

# MINUTES OF THE NINTH ASSEMBLY

At 2.30 p.m. on Saturday 15 July 2000 the Ninth Assembly was formally constituted with recognition of the Kurna people on whose land the Assembly was meeting and with worship led by the President, John Mavor.

## OPENING ACTIONS

### 00.01 ROLL OF ASSEMBLY (see Appendix A)

The Assembly resolved to adopt the roll of members, subject to any alterations advised to the General Secretary no later than 5.30pm on Monday 17 July 2000.

### 00.02 PRESIDENT

The Assembly resolved to elect Ian James Mitchell Haire as President of the Assembly, to hold office until the installation of his successor at the next ordinary meeting of the Assembly.

### 00.03 BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Jan Trengove, assisted by other members of the Business Committee, "coached" the members of Assembly through an orientation to Assembly procedures. Jan Trengove (Chairperson) and Gregor Henderson (General Secretary) then presented the report of the Business Committee.

The Assembly resolved:

00.03.01 to receive the report;

#### 00.03.02 Appointment of Business Committee

to appoint the following persons as members of the Business Committee for the Ninth Assembly: Jan Trengove (Chairperson), Elizabeth Burns, Geoff Collins, James Haire, Marelle Harisun, Gregor Henderson, Bruce Irvine, Taek Lee, Karan Hudson, Subramaniam Manopavan, John Mavor, Jan Oliver, Brian Robins, Isabel Thomas Dobson, Kate Thompson and Ian Tozer;

#### 00.03.03 Appointment of Minute Secretaries

to appoint the following persons as minute secretaries: Rodger Bassham, Noreen Bray, Ted Bray, Margaret Burns, Judy Chadwick, Val Chapman, Mervyn Maddern, Brian Robertson, Rhonda Robins, Allan Shephard, Coralie Simpson, Maxine Watchman;

#### 00.03.04 Order of Business

to approve the order of business and timetable submitted by the Business Committee, noting that decisions to vary the order of business and timetable may be taken by the Assembly at any time;

#### 00.03.05 Participation of Children and Youth

to welcome the participation of children and youth in this Assembly through the "KUCA-A" and "Youth at Assembly" programs, and associate the children and youth with the right to speak but not to vote;

00.03.06 **Confirmation of Minutes**

to authorise the following persons to confirm the minutes of the Ninth Assembly: Margaret Burns, Malcolm Gledhill, James Haire, Gregor Henderson, Brian Robins and Jan Trengove;

00.03.07 **Proposals involving financial commitment**

to determine that any proposal submitted at this Assembly which may involve a financial commitment not currently provided for in Assembly budgets or which seeks to establish a priority on the use of resources of the Assembly and/or its agencies or which may involve a financial commitment for Synods, be subject to comment before determination by the Assembly as follows:

- by the Finance Committee and the Management Advisory Group in the case of a financial commitment not currently provided for in Assembly budgets;
- by the Management Advisory Group in the case of seeking to establish a priority on the use of Assembly resources;
- by the Finance Committee in the case of financial commitment for Synods;

00.03.08 **Ballots and Nominating Procedures**

- (a) to appoint Margaret Pittman as Returning Officer;
- (b) to appoint a Ballot Committee with responsibility for advising the Assembly on any questions relating to nominations and elections;
- (c) to appoint the following persons as members of the Ballot Committee: Margaret Pittman (Convener), Elizabeth Burns, Don Catford, Malcolm Gledhill and Robert Johnson;
- (d) to appoint the following persons as scrutineers: Beth Ackland, Margaret Boundy, Merv Boundy, Mavis Ellis, Trevor Forby, Fay Goldsworthy, Frank Moore, Marlene Moore, Geoff Pope, Don Sarre, Rosemary Sarre, James Wallace and Judith Wallace;
- (e) to approve the nominating and voting procedures as detailed in paragraphs 5.1 – 5.12 of the report;
- (f) to determine that nominations close at 5.30 p.m. on Monday, 17 July, 2000;

00.03.09 **Association of persons with the Assembly**

to associate the following persons with the Assembly for the business as listed, with the right to speak but not vote:

- (a) Ecumenical guests
  - (i) from other Australian churches and the National Council of Churches in Australia, for the whole of the Assembly:
    - Archbishop Ian George, Anglican Church of Australia;

- Rev David Gill, General Secretary, National Council of Churches in Australia;
  - Mr Robert Leane, Past President, Churches of Christ in Australia;
  - Rev Dr Michael Tan, President, Methodist Church in Australia (Australasia);
  - Rev Alan Filipaina, President, Congregational Federation of Australia;
  - Bishop Michael Putney, Roman Catholic Church;
  - Rev Dr David Stolz, Victorian President, Lutheran Church of Australia;
- (ii) from overseas churches and from international ecumenical bodies, for the whole of the Assembly:
- Rev Agustinus Aesh, Moderator, Gereja Masehi Injili di Halmahera;
  - Mrs Ma Sophia Lizares Bodegon, United Church of Christ in the Philippines;
  - Rev Tony Burnham, General Secretary, United Reformed Church UK & Council for World Mission, UK;
  - Mrs Valerie Burnham, United Reformed Church UK & Council for World Mission, UK;
  - Rev David Bush, President, Methodist Church of New Zealand;
  - Rev Daniel Caihe, Evangelical Church in New Caledonia & The Loyalty Islands;
  - Rev David Campbell, Presbyterian Church in Ireland World Church Relations Committee;
  - Mr Young Jin Choi, Presbyterian Church of Korea;
  - Rt Rev Dr V Devasahayam, Bishop of Chennai, Church of South India;
  - Rev Francisco de Vasconcelos, Moderator, Protestant Church in Timor Lorosae;
  - Rev Penisimani Fonua, General Secretary, Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga;
  - Rev Tomasi Kanailagi, President, Methodist Church in Fiji;
  - Mr Kriang, International Relations, Church of Christ in Thailand;
  - Rev Kyu Ho Lee, Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Korea;
  - Rt Rev Cliff Leeuw, Moderator, Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa;
  - Rev Samson Lowa, Moderator, United Church in Papua New Guinea;
  - Rev Marjory A MacLean, Depute Clerk to the General Assembly, Church of Scotland;
  - Rt Rev Vinod Malaviya, Bishop of Gujarat, Church of North India;
  - Rev Thobias Messakh, Moderator, Gereja Masehi Injili di Timor;
  - Rt Rev Dr Trevor Morrow, Moderator, Presbyterian Church in Ireland;
  - Mrs Carys Morrow, Presbyterian Church in Ireland;
  - Rev Baiteke Nabetari, Moderator, Kiribati Protestant Church;
  - Rev Ross Olivier, Executive Secretary, Methodist Church of Southern Africa;
  - Rev Dr Arnold Parengkuan, President, Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa;
  - Mrs Heung Ae Park, Presbyterian Church of Korea;

- Ms Kathleen Richards, World Alliance of Reformed Churches;
- Bishop Philemon Riti, Moderator, United Church in the Solomon Islands;
- Rev Prof Dr W A Roeroe, Retiring President, Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa;
- Bishop Alan Sarte, North Luzon Jurisdiction, United Church of Christ in the Philippines;
- Rev Herman Saud, Moderator, Gereja Kristen di Papua;
- Rev Pamela Tankersley, Business Co-convener, Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand;
- Rev Alis Tira, Secretary for Mission, Kiribati Protestant Church;
- Rev Dr John Titaley, Dean of Faculty, Satya Wacana Christian University, Indonesia;
- Rev Sammy Titaley, Moderator, Gereja Protestan Maluku;
- Rev Tangimetua Tangatatutai, President, Cook Islands Christian Church;
- Rev Esau Tuza, General Secretary, United Church in the Solomon Islands;
- Rev Kalsakau Urtalo, Talua Principal, Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu;
- Rev Jill van de Geer, General Secretary, Methodist Church of New Zealand;

(b) persons who will assist in resourcing the Assembly:

- Jill Tabart, for the whole of the Assembly;
- John Adams and Ivan Copley for the business of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress and Covenanting and related business;
- Bussy Arulampalam, John Barr, Robin Boyd, Rob Gallacher, Laurie Fitzgerald and Julie Woolcock for the report of Unity and International Mission and related business;
- Nancy Bomford, Cheryl Lawrie and Chris Walker, for proposals 14 and 28 and related business;
- John Brown and Sue Blacklock for the report of Covenanting and related business;
- Susan Burt, for the report of the Task Group on the Teaching Ministry and Mission of the Church and related business;
- Geoff Collins and Ian Tozer, for the report of Social Responsibility and Justice and related business;
- Ann Connan, for the report of the Uniting Church Adult Fellowships National Committee and related business;
- May Chang and Stephen Pearson, for the report of National Finance and related business;
- Philip Creed, for the report of Uniting Education and related business;
- Rod Dungan, for the report of Uniting Education and business relating to children's and youth ministry;
- Beth Hancock, Peter Harris, John Oldmeadow and Deidre Palmer for the report of Coolamon College and related business;
- Bob Macintosh and Bill Reddin, for the report of Defence Force Chaplaincy and related business;
- Anita Monro, for the reports of Coolamon College and Gospel and Gender and related business;
- Bill Munro and Perc Marland for proposal 37 and related business;
- Des Perry and Leonie Walker, for business related to diversity and sexuality;

- Ruth Powell, for the report of the Strategic Planning Unit and related business;
- Brian Robins, Deidre Palmer, Graham Vawser and Peter Gunn for the reports of the Facilitation Group and related business;
- Carla Tongun, Timothy Tot Chol and Bernie Clarke for proposal 20 and related business;
- Peter Trenorden for the naming of the Uniting Church rose;
- Laurie Turner, for the report of the Beneficiary Fund and related business;
- Rosemary Young, for the report of Frontier Services and related business.

**00.04            MANUAL FOR MEETINGS**

Jill Tabart presented the report on the proposed revised Manual for Meetings.

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.04.01            to receive the report;
- 00.04.02            to approve the amendments to the Manual for Meetings, as per section J of the Assembly working papers, with an additional amendment to 8.3 on page J-23 to provide for minor changes to the Manual for Meetings to be approved by the Assembly Standing Committee and major changes to be approved by the Assembly, and amendment of the term “associated member” by substituting a more appropriate term to be determined by the Standing Committee;
- 00.04.03            to determine that the business of the Ninth Assembly shall be conducted in accordance with the amended Manual for Meetings;
- 00.04.04            to request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to make provision in the Regulations for the Manual for Meetings to be the standard meeting procedures used throughout the Church.

**00.05            COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE**

The Assembly resolved that the elected membership of the Standing Committee shall include:

- at least two persons 25 years or under;
- no fewer than eight women and no fewer than eight men;
- at least two persons recognised by Multicultural Ministry as being among the migrant-ethnic members of the Assembly, at least one of whom shall be a lay person, at least one of whom shall be of Pacific origin, and at least one of whom shall be of Asian origin.

**00.06            LAUNCH OF ASSEMBLY THEME**

Ruth Powell, Wendie Wilkie and David Pitman launched the theme of the Ninth Assembly - "here we are...=...send us".

**00.07            MINISTERIAL MATTERS (see Appendix B)**

The General Secretary tabled the names of Deacons, Ministers of the Word, Deaconesses, Youth Workers, Lay Pastors and Community Ministers who have been received by the Uniting Church since the Eighth Assembly, of Ministers of the Word, Deaconesses, Youth Workers and Community Ministers who have died since the Eighth Assembly, and of Ministers of the

Word, Youth Workers and Lay Pastors whose recognition has been withdrawn.

The Assembly was led in prayer by the President, who gave thanks particularly for those who had gone before us.

## **00.08 RETIRING PRESIDENT**

John Mavor addressed the Assembly.

The Assembly resolved:

00.08.01 to receive the report of the retiring President, John Mavor;

00.08.02 to record its thanks to God and its deep appreciation for the service of John Mavor as the eighth President of the Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia in this resolution:

### **Appreciation of John Mavor**

The Eighth Assembly, meeting in Perth in July 1997, raised huge issues for the Uniting Church and beyond the church, for our community. The consideration of reports and decisions regarding sexuality, the stolen generations, church structures, and ministerial education are still reverberating through the Uniting Church in Australia and into our community. People came to that Assembly with strong and differing convictions, and perhaps even stronger feelings on these matters.

The Uniting Church in Australia gives thanks to God that, in John Mavor, we have had a big man who has given wise leadership as the Church works with these important issues.

At the Assembly John inspired us with his vision and enthusiasm for the Church, and chaired the meetings with wisdom, firmness and a strong desire to allow all to contribute to the life of the Assembly and to the decisions which were made.

John has a strong and mature faith in a big God and a great capacity to witness to that God and to share that faith with others. John has continually pointed us to a loving God who is greater than any of our preconceptions and whose love is wider than any of our limitations. John has continually invited us to a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and helped us to be aware of the Holy Spirit moving with strength and life among us.

This God has given John a big heart for people, an ability to be concerned for the whole Uniting Church, to love everyone and to help us to move forward. John has had particular concern to go as President to be with those who are hurting, angry, or feeling excluded by the church. He has done this at great personal cost to himself and his family.

John has been truly a leader for the Uniting Church. He has pointed us beyond ourselves to the God who calls us and is calling us forward together in mission. He is a leader because he loves to encourage others to exercise their gifts for ministry as part of this mission. He knows how to get the best out of people, with encouragement, with appropriate freedom, and a willingness to speak the hard word when it is necessary.

John has driven an enormous number of kilometres around Australia in his desire to be with the Uniting Church wherever the need was. Actually, we should note that John probably drove very few of these kilometres himself –

Rae, as an expression of her support for John and his ministry, has come on most of these trips and has usually driven the whole way, to enable John to prepare for his next engagement by praying, thinking, or sleeping!

John had particular concerns for the Uniting Church during these three years. He really wanted to encourage young people in the church and so initiated and ran a young leaders conference each year in order to build up and prepare those young adults for leadership in our church. He continued his practice of giving strong encouragement and leadership to young people – is he the only person who has been to every NCYC yet?

John has a strong relationship and respect for Aboriginal and Islander people, and for the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress. That has been clear in the way in which he has worked hard to deepen and honour those relationships and to represent the interests of Aboriginal and Islander people to government and in the community. In a similar way, John has had a strong relationship with the migrant-ethnic churches and members of the Uniting Church and has pushed us strongly along the road of truly becoming a multicultural church.

Perhaps John's greatest gift to the church has been prayer. We know that John not only prays in private and with Rae for the Uniting Church, constantly, but with us. All of us who have been visited by John Mavor know that when we have shared our concerns for the church, John will always conclude with words such as, "I'd like to pray for you" or "Let's make a prayer".

The Uniting Church in Australia gives thanks and praise to God for not only providing us with a big man to face a testing time for the church, but that John and Rae have been so prepared to give themselves to this God and to the task the Uniting Church in Australia has entrusted to him.

We pray that God will bless John and Rae in their retirement and in the different avenues of ministry which we are sure they will discover in that retirement.

## **FROM ASSEMBLY BODIES**

### **00.09 BENEFICIARY FUND**

The report was presented by Laurie Turner (Chairperson) and Clem Dickinson (Executive Director).

The Assembly resolved:

00.09.01 to receive the report;

#### **00.09.02 Appreciation of Clem Dickinson**

to place on record its appreciation of the contribution that the Rev Clement A Dickinson has made to the life of the Church as Executive Director of the Beneficiary Fund and through his involvement in other areas of the Assembly's life.

He was appointed Managing Treasurer of the Assembly Beneficiary Fund by the Assembly in 1991, taking up the placement on 1<sup>st</sup> December of that year. The nine years he has held the appointment has been a time of great

significance to the Fund. Following Government's proclamation of the Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act, Clem has guided the Fund through a veritable minefield of changes, ensuring that it became and remained a Complying Fund within the meaning of that Act.

Clem supervised the incorporation of the Fund with establishment of Benefund Limited as the corporate Trustee, having a Board of Directors elected by six Synods, himself becoming Executive Director. He promoted the principal of Directors being elected on the basis of skills' criteria (each Director to possess at least two of the skills identified as appropriate). During this time Clem has employed and maintained a stable, long-serving and competent staff, improving the range of skills available to the Fund when changes in staff have occurred. The Board has benefited by the manner it has been represented by its Executive Director in the Councils of the Church, industry seminars and the establishment of an Inter-Church Superannuation Group.

Within the UCA, he provided the framework and carefully guided the setting up of a Preventative Care Program, which has proved of great value to ministers and the Church - a program unique in the Australian superannuation field. Under his administration the Fund assets have grown from \$114 million to \$230 million (at the end of 1999), and despite changing economic conditions the Fund's results have been near the top of industry performers. His professional conduct of the affairs of the Fund has earned the respect of the Fund's many consultants - actuarial, legal, investment and audit etc. An objective external measure has been the commendation of the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority which over two detailed reviews commended the Fund on its purpose, transparency and high standard of competency.

In the midst of all this complexity Clem has maintained the Beneficiary Fund's strong pastoral emphasis as a Defined Benefit Fund (rare in these days), while being responsible for management of fund investments, self-insurance, payment of pensions and oversight of a complex system of member benefits. With the support of Directors and staff, Clem has organised the workload to ensure that very little administration is outsourced.

To this must be added Clem's other Assembly involvements - co-opted member of the Finance Committee, member of the Management Advisory Group, attends Assembly Standing Committee by invitation, and, on a few brief occasions, acting General Secretary. Clem facilitated the creation of the National Home Endowment Fund (except Queensland) and arranged for it to be administered from the Beneficiary Fund office.

Clem has always seen good administration as having a clear pastoral dimension. In all his roles Clem has been a pastor - to members of the Fund, active and retired, his own and other Assembly staff. He has made himself available to anyone who seeks his support or help. His role has involved extensive travel within the bounds of the Assembly - reporting to Synods, meeting with Presbyteries, groups or individual ministers. His retirement seminars have been greatly valued, both for the detailed and relevant information provided and the fellowship engendered. Telephone counselling is constantly availed of. To all the personal relations Clem has brought an open and sensitive ear, informed mind and a concerned heart. He has seen each role as an active expression of his primary goal - to be a faithful minister of Christ and his Church.

To this expression of thanks, the Assembly offers to Clem and Margaret its assurance of its prayerful interest in their retirement. The Lord be with you.



**00.10 COOLAMON COLLEGE**

The report was presented by Robert Bos (National Director), Marelle Harisun (Chairperson) and Anita Monro.

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.10.01 to receive the report;
- 00.10.02 to confirm the Standing Committee decision to declare Coolamon College the preferred provider of distance theological education;
- 00.10.03 to commend and encourage the Standing Committee and the Finance Committee in their efforts to fund Coolamon College to break-even point.

**00.11 COVENANTING**

The report was presented by Peter Lewis (National Director), Shayne Blackman (National Administrator, UAICC), John Brown, Sue Blacklock, Ivan Copley and Vince Ross.

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.11.01 to receive the report;
- 00.11.02 **Towards Reconciliation**  
noting that during 2000 the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation has presented to the nation documents for reconciliation:
  - (a) to endorse the *Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation* and commend it to all councils of the church for study and endorsement as a further step in covenanting and reconciliation;
  - (b) to endorse the idea of a legislated process of negotiation between the leaders of the Indigenous and non-indigenous peoples of Australia towards a formal agreement (treaty) dealing with the “unfinished business” of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation’s process for reconciliation;
- 00.11.03 **Action to advance Covenanting and Reconciliation**
  - (a) to urge Assembly agencies, Synods, Presbyteries and Congregations to study the *Roadmap for Reconciliation*, and the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress suggested *Strategies for Reconciliation* (see section 6.3 of the report) and to report extensively to the church;
  - (b) (i) to implement, in partnership with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, an *Indigenous Employment Program* whereby at least 2% of the staff of the Assembly and Assembly agencies are Indigenous people;
  - (ii) to commit to maintaining and developing programs which provide young people with cross-cultural experience of each others’ communities and extend to all people of all ages as the opportunity arises;

- (c) (i) to request each Synod to establish a process for monitoring the progress of the UAICC *Strategies for Reconciliation*, including within their schools and community service agencies, and to report annually to the UAICC, the Assembly standing Committee, and the Covenanting Reference Committee on their progress;
- (ii) to request each Synod to implement, in partnership with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, an *Indigenous Employment Program* whereby at least 2% of the staff of the Synod and Synod agencies are Indigenous people;

00.11.04

**Ministerial education**

to request the Ministerial Education Commission, in partnership with Covenanting and the UAICC, to:

- (a) facilitate the further development of cross-cultural awareness and anti-racism programs as compulsory elements for candidates for the specified ministries of the Uniting Church and as church-wide continuing education programs for ministers in placement;
- (b) facilitate the development of theologically based community development training programs to support the ministry of the UAICC;
- (c) facilitate the development and recognition of Internships with the UAICC as field education and licensed year placements during education for ministry courses;
- (d) continue to foster, support and encourage the ongoing development of Indigenous theology and its contextualisation in each state;
- (e) organise a theological educators' conference to explore the above issues with the aim of developing a process for implementation;

00.11.05

**Government action**

to call on the Federal Government to:

- (a) adopt the *Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation*;
- (b) support and implement the *Roadmap for Reconciliation* in consultation with Indigenous organisations and communities;
- (c) support and provide funding on request for *Reconciliation Australia*;
- (d) establish a consultative body consisting of equal numbers of Indigenous leaders and non-Indigenous leaders which will create a legislated framework agreement (treaty) which will:
  - (i) provide constitutional acknowledgment and recognition of the status of Indigenous peoples of Australia as 'First Peoples';
  - (ii) provide constitutional recognition of Indigenous rights and remove aspects of the constitution which can be used to discriminate on the basis of race;
  - (iii) provide constitutional protection to the Racial Discrimination Act;
  - (iv) provide for a process of Indigenous representation in the parliament;

- (v) affirm and recognise native title, land rights, customary law and indigenous heritage protection;
- (vi) respect the right to self-determination for Indigenous peoples within the life of the nation;
- (vii) provide the foundation for the co-existence of the Indigenous and non-indigenous systems of land ownership;
- (viii) acknowledge traditional Indigenous economies and Indigenous rights as the basis for economic empowerment of Indigenous communities;
- (e) ensure that all Australian laws, policies and practices which impact on Indigenous people meet the requirements of relevant UN conventions to which Australia is a signatory;
- (f) apologize to Indigenous Australians for the negative consequences of all Australian governments' past laws, policies and practices that led to the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families and establish a reparation and compensation tribunal for those negatively affected;

00.11.06

**Australia's national day**

- (a) to reaffirm the Assembly policy of moving Australia's national day away from the 26<sup>th</sup> January;
- (b) to ask Covenanting, in consultation with UAICC, to produce study guides in support of the Reconciliation process which include the Christian understanding of reconciliation between God and God's creation, including the reconciling work of Jesus Christ. And that these materials be in a suitable cross-cultural form and accessible to people of all ages including children;
- (c) to affirm the value of face to face meetings and of sharing stories in fostering reconciliation;
- (d) to apply to its own life the recommendations of the *Bringing Them Home* Report;

00.11.07

**Appreciation of John Brown**

to place on record its appreciation of the contribution that the Rev Dr John Brown has made to the life of the church in his foundational work on Covenanting and Reconciliation.

He was the first Covenanting Coordinator and later National Director for Covenanting for the Assembly and was, and continues to be, one of the nation's key leaders in the area of reconciliation. John continues his work in covenanting and reconciliation as a volunteer. He is currently the Co-Chair of the National Sorry Day Committee and assisted in the organisation of the Myall Creek Massacre memorial.

John's contribution to reconciliation is an example of how the church can engage, challenge and provide a national vision.

We give thanks for the work of Rev Dr John Brown.

**00.12 DEFENCE FORCE CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE**

The report was presented by Neale Michael (Convener).

00.12.01 The Assembly resolved to receive the report.

**00.13 FRONTIER SERVICES**

The report was presented by Anne Amos (Chairperson) and Rosemary Young (National Director).

00.13.01 The Assembly resolved to receive the report.

**00.14 GENERAL SECRETARY**

Gregor Henderson, retiring General Secretary, addressed the Assembly and presented the report.

The Assembly resolved:

00.14.01 to receive the report;

00.14.02 to record its thanks to God and deep appreciation of the ministry of the Reverend Gregor Henderson as Assembly General Secretary during the period 1989-2000:

**Appreciation of Gregor Henderson**

Gregor was appointed General Secretary by the Fifth Assembly and has provided distinguished executive leadership during a period of significant consolidation and growth in the work of the Assembly. This has culminated in the major restructuring of the Assembly organization achieved during the past triennium. During this period the organisational, administrative and pastoral skills of Gregor have been meshed with his focus upon the Assembly's responsibility to lead and resource the Church in the local, national and international dimensions of the Church's mission.

Gregor has brought great competence as a biblical scholar to all his work, not only shaping his own ministry and leadership, but through preaching and teaching bringing encouragement, nurture and challenge to people in congregations throughout the country and in many areas of the church's life.

His extraordinary capacity has been demonstrated in the manner in which he has responded to the huge demands and expectations placed upon him from all sections of the church. It has been further reflected in the comprehensive understanding that he has maintained of the wide-ranging issues under consideration. His creativity at times of apparent impasse and the freshness, good humour and enthusiasm with which he has approached every issue, whether large or small, have generated goodwill and enthusiasm across wide sections of the church.

In spite of a heavy workload, Gregor has always been available to those who seek his advice and counsel. He has particularly been a friend and advocate for members of the Congress in the quest for Aboriginal reconciliation, a listener and counsellor with migrant-ethnic congregations and multicultural issues and instrumental in ensuring that many minority voices in our diverse church are heard.

Gregor is held in high esteem in the ecumenical community of the church and among people of other faiths. He has contributed to many of the ongoing dialogues; he has represented the Uniting Church with integrity and sensitivity in occasional difficult issues, fostering closer relationships and partnerships with churches in Australia and overseas. His contribution and capacity in this area is acknowledged in his election as a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches.

Gregor has been a close colleague with staff within the Assembly where his ministry has been appreciated both as a leader and as a pastor. His work with successive Assembly Presidents has been based on mutual respect and has led to enduring friendships. Through such relationships, the Uniting Church has been especially blessed by God in the quality of its national leadership. Gregor has been a valued colleague, mentor and trusted friend of Synod Secretaries whom he has supported and encouraged in their respective contexts. Whilst promoting and developing the work of the Assembly, he has at all times been supportive of Synods and Presbyteries in the exercise of their responsibilities.

Members of the Assembly are very aware of the gifts and capacity of Gregor's ministry as seen in his leadership and administration within the Assembly sessions. Members of Standing Committees and other committees and working groups have seen and appreciated this leadership, focussed sometimes with even greater intensity.

The Church is deeply grateful, also, for the loving support which Alison has provided to Gregor and for the way in which their family have shared this ministry with him. We acknowledge that the church has placed expectations upon Gregor which have taken him from his home life. We are most grateful for the generous manner in which they have shared Gregor with the church.

The Uniting Church in Australia gives thanks to God for the gift of Gregor Henderson to the church as Assembly General Secretary during the past twelve years and for the wisdom and grace with which God has sustained him throughout this period.

We pray that God will continue to bless Gregor and Alison as they move on to new fields of ministry and service of Christ and the church.

**00.15 GOSPEL AND GENDER**

The report was presented by Anita Monro (National Director) and Glenda Blakefield (Chairperson).

The Assembly resolved

00.15.01 to receive the report;

00.15.02 **Appreciation of Christine Cargill**  
to extend its appreciation for the significant leadership given by Christine Cargill, Gospel & Gender and all those who have been involved in the development of the Code of Ethics and the various documents dealing with procedures for use in cases of complaints of sexual misconduct;

00.15.03 to request Gospel & Gender to continue to explore the significance of gender and identity issues for the life of the Uniting Church and the witness of the Gospel through further attention to:

- the inclusive nature of theology and worship of the Uniting Church via the development of closer relationships with the working groups of Theology and Discipleship, and
- the way in which women and men understand their identities in Christ through the development of a forum where the interaction of different understandings of gender identities are highlighted and discussed;

00.15.04

**Code of Ethics**

to approve the Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice, to replace the Interim Code of Ethics approved in July 1998, with immediate effect, as follows:

Uniting Church in Australia



**CODE OF ETHICS AND MINISTRY PRACTICE**

for Ministers of the Word, Deacons, Deaconesses, Youth Workers, Community Ministers and Lay Pastors in the Uniting Church in Australia (whether in approved placements or not).

In this Code, "Minister" refers to Community Ministers, Deacons, Deaconesses, Lay Pastors, Ministers of the Word and Youth Workers.

This Code of Ethics is to be applied within the context of the Constitution and Regulations of the Church which state the Church's requirements in relation to the conduct and accountability of its Ministers.

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The Christian community is called into being by God through the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit. As the Basis of Union says:

"The Uniting Church acknowledges that the Church is able to live and endure through the changes of history only because its Lord comes, addresses and deals with people in and through the news of his completed work." (para 4).

The church is sustained by Christ through baptism, the Eucharist and preaching of the Word. Its life and fellowship is derived from the fact that the Church is the Body of Christ, the presence of Christ in the world. We are united in a fellowship of love, service, suffering and joy through our shared faith in Christ. We worship, pray, give our witness, study Scripture and other sources of faith, offer pastoral care to each other, develop deep friendships, and seek to be mutually accountable. We are, for this reason, a deeply intimate community.

1.2 Ministers have a particular place within that community. They touch people's lives at many points of joy, pain, celebration, grief and vulnerability. They are responsible for providing leadership in the community's task of worshipping, proclaiming the good news of Jesus, providing pastoral care, standing with those who suffer, and working for justice and peace. They minister within a pastoral relationship in which they seek to enable other people to focus on God as the source of healing, restoration and wholeness.

- 1.3 The pastoral relationship occurs within a faith community whose life and relationships are established by Jesus Christ. The pastoral relationship has its meaning, and is established and maintained, as the church enables others to meet Jesus who nourishes our lives. The pastoral relationship is part of the way the church is nourished and built up as the Body of Christ, and nurtures life in the world. As a result of this context, ministers also have relationships and responsibilities within the broader community which are based on their responsibilities within the faith community.
- 1.4 It is the seriousness of the pastoral relationship, and the vulnerability of people in that relationship, which make it necessary for Ministers to appreciate their unique position and the way they touch people's lives. They exercise considerable influence and power. It is essential that each individual Minister recognises the power they have and understands the boundaries that the church requires to be observed within their ministry.
- 1.5 Because the pastoral relationship occurs in a deeply intimate community, friendships will develop. These will, at times, challenge the capacity of Ministers to provide the pastoral care that belongs to their role as Minister. Ministers have responsibility to distinguish times when objective pastoral care is required. They have the responsibility to discern the boundaries of the pastoral relationship, to offer professional pastoral care when it is required, and to discern when their relationships overstep the appropriate level of friendship and intimacy, or when they are exercising power inappropriately in relation to others in the pastoral relationship.
- 1.6 The Uniting Church understands that as Ministers live out God's call to ministry, all relationships shall be characterised by the love, care and compassion that was embodied in Jesus Christ. The requirement is that the Minister will embody integrity, trust and compassion.
- 1.7 People enter ministry as a response to a call from God and the Church. It is this call that requires that all Ministers carry out their ministry in a professional and accountable manner.
- 1.8 It is recognised that rural and isolated communities present particular difficulties in term of professional/personal relationship; availability of supervision and access to support. This intensifies the responsibilities of Presbyteries for care of such persons, and in assisting Ministers to fulfil the Code of Ethics.

## **2. The Pastoral Relationship**

- 2.1 Recognising that all relationships in the Christian community are intended to nurture the church and people's relationship with Christ who is Lord of the Church, in the context of this Code of Ethics, the **pastoral relationship** "means the relationship between a Minister and another person:
- (a) in which the Minister is providing spiritual care for the person; or
  - (b) where the person has looked to the Minister for guidance, protection or care; or
  - (c) where the person has made contact with the Minister in their responsibility or function as Minister" (Reg 7.7.5).

Ministers are in a pastoral relationship with all members and adherents of a Congregation through the vows they make at their induction. Where Ministers are in a non-Congregational placement, they are in pastoral relationship with those persons they come in contact with by virtue of their placement.

- 2.2 The pastoral relationship is concerned for maturity in Christian life, and for fullness of life for all people, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, economic circumstances or other personal characteristics. It is a relationship in which Ministers seek to express an ethic of care, which includes nurturing the other person's power over their own life as they relate to others and to God.
- 2.3 The pastoral relationship is nurtured and guided through the vows of commissioning or ordination. These vows reflect the intention of Ministers to exercise their ministry:
- (a) through faith in Jesus Christ and relying on the power of the Holy Spirit;
  - (b) within the faith of the church, guided by the Basis of Union;
  - (c) by being nourished and guided by the study of Scripture;
  - (d) through announcing the Good News in Christ to those outside the community of faith;
  - (e) through faithful affirmation of, and celebration of sacraments;
  - (f) in a mutual manner, offering pastoral care and nurturing people in faith, recognising and valuing other peoples gifts, training them for ministry and working cooperatively with their ministry;
  - (g) through working for justice and peace;
  - (h) by striving for peace and unity among all Christian people;
  - (i) by engaging in ongoing study;
  - (j) by respecting the guidance and decisions of the councils of the church;
  - (k) within the discipline of the church.
- 2.4. Ministers shall exercise their ministry in a manner that expresses:
- (a) commitment to God;
  - (b) inclusiveness of the Gospel;
  - (c) accountability ;
  - (d) commitment to the call of the church to ministry;
  - (e) the professional nature of the relationship, and ensures:
    - (i) that Ministers do not seek to meet their personal needs through the pastoral relationship;
    - (ii) that people are encouraged to identify and use their power;
    - (iii) that clear boundaries are recognised and observed (ie. the relationship and behaviour are appropriate to the pastoral relationship);
    - (iv) respect, sensitivity and reverence for others;
    - (v) confidentiality
    - (vi) non-abusive use of power;
    - (vii) commitment to justice.

### **3. Professional Conduct**

#### **3.1 Relationships with Colleagues**

- (a) Ministers shall work within the polity of the Uniting Church as guided by the Basis of Union and defined in the Constitution and Regulations, respecting the rights and responsibilities of those who share leadership in the Uniting Church, both lay and ordained.
- (b) Ministers shall respect the call and placement of other Ministers. They shall recognise those people who are colleagues, or those with whom they are in team ministry, as equals in standing and responsibility in the fulfilment of their duties as a Minister in that placement as outlined in the Regulations (2.3.10 and 2.3.11).
- (c) Ministers who have particular authority in relation to other Ministers and lay staff shall exercise their power justly and in a clearly accountable manner.
- (d) Ministers shall:



- (i) accept the theological validity of the ordination of both women and men for ministry in Christ's church as a Minister;
  - (ii) be willing to work with and support women and men as colleagues in the ordained ministries; and
  - (iii) be willing to encourage, equip and support both women and men in all forms of ministry in the Church and to teach the Church's position in this regard (ASC minute 92.61.5).
- (e) Ministers shall respect the professional expertise of members of other disciplines/professions with whom they work in the Church or other institutions.

### **3.2 Teaching**

Ministers have a responsibility to represent accurately the teachings of the Scriptures and of the Church. When teaching, preaching or leading worship, Ministers have an obligation to present the gospel of Jesus Christ, guided by the witness to Christ in the Scripture, to take seriously the tradition of faith and worship of the church catholic; and to share that faith in the language and forms of the particular worshipping community and to address its issues.

In particular, Ministers shall:

- (a) live out the vision of the Basis of Union;
- (b) accurately represent the meanings of biblical passages;
- (c) accurately represent the degree to which experts in a discipline support their views;
- (d) accurately represent opposing views;
- (e) uphold the theological and liturgical tradition of the Church;
- (f) be guided by the decisions of the Assembly;
- (g) be open to challenge and correction from colleagues.

### **3.3 Relationships with Church Councils**

- (a) Ministers shall respect the guidance and decisions of the councils of the church, and maintain accountability within the discipline of the church.
- (b) Ministers have a responsibility to participate fully in their local church councils, Presbytery, and in the wider work of the church.
- (c) Ministers may not use their preaching role to inflame conflict within the Congregation, or between the Congregation and other councils of the church. Processes and decisions of church councils should be reported accurately and fairly. Disagreements need to be conducted within the framework of principles provided by *A Manual for Meetings*, (ie. in a way that expresses Christian community and commitment to rational debate based on evidence and argument, not personal attacks and mere assertion of opinion).

### **3.4 Competence**

- (a) Ministers have a responsibility to maintain high standards of knowledge and skills in all the areas of ministry relevant to their placement. This responsibility requires that Ministers undertake continuing education appropriate to this ministry.
- (b) Ministers shall not misrepresent their competence, qualifications, training or experience.
- (c) Ministers shall refrain from offering to undertake and or engage in work beyond their professional competence; and shall make appropriate referrals.
- (d) Where Ministers are forced by circumstances to provide care beyond their normal competence they shall:
  - (i) discuss this with their supervisor;

- (ii) seek guidance from a person with appropriate competence;
- (iii) where warranted, seek opportunities to develop the appropriate skills.
- (e) Ministers shall end pastoral care when it is not beneficial for the other person or where the help needed is outside their pastoral competence.

### **3.5 Professionalism**

- (a) Ministers shall recognise the power that is inherent in their role and shall not use this power in a manner which is abusive or unprofessional.
- (b) Ministers shall exercise their ministry to the other person in the pastoral relationship in a professional manner. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - (i) offering the best quality care, leadership of worship and preaching of which they are capable;
  - (ii) offering appropriate Christian teaching;
  - (iii) appropriately dealing with emotional and spiritual needs;
  - (iv) being sensitive to people's different social contexts;
  - (v) following recognised and acknowledged modes of working in specialist areas such as bereavement, trauma and suicide;
  - (vi) being sensitive to the needs and vulnerability of the children and young people with whom they work, ensuring that the professional nature of the relationship is made clear in an appropriate way;
  - (vii) being sensitive to the needs of, and ways of relating to, people from any different cultures with whom they have contact.
- (c) Ministers shall not engage in sexual relationships with people in their professional pastoral care.
- (d) Ministers have a responsibility to provide unbiased pastoral care to those with whom they disagree, and to consult their supervisor in relation to the situation.
- (e) Where there is an actual or potential conflict of interest in matters affecting Ministers, their family or their financial interests, the Ministers shall absent themselves from discussion and decision, except in the case of deliberations by Presbyteries, Synods and Assembly and their agencies on ministerial stipends and entitlements.

### **3.6 Confidentiality**

- (a) Ministers shall not breach confidentiality. Confidentiality is not about secrecy. In the context of a pastoral relationship, it is an assurance that Ministers will not share written or spoken information about an individual with other people [except as indicated in (d) below], or use it for a purpose other than for which it was collected.
- (b) In the processes of the church, there are also times when, because of its personal nature or its potential for misuse or harm, some information may be designated confidential, and is only intended for a particular audience such as a Synod in closed session, a board or local church council.
- (c) In a pastoral relationship Ministers shall take care to discuss the nature and limits of their confidentiality with the other person.
- (d) Information received in the context of a pastoral relationship shall remain confidential unless:
  - (i) the person gives permission for the particular disclosure; or
  - (ii) retaining such information would result in significant physical, emotional or sexual harm to another person or persons; or
  - (iii) required by law; or
  - (iv) disclosure is necessary to prevent financial loss to some other person due to fraud or other dishonesty or where undue hardship might result. (as stated in the Privacy Act 1988); or
  - (v) disclosure is required in accordance with the terms of placement/employment applicable in a particular appointment.

- (e) Confidentiality also requires that Ministers shall not seek to gain sensitive or confidential information to which they are not entitled or which would require another person to breach a confidence.
- (f) Ministers shall share with the intended audiences information from Presbytery, Synod and Assembly (and their agencies) that is meant to be disseminated.

### **3.7 Self Care**

Ministers shall take responsibility:

- (a) to maintain their physical, spiritual and emotional health;
- (b) to participate in supervision;
- (c) to give adequate priority to their relationship with their family;
- (d) to nurture personal relationships which assist them in their wholeness.

### **3.8 Supervision**

- (a) Ministers have a responsibility to recognise that they are also vulnerable, requiring them to maintain their professionalism in difficult circumstances.
- (b) Ministers shall keep appropriate pastoral records (eg. details of appointments and referrals and a journal of critical incidents).
- (c) Professional supervision means the relationship Ministers have with another professional or group whereby the Minister is assisted to maintain the boundaries of the pastoral relationship and the quality of ministry (as per the definition at the commencement of the Regulations) including competencies, time management, priorities and any difficulties arising in ministry.
- (d) Ministers have a responsibility to ensure that they receive regular professional supervision. Such supervision is intended to assist Ministers to maintain the boundaries of the pastoral relationships and quality of ministry.
- (e) Ministers shall discuss with their supervisor any ongoing situations of conflict in which they are involved in the course of their work.
- (f) Where applicable, Ministers shall maintain membership requirements of any relevant professional association (eg, psychologists or counsellors.)

## **4. Particular Relationships**

- 4.1 A particular relationship refers to a close personal relationship between a Minister and another person such as:
  - (a) a very close personal friendship; or
  - (b) a close family relationship; or
  - (c) a marriage; or
  - (d) a relationship which is becoming romanticised.
- 4.2 Some particular relationships may exist within the pastoral community. In such circumstances the Minister should not be the sole provider of pastoral care, but steps should be taken to ensure professional pastoral care is available to the other person (eg. the spouse of the Minister, a close friend).
- 4.3 Ministers shall recognise those situations in which it is inappropriate for them to enter into, or continue in, a pastoral relationship. In such situations Ministers shall ensure that appropriate care is arranged for the other persons involved.
- 4.4 In some circumstances it will be appropriate for a Minister to cease a pastoral relationship in order to enter a particular relationship. In the event that a Minister and a person with whom they have been in a pastoral relationship identify a potential particular relationship, the Minister shall:
  - (a) disengage from the pastoral relationship and arrange alternative pastoral care for the other person;

- (b) seek advice on the appropriateness of such a particular relationship, preferably through supervision;
- (c) encourage the other person to talk with someone else about the relationship;
- (d) disclose the relationship to an appropriate officer of the Church (eg. chairperson of the Church Council, Presbytery Minister or other appropriate person within the appointing body).

## **5. Gifts and Fees**

- 5.1 Ministers shall not seek financial gain for themselves or their families from a pastoral relationship beyond recognised fees, stipends and entitlements.
- 5.2 Where Ministers receive gifts resulting from the pastoral relationship the Minister shall use discretion concerning the acceptance or return of gifts by considering the intent and affordability of the gift and whether there is a risk of the Minister being compromised or losing objectivity. Advice shall be sought from the appropriate Presbytery officer if the Minister is uncertain of the appropriateness of a gift.
- 5.3 Where Ministers accept a gift to satisfy cultural traditions they should then look at the appropriate use of the gift to benefit the community of faith.
- 5.4 Ministers shall not use their ministry to recruit clients for private practice or commercial interests.

## **6. Relationship with the Law**

- 6.1 Ministers shall inform the Synod Secretary if of any matter which may lead to legal action against the Minister and/or the Church.
- 6.2 It is unethical for Ministers deliberately to break the law or encourage another to do so. The only exception would be in instances of political resistance or civil disobedience.

## **7. Working with another institution or profession**

- 7.1 Ministers shall be aware of the Codes of Ethics or similar guidelines in other institutions where they may work (eg. hospitals, prisons). Ministers in such placements have a responsibility to abide by those Codes of Ethics also.
- 7.2 Where the demands of another organisation conflict with this Code of Ethics, Ministers shall clarify the nature of the conflict between those demands and the principles of this Code. Ministers shall inform all parties of any conflict and seek to resolve it.

## **8. Breach of Code of Ethics**

- 8.1 Breach of the Code of Ethics refers to any violation of the requirements or principles of the Code by Ministers. It includes any instance where Ministers have deliberately encouraged another to breach the terms of the Code.
- 8.2 When Ministers know of a Code violation by another Minister, and it seems appropriate, they shall informally attempt to resolve the issue by bringing the matter of concern to the attention of that Minister in a constructive manner. If this

is not practical, or does not address the issue of concern, the facts shall be reported to the Presbytery or other appointing body.

8.3 Ministers are required to inform the appropriate council or officer of the Church if the behaviour of any Minister, lay employee or lay appointee could be considered as sexual misconduct (as defined in Regulation 7.7.5).

8.4 It is the responsibility of the Presbytery in the first instance to deal with an allegation of a breach of this Code in accordance with the Regulations. An allegation of a sexual misconduct which could amount to a breach of the Code should be forwarded immediately to the chairperson of the Synod Sexual Misconduct Complaints Committee as required under Regulation 7.7.9.”

- 00.15.05 to encourage Synods and Presbyteries to provide education to Ministers and Congregations on issues relating to the Code, and professional awareness and responsibility;
- 00.15.06 to request the Ministerial Education Commission, in consultation with the Synods to:
- (a) provide resources on models of supervision available to ministers;
  - (b) suggest mechanisms for payment and access to supervision;
  - (c) provide guidance on the relationship between accountability and supervision;
  - (d) design a mechanism of accountability to ensure that the requirement of supervision is being fulfilled;
- 00.15.07 to ask the Ministerial Education Commission to consider developing a consistent training program for youth workers, and those who work with young people, which addresses issues of professional ethics within youth culture;
- 00.15.08 to request the:
- (a) Legal Reference Committee to provide advice on the legal requirements and parameters of confidentiality;
  - (b) Ministerial Education Commission and Uniting Education to provide educational leadership and resources on confidentiality within ministry practice and church councils;
- 00.15.09 (a) to ensure that:
- (i) the Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice is translated for major language groups within the Uniting Church;
  - (ii) further consultation take place with migrant-ethnic Congregations and the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress on any cultural modifications that are advisable to the Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice, to allow full implementation by March 2001;
- (b) to authorise the Standing Committee to approve any changes to the Code which it considers advisable for particular migrant-ethnic Congregations and/or for the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, in light of such consultation;
- 00.15.10 to request the Standing Committee to consider the concerns raised in Section Five of the report and ensure that any outstanding issues raised in the consultation process are addressed by referral to the relevant agencies and councils of the Church;

00.15.11 to request Synods and Presbyteries to ensure that the Code is distributed and the appropriate education occurs;

00.15.12 to thank the task group for their work and discharge them.

## **00.16 HISTORICAL REFERENCE COMMITTEE**

The report was presented by William Emilsen.

The Assembly resolved:

00.16.01 to receive the report;

00.16.02 to encourage participation in celebrations of the centenary of Australian federation with a view to drawing attention to the influence of the churches;

00.16.03 to amend the mandate of the Historical Reference Committee by:

(a) inserting a new mandate point 1 to read "To foster interest in the Church's heritage", with subsequent renumbering;

(b) deleting the words "foster interest in the Church's heritage, and" from mandate point 6;

### **00.16.04 Appreciation of Cornelis Uidam**

to sincerely thank the Rev Cornelis Uidam for his long and dedicated service to the Assembly. We commend him for the distinction that he has brought to the office of honorary Assembly Archivist. We acknowledge the magnificent task that he has accomplished, often under very difficult circumstances and with limited resourcing. We note Cornelis' resignation with regret and extend our good wishes to him for his future.

## **00.17 MINISTERIAL EDUCATION COMMISSION**

The report was presented by Marion Zaunbrecher (Secretary), Peter Matheson and Jenny Byrnes.

The Assembly resolved:

00.17.01 to receive the report;

00.17.02 (a) to ask the Ministerial Education Commission to 'reshape' the 3rd phase ('Licensed Year') in order to address the concerns regarding placement and funding;

(b) to recognise that the name of the third phase as the 'Licensed Year' needs to be reconsidered;

(c) to invite the Ministerial Education Commission to develop interim guidelines for the third phase of Ministerial education, in response to the results of the ongoing consultation with relevant Assembly and Synod agencies and report to the Assembly Standing Committee in March 2001 for approval.

## **00.18 MULTICULTURAL MINISTRY**

Seongja Yoo-Crowe (National Director) and Inoke Nabulivou (Chairperson) presented the report.

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.18.01 to receive the report;
- 00.18.02 to refer to Standing Committee the request for “One Great Sunday of Sharing” to be held in June on the Anniversary of the UCA;
- 00.18.03 as a specific mission strategy, to strongly encourage Congregations, Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committees and Synod Placements Committees, when making decisions regarding placements, to pursue the possibility of placing ministers who are able to exercise ministry in both Anglo and specific Migrant-ethnic cultures (with the relevant language capacities);
- 00.18.04
  - (a) as a specific expression of the multicultural nature of the Church, to affirm the need for a national translation strategy;
  - (b) to request representatives of the Reference Committee on Multicultural Ministry and the Secretariat to consult about steps to be taken in implementing such a strategy;
- 00.18.05
  - (a) to agree to launch a national bequest campaign for Multicultural Ministry;
  - (b) to authorise the National Director for Multicultural Ministry to develop an annual appeal on One Great Sunday of Sharing for the work of multicultural ministry.
- 00.18.06
  - Appreciation of Seongja Yoo Crowe**
    - (a) to thank God and place on record its appreciation of the contribution, leadership and practical vision given to the church by one of the courageous pioneers in Multicultural Ministry in the Uniting Church in Australia, Seongja Yoo Crowe.
      - 1985: Coordinator of publication project for CWM “Handbook for New Arrivals.”
      - 1986-1990 Secretary for Ethnic Affairs within National Mission and Evangelism (NME)
      - 1991-1997 Secretary of Committee on Ethnic Diversity within NME
      - 1997-1998 National Secretary, Committee on Multicultural Ministry.
      - 1999-2000 National Director
    - (b) to wish God’s richest blessing upon her and Colville;
    - (c) to commit to God her continuing work in the life of the Uniting Church;
- 00.18.07
  - Appreciation of Inoke Nabulivou**
    - to place on record its appreciation of the contribution that the Rev Inoke Nabulivou has made to the life of the Church as Chairperson of the Reference Committee on Multicultural Ministry for its first three years 1997-2000; by his leadership style and pastoral caring, Inoke has enabled the Committee to become a working model of interdependence; in prayer and worship he has consistently pointed to Jesus Christ as the source of unity amid diversity.

**00.19 NATIONAL FINANCE**

The report was presented by Ed Walker (Chairperson) and Stephen Pearson (Executive Officer).

00.19.01 The Assembly resolved to receive the report.

## **00.20 RELATIONS WITH OTHER FAITHS**

The President welcomed Rabbi Adam Morris who greeted the Assembly in the Jewish tradition. The report was presented by Graham Brookes (Chairperson) and Wendie Wilkie (Associate General Secretary).

The Assembly resolved:

00.20.01 to receive the report;

00.20.02 to encourage Congregations and groups to refer to and use the resources available on “Living with the neighbour who is different” and “So you want to worship together: Guidelines for multi-faith gatherings for members of the Uniting Church in Australia”;

### **00.20.3 War Criminals**

- (a) to express its commitment to solidarity with all people seeking justice for war crimes;
- (b) to express its belief that neither the passage of time nor the vagaries of location should become pretexts for inaction in the pursuit of justice;
- (c) to work for the further development and acceptance of international agreements and efforts in bringing to justice alleged war criminals and persons charged with genocide;
- (d) to encourage the Australian Government to
  - co-operate further with relevant bodies within Australia and overseas in the pursuit of alleged war criminals and those charged with genocide;
  - ensure that there are government or other officially recognised/authorised bodies in Australia with specific responsibility for the investigation and pursuit of alleged war criminals and those charged with genocide;
  - adequately resource appropriate government or other officially recognised/ authorised bodies to investigate and act upon all allegations of war crimes and genocide brought against persons known or thought to be residing in Australia;
- (e) to inform the Australian Government of these resolutions.

## **00.21 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND JUSTICE**

The report was presented by Christine Cargill (National Director) and Bev Fabb (Chairperson)

The Assembly resolved:

00.21.01 to receive the report;

00.21.02 **Liberty to the Captives (Mandatory Sentencing)**  
in the spirit of this year of Jubilee:



- (a) to record its:
  - (i) opposition to Mandatory Sentencing in any jurisdiction and under any conditions;
  - (ii) desire that all Australians have access to fair and discretionary sentencing;
  - (iii) disappointment that Indigenous Australians are often disadvantaged within the criminal justice system;
  - (iv) expectation that sentencing of juveniles occur within the parameters set by the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty;
  - (v) expectation that Australia fulfil its obligations under the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
  - (vi) expectation that Australia will meet the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the treatment of Prisoners 1955;
  - (vii) support for a restorative and rehabilitative justice system within Australia;
- (b) to call on the Australian Government to use both advocacy and its legislative authority to outlaw the practice of mandatory sentencing within this nation;
- (c) to convey the beliefs outlined in (a) and (b) to the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, the Leaders of other parties in the Senate and House of Representatives;
- (d) to convey the beliefs outlined in (a) and (b) to all State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers and Leaders of other parties within these jurisdictions;

00.21.03

**Welcome the Stranger**

in the spirit of the Year of Jubilee:

- (a) to note the important call of the gospel to welcome the stranger;
- (b) to commend and celebrate the work of those within the Uniting Church and wider community who work with refugees and asylum seekers as they commence resettlement within Australia;
- (c) to celebrate the work which has been undertaken by the NCCA National Program for Refugees and Displaced Persons over many years and for the creation in late 1998 of an ecumenical committee to support this work;
- (d) to commit the Uniting Church in Australia to ongoing support for refugee and asylum seeker resettlement in Australia;
- (e) to commit the Uniting Church in Australia to:
  - (i) promoting cultural sensitivity particularly in the language that it uses to describe those who are refugees, access to interpreters from the same cultural background and access to appropriate faith communities; and
  - (ii) awareness of racism and discrimination used to instil fear against refugees and asylum seekers;
- (f) to affirm the need for fair, humanitarian, adequately resourced and culturally appropriate government policies and procedures for the

processing of refugees and asylum seekers both within Australia and overseas;

- (g) to call on the Australian government to amend its policies and practices by ensuring:
  - (i) accountability and transparency within government process in processing of refugees and asylum seekers
  - (ii) that discrimination does not occur in the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers, and that their dignity is respected;
  - (iii) cultural sensitivity towards asylum seekers and the situations from which they come;
  - (iv) that the language used by Government does not encourage fear and hatred towards refugees and asylum seekers;
  - (v) the current limits on intake of refugees and asylum seekers within Australia are reviewed and that Government demonstrate its international responsibility to the protection of vulnerable individuals;
  - (vi) an end to the long period of detention experienced by some refugees and asylum seekers;
  - (vii) continued investigation and implementation of alternative methods to detention for those seeking asylum onshore in Australia ;
  - (viii) all refugees and asylum seekers have equal access to facilities, benefits, assistance, information, community networks and legal advice immediately upon arrival within Australia;
  - (ix) immediate notification to the Red Cross and United Nations of any refugees or asylum seekers arrival in Australia;
  - (x) sufficient and culturally sensitive translation services are available in all refugee centres;
  - (xi) sufficient access to medical, legal or community services for those residing in detention centres, including trauma and torture services;
- (h) to encourage the Australian government to separate its trade policy from its response to refugees and asylum seekers;
- (i) to encourage members, agencies, Congregations and councils of the Uniting Church to welcome recently arrived refugees into their communities and to provide support and advocacy as they are able;
- (j) to express its concern to the Australian government at the current practice of releasing refugees into urban and rural areas with inappropriate supports and resources, and with unsatisfactory notification of services within the placement area.

## **00.22 STANDING COMMITTEE - GENERAL REPORT**

The report was presented by Gregor Henderson (General Secretary).

The Assembly resolved:

00.22.01 to receive the report;

00.22.02 **Review of the ministry of deacon**  
to establish a review of the ministry of deacon within the Uniting Church in Australia, with the following terms of reference:

### **Purpose of the Review**

the overall purpose of the review is

- to clarify the Uniting Church's understanding of the ministry of deacon,

- to assess the church's experience of the ministry,
- to seek ways of further enhancing the ministry of deacon,
- to further the diaconal ministry of the church, and
- to bring a report to the 2003 Assembly.

**The review will include consideration of:**

1. the vision for the diaconate expressed in section 3.6.2 of the 1991 report "Ministry in the Uniting Church in Australia";
2. the Church's objectives in diaconal ministry, and what changes are needed for the Church to meet those objectives more effectively;
3. the education and training of deacons;
4. deacons and the processes of ministerial placement;
5. support structures for deacons;
6. the accountability of deacons;
7. how the ministry of deacon is enabling the Church to develop its theology and praxis of service in a needy world;
8. how deacons contribute to the wider life and mission of the whole church, including the participation of deacons in Synod, Assembly and ecumenical bodies;
9. other factors and issues which the review group believes are relevant to the purpose of the review.

**Among documents** to which the review group refers shall be:

- the Report on Ministry in the Uniting Church in Australia 1991;
- the Constitution and Regulations of the Uniting Church in Australia 1999;
- the interim rules for the course of study for the ministry of deacon 1992.
- the services of induction and ordination of deacons.

The review group shall arrange for **research and consultation** as appropriate, within the constraints of the annual budgets approved by the Standing Committee. Among those consulted shall be:

- deacons
- those with whom deacons have been and are in ministry
- ministers of the Word
- candidates for the ministry of deacon
- Synods
- Presbyteries (not necessarily all Presbyteries)
- Ministerial Education Commission working group on ministry of deacon
- Assembly agencies
- theological colleges
- community service agencies.

The review group **shall be appointed** by the Standing Committee in 2000 and will include:

- one nominee of Diakonia UCA;
- one member of the Assembly Task Group on Ministry 1988-1991;
- one Synod Secretary;
- one nominee of the Ministerial Education Commission;
- one member of the Standing Committee;
- up to two others;

one of whom shall be designated by the Standing Committee as chairperson and at least three Synods are to be represented in the membership.

The review group is to bring its **report and recommendations** to the Tenth Assembly in 2003, and may make progress reports to the Standing Committee. The **budget** is expected to be around \$25,000 for the period of November 2000 to May 2003, and is to allow for two or three meetings per year of the review group, commissioning of research and processes of consultation. The provision of administrative support may be negotiated with the National Secretariat.

00.22.03

**Referral of matters to the incoming Standing Committee**

to refer to the Standing Committee, the following matters which have been considered but not concluded by the outgoing Standing Committee:

- inter-conciliar relationships;

- matters relating to the rental costs and location of the Sydney Assembly office;
- membership in the Uniting Church - definitions, categories, privileges and responsibilities;
- agreement on cross-Tasman relationships;
- future of the Cato Visitor Committee;
- approval of the policy document "Policy for dealing with a complaint of sexual misconduct made against a member or adherent of the Uniting Church in Australia" ;
- more equitable distribution of resources across the councils of the church;
- levels of financial contributions to the Assembly from Synods and possible new and increased sources of income for the Assembly;
- consideration of policy matters arising from contracts between the Federal Government and Wesley Uniting Employment;
- consideration of recommendations from the national consultation on public relations strategy;
- any follow-up after comment is received on possible concerns re the ministry of Youth Worker;
- possible amendments to Regulations on Ministerial Education Boards and the Ministerial Education Commission;
- the promotional and financial needs of the Northern Synod.

**00.23                   STANDING COMMITTEE RE APPOINTMENT OF GENERAL SECRETARY**

The report was presented by Jim Mein and Jenny Byrnes.

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.23.01           to receive the report;
- 00.23.02           to appoint Terence Corkin as General Secretary of the Assembly for a period of six years from 1 January 2001.

**00.24                   STANDING COMMITTEE RE CHURCH STRUCTURES**

The report was presented by Allan Thompson.

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.24.01           to receive the report;
- 00.24.02           to adopt the following statement of core functions of councils of the Church:

**“CONGREGATION**  
(Basis of Union 15a; Constitution 22)

**Distinctive Responsibilities**  
To be the embodiment in one place of the one holy catholic and apostolic church, worshipping, witnessing and serving as a fellowship of the Spirit in Christ. [Reg 3.1.1(a)]  
Formation of a Church Council [Reg 3.1.11-3.1.27]

**Lead Roles [Regulation 3.1.1(b)]**  
Worship, witness and service  
Nurture of people in faith hope and love  
Education of members in Christian faith and discipleship  
Planning equipping and resourcing for mission and evangelism

Response to community and personal needs through pastoral care, liturgies, and local community development/action  
Fostering co-operation with Congregations of other denominations

### **PRESBYTERY**

(Basis of Union 15c; Constitution 26)

#### **Distinctive Responsibilities**

Pastoral and administrative oversight of Congregations, Ministers of the Word, Deacons, Deaconesses, Youth Workers, Lay Pastors and Community Ministers (Regulation 3.4.4)

Ordination of Ministers of the Word and Deacons (Regulation 2.3.1)

Recognition of lay preachers (Regulation 2.8.6),

Commissioning of Youth Workers (Reg. 2.9.19) community ministers (Regulation 2.12.13) and lay pastors (Regulation 2.7.22).

#### **Lead Roles (Regulation 3.4.4.)**

Oversight and support of Congregations

Promotion of the wider aspects of the work of the Church

Development and oversight of regional mission strategies

Instruction of Church members towards a better understanding and a fuller participation in witness and service

Placement and oversight, including discipline, of Ministers of the Word, Deacons, Deaconesses, Youth Workers, Lay Pastors and Community Ministers.

### **SYNOD**

(Basis of Union 15d; Constitution 32)

#### **Distinctive Responsibilities**

Administration and co-ordination of physical resources, including property and finance (Regulation 3.5.11)

Provision of specialist staff

Formation and dissolution of Presbyteries [Regulation 3.5.12(b)]

Oversight of the Church's schools and colleges

#### **Lead Roles (Regulations 3.5.11 and 12)**

General oversight, direction and administration of the church's worship witness and service.

Development and promotion, with Presbyteries, of a vision for mission.

Oversight of and liaison with Presbyteries.

Response to complaints and grievances.

Provision of ministerial education and formation, including determination of applications for candidature.

Development and promotion of ecumenical relationships ministry and mission.

Support of the national and international life of the church.

Establishment of such boards and agencies as are appropriate for carrying out its responsibilities.

Co-ordination of placements.

Processing of applications for reception of ministers from other communions.

### **ASSEMBLY**

(Basis of Union 15e; Constitution 38)

#### **Distinctive Responsibilities**

Determining responsibility for doctrine, worship, government and discipline (Constitution 38a)

Ecumenical relationships, including measures towards the wider union of the church (Constitution 38b)

Establishment of standards of ministerial education (Constitution 38a)

Determination of standards for the reception of ministers from other communions (Constitution 16)

International relationships (Constitution 38b)

Formation and dissolution of Synods

#### **Lead Roles (Regulation 3.6.5)**

General oversight and promotion of the life and mission of the church  
Education of Church members in the matters for which the Assembly has distinctive responsibility  
Liaison with Aboriginal and Islander Australians  
The address, by word and action, of matters of national importance  
Guiding decisions on the tasks and authority to be exercised by other councils  
Ensuring the provision of ministry in remote areas of Australia.”

- 00.24.03 to welcome the increasing development across councils/sectors of the church of more flexible structures, both formal and informal, through which there is a greater sharing of resources and engagement in the life and mission of the church;
- 00.24.04 to request Synods, in the exercise of their responsibilities under Reg 3.5.12(a) and (b), to ensure that each Presbytery is equipped with or has access to the human and financial resources required to fulfil the Presbytery’s diverse pastoral, missional and administrative functions;
- 00.24.05 to request Synods and Presbyteries to consider further which of their functions can be exercised in co-operation, or by one Synod/Presbytery on behalf of other Synods/Presbyteries, to achieve greater efficiencies and effectiveness in the use of human and financial resources;
- 00.24.06 to require the Standing Committee to regularly re-evaluate the distribution of human and financial resources in the Assembly and, after receiving advice from the Management Advisory Group, report to the Assembly whether any non-core functions are being continued.

**00.25 STANDING COMMITTEE RE “MOVING AHEAD WITH DIVERSITY”**

The report was presented by Robert Johnson, John Mavor, Judy Caldwell, Leonie Walker, Inoke Nabulivou, Rachel Kronberger and Don Catford.

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.25.01 to receive the report;
- 00.25.02 to determine not to consider any proposals relating to sexuality at this Assembly except for Proposal 40.1 (*see minute 00.25.03*);

**00.25.03** to adopt the following Statement on Unity and Diversity and commend it to all Synods, Presbyteries and Congregations:

**“STATEMENT ON UNITY AND DIVERSITY**

We celebrate

- that the church’s faith is in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and that the church’s work and unity are built upon the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ;
- that in the Uniting Church we have already agreed on and affirmed important matters regarding marriage, marriage preparation, marriage counseling, divorce, re-marriage, sexuality and sexual ethics (*Assembly minutes 97.31.5-97.31.13*);

We affirm

- the authority of the Scriptures as defined in the Basis of Union, acknowledging that within the church there is a range of views on questions of Biblical interpretation on various matters of Christian faith and practice;
- we are bound together by Christ, and because we love the Uniting Church as part of the one holy catholic and apostolic church we will continue to work together in our diversity as servants of the living God;

We acknowledge

- that issues regarding committed same sex relationships and ordination were unresolved by the Eighth Assembly in 1997 and the Ninth Assembly in 2000 and remain unresolved;
- that the diversity of viewpoints and the lack of resolution of these issues have resulted in tension within the life of the church;

We regret

- that some people have felt hurt or offended because of the church’s acceptance of diversity;
- that some people feel excluded from exercising their gifts of faith and ministry in their local Congregations;

We reject

- all forms of vilification and harassment within the life of the church;

We pray

- that God will continue to bless and use the diverse gifts of all church members as we seek to work together to make known God’s love and salvation.”

- 00.25.04 (a) to request all councils of the church to take steps to ensure that any instance of vilification and harassment is dealt with effectively and consistently;
- (b) to request the Standing Committee to issue guidelines to assist councils to fulfil this request.

**00.26 STANDING COMMITTEE RE THE REVIEW OF ASSEMBLY STRUCTURES**

The report was presented by Jim Mein.

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.26.01 to receive the report;.
- 00.26.02 to approve the mandates of Assembly agencies;
- 00.26.03 to note that a revised structure of the Assembly came into effect on 1 August 1998;
- 00.26.04 to request the Standing Committee, in light of the establishment of Uniting Church Overseas Aid, to consult with Unity and International Mission with a view to amending the Unity and International Mission mandate;
- 00.26.05 to note the points raised concerning the new Assembly structure in section 3.3 of the Unity and International Mission report in any consideration and evaluation of Assembly structures.

**00.27 STRATEGIC PLANNING UNIT**

The report was presented by David Pitman (Chairperson), Tegan Alice Brown (KUCA-A), Mian Kerr (KUCA-A), Andrew Johnson, Wendie Wilkie and Ruth Powell.

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.27.01 to receive the report;
- 00.27.02 facing the future with hope, to invite the councils of the Church to celebrate the excitement of journeying with God. Led by the Spirit, we affirm that the journey is both inward and outward in relation to spiritual growth and maturity, and expressed in our worship, witness and service as Christian communities;
- 00.27.03 to recognise the four principles stated in the report, namely
- an outward focus,
  - a sense of vision,
  - new ways of being church, and
  - making space,
- and encourage their use to motivate a sense of strategic thinking and focus of the Church's energy over the next three years;
- 00.27.04 with regard to the **Strategic Planning Unit** to request the Strategic Planning Unit in consultation with related Assembly Agencies, similar bodies in Synods and Presbyteries, and ecumenical bodies to facilitate networks which continue to monitor the broader social trends in



society in order to alert the Church to the implications of these changes for its ministry and mission;

00.27.05 to accept the substance of proposals 16.3 to 16.7 and commend the substance of these proposals to the Church:

“That the Assembly:

- 16.3 invite **Congregations and Faith Communities**
- (a) who in the past two years have not developed or reviewed a vision statement, to develop one in consultation with their Presbytery or Synod mission planners;
  - (b) to identify appropriate ways of periodically renewing their commitment to and ownership of their vision;
  - (c) to invite their Presbytery liaison person, and a member of a neighbouring Congregation or some other suitable person not in the Congregation, to one meeting of the Congregation each year that is devoted to reviewing their mission plan ;
  - (d) to explore alternative ways of being church, including different styles, times and places of worship and ways of expressing of the faith;
  - (e) to identify groups not well represented in current worship services and, where possible, to work with at least one of them to develop new and appropriate celebrations of worship;
  - (f) to report back to Presbyteries by 1 December 2001;
- 16.4 invite **Presbyteries** to resource Congregations and faith communities by
- (a) affirming and encouraging Congregations in their choice and implementation of initiatives in mission and worship;
  - (b) regularly receiving reports, sharing ideas and stories, and celebrating progress being made by Congregations;
  - (c) identifying potential regional Congregations within their bounds, supporting the development of such regional Congregations and reporting to meetings of the Synod on such developments;
- 16.5 invite **Synods** to resource Presbyteries in carrying out 16.4 by
- (a) giving particular attention to new faith communities and emerging Congregations, reviewing their support and reporting at least annually to their Standing Committee or Council of Synod in regard to this area of the Church's life;
  - (b) regularly providing stories of these mission and worship initiatives for possible publication to the Church;
- 16.6 with regard to **education for ministry**
- (a) invite Presbyteries to encourage and further develop new and flexible models of ministry appropriate to the changing context of ministry, and report to each meeting of their Synod on progress being made;
  - (b) request the Synods and the Ministerial Education Commission to consider the impact of new models of ministry on both initial preparation and continuing education for ministry, encourage them to develop appropriate models of training for these ministries, and report to the Assembly Standing Committee on progress made in this regard by March 2002;
  - (c) ask the Assembly Standing Committee to identify, after appropriate consultation, a theological college willing to develop a pilot program focussed on both preparation and continuing education for new and alternative models of ministry [as referred to in (b) above], and report to the Standing Committee in November 2001 on progress made;
- 16.7 with regard to those who exercise **diaconal ministries**
- (a) affirm the key role that chaplains and other ministries which interface with the community can play in furthering the mission of the Church;
  - (b) to invite Synods, Presbyteries and Congregations to support these ministries, to engage with them in discerning how their work might be developed in the future, and to identify strategies appropriate for that purpose.”

**00.28 TASK GROUP ON THE TEACHING MINISTRY AND MISSION OF THE CHURCH**

The report was presented by Deidre Palmer and Jill Tabart.

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.28.01 to receive the report;
- 00.28.02 to approve the vision statement as the vision of this Assembly for the teaching ministry and mission of the Church's congregations:

"A vision -

- (a) of members of all Congregations of the Uniting Church in Australia being able to give with confidence an account of the hope that is in them, and to express their faith through word and action in ever-deepening discipleship;
  - (b) of enquirers being welcomed into a learning community in which faith is intentionally developed, doubts and questions are openly explored, and all ages grow in their commitment to Jesus Christ and his ministry in the world;
  - (c) of all Congregations having an active process for identifying members' teaching gifts and for equipping and sustaining them in their teaching ministries, within and beyond the Congregation; and of Congregations being adequately resourced and supported in this ongoing work in education and resultant mission;
  - (d) of all those in the specified ministries of the Church, and all others teaching Religious Education in schools, being adequately equipped through foundational and continuing education for their teaching ministry responsibilities.";
- 00.28.03 to name the teaching ministry as a core function of each council of the Church;
- 00.28.04 to request Standing Committee to explore the possibility of establishing a national website/chatroom through which sound doctrinal teaching is accessible to those surfing the internet;
- 00.28.05 to request the Standing Committee to set up a process, in consultation with the UAICC Executive Committee and the Multicultural Ministry Reference Committee, to discover how the teaching ministry being exercised in Aboriginal and Islander and migrant-ethnic Congregations of the Church may be strengthened;

**Arising from part (a) of the vision:**

- 00.28.06 to commit ourselves, as members of the Uniting Church, to open and honest exploration of how the Word of God informs our daily living and to encourage fellow members of learning communities of which we are a part, including our home Congregations, to a similar commitment:

Members are invited to prayerfully consider how they might express this commitment. This commitment may include:

- regular reading and prayerful contemplation of the Bible;
- participating in at least one intentional programme of Bible study each year;
- seeking access through the local teaching ministry to 'the knowledge of God's ways with humanity which are open to an informed faith' (Basis of Union, paragraph 11), including listening to the wisdom:
  - of the Reformation witnesses,
  - of scholarly interpreters of Scripture,
  - of the world-wide fellowship of churches in which the Uniting Church sharpens its understanding of the will and purpose of God,

- of interaction with contemporary societies through which to understand the church's nature and mission;

**Arising from part (b) of the vision:**

- 00.28.07 to encourage all Congregations:
- (a) to become learning communities, always seeking 'the knowledge of God's ways with humanity which are open to an informed faith';
  - (b) to develop intentional, systematic and sustained teaching programmes, relevant to the ages and capacities of all members (infancy to old age), and in settings that make participation accessible and appealing (such as in home groups, mid-week lunchtime gatherings, peer work or age group discussions, nursing home Bible studies);
  - (c) to look for ways of linking members' daily living experiences with their faith understanding, and encouraging their articulation of those connections; such opportunities to include local initiatives within the local community as well as ready access to wider stimulation (such as Synod journals / other publications, encouragement/assistance to attend relevant seminars or conferences, website resources);
  - (d) to encourage mentoring as a valued component of the teaching ministry and mission of the church;
- 00.28.08 to request the working group on worship to include specific reference to teaching responsibilities in the Congregation's vows in Orders of Service for Baptism;
- 00.28.09 to note with appreciation Uniting Education's "Belonging" project and Coolamon College's "Discover..." program and encourage both agencies to continue developing teaching materials for creatively discipling new and continuing members of the Church;

**Arising from part (c) of the vision:**

- 00.28.10 to request Synod and Presbytery bodies responsible for Christian education:
- (a) to encourage and resource Congregations in their responsibility of intentionally identifying equipping and nurturing leaders who have a teaching ministry within and beyond the Congregation;
  - (b) to draw as necessary on the expertise available through Uniting Education, to develop planning, analysis and appraisal tools relevant to the Congregations within their bounds;
- 00.28.11 to encourage Synods and Presbyteries, as well as Congregations themselves, as a matter of urgency to budget specifically and adequately for the necessary resources that will enable Congregations to be equipped for the teaching ministry, which is foundational to the health and growth of Congregational life and mission;

**Arising from part (d) of the vision:**

- 00.28.12 to request the Ministerial Education Commission to ensure:
- (a) that the naming of, and equipping in, the ministry of teaching all ages (children, youth and adults) is an integral part of all theological training;
  - (b) that sound teaching methods, appropriate to how adults best learn, are modelled by those teaching all courses during training for the specified ministries;
  - (c) that the upgrading of competency in teaching methods which reflect how adults best learn, be available as part of the continuing education programme of all theological college staff;

- (d) that the equipping of people to teach cross culturally is an integral part of theological training;
- 00.28.13 to request the Ministerial Education Commission to require all candidates for the specified ministries to demonstrate teaching competencies prior to ordination/commissioning; and encourage MEC to consult with theological colleges on strategies to achieve this end;
- 00.28.14 to request Presbyteries to ensure that continuing education opportunities for those in the specified ministries include those appropriate to the development and enhancement of their teaching ministry task;
- 00.28.15 to request Synods to ensure school and tertiary chaplains, and chaplains in other sector ministries who have teaching responsibilities, are appropriately trained for their ministries, including requirements for adequate qualifications in Religious Education; and that Presbyteries, Synods, theological colleges, Uniting Church schools and chaplaincy co-ordinators are alerted to this requirement;
- 00.28.16 to request Uniting Education, through the Synods, to ensure that, in order to be adequately equipped for their work, all those who teach Religious Education in Uniting Church schools hold qualifications in Religious Education; and that Uniting Church schools are alerted to this expectation.

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**00.29 TASK GROUP ON THE UNDERSTANDING AND USE OF THE BIBLE**

The report was presented by Don Hopgood (Convener), Keith Rowe and Robert Iles.

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.29.01 to receive the report;
- 00.29.02 to reaffirm the centrality of reading and studying the Bible for the enhancement of every aspect of the life of the Uniting Church;
- 00.29.03 to commend the report to Congregations and Presbyteries for prayerful consideration and action;
- 00.29.04 to encourage Synods and Presbyteries to ensure that:
  - (a) lay people, wherever possible, take advantage of the wide range of courses available in theological colleges and lay education units, many of which courses can be accessed by correspondence;
  - (b) students undertaking the period of discernment be nurtured in their development of biblical understanding;
  - (c) in negotiating their continuing education for ministry contract ministers give due priority to biblical studies in their continuing education programs;
- 00.29.05 to request all members, Congregations and councils of the church to consider prayerfully and use the resources produced and noted by the Task Group; these resources include, but need not be limited to:
  - (a) the Bible study published as a companion to the report;
  - (b) following approval by the Standing Committee, the book of papers written for the Task Group or identified by it as useful insights into the use and understanding of Scripture;
  - (c) the Disciple materials produced by the United Methodist Church in the USA;

(d) the materials listed in the appendix to the report;

00.29.06 recognising that the matters raised in the report involve a continuing process, to refer them to Theology and Discipleship for ongoing attention; Theology and Discipleship may well consider the desirability of sponsoring a consultation of biblical scholars and theologians in the Uniting Church, to be held in the next three years, with a view to providing further advice to the Assembly;

00.29.07 to thank and discharge the Task Group on Understanding and Use of the Bible.

### **00.30 THEOLOGY AND DISCIPLESHIP**

Geof Lilburne (National Director), Jenny Tymms (Chairperson) Phil Gardner and John Rickard presented the report.

The Assembly resolved:

00.30.01 to receive the report;

#### **00.30.02 Living with the Neighbour who is Different**

- (a) to commend the report to Synods, Presbyteries and Congregations for study and action;
- (b) to note that the full report and study guide are available and commend it to the church;
- (c) to request Synods, Presbyteries, Congregations and members of the Uniting Church to recognise, as part of their mission in Australia at this time, the importance of fostering of neighbourly relations with people of other faiths;

#### **00.30.03 Ecclesiology: Alternative Communities of Faith**

- (a) to remind Synods that where Synod agencies are establishing communities of faith as a means of outreach into new areas, Presbytery recognition of the new faith community is required (as per Regulation 3.1.32);
- (b) to request Theology and Discipleship to facilitate the study in each Synod of the nature and role of small communities of faith in the Roman Catholic Church and the way in which these relate to the Congregations and the church as a whole, in order to determine how the Uniting Church might develop similar groups;
- (c) to request Synods and Presbyteries to encourage existing communities of faith sponsored by the Uniting Church to observe Regulation 3.1.32 and to accept the guidelines proposed in the report, namely:
  - respect the Basis of Union and seek to live and work within the faith and unity of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church as that is interpreted in the Basis of Union;
  - be open communities, welcoming people irrespective of gender, class or ethnicity;
  - be known by the Presbytery within which they meet and be open to the oversight of the Uniting Church;
  - accept sacramental authorisation from the Church (note this does not mean that only an ordained minister can preside at the sacraments; a leader or leaders may be authorised for this purpose by the Presbytery);
- (d) in relation to communities of faith which do not wish to accept the above guidelines, to request Synods and Presbyteries to relate to them as they

- relate to other churches – in Christian fellowship and charity – and to work in co-operation wherever that is possible;
- (e) to encourage Presbyteries, Congregations and faith communities recognised by the Uniting Church to make use of this report for study and discussion;

00.30.04 **Living and believing within the faith and unity of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church**

- (a) to commend the report to Synods and Presbyteries for discussion;
- (b) to request the Standing Committee to arrange for a study version of the report to be prepared and made available to the church;

00.30.05 **Called to Community of Difference: A Uniting Church Charter**

- (a) to endorse the document as an appropriate basis for relating to one another within the life of the church;
- (b) to refer to the Standing Committee the method of its publication and distribution to the Church;

00.30.06 **Missiological Dialogue**

to invite the Church to respond to the dialogue initiated by the Missiology report, making use of the Theology and Discipleship web site, e-mail, mail and personal contacts;

00.30.07 **Evangelism Tributes**

- (a) to acknowledge with gratitude John Mavor's particular and passionate commitment to the work of evangelism;
- (b) to celebrate with thanksgiving the commitment and leadership given over many years by Dean Brookes to the work of evangelism in the Uniting Church;

00.30.08 **New Congregations and Faith Communities**

- (a) to encourage the developing of new Congregations and faith communities;
- (b) to request the councils, commissions, boards and agencies of the Church to equip and support leaders and teams for this vital work;

00.30.09 **Worship resources and "Together in Worship"**

- (a) to request Synods and Presbyteries to promote the use of the website of the Working Group on Worship [<http://nat.uca.org.au/TD/index.html>] for resourcing the worship of the Church;
- (b) to request Theology and Discipleship to bring a detailed report to the Tenth Assembly on the progress of "Together in Worship";
- (c) to request the Management Advisory Group, the Finance Committee and the Standing Committee to investigate ways of funding the development and production of "Together in Worship" for the triennium 2003-2006.

**00.31 UNITING ABORIGINAL ISLANDER CHRISTIAN CONGRESS**

The report was presented by Sealin Garlett (National Chairperson) and Shayne Blackman (National Administrator).

The Assembly resolved:

00.31.01 to receive the report;

00.31.02 **Appreciation of Djinyini Gondarra**

to acknowledge the contribution of Djinyini Gondarra in the leadership of the UAICC, especially in the last three years as its Chairperson; Djinyini has

demonstrated commitment over many years to the growth of the church and development of communities, particularly in his home region of Eastern Arnhemland; more recently, as a member of the national Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, he has advocated strongly for Aboriginal people particularly in the recognition of customary law; we give thanks to God for his faith and leadership.

- 00.31.03 to request the Standing Committee to consult with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress with a view to:
- clarifying the meaning of Regulation 3.6.40, particularly the use of the term “oversight”, to ensure that the Congress has real management and administrative control of the Church’s ministry with and for Indigenous people;
  - amending Regulation 3.6.40 as determined by Standing Committee (with any other consequential amendments), following the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to express more clearly the Congress’ responsibility for management and administrative control of the Church’s ministry with Indigenous people and to clarify the relationships between the Congress and councils, agencies and Congregations of the Church;
  - ensuring that where councils, agencies and Congregations of the Church initiate or undertake ministry with Indigenous people it is done in partnership with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress;
  - negotiating written protocols on how Regulation 3.6.40 is to be followed, particularly in relation to partnerships in ministry with Indigenous people between the Congress and councils, agencies and Congregations of the Church.

## **00.32 UNITINGCARE AUSTRALIA**

The report was presented by Libby Davies (National Director) and Harry Herbert (Chairperson).

The President launched *UnitingCare* as the new national identity for the community service activities of the Uniting Church and the renaming of *Uniting Community Services Australia* to *UnitingCare Australia*.

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.32.01 to receive the report;
- 00.32.02 to welcome *UnitingCare* as the new national identity for the community service activities of the Uniting Church and the renaming of *Uniting Community Services Australia* to *UnitingCare Australia*;
- 00.32.03 to approve the revised *UnitingCare* Theological and Philosophical Foundation Document.

## **00.33 UNITING CHURCH ADULT FELLOWSHIPS NATIONAL COMMITTEE**

The report was presented by Lee Edwards (ex-President) and Ann Connan (President).

- 00.33.01 The Assembly resolved to receive the report.

**00.34 UNITING EDUCATION**

The report was presented by Philip Creed (Chairperson) and Andrew Syme.

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.34.01 to receive the report;
- 00.34.02 to affirm the essential Christian education functions of the Assembly as stated within the distinctive responsibilities and lead roles of the Assembly;
- 00.34.03 **Towards a Christian education mind-set and encouraging inter-agency collaboration**
- (a) to encourage Presbyteries to establish a working group for Christian education;
  - (b) to encourage Presbyteries to advise Uniting Education of their Education Working Group contact persons by 30 April 2001;
  - (c) to encourage Uniting Education, in collaboration with Synods' Christian education agencies, to develop model 'Terms of Reference' for a Presbytery Christian Education Working Group, that will encourage relevant, faithful and competent Christian education in Congregations;
  - (d) to distribute the model 'Terms of Reference' to every Presbytery to assist Presbyteries in the construction of suitable terms of reference relevant to each Presbytery's setting and situation, as well as to assist in recruiting appropriate persons to the Working Group;
  - (e) to encourage Synods and Presbyteries to send representatives to a national consultation on Christian education directions and strategies in the Uniting Church – 2002 to 2007.
- 00.34.04 **Towards a strengthened and active Uniting Church Christian education ministry**
- (a) to recommend to all Presbyteries that they assist their Congregations to undertake an intentional Christian education program during the next triennium, addressing the theological understandings of the Uniting Church within the reformed and evangelical traditions of the Church;
  - (b) to recommend to Congregations the following resources as suitable programs for consideration in fulfilment of the (above) proposal:
    - Disciple - available from MediaCom Education;
    - The Belonging Kit – available from Uniting Education and Rainbow Books;
    - Kerygma – The Bible in Depth - available from Rainbow Books;
    - Coolamon's Discover course;
  - (c) to recommend to the Congregations, Presbyteries and Synods of the Uniting Church the Seasons of the Spirit curriculum as suitable to the ethos and needs of the Uniting Church in Australia;
- 00.34.05 to refer proposals 23.4 and 23.5 for consideration through the Assembly's normal budget setting process:
- 23.4 **with regard to publishing:**  
to request the Finance Committee to:
- (a) establish a three year budget to secure funding adequate to the publishing needs of the Uniting Church as a whole;
  - (b) raise from sources other than annual Synod contributions funds to support worthy Christian education publications for which there is an established need, but insufficient "essential publication" funding available;
- 23.5 **with regard to education:**



- (a) to welcome the establishment of the Federal Education Policy Working Group within Uniting Education;
- (b) to refer the question of funding for the work of the Federal Education Policy Working Group (approximately \$10,000 per year) to the Management Advisory Group, the Finance Committee and the Standing Committee for consideration within the Assembly budget-setting processes.

**00.35 UNITY AND INTERNATIONAL MISSION**

The report was presented by Bill Fischer (National Director).

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.35.01 to receive the report;
- 00.35.02 **Roman Catholic/Uniting Church dialogue**  
to express its appreciation to the Roman Catholic Church/ Uniting Church Dialogue group for their work in producing the report *Interchurch Marriage: their ecumenical challenge and significance for our Churches* and to commend it to all ministers and lay people, and especially to interchurch couples;
- 00.35.03 **The Lutheran Church of Australia**
  - (a) to approve the *Declaration of Mutual Recognition by the Uniting Church in Australia and the Lutheran Church of Australia*;
  - (b) to welcome its potential for shared and co-operative ministry;
  - (c) to refer it to Presbyteries for implementation;
  - (d) to note that this approval is without prejudice to ongoing discussions on sexuality;
- 00.35.04 **Conciliarity and Episkope**  
to request the Standing Committee in consultation with Unity and International Mission to develop a process to re-examine the relationship between conciliarity and episkope in the context of international and national developments and of our dialogues with Anglican, Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches;
- 00.35.05 **NCCA covenanting**  
to commend the covenanting proposals of the National Council of Churches to the councils of the Church, drawing particular attention to the plan for the celebration of our common baptism at Pentecost 2001, and its potential for specific local covenants;
- 00.35.06 **Reconciliation within the Uniting Church**  
to request the Standing Committee to consider the co-ordination of the various groups seeking to promote “intrachurch” reconciliation within our church, especially between so-called “evangelical” and “liberal” groups, with a view to affirming our unity and freedom within the Body of Christ;
- 00.35.07 **Centre for Ecumenical Studies**  
to welcome the foundation and the work of the Melbourne College of Divinity’s new Centre for Ecumenical Studies, and urge the Standing Committee to follow up the 1997 Assembly’s referral to the Ministerial Education Commission “that all colleges provide for the intentional study of the theology and practice of ecumenism, and that this study be compulsory for all candidates” (Assembly minute 97.32.11);
- 00.35.08 **Study documents**

to commend the following publications to the Church for widespread study:

- *Mission and Evangelism in Unity Today (International Review of Mission, Jan/April 1999)*
- *The Nature and Purpose of the Church: a stage on the way to a common statement (WCC Faith and Order Paper No. 181, 1999)*
- *A Treasure in Earthen Vessels: an instrument for an ecumenical reflection on hermeneutics (WCC Faith and Order Paper No 182, 1999);*

00.35.09 **Thanks for mission support**

to express its thanks to the members of the Church for their generous support and prayer for International Mission work, especially the Papua New Guinea drought, the North Korea famine, and Indonesia and East Timor;

00.35.10 **Commitment to world mission**

- (a) to acknowledge, with regard to the mission of the Uniting Church:
- (i) the great World Mission heritage of the Uniting Church which was so strongly expressed in the commitment of our parent churches to engage in mission in Asia and the Pacific;
  - (ii) that Paragraph 2 of the Basis of Union affirms “that Christians in Australia are called to bear witness to a unity of faith and life in Christ which transcends cultural and economic, national and racial boundaries”; this is followed by an expression of commitment by our Church to seek special relationships with churches in Asia and the Pacific;
  - (iii) in a time of declining resources and seeking for ways to be more effective in mission in a changing Australia, it is to be expected that the Uniting Church would focus more of its total resources on mission in Australia; however, it is not right to emphasise mission in Australia at the cost of forgetting our mission responsibilities in the world, especially in Asia and the Pacific;
  - (iv) in the current context of globalisation, fragmentation, and communal and religious conflict, many of our partner churches at this time are particularly vulnerable;
  - (v) the vision of the Christian faith is that we take a broad view of mission and give generously beyond our local situations, and that when we withdraw to focus on our own immediate concerns not only are our partners diminished in their mission but so also are we;
- (b) to reaffirm the commitment of the Uniting Church to be actively involved in the world mission of the church, especially in Asia and the Pacific;
- (c) to invite Synods, Presbyteries, Congregations and members of the church to involve themselves in the global mission of Christ by supporting a specific mission project within the life of our mission partners through Unity and International Mission;

00.35.11 **Indonesia**

to note that:

- (a) over the last 18 months the Uniting Church has been deeply aware of the suffering, danger and terror that has been faced by our brothers and sisters in Indonesia;
- (b) Assembly agencies, church councils and church members have sought to stand in solidarity with our partner churches and other groups in Indonesia during their time of trial and suffering - offering prayers, financial and other support, and encouragement as we have been able, often feeling the great inadequacy of our response;

00.35.12 at this moment in time, constrained by the love of God, to make this solemn pledge:

- (a) to urge the members of our church to pray for the people and leaders of Indonesia, seeking to understand the situation with care and

compassion, to restrain themselves from falling into the easy temptation of alienation from other faith communities and of irrational demonisation of people groups;

- (b) to express our solidarity and compassion for those who have suffered and grieved in the aftermath of hostilities in the Moluccas region, and elsewhere in Indonesia;
- (c) to comfort those who suffer and, through ecumenical and interfaith co-operation, to commit ourselves to participate in efforts of humanitarian relief, and the resettlement and rehabilitation of those who have suffered significant losses or been displaced back to their home communities;
- (d) to continue to call upon our government, the United Nations and other appropriate bodies to use the means of diplomacy and aid to communicate concern for the situation in Indonesia, to offer whatever humanitarian assistance is possible, to alleviate suffering and to contribute to communal harmony in Indonesia;
- (e) to continue to stand in solidarity with our partner churches in Indonesia through our prayers, visits and other means of mutual support, advocacy and financial support. In their difficult time we commit ourselves as best we are able from our position of security and comfort, to walk with them;

00.35.13 to express its strong solidarity with the concerns, fears and hopes of the Indonesian community in Australia, particularly with the Christian Congregations and fellowships that are part of the Uniting Church, and assure them of our strong support in the difficult period they are facing;

00.35.14 **Solidarity with partner churches**

- (a) to recognise that partner churches in India, Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, South Korea, Taiwan, Fiji and the Philippines have faced - and continue to face - communal and religious conflict, and political tension in the life of their societies;
- (b) to continue to stand in solidarity with our partner churches in these countries, offering our prayers, financial and other support, as they seek to be faithful witnesses in their specific situation;

00.35.15 **Appreciation of staff and members**

to record its thanks to God for the gifts of presence, courage, love and commitment to our overseas partners offered by UIM staff and those Uniting Church members who shared with them during the crisis in Indonesia and East Timor in 1999-2000;

00.35.16 **Fiji**

- (a) having heard the report of the President of the Methodist Church in Fiji, Rev Tomasi Kanailagi, to welcome the fact that a civilian government is being installed and looks forward to the return of constitutional democracy as soon as possible;
- (b) to ask the Australian Government to ensure that in the institution or removal of sanctions against Fiji, it acts on the request and advice of those most likely to be affected, particularly the poorest sections of both the indigenous Fijian and Indo Fijian communities;
- (c) to remind the Australian Government that economic sanctions could further destabilise the country leading to conflict among the indigenous Fijian community and the further persecution of Indo Fijians;

00.35.17 **Maluku Islands**

as a matter of urgency:

- (a) to urge the Government of Indonesia to invite the international community through, the United Nations to:
  - (i) facilitate the immediate evacuation of victims of violence in the Maluku Islands to safe havens;

- (ii) participate in the restoration of law and order and the reconciliation of warring factions in the Maluku Islands;
- (b) to call on the Government of Australia to:
  - (i) provide immediate additional humanitarian aid to the victims of the conflict in the Maluku Islands;
  - (ii) provide safe havens in Australia for displaced people from the Maluku Islands.

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND REGULATIONS AND RELATED MATTERS**

### **00.36 AMENDMENT OF A DEFINITION IN THE CONSTITUTION**

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.36.01 to amend the definition of “Member” in clause 3 of the Constitution by replacing the words “Council of Elders” with the words “Church Council”;
- 00.36.02 to request Synods and Presbyteries to notify the General Secretary by 2 March 2001 of their response to this amendment of the Constitution, in accordance with clauses 72 and 73 of the Constitution.

### **00.37 REGULATIONS 2.3.10 – 2.6.1 CLASSIFICATION OF MINISTERS**

The Assembly resolved to request the Standing Committee to consult with Church Polity and Synod Secretaries with a view to amending Regulations as follows, and authorise Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend the Regulations as it determines, including consequential amendments, in light of its consideration and consultation:

- A.** Delete Regulations 2.3.10 - 2.6.1 and replace them with the following Regulations 2.4.1 – 23:

#### **“RECOGNITION AND DUTIES OF A MINISTER”**

##### **RECOGNITION OF A MINISTER**

- 2.4.1 A Minister is recognised by ordination, by admission from another denomination, or by the re-admission of a former Minister. A Minister is recognised as such for the whole of life unless that recognition is withdrawn.

##### **DUTIES OF A MINISTER**

- 2.4.2 Within the ministry of the whole Church, Jesus Christ calls men and women to proclamation of the gospel in word and deed through the ministry of the Word and the ministry of Deacon. This calling is exercised by:
  - (a) preaching of the Word;
  - (b) presiding at the celebration of the sacraments;
  - (c) witnessing in the community to the gospel of Jesus Christ;
  - (d) guiding and instructing the members of the Church and equipping them for their ministry in the community;
  - (e) nurturing candidates for baptism and confirmation;
  - (f) pastoral oversight and counsel wherever needed;
  - (g) serving in the community, especially among those who are hurt, disadvantaged, oppressed or marginalised;
  - (h) careful attention to administrative responsibilities;
  - (i) due observance of the discipline of the Church;
  - (j) the enhancement of the Minister’s own gifts for the work of ministry;

- (k) pioneering new expressions of the gospel and encouraging effective ways of fulfilling the mission of the Church.

2.4.3 Every Minister shall participate fully and regularly in the public worship of God and the mission and fellowship of the Congregation with which the Minister is enrolled (Regulations 2.4.12-14).

2.4.4 Every Minister shall report annually to the Presbytery with which the Minister is enrolled on the ways in which the duties of a Minister as prescribed in Regulations 2.4.2 and 2.4.3 are being exercised.

#### **ACTIVE SERVICE**

- 2.4.5 A Minister shall be recognised as in active service if the Minister is
- (a) in an approved placement designated by a Synod or the Assembly for the regular exercise of the duties of a Minister (Regulation 2.4.2);
  - (b) seconded to another church for a defined period by the Placements Committee of the Synod at the request of such other church or a council or agency of that church for the regular exercise of the duties of a Minister (Regulation 2.4.2); such period of secondment may be extended or varied by the Placements Committee;
  - (c) serving in an ecumenical or Church-related body for a defined period with the approval of the Placements Committee of the Synod for the regular exercise of the duties of a Minister (Regulation 2.4.2); such period of service may be extended or varied by the Placements Committee;
  - (d) regularly and faithfully exercising the duties of a Minister (Regulation 2.4.2) in a situation other than those described in (a), (b) or (c) above, with the approval of the Placements Committee on the recommendation of the Presbytery; the Placements Committee may at any time, after review of the work of the Minister or on the recommendation of the Presbytery, declare that the Minister is no longer in active service.

#### **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

- 2.4.6 A Minister may be granted leave of absence from active service by the Placements Committee on the recommendation of the Presbytery for a defined period
- (a) to undertake an approved course of study,
  - (b) for family or other pastoral reasons, or
  - (c) for other reasons which the Placements Committee considers sufficient.

#### **RETIREMENT**

- 2.4.7 A Minister may retire from active service
- (a) permanently
    - (i) after reaching the age of 55,
    - (ii) on the issue of a medical certificate by the Synod's Medical Advisers that the Minister is unfit for active service and the Beneficiary Fund has determined a pension will be paid, or
    - (iii) for any other reason which the Placements Committee after consultation with the Presbytery considers sufficient;
  - (b) temporarily for a defined period with the approval of the Placements Committee of the Synod on the recommendation of or with the concurrence of the Presbytery on the issue of a medical certificate by the Synod's Medical Advisers that the Minister is temporarily unfit for active service and the Beneficiary Fund has determined a pension will be paid. Such temporary retirement may be extended or varied by the Placements Committee and at the end of the period of temporary retirement the Minister shall return to active service.

#### **NOT AVAILABLE FOR PLACEMENT**

- 2.4.8 A Minister shall be designated as not available for placement
- (a) at any time when the Placements Committee on the recommendation of or with the concurrence of the Presbytery determines that for a defined period the Minister shall not be in active service for any reason

which the Placements Committee and the Presbytery consider to be sufficient, and such designation may be extended or varied by the Placements Committee after consultation with the Presbytery;

- (b) pursuant to any determination of the Committee for Discipline to suspend a Minister from active service (Reg 7.8.16 (c) and (e)), such designation being for the period determined by the Committee for Discipline.

#### **AWAITING PLACEMENT**

- 2.4.9 Any Minister who is not in active service and who is not on leave of absence, retired or designated not available for placement shall be designated as awaiting placement. Such Ministers will make themselves available for call to a placement or other active service. Any Minister who continues in the designation of awaiting placement for more than two years shall cease to be recognised as a Minister unless the Placements Committee and the Presbytery both agree, by a two-thirds majority, that there are circumstances which warrant the extension of the term by a further year. Any Minister who ceases to be recognised under this Regulation is eligible for re-admission in accordance with Reg 2.3.8.

#### **PRESBYTERY ROLLS**

- 2.4.10 The name of each recognised Minister shall be listed on the roll of an appropriate Presbytery to which the Minister shall be answerable in matters of faith and discipline. A Minister shall be designated as on active service, on leave of absence, retired, not available for placement or awaiting placement. The Presbytery shall review the roll of Ministers each year to ensure that each Minister is designated correctly.
- 2.4.11 A Minister in an approved placement in the Assembly or a Synod shall be placed on the roll of a Presbytery designated by the Assembly or Synod respectively.

#### **CONFIRMED MEMBERS ROLLS**

- 2.4.12 A Minister in a placement in a Congregation(s) shall be listed on the roll of confirmed members of one Congregation within the pastoral charge.
- 2.4.13 In all other cases, a Minister shall be listed on the roll of confirmed members of the Congregation with which the Minister chooses to be actively involved and the Minister shall advise the Presbytery of the Congregation chosen.
- 2.4.14 The Presbytery shall record on its roll of Ministers, along with the Minister's designation, the name of the Congregation on whose roll of confirmed members the Minister is listed.

#### **MINISTERS-IN-ASSOCIATION**

- 2.4.15 Any Minister who is not in an approved placement in a Congregation(s) nor designated not available for placement may on the invitation of a Church Council and with the approval of the Presbytery become a Minister-in-Association within the Congregation or Pastoral Charge to fulfil such pastoral, preaching or other responsibilities as may be agreed with the inducted Minister(s).
- 2.4.16 (a) The term of service of a Minister-in-Association shall be not more than two years. It may be renewed with the approval of the Presbytery.  
(b) The term of service of a Minister-in-Association shall cease whenever there is a change of or within any placement in the Congregation or Pastoral Charge. A new invitation may be issued after the change in accordance with Regulation 2.4.15.

#### **CHANGE OF ORDAINED MINISTRY**

- 2.4.17 (a) A Minister of the Word may apply to the Presbytery to be accepted as a candidate for the ministry of Deacon. If accepted, and when all requirements for ordination to the ministry of Deacon have been satisfied, such person shall be ordained as a Deacon, and shall thereupon cease to be recognised as a Minister of the Word.

- (b) A Deacon may apply to the Presbytery to be accepted as a candidate for the ministry of the Word. If accepted, and when all requirements for ordination to the ministry of the Word have been satisfied, such person shall be ordained as a Minister of the Word, and shall thereupon cease to be recognised as a Deacon.
- (c) Applications shall be in writing.
- (d) The Presbytery shall deal with the application in terms of Regulations 2.2.6 to 2.2.14, with the exception of requiring a report and recommendations of the Church Council and confidential report of the Minister.

#### **COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES**

2.4.18 Where within any one pastoral charge more than one Minister is placed to share the ministerial responsibilities,

- (a) they shall be recognised as colleagues of equal standing;
- (b) for the better fulfilment of the mission of the Church, the better use of gifts and graces of the Ministers and the better ordering of the life of the pastoral charge, specified responsibilities may from time to time be allocated to a particular Minister, as determined either
  - (i) by the Ministers serving in the pastoral charge, with the approval of the Church Council; or
  - (ii) by the Church Council, with the approval of the Ministers serving in the pastoral charge.

In the event of disagreement, then either the Church Council or any of the Ministers may refer the matter to the Presbytery which shall be entitled to investigate and to determine any or all of the matters in question. Any arrangements made at the time of the commencement of the placement of the Ministers shall be taken into account in any determinations made under this Regulation.

#### **MINISTRY TEAMS**

- 2.4.19 (a) Church Councils and other appropriate bodies may determine that a ministry team is to function within a pastoral charge or part of a pastoral charge, for the purpose of better enabling Christ's mission within the pastoral charge, and shall designate the members of the ministry team. A ministry team may consist of Ministers serving in placements in the pastoral charge, those in specified ministries serving in the pastoral charge, and other lay and ordained leaders, whether stipended or non-stipended.
- (b) A Church Council or other appropriate body will designate the member of the ministry team who has responsibility for convening meetings and co-ordinating ministry functions.
  - (c) In the event of disagreement on the composition of the ministry team or the designation of the person designated under (b) above, then the Church Council or any of the Ministers, Lay Pastors or Youth Workers within the pastoral charge may refer the matter to the Presbytery, which may investigate and determine the matter.
  - (d) The composition of the ministry team and the designation of the person under (b) above may be reviewed by the Church Council or other appropriate body whenever deemed appropriate, and shall be reviewed when there is a change in a ministerial placement.

#### **STIPENDS**

2.4.20 *[As determined under proposal 65]*

#### **PROVISIONS AND ALLOWANCES**

2.4.21 Provision for the housing of Ministers in placement and for travelling allowances, leave entitlements, insurances and expenses of such Ministers shall be made in accordance with the determination of the Synod or other determining body.

#### **BENEFICIARY FUNDS**

2.4.22 The Assembly shall establish and maintain a retirement fund and such other beneficiary funds for Ministers as the Assembly may consider appropriate,

and shall determine the conditions upon which a Minister may be required to participate or may be exempt from participation in such funds.

#### **WITHDRAWAL OF RECOGNITION**

- 2.4.23 The recognition of a Minister may be withdrawn by the Synod by reason of
- (a) the acceptance by the Presbytery with which the Minister is enrolled of a resignation from the Ministry, or
  - (b) continuing in the designation of awaiting placement for more than two years or any approved extended period, or
  - (c) a determination of the Committee for Discipline pursuant to Regulation 7.8.16(f)."

#### **B. Consequential Amendments**

1. **Delete Reg 2.7.5** which is now redundant, there being no category of "Ministers without Placements" and the provisions of Reg 2.7.5 (b) now included in the proposed Reg 2.4.8 (a).
2. **Delete Reg 2.7.6(g)** which is now redundant.
3. **Inductions** Reg 2.7.20 (d) is redundant and it is proposed to replace it with "2.7.20 (d) The Presbytery shall be responsible for, or shall participate in, any service of worship in which a Minister is inducted or commissioned."
4. **Exercise of Ministerial Function** These Regulations now appear to be redundant and should be deleted. The provisions of Reg 2.7.23 if ever needed can be exercised under proposed Reg 2.4.8 (a).
5. **Membership of Church Council** amend Reg 3.1.12(a)(iii) by deleting "Regulation 2.5.1(g)" and inserting "2.4.15".
6. **Presbytery Membership** It is proposed that every Minister who is in active service should be a Presbytery member and other Ministers, except those designated not available for placement, should be associate members. The amended regulations are  
"3.4.15 The Presbytery shall consist of  
(a) Ministers who are  
(i) in active service;  
(ii) associate members appointed officers of the Presbytery, and co-opted by Presbytery to full membership during all or part of their term of office.  
  
3.4.16 (a) Ministers who are on leave of absence, retired or awaiting placement shall be associate members of Presbytery unless they are members of the Presbytery under the provisions of Regulation 3.4.15."
7. **Pastoral Relations Committee** The duties in Reg 3.4.38(c)(viii) are now inappropriate and the duties in Reg 3.4.38(c)(ix) could be extended. Proposed replacement Regulations are  
"3.4.38 (c) .....  
(viii) to make provision for the appropriate pastoral support and accountability of Ministers in active service who are not in approved placements;  
(ix) to review the list of Ministers under its care who are awaiting placement with a view to either assisting such Ministers to return to active service or to make other appropriate vocational decisions or suggesting to a Church Council that an invitation be extended to the Minister to become a Minister-in-Association."



The Assembly resolved to refer Proposal 44 to the Standing Committee with power to act:

44. That the Assembly request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulations 2.7.7 and 2.7.11 as follows:

“2.7.7 The placement in a pastoral charge shall normally be made for an undefined term, subject to the provisions of Regulation 2.7.11.

2.7.11 (a) when a placement reaches the end of the tenth year, and by the end of each subsequent five year period, the Presbytery shall conduct a special consultation/mission study of the ministry within the Congregation to determine that the leadership of the Minister is conducive to the continued growth and development of the mission of the Congregation (see also Regulation 3.4.5).

(b) In such special consultation/mission study, the Presbytery shall also consult with, and give consideration to the welfare and vocational growth of the Minister.”

#### **00.39 REGULATION 2.13.11 MINISTRY OF LAY PASTOR**

The Assembly resolved to request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 2.13.11(c) to remove the normal ten-year maximum for recognition of a person as Lay Pastor.

#### **00.40 REGULATION 3.1.10 ELDERS WITH LIFETIME TENURE**

The Assembly resolved to request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 3.1.10 as follows:

##### **“ELDERS**

- 3.1.10 (a) *[as is]*
- (b) Members who held life tenure as Elders at the inauguration of the Church and have not relinquished their life tenure shall continue to be recognised as Elders.
- (c) Elders holding life tenure who have not relinquished their life tenure and who have maintained continuous membership of the Congregation in which they held membership at the inauguration of the Church shall be entitled to be members of the Church Council of that Congregation.
- (d) Elders holding life tenure and whose membership has been transferred to another Congregation since the inauguration of the Church may stand for election as Elders and members of Church Council under the provisions of Regulations 3.1.12, 3.1.4 and 3.1.16, but shall not automatically be entitled to be members of Church Council.
- (e) A Congregation may choose to use the term “Leader” instead of “Elder” for those fulfilling the ministry of Elder.”

#### **00.41 REGULATION 3.4.4(a) PRESBYTERY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Assembly resolved to request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 3.4.4(a) by adding after “bounds” the words “, the responsibilities identified in Regulation 7.6.1”.

**00.42                    REGULATION 3.4.15 EX-OFFICIO MEMBERSHIP OF PRESBYTERY**

The Assembly resolved to request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 3.4.15 to include a new clause “(a) the Chairperson and Secretary of the Presbytery;” and to make any required consequential amendments.

**00.43                    REGULATION 3.4.18 TERM OF LAY PRESBYTERY MEMBER**

The Assembly resolved to request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to delete Regulation 3.4.18, namely “Term of Appointment  
Lay persons who are members of Presbytery pursuant to Regulation 3.4.15(b)(ii) and (c) shall be elected or appointed for a period of one year and shall be eligible for re-election or re-appointment up to a total of ten consecutive years and shall not then be re-elected or re-appointed until one year after ceasing to be a member.”

**00.44                    REGULATION 3.5.10 SYNOD MEETINGS**

The Assembly resolved to request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 3.5.10 to the extent necessary:  
(a) to require the Synod to determine the frequency of ordinary Synod meetings;  
(b) to authorise the Synod Standing Committee to fix the time and place for the commencement of the next ordinary meeting of the Synod.

**00.45                    REGULATION 3.5.13(a) ELECTION OF MODERATOR**

The Assembly resolved to request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 3.5.13(a)(i) to read:  
“(i) a Moderator shall be elected and designated Moderator-elect by a meeting of the Synod prior to the one at which the person will take office;”.

**00.46                    REGULATION 3.5.19 TERM OF OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF SYNOD**

The Assembly resolved to request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 3.5.19 as follows:  
“3.5.19 The initial term of office shall normally be for five years. The appointment shall be reviewed during the last two years of the initial appointment and during the last two years of any extension of appointment. Terms of reappointment may be for periods of up to five years.”

**00.47                    REGULATION 3.5.35(b) INSTITUTIONS**

The Assembly resolved to request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 3.5.35(b) to include authority for a Synod to revoke a constitution or instrument if the organisation ceases to exist or the constitution or instrument is no longer required

**00.48           REGULATION 3.6.27(c) PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE**

The Assembly resolved to request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 3.6.27(c) to read:

“Secretaries of Synods, the Associate General Secretary and the National Director, Theology and Discipleship, and such Assembly staff as the President and General Secretary, after consultation, may invite, having regard to the agenda of the meeting, may attend the meetings of the Standing Committee as observers with the right to speak but not to vote.”

**00.49           REGULATION 4.11.1(a) INDEMNITY**

The Assembly resolved to request the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 4.11.1(a) by amending the heading and by adding the words “and who is not an independent contractor” so that the Regulation reads:

**“INDEMNITY**

4.11.1 (a)   Any person acting under the express or implied authority of the Church and who is not an independent contractor shall be indemnified out of trust property against all liability for any matter or thing done or liability incurred except in the case of fraud, criminal act, gross negligence or wilful misconduct.”

**00.50           REGULATIONS 7.5.1-7.7.3 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES**

The Assembly resolved:

00.50.01   to request the Standing Committee to consult with Synods and the Church Polity and Legal reference committees with a view to amending Regulations 7.5.1–7.7.3 to provide for:

- the Pastoral Relations Committee to have authority to determine that a complaint against a minister warrants no further action;
- an appeal mechanism against such a decision by a Pastoral Relations Committee;
- the Pastoral Relations Committee to refer a complaint for mediation or conciliation;
- a Presbytery Chairperson to refer a complaint directly to the Committee for Counselling;
- the Committee for Counselling to refer a complaint for mediation or conciliation;
- any related matters which emerge from Standing Committee’s consideration and consultation;

00.50.02   authorise the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulations 7.5.1 – 7.7.3 and make consequential amendments to Regulations as it determines, in light of its consideration and consultation on these matters.

**ELECTIONS**

00.51       On the advice of the Returning Officer, Margaret Pittman, the President declared the following results of elections:

**President-Elect**

Dean Drayton

**Standing Committee**

Jane Aagaard

Bruce Binnie

Elizabeth Burns

Dennis Chapman

Jelita Gardner-Rush

Alistair Macrae

Myung Hwa Park

Fefiloi Reid

Jan Trengove

Craig Bailey

Robert Brown

Jennifer Byrnes

Kylie Crabbe

Jason Kioa

Jim Mein

Julia Pitman

Allan Thompson

Seongja Yoo-Crowe

Church Polity Chairperson

Coolamon College Chairperson

Defence Force Chaplaincy Convener

Frontier Services Chairperson

Historical Reference Committee Chairperson

Legal Reference Committee Chairperson

Ministerial Education Commission

Chairperson

Secretary

Multicultural Ministry Chairperson

National Finance Committee

Chairperson

Members

Graham A McAnalley

Marelle Harisun

Neale Michael

Anne Amos

Geoffrey L Barnes

Malcolm Gledhill

Jennifer Byrnes

Marian Zaunbrecher

James Latu

Edmund (Ed) Walker

Heather Ackland

David Greenall

Mary Henning

Jim Mein

Margaret Lightbody

Graham Brookes

Bev Fabb

Elizabeth Walker

John Pettman

Philip Creed

Margaret Reeson

Relations with Other Faiths Chairperson

Social Responsibility and Justice Chairperson

Theology and Discipleship Chairperson

UnitingCare Australia Chairperson

Uniting Education Chairperson

Unity and International Mission Chairperson

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

**00.52**

### **GREETINGS FROM ECUMENICAL GUESTS**

During the Assembly the following guests from other Australian churches and overseas churches and church bodies participated in bringing greetings to the Assembly:

Rev Alan Filipaina, President, Congregational Federation of Australia

Rev David Gill, General Secretary, National Council of Churches in Australia

Bishop Michael Putney, Roman Catholic Church

Rev Dr David Stolz, Lutheran Church of Australia

Rev Michael Tan, President, Methodist Church in Australia (Australasia);

Rev Agustinus Aesh, Moderator, Gereja Masehi Injili di Halmahera

Ma Sophia Lizares Bodegon, United Church of Christ in the Philippines

Rev Tony Burnham, General Secretary, United Reformed Church UK and Council for World Mission UK

Rev David Bush, President of the Methodist Church of New Zealand  
 Rev Daniel Caihe, Evangelical Church in New Caledonia & The Loyalty Islands  
 Rt Rev Dr V Devasahayam, Bishop of Chennai, Church of South India  
 Rev Francisco de Vasconcelos Moderator, Protestant Church in Timor Lorosae  
 Rev Penisimani Fonua, General Secretary, Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga  
 Rev Tomasi Kanailagi, President, Methodist Church in Fiji  
 Mr Kriang, International Relations, Church of Christ in Thailand  
 Rev Dr Kyu Ho Lee, Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Korea  
 Rev Cliff Leeuw, Moderator, Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa  
 Rev Samson Lowa, Moderator, United Church in Papua New Guinea  
 Rev Marjorie MacLean, Depute Clerk to the General Assembly, Church of Scotland  
 Rev Vinod Malaviya, Moderator, Gereja Masehi India di Timor  
 Rev Trevor Morrow, Moderator, Presbyterian Church in Ireland  
 Rev Baiteke Nabetari, Moderator, Kiribati Protestant Church  
 Rev Ross Olivier, General Secretary, Methodist Church of Southern Africa  
 Rev Dr Arnold Parengkuan, President, Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa  
 Bishop Philemon Riti, Moderator, United Church in the Solomon Islands  
 Rev Prof Dr W A Roeroe, Retiring President, Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa  
 Bishop Alan Sarte, North Luzon Jurisdiction, United Church of Christ in the Philippines  
 Rev Herman Saud, Moderator, Gereja Kristen di Papua  
 Rev Tangimetua Tangatatutai, President, Cook Islands Christian Church  
 Rev Pamela Tankersley, Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand  
 Rev Alis Tira, Secretary for Mission, Kiribati Protestant Church  
 Dr John Titaley Dean of Faculty, Satya Wacana Christian University, Indonesia  
 Rev Sammy Titaley, Moderator, Gereja Protestan Maluku  
 Rev Esau Tuza, General Secretary, United Church in the Solomon Islands  
 Rev Kalsakau Urtalo, Talua Principal, Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu.

## **00.53 SIGNING OF PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS**

- 00.53.01 **Cook Islands Partnership Agreement**  
 The partnership agreement between the Cook Islands Christian Church and the Uniting Church in Australia was signed by Rev Tangimetua Tangatatutai, President of the Cook Islands Christian Church and Rev Prof James Haire, President of the Uniting Church in Australia.
- 00.53.02 **Halmahera Partnership Agreement**  
 The partnership agreement between the Gereja Masehi Injili di Halmahera, and the Uniting Church in Australia was signed by Rev Agustinus Aesh, Moderator of Gereja Masehi Injili di Halmahera and Rev Prof James Haire, President of the Uniting Church in Australia.
- 00.53.03 **Maluku Partnership Agreement**  
 The partnership agreement between the Gereja Protestan Maluku and the Uniting Church in Australia was signed by Rev Sammy Titaley, Moderator, Gereja Protestan Maluku and Rev Prof James Haire, President of the Uniting Church in Australia.
- 00.53.04 **Minahasa (Sulawesi) Partnership Agreement**  
 The partnership agreement between the Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa (Evangelical Church of Minahasa) and the Uniting Church in Australia was signed by Rev Dr Arnold Parengkuan, Moderator of Gereja Masehi Injili di

Minahasa and Rev Prof James Haire, President of the Uniting Church in Australia.

**00.54 OVERSEAS GUESTS HAVE THEIR SAY**

On behalf of all overseas guests, Sophia Bodegon, Francisco de Vasconcelos, Alis Tira, Marjory MacLean, Trevor Morrow and Ross Olivier addressed the Assembly in prayer, song, word and poetry.

**00.55 BIBLE STUDY**

During the Assembly four Bible Studies were presented by Geof Lilburne and Deidre Palmer, following the theme of the Assembly, "here we are...=...send us".

**00.56 CHILDREN OF THE NINTH ASSEMBLY – KUCA-A**

The report was presented by the children of KUCA-A.

The Assembly resolved to receive the report.

**00.57 YOUTH AT ASSEMBLY**

The report was presented by the Youth at Assembly.

The Assembly resolved to receive the report.

**00.58 STATEMENT FROM THEOLOGICAL CONSULTATION**

Copies of a statement prepared at the Theological Consultation held immediately prior to the Assembly were distributed.

**00.59 THE UNITING CHURCH ROSE**

Following the competition which received over 1200 entries, the name of the rose to commemorate the Uniting Church's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary was announced as "Gift of Grace", named by Sue Wilson of Western Australia.

**00.60 REFERRAL OF PROPOSAL 37**

The Assembly resolved to refer proposal 37 to Church Polity with the request that, in consultation with Theology and Discipleship and a representative of the former Task Group on Church Structures, Church Polity:

- (a) prepare a discussion paper on
  - (i) the role and ministry of elder/leader in the Congregation;
  - (ii) the nature and role of the Church Council;
  - (iii) the relationship between the elders/leaders and the Church Council;
- (b) invite responses to the discussion paper from Presbyteries;
- (c) bring a report, with recommendations, to the Tenth Assembly:

37. That the Assembly:

- 37.1 determine that each Congregation or group of Congregations re-establish a Council of Elders to have, with the Minister, oversight of the total life and

mission of the Congregation and responsibility for resourcing that life and mission;

- 37.2 determine that the Council of Elders consist of:
- (a) the Ministers, Youth Workers and Lay Pastors who are settled in the Congregation;
  - (b) Community Ministers and candidates for Community Minister who are serving in community ministry in the Congregation;
  - (c) Ministers, being members of the Congregation, who are Ministers-in-Association in accordance with Regulation 2.5.1(g); and
  - (d) the Elders of the Congregation;
- 37.3 determine that the Council of Elders assume the duties and responsibilities currently exercised by the Church Council;
- 37.4 determine that each Congregation or group of Congregations establish a Property and Finance Committee elected annually and responsible to the Council of Elders;
- 37.5 determine that membership of the Property and Finance Committee be:
- (a) a treasurer appointed annually by the Congregation;
  - (b) members of the Congregation who may be non-Elders and who have the appropriate gifts; and
  - (c) at least one Elder to be appointed by the Council of Elders.
- 37.6 determine that the duties and responsibilities of the Property and Finance Committee be:
- (a) managing the financial affairs and assisting in the general administration of the Congregation including the preparation and presentation of all necessary budgets, statements and reports;
  - (b) managing and controlling property in accordance with the Regulations;
  - (c) preparing and presenting to a meeting of the Congregation, through the Council of Elders, an annual report concerning property and finance and making recommendations with regard to those matters for the ensuing year; and
  - (d) reporting at least quarterly to the Council of Elders;
- 37.7 amend clause 2 of the Constitution by the substitution of 'guided by its Basis of Union' by 'as that way is described in the Basis of Union' so that clause 2 shall read:  
"The Church, affirming that it belongs to the people of God on the way to the promised end, lives and works within the faith and unity of the one holy catholic and apostolic church, as that way is described in the Basis of Union."

*[Proposal 37 then listed consequential amendments to the Constitution and Regulations, subject to the Assembly's approval of proposals 37.1-37.7]*

## **00.61**

### **SUDAN**

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.61.01 to express admiration to the New Sudan Council of Churches for their courageous work towards reconciliation and peace in New Sudan, assuring them of our support;
- 00.61.02 recognising the violence inherent in the imposition of a "jihad" or "holy war" in Sudan and the ambiguity of political and military responses which tear people apart, to convey to the Sudanese community in Australia our continuing support to them as they seek to rebuild lives, find employment, ensure schooling for their children and maintain their cultural roots as Sudanese people;

- 00.61.03 to encourage members of the Uniting Church, its Congregations and Presbyteries, to continue their pastoral and practical support to the Sudanese community in Australia;
- 00.61.04 to welcome the formation of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (Australian Chapters), and commit ourselves to work with them, the National Council of Churches, and other supporting organisations, in the continuing struggle to create a peaceful society characterised by freedom, democracy, fundamental human rights and the dignity and respect of all persons, regardless of race, sex or religion;
- 00.61.05 to stand in solidarity with the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement Australian Chapters as they:
- draw international attention to the pain of the Southern Sudan, including Southern Kordofan (Nuba Mountains) and southern Blue Nile (Ingessena);
  - support the organisation essential to the reconstruction of communities in SPLM administered areas in Sudan;
  - work towards the liberation of their people and the creation of a safe and peaceful community.

## **00.62 ECUMENICAL CO-OPERATION IN RURAL AREAS**

The Assembly resolved::

- 00.62.01 to acknowledge the difficulties being experienced by small rural Congregations in sustaining their ministry, and affirm the need for them to be given encouragement, freedom and flexibility to initiate/negotiate arrangements with other denominations which meet the needs of local situations, and
- 00.62.02 to request Unity and International Mission, as a matter of urgency, to:
- (a) initiate (or revive) dialogue with other denominations at the highest level to explore ways in which Christian ministry might be more effectively provided in small rural centres, and
  - (b) encourage Synods and rural Presbyteries to encourage and foster local ecumenical initiatives to enhance Christian life and witness in rural communities.

## **00.63 SYNOD OF TASMANIA**

The Assembly resolved to authorise the Standing Committee to act on receipt of any proposals or requests from the Synod of Tasmania which relate to the bounds of the Synod and/or the Presbytery of Tasmania or to the dissolution of the Synod or to new arrangements for the government and administration of the church in Tasmania which would require Assembly approval.

## **00.64 MANDATORY SENTENCING**

The Assembly resolved:

- 00.64.01 to stand with the Northern Synod in its opposition to mandatory sentencing and declares that mandatory imprisonment is contrary to Australia's international human rights obligations and goes against the teachings of the Gospel;



- 00.64.02 to call on the Northern Territory Government to repeal these laws and asks that this message be conveyed to the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory by the Assembly General Secretary and the President;
- 00.64.03 to call on the Prime Minister to encourage the Northern Territory Government to repeal these laws and asks the Assembly General Secretary and President to convey this message to the Prime Minister.
- 00.65 COHESIVE APPROACH TO SYNODS AND PRESBYTERIES**
- The Assembly resolved:
- 00.65.01 to refer all resolutions of the Ninth Assembly which seek to impact on the life and ministry of Congregations and Presbyteries to the sponsoring agencies and bodies and the Assembly Secretariat, with a view to the development of a cohesive strategy to be offered to the Church in relation to those resolutions;
- 00.65.02 to request the Standing Committee to consider and determine the proposed strategy in November 2000 to enable a creative co-ordinated encouragement from the Assembly to Congregations and Presbyteries during 2001.

## **CLOSING ACTIONS**

### **00.66 REMAINING BUSINESS**

The Assembly resolved to refer all remaining business to the Standing Committee to deal with as it sees fit:

- Application of Constitution clause 39 (Standing Committee);
- Duties of a Minister (Church Polity, Synod of NSW)
- Year of Jubilee (Social Responsibility and Justice)
- Environmental concerns (Social Responsibility and Justice)
- Criminal justice reform (Social Responsibility and Justice)
- Rural and remote communities (Social Responsibility and Justice)
- Intentional interim ministry (Presbytery of Eyre)
- Regulations on Discipline (Legal Reference Committee and others)
- Amendment to Regulation 2.5.2 (two Assembly members)
- Statement on the Basis of Union (Synod of Victoria)
- Ministry and mission in remote areas (two Assembly members)
- Growing a generous church (two Assembly members)
- Prayer and Christian spirituality (two Assembly members)
- Care of church land (two Assembly members)
- Consolidation of theological education (two Assembly members)
- Ecotheology (two Assembly members)
- Amendment of Regulation 3.1.29 (Synod of NSW)
- Sri Lanka (two Assembly members)
- 18<sup>th</sup> Diakonia Assembly (two Assembly members).

### **00.67 APPRECIATION**

On behalf of the Assembly, Shannon Short expressed appreciation to all who had contributed to the presentation, conduct and functioning of the Ninth Assembly. The General Secretary made special reference to Jan Trengove, Chairperson of the Business Committee, and Gwenda Kerley, Secretary of the

Local Arrangements Committee and presented them each with a bouquet of flowers.

## **CLOSE**

The Ninth Assembly concluded at 1.25pm on Saturday 22 July 2000 with worship, including the celebration of the Eucharist at Kent Town Uniting Church.