



Report from

Synod Advisory Committee on Ministerial Placements

Report

Context

The Placements Committee (Advisory Committee on Ministerial Placements) is responsible for the oversight of the processes that enable the placement of ministers, ministers from other denominations, and lay people specified ministries. Membership includes the Moderator (Chairperson), Associate General Secretary (Secretary), each presbytery minister, delegate of the CEO of UnitingCare Queensland, the Executive Officer of the Queensland Synod Chaplaincy Commission, and the Director of Christian Formation or delegate. This diverse membership brings together a collective story about what is happening across the life of the church and what resources are best able to meet the needs of particular ministry contexts.

Focus since the last synod

- Implementation of the optional dual track process has been the focus since the 33rd Synod.
- In August 2017 the Synod Standing Committee approved the implementation of the optional dual track process for an initial trial period of three years, commencing 1 January 2018.
- The introduction of a dual track placements process has allowed Joint Nominating Committees (JNCs) and ministers a choice of which placements process they would like to use.
- The option to use the delegated process has shifted the locus of the operation of the placements process from the Placements Committee to the relevant presbytery, congregation or appointing body as councils giving 'heed to one another' (Basis of Union para. 15).
- Through the use of the optional delegated pathway, has brought a greater sense of transparency to the process so that those most intimately involved in the discernment process, ministers and JNCs, might feel that they know what is happening and be empowered to act.
- We are in the midst of the initial three-year trial and the statistics below indicate a slow take up rate.
- The Placements Committee continues to have an oversight function of the placements process and, where it considers necessary, can act in what it sees as the best interests of the wider church and individual ministers and placements. With less of its time taken up on transactional business the Placements Committee has been able to devote to strategic thinking, vocational trajectories, and general oversight of the trends and needs of placements across the state.

Statistics as at 1 March

Total number of approved placements (including vacancies)	311
Number of approved placements less than full time	115
Number of ministry agents in approved placements	241
Ordained	176
Lay	62
Male	154
Female	90

Priority Directions

Through its oversight and discernment function, the Placements Committee seeks to match ministers and vacant placements. In doing this, the Placements Committee is mindful of the priority directions and how these impact on the needs of placements.

Challenges/risks as we progress

- Our ability to resource the church's witness in locations of strategic importance geographically, organisationally, and demographically with suitably skilled ministry agents.
- The rise in the number of part-time placements demands the need to rethink the nature of ministry in the placement. When placements reduce from full time, history shows that without significant, purposeful intervention, the fraction of the placement continues to decrease.
- Placements Committee continues to work with presbyteries and councils to find constructive ways to respond when the vitality of a placement come into question.

Proposals to the 34th Synod

It is proposed that the 34th Synod receive this report.

Contact for report questions

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