

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN EMMAUS AUSTRALIA NATIONAL SECRETARIAT AND THE ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

INTRODUCTION

1. The Walk to Emmaus (WTE) is a copyrighted program of the Upper Room, a division of the General Board of Discipleship (GBOD) of the United Methodist Church in the USA. The International Emmaus Office of the Upper Room is located in Nashville Tennessee and is responsible for the establishment and oversight of Emmaus communities throughout the world.
2. The first Australian Walk to Emmaus weekend was held in Sydney in August 1984 with the agreement of the Uniting Church with the Upper Room to sponsor Emmaus in Australia.
3. Subsequently, the youth outreach of Emmaus, called Chrysalis, was established as part of participating Emmaus communities.

EMMAUS AUSTRALIA – Structure and Governance

4. Emmaus Australia is made up of around 30 Emmaus and Chrysalis communities in every state and territory across Australia. These communities have their own Board to run Emmaus activities within their community. The Board members are elected by the Community members. Each Community is also a member of the Emmaus Australia Secretariat, which holds a Conference and Annual General Meeting each year. The Secretariat has its own National Board. The National and Community Boards are governed by the Emmaus Handbook and Manuals and their own set of By-Laws. The relationship between the International Emmaus Office (IECO) and the Australian Emmaus Communities is through the National Board. The IECO holds an International Advisory Committee in Nashville each year to which the National Board may nominate attendees. All suggested variations to the Emmaus program are referred to the IECO or to this committee for consideration.
5. Each year the International Office of Emmaus requires each Emmaus Community Board to sign The Covenant agreement. In Australia the National Board signs for all the Communities when these are received from each community. The National Board and the International Emmaus Office agrees to recognize the group as an Emmaus or Chrysalis community, hereinafter referred to as the Community, and to support its ministry when it undertakes as part of its life that
 - each Community will have a local governing body that is elected by the persons in that community. The local governing body will be organized and will conduct its business in accordance with the Emmaus Office guidelines in a manner that honours Christ and His church. The local governing body will stay in communication with the Secretariat regarding scheduled Emmaus and Chrysalis weekends, election of new officers and other developments affecting the quality of the ministry. Each local governing body will update and maintain their community's information on the Emmaus Boardroom website and the Australian national website;
 - as a program offering of The Upper Room Ministries of The United Methodist Church, invite interdenominational, interracial and international participation, and foster a spirit of Christian acceptance and unity. The local governing body will foster in Emmaus activities, the openness to diversity and the mainstream theological balance that is reflective of Upper Room Ministries; and
 - seek to cooperate with the leaders of other denominations and to function entirely as a servant of the church;

6. The Emmaus community in Australia provides the following undertakings to the Uniting Church in Australia in acknowledgement of its interest and concern for the work of Emmaus and Chrysalis as the sponsoring denomination.
 - The Emmaus movement in Australia will be conducted under the Handbook and Manuals approved and issued by the International Emmaus and Chrysalis Office of the Upper Room in the USA, or any written agreement for variation issued by that Office.
 - Members of the Executive of the Emmaus Australia Secretariat, and of the Boards of Directors of all Communities within Australia, must be members in good standing of a local church or denomination that is recognised as a valid representation of the Body of Christ.
 - A representative of the Uniting Church appointed by the Assembly Standing Committee, or their nominee, shall be eligible to attend the Emmaus Australia Secretariat. If that representative has previously attended a Walk to Emmaus he or she shall be entitled to a vote at the Secretariat; if they have not they shall not be entitled to a vote but may still take part in decision-making considerations. (See Appendix)
 - The Emmaus Australia Boards shall have adequate insurance cover for its operations through the Insurance section of the Uniting Church Synod of NSW / ACT.
 - The Emmaus Australia Boards will pay due diligence to issues of safety and standards of leadership, at all times adhering to the laws relating to occupational health and safety, conduct and harassment.
 - Any Ministers who are suspected of misconduct will be referred to their denominational body for follow up action.

7. The Uniting Church in Australia, through the Assembly, offers the following undertakings to the National Emmaus Secretariat, as an expression of its ongoing interest and support for the ministry of the Emmaus movement.

The Uniting Church in Australia shall:

 - Encourage its members and Ministers to know about the ministry of Emmaus and where possible to support it through such means as making buildings and facilities available to Emmaus for use at minimal cost; facilitating access to cover under Uniting Church insurance policies in the same way and under the same terms as programs and activities of the Uniting Church; and making its ministry known.
 - Welcome an invitation to appoint a representative to the Emmaus Australia National Secretariat and to consider appointing a representative to the Emmaus National Board.
 - Be open to offering advice on policies and procedures for dealing with issues of OH&S, grievances and complaints, and approaches about ways in which the UCA might otherwise support the work of Emmaus.

8. This Memorandum of Understanding shall commence on the date of signing and will cease under the following circumstances:
 - i) If either party is having difficulty in fulfilling this Memorandum of Understanding the parties should enter into a 'best-practice' mediation process as a precursor to any formal termination of this MOU.
 - ii) If the mediation process does not resolve the differences either party may terminate this Memorandum of Understanding by giving 3 months written notice that they intend to withdraw from this MOU.

9. It is intended that this MOU will enhance the depth of leadership within the church by seeing Christian lives renewed and involved in activities that will enhance the ministry and discipleship of God's people and bring glory of God.

10. This MOU shall be reviewed in the 5th year of its operation.

Signed

National Lay Director
Emmaus Australia National Secretariat

Assembly General Secretary
Uniting Church in Australia

Date:

Date:

APPENDIX - UCA Representative to the Emmaus Australia National Secretariat

If appointing a lay or ministerial representative to the Emmaus Australia National Secretariat under the Memorandum of Understanding The Uniting Church Assembly Standing Committee shall seek the following characteristics in the person being appointed.

The term of appointment shall normally be for a period of 3 years.

The Uniting Church representative appointed by that body, shall also have a seat on the Executive of the Emmaus Australia Secretariat, or, if unable to attend, send a nominee. If that representative, or nominee, has previously attended a Walk to Emmaus he or she shall be entitled to a vote on the Executive; if they have not they shall not be entitled to a vote but may still take part in decision-making discussions.

Essential

A person who:

- 1) Is considered by the Assembly to be in a senior position within the Assembly, or associated with the Assembly;
- 2) Is able to assist Emmaus Australia in its programs and projects with links to the resources of the Uniting Church in Australia;
- 3) Has a commitment to working ecumenically within a movement emphasising the development of Christian leaders for the wider church as servant leaders;
- 4) Has the ability to travel to Executive meetings throughout Australia

Desirable

- a) A good knowledge of the Emmaus Handbook and Manuals
- b) Has completed an Emmaus Walk
- c) Has a good knowledge and understanding of Microsoft Office programs
- d) Has access to the Internet