

# **The Uniting Church in Australia Western Australia**



**The Minutes of  
a Special Meeting of the Presbytery of WA  
Held at Penrhos College, Perth WA  
on  
10 February 2018**

**These Minutes record events and the business of those committees or  
bodies that relate to the Presbytery of Western Australia**

## **OPENING REMARKS**

The Presbytery of Western Australia meeting was held on Saturday 10 February at Penrhos College. More than 120 lay and ordained members from the congregations and faith communities from around the Presbytery came together for fellowship and to seek the will of God for the business of the Presbytery.

Rev Greg Ross acknowledged the prior custodians of the land with respect paid to their elders and Mitchell Garlett led the Welcome to Country segment.

## **WORSHIP**

Worship, led by the Strategy and Mission Planning Committee (SMPC) chairperson, Rev Greg Ross, prepared the Presbytery for a morning of discussion about the Presbytery's Mission Focused Strategic Goals with the aim of how we plan to make the goals become reality.

## **BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

Rev Lorraine Stokes invited Rev David Kriel to advise the meeting of all logistical arrangements for the day, i.e. housekeeping and catering.

Rev Lorraine Stoke, Chairperson of Presbytery WA, referred to the Constitution of the meeting, referring the meeting to the proposed Order of Business, Business Committee Report as well as presenting Proposal 1 by the Business Committee.

### **Proposal 1**

That the Presbytery adopt the Order of Business, Business Committee Report and Proposal 1 from the Business Committee.  
P01/02-2018 **Approved by consensus**

Rev Lorraine Stokes re-introduced Rev Greg Ross to proceed with the Order of Business:

## **STRATEGY and MISSION PLANNING COMMITTEE PRESENTATION**

### *Change the Future with a Different Present*

At the Presbytery of Western Australia meeting in November 2017, the Presbytery agreed by consensus to note the Mission Focused Strategic Goals: by developing fresh expressions of church, through deliberate, wise and prayerful mission planning by working to be part of, and creating collaborative networks of communities of faith.

This meeting engaged with the Mission Focused Strategic Goals, with a view to strategically incarnating them in the life of the Presbytery.

The Presbytery members considered the sobering numbers of the current situation from when five Presbyteries joined into one back in 2006.

<b>Presbytery of Western Australia</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2017</b>	
Numbers of Congregations	135	110	18.5% decrease in 11 years
Average Attendance	5607	4230	25% decrease
Numbers of Ordained Ministers	99	53	46% decrease
Number of Lay Ministers	22	15	31% decrease
Number of Candidates for Ministry	6	1	83% decrease
Average Size of Congregation	25	20	20% decrease
Congregations Closed		27	

Following Rev Greg Ross' synopsis of the journey so far, the members of Presbytery began their work with discussion in one of 12 table groups.

Firstly, members considered and discussed the proposal that every congregation, church council, committee and meeting within the Presbytery of Western Australia be requested to give the first portion of their agenda at every meeting to consideration of the ways in which their participation in the mission of God is growing the church by developing 'Fresh Expressions of Church'. The aim is that by the end of 2020: all ministry agents and church councillors will have completed the Mission Shaped Ministry Course; and more than 80% of our faith communities, congregations and agencies in the Presbytery will have developed one or more Fresh Expressions of church.

In their groups, they discussed two questions:

1. What was your first response when you heard the proposal?
2. What help would your community of faith need to be able to achieve this goal by the end of 2020?

Each table group briefly shared their responses with all Presbytery members.

Secondly, following an introduction from SMPC member, Rev Narelle Collas, members considered and discussed the second part of the proposal that every congregation, church council, committee and meeting within the Presbytery of Western Australia be requested to give the first portion of their agenda at every meeting to consideration of the ways in which their participation in the mission of God is growing the church by enabling deliberate, wise and prayerful mission planning and community outreach. The aim is that by the end of 2020: all faith communities, congregations, agencies and committees within the Presbytery will have completed and implemented Mission Plans.

In their groups, they discussed two questions:

1. What was your first response when you heard the proposal?
2. What help would your community of faith need to be able to achieve this goal by the end of 2020?

Each table group briefly shared their responses with all Presbytery members.

Thirdly, following an introduction from SMPC staff support, Rev Mark Illingworth, members considered and discussed the third part of the proposal that every congregation, church

council, committee and meeting within the Presbytery of Western Australia be requested to give the first portion of their agenda at every meeting to consideration of the ways in which their participation in the mission of God is growing the church by working to be part of and creating collaborative networks of communities of faith. The aim is that by the end of 2020: at least four identified creative collaborative networks of communities of faith would be operating across the Presbytery.

In regional gathering area groups, they discussed two questions:

1. What was your first response when you heard the proposal?
2. What help would your community of faith need to be able to achieve this goal by the end of 2020?

Each table group briefly shared their responses with all Presbytery members.

Near the end of the meeting, after considering all of the table group feedback, SMPC presented the following proposal to the members and it was **agreed by consensus**:

That the Presbytery of Western Australia request each community of faith, congregation, church council, agency and committee meeting within the Presbytery give the first portion of their agenda at every meeting to consideration of the ways in which their participation in the mission of God is growing the church by:

1. developing 'Fresh Expressions of Church',
2. deliberate, wise and prayerful mission planning and community outreach,
3. working to be part of and create Collaborative Networks of faith communities.

That Presbytery note that SMPC, in collaboration with the Commission for Education for Discipleship and Leadership (CEDAL), will do all it can between now and 2020 to encourage and support communities of faith, congregations, church councils, agencies and committees within the Presbytery to:

1. invite all ministry agents, church councillors and interested members to complete the Mission Shaped Ministry course;
2. aim to have 80% of our faith communities, congregations and agencies in the Presbytery to have developed one or more 'Fresh Expressions of Church';
3. support all faith communities, congregations, agencies and committees within the Presbytery to have completed and implemented Mission Plans, including ways that they are reaching out into the community; and
4. work with the Council for Mission in establishing at least four creative collaborative networks of communities of faith.

Presbytery members applauded SMPC members for their work during, and in the lead-up to, the meeting, for facilitating the work of how we can regenerate and turn around the future of the Uniting Church WA.

“We believe that God is still calling us to add something significant to the life and future of our nation,” - by Rev Greg Ross.

## **MINISTRY MILESTONES**

Anniversaries of ordination for those who have served God and the Church faithfully over many years were celebrated.

### **10 years**

Rev Eric McAndrew

### **15 years**

Uto Fotu

Rev Lorraine Stokes

Community Minister at Beth Shalom Uniting Church  
Willetton Uniting Church

### **20 years**

Rev Floss Atkinson

Rev Raymond Clee

Rev Alistair Melville

Rev Nalin Perera

Rev Gary van Heerden

Wesley College  
Presbyterian Ladies' College

### **25 years**

Rev Mitch Fialkowski

Rev Alan Jeffrey

Rev Dr Elizabeth Sanderson

Remote Area Ministry Murchison Patrol  
South Perth Uniting Church

### **30 years**

Rev Mervyn Anderson

Rev Pat Burvill

Rev Stephen Larkin

Nedlands Uniting Church

### **35 years**

Rev Michael Fawcett

Rev Vijay Paul

Rev Dr Sonny Rajamoney

Rev Dr Ian Tozer

St Peter & Emmaus Church  
All Saints Floreat Uniting Church

### **40 years**

Rev John Edwards

### **40 years of service in WA**

Rev Emeritus Prof Bill Loader

### **50 years**

Rev Geoff Blyth

Rev Philip Sindle

## **60 years**

Rev David Oxley

Rev John Phillipson

Each milestone recipient was presented with a balloon before the Moderator, Rev Steve Francis led the Presbytery in prayer giving thanks to God for their faithful service and that they continue to live their call. The Presbytery sang unaccompanied, 'Great is your faithfulness'. Rev David Oxley cut the cake which was shared for dessert at lunch. Special thanks was extended to Amanda Badenhorst, Pastoral and Placements Administrator who made the scrumptious cake.

Following Lunch, the meeting moved to further Reports and Proposals

## **REPORTS AND PROPOSALS**

### **Committees of Presbytery**

Presbytery Standing Committee (\*PSC)

Pastoral Relations Committee (\*PRC)

Strategy and Mission Planning Committee (\*SMPC)

Property Committee

Candidates for Ministries Committee (\*CMC)

Congregational Community Services Committee (\*CCSC)

Rural ministry Committee

Multicultural and Cross-Cultural Committee

First Third (now known as Uniting Generations)

Liturgy Committee

Commission for Education for Discipleship and Leadership (CEDAL)

## **SUPPORTING THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH**

The Presbytery agreed to encourage the committees of the Presbytery of Western Australia to explore how they can work together more closely and bring any changes to the Annual Meeting of the Presbytery of Western Australia on Saturday, 16 June 2018.

Currently, the Presbytery has ten committees - more than any other Presbytery within the Uniting Church in Australia. The regulatory committees include: Presbytery Standing Committee (PSC), Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC), and the Presbytery Property Committee (PPC). The Commission for Education for Discipleship and Leadership (CEDAL) carries the education Regulations for both the Presbytery and Synod of Western Australia.

In the future, the Community Services Committee wants to have a greater emphasis on mission and a closer relationship with the Strategy and Mission Planning Committee (SMPC). The three other Presbytery committees, Rural Ministry, Uniting Generations and Multicultural Ministry may consider direct participation with CEDAL, SMPC, PPC and PRC to assist decision-making and participating as plans are being made for the future.

No committees will be disbanded. However, committees may decide to change the way they operate and any rule changes will be brought to the Presbytery in June.

## **DELIBERATIONS AND DECISIONS**

As agreed at the 11th Annual Meeting of the Presbytery of Western Australia held in November 2016, reports to the Presbytery were received individually to enable issues and questions to be addressed and discussed more effectively.

Reports were received from:

Presbytery Standing Committee

Presented by Rev David Kriel & Rev Lorraine Stokes - **received and accepted by consensus.**

Pastoral Relations Committee

Presented by Rev Trevor Waters & Rev Mark Illingworth - **received and accepted by consensus.**

Presbytery Property Committee

Presented by Rev Stephen Larkin - **received and accepted by consensus.**

### **Proposal 2**

That the Presbytery appoint Rev John McKane as Acting Secretary of Presbytery with immediate effect until 30 June 2018.

P02/02-2018 **Agreed by consensus.**

### **Proposal 3**

That the Presbytery agree to authorise the Presbytery Standing Committee to determine a process for seeking nominations, defining the role and bringing a name for Secretary of Presbytery to the June 2018 Annual Meeting of the Presbytery of Western Australia.

P03/02-2018 **Agreed by consensus.**

### **Proposal 4**

That the Presbytery resolve to propose to the Assembly: Regulations on the Powers of a Presbytery Standing Committee - that the Assembly authorise the Presbytery Standing Committee, on advice from the Legal Reference Committee, to add to the current Regulation 3.7 a description of the powers of a Presbytery Standing Committee giving it on-going authority to act for the Presbytery on urgent matters.

P04/02-2018 **Agreed by consensus.**

### **Proposal 5**

That the Presbytery resolves to meet four times a year commencing in 2019: i.e. on 9 February 2019, 4 May 2019, 3 August 2019 and 9 November 2019.

P05/02-2018 **Agreed by consensus.**

## **THANK YOU AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Chairperson of SMPC, Rev Greg Ross thanked Penrhos College for their support and work in hosting the first Ordinary Meeting of Presbytery for 2018. The Chairperson also acknowledged the Church and Presbytery for its involvement and decision making to the issues arising from the meeting and thanked the staff of the Church Office, Media and Communications, Commissions and Committees. Rev Greg Ross concluded the full meeting with a prayer.

The meeting concluded at 4:00 pm

**WE CONFIRM THAT WE HAVE CHECKED THE MINUTES FOR THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2018 AT PENRHOS COLLEGE AND CONFIRM THAT IT IS A TRUE REFLECTION OF THE EVENT.**

**Acting Secretary of Presbytery**

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Rev John McKane

**Chairperson of Presbytery**

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Rev Lorraine Stokes