

University Ecumenical Chaplaincy Chairperson's Report for AGM 28 March 2023

1. University 'State of Play'

Currently there seem to be ongoing concerns from University of Waikato senior management around budgets for 2023, particularly staffing budgets. While other universities (notably AUT with a job cull of over 80 positions) have been taking quite radical steps to balance their budgets for 2023, this seems to be more low key and large scale layoffs of staff are not expected in 2023 for the University of Waikato.

Slow recovery of international student numbers as predicted for 2023 are progressing in line with forecasts, but these enrolments have not yet recovered to pre-covid levels. 2023 domestic enrolments are currently weaker than 2022 and this may be prompting the concerns noted in the first paragraph.

The Pa, a major building development initiative, will become operational during 2023. The exact date of opening is unclear, but this \$90m investment represents the confidence the university has in a 'bricks and mortar' presence in the city, and the importance of a 'campus experience' in attracting and retaining students.

2. Financial Postion of the Ecumencial Chaplaincy

This has improved over 2022, noting that a deficit budget forecast at the start of the year of just over \$10,000. Several substantial contributions from an email appeal to Presbyterian and Co-operating parishes has meant that this deficit was substantially reduced, with one parish generously contributing \$5,000. The total contribution from this appeal was \$9,145 which is close to the \$10,000 the Kaimai Presbytery used to donate. The budget for 2023 reflects the hope that a similar level of giving will occur for 2023. The actual expenditure for 2022 is low, due to the university's time lag in presenting invoices for the refund of 50% of the ecumenical chaplain's salary.

Investment strategies for the trust funds available to the Chaplaincy are still under discussion.

3. Assistant Chaplains (voluntary)

Significant progress in relation to the establishment of Assistant Chaplaincy scheme at the University of Waikato during 2022. Documentation and processed for appointment were developed, based on that used by other institutions. Interviews were held with two potential candidates, Nick Goodwin and Nadia Werner in November 2022. The recommendations for appointment were ratified at the meeting held 22 November 2022. As both of these candidates have been operating in similar roles at the university prior to this process, it has been a useful exercise to sort out our appointment process and items that need to be organised (e.g. police checks, business cards, email logins, supervision meetings) for future appointments. Both candidates are very capable, well qualified and bring a range of gifts and welcome diversity to the role. There is a need to figure out ways of advertising and recruiting for further candidates, especially among the student body.

4. Ecumenical Chaplain's 2022 Performance Review

I was able to attend and participate in Andrew's performance review, led by Jill Dibble, on 12 May 2022. This was a useful meeting, and I appreciated being able to contribute to the review, representing the combined churches which are the key members of the Chaplaincy Committee. Note that Jill has now left the university, we thank her for her positive contribution and inclusion of Andrew in the Health and Wellbeing team, and her willingness to work with the Chaplaincy Committee. Andrew and I have met recently with Jo Knight, Jill's replacement, and affirmed our continuing co-operation.

5. Changes to the Chaplaincy Committee

Rev. Sharon Ensor-Ross resigned from the committee at the end of 2022, taking up a new position in Auckland. We thank her for her faithful service and wish her every blessing in her new appointment. A new Presbyterian representative is being sought from a Hamilton parish.

My thanks to all the continuing committee members for their service in 2022.

Stephen Bright
Chairperson
21 March 2023