This included making explicit certain requirements of the *Associations Incorporations Act*, for example, books and documents are available for inspection on request. The revised Rules were ratified at the August meeting of the BMI Committee and were submitted to Access Canberra and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

In an environment where much more attention is being given to governance and the responsibilities of Committees and Boards, much attention has been given to examining our overall direction, clarifying responsibilities, and setting priorities.

Thus while it was disappointing that the Soul Companions program did not attract the threshold number of intending participants to be able to be run in 2018, it was a financially responsible decision. We look forward to a new cohort starting in 2019. Meanwhile progress is being made in preparing for the new program, Soul Space, for the formation of retreat leaders. We are delighted that Lucy Abbott Tucker will be visiting Australia again in 2018 and conducting workshops in Brisbane and Perth, and teaching in the August session of Listen into Life.

I would like to thank our Director Sue Dunbar for her energy, insights and dedication, and particularly in the weeks preceding her knee operation when she worked hard to have as many things as possible put in place to prepare for the weeks when she would be unable to be in the office.

I also thank the Committee for their consistent contribution to the work of BMI, often in less visible ways, and for their willingness to embrace conversations about future directions for BMI and what might need to change to get there.

