

## THE BUSINESS OF THE ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 22ND JUNE, 1977

2.30 P.M. — SESSION 1

### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNITING CHURCH AND CONSTITUTING OF THE FIRST ASSEMBLY

The Rt. Rev. L. F. Gunn, Chairman of the Joint Constitution Council and Joint Constitution Commission took the Chair. An act of worship was led by the Chairman, assisted by Rev. H. T. Wells and Mr. H. N. Julian.

### REPORTS FROM THE UNITING CHURCHES

The President of the Congregational Union of Australia, the President-General of the Methodist Church of Australasia and the Moderator-General of the Presbyterian Church of Australia each presented a resolution of the respective Assembly or Conference, expressing the decision to unite.

### REPORT OF THE JOINT CONSTITUTION COUNCIL AND THE JOINT CONSTITUTION COMMISSION

Mr. H. N. Julian reported on behalf of the Joint Constitution Commission and the Joint Constitution Council as to

- legislative provision made throughout Australia;
- the preparation of a constitution which conforms to the Basis of Union for submission to the Assembly;
- the preparation of regulations pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution for submission to the Assembly;
- the Joint Planning Committees within the several proposed Synods having made appropriate provision for the Synods and their constituent Presbyteries and Parishes to commence to function.

### THE CONSTITUTING OF THE ASSEMBLY

The Moderator-General of the Presbyterian Church of Australia (The Rt. Rev. G. A. Wood), seconded by the President of the Congregational Union of Australia (The Rev. K. B. Leaver) moved and it was resolved:

- 77.1 THAT this Assembly of representatives duly appointed by the Congregational Union of Australia, the Methodist Church of Australasia and the Presbyterian Church of Australia, being satisfied that all necessary action has been taken to give effect to the decisions of the respective Assemblies and Conference to unite upon the Basis of Union (1971) under the name of the Uniting Church in Australia pursuant to the power conferred on it by the Basis of Union hereby establishes the Church, accepts as her members those who are recognised at the time as members in the uniting churches and who desire membership in the Church, and resolves that the first Assembly be now constituted by the representatives here present.

The Rev. Dr. A. Harold Wood, a former President-General of the Methodist Church of Australasia, offered a prayer of thanksgiving and constitution.

The Chairman declared the Uniting Church in Australia inaugurated and the first Assembly duly constituted. The roll of members of the Assembly appointed by the Congregational Union of Australia, the Methodist Church of Australasia and the Presbyterian Church of Australia was laid on the table.

### ADOPTION OF THE INTERIM CONSTITUTION

Mr. H. N. Julian (Secretary of the Joint Constitution Commission) moved, and it was resolved

- 77.2 That the Assembly:  
adopts the Interim Constitution prepared by the Joint Constitution Commission (as published November, 1976).

### RECOGNITION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF NORTH AUSTRALIA

Mr. R. H. Grove (Chairman of the United Church Board) moved, and it was resolved

- 77.3 That the Assembly:
- Hereby receives the United Church in North Australia into union and recognises her as part of the Uniting Church in Australia and her members as members of the Uniting Church in Australia.
  - Receives as members of the Assembly six persons appointed by the Standing Committee of the Conference of the United Church of North Australia.
- (The list of members of the Assembly appointed by the United Church in North Australia was laid on the table.)

### APPOINTMENTS

#### A. PRESIDENT OF THE ASSEMBLY

The Rev. W. D. O'Reilly (Executive Officer of the Joint Constitution Council) moved, and it was resolved

- 77.4 That the Assembly:  
appoints the Rev. J. D. McCaughey, M.A., D.D., to be President of the Uniting Church in Australia.

#### B. SECRETARY OF THE ASSEMBLY

The Rev. L. F. Gunn moved, and it was resolved

- 77.5 That the Assembly:
- Pursuant to Section 45 of the Constitution appoints a Secretary of the Assembly;
  - Determines that the Secretary hold office until the next Assembly and for such further period as the Assembly may determine;
  - Appoints the Rev. W. D. O'Reilly, M.A., M.Ed., Dip.Soc. Stud., as Secretary of the Assembly.

#### C. OTHER OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.6 That the Assembly appoints the following officers of the Assembly:
- Minute Secretaries: Rev. G. B. Hickson, Rev. H. Brentnall, Rev. L. A. Vidler
  - Business Committee: The Secretary of the Assembly (Convener), Revs. L. F. Gunn, H. T. Wells and Mr. H. N. Julian

which Committee shall advise the Assembly as to the order and times for the taking of business, and be authorised to read and approve the Minutes of the Assembly.

(c) Scrutineers:

Mrs. P. A. R. Dale, Mr. H. L. Davis, Mr. S. G. Edenborough, Rev. D. Eland, Rev. J. S. Gilks, Mr. R. H. Grove, Mr. A. J. Kilgour, Mrs. M. Ralph, Mr. R. H. Grove (Convener).

#### STANDING ORDERS

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.7 That Assembly adopts the Standing Orders. (See Regulations 3.7.1 to 3.7.43.)

#### HOURS OF SESSION

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.8 That the Assembly fixes the hours of session: (See Official Minutes)

#### RECOGNITION OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND DEACONESSES

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.9 That the Assembly:

Recognises and accepts as Ministers of the Word all ordained ministers whose names are in the lists laid on the table, and recognises and accepts as Deaconesses all Deaconesses whose names are in the lists laid on the table, such lists being submitted by the Congregational Union of Australia, the Methodist Church of Australasia, and the Presbyterian Church of Australia and comprising the names of those Ministers and Deaconesses of each of those churches who adhere to the Basis of Union and desire to be so recognised and accepted.

#### RECOGNITION OF ELDERS LAY PREACHERS AND LAY PASTORS

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.10 That the Assembly:

- (a) Recognises as Elders those who having expressed adherence to the Basis of Union have currently been:
- (i) Deacons of the Congregational Church;
  - (ii) Leaders in the Methodist Church appointed "to assist the Minister in exercising spiritual oversight" over a number of members of the Church;
  - (iii) Elders of the Presbyterian Church and members of a session;
  - (iv) Exercising in a joint parish spiritual leadership corresponding to the above offices.
- (b) Recognises as Lay Preachers those who having expressed adherence to the Basis of Union have currently been so recognised by one of the uniting churches;
- (c) Recognises as Lay Pastors those who having expressed adherence to the Basis of Union have been currently serving in appointments as recognised Lay Pastors in the Congregational Church or Home Missionaries in the Methodist or Presbyterian Church.

#### GREETINGS

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.11 That the Assembly remembering those with whom the Uniting Churches have hitherto shared in life and fellowship,

- (a) expresses greetings to Presbyterian and Congregational churches which have not become part of the Uniting Church in Australia;
- (b) expresses its intention to seek co-operation with these churches and requests Synods and Presbyteries to take appropriate steps to seek co-operation with those churches in their respective areas.

#### 77.12 That the Assembly:

- (a) creates the Synods of New South Wales, Northern Australia, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia; and
- (b) determines that the Synods shall comprise the areas set out in the definitions of boundaries as supplied by the respective Joint Planning Committees and shown in Appendix 10;
- (c) directs that the by-laws submitted by the Joint Planning Committee in respect of each Synod shall apply until otherwise determined by the Synod concerned;
- (d) appoints the following persons as Moderators and Secretaries of the Synods until the first meeting of the Synod concerned:

|                       |                        |  |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--|
| N.S.W.                | Moderator<br>Secretary | Mrs. Lilian Wells<br>Rev. F. H. Butler       |
| Northern<br>Australia | Moderator<br>Secretary | Rev. J. G. Bucknall<br>Rev. G. D. Bence      |
| Queensland            | Moderator<br>Secretary | Rev. R. A. Busch<br>Rev. D. F. Kirkup        |
| Sth. Australia        | Moderator<br>Secretary | Rev. I. B. Tanner<br>Rev. R. K. Waters       |
| Tasmania              | Moderator<br>Secretary | Rev. C. Mostert<br>Rev. J. S. Petrie         |
| Victoria              | Moderator<br>Secretary | Rev. R. W. Allardice<br>Rev. G. A. McAnalley |
| West. Australia       | Moderator<br>Secretary | Mr. R. D. Wilson<br>Mr. G. A. Wilson         |

such Moderators being eligible for re-appointment at that time for any period up to three years.

#### PROVISIONS RELATING TO SYNODS

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

#### 77.13 That the Assembly:

- (a) Appoints a Standing Committee in respect of each Synod to act until the first meeting of the Synod, such committee to consist of the Moderator and Secretary of the Synod together with the persons whose names are tabled by the respective Joint Planning Committees, the committee to have all the powers granted by regulation to a Synod Standing Committee and the power to make such further appointments as may be necessary prior to the first meeting of the Synod;
- (b) Appoints in respect of each Synod the officers, boards, committees, and other bodies recommended by the Joint Planning Committees as shown in lists tabled by the Joint Planning Committees, such appointments to remain effective

tive until such time as the Synod or its Standing Committee may otherwise determine;

- (c) Directs that all other provisions and arrangements made by the Joint Planning Committees shall be effective until otherwise determined by the Synod.

#### **ADOPTION OF REGULATIONS AND PROVISION FOR REVIEW**

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

77.14 That the Assembly:

- (a) Adopts the Regulations submitted by the Joint Constitution Commission;
- (b) Pursuant to Section 59 of the Constitution appoints a Committee with power:
  - (i) to deal with and settle any question of dispute which may arise concerning regulations prior to the second Assembly, and for this purpose is vested with the powers of the Assembly;
  - (ii) to make, rescind or vary any regulation found necessary to be made, rescinded or varied before the second Assembly subject in each case to the approval of the Standing Committee;
  - (iii) to review the Interim Constitution and Regulations having regard to advice or submissions from Assembly agencies, Synods, Presbyteries and Parishes and to report thereon to the next meeting of the Assembly.
- (c) Appoints as Members of the Committee, the Secretary of the Assembly, Revs. R. W. Albiston, F. H. Butler, Mrs. H. Stutchbury, Messrs. S. C. Gillmore and H. N. Julian (Mr. H. N. Julian, Convener).

#### **AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS**

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.15 That Assembly recognises and accepts, until such time as the Assembly or other authorised Council of the Church may otherwise determine, those agencies and institutions existing in the uniting churches for the discharge of current responsibilities and authorises the operation of existing constitutions, charters, or administrative procedures relating thereto, until such time as other provision may be made by the relevant Council of the Church.

#### **ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE**

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

77.16 That the Assembly:

- (a) Appoints a Standing Committee to consist of the President and Secretary of the Assembly (ex-officio) together with sixteen members of the Assembly elected by the Assembly;
- (b) Determines that the membership of the Standing Committee include one or more persons from at least four of the Synods.
- (c) Determines that not fewer than one third of the elected members are women, and that in computing the one-third calculations shall be taken to the nearest whole number.

- (d) Determines that not fewer lay persons than Ministers of the Word be included.

- (e) Determines that the elected members of the Standing Committee be as shown in Appendix 7.

#### **FORMATION OF PRESBYTERIES**

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

77.17 That the Assembly:

- (a) Establishes the Presbyteries as set out in Appendix 10;
- (b) Appoints as officers of the Presbyteries the persons designated therein, each officer to hold office until the Presbyter concerned confirms or varies the appointment;
- (c) Establishes the Parishes and Congregations and fixes their bounds in accordance with the lists of Parishes and Congregations tabled by the respective Joint Planning Committees;
- (d) Subject to the Constitution and Regulations of the Assembly directs the aforesaid Presbyteries, Parishes, Congregations and officers to act in accordance with Synod by-laws and Presbytery rules tabled by the respective Joint Planning Committees until the same are varied or replaced by the appropriate councils of the Church.

#### **VALIDATION OF AUTHORITY**

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.18 Assembly directs that subject to provisions and arrangements made by Joint Planning Committees until such time as the Synods, Presbyteries, Parishes, Congregations and other bodies are able to meet or otherwise to make the relevant determinations and give appropriate directions any organisation or other body and any officer or other appointee currently operating or in office under the authority and provision of one of the uniting churches or of a Joint Planning Committee shall so continue as though authorised or appointed by the Church, subject to the same entitlements and obligations as were applicable at the time of union, this authority to include authority relative to financial transactions and the execution of documents.

#### **RECOGNITION OF SETTLEMENTS**

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved:

- 77.19 That the Assembly, except as may be varied by the determinations of the Assembly, recognises the settlements at present held by Ministers of the Word, Deaconesses and Lay Pastors until a meeting of the appropriate council of the Church otherwise determines.

#### **CHAPLAINCIES**

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

77.20 That the Assembly:

- (a) Approves the following appointments:

|                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Naval Representative   | Rev. Graydon C. Swain |
| Chaplain General       | Rev. R. Busch         |
| Principal Air Chaplain | Rev. F. A. Foley;     |

- (b) Approves the appointment as Uniting Church Chaplains to the defence forces those who at the date of the inauguration of the Church were serving as Congregational (O.P.D.), Methodist or Presbyterian Chaplains to the Australian Defence Forces and who are recognised as Ministers of the Church, as listed in Appendix 5.
- (c) Appoints a committee to have oversight on its behalf of the matters pertaining to chaplaincy to the Defence Forces, the Committee to comprise the Naval Representative, the Principal Air Chaplain, the Chaplain General and the Secretary of the Assembly (all ex-officio), Rev. R. Busch (Convener), together with those persons whose names appear in Appendix 7, further names to be added by Standing Committee;
- (d) That the responsibilities and procedure applicable to the Committee be as set out in Appendix 9.

#### ASSEMBLY OFFICE

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.21 That the Assembly:
- (a) Resolves that the Assembly office of the Uniting Church in Australia be situated in Sydney and empowers Standing Committee to vary this decision should circumstances so warrant;
  - (b) Appoints a committee to assist the Secretary in the oversight and management of the office and in the administration of the Assembly Fund and other matters as required by the Assembly the Standing Committee or the Secretary;
  - (c) Appoints as members of the Committee:  
Revs. J. S. Woodhouse, Max Court, Miss V. Steward, Mrs. Barbara McInnes, Messrs. H. N. Julian, S. H. Manning, H. E. Scotford, L. J. Triglone and M. Tweeddale;
  - (d) Directs the committee to determine the stipend and allowances of the Secretary and to report to the Standing Committee.

#### INVOLVEMENT IN MISSION

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.22 That the Assembly:
- (a) Affirms our commitment to engage in missionary outreach and evangelical endeavour;
  - (b) Accepts responsibility to further to the best of our ability the mission programmes to which the several uniting churches were committed through their mission agencies, and as may be possible and appropriate, to expand such activity;
  - (c) Rejoices in our fellowship with churches with which we have worked together in missionary undertakings, especially those which trace their origin to the earlier missionary work of our constituent denominations, offering to them our continuing co-operation under the guidance of the Spirit;
  - (d) Greets ministers and members from Australia currently working with related churches overseas, upholding them in our prayers;

- (e) Accepts into the Church the mission agencies of the uniting churches, and directs that the councils and officers concerned take appropriate steps to co-ordinate and maintain the work.

#### COMMISSION FOR WORLD MISSION (C.W.M.)

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.23 That the Assembly:
- (a) Appoints a Commission for World Mission, to have responsibility for the work hitherto within the responsibility of the denominational boards concerned with overseas missions;
  - (b) Determines that the Commission shall consist of persons appointed by the Synods as follows: N.S.W. 4, Victoria 5, and all other Synods 2 each, together with a chairman, an honorary treasurer and 6 other persons appointed by the Assembly, all members to hold office from Assembly to Assembly, the membership to be reviewed at the second Assembly;
  - (c) Appoints the persons whose names appear in Appendix 7 of the Minutes of Assembly to be the first members of the Commission;
  - (d) Appoints the Rev. J. P. Brown as Secretary of the Commission, and Rev. P. K. Davis as Associate Secretary, until the end of 1979, both to be ex-officio members of the Commission.
  - (e) Authorises the Commission to associate with it, in such manner as may be mutually determined, representatives of churches with which any of the churches entering the Uniting Church has had a traditional relationship in mission.
  - (f) the Commission shall have power to co-opt up to five additional members.

#### COMMISSION FOR AUSTRALIAN INLAND MISSION AND FRONTIER SERVICES (C.A.I.M.)

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.24 That the Assembly:
- (a) Appoints a Commission for Australian Inland Mission and Frontier Services to have responsibility for the work hitherto within the responsibility of the denominational boards concerned with national home and inland mission work;
  - (b) Determines that the Commission shall comprise one member each appointed by the Synods together with members appointed by the Assembly, from the Synods as follows: N.S.W. 9, Victoria 7, South Australia and Queensland 2 each, North Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania 1 each, one of the Assembly appointees to be designated Chairman;
  - (c) Appoints the persons whose names appear in Appendix 7 as members of the Commission;
  - (d) Appoints to the staff of the Commission, Rev. M. J. L. Griffiths as General Secretary.

## COUNCIL OF MISSION

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

77.25 That the Assembly:

- (a) Appoints a Council of Mission to consist of six persons appointed by the Commission for World Mission, six persons appointed by the Commission on Australian Inland Mission and Frontier Services, and a chairperson and six other persons appointed by the Assembly of whom the Secretary of the Assembly shall be one, all members to hold office from Assembly to Assembly but to be eligible for re-appointment;
- (b) Determines that the Secretary of the Assembly shall be the Secretary of the Council;
- (c) Directs that the Council be responsible to promote consultation between the commissions on mission, to encourage co-ordination in administration and mission programmes, to stimulate reflection on the theology of mission and evangelism, and to evaluate current activities in these areas, to seek to identify mission priorities, as far as possible give practical assistance in any of the above matters, and to report to and advise the Assembly in regard thereto;
- (d) Appoints the persons named in Appendix 7 to the Minutes of the Assembly as the members of the Council of Mission.

## COMMISSION ON DOCTRINE

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

77.26 That the Assembly:

- (a) establishes a Commission on Doctrine with the following terms of reference:
  - (i) To examine and report on the Appendices to the Basis of Union;
  - (ii) To prepare such affirmation of faith as may be commissioned by the Assembly;
  - (iii) To produce, as they may be requested by the Assembly, statements as to the doctrines of the Church in regard to specific matters (such as Baptism, Confirmations, etc.);
  - (iv) Generally to advise the Assembly in matters of doctrine;
- (b) Appoints the President (ex-officio), Rev. Dr. R. H. S. Boyd (Convener), together with the persons whose names appear in Appendix 7 as members of the Commission.
- (c) Instructs the Commission to present a report to the Synods in 1978 and to the next meeting of the Assembly.

## THE APPENDICES TO THE BASIS OF UNION

The Secretary moved

77.27 That the Assembly:

- (a) Receives the Appendices to the Basis of Union;
- (b) Requests the Commission on Doctrine to consider matters arising from these Appendices and to forward to Synods Presbyteries and Parishes prior to 30th June, 1978, recommendations concerning the issues raised therein;

- (c) Invites Synods Presbyteries and Parishes to respond to such recommendations not later than 30th November, 1978;
- (d) Instructs the Commission to bring recommendations to the next meeting of the Assembly;
- (e) Directs Presbyteries to use for the time being the Ordination questions and liturgical material in Appendix II of the Basis of Union and to heed the directions in Section 3 of Appendix II.

## LITURGICAL COMMISSION

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

77.28 That the Assembly:

- (a) Establishes a Liturgical Commission with the following terms of reference:
  - (i) to prepare services of worship to be available for general use in the Uniting Church, subject to the approval of the Assembly;
  - (ii) to prepare and distribute resources for occasional services and other worship material for use in churches;
  - (iii) to encourage responsible liturgical experimentation and to offer its services to congregations as a co-ordinating agency;
  - (iv) to study liturgical developments in other churches with particular reference to Baptism and Holy Communion;
  - (v) to maintain liaison with the Commission on Doctrine and the Council on Ministerial Education regarding matters of common concern;
  - (vi) to maintain relationships with working groups in the several Synods;
- (b) Determines that the members of the Commission be from one Synod, not fewer than one third of the members being lay persons;
- (c) Appoints Rev. Dr. H. D. Wood (Convener), together with the persons named in Appendix 7 as members of the Commission;
- (d) Authorises the Commission to appoint individuals or groups in other parts of Australia as consultants or as corresponding members and to delegate assignments provided that the Commission accepts responsibility for any reports made or material published;
- (e) Empowers the Commission to form sub-committees and working groups as it deems desirable.
- (f) Requests the Commission:
  - (i) to examine the desirability of:
    1. compiling a Book of Worship for the Uniting Church, such book to contain orders of service for the sacraments and other services;
    2. preparing a lectionary for the Uniting Church;
  - (ii) to co-operate with the Commission on Doctrine in study of the following:
    1. "the relation of baptism to confirmation and to participation in the Holy Communion" (Basis of Union para 12);

2. the introduction of a Service of Thanksgiving for Parenthood;
- (g) Instructs the Commission to present a report to the Synods in 1978 and the next meeting of the Assembly;
  - (h) Commends for use until the next Assembly services as tabled at this Assembly for Ordination of Ministers of the Word, Induction of Ministers, Commissioning of Elders, Recognition of Lay Preachers, and Confirmation;
  - (i) Notes with interest the publication of the Australian Hymn Book in September next, and commends the Book to the attention of Parishes and Congregations;
  - (j) Directs The Liturgical Commission to report to the next Assembly on
    - (i) the appropriate use of the Australian Hymn Book in the Uniting Church,
    - (ii) the management and operations of the A. H. B. Company and its relation to the Uniting Church,
    - (iii) the desirability of the continuation of the A. H. B. Committee, on a reduced scale, in co-operation with the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church and the Presbyterian Churches,
    - (iv) any other hymnal matters the Commission deems appropriate.

#### MINISTERIAL EDUCATION COUNCIL

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.29 That the Assembly:
- (a) establishes a Ministerial Education Council pursuant to regulations 2.2.16 to 2.2.20;
  - (b) appoints as members of the Council the persons whose names appear in Appendix 7;
  - (c) directs that until otherwise determined the Executive of the Council shall be within the Synod of Victoria;
  - (d) Notes the regulations for the Ministerial Education Council as proposed by the Working Group on Ministerial Education, including
    - A. Course of Studies for Ministers of the Word;
    - B. Course of Study for the Ministry of Deaconesses;
    - C. Examination of Lay Preachers.
  - (e) directs that at the discretion of the Council regulations relating to education for ministry may be modified to the extent necessary to facilitate the transition from the denominational procedures to those required by the Church.

#### RECOGNITION OF MINISTERIAL TRAINING COLLEGES

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.30 That the Assembly recognises the Colleges and institutions in Appendix 4 as places of training in Australia for Ministers of the Uniting Church in Australia.

#### ECUMENICAL COUNCILS

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.31 That the Assembly:

- (a) welcomes assurances given by Ecumenical and world confessional bodies that the Uniting Church in Australia will be welcomed as a member church and resolves to apply for membership of the Australian Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, the Christian Conference of Asia, the World Methodist Council and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches;
- (b) authorises Standing Committee to make appropriate appointments;
- (c) instructs the Assembly Fund to make provision for payment of Affiliation fees and other costs up to such amount as may be determined by the Standing Committee.

#### COMMISSION ON ECUMENICAL AFFAIRS

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.32 That the Assembly:

- (a) establishes a Commission on Ecumenical Affairs;
- (b) gives the Commission responsibility for:
  - (i) inter-church dialogue on matters of faith and order;
  - (ii) general issues relating to Christian Unity;
  - (iii) direct relations with the W.C.C., A.C.C., and C.C.A. and nomination to the Assembly or Standing Committee (after consultation with C.W.M.) of representatives to the A.C.C., W.C.C., World Alliance of Reformed Churches; and World Methodist Council and C.C.A., and to deal with study material and general matters contingent on our relationship with these bodies;
- (c) appoints Rev. H. Christie-Johnston as Convener of the Commission;
- (d) appoints as members of the Commission the persons whose names appear in Appendix 7,
- (e) directs that the members of the Commission appoint an Executive from among their membership;
- (f) approves the appointment by the Commission of such working groups as it may determine;
- (g) the Assembly of the Uniting Church, meeting for the first time in Sydney, acknowledges gratefully the greetings of the Australian Episcopal Conference of the Roman Catholic Church conveyed by His Eminence Cardinal Freeman and reciprocates warmly the good wishes contained in his letter;
- (h) the Assembly affirms its intention to continue the ecumenical dialogues and co-operative ventures already undertaken between the three Uniting Churches and the Roman Catholic Church and instructs its Commission on Ecumenical Affairs to advise The Assembly's Standing Committee concerning the appropriate means of carrying out their intentions.

#### COMMISSION ON IMMIGRATION AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.33 That the Assembly:

- (a) appoints a Commission on Immigration and Ethnic Affairs to comprise:

- (i) **Assembly appointees** — Up to twelve persons, the majority of whom are resident in Victoria, such persons to be the Executive of the Commission;
  - (ii) **Synod appointees** — One person appointed by each Synod or its approved Committee;
  - (iii) **Council of Mission appointees** — Four persons appointed by the Council of Mission;
- (b) gives the Commission the following responsibilities:
- (i) in conjunction with appropriate agencies to welcome and assist migrants settling in the Australian community, having regard especially to fostering the awareness of congregations of the needs of such migrants and encouraging appropriate responses from congregations;
  - (ii) in conjunction with appropriate agencies to foster programmes to promote understanding of the culture and life style of ethnic groups in Australia, and assist groups of differing ethnic and cultural background to find facilities in Australia for the exercise of religious worship and associated activities;
  - (iii) with the other agencies to draw attention to situations where there is need to review Australian migration and settlement policies, particularly where considerations of justice and humane concern are involved, or where situations of neglect discrimination or inappropriate or inadequate services need to be rectified;
- (c) provides that the Commission operate on the basis of a budget submitted to the Assembly for approval and administered through the General Assembly Fund;
- (d) appoints as members of the Commission the persons named in Appendix 7, with Rev. W. J. Johnson, Convener.

#### ELECTION OF SECOND PRESIDENT

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.34 That the Assembly directs that the procedure to be adopted for the election and designation of the person to become President at the second Assembly be as follows:—
- (a) that Synods and Presbyteries be each entitled to nominate one person for the office of President-elect, and that nominations be forwarded (with the consent of the nominee) to the Secretary of the Assembly not later than 30th November 1978;
  - (b) that all nominations from Synods be included in the Ballot for the election of President-elect;
  - (c) that in respect of nominations from Presbyteries only those nominees who have been nominated by at least three Presbyteries be included in the ballot;
  - (d) that Standing Committee be empowered to designate the President-Elect following an election by postal and preferential ballot of members of the First Assembly.

#### COMMISSION ON SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

77.35 That the Assembly:

- (a) appoints a Commission on Social Responsibilities to consist of:
  - (i) **Assembly appointees** — up to 12 persons who are members of the Church in Queensland, preferably resident within reasonable distance of Brisbane, such persons to be the Executive;
  - (ii) **Synod appointees** —
    - 3 persons appointed by the Synod of NSW
    - 3 persons appointed by the Synod of Vic.
    - 2 persons appointed by the Synod of S.A.
    - 1 person appointed by each of the Synods of Qld., Nth. Aust., Tas., and W.A.;
- (b) directs that the responsibilities and working procedures of the Commission be:—

##### Responsibilities:

- (i) to identify and study those social issues in respect of which it is appropriate that the church, in the light of the gospel, should declare its view, offer leadership or take action,
- (ii) to advise the Assembly, the Standing Committee or the President, or to speak or act in the name of the Commission — provided that in matters which are either the specific responsibility of or a shared responsibility with any other body within the church there shall be appropriate consultation and co-operation with such bodies,
- (iii) to provide opportunities whereby the Synod bodies having a responsibility in regard to social issues may confer and co-ordinate their work, and wherever possible to assist and encourage them in that work, and if so requested to act with or for them at the national level,
- (iv) to consult and co-operate with other Assembly agencies as may be helpful in the carrying out of the responsibilities of either or both parties,
- (v) to undertake such research, furnish such reports or otherwise to act as may be requested by the Assembly.

##### Working Procedures

- (vi) the full Commission shall meet normally concurrently with the meetings of the Assembly and on as many occasions between meetings of the Assembly as the Assembly may provide,
- (vii) the Executive shall meet at such intervals as it shall determine and may exercise any or all of the responsibilities of the Commission provided that as far as practicable all other members shall be advised in advance of meetings of the Executive, be given opportunity to submit comments on the matters to be dealt with at such meetings, and be given copies

of the Minutes as soon as practicable after the meetings,

(viii) the Commission shall report at least annually to the Assembly or its Standing Committee,

(ix) the Commission shall to the extent that it considers desirable to ensure the adequacy and effectiveness of its work:—

- appoint sub committees with specified responsibilities;
- appoint ad hoc task forces for particular assignments, members of those bodies not necessarily being members of the Commission;
- delegate assignments to Synod bodies or other Assembly bodies which may be willing and able to accept such assignments;
- use the services of specially qualified consultants;
- work with other church or community groups.

(c) provides that the Commission shall have such funds as the Assembly shall determine to provide for its working expenses, the funds to be administered within the General Assembly Fund;

**(d) FULL TIME APPOINTMENT**

directs the Standing Committee to appoint persons to investigate the possible appointment of a full time staff member to the Commission on Social Responsibilities and to report to the Synods of 1978 and the Assembly of 1979;

**(e) APPOINTMENTS**

appoints to the Commission on Social Responsibilities the persons whose names appear in Appendix 7.

**BENEFICIARY FUNDS**

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

77.36 That the Assembly:

(a) receives the following reports of Assembly Working Group B of the Joint Constitution Commission as Reports to the Assembly (see Appendix 9):

- (i) the Report on a proposed Beneficiary Fund;
- (ii) the Report on Deaconesses Retirement Funds;
- (iii) the Report on Provisions for Superannuation Benefits for lay employees of the Church;

(b) refers each of the above reports to the Synods for consideration and report back to the Assembly Standing Committee such Synod reports to be forwarded to the Secretary within three months of the meeting of the Synod;

(c) (i) direct that the Synods make no decision to require parishes and other bodies to require contributions to Beneficiary and other retiring funds from 22nd June, 1977, to 31st December, 1977, to be at higher rate than the rate applicable prior to 22nd June, 1977,  
(ii) declare that as from 1st January, 1978 the provisional Notional Stipend for Beneficiary Fund purposes be \$8,200,

(iii) direct that as from 1st January, 1978, parishes and other bodies responsible for the stipend of ministers contribute a Beneficiary Fund assessment at the rate of \$902 per annum or at the rate applicable in 1977, if greater than \$902 per annum,

(iv) direct that as from 1st January, 1978, the personal Beneficiary Fund contribution payable by Ministers be at the rate of \$328 per annum or such higher amount as is required in terms of the regulations of the fund of which they are a member.

(v) direct that each of the existing beneficiary funds receive contributions from parishes or other bodies and ministers at the rates prescribed in the regulations of those funds, any balance up to \$902 and \$328 per annum respectively to be paid into the Uniting Church (former Methodist Church) Fund, this balance to be held on deposit in the name of the Minister attracting interest at the net earning rate of the said fund and payable to the minister as his/her entitlement at the same time as any payment is made from the fund to which the other part of the contribution is paid. On a minister transferring to the new Uniting Church Fund any sum held on deposit in the Methodist Fund shall be similarly transferred with interest,

(vi) declare that pending the establishment of a new fund persons received as Ministers of the Word and not being members of any existing denominational funds become during the interim period members of the fund established under the Methodist Supernumerary Fund Act, now in process of being re-named "Uniting Church in Australia Interim Beneficiary Fund (Methodist Section)";

(d) empowers the Assembly Standing Committee:

- (i) to take such action as it sees fit on behalf of the Assembly to establish a new Fund or Funds for retirement benefits for ministers, deaconesses and lay employees,
- (ii) to take such action as is necessary on behalf of the Assembly to protect the rights of participants in any of the beneficiary funds of the uniting churches;

(e) appoints a committee to:

- (i) make all necessary preparation for the establishment of such fund or funds as may be approved by the Assembly Standing Committee and to make provision for the transfer to such fund or funds of all assets and liabilities relating to participants transferring their membership from a beneficiary fund of one of the uniting churches; and
- (ii) advise the Assembly Standing Committee as to all arrangements necessary for the continued protection of the rights of participants in any of the beneficiary funds of the uniting churches transferring to the Uniting Church pending the establishment of an appropriate fund by the Uniting Church;



- (f) directs the committee to report to the Assembly Standing Committee as required by it;
- (g) reappoints as the Working Group: Rev. E. K. Ditterich (Convener) and Messrs. L. J. Cohn, D. S. P. Dunham, A. R. Gillespie, J. Nixon and K. J. Squire; to report to the Synods, and further requests the Standing Committee to appoint the Committee on the nomination of Synods or Synod Standing Committees: New South Wales 3, Queensland 2, South Australia 2, West Australia 1, Tasmania 1, Victoria 9, the Victorian members to be the Executive of the Committee and being: Rev. E. K. Ditterich (Convener), Rev. R. B. Johnson, D. L. Rowe, Messrs. G. R. Bruns, L. J. Cohn, D. S. P. Dunham, A. R. Gillespie, A. W. Gorrie, J. F. Nixon;
- (h) authorises the Committee to seek such actuarial, legal and other advice as it considers necessary;
- (j) directs that the Committee submit to the Assembly Standing Committee for approval proposed regulations in respect of any fund or funds to be established.

#### ASSEMBLY FINANCE COUNCIL

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.37 That the Assembly:
- (a) appoints an Assembly Finance Council;
  - (b) resolves that the responsibilities of the Council be as set out in the Regulations and as may be further determined by the Assembly;
  - (c) appoints as members of the Council:  
**Assembly appointees:** Revs. R. W. Allardice, W. D. O'Reilly, Messrs. A. R. Gillespie, A. J. Kilgour (Chairman), D. Robinson;  
**Synod appointees:** N.S.W. Rev. R. M. E. Glover; Nth. Australia Rev. G. Bence; Qld. Rev. R. S. Ramsay; S.A. Mr. K. J. Ellis; Tas. Rev. M. J. E. Stansall; Vic. Rev. A. S. Crawford; W.A. Mr. G. A. Wilson.

#### NATIONAL GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.38 That the Assembly:
- (a) establishes an Interim Committee on National Organisations;
  - (b) directs the Committee:
    - (i) to encourage and foster the fullest possible participation of women and men together in all aspects of the life of the Church,
    - (ii) to act as necessary and appropriate at national and inter-national level on behalf of the Church organisations which do not have a national committee,
    - (iii) to advise and make recommendations relative to the formation, continuance or termination of organisations at national level,
    - (iv) to consult and co-operate with the Synods in relation to any of the above matters,
    - (v) to do such other things as may be required by the Assembly and to report to the Assembly in 1979,

- (c) appoints to the Committee the persons whose names appear in Appendix 7 of the Minutes of the Assembly, with power to co-opt up to two further persons and to hold office till the next Assembly.

#### RECOGNISED CHURCHES AND ACCEPTANCE OF MINISTERS

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.39 That the Assembly recognises the following as churches from which Ministers of the Word may be received on transfer subject to their acceptance of the polity and discipline of the Church:
- (i) Congregational churches in membership with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches,
  - (ii) Methodist churches in membership with the World Methodist Council,
  - (iii) Presbyterian churches in membership with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches,
  - (iv) United Churches and other churches which at the time of the inauguration of the Church were recognised by any one of the uniting churches.

#### APPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS BODIES

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.40 That the Assembly appoints representatives to ecumenical and other bodies as shown in Appendix 6.

#### PUBLICATIONS

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.41 That the Assembly:
- (a) authorises the publication and sale of the following documents:
    - (i) the Minutes of the Assembly,
    - (ii) an Assembly Directory (annual);
  - (b) resolves:
    - (i) to establish a publishing agency, to be managed by a committee appointed for that purpose,
    - (ii) that the Committee comprise up to twelve persons resident in Victoria together with managers of church bookshops as consultant members,
    - (iii) that the responsibilities of the committee be to arrange for the publication of material considered helpful or necessary to the life of the Church, as may be directed by the Assembly or Standing Committee or otherwise determined by the Committee,
    - (iv) that the members of the Committee be as shown in Appendix 7;
  - (c) requests the Committee to consult with the Joint Board of Christian Education about the publishing functions of the two agencies, and report to the next Assembly.

#### ARCHIVES AND HISTORICAL RECORDS

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.42 That the Assembly:

- (a) appoints an Archives and Historical Records Committee to consist of up to twelve persons appointed by the Assembly, a majority of such persons being resident in N.S.W. and to comprise the Executive of the Committee, the Committee having power to co-opt up to three further members and to consult with qualified advisers;
- (b) determines that the responsibilities of the Committee be:
  - (i) to arrange for the collection, preservation and housing of documents, records, films and other material of value and interest to the Church, particularly at a national level,
  - (ii) as far as may be practicable and desirable to arrange for the cataloguing and display of the aforesaid material,
  - (iii) to undertake and encourage historical research,
  - (iv) to produce or to assist or encourage others to research and produce papers, articles or journals of historical value,
  - (v) to co-operate with persons or organisations within each Synod in respect of the foregoing matters,
- (c) appoints as members of the Committee the persons whose names appear in Appendix 7.

#### LEGAL REFERENCE COMMITTEE

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.43 That the Assembly:
- (a) resolves to appoint a Legal Reference Committee with responsibility:
    - (i) to assist the Assembly, as requested, in matters of drafting, checking and interpretation of legal aspects of documents,
    - (ii) generally to advise the Assembly and its officers in legal matters,
  - (b) appoints as members of the Committee: Mrs. P. Dale, Mr. R. H. Grove, Mr. I. S. Hunt, Mr. H. N. Julian (Convener).

#### THE F. J. CATO LECTURE

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.44 That the Assembly:
- (a) resolves to gratefully acknowledge its acceptance of the Cato Lectureship provisions;
  - (b) appoints a Lectureship Committee to do all such things as may be necessary in terms of the F. J. Cato Bequest;
  - (c) appoints as members of the Committee the persons named in Appendix 7;
  - (d) requests the Committee to arrange for the next Cato Lecture to be delivered at the Second Assembly.

#### SUNDRY APPOINTMENTS

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.45 That the Assembly:
- (a) appoints as officers of the Assembly and/or its Councils and Agencies those listed in the Schedule in Appendix 3,
  - (b) authorises Standing Committee to make such further appointments as may be required.

#### COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.46 That the Assembly:
- (a) recognises The Joint Board of Christian Education of Australia and New Zealand as the Council of Christian Education of the Church;
  - (b) (i) approves the Constitution of the Board as set out in Appendix 9,  
(ii) directs the Standing Committee to arrange negotiations with the Board with a view to the submission of a new Constitution to the Second Assembly;
  - (c) appoints the Rev. John Grundy, David Merritt, and Keith Pearson as Directors of the Board;
  - (d) appoints to the Board under the provisions of clause 3(a) of the Constitution thereof the persons whose names appear in Appendix 7;
  - (e) agrees that unless and until otherwise determined by the Assembly the Board continues to exercise the responsibilities that were given to it prior to union by the Methodist Church of Australasia and the Presbyterian Church of Australia, including provision of opportunities for staff training, ministry with children and youth, and religious education in schools.

#### BUDGET

The Secretary moved

- 77.47 That the Assembly adopts the Budget for 1978 as submitted in Appendix 8.

#### CHURCH DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.48 Since all documents and records relating to the business of the Church, whether completed or currently in use, are the property of the Church, Assembly:
- (a) directs that all such documents and records remain within the custody of the persons duly authorised for that purpose;
  - (b) directs such persons to take appropriate measures to adequately safeguard those documents and records;
  - (c) requires the persons having the custody of documents and records to arrange for access thereto by persons duly authorised;
  - (d) determines that when in the opinion of persons having custody of the documents the retention thereof by those persons is no longer appropriate, or when the Assembly Synod Presbytery or other Body concerned so directs those documents shall be transferred to the custody of another appropriate authority within the Church.

#### MARRIAGE RITES

The Secretary moved, and it was resolved

- 77.49 That the Assembly declares the marriage rites authorised or approved for use in any of the Uniting Churches at the time of union be recognised as approved marriage rites of the Church until otherwise determined by the Assembly.

## DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY (INVESTMENTS)

It was resolved:

- 77.50 That the Assembly, pursuant to the powers conferred upon it by the respective Statutes hereby delegates to each Synod the power to authorise the form of investment, in addition to those forms authorised by law for the investment of trust funds, in which funds available for investment and vested in the statutory body corporate associated with the Synod may be invested.

## HERITAGE SOCIETY

It was resolved:

- 77.51 That the Assembly approves the setting up of a single Heritage Society and refers the details to the Standing Committee for appropriate action.

## ADDITIONAL APPOINTMENTS TO COUNCILS, ETC.

It was resolved:

- 77.52 That the Assembly determines that Assembly Councils, Commissions, and Committees shall have the right to nominate to the Standing Committee additional appointments (up to five additional or one quarter of the elected membership whichever is the less), the Assembly Standing Committee having authority to appoint or reject the nominations.

## EMBLEM

It was resolved:

- 77.53 That the Assembly endorses the action taken by the Joint Constitution Council in adopting the Church Emblem.

## CONFESSION OF FAITH

It was resolved:

- 77.54 That the Assembly refers the remit from the 1974 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, re the preparation of a confession of faith to the Commission on Doctrine for consideration and report to the next Assembly.

## PUBLICATION OF ADDRESSES

It was resolved:

- 77.55 That the Assembly authorises the publication and sale of the Addresses to the Assembly by the President and Dr. Philip Potter, at a price estimated to be adequate to defray costs of publication and that we request the Board of Education to arrange for distribution.

## ASSEMBLY TRAVEL FUND

It was resolved:

- 77.56 That the Assembly refers the proposal for the establishment of an Assembly Travel Fund to the secretariat for appropriate action.

## MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCILS, ETC.

It was resolved:

- 77.57 That Assembly refers the question of limiting the number of bodies to which any person may be appointed for consideration by the Standing Committee and report to the next Assembly.

## MEMBERSHIP OF SYNODS

It was resolved:

- 77.58 That pursuant to the provisions of Regulation 3.5.2(c), Assembly approves that the maximum number of members in respect of certain Synods be as follows:—
- |                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| New South Wales | 750 |
| Queensland      | 600 |
| Victoria        | 600 |

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 77.59 This first Assembly of the Uniting Church puts on record its heartfelt thanks to five of its members who, while performing many other duties and fulfilling responsibilities in the church and the community, gave of their time, skills and energies unstintingly so that the Uniting Church of Australia might be inaugurated in June, 1977.

Those five members being:

The Rt. Rev. L. Farquhar Gunn,  
The Rev. Winston O'Reilly,  
The Rev. Henry T. Wells,  
Mr. Rupert H. Grove,  
Mr. Harold N. Julian.

## GREETING (NIGHTCLIFF)

- 77.60 The Assembly rejoices to learn that the Nightcliff church in Darwin which was totally destroyed by Cyclone Tracy on 25th December, 1974, has now been rebuilt and will be reopened and dedicated under the auspices of the Arafura Presbytery on Saturday, 25th June, as part of the inauguration celebrations in Darwin.

The Assembly congratulates the Darwin parish and the Nightcliff Church Council on the completion of the building and extends its warmest greetings to the members of the parish and of the Nightcliff congregation on this happy occasion.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

It was resolved:

- 77.61 That the Assembly authorises the Standing Committee to deal with any matters not completed by this Assembly.

## SECOND ASSEMBLY

It was resolved:

- 77.62 That the Second Assembly be held in Melbourne to commence on 15th May, 1979.