

## Uniting Church in Australia

### ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE

19 – 21 JULY 2013

**PRESENT** Andrew Dutney (President), Alison Atkinson-Phillips, Bethany Broadstock, Stu Cameron, Denise Champion, Michelle Cook, Terence Corkin, Emma Davison, Geoffrey Grinton, Ronang Gurrawurra, Zac Hatfield Dodds, Andrew Johnson, Jason Kioa, Alistair Macrae, Stuart McMillan, Craig Mitchell, Deidre Palmer, Ian Price, Isabel Thomas-Dobson, Ian Tozer, Jenny Tymms.

**In attendance:** Peter Andrews, Jenny Bertalan, Kay Dowling, Glenda Blakefield, Shirley Coulson, Peter Jones, Mark Lawrence, Matt Pulford, Chris Walker, Andrew Williams.

**WORSHIP** On the Friday evening, as part of the formation of the community, the President preached and presided at the opening Service of Holy Communion. On the Saturday Ian Tozer led morning worship and Bethany Broadstock and Zac Hatfield Dodds led evening prayers. On the Sunday Jason Kioa led morning worship and the closing prayer in the afternoon was led by Bethany Broadstock.

#### WELCOMES

The President welcomed all participants of the Standing Committee meeting. Also welcomed as visitors were Mark Neasey for matters related to the Assembly Audit, Finance and Risk Committee, Jim Mein for matters related to the Beneficiary Fund, Gregor Henderson and Kisoo Jang for matters related to the Review of the Korean Regulations

#### RECOGNITION OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LAND

On behalf of Standing Committee, the President acknowledged the local Eora people and their role as custodians of the land on which the meeting took place.

#### APOLOGIES

**13.27** **It was resolved to** receive the apology of Kate Fraser, Jan Trengove and Graham Humphris for the whole meeting; Emma Davison for Sunday, Zac Hatfield Dodds for Friday night.

#### PASTORAL MATTERS

The participants were advised that Kate Fraser was to have surgery, Rev Dr Bob Brown and Robin Pryor passed away. Dennis Corrowa's imminent surgery was also reported.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The General Secretary spoke to the agenda and timetable as listed in Document 1. Documents 2A, 11A and 25 were distributed on the Friday night.

**13.28** **It was resolved to** approve the timetable and agenda of the meeting as outlined in Document 1, noting that the committee is free to vary the agenda at any time.

#### CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

**13.29** **It was resolved to:**  
a) confirm the minutes of the meetings held on March 15 – 17 2013, April 18 2013 (teleconference);

- b) confirm the minutes of the extraordinary meeting 28 – 29 June 2013 with the deletion of Mark Lawrence’s name from the attendees, adding Deidre Palmer to the apologies; and
- b) note that the Standing Committee resolved by electronic ballot to:
  - (i) note that Libby Davies and Stuart Uhlhorn have been unable to take up the appointment to the Transition Board established to oversee the Assembly’s responsibilities for aged care services delivered under the Aged Care Act as proposed in ASC minute 13.21..04 (a) (iii); and
  - (ii) appoint Mr Peter Worland to the Transition Board.

**13.30 It was resolved in relation to the conflicts of interest to**

- a) note:
  - (i) the General Secretary’s conflict of interest in matters related to Frontier Services; and
  - (ii) permit him to participate fully in the meeting;
- b) note:
  - (i) Kay Dowling’s conflict of interest in relation to Presidential Ruling No. 28; and
  - (ii) request her be absent for business relating to Presidential Ruling No.28;
- c) note:
  - (i) Craig Mitchell’s conflict of interest in the areas of Christian Education; and
  - (ii) request that he not participate in the discussion of Documents 6 and 21;
- d) note:
  - (i) the General Secretary’s and the Associate General Secretary’s conflict of interest; and
  - (ii) request them be absent for business relating to their reviews;
- e) note:
  - (i) Chris Walker’s conflict of interest re changes to the Position Description for National Director, Theology and Discipleship
  - (ii) request that he be absent for business relating to Document 6D;
- f) note Ian Tozer’s advice that he would abstain from the discussion and voting on Presidential Ruling No. 28.

**NOTE CONSTITUTION CLAUSE 39**

Standing Committee members were reminded of the Constitution clause 39, as per ASC minute 00.71:

*“On matters which, by a two thirds majority vote, the Assembly deems to be vital to the life of the Church, the Assembly shall seek the concurrence of the Synods and/or Presbyteries and/or Congregations as the Assembly may determine.”*

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

On the Sunday morning the President reported that his activities since the last regular ASC meeting included:

- attending the National Rural Ministers' Conference
- attending and addressing the 2013 meeting of the Synod of NSW and the ACT
- attending and addressing the first gathering of UCA ministers and Islamic scholars
- hosting the Trans-Tasman Moderators' gathering
- attending and addressing the 2013 meeting of the Synod of Victoria and

Tasmania

- attending the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland
- addressing the Presbytery of SA Ministers' Appreciation Day
- participating in several events in the SA leg of Reconciliation Australia's "Journey to Recognition"
- attending the triennial Forum of the NCCA
- working with the Governance Group and the ASC to support Frontier Services in its recent challenges

He expressed appreciation also for the many opportunities he had to share with local congregations and leaders in the ordinary, special or difficult moments in their lives.

Noting that it was one year since his installation by the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly, the President commented that he had found the experience of the past year "deeply formative". He highlighted the opportunities to represent the Uniting Church in various ecumenical settings, giving him a new sense of "that unity which is Christ's gift and his will for the Church" (Basis of Union paragraph 1).

In the light of that, the President said, "Our goal is not to make the *UCA* multicultural but for the Church to be *one*. By the power of the Gospel the church of God is *already* gloriously multicultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual – especially here in Australia – but because of our own cussedness we are divided." He said that our divisions conceal from the world the sign and foretaste of "that coming reconciliation and renewal which is the end in view for the whole creation" which God has already given in the Church (Basis of Union paragraph 3).

The President reflected on his participation in the 2013 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. He said that he felt privileged to observe a deeply matured decision-making process in action. The Church of Scotland is considering whether it might take up some form of consensus decision-making. The President wondered what the *UCA* had gained through nineteen years of consensus decision-making. He said that, especially in comparison to what he was observing in Edinburgh (arguably the best and most successful example of the traditional Presbyterian approach to making decisions in council) two things stood out. The quality of debate and oratory in the Church of Scotland Assembly was outstanding and, in its own terms, superior to the *UCA* Assembly. But it clearly came at a cost, especially at the cost of the participation of those for whom English is a foreign language or for whom that style of interpersonal communication is difficult. Through its use of consensus decision-making the *UCA* has gained a great deal from the participation and leadership of younger members, women, people for whom English is a foreign language and, especially, from the genuine participation of representatives of the First Peoples. The participation of such members was conspicuously absent in the Church of Scotland Assembly. He said that the continued use of consensus decision-making in the *UCA* was progressively building a more profound sense of being the body of Christ – of being "members of one another" – across the cultural and linguistic diversity of our fellowship.

**13.31** It was **resolved** to receive the report.

## **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS STANDING COMMITTEE**

### **1. Guidelines for Lay Presidency at the Sacraments (ASC Minute 13.15.03)**

The General Secretary spoke to Document 14, consisting of a revised edition of the Guidelines.

**13.32 It was resolved to:**

13.32.01 receive the report; and

13.32.02 approve the distribution of the revised edition of the “Guidelines on Lay Presidency at the Sacraments (Attachment A).

**2. Liturgy to Recognise a Lay Person Authorised to Administer the Sacraments (ASC Minute 13.15.02)**

The General Secretary spoke to Document 12, consisting of a proposed liturgy prepared by the Working Group on Worship to mark the recognition by a Presbytery of a lay person it has authorised to conduct the sacraments.

**13.33 It was resolved to:**

13.33.01 receive the report; and

13.33.02 endorse the liturgy for the “recognition of the authorisation by a presbytery for a lay person to preside at the sacraments” (Attachment B).

**3. Ordination and Commissioning Questions**

The General Secretary presented Document 13, consisting of a report from the Working Group on Worship on the recommended new wording.

**13.34 It was resolved to:**

13.34.01 receive the report; and

13.34.02 endorse the following changes to the ordination charge and questions at Induction and Commissioning services:

In regard to the Charge, the inclusion of the following words as the penultimate paragraph...

*You will affirm and commit yourself to the covenant made between the United Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress and the Uniting Church and accept the obligation to serve both First and Second peoples*

In regard to Induction and Commissioning Services, the inclusion of the following as the penultimate question...

*Do you affirm and commit yourself to the covenant made between the United Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress and the Uniting Church and accept the obligation to serve both First and Second peoples?*

I do

**4. Priority Setting for the Assembly (March 2013 ASC Minutes)**

**13.35 It was resolved to** defer the discussion on this matter to the November 2013 meeting of the Standing Committee.

**5. Report of the Transition Board (ASC Minute 13.21.05)**

Alistair Macrae presented Document 3, consisting of a report on the work of the Transition Board, Frontier Services – Aged Care.

**13.36 It was resolved to** receive the report.

## 6. Review of Alternative Regulations for Korean Congregations (ASC Minute 12.15.06)

Gregor Henderson and Kisoo Jang presented Document 4, consisting of a report from the Task Group on the review of the Alternative Regulations for Korean Congregations.

### 13.37 It was resolved to:

13.37.01 receive the report;

13.37.02 amend Alternative Regulation 2.1.1 as follows:

- a) deletion of the definitions of Bu moksa and Tam-im moksa;
- b) amend the definition of "Korean Congregation" to read:  
**Korean Congregation** means a Congregation of the Uniting Church which is recognised by a Presbytery, following consultation with the Korean National Conference, as being a Korean Congregation; and
- c) add a new definition to read:

### The purposes of the Alternative Regulations for Korean Congregations are:

- consistent with the Uniting Church's commitment to multiculturalism, to give the option to Korean congregations within the Uniting Church to continue to follow some of their customary church traditions where these vary from Uniting Church regulations;
- to facilitate the recruitment of ministers for Korean Congregations from overseas;
- to assist with the process of "independent" Korean Congregations in Australia joining the Uniting Church;
- as a transitional measure, to encourage Korean Congregations to move towards UCA Regulations;

- d) amend the definition of we-im moksa to remove the reference to tam-im moksa

13.37.03 delete Alternative Regulation 2.11.2;

13.37.04 amend Alternative Regulations regarding the Duration and Termination of Ministerial Placements to achieve the following outcomes:

- a) no new we-im moksas (lifetime tenure) from a date to be determined, except in the situation where an "independent" Korean Congregation is joining the Uniting Church and its minister is already a we-im moksa serving in that congregation;
- b) retention of we-im moksa provisions for those who are already we-im moksas;
- c) no provision for tam-im moksas from a date to be determined;
- d) no provision for bu moksas from a date to be determined.
  - (i) retention in an amended form of Alternative Regulation 2.7.3;
  - (ii) deletion of the entire OPTION ONE; and
  - (iii) deletion of the entire OPTION TWO;
- e) the "date to be determined" be resolved on the recommendation of the Legal Reference Committee on reception/approval of the amended Alternative Regulations. The date could be the November 2013 ASC meeting or perhaps 31 December 2013;

13.37.05 simplify the Alternative Regulations in relation to Elders to allow for the election of elders normally for a five-year term and their eligibility for re-election;

13.37.06 delete Part 5 of the Alternative Regulations;

13.37.07 delete Alternative Regulation 3.9.9(iii);

- 13.37.08 amend Alternative Regulation 3.1.8 in order to allow for the Assembly to review the Alternative Regulations as and when it determines;
- 13.37.09 request the Legal Reference Committee to consult with Gregor Henderson and Kisoo Jang and to bring amendments to the Alternative Regulations as proposed in this report to the next meeting of Standing Committee for approval, together with a recommended date on which the revised Alternative Regulations are to take effect; and
- 13.37.10 thank and discharge the Task Group.

**7. Review of Sexual Misconduct Complaints Policies (ASC Minutes 08.47.06, 08.75 and 10.46.02)**

Kay Dowling introduced Document 19, consisting of a document in relation to policy and procedures on sexual abuse – prevention and response within congregations and faith communities involving a member, adherent, volunteer worker and leader.

**13.38 It was resolved to:**

- 13.38.01 receive the draft policy for dealing with “Sexual Abuse – Prevention and Response within Congregations and Faith Communities Involving a Member, Adherent, Volunteer Worker and Leader”;
- 13.38.02 request Kay Dowling(Convenor), Jason Kioa and a nominee of the Synods of Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania and South Australia to:
  - a) review the draft and amend it in the light of the Standing Committee’s comments and other feedback received;
  - b) circulate the draft to Synods with a request to forward it to their Royal Commission Task Groups, UAICC and Multicultural and Cross-cultural networks and invite feedback on the redraft; and
  - c) bring a revision of the policy to the March 2014 meeting of the Standing Committee.

**8. Review of the Ministry of Pastor Task Group – Interim Report (ASC Minute 12.27.01(c))**

The General Secretary spoke to Document 9, consisting of an interim report prepared by the Task Group

**13.39 It was resolved to:**

- 13.39.01 receive the report; and
- 13.39.02 note that the final report will be brought to the November 2013 meeting of the Standing Committee.

**FROM ASSEMBLY BODIES**

**1. Assembly Audit, Finance and Risk Committee**

Peter Andrews and Mark Neasey introduced Documents 15 and 15A, consisting of a report on various financial matters and the Assembly investments.

**13.40 It was resolved to:**

- 13.40.01 receive the report;
- 13.40.02 receive the audited accounts for the year ended 31 December 2012 for
  - UnitingCare Australia

- UnitingWorld Church Connections
- UnitingWorld Relief & Development
- Assembly Fund
- Uniting Aboriginal & Islander Christian Congress
- UCA Assembly Limited
- UCA New Zealand Christchurch Earthquake Disaster Relief Fund
- UCA Japan Earthquake & Tsunami Disaster Relief Fund

- 13.40.03 endorse that
- a) as a part of the development of a Risk Matrix for each agency, attention be given to specifying the skills necessary to ensure the competent and informed leadership of that entity; and
  - b) the resultant Skills Matrix be tabled at the Standing Committee on each occasion that Board membership is being contemplated and that any recommendations for appointment directly relate to the requirements reflected by a comparison of the skills and experience of incumbent Board members viz. a viz. the requirements highlighted by the Skills Matrix; and
  - c) request Alison Atkinson-Phillips and Ian Tozer to give consideration to the establishment of a more structured nomination process for bodies appointed by the ASC and bring a report to the November meeting;
- 13.40.04 affirm the importance of the Governance Task Group in
- a) establishing a structured schedule of reporting such that each Agency shall report to the Standing Committee no less than twice in each triennium; and
  - b) preparing a standard format for such reports including key questions that serve to highlight the matters of concern to the Standing Committee; and
- 13.40.05 refer the matter raised in point 4.1 of the report to the November meeting of the Standing Committee.

## **2. ASC Governance Group**

The General Secretary presented Document 5, consisting of a report on various areas of the life of the Standing Committee.

### **13.41 It was resolved to:**

- 13.41.01 receive the report;
- 13.41.02 delegate the monitoring and oversight of performance re risk management in the areas of the Secretariat, Uniting Faith and Discipleship and the Assembly Fund to the Assembly Audit, Finance and Risk Committee with reports on matters arising from this delegation to be part of its regular reports;
- 13.41.03 request the General Secretary to provide time and resources so that the Standing Committee can develop a Risk Register that relates to the specific risks faced by the Assembly as a Council of the Church and in its capacity as a governance body;
- 13.41.04 request Geoffrey Grinton and Jenny Tymms to prepare a discussion paper on “conflict of interest – staff persons on governance bodies” for the November meeting of the Standing Committee;
- 13.41.05
- a) appoint the ex President and Stu Cameron to undertake the annual performance review of the General Secretary for the life of the current ASC; and to consult with the current President as part of the process;
  - b) ask them to bring a statement of purpose and process to the November meeting of the Standing Committee; and
  - c) request them to advise the ASC that it has completed its annual review at each November ASC of the triennium;
- 13.41.06
- a) continue the operation of the ASC Governance Group until March 2015;

- b) appoint the President, President Elect, General Secretary, Michelle Cook, Geoffrey Grinton and Andrew Johnson to the Governance Group; and
- c) request the Governance Group to bring a report to the March 2015 meeting of the Standing Committee with recommendations about the continuation or otherwise of this group, and if it is to continue recommendations re a Mandate and membership for the Governance Group;

### 3. Christian Education Staff Position

Glenda Blakefield introduced Documents 6, 6A, 6B, 6C, 6D and 6E, consisting of a report on the review of operations of Uniting Faith and Discipleship with the position description for National Director, Formation, Education and Discipleship, the profiles for nominations for the Formation, Education and Discipleship Working group, the Terms of Reference for Formation, Education and Discipleship and the Position Description, National Consultant, Christian Unity, Doctrine and Worship as attachments.

#### 13.42 It was resolved to:

- 13.42.01 receive the report;
- 13.42.02 approve the Position Description, National Director, Formation, Education and Discipleship (Doc 6A) as amended by the Standing Committee (Attachment C);
- 13.42.03 appoint Lindsay Cullen, Rohan Pryor, Susan Burt, Elaine Rae, Drew Hanna, Sue Ellis, Robin Yang, Adam McIntosh, Deidre Palmer, Neil Thorpe, Duncan Macleod, Rick Morrell to the Formation, Education and Discipleship Working Group;
- 13.42.04 approve the Terms of Reference for the Formation, Education and Discipleship Unit and Working Group within the mandate of Uniting Faith and Discipleship (Attachment D);
- 13.42.05 approve the Position Description of the National Consultant, Christian Unity, Doctrine and Worship (Attachment E);
- 13.42.06
  - a) invite the incumbent National Consultant, Theology and Discipleship to express his willingness to undertake the new role for the duration of his current extension (31 July 2015); and
  - b) confirm the incumbent in the new role until 31 July 2015 subject to the concurrence of the Christian Unity Working Group; and
  - c) determine that if it is not possible to appoint the incumbent to the new role authorise the Assembly Officers to appoint a nominating committee with a view to bringing a nomination to the November meeting of the Standing Committee;
- 13.42.07 request the Associate General Secretary to develop working protocols for the area of work of the National Consultant, Christian Unity, Doctrine and Worship and to make recommendations to the ASC for changes to the mandate of Uniting Faith and Discipleship so as to include the area of Christian Unity;
- 13.42.08 approve the Uniting Faith and Discipleship Ways of Working (Attachment F);
- 13.42.09 amend each position description of the members of the Uniting Faith and Discipleship team to include the Ways of Working Team Appendix;
- 13.42.10 amend the Uniting Faith and Discipleship mandate to include the Ways of Working;
- 13.42.11 appoint Ian Tozer, Rohan Pryor, Ian Price and Glenda Blakefield as members of the Nominating Committee for the appointment of the National Director, Formation, Education and Discipleship;

- 13.42.12 thank and discharge the National Youth Activities Reference Committee;
- 13.42.13 authorize the Associate General Secretary to make any consequential amendments to the position description of the National Faith Development Consultant;
- 13.42.14 thank and discharge the Christian Education Reference Committee; and
- 13.42.15 appoint Ian Price as Chairperson of the Formation, Education and Discipleship Working Group.

#### **4. General Report**

The General Secretary spoke to Documents 23 and 23A, consisting of a report on various matters and the work of the Transition Board.

- 13.43 It was resolved to** receive the reports.

#### **5. Interim Frontier Services Board**

The General Secretary introduced Document 2, which included a report on actions taken by the Interim Board. Additional information was provided including advice on the resignation of Rosemary Young, National Director of Frontier Services effective 26 July and the arrangements made to appoint Rev Alan White as Interim National Director and Rev Dr Dean Drayton to provide a bridging role until Alan White can commence.

- 13.44 It was resolved to:**

- 13.44.01 receive the report;
- 13.44.02 appoint Gregor Henderson (Convenor), Rob Brown, Jim Mein and Tim Matton-Johnson (subject to his agreement) as members of the Interim Frontier Services Board;
- 13.44.03 authorise the Assembly Officers to appoint a 5<sup>th</sup> member to the Interim FS Board and to consult with UAICC to find an alternate member should Tim Matton-Johnson be unavailable;
- 13.44.04 note that the General Secretary, Associate General Secretary, Jenny Tymms and Stuart McMillan have concluded their role on the Interim Frontier Services Board and thank them;
- 13.44.05
  - a) receive the resignation of Rosemary Young as National Director of Frontier Services; and
  - b) request the President to convey the thanks of the Standing Committee for her dedication and commitment over many years; and
- 13.44.06 authorize the General Secretary to appoint an Interim National Director for Frontier Services.

#### **6. Legal Reference Committee**

The General Secretary and Andrew Johnson presented Document 18, consisting of a report on the various matters the Legal Reference Committee had dealt with since the March 2013 Standing Committee meeting.

- 13.45 It was resolved to:**

- 13.45.01 receive the report;
- 13.45.02 amend the following regulations and to renumber the subsequent clauses accordingly:

- a) Regulations 3.7.5.1 and 3.8.4 to read:

## **ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE**

### **3.7.5.1**

- (i) ~~Any matter coming before the Standing Committee for determination may be dealt with by postal or electronic vote, provided that no such matter shall be deemed to be resolved in the affirmative unless at least four-fifths of the members of the Committee vote for the affirmative and further provided that if within seven days after the referral of such matters to the members of the Committee any three or more members give written notice that they require the matter to be referred to a duly convened meeting of the Committee, the postal or electronic vote shall be of no effect.~~

## **CONDUCT OF MEETINGS AND ELECTRONIC DECISION MAKING**

- 3.8.4** (a) Meetings of a congregation, council or a standing committee shall be conducted in accordance with “A Manual for Meetings in the Uniting Church” unless the congregation, council or standing committee has adopted other standing orders or meeting procedures.
- (b) Decisions made by a council or standing committee other than in a meeting, by electronic means, shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures outlined in 5.18 of “A Manual for Meetings in the Uniting Church” unless the council or standing committee has adopted other standing orders or meeting procedures.
- (bc) If the presiding officer of a meeting of a congregation or council (or its standing committee) is unavailable then the meeting shall elect a chairperson for that meeting.
- b) the Manual for Meetings by the addition of a new paragraph 5.18:

### **5.18 ELECTRONIC DECISION MAKING**

Determining a matter by electronic decision making, without a meeting of the council, should only be used in situations where the matter is urgent or with the prior approval of the council.

When a request is made for a matter to be determined by electronic decision making the following procedures shall apply:

1. The chairperson of the council shall determine the matter is appropriate for determining by electronic decision making.
2. The secretary of the council shall take reasonable steps to advise all members of the council of the proposed decision, the timeline for a response, the threshold for the decision being resolved in the affirmative and the mechanism for having the matter referred to the next meeting of the council.
3. The time allowed for members to respond to the proposed decision shall be not less than 72 hours unless the Chairperson determines that special circumstances exist and sets a shorter period.
4. The number of members who shall be required to participate in the decision making for the matter to be determined shall be the same as the number required for a quorum.
5. For a matter to be resolved in the affirmative it shall require all those who participate in the decision making to vote in the affirmative unless the Council has determined otherwise (Regulation 3.8.4(b)).
6. If any member votes in the negative or requests that the matter be referred to the next meeting of the council, the matter shall be referred to the next meeting of the council.

7. Decisions made by electronic decision making shall be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting of the council, including the date in which the decision was reached.

c) the effective date for the changes to the Regulations and the Manual for Meetings be August 1<sup>st</sup> 2013;

13.45.03 a) amend Regulation 2.3.2.4(d)(iv) to read:

**SELECTION PANEL OF CANDIDATES FOR MINISTER**

2.3.2.4 (d) The selection panel shall determine the application by:

(iv) encouragement of the applicant to continue to exercise a ministry as a lay member of the Church but rejection of the application to serve in one of the specified ministries,

b) the effective date for the changes to the Regulation be August 1<sup>st</sup> 2013;

13.45.04 a) amend the following regulations to read:

**Re: Application for Candidature for Minister**

2.3.2.2 (a)(i) Any person seeking to become a candidate shall make written application to the Presbytery through the Minister of the Congregation (or through the appropriate member of the ministerial team in the Congregation) in which the applicant holds membership. If there is no Minister of the Congregation in which the applicant holds membership, the application may be made directly to the Presbytery.

(ii) The applicant shall make available to the Presbytery such additional information and material as is prescribed under these Regulations or as may be required by the Presbytery or by the Ministerial Education Board, including information on the applicant's participation in the period of discernment.

**Re: Presbytery responsibilities in selection of candidates for Minister**

2.3.2.3 (a) As soon as possible following receipt of an application the Presbytery shall request a confidential report from ~~the~~ an appropriate Minister and shall seek comment from the Church Council where the applicant's membership is held and other referees, and shall then consider the application in accordance with the Regulations.

**Re: Process for candidature and selection of Lay Preachers**

2.3.4 (b) Applicants shall make written application to the Presbytery through the Minister of the Congregation (or through the appropriate member of the ministerial team in the Congregation) in which the applicant holds membership. If there is no Minister of the Congregation in which the applicant holds membership, the application may be made directly to the Presbytery.

(c) The Minister of the Congregation or, if there is no such Minister, the Presbytery, shall notify the Church Council of the application, after which the Church Council shall interview the applicant and forward the application, with its report and recommendations, to the Presbytery within ninety days after receipt of the application by the Minister of the Congregation.

(d) The Presbytery shall request a confidential report from an appropriate Minister and shall make such other investigations and enquiries as it sees fit and may interview the applicant and shall either accept the applicant as a candidate for training as a Lay Preacher or reject the application providing that a two-thirds majority vote of members present shall be required for acceptance.

## Re: Process for the selection of a Pastor

- 2.3.3 (b) In considering and determining applications made under Regulation 2.3.3(a)(i) the appointing body shall have reference to:
- (i) confidential testimonials, supplied at the request of the appointing body, from ~~the an appropriate Minister, of the applicant's Congregation~~ and the Church Council of the applicant's Congregation;
  - (c) A Synod body designated by the Synod shall have responsibility for considering and determining applications made under Regulation 2.3.3 (a)(ii). The procedures to be followed by the Synod body shall be approved by the Synod and shall include:
    - (i) requests for confidential testimonials from ~~the an appropriate Minister, of the applicant's Congregation~~ and the Church Council of the applicant's Congregation;

## Re: Responsibilities of the Presbytery

- 3.1.3 (m) in the exercise of its responsibility for the oversight of congregations during periods when the eCongregation has no Minister in placement: supervision of vacancies in pastoral charges,
- (i) appointing one or more Presbytery Liaison Persons who shall have the right to attend and speak at any meeting of the Congregation or its Church Council, and who shall liaise with the Congregation on behalf of the Presbytery, during the vacancy. In most cases When a eCongregation is seeking to fill a vacancy, this role will normally be given to one or more of the Presbytery-appointed members of the Joint Nominating Committee.
  - (ii) assisting the nurture and care of the Congregation by the appointment, when considered appropriate by the Presbytery, of a Minister not classified under Regulation 2.6.1(e) to become an Associated Minister to fulfil such pastoral, preaching or other responsibilities as may be agreed with the Church Council and the Presbytery. The Church Council shall recommend to the Presbytery any appropriate remuneration for the person to be appointed and shall be responsible for the payment of the agreed sum. The appointment shall be reviewed annually by the Presbytery.

## FORMATION AND RECOGNITION OF A CONGREGATION

- 3.4.1 ~~(c) The Presbytery shall assist the nurture and care of a new Congregation by designating an appropriate person to liaise with the Congregation on behalf of the Presbytery until the Presbytery determines such a liaison role is no longer warranted.~~
- ~~(d) The Presbytery shall make provision for the sacraments to be celebrated in the life of a new Congregation.~~

## Re: Oversight of Lay Preachers

Regulation 3.1.3 - add a new clause (j)

3.1.3 (j) the exercise of oversight of Lay Preachers within its bounds;  
Provide a heading for this regulation "Oversight of Lay Preachers" and  
Renumber clauses (j) to (r) as (k) to (s); and

- b) note that no effective date has been set for these changes due to work still to be undertaken on other parts of these regulations.

## 7. Ministry Education Task Group

Deidre Palmer and Michelle Cook spoke to Document 10, consisting of an interim report prepared by the Task Group.

**13.46 It was resolved to:**

- 13.46.01 receive the report;
- 13.46.02 note that the Task Group has been unable to complete its work by July 2013 and request that a final report, and nomination for Chairperson of the Working Group on Education for Ministry, be brought to the November 2013 meeting; and
- 13.46.03 request the Task Group to establish an Expressions of Interest process for receiving nominations for the new Education for Ministry Working Group and to bring proposed nominations for appointment to the Working Group in November.

**8. National Engagement and Response Task Group re the Royal Commission**

The General Secretary introduced Document 7, consisting of a report from the Task Group.

**13.47 It was resolved to:**

- 13.47.01 receive the report;
- 13.47.02 authorise the General Secretary to submit in the name of the UCA any response to the Royal Commission's Issues Papers after the response has been endorsed by the National Task Group.

**9. Review of Appeals Task Group**

Andrew Johnson presented Document 8, consisting of a report on the work the Task Group has done since its establishment, the matters which were raised during the identification process and foreshadowing the next stage in the process.

- 13.48 It was resolved to** receive the report.

**10. Review of the Ministry of Lay Preacher**

Craig Mitchell presented Document 21, consisting of a report on the findings of the national review of the ministry of Lay Preacher undertaken by the Ministerial Education Commission.

**13.49 It was resolved to:**

- 13.49.01 receive the report;
- 13.49.02 reaffirm the significance of the ministry of Lay Preacher for the life and witness of the Uniting Church and to invite congregations and councils of the church to celebrate the service of Lay Preachers;
- 13.49.03 encourage presbyteries, church councils and Ministers, in the light of Paragraph 13 of the Basis of Union,

*...It acknowledges with thanksgiving that the one Spirit has endowed the members of Christ's Church with a diversity of gifts, and that there is no gift without its corresponding service: all ministries have a part in the ministry of Christ... The Uniting Church will thereafter provide for the exercise by men and women of the gifts God bestows upon them, and will order its life in response to God's call to enter more fully into mission.*

to

- a) encourage members whose gifts are in worship leading and preaching to develop and exercise their gifts;
- b) seek to provide support and resourcing for the development of such gifts;

- c) offer local opportunities for affirmation and recognition of those who serve in these ways; and
  - d) seek to offer encouraging and constructive feedback to those who serve in these ways;
- 13.49.04 request Synod Secretaries to discuss the differences in systems and levels of remuneration and financial assistance for Lay Preachers and candidates across Synods in terms of training costs, travel costs and preaching/leading fees, and bring a recommendation to ASC regarding
- a) the possibility of reducing the degree of discrepancy;
  - b) ways to encourage presbyteries and congregations to follow such guidelines; and
  - c) sources of financial assistance (e.g. study scholarships or subsidies);
- 13.49.05 request the Education for Ministry Working Group to
- a) review the responsibilities and accountability of the National Lay Preachers' Committee in the light of the Working Group's responsibilities;
  - b) consult with synod education agencies and work with the Assembly Communications Unit to prepare a promotional strategy relating to the ministry of Lay Preacher;
  - c) consult with MEBs, presbyteries which were identified in the Review as providing effective support and oversight, a range of culture and language groups, and the National Lay Preachers' Committee to develop Guidelines for presbyteries in providing oversight of, and support for, Lay Preachers, including
    - (i) suggest goals and strategies for promotion and recruitment
    - (ii) suggest goals and strategies for support and encouragement
    - (iii) suggest goals and strategies for education, formation and continuing education;
    - (iv) suggest goals and strategies for provision of feedback and review
    - (v) identify ways in which any additional duties requested of individual Lay Preachers may be addressed in terms of competencies and oversight, including mention of the ministry of Pastor as an appropriate option in some circumstances; and
    - (vi) ways in which the "Code Of Ethics And Ministry Practice for Lay Preachers In The Uniting Church In Australia" may be promoted and used as a tool for reflection and review;
  - d) include in the Guidelines produced in response to 6 (c) consideration of the training, recognition and oversight of other ('non-accredited') church members who lead worship and preach regularly;
  - e) collaborate with Synod Lay Education agencies and a range of presbyteries to develop a national strategy for the education and formation of lay people for preaching and worship leading in the context of Christian discipleship in the light of the report findings by March 31 2015, including
    - (i) revised 'Rules' for education and formation of Lay Preachers
    - (ii) a national competency framework and national assessment framework s, allowing for (but not requiring) the option of VET sector accreditation for training courses
    - (iii) guidelines for ministry formation for lay preachers and worship leaders
    - (iv) a national certificate of recognition for Lay Preachers
    - (v) a tiered or incremental approach to competency development
    - (vi) modular learning with a range of delivery approaches and teaching styles
    - (vii) varied learning approaches for people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities
    - (vii) a range of approaches to teaching, learning and assessment
    - (ix) options for online delivery
    - (x) consideration of the provision of resources for local mentoring in worship leading and preaching by ordained Ministers and others
    - (xi) tools for feedback or review of Lay Preachers within presbyteries

- f) review education and training programs offered within synods during 2015 in co-operation with MEBs; and
- g) consult with the Assembly Working Group on Worship about the possibility of expanded provision of online resourcing of worship leaders and preachers, covering a range of worship and preaching styles, with particular attention to the needs of smaller congregations

## **11. Theology and Discipleship**

### **Discussion Paper – Ministry with or without Ordained Minister UCA and the Reformed and Evangelical Tradition**

Chris Walker called the attention of the participants to these documents but there was not opportunity for discussion at this meeting.

## **12. UnitingWorld Church Connections Appointments**

The General Secretary spoke to Document 24, consisting of a report on the resignation of the Chairperson and the nomination to fill in the role

### **13.50 It was resolved to:**

- 13.50.01 receive with regret the resignation of Stu Cameron as Chairperson of the UnitingWorld Church Connections National Committee and thank him for his valuable service;
- 13.50.02 appoint Andrew Glenn as Chairperson of the UnitingWorld Church Connections National Committee;
- 13.50.03 note with regret the resignation of the Ji Zhang as a member of the UnitingWorld Church Connections National Committee and thank him for his valuable service; and
- 13.50.04 appoint Rosemary Dewerse as a member of the UnitingWorld Church Connections National Committee.

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **1. Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC)**

The General Secretary and Mark Neasey spoke to Document 17, consisting of a report on the issues, implications and decisions in relation to the ACNC.

- 13.51 It was resolved to** receive the report.

### **2. Budget Preparation**

The General Secretary and Mark Neasey spoke to Document 16, consisting of a report on the assumptions and basis on which it is proposed to prepare the 2014 budget for the Assembly Fund.

- 13.52 It was resolved to** receive the report.

### **3. General Business**

The General Secretary presented the business in Document 22.

### **13.53 It was resolved to:**

- 13.53.01 receive the report;

- 13.53.01 a) appoint Andrew Johnson (Convenor), Bethany Broadstock, Eseta Meneilly and Terence Corkin to be the Review Group for Rev Glenda Blakefield;  
 b) authorize the Assembly Officers to appoint a new person to the Review Group if Eseta Meneilly is not available; and  
 c) request that a report on the review be brought to the November meeting of the Standing Committee;
- 13.53.02 note the changes to the Uniting Church delegation to the 8<sup>th</sup> NCCA Forum by the addition of Rev Sue Ellis and the removal of Ms Maureen Postma;
- 13.53.03 a) rescind ASC minute 12.68.01;  
 b) establish a Task Group to review the operation, status, membership, directorship and utility of UCA Assembly Ltd, giving particular attention to its use as the Assembly's legal entity in relation to signing contracts with the Government for the delivery of services;  
 c) request the Assembly Officers to appoint the Task Group;  
 d) request that the report of the Task Group be brought to the November 2013 meeting of the Standing Committee;  
 e) (i) note ASC minute 12.26.02 (a) in which the resignation of Terence Corkin as Director of UCA Assembly Ltd was accepted;  
 (ii) receive the advice of the Company Secretary that the Constitution of UCA Assembly Ltd requires that there be four Directors and that the resignation of three Directors, as assumed by the ASC meeting in June, would have put it in breach of its Constitution and note that as a consequence Terence Corkin has not yet been removed as a Director of UCA Assembly Ltd;  
 (iii) withdraw acceptance of the resignation of Terence Corkin as a Director of UCA Assembly Ltd;  
 f) delegate the monitoring and oversight of performance re risk management for the UCA Assembly Ltd.; to the Assembly Audit, Finance and Risk Committee;
- 13.53.04 appoint Isabel Thomas Dobson as a member of the Assembly Reception of Ministers Committee; and
- 13.53.05 (a) note the advice from the Board of the Beneficiary Fund of the pending vacancy of a Member Director position on the Board; and  
 (b) approve the procedure of inviting the Synod of Western Australia to nominate at least one person and not more than two people for appointment to the casual vacancy.

#### 4. Presidential Ruling No. 28

Alistair Macrae took the chair and the President presented Document 25, consisting of Presidential Ruling No. 28.

- 13.54.** **It was resolved to** vary Presidential Ruling No. 28 (Attachment G) to amend Regulation 4.5.1(b) to read 5.4.1(b) with Ian Tozer's abstention from voting noted.

## CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 4.00pm with prayer led by Bethany Broadstock.

**DATE FOR 2013: 15 – 17 November 2013**

**DATES FOR 2014: 21 – 13 March 2014**  
**18 – 20 July 2014**  
**14 – 16 November 2014**