

# BANYULE NETWORK OF UNITING CHUCHES

## PLACEMENTS INFORMATION BULLETIN - November 2010

The Placements Working Group was established by the Network Coordinating Committee in August 2010 with a brief to explore the ministerial placement requirements for the Banyule Network. The Group agreed that their immediate task was to address the need to fill four impending ministerial vacancies at Ivanhoe, Cross Generation, Arden Crescent and Gresswell through a Network-wide strategy.

The work of this Group has involved: -

- assessing the future placement needs to take the mission of the Network forward
- assessing the current existing placements
- collating congregational profiles for all congregations in the Banyule Network
- conducting a detailed review of each congregation's activities with each representative presenting information
- seeking an expanded understanding of the 'priorities for action at Network level' that were developed out of the survey of congregations and received by the Network Coordinating Committee in early 2009

The Placements Working Group is conscious of the need to progress towards seeking placements for the Network in 2011 and understands the anxiousness of congregations whose Ministers will be concluding their ministries between November 2010 and February 2011. We are grateful for their patience and for the openness of these congregations to seeking placements that will provide ministry for their congregation but also contribute to the priorities of the Network.

The following is a list of the Network priorities that were established in 2009 following a survey of all congregations: -

- ministry to children, young people and young families and those currently disengaged from the Church
- contemporary and participatory worship aimed at young adults and those beginning to explore Christianity as adults
- educational gatherings presented by experts in the fields of ethics, justice, spiritual development, expressing faith in the 21st Century, building sustainable futures etc using local and visiting personnel
- ministry to the ageing for those in their retirement years seeking stimulation and the opportunity to explore issues impacting on people as they grow older
- a Community Centre on the West Heidelberg site offering a diversity of services to the local community plus a worshipping community which can integrate and interact with the services and ministries operating in the Community Centre
- ministry to the mentally ill and intellectually disabled

In an atmosphere of openness and collaboration, the Placements Working Group has carefully worked through the many aspects of these Network priorities and has reached a consensus on how to progress the urgent work of submitting profiles to the Presbytery Placements Committee.

- We will continue to support the funding application for ministry to children, young people and young families and those currently disengaged from the Church via a BOMAR application.
- We support the importance of the schools and youth program running from Gresswell and the placement of the Community, Schools and Youth Ministry Coordinator.
- We seek placements that support our goal of seeking high standards of worship in our congregations. This is core to a vibrant and 're-energised' Uniting Church presence in the region which seeks new ways and fresh approaches for people of all ages to follow Christ. This will also lead to increased interest in educational gatherings presented by experts in the fields of ethics, justice, spiritual development, expressing faith in the 21st Century, building sustainable futures etc using local and visiting personnel.

- We acknowledge the importance for congregations to enhance ministry for the Third Age by:
  - identifying ways that the time and skills of people entering or in retirement can be harnessed to enrich their Christian lives and the Uniting Church
  - developing programs for transition to retirement which relate to finding meaning, reviewing Christian faith and becoming re-engaged with the Church
- We support the progress to date in establishing a Community Centre on the West Heidelberg site offering a diversity of services to the local community plus a worshipping community which can integrate and interact with the services and ministries operating in the Community Centre.
- We understand the value and need for a continuing ministry to 'People Living with Mental and Physical Disabilities' and support the current programs in place in the Network: -
  - the Heidelberg-East Ivanhoe Drop-in Centre, *hope springs* and Thursday Worship at Heidelberg West
  - the opportunities for people living with multiple disabilities to have access to inclusive worship, resilience building programs and opportunities for socialising and belonging to a community
  - the pastoral care provided to members of this group and their carers
- We support the Social Justice programs in the Network: –
  - outreach support for asylum seekers – meeting their need for practical support and accommodation through the program at Ivanhoe and other initiatives
  - supportive network/programs for students from La Trobe and RMIT Universities, including international students
- The Network has a great need for pastoral care of patients at the Mercy Hospital, Austin Health Care, local private hospitals, aged care facilities and people who are housebound.
- We acknowledge the strong and significant relationships between UnitingCare Agencies (and others) who are service providers within the community and congregations. There are strong mission partnerships between Ivanhoe and UnitingCare Harrison (for Wesley Court) and Wesley Mission Melbourne (for Linlithgow).

Considering all these requirements, the Placements Working Group will recommend that congregations seek placements that support the core needs of current congregations and enhance the potential of the Network to action the Network priorities.

To achieve this outcome, we believe we will need to establish one Joint Nominating Committee with representatives from each congregation and the Presbytery. We will need to work together to achieve placements that build a strong Ministry Team for the Network.

The Placements Working Group now has the large task of developing and completing the Network Team Profile and collaborating with the Treasurers of our congregations to affirm our ability to finance Network placements to meet congregational and Network ministry requirements.

If you have any feedback regarding this communication, please feel free to contact the Placements Working Group either through your congregational representative, or the co-Chairs - Sue Withers ([sue.withers@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:sue.withers@victas.uca.org.au)) and Paul Stephens ([paul.stephens@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:paul.stephens@victas.uca.org.au)) - or the Secretary, Rod Horsfield ([equus66@bigpond.com](mailto:equus66@bigpond.com)).

The Placement Working Group members are: Sue Withers (Presbytery/co-Chair), Paul Stephens (Presbytery/co-Chair), Rod Horsfield (Secretary), Frances Wright (Ivanhoe), Grant Watson (Cross Generation), Jenny Gibbons (Heidelberg-East Ivanhoe), Jim May (Bellevue), Keith Tupper (Arden Crescent) and Ross Kimber (Gresswell).

*Approved for distribution to all Church Councils and congregations by the Network Coordinating Committee  
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