



17th April 2020

Notes and news for Yarra Yarra Congregations and Institutions

As usual, the newsletter contains two sections. The first has information directly related to Yarra Yarra Presbytery, and this is followed by information about items which may be of interest to your congregations.

Please identify other items relevant to your community, and promote the issues and events listed below through your own newsletters and other communication channels as appropriate. There is much going on, so please take a few minutes to review.

Please ensure that items for the next edition are sent in by the end of the month. It is helpful if you can provide text, rather than copies of fliers which need to be transcribed and summarised. Please include contact information for those seeking more information.

PRESBYTERY NEWS

An unexpected time

Although I have left the introductory text above, clearly this is not a time when there is a lot of activity to be published. Nevertheless, life in the Presbytery of Yarra Yarra and its congregations continues. Our buildings are closed, but this does not mean that the work of God is on hold. For many, the enforced limitation on movement has meant a change of activity, but it has also introduced us to new ways of doing things, and challenged us to develop new strategies for maintaining our community.

This newsletter will outline some of the changes that have taken place in the Presbytery so that you are able to understand how we are responding. Our Presbytery team are still working, and responding to phone and email contacts.

Inductions and Ordinations

Inductions and ordinations are times of particular significance for congregations and the ministers involved. The Presbytery Standing Committee has recognised that these services, as with all other group events, cannot take place in the normal manner.

- Ordinations, and specifically the ordination of Ye (Viola) Liang, will be deferred until it is again possible to meet together. The importance of having a group of people physically present has been recognised for the nature of the event and for those involved.

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|----------------------|------------------|--------------|--|
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| Secretary | | | |

- The Chairperson is reviewing the potential for holding induction services by teleconference, based on a model developed in the Port Phillip East Presbytery. Each situation will be considered on an individual basis, and decisions will be made to suit the Minister and congregation involved. In the near future this will impact on the inductions of Rev Rod Peppiat at Blackburn (The Avenue), and of Rev Jinseon Park at Mooroolbark

In the meantime, we are pleased that Viola has been able to commence her ministry at Warrandyte. The Pastoral Relations Committee has authorised her to engage in all the activities of a Minister, including the sacraments, pending an opportunity for ordination and induction services.

Synod and Assembly News

I hope that everyone is a subscriber to the newsletters published regularly by the Synod and Assembly. To subscribe, please use the following links:

- Synod: send an email request to communications@victas.uca.org.au
- Assembly: send an email request to comms@nat.uca.org.au

Worship resources

By now I am sure that all congregations will have decided an approach to ensure there are regular worship opportunities for members. However, variety is always pleasant, and you may wish to publish alternative online opportunities. Both of the newsletters from the Synod and Assembly contain links to a wide variety of realtime or pre-recorded services.

Congregational information

While some normal activities are suspended, it may be a good time to review your congregational rolls, to ensure that you are maintaining them in the form required under the Uniting Church Regulations. Remember that each congregation is required to have membership rolls with lists of confirmed members, members-in-association and baptised members. A roll of adherents is also required for those who do not fit any of these three categories. It may be timely to review the requirements set out in Section 1 of the UCA Regulations, which can be found on the Assembly web site at <https://resources.uca.org.au/resources/regulations>.

Presbytery Meeting

At this time it appears unlikely that the Presbytery meeting scheduled for 30th May will be able to proceed. The Standing Committee is reviewing a variety of options which would allow us to deal with urgent business, and will inform members once the position is a little clearer.

Annual Mission Grants Programme in 2020

If you have been thinking about an application to the Annual Mission

Grants Programme in 2020 then the following information will be important to you.

Normally the grant process commences in mid to late April each year with the distribution of application forms and a guidelines document that outlines all the key dates and information. Due to the current circumstances because of the COVID 19 pandemic, commencement of the program will be delayed. The Annual Grants page on the Synod website (<https://victas.uca.org.au/resources/grants/annual-grants>) will be updated in the next few days to reflect this advice, and a further update will be provided by the first week of May, following the meetings of the Mission and Ministry Committee and the Property and Operations Committee in late April.

LAY EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Please take a few moments to review the information about lay leadership training included in the last newsletter. A wide range of opportunities is available, and there are probably people in your congregation who would appreciate hearing about these. Please ensure that information is published in your regular newsletters to all members. For more information, contact Sunny Chen, on tel 9857 1001 or at sunny.chen@victas.uca.org.au.

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION ONLINE

Mindfulness is proven to be an important and beneficial practice to help us deal with our stress and anxieties, and evidence suggests it may boost our immune system. It can simply be important for us to push the “pause” button and take us into the Green Zone, (for those that are familiar with that term). Rev Deacon John Tansey has advised us that from the 17th April he will lead an online Meditation for around 20 minutes via Zoom. At the end of the session he will answer any questions that people may have about the practice or discuss with each other. The sessions will be available via computer or mobile phone using Zoom, or can also be accessed by telephone.

For more information, including the Zoom link and phone number, contact John on tel 0433 259 146 or at tojtansey@gmail.com.

*If you have information that you wish to have distributed through this newsletter, please ensure that it is submitted by the start of the month in which the item is to appear. I plan to try to send newsletters out in the third week, so that means if your event occurs early in the month, you will need to have it submitted by the start of the **previous** month.*

The newsletter is sent to Church Council Secretaries and Presbytery members. If you should not be receiving it, please contact me at pyy.secretary@victas.uca.org.au with the name of your congregation and the name of the correct person.