

The 2019 Annual Report

As we write this our minds are full of COVID-19 and contingency plans so it is good to look back over the past months since our last annual conference and reflect on what else has been happening and what the Lord is doing in and through our organisation.

While we missed one of our deputy directors for the last 6 months of 2019, as she was on sabbatical, we did see momentum pick up in a number of ways after a positive and strategic time together at conference. We began to see more intentionality arise as different aspects of our MAP (Mobilise - Advance - Proclaim) goals came to light. Rural visits increased and there was great excitement for STEPPING INTO MISSION with interns (LEAP) and gap year (Jump) participants being sought and then launched at the Strathfield centre. We also appreciated some worthwhile times of connecting with our members back on home leave, gaining a greater appreciation and understanding of their joys and challenges. Along with this, it has been a delight to be part of the journey our candidates have been on, seeing a number complete this training season and prepare/depart for Ministry Branches.

WATL (WEC Australia Team Leaders) met in September last year and it was a good time of meeting up with team leaders and having our Area Directors join in. The leadership training with Craig Hamilton was especially useful. At that time we also had a few other international WEC visitors to Sydney which was an encouragement as they shared and participated in the Strathfield community.

Until recently we have taken turns to travel interstate to visit a number of members, although sadly we have been unable to make it to the west since conference last year. We all enjoy these times of connection face to face and have a greater appreciation for the ministry our members are involved in within their respective regions. Where we haven't been able to see everyone face to face, we have also appreciated times of 'virtual connection' with many through meetings and annual reviews, and appreciate our members trust as we share together. Some have had some significant struggles and we have valued their openness and honesty, allowing us to be part of that journey through conversations and prayer.

The opening of our Melbourne centre, Quambee was another highlight and it's been exciting to see this new centre developed and an increased occupancy there. In fact it's been good to see centres grow in number in several areas. The student numbers for Worldview College for Intercultural Studies have increased and the Strathfield centre has enjoyed the energising presence of the 3 JUMP participants and 1 LEAP intern for the past several months as they participated in their program with others helping facilitate from within the community and beyond.

The BC has been an integral part of our work in leading WEC Australia and we are very thankful for each one. Late last year we decided to increase our frequency of meeting virtually using Zoom and to decrease our face to face times in order to overall increase our BC contact times and to be good stewards of finances. We have appreciated the support and wisdom of the BC especially in recent times as we have had to have extra virtual meetings together to make decisions about how to manage the changes the COVID-19 virus has forced us to make.

In recent days as the pandemic has advanced we have had to re-think how we do meetings and conferences and have been trying to navigate the challenge of caring for our members,

some of whom are unable to leave their countries of service overseas or who are unable to return to them and are grounded in Australia. We have seen the Lord taking care of each one as they have been making adaptations and coming to terms with isolation and disappointment.

At the beginning of this year, without knowing what the year would hold, we put forward Romans 11:36 as WEC Australia's theme for 2020: "God is the ultimate origin, the ultimate sustaining power and the ultimate goal of all things. To Him be the glory and may all praise rise to Him." Our prayer is that He will be our focus this year, the Lord, who has ultimate control of this world. May we continue to look to how we can serve and glorify Him in these unprecedented times.

The WEC International Australia Leadership Team