

Uniting Church in Australia
ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE

14 – 16 November 2003

PRESENT Dean Drayton (President), Bruce Binnie, Elizabeth Burns, Dennis Chapman, Samantha Charlesworth, Sue Clarkson, Terence Corkin, Tony Davies, Bev Fabb, Sealin Garlett, Susan Gormann, Gregor Henderson, Wesley Gleeson, Geoffrey Grinton, Matthew Grudnoff, Troy Hamilton, Jason Kioa, Isabel Thomas Dobson, Allan Thompson, Myffie Trudinger, Julie Watts

In attendance: Jenny Bertalan, Rob Bos, Kim Cain, Stu Cameron, John Evans, Graham Humphris, Robert Johnson, Allan Kuchler, John Rowland, Wendie Wilkie.

WORSHIP On the Friday evening, as part of the formation of the community, the General Secretary presided at the opening Service of Holy Communion and Bev Fabb preached. On the Saturday Samantha Charlesworth led morning worship and Dennis Chapman led evening prayers. On the Sunday Wesley Gleeson led morning worship and the closing prayer in the afternoon was led by Julie Watts.

WELCOMES

The President welcomed all ASC participants to the meeting and extended a special welcome to Graham Humphris, Moderator of the South Australian Synod and Kim Cain, Communications Officer from the Synod of Victoria/Tasmania as visitors and to Chris Budden and Liva Tukutama who were unable to attend the previous meeting. Also welcomed as visitors were Rob Runco and Robert Hoskin to present reports on the Beneficiary Fund on Saturday; Sebert Ruddock to present a report on the Home Endowment Fund on Sunday and Jim Fraser to speak to the National Finance Committee report on Saturday.

RECOGNITION OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LAND

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

APOLOGIES

03.70 **It was resolved** to receive the apology of Jenny Tymms and Shayne Blackman, for absence from the whole of the meeting; from Jason Kioa for absence from the Friday evening, Saturday morning and afternoon; from James Haire for the Friday evening and Saturday morning; Troy Hamilton on Friday evening session due to his late flight into Sydney.

PASTORAL MATTERS

The President introduced a time of sharing on pastoral matters. Stu Cameron from the Synod of South Australia reported that the Synod had recently lost two ministers, Jane Tiller and John Keane. Both ministers were from the Presbytery of Wakefield. The General Secretary advised that Meg McKay, wife of Rev Dr Fred McKay, former director of AIM had passed away. Robert Johnson reported

that Rev Davis McCaughey was in hospital and he was doing well. The death of the Rev Gemmel Sherwood's mother was also noted. Gregor Henderson announced that the World Council of Churches is publishing a book (which was written by Jill Tabbart) on consensus-based rules of procedure modelled on the Manual for Meetings of the Uniting Church and the World Alliance of Churches may be using it for some parts of their business in Accra.

03.71 **It was resolved to** express sincere thanks to Jill Tabbart.

APPROVAL OF TIMETABLE AND AGENDA

The General Secretary spoke to the agenda and timetable as listed in Document 1. Several new documents were distributed on the Friday evening and Saturday morning.

03.72 **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

03.73 **It was resolved to** confirm the minutes of the meetings held 22- 24 August 2003, subject to adding Gregor Henderson to those in attendance and adding the names of Rev Ju Min Hyung, Mrs Kalo Fotu and Rev Samata Elia to the Multicultural Ministry Reference Committee members under Minute 03.63.07 and by adding " and to serve as an ex-officio member of these;" to point b) i. in Minute 03.61.02 to read:

- 03.61.03 b) that the National Consultant's role be:
- i. to resource and co-ordinate the functions of all Working Groups/Network within Theology and Discipleship and to serve as ex-officio member of these;

NOTE CONSTITUTION CLAUSE 39

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

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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

On the Saturday afternoon the President reported to the Standing Committee on his activities since the previous meeting. He referred to the large amount of correspondence received in relation to Proposal 84 since August, with lately an increasing number of responses to responses. He spoke about his visit to Adelaide to attend the Conference of the Patrol Ministers and Rev David Thiem's induction. He noted that he was pleased to hear Sealin Garlett's report on what the Congress had been experiencing since the Tenth Assembly including the graciousness the Church had shown towards Congress' place in the Church and the affirmation of their right to speak. He mentioned Congress' desire to see what is happening in the Methodist Church in New Zealand with the Pakeha and Maori Caucusing which is part of their decision making, and his recent visit there to see how this operated. He saw the caucus process at work in a discussion which led to The New Zealand Methodist Church resolving to ordain homosexual persons.

The President also shared with the Assembly Standing Committee the details of his visit to Bali at the invitation of the Christian Church of Bali. He was the only Australian Head of Church present at the televised Australian Government Christian service, and noted that there had been no reporting in Australia of the services organized by the Balinese Christian Churches at which more than 8,000 attended. He reported that later he traveled to Port Hedland for a eucharist service with Uniting Church congregation of detainees in the detention centre. He informed the Assembly Standing Committee of the call for a National Forum on poverty which had been launched by the Heads of Churches working together with the Islamic Council and Jewish leaders. Though there was a minimal response in the media, it was a major step forward when the Labor Party made included the need for such a Forum in their own policy platform. He also reported his visit to Central Queensland Presbytery in which he visited nearly all of the congregations from Longreach through to Rockhampton and Gladston with the Presbytery Officer. He was encouraged by the response to his presentation about Proposal 84.

He then commented on the fact that while there had been two reviews of the National Assembly structure in the last 26 years, there had not been a review of the role of the President. He noted the difficulties that he was having given that officially the position is half time, but the expectation in the last decade has been that the position is at least full time. He noted that it depended on the other employing body to really carry the Assembly. He observed that as each major issue emerged it was addressed and then became an issue which developed its own agenda for the future, e.g. detainees, call for a national forum on Poverty, etc. He believed it was time for a review of the role of President.

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

SYNOD SHARING - SYNOD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Participants from the Synod of South Australia shared something of the life of their Synod as an expression of our inter conciliar sharing. The major focus was on the recent Synod meeting held in the Barossa Valley where the Synod had a chance to get together as a community and meeting out of the city enhanced the feeling of togetherness. The Synod had farewelled Jan Trengove and inducted Graham Humphris as the new Moderator. Stu Cameron focused on the major decisions made at the Synod meeting as well as the debates and challenges they have to face as a Synod. Dennis Chapman touched upon issues of property and finance. Myffie Trudinger reported about the highly successful South Australia Camp Out (SACO) event which had attracted the biggest ever attendance. Graham Humphris shared some thoughts about the Synod meeting's theme: Go and Make Disciples under which the Synod is encouraging faith sharing by Congregations. Stu Cameron commented that the Synod is sensing that the Congregations are looking for ways to build community.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS STANDING COMMITTEE

1. APPOINTMENT OF A TASK GROUP RE THE CODE OF ETHICS (ASC MINUTE 03.43.04)

The General Secretary presented the names of those nominated to serve in the Task Group.

03.75 **It was resolved to** approve the names of Meg Herbert, Diane Stanton, Anita Monro, Chris Walker, Sang Taek Lee, John Evans (corresponding member), Samata Elia (corresponding member).

2. RE MINISTRY LEADERSHIP (ASC MINUTE 03.45.04)

Chris Budden presented Appendix A of Document 8, containing a report of the group appointed to consider a Task Group on Specified Ministries.

03.76 It was resolved to:

- 03.76.01 receive the report;
- 03.76.02 establish a task group to develop and oversight a process which encourages a broad discussion within synods and presbyteries on the following foundational theological issues in the light of our present situation, and their relationship to the questions the church faces in ordering its Ministry;
- The mission of God (linked with);
 - The nature and mission of the church;
 - Baptism, membership and ministry of the whole people;
 - The Ministry of the church; in particular, the issues surrounding the ordering of Ministry within the church;
- 03.76.03 at a certain point the task group facilitate conversations within Synods about the implications of those conversations for the way in which the church expresses its practice of Ministry, and encourage the synods to raise issues with the Assembly if the Regulations impede or do not support good missional practice;
- 03.76.04 appoint the following members of the Task Group:
- Colleen Geyer (Convenor)
 - Bruce Mullan
 - Geoff Thompson
 - Neil Sims
 - Duncan McLeod
 - Robin Yang
 - Carol Bennett
 - Chris Budden (Doctrine Working Group)
 - Corresponding members
 - Jenny Byrnes (SA)
 - Jason Kioa (Vic)
 - Sef Carole (NSW)
 - Andrew Dutney (Polity)
 - Richard Wallace (Congress)
 - John Evans
 - Rob Bos
- 03.76.05 request the Doctrine Working group to prepare the basic material for the discussions;
- 03.76.06 request the Task group to use a variety of methods to encourage the conversations, including face-to-face meetings, and electronic discussions;
- 03.76.07 discourage Regulation changes in regard to the ordering of Ministry during the next three years, and encourage Synods and presbyteries to think imaginatively about ways to work with the existing regulations while the discussions are occurring;
- 03.76.08 request the General Secretary to provide a space in the March 2004 agenda for the foundational theological issues to be introduced and discussed, so that the ASC is better able to understand and support the conversations on Ministry, and provide support for the process that is developing;
- 03.76.09 request the General Secretary to negotiate with the Task group about the resources necessary for this work, and to report to the March 2004 ASC about the provisions which have been made;

- 03.76.10 authorise the Assembly Officers to finalise the appointment of the persons on the committee with special regard to deacon and gender balance;
- 03.76.11 thank and discharge the working group established under Minute 03.45.

FROM ASSEMBLY BODIES

1. BENEFICIARY FUND

Rob Runco, Executive Director of the Beneficiary Fund presented Documents 5 and 5A, Document 5 being a report on the benefits the Fund currently provides, the actuarial review and asset/liability study, options for change, viability of options and reasons change the Fund from Defined Benefits to Accumulation. Document 5A consisted of a report on composition of the Trustee Board of the Beneficiary Fund, the consequences of the resolution by the Assembly Standing Committee to amend Regulation 6.2 by reducing the Member Representative Directors from six (6) to five (5) and the options to rectify the situation.

1. Beneficiary Fund

03.77 It was resolved:

- 03.77.01 to receive the report;
- 03.77.02 that the Fund take positive steps to improve the Vested Benefits Index of the Fund by temporarily constraining the growth in pensions and accrued benefits;
- 03.77.03 that all Members joining the Beneficiary Fund on or after 1 July 2004 join the Accumulation Category of the Beneficiary Fund;
- 03.77.04 that Church contributions and Member contributions be the same for both Defined and Accumulation categories of Members;
- 03.77.05 that Church contributions increase from 13% of Notional Stipend to 14% of Notional Stipend on 1 January, 2004, with a further increase of 1% of Notional Stipend on 1 January, 2005;
- 03.77.06 to request the Trustees to undertake a review of the existing Temporary and Permanent Disablement Benefits of the Fund and report to the Assembly Standing Committee.

2. Beneficiary Fund Trustee Board

03.78 It was resolved to:

- 03.78.01 approve that the Trust Deed be amended to reduce the Assembly Representative Directors from six (6) to five (5);
- 03.78.02 approve the Trust Deed be amended to include the provision for the election by the Board, with the approval of the Church, of an Independent Trustee.

GENERAL REPORT

The General Secretary spoke to Document 8, consisting of reports on various matters including Minutes of the Tenth Assembly, Anglican / UCA Joint Working Group re "For the Sake of the Gospel", Christian Unity Working Group Secretary, Human Resources Policies and Procedures, Response to the EMU Petition, Trademark Registration, Assembly Task Groups, Media Officer, Provision of Financial Support for the President, Principle 4 of General Secretary Role. The

General Secretary also mentioned the request from Rosemary Broadstock to have Reforming Alliance recognised. Lengthy discussion ensued.

03.79 It as resolved to:

- 03.79.01 receive the report;
- 03.79.02 appoint Chris Mostert, Robert Gribben, Graham Perry, Janet Wood and Pam White as the Uniting Church members on the ongoing Anglican – Uniting Church dialogue;
- 03.79.03 recommend to the WCC that Dean Drayton, Steve Francis, Catherine Lambert, Peter Lewis and Helen Richmond be appointed as the Uniting Church representatives to the WCC Conference on World Mission and Evangelism to be held in Athens in May 2005;
- 03.79.04 approve the position of Secretary to the Christian Unity Working Group as an Assembly placement (limited / 0.4);
- 03.79.05 adopt the principle that the ownership of all UCA trademarks should be vested in the Assembly / UCCMTA;
- 03.79.05.01 authorise the issuing of licencing agreements to enable other entities to use them;
- 03.79.05.02 authorise the General Secretary to liase with the current holders of Uniting Church trademarks with a view to them assigning their rights to the Assembly;
- 03.79.05.03 commend the practice of one agent undertaking the monitoring of the Church's trademark interests;
- 03.79.06. approve the release of up to \$40,000 from the 2004 allocation of the Wesley Uniting Employment funds towards the cost of an Assembly Media Officer;
- 03.79.07 reimburse the President's employing body to 50% of the NSW stipend plus a 20% margin and 50% of the normal on costs and allowances applicable to the NSW Synod for this triennium;
- 03.79.08 authorise the Assembly Officers to appoint a committee to address the issue of remuneration for the President and the amount of time that the role requires.

3. HOME ENDOWMENT FUND

Sebert Ruddock presented Document 6, consisting of a report on the Home Endowment Fund. The Fund is facing major structural problems that need to be addressed very promptly.

03.80 It was resolved to:

- 03.80.01 receive the Report;
- 03.80.02 establish a Review Committee to assess the position of the Home Endowment Fund with particular reference to the present and future viability of the Fund;
- 03.80.03 appoint the following people to the Review Committee:
Sebert Ruddock (Convenor), one Victorian & Tasmanian Synod representative
General Secretary (or his nominee)
Nomination from each of the NSW and South Australian Synods;

- 03.80.04 authorise the Review Committee to bring recommendations affecting the current and future operations of the Fund to the next Assembly Standing Committee meeting.

4. LEGAL REFERENCE COMMITTEE

The General Secretary introduced Document 10, consisting of a report by the Legal Reference Committee on the referrals that had come from the Tenth Assembly for changes to the Regulations.

03.81 It was resolved to:

- 03.81.01 receive the report;

- 03.81.02 amend the Regulations as follows:

03.81.02.01 ELDERS AND CHURCH COUNCILS Regulations 3.1.11 (b) & (c) & 3.1.14 (c)

Amend Regulation 3. 1. 11 by:

- (i) the deletion of the last sentence of 3.1.11(b), and
- (ii) the addition of a subsection, 3.1.11(c), to read:

In furtherance of the principle set out in 3.1.11(b), the Church Council and committees and other bodies shall as far as practicable include a significant proportion of members of the younger age groups to enable them to exercise their gifts.

Regulation 3.1.14 (c)

The maximum number of Elders and other Church Councillors to be elected, in addition to any Elders holding life tenure, shall be determined by the Congregation from time to time after advice from the Church Council.

03.81.02.02 RECOGNITION OF LAY PASTORS

- 2.13.10 (a) When a candidate has fulfilled all the requirements, including satisfactory completion of the course of studies and in the Synod body's opinion is ready to exercise the ministry of Lay Pastor, the Synod shall certify that the person is ready to exercise the ministry of Lay Pastor.

- (b) The Synod shall recognise a person as a Lay Pastor when the person, who is so certified, commences an approved placement or other ministry position recognised by a Presbytery.

2.13.11 The recognition of a Lay Pastor shall cease upon:

- (a) the acceptance by the Synod of a resignation from the ministry of Lay Pastor;
- (b) the termination of the placement of a Lay Pastor where the Lay Pastor does not immediately commence a new placement or other ministry position recognised by a Presbytery;
- (c) the determination of the Committee for Discipline pursuant to Regulation 7.8.16(f), subject to the Regulations relating to review and appeal.

03.81.02.03 SPECIAL MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION AND PRESBYTERY

Amend

- 1) Regulation 3.1.9 (d) in the following terms:

The chairperson and secretary of the Congregation may convene a special meeting, due notice being given, and shall do so if requested in writing by at least ~~seven voting members~~ seven members eligible to vote or a number representing at least 10% of the members eligible to vote, whichever is the greater, of the Congregation. A special meeting shall deal only with matters specified in the notice of meeting.

- 2) Regulation 3.4.10 in the following terms:

If, in the opinion of the chairperson, urgent business warrants the holding of a special meeting, or on written request from ~~not less than five members~~ at least seven members or a number representing at least 10% of the members, whichever is the greater, of the Presbytery, the chairperson shall instruct the secretary to convene a special meeting.

03.81.02.04 ALTERNATE REGULATIONS FOR SMALL CONGREGATIONS

1. Where a Congregation has no more than 30 ~~voting~~ members eligible to vote [as listed in Regulation 3.1.9(a)], the Presbytery may, at the Request of the Congregation, authorise the Congregation to determine that all those who are ~~voting~~ members eligible to vote shall comprise the Church Council.

2. the authorisation shall continue until:

- a) the Congregation decides that it will cease to operate under these alternate Regulations and exemptions and form a Church Council under the Regulations; or
- b) it is withdrawn by the Presbytery after consultation with the Congregation (which shall be carried out by the Presbytery at least every five 5 years); or
- c) ~~the period of 12 months mentioned in alternate Regulation 3 expires~~ the expiry of the period of 12 months mentioned in Alternate Regulation 3 or the longer period authorised under alternate Regulation 3, as the case may be.

3. ~~No later than 12 months after the number of voting members of the Congregation grows to more than 40, t~~These alternate Regulations and exemptions shall cease to apply to the Congregation and the Congregations shall from a Church Council in accordance with the Regulations at the expiry of a period of 12 months after the number of ~~voting~~ members of the Congregation eligible to vote grows to more than 40 or at the expiry of such longer period as the Presbytery may authorise where it considers it is in the best interest of the Church to do.

4. a) a meeting of a Congregation in which the ~~voting~~ members eligible to vote comprise the Church Council shall also be a meeting of the Church Council and vica versa unless the meeting is convened only as a meeting of the Church Council.

- b) The quorum for the meeting of the Congregations which is also a meeting of the Church Council and the quorum for a meeting which is convened only as a meeting of the Church Council shall be one ~~quarter~~half of the ~~voting~~ members eligible to vote. If a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be reconvened.

EXEMPTION:

5. Congregations in which the ~~voting~~ members eligible to vote comprise the Church Council are exempt from:
- a) Regulations 3.1.12(a), 3.1.14 and 3.1.16 insofar as they provide for the election of Church Councillors;
 - b) Regulation 3.1.12(b) insofar as it requires Elders to comprise at least one half of the membership of the Church Councils; and
 - c) regulation 3.1.9(h) only insofar as it is consistent with alternate Regulation 4;
 - d) Regulation 3.1.22

03.81.03 The amendments to the Regulations to come into effect January 1 2004.

5. NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE

Jim Fraser presented Document 7, consisting of a report on the proposed move to an Audit and Finance Committee, mechanisms of national cooperation, premises update and the Telstra Agreement. Additional papers contained a summary of the 2004 budget.

03.82 It was resolved to:

- 03.82.01 receive the report;
- 03.82.02 note with gratitude the contributions from Synods to the Assembly budget for 2004;
- 03.82.03 approve the 2004 budgets as submitted for:
- Assembly Fund;
 - Uniting International Mission;
 - Uniting Church Overseas Aid;
 - Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress;
 - Uniting Education;
- 03.82.04 authorise the General Secretary to sign leases for office accommodation for Frontier Services and the other Sydney Agencies within the Sydney CBD and at 222 Pitt St respectively (Regulation 4.10.3);
- 03.82.05 encourage the pursuit of National Co-operation by the Assembly and Synod Secretaries;
- 03.82.06 note that Frontier Services is investigating both lease and purchase options for its Sydney office accommodation, that Frontier Services wishes to select the option which maximises the funds available for ministry in remote areas, and that a decision will be made only with the approval of the General Secretary.

6. REVIEW OF ASSOCIATE GENERAL SECRETARY AND NATIONAL DIRECTORS

The General Secretary spoke to Documents 3 and 3A, Document 3 included possible terms of reference, process and timeline for the reviews, and Document 3A was the “case for change” that was considered by the previous Standing Committee.

03.83 It was resolved to:

03.83.01 receive the report;

03.83.02 conduct one review for the positions of Associate General Secretary and National Directors of Covenanting, Uniting Education, Uniting Justice and Theology and Discipleship;

03.83.03 adopt the following terms of reference:

1. Identify the insights, knowledge and skills available to the Assembly through the Agencies Uniting Justice, Covenanting, Uniting Education, and Theology and Discipleship; and the office and work of the Associate General Secretary.
2. Give consideration to, and name, which of these insights, knowledge and skills should continue to be available to the Assembly for the advancement of its responsibilities within the life of the Church; and which additional capacities should be added for the next period of time.
3. In the light of the views developed in 2) bring recommendations to the Standing Committee on how best to organise these “insights, knowledge and skills” in the light of current and projected financial parameters.
4. In developing proposals about how best to structure and staff the Assembly for the identified roles it should fulfill consideration should be given to:
 - good organisational theory, including how the work will be managed and supported (in addition to financial terms)
 - how to nourish creativity
 - capacity building in the system, including consideration of the capacities that the Assembly wants to build within its life
 - enhancing relationships with other Councils of the Church so as to include, but not be limited to, adding value to the work of other Councils
 - who are the beneficiaries of this part of the work of the Assembly
 - identifying the skills and personality profiles that will enable flexibility in work practices and enable a relationally positive team
 - the benefits and disadvantages of co-locating the personnel, and if considered appropriate a location for co-location
 - whether the focus for identifying the work should predominantly be by task (eg covenanting and social justice) or by skill sets (eg advocacy, mission, theology and education)
 - if particular areas of work / tasks are identified which areas warrant a person with specialist skills (even if this is not their only responsibility)

03.83.04 appoint a working group of the General Secretary, 3 members of the Assembly Standing Committee, 3 other persons beyond the Assembly Standing Committee;

- 03.83.05 appoint Sam Charlesworth, Allan Thompson and Bruce Binnie and the General Secretary as Convenor;
- 03.83.06 request members of the Assembly Standing Committee to provide names to the General Secretary by the end of November for determination and appointment by the Assembly Officers.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. KEY DIRECTIONS

Wendie Wilkie presented Document 2, consisting of the Key Directions as adopted by the Tenth Assembly. The key directions were defined by the Community Working Groups at the Assembly and relate to the Assembly Standing Committee as the key decision-making body. She challenged and stimulated the Assembly Standing Committee to consider further the meaning of the key directions, to pinpoint the key emphases or to sharpen them up, to reflect on the relationship between agencies and the Assembly Standing Committee.

The Assembly Standing Committee members worked in table groups and grappled with the task of determining what meaning the terms “theologically disciplined and collaborative way of working” in point a) of the Assembly unconfirmed minutes conveyed to them. Ideas relating to these terms ranged as follows

- Seeing how Gospel principles, theology and Basis of Union relate to various work
- spending more time to reflect theologically in ASC meetings
- receiving theological input as it provides an underpinning to discussions
- that the Spirit will lead us to listening and patience
- seeking wider collaboration with agencies and synods
- the importance of interaction between the Agencies
- recognising what the Agencies are doing and to see how they are carrying out the key directions,
- developing opportunities for collaboration

On the issue of what the key emphasis should be, the table groups held varying views.

- unity and diversity,
- missional focus (making disciples, prophetic voice, walking together),
- being a national church – looking at ways we can share work and avoid duplicating efforts
- ways to restore credibility and the importance of good leadership

Key questions and issues raised were what our Church will look like in the future, what opportunities will present themselves, quality of leadership; reconciliation within the Church, problems of anti-institutionalism. However there seemed to be agreement that the most important were being a national church with unity and diversity being integral.

Later in the session the table groups gave some thoughts to what they actually want from the Agencies when they report to the ASC in order to be able to make good policy decisions, and what the Agencies want or need from Assembly Standing Committee. It was recommended that agencies present a one page, dot point, report at each meeting to assist the Standing Committee to be better informed about the agencies.

2. LEGAL ADVICE

The General Secretary presented Document 10A, consisting of a summary of the legal advice received from Russell Kennedy re Proposal 84 and the impact of anti-discrimination legislation as well as a copy of the correspondence from the Melbourne legal firm.

03.84 It was resolved to:

- 03.84.01 authorise the General Secretary to release the summary of the legal advice from Russell Kennedy with a summary to the Church with full copies to Presbyteries and Synods.
- 03.84.02 request the General Secretary, Allan Thompson and Geoffrey Grinton in consultation with the chairperson of the Legal Reference Committee and the Synod General Secretaries
- a) to develop protocols to guide the Church in how to conduct candidature and placement discussions in the light of the legal advice;
 - b) to report to the March 2004 Assembly Standing Committee;
- 03.84.03 regard this decision as fulfilling the request in Assembly resolution 03.12.04 d)(i).

3. PREPARATIONS FOR THE ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY

The General Secretary presented Document 12, consisting of a report on the preparations for the Eleventh Assembly with the proposed venue and dates.

03.85 It was resolved to:

- 03.85.01 receive the report;
- 03.85.02 hold the Eleventh Assembly at the St Lucia campus of the University of Queensland from Wednesday July 5 to Tuesday July 11 2006.

4. APPOINTMENT PROCESS FOR ASSEMBLY PLACEMENTS

The General Secretary presented Document 13, consisting of a report on the appointments of persons to Assembly placements in the light of the Principles adopted by the Tenth Assembly to guide the General Secretary in the exercise of management responsibilities.

03.86 It was resolved to:

- 03.86.01 receive the report;
- 03.86.02 determine that all Defence Force Chaplaincy and Frontier Services Patrol Ministry positions be Assembly placements;
- a) delegate to the Defence Force appointment process the authority to fill all Defence Force Chaplaincy positions on behalf of the Assembly;
 - b) request the Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee to advise the Standing Committee of changes in the names of personnel serving as full time chaplains in the Defence Forces;
 - c) delegate to the National Director and Associate National Director of Frontier Services, the appointment of Frontier Services Patrol Ministers;

- d) request the Frontier Service Committee to advise the Standing Committee of changes in the list of Ministers serving in Assembly placements as Patrol Ministers;
- 03.86.03 determine which Assembly staff position shall be placements as and when necessary;
- 03.86.04 delegate to the General Secretary, in consultation with the appropriate Agency National Director, the authority to issue the call to people (other than National Directors) to placements previously approved as Assembly placements and report them to the ASC;
- 03.86.05 determine that it will issue the call to persons (lay and ordained) for Assembly placements as National Directors, the Associate National Director of Frontier Services and the Associate General Secretary.

5. SYNOD RESPONSES TO PROPOSAL 84

Document 4 consisted of the various resolutions adopted by the meetings of the Synods of New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia and the Northern Synod regarding Proposal 84. The President, the General Secretary, the Synod General Secretaries presented reports on the responses they had received in relation to Proposal 84.

Sealin Garlett, Chairperson of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress shared with the meeting about how the Congress was dealing with the consequences of Proposal 84 and commented on the respect the Church had show towards the UAICC.

03.87 It was resolved to:

- 03.87.01 receive the resolutions of the Synods of New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and the Northern Synod on Assembly resolution 03.12.04 as varied by the Assembly Standing Committee minute No. 03.69.03;
- 03.87.02 receive the reports on responses from Synods, the Congress, the General Secretary and the President;
- 03.87.03 respond to requests from councils of the Church by establishing a process to clarify the doctrine of the Church regarding people in committed same-gender relationships being in leadership roles, including ordained ministries, with a view to decision-making at the 11th Assembly:
 - (a) Step 1 – responding to the requests of synods and presbyteries
refer Assembly minute 03.12.04 as varied by ASC minute 03.69 (proposal 84) to congregations and presbyteries for their responses by 30 April 2004;
 - (b) Step 2 - wrestling with the issues
a period of Biblical and theological study throughout the Church, from June 2004 to June 2005, whereby members and councils, guided by the Basis of Union especially Paragraphs 5 and 11, seek further to discern God's will in this matter;
 - (c) Step 3 - towards decision-making
prepare a full report on steps 1 and 2 by September 2005, in order to resource synods and presbyteries as they prepare for the 11th Assembly;

- 03.87.04 request the Assembly officers (Dean Drayton, James Haire, Gregor Henderson, Terence Corkin), in consultation with Synod Moderators, to approve the documentation for step 1 of the process;
- 03.87.05 appoint a working group to bring recommendations to the next meeting of Standing Committee on the processes and resources needed for step 2 of the process;
- 03.87.06 request the working group to initiate conversations with representatives from migrant-ethnic congregations, the Congress, the Reforming Alliance and Uniting Network concerning the process of discernment;
- 03.87.06 appoint Sue Gormann (convener), Rob Bos, Ian Breward, Bev Fabb, James Haire, Jione Havea, Graham Humphris, Sarah Mitchell and Isabel Thomas Dobson as the members of the working group (subject to their agreement);
- 03.87.07 request councils of the Church to consider carefully the implications of their decisions on others in the life of the Church when they make decisions on these matters leading up to the 11th Assembly.

6. UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

Sealin Garlett spoke to a proposal that the Uniting Church in Australia forge a deeper relationship with the United Church of Canada. He noted that the First Nation people's history is very similar to that of indigenous Australians.

03.88 It was resolved to:

- 03.88.01 approve that the Assembly Standing Committee seek to deepen our relationship with the United Church of Canada, especially between the UAICC and the ministry of the United Church in Canada with the First Nation people, so that the two churches may move to a covenant relationship as global partners.

7. FREE WESLEYAN CHURCH OF TONGA

A verbal report was presented by Jason Kioa on the status of the negotiations with the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga. The date of the consultations had been moved to the week after the Standing Committee meeting and a written report will be available to the March 2004 Standing Committee meeting.

03.89 It was resolved to receive the report.

APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS OF COMMITTEES

The General Secretary presented document 9, consisting of profiles of nominees for election to the Defence Force Chaplaincy and Multicultural Ministry.

03.90 It was resolved to appoint the following members of Reference Committees for a period of three years to 2006:

- 03.90.01 **DEFENCE FORCE CHAPLAINCY**

Murray Earl	Peter Jenkins
Warren Tapp	Mark Lee
Graeme N. Adsett	Robert E. Heathwood
Kaye Ronalds	Albert L. Johns
Christine C. Digby	

03.90.02

MULTICULTURAL MINISTRY

Ivan Roberts

Lu Senituli

CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 4.00pm with prayer led by Julie Watts.

2004 ASC MEETINGS:

12 – 14 March 2004

16 – 18 July 2004

12 – 14 November 2004

Signed: (President)

Date: