



Congregational Policy: Equal Opportunity

1.0 Policy Statement

It is fundamental to the Christian faith and the ethos of the Congregation that all individuals are treated equally. The Congregation is committed to achieving equal employment opportunity for all employees as a means of increasing the effectiveness of the organisation and recognising the true potential of employees.

To ensure that all employees in Congregational workplaces are treated on the basis of their true abilities and merit and are provided with a work environment which is free of discrimination.

Accordingly, all employees are entitled to access employment, promotion, training, transfer and all benefits of employment on the basis of merit and will be assessed on the basis of their skills qualifications, abilities, prior work performance and aptitudes.

1.1 Our Calling

As a people journeying together we affirm our calling under God:

- to preach Christ the crucified and risen one and confess him as Lord
- to bear witness to the unity of faith and life in Christ, rising above cultural, economic, national and racial boundaries
- to engage in fearless prophetic ministry in relation to social evils which deny God's active will for justice and peace
- to act with God alongside the oppressed, the hurt and the poor
- to accept responsibility for the wise use and conservation of the finite resources of this earth for the benefit of all
- to recognise, treasure and use the gifts of the Spirit given to all God's people for ministering
- and to live a creative, adventurous life of faith, characterised by openness, flexibility, hope and joy.

Consideration should be given to our calling in seeking guidance and interpretation surrounding this policy.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all Congregational staff and volunteers.

1.3 Policy Owner

This Equal Opportunity Policy is implemented and maintained by the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer.



1.4 Further Assistance

Any staff member who requires further assistance in understanding or applying this policy can contact a member of the People and Culture team.

1.5 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if required.

1.6 Related Policies and Procedures

Code of Conduct

Bullying and Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures

Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1.8 References

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act, 1986 (Cth)

Racial Discrimination Act, 1975 (Cth)

Sex Discrimination Act, 1984 (Cth)

2.0 Policy in Practice

2.1 Grounds of discrimination

Discrimination in employment and in the supply of goods and services is unlawful under Commonwealth and Victorian legislation. Thus, stereotyped assumptions based on prejudice will have no place in Congregational workplaces and there will be no discrimination on the grounds of

- a) age;
- b) disability / impairment;
- c) industrial activity / inactivity;
- d) lawful sexual activity;
- e) marital status, including de facto relationships;
- f) physical features;
- g) political belief or activity;
- h) pregnancy;
- i) race;



- j) religious belief or activity except where the inherent requirements of the position require that an employee is committed to the religious doctrines and beliefs of the church
- k) sex;
- l) status as a parent or carer;
- m) personal association with someone of the above attributes; and
- n) irrelevant criminal conviction.

2.2 Employees

All Congregational employees have a legal and moral responsibility to treat each other fairly, and are expected to fulfil these responsibilities as a condition of employment.

Where employees believe they may have been discriminated against on any of the above grounds, they are encouraged to raise the matter with their supervisor or another manager.

Alternatively, they may raise the matter with the Chair of Church Council or the Presbytery.

2.3 Managers and Supervisors

Managers, supervisors, the Chair of Church Council and the Presbytery will treat reports of possible discrimination seriously and sympathetically and will investigate them thoroughly. They will also ensure that no one is disadvantaged or victimised as a result of a discrimination complaint being made or investigated.

Established breaches of the Congregation's equal opportunity policy will be met with disciplinary action and may result in dismissal.

2.4 Affirmative Action Program for Women

In accordance with equal opportunity provisions of the Affirmative Action (Equal Opportunity for Women) Act, 1986, the Synod is committed to removing any barriers to equal opportunity faced by women and will take positive steps to promote their equality.