The Promise and Potential of Receptive Ecumenism

24-28 July 2012 - five-day series of Conversations and Presentations held in 7 different venues across South Australia.

Presented by Professor Paul D Murray, Centre for Catholic Studies, Department of Theology and Religion, Durham University, UK

Participants included:

• Over 215 people from at least 11 different traditions
• Leaders/Heads of 8 different Churches
• Lay and ordained leaders in local congregations
• Theologians, Scripture Scholars, Liturgists, Church Historians...
• Members of bi-lateral dialogues
• Students for Ministry
• Chaplains
• Retired Church Leaders
• Leaders from ecumenical organisations

Key words and phrases:

• Broken sign value
• Healing gifts for wounded hands
• Offering our wounded hands - or offering our best china?
• Run at the horizon and the horizon expands
• Surprised by joy – expectant and penitent joy, realising we are on Holy ground fed by the presence of Christ
• Lean into the Spirit, the agency of the ecumenical journey
• A journey of continuing growth on each side
• Start with the part of the garden we’re responsible for...

Insights following the various presentations...

• A renewed emphasis on ecumenism
• A renewed insight into the importance of ecumenism
• Learning from as distinct from learning about
- Understanding Receptive Ecumenism – recognising we are on Holy Ground in each other’s presence
- Sharing our woundedness with others
- Introduction of a new concept to me
- The change of thought and new receptive ecumenism is extremely important to the future of our combined Christian faith
- Need for openness
- Importance of Theology of Blessing in the absence of sharing at the table
- Receptive ecumenism is a movement, not a programme
- An understanding of RE as vision and strategy
- Respecting not only other denominations, but the strength of their tradition
- The desire of many more people for ‘eternal’ unity
- RE is not a method or a tool, but ultimately a disposition of the heart
- Receptive ecumenism ... as a tool ... for my tradition as well as for others
- Starting with what is difficult within my tradition
- Receiving others in ecumenical way of love
- Humility
- Paul’s input new way of looking at ‘problem’ → becomes a new way of doing ecumenism
- Reconnection with an interest in ecumenism
- The difference between receptive ecumenism and spiritual cherry-picking
- Anyone can be an ecumenical starter!
- Learning to lean into the Spirit
- How can we sing a new song?

Feel free to share your own insights - contact Geraldine Hawkes sacc1@picknowl.com.au