



Placements for a Just Church

Email to synodmeeting@nswact.uca.org.au

That the Synod

Set out the action to be taken by the Synod, e.g. requests encourages, directs, adopts the statement/report, appoints a committee/task group, records its appreciation, approves the guidelines, making reference to the body to whom it is directed.

That the Synod:

Affirm the direction of the paper and provide constructive feedback to guide the working group

The scope of a proposal

Be concise and clear e.g. what this consists of; what is and isn't part of this proposal. The more specific you can be, the better.

This is a discussion paper. No proposals to change current processes are included.

Rationale

A rationale is a kind of sub-proposal within a proposal: it offers the reasons for proceeding to address a particular problem with a particular solution.

Justice: Is not just about us and our processes, but about how we live out our hope in Jesus Christ and our understanding of how we best be God's church in the world.

1. Our current reality:

Current placement processes are well-known to be problematic. Without blame or criticism the working group has heard that:

2. Current Placements are reported as:

- i. There are not enough ministers, and few are willing or able to relocate outside of their preferred Presbytery/location.
- ii. The rural/regional church suffers from depleted financial and volunteer resources. Fewer ministers are willing or able to relocate. This is compounded by fewer and aging volunteers, so there are less people available/willing to actively create missional opportunities that might stimulate interest for a minister.
- iii. Financially driven rather than missionally inspired. Finance has become a restraint and a control, rather than a means of creativity.
- iv. Underpinned by a complex and difficult profile process that rarely reflects the accurate reality.
- v. It is a complex blend of polity, inherited wealth and advantageously located property, but the result for our placements process is not generous, inclusive, or courageous.

We affirm that:

- i. God is present, active, and leading us forward.
- ii. The triune God calls us out of our buildings and our love of the past, to serve the wider world and to seek reconciliation with all creation. As a gift from God and our forebears, we have an abundance of resources, financial and human, which could enable missional initiatives across our Synod. How we currently use them is problematical.
- iii. Congregation members exist to serve the wider community and to be the discipling body of Christ.
- iv. Presbytery exists to resource, support, encourage and lovingly oversight the congregations in mission.
- v. Synod exists to resource the Presbyteries, to encourage them in their care for congregations, to oversight property and enact government legislation.

Future of Placements

1. Can we determine a broader focus that moves beyond traditional ministry, enabling ministers to be strategically placed in teams, to intentionally work with the congregation in serving the wider community?
2. Should every placement have an expectation of community engagement, encouraging the congregation to turn their face towards the community.
3. Might we change our formation processes so that prospective candidates:
 - i. Work with UTC to deepen the learning and field practice already being undertaken by Candidates for Ministry to intentionally form and coach them for team ministry.
 - ii. Work with UTC to develop a process to place a team of candidates/students in a practicum of a church plant/something new (non-traditional).
 - iii. Work with UTC to refine and implement Peter Walker's plan to reform Phase 2 Formation so that candidates are introduced to ministry placements earlier.
4. Allow the Blended Ecology and the Enculturating ministry proposals to shape our future placements process.
5. Simplify our processes/profiles.

Proposers

A proposer and the seconder must be attending the Synod in Session as members. If the proposal is from one of Synod's reporting bodies (committee, board, presbytery, task group), it should be submitted and signed by an authorised officer of that body.

Name: Bronwyn Murphy (Convenor),
Simon Hansford (Moderator),
Amanda Hay (ACOMP),
Andrew Smith (Canberra Region Presbytery),
Heewon Chang (Phase Three Minister),
Matagi Vilitama (Georges River Presbytery),
Mark Faulkner (Saltbush),
Lindsay Cullen (Assembly),
Rob McFarlane (Synod),
GLEN SPENCER (UME).

Email: BRONWYNM@NSWACT.UCA.ORG.AU

Phone: 0428 411 830

