

Uniting Church in Australia

ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE

16 – 18 July 2010

PRESENT Alistair Macrae (President), Kim Anderson, Shayne Blackman, Jenny Brecknell, Michelle Cook, Terence Corkin, Lesley de Grussa-Macaulay, Andrew Dutney, Andrew Glenn, Geoffrey Grinton, Gregor Henderson, Kisoo Jang, Andrew Johnson, Jason Kioa, Peter McDonald, Stuart McMillan, Fatai Tapuelulu, Isabel Thomas Dobson, Jenny Tymms, Robert Watson, Adrian White, Wendie Wilkie.

In attendance: Jenny Bertalan, Glenda Blakefield, Rob Brown, Kay Dowling, Douglas Jones, Peter Jones, Paul Swadling, Carolyn Thornley and Chris Walker

WORSHIP On the Friday evening, as part of the formation of the community, Paul Swadling preached and the President presided at the opening Service of Holy Communion. On the Saturday Isabel Thomas Dobson led morning worship and Peter McDonald led evening prayers. On the Sunday Michelle Cook led morning worship and the closing prayer in the afternoon was led by Robert Watson.

WELCOMES The President welcomed all Assembly Standing Committee participants to the meeting. Also welcomed as visitors were Carolyn Thornley as Theological Listener, Chris Mostert for matters related to the Anglican – UCA Covenant of Association and other ecumenical matters, Kerry Enright, Rob Lutton, Kathy Pereira, John Barr, Joy Balazo, Malcolm Gledhill, Bruce Mullan, Michelle Erofeyeff and Rob Floyd on Saturday afternoon for matters related to UnitingWorld, Elenie Poulos and Janeen Barker on Sunday morning for matters related to UnitingJustice Australia, Peter Andrews for matters related to Assembly Finance, Robert Hoskin and Ian Moore for matters related to the Beneficiary Fund, Malcolm Gledhill for matters related to Legal Reference Committee.

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

10.20 **It was resolved** to receive the apology of Kendall Trudgen, Graham Humphris and Ken Sumner for the whole meeting; Jason Kioa for Friday night and Sunday; Gregor Henderson for Friday night and Saturday morning; Andrew Johnson for Saturday night.

PASTORAL MATTERS

The General Secretary informed the Standing Committee that Rae Mavor was diagnosed with leukemia and Faye, wife of Sandy Yule, Secretary of the Christian Unity Working Group had major surgery in early July. The Standing Committee was also advised that the Moderator of the Queensland Synod is going into hospital for an angiogram and possibly for a bypass. It was also reported that Jenny Tymms's father passed away.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The General Secretary spoke to the agenda and timetable as listed in Document 1. Documents 4, 8 and 21 were distributed on the Friday night.

- 10.21** **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

- 10.22** **It was resolved** to confirm the minutes of the meeting held March 19 - 21 with the addition of Isabel Thomas Dobson in the list of those present at the meeting and Jenny Brecknell to the names of persons presenting the Queensland Synod sharing.

NOTE

Standing Committee members were reminded of:

1. Constitution Clause 39: "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 Synods and/or Presbyteries and/or Congregations as the Assembly may determine."; and
2. the authority of the Standing Committee as set out in Regulation 3.6.34 and the resolutions of this Assembly on this subject (Assembly minute 09.08.07).

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

On the Saturday evening the President reported to the Standing Committee on his various activities since the last meeting of the Standing Committee. He led Bible studies at Queensland Synod and provided special key input NSW and the ACT Synod meeting as well as attended and preached at the Chinese and Tongan National Conferences. He reported that he is progressing with the plans for Pilgrimages to Sources of Living Water in 2011 and the National Ministers Conferences which are scheduled for Vanuatu, Alice Springs and Adelaide with theme 'Ministry in a Time of Transition'. The President also shared some aspects of the Tans-Tasman Moderators' retreat in New Zealand. He was honoured to lead Bible studies and to preach at re-opening of the Ernabella Church. He was also a participant in the inaugural meeting of World Communion of Reformed Churches in the USA and the Triennial National Council of Churches Forum in Canberra. He also attended/contributed to numerous UCA congregational, Presbytery and network events. He closed his report with reiterating the main advocacy areas he has been working on including asylum seekers and issues relating to the forthcoming Federal election Committee.

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

SYNOD SHARING – NORTHERN SYNOD

Peter Jones, Stuart McMillan and Jenny Tymms from the Northern Synod shared something of the life of the synod as an expression of our inter-councilar sharing.

UAICC SHARING

On the Saturday evening, Shayne Blackman, the National Administrator of UAICC talked about the special youth gathering held recently where approx. 100 young people from across Australia came together. The youth area is really a bright spot for Congress, he said. It was uplifting for UAICC to see

these people at the gathering and they have long term plans to grow them into ministry. Yalga Binbi provides the training program for community development, which is going well. 10 graduated in Christian ministry. Education is major issue. Approx. 400 students at Shalom College, about 73%; have major problems either health, family or psychological. Attendance at school is about 90%, which is remarkable in light of the difficulties they face. Congress took over an aged care program in Cairns, it was a sink or swim situation for them.

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

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS STANDING COMMITTEE

1. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL OF THE ASSEMBLY GENERAL SECRETARY (ASC MINUTE 10.15.04)

The President spoke to Document 21, consisting of the report on the annual appraisal of the Assembly General Secretary. Gregor Henderson chaired the meeting during this presentation.

10.25 **It was resolved to:**

- 10.25.01 receive and endorse the report of the General Secretary's annual appraisal;
- 10.25.02 note the strong affirmation of, and confidence in, Terence Corkin's character, call and performance in this role; and
- 10.25.03 note that the appraisal team will follow up with the General Secretary other matters contained in the report.

2. CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES MINISTRY TASK GROUP (ASC MINUTE 09.45)

Michelle Cook and Adrian White spoke to Document 11, consisting of a report from the Children, Youth and Families Ministry Task Group.

10.26 **It was resolved to:**

- 10.26.01 receive the report;
- 10.26.02 a) note that organising for the 2011 Ministers' Conferences is underway; and
 b) encourage the organising committee to include children youth and family ministry as an element of these conferences,
- 10.26.03 request the President, the Chair of Congress and Multicultural and Cross-cultural National Director, with support from relevant bodies/personnel, to make arrangements for a President's young leaders' conference which gathers young leaders from Congress, multi-cultural communities and the English-speaking church together to develop theological leadership skills and be part of ongoing mentoring;
- 10.26.04 approve the concept of a President's award for innovation in children, youth and family ministry and request the Task Group to further develop the idea;
- 10.26.05 a) request the Task Group carrying forward the review and simplification of the Regulations consider the impact of any changes on effective ministry and mission with children, youth and families

and the participation of people in the first third of life in the councils of the church; and

- 10.26.06 b) request the Task Group reviewing the paper on membership to ensure that continuing conversations consider effective ministry and mission with children, youth and families;
- 10.26.07 a) request the Multicultural and Cross-cultural Reference Committee to
- (i) produce reports/resources on how children, youth and families (CYF) ministry is conducted in their cultural context and how this may enrich the CYF ministry of the rest of the Uniting Church; and
 - (ii) encourage the production of resources nationally that are appropriate for CYF ministry in different cultural contexts;
- b) encourage the National Faith Development Consultant in consultation with the National Consultant for Theology and Discipleship and CYF ministry networks to explore ways in which the resources of the Working Group on Doctrine and Working Group on Worship could be adapted to various age groups and those resources and /or essential resources list be distributed throughout the church; and
- c) encourage the National Faith Development Consultant and the National Consultant, Theology and Discipleship in collaboration with children's and family ministry networks to develop an essential resources list around children's and family ministry and distribute that list throughout the church;
- 10.26.08 a) note that that the MEC is taking up the recommendations that arose from the Task Group's submission to it; and
- b) forward the full ASC Children, Youth and Family Task Group Report to the MEC;
- 10.26.09 a) request Colleges and MEBs to examine the report from the ASC Task Group in the light of Assembly Resolution 00.28.13 on equipping in the ministry of teaching all ages (children, youth and adults) and cross-culturally, and to discuss the implications for formation for Specified Ministries; and
- b) invite Colleges to provide advice on how they have addressed the previous resolution and how they will address the recommendations in the current Task Group Report;
- 10.26.10 a) charge the Task Group with following up the outcome of ASC minutes 10.26.02, 10.26.03, 10.26.04 and 10.26.05.
- b) request the Associate General Secretary to act as liaison with this group; and
- c) request the Task Group to report to the March 2011 meeting of the Standing Committee.

3. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP (ASC MINUTE 10.06.02)

- 10.27** **It was resolved to** approve that Document 6 be withdrawn and the matter deferred.

4. GUIDELINES FOR THE THIRD PHASE OF MINISTERIAL EDUCATION (MINUTE 10.12.02)

Jenny Brecknell spoke to Document 8, consisting of a review from the Ministerial Education Commission of the Third Phase Ministerial Education within the UCA.

10.28 It was resolved to:

10.28.01 receive the report; AND

10.28.02 endorse the Guidelines for the Third Phase of Ministerial Education (Attachment A).

5. REVIEW OF THE ASSOCIATE GENERAL SECRETARY (ASC MINUTE 09.67)

Andrew Johnson spoke to Document 4, consisting of a report on the review of the Associate General Secretary.

10.29 It was resolved to:

10.29.01 receive the report;

10.29.02 strongly affirm the ministry of Rev Glenda Blakefield in the role of Associate General Secretary;

10.29.03 a) create an Associate General Secretary Support Group for the term of the current ministry placement for the purpose of providing support, encouragement and advice for the Associate General Secretary through:
(i) assisting the Associate General Secretary to reflect globally on the position; and
(ii) supporting the Associate General Secretary in decision making and implementation;

b) invite the Associate General Secretary to identify up to three members for the group and meet as appropriate;

10.29.04 approve the revised position description (Attachment B);

10.29.05 invite the General Secretary and Associate General Secretary (with appropriate support) to:

a) negotiate an appendix to the Position Description which outlines the current responsibilities, memberships and authority of the Associate General Secretary; and

b) table the appendix at the November 2010 Assembly Standing Committee and each Assembly Standing Committee following any subsequent amendment to the appendix.

6. REVISION OF THE REGULATIONS (ASC MINUTE 09.52)

The General Secretary presented Documents 17 and 17A, consisting of a report on the results of the process which was undertaken to review the Regulations.

10.30 It was resolved to:

10.30.01 receive the report;

10.30.02 a) appoint Terence Corkin (Convenor), Andrew Johnson, Isabel Thomas Dobson and Fatai Tapuelulu to develop the proposed directions for the

revision of the Regulations in the light of the report and the discussion at the meeting; and

- b) request the Working Group to bring a progress report to the November 2010 meeting of the Standing Committee.

7. WORKING GROUPS WITHIN MULTICULTURAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY (ASC MINUTE 09.69.03)

Glenda Blakefield introduced Document 9, consisting of a report on the review of the number and purpose of the Working Groups that report to the Reference Committee within the mandate of Uniting Faith and Discipleship.

10.31 It was resolved to:

10.31.01 receive the report; and

10.31.02 request the Associate General Secretary in consultation with the Reference Committee and the National Director of the Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry to bring any consequential amendments to the position description.

FROM ASSEMBLY BODIES

1. ASSEMBLY AUDIT, FINANCE AND RISK COMMITTEE

Peter Andrews presented Document 14, consisting of a report from the Committee.

10.32 It was resolved to:

10.32.01 receive the report; and

10.32.02 adopt the Frontier Services budget for the year ended 30 June 2011.

2. BENEFICIARY FUND

Robert Hoskin and Ian More introduced Document 15, consisting of a report on the current status of the Beneficiary Fund and also offered a PowerPoint presentation on the same matter.

10.33 It was resolved to receive the report.

3. GENERAL REPORT

The General Secretary spoke to Document 19, consisting of a report on various matters.

10.34 It was agreed to receive the report.

4. LEGAL REFERENCE COMMITTEE

The General Secretary and Malcolm Gledhill introduced Document 10, consisting of a report on the matters the Legal Reference Committee dealt with since the March 2010 Standing Committee.

10.35 It was resolved to:

10.35.01 receive the report;

10.35.02 a) approve the draft Regulation on Property Sharing, and authorize the Legal Reference Committee to allocate an appropriate number to the

Regulation; and

- b) determine that the effective date for the new Regulation will be October 1 2010; and

10.35.03 request the Legal Reference Committee to consider the development of a regulation in support of the designation of a property as being available for alternative missional use in the light of the discussion at the Standing Committee meeting and request that a draft regulation be brought to the ASC as soon as possible.

5. MINISTERIAL EDUCATION COMMISSION

The General Secretary spoke to Document 18, containing various matters including correspondence from the Ministerial Education Commission.

10.36 It was resolved to:

10.36.01 receive the correspondence from the MEC Executive;

10.36.02 defer consideration of the proposed amendment to Regulation 2.2.18 that was brought;

10.36.03 note that wider issues were raised in ASC Minute 10.12.05 than addressed by the MEC correspondence and there are also other questions about the role of the MEC in the life of the Church; and

10.36.04 request the Assembly Officers to identify a small group which can bring a process to the November 2010 meeting of the Standing Committee on how the Assembly might address these issues including terms of reference, timelines.

6. UNITINGWORLD

Kerry Enright, Kathy Pereira, Rob Lutton, Rob Floyd, Joy Balazo, John Barr, Michelle Erofeyeff and Bruce Mullan offered a presentation on the themes in UnitingWorld as contained in Document 5 and engaged in conversation with the meeting attendees.

10.37 It was resolved to receive the report.

7. UNITINGJUSTICE AUSTRALIA

Elenie Poulos and Janeen Barker delivered a presentation on the main focus areas of UnitingJustice Australia's work, the issues they are dealing with such as refugees and human rights. Their publication 'An Economy for Life' has been very well received and the election resources have just been finalised and they seem to be in demand. The meeting participants also learnt of the significant number of submissions the agency has made to various government and Senate enquiries.

10.38 It was resolved to receive the report.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. ANGLICAN – UCA COVENANT OF ASSOCIATION

Chris Mostert spoke to Documents 2 and 2A, consisting of an introduction and the draft covenant of association. Table group discussion followed.

10.39 It was resolved to:

10.39.01 receive the report;

- 10.39.02 welcome and express support for the ACA – UCA Covenant of Association (Attachment C);
- 10.39.03 recommend to the 13th Assembly that
- a) the document “ACA – UCA Covenant of Association” be received and endorsed;
 - b) a Covenant of Association be entered into;
 - c) a joint committee be established to carry forward the implementation of this Covenant of Association; and
- 10.39.04 express appreciation to the UCA and ACA members of the dialogue.

2. BUDGET PREPARATION

The General Secretary introduced Document 13, consisting of a report on the process for preparing the 2011 budget for the Assembly Fund.

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

3. CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE OF ASIA ASSEMBLY

The General Secretary presented Document 3, consisting of a report on the General Assembly of the Christian Conference of Asia held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

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

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

The General Secretary presented the business in Document 18, consisting of various matters.

- 10.42** **It was resolved to:**

- 10.42.01
- a) appoint Rev David Pitman as Convenor of the Working Group on Worship;
 - b) appoint Dr Ben Meyers to the Doctrine Working Group; and
 - c) appoint Rev Leva Pat and Rev Kath Hobson to the Worship Working Group;
- 10.42.02
- (a) express to Rev Dr Paul Walton the sincere appreciation of the Church, and the Assembly in particular, for the energetic, careful and creative leadership that he has brought to the role of Convenor of the Assembly Working Group on Worship (and its predecessor); and
 - (b) record the following Minute of Appreciation
Paul Walton served as Convener of the Worship Working Group for a period of 15 years. In this time he gave himself to the task with grace and attention to detail. He has provided discerning leadership in the role. In that time, as well as the ongoing work of revising services and creating new ones for the use of the Uniting Church, he played a key role in the publication of *Uniting in Worship 2* including the many resources for worship that are found on the CD that accompanied the printed book. Paul has a wealth of knowledge and a passion for the worship life of the church. Paul is also to be congratulated on recently achieving a PhD in worship and liturgy. His chairing of the Worship Working Group was greatly appreciated by its members. He dealt with the business of the meetings in a way that ensured that

worship resources were progressively made available or revised. While he will be stepping down from the Convener's role he will continue on the Worship Working Group. For this the Church is grateful as it will mean he can continue to share his knowledge and expertise in this important area in the life of the Assembly and the Uniting Church in Australia;

- 10.42.03 approve the request of the Task Group reviewing the Assembly Reception of Ministers Committee to bring a discussion paper to the November 2010 meeting of the ASC, with a view to bringing a final report in March 2011;
- 10.42.04 receive the correspondence from Rev John Brown regarding the Preamble and refer it to Uniting Faith and Discipleship for comment to a later meeting of the Standing Committee;
- 10.42.05 a) receive the letter from the Doctrine Working Group; and
b) request the Doctrine Working Group to provide the Standing Committee at its November 2010 meeting with a paper which more fully outlines the concerns and opportunities that they see in relation to the Ministry of Pastor;

5. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

Gregor Henderson presented the resolutions made at the NCCA National Forum.

10.43 It was resolved to:

- 10.43.01 endorse the resolutions of the NCCA National Forum 2010 on Palestine and Israel;
- 10.43.02 request the General Secretary to distribute a copy of the Kairos Palestine document to all ASC members and participants;
- 10.43.03 determine to respond at the next ASC meeting to the NCCA request for churches "to consider a boycott of the goods produced by Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories" and request NCCA Act for Peace to provide information to resource our consideration; and
- 10.43.04 advise the NCCA of these resolutions.

6. MARGARET DENNIS COTTAGES

The General Secretary spoke to Document 7, consisting of a report on the history of and the issues revolving around the Margaret Dennis Cottages.

10.44 It was resolved to:

- 10.44.01 receive the report;
- 10.44.02 authorise the General Secretary, in consultation with the National Director of UnitingWorld, to negotiate with the Presbytery and the Synod on the use of the sale proceeds from the Margaret Dennis Cottages with a view to whether the proceeds may be used to support the work of UnitingWorld, and international mission or other consistent purposes within the Presbytery and Synod; and
- 10.44.03 bring a report to the next meeting of the ASC on the outcome of these discussions.

6. ON BEING AN APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Chris Walker presented Document 20, consisting of a paper prepared by the Doctrine Working Group on what it means for the UCA to be an Apostolic church.

10.45 It was resolved to:

- 10.45.01 welcome and endorse the paper provided by the Doctrine Working Group; and
- 10.45.02 that the paper be made available through the Doctrine Working Group.

7. POLICY FOR DEALING WITH A COMPLAINT OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT MADE AGAINST A MEMBER, ADHERENT OR VOLUNTARY WORKER OF THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA AND ITS BODIES

The General Secretary and Malcolm Gledhill introduced Document 16, consisting of the revised policy.

10.46 It was resolved to:

- 10.46.01 receive the report;
- 10.46.02 appoint a Task Group to review the proposed policy for dealing with a complaint of sexual misconduct made against a member, adherent or voluntary worker of the Uniting Church in Australia in terms of divergence from current practice, policies and procedures, usability, etc; and
- 10.46.03 request the Assembly Officers to appoint the Task Group members.

CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 4.00pm with prayer led by Robert Watson.

MATTERS REFERRED TO THE ASSEMBLY OFFICERS

1. TASK GROUP TO CONSIDER HOW TO ADDRESS MEC ISSUES RAISED IN MINUTE 10.12.02 (ASC MINUTE 10.36.03)

- 10.47 It was resolved to** appoint Andrew Dutney (Convenor), Glenda Blakefield and Wendie Wilkie to the group established by ASC minute 10.36.04.

2. POLICY FOR DEALING WITH A COMPLAINT OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT MADE AGAINST A MEMBER, ADHERENT OR VOLUNTARY WORKER OF THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA AND ITS BODIES

- 10.48 It was resolved to** appoint Terence Corkin (Convenor), Carol Bennett, Jenny Byrne and Barbara Gayler to the Task Group established by ASC minute 10.45.03.

**2010 MEETING DATE:
19 – 21 November 2010**

**2011 MEETING DATES
18 – 20 March 2011
15 – 17 July 2011
18– 20 November 2011**