

GUNGAHLIN ANGLICAN CHURCH

PASTORAL CARE POLICY

Purpose:

The purpose Gungahlin Anglican Church's (GAC's) Pastoral Care framework is to help people live life in all its fullness, according to the example of Jesus. Pastoral care involves strengthening, comforting, encouraging and urging believers to live a life of faith that is pleasing to God.

Policy:

GAC is committed to the belief that God loves us all unconditionally and seeks to reflect that love in its care for others as God's Word commands. Pastoral care happens when Christians help others whether by listening, responding, praying and providing caring support. GAC recognises that both formal and informal pastoral care is equally important and both have spiritual significance.

The first point of formal pastoral care occurs through the weekly messages preached. Formal pastoral care is carried out by the Rector and Ministry Staff on behalf of the church.

Growth Groups

GAC believes that the best way to administer informal pastoral care is within Growth Groups which meet in the homes of church members on a weekly or fortnightly basis. Growth groups are places where people can work together to understand God's Word better, develop friendships, are supported, prayed for and encouraged in their faith. GAC recognises that this type of pastoral care can also occur by members of the congregation.

GAC attempts to base groups within each of its three services (as far as possible) to enable better care for each other and its aim is to see two thirds of church members in growth groups (growing in commitment to each other and the Lord).

The Ministry team holds meetings with Growth Group leaders three times a year, with Ministers aiming to visit individual Groups twice per year.

Pastoral Care Team

A *pastoral care coordinator* has been appointed for each congregation. Pastoral care coordinators keep in touch with Contactors (see below), and encourages them in their role. They also liaise with staff in charge of their respective congregation and keep them updated on any pastoral care issues that may arise.

GAC aims to assign each family/person listed on its parish roll not in a Growth Group to a member of the congregation (known as a *Contactor*) who will be a contact person in times of need, and also in good times. The prime goal of this network is to care for and encourage one another on our Christian journey.

Roll keepers provide Sunday attendance information as a confidential way of knowing who needs follow-up ministry. This structure (pastoral care coordinator/contactor/roll keeper) assists staff to provide multiple connections for newcomers, and enables the pastoral care teams to initiate further care for members of each congregation who are not in a growth group.

Prayer

Two confidential prayer chains have been established for crisis and long term prayer requests, and also for giving thanks for answered prayer. The women's ministry team also holds prayer breakfasts on a regular basis. Informal prayer partnerships/groups are also encouraged.

Practical Care

GAC responds to those with special needs due to illnesses, hospitalisations, bereavements, family pressures and other issues. GAC maintains a supply of frozen and fresh meals with availability for congregational members at short notice for emergency situations.

GAC also has a SWAT Team (Service With Attitude – Love!) which responds to the practical needs of people, such as assisting with odd jobs in the homes and gardens of members of the church and wider community.