



UC Information

A straight highway through the desert

Registered by Australia Post PP530028/00079

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The Old Testament reading for the second week in Advent includes the words, "In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God (Isaiah 40.3)." At a recent meeting someone remarked that while Lent does not fit well with our shortening autumn days this passage about a highway in the desert has extra power in the heat of the Australian summer.

The reading reminded me of a recent visit to the Red Centre. On reflection it abounded with Advent imagery. Advent is a time of expectation and the Red Centre has achieved iconic status in Australia. I found myself wondering what it would really be like. Is the majesty of Uluru and Kata Tjuta really what people say it is or would I be disappointed? I was expectant but did not quite know what it would be like.

There was indeed a long, and often straight, highway through the desert. But it was never dull. There were surprises along the way like majestic Wedge-tailed eagles and then we reached the corner – at Eridunda – where expectation built for at last we were heading straight toward the Rock.

Suddenly the rock appeared – bigger than I had expected – but we were tricked because it was Mount Connor. It was a real Uluru look alike, at least from a distance, but it was not what we had come all this distance for and we had to drive on still further.

But our expectation and determination paid off and we arrived in the national park, set up our tent and spent time just gazing at the beauty of Uluru as the sun slowly set. It was truly magnificent even from the distance of the camping ground.

The following day we walked around the base of Uluru. It was about 11 kilometres and every face, every angle was different. The next day we went to Kata Tjuta – the Olgas. We walked through and around the part that was accessible to the public. This too was magnificent. In fact in some ways it was more magnificent because we could walk through the gorges between the huge domes. I was truly impressed and I was deeply thankful that I could see such a beautiful part of the world.

As we walked back to the car it started to rain and as we reached the car it became heavy. We became part of the 1% of visitors who see waterfalls on these huge rocks. We returned to Uluru and again wondered at this mighty rock which now had waterfalls in every valley.

So for us the trip was full of both expectation and surprise. The Red Centre is a deeply spiritual place and I felt the presence of God very strongly. After we arrived home I was talking to someone who would probably class himself as an atheist. He too had heard people say that it was a spiritual place but was very surprised to find that he too sensed it when he went there.

Advent is always a season of expectation for me. There are always surprises. There are always surprise encounters with the Christ child. It is an old season yet it is new each year. I pray that your Advent will be full of expectation, that you will be surprised by your encounters with the Christ child and that you will be richly renewed in your faith and your discipleship.



PLACEMENTS NEWS

Placements finalised since the last edition of UC Information:

- Anthony Hill (MOP) to Resthaven Paradise, Leabrook and Murray Bridge from 5 December 2011.
- Rev Nicholas Rundle (Anglican) to Christ Church from 1 February 2012
- Rev Dr Steve Taylor (Baptist) to Principal UCLT from 1 July 2012

Wondering if any new placements have become available between UC Information mailings? Check out the Website under UC positions vacant:

resources.sa.uca.org.au/uc-positions-vacant

The following is the current list of vacant (or soon to be vacant) approved placements:

Profiles available

- Adelaide West
- Bordertown, Buckingham and Mundulla from 1.01.12
- City Soul (0.5)
- South West Fleurieu
(Delamere, Inman Valley, Myponga, Range Road, Yankalilla)
- Southern Yorke Peninsula
(Brentwood, Corny Point, Curramulka, Edithburgh, Koolywurtie, Minlaton, Port Vincent, Stansbury, Warooka, Yorketown)
- Resthaven Co-ordinating Chaplain - Marion and Bellevue Heights 0.8 FTE.

Profiles not yet available

- Hare Street (0.25) from 1 January 2012
- Mitcham Village (0.5 - 0.7?)
- Chaplain, Flinders Medical Centre

Interstate Placement Profiles

Northern Synod

- Broome (0.7)
- Casuarina, Darwin
- Nhulunbuy (0.5)

Frontier Services Placements

Frontier Services have Placements in NT and W.A. If you are looking for a challenge contact Rev David Buxton:

Associate National Director
david.b@frontierservices.org
02 8270 1322 or 0417 489 946

If you wish to express an interest in any of these placements, or would like to have a look at the profile, please advise Rev Philip Gardner, pgardner@sa.uca.org.au, by **Tuesday 17 January 2012**. You should also inform your Mission Network's representative on Placements Committee of your interest. The next meeting of the Placements Committee will be held on **Monday, 23 January 2012** when names of Ministers will be considered to fill a number of these placements.

Please join us as for the following Special Services in the next few months

INDUCTIONS

Rev Judi Hartwig
Spicer

16 January 2012 7.30 pm

Rev Andrew Diprose
Eldercare, Acacia Court
January 2012

Rev Nicholas Rundle (Anglican)
Christ Church
10 February 2012 7.30 pm

COMMENCEMENTS

Nathan Whillas (Candidate for MOW)
Loxton and Renmark
January 2012

Michael Dowling (Candidate for MOW)
Eldercare, Kirkholme
January 2012

