UCANZ
News for Uniting Congregations
APRIL 2020

CRISIS: challenge and opportunity

The out-working of the current pandemic crisis is providing challenge to every one of our social lives. Local churches, as would-be expressions of Christian community, are profoundly affected. As local networks, churches are also well-placed in the short and medium term to assess and address the welfare of local people: mostly remotely, although the value of church members under 70 shopping for their seniors is immediately evident.

The denominations have done well in terms of vital communications at this time. They are taking their lead from a New Zealand government acting with care and decisiveness. The Prime Minister and key officials have shown how essential to being effective is a unified message.

There is a profound message here for the Church. While delivery of the message is adapted for different constituencies (urban/rural for example) we are less effective as CVs with multi-denominational demands on our time. Yet Partner Churches representatives (Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian) at our recent Standing Committee were sceptical as to whether structural improvement can be on the agenda for CVS.

What do the local churches think? If your church council is meeting by Zoom, these three questions could form the basis of a discussion:

1. **Do you value being a uniting congregation?**
2. **Are you happy with current regional church structures?**
3. **Would you like to relate more closely to other CVs?**

Is it time for the 115 cooperative ventures to petition for greater *autonomy* within the current institutional structures, or else to re-align as single-denomination churches? The present hiatus serves no one very well.

Any feedback from April or May councils can be emailed to Adrian and will inform our June UCANZ Meeting. And/or contact any of your elected representatives to Standing Committee:

Jenny Chalmers (Taupo) Alan Robinson (Kerikeri)
David Hall & Fakaofo Kaio (Auckland)
Geraldine Coats & David Harding (Wellington)
Heather Kennedy (Ashburton)
Chris Auchinvole (Hokitika)
Andrew Howley (Alexandra)

PRACTICAL consequences of COVID

During these first four weeks of lock-down, please note that no post addressed to our shared (Anglican Centre) PO Box is being collected. Please contact Margaret or Adrian if you need urgently to send us something by post.

The **UCANZ Directory** is being issued as a pdf. Your church secretary has the file available for printing.

FORUM footnote

Last year's Forum featured musical input from Rev David Dell. He has now made the sheet music for the song '**Make a Difference**' available to us. You can download it from the website 2019 Forum page. Reporting your usage through CCLI licence will allow David to reap some royalties.

Christian World Service: the bigger picture

Pauline McKay, National Director of CWS, joined our recent Standing Committee meeting and reminded us of the greater stresses to societies in the wider world that have less comprehensive healthcare. You can read her latest media release at: https://cws.org.nz/newsroom/media-releases/

UCANZ Removal Fund

This year has already seen a pleasing number of ministers moving into CVs. This experience has led us to believe that the scheme is not as well known as it should be. Full details are on the website under Resources – Procedures 9.3.1

We want to make sure that all churches are aware of certain parameters of the scheme:

- A local church may join the fund at any time.
- A local church must belong to the fund for a minimum of five years.
- A local church wishing to withdraw from the fund must give 12 months' notice no earlier than the end of the fourth year of membership.

The scheme essentially spreads the costs of receiving an incoming minister over several years and insures against the high cost of a long-distance move. If any church would like to discuss Fund membership, contact the 'office'.

Ngā mihi e noho ora mai,

Adrian Skelton & Margaret Pitt