



UC Information

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Mission & Discernment

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The editor of the Queensland Synod's newspaper, Journey, recently asked me if I would write a short statement on "What inspires me". It was for their back page (where ordinary papers put the sports headlines) and would sit with a few other people's thoughts on the same theme. This was easy – a real Dorothy Dixier. I wrote:

My students inspire me. They really do. I have the great privilege of being the Principal of a College that people come to because they want to become more faithful disciples of Jesus and more effective leaders in their local congregations or agencies. Some of the students are responding to a call to the ministry of the Word or ministry of Deacon. Others are ministers wanting to reflect on their ministry experience and to equip themselves for the next challenge. And because I'm the Principal I get to have one-on-one conversations with most of them about why they have come to the College to study. I'm inspired by their stories of risky, costly commitment to God's call. But I'm inspired especially by the evidence their stories give me that God is deeply engaged with the world and the church in this generation too.

God has a mission and calls members of the church to participate in it in a variety of ways. As I listen to people telling me what God has called them to do I'm also hearing what God is up to in our generation – and challenged to join in.

The Basis of Union brings a theological perspective on this, especially in paragraph 13.

- The one Spirit has endowed the members of Christ's Church with a diversity of gifts.

- There is no gift without its corresponding service: all ministries have a part in the ministry of Christ.
- The church will provide for the exercise by men and women of the gifts God bestows upon them, and will order its life in response to God's call to enter more fully into mission.

That's what inspires me – seeing that ideal of the church as the body of Christ being *lived* (I Corinthians 12).

In these challenging times, when many of our familiar and trusted ways of being the body of Christ in our own towns and neighbourhoods are proving hard to sustain it's natural to wonder what we should do next. The answer is easy to say but harder to do. We should do whatever it is that God is calling us to do. We should find out where the Holy Spirit is at work around us and join in.

James Dunn has noticed that if the definition of mission is 'finding out where the Holy Spirit is at work and joining in', then 'discernment is the first act of mission'. In our times (as in all times) discernment needs to be central to the life of every Christian community. One key aspect to that discernment is to be continually seeking to identify the gifts that the Holy Spirit is giving to the members of the community. It's less a case of saying, "It's time to organize carols by candlelight again and we need a keyboard player. Is there anyone you can think of who could do that?" It's more a case of saying, "We're learning that Susan and James have a real gift and passion for hospitality. Is there a way that we could help them lead our congregation in extending the hospitality of Christ to our neighbourhood?"



PLACEMENTS NEWS

Placements finalised since the last edition of UC Information:

- Rev Andrew Diprose to Eldercare, Acacia Court from 1 January 2012
- Dianne Bailey-Walters (MOP) to Resthaven Mount Gambier from 17 October 2011
- Rev Rob Brown to Executive Officer, Uniting Care from 1 March 2012

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
- 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)

Profiles not yet available

- Mitcham Village
- Chaplain, Flinders Medical Centre

Advertised Positions/Placements

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

- Chaplain, Royal Adelaide Hospital

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 22 November 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 November 2011** when names of Ministers will be considered to fill a number of these placements.



Please join us as for the following Special Services:



INDUCTIONS

Rev Judi Hartwig
Spicer

16 January 2012 7.30

Rev Andrew Diprose
Eldercare, Acacia Court
January 2012

COMMISSIONINGS

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

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

From Placements Committee

We have recently completed documents on two important areas for Placements. One of these is on advertising for congregational placements. The other one is on what we have come to call "local arrangements" - when congregations are looking for someone to do some preaching and pastoral work for a few hours a week, too few for us to consider it a placement. (The question we wrestle with is how to maintain connection and oversight in these circumstances.) The documents will be available on our soon to be launched website. In the meantime if you are wanting to advertise or fit the "local arrangements" description, contact us so that we can guide you through the process.

Fresh expressions of church with John Drane, Church of Scotland

John Drane will explore fresh expressions of church on the edges of the Church of Scotland, outlining the opportunities and challenges for being church today. Given historical links between the Church of Scotland and the Uniting Church, this should be of particular interest. Thursday 17 November, 3.30pm – 5pm at Uniting College (34 Lipsett Terrace, Brooklyn Park). Cost \$10. Contact: steve.taylor@flinders.edu.au.