



# UC Information

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## GETTING ON WITH MISSION

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One of the highlights of my first few months as Principal have been visiting rural churches. As part of the Refresh programme, I've found myself in Lock, Laura and Robe. It has been a great way to meet new folk and to get a feel for church life beyond the suburban sprawl that is Adelaide.

My topic was Getting on with mission. Mission is a word with so much baggage.

For some it is linked with Stolen Generations. For others, it smacks of Billy Graham Crusades and the mass appeal of stadium preaching. Or the corporate business world, in which mission statements suggest programmes for church growth.

None of these make any sense of the Biblical narrative.

**Being a mate** - This expression of mission is best seen in the story of the woman at the well (John 4). An encounter with Jesus turns the Samaritan into a storyteller. What is striking is how she, not Jesus, is the primary agent in mission. Even though only minutes old in faith, she is willing to verbally share her moment of encounter with her neighbours who know her so well.

**Having a yarn** - This expression of mission is threaded throughout the book of Acts, thirty six times in which faith is presented verbally to a group of listeners. What is striking is how different each speech is - in setting, in illustrations, in ending, in effectiveness. There is never a "one-size-fits-all" repeated stock sermon or generic alter call. Instead there is a deep sensitivity to a listening audience and the unique cultures that shape their hearing.

**Crossing the ditch** - In Acts 8, mission occurs as the gospel jumps continents and the church in Africa is birthed. Ditches are being crossed. They can be cultural. They can also be generational. What is important is who takes the initiative in Acts 8. The primary agents are not the one on mission (Philip), but the Spirit and the Ethiopian. By implication, the first act of mission is thus an act of listening, of finding out where, and how the ditch is being crossed.

**Sharing the load** - In John 10:11, Jesus is the Good Shepherd, who lays down his life. Mission emerges in

the context of "knowing a voice", of relationships of depth and honesty. Mission takes shape not in words, but in sacrificial actions. When linked with Luke 15:3-7, we are reminded that mission expects shepherds to be wandering far from the walls of the church.

In summary, in the Biblical narrative, mission in the Bible has little to do with imposition, corporate programmes or manipulation. Instead it emerges in relationships, through listening and the sharing of life.

When I look around today I continue to see these images of mission.

**Being a mate** occurs as we hold a street barbeque, download the "50 ways to share your faith" Synod resource or offer Prayers of Intercession for the various work and play places which our congregations inhabit.

**Having a yarn** occurs through special services like weddings, Christmas or Anzac Day. Or in the example of a friend of mine, who in a few short sentences at his 50th birthday party, found words to name the changes that faith had wrought in him.

**Crossing the ditch** occurs in fresh expressions, as we join an Aboutface, through overseas missions exposure trips or as we teach conversational English to refugees.

**Sharing the load** occurs through the many forms of chaplaincy supported by the Uniting Church. This can be officially, through placements such as schools, aged-care centres, hospitals etc. It can also be unofficially. Each of us have the potential to adopt an 'unofficial' chaplaincy posture within our surrounding community - to your street, sporting club, or the local cafe!

*(Short advertising break - Have you heard about the new Diploma of Ministry (Chaplaincy) at Uniting College. Which type of chaplaincy, it may be an ideal next step for you or someone in your congregation. Why not contact the College to request more information!)*

These are the words and image that define my understanding of mission.

What about you and your church? How are you giving expression to the breadth and depth found in the word?

## PLACEMENTS NEWS

**Placements finalised** since the last edition of UC Information:

- Rev Liellie McLaughlin to Eden Hills (0.25) from 1 February 2013.

The following is the current list of vacant approved placements:

### Profiles available

- Ardrossan (0.5)
- Barossa (Angaston, Greenock, Nurioopta, Tanunda & Truro)
- Blackwood from 1 January 2013
- Bordertown, Buckingham & Mundulla
- Kangaroo Island Linked Congregations
- Kent Town (0.7) from 1 January 2013
- Mallala and Two Wells (0.6)
- Mt Gambier from 1 January 2013

### Profiles not yet Available

- Glenunga
- Port Augusta Congress Faith Community
- Woodville

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](mailto:pgardner@sa.uca.org.au) by **Tuesday 20 November 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, 26 November 2012** when names of Ministers will be considered to fill a number of these placements.

### Advertised Placements/Positions

Watch [resources.sa.uca.org.au/uc-positions-vacant](http://resources.sa.uca.org.au/uc-positions-vacant) for **position descriptions and application closing dates**

- Executive Officer MR (SA) from 1 January 2013
- Pastoral Relations Officer, Congregations and Ministry from 1 January 2013

## 50 WAYS to share your faith

50 weeks of inspiration to help you share what you believe

[sa.uca.org.au/share-your-faith/](http://sa.uca.org.au/share-your-faith/)

*50 ways to share your faith* is a free app or email to encourage you to live what you believe and talk about it.

Over 50 weeks, you'll see 50 real-life stories and ideas to help you share your faith.

You are invited  
to the following Special Services

### INDUCTION

**Rev Rod Dyson**

Adelaide West

15 January 2013 7.30pm

**Rev Christine Gilbert**

St Andrews by the Sea, Glenelg

31 January 2013 Time: TBA

### COMMISSIONING

**Rob Morgan, Lay Pastor**

Southern Yorke Peninsula

20 January 2013 2.00pm

At Yorketown

### Presbytery & Synod devotions from Vicky Balabanski

Vicky's encouraging devotions 'Treasure in Clay Jars' and 'Dry Bones' are now available for churches, [college.sa.uca.org.au/resources/presbytery-synod-bible-studies.html](http://college.sa.uca.org.au/resources/presbytery-synod-bible-studies.html)



### Save the date:

**KCO 2013**

March 23 - 24

Theme "Team Jesus"

Venue: Barossa Valley  
Tourist Park.

Discover more about God's love and our world in a way that is filled with creativity, play, exploration, worship, friendship and fun. Pull on your KCO colours, get ready to cheer, it's time to celebrate with Team Jesus at KCO 2013! For more information visit the KCO 2013 website

### Complaints Processes –

#### Opportunity to share your concerns

At the November 2012 Presbytery and Synod meeting an explanation regarding complaints processes was presented. The Complaints Processes Working Group, invites any individual or group in writing or by conversation, to share their concerns on one of the following days, Tuesday 11 December, 12.30pm to 4.30pm or Thursday 13 December 10.00am to 4.30pm at the Adelaide College of Divinity. Please contact Malcolm Wilson, Phone: 82364206 or [mwilson@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:mwilson@sa.uca.org.au) to organise a time or a written submission.