

PETER BENTLEY
MINUTE OF APPRECIATION: May 12 2005

The Presbytery of Sydney wishes to record its considerable gratitude for the dedicated service of Peter Bentley for his seven years as Presbytery Secretary. Peter arrived at Presbytery in March 1998 with a detailed knowledge of the Uniting Church. He is not only an active lay member at parish/ congregational level of many years standing but he had previously served for seven years with the National Assembly, mainly as the Secretary for the Commission on Doctrine.

Peter's considerable knowledge of the Uniting Church, wide networks of contacts and insights into church polity have all been of great assistance to the Presbytery.

His arrival at the Presbytery coincided with the move towards congregational structures and so he helped to guide the parishes/ congregations through this transition.

Much of his time was also given over to the Pastoral Relations Committee. This required not only a knowledge of church polity but also skills in personal relations and dispute resolution.

He was also a member of several Joint Nominating Committees. In his busiest year for JNCs (his second year of service) he served on a total of 15 simultaneously. He was also Secretary of the Candidates Committee reviewing the potential new ministers for the Uniting Church.

Throughout all this time, the wider Uniting Church benefited from his wisdom, through his membership of such bodies as the annual Synod meetings and the Council of Synod.

Despite all this frenetic activity, he remained calm, cool and collected. He always had time for assisting people and parishes/ congregations. Nothing was ever too much for him. He was always obliging.

His preparation for the various meetings was always thorough, accurate and punctual. Similarly his records of proceedings were always clear, accurate and sent out quickly.

Remarkably all this work was achieved on only a part-time basis. He was employed for most of his service on a three-quarters basis, that is, 30 hours per week. (He was employed full-time for only the last year and a half year of his service). Clearly he worked well above the amount of time for which he was actually paid. This is yet further proof of his dedication to the Uniting Church. Members of Presbytery were very sorry that he decided not to seek a renewal of his contract. He had set a very high standard for the quality of administration and leadership.

Presbytery gives thanks that in its time of need, God found such a gifted servant to provide the necessary skills.

Presbytery wishes Peter and his wife Colleen God's richest blessings for their future.

Presented by Dr Keith Suter
May 2005