

# Multicultural Policies 2006 Onwards

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## **THE 11th ASSEMBLY 2006 – NATIONAL CONFERENCES AND PROPERTY SHARING**

### **06.14 MULTICULTURAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY**

#### **06.14.02 National Conferences**

- a) to recognise the significant role National Conferences have in the life of the Church in providing national networks for migrant communities;
- b) to request Councils of the Church, where possible, to work together with National Conferences in mutually supportive and collaborative ways; consulting with National Conferences as appropriate, working together when ministry consultations take place, finding ways to address issues of conflict and enhance the mission of migrant congregations; and
- c) on advice from Assembly Multicultural and Cross Cultural Ministry, to appoint a National Conferences Task Group to have discussions with the National Conferences and other bodies or Councils as appropriate, and report, including bringing any proposals, to the 12th Assembly on how the voice of migrant communities expressed through the National Conferences may be strengthened in the life of the Church.

#### **06.14.03 Property Sharing in Cross-cultural Settings**

- a) to reaffirm its understanding that all property belongs to God and we are called to be its stewards;
- b) to encourage congregations that share property to undertake a 'Living together as God's people in this place' workshop and to explore ways in which their life together can reflect the love, justice and hospitality of God and ensure that the sharing of property promotes the ministry and mission of the people of God;
- c) to request the Standing Committee, with advice from Assembly Multicultural and Cross Cultural Ministry, to appoint a Property Sharing Task Group to explore and report, including bringing any proposals to the 12th Assembly on the state of property sharing in the UCA;
- d) to call on presbyteries to assist the Task Group on property sharing by facilitating the survey of all situations where two or more Uniting Church congregations are sharing property;
- e) to request presbyteries and synods to explore how they can promote joint custodial responsibility and joint 'beneficial interest' where two or more Uniting Church congregations are sharing property and report to the ASC on their response to this request, through the Property Sharing Task Group.

#### **06.14.04 Renewing our Vision of Being a Cross-cultural Community**

- a) to endorse the Vision Statement 'A Church for All God's People' (See Appendix C);
- b) to distribute the Statement widely across the life of the Church;
- c) to encourage congregations and presbyteries to consider how they can make the affirmation a reality in their setting.

**ASC MINUTES 2006 AUGUST RELATING TO PROPERTY SHARING IN CROSS-CULTURAL SETTINGS/NATIONAL CONFERENCES**

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**4. Proposals 71 and 72: Property Sharing in Cross-cultural settings / National Conferences**

**06.39 It was resolved to request Assembly Multicultural and Cross Cultural Ministry to bring nominations to the November 2006 meeting of the ASC of persons for appointment to the two Task Groups approved by the 11<sup>th</sup> Assembly on property sharing and National Conferences (Proposals # 71 and**

## ***REVIEW OF KOREAN REGULATIONS***

### **6. Task Group on Review of Korean Regulations**

The General Secretary spoke to Document 11, consisting of a report of the Task Group on the Review of the Korean Regulations.

#### **06.50 It was resolved to:**

06.50.01 receive the report;

06.50.02 note that the Alternate Korean Regulations are extensively used within the Uniting Church Korean community and are seen as helpful by most Korean congregations;

06.50.03 note with concern that 3.1.34 (b) and 3.1.35 (c) of the Alternate Regulations relating to ensuring that one third of Elders be women has not been implemented by Korean Uniting Church congregations;

06.50.04 request Rev Dr Jason Choi, Rev Kisoo Jang and Rev Aeryon Lee to prepare a study / congregational discussion document to assist Korean congregations to reflect further on the importance of encouraging the gifts of women and women's leadership;

*Assembly Standing Committee 25-27 August 2006 Uniting Church in Australia 9 Minutes*

## ***ASC MINUTES 2006 RELATING ENGLISH COMPETENCE FOR MINISTERS OF OTHER CHURCHES***

### **4. Proposal 91 – Competency in English for Ministers of Other Churches (ASC Minute 06.73)**

The General Secretary spoke to Proposal 91.

#### **06.94 It was resolved to:**

06.94.01 request the General Secretary to ask the Synods of Victoria/Tasmania and NSW to provide information about their “theological English” courses; and

06.94.02 refer this information to the Reception of Ministers Committee and seek their comment on whether these resources meet the concerns that gave rise to Assembly proposal 91.

# 11<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY VISION STATEMENT -2006

## VISION STATEMENT 'A CHURCH FOR ALL GOD'S PEOPLE'

*At this 11<sup>th</sup> Assembly, as those called to be witnesses to the hope of reconciliation, we renew our commitment to being a multicultural and cross-cultural community. As God's diverse people, united in Christ, we embrace the vision of being a Church for all God's People.*

### **(1) Introduction**

Since time immemorial God has been present in this land. We acknowledge the Creator of the universe and the unique place of Indigenous people in God's creative plan for the land we call Australia. We look towards the time when the faith and spirituality of Indigenous people can truly shape who we are as a Church. We acknowledge Christ as the source of unity and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit who is ever renewing God's people. The diversity we have in the body of Christ is God's gift to us. Learning to understand one another and celebrate our differences is both a joyful and painful journey. We seek to be a community that is open to welcome one another as Christ has welcomed us.

### **(2) Biblical Underpinnings**

*All human beings are created by God in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1: 26-27, 10: 32, Psalm 24: 1)*

"The earth is the Lord's and everything in it". God has created the world with great diversity ('of every kind'- Gen 1). All human beings share a fundamental unity. We are connected to one another, part of the wholeness and goodness of God's creation. We are all made in the image of God. Despite our sinfulness, God's covenantal promise is with all of creation, all people and all generations (Gen 9:9-12). The story of the Tower of Babel (Gen 11) reminds us of the danger of monocultural arrogance and affirms cultural and linguistic differences as part of God's plan for humanity. From one ancestor God made all the nations (Acts 17: 26).

*Welcome the stranger (Gen 18: 1-8, Exodus 22: 21, 23:9; Leviticus 19: 33; Deut 10: 19, Deut 24: 17-18)*

Israel was required to exercise justice and compassion to strangers. In the Biblical stories

there are many examples of God coming in the form of a stranger. In Genesis 18: 1-8

Abraham offered hospitality to the three strangers who turned out to be God's

messengers. Strangers enhance rather than diminish the life of communities (Luke 24:

13-35, Acts 10: 34, Rom 12: 13, Heb 13: 2).

*Go... to the Land that I show you (Gen 12: 12)*

Abraham and Sarah heard God's call to leave their country and venture in faith into the unknown. Our cross-cultural ministry is heir to this tradition. We are called to go where God sends us and be a blessing to the nations. The biblical tradition is full of people who go on crossing journeys- for example Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Exodus, Naomi and Ruth, Daniel, Jonah, Esther, Jeremiah. Those exiled in Babylon were told to plant gardens, build houses and seek the welfare of the city they were in (Jer 29: 4-8). At times with faith and at times with despair, God's people are called to move into new situations. They discover God's will for them in a new land. As they struggle with issues of identity they come to a deeper understanding of who they are as God's people and who is the God who sustains them.

*Jesus crossed cultural boundaries*

Jesus conversed with a Samaritan woman, acknowledged the faith of a Syrian-Phoenician woman, praised a Roman centurion and a Samaritan leper, ate with outcasts, crossed over 'to the other side' and reached out with compassion to those who were marginalised by his religious community. He shows us that love rather than fear needs to determine relationships (John 4:7-10; Mark 7: 26, 29; Mat 8: 10; Luke 17: 16, Luke 10: 37, Mark 3: 5-6; Luke 13: 13-14; Mat 9: 29, 32, Mat 15: 28, Mark 4: 35, Luke 10: 25-37).

*Hospitality is the hallmark of the kingdom community*

Jesus challenged religious leaders to invite to their table the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. (Luke 14: 1, 7-14, Mat 25). His parable of the great banquet offered a picture of the generous hospitality of God reaching out to invite those who had been excluded. In the Kingdom, "People will come from north, south, east and west and feast together" (Luke 13: 9). Paul told the church in Rome to "welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you" (Rom 15:7).

*The Church born at Pentecost is multicultural from the beginning*

The church born at Pentecost was a multicultural church. When the Spirit came each was able to hear the good news in their own native language (Acts 2: 8). The unity they discovered was not uniformity. The first council in Jerusalem, after hearing of the story of Cornelius and Peter, came to recognise that God calls people of all races, languages



and cultures. By the power of the Spirit Jews and Gentiles now belong to the body of Christ. Baptised believers share an equality in Christ (Eph 2: 19, Gal 3: 28). Christ transcends all differences and the Christian community is a new creation in Jesus Christ. Old divisions are broken down and a new unity is created (1 Cor 15, Eph 2: 11-19). Gentile Christians are told they are equal members in God's family "*You are no longer strangers and sojourners but fellow citizens and saints with members of the household of God*" (Eph 2: 19)

*"...a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and language..."*

The vision of the heavenly banquet includes people from "every nation, tribe, people and language" (Rev 7: 9).

The 'Promised End' is indeed multicultural. Rev 7: 12 offers a vision of an innumerable multitude of every nation, tribe, race and language each praising God in their own language. The rainbow mix of people we have within the Church today can be seen as a foretaste of life in the heavenly kingdom and a reminder that ... 'my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples' (Isaiah 56: 6-8, Jer 29).

### **(3) Key Principles for Building a Cross-cultural Community**

#### **(i) Affirming our unity and diversity in Christ**

A Church for all God's People is founded on the understanding that each person is made in the image of God and we share a fundamental unity. Through Christ we are members of the one household of God (Eph 2: 19) and we discover a family resemblance not based on colour, language, ethnicity or race. We have a 'foretaste of that coming reconciliation and renewal which is the end in view for the whole creation' (Basis of Union Par 3). The unity the Spirit gives does not create uniformity but calls people of all races, languages and cultures to share together in one family. People of different cultural groups worship in different languages and operate in some distinctive ways while at the same time striving to work together and enrich one another. They belong together in the body in Christ, are united by a common faith in the triune God and they value the diverse gifts God has given.

#### **(ii) Mutual Sharing and Learning**

People are created to live in community. Sharing life together as people from different backgrounds and cultural traditions is central part of the Biblical witness. As a cross-

cultural community we will seek to provide space for people of different cultural groups to maintain language, cultural patterns and traditions that are life giving. A Church for all God's People urges members to share their experience and learn from others as we embark on a journey of cross-cultural learning, open to the transformation which the Spirit brings.

**(iii) Hospitality and Inclusiveness**

Hospitality is the hallmark of the kingdom community Jesus proclaimed. People from different ethnic backgrounds take up their place, contribute their gifts and participate as equals. A Church for all God's People is inclusive of all peoples and cultures, women and men, young and old.

**(iv) Living out the Gospel of Hope and Reconciliation in God's World**

A Church for all God's People is a sign of hope pointing to the reconciling power of the living Christ. Such a Church recognises the place of Australia's first peoples, advocates for justice and peace, supports migrants and refugees, builds inclusive communities and reaches out to witness and serve. Such a Church is part of God's transforming work in the world and in the lives of people. Christ invites us to live in ways that herald in a new creation. As the wider Australian community changes and new challenges emerge in the world, a Church of all God's People seeks flexible and life-giving models of church life that foster new models of ministry. A Church of all God's people promotes cross-cultural learning, challenges prejudice, develops and trains people for mission in cross-cultural settings, fosters new leadership and reflects respect, justice, love, equality and partnership in all relationships.

**(4) AFFIRMATION – A CHURCH FOR ALL GOD'S PEOPLE**

*Called to be witnesses to the hope of reconciliation, we renew our commitment to being a Church for all God's People*

*Within the life of our nation we will:*

- (i) Recognise the place of Australia's first peoples and work for reconciliation
- (ii) Reflect the love of Christ for all people
- (iii) Contribute to building an inclusive Australian society
- (iv) Seek to minister effectively within a culturally diverse society and build bridges with people of different cultures and faiths

*As a welcoming community we will:*

- (v) Be open to receive from one another, sharing the hospitality of Christ
- (vi) Affirm and celebrate cultural diversity, and let that diversity be a resource for ministry
- (vii) Overcome prejudice and racism and develop a spirituality of trust, respect and mutuality
- (viii) Encourage all members to embark on a journey of cross-cultural learning

*As a community made up of people from many different backgrounds and cultures we will:*

- (ix) Provide space for people from different cultural groups to maintain language and cultural patterns and traditions that are life giving
- (x) Reflect ethnic diversity in a visible way in our worship, life and leadership
- (xi) Encourage people from different backgrounds to take up their place in the life of the church and contribute to its life
- (xii) Seek to meet the needs of our diverse membership and develop policies and processes to assist the full participation of all members

*As a community at mission we will:*

- (xiii) Encourage the development of culturally diverse congregations
- (xiv) Form, develop and train people for ministry in cross-cultural settings
- (xv) Ensure equality and partnership in the sharing of resources so that property is a resource for the ministry and mission of the whole people of God
- (xvi) Utilise the gifts of all of God's people
- (xvii) Be open to the transformation which the Spirit brings!

## PRAYER

God our Creator, you brought this Uniting Church into being  
You have called us to be your diverse and multi-coloured people  
Show us how to value one another as those made in your image

Christ Jesus

You reached out across the barriers that divided Jews, Samaritans and Romans,  
Enable us to cross the barriers that separate us from one another

Holy Spirit,

You are the Giver of Unity,  
Unite your people in love that we may be a community of justice, love and reconciliation

-  
A Church for all God's People  
Amen

## 12<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY -2009 – PROPERTY POLICY

### 09.09 Property Policy for the Uniting Church in Australia

- 09.09.01 to receive the report;
- 09.09.02 to call on congregations, schools and agencies to look proactively for opportunities to encourage and resource new and emerging congregations and faith communities within all cultures and cultural groupings;
- 09.09.03 to authorise the Standing Committee, on advice from the Assembly Legal Reference Committee, to make Regulations relating to property sharing arrangements between two or more Uniting Church congregations or faith communities including provisions that:
- i. where two or more Uniting Church congregations or faith communities function or will function from one property base, a culturally sensitive and appropriate form of memorandum of understanding or covenant [not a tenancy agreement] will apply to that relationship, according access and usage rights and stewardship responsibilities, and an appropriate sharing of costs, and taking into account the ministry and mission needs of both congregations or faith communities, on the basis of joint custodial stewardship;
  - ii. such agreements are to be negotiated by the congregations or faith communities involved and the relevant presbytery/ies and approved by the synod concerned;
  - (iii) the transfer and responsibility for the stewardship and use of the premises will normally be made by the presbytery/ies having oversight of the congregation(s) or faith community/ies concerned, in consultation with the relevant church council/s and the synod, and that the synods may provide policies and processes to assist presbytery/ies and church council/s in this process;
  - (iv) where more than one UCA congregation or faith community have or request access to UCA congregational property and there is a dispute or conflict over property issues:
    - (a) a resolution will be sought between the congregations through the relevant church councils;
    - (b) if there is no agreement, a decision can be made by the presbytery/s having oversight of the congregations; and
    - (c) if any party is dissatisfied with the decision of the presbytery/s an appeal may be made to a meeting of the Synod Standing Committee for a decision;
  - (v) there is an expectation of compliance with a “National Property Policy” that has been approved by the Assembly Standing Committee;
- 09.09.04 to request Assembly Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry to resource

the Assembly Standing Committee in the development and adoption of a “National Property Policy” by bringing a draft Policy document to the ASC in November 2010, which is based on any changes to the Regulations and ensuring that the following considerations are taken up in it:

- (i) a register to be kept by synods of all Uniting Church congregations or faith communities seeking a place of worship;
- (ii) any Uniting Church congregation considering making property available to a non-UCA congregation, be required through their presbytery/presbyteries to first check if any UCA congregations or faith communities are listed on the register seeking accommodation in their area;
- (iii) whilst taking account of ministry and mission needs, priority shall normally be given to UCA congregations or faith communities listed on the register;
- (iv) any congregations currently sharing property with a non-UCA congregation or Fellowship Group to have a regular review by the presbytery/presbyteries included in the ‘tenancy’ arrangements;
- (v) preference to be given to UCA congregations/fellowship groups seeking a property when the term of an existing contract with the non-UCA congregation concludes, except if in the opinion of the presbytery the non-UCA congregation/fellowship group is actively exploring membership of the UCA, or if particular circumstances exist, to continue the relationship; and
- (vi) where more than one UCA congregation or faith community are sharing property, irrespective of racial, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, that they undertake appropriate workshops together e.g. property sharing and Cross-cultural relationships.

# ***Uniting National Conference: Guideline for Uniting National Conference (2008)***

## **Assembly Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry**

### **GUIDELINES FOR UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA NATIONAL CONFERENCES**

*[Reviewed & Revised after discussions in UNC Working Group & National Reference Committee February 2008]*

#### **1. Introduction**

The Uniting Church in Australia is an ethnically diverse and multicultural community and recognises the need for culturally and linguistically diverse communities that are part of its life to have opportunities to meet together for sharing, reflection and discussion in their first language.

Since the first National Conference was held in 1987 [Tongan], other communities have formed National Conferences. By 2008 National Conferences have been held by the *Chinese, Fijian, Filipino, Indonesian, Korean, Niuean, Samoan, Tamil, Tongan, and Vietnamese* communities within the UCA.

Some communities are quite small [1-2 congregations, faith communities and fellowship groups]. Others are very large (20+ congregations, faith communities or fellowship groups totaling 2,000+ women and men, youth and children). The National Reference Committee and the National Director continue to explore the possibility of developing national conferences for smaller and emerging communities within the UCA *where that is an appropriate strategy.*

#### **2. Definition of 'National Conferences'**

2.1 National Conferences have a significant role and place in the life of the Uniting Church in Australia. This is illustrated in the "Structures and Relationships" chart shown at number 11 in these Guidelines.

2.2 National Conferences bring together people from congregations, faith communities and fellowships of the same culture within the Uniting Church in Australia (and sometimes reaching beyond the Uniting Church) for consultation and sharing.

2.3 National Conferences are able to represent a significant voice for each community.

2.4 National Conferences can act as a consultative body in the UCA.

#### **3. Aims**

3.1 To establish a national network of solidarity, support and fellowship between congregations, faith communities, fellowship groups and members of the Uniting Church from the same culture and speaking the same language.

3.2 To share common problems, joys and concerns and offer mutual co-operation in solving difficult issues arising in the life of their congregations, fellowship groups, faith communities and members.

3.3 To increase a sense of belonging to and understanding about the multicultural Uniting Church.

3.4 To review ministry and mission needs of their community and communicate

concerns or issues to the appropriate councils and agencies of the Uniting Church.

- 3.5 To enable the voice[s] of particular language specific communities to be heard and to help the community make a distinctive contribution to the life of the Uniting Church.
- 3.6 To assist other councils of the church in matters relating to congregations, faith communities, fellowship groups and members from their community.
- 3.7 To give attention to the needs of the first and second generations. [Note: Some National Conferences organize parallel youth programs].
- 3.8 To forward recommendations to the Assembly Standing Committee and other councils of the UCA as appropriate in consultation with the Assembly Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry National Director and Chairperson of the National Reference Committee.
- 3.9 To participate in the *Working Group: Uniting National Conferences*, to assist in the development of Uniting Church processes, policies and polity that are responsive to the needs of our communities.

#### **4. Frequency of Meetings of the National Conference**

Each community/National Conference decides the frequency for their meeting. For example, it may be once a year, every second or third year or 'as required'.

#### **5. Funding of Meetings of National Conferences**

- 5.1 Each congregation, faith community or fellowship group is encouraged to contribute towards the costs of sending its participants to meetings of the Conference.
- 5.2 Each Conference can apply through the National Director to receive some financial contribution towards the meetings of the Conference.

*NOTE: For the period 2008-2010 the National Reference Committee has determined that an amount of up to \$2,000 is available to a particular National Conference for the whole period. So, whether a National Conference meets once [1] or three times [3] in that period, the maximum available is a total of \$2,000. Conferences that meet more than once in the 2008-2010 period can request how they receive up to that amount. For example: 2 Conferences \$1,000 each or \$1,200 and \$800 and so on.*

#### **6. Formation of a Working Committee or Executive**

- 6.1 It is recommended that the National Conference of each community elect a Chairperson, one or two Secretaries (Minutes to be provided in language and in English), treasurer and other office bearers as required to organise the meetings of the Conference in consultation with the National Director and follow up issues between meetings of the Conference.
- 6.2 In electing office bearers and in the formal operation of their meetings, National Conferences are encouraged to make use of Uniting Church procedures and the *Manual*



*for Meetings. These can assist in meeting 'Aim 3.3' above to – increase a sense of belonging to and understanding about the multicultural Uniting Church.*

## **7. Accountability**

7.1 National Conferences were initiated through the Assembly Agency – Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry and each Conference is accountable to the Assembly Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry National Reference Committee (MCM-NRC) through the National Director, Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry. The Minutes of each National Conference [in language and in English] comes to the National Director and a report is provided to the MCM-NRC.

7.2 The Working Group 'Uniting National Conferences' provides a forum for the Chairpersons of National Conferences [or their nominee] and leaders from within other culture and language communities in the Uniting Church in Australia to meet together to share matters of common concern, develop common vision and highlight common issues of national importance to the multicultural and cross-cultural life of the Uniting Church in Australia. This annual meeting will include access to the national Agencies of the UCA and report [with the other Working Groups: 2Gen/nXtgen; Intentional Cross-cultural Ministry and Cross-cultural Theology and Education] directly to the National Reference Committee.

## **8. Membership of the Meetings of each National Conference**

National Conferences bring together representatives of congregations, faith communities and fellowship groups of the same culture within the Uniting Church in Australia (and sometimes reaching beyond the Uniting Church) for consultation and sharing.

Within that gathering there will be times when the Conference wants or needs to make decisions on particular matters.

8.1 As a decision-making body the National Conference will have voting members from each Uniting Church congregation, faith community and fellowship group.

8.2 As voting members of National Conferences, congregations, fellowship groups and faith communities are encouraged to include women and men and younger generation members as well.

8.2 The size of each National Conference may vary depending on the overall size of a particular community and its needs.

For example:

There may be a National Conference that has the ministers/leaders and two [or more] people nominated from each congregation, faith community or fellowship group.

Other conferences may choose to have a larger number of voting members. In such cases it is suggested that there be:

Six for the first 50 confirmed members: Two for every 50 confirmed members or part thereof after the first 50 confirmed members up to 500 confirmed members: One extra representative for every 50 confirmed members if membership is over 500. (e.g. A congregation of 170 confirmed members would send 12 representatives: first 50 = 6, second 50 = 2, third 50 = 2, final 20 [part of 50] = 2, total = 12). At least one third of the congregation's voting representatives should be women.

8.4 Ministers/leaders serving language and culture specific congregations, faith communities and fellowship groups are members of the Conference. Other ministers/leaders who would normally be invited include:

## ***Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry*** ***An Agency of the Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia***

### **Operational Guidelines 2009**

**In 1985 the Uniting Church proclaimed itself a multicultural church, acknowledging the changed context of ministry in Australia and the presence of people from racial, cultural and linguistically diverse background in its membership.**

Key challenges in such a proclamation include: nurturing this gift and vision and developing models of ministry and mission, outreach and evangelism that celebrate and express the theological, biblical and liturgical richness that arises from the Uniting Church in Australia's racial, cultural and linguistic diversity within a multicultural and multifaith environment

Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry is a unit of the National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia and sits within the Mandate of Uniting Faith and Discipleship. It works collaboratively with other units of the team. It is our mission to assist the Church in learning to live as people from diverse cultures in worship, witness and service and to foster models of cross-cultural ministry and mission, outreach and evangelism that reflect the hospitality of God. In so doing it is committed to continue developing respectful and reconciling relationships with Indigenous peoples and across the life of the church.

#### ***What we do***

- Promoting cross-cultural learning and sharing across the life of the Church
- Supporting the ministry of migrant congregations and ministry to new and emerging groups
- Working collaboratively with Synods and other Assembly Agencies to support [and resource] leaders who can minister across cultures and foster the development of multicultural congregations
- Assisting the national networking and co-ordination of the work of Synods in exploring ways of discipleship formation and leadership training of second generation [nXtgen] members; and identifying emerging leadership with gifts for multicultural and cross-cultural ministry
- Assisting the Church to fully utilise the gifts of members from culturally diverse backgrounds and develop policies and cultural sensitivities that respond to their needs

Priorities are set and identified through resolutions of the Assembly and the Assembly Standing Committee, the Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry Reference

Committee, the Uniting Faith and Discipleship team, long-term strategic planning, issues arising out of ecumenical co-operation, and urgent political and social issues.

With Uniting Faith and Discipleship, Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry is committed to using the most appropriate strategies to nurture this gift and vision and to developing models of ministry and mission, outreach and evangelism that celebrate and express the theological, biblical and liturgical richness arising from the Uniting Church in Australia's racial, cultural and linguistic diversity and expressions of faith.

In a multicultural and multifaith environment such a faithful corporate life makes a positive difference in the world.

### **Our ministry makes use of a range of strategies**

- Facilitating the development of policies that will enhance the multicultural life of the Uniting Church in Australia, in consultation with the relevant culturally and linguistically diverse communities (For example, policies on the just and equitable use of Uniting Church in Australia property, 'in language' resource and foundational documents and other resources)
- Encouraging the networking of Uniting Church in Australia communities representative of the racial, cultural and linguistic diversity of the Uniting Church in Australia, particularly through National Conferences
- Translating key documents and providing other appropriate resources in community languages
- Ensuring consultation occurs with Uniting Church in Australia migrant communities when relationships with partner churches may impact on the life of their congregations
- Monitoring and educating on matters relating to the just and equal sharing and use of property and other resources for mission
- Nurturing the participation of migrant members and ministers in the whole life of the Uniting Church in Australia
- Advising and assisting on matters relating to the orientation of ministers coming from overseas, and the settlement and reception of ministers and congregations from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Sharing creative models of cross cultural worship, mission and multicultural ministry with the Uniting Church in Australia
- Organising appropriate national network opportunities that nurture the Uniting Church in Australia's emerging witness and mission, outreach and evangelism in cross-cultural and multifaith contexts, and provide opportunities to review multicultural policies and practice and the implications of ethnic diversity for the ordering of the Uniting Church in Australia's life.

### **How we do it**

Within the Mandate of Uniting Faith and Discipleship, the work of Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry will:

- be grounded in the gospel of Jesus Christ
- build upon the inherited tradition of the Uniting Church in Australia
- use insights from theological, biblical and mission studies, worship and spirituality that are gifts to the Uniting Church in Australia from our racial, cultural and linguistic diversity to reflect on the shape of witness and mission, outreach and evangelism in cross-cultural and multifaith contexts
- respect and seek understanding and insight from Indigenous people in endeavouring to further develop faith language, images and metaphors appropriate to this land and its environment
- work to advance the witness to Christ in 21<sup>st</sup> century multicultural and multi-faith Australia
- reflect the racial, cultural and linguistically diverse life, faith experience and expressions of Christian life of those who share a common faith in Christ and that are consistent with the Basis of Union of the Uniting Church in Australia
- be undertaken in co-operation with synods and other Assembly agencies, ecumenically and in consultation with 'home' churches
- be conducted on the basis of the best research available

#### **Our Reference Committee**

A National Reference Committee supports the Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry staff team.

#### **Membership of the Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry National Reference Committee**

Membership of the National Reference Committee will normally consist of Uniting Church members appointed in accordance with the Mandate of Uniting Faith and Discipleship with the following additions for this specific work area:

- The staff member of Uniting Faith and Discipleship with responsibility for the work area within which the committee operates – *National Director Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry*;
- The Associate General Secretary;
- The Chairperson appointed by the Triennial Assembly;
- Additional persons appointed by the Assembly Standing Committee at the first meeting after the Triennial Assembly, with expertise in the work area and up to a total of sixteen persons.

#### **Membership is for the Assembly triennium**

Care shall be taken to ensure that the list of nominations includes:

- racial, cultural and linguistic diversity, gender balance and emerging 2ndgen/nXtgen leadership;
- one person from each of the Working Groups that are established from time to time (in 2009 there are four Working Groups);
- at least one person from five of the six Synods to assist with national networking;

- a nominee of the UAICC;
- the immediate past Chairperson.

The particular perspectives and insights of Synod Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry staff are highly valued. While they are not members of the National Reference Committee they are invited to attend the meetings and costs relating to their attendance are negotiated.

**Role of the National Reference Committee - in addition to the Mandate of Uniting Faith and Discipleship**

- Focus the activities of Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry on the vision of the Assembly as a whole;
- Assist in working to fulfil the Operational Guidelines by providing support and advice to the National Director and staff on such matters as strategic planning, priority setting and the development of policy positions;
- Receive and consider matters referred by the National Director;
- Assist the National Director and any other staff in the implementation of policies determined by the Assembly and/or the Assembly Standing Committee;
- Together with the National Director, assist and provide advice to the President and General Secretary, the Assembly and/or the Assembly Standing Committee on policy matters within their area of responsibility;
- With the National Director, make policy decisions where the Assembly or the Assembly Standing Committee has delegated authority for certain policy areas, either through the Operational Guidelines or by resolution;
- Ensure that appropriate pastoral support is offered to staff members;
- Participate in cross-agency projects and teams established by the Assembly;
- Establish working groups for special tasks related specifically to the Operational Guidelines;
- Make recommendations to the Assembly Standing Committee to establish other working groups for special tasks related to but not part of the mandate.

## ***Uniting Faith and Discipleship Mandate (2009)***

### ***An Assembly Team***

### ***Nature of Team***

### ***Responsible To***

### ***Reporting Arrangements***

### ***Mission Statement***

### ***Mandate***

Uniting Faith and Discipleship

Permanent

Assembly

To the Assembly and the Assembly Standing Committee  
To the Associate General Secretary, the Team Leader.

Uniting Faith and Discipleship will strive to witness to the wholeness of the gospel and the Christian life by affirming and modelling the inter-relationship of scripture, mission, justice, education and theology. It will work in a way that helps the church to celebrate and express the theological, biblical and liturgical richness that arises from the Uniting church's racial, cultural and linguistic diversity within contemporary multifaith Australia

It will foster discipleship in the Uniting Church for people of all ages.

It will share the Church's vision of hope and transformation in the public forum.

Uniting Faith and Discipleship will:

- (a) Provide innovative national leadership and vision in the areas of:
  - theology
  - Christian education
  - discipleship and faith formation
  - worship
  - evangelism
  - mission
  - inter-faith relationships
  - multicultural and cross-cultural life
  - social justice, peace and environment
  - covenanting and reconciliation
- (b) Educate, inform, resource, guide and respond to congregations, presbyteries, synods and schools, in the areas listed in (a) above, as they seek to live out life as a gospel community in contemporary Australia.
- (c) Develop Church proposals (for the consideration and decision-making of the Assembly and the Assembly Standing Committee), positions and programs in the areas listed in (a) above.
- (d) Provide advice and support to the President and General Secretary in the areas listed in (a) above.
- (e) Advocate and participate in public debate in the areas listed in (a) above where it is appropriate that the Church, in the light of the Gospel, should declare its

view.

- (f) Articulate the Assembly's vision and policies, as appropriate, to Uniting Church in Australia membership, other churches, ecumenical bodies, government and/or the community.



**Contribution to the Life of the Assembly**

Uniting Faith and Discipleship enables and resources the Assembly to:

- reflect, comment and act faithfully across a number of critical areas of its life;
- have its understanding in a number of primary and culturally diverse perspectives of scripture, mission, justice, education and theology.
- plan and set priorities, including taking up new work and responding to emerging needs and opportunities, whilst noting the Assembly's key directions.

**Operational style**

Uniting Faith and Discipleship:

- engages with and contributes to the whole work of the Assembly;
- considers its work through five broad lenses – scripture, mission, justice, education and theology;
- exercises leadership and ministry as a collegial team and in accordance with particular specialisations;
- is flexible as it responds to the changing circumstances within which its ministry is exercised and the decisions of the Assembly;
- is supported by specialist reference committees and working groups as determined by the Assembly Standing Committee;
- establishes and provides oversight for task groups and networks to assist with the fulfilment of the mandate
- develops intentional sharing between reference committees and groups to enhance its understanding of priorities and collaboration in the Assembly's work

***Relation with Assembly agencies***

Uniting Faith and Discipleship will maintain regular contact and seek to collaborate where possible with Assembly agencies and working groups.

**Organisational Structure**

Uniting Faith and Discipleship is a collegial team with expertise and responsibility for particular work areas, working collaboratively under the leadership of the Associate General Secretary.

**Reference Committees and Working Groups**

Specialist reference committees and working groups to support the work of Uniting Faith and Discipleship, will be determined and appointed by the Assembly Standing Committee.

**• Role and Responsibilities**

The roles and responsibilities of reference committees and working groups in identified work areas are to:

- provide expert advice to staff members of Uniting Faith and Discipleship.
- provide support to staff members of Uniting Faith and Discipleship in the implementation of key priorities
- The Chairperson of the reference committee or working

**• Chairperson**

	<p>group is appointed by the Assembly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenure is for the Assembly triennium</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Membership</b></li> </ul>	<p>Membership will normally consist of Uniting Church members, and comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the staff member of Uniting Faith and Discipleship with responsibility for the work area within which the committee or working group operates</li> <li>• the Associate General Secretary</li> <li>• the Chairperson</li> <li>• normally up to seven additional persons appointed by the Assembly Standing Committee, with expertise in the work area within which the committee operates</li> </ul> <p>Tenure of membership is for the Assembly triennium.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Frequency of Meetings</b></li> </ul>	<p>Reference committees or working groups may determine the frequency and style with which they meet, in keeping with work priorities and within the budget parameters established annually by the Assembly Standing Committee.</p>
<p><b>Task Groups and Networks</b></p>	<p>Uniting Faith and Discipleship may establish or endorse such task groups and networks as required.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Role</b></li> </ul>	<p>The role of task groups and networks is to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work on specific tasks as identified by Uniting Faith and Discipleship staff members or reference or advisory committees;</li> <li>• operate for as long as is required, with regular reviews of their tasks</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Membership</b></li> </ul>	<p>The membership of task groups and networks will normally consist of Uniting Church in Australia members with relevant expertise.</p>

