
Media & Communications

Manager
Team

Maggie Johns
Heather Dowling
Andy Reavell
Elaenor Nield
Laura Clapton

The Media and Communications Unit continues to seek to communicate the story of God's work within and through the Uniting Church to the people of the church and the people of Western Australia.

The Team

Members of the Media and Communications Team, accounting for 2.8 full-time equivalents (FTE), are:

- Media & Communications Manager (0.6 FTE) – Maggie Johns – with oversight of the team and responsibility for setting strategic direction. Primary focus on external and internal communication, including issues management and public relations.
- Media & Communications Officer (0.8 FTE) – Heather Dowling – Editor of Revive with a focus on writing stories and sharing information, internally and externally.
- Production Officer (0.8 FTE) – Andy Reavell – with a focus on design, print production and promotional materials.
- Digital Communications Officer (0.6FTE from 27 January 2016) – Elaenor Nield – with a focus on content creation and management of our digital presence, as well

as the database (a revised, new role in lieu of the Website & Information Officer position).

- Website & Information Officer (0.6 FTE casual contract 6 July to 30 November 2015) – Laura Clapton – with a focus on website and database management. Following a review of the Website and Information Officer role, this position ceased on 30 November 2015.
- Events Officer (1.0 FTE to 1 August 2015, then 0.4FTE to 18 September 2015 seconded from property services) – Clare Ligtermoet – with a focus on managing the logistics for major events such as Assembly, Synod, Presbytery and the Expo.

Media and Communications continue to be well supported by a team of dedicated volunteers:

- Keith Jarvis, Doug Lambert, Linley Lambert, Neville Lewis, Gerry Ligtermoet, Robby Muir, Reg Radford and Kim Bennewith (until his passing on 6 September 2015) assist with Revive distribution.
- Judith Amey, Marion Millin, Dianne Boon and Deirdre Russell assisted with proofreading the 2015 Synod/Presbytery reports.

I TELLING THE STORY (activities to 30 June 2016)

The Media and Communications team are in a privileged position to see, hear and experience the faithful journey of individuals and groups throughout the church. We are committed to sharing those stories to encourage, inspire and empower our community.

I.1 Revive

Revive, the Uniting Church's free, bi-monthly publication, is an outreach of the Uniting Church to the wider Western Australian community. While Revive is available both within the Church community to nurture and inspire members and

employees in their lives; it's also a way of spreading the word of God to the wider community, particularly through its availability in all Good Samaritan stores, Uniting Church schools/colleges and agencies. The potential readership of Revive is much more than congregation members; Revive is one of the outlets that puts the Uniting Church on public display in the community. While putting together each edition of Revive, we keep in mind how to engage the wider community and our Uniting Church community at the same time.



Revive continues to evolve in the online space and is available to be read on mobile devices such as tablets and smart phones by visiting <http://revivemagazine.org.au/editions>.

In September 2015, Robert Watson received an Australasian Religious Press Association (ARPA) Silver Award for his accomplishments, contribution and outstanding performance in the Best Theological Article category for his article, 'On the road to Jericho' published in the February 2014 edition of Revive.

Andy Reavell, Revive art director and designer also received a 'Highly Commended' in the ARPA Best Cover category for his cover published in October 2014 with the theme 'Voices for the voiceless'.

2.2 Digital Media

The development of a broad digital media portfolio has been a focus of the new Digital Communications Officer position. Included in this digital media expansion is the implementation of a newly developed Social Media Strategy. The results of the strategy can already be seen in the increase in the reach of our Facebook posts from an average of less than a 78 person reach per day in December 2015 to a 209 person reach in June 2016.

There have also been significant gains in Twitter impressions since the implementation of the Social Media Strategy. For the period 7 December 2015 to 6 March 2016, the average Twitter impressions per day was 267.

For the following 91 day period, from 7 March to 6 June 2016, the average impressions per day had increased to 378, this represents a 41% increase in daily Twitter interaction. While these increases will plateau in the future, we should continue to see steady growth in Twitter impressions as the Uniting Church Western Australia's social media presence expands.

The most popular content on the Facebook page is overwhelmingly to do with events and projects such as the Uniting Church in Australia's 39th Anniversary posts and Revive editor Heather Dowling's live-blogged ration challenge experience.

The Uniting Church Western Australia website (www.unitingchurchwa.org.au) has also seen significant gains with new sections including The Moderator's weekly blog and the General Secretary's monthly blog, Generally Speaking. Both have been well received and diversify the content on the website overall. We will continue working toward the diversification and increased functionality of the website.

2.3 Media

The Uniting Church Centre's media engagement is usually about social justice issues instigated by a media release or in response to direct approaches from a journalist regarding a specific issue. The Moderator also submits editorials at Christmas and Easter to be published in The West Australian and The Sunday Times newspapers.

3. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

3.1 News & Notes

News and Notes is a free, weekly electronic newsletter of news and events published at close of business on Wednesday afternoon. Our first redesigned News & Notes was distributed on 22 June, the 39th Anniversary of the Uniting Church in Australia.

Special editions in August, October and December 2015, and February, April and June 2016 of General Council News and Notes, and 2016 Presbytery News and Notes, as well as the 2015 Synod/Presbytery News and Notes were emailed or posted to individual members of the Synod and Presbytery. In addition, the existing practice of distributing a hard copy in the monthly mail-out to all congregations/faith communities, schools/colleges and agencies on

the first Tuesday of the month continued.

We welcome news or events to be listed in News and Notes to be sent to newsandnotes@wa.uca.org.au or GPO Box M952, Perth WA 6843 by 12 noon on Wednesday.

3.2 14th Assembly

Hearts on Fire, the 14th Triennial Assembly meeting of the Uniting Church in Australia was held at Winthrop Hall, University of Western Australia and Trinity Residential College and Conference Centre from Sunday 12 to Saturday 18 July, 2015.



This event was a major undertaking by the WA Synod and particularly media and communications where work began back in September 2011.

In May 2014, Clare Ligtermoet, events officer, was seconded from Property Services. This position had primary responsibility for managing the logistics of Assembly, Synod and Presbytery.

The WA Synod was responsible for key areas of the 14th Triennial Assembly meeting, including the opening and installation service, daily worship, co-ordination of all aspects relating to the main and accommodation venues, as well as catering and transport. In addition to this, there was close involvement with the 14th Assembly Local Organising Committee, Assembly officers, key stakeholders and suppliers.

Heartfelt thanks to Clare Ligtermoet for her diligence, problem solving, professionalism, determination and her significant contribution in ensuring that the WA Synod were fantastic hosts and set the Uniting Church in Australia's 'Hearts on Fire'.

3.3 Synod/Presbytery Expo 2015

Building on the success of 2014, the Synod/Presbytery Expo was held at All Saints Floreat Uniting Church on Friday 11 September 2015. This was a vibrant and engaging time to interact with agencies, boards and commissions as they showcased their work.

Attendees were able to choose sessions and workshops concurrently throughout the day where representatives talked about the work they do and addressed upcoming proposals. There were also static displays in the hall, and in the foyer, with the opportunity to ask questions. Sessions included a presentation from the Social Justice Unit on care for the environment and an invitation for the Synod to make a symbolic action calling for stronger action on climate change; Congregation Community Services Commission resources; planning for a missional church; sharing the journey of South Perth Child Care Centre; progress in mission at Busselton; congregation community services in Mandurah; creative living at All Saints Floreat Uniting Church; prison chaplaincy; Uniting Church Adult Fellowship (UCAF); UnitingCare West; UnitingWorld WA committee, Beananging Kwuurt Institute; the Royal Commission into

Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; and Makes you Wonder training to learn how to speak about your faith in your words and context.

There were also opportunities to discuss, ask questions and find out the importance of forthcoming proposals at Synod.

First Third specialist, Paul Montague closed an inspiring, thought-provoking and sometimes challenging day with a video of Persian-American poet, Anis Mojgani performing 'Shake the Dust'.

Thanks to events officer, Clare Ligtermoet whose skills brought another event successfully to fruition.

3.4 Directory and Database

The Directory is republished every 18 months and the updated Directory is scheduled to be published in mid-2017. The directory is password protected, available electronically on the website and is updated frequently.

The Uniting Church WA database, which holds the information of members, staff, companies, congregations and other contacts, is due to be overhauled as the current database has become out-of-date from a technological perspective. Digital Communications Officer, Elaenor Nield is currently working with our IT consultants and Clare Ligtermoet to establish a new database system with greater functionality to keep all contact information up-to-date across the organisation.

3.5 Presbytery Orders of Service

Working with the Liturgy Committee, with support from the personal assistant to the Moderator, Justine Woodward, we have prepared the printed order of service for: Rev Samuel Dinah's ordination as a Minister of the Word; Rev Robert Jetta's ordination as a Minister of the Word; Rev Stephen van Schalkwyk's induction to Wagin Group (Collanilling, Darkan, Dumbleyung and Wagin); Rev Dr Ian Tozer's induction to Fremantle Wesley; Rev Andrew Broadbent's induction to Busselton; Kristin Grainger's Ministry of Pastor commissioning to Manjimup; Rev Kim Francis' ordination as a Deacon; Rev Rick Morrell's ordination as a Minister of the Word; Rev Kim Francis' induction to Maylands-Mount Lawley; Rev Emma Matthews' induction to Nedlands; Rev Dr Sonny Rajomoney's induction to



St Peter's Emmaus Community Church; Rev Brian Thorpe's induction as an Intentional Interim Minister to Trinity North; Rev Karama Iopo's commissioning as a Supply Minister to Trinity North; and Rev Ruth Vertigan's induction as Rural Ministry Co-ordinator.

3.6 Royal Commission Task Group

Maggie Johns, Media and Communications Manager, continues to attend the meetings and resource the WA Synod Task Group for the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

3.7 Communications Network

The WA Uniting Church Communications Network is an important opportunity to get to know our communications colleagues from our caring agencies and schools. Fifteen to twenty communications professionals share their knowledge and expertise with each other in an informal environment over lunch during the school holidays at the end of terms one, two and three. Since July 2015, gatherings were generously hosted by St Stephen's School, the Uniting Church Centre and GSI.

These gatherings provide a wonderful opportunity to learn about and connect with our counterparts within the Western Australian Uniting Church family.

3.8 Work experience

In early December 2015, Media and Communications again welcomed a year 10 student from Penrhos College for work experience.

These are valuable and enjoyable learning opportunities for everyone involved.

3.9 ARPA

Media and communications manager, Maggie Johns and Revive editor, Heather Dowling attended the Australasian Religious Press Association (ARPA) annual conference, Freedom of the Religious Press, in Brisbane from Friday 28 to Sunday 30 August 2015. The conference program included stimulating, challenging and thought provoking presentations from Dr John Harrison, Journalism Program Director at The University of Queensland; Professor Nicholas Aroney, Australian Research Council Future Fellow at the Centre for Public, International and Comparative Law; Mark Fowler, Director of Newmann & Turnour Lawyers, Brisbane;

Casey O'Brien Machado, Territorial Social Justice Co-ordinator of the Salvation Army Australian Eastern Territory and Wendy Francis, Queensland Director for the Australian Christian Lobby (ACL).

ARPA provides an opportunity to network and for professional development. It exists to help Christian publications and their staff to better understand and fulfil the work that Christ wills to be done through the Christian press in Australia and New Zealand.

In conjunction with the ARPA conference, we meet in person with our Uniting Church counterparts from around Australia for one day to discuss, share and learn about our specialist areas of work within the context of each Synod.

3.10 UnitingWomen 2016

Media and communications manager, Maggie Johns and Revive editor, Heather Dowling attended UnitingWomen 2016, Sharing Stories of Hope, in Adelaide from Thursday 28 April to Sunday 1 May 2016. The conference program was intense and included stimulating, challenging and thought provoking presentations from keynote speaker, Khadija Gbla; Biblical narrative leaders Vicky Balabanski and Liz Boase; hope in women's daily lives presenters Candace Champion, Joanna Palmer, Ema Atiola, Kathryn Button and Helen Whittington; hope in our global context presenters Maleta Rumaroti, Secretary for Mission, Kiribati Uniting Church, Sureka Goringe, Associate Director of Church Connections, UnitingWorld, and Seforosa Carroll, Manager of Pacific Church Partnerships, Uniting World; hope for reconciliation in Australia presenters Tanya Hosch, Brooke Prentis, Denise Champion and Amel Manyon; hope for supporting and mentoring women cross-generationally presenters Denise and Candace Champion, Katheryn Curnow and Danica Patselis; hope in Australian society Q&A hosted by Julie McCrossin with panellists Lorna Hallahan, Geraldine Hawkes, Tanya Hosch, Elenie Poulos and Penny Wong; hope through church, its ministry and mission speakers Stuart McMillan, President of the Uniting Church in Australia, Myung Hwa Park, Moderator of the Uniting Church in NSW/ACT, Thresi Mauboy, Moderator of the Northern Synod, Deidre Palmer, Moderator of the Uniting Church in South Australia and Colleen Geyer, General Secretary of the Uniting Church in Australia Assembly.



UnitingWomen 2016 was a wonderful opportunity for women to join together in christian community, celebrating their stories of hope, as they embody the compassionate gospel of Christ in their daily lives. The aim was to:

nurture and encourage women in their christian journey; connect women together and build Christian community across Australia; and provide spaces for women to share their gifts and their narratives of hope.

As I reflect upon another busy, challenging and successful year, I sincerely thank and acknowledge each of my professional, knowledgeable and dedicated media and communications team members. They juggle many competing requests, often with tight deadlines, from across the organisation,

whilst maintaining their good humour and a focus on high quality outcomes. They regularly go above and beyond what is required of them and bless the Uniting Church WA with their skills and gifts in the process. I'm privileged to lead this amazing team of dedicated individuals.

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