



Dollars & Sense

September 2015 Newsletter from the UCSA Resources Team

Making Best Use of Resources

Welcome to another edition of Dollars and Sense. We hope you find the articles and information helpful as you serve in your Congregation.

As you would be aware, the Presbytery and Synod meets through the year to consider a range of matters and in many cases, sets new directions for the Church. A number of decisions were made at the June meeting which I would like to share with you. As we've looked for cost savings across the Church we have focussed our attention on making the very best use of the resources entrusted to us.

1. A new initiative is the Manse Reinvestment Scheme (MRS) which aims to provide Congregations with a new option within the scope of utilising proceeds from the sale of manses. The MRS sits as a special provision alongside the Property Sales Proceeds Policy.
2. All of Presbytery and Synod, Mission

Networks and Congregations are encouraged to invest monies available in term investments with UC Invest. This would see all returns from these investments coming back to the Church.

3. An increase in the Congregation contribution to the Mission and Service Fund from 9% to 10% was approved, effective 1 January 2016.
4. The 2016 Ministers Stipends and allowances were approved (with the vehicle depreciation and standing charges to be advised later).
5. The Church took a decision to exclude thermal coal extraction and exploration from the Church's investment portfolio.

These matters are discussed in more detail later in this edition.

As the Church worked through some significant and challenging matters in the life of our Church there was a really encouraging sense of being 'in it together'. Nigel Rogers, General Secretary, reminded us of this – that we are one Church.

Reflecting on the decisions made I continue to be grateful for your work and humbled to be entrusted to oversee the resources of the Church. I understand that many people do not see what happens within the Synod office, but choose to trust those who have been called to these roles. This trust is not taken lightly nor taken for granted. Our aim is to provide exceptional service built on trust, integrity and clear communication. Later in the year we plan to invite you to respond to a survey, seeking your feedback on the services we provide. We also want to know what services you need that we currently don't offer.

Should you require further information please call me (8236 4225) or write a note to pbattersby@sa.uca.com.au. General enquiries are welcomed at resources@sa.uca.org.au

Grace and peace
Peter Battersby
Executive Officer, Resources

Beyond Limits – an instant hit with schools

Beyond Limits Outdoor Education is fast approaching 4,000 participants annually as interest in our activity programs continues to grow. Since 2012, Uniting Venues SA has provided programs at Adare, Nunyara and Tarooki and the team of young Christian men and women is planning to facilitate activities for approximately 80 groups in 2015 – that's two programs a week for each school week of the year.

Beyond Limits is providing growth opportunities for the camps and conference centres as new programs are introduced. This year 'tent camps' were introduced at Adare and our activities at Nunyara for primary schools were expanded to include billy carts, bush cooking and shelter building.

The introduction of the new activities is a

strategic decision to provide a 'Sequential Camp Experience' for the school students. Students can now attend Nunyara in Years 4, 5 or 6; Adare in Years 7 or 8; a tent camp at Adare in Years 9 or 10; and return to Nunyara in Years 11 or 12. Tarooki, at Robe, provides another great option for schools.

The philosophy behind the sequential camps experience is that students develop their skills whilst not participating in the same activity twice and receive consistent facilitation through the various year levels – our facilitators get to know the students better through the process of the sequential camps.

Thanks and praise is given to God for His abundant and very obvious blessing for Beyond Limits and the broader Uniting Venues SA team.



Finance - general:

Increase in Mission and Service Fund Contributions

At the June 2015 Presbytery and Synod meeting, the proposal to increase Mission and Service Fund (M&SF) contributions from 9% to 10% was approved, effective from January 2016.

This contribution has been locked at 9% since 2006, when the decision was made to reduce contributions from 15%, following the move to one Presbytery. However, in the intervening years there have been considerable legislative and regulatory changes placed on the Church. This has required the inclusion of new departments within the Synod Office, including Information Technology, Human Resourcing and Workplace Health and Safety, necessary to support the work of Congregations. This has changed the expenditure base of the M&SF and as such the contribution amount has been increased to assist in meeting the additional costs the church is facing.

Please allow for this increase in your annual budgets. We thank you in anticipation of your ongoing and vital support to the M&SF and the work of the Synod Office.

Audited 2014 Financial Statements - Congregations and Parishes

Audited copies of Congregational and Parish 2014 financial statements are due to be lodged with the Presbytery and Synod office (Financial Services Team) by the 30th June 2015. Thank you for those statements already received.

If your Congregation or 'Parish' is yet to complete this, please send these in as soon as possible. The Financial Statements should include an Income Statement (containing all revenue and expenses), a Balance Sheet (showing assets and liabilities) and an Audit Statement confirming that the accounts have been audited.

Church Councils should refer to Section 3.8.7 of the 2012 UCA Regulations for more information. These can be viewed at <http://assembly.uca.org.au/resources/regulations>

Should you have any questions about this please contact the team on finance@sa.uca.org.au

Payroll

WorkCover Levy rate 2015/2016

The Synod Payroll Bureau will advise the new

WorkCover levy rate shortly and this will be reflected on September Tax Invoices / Payroll Statements.

2016 Stipend and Allowances

The Stipends Committee reported to the June 2015 meeting of the Presbytery and Synod, proposing increases for 2016. Its recommendation of a 2.5% increase on the minimum stipend and associated allowances (excluding vehicle depreciation and standing charges) was approved and will be effective from January 2016. <http://sa.uca.org.au/documents/presbytery-and-synod-meetings/2015/2015-june/second-mailing/Stipends-Committee-Report-for-June-2015-P/S-meeting.pdf>

Congregation Change of Contact Details

If there has been any change to contact persons within your Congregation please advise the Payroll Bureau as soon as possible by completing the Payroll Bureau Service MOU Change of Representative form. This can be downloaded from UCSA website at <http://sa.uca.org.au/finance/payroll-bureau-service>

This form also includes space to update the email address where Payroll Tax Invoice Statements are to be emailed each month. These Payroll Tax Invoice Statements provide a breakdown of the month's payroll amounts, prior to the funds being debited from your Congregation's bank account (reimbursement) on the 14th of the month.

Award Rate & National Adult Minimum Wage Changes

The new Modern Award pay rates have changed as of 1st July 2015. These can be downloaded from UCSA website at <http://sa.uca.org.au/human-resources/congregational-resources/modern-awards>

The National Adult Minimum Wage is currently \$17.29 per hour or \$656.90 per 38 hour week (before tax).

Casual employees covered by the national minimum wage also receive a 25% casual loading.

This will mean employees, who are paid the minimum wage rate in accordance with a Modern Award or if award-free receive the national minimum wage rate, received a pay increase in July in accordance with the National Minimum Wage Order made by the Fair Work Commission.

Payroll Compliance

Is your Congregation complying with all of

its statutory obligations in relation to payroll payments, record keeping and reporting?

Superannuation Guarantee obligations

If you pay an employee \$450 or more in a month, you must make an employer contribution of 9.5% to their chosen fund. Under SuperStream, employers must make super contributions on behalf of their employees by submitting data and payments electronically in a consistent and simplified manner. SuperStream is mandatory for all employers making super contributions, APRA-regulated super funds and self-managed superannuation funds (SMSFs) receiving contributions. If you have 20 or more employees (medium to large employer) SuperStream started from 1 July 2014. From that date, employers needed to start implementing SuperStream and had until 30 June 2015 to meet the SuperStream requirements when sending superannuation contributions on behalf of employees. This has now been extended to 31 October 2015. If you have 19 or fewer employees (small employer), SuperStream started from 1 July 2015. You have until 30 June 2016 to meet the SuperStream requirements when sending superannuation contributions on behalf of your employees. The following link takes you to the ATO website information about the small business superannuation clearing house which you will need to use to meet your super obligations.

<https://www.ato.gov.au/business/super-for-employers/paying-super-contributions/small-business-superannuation-clearing-house/>

PAYG Tax

Employers are required to withhold tax from the payments they make to employees and send those payments to the ATO regularly. An employee can only claim the tax-free threshold from one payer at a time.

Employees must complete a Tax File Number Declaration and provide it to their employer to advise their particular circumstances and enable the employer to work out how much tax to withhold.

If you make payments subject to withholding, you must:

- register for PAYG withholding
- withhold amounts from wages and other payments
- lodge activity statements and make payments to the ATO
- provide payment summaries to employees
- provide the ATO with a PAYG withholding payment summary

annual report.

Workcover

Under the South Australian Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986 (the Act), all employers must register with WorkCoverSA within 14 days of employing workers, unless you, as the employer, are exempted.

These requirements apply to ALL employees that the Congregation may have now, or in the future.

There are also other obligations and requirements related to the Human Resources function including, but not limited to awards, contracts of employment and position descriptions.

Failure to comply with these requirements opens up the Congregation to penalties and prosecution. It also endangers the BAS Agent registration of the Synod and the individual registered agents within the Synod.

You are strongly encouraged to avail yourselves of the services of the Uniting Church SA Synod Payroll Bureau, which will help you to ensure that all employer obligations are met.

The Payroll Bureau Service ("Bureau") is available to Congregations and Faith Communities of the Presbytery and Synod of South Australia, by agreement, on a cost recovery basis.

The Bureau will process payments as directed by the Congregation. The Congregation remains the employer and manager of the personnel (employees and people in specified ministries) at all times. The Bureau will endeavour to ensure that the instructions received by the employing entity comply with all applicable legislation however, ultimately, compliance remains the responsibility of the Congregation.

Payroll is processed monthly and includes the following activities:

- calculation and payment of salaries and wages
- calculation and withholding of PAYG tax and remittance to ATO
- making before and after tax deductions from pay
- production and email distribution of pay slips on a monthly basis
- processing approved leave applications
- responding to queries by Authorised Persons
- calculating and remitting superannuation contributions

- calculating and remitting WorkCover levies
- production of the Payroll Tax Invoice Statement and distribution to the Congregation's nominated confidential email account
- WorkCover and superannuation will be paid on behalf of the employer and employee and included in the monthly charges to the Congregation.
- Payment will be paid into personnel's nominated bank account on the 15th of the month or the previous working day if this date falls on a weekend.
- The Congregation will be charged a monthly processing fee for each paid person. This is charged on the 14th of the month or the previous working day if this date falls on a weekend.
- Payment Summaries will be produced and distributed at the end of each financial year.

Following these recommendations will ensure that the Treasurer, Church Council and Congregation will be complying with the requirements and obligations incumbent on them as office holders and as a legal entity.

For further information please contact or Payroll (email PayrollUCA@sa.uca.org.au or phone 8236 4242).

Police Checks and Due Diligence

The Screening and Authority process is an important part of the policies and practices of the Uniting Church SA. It involves two steps: 1. A National Criminal History Check through the UC Screening Services Unit and 2. Authorisation by the Church Council as it appoints the person into a role of responsibility having completed due diligence.

What roles does this include?

The obvious roles are those in designated ministry leadership, such as Ministers, leaders of children and youth, pastoral care visitors and Church Council members. We also need to include individuals who

have a perceived responsibility in the tasks that they undertake. If we use the lens of an outsider observing an individual in a position of power and trust, then we need to ensure we are communicating to the wider community that we understand the importance of providing safe ministry.

Individuals being considered for a leadership/role of responsibility should first be approached privately to ensure they are willing to participate in the screening process. The Presbytery and Synod office provides a centralised service for the screening requests to be processed. Forms can be downloaded from the Called to Care section of the website: sa.uca.org.au/called-to-care/downloadable-resources

Invest with UC Invest!

UC Invest was established to provide investment options and opportunities for the Uniting Church SA community and to create revenue for the wider Uniting Church. Over the years it has become a significant contributor and trusted activity of the Uniting Church SA. Its endurance and performance through financial challenges are testament to its good governance and quality systems together with a discerning investor base.

At the core, UC Invest offers competitive interest rates which, unlike other financial institutions, also provide profitable returns to the Uniting Church community. These returns are provided through grants to the Mission and Service Fund (\$2.0m in 2015) and other activities within the life of the Uniting Church.

Whilst many Congregations (and members) use UC Invest, others invest their funds (\$2.5m) with external financial institutions. Keeping funds within the Church returns profits to the Church which become available for the work of the Church (through the Mission and Service Fund).

So in an effort to achieve a balanced budget, the Presbytery and Synod requests that all Presbytery and Synod entities, Mission Networks and Congregations invest monies available in term investments with UC Invest. This small but significant resolution reflects our desire to be 'in it together'.

Property Services - Manse Reinvestment Scheme

The Manse Reinvestment Scheme (MRS) was approved at the June 2015 Presbytery and Synod meeting and aims to provide Congregations with a new option for utilising proceeds from the sale of manses as well as provide a benefit for the Mission and Service Fund (M&SF). This initiative has arisen from strengthening the cultural norm that the whole Uniting Church SA is 'in it together' when it comes to balancing the M&SF.

'In it together'

The structures and practices of the Uniting Church in SA are inherent functions of being a pilgrim people. We are a part of "the people of God on the way to the promised end" (Basis of Union, para. 18). As pilgrims we move best when we move together. When we are 'in it together' as the people of God, we strengthen and enhance our capacity to participate in the reign of God transforming this world.



Manse & the MRS

The core business of a manse is to provide accommodation for the minister in placement. Today's ministry context has changed from the past and hence the provision of accommodation has changed. A manse can be 'held' in both bricks and mortar or as sale proceeds and still be providing accommodation for the minister.

The MRS sits alongside the *Property Sale Proceeds Policy* (PSPP) and adopts the 'in it together' principle based on a leveraged approach resulting in a contribution to the M&SF income whilst providing a guaranteed income source for Congregations.

When a manse is sold and the sale proceeds are held to purchase a manse in the future as per the PSPP, the MRS is a voluntary option for the investment of the sale proceeds. The Congregation can choose to invest the resulting funds as per the following:



<i>Investment options</i>	<i>Summary</i>	<i>Further description</i>
Conservative	<i>Capital guaranteed – target return (not guaranteed) CPI + 1%</i>	<i>This option is capital guaranteed and will target a return (not guaranteed) of 1% higher than CPI.</i>
Growth	<i>Managed equity fund</i>	<i>Not capital guaranteed - value will rise and fall with market conditions. Minimum suggested investment timeframe of 3-5 years. Asset mix is 100% Australian equities.</i>
Manse Reinvestment Scheme	<i>Capital guaranteed. Returns a guaranteed 4% plus 1% for M&SF</i>	<i>Returns guaranteed 4% per annum for congregation and 1% for the Mission and Service Fund. Income credited on a quarterly basis. Capital guaranteed.</i>

Where a physical manse is rented out, the congregation continues to incur the costs of running and maintaining the rental property and is exposed to vacancy risk and tenancy risk. The MRS provides a return without the costs, exposure to risk and can free up volunteer time for mission.

Existing sale proceeds

Congregations with existing sale proceeds can elect to participate in the MRS or continue in their existing investment choice. Those Congregations whose existing investment choice is Growth (currently the Share Fund) and would like to continue with this investment, are invited to consider giving a 1% dividend to the M&SF on an 'in it together' basis.

MRS summary

- Sale proceeds accessible to purchase manse in future
- Guaranteed income source for congregations
- Voluntary participation
- No time constraint on utilisation of capital sale proceeds
- 'In it together' to help balance Mission & Service Fund.

For further information regarding manses, please contact Lynne Aird, Property Administrator, on 8236 4210 or laird@sa.uca.org.au
sa.uca.org.au/property-services/manses

Uniting Church SA Commits to Action on Climate Change

At the June Presbytery and Synod meeting the Church was challenged to consider how it must respond to the growing imperatives of climate change, both corporately and individually, as we accept God's call to care for His creation. It was agreed that the Uniting Church SA would divest its share portfolio from companies involved in the extraction or exploration of thermal coal and will seek to further decarbonise its investment portfolio in the coming years. The Moderator Dr Deidre Palmer welcomed the resolution, "In making this

decision we are demonstrating our Christian responsibility for taking action on climate change. The earth is God's gift and we are called to care for it in ways that reflect God's trust in our stewardship for present and future generations". The meeting also agreed that an action plan would be developed which would encourage Congregations and Mission Networks to find ways of living and working which minimise our impact on the environment.

WHS

Safe-Tea Break

Welcome to the third instalment of 'Safe-Tea Break' - an opportunity to take 5 minutes to consider all matters WHS. I'm hoping that if you're reading this that you have also read the other two instalments for 2015, but if you haven't, please do as they will make more sense if they are read in order! As a reminder, in this year's Dollars and Sense editions, I'm aiming at getting us back to basics by providing some simple guidance to those looking at where to start and a review opportunity for those who are further on.

In the March edition of Dollars and Sense, the focus was on trying to prevent accidents and incidents from happening in the first place. This is the principal focus of all our WHS related activities; sadly however, the statistics make for pretty alarming reading and show there is still plenty of room for improvement. In SA alone the numbers of seriously injured workers is currently in the region of 6,000 people every year. We know from the incidents that are reported to Synod that the Uniting Church is not immune to serious accidents and injuries.

Dealing with any emergency, if left to chance,

makes a response less effective and often chaotic and so this is our next area of focus when managing safety. Emergency planning isn't just about fire safety and should also include provisions for incidents involving first aid, adverse weather, property damage and security breaches etc. Further UCSA guidance information and documents that can be used for emergency planning, first aid, fire safety and incident management can be accessed using the following link: <http://sa.uca.org.au/whs/>

Emergency Planning guidelines:

- Use your hazard register and risk assessment(s) to help identify the types of emergencies you are likely to have.
- Document your plan, keeping it as clear and concise as possible and ensure the relevant people (including Church Council) are aware of its contents and location(s) for referral.
- Place evacuation diagrams, emergency signs and contact information in key locations throughout the building(s).
- Ensure that any areas or equipment required during an emergency

are checked, in working order and accessible (e.g. escape routes, first aid kits, emergency lighting and extinguishers).

- Provide training for those with responsibilities (e.g. first aiders and fire wardens).
- Rehearse your plan to ensure it is effective. This doesn't have to be with everyone present, but should include those with any specific responsibilities.

You are likely to have much of the contents of a good emergency plan in place already and therefore implementing a new plan or updating an existing one should not be overly difficult. Regularly reviewing your emergency plan will ensure it remains effective and relevant to your Congregation.

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

Wayne Booth
WHS Coordinator

Insurance Services

Hi everyone,

Just a friendly reminder to let everyone know that we are starting the renewal process for our insurance program for 2015/16. If you need to review your sums insured on any properties or wish to add or remove something from your insurance schedule give us a call to discuss it (if possible before 31st October 2015).

Another thing to keep in mind is that we are coming up to the busy season for fetes and fairs. If you are thinking of having an event

and require a certificate of currency for Public Liability to give to your local council, give us a call. Please keep in mind the Synod insurance program provides protection from actions brought against the Church in respect to our liabilities, both as the property owner and in connection with our recognised activities. 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.

At the end of the day we want to make sure that church property and members are safe from any losses, which will also help keep our insurance premiums low.

In the meantime, if you have any questions about insurance please contact Sue Alley or me in the Insurance Services Department on 08 8236 4222 or email insurance@sa.uca.org.au

Tony Phillips
Manager, Insurance Services