



Dollars & Sense

February 2016 Newsletter from the UCSA Resources Team

What's New in 2016?

Happy New Year - although it's February already! Do you find there's something exciting about new things? Like wearing new clothes, driving a new car, tasting a new food or opening an unexpected gift? But somehow it doesn't take long for that something new to become just be an everyday thing. As it's already February, the newness of the year is fading and I'm guessing for you it might seem a long time ago that we welcomed in the New Year. Perhaps we've even got a little bored or frustrated with the year already, or have taken a deep breath, counting the days to the Easter break. Whilst all these feelings are available to us, I was reminded of those special verses in Lamentations which tell us *"The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness"*. How good it is that God's love for us is never ending and his mercies are new every morning? God never gets bored with us and he never wishes away the days, months or years he spends with us. So "Happy New Day" to you as you serve your community in your appointed role.

As each New Year brings new opportunities, such is the case in the Property Department.

We welcome Matt Wilson to the role of Manager, Property Services in the Presbytery and Synod office. Matt comes to us from Renewal SA, where he was Manager, Special Projects, Urban Design and Planning. One of his past projects was the planning and urban design for the Playford project, so Matt is already known to some of us through the Playford Uniting Church building project. In addition to Matt's planning qualifications, he is an active member of the Uniting Church. His professional skills coupled with his knowledge and understanding of the Uniting Church are already making him a valued part of the Resources Team.

Thank you for your responses to the Resources Team survey, conducted late last year. We received about 200 responses from across the Presbytery. Whilst a full analysis of the feedback is not complete we are grateful for the information shared, suggestions made and affirmation given. Later this month the Resources team will spend time considering the feedback in light of the Church's Strategic Plan and how we can enhance our service to make the Church stronger.

We hope this edition of Dollars and Sense will provide you with helpful information as you serve in your local community. As always, if you have any questions or

suggestions, do not hesitate to contact us at resources@sa.uca.org.au

Peter Battersby
Executive Officer, Resources

Governance Training

Two training sessions, suitable for church council or board members, will be held at 212 Pirie Street in the coming months. A session "Introduction to Governance" will be held on **Thursday 7 April**, 4.30 pm – 6.30 pm. On **Thursday 5 May**, training will be held on two topics, firstly an Introduction to the Ethos of the Uniting Church, 4.30 pm – 5.30 pm, followed by an Introduction to Financial Management (6.00 – 7.30 pm).

More formal invitations will be sent later but please ensure that relevant members of your organisation are given the opportunity to attend.

These training sessions are provided by UnitingCare SA and are free of charge to participants. They provide sound governance principles along with an emphasis on how these principles apply within the organisations associated with the Church.

Insurance Services

Hi everyone,

Here we are again in 2016. Last year went so quickly. Happy New Year to all of you and let's hope we have another great year.

By now all of you should have received your tax invoices for this year's insurance renewals. If you have not received anything or misplaced the schedule, please contact Sue Alley or me and we can arrange to send off another copy of the invoice to you.

I'd like to thank all the Congregations who assisted in the transition from paying premiums annually or by monthly instalments to annual or quarterly instalments. We

understand how difficult it was and is for some to come up with the annual premiums in a lump sum, however in the end we were able to work through this problem with them. There are still a couple of Congregations with outstanding premiums, and we would appreciate your attendance to these ASAP. Reminder notices will be sent out shortly.

We also would like to reinforce how important it is to notify the Insurance Services Department as soon as possible if you find damage to your property from a storm or burglary or feel a claim may arise from an incident. We can arrange service providers to attend quickly to dry out carpet and make

safe areas that can minimise disruption as well as keep costs down. Very often when carpet becomes wet, it does not take long for it to be ruined if it is not lifted and dried within a few hours. This can affect whether we repair or replace the carpet, and the difference can be in the thousands of dollars.

Remember we are here to assist you, so if you have any questions about insurance don't hesitate to contact Susanne Alley or me in the Insurance Services Department on 08 8236 4222 or email at insurance@sa.uca.org.au

Tony Phillips

Government & community grants

Government, local government and NGOs provide many grant programs for funding. Many require applications to be submitted by an incorporated body. *The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (S.A.)* is a Body Corporate by an Act of Parliament and the legal entity for all Uniting Church Congregations; it is usually the applicant or the sponsor/auspice organisation.

Funding bodies and websites

- [GRANTassist](#) is a new grants database providing information on state government grants and assistance, replacing GrantsLink. It is a great resource and you can subscribe to updates. It can be found at www.grantassist.sa.gov.au/community
- Local council websites give information grants which are often available from local councils for community programs (for a list of all council websites - [click here](#)).

Following are some of the grants Congregations have had success with over the last few years. Property Services provides guidelines and information for online application completion for most of these:

Grant types	Website & description	Detail & comment
State government grants	www.grantassist.sa.gov.au/community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above for information re GRANTassist
Community Benefit SA <i>(Dept for Communities & Social Inclusion)</i>	www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/services/grants-for-organisations/community-benefit-sa One-off project funding to develop and strengthen communities across the metropolitan, rural and remote regions of SA - to improve community participation, life management skills, well-being and quality of life of disadvantaged individuals, families and communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing funding rounds • State government • We provide full information for online application completion & lodgement
Volunteer Support Fund <i>Office for Volunteers</i>	www.ofv.sa.gov.au/grants Grants up to \$3,000 to help community based, not-for-profit organisations by providing training and resources to support their volunteers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State government • We provide full information for online application completion & lodgement
Grants for Seniors <i>Office for the Ageing</i>	Office for the Ageing Community Grants Grants up to \$5,000 to create or extend opportunities for seniors to engage with the community - to buy equipment, materials/ consumables, or support cultural, social, educational or sporting activities and programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State government • We provide full information for online application completion & lodgement
Positive Ageing Development Grants <i>Office for the Ageing</i>	Office for the Ageing Community Grants Grants up to \$25,000 for projects supporting seniors to have choices and opportunities to be active in their own communities and retain independence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State government • We provide full information for online application completion & lodgement
Smart State PC Donation Program	www.dpc.sa.gov.au/smart-state-pc-donation-program Provision of computer equipment from surplus government stocks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State government
Dept of Social Services	www.dss.gov.au/grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal grants

If you would like to be a part of the grants distribution list, please email Lynne Aird (see below).

Grants workshops are available for 10 people or more in metropolitan or outer metropolitan areas – a great opportunity for several Congregations to come together or for a mission network to host a workshop. Rural area workshops are also possible.

For further information regarding these or any other grants, please contact Lynne.

Lynne Aird, Property Administrator

8236 4210 or laird@sa.uca.org.au

Expression of Interest

The Resources Board (a sub-committee of Standing Committee) is seeking expressions of interest from individuals who possess expertise and/or extensive technical skills and experience in investment. The person shall have an active Christian faith and be committed to the Uniting Church's ethos, structure and ethics. The Board meets seven

times per year and this role is non-remunerated. Further details about the role and the Resources Board are available on the UCSA website [here](#) or direct queries to Leah Hopton on 8236 4229. Please email expression of interest to lhopton@sa.uca.org.au by 28th March.

Work Health & Safety (WHS)

Safe-Tea Break

Welcome to the first instalment of 'Safe-Tea Break' for 2016 - and my ongoing quest to try and demystify WHS. You may or may not be aware that the world of WHS has been on the path to greater self-regulation over the last few decades. Essentially this means that regulations are becoming less prescriptive and more overarching in their requirements. There are many reasons for this, however the net effect on those of us trying to implement WHS in our places of work can be both positive and negative. A self-regulated WHS system places more duty on employers to know more about safety, implement policies, systems, procedures and then to measure and evaluate their effectiveness so that improvements can be made. More positively though, it affords employers greater flexibility to make decisions and take actions based on the requirements of their business and not just blindly implement prescriptive legislation.

'Reasonably Practicable' is a legal term that allows courts to look at all of the circumstances involved in a possible breach of this type of legislation, and enables them to take into consideration the ever widening differences between industries and employers. They will look at different ways in which the breach could have been managed,

similar industry methods and standards, as well as the means available to the employer to manage their duties. This is ultimately done to try and answer the question 'could and should they have done more to prevent this from happening?'

This is a particularly good thing for Congregations and other 'small businesses' as it allows us to focus on implementing a system that is right for our needs. This doesn't mean that the legislation doesn't apply to us in the same way; it means we can develop and operate our own WHS systems to better fit our organisation. The simple point I'm trying to make with this is that many of us have worked in large business, industrial or public service sectors, and have encountered a wealth of policies, procedures, trained representatives and safety staff. Given this experience, it can be easy to expect that we have to do the same to be compliant, perpetuating the notion that WHS is large and complicated. We've long known in WHS circles that small businesses rarely have the capacity, in both time, experience and resources to implement and manage such complex safety systems, and believe it or not, the regulators know this too. Have a quick look at this area from SafeWork SA if you're still not convinced:

http://www.safework.sa.gov.au/show_page.jsp?id=113072#VsPUEFLVzAU

Remember what we're aiming for is good health & safety not complex health & safety. Often in summing up cases following a serious accident, it is clear that to preventing the accident required implementing simple preventative measures. This is done largely to encourage us not be complacent and to take action, but also to confirm that simple in WHS is generally more effective.

If you're blessed in having the resources and experience to operate a more corporate type of safety system and it works, great, but also consider if this is sustainable. At some point you will need to involve others or pass this system on, and if it's too onerous, you may find volunteers are hard to come by.

If you would like to discuss this or any other WHS related matters, I work Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at the Synod office and can be contacted at wbooth@sa.uca.org.au or by phone on 8236 4214.

Wayne Booth
WHS Coordinator

New Code of Conduct for Volunteers and Leaders

As a part of the recent Called to Care Resource roll out and as an initiative of the Safe Church Committee, we'd like to draw your attention to the new Code of Conduct for Volunteers and Leaders. The Presbytery and Synod released this document last year with the intention that Church Councils would enter into conversations with those in voluntary roles about a common understanding of expectations of appropriate behaviours and healthy role modelling as individuals carry out roles of responsibility. The Code of Conduct for volunteers and leaders is available from the Called to Care section of the UC SA Website where the individual can then acknowledge their

willingness conduct themselves within the principles outlined.

Called to Care Orientation sessions are being offered around the metropolitan area in the weeks leading up to Easter. Dates for sessions are published through UC e-News and on the Called to Care Training page of the website. Further sessions for regional and metropolitan locations are being planned for July and August. Linda Vinall, Called to Care Training and Development Officer, can be emailed on: calledtocare@sa.uca.org.au

Financial Services & Screening Services Unit

Finance

Pancake Day Fundraising – what is the correct treatment of money in relation to GST?

Many Congregations get involved with the Pancake Day fundraiser for Uniting Care. This event can be treated as an "Input Taxed Fundraising Activity". This means you do not have to include GST in the price of the pancakes you sell. In addition, you MUST NOT claim back any GST

on any of the expenses you may have in relation to the event (such as purchase of disposable plates & cutlery, serviettes, bbq gas). Many of the supplies for the event will either be donated, or be GST free anyway (pancake mix, lemons, sugar).

If you have any questions about this, or any other GST related matter, please call Marie-Ann Ellis on 82364215.

Emergency Services Levy Invoices

The issuing of the annual invoices for Emergency Services Levy has been delayed, as the Synod office awaits the figures from Revenue SA.

The invoices will be issued shortly so please bear this in mind when planning for expenses.

Mission and Service Fund contributions

Mission and Service Fund contributions from Congregations and Parishes play a vital role in funding the Presbytery and Synod's activities on behalf of South Australian Congregations.

Treasurers are reminded that Mission and Service Fund contribution response forms (using the new 10% rate) for 2016 are now overdue and we would appreciate your submission of these if you have not already done so.

Forms can be downloaded from <http://sa.uca.org.au/mission-and-service-fund> and, once completed, should be forwarded to the Financial Services Department as soon as possible.

Queries: contact Peter Harbison (08) 8236 4270 (Country Callers 1300 766 956).

Screening Services Unit

Congregations are diligently ensuring that those persons needing UCSA police checks are submitting request forms.

When completing your form, please ensure that you read the Information Sheet and ensure that the ID is correctly witnessed by authorised persons, i.e. UCA Ministers, UCA employees or members of UCA Church Councils (currently this excludes JPs and police officers). The Information Sheet and forms can be downloaded from <http://sa.uca.org.au/called-to-care/downloadable-resources>

Police checks for UCSA volunteers are free of charge.

Correct contact details on the Synod database

It is important that the Synod database of key contacts and office holders is as accurate as possible so that communications will go to the right person or persons. Your Congregation's authorised person can check your Congregation or Parish details via Uniting Portal, which is on the UCSA website. To update details, please use the form which is available for download from <http://sa.uca.org.au/online-directory-services> and which can be used to advise of new office holders or new addresses.

Payroll

Long Service Leave Provision

Do your Congregational accounts hold a provision for Long Service Leave for employed lay staff (including casual staff)?

Under the Long Service Leave Act, a worker who has completed 10 years of service is entitled to take up to 13 weeks long service leave. A further 1.3 weeks is granted for each completed year after the ten year anniversary.

Should a worker leave, or their employment be terminated after 7 years of completed service (but less than 10 years) they are normally entitled to the monetary equivalent of 1.3 weeks leave for each completed year of service.

If you would like any further information please contact the Congregational Bookkeeping Unit (CBU) at cbu@sa.uca.org.au

Mercer Super Trust Fund (ex Beneficiary Fund)

With the recent transition of the Uniting Church in Australia Beneficiary Fund into the new Mercer Super Trust Fund we have experienced an increase in the number of queries directed to Payroll Bureau around how the fund works and how it impacts retirement planning.

A Fact Sheet has been prepared which we hope will provide some initial guidance.

The Fact Sheet can be found via the link:

<http://sa.uca.org.au/finance/payroll-bureau-service>

Please be aware that Payroll Bureau staff members are not Mercer representatives and are therefore not in a position to provide any further detail. Queries should be directed to the Mercer Member helpline on 1800 682 525.

Members (or potential members) can access the PDS and other documents at www.mercersupertrust.com

E-mail address for Monthly Statement of Payroll

Payroll Statements are emailed to the nominated Congregation payroll contact prior to the monthly direct debit, which occurs on the 14th of each month.

To ensure confidentiality of emailed Tax Invoice / Payroll Statements, Payroll Bureau must be advised of any relevant changes to email addresses or contact persons in advance of this date.

The Notification Change of Contact Details form is available at:

<http://sa.uca.org.au/documents/finance/payroll/2013-Payroll-Bureau-Service-MOU-Change-of-Representative.pdf>

Direct Debit Authorities – advising of change to bank details

Please notify the Payroll Bureau of any change to bank details for direct debits - a new Direct Debit Authority Form is available at:

<http://sa.uca.org.au/documents/finance/payroll/DD-Change-of-Bank-Account-Details.pdf>

Please note that this form incorporates the option to advise other UCSA Synod departments if applicable (e.g. Insurance, Mission & Service Fund Contribution).

Financial Advice

Please be aware that the UCSA Payroll Bureau is a processing unit and is able to provide information regarding such items as balances of leave available, leave taken, and tax on pay being processed through Payroll.

Payroll Bureau is not authorised or licenced to give financial advice (as each individual's circumstances are different). Should you have questions about legislative changes (ATO or Centrelink) which may impact your personal situation or tax implications on retirement, please seek advice from the relevant government department or a recognised Financial Advisor or Tax Accountant.

Monthly deadline for Timesheet submission

Please ensure that timesheets (and any associated leave forms) are sent through to Payroll by the **4th** of each month.

This will greatly assist in the smooth running of payroll processes and reduce the need for Payroll to follow up where they believe a timesheet may be missing.