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15

MEETING DATES FOR 2002

15



Uniting Church in Australia
ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE

15 – 17 March 2002

MINUTES

PRESENT James Haire (President), Craig Bailey, Bruce Binnie, Shayne Blackman, Robert Brown, Elizabeth Burns, Jennifer Byrnes, Dennis Chapman, Terence Corkin, Kylie Crabbe, Jelita Gardner-Rush, Jason Kioa, Alistair Macrae, John Mavor, Jim Mein, Myung Hwa Park, Julia Pitman, Fefiloi Reid, Allan Thompson, Jan Trengove, Seongja Yoo-Crowe.

In attendance: Chris Budden, Stu Cameron, John Evans, Robert Johnson, Betty Keep, Gillian Stone, Jenny Tymms, Wendie Wilkie.

WORSHIP On the Friday evening, as part of the formation of the community, the President presided and preached at the opening Service of Holy Communion. On the Saturday Jan Trengove led morning worship and Dennis Chapman led evening worship. On the Sunday Allan Thompson led morning worship and the closing prayer in the afternoon was led by Fefiloi Reid.

WELCOMES The President welcomed Rev Dr John Evans, new General Secretary for the Western Australian Synod, and Rev Jenny Tymms, new General Secretary for the Queensland Synod, to their first Standing Committee meeting and Rev Dr Rob Bos as the new National Director of Theology and Discipleship, who will be a regular participant in Standing Committee meetings.

He also welcomed three Synod Moderators as visitors to this meeting: Rev Colleen Grieve (Tas) for Friday evening and part of Saturday morning; Rev Lindsay Faulkner (Nth) and Rev Dr Ray Reddifcliffe (Qld) for the whole of the meeting. Also welcomed as visitors for all or part of this meeting were Ms Lin Hatfeld Dodds (new National Director of UnitingCare Australia) attending for the first time, Rev Dr Anita Monro (Acting Principal of Coolamon College), and Matthew Budden (Communications Officer), Rev Dennis Robinson and Ms Ruth Powell (members of the Strategic Planning Unit) on Saturday morning; Mr John Emmett (National Director, Uniting Education) on Saturday morning; Dr Marelle Harisun (Chairperson of Coolamon College Reference Committee) for related business on Saturday; Rev Elenie Poulos (new National Director of Social Responsibility and Justice) on Sunday.

APOLOGIES Apologies were received from Jane Aagaard, Dean Drayton, Sealin Garlett and John Rowland for the whole of the meeting; Jim Mein for Saturday evening; Myung Hwa Park for the whole of Sunday.

RECOGNITION OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LAND

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

PASTORAL MATTERS

The President introduced a time of sharing on pastoral matters. It was noted that this is the last ASC meeting for Betty Keep as Secretary of the Synod of Tasmania. The recent death of Mr Ken Holm, father of former President Jill Tabart, in Melbourne on 20 February was also noted. The President advised Standing Committee of the illness of Dr Susan Emilsen, a member of the Doctrine Working Group. Congratulations were extended to Julia Pitman on her new position as Social Justice Research Officer, Research and Development Unit, jointly funded by the Adelaide Central Mission and the SA Synod. The General Secretary reported on the Bush Fire Appeal launched by the President on behalf of the Assembly and the NSW Synod, following the devastating bush fires. The President led the meeting in prayer.

GREETINGS

On the Saturday afternoon the President read a greeting to the Standing Committee from the State/National staff of the Australian Ecumenical Councils, including the National Council of Churches in Australia, expressing how much the support, encouragement and input of the UCA is vital to the Ecumenical Movement and deeply valued by its officers.

APPROVAL OF TIMETABLE AND AGENDA

The General Secretary spoke to the proposed timetable and agenda as listed in documents 1 and 1A, noting some changes to the agenda and several new business items. Several new documents were distributed on the Friday evening.

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

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 02.02** **It was resolved** to confirm the minutes of the meeting held 16 – 18 November 2001, subject to correcting the spelling of the acronym for the Children's and Youth National Coalition to read ChYNC where appropriate in 01.83.03, and adding the name of John Mavor to those in attendance.

NOTE CONSTITUTION CLAUSE 39

Standing Committee members were reminded of 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 Synods and/or Presbyteries and/or Congregations as the Assembly may determine.”

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

At the beginning of each day the President provided a focus for reflection by lighting a candle and displaying cloths presented to the UCA: Bali, Indonesia – to remember the current suffering of Christians under the majority Hindu population in Bali, and Tahiti – celebrating 200 years of the Gospel in the Pacific. He also displayed a basket from the Highlands of PNG presented to him, as a reminder to pray for the people of the Southern Highlands facing turmoil and violence at this time.

On the Saturday afternoon the President shared four issues relating to his work since the last meeting –

- his travel to the Moluccas and Sulawesi, Indonesia in January / February 2002, and the situation facing some of the Uniting Church's partner churches, especially in Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, and the enormous wave of violence developing in these countries (he described his involvement in relation to the processes in Indonesia)
- the tremendous enthusiasm for all forms of outreach throughout the Uniting Church
- his contact with other churches around the world, especially those traditionally linked to the Uniting Church such as the British Methodist Church, United Reformed Church, Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church (USA) on a number of theological issues, especially in the area of changing forms of ministry and mission
- the area of chaplaincy in both secondary and tertiary educational institutions.

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

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

On the Saturday evening the General Secretary gave a verbal report on some of his recent visits and matters relating to the Assembly office life for the information of the Standing Committee. These included –

- participating in a Forum of South Australian Presbyteries
- addressing a South Moreton Presbytery (Qld) gathering
- a systems review of the Assembly's Accounting Unit
- working with the National Directors in team building and addressing issues through more face to face meetings
- refocusing and revitalising the vision of the Management Advisory Group.

He also presented a written report of a framework for Agency Reports to the ASC.

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

SYNOD SHARING – SYNOD OF VICTORIA

Participants from the Synod of Victoria shared something of the life of their Synod as an expression of our inter conciliar sharing –

- the Vision statement 'A Call to the Church' including the slight shift in church attendance upwards and financial contributions stabilising
- the vision for integrated learning in Theological and Ministerial Formation
- the new Centre for Theology and Ministry
- changes within Community Services
- Multi-cultural Ministry.

SHARING WHAT IS HAPPENING RE THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY

The Synod Secretaries and Moderators shared information about the various activities being planned in their Synods to celebrate the UCA's 25th anniversary both on 22 June and at other times during 2002, by holding a large synod gathering and in local congregations. Channel 7 will host a two hour national TV program to be broadcast on Sunday 23 June entitled "Heart and Soul", currently being produced on the initiative of the Queensland Synod. Worship resources prepared by the Assembly's Working Group on Worship and Bible study notes prepared by Rob Bos will shortly be available.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS STANDING COMMITTEE

1. FORMATION OF NATIONAL COORDINATING GROUP RE MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH (ASC minute 01.83)

The General Secretary reported on difficulties encountered since the November Standing Committee meeting to develop the conversations proposed in ASC minute 01.83. Members of the working group have indicated that they have a view that they will be unable to fulfill the role of investigating possible sources of funding for this work. The working group expects to bring a report on all matters given to it to the July ASC meeting.

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

2. STRATEGIC PLANNING UNIT (ASC minute 01.84)

Ruth Powell, Dennis Robinson and Wendie Wilkie commenced the session with a Powerpoint presentation, recapping the issues facing the national church and society and giving an overview of 'the emerging church' as part of SPU's providing a process to enable the ASC to determine the priority order of the critical questions for its life. Document 2, which had been prepared by SPU to resource this session, included questions for discussion. Lengthy discussion followed in table groups, followed by a brief response time in plenary session.

3. PLANNING FOR THE 10TH ASSEMBLY (ASC minute 01.100)

The General Secretary presented document 12 consisting of a report outlining the developing work of the Design Team responsible for the planning of the 10th Assembly since the November ASC meeting. Robert Johnson, chair of the Design Team, then gave a Powerpoint presentation showing the interior of the Royal Exhibition Building which has been booked as the venue for the opening service.

02.06 **It was resolved to:**

02.06.01 receive the report;

02.06.02 confirm that the theme for the 10th Assembly is "Witness the Glory of God".

4. DETENTION CENTRE MINISTRY (ASC minute 01.102)

The General Secretary presented document 8, consisting of a report outlining action taken since the November ASC meeting by the General Secretary, Frontier Services, Social Responsibility and Justice, the Secretary of the Northern Synod and others to implement ASC minute 01.102.

02.07 **It was resolved to:**

02.07.01 receive the report;

02.07.02 note that the priority for chaplaincy has been identified as Curtin Detention Centre;

- 02.07.03 provide \$5,000 of the 2002 Wesley Uniting Employment money (as an Assembly grant) to the Northern Synod for use in the provision of a chaplain at Curtin Detention Centre;
- 02.07.04 make available additional funds up to \$5,000 from the 2002 Wesley Uniting Employment money to underwrite this ministry until such time as other funds become available. This seed money to be repaid to the Assembly once there are sufficient funds to ensure that with donations and the Assembly contribution, the ministry is able to continue half time for at least six months;
- 02.07.05 endorse the holding of an appeal to support detention centre ministry.

FROM ASSEMBLY AGENCIES

1. UNITING EDUCATION RE UCA EDUCATION CHARTER

John Emmett presented document 4 which is the proposed National Education Charter developed by Uniting Education, through its Federal Education Policy Working Group. Discussion took place in table groups. The Standing Committee were invited to comment on several areas in the draft document and individual members of the ASC were also welcome to respond in their own right. Valuable input was received from the ASC. The final draft document will be submitted to the July ASC meeting for endorsement.

2. GENERAL SECRETARY RE “WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES / MINISTRIES OF THE ASSEMBLY?”

The General Secretary presented document 3, consisting of a paper on a range of issues related to the basis on which the Synods fund the responsibilities / ministries of the Assembly, with a view to identifying what issues are important to the Synods and the Assembly when grant decisions are being made. Much discussion followed in table groups and plenary session.

02.08 **It was resolved:**

02.08.01 to receive the report;

02.08.02 to note

(a) the following list was developed by the Standing Committee when discussing the essential ministries / responsibilities of the Assembly:

- CONSTITUTED / CORE

Doctrine Worship	Nationally in Planning
Ecumenical Relations – National/International	Function of Secretariat (Meetings)
UAICC	Polity
MEC Functions	Archives
Oversight / Focus of the Church	Legal Reference Committee
	President

- “AGREED” NATIONAL COOPERATION – MEDIUM TERM COMMITMENTS

UnitingCare	Christian Education
Frontier Services	Synod Support
Beneficiary Fund	Other Faiths
Coolamon College ?	Ethics and Sexual Misconduct
SR&J (re national desk)	Defence Force Chaplaincy

- NATIONAL COOPERATION – “SHORTER TERM” COMMITMENTS

Aspects of UnitingCare	Overseas Aid
SR&J issues	Covenanting Process
Mission and Evangelism	Children, Youth and Families
Multicultural Ministry	Jobs Network
National Education Policy	Networks
Adult Fellowship	

- SYNOD COOPERATION

It was noted that there are many other examples of national co-operation that are conducted through other avenues that do not involve the Assembly.

Notes:

- * Difficulty of referring to Assembly functions apart from other councils
- * Coordination / Cooperation distinction may warrant further reflection
- * There is a need to reflect further on the actual location of some of the work
- * The discussion on whether the polity of the church is sustainable needs to be held

(b) further discussion will be needed in order to make this a definitive list, eg the location of Congress and Coolamon College, and to give recognition to the fact that some areas of work within Agencies may fit across more than one category;

02.08.03 to approve the use of this list by the General Secretary as a guide in negotiations with the Synods about funding issues;

02.08.04 to determine that at a later date it will return to the question of how much funding is required for the constituted / core areas, and the relative proportion of funds that should be directed to different areas of work;

Arising out of this discussion the ASC identified some areas for action and further deliberation –

02.08.05 that at the adoption of the agenda the ASC be asked to consider whether the content and emphasis of the agenda reflects an appropriate level of focus on matters of contemporary significance to the Church;

02.08.06 that recognising the stress to our polity arising from changes in society and the church, and the need to encourage new forms of church and Christian discipleship, resolve that at the next ASC meeting time, and appropriate resourcing, will be made available to:

- discuss the reason for the present polity of the church (i.e. what ‘needs’ we are responding to through our polity)
- identify the pressures on that polity
- begin to identify features of a polity that responds to the changes we face
- identify ways the ASC can encourage a broader discussion within the church that might assist other councils to consider these issues, any necessary changes and ways to respond to these insights.

3. GENERAL SECRETARY RE POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The General Secretary presented document 5, consisting of a discussion paper on the relationship between management and policy in the Assembly. Much discussion took place in table groups and plenary session.

02.09**It was resolved:**

02.09.01

to establish a task group to be convened by a member of the Standing Committee to develop a process that will assist the ASC to explore and, if appropriate, enact a model of governance (ie. the role and relationship of ASC and General Secretary and staff) that may include the following principles:

- that the ASC will establish goals / outcomes, and the values within which they shall be pursued; and the General Secretary will be free to pursue these goals / outcomes by all means except those indicated by the ASC
- that the ASC will concentrate on outcomes for the Assembly areas of responsibility, rather than determining programs or staffing for programs
- that the ASC will not appoint any staff (including senior staff), but will indicate values that impact on employment practices
- that the NFC should be accountable to the General Secretary, except in its role as the audit committee for the Assembly where it will be accountable to the ASC
- that the General Secretary will report on a regular basis to the ASC on the ways that the ASC's goals / desired outcomes and values are being fulfilled
- that the ASC will indicate the funds available to achieve its goals, and require the General Secretary to provide and justify a budget that best achieves these goals; this budget being approved by the ASC;

02.09.02

to appoint Allan Thompson (convenor), Chris Budden, Terence Corkin, Jim Mein and Jelita Gardner-Rush as the task group;

02.09.03

that the ASC agree to spend time over the next two meetings to determine how these principles can best be made operational in its life.

4. ASSOCIATE GENERAL SECRETARY RE GUIDELINES FOR THE REVIEW OF ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE STAFF APPOINTMENTS AS A TERM NEARS CONCLUSION

Wendie Wilkie presented document 6, consisting of a report on proposed guidelines for reviewing ASC staff appointments as a term nears conclusion. These guidelines also give opportunity to reconsider the need and purpose for the position under review and whether or not the position should be continued.

02.10**It was resolved to:**

02.10.01

receive the report;

02.10.02

determine to adopt the procedures presented in document 6 until such time as the discussion on governance requires a change to this process.

5. FRONTIER SERVICES

On behalf of Rosemary Young, National Director of Frontier Services, Wendie Wilkie presented documents 10A, 10B and 10C consisting of reports on the appointment of a new Chairperson for the Frontier Services Reference Committee, the appointment of an Associate National Director, and 2002 – Year of the Outback and Frontier Services' 90th anniversary.

- 02.11** **It was resolved to:**
- 02.11.01 receive the reports;
- 02.11.02 receive the resignation of Rev Anne Amos as Chairperson of the Frontier Services Reference Committee;
- 02.11.03 appoint Rev Gregor Henderson as Chairperson of the Frontier Services Reference Committee;
- 02.11.04 appoint Rev Anne Amos to the casual vacancy on the Frontier Services Reference Committee until Assembly 2003;
- 02.11.05 record its thanks to God and its deep appreciation for the service of Anne Amos as Chairperson of the Frontier Services Reference Committee:
- Anne's work in the Northern Synod prepared her for involvement with Frontier Services. She joined the Committee in 1992 and became the Chair in 1995.
- Anne has consistently inspired us with vision and enthusiasm for Frontier Services as an agency of the National Assembly, but as an integral part of the Church.
- She has chaired meetings with wisdom and grace and has provided an opportunity for all members of the Committee to contribute to the life and work of Frontier Services.
- Anne has supported the staff of Frontier Services with warmth, compassion and understanding. She has chaired the Reference Committee through the Assembly restructure period, adjusting the Committee to its new role and Frontier Services to its new structure.
- Anne has worked to honour Frontier Services' commitment to working closely with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress and has pushed the agency strongly along the road towards a shared future.
- She has taken a strong leadership role within the Church and made an enormous contribution to the people of the outback as Chairperson of the Frontier Services Reference Committee. As she now moves on to other tasks, we give thanks and praise to God for His gift of Anne's leadership;
- 02.11.06 nominate Rev John Rowland as ASC's representative to the Joint Nominating Committee for the position of Associate National Director of Frontier Services;
- 02.11.07 (a) note that in 2002, the year designated "Year of the Outback", the Uniting Church celebrates the 90th anniversary of the establishment of the Australian Inland Mission, whose work and the work of the Federal Methodist Inland Mission and the Home Mission of the Congregational Union is carried on through its national agency, Frontier Services;
- (b) affirm that the Church continues to stand alongside people challenged by distance, through the ministry and community services offered by Presbyteries, Synods, and the Assembly through Frontier Services;
- (c) affirm the role of its national agency in its commitment to working ecumenically to resource ministry in remote areas, and as an agent of reconciliation.

6. COOLAMON COLLEGE

Anita Monro and Marelle Harisun used a Powerpoint presentation to introduce document 11, consisting of a major report on future directions for Coolamon College, including the proposed relocation of the College from Brisbane to Adelaide and its linkage with the Adelaide College of Divinity. The draft memorandum of understanding between Coolamon College and the Adelaide College of Divinity was tabled.

02.12 It was resolved to:

02.12.01 receive the report;

02.12.02 note

(a) that in ASC minute 01.92.02 it “approve(d) the relocation of Coolamon College to Adelaide, and its linkage with Adelaide College of Divinity, subject to (various requirements)”;

(b) that all the qualifications (except a memorandum of understanding) placed upon the approval have been addressed in the report brought to this meeting of the ASC;

02.12.03 reaffirm its approval for the relocation of Coolamon College to Adelaide, and its linkage with Adelaide College of Divinity, such relationship to commence from 1 January 2003, or the nearest practical date;

02.12.04 authorise the General Secretary and, as appropriate, the Acting Principal of Coolamon College, to sign any memoranda of understanding that are generally consistent with the reports received.

7. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

On the Saturday evening the General Secretary and other staff were asked to leave when the Standing Committee, with the Synod Secretaries, received an oral report on the performance appraisal of the General Secretary after twelve months. The performance appraisal was conducted by the President, Jim Mein and Myung Hwa Park.

02.13 It was resolved to receive the report.

The private sitting was then concluded.

8. MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP RE COOPERATION AMONG AGENCIES

The General Secretary presented document 13, consisting of a report and proposed management diagram arising out of a meeting of the Management Advisory Group in late 2001 to further explore a proposal for developing increased interaction and cooperation between Assembly agencies to enable the flexibility to address new opportunities and cope with the varying peak demand times for some agencies. Document 13A, consisting of a response to the MAG report by Elenie Poulos, National Director of SR&J, was also presented. Much discussion followed.

02.14 It was resolved to receive the reports.

9. NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE

Bruce Binnie, as Chairperson, presented the report of the NFC. Document 14 consisted of a report on various issues and the following attachments – UnitingCare Australia's revised 2001 / 2002 budget, a 2002 budget revision request from the Ministerial Education Commission and Church Resources latest listing of preferred suppliers.

- 02.15** **It was resolved to:**
- 02.15.01 receive the report;
- 02.15.02 approve the UnitingCare Second Revised 2001 / 2002 Budget;
- 02.15.03 approve of an increase of \$6,165 in the 2002 Synod Budget allocation to the Ministerial Education Commission (new budget of \$28,592), with the additional funds being funded from the Synod contribution of \$35,000 which will be received from the Tasmanian Synod during the second half of 2002;
- 02.15.04 note the report on the Church Resources Agreement and on the significance of this Agreement to the Uniting Church due its ecumenical nature and its potential to deliver considerable financial savings to the Church;
- 02.15.05 note the report on the review of Assembly lay staff salaries and review of the Accounting Services Unit and accounting system, and approve of the allocation of:
- \$6,185 from the Year 2000 Job Network funds; and
 - up to \$4,565 from the Year 2002 Job Network funds
- for the purpose of engaging consultancies to review:
- lay staff remuneration for certain Assembly staff; and
 - the Assembly Accounting Services Unit and the accounting system.

10. LEGAL REFERENCE COMMITTEE

The General Secretary presented document 15 consisting of a report dealing with a referral from the ASC about proposals to assist the implementation of the decisions in relation to the merger of the Synods of Tasmania and Victoria, along with some other matters.

- 02.16** **It was resolved to:**
- 02.16.01 receive the report;
- 02.16.02 note that the persons appointed by the Synods of Tasmania and Victoria to their respective Property Trusts will continue in office for the balance of their term and that subsequent appointments to the Property Trusts will be made by the new synod;
- 02.16.03 recommend to the Standing Committee of the new synod that it confirms the appointments to the Property Trusts at its first meeting;
- 02.16.04 determine that the current Standing Committee of the Synod of Victoria plus two representatives appointed by the Synod of Tasmania be the Standing Committee of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania from the date of merger of the synods until the first meeting of the new synod;
- 02.16.05 resolves that by reason of the authority granted to it by the Assembly, and in the spirit of Regulation 3.6.34, the ASC grant the Presbytery of Tasmania permission to

- appoint three ministers and three lay people to the 10th and 11th Assemblies, notwithstanding Regulation 3.6.2 (b), and
- have a member of the Assembly Standing Committee elected at the 10th and 11th Assemblies. The election of this person to be in the same order as that governing the synod persons elected under Regulation 3.6.25 (b);

02.16.06

note

- (a) the need for the Board of Benefund Ltd, as a consequence of the decision to create the synod of Victoria and Tasmania, to bring proposed changes to their Trust Deed to the ASC, and
- (b) that when these amendments are confirmed by the ASC the General Secretary, on advice from the Legal Reference Committee, will bring consequential amendments to the Regulations in time for determination by the 10th Assembly.

11. THEOLOGY AND DISCIPLESHIP

Rob Bos presented document 16 consisting of his first report as National Director, including his settling into the position, the T&D Reference Committee's meeting in February and the range of issues before the Committee, the ongoing work of T&D's four working groups, and the T&D web site.

02.17

It was resolved to:

02.17.01

receive the report;

02.17.02

approve the changes to the following services to take account of the change in nomenclature from "parish" to "congregation" and also adding hymns/songs from *Together in Song*:

- A Service to welcome a Youth Worker
- The Commissioning of a Youth Worker
- Ordination of a Deacon
- Induction of a Deacon
- Ordination of a Minister of the Word
- Induction of a Minister of the Word
- The Commissioning of a Lay Pastor;

02.17.03

express the appreciation of the ASC to Rev Elizabeth Walker for her very significant leadership and contribution to the work of T&D during 2001.

12. MINISTERIAL EDUCATION COMMISSION RE GUIDELINES FOR THE THIRD PHASE

The General Secretary tabled the MEC's draft guidelines for the Third Phase of Ministerial Education – Ministry Intern Phase, for the information of Standing Committee. The guidelines will be before the ASC for determination in July.

13. UNITY AND INTERNATIONAL MISSION

(a) Partnership Agreement with the Presbyterian Church in India

On behalf of Bill Fischer, National Director of Unity and International Mission, the General Secretary presented a report contained on page 4 of document 1A on the proposed partnership agreement between the

UCA and the Presbyterian Church in India. General discussion followed on the significant number of partnership relationships the UCA has with overseas churches, and the need to continue thinking about how they can best be developed.

02.18

It was resolved:

02.18.01

to receive the report;

02.18.02

that approval be given to the signing of a Partnership Agreement with the Presbyterian Church of India at their April 2002 Assembly.

(b) Relations with the Free Wesleyan Church in Tonga

On behalf of Bill Fischer, National Director of Unity and International Mission, the General Secretary presented a report contained on page 4 of document 1A. Discussion focused on actions of the FWCT that seemed to be at variance with the Uniting Church's understanding of what partnership required.

02.19

It was resolved to:

02.19.01

receive the report;

02.19.02

note with deep regret and dismay that the Free Wesleyan Church in Tonga has taken steps to establish Districts of the FWCT in Australia contrary to agreement between the UCA and the FWCT, and the impact that the actions of the FWCT have had on Uniting Church Tongan Congregations in Sydney and Melbourne and other parts of the Uniting Church (eg. the Sydney Presbytery);

02.19.03

express regret that the action of establishing the Districts has effectively suspended the partnership agreement between the UCA and the FWCT;

02.19.04

indicate to the FWCT that the UCA has oversight of all congregations who are part of the Uniting Church, without appeal to the FWCT;

02.19.05

indicate that the UCA will only support and relate to those congregations who accept its oversight and polity;

02.19.06

express a strong desire to re-establish, at an appropriate time, the relationship between the two churches that might lead to the agreement being re-activated;

02.19.07

convey this message to the FWCT Conference in the Tongan language as soon as possible;

02.19.08

send greetings and assurance of support to the UCA Tongan Congregations, and inform them of the actions taken.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. REGULATIONS RELATED TO MINISTRY CANDIDATES IN THE THIRD PHASE

It was noted that the Regulations and expectations of the Church are ambiguous about whether candidates in the Third Phase should be treated as lay persons or members of a specified ministry.

02.20**It was resolved to:**

02.20.01

request the Legal Reference Committee to recommend changes to the Regulations in regard to people in the Third Phase of ministry training so that it enables their participation in Synods and brings them under the Discipline Regulations for Ministers;

02.20.02

communicate with the MEC regarding the work they are doing in this area prior to bringing recommendations to the ASC.

2. NAMES OF ASC MEMBERS ON THE ASSEMBLY WEBSITE

The General Secretary inquired whether ASC members were willing for their name to be placed on the Assembly website. No objection was raised by ASC members.

3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE MINISTRY OF DEACON REVIEW GROUP

The General Secretary advised that the ASC representative on the Ministry of Deacon Review Group, Myung Hwa Park, has advised the Review Group Convenor that due to moving to a new placement she is no longer able to be a member. The Convenor considers that it is too late in the process to add a new person to the membership of the group.

02.21**It was resolved to:**

02.21.01

receive the resignation of Rev Myung Hwa Park from the Ministry of Deacon Review Group;

02.21.02

note that while there is no member of the ASC now on the Review Group, Stu Cameron attends the ASC and can resource the ASC at any points where this may be necessary prior to the completion of the Review Group's report.

4. WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL

John Mavor presented document 7 consisting of a report on the possibility that the World Methodist Council could wish to hold their Conference and Council meeting in Sydney or Brisbane in 2006, and the implications and benefits for the UCA should the WMC decide to meet in Australia.

02.22**It was resolved to:**

02.22.01

receive the report;

02.22.02

indicate to the World Methodist Council office-bearers that the UCA would warmly welcome the WMC should they decide to hold their 2006 Conference and Council meetings in Australia, but that the WMC be requested not to clash with the UCA's 11th Assembly to be held in 2006.

5. APPOINTMENT OF PARTICIPANTS TO THE 24th GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES

The General Secretary presented the names proposed by the Christian Unity Working Group, as reported on page 2 of document 1A, for appointment as the six UCA delegates to the 24th General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in Accra, Ghana, in 2004.

- 02.23** **It was resolved to:**
- 02.23.01 receive the report;
- 02.23.02 request the Assembly Officers to appoint the six UCA delegates to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches 24th General Council in Accra, Ghana, from 30 July to 12 August 2004 after further consultation with the Christian Unity Working Group.

6. CHANGE OF SYNOD BOUNDARIES

The General Secretary referred to correspondence from the Secretary of the NSW Synod advising that conversations have taken place between the Synods of NSW and Queensland, and the relevant Presbyteries, with a view to transferring the Kingscliff Congregation to the Far North Coast Presbytery.

- 02.24** **It was resolved** that the boundaries of the NSW and Queensland Synods be adjusted so that Kingscliff Congregation becomes part of the Synod of NSW.

7. NCYC 2005

The General Secretary referred to correspondence received from John Emmett advising that the Uniting Education Reference Committee in December has accepted a proposal from the Synod of South Australia to be the Host Operator for NCYC 2005. The Synod has been advised of the decision of the Reference Committee, taken in accordance with their mandate.

- 02.25** **It was resolved** to note the decision of the Uniting Education Reference Committee to accept the offer of the South Australian Synod to host the 2005 NCYC.

8. MEMBERSHIP OF UNITINGCARE REFERENCE COMMITTEE

The General Secretary referred to an email from Gregor Henderson, Acting National Director of UnitingCare Australia, advising that the ASC may co-opt up to five people to the Reference Committee on the recommendation of the Reference Committee. At present there are no co-opted members. The term of appointment is the current life of the Committee.

- 02.26** **It was resolved** to co-opt Lurleen Blackman (Qld), Wayne Koivu (NSW) and Mandy Leveratt (Vic) to the Reference Committee of UnitingCare Australia until the first meeting of the Assembly Standing Committee after the 10th Assembly.

9. MEMBERSHIP OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND JUSTICE REFERENCE COMMITTEE

The General Secretary referred to an email from Elenie Poulos, National Director of SR&J, advising that Ms Jane Aagaard has resigned as a member of the Reference Committee due to new responsibilities and the Northern Synod has proposed the name of Rev Andrew Watts.

- 02.27** **It was resolved** to appoint Rev Andrew Watts to fill the casual vacancy on the Social Responsibility and Justice Reference Committee.

10. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The President reported that at the Synod Moderators and President's Retreat held prior to the Standing Committee meeting, the recent debate relating to the Governor General and child sexual abuse was discussed. They had decided that the President should write to every UCA congregation on their behalf, requesting that the letter be read from the pulpit reminding members of the standards set out by the UCA to address these issues, and listing the documents available for dealing with the issue of child sexual abuse and more general issue of sexual misconduct.

11. DATE OF THE MARCH 2003 MEETING

The date of the March 2003 meeting of Standing Committee was set for 14 – 16 March.

CLOSURE The meeting closed at 2.45 pm with prayer led by Fefiloi Reid.

MEETING DATES FOR 2002

19 – 21 July

15 – 17 November