

UC CHAPLAINCY

Since the departure of Revd Spanky Moore UC Chaplaincy has entered a time of rebuilding, increased activity, and visibility, and now lots of green shoots in terms of pastoral outreach, dialogue, advocacy and celebrating faith on campus.

Our chaplaincy team has gotten bigger and more diverse—still a work in progress.

Senior Ecumenical Chaplain: Revd Dr John Fox

Ecumenical Chaplain: Cassandra Allpress

Assistant (Volunteer) Chaplains:

Rev'd Bernard Walker, Rev'd Stowe Campbell, Rev'd Dr Mary Allan, Jane Halliday

We have had many challenges over the past three-year term: assisting with COVID relief work, delivering food parcels and pastoral support, and renewing the chaplaincy (as happens every three years when students graduate) with new partnerships, new areas of visibility and investing in, local parishes. Highlights follow.

New Space

The old chaplaincy house at 120 Ilam Road has been condemned due to earthquake damage. This means that we were given (for the first time since before the quakes) space on campus for Prayer and Respite, Office Space, and a Common Room and kitchen facilities. This has allowed us to bring back Christian Prayer Space to campus, and we acknowledge those parishes (particularly Fendalton, Sumner, CSN, Avonhead and Highfield) who enabled us to furnish it with couches, a proper altar and altarpiece, enabling Holy Communion for the first time in many years. This new space allows contemplative prayer and lunch every Wednesday and is "home base" for our eleven Christian Clubs and enables private and efficient pastoral outreach. There is regular prayer in our space almost every day, and this spiritual regeneration is our most important work.

A Bigger Team

Thanks to the Journey to Jesus grant we received, and increased support from Uni. staff and local clergy, we were able to hire first Jane Halliday and then Cassandra Allpress. This bigger team enables broader visibility and outreach, and more established initiatives. Community Lunch, in combination with three local churches and two Anglican parishes, enables a sense of "home" on campus, and a stable group of between 25 and 50

finds relational support, spiritual conversation, and a context for pastoral care. We continue our traditional support of students and staff, and have added Travelling Morning Tea for staff, support student faith groups in Clubs and Faculties, such as Navigators, Christian Union, and Christians in Engineering. We are looking forward to more green shoots. We are also conscious of the level of need, homesickness, and purposelessness among students, and we hope to continue to develop and grow in addressing these vital needs.

More Opportunities

UC is probably the most faith friendly University in the country. We were able to celebrate the University's 150th anniversary with two faith events, including a Multifaith breakfast and a Service of Thanksgiving in the Cathedral, where the bishop preached, and a number of local church leaders and Christian Clubs participated in tribute to the University's Christian roots. We continue regular ceremonial and spiritual care, especially in situations of crisis, and we celebrate the partnership in the gospel we are further developing with other churches, Christian clubs, and other Church leaders. Progress is patchy, but real. We have been able to facilitate five unified Christian events, have continued Spanky's Chaplain's Shout with all the Christian groups, and we have had a strong and valued presence at Halls of Residence (especially College House), and at moments of significant pain and progress in the University's life. We continue work on the Faith and Complaints policies, and other structural work enabling Christian witness. We have also nurtured and developed partnerships and good neighbourly relationships with other faith groups, including Muslim, Bahai and Jewish representatives.

Dialogue

We intend to sponsor seminars in the coming semesters focusing on all of the major "blockers to faith" identified by the latest NZ research: God and Science, suffering, sexuality, other religions and Christian history and story. We have already facilitated three science events, all of which have been oversubscribed, and two standing room only. We have also sponsored seminars on sleep, alcohol abuse, anxiety, and emotional healing. We also allowed local churches to join us in pastoral initiatives, notably giving winter coats, op shop clothes, Community Lunch, donating food and furniture, "Ask your Granny" advice, mending clinic, and other service to students and staff. We acknowledge their vital contributions with gratitude and thank God for the progress we have made.

Prayer Points:

For more visible (and permanent) space

For the right people to fill our expanding team

Funding sustainability

For students and staff under pressure and feeling fragile.