

S7.5 MINISTERIAL SUPPORT FUND

NAME AND ESTABLISHMENT

- S7.5.1 (a) The Synod will establish and maintain a fund entitled "The Ministerial Support Fund".
- (b) The Ministerial Support Fund will take over the functions, responsibilities and obligations of the Hardey Bequest Fund, the Provident Fund and the Theological Student Assistance Fund and assume such additional functions, responsibilities and obligations as are detailed in these By-Laws.

PURPOSE

- S7.5.2 The purpose of the Ministerial Support Fund is to assist ministers (Ministers of the Word, Deacons, Deaconesses, Community Ministers, Lay Pastors and Youth Workers recognised as such by the Uniting Church in Australia), ministerial candidates and other persons involved in the ministry of the Church who are suffering financial hardship, are in necessitous circumstances and for whom no other help is available.

PROPERTY OF THE FUND

- S7.5.3 The real and personal property of the Ministerial Support Fund will be vested in the Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (WA) and will be dealt with according to these By-Laws and the Regulations of the Church.

ASSETS

- S7.5.4 The assets of the Ministerial Support Fund consist of:
- (a) the assets (including accrued interest) of the following funds previously known as:
- i. "The Hardey Bequest Fund", established for the purpose of assisting ministers of the Word, deacons, deaconesses and youth workers who most need financial help;
 - ii. "The Provident Fund", consisting of the Children's Fund Reserve (the residue of the former Methodist Children's Fund), the W.A. Superannuation Reserve (of the former Congregational Church) and the former Presbyterian Provident Fund;
 - iii. "The Theological Student Assistance Fund", established for the benefit of any minister or student for the ministry who is in necessitous circumstances;
 - iv. "The Benevolent Fund" established for people in need;
 - v. "The Emma Reid Bequest" established for people in need; and
 - vi. "The Rischbeith Bequest" established for the relief of those in poverty;
- (b) such additional gifts, bequests and legacies of real and personal property made to the Ministerial Support Fund or determined by the Synod, in furtherance of its powers, to be applied to the Ministerial Support Fund;
- (c) moneys allocated to the purposes of the Ministerial Support Fund by the Synod; and
- (d) income earned and interest accrued by the Ministerial Support Fund.

ACCOUNTING AND INVESTMENT

- S7.5.5 The Ministerial Support Fund will be maintained in the Trust and Special Purpose Funds of the Synod in an account styled "The Ministerial Support Fund".
- S7.5.6 The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (WA) may invest the assets of the Ministerial Support Fund in any manner authorised by the Act and the Regulations of the Church.
- S7.5.7 The Financial Services Unit will keep proper books of account and arrange for the books to be audited in accord with Reg. 3.8.7.
- S7.5.8 The Financial Services Unit will, as requested, furnish to the Committee referred to below a statement of the financial position and financial performance of the Fund.

MINISTERIAL SUPPORT FUND COMMITTEE

- S7.5.9 The Ministerial Support Fund is managed by a Committee styled "The Ministerial Support Fund Committee" hereinafter referred to as "the Committee".
- S7.5.10 The Committee consists of:
- i. the Moderator (the convener);
 - ii. the Chairperson of the Placements Commission;
 - iii. the Convener of the Ministerial Benefits Committee; and
 - iv. the General Secretary.
- S7.5.11 Should there be a vacancy in any one of these offices from time to time, the Synod or the Synod Standing Committee may appoint an appropriate person to act.
- S7.5.12 The Committee will meet as often as may be required. The committee may use telephone or other electronic methods to meet. Three members present will constitute a quorum.
- S7.5.13 The Convener may poll by electronic means all members with regard to any matter. If there is unanimity, the decision may be implemented. If there is not unanimity, a meeting pursuant to clause S7.5.12, will be called to determine the matter.
- S7.5.14 The Committee will keep appropriate records of its activities and decisions.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

- S7.5.15 The Committee will determine each year, prior to the distribution of any funds in accordance with these By-Laws, the amount available for distribution bearing in mind the need to preserve the value of the Ministerial Support Fund's capital, and may, if necessary, recommend to the Synod any action necessary to maintain and grow the value of the Ministerial Support Fund.
- S7.5.16 The Committee will receive applications for assistance from eligible persons in financial need and necessitous circumstances and approve or refuse financial assistance by way of grant or interest free loan from the Ministerial Support Fund or assist the applicant to access assistance from other sources.
- S7.5.17 Without limiting the general authority of the Committee in By-Law S7.5.16 above, the Committee may provide assistance to persons in the following circumstances:
- (a) candidates for the ministry completing Phase II of their ministerial training and awaiting their first placement;

- (b) candidates for the ministry completing Phase II of their ministerial training and entering their first placement who may require assistance with the acquisition of a car, furniture and office equipment;
- (c) ministers awaiting placement;
- (d) ministers who are moving out of ministry and require assistance in the transition to a new vocation;
- (e) ministers in placement whose level of stipend is to be reduced from full-time or an agreed proportion to a lower level;
- (f) ministers whose placement gives rise to additional expenses; and
- (g) such other circumstances that from time to time may be determined by the Committee as requiring assistance.

S7.5.18 In determining that an applicant is in need of financial assistance, the Committee will take into account

- (a) the income and other financial benefits received by the applicant from their appointment or placement within the Uniting Church;
- (b) the private and other income received by the applicant or her or his spouse from sources outside their appointment or placement; and
- (c) the family and domestic responsibilities of the applicant in respect of education, sickness, ill health, or any misfortune.

CONFIDENTIALITY

S7.5.19 Except in due performance of their duties under these By-Laws and the Regulations of the Church, no person will disclose any information concerning any application for financial assistance.

ANNUAL REPORT

S7.5.20 The Committee will report to each ordinary Synod concerning the operation of the Ministerial Support Fund in such a manner that the applicants and grantees of assistance are unable to be individually identified.