

PRIORITY DIRECTION B:

Promoting a discipline of prayer and spirituality (individual and corporate)

Executive Summary

Framework

Seeking to be a “prayerful listening Church” requires that we affirm the many people currently engaged in the discipline of prayer and the diversity of styles of prayer being offered by people in public worship, in small groups and by individuals. The strategies will promote prayerfulness and endeavour to create opportunities to develop in skill, grow the opportunities for exploring “how to” pray, gather and distribute resources on prayer and foster a hunger for Christian Spirituality.

Challenges

We know prayer happens, but we have no measure of the current state of prayer in the Qld UCA.

Spiritual retreats are not a strong part of the UCA tradition, but there are some quiet achievers in that field worth promoting and celebrating. People are willing to attend workshops, camps and conferences for other fields of endeavour so we hope that they will take up opportunities to attend weekends on prayer.

Some people resist initiatives that have a “top-down” appearance so the EVERY MEMBER WILL PRAY ON MONDAY AT MIDDAY may not be embraced.

Little specific work has been done by the group on the “worship” spoke.

Overall Direction of Proposals

The intention is to affirm the existing activity, to grow skills and opportunities and to develop a hunger and a language for further engagement on prayer and spirituality.

Specific Objectives

1. An increased number of people participating in groups that practise, model and teach prayer
2. Every member will articulate an increased knowledge of prayer in the life of Christians
3. Increased access to resources on prayer and Christian spirituality in line with Uniting Church ethos and theology
4. An increase in explicit prayer experiences across all levels of the Church

OBJECTIVE 1 *An increased number of people participating in groups that practise, model and teach prayer*

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Every Member will pray on Monday at midday (event and resource) Members across the Synod engaged in regular prayer on a Monday at midday.

- Group to develop prayer for a business card size card to be distributed at Synod.

The Church participates in Prayer Workshops “Come and Try Style”

- Make prayer workshop package available to whole of Church in Queensland, thereby increasing opportunities for people to explore and learn about Biblical teaching and a variety of Christian prayer styles and expression e.g. movement, labyrinth, art, colour, song, lament, meditation, small group, silent.

The Church will be intentional about prayer by using Lists of Triggers to pray

- Produce lists of triggers to pray.
- Identify suitable organisations and place printed list on passing notice boards in those organisations.
- Brand with *Together on the Way, Enriching Community* logo.
- Promote on *Together on the Way, Enriching Community* website.

Christian spirituality is lived and practiced

- Invite groups to register and distribute prayer points.
- Collate prayer contributions weekly.
- Provide the online means for groups to register and distribute prayer points to identify how many groups are praying.
- Distribute prayer points via email or RSS feed or via website or via UC Info.

OBJECTIVE 2 Every member will articulate an increased knowledge of prayer in the life of Christians

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

The Church will be more aware of and participate in Prayer events

- Identify a Prayer week and invite people to participate where they are.
- Suggest week leading up to UCA Anniversary, 22 June 2012.

Gifted “pray-ers” will be identified and affirmed

- Identify and provide education for pray-ers.
- Educate about gifts, styles, practices, spiritual disciples, skill development.
- Could potentially use prayer workshops as identified in Goal 1.

A high level of commitment in the Church to spiritual growth and exploration is demonstrated

- Celebrate what is already happening through the online sharing of prayer-focused stories.
- Develop resource – Discipleship / Train the Trainer (ensure teaching is relevant to each person’s context eg. CALD congregations, children, disability)

OBJECTIVE 3 *Provide increased access to resources on prayer and Christian spirituality in line with Uniting Church ethos and theology*

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Provide access to online prayer resources for personal or corporate use

- Identify Internet links to prayer resources
- Access to prayer resources and service links between Prayer and agencies
- Identify links between UCA online prayer resources and Lectionary
- Access to online prayer resources will be available to all parts of the UCA in Queensland, including Congress, CALD and disability communities.

Online information will be available about Retreat Centres and prayer opportunities

- Identify Retreat Centres and prayer opportunities for promotion
- Gather lists of retreat opportunities for group and individual use.
- Affirm “quiet achievers” who organise, attend and lead retreats.

Availability and use of “What is prayer? How do you pray? Resource

- Prepare a bibliography of Prayer and Spirituality writings eg. Richard Foster’s Prayer
- Explore what suitable booklets are being used for new Christians.
- Explore what books are providing help to long term Christians.
- Explore what materials are meeting the spiritual hunger of staff of agencies/schools/church members.

The Bible is recognised and used as a Prayer tool

- Identify links between Prayer and the Bible

OBJECTIVE 4 An increase in explicit prayer experiences across all levels of the Church

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

The Church will adopt a Praying Listening Church... culture

- Prepare and deliver Prayer Life workshops – an evening with Church leaders talking about the place of prayer in their own lives and receive questions from the floor.
- Invite attendees to share what is happening in their own area.

The Spirit of God will be evident in the Synod corporate workplace

- Establish a culture of praying in the workplace.
- “The Way We Meet” is not just about worship, but about the workplace as well.
- Create an attitude of an expectant church.
- Prepare regular worship with links between *Together on the Way, Enriching Community* Call, Vision and Values in the themes each time.
- Prayer Chapel will be organised and available at the Synod meeting
- Prayer roster will be organised.