



The Shape We're in

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Sharonne Price
Executive Officer Pastoral Relations

Stacey was a young woman with whom I spent a lot of time. She was exceptionally attractive but all skin and bone. She seemed so sure of herself, but it was all illusion. In fact illusion was the topic of many of our conversations. She would look at herself in the mirror, and comment on how fat, ugly and irresponsible she was. She was intent on punishing her body and soul - day after day after day. Of course it was neither realistic nor logical. Rather it was a sustained perception and a projection borne of fear, anxiety and identity trauma. Our prayer time together would always focus on being the beloved of God – warts and all.

I am constantly reminded of Paul's exhortations to the early church and his frequent body talk.

*Now the body is not made up of one part, but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body, it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body...if they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body."
(1 Corinthians 12: 14,19,20)*

It sets me wondering...how do we perceive our Uniting Church body – part of the body of Christ? You know, the you and me and us and them?

I'm sure you all remember those perception games - you know – the old woman/young woman trick, the faces and goblet pictures and so on. Just to illustrate, is this a rabbit or a duck?



The truth is that when we choose to see just one of the images, we miss the wonder of the whole picture. It is not one or the other, but both. They belong together. They are indivisible.

The eye can not say to the hand "I have no need of you" And the head cannot say to the feet, I don't need you!" (verse 21)

Secondly, just like Stacey, I wonder how often do we look at this wondrous body, the church of Jesus Christ, and say, "Yuk!" I'm not suggesting we should suspend our critical minds but sadly I often hear people decry sections of the Church, or indeed the whole church and, usually in ignorance declare, "Unclean!" It took a mightily disturbing vision for Peter to be convinced that the Gentiles of Caesarea were worthy of ministry and baptism. What sort of vision might challenge us to see each other differently?

Finally, too often we define ourselves according to what we are not - as if we needed to stand against another part of the body in order to feel acceptable to ourselves.

Instead of "Lord, I am glad that I am not like those sinners!", what would it do for our spirits to utter, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner."? This is the gift of knowing our common humanity, our common brokenness, our common redemption, hope and destiny.

We belong together in this wonderful body of Christ. Take a long look in the mirror. We are the profoundly beloved. We are indeed marvellous.

And it is always going to be "You and me and us and them" to the glory of God.

PLACEMENTS NEWS

Placements finalised since the last edition of UC Information:

- Rev Matt Curnow to Summertown from 1.02.11
- Rev Chris Harkness to Bridgewater (0.5) from 1.02.11
- Pastor Brian Scott to County Jervois from 1.07.11
- Rev Coral Smith (Deacon) to Blackwood (0.5) from 1.05.11
- Rev Kevin Sarlow to Glenunga from 1.05.11
- Rev Naomi Duke to Parafield Gardens from 1.03.11

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

Profiles available

- Adelaide Congress
- Adelaide West
- Bordertown
- Burra (0.5) from 1.04.11
- Cornerstone, Davoren Park (0.5)
- Gateway (0.3)
- Kimba
- Mylor (0.2)
- Seaton (0.3)
- West Lakes (Joint with Church of Christ) from 1.03.11
- Westbourne Park

Profiles not yet available

- Ardrossan
- Barossa
- Clayton Wesley*
- Freedom, Paralowie*
- Grange
- Kent Town
- Loxton and Renmark

**Received but still to be approved*

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 **Wednesday, 22 February 2011**. 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, 28 February 2011** when names of Ministers will be considered to fill a number of these placements.

Please join us as we celebrate with the following Congregations and people over the next few months.



UnitingCare Commissioning Service Adelaide West UCA 27 February 2011 at 2.00pm

The annual Commissioning Service for Agency CEOs, School Principals and their governing boards and councils
Afternoon tea served afterwards.
RSVP: Friday 18 February to Amelia Brown
8236 4255.

Rev Naomi Duke (Induction) Parafield Gardens 13th March 2011 at 2.30pm

Presbytery Commissioning Service (as part of the Presbytery and Synod of SA Meeting) Adelaide West UCA 11 March 2011 7.00pm

**Rev Dr Ian Price
Rev Rod Dyson
Mr Alan Dutton
Rev Ruthmary Bond
Rev Ashley Davis
Rev Dave Williamson
Rev Sarah Williamson (Deacon)**

Rev Sue Ellis (Induction) Ceduna March 2011

Rev Kevin Sarlow (Induction) Glenunga May 2011

Rev Coral Smith, Deacon (Induction) Blackwood May 2011

Meeting of the Presbytery and Synod of SA
Friday 11 March 2011 from 6.30 pm
Saturday 12 March 2011 from 9.15 am
Adelaide West Uniting Church

**Tom and Kim Long
"Worship, Witness & Word"**

Registration due now

Bev Freeman
bfreeman@sa.uca.org.au or 8236 4243
Prepaid lunches available on Saturday

Open to everyone