

**Uniting Church in Australia  
National Assembly**



**ASSEMBLY STANDING  
COMMITTEE**

**19 - 21 July 2002**

*Chevalier Resource Centre  
1 Roma Avenue  
Kensington NSW 2033*

**MINUTES**

PO Box A2266, Sydney South NSW 1235  
Telephone (02) 8267 4202 Fax (02) 8267 4222  
E-mail: [assysec@nat.uca.org.au](mailto:assysec@nat.uca.org.au)  
Web: <http://nat.uca.org.au>

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**Uniting Church in Australia**  
**ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE**

**19 – 21 July 2002**

**MINUTES**

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

**In attendance:** Rob Bos, Chris Budden, Stu Cameron, John Evans, Robert Johnson, John Rowland, Gillian Stone, Jenny Tymms, Wendie Wilkie

**WORSHIP** On the Friday evening, as part of the formation of the community, the President presided and Allan Thompson preached at the opening Service of Holy Communion. On the Saturday Stu Cameron led morning worship and Jenny Tymms led evening worship. On the Sunday Wendie Wilkie led morning worship and the closing prayer in the afternoon was led by Bruce Binnie.

**WELCOMES** The President welcomed as visitors for all or part of this meeting: Matthew Budden (Communications Officer); Mr John Emmett (National Director, Uniting Education) and Dr Philip Creed (Chairperson, Uniting Education) on Saturday morning; Rev Bill Fischer (National Director, Unity & International Mission and Uniting Council for Overseas Aid) on Saturday afternoon; Rev Elenie Poulos (National Director of Social Responsibility and Justice) on Sunday morning.

**APOLOGIES** Apologies were received from Jane Aagaard, Shayne Blackman and Jan Trengove for the whole of the meeting; Sealin Garlett for Friday evening; Dean Drayton for Friday evening and Saturday morning; Wendie Wilkie for Saturday evening; Jason Kioa and Myung Hwa Park for the whole of Sunday; Seongja Yoo Crowe for Sunday morning and Jim Mein for Sunday afternoon.

**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 and ASC participants were invited to share any pastoral matters. Congratulations were expressed by acclamation at the new Synod of Victoria and Tasmania which was inaugurated on 22 June as part of the UCA's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations held simultaneously in Melbourne and Launceston, using a live video link-up between the two locations.

Warm congratulations were extended to Allan Thompson on his new position as Associate General Secretary of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania.

Stu Cameron advised that Jan Trengove was unable to be present this weekend due to a longstanding commitment to lead the worship at a Reconciliation and Rural Youth gathering in South Australia.

Seongja Yoo Crowe referred to the miraculous healing experienced by Natasha Emmett and Chrissie Crowe, both of whom were suffering from serious illnesses and have been in our prayers over the past few years.

Craig Bailey commented on Jane Aagaard's heavy workload since her appointment as Minister for Health in the Northern Territory Parliament, preventing her from attending ASC meetings. John Rowland undertook to make a pastoral approach to Jane about her situation. It was noted that Jane's excellent work on health issues in remote areas and social policies had been reported in both the Australian and British press.

John Rowland reported that 9 November 2002 will mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Church at Ernabella and the Northern Synod will support local celebrations.

Jenny Tymms advised of the sudden death of Julie, wife of Rev Dr David Rankin, a Lecturer in Church History at Trinity College Queensland, and requested that we uphold Dr Rankin and his two teenage children in our prayers.

Robert Johnson announced that Aunty Ida West from Tasmania has recently been recognised at the NAIDOC awards as National Female Aboriginal Elder of the Year and as the Tasmanian Aboriginal of the Year.

**02.28**            **It was resolved** to request the General Secretary to write to Aunty Ida West expressing ASC's congratulations on the two NAIDOC awards given to her in recognition of her significant leadership and ministry.

## **APPROVAL OF TIMETABLE AND AGENDA**

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

**02.29**            **It was resolved:**

- (a) in accordance with Minute 02.08.05, to consider whether the content and emphasis of the agenda reflects an appropriate level of focus on matters of contemporary significance to the Church; and
- (b) 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 THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**02.30**            **It was resolved** to confirm the minutes of the meeting held 15 – 17 March 2002.

## **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 a cloth from West Papua presented to the UCA by the Church in Papua, and a cloth presented to him at the celebrations marking the Independence of the Democratic Republic of East Timor in recognition of the Uniting Church's significant contribution through solidarity with partner churches, participation in humanitarian efforts and financial support. He also displayed a talking stick and whisk from Samoa to remind us of the UCA's relationship with the Methodist Church in Samoa.

On the Saturday afternoon the President shared three areas in which he has been involved since the ASC meeting in March:

- International visits – giving papers, Bible Studies, speeches or preaching at
  - Independence of the Democratic Republic of East Timor/Timor Lorosae
  - Church of Scotland General Assembly, Edinburgh, Scotland
  - Methodist Church of Great Britain, London
  - United Reformed Church of Great Britain, London
  - Methodist Church in Ireland Conference, Erriskillen, Northern Ireland
  - Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Belfast, Northern Ireland (Bible Studies)
  - Presbyterian Church (USA) General Assembly, Columbus, Ohio, USA
  - Christian Conference of Asia General Committee, Taipei, Taiwan (Bible Studies)
  - Methodist Church of Samoa, Apia, Samoa
- Public issues and Ethical issues, especially Bioethics
- Youth – organisation of the President's Young Leaders' Conference in August.

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

## SYNOD SHARING – NEW SOUTH WALES

Chris Budden gave a powerpoint presentation entitled *Visions, Goals and Directions*, outlining the nine goals and directions adopted by the 2001 Synod. Jelita Gardner Rush spoke enthusiastically about her involvement in preparations for NCYC in January 2003. Jim Mein shared briefly about the work of the NSW Board of Finance and Property.

## SHARING THE EXPERIENCE OF THE UCA'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY

The President invited ASC participants to share the various ways which synods celebrated the Uniting Church's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. These ranged from major celebrations in five synods with large numbers of people attending to smaller regional gatherings and special services in congregations over the weekend 22–23 June, a UnitingCare TV advertising campaign and TV program *Heart and Soul*, Uniting Church Week in Queensland, seminars, etc. The Northern Synod's celebration will take place in association with the opening of the next synod meeting in October, around the theme *Forwarding the message*. The President led the meeting in a prayer of thanksgiving.

## BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS STANDING COMMITTEE

### 1.    **DETENTION CENTRE MINISTRY** (ASC minute 02.07.05)

On behalf the General Secretary, Wendie Wilkie presented Document 9, consisting of a report on the work undertaken by the small group appointed to assist her in setting up a national appeal towards supporting chaplaincy services in Detention Centres, the form the appeal would take and the amount of funds raised to date.

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

## **2. DISCUSSION #1 - IS THE POLITY OF THE UCA SUSTAINABLE?** (ASC minute 02.08.06)

Chris Budden introduced Document 2, consisting of a paper he had prepared arising out of ASC minute 02.08.06 to resource the Saturday discussion on the polity of the UCA. He and the General Secretary provided a set of questions for discussion in table groups and insights were noted for a later discussion. On the Sunday the ASC again met in table groups and plenary session to continue this discussion.

### **02.33**

**It was resolved to:**

02.33.01

receive the report;

02.33.02

invite two or three members of the ASC from one synod to meet and, bearing in mind the discussion at this meeting of ASC, 'toy with' new ideas for the polity of the UCA that reflects our need to be a mission community, including ways in which the polity could be described;

02.33.03

present their ideas to the November meeting of ASC;

02.33.04

request the General Secretaries to appoint the group.

## **3. UNITING EDUCATION RE NATIONAL EDUCATION CHARTER**

John Emmett introduced Document 5, consisting of the final form of the National Education Charter presented to the March meeting of ASC for comment. This final form is the result of wide and in depth consultation, and has the support of Synods' Schools and Education Commissions and Committees and the Uniting Education Reference Committee.

### **02.34**

**It was resolved to:**

02.34.01

adopt the Principles as set out in the National Education Charter, noting

(a) the purposes of the Charter as set out in the preamble to the Charter;

(b) that some editorial changes will be made in the light of the discussion, ie. split principle 1 into two parts, remove third dot point on page 1, and forms of expression at certain points;

02.34.02

commend to all councils, institutions and agencies of the Uniting Church in Australia the *Guidelines for our Practices* and *Experiencing Principles in Action*.

## **4. REPORT ON FORMATION OF NATIONAL CO-ORDINATING GROUP RE MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES**

Wendie Wilkie presented Document 8, consisting of a report outlining the steps taken since the March meeting of ASC to finalise the appointment of the members of the National Co-ordinating Group.

### **02.35**

**It was resolved to:**

02.35.01

receive the report;

02.35.02

appoint as the Co-ordinating Group on Ministry with Children, Young People and their Families: Rick Morrell, Rev Bruce Moore, Rev Diane Stanton and Cheryl Lawrie from ChYNC; and Julie Furner, Catherine Herbert and David Guthrey;

- 02.35.03 authorize Wendie Wilkie, Diane Stanton, Kylie Crabbe and Andrew Johnson to approve up to another three persons to the group and report the names to the November meeting of ASC.

## **5. PLANNING FOR THE 10th ASSEMBLY**

The General Secretary presented Document 12, consisting of a report on some areas of the Design Team's work since the March meeting of ASC, including the way Agencies report to the Assembly, details regarding venues, programs and the logo, and steps being taken to recommence the Cato Visitor program into the Assembly.

### **02.36 It was resolved to:**

02.36.01 receive the report;

- 02.36.02 (a) appoint Al Macrae and the General Secretary (as convenor) to a Cato Visitor's Committee;
- (b) request the Cato Trustees to appoint two persons;
- (c) authorize the Design Team to approve the Cato Visitor for the 10th Assembly.

## **6. COOLAMON COLLEGE (ASC minute 02.12)**

Wendie Wilkie presented Documents 10 and 10B, consisting of a progress report on negotiations in relation to the proposed link with the Adelaide College of Divinity and Coolamon College and move to Adelaide, and a supplementary report to the progress report. Discussion followed.

Wendie then presented Document 10A, consisting of a report, including person description, position description and terms of employment, prepared by Dr Marelle Harisun, chairperson of Coolamon College, on the appointment of the Principal of Coolamon College due to be made for commencement 1 January 2003.

### **02.37 It was resolved to:**

02.37.01 receive the reports;

02.37.02 agree that Coolamon College's continuation and the need for a Principal has already been approved by implication by the November 2001 and March 2002 meetings of ASC, and therefore that the need for the review of the position of Principal is not necessary at this time;

02.37.03 approve the attached Position and Person Descriptions for the position of Principal of Coolamon College;

02.37.04 determine that the position of Principal be located in Brisbane for 2003 and thence in Adelaide, contingent on the acceptance by Adelaide College of Divinity of Coolamon College as a full member of ACD;

02.37.05 given the extraordinary circumstances facing Coolamon College, appoint a Joint Nominating Committee to, in the first instance, conduct a preferential interview with Rev Dr Anita Monro, to determine her suitability for the Principal's position as set out in the approved Person Description;

02.37.06 appoint as the Joint Nominating Committee: Dean Drayton (chair), Stu Cameron, Marelle Harisun and Wendie Wilkie;

- 02.37.07 authorize the General Secretary of Assembly and the President to make the appointment to the position, should this process be completed significantly before the November meeting of ASC;
- 02.37.08 determine, should the current Acting Principal not be successful in this process, to advertise the position to commence 1 January 2003, with the location in Brisbane, to move to Adelaide 1 January 2004 or earlier as approved by the General Secretary of Assembly;
- 02.37.09 negotiate stipend, loading and allowances consistent with those of the Parkin Wesley College faculty.

## **7. GENERAL SECRETARY'S PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

During a private session of ASC and Synod Secretaries, the President reported back on his conversation with the General Secretary regarding his performance appraisal.

## **8. MINISTERIAL EDUCATION COMMISSION RE GUIDELINES FOR THE THIRD PHASE OF MINISTERIAL EDUCATION – MINISTRY INTERN PHASE**

Jenny Byrnes, chairperson of the MEC, presented Document 4, consisting of a report outlining the background and process in preparing the guidelines, and Document 4A, the Guidelines for the Third Phase of Ministerial Education – Ministry Intern Phase, for consideration and adoption by the ASC.

### **02.38 It was resolved to:**

- 02.38.01 receive the report;
- 02.38.02 approve The Guidelines for the Third Phase of Ministerial Education: The Ministry Intern Phase (**Attachment A**).

## **9. UNITY AND INTERNATIONAL MISSION RE RELATIONS WITH THE FREE WESLEYAN CHURCH IN TONGA (ASC minute 02.19)**

The General Secretary presented Document 7, consisting of a report on action taken to address the matters of concern raised by the ASC in March and a Draft Partnership Agreement (Understanding) between the FWCT and the UCA, and Document 7A, consisting of Draft Key Principles and Operating Guidelines for partnership relations between the FWCT and the UCA. Much discussion followed.

**02.39** In the light of further conversation, and the commitment to reconsider our relationship, the ASC acknowledges that while recent events have made the relationship between the UCA and the FWCT difficult, and such events are to be regretted, Standing Committee affirms that there is still an important relationship between the two churches.

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

- 02.39.01 receive the report;
- 02.39.02 welcome the documents "Draft Partnership Agreement" and "Draft Key Principles and Operating Guidelines";
- 02.39.03 request Jason Kioa and Bill Fischer to append to the documents notes from the ASC, some questions and guidance for discussion;

- 02.39.04 distribute the documents, subsequent to notification of the FWCT, for consideration and comment by interested councils of the church and other parties;
- 02.39.05 request the General Secretary and Synod Secretaries of Victoria and Tasmania and New South Wales to convene an appropriate representative group to discuss the documents and comments received;
- 02.39.06 request Bill Fischer and Jason Kioa to bring an interim report to the November 2002 meeting of the ASC with a view to a final report and way forward being agreed upon at the March 2003 ASC meeting;
- 02.39.07 request National Directors of UIM and Multicultural Ministry to engage in reflection on the broader long-term issue of how the UCA can provide hospitality to those people in Australia, coming from partner churches, who are not yet part of the UCA, and report to the ASC.

## FROM ASSEMBLY BODIES

### 1. TASK GROUP ON GOVERNANCE

Allan Thompson, convenor of the Task Group, presented Document 3, consisting of a progress report and discussion paper. Members of the Task Group then made a verbal presentation giving opportunity for questions to identify areas of agreement and disagreement/concern with the proposals contained in Document 3. Much discussion followed in table groups and plenary session. Later in the meeting further discussion took place in plenary session on the matters identified as concerns, with some input that addressed those concerns. In table groups discussion took place on issues about which there was concern or disagreement.

**02.40** **It was resolved** to request the Task Group on Governance to give further consideration to the issues raised in Document 3, and, in the light of the reports from table groups at this meeting, to bring to the next meeting a further report and recommendations on issues of governance, including:

- (a) the relationship between the Assembly and the ASC;
- (b) the desirability of the Triennial meeting of the Assembly determining its directions, values and goals, and/or the desirability of the ASC; articulating these at its first meeting following a triennial meeting of the Assembly;
- (c) a policy on the parameters of the authority of the General Secretary;
- (d) the expectations the ASC may have with regard to the General Secretary's reporting to the ASC;
- (e) the means by which the ASC will participate in the selection and/or appointment of staff, giving due consideration to the Regulations on placements.

### 2. UNITY AND INTERNATIONAL MISSION AND UNITING CHURCH OVERSEAS AID REPORT RE FUTURE PLANS

Bill Fischer presented Document 6, consisting of a report giving an overview on the main elements of UIM/UCOA's work, and attached annual reports of UIM and UCOA. This was followed by a presentation of the strategic issues facing UIM/UCOA with opportunity for questions and discussion. He also tabled a paper giving a financial overview of UIM/UCOA from 1986–2012.

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

### **3. GENERAL REPORT BY THE ASSEMBLY SECRETARIES**

The General Secretary presented Documents 11 and 11A, consisting of a report on the following matters –

- ASC minute 02.23.02 re the appointment of the UCA delegates to the 24th General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches: Rev Dr Chris Budden, Rev Dr Dean Drayton, Ms Judi Fisher, Rev Prof James Haire and Rev Vicki Waller, with the name of a youthful participant to come;
- housing for the National Director, Social Responsibility and Justice;
- review of lay staff salaries and the Accounting Services Unit;
- the appointment of Rev David Thiem as Associate National Director for Frontier Services from January 2003;
- United and Uniting Churches Conference sponsored by the World Council of Churches, to be held in The Netherlands from 11 – 19 September on the general theme 'uniting and its contribution to the mission of the church' – the General Secretary to attend and present the UCA paper;
- request to the Legal Reference Committee re Regulations for the Third Phase of ministry training;
- actions taken in response to ASC minutes 01.87.04 and 01.87.06 in respect of the document *For the Sake of the Gospel*, the Anglican/Uniting Church Dialogue group report;
- Cross-cultural Workshop on *Confronting Racism* to be run in synods, presbyteries congregations, theological colleges and centres for lay education (background paper from Multicultural Ministry and brochure tabled at ASC);
- Consultation on National Co-operation to be convened by the General Secretary;
- It was reported that Christian Unity has undertaken the work requested in resolution 01.87.06, subject to some minor variations and Document 11B, entitled *Thinking through the options*, a paper on the process and timeline for developing a multi disciplinary team, arising out of the Management Advisory Group's report re co-operation among Assembly Agencies to the March meeting of ASC.

**02.42**                    **It was resolved** to receive the reports and to endorse the process and timeline being put forward in Document 11B.

### **4. GENERAL SECRETARY RE ASSEMBLY BUDGET PREPARATION**

The General Secretary presented Document 21, consisting of a progress report on the preparation of the Assembly's budget for 2003. The report gave details of the budget development process followed based on five reference points, work undertaken by the Management Advisory Group since the March ASC meeting, and information about the likely budget situation of the Assembly for 2003 including advice from synods and other factors. At one point the ASC met in table groups to discuss three areas for consideration in achieving a balanced 2003 budget to bring to the November meeting.

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

### **5. NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Bruce Binnie, chairperson of the National Finance Committee, presented Document 14, consisting of a report on the need for a review of the National Finance Committee's mandate and the conclusions of the NFC's recent review of existing and proposed commission arrangements regarding National Corporate Agreements.

- 02.44**                    **It was resolved to:**
- 02.44.01                receive the report;
- 02.44.02                note the proposed review of the Mandate of the National Finance Committee;
- 02.44.03                note the change in arrangements for distribution of commissions arising from preferred supplier and Church Resources arrangements.

**6. REVIEW OF NATIONAL DIRECTORS (UNITY & INTERNATIONAL MISSION AND FRONTIER SERVICES) AND THE ASSOCIATE GENERAL SECRETARY**

The General Secretary presented Document 15, consisting of a report alerting the ASC of the need to review the appointments of the National Director, Unity and International Mission; National Director, Frontier Services and the Associate General Secretary as their terms conclude on 31 December 2003. The ASC needs to implement stage one of the review procedures it agreed to under ASC minute 02.10.02.

- 02.45**                    **It was resolved to:**
- 02.45.01                receive the report;
- 02.45.02                (a) appoint Bruce Binnie (convenor), Terence Corkin and Margaret Reeson to the Review Group for the National Director, Unity and International Mission, with power to co-opt an additional person;
- (b) appoint Jan Trengove (convenor), Gregor Henderson, Robert Johnson and Wendie Wilkie to the Review Group for the National Director, Frontier Services;
- (c) appoint Jelita Gardner-Rush (convenor), Chris Budden, Terence Corkin and David Pitman to the Review Group for the Associate General Secretary.

**7. THEOLOGY AND DISCIPLESHIP**

Rob Bos presented Document 16, consisting of a report on the UCA's membership of Australian Hymn Book Committee including advice that the Rev Dr D'Arcy Wood is stepping down after many years of service on the committee, and the issue of which worship resources should be brought to the ASC for approval. He also presented Document 16A, which continued work begun earlier on the question of membership within the Uniting Church. He also tabled a copy of a paper on the catechumenate.

- 02.46**                    **It was resolved to:**
- 02.46.01                receive the reports;
- 02.46.02                (a) thank Rev Dr D'Arcy Wood sincerely for his many years of service on the Australian Hymn Book Committee;
- (b) appoint Megan McLaughlin as the UCA's representative on the AHB Committee;
- 02.46.03                adopt the policy that worship resources that reflect/affect core doctrines or practices and have ecumenical implications (eg Lord's Supper, Baptism/Confirmation); that have legal implications (eg Marriage Service); or have to do with the ordination/induction /commissioning of the six specified ministries; and background papers that the ASC may wish to adopt as official policy for the church shall be brought to the ASC for adoption;

- 02.46.04
- (a) request the Design Team to set some time aside for a discussion on issues related to membership in the Uniting Church as it prepares for the 10th Assembly;
  - (b) set aside time at the November meeting of the ASC for a fuller consideration of the issues raised by the report on membership;
  - (c) facilitate a discussion among the other Councils of the Church on the issues raised in the paper on membership, prior to the matter coming to the 10th Assembly.

## **8. NATIONAL SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND JUSTICE RE ASYLUM SEEKER AND REFUGEE POLICY**

Elenie Poulos presented Document 17, consisting of a submission from NSR&J to update and revise the Uniting Church's current policy on asylum seekers and refugees, and the draft revised policy paper *Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Humanitarian Entrants*, for the approval of the ASC.

### **02.47 It was resolved to:**

- 02.47.01 adopt the policy paper *Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Humanitarian Entrants* as presented in Document 17, with the addition of a theological preamble and definition of terms;
- 02.47.02 request the Assembly Officers in conjunction with National Social Responsibility and Justice to make a statement expressing concern about the treatment of the Bakhtiari brothers who were recently returned to Woomera Detention Centre.

## **9. FRONTIER SERVICES RE DESIGNATION OF PLACEMENTS**

On behalf of Rosemary Young, National Director of Frontier Services, the General Secretary presented Document 18, consisting of a report on the current policy for the designation of placements and a schedule indicating a number of Frontier Services placements for patrol ministers that had not followed the pre 1998 procedures for appointment. The presentation noted the importance for Frontier Services that it be able to be flexible, timely and clear in negotiations with third parties for the creation of placements. It was noted that the pre 1998 process for appointment is no longer applicable and another mechanism will be required.

### **02.48 It was resolved to:**

- 02.48.01 receive the report;
- 02.48.02 refer to the Task Group on Governance consideration of the process for the designation of placements within Frontier Services, and the appointment of persons to those placements as part of its wider consideration of appointment processes under the developing governance policy of the Assembly, and report to the November meeting of ASC when the final decision will be made.

## **10. TASK GROUP ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION**

Allan Thompson, convenor of the Task Group, presented Document 19, consisting of an Options Paper arising from reflections in the Task Group following extensive consultation and some face-to-face meetings with presbyteries, synods, some Assembly agencies and individual members of the UCA. This Options Paper will shortly be forwarded to various councils and agencies of the church with an invitation to comment and to enable the Task Group to bring a final report to the ASC in November.

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

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **1. REQUESTS TO BLESS SAME SEX RELATIONSHIPS**

The General Secretary presented Document 13, consisting of a report and correspondence arising out of ASC minute 01.72.02 dealing with issues related to requests to bless same sex relationships. Much discussion ensued.

**02.50**                    **It was resolved** to:

02.50.01                receive the report;

02.50.02                approve the release of the advice present in the report and request the General Secretary to forward that advice to the minister concerned;

02.50.03                accept the offer of Chris Budden's to write a short paper on the relationship between theology, doctrine and ethics, and resolve to allow time at the November meeting of the ASC for consideration of this issue;

02.50.04                request the General Secretary to bring a report to the November meeting of the ASC on matters that might be coming to the 10th Assembly in the area of human sexuality, and what this might require in preparing for the 10th Assembly.

### **2. CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE EVANGELICAL MEMBERS WITHIN THE UNITING CHURCH**

The General Secretary presented Document 20, consisting of correspondence from the National Spokesperson for the Evangelical Members within the Uniting Church on behalf of the EMU National Council raising a number of matters, including the Code of Ethics, the status of same sex blessings, and the development of guidelines on vilification and harassment.

**02.51**                    **It was resolved** to:

02.51.01                receive the correspondence;

02.51.02                (a) request the Synod and Assembly Secretaries to consider whether it is timely to review the operation of the Code of Ethics;

(b) if so request that they recommend a process, including terms of reference, to the Assembly Officers at the earliest possible opportunity; and

(c) authorize the Assembly Officers, if recommended by the Synod and Assembly Secretaries, to approve of a process and arrange for its implementation;

02.51.03                (a) note the concern of the National Council of the Evangelical Members within the Uniting Church re the actions of a Presbytery;

(b) note that it is (in the case of Congregational placements) the responsibility; and authority of Congregations and Presbyteries to call and induct Ministers into such placements;

(c) remind the National Council of EMU of Presidential Ruling No. 20;

- (d) remind the National Council of EMU that where a Minister is designated “available for placement” in the UCA then the Minister is free to negotiate a call. Where a Minister is designated “available for placement” a Congregation is free to call that Minister, and it is legitimate for a Presbytery to induct the Minister.

**3. GUIDELINES ON DEALING WITH VILIFICATION AND HARASSMENT** (Assembly minute 00.25.04).

The General Secretary reported that since commencing work on the proposed guidelines, two members of the working group had stood down and the convenor was no longer able to continue to lead this group.

**02.52**

**It was resolved** to refer the matter to the Synod Secretaries to arrange the drafting of proposed Guidelines on dealing with vilification and harassment in the church, and request that they be brought back to the ASC at the earliest opportunity.

**4. REQUEST FROM THE NSW SYNOD RE GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT BY LAY STAFF IN CONGREGATIONS**

The General Secretary had received correspondence from the General Secretary of the NSW Synod requesting that the Assembly consider developing guidelines for dealing with complaints of sexual misconduct so that they more appropriately relate to lay staff in congregations.

**02.53**

**It was resolved** that the General Secretary, in consultation with Synod Secretaries and the Assembly Legal Reference Committee, refine the Guidelines for dealing with complaints of sexual misconduct by lay staff in congregations, and bring them for consideration by the ASC at the earliest opportunity.

**CLOSURE**

The meeting closed at 3.35 pm with prayer led by Bruce Binnie.

**DATES OF NEXT  
MEETINGS:  
15 – 17 November 2002  
14 – 16 March 2003**

**GUIDELINES FOR THE  
THIRD PHASE OF MINISTERIAL EDUCATION  
MINISTRY INTERN PHASE**

**These Guidelines seek to establish common practice across the Assembly in terms of an overall framework for the Third Phase of Ministerial Education.**

**(The Guidelines DO NOT seek to make uniform the implementation specifics across synods and presbyteries.)**

**Each Synod is encouraged to seek implementation of the Phase in a manner appropriate to the resources and practices of its synod and presbyteries. The manner of program development and delivery and the resourcing for the Phase will reflect the diversity of each of the synods.**

**1. Summary of Ministry Intern Phase**

<b>Name</b>	Ministry Internship
<b>Status of individual</b>	Full ministerial responsibility and accountability, including where approved authority to preside at the sacraments.
<b>Ordination / commissioning</b>	At the completion of the Third Phase (which would normally be one year into the Placement, but may be extended to up to 3 years).
<b>Ministry Intern Phase</b>	<b><i>Normally 12 months, but may be extended up to three years.</i></b>
<b>Placement Length</b>	3 -10 years
<b>Study</b>	The study component is to be flexible, with mixed mode study. Minimum of 240 hours (6 weeks), including supervision time.
<b>Oversight &amp; accountability</b>	Placement Presbytery (in consultation with Education Agency and Supervisor)
<b>Funding</b>	Placement to fund normal ministry stipend. The Synod, through an appropriate agency, meets the costs of the study portion (in a manner reflective of the Synod’s meeting of costs for Continuing education required in Phase Four). Supervision costs met as determined by Placement Presbytery.
<b>Consequences of non-completion</b>	Failure to achieve satisfactory completion by the end of the third year would normally result in terminating placement without ordination/ commissioning taking place.

## 2. Background

In 1997 the Assembly agreed to the introduction of 4-phases of ministerial education.

Phase One is a Period of Discernment;

Phase Two is a period of core theological education and formation;

Phase Three is a period of transition into the ministry workplace; and

Phase Four is the continuing education and formation for ongoing effective ministry.

## 3. Key to Terms used in Guidelines

Ministry Intern Phase:	the third phase of Theological and Ministry education, normally 1 year in length.
Ministry Intern:	the person participating in Phase Three.
Synod Placements:	the synod body which has oversight of the placement processes and Committee placement of Ministers with a particular Synod.
Home Presbytery:	the Presbytery in which the Ministry Intern candidate.
Placement Presbytery:	the Presbytery in which the Ministry Intern is exercising Ministry.
Supervision:	the covenantal relationship between the Ministry Intern and a Supervisor where the Supervisor exercises oversight, encouragement and feedback to the Intern, enabling appropriate reflective practice of his/her ministry.
Educational Agency:	the agency designated by the Synod to co-ordinate the study component of Phase three. Normally, this would be the Theological College within the Synod where the Core Phase for the candidate was completed.
Code of Ethics:	document outlining code of Ministerial practice within the Uniting Church. Adopted by the 9 <sup>th</sup> Assembly 2000.

## 4. Purpose of the Third Phase

The Ministry Intern Phase is a supervised experience of Ministry. The purpose of this phase is to give the Ministry Intern the opportunity to begin to integrate learning from the Core Phase of theological education in a comprehensive ministry context and to continue serious and guided education for Ministry.

This Phase has many aspects of accountability and responsibility at a greater level than that of the Core Program Field Education component.

The Phase is another opportunity for the Intern and the church to reflect on and ascertain the his/her suitability for Ministry.

The Phase's supervised experience of ministry may provide a model with benefits for all the years of Phase Four.

## **5. Responsibility for Phase Three Components**

### **5.1 Placement of Ministry Intern**

The Placements Committee, in consultation with a congregation/agency, its Presbytery and the Educational Agency, will arrange the placement for the Ministry Intern.

### **5.2 Study undertaken by Ministry Intern**

The Educational Agency will determine, in consultation with the Ministry Intern, the appropriate study foci for Phase Three.

### **5.3 Supervision engaged in by Ministry Intern**

The Placement Presbytery, in consultation with the Educational Agency and the Ministry Intern, will determine the appropriate Supervisor to guide the Ministry Intern during this Phase.

## **6. Length of Ministry Intern Phase**

The Ministry Intern Phase will normally extend for a period of twelve months, but may, on the discretion of the Presbytery and in consultation with the Education Agency and Supervisor, be extended up to 3 years.

## **7. Status of Ministry Intern**

The Ministry Intern will exercise all the responsibility and authority of Ministry and leadership in the Placement. It is expected that Presbytery will normally grant authority to preside at the celebration of the sacraments. However, the authority for sacramental ministry is not automatically granted and each Presbytery must exercise its role in determining requests for it.

## **8. Oversight and Accountability during Phase Three**

The Placement Presbytery is primary in exercising oversight and accountability, in consultation with the Education Agency and the designated Supervisor.

## **9. Placement**

The Placement designated for the Ministry Intern may be any approved placement within the Synod. However, certain characteristics will be sought within the Placement.

The congregation or agency needs to be of sufficient stability to enhance the Ministry Intern's opportunity for Ministry practice.

The congregation or agency needs to have sufficient capacity to support and encourage the purposes and goals of the Ministry Intern Phase, including encouragement and acceptance of the anticipated time required for the study component.

### **9.1 Placement Length**

The length of the Placement is for an exit placement within the Uniting Church, that is, normally a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 10 years.

## **10. Study Component**

### **10.1 Curriculum**

The study component is to be flexible and determined by the Educational Agency in consultation with the Ministry Intern.

Some Ministry Interns will be required to complete formal theological study. Others may be encouraged to study contextual ministry education, such as Clinical Pastoral Education, mission and evangelism, leadership and practical ministry courses, management and organisational dynamics.

The component will also include transitional action/reflection opportunities. The range of study opportunities will reflect the resources and current offerings in continuing education within each Synod.

The study component will be in a mixed-mode format and may include intensives, 'one-off' workshops, distance education, supervision, and formal study.

### **10.2 Intensity**

The study component is a minimum of 240 hours (6 weeks) including supervision, and is anticipated should not exceed 320 hours (8 weeks) except in exceptional circumstances.

### **10.3 Funding**

The cost of study in the Ministry Intern Phase is to be met in the same manner as in the Continuing Education requirement of the Fourth Phase, and may be met by educational grants, subsidised study at Theological College and contributions by the individual engaged in the study.

### **10.4 Remote Areas**

It is envisaged that a significant portion of the study component of ministry Interns in remote areas will be fulfilled either by distance education (e.g. on-line learning) or through intensives.

## **11. Supervision**

### **11.1 Purpose of Supervision**

The purpose of the Supervision component is to assist the Ministry Intern to address matters arising from the practice of Ministry within the Placement, including the integration of theological education and Ministry practice, action/reflection on aspects of Ministry; and exploration of an appropriate model for ministry within Phase Four.

### **11.2 Frequency**

The frequency of the Supervision engagement will be determined by the geographical and contextual constraints of the Placement. However, face-to-face engagement is deemed important and at the very least once per month.

### **11.3 Appointed Supervisor**

The Supervisor will be appointed by the Placement Presbytery in consultation with the Ministry Intern and the Educational Agency. The designated supervisor is to be recognised by the Presbytery as one with experience in Ministry and an ability to exercise reflective ministry practice. The Supervisor will meet the church's expectations as outlined in the Guidelines for Pastoral Supervision and will have completed synod-recognised training in the practice of supervision.

### **11.4 Funding**

The funding of this component of the Ministry Intern Phase will be met in the same manner as the Supervision requirements are normally funded within the presbytery.

## **12. Funding of Ministry Intern Phase**

The designated Placement is to fund the Ministry Intern Phase through the normal ministry terms of Placement.

The Ministry Intern continues to receive the normal stipend and allowances while engaged in the study and supervision component of the Phase.

Extra costs involved in the study (such as course fees and supervision costs are met according to the normal practice within each synod and presbytery for Continuing Education and Code of Ethics requirements. Some Synods have resource grants given directly to Ministers, other Synods meet the costs of Continuing Education mainly through subsidising continuing education programs.)

## **13. Satisfactory completion of Ministry Intern Phase**

The Placement Presbytery, in consultation with the Education Agency, and the Supervisor will determine whether the intended outcomes of the Ministry Intern Phase have been appropriately reached.

## **14. Decision to Ordain or Commission**

The Home Presbytery shall, following consideration of an appraisal from and consultation with the Placement Presbytery, determine whether or not to ordain or, in the case of a Youth Worker, commission the Ministry Intern, taking into account the requirements of the Church, including Regulation 2.3.1 or 2.9.2.

## **15. Consequences of Non-Completion**

As noted above, the Ministry Intern Phase will normally be completed with one year. At the discretion of the Placement Presbytery and educational agency (in consultation with the Home Presbytery) it may be necessary to extend the Phase to allow for further discernment. Failure to achieve satisfactory transition into full and effective practice of Ministry by the end of the third year will normally result in termination of the Placement, without ordination or commissioning. In this instance the Home Presbytery and Educational Agency will be involved in a discernment process with the individual regarding future ministry possibilities.

## 16. Appendices

### 16.1 Examples of Ministry Intern Phase

#### Example One

Placement - rural congregation, with close proximity to regional rural centre

Study Component -

Course/Program	Sponsoring Body	Funding	Time-Commitment
Synod-wide intensive on mission & evangelism - residential	Continuing Education Agency	Subsidised by Continuing education agency \$100 individual payment	4 days = 40 hours
Reflection on Ministry Program - residential	Theological College		3 days x 2 = 60 hours
Coolamon College (2 Cert. level subjects)	Coolamon College	Individual	50 hrs x 2 = 100 hours
Supervision	Presbytery	No cost – Minister trained in supervision	2 hrs x 12 (face-to-face) + 2 hrs x 12 (preparation) = 48 hours

#### Example Two:

Placement - community welfare agency - diaconal appointment

Study Component -

Course/Program	Sponsoring Body	Funding	Time-Commitment
Deacon intensive – ministry in a hurting world - residential	Theological College	Subsidised by Continuing education agency \$200 individual payment	5 days = 50 hours
Reflection on Ministry Program - residential	Theological College		3 days x 2 = 60 hours
B. Theol level subject – Spirituality in a secular age	Theological College	Theological College	10 hrs. per week (one semester) = 130 hours
Supervision	Presbytery	Supervision paid partially through Ministerial Benefits, and partially by Agency.	2 hrs x 12 (face-to-face) + 1 hr x 12 (preparation) = 36 hours

### Example Three:

Placement - metropolitan church - team ministry

Study Component -

Course/Program	Sponsoring Body	Funding	Time-Commitment
School of Theology - residential	Theological College	Subsidised by Continuing education agency \$250 individual payment	4 days = 40 hours
Reflection on Ministry Program - residential	Theological College	Continuing education	4 days = 40 hours
On-Line Learning – Community Development Course I & II	TAFE / Theological College	Individual	5 hrs. per week (two semesters) = 130 hours
Supervision	Presbytery	Reduced cost – Minister trained in supervision – Intern’s MBA	2 hrs x 12 (face-to-face) + 1 hr x 12 (preparation) = 36 hours

### Example Four:

Placement - remote rural ministry

Study Component -

Course/Program	Sponsoring Body	Funding	Time-Commitment
School of Theology - residential	Theological College	Subsidised by Continuing education agency \$250 individual payment	3 days = 30 hours
Post-graduate Unit – Rural ministry Practicum	Coolamon College	Individual	250 hours
Supervision	Presbytery	Reduced cost – Colleague trained in Supervision – Intern’s MBA	2 hrs x 9 (face-to-face) + 1 hr x 9 (preparation) = 27 hours

## 16.2 Frequently asked questions

### What are the expectations with regard to Part-time placements?

Each synod (MEB) will need to determine the ‘pro rata’ expectations on those exercising a part-time candidacy into the Ministry Intern. Clearly the purposes of the Ministry Intern Phase will still need to be achieved while ministering part-time.

**What happens, with respect to preside at the Sacraments in a Placement within an ecumenical agency?**

Where, for ecumenical and other reasons, the Ministry Intern placement is one in which the Ministry Intern celebrates the sacraments – the presbytery is encouraged to grant authority to preside at the sacraments.

**What is the Ministry Intern's status with regard to the**

**Beneficiary Fund?** Under the present terms of the trust deed, there is no provision to admit non-ordained persons into the Beneficiary Fund. At present the Lay Fund would provide a suitable transition platform and Ministry Interns could then rollover/buy back years of service in the Beneficiary Fund upon ordination.

**Do the Phase Three Guidelines impose additional tasks on new ministers and will that mean they will be therefore less available for ministry practice?**

Phase Three does impose additional tasks upon the Ministry Intern. However, such tasks are designed to enhance the transition for Ministry Interns from academic life into ministry practice. Secondly, the Phase Three requirements are designed to begin to develop long term practices which will support and enhance ministry throughout all the years of Ministry.

**What happens re transition from Phase 2 into Phase 3?**

Recognition that Phase Two has been completed. This may mean the award of Completion of Core Study, or some similar descriptive recognition.

**Who instigates the transition from Phase 3 to Phase 4?**

The Placement Presbytery, in consultation with the educational agency, the supervisor and the Home Presbytery, determines that a Ministry Intern is ready for ordination.

***Approved by Assembly Standing Committee  
July 2002***