

MINUTES OF THE TENTH ASSEMBLY

At 2.30 p.m. on Saturday 12 July 2003 the Tenth Assembly was formally constituted with a welcome to country led by Vince Ross on behalf of the traditional owners of the land – the Wurundjuri people; and worship led by the President, James Haire.

OPENING ACTIONS

03.01 ROLL OF THE ASSEMBLY (see Appendix A)

The Assembly resolved:

to adopt the roll of members, subject to any alterations advised to the General Secretary no later than 6.00pm on Monday 14 July 2003.

03.02 PRESIDENT

The Assembly resolved:

to elect Rodney Dean Drayton as President of the Assembly, to hold office until the installation of his successor at the next ordinary meeting of the Assembly.

03.03 BUSINESS COMMITTEE

The Assembly resolved:

03.03.01 Membership of Business Committee

to appoint the following persons as members of the Business Committee for the Tenth Assembly: Robert Johnson (Chairperson), Geoffrey Grinton (Convenor), Terence Corkin, Philip Creed, Dean Drayton, John Emmett, James Haire, Dave Hall, Jason Kioa, Al Macrae, Barbara Spencer, Jan Trengove, D'Arcy Wood (Convenor of the facilitation group), Dan Wootton and Wendie Wilkie.

03.03.02 Appointment of Minute Secretaries

to appoint the following persons as Minute Secretaries: Jenny Bertalan, Jill Tabart, Laurie Thorn.

03.03.03 Order of Business

to approve the order of business and timetable submitted by the Business Committee, noting that decisions to vary the order of business and timetable can be taken by the Assembly at any time.

03.03.04 Participation of Children

to welcome the participation of children in this Assembly through the "KUCA-A" program, and to associate the children with the right to speak but not to vote.

03.03.05 Confirmation of the Minutes

to authorise the following persons to confirm the minutes of the Tenth Assembly: Terence Corkin, Dean Drayton, Geoffrey Grinton, Robert Johnson, Jill Tabart and Jenny Bertalan.

03.03.06 Proposals involving financial commitment

to determine that any proposal submitted at this Assembly which may involve a financial commitment not currently provided for in Assembly budgets or which seeks to establish a priority on the use of resources of the Assembly and/or its agencies or which may involve a financial commitment for synods, be subject to comment before determination by the Assembly as follows:

- by the Finance Committee and the General Secretary in the case of a financial commitment not currently provided for in Assembly budgets;
- by the Management Advisory Group in the case of seeking to establish a priority on the use of Assembly resources;

- by the Finance Committee in the case of financial commitment for synods.

03.03.07

Ballots and Nominating Procedures

- (a) to appoint Malcolm Gledhill as Returning Officer;
- (b) to appoint a Ballot Committee with responsibility for advising the Assembly on any questions relating to nominations and elections;
- (c) to appoint the following persons as members of the Ballot Committee: Malcolm Gledhill (Convenor), Nancy Bomford, Gemmel Sherwood and Jenny Tymms;
- (d) to appoint the following persons as scrutineers: Julie Watts, Beth Cardona, Joan McRae-Benson, Margaret Stollery, Paul Stephens, John Hooper, Harold Kilah, Sue Mulcahy, Sharon Kirk, Peter Bentley, Trevor Knight, Geoff Ebel;
- (e) to determine that the closing time for nominations and the submission of proposals on new matters is 6.00pm Monday 14 July 2003.

03.03.08

Association of persons with the Assembly

to associate the following persons with the Assembly for the business as listed, with the right to speak but not to vote:

- (a) ecumenical guests
 - (i) from other Australian churches and the National Council of Churches in Australia for the whole Assembly:
 - Rev John Henderson, National Council of Churches in Australia;
 - Bishop Huggins, Anglican Church of Australia;
 - Mr Sandy Parker, Religious Society of Friends in Australia;
 - Bishop Mark Coleridge, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference;
 - Mr Russel Hoath, Baptist Union of Australia;
 - Bishop Joseph, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia;
 - Rev Dr David G Stolz, Lutheran Church of Australia.
 - (ii) from overseas churches and from international ecumenical bodies for the whole of the Assembly:
 - Rt Rev Dr Ivan McKay, The Presbyterian Church in Ireland;
 - Mr William McVey; United Reformed Church;
 - Rev Gradye Parsons, Presbyterian Church USA;
 - Rt Rev Michael Thawley, Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand;
 - Rev Karolina Kaunang, Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa
 - Mr Tevi Feiloakitau Kaho, World Council of Churches;
 - Mr Tony Waworuntu, Christian Conference of Asia;
 - Rev Laisiasa Ratabacaca, Methodist Church in Fiji;
 - Ms Omega Bula, United Church of Canada;
 - Rev Dr Sint Kimhachandra, Church of Christ in Thailand;
 - Rev Tofiga Falani, Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu;
 - Rev Penisimani Fonua, Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga;
 - Mrs Vasanthi Rajaratnam, Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India, Sri Lanka;
 - Mr Umerto Arwan, Evangelical Christian Church in the Land of Papua;
 - Mrs Heather Walls; New Zealand Methodist Church;
 - Rev Toraita Raiota, Kiribati Protestant Church;
 - Rev William J. K. Lo, Presbyterian Church in Taiwan;

- Rev Samson Lowa, United Church in Papua New Guinea;
- Bishop Ketut Suyaga Auyb, Protestant Church in Bali;
- Dr Margaretha Hendriks, Protestant Church in Maluku;
- Rev Choi Byung Gon, Presbyterian Church of Korea;
- Pastor Philippe Capoa, Eglise Evangelique au Nouvelle-Caledonia;
- Rev Sartje Papoeling, Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera;
- Rev Ok-Nam Kim, Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea;
- Rgt Rev Dr G. Dyvasirvadam, Church of South India.

(iii) persons who will assist in resourcing the Assembly:

- Rev Prof Christiaan Mostert for “For the Sake of the Gospel”;
- Ms Rosemary Young for Frontier Services;
- Rev John Mavor for the whole of the Assembly;
- Mr Rob Runco for Beneficiary Fund;
- Chaplain Graeme Watkinson for Defence Force Chaplaincy;
- Rev John Adams for Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress and Covenanting;
- Mr Richard Miller for UnitingCare;
- Rev Helen Richmond for Multicultural Ministry;
- Rev James Latu for Multicultural Ministry;
- Rev Deacon Tracy Spencer for the Review of the Ministry of Deacon;
- Mrs Janet Wood for Ministerial Education Commission;
- Rev Dorothy McRae-McMahon, Mr Paul Somerville, Mrs Mary Hawkes, Rev Walter Abetz for Proposals 26 & 54 and related business;
- Rev John Barr, Ms Joy Balazo, Rev Lawrence Fitzgerald for Uniting International Mission;
- Dr Mark Zirnsak for Uniting International Mission.

(b) Co-opted members:

- Dr Odile Glenn
- Mr Geoff Smith
- Mr Ed Walker
- Dr Jill Tabart
- Dr Marelle Harisun

03.04 LAUNCH OF ASSEMBLY THEME

The President and Dave Hall launched the theme of the Tenth Assembly – “Witness the Glory of God”.

03.05 MINISTERIAL MATTERS (See Appendix B)

The General Secretary tabled the names of Deacons, Ministers of the Word, Deaconesses, Youth Workers, Lay Pastors and Community Ministers who have been received by the Uniting Church since the Ninth Assembly, of Ministers of the Word, Deaconesses, Youth Workers and Community Ministers who have died since the Eighth Assembly, and of Ministers of the Word, Youth Workers and Lay Pastors whose recognition has been withdrawn.

The Assembly was led in prayer by the President, who gave thanks particularly for those who had gone before us.

03.06 RETIRING PRESIDENT

James Haire addressed the Assembly.

The Assembly resolved:

03.06.01 to receive the report of the retiring President, James Haire;

03.06.02 to place on record its profound thanks to God for the ministry of the Rev. Professor James Haire as the ninth President of the Assembly (2000–2003), and convey to James the deep appreciation of the Church for his tireless and at times fearless exercise of the ministry of President.

When the Eighth Assembly elected James Haire the Church was aware that the Assembly had elected a man of scholarship, a clear thinker, a passionate ecumenist, a Christian disciple with a heart for the gospel of Jesus Christ, and a love of the Uniting Church. In the three years that James has served as our President we had a President of whom we were proud, who was readily accessible to the church and the wider society, and whose statements both on his own behalf and on behalf of the Church contributed helpfully to public and church debate. The knowledge, background and intellect James brought to issues of church and society are such that his is a voice with high credibility. James often entered public debate, and commanded the respect of our political leaders, many of whom regularly gave him their time and ear. James took office at a time when the General Secretary for the previous twelve years was about to conclude his service in that role. The President welcomed and supported the new General Secretary and assisted him to grow into the role.

James travelled widely during his term of office, both within Australia and overseas. He visited large and small congregations, in large cities, country towns and remote areas. He honoured the schools and UnitingCare agencies as part of the Uniting Church family, and regularly included them in his busy itinerary. James has the skills to relate meaningfully to humble people with no claim to fame, as well as those in the upper echelons of society. At times of crisis, such as flood and fire, James visited traumatised communities to offer the support of the church and the hope of the gospel. In empathy James has a great capacity to laugh or to grieve with others.

James travelled extensively overseas, especially in Asia and the Pacific, but also in Europe and North America. His vast knowledge and appreciation of Indonesia was a great gift to the church when, in the early days of his Presidency, the political and social situation of our near-northern neighbour was very volatile. When we elected James as President-Elect none of us foresaw the upheaval which would occur in Indonesia just over three years later. Many of us marvelled at the grace of God in so guiding the Eighth Assembly that we would have a leader who not only had past knowledge of Indonesia, but many current contacts.

As he moved around the councils of the Church James sought to communicate his vision of God's mission for the Church, a vision grounded in the biblical witness. James constantly reminded us of God's purpose and God's presence. The theological depth the President brought to his presentations to synods, presbyteries and the Assembly Standing Committee was a wonderful resource to the church.

As President he occupied the chair of meetings, not only of the Assembly and its Standing Committee, but also many other smaller groupings, and did so with grace. As chairperson of a meeting James listened carefully to appreciate all points of view, encouraged all participants to make a contribution, and had the great gift of being able to summarise the points of debate and suggest processes to resolve issues.

The Assembly recognises that throughout his term of office James has had the love and support of his wife, Mary, and his children, Julia and Miriam. Because of Mary's own vocation it was only on rare occasions that she was able to accompany James when he travelled as President, but her encouragement meant a great deal to James. We thank Mary, Julia and Miriam for releasing their husband and father to the role of President with the

frequent absences from home, and the constant interruptions of family life. We pray that in the years to come the Haire family will continue to be united in love and service and that as James undertakes his new ministry as Executive Director of the Centre for Christianity and Culture in Canberra he will be sustained in the faith hope and love of the gospel of Jesus Christ whom James has honoured so well as our President.

The Uniting Church in Australia is indebted to James Haire for giving so much of himself and commends him in his future life and ministry to the love of the Triune God.

FROM ASSEMBLY BODIES

The Agency reports were received en bloc in plenary session and dealt with in working groups. Questions were put to the National Directors and answers were provided both verbally and in writing.

03.07 BENEFICIARY FUND

The report was presented by Rev Robert Hoskin (Chairperson) and Mr Robert Runco (Executive Director).

The Assembly resolved:

to receive the report.

03.08 CHRISTIAN UNITY WORKING GROUP

The Assembly resolved:

Anglican – Uniting Church Dialogue (*For the Sake of the Gospel*)

- (a) to receive the report of the Uniting Church / Anglican Joint Working Group, “For the Sake of the Gospel”;
- (b) to approve the statement on essentials of faith and ministry as contained in the report Section 4 and summary statements in 5.9 and 6.2 as a basis for further conversation with the Anglican Church of Australia;
- (c) to take all possible and necessary steps toward a covenant of association and inter-communion, and advise the Anglican Church of Australia accordingly;
- (d) to request the Standing Committee, in consultation with the Christian Unity Working Group, to appoint the Uniting Church in Australia members to a joint working group for that purpose;
- (e) to request the newly appointed Joint Working Group to report to the next Assembly.

03.09 COOLAMON COLLEGE

The Assembly resolved:

03.09.01 Coolamon College appreciations

- (a) to express appreciation to the Synods of Queensland and South Australia for their financial and other support of Coolamon College in the past triennium;
- (b) to request all synods to appoint one person to the Coolamon College Reference Committee, to take up membership from the end of July 2003.

03.09.02 Coolamon College Council

- (a) to approve the renaming of Coolamon College Reference Committee to Coolamon College Council, with membership to comprise
 - (i) the chairperson appointed by Assembly;

- (ii) the Principal;
- (iii) the remaining members of the Academic Committee (6);
- (iv) one representative from each synod (6);
- (v) one representative of the Presbytery of Tasmania for the next triennium;
- (vi) one representative from each of Theology and Discipleship, Uniting Education, and the Ministerial Education Commission of Assembly;
- (vii) up to three co-opted members to provide a balance of expertise for the work of the college.

and to note that members of the Council may represent one or more of these categories.

03.09.03

Appreciation of Rev Dr Rob Bos

to acknowledge with deep appreciation the major contribution made by Rev Dr Robert Bos to theological education across the Uniting Church in Australia, as National Director and then Principal of Coolamon College.

Robert was appointed to the Directorship of the College from its inception. He brought to the position extensive experience working in theological and distance education, through his position with Nungalinga College, as well as in the dilemmas facing church people living in remote and isolated situations as they endeavour to equip themselves for mission and ministry. His vision of theological education accessible to all was driven by the Gospel values of justice and equity.

Robert has led the College through its early development phase, and then as we expanded our offerings beyond the initial diploma level courses, into degree and postgraduate level study, and more recently in the certificate and small group discussion offerings catering to the needs of local church people for learning.

His vision for what the college could become, and how it could serve the Church has been an inspiration over the nine years of his leadership, to the committee, the students, the staff and the whole church. His expertise in multicultural communities has expanded the service to provide resources for migrant/ ethnic congregations and for partner churches in the Pacific. Students have enrolled from Asian countries in later years.

Throughout the time of his leadership, he has demonstrated his outstanding management skills in relation to team leadership, project and budget management as well as visionary planning and policy development. He has taken the college from a small operation to an organization boasting over 2500 students enrolled in courses, over 600 students per year, and one that has worked from a deficit budget to one that now balances its budget. He has been persuasive of Assembly Standing Committee in obtaining greater financial support for the work, and gained great support from the Queensland Synod in the way they carried the deficit for many years, and hosted the college.

Over those years, he has negotiated, consulted and cemented relationships with all the synods, resulting in cooperative agreements, as well as with several Anglican dioceses who use our materials for their Ministerial Education. He has always been concerned for students, communicated regularly with them, taken their feedback seriously, and devised new ways of meeting their needs.

In the last two years, he worked tirelessly to assist the committee to chart a new direction for the college, and to negotiate with Adelaide College of Divinity, Parkin Wesley College, the Synod of South Australia and Assembly Standing Committee the basis of a new set of coalitions for the college, as we provide even greater options for students.

Robert has been curriculum developer *par excellence*, studying for his Masters degree in Distance Education by distance, and gaining recognition

from the University of South Australia of his documentation of policies, curriculum and course material as the equivalent of a thesis, in completing the degree.

Robert has also been a major writer of course materials and an assessor at all levels of offerings, using his theological expertise to resource students in spirituality and other areas. He has produced a resource for the whole Church for the 'Period of Discernment', and others to help people to understand the characteristics of the Uniting Church.

Where the college was originally conceived as a resource for lay people to give them equity of access to theological education, Robert has enabled us to respond to the changing approaches to Ministerial Education, by providing resources for Phase 1 to 4 of that education.

It is because of his outstanding leadership, and commitment to quality in all the college does, in offering open and flexible education opportunities using the latest technology, that has built the reputation of the college across the church to the point where we have high credibility. We are ready to move into new relationships with a consortium of colleges and a University, so that our vision is closer to being realised.

The whole church owes Robert Bos a great debt for the ground-breaking work he has undertaken and for the outcomes he has achieved in establishing and nurturing this national educational institution towards equipping for ministry and mission the whole people of God. His work has changed the culture of the Uniting Church.

03.09.04

Appreciation of Rev Dr Anita Monro

to place on record its appreciation of the enormous contribution made to the work of Coolamon College by Rev Dr Anita Monro, Acting Principal in 2002.

Anita Monro worked for Coolamon College in a variety of roles over a period of five years, as part-time and full-time Educational Developer, then managing the postgraduate program and students, later undertaking some administration as well and finally as Acting Principal at an extremely difficult time in the college's history. In this last role, she undertook the complicated negotiations with Adelaide College of Divinity (ACD) with dogged determination, attention to detail, a keen sense of humour, respect for others, incisive insight and thoroughness, thus successfully bringing about the membership of Coolamon College of ACD from the beginning of 2003. She also took care that relationships with Brisbane College of Theology and Sydney College of Divinity were maintained, for continuing students to complete their awards with these consortia. She has demonstrated how flexible, adaptable and creative she is and how to thrive, not just survive, on change in organizations and in life.

Anita contributed her feminist perspectives and theological acumen to her work, editing and writing course materials over a wide range of awards from certificate to postgraduate levels. Her wisdom, patience and longsuffering have been inspirational, proving beyond doubt her strengths and abilities far beyond the average 'academic'.

Coolamon always struggled financially. For most of its history it had a huge debt, generously carried by the Queensland Synod. Initially, Coolamon could not provide office space, desk, computer or printer (which she provided herself for some years). Eventually the photocopier was located outside the Coolamon office to make room for Anita to work on site.

During her time with Coolamon, the college moved from a small college to perhaps the largest in the UCA in terms of number of students, at a time when it was stretching its wings in new ways and with new vision. She showed visionary and strong leadership, as well as magnificent attention to detail and a healthy stubbornness in achieving the college's vision for its growth.

Coolamon College owes Anita Monro an incredible debt, which can never be repaid. The students and their progress in being equipped for ministry and mission, and the impact they make on the Church, will to some extent demonstrate the fruits of her efforts on their behalf.

Coolamon College Reference Committee appreciates Anita's agreement to make a continuing commitment to Coolamon, as a writer and an assessor in the years ahead, especially in topics for postgraduate awards.

In summary, Anita Monro has made an indelible and historic contribution to this cutting edge of theological education in Australia. As she moves into a key role in United Theological College and the New South Wales Synod the Assembly prays God's strength, wisdom, love, care and peace will be always with her as she moves in these new directions and challenges of her ministry for the mission of the Church.

03.10 MULTICULTURAL MINISTRY

The Assembly resolved:

03.10.01 Review of Current Policies

- (a) to establish a Task Group to review the current policies of the Uniting Church on multicultural ministry and migrant-ethnic congregations, and the effect of these policies on the proper functioning and role of each of the councils of the church and the processes followed by the councils of the church in implementing these policies;
- (b) to authorise the Standing Committee to appoint the Task Group;
- (c) to recommend that the Task Group consist of 7 persons appointed according to the following principles:
 - there shall be one representative from the Assembly Multicultural Ministry Reference Committee;
 - there shall be one representative from each of the equivalent committees of the Synods of NSW and Victoria and Tasmania;
 - at least four of the seven members shall come from a non-English-speaking first language background;
 - and one of those four shall be a person born or educated in Australia;
- (d) to request that the Task Group report to the March 2005 meeting of the Standing Committee, including the bringing of any recommendations;

03.10.02 Confronting Racism

trusting that in Jesus Christ God has broken down barriers between all people, and by the Holy Spirit is able to transform lives and heal communities,

- (a) to recognise again that racism is a sin that reflects our alienation from God and one another and is incompatible with the Gospel;
- (b) to reaffirm its commitment to work to overcome racism in Australia and beyond;
- (c) to call on the church to model the inclusive love of Christ, building communities of justice and love and practising respect and equality in all our relationships; and
- (d) to urge members of the Uniting Church, particularly those in leadership, to attend a *Confronting Racism or Looking with New Eyes* workshop to explore ways of working to eradicate racism.

03.10.03 Representative Membership in a Culturally Diverse Church

- (a) to support an increase in the membership of Assembly of people from non-Anglo cultural and linguistic backgrounds from 6 to 12 and to request the Standing Committee to find the most appropriate

means of implementing this desire;

- (b) to encourage synods and presbyteries to adopt an intentional policy on ethnic diversity for nominations to all councils of the church, giving consideration to an appropriate cultural mix in the context of each particular synod and presbytery.

03.11 RELATIONS WITH OTHER FAITHS

The Assembly resolved:

Interfaith Religious Affairs

to request the Relations with Other Faiths Committee, working with the President and General Secretary, in consultation with the National Council of Churches in Australia and dialogue partners, to progress the development of a national interfaith advisory council to advocate to government on interfaith matters as they impact on domestic and foreign policy.

03.12 STANDING COMMITTEE

The Assembly resolved:

03.12.01 Agency Arrangements

- (a) (i) to remove the requirement that all Agencies / areas of work must be described as agencies;
- (ii) that where the work of the Assembly is best carried forward and supported by another kind of group then it is not essential that the area of work have a Reference Committee;
- (b) (i) to determine that the following areas of work no longer be recognised as Agencies: Church Polity Reference Committee, Defence Force Chaplaincy, Historical Reference Committee, Legal Reference Committee, National Secretariat, Reception of Ministers Committee, Relations With Other Faiths, and Strategic Planning Unit;
- (ii) to authorise the Standing Committee to implement the transition to new arrangements after appropriate consultation;
- (c) to authorise the Standing Committee to:
- (i) consult with Agencies about whether they continue to be designated as Agencies;
- (ii) determine which areas of work will be described as Agencies and which areas are described and supported in other ways;
- (iii) make decisions in relation to Reference Committees, including the possibility of Boards consistent with the values of the 1998 restructure;
- (iv) remove or amend the mandates of Agencies as required in the implementation of the authority granted to it by the 10th Assembly;
- (d) to determine that the election of Chairpersons of Reference Committees will be on an interim basis until the Standing Committee acts upon its authority to address the issue of Reference Committees with the Agencies.

03.12.02 Code of Ethics

- (a) to request the Standing Committee to appoint a Task Group to review the Code of Ethics and to set the terms of reference for the review;
- (b) that the review give consideration to:
- the knowledge of the Code of Ethics within the life of the church;
 - the operation of the Code of Ethics within the church, including within different cultural backgrounds;
 - whether areas addressed by the Code of Ethics should be broader than professional ethics ie “ministry practice”;

- the inclusion of candidates for the specified ministries of Minister of the Word, Ministry of Deacon and Ministry of Youth Worker;
- the inclusion of persons in recognised placements fulfilling the roles of those ministries named in the Code of Ethics;

(c) that the review group report to the Standing Committee, with any recommendations arising from the review, no later than July 2005.

03.12.03

Principles to Guide the General Secretary in the Exercise of Management Responsibilities

- (a) to note that good governance requires that the Assembly develop policies that make clear the respective roles of the Assembly and its Standing Committee and the staff;
- (b) to adopt the following principles to guide the General Secretary in the exercise of management responsibilities:

Principle 1

The Assembly has responsibility for determining the directions, values, goals and policies for the Assembly. Between meetings of the Assembly the Standing Committee fulfils this responsibility, and as part of its general oversight, the Standing Committee also has the role of articulating and monitoring the directions, values, goals and policies determined by the Assembly;

Principle 2

At its first meeting following each Assembly the Standing Committee will carefully clarify and spell out the directions, values and goals identified by the Assembly in its various decisions, and so provide:

- (i) a focus for the work of the Standing Committee for the following triennium; and
- (ii) a framework to enable Assembly agencies to be clear about the directions required of them for the ensuing term;

Principle 3

Implementation of the directions, values and goals of the Assembly is a shared responsibility of the Standing Committee, agencies, committees and staff. It is the responsibility of the General Secretary to co-ordinate, oversight and manage this implementation, and this responsibility is limited only by those matters or processes determined by decision of the Assembly / Standing Committee;

Principle 4

As an expression of the accountability of the General Secretary to the Assembly / Standing Committee, the General Secretary will present to each ordinary meeting of the Standing Committee a detailed report on the way in which a selection of agencies are fulfilling the goals, directions and values of the Assembly, ensuring that within each triennium there is at least one report on each agency;

Principle 5

The Standing Committee will adopt a policy of "GENERAL SECRETARY LIMITATIONS" as follows:

The General Secretary's ministry shall be exercised in ways which are consistent with the authority and roles inherent in the position description, and which respect the authority and roles of others (e.g. the President). Within the management function of this ministry the General Secretary shall not:

- (i) make and/or implement decisions in ways that are

- inconsistent with the Basis of Union, Constitution or Regulations of the Uniting Church in Australia;
- (ii) disregard the authority and decisions of the Assembly / Standing Committee;
- (iii) act in contravention of Federal or State legislation;
- (iv) act outside the budget directions given by the Assembly / Standing Committee;
- (v) noting Regulation 2.7.12(b) [*Any change in the number, distribution or designation of approved placements under the jurisdiction of the Assembly shall be made by the Assembly or its Standing Committee.*], change the geographical location of the principal office of the Assembly or the location of particular staff/agencies without the prior permission of the Standing Committee;

Principle 6

The General Secretary has authority to appoint and dismiss all staff, subject only to the following:

- (i) Congress Personnel do not fall under the management authority of the Assembly General Secretary;
- (ii) Assembly placements shall be made by the Assembly [Regulation 2.7.5(f)];
- (iii) all other staff shall be appointed by the General Secretary – but on the understanding that the General Secretary may delegate the selection to a National Director or other senior staff;
- (iv) subject to the provisions of industrial legislation, termination of the appointment of the Associate General Secretary or any National Director, related to performance, may be decided only as a result of a review initiated by the General Secretary. The review shall be undertaken by a team of three persons consisting of the General Secretary and two others (at least one of whom will be a member of the Standing Committee) appointed by the President;
- (v) termination of the appointment of other lay staff, related to performance, will be as agreed by the General Secretary and the person's supervisor, provided that the provisions of industrial legislation are followed;
- (vi) termination of the appointment of ministers in placement, related to performance, will be initiated by the General Secretary, in consultation with the minister and other bodies concerned [Regulation 2.7.8(c)];
- (vii) when a member of staff is within the first four months of the last twelve months of their term of appointment the General Secretary will arrange for a review of the appointment. For those positions in which the Standing Committee has participated in the selection and/or appointment of the person, the Standing Committee will select two of its voting members to participate in the review and determine if re-appointment should be offered. This assumes that as a matter of course the General Secretary has, as a matter of good management practice, determined if the position should be maintained/alterd in terms of the goals set by the Assembly;

Principle 7

All Assembly staff are ultimately accountable to the General Secretary;

- (c) to authorise the Standing Committee to continue the development of policies that enable the Assembly to exercise good governance.

03.12.04

Ministry and Membership in the Uniting Church¹

- (a) to note the following extracts from Assembly minute 00.25.03:
 - (i) that the Church's faith is in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and that the Church's work and unity are built upon the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ;
 - (ii) the authority of the Scriptures as defined in the Basis of Union, acknowledging that within the Church there is a range of views on questions of Biblical interpretation on various matters of Christian faith and practice;
 - (iii) we are bound together by Christ, and because we love the Uniting Church as part of the one holy catholic and apostolic church we will continue to work together in our diversity as servants of the living God;
- (b) recognising that:
 - (i) within the church people of faith have wrestled with integrity to interpret Scripture in relation to the issue of Christian sexual ethics and have on some issues come to mutually exclusive positions;
 - (ii) here are members of the church who have reached the conclusion that "celibacy in singleness and faithfulness in marriage" is a faithful Christian standard for Christian sexual ethics;
 - (iii) there are members of the church who have reached the conclusion that "right relationships" as outlined in *Uniting Sexuality and Faith* is a faithful Christian standard for Christian sexual ethics; and
 - (iv) membership of the Uniting Church is open to all persons subject only to the guidance of the Basis of Union, the Constitution, the Regulations and policies of the Assembly;to call upon members of the Church to seek to live together in peace as people of faith, notwithstanding differing views in the matter of same sex relationships;
- (c) to remind presbyteries that:
 - (i) in considering issues related to candidature, ordination or commissioning for specified ministries, and the placement of persons in specified ministries, decisions should only be taken on a case by case basis; and
 - (ii) a decision on the suitability of an applicant or candidate depends upon a wide range of criteria and may include consideration of the manner in which the applicant's or candidate's sexuality is expressed;
- (d) to request the Standing Committee:
 - (i) to provide guidance for congregations and presbyteries on how to conduct discussions on contentious issues in ways that comply with the Church's policy on vilification and harassment;
 - (ii) to seek advice for the church on the legal implications of the relevant legislation, eg anti discrimination legislation, anti vilification legislation, etc; and advise councils of the church of this advice; and
 - (iii) to amend, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, Regulation 2.7.16(I) to make more explicit the role of presbyteries in the placement of people in specified ministries.

¹ This resolution was varied by the Standing Committee in August 2003 (Minute 03.69.03). This resolution is attached as Appendix C.

03.13 STRATEGIC PLANNING UNIT

The Assembly resolved:

- (a) to receive the final report of the Strategic Planning Unit;
- (b) to thank and discharge the members of the Strategic Planning Unit;
- (c) to refer the mandate of the Strategic Planning Unit to the Standing Committee for further action and implementation as it sees fit.

03.14 TASK GROUP ON ELDERS AND CHURCH COUNCILS

The Assembly resolved:

- (a) to affirm that the Church Council is the council within a congregation or group of congregations [Basis of Union, Paragraph 15(b)];
- (b) to authorise the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 3.1.14(c) to read:
“The total 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.”;
- (c) to authorise the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 3.1.11 by:
 - (i) the deletion of the last sentence of Regulation 3.1.11(b), and
 - (ii) the addition of a subsection, Regulation 3.1.11(c), to read:
“In furtherance of the principle set out in Regulation 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.”;
- (d) to approve the following statement as a guide to congregations with regard to their understanding of the role of Elder/Leader:

Statement on the role of Elders/Leaders in the Church

“... the Uniting Church recognises and accepts as elders or leaders those who at the time of union hold the office of elder, deacon or leader appointed to exercise spiritual oversight. ...It will seek to recognise in the congregation those endowed by the Spirit with gifts fitting them for rule and oversight. Such members will be called Elders or Leaders.”
[Basis of Union paragraph 14(b)]

Elders continue to have an important and distinctive role in the life of the Uniting Church. The Eighth Assembly (1997) was clear that Elders/Leaders were to be retained in the new structures. The Assembly also declared that Elders/Leaders should normally comprise at least a majority of the church council, which is the (single) council within a congregation or group of congregations.

Each congregation is encouraged to carefully consider the issue of how the function of eldership will be exercised in that congregation, being mindful that following this they may apply to Presbytery seeking authorisation for an alternative model of Church Council.

Subject to the Constitution and Regulations of the Uniting Church, the church council has responsibility for all aspects of the life and ministry of the congregation. In this council the Elders exercise their office corporately. Elders also exercise an individual ministry within the life and work of the congregation.

Eldership is exercised **corporately** within the church council by ensuring that the agenda for church council meetings gives priority to the following matters:

- making arrangements for the pastoral care of the members of the congregation;
- assisting the Minister in planning the worship of the congregation;
- building up the congregation in faith, hope and love;
- encouraging the congregation in Christ's mission in the world.

Eldership may be exercised in an **individual** way by:

- modelling the Christian life;
- developing a pastoral relationship with particular members of the congregation;
- participating in aspects of the congregation's education and mission program;
- assisting the Minister in the leadership of worship and the administration of the sacraments;
- encouraging individual members to share in the mission of the church – local, regional and global.

- (e) to request Uniting Education to prepare educational resources to assist congregations to understand the comprehensive role of oversight of the church council as the council within the congregation or group of congregations, and the role of Elders, and to make these resources available to presbyteries and synods for use with congregations.

03.15

TASK GROUP ON THE MINISTRY OF DEACON

The Assembly resolved:

- (a) to receive the report;
- (b) to commend the report to Assembly agencies, synods, presbyteries and congregations for study and implementation;
- (c) to request that synods employ effective processes for the implementation of placements for deacons, giving consideration to:
- (i) the continuity of placements;
 - (ii) securing adequate, ongoing finance for diaconal placements;
 - (iii) the provision of deacon placements in clusters of congregations, in presbyteries, or in team ministries with ministers of the Word;
 - (iv) encouraging and supporting deacons in finding placements based in community organisations; and
 - (v) ensuring that deacons placed in synod chaplaincy or non-congregational positions are connected into a congregation which will provide loving support in these outreach activities;
- (d) (i) to request theological colleges and halls to collaborate in the provision of deacon-specific courses for deacon education in order to:
- provide consistent and appropriately staffed deacon-specific courses for all deacon candidates;
 - ensure consistency and quality in the deacon pre-sessional course; and
 - ensure field education experiences are of appropriate length, content and supervision for deacon candidates;
- (ii) to request the Ministerial Education Commission to take the coordination of deacon education into account in its development of a national strategy for ministerial education, in order to:

- provide appropriate and intentional formation programs for deacon candidates;
 - address difficulties experienced by faculty in meeting the needs of this minority student population; and
 - provide education for all candidates regarding the Uniting Church ministry of deacon;
- (e) to request that presbyteries and theological colleges ensure that candidates are fully informed of all specified ministries during the four phases of formation, and that people in the Period of Discernment have full access to such information;
- (f) to promote an understanding of the ministry of deacon throughout each area of the Uniting Church, by strategies such as:
- (i) promoting the existing Diakonia UCA brochures and ensuring that these brochures are translated into different languages; and
 - (ii) encouraging the development of new materials through Diakonia UCA on the diaconal ministry of the church, in order to help congregations discover the potential for diaconal ministry;
- (g) to request Theology and Discipleship, in consultation with Diakonia UCA, to promote an annual diaconal ministry Sunday, to increase awareness of the diakonia of the whole people of God. (*cf* Recommendation 2 of the 1991 Report: “that congregations be encouraged to develop, encourage and recognise new forms of ministry through which members can use their gifts in mission, recognising ‘that every member of the church is engaged to confess the faith of Christ crucified and to be his faithful servant’ (Basis of Union #13)”).

03.16

TASK GROUP ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The Assembly resolved:

- (a) to receive the report of the Task Group on Theological Education;
- (b) to affirm the principle that the theological education of candidates for ministry and other members of the Uniting Church in Australia will be improved through an accelerated growth in co-operation and co-ordination between the various providers of theological education in the UCA.
- (c) to request congregations to affirm the role of each congregation as a centre of theological education which takes seriously its teaching ministry and recognises each Minister as a theological teacher in the local context;
- (d) to request the Ministerial Education Commission:
 - (i) to facilitate the formation of a national network of teachers in the UCA, including members of faculties, other teachers and lay educators, for the exchange of ideas and information and to increase awareness of the specialist interests and expertise available within the UCA;
 - (ii) to facilitate conversation among the theological colleges to consider issues of specialisation, with particular reference to:
 - whether each college needs teachers in specific disciplines;
 - whether the theological education of candidates for the ministry of Deacon and the ministry of Youth Worker are best developed by one college rather than by many;
 - (iii) to facilitate means by which the scholarship and giftedness of individual teachers can be accessed nationally for intensives and special workshops;

- (iv) to liaise with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress to enable cross-cultural theological learning to be available to both indigenous and non-indigenous candidates for ministry and other lay students of theology;
- (e) to request synods:
 - (i) to make appointments to faculties of colleges only after consideration of the expertise and range of giftedness available in the faculties of other UCA theological colleges;
 - (ii) to facilitate the establishment of intentional dialogue between mission educators and theological educators, to assist the formation of Ministers for the current and future mission context for the church in contemporary Australia;
 - (iii) to ensure that its providers of theological education include cross-cultural education to assist understanding of the changing ethnic mix of both the Uniting Church and Australian society;
 - (iv) to provide and promote theological education in regional centres, particularly through short-term intensive programs aimed at:
 - lay persons seeking to expand their theological depth and awareness;
 - ministers engaged in continuing education; and
 - those engaged in phase 3 of ministerial education;
 - (v) to engage in dialogue with universities with a view to developing links between the Church's providers of theological education and the universities for both under-graduate and post-graduate theological education;
 - (vi) to explore ways in which the number of people training for the specified ministries can be substantially increased;
- (f) to request faculties:
 - (i) to continue the ecumenical sharing of resources (especially teachers) with churches and colleges of other churches, including, but not limited to, those of the Anglican and Catholic Churches;
 - (ii) to identify additional pathways for learning, especially by encouraging both candidates for ministry and other students to access appropriate distance education opportunities, including those provided by Coolamon College;
- (g) to request the Standing Committee to review the mandate, membership and name of the Ministerial Education Commission, including any necessary changes to the Regulations, to better implement its responsibility to include the theological education of lay persons at UCA theological colleges.

03.17 THEOLOGY AND DISCIPLESHIP

The Assembly resolved:

03.17.01

“Becoming Disciples”

- (a) to receive the report;
- (b) to commend the Becoming Disciples Process (the catechumenate) to congregations and faith communities;
- (c) to prepare resource materials and training programs to assist congregations to implement the Becoming Disciples Process;
- (d) to declare the resourcing of Congregations for implementing the Becoming Disciples Process a priority for the next triennium;
- (e) to commend to congregations and faith communities the use of an annual service of commitment such as *A Congregational*

Reaffirmation of Baptism or The Covenant Service;

- (f) to request congregations and presbyteries to engage in serious theological reflection on issues of membership and the sacraments, including:
- (i) How do we live with the tension of being an open, hospitable, welcoming community and having a committed, covenanted membership whose sole loyalty is to Jesus Christ?
 - (ii) The place of Baptism in the Christian life, including:
 - Baptism as a gift of God’s grace and the place of Baptism in the Christian life.
 - the relationship between Baptism and being in covenant community.
 - the relationship between Baptism and the Lord’s Supper including the issue of what we mean by “an open table”.
 - the desirability, or otherwise, of parents who bring children for Baptism affirming their faith and/or reaffirming their own Baptism.
 - the possibility of people transferring from non-sacramental churches being accepted as members of the UCA.
 - the desirability or non-desirability of dual membership, either in two UCA congregations, or in a UCA congregation and in a congregation of another Christian church.
 - (iii) Can we find a more adequate term for the individual person’s relationship with the congregation than “affiliation”?
 - (iv) To what extent is our own identity as the UCA important in the light of (a) our “post-denominational” context, and (b) our commitments to ecumenical partners?
 - (v) In small rural congregations, where people from many backgrounds worship in the UCA, to what extent should the unique ethos and contribution of the UCA be emphasised?
- (g) to commit itself to prepare resources to assist the Church, such resources to:
- (i) aid the church in its reflection on the meaning of membership and the sacraments;
 - (ii) consider biblical and theological foundations in the light of the current context and to be presented in a style which allows as many people as possible to engage in reflection and discussion;
- (h) to affirm the general direction of moving towards a category or categories of membership which are based more on Baptism and actual participation in the worship, witness and service of a congregation, rather than on once having been confirmed;
- (i) (i) to request Theology and Discipleship to bring a detailed report on the issue of membership and, in particular, its relationship to the sacraments, to the Standing Committee;
 - (ii) to authorise the Standing Committee, on advice from the Legal Reference Committee, to make a decision regarding any changes to the Constitution and Regulations;
 - (iii) to direct the Standing Committee that if significant changes to the Uniting Church’s understanding of membership are envisaged then there be a comprehensive consultation with synods and presbyteries.

03.17.02

Uniting in Worship 2

- (a) (i) to note that ‘Ordered Liberty’ is the document that fulfils Assembly resolution 97.17.03 and provides ‘guidance regarding those elements, words or actions which constitute certain services’;

- (ii) to further note that the services of 'Uniting in Worship 2' currently under preparation conform to the guidelines set down in 'Ordered Liberty';
 - (iii) to approve further preparation of 'Uniting in Worship 2' by the Worship Working Group, for publication in 2004;
 - (iv) to authorise the Standing Committee to recognise the orders of service of 'Uniting in Worship 2' as official services of the Uniting Church in Australia along with 'Uniting in Worship' (1988), and to commend them to ministers of the Word, deacons, youth workers, other specified ministries and other leaders of worship, and to church councils and congregations for their use;
- (b) to approve the publication of 'Uniting in Worship 2' in the following formats:
- (i) a book, which will contain the major services and some resources. Such material to be free to be copied for use by the church;
 - (ii) small booklets – Marriage, Service of the Lord's Day, Baptism and the Re-affirmation of Baptism called Confirmation;
 - (iii) web-based resources for the various services;
 - (iv) a CD-ROM resource, to be provided with the book;
- (c) to request the Standing Committee to consult with Multicultural Ministry and the General Secretary about how best to ensure translation of the major services of 'Uniting in Worship 2' along with other resources in (b)(iii) for the use of congregations worshipping in a language other than English.

03.18 UNITING INTERNATIONAL MISSION

The Assembly resolved:

03.18.01

Tuvalu and the impact of Global Warming

- (a)
 - (i) to call on the Australian government to immediately sign and ratify the Kyoto Protocols in relation to global warming, especially because this has affected the nation of Tuvalu and other Pacific countries;
 - (ii) to call on the Australian government to offer the guarantee of special immigration status to the people of Tuvalu, for immigration to Australia when their nation loses its viability for human habitation;
- (b) to express our solidarity with the Christian Church of Tuvalu in this predicament and to call on our people to remember the people and church of Tuvalu in their prayers.

03.18.02

Support for the Church and People in Bali

being aware of the severe economic situation being faced in Bali in the aftermath of the bombing in October 2002,

- (a) to express greetings to the Protestant Christian Church in Bali, assuring them that we are aware of their pain, hurt and insecurity at this time;
- (b) to express its thanksgiving for their continuing positive and faithful witness and service;
- (c) to assure them of our continuing solidarity with them as they move forward into the future;
- (d) to ask members of the Uniting Church to express their solidarity with the church in Bali through prayer and practical support;
- (e) to encourage members of the Uniting Church to include Bali in their itinerary for overseas travel whenever possible and to make contact with the church in Bali during their visit.

- 03.18.03 **Support for the Church and People in Eastern Indonesia**
- (a) to acknowledge the continuing uncertainty, danger and great human need being faced by our Partner Churches and others in Eastern Indonesia as a result of conflict and post conflict situations;
 - (b) to express our greetings to our Partner Churches, assuring their members of our continuing solidarity, compassion, prayers and support for them in the serious situations that they face;
 - (c) to invite the people of the Uniting Church to support projects assisting the restoration of communities in Eastern Indonesia as a way of expressing solidarity, compassion and support.

- 03.18.04 **Solomon Islands**
- (a) to send greetings to our Partner Church – The United Church in the Solomon Islands;
 - (b) to convey to that church the ongoing concern of the Assembly for them and the people of their nation as they face racial tension, lawlessness, the breakdown of the economy and the dislocation of many government services and to assure them of our prayers and ongoing support;
 - (c) to thank the people and congregations of the Uniting Church who have provided support for projects in the Solomon Islands and ask that such support continue and expand;
 - (d) to note:
 - (i) the willingness of the Australian Government to become the lead nation in an Intervention Force to be provided by Pacific Island nations; and
 - (ii) that the restoration of law and order is the primary task of the Intervention Force;
 - (e) to urge the Australian Government to ensure its armed forces act with cultural sensitivity and to focus not only on law and order in the short term but also on the long term tasks of economic restoration and the development of the Solomon Islands through aid grants in other ways.

- 03.18.05 **General Support of Partner Churches**
- (a) to acknowledge that many of the Partner Churches of the Uniting Church are facing rapid change in their societies, major impacts of globalisation, international tensions, communal conflicts and violence or their aftermath, the huge effects of HIV / AIDS and rising levels of inequality, injustice and poverty;
 - (b) to express greetings to and solidarity with Partner Churches as they face these huge issues in their countries and seek to be faithful in their witness and service;
 - (c) to ask members of the Uniting Church to provide ongoing prayer, solidarity and support for our Partner Churches.

03.19 UNITINGJUSTICE

The Assembly resolved:

- 03.19.01 **Iranian Asylum Seekers**
- (a) to condemn the Australian government for its plans to forcibly deport Iranian people to a situation where they will face persecution and possibly death;
 - (b) to ask all members of the Assembly to write to the Minister for Immigration and the Prime Minister, expressing our grave concerns about this proposed action;

- (c) to request the President to write to the Iranians in Port Headland and Baxter Detention Centres expressing the concern and support of the Uniting Church for them;
- (d) to request the President to write to the Uniting Church Ministers providing ministry to Iranians in detention centres expressing the concern and support of the Assembly for them.

03.19.02

Uniting for Peace

affirming that God loves all creation and that all people, as members of God's family, are called to love each other, and, recalling past resolutions of this Assembly,

- that God came in the crucified and risen Christ to make peace; and that God calls all Christians to be peacemakers, to save life, to heal and to love their neighbours²; and
 - that the Church is committed to be a peacemaking body,³
- (a) in response to the World Council of Churches' declaration of the *Decade to Overcome Violence*⁴, to commit:
 - (i) to work together for peace, justice, and reconciliation at all levels – local, regional, and global;
 - (ii) to embrace creative approaches to peace building which are consonant with the spirit of the gospel;
 - (iii) to interact and collaborate with local communities, secular movements, and people of other living faiths towards cultivating a culture of peace;
 - (iv) to empower people who are systemically oppressed by violence, and to act in solidarity with all struggling for justice, peace, and the integrity of creation; and
 - (v) to repent together for our complicity in violence, and to engage in theological reflection to overcome the spirit, logic, and practice of violence;
 - (b) to call on all members, councils, agencies, congregations and groups of the Uniting Church to examine their own lives in order to overcome violence and to transform systems and structures of injustice;
 - (c) to commit to work for peace through justice and genuine security, believing that:
 - (i) true justice can only be achieved through means that do not consist of violence, nor perpetuate the cycle of violence;
 - (ii) true security can only be achieved through non-violent means that seek to build trust and relationships of understanding and acceptance between nations and people;
 - (d) to support, and urge the Australian Government to support, the following mechanisms for dismantling the global culture of violence and building a culture of peace through justice and genuine security:
 - (i) international treaties and programs on human rights, environment, and social and human development, also ensuring that Australia fulfils its obligations in these areas;
 - (ii) co-operation with governments, the United Nations, and community sector and religious organisations to develop peaceful solutions to conflict and to seek just and peaceful means for overcoming and preventing violence in all aspects of our life together, from the personal to the global;
 - (e) in light of recent wars and in the face of impending war, the increasing global militarism and willingness to use military force, and

² Assembly Minute 82.57 1(a)

³ Assembly Minute 82.57 1(c)

⁴ The sub-clauses (a) to (e) are the commitments proposed by the World Council of Churches.

those countries seeking to acquire or retain nuclear, chemical and/or biological weapons, to declare that:

- (i) ownership, use, or threatened use of nuclear, chemical and/or biological weapons is evil;
- (ii) reliance on weapons for peace and security can never achieve a just and lasting peace. Security achieved through armament is sustained by fear of the enemy and can never see the world reconciled;
- (iii) genuine global security will only be achieved by working for an end to the trade in illegal weapons and the arms trade, preventing the proliferation of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction, and requiring progressive disarmament of all nations.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND REGULATIONS AND RELATED MATTERS

The Assembly resolved:

03.20 REGULATION 2.3.5(b)(iii) — RECEPTION OF MINISTERS

to authorise the Standing Committee on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee to amend Regulation 2.3.5(b)(iii) to read:

“unless there are special circumstances the applicant shall have received an education (academic study and ministerial formation) comparable to that required of certificated candidates for the corresponding ministry in the Church or attained competency comparable to that required of Ministers.”

03.21 REGULATIONS 2.3.5(c), 2.3.7 AND 2.3.9 — RECEPTION OF MINISTERS

The Assembly resolved:

to refer Proposal 35 to the Standing Committee with the power to act:

Proposal 35: That the Assembly authorise the Standing Committee on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee

- (a) *to amend Regulation 2.3.5. (c) by the addition of the words:*

“The committee shall issue a certificate of eligibility when all criteria for eligibility for admission as a Minister of the Church have been satisfied”.

- (b) *to amend Regulation 2.3.7 by addition of the underlined words:*

“The Synod or its Standing Committee, following receipt of advice from the Assembly Reception of Ministers Committee, shall then proceed to determine the application in any one of the following ways:”

- (c) *to amend Regulation 2.3.9 by the addition of the underlined words:*

“A Minister admitted from the ministry of another denomination shall be recognised in a service arranged by the Presbytery in accordance with provisions laid down by the Assembly following receipt of the certificate of eligibility referred to in Regulation 2.3.5(c). A service of induction to a placement shall only take place following recognition as a Minister of the Church.”

03.22

REGULATIONS 2.4.20 AND 2.4.21 — MINISTERIAL STIPENDS AND ALLOWANCES

The Assembly resolved:

to refer Proposal 55 to the Standing Committee with power to act, with the request that it be dealt with by an appropriate synod-based group.

Proposal 55: That the Assembly resolve:

- (a) *to take immediate steps toward the development of an equitable national system of minimum ministerial stipend, provisions and allowances.*
- (b) *to authorise the Standing Committee (on the advice of the Assembly Legal Reference Committee) to amend Regulations 2.4.20 and 2.4.21 to provide that the minimum ministerial stipend, provisions and allowances be determined by the Assembly.*

03.23

REGULATIONS 2.13.10 AND 2.13.11 — RECOGNITION OF LAY PASTORS

The Assembly resolved:

to authorise the Standing Committee on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee to amend Regulations 2.13.10 and 2.13.11 to read:

- 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."

03.24

REGULATION 3.1.9(d) — SPECIAL MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION AND PRESBYTERY

The Assembly resolved:

to authorise the Standing Committee on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee:

- (a) to amend Regulation 3.1.9 (d) to read:
"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 members eligible to vote or 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."
- (b) to amend Regulation 3.4.10 to read:

“If, in the opinion of the chairperson, urgent business warrants the holding of a special meeting, or on written request from seven members or 10% of the members, whichever is the greater, of the Presbytery, the chairperson shall instruct the secretary to convene a special meeting.”

03.25

NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Assembly resolved:

Assembly Finance and Audit Committee

to authorise the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to delete Regulations 3.6.31–3.6.33 and the heading “Assembly Finance Committee” and substitute the following:

“ASSEMBLY FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 3.6.31** (a) The Standing Committee shall establish a Finance and Audit Committee consisting of:
- (i) a Chairperson appointed by the Standing Committee from its membership;
 - (ii) four other persons at least two of whom are not employees of the Church or Ministers;
 - (iii) the General Secretary and Chief Financial Officer of the Assembly who shall be ex officio non-voting members;
- (b) The members shall be appointed by the Standing Committee at its first meeting after each ordinary meeting of the Assembly;
- (c) All members shall hold office until a new committee is appointed according to Regulation 3.6.31(b);
- (d) Casual vacancies may be filled by the Standing Committee.
- 3.6.32** The Finance and Audit Committee shall:
- (a) be accountable to the Assembly and its Standing Committee;
 - (b) make to the Assembly such reports and recommendations on financial matters and policies as the Assembly may require or the Finance and Audit Committee considers appropriate.
- 3.6.33** The Finance and Audit Committee shall:
- (a) assist the Standing Committee to discharge its responsibility to exercise due care, diligence and skill in relation to:
 - (i) selection and application of accounting policies;
 - (ii) financial budgeting, recording, monitoring and reporting;
 - (iii) management and internal controls;
 - (iv) business policies and practices;
 - (v) compliance with applicable laws, regulations, standards and best practices;
 - (b) improve the quality of internal and external reporting by the Assembly and its agencies;
 - (c) improve the effectiveness of internal and external audit functions and advise regarding auditors;
 - (d) provide a formal forum for communication between the Standing Committee, senior financial management and the external auditor;

- (e) monitor audit and risk management systems put in place by the various agencies;
- (f) initiate action to investigate or intervene in any agency / activity of the Assembly where such action is warranted by an audit finding or risk situation.”

03.26 REGULATION 3.4.15 — MEMBERSHIP OF PRESBYTERY: MINISTERS-IN-ASSOCIATION AND RETIRED MINISTERS

The Assembly resolved:

to refer Proposal 40 to the Standing Committee with power to act:

Proposal 40: That the Assembly authorise the Standing Committee on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee to amend Regulation 3.4.15 by:

- (a) *adding a new clause (iii) to 3.4.15 (b):*
 - “(iii) Ministers-in-Association or retired Ministers, who are not already members of a Presbytery, who are co-opted by the Presbytery.”;*
 - (b) providing that the first three sentences in the third last paragraph of Regulation 3.4.15 (f) will apply to all co-options; ie “Co-options shall be for a period of one year. A co-opted member is eligible for further co-option, without limit to the number of years of consecutive service. Co-opted members shall have the right to vote.*

03.27 ASSEMBLY PROPERTY REGULATIONS

The Assembly resolved to authorise the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend Regulation 4.10.1 to read:

“All real property acquired or held for or on behalf of the Assembly or any agency of the Assembly (hereinafter called Assembly property) shall be managed and administered by the body concerned or such officer or body as the Assembly or its Standing Committee designates.”

03.28 MEMBERSHIP OF ASSEMBLY

The Assembly resolved:

to refer Proposal 45 to the Standing Committee with power to act:

Proposal 45: That the Assembly authorise the Standing Committee on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee to amend Regulation 3.6.2 by replacing the words “one confirmed lay member” by the words “two confirmed lay members”.

03.29 COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP OF THOSE IN FIRST PLACEMENT (PHASE III) MINISTERIAL EDUCATION

The Assembly resolved:

to authorise the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend those regulations which specify the membership of the church council, presbytery and synod, so that a person in first placement undertaking Phase III of ministry training may be included on that council as if they are a person in a specified ministry.

03.30 UNSAFE BUILDINGS

The Assembly resolved:

to authorise the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference

Committee, to amend the Regulations by the addition of new Regulations in the following terms:

- (a) The Synod Secretary or the Property Officer shall, in relation to any building or property owned, leased or occupied by a Property Trust or other body of the church, have the power:
 - (i) to close down the building or property;
 - (ii) to require the occupier to undertake an audit of the building or property;
 - (iii) to require that remedial work be undertaken by the occupier, if, in the opinion of the Synod Secretary or the Property Officer, the building or property is unsafe or does not meet relevant legislation, health, planning, building or other requirements; and
 - (iv) to make safe or recommend disposal of any property or building on the grounds of safety or non-compliance with relevant requirements;
- (b) In the event that any power is exercised under these new Regulations on unsafe buildings, the Assembly, a synod, or its Standing Committee may delegate to its Property Board the responsibility to decide the future use of the building or property, after consultation with the council having oversight of the building or property.

03.31 ALTERNATE REGULATIONS FOR CHURCH COUNCILS IN SMALL CONGREGATIONS

The Assembly resolved:

to authorise the Standing Committee on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee to amend the *Alternate Regulations for Church Councils in Small Congregations*:

- (a) to read in Regulation 2(b):
 - "The authorisation shall continue until:
 - (b) it is withdrawn by Presbytery after consultation with the Congregation (which shall be carried out by the Presbytery at least every five years); or"
- (b) by renumbering the current Regulation "3" as "3(a)";
- (c) by inserting a new Regulation 3(b):
 - "Where the Presbytery considers it is in the best interests of the Church the Presbytery may allow a Congregation to continue to operate under these Regulations although there are more than 40 voting members.";
- (e) to read in Regulation 4(b):
 - "The quorum for a meeting of the Congregation which is also a meeting of the Church Council shall be one quarter of the voting members. If a quorum is not present the meeting shall be reconvened."

03.32 REFERRAL OF PROPOSALS

The Assembly resolved:

03.32.01 Membership of the Assembly

to request the Reference Committee on Church Polity, in consultation with synods and the Assembly Working Group on Doctrine:

- a) to consider whether the historical precedents that gave rise to the pattern of an equal number of ministerial and lay persons in the membership of synods and Assembly are still relevant;

- (b) to give consideration to the possible revision of the Constitution (paragraphs 33 and 40) and Regulations (3.5.2 and 3.6.4) within the following parameters:
 - (i) whether the definition of “ministerial members” (Regulations 3.5.3(a) and 3.6.4) should include those people who are serving in lay specified ministries, or
 - (ii) other alternatives, such as the creation of different categories of membership;
 - (iii) the inclusion of an appropriate listing of all categories of specified ministry;
- (c) to request the Reference Committee on Church Polity to report to the Standing Committee no later than March 2005.

03.32.02

Regulations 7.7.6(c), (d) and (h) Changes to the Synod Sexual Misconduct Complaints Committee

to refer proposal 37 to the group set up to review Sexual Misconduct Regulations:

Proposal 37: That the Assembly authorise the Standing Committee on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee to amend Regulations 7.7.6(c), (d) and (h) so that the following outcomes are achieved:

- (a) *the Synod Sexual Misconduct Complaints Committee (SSMCC) becomes a group/panel of three people which processes complaints received;*
- (b) *a separate, permanent panel of three persons, be appointed to deal with the complaints that have been received from the committee referred to above. This group to fulfil the functions of the committee as described in Regulation 7.7.6(h);*
- (c) *the Panel consist of*
 - (i) *a past Moderator, a person with legal expertise and a person with expertise in sexual abuse issues;*
 - (ii) *both men and women;*
 - (iii) *persons appointed for a term of two (2) years;*
- (d) *the members of the panel to receive remuneration based on the time spent hearing each complaint;*
- (e) *the panel would be expected to act promptly on receiving advice from SSMCC and reach a decision expeditiously;*
- (f) *appeals from the panel’s decision to follow the current regulations with the Moderator appointing an Appeal Panel.*

ELECTIONS

03.33

Results of Elections

On advice of the Returning Officer, Malcolm Gledhill, the President declared the following results of elections:

President-Elect		Gregor Henderson
Standing Committee	Bruce Binnie	Elizabeth Burns
	Dennis Chapman	Samantha Charlesworth
	Sue Clarkson	Tony Davies
	Bev Fabb	Susan Gormann
	Wesley Gleeson	Geoffrey Grinton

Matthew Grudnoff
Jason Kioa
Allan Thompson
Liva Tukutama

Troy Hamilton
Isabel Thomas Dobson
Myffie Trudinger
Julie Watts

Church Polity Chairperson
Coolamon College Chairperson
Defence Force Chaplaincy Chairperson
Frontier Services Chairperson
Historical Reference Committee Chairperson
Legal Reference Committee Chairperson
Ministerial Education Commission Chairperson
Multicultural Ministry Chairperson
National Finance Committee

Andrew Dutney
Marelle Harisun
A. Gale Hall
Gregor Henderson
William Emilsen
Malcolm Gledhill
Christopher Udy
Liva Tukutama

Chairperson
Members

Bruce Binnie
Heather Ackland
David Greenall
Jim Mein
Margaret Lightbody
Lyll Weaver
John Preston
Ray Oliver
Ray Richmond
Murray Muirhead
Elizabeth Walker
Richard Miller
Philip Creed
James Haire

Relations with Other Faiths Chairperson
UnitingJustice Chairperson
Theology and Discipleship Chairperson
UnitingCare Australia Chairperson
Uniting Education Chairperson
Uniting International Mission Chairperson

GENERAL BUSINESS

03.34 GREETINGS FROM ECUMENICAL GUESTS

On behalf of the overseas guests, Omega Bula, William McVey and Gradye Parsons participated in bringing greetings to the Assembly.

Byuong-Gon Choi addressed the Assembly and called for peace.

Penisimani Fonua and Laisiasa Ratabacaca led the Assembly in prayers.

03.35 BIBLE STUDY

During the Assembly four Bible Studies were presented by Rev Dr Dorothy Lee on the theme "Witness the Glory of God".

03.36 CHILDREN OF THE 10TH ASSEMBLY – KUCA-10A

The children of KUCA-A presented a challenging report of their reflections on the Assembly and the church in general.

The Assembly resolved:

to receive the report.

Young People:
Tomothy Calwell
Kayla Neve
Maria Makafi
Matthew Fox
Vanessa Munro
Huluni Pomale
Rachel Paule
Fiona Holt

Brinthan Rajaratnam
Kirsty Imms
Ofa Palu
Alice Ridge
Barcelona Pomale
Melinda Morna
Amelia Peace

Leaders:
Mary Sutherland
Fauhiva Lutui
David Gates

Michael Calwell
Gordon Ramsay
Bill Lidgett

03.37 REGULATIONS EXPRESSING FLEXIBILITY

The Assembly resolved:

to request the Church Polity Reference Committee to seek ways in which the Regulations may be made more appropriate to the needs of and express the flexibility required by our increasingly diverse church, whilst as the same time remaining within the ethos of the Uniting Church.

03.38 REVIEW OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT REGULATIONS

The Assembly resolved:

- (a) to establish a review of the Regulations and policies covering sexual misconduct and discipline of Ministers, and complaints against lay people, that includes but is not limited to:
 - (i) the principles which underpin the process, including the outcomes which are desired by the Church;
 - (ii) those things which make it more difficult for the process to deliver equitable outcomes for the parties and the Church;
 - (iii) limitations on the process which arise due to lack of clarity in language;
 - (iv) consideration of whether the use of panels assists the process or whether other options should be adopted;
 - (v) ways in which there can be consistency in the decisions of committees;
 - (vi) ways in which original complainants can be respected in the Discipline processes;
 - (vii) consideration of whether the Regulations and policies covering sexual misconduct and discipline should be extended to candidates for the ministries of Minister of the Word, Deacon and Youth Worker and to people exercising the roles of Minister of the Word, Deacon or Youth Worker in recognised placements;
 - (viii) compensation which may be paid to the complainants affected by sexual misconduct and the process by which that compensation will be paid;
- (b) to authorise the Standing Committee to appoint the group and request the Review Group to report to the November 2004 meeting of the Standing Committee;
- (c) to ensure that the review group consults with each synod and is resourced by Uniting Church people with professional expertise in this area, and by synod and presbytery people with experience in working with the process;
- (d) to authorise the Standing Committee on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee to make amendments to the Regulations and policies related to sexual misconduct and discipline where in the opinion of the Standing Committee it is a matter of urgency.

03.39 LAY PASTOR - TITLE

The Assembly resolved:

to refer proposal 38 to the Task Group on Specified Ministries:

Proposal 38: That the Assembly authorise the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to amend the Constitution and Regulations in order to change the

designation "Lay Pastor" to "Pastor".

03.40

TASK GROUP ON SPECIFIED MINISTRIES

The Assembly resolved:

- (a) to refer Proposals 24, 25, 33 and 61 to the Assembly Standing Committee;

Proposal 24: That the Assembly:

- (a) *request the Standing Committee to appoint a Task Group*
- (i) *to undertake a reassessment of ministry in the Uniting Church in Australia;*
 - (ii) *in order to give consideration to the possibility of incorporating those persons presently candidating for, and placed within, the specified ministry of youth worker into one of the existing ordained ministries;*
 - (iii) *that includes lay and ordained members and at least one member of each of the specified ministries included in the scope of this work.*
- (b) *establish the following terms of reference for the Task Group:*
- (i) *to clarify the relationships between the various ministries of Word, deacon, youth worker, lay pastor and community minister;*
 - (ii) *to recommend ways in which it might be possible to facilitate the transfer of persons in the specified ministry of youth worker, and candidates, into the existing ordained ministries;*
 - (iii) *to explore, and to recommend, ways in which it may be possible to simplify the ordering of the specified ministries;*
 - (iv) *in undertaking its task the task group shall refer to the following documents, but not be limited to*
 - *the report on Ministry in the Uniting Church in Australia 1991;*
 - *the report Ordination and Ministry in the Uniting Church 1994;*
 - *the Constitution and Regulations of the Uniting Church in Australia 2001; and*
 - *the Queensland Synod discussion paper Reconsideration of the Ministry of Those Called to Work with Children, Young People and Their Families 2002.*
- (c) *request the Task Group to report to the Standing Committee no later than July 2005 with a view to the Standing Committee bringing proposals to the Eleventh Assembly.*

Proposal 25 That the Assembly:

- (a) *appoint a Task Group to collect information about, and review the ministry of Community Ministry;*
- (b) *refer the appointment of the members of the Task Group to the Assembly Standing Committee;*
- (c) *determine that at least two of the members of the Task Group are commissioned Community Ministers, with no more than one from any particular Synod;*
- (d) *determine that the review should consider the following matters, but remain open to further matters arising from the consultation:*

- *Present roles of commissioned community ministers, and conditions of appointment including financial remuneration (if applicable);*
 - *Type of courses required to be undertaken by candidates for community ministry;*
 - *Future training needed in relation to roles and responsibility;*
 - *Authorisation for presiding at the sacraments (and relation to training);*
 - *Authorisation for marriage celebration;*
 - *The relationship of provisional candidature to the Period of Discernment;*
 - *The two services for recognition of this ministry*
 - *Name of the ministry;*
 - *The relationship of the Community Minister to a Minister in placement (where there is a placement in the congregation or community in which the Community Minister serves);*
- (e) *bring a report to the 11th Assembly with any recommendation for action.*

Proposal 33 That the Assembly:

- (a) *affirm for the time being the current Assembly policy on lay presidency and call on all presbyteries to apply the guidelines strictly;*
- (b) *request the Standing Committee to appoint a broad based task group (including representatives of the Christian Unity Working Group, the Ministerial Education Commission and Theology and Discipleship) to arrange a major consultation with the following aims:*
- (i) *exploration and assessment of the ecumenical implications of the current practice of lay presidency at the Eucharist;*
 - (ii) *consideration of the variety of ways in which it may be possible to provide ecumenically recognised ministry to small rural congregations, faith communities and new congregations in developing areas;*
 - (iii) *examination of the implications of the Uniting Church's understanding of ministry and ordination, and its place of the Uniting Church within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. (See 'The Basis of Union' #2);*
- (c) *request the Task Group to report to the Standing Committee by November 2004 with any proposals for further work or action that arise from the consultation.*

Proposal 61 That the Assembly resolve:

- (a) *to note the findings of the Queensland research from the Future of Ministry Task Group Report that:*
- (i) *in the Queensland Synod there is already a shortage of ministers to meet the needs of congregations and other placements requiring people trained and ordained/specified for UCA ministry;*
 - (ii) *the current cohort of ministers is ageing and projections indicate that shortages will increase dramatically into the foreseeable future;*
 - (iii) *there are insufficient candidates offering and currently in training to fill the current and projected vacancies;*
 - (iv) *the church has been consistently unsuccessful in*

recruiting younger people as candidates for ministry;

- (b) *to request the Ministerial Education Commission (MEC) to convene a working group to give consideration to ways in which the rules for training people for the specified ministries, and the application of those rules, restricts the church in being able to recruit sufficient and younger people to candidate for the specified ministries;*
- (c) *to direct the working group to give particular attention to the issues of:*
 - (i) *the increased complexity of candidating process from Period of Discernment through to ordination/commissioning;*
 - (ii) *the amount of initial training required for ordained/specified ministries;*
 - (iii) *the social and economic issues that deter potential candidates from offering for ministry in the church;*
 - (iv) *the perceptions of ministry and training that inhibit younger candidates from offering for ministry in the church;*
 - (v) *the need for more flexible wording for regulation 2.2.2(c);*
- (d) *to determine that more than half of the working group members will be drawn from outside the membership of the Ministerial Education Commission and that the working group will include:*
 - (i) *at least one person under the age of 30;*
 - (ii) *at least one member of the Queensland "Future of Ministry Task Group"; and*
 - (iii) *people identified by the Commission with appropriate skills and experience to resource the work of the group.*
- (b) to request the Standing Committee to form one or more Task Groups on Specified Ministries and Lay Presidency and to determine the membership of each;
- (c) that the terms of reference of the Task Group/s shall include those matters raised by Proposals 24, 25, 33 and 61 and missional implications;
- (d) to request the Standing Committee to establish a timeline for the Task Group/s with a view to a report and recommendations being brought to the 11th Assembly;
- (e) to refer Proposals 51 and 78 to the Standing Committee for its information.

Proposal 51 That the Assembly resolve:

that proposal 33 be amended by the inclusion of the Church Polity Reference Committee among those bodies named in sub-section (b).

Proposal 78 That the Assembly resolve:

to amend Proposal 33 as follows:

- (a) *amend clause (a) by the deletion of crossed-out words and the addition of underlined words so that it reads:*
 - (a) *affirm for the time being the current Assembly policy on Lay Presidency and call on all Presbyteries to apply the Assembly guidelines on Lay Presidency at the Sacraments strictly.*

- (b) *amend clause (b) to include representatives of Rural Ministry Task Groups, and at least two persons who are authorised Lay Presiders.*

03.41

NATIONAL CHURCH

The Assembly resolved:

to refer Proposal 52 to the Standing Committee with the power to act.

Proposal 52: That the Assembly resolve:

- (a) *to establish a task group to enquire into the Uniting Church in Australia being a “national church”;*
- (b) *to determine that the enquiry*
- (i) *examine the implications for the Uniting Church in Australia of the different strengths and presence of the church across Australia, noting in particular the significant financial difficulty of the Northern and Western Australian Synods, and even of the Assembly itself;*
 - (ii) *present practical ways in which the Assembly and its agencies and instrumentalities, may be structured and organised so that there is appropriate participation and involvement of church members from across the nation in the processes of the Assembly and its agencies and instrumentalities;*
 - (iii) *explore the implications for a “national church” that there are certain regional perspectives and ways of “being church”;*
 - (iv) *consider the location of Assembly operations (staff, committees, meetings etc) and their significance for a national church perspective;*
 - (v) *consider, and if practicable, prepare a contingency plan in the event that a synod ceases to be financially viable;*
 - (vi) *recommend appropriate administrative and legal structures for the church which may facilitate a “national church” approach to relation to government and other bodies external to the church;*
 - (vii) *examine approaches to achieve “national co-operation” among the synods in their ministry, mission and operations; and*
 - (viii) *address broad questions of the polity of the church that inhibit or enhance the national character of the church and bring appropriate recommendations to the 11th Assembly;*
- (c) *to refer the appointment of the members of the Task Group to the Assembly Standing Committee, with the advice that the task group consist of ten people, convened by the past President, with each synod and the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress represented.*

03.42

DETENTION OF AUSTRALIAN CITIZENS IN GUANTANAMO BAY

The Assembly resolved:

- (a) affirming that:
- God’s love for every human being leads Christians to support those whose human rights are disregarded, including those who are imprisoned unjustly, and
 - it is a fundamental responsibility of a democratic government to

seek to safeguard the human rights of all its citizens, including the unpopular and the alleged wrongdoer, to deplore the detention without legal charges or trial of Australian citizens David Hicks since January 2002 and Mamdouh Habib since May 2002 in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and the acquiescence of the Australian government in their detention by the government of the United States of America;

- (b) to request the Australian Government to act immediately:
 - (i) to enable any alleged offences of David Hicks and Mamdouh Habib to be dealt with under Australian or international law,
 - (ii) to ensure that David Hicks and Mamdouh Habib are granted access to lawyers engaged by themselves and/or their families,
 - (iii) to arrange for the return of David Hicks and Mamdouh Habib to Australia to be dealt with under Australian or international law for any alleged offences,
 - (iv) to arrange the release from detention of David Hicks and Mamdouh Habib if there is insufficient evidence for them to face trial under Australian or international law,
 - (v) to protest against United States plans to bring one or both of David Hicks and Mamdouh Habib to trial before a United States Military Tribunal, and
 - (vi) to protest in the strongest possible terms against the potential use of the death penalty as a punishment, should the United States proceed with plans to try David Hicks and/or Mamdouh Habib and find them guilty;
- (c) to communicate these resolutions to the Australian Government, the Federal Opposition, the Australian Democrats, the Australian Greens, the Ambassador of the United States of America and the families of David Hicks and Mamdouh Habib.

03.43

ASSEMBLY KEY DIRECTIONS

The Assembly undertook a series of discussions in community working groups and in plenary sessions in order to discern God's call on the Assembly at this time.

At the conclusion of this process the Assembly resolved:

- (a) to commit itself, its agencies and committees to continue to explore and model theologically disciplined and collaborative ways of working; and to shape and prioritise the Assembly work for the next triennium in light of the following key directions:
 - (i) Exploring, developing and expressing new ways of being the national church;
 - (ii) Creating, building and nurturing "gospel community" in Australia with particular attention to the Church's commitment to justice, reconciliation, peace and relations with other faiths;
 - (iii) Strengthening the prophetic voice of the Assembly addressing national issues and helping local congregations and groups to link with national issues at local level;
 - (iv) Supporting and enabling the Church to live in unity with diversity;
 - (v) Developing contextually appropriate ministry models;
 - (vi) Strengthening its missional focus with particular attention to what this means for the service and advocacy work of the Assembly, discipleship opportunities and critiquing society;
 - (vii) Equipping people and communities for growth in the life of the Christian faith with particular attention to forming new disciples and identifying new leaders;
 - (viii) Continuing to walk together with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, ecumenical partners, and churches in other countries; and

- (b) to refer this resolution, together with material prepared by Community Working Groups and the Facilitation Group, to the Standing Committee and the General Secretary for implementation.

03.44 APOLOGY TO THE UNITING ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER CHRISTIAN CONGRESS

The Assembly resolved:

- (a) to apologise to the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) for the hurt caused by the Assembly's failure to listen adequately to the UAICC's voice in the Assembly's consideration of Ministry and Membership in the Uniting Church (Minute 03.12.04);
- (b) to assure the UAICC of the strong desire of the UCA to continue to live under God in the covenant relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous members of the Church;
- (c) to request the President to ensure that steps are taken as soon as possible to participate with the UAICC in response to their and our concerns for the future of the covenant relationship;
- (d) to request the Standing Committee to consider ways in which the Assembly's decision-making procedures may become more culturally sensitive and more informed by our cultural diversity.

03.45 NCYC APPRECIATION

The Assembly heard a presentation on planning for the next National Christian Youth Convention, to be held in Adelaide in January 2005, the fiftieth anniversary of the first Convention.

The Assembly resolved:

to express its appreciation for the giftedness and perseverance of the organisers and leaders of each of the National Christian Youth Conventions since the last Assembly – 2001 in Brisbane, 2003 in Newcastle.

03.46 VENUE FOR THE ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY

The Assembly resolved:

- (a) to receive with thanks the invitation of the Synod of Queensland to hold the Eleventh Assembly in Brisbane or environs;
- (b) to authorise the Standing Committee to determine the exact date, and to negotiate with the Synod of Queensland as to the particular location and venues for the various Assembly functions

03.47 KOREAN CRISIS

The Assembly resolved:

noting the current nuclear and military threats in the Korean peninsula and the commitment of our Korean partner churches to peaceful reunification of Korea:

- (a) to affirm and support the efforts of our partners in North and South Korea in their call to oppose policies that embrace confrontation and to support the peaceful resolution of the crisis;
- (b) to ask Uniting International Mission to make urgent representation of the concerns of our partner churches to the Australian government;
- (c) to convey these resolutions to the National Council of Churches in Australia for their consideration and action;
- (d) to condemn any Australian involvement in aggression against North

Korea and to call on the Australian Government to advocate for a peaceful solution to the crisis in the Korean Peninsula.

03.48 TAIWAN

The Assembly resolved:

noting the suffering and anxiety caused by the recent Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic in Taiwan, and the delayed response of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other international health agencies to the epidemic in Taiwan, to support our partner church, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, in its request on behalf of the Taiwanese people for urgent access to all the services of the World Health Organisation and, in the longer term, for full membership of the WHO.

CLOSING ACTIONS

03.49 REMAINING BUSINESS

The Assembly resolved to refer the following proposals to the Standing Committee, with power to act:

- Change to Counselling Procedures Referral (Sydney Presbytery);
- Cato Visitor (Terence Corkin);
- Basis of Union (Chris Budden, Robert Bos);
- Costs of Theological Education (Bruce Binnie, Jim Mein)

03.50 APPRECIATION

On behalf of the Assembly, Jan Trengrove expressed appreciation to all who had contributed to the preparation, presentation and functioning of the Tenth Assembly.

CLOSE

The Tenth Assembly concluded at 1.25pm on Saturday 19 July 2003 with worship led by the President.