



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

CROYDON CONGREGATION

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TO EVERYONE ASSOCIATED WITH CROYDON UNITING CHURCH

As we conclude one very busy year in the life of the Croydon UC congregation, and are about to begin another, there is some important news to share with every member of the church community and our partners in mission in Croydon.

At the Church Council meeting on December 20, Rev. Bronwyn Daniels advised that she has received and accepted a Call to the Uniting Church congregation in East Kew. Bronwyn will therefore be leaving Croydon UC from the end of March, 2017 to commence ministry there.

Bronwyn arrived at Croydon in early 2008 as her first appointment out of Theological College. The normal maximum duration of a ministerial placement in the Uniting Church is ten years. The wider Uniting Church will have been conscious that Bronwyn's ten years would be reached in about twelve months' time, and would therefore have been considering a potentially suitable next placement for her. In terms of timing, it is not surprising that Bronwyn has responded to the Call of God through the wider church as well as from the particular congregation. Whilst there will be sadness for us, we are grateful for Bronwyn's ministry with and to us over those nearly nine years and wish her every blessing in this next stage of ministry.

As soon as practical in the new year, the Church Council will commence several lines of activity. Firstly, we need to work with the Presbytery of Yarra Yarra regarding suitable ministry for the next phase of *our* journey as Croydon UC. As the duration of this process will not be known until we have had a chance to commence discussions, we will be concurrently exploring relevant interim arrangements for the leadership of worship and the provision of pastoral care in the time immediately following Bronwyn's departure. We will keep the congregation fully informed at each point of the process.

There will be opportunities to express our gratitude to Bronwyn, including an organised occasion to farewell Bronwyn and to formally 'release the pastoral ties'. This will probably be on Bronwyn's last Sunday at Croydon UC, March 26, and as planning proceeds we will ensure that this event is widely communicated.

You will be aware that Bronwyn's departure is not the only significant change to impact Croydon UC during 2017. As per previous newsletters, mail-outs and other public statements, approval was received during 2016 for a substantial property redevelopment project. Processes are well underway which will see the consolidation and re-development of the main church complex, including demolition of the current hall complex and subdivision of the land to the west of the memorial garden into house blocks for sale. The demolition will occur no earlier than the end of

May 2017, but hopefully soon after that. More precise timing will not be known until proposals are received from contractors (and approved by the Project Control Group), for which tenders have now been called.

From time to time, we continue to hear of people associated with Croydon UC who are apparently unaware of these significant changes to our property. Our encouragement is for everyone who has received this (and proceeding) letters to continue to help us communicate widely. The more that these 'exciting changes' are part of everyday conversations the more everyone will be engaged in the journey which will be an essential part of our life together over the next several years. People with particular concerns or questions can continue to direct them to the Chairperson of the Congregation, Russell Davison, or the Chairperson of Church Council, Rohan Pryor.

We must emphasize that the timing of Bronwyn's move to another placement is entirely associated with the Call process of Uniting Church, rather than related to the property project, and that she has been entirely supportive of Croydon UC planning for its mission and ministry into the future. The timing does, of course, emphasize the need for appropriate pastoral skills and leadership over the coming months, and we will need to work closely with the Presbytery to ensure the appropriate skillset for both interim and continuing ministries.

In the first months of 2017 we will also continue to address our obligations to provide suitable local leadership and our meeting of legal requirements to ensure the prevention of child abuse - both of these in ways that will be viewed as acceptable by the wider community and the wider Uniting Church, not just by ourselves. The Church Council and some of our many committees have already begun working through the Uniting Church's policies for the prevention of child abuse (*Keeping Children Safe*), and the *Code of Conduct for Lay Leaders*. Attached to this letter are copies of the *Child Safe Standards*, our *Statement of Commitment*, and the *Code of Conduct for Lay Leaders*. These are the formal policies of the wider Uniting Church that the Croydon Uniting Church Council has formally accepted and endorsed. More details on each of these important matters will be shared with the whole church community early in 2017.

We invite your continued prayers and support for Bronwyn as she prepares for a change in ministry - both concluding at Croydon and beginning at East Kew - as well as prayers and encouragement for all the local leaders in the Croydon congregation and Church Council.

With confidence that God is with us throughout the changing and challenging times in which we live, and in continued service to the world for which Christ died, we are faithfully yours,



Russell Davison
Chairperson,
Croydon UC Congregation



Rohan Pryor
Chairperson,
Croydon UC Church Council

