



# Dollars & Sense

November 2017 Newsletter from the UCSA Resources Team

Each year I prepare a report for the annual Presbytery and Synod meeting which details the main activities the Resources Board and Team have been progressing through the year. This includes the refurbishment of Level 2/212 Pirie Street, presentation of 30 financial accounts, delivery of a third balanced Mission and Service Fund budget, refurbishment of Uniting College facilities at Brooklyn Park and the introduction of new initiatives, policies and resources.

Earlier in the year I celebrated working at the UCSA Presbytery and Synod office for 10 years. As I look back over that time I've come to understand that it's not what has been achieved that comes to mind, but the memories of who I've worked with, listened to and been encouraged by, in that time. It

reminds me that there are so many people, past and present, seen and unseen, who have given much to the UCSA.

Most recently at the November Resources Board we thanked and farewelled Rob Williamson and Tom Adams. Rob and Tom have served faithfully over many years and will complete their full term on the Board in November. Recently Wayne Abbott and Peter Pledge have retired. Wayne has served the Church for over 25 years in many of the Church's committees generously sharing his legal expertise. Similarly Peter has served the Church as Presbytery and Network treasurer for many years and has also used his financial expertise to audit Congregation annual financial statements.

As I reflect on the achievements of 2017, I am grateful for the Members, Directors, and Governors of the Church's Boards, Committees and Trusts, Congregation Treasurers and Administrators who willingly give their time and share their intellect as their expression of service in response to God's call on their life. I am aware that I only meet a small number of people who serve in their local setting and I know there are so many others who serve. Please accept my thanks for what you do in your church and pass on my thanks to the others in your team who serve alongside you.

**Peter Battersby**  
**Executive Officer, Resources**

## Insurance Services

### Insurance Renewals 2018

The Insurance Services department, in conjunction with our insurance broker, has recently negotiated renewal terms for the next 12 months. As you would be aware, last year South Australia experienced five major storm events across the state causing some quite extensive damage to church property. This has impacted on our insurance renewal costs. Overall, insurance costs across Australia are increasing due to the costs insurers have borne from extreme weather events. As a result, you will notice an increase in premiums from last year. As soon as we receive our invoices from the insurers we will forward your tax invoices for payment. If you require a current certificate of currency for Public Liability insurance, please call or email us to arrange copy to be sent to you.

### Public Liability Insurance for Third Parties

Please remember that if you are arranging any fetes or fairs, make sure any stall holders who are not a part of the Uniting Church have arranged their own Public Liability insurance. Our cover does not extend to include liabilities of other parties conducting activities at or on church premises. This includes "third party vendors" where they are legally responsible (arising from an incident/activity where they are at fault,) to pay compensation for bodily injury to other people or their property.

### Any Property Damage?

Lastly, if you are aware that a property has suffered damage from a storm or burglary, it is very important to advise us as soon as possible so we can attend to repairs quickly. If a property becomes more damaged over

time due to delays in repairs, the insurer may not pay for the subsequent damage. We have a panel of builders and repairers at call ready to assist you with repairing insurance work quickly and correctly.

If you have any other questions about insurance, please contact me or Susanne Alley in Insurance Services on 08 8236 4222 or email us at [insurance@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:insurance@sa.uca.org.au)

**Tony Phillips**  
**Insurance Services**

### Safe-Tea Break

Welcome to the fourth and final instalment of 'Safe-Tea Break' for 2017 - and my ongoing quest to try and demystify WHS. In this issue I'm focussing on working at height as this represents one of the most common, serious and yet often misunderstood areas of risk in the church. Many of our buildings have significantly high ceilings, roof voids, storage areas, balconies, towers and other structures that require some level of work at height to use or maintain. The actual height of the work though can be misleading. Many serious injuries occur at what most of us might consider reasonably safe lower levels. This is the principal reason why the actual mention of any specific heights in legislation is reserved mainly to identifying what is classed as 'high risk construction work'.

Some of the more common questions I hear when dealing with this issue include the following:

- What is the maximum height we can access using a ladder or stepladders?
- Do we need a safe operating procedure?
- Are there any age restrictions when using ladders?
- How can we stop one of our volunteers who's been doing this for years?

The answer to these and many other questions in all areas of WHS is using that tried and tested (legally required) risk assessment. This answer may be predictable now in WHS but it is our best tool when approaching such issues. Good risk assessment and importantly the provision of suitable control measures is a positive and proactive step, designed to ensure incidents are prevented.

An effective risk assessment for any work activity doesn't necessarily need to be written but it is preferred practice as it helps people understand the process. Once done, it can then be used to provide a point of ongoing reference for review, training, inspection and audit. It will also be one of the first documents a Safework SA inspector will request should there be an investigation following an incident. Failure to undertake a suitable risk assessment is cited with unerring regularity in successful WHS prosecutions against Persons Conducting a Businesses or Undertaking (PCBU).

Undertaking a suitable work at height risk assessment need not be difficult for most lower risk activities and can be included on a risk register or general risk assessment. However, the more the risks increase, so

should the knowledge and competence of the risk assessor. Having a suitable level of awareness of the available methods, equipment and relevant legislation required to manage those increased risks is also an expectation in law. This is why all construction related work above 3m (in South Australia) is classed as high risk and needs to be undertaken by licenced professionals.

Generally though, routine tasks such as changing light globes, clearing gutters and minor decorating works don't fall into this category, so the following are few guidance points when considering these types of activity:

- Work at height should never be undertaken alone either by volunteers or contractors undertaking any works for a congregation.
- Ladders may still be used, but the dangers from them are well known. Ladders are best used 'to gain access to' rather than 'work from' in most cases. They should be secured (preferably at both ends where possible) with users maintaining three points of contact at all times.
- Stepladders are generally more stable than ladders, but they still offer no fall arrest protection. They are clearly dangerous when used incorrectly or inappropriately, particularly as safer options have become common place. Additional attachments for most types of ladders are available now such as: leg levellers, stabilisers and outriggers. It may also be appropriate to consider the professional installation of a suitable anchor point(s) to be used with fall arrest and harness type equipment for regular higher risk activities.
- Methods and long-reach equipment enabling more tasks to be undertaken from ground level have also improved. As have the number of options to reduce the frequency of work at height such as installing longer lasting energy efficient lighting, gutter guards and believe it or not, even self-cleaning glazing is now a thing!
- The cost into access equipment can be taken account when considering appropriate controls, but this should never be the starting point or main reason for dismissing an appropriate control and undertaking an activity regardless. You need to be able to show that all reasonable options had been considered and the cost of the equipment was grossly

disproportionate to the risk. Essentially this is akin to placing a price tag on someone's wellbeing.

- Ladders should not be accessible to anyone who isn't authorised and competent to use them. For both safety and security reasons, they should be locked away when not in use.
- Whether someone is competent to use such equipment is an assessment based on all of the relevant information. Competency of an individual includes their experience, training, physical capabilities and limitations, and the capacities and limitations of the equipment. Age is a factor, but as with specific heights, this can be misleading. (*Age can affect the level of insurance cover provided to an individual and therefore concerns should also be discussed with UCSA Insurance Services*).
- Volunteers do not have a legal right to undertake any activity or accept any risk they like on behalf of the congregation. Conversely though, in most cases, the church council as the 'officers' of the PCBU have a clear legal duty to eliminate or minimise any risks.
- A written safe operating procedure (SOP) may be an appropriate control measure if the task is complex and higher risk, but it becomes a specific legal requirement when undertaking 'High Risk Construction' works, which again, must be undertaken by licenced professionals.

Ultimately, the risks from work at height are well known and the consequences of getting it wrong can be severe. There shouldn't be so urgent an activity in any congregation requiring anyone to endanger either themselves or others by undertaking any work at height activity unsafely.

As this is a complex topic and further information and guidance on 'Managing the Risks of Falls' can be found in the relevant Code of Practice which is available here:

[https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/show\\_page.jsp?id=113703](https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/show_page.jsp?id=113703)

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

**Wayne Booth**  
**WHS Coordinator**

## Human Resources and WHS: It's all about people...

Uniting Church SA values people and is committed to providing a safe, healthy and productive work environment. Human Resource practices can influence behaviour, attitudes and performance within the workplace.

Uniting Church SA Human Resources can provide Church Councils on behalf of their congregations, with advice, resources, assistance and expertise from a first-tier enquiry basis through to more complex and specific human resource matters. This edition focuses on the **Recruitment and Selection** circle.



When Recruitment and Selection is done well it can give the decision makers (Church Council Chairs, Treasurers and other members) confidence in their final decision of employee, and future working life of that employee within the congregation.

The lifecycle of recruitment starts with job analysis and design of the Position Description and Person Specification (PDPS) with the associated approvals to recruit. Next is advertising through the Positions Vacant section of the website and UC E-News as well as local congregational communications. The candidates who respond to advertising are then shortlisted and from this, interviews can be

conducted. The preferred candidate/s after interview are reference checked (and in some cases technical or medical tests are conducted). After consideration (and possibly a second interview) the Church Council can move with assurance to the offer of employment stage.

**For further information please contact Presbytery & Synod Human Resources on: 82364234 or email [humanresources@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:humanresources@sa.uca.org.au)**



## Property Services

The Property Services Team has undergone significant staffing changes over the last 12 months.

After some 16 ½ years, Lynne Aird (Property Administrator) concluded her role in July. Lynne had been responsible for facilitating the sale and purchase of property, residential and commercial leasing, license agreements, congregational applications, subdivisions, heritage, fencing matters and closing of buildings on behalf of the Property Trust. Lynne was thanked in many forums including an afternoon tea where many stories and anecdotes were shared. Although leaving the Synod office, Lynne is not leaving the Uniting Church; instead we wish her well as she transitions to a congregational ministry role.

Bron Minchin also concluded her contract role as Property Administration Assistant earlier in the year. Bron had served in Property Services since May 2015. Bron ably assisted the team in many facets of administration, including coordinating the wind-down of the Motor Vehicle Lease Scheme.

In March, Trish Johnston commenced in the role of Property Coordinator. Trish has 20 years' experience in administration, much of

which involved minor capital works and building projects. Trish is an active Uniting Church member and is involved in the coordination of a women's group, a member of the worship team and also volunteers for the Salvation Army, serving the homeless.

Later in June, Beverly Ong commenced in the role of Property Administration Assistant (0.4FTE). Beverly has over 10 years full-time work experience in administration, procurement, finance and IT across a range of industries. Most recently Beverly has worked part-time in a real estate company, which has given her exposure to aspects of property management.

Catherine Stock also continues to serve the church with excellence in her role as Building and Projects Coordinator.

The Property Services Team looks forward to helping you and your congregation with any queries or plans you have for your church property.

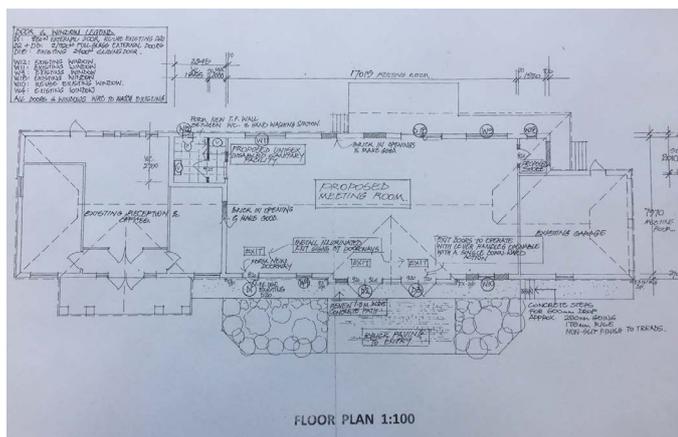
**Matt Wilson**  
**Manager, Property & Projects**

## Uniting Venues SA – it's project time!

Following a number of investigations and reports spanning many years, the roof cladding and gutters on Adare House are finally being replaced. Works commenced mid-October and are due for completion by the end of the year. Once complete, Adare house will once again be free of leaks and subsequent water damage.



The project is reasonably complicated due to the height and design of the building. Scaffolding surrounds the building to provide a safe working environment for the tradespeople involved in the project. In addition to replacing the roof cladding and gutters, all of the fascia boards and scotias will either be repaired or replaced as well as painted and a damaged chimney will be repaired.



The second of our two projects is underway at Nunyara. The second residence located next to the office / reception is being converted into a multi-purpose meeting room. Once complete in early 2018, the 132sqm room will provide greater flexibility and choice for guests as well as a much needed indoor space for school activity camps on rainy days.

The project involves removing all of the internal walls and services and installation of two entrance doors. The existing ensuite will be converted into a disability access toilet and the room will be equipped with audio-visual equipment and reverse cycle air conditioning.

Thanks and praise is given to God for his abundant and very obvious blessing for Adare and Nunyara and the broader Uniting Venues SA team.

## Finance - General

### 2018 Stipends and Allowances

The approved "Schedule A – Ministers Stipend Allowances and Charges 2018" is available for your information on the UCSA website at [Uniting Church SA - Stipends](#).

### Audited 2016 Financial Statements

Please send copies of audited annual Financial Statements (of congregations, faith communities and 'parishes') to the UCSA Synod Financial Services Team within 6 months of the end of your financial year, in line with regulation 3.8.7 Accounting and Audit (which can be viewed on the National Assembly web site).

For those with a year end of 31 December these were due by 30 June 2017. Please ensure that your Financial Statements have been sent in if not already actioned.

If you have any questions regarding this please contact Peter Harbison on (08) 8236 4282 or for Country Callers 1300 766 956.

### Mission and Service Fund Contributions – 2018

Response forms for 2018 Mission and Service Fund contributions can be downloaded from Uniting Church SA <http://sa.uca.org.au/mission-and-service-fund>

Please print, complete and return your form by 20 December 2017. (Please note that the contribution rate increased to 10% from January 2016).

If your congregation wishes to have all 2017 contributions recorded in the 2017 financial year (ending 31 December) please ring (08) 8236 4282 to discuss a payment method before Friday 15 December 2017.

### Synod Office Opening Times – Christmas 2017 and New Year

The Synod office will close on Friday 22nd December and re-open on Tuesday 2nd January 2018.

UC Invest will be available during normal business days through the Christmas period.

Please check the UC Invest website for opening hours.

For important cut-off times relating to the Payroll Bureau (for December and January pay cycles) please see the Payroll section in this newsletter.

### Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC)

The Annual Information Statement (AIS) required by the ACNC must be lodged with them no later than 6 months after the end of your financial year.

For congregations with a 30 June end of year, this should therefore be lodged with the ACNC by 31 December.

Please see the following link for further assistance:  
[Uniting Church SA - ACNC](#)

## Payroll

### December Payroll Cut-off Times

For the month of **December** we ask that all **timesheets** (relating to November) **and any leave forms** are submitted to the Payroll Bureau as soon as possible and no later than **Friday 1st December**. This will greatly assist Payroll in completing the final pay cycle for the year and all other obligations on time.

Please note, any leave reflected on December timesheets or planned to be taken in December should be accompanied by an **authorised leave form**. Timesheets & leave forms can be scanned & emailed to [payroll@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:payroll@sa.uca.org.au) or posted or faxed.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Payroll by emailing [PayrollUCA@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:PayrollUCA@sa.uca.org.au) or phone 8236 4241 or 4242.

### Payroll Bureau Administration Processing Fee increase - 2018

The Payroll Bureau Service Fees will be increasing from 1st January 2018 in order to partially recover costs associated with providing the Payroll Bureau Service. The new rates will be:

|                                | Without GST    | With GST       |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Payroll Monthly Admin Fee      | <b>\$22.50</b> | <b>\$22.55</b> |
| Set up of New Company          | \$106.65       | \$117.32       |
| Set up of New Employee         | \$53.30        | \$58.63        |
| Termination of MOU Fee         | \$26.65        | \$29.32        |
| Reprocessing Fee               | \$26.65        | \$29.32        |
| Recovery Fee (Payment Summary) | \$47.85        | \$52.64        |

## Congregational Bookkeeping Unit (CBU):

### Services Offered by CBU

The CBU offer a variety of services to congregations including:

- Bookkeeping Services
- General Bookkeeping Support
- Consultancy Services
- MYOB software - Installation and Training

Information about these is available on the UCSA website at [Uniting Church SA - Congregational Bookkeeping Unit](#) or email [cbu@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:cbu@sa.uca.org.au) with any enquiries.

Please note that during the end of financial year period, December to March, the CBU is unable to undertake MYOB Installations and Training or Consultancy as resources are fully utilised in preparing financial statements for all CBU clients. Enquiries are still welcomed and CBU will endeavour to accommodate requests as soon as possible.

**Diane Hughes**  
**Manager Financial Services**