



The Assembly Standing Committee met online on 18-19 July 2020.

President Dr Deidre Palmer led opening worship, reflecting on Jesus' words in the Gospel of Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest," noting the fatigue that many people are carrying as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. Prayers of intercession were offered for those in Victoria and parts of NSW where a second wave of infections has broken out.

Assembly General Secretary Colleen Geyer said the meeting was effective and worthwhile, and acknowledged the importance of the community ASC members have built meeting together over the past two years.

Because of the continuing restrictions due to COVID19, the ASC will meet via videoconferencing for the remainder of 2020, in its usual meeting in November, and an additional meeting in September.

COVID19: The Standing Committee considered a number of reports that included the response that the Assembly and its Agencies have been making to the impacts of COVID19, operationally, through advocacy, the establishment of national worship services, online conversations with our Church Partners, webinars considering impacts on CALD communities, resources available through the Assembly Circles of Interest.

BUDGETS: The Standing Committee approved all Assembly budgets.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS: The Standing Committee received nominations to the Frontier Services and UnitingWorld Boards. Katrina Gillies and Rev. Heather den Houting were appointed to the Frontier Services Board. Warren Tapp was appointed to the UnitingWorld Board. The Standing Committee also received and endorsed a Minute of Appreciation for Margaret Watt for her long and significant service to the UnitingWorld Board

UNITINGCARE AUSTRALIA: Paul Linossier (Interim Chair) and Claerwen Little (National Director) presented the annual report of UnitingCare Australia. The report covered important governance responsibilities, resourcing of the Uniting Church's community services network, advocacy and support for the network and the Church for the two current Royal Commissions. The Standing Committee affirmed the work of UnitingCare Australia, and also appointed Geoff Batkin as the new Chair of the UnitingCare Board, commencing in November 2020.

16th ASSEMBLY 2021: The Standing Committee considered the initial planning that has been undertaken for the meeting of the 16th Assembly in July 2021 in Queensland. As with many national events, planning for the 16th Assembly includes the consideration of flexible arrangements that may need to be used.