



MEDIA RELEASE | 20 October 2016

Centre for Research in Religion and Social Policy

The University of Divinity promotes the highest standards of scholarship in theology, philosophy and ministry. In keeping with its vision, the University is pleased to announce the establishment of its new Centre for Research in Religion and Social Policy, to commence in October 2016.

Revd Dr Gordon Preece has been appointed Interim Director of the Centre for Research in Religion and Social Policy. An Anglican Priest based in Yarraville, Melbourne, Dr Preece brings an extensive background in leadership and research to the role. His wide-ranging experience has seen him hold positions such as Director of the Centre for Applied Christian Ethics (Ridley College, The University of Melbourne), Executive Director of Urban Seed Melbourne and Director of the Macquarie Christian Studies Institute (MCSI). Most recently Dr Preece has been Director of Ethos (Evangelical Alliance Centre for Christianity and Society), Chair and Executive of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne Social Responsibilities Committee, member of the Standing Committee and Board Member of the Theology of Work Project, and Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Divinity.

Dr Preece is a highly regarded scholar, researcher and lecturer with numerous publications, including books, in theology of work and ethics to his name. He is in demand for comment in public media forums (Compass, Waleed Aly, John Faine, Jon Cleary, *The Age*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Herald Sun*) and for articles and reviews in journals, including ABC Religion and Ethics Online, *Christian Teachers Journal*, *Equip*, *Interface*, *Theology Today*, *International Journal of Systematic Theology* and *Foreign Affairs Journal*. Additionally, Dr Preece's writing has been featured in hundreds of articles in magazines including *Alive*, *Baptist Witness* (Victoria), *MCSI Thinkpiece*, *Ridley College Centre for Applied Christian Ethics Newsletter*, *Southern Cross* and *The Melbourne Anglican*, and he edits the Australasian Religious Press best publication-winning (2013) *Zadok Perspectives*.



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About his appointment, Dr Preece said:

I'm very excited and honoured to be taking on the Interim Director's role for the new University of Divinity (UD) Centre for Research in Religion and Social Policy. The Centre is a key step forward by the University in line with one of its major aims, that of public engagement. I'm looking forward eagerly to working with UD partner institutions and future members of our centre in various cross-disciplinary research projects engaging major social policy issues of our time.

I invite members of the University of Divinity constituency to join us in a process of discernment regarding what research issues we take on. We'll be looking at areas where this constituency has something distinctive to say, arising out of our various distinctive but ecumenically oriented polities in relation to issues of social policy. We hope they will be timely and also of a relatively perennial, not only occasional, nature.

The Centre for Research in Religion and Social Policy will provide a means of engaging with the issues of the contemporary world – by stimulating research and engagement activity across the whole institution and by building external partnerships. Additionally, the Centre will actively build collaborations with the churches and agencies, and by commissioning and publishing research.

The University looks forward to working with Dr Preece and future members of the Centre in this exciting new endeavour to engage further in and promote Australian theological scholarship.

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