



The Uniting Church in Australia



A
**HANDBOOK FOR
MEMBERS
OF PRESBYTERY**

MARCH 2016

A Companion to

The Presbytery Directory

which lists Congregation and Agency details
and an alphabetical index of contact details.

PLEASE NOTE

All communication with the Presbytery should be
as follows:

Mail: The Presbytery Secretary,
P.O. Box 4157,
Alfredton, 3350

Email:

PresbyteryWV@victas.uca.org.au

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NOTES

OH&S	Occupational Health and Safety committee or requirements
OoH	Office of Housing (a body within the DHS)
Parish Mission	A Congregation who has the responsibility <i>for approved ministries of such special character and extent</i> allowing them to operate with a different set of powers than a regular Congregation.
Placements	A Joint Presbytery meets monthly to co-ordinate the calling and placements of ministers.
PM	Presbytery Minister
PRC	Pastoral Relations Committee - a Presbytery committee which deals with all ministerial placements and relationships between congregations and ministries/ers
Presbytery	The council of the Church which oversees all UCA activities within its bounds - for us it is the Presbytery of Western Victoria
Property Trust	The legal owner of all Uniting Church assets - property, service agreements, finances etc. Some authority is delegated to us to act from them through our Constitution but all property transactions go through it for its seal.
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SHARE	A public fundraising appeal held throughout the state in May. Congregations and agencies may make application for the use of these funds for mission activities.
SooLAM	Our Presbytery's statement of its Life and Mission
Synod	The state overseeing Council of the Church - meets every 18 months
THM	Transitional Housing Manager - the Housing <i>program</i> not a person run by UnitingCare Ballarat Parish Mission and Wimmera Uniting <i>Care</i>
UA	UnitingCare Australia
UCA	Uniting Church in Australia
UCAF	Uniting Church Adult Fellowship
UCV	UnitingCare Victoria
VCOSS	Victorian Council of Social Services
VCC	Victorian Council of Churches
WUC	Wimmera UnitingCare

Welcome to the Presbytery of Western Victoria

A person elected to be a member of the Presbytery is a vital conduit between the Presbytery gathered and the Congregation or Agency from which they come. Being a member of Presbytery is both a source of encouragement and a window to the wider church. It can be a place to grow in your faith and to be a member of Presbytery is both a privilege and a blessing.

Your appointing body has elected you to be a member of the Presbytery because you have gifts for this role and you have time and energy to contribute to the wider work of the Church.

We encourage appointing bodies to be strategic in nominating their Presbytery members. The Presbytery will be enriched and do its work better if the membership includes those with vision, discernment and passion for this area of the Church and God's mission.

We are pleased to welcome you as a member of the Presbytery of Western Victoria. Thank you for your commitment to serving our Lord in this way.

This comprehensive Handbook is designed to help you settle in and find your way around the Presbytery and to learn about its way of working.

Please take time to read through the contents and ask questions about anything you need more information about.

As you read, you will start to appreciate the breadth of the work of the Church at the Presbytery level, as it seeks to make its contribution to God's work in the life of the Church and in the world.

As a member of the Presbytery it is important that you pass on relevant information to your congregations so that they can be informed of decisions and views on the matters dealt with at Presbytery meetings. You may choose to have a reporting segment at a meeting, or during the notices before worship, you may choose to pass on certain items through your Church news sheet, or any other means that may be effective for you.

Finally, please pass this information on to an incoming representative if you are no longer able to be a representative for your congregation.

Some Hints for a Presbytery Member:

Before a Presbytery Meeting

Check with your local community as to whether there are matters that are being referred to the Presbytery and ensure you are appropriately briefed about these matters. Discuss how these matters will get onto the agenda and who will carry that through.

Read and pray over the meeting papers which you will receive electronically if you have email, or otherwise by mail. Pray especially for any matters that relate to your community.

Follow up with the authors of reports if you have any questions.

Pray for those who will gather, especially the leadership

Plan to travel with others from your congregation/agency/area to maximise the sense of community.

Advise the Presbytery Secretary if you are unable to attend.

Take note of any local arrangements in relation to food/ cost of food/ celebratory worship.

Promote the meeting or gathering within your community and invite their prayer for you and for those who will gather to undertake the work of Presbytery.

Ensure you are familiar with the Uniting Church Manual for Meetings and know how to use consensus decision making procedures. (see Manual for Meetings <http://assembly.uca.org.au/resources/regulations>)

At the Meeting

Arrive in good time so there is time for fellowship and greeting those you don't see often.

Sit at a table with those whom you might not have met before. These gatherings are a good time to hear how other communities are travelling in their journey of discipleship.

GLOSSARY and ACRONYMS

Reference is often made to various bodies of the church or activities by the use of initials or an affectionate name. The following is list of the most common you may encounter. You may add your own as well!

A&D	Aged and Disability
ACCESS	Council for Christian Education in Schools
ASIST	Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training
Assembly	The National overseeing Council of the Uniting Church - meets each 3 years
Bethel	A centre based in North Balwyn to assist people who need to deal with issues of abuse
Board	A body appointed by a Council of the Church to govern an Agency
BOMAR	Board of Mission and Resourcing (A Synod Body)
BRHCC	allarat Regional Healthcare Chaplaincy Council
CE	Continuing Education
CFM	Commission for Mission
CTM	Centre for Theology and Ministry
DHAC	Department of Health and Aged Care (A Commonwealth Government Department)
DHS	Department of Human Services - State Government
ED	Executive Director
EFT	Equivalent Full Time
EO	Equal Opportunity
FASA	Funding and Service Agreement
HACC	Home and Community Care
HEF	Housing Establishment Fund
HR	Human Relations
IR	Industrial Relations
IT	Information Technology
Just Ask	Lifeline's national mental health information service
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
KRA	Key Result Areas
KSC	Key Selection Criteria
LPA	Lay Preachers' Association
M&E	Mission and Education Committee of Presbytery
MERO	Municipal Emergency Response Officer
MRM	Municipal Recovery Manager
NIDS	National Illicit Drug Strategy

BOMAR

The Board of Mission and Resourcing is not a Synod body, but is a means by which the Presbyteries work together in managing the finances and resources for the church mission and ministry. It is made up of two people appointed by each Presbytery and the two Commissions (Commission for Mission, Centre for Theology and Ministry). The Synod meeting appoints an independent Chairperson, and Synod staff are not members of the BOMAR but resource it.

BOMAR meets monthly and any matters raised at a Synod meeting or a Standing Committee meeting which have a financial implication are to be referred to BOMAR for comment before they can be implemented. BOMAR develops the Synod budget, allocates funds for the running of the Synod, Presbytery and Commission functions. It receives submissions from Agencies and congregations for special funding of ministry and property activities, and disperses funds from designated funds held in trust by the Church.

Dates & Timelines to aid in Congregation Planning

February, May, August, November: Presbytery Meetings
August is overnight at Halls Gap

Church Council Annual Meeting/Elections - February

Congregation Annual meetings: usually February- March

Applications for BOMAR and SHARE funding - into Presbytery for the August meeting

Mission and Service allocation approval – July

Use the consensus processes confidently when appropriate and invited, e.g. showing your cards to indicate to the Chair of the meeting how you feel about a particular discussion.

Offer your contribution as is appropriate, especially during table group discussion.

Listen to discussion and alternative points of view with openness so that you can be alert to hearing the movement of the Holy Spirit in the conversation.

Be observant and discerning about the gifts that other members offer and support those with appropriate gifts in offering them to further build up the body of Christ that is this Council of the Church.

Be careful to ensure that the gathering is maintained as a safe place for all people, e.g. care with language and behaviour that others might experience as bullying.

Remember that each person carries the image of God in some way and so has value.

After the Meeting

The Sunday after the meeting make a verbal report to your congregation of the three key decisions or events that happened at the gathering. Indicate that you would welcome further discussion on any thing people are interested in and be prepared to share minutes and meeting papers (unless confidential matters have been discussed).

For the next Church Council meeting – provide a one page report of the major decisions made or areas discussed, drawing out the impacts and implications that you have discerned for your appointing body, e.g. congregation or agency.

Make a note of those matters that need further work or follow up. Follow through on those issues with the appropriate body.

The Uniting Church in Australia

(according to its Basis of Union)

is a Christian community who:

- * worships the one God
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
- * trusts in Jesus Christ
the divine One who became human, died and rose for the world (Par 1, 3),
- * shares God's love with all people
across barriers of race, gender and class (Par 1, 2),
- * seeks unity within the whole church
that the world may believe in Christ (Par 2),
- * hears Christ through the Scriptures
in which he meets, feeds and guides us (Par 5),
- * celebrates Baptism and the Lord's Supper
in which Christ embraces and feeds God's people (Par 6-8),
- * affirms the faith of the whole church
in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds (Par 9),
- * engages with issues of our time
confessing Christ in fresh words and deeds (Par 11),
- * believes God's Spirit gives gifts to all members
and calls them to serve God in the world (Par 13f),
- * prays that God will be praised and glorified
in the Church's worship, witness and service (Par 18).

The Synod of Victoria offers this statement as a notice pointing to the Basis of Union, not an interpretation of it.

Closing a Congregation

Because of some very awkward and protracted difficulties the Administration Committee has experienced the Presbytery has developed a "Checklist for Closing a Congregation". Although Congregation Closure is the responsibility of the PRC the Administration Committee is the body responsible to ensure all property and finance decisions are made before such a closure occurs. The document is available from the Presbytery Secretary, PRC Chairperson or the Presbytery Minister—Administration.

On line data collection

Synod annually collects information from Congregations on financial and administrative information (e.g, numbers attending, rolls,) through an on-line process (replacing what used to be referred to as the A Form) with a paper based option if this is required. This information is usually collected mid-year. This information is used to inform the life and witness of the Church in Victoria and Tasmania and give some indication of the state of the Church at any given time.

Manses inspection/vacancies

Whenever a Manse is vacated by a Minister in Placement, the Manse must be inspected by the Presbytery to ensure that the property continues to meet the requirements that the Synod have specified for properties to be used as a Manse. This recognises that a Manse is not just a private house, but serves many purposes. Issues of storage for example are critical.

The maintenance of Manse property is shared between the Minister and the Church Council. The Minister is expected to pay for the use of services such as gas and electricity, the Church Council pays the service fees. The Minister is required to tend the garden and report other issues that require maintenance to the Church Council. It is helpful for the Church Council to appoint a Manse property person with whom the Minister may liaise.

When the Minister is vacating the Manse, it is the Minister's responsibility to pay for cleaning of the stove, cupboards, walls, floor coverings and curtains, using the principle where possible of leaving the property in a better condition than they found it.

The Presbytery then works with its Treasurers to determine how that figure allocation for the Presbytery can be met.

There is a basic principle which is applied in this Presbytery which allows for a greater allocation to be made in congregations who are not supporting a full time ministry placement. However, this allocation is reviewed annually and is managed by the Presbytery Administration Committee who should be in regular contact with Treasurers.

Congregations pay this allocation directly to the Synod and NOT to the Presbytery and it is the Synod preference that this payment be made at least monthly. This helps keep the cash-flow for the running of the Synod.

If circumstances arise which may prevent a Congregation meeting its allocation, the sooner this possibility is reported to the Presbytery Administration Committee the better so that the Committee can ascertain whether the Congregation may benefit from some other financial assistance.

Annual Reports of Congregations

There is a requirement that each Congregation hold an annual general meeting at which a detailed report of activities and financial accounts is presented and a budget for the following year is approved to direct the Church Council in its financial deliberations. The Synod requires that a copy of this report is submitted to the Presbytery Secretary. This is to ensure that all accounts are appropriately audited. The Audit Committee of the Synod has sometimes examined these Congregational reports randomly to not just ensure that accounts are in order, but to provide information which can be fed back to Treasurers to make their life a little less complicated.

Treasurers need to refer to the section in the Regulations about Finances and their management, banking and auditing.

A *Treasurer's Handbook* has been produced by the Synod and is available as a resource for Church Council Treasurers. It can be found on the Synod Website and downloaded.

The U.C. logo is a symbol of hope and victory.



"The cross of Jesus Christ in its light and love stands over the darkened world redeeming it through grace and truth.

By that cross, His people in heaven and earth are bound to Him and each other. The Holy Spirit, symbolised by the dove with the wings of flame empowers and guides us to be witnesses to Jesus Christ.

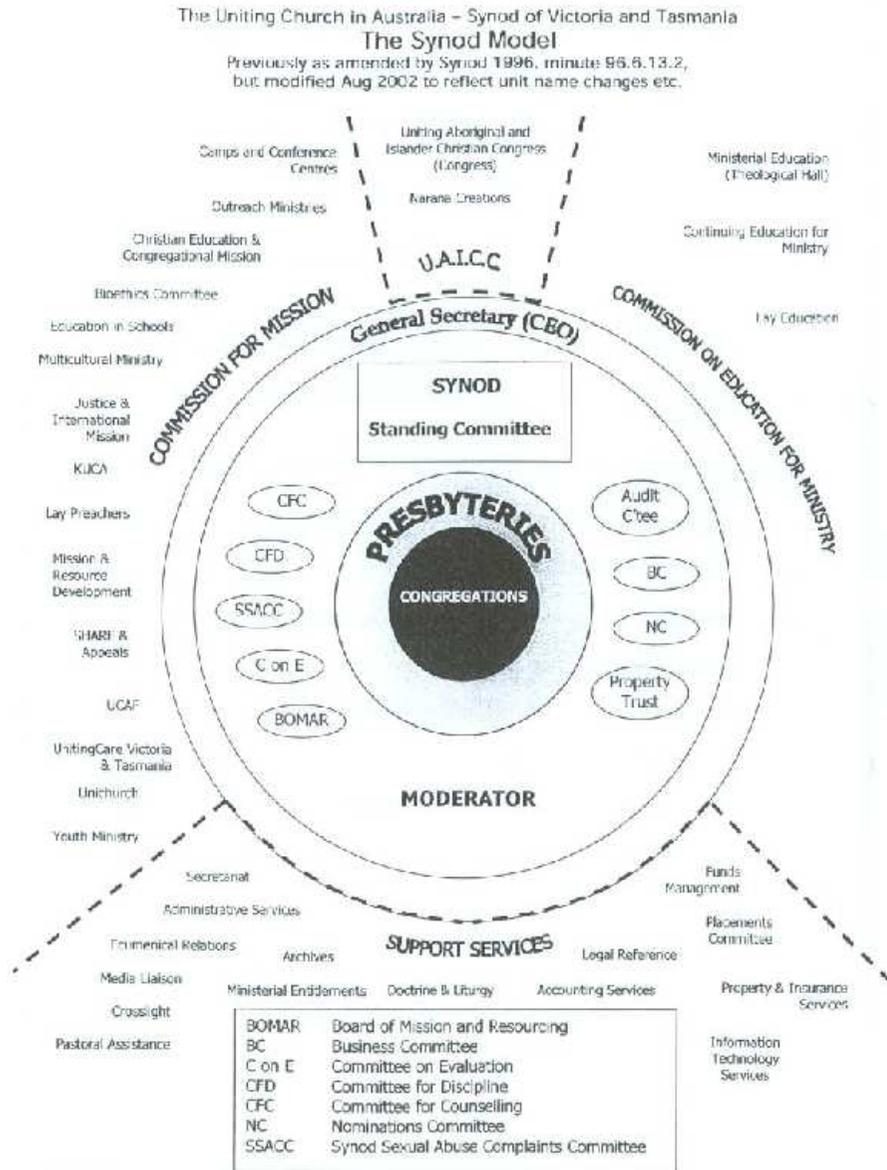
The wide U at the bottom of the emblem points to the fact that we are uniting. As a semi circle it reminds us also that the renewing of both church and world is yet incomplete."

The Uniting Church logo has come to symbolise the vision and hopes we hold for the future. It reminds us of the centrality of the gospel message in all we seek to do, of the need for constant reform and renewal, of the commitment of us all to worship, witness and serve the world.

THE VISION

The Assembly has developed procedures for the correct use of the Uniting Church logo on stationery, brochures etc. and the open display on our buildings, vehicles or for times of public demonstration for the way we use our logo is a statement — an open declaration to ourselves, and the community, that we are justly proud to identify with the Uniting Church.

The Synod Model



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Leasing of property

Any property not currently required for the current needs of a congregation may be leased either to another Uniting Church organisation or to another person or entity. Before this is done, the congregation needs to complete and submit an Application to Lease to Synod Property Services (Form 3E). Once approved, a copy of the actual commercial lease document must also be submitted to Property Services. By law, the only person authorised to sign leases on behalf of the Church is the Property Officer of the Synod or a person who has been delegated with that authority by the Synod.

Property sales and development projects

No sale or development can take place without demonstrating that due consideration has been given to the missional purpose for the proposal. Forms 1 & 2, found on the web-site above, are designed to demonstrate that this discernment has taken place. Once approved, the specific form for building etc, can follow using the:

- Application to Sell-Form 3F
- Application to Purchase-Form 3G
- Application for Concept Approval-Form 3I

Property Sale Proceeds (PSPs)

Once property has been sold, congregations must apply for the Property Sale Proceeds (PSPs) on Form 3A on which they must confirm the application of the proceeds, whether for immediate use, such as urgent maintenance, or invested to support a longer term goal, in which case the funds are required to be placed in an Interest Only Mission Fund (IOMF), Form 3D.

Mission and Service allocations

In the Synod budget process overseen by BOMAR, there are a number of income streams which are used to support both the Synod and the National Assembly work and Presbytery functions. One of these streams is called the Mission and Service Allocation. The allocation is negotiated with each Presbytery to ascertain an amount that it believes is possible from within that Presbytery. Each Presbytery invites each congregation to determine how much it can contribute to this total Presbytery figure.

Who owns Uniting Church Property?

All Uniting Church property is vested in the Property Trusts of Victoria and Tasmania, so each congregation enjoys 'beneficial use' of the buildings which they occupy. Each Congregation has the responsibility to ensure that it is a responsible steward of land and buildings assigned to it, maintaining them in good order.

Property Maintenance, Purchase, Lease, or sale

There are procedures to be followed at any point when property is bought, sold, leased, built on, or altered.

Forms for these purposes can be downloaded from the Synod website, <http://wr.victas.uca.org.au/property-and-insurance-services/property/>.

The following schedule indicates the responsibilities of Church Councils with regards to property expenditure:

Synod approval must be obtained for every property transaction, with the exception that:

Providing the work is self-funded and no building permits are required, building maintenance to the value of \$10,000, may be undertaken at a local initiative (usually following the obtaining of 3 quotes for the work.)

Any works that require a building permit and all expenditure in excess of \$10,000, must be approved by Presbytery and processed through PART.

Each property application is scrutinised by the Property And Resources Team (PART), which has delegation from the Synod Property Board for all but the largest projects. This committee meets fortnightly. In order to expedite matters at the Presbytery level, material is processed electronically between formal meetings of the Administration Committee.

Church Councils need to be aware of the Handbooks concerning Occupational Health and Safety and the Essential Services Manual which outlines steps that must be followed to provide protection both for them and for tradespeople who come to work on Church properties.

Map of Presbyteries of the Synod



- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Loddon - Mallee | 2. Western Victoria |
| 3. North East Victoria | 4. Gippsland |
| 5. Port Phillip West | 6. Yarra Yarra |
| 7. Gippsland | 8. Tasmania |

Map of the Presbytery



- 1 North West
- 2 Henty
- 3 North Central

- 4 Hopkins (South Central)
- 5 North East
- 6 Corangamite-Otway

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The Administration Committee is resourced by the Presbytery Minister (Administration) and is a conduit between the Synod and Congregations, Agencies, and Schools. The Presbytery Statement of our Life and Mission sets out the following responsibilities of the Administration Committee

- Support the Presbytery Minister – Administration
- Work collaboratively with the Mission and Education Committee in matters that impinge on the Presbytery mission for itself and for congregations and agencies
- Develop the annual budget for the Presbytery
- Monitor the finances of the Presbytery as they align with the approved budget
- Act as the Presbytery Property Committee under the Regulations in matters of extreme urgency
- Facilitate manse inspections in co-operation with PRC and maintain a register of the reports.
- To act on behalf of the Property Trust of VicTas Synod to ensure that all property in the presbytery is properly maintained
- Provide, receive and process applications for property and building matters [e.g. leasing, building, selling, purchasing, demolition, alterations, emergency funding, reallocation of property sale proceeds etc]
- Provide, receive and process grant, loan and BOMAR (Board of Mission and Resourcing) applications
- Receive and collate annual returns from congregations
- Assist congregation treasurers and secretaries as requested
- Membership: PM Administration, chairperson, secretary, treasurer, BOMAR representatives and others representing the geographic diversity of the Presbytery (email access preferable)

The work of this Committee is diverse but is also critical as some matters need to be dealt with quickly. There is of benefit to the whole Presbytery, as well as to the decision-making capacity of the Committee, if the Committee is made up of people from across all of the Regions. The Administration Committee has to be very mindful of the “bigger picture” and so a Presbytery-wide or Regional strategy is vital. Membership of the Committee is not confined to members of the Presbytery but is open to any who have particular expertise that can benefit the life of the Presbytery through this Committee.

BALLARAT REGIONAL HEALTHCARE CHAPLAINCY



Uniting Church Chaplaincy to the hospitals and aged care services in Ballarat was a ministry of the Presbytery of Grampians. In 2009 a Chaplaincy Task Group was established to coordinate fund-raising efforts and the Presbytery approved the Terms of Reference of a support group "take responsibility for the 'on-the-ground' support and operation of this chaplaincy". Chaplaincy is a key of ministry that the church needs to develop to meet the future challenges of mission and outreach.

The Ballarat Regional Healthcare Chaplaincy Council (BRHCC) is an agency of the Presbytery of Western Victoria which administers and has oversight of the Ballarat Regional Healthcare Chaplaincy. The BRHCC provides a pastoral ministry of the church to UC people accommodated in the Ballarat Health Services Base Hospital, the St. John of God Hospital Ballarat, and Ballarat Health Services and non-government aged care services, and other private aged-care residential arrangements.

The work of the BRHCC is to:

- maintain, develop and promote the chaplaincy and pastoral care ministry within the resources available to it.
- raise and administer funds to sustain this ministry,
- be responsible for the appointment of any paid staff,
- oversee any volunteer services provided to enhance and extend the ministry of chaplaincy
- consider and implement ways of improving or adapting this ministry

The BRHCC meets at least bi-monthly and may establish such task groups as may be needed to facilitate its work, co-opting persons to such task groups as needed. It tries to maintain cooperative relationships with church councils and congregations within the Presbytery, especially those in the Ballarat region as well as maintaining relationships with external bodies including other faiths and denominations, health-care providers and other relevant stakeholders.

PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN VICTORIA

Presbyteries within the Synod are resourced by three ministries:

Administration:

Mission and Education:

Pastoral Care:

About Us

The Presbytery of Western Victoria is a large area stretching from the South Australian border west of Portland, just north of the Dukes Highway west of Serviceton, turning northeast to include Jeparit, Warracknabeal and Beulah and running down southeast, to take in the towns north and north east of Ballarat, including Ballan, before turning south and passing to the west of Geelong, to the coast at Apollo Bay. It includes a number of major centres such as Ballarat, Warrnambool, Horsham, Colac, Hamilton, Portland, Ararat and Stawell.

In common with much of rural Victoria agricultural activity is varied, including dry land cereal and grazing, dairy, forestry, wool and beef production. Tourism and service industries, education and medical facilities are spread throughout the region. The most remote parts are about five hours from Melbourne.

There are about 90 congregations ranging in size from the faithful handful to nearly 300 members. They meet in small weatherboard, brick or blue-stone buildings, through to large city churches. Many of our Congregations have celebrated between 100 to 160 years of witness.

The geography in which they are set is as varied as the buildings and the congregations themselves - from the wide Wimmera plains to the high-lands of the Great Divide, from coastal towns to places hundreds of kilometres from the sea. While some areas continue to grow, others are declining in population and services.

To try to overcome the 'tyranny of distance', the Presbytery is divided into six regions, each with its distinct characteristics. Ministering to such dispersed and disparate populations when the numbers of ordained ministers and deacons in placement are declining, continues to provide us with our greatest challenge. Many congregations depend on the devotion of lay ministry teams, which are supported through continuing education and training programs which aim to try and equip the whole people of God for effective witness in their various communities.

REGIONAL NETWORKS

1. NORTH WEST

Horsham & District:	<i>Horsham, Pimpinio, Dimboola, Natimuk, Goroke, Grass Flat, Minimay, Murtoa, Rupanyup</i>
Lowan	<i>Nhill, Jeparit, Yanac</i>
Yarriambiack Creek	<i>Warracknabeal, Brim, Beulah</i>
Kaniva – Serviceton	<i>Kaniva, Serviceton</i>
Lay Ministry Team	<i>Edenhope, Douglas</i>

2. HENTY (South West)

Bolwarra, Branxholme, Carapook, Casterton, Cavendish, Coleraine, Dartmoor, Digby, Dunkeld, Glenthompson, Hamilton, Heywood, Macarthur, Mirranatwa (in recess), Nareen, Pannyabyr, Pen-shurst, Portland, Wallacedale

3. NORTH CENTRAL

Ararat	<i>(communities of Ararat, Ararat West, Crowlands, Elmhurst, Warrak)</i>
Stawell - Pomonal	<i>Stawell, Landsborough</i>
Lake Bolac Parish	<i>Lake Bolac, Willaura, Streatham, Tatyoon,</i>

4. HOPKINS (South Central)

Allansford, Grasmere-Wangoom, Mepunga, Mortlake, Port Fairy, Warrnambool, Woorndoo

5. NORTH EAST

Ballarat Central Parish Mission (Lydiard St)	
Ballarat South	<i>Buninyong, Sebastopol, Meredith</i>
Other Ballarat	<i>Brown Hill, Neil St, Pleasant St, Skipton St, Wendouree</i>
Highlands Cluster	<i>Ballan, Blackwood, Daylesford, Trentham</i>
Creswick Cluster	<i>Creswick, Clunes,</i>
Beaufort Cluster	<i>Beaufort, Carngham, Burrumbeet, Learmonth</i>

6. CORANGMAITE-OTWAY

East:	<i>Beeac, Birregurra, Colac, Cressy, Forrest, Roke-wood, Warrion.</i>
Middle:	<i>Apollo Bay, Camperdown, Derrinallum</i>
West:	<i>Cobden, Terang, Timboon</i>

The College Senior Campus is centrally located and is in close proximity to sporting and cultural facilities. A separate 14 hectare property just one and a half kilometres from the Senior campus contains the Boarding Houses, Junior Campus and the Equestrian Centre. The College has a long history of academic excellence and a tradition of high achievement. The College provides a nurturing yet challenging environment for students from Early Learning level through to Year 12. Presently, the College has 506 students with 75 boarding students.

CHAPLAINCY

There are a number of chaplaincies in the Presbytery principally in schools, prisons and hospitals.

The Hopkins Correctional facilities at Ararat and Langi Kal Kal have been supported by the Ararat Congregation for many years. Besides the conduct of church services at both the prisons, time is spent in conversation with the prisoners usually on a one to one basis. Volunteers generally work in teams of three and spend two to three hours at each prison once a week and on worship days at Langi Kal Kal the volunteers spend four to four and a half hours there each month..

There is an active Chaplaincy at Ballarat and Clarendon College which involves regular weekly Chapel services as well as other opportunities for faith sharing in a manner relevant to the age of students. In many other communities, Uniting Church Congregations support local chaplaincy in both their primary and secondary school settings.

Throughout the Presbytery local Congregations have a relationship with their hospitals through volunteer visiting which is under the oversight of the hospital's pastoral care program. As Ballarat is the major regional Centre for the northern part of the Presbytery the Presbytery has established the Ballarat Regional Healthcare Chaplaincy (see page 60) and there is a smaller but similar program at the Warrnambool Base Hospital. Aged-care facilities are also supported by local Congregations and some Congregations have asked PRC to authorise Pay Presiders to conduct Sacraments in these facilities.

Within the Presbytery are the camping and conference centres operated by Uniting Camping: NORVAL - consisting of Norval House, Norval Lodge, Acacia and The Cottage, based in Halls Gap in the Grampians, and ADEKATE, sited at Dean, north of Ballarat. These sites provide accommodation and other facilities for groups from congregations and elsewhere who may camp and undertake programs which foster and promote Christian education and other activities within the life of the Church.

SCHOOLS

Ballarat & Clarendon

Ballarat Clarendon College is a coeducational school associated with the Uniting Church in Australia. It is a school where learning comes first and enrolls students from Early Learning to Year 12. Clarendon has a Junior (ELC to Year 4) campus in Mair Street, Ballarat, a Years 5 to 12 campus in Sturt Street, Ballarat and a campus on King Island where Year 9 students spend part of their year.

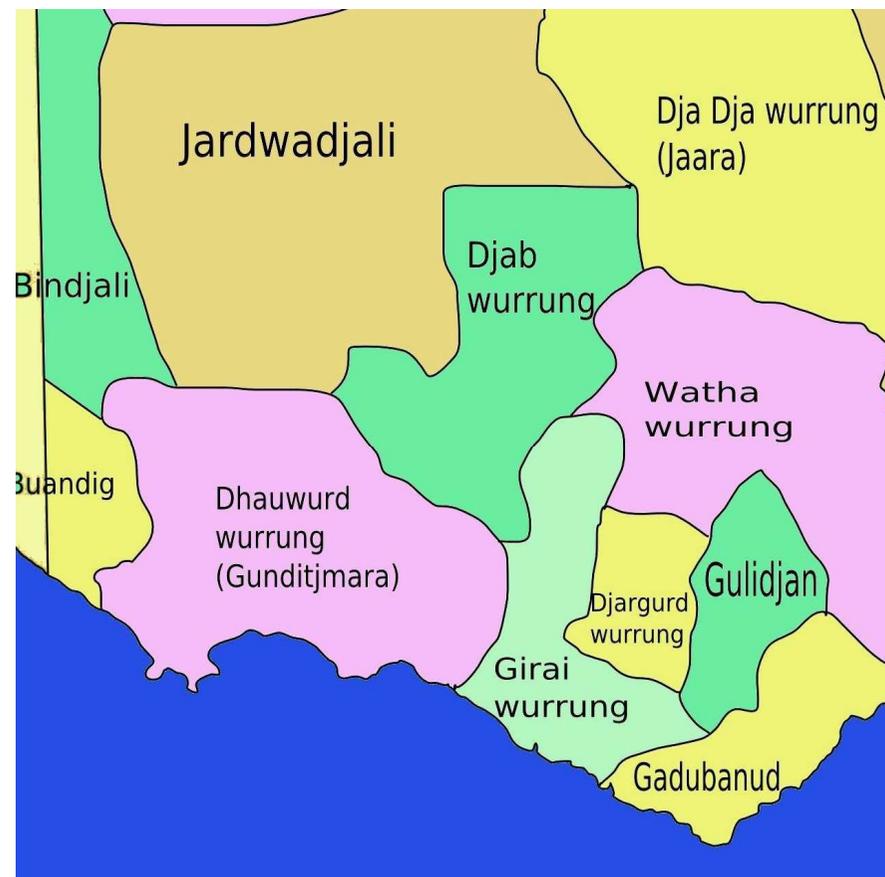
Throughout a student's time at Ballarat Clarendon College our focus is to maximise their competence, skills and capacity so that, at the end of their time at the school, when they stand on the threshold of their future, they can choose their "heart's desire".

We recognise that, in order to make informed choices, all students require excellent teaching and learning, inspiring ideas and thinking, and exposure to a breadth of experiences. It is our belief that schools care for their students most effectively when they maintain their focus on student learning which is not confined to the classroom but rather in every interaction that occurs with students, staff members, in every setting.

Hamilton & Alexandra College

Hamilton College became a co-ed school 1962 with the amalgamation of Hamilton and Western District Boys' College (founded 1871) and Alexandra College (founded 1872). Both schools served as University Colleges, preparing students in the first year of Tertiary Education. They were built by Western District residents so that their children could receive a good education in their own district. Each school came under the control of the Presbyterian Church. Hamilton College became associated with the UCA in 1977 and adopted the name "The Hamilton and Alexandra College" in 2001.

Map of Corresponding areas of First Peoples



The Uniting Church acknowledges that we live and worship on land for which the were the First People. We acknowledge that the land is sacred to them as it is to us, and, to the best of our ability we will continue to care for it so that, as the generations of the past have done, future generations may enjoy its beauty and sacredness and worship God the Great Creator Spirit, made known to us in human form in Jesus Christ.

THE PRESBYTERY LOGO



The logo adopted by the Presbytery in 2015 conceptualises the diversity of the presbytery through shape and colour..

The broad trapezoid shape represents the geographical boundaries of the Presbytery and the red and black wedges and the white lines represent the Uniting Church in Australia's involvement and movement in the region. The black also acknowledges the First Peoples and the juxtaposition of the yellow, red and black represent the indigenous colours.

The purple represents the mountains which dominate the central part of the presbytery, through the paddocks and rural areas in yellow, the cities and towns in green and the sea at the southern end of the Presbytery in blue.

Regional Lay Preachers Associations: The committee liaises with Lay Preachers and regional networks to promote further education.

Professional Development for Ministers: Assorted educational opportunities are offered in this area.

AGENCIES

Presbytery may be a Council with which an Agency is associated. This relationship provides the expectations that the presbytery, as an associated Council of the community services agency will:

- (a) In partnership with UnitingCare Victoria, consult with the agency to ensure that its work is consistent with the Basis of Union and the Constitution of the Uniting Church in Australia.
- (b) promote the integration of the work of the agency or program with the life and mission of the church;
- (c) liaise with UnitingCare Victoria in developing mission imperatives
- (d) provide personal pastoral care for staff, residents, volunteers of the agency, and members of the Board, as requested by the Board;
- (e) promote the placement of ordained ministers & chaplains in agencies;
- (f) commission or induct the CEO and other personnel of agencies where appropriate;
- (g) nominate appropriate members for the Board of Governance to the Commission for Mission when required; and
- (h) participate in any review conducted by UnitingCare Victoria of an agency with whom they are associated.

The agency for which the Presbytery has this responsibility is **WIMMERA UNITINGCARE** - based in Horsham and operating services in various towns of the Wimmera. It runs programs in child and family, psychiatric, and other disability, housing, and an aged care facility: HAZEL-MERE.

There are other community service agencies in the presbytery which are either based in congregations for which they have oversight or are associated with Uniting Age Well: Mortlake (Abbeyfield), Warrnambool (Child Care Centre, Heatherlie Aged Care). Rupanyup (SWEETMAN COURT) and the programs run from the BALLARAT CENTRAL PARISH MISSION which incorporates programs of Housing, Welfare, Alcohol and Other Drugs, Aged Care and Lifeline governed by a Board appointed by the Commission for Mission and the Ballarat Central Church Council.

- Liaise with *UnitingCare* agencies within the Presbytery Bounds
- Provide resources to all those involved in ministry within the Presbytery in the areas of continuing education, spiritual formation and discipleship
- Develop an education plan and strategy for the Presbytery
- Have particular responsibility for retreats and schools of ministry
- Liaise with the Centre for Theology and Ministry for the provision of programs for both clergy and lay people
- Encourage the Lay Preacher's Association
- Membership: PM – Mission & Education, chairperson, secretary, treasurer, BOMAR representatives and others representing the geographical diversity of the Presbytery (preferably with email access) with a balance between ordained people in placement and lay people.

Camping, Retreats and Conferences:

Submissions for In-kind funding for Presbytery camping need to be submitted to M& Ed by the end of July each year. Information should include: Camp/Retreat/Conference name, group attending, date/or month of event if date not settled, Campsite venue, amount you are seeking in support, and a short 100 word description on how it is furthering the mission of Christ.

Educational Courses

Please note that while a selection of these are annual and are offered at appointed locations, requests can be made of the committee to run courses in your region. These are examples of previous courses:

Funeral course to train lay leaders who may be leading funerals.
5 session course over at least 5 weeks.

Weaving Worship – catering for lay worship teams and anyone who wants to increase their understanding of worship-2 day workshops,

Lay Preacher Training - in partnership with the CTM – meeting the educational requirements for those seeking accreditation as Lay Preachers.

Children's and Family Network workshops - partnership with the CTM building networks and empowering those involved in ministry with children and families.

Conferences, Camping and Retreat Ministry – e.g. Youth camp, ministers' retreats, rural ministry conference, School of Ministry.

STATEMENT OF OUR LIFE AND MISSION (SooLAM)

What is this document for?

When we are clear about who we are and what is important to us, we are better able to make choices and decisions that have integrity. We are freed to say 'no' to that which doesn't fit with our core values or calling, and say 'yes' with confidence at other times.

This document names the identity and purpose of the Presbytery of Western Victoria. The language used describes how we imagine ourselves functioning at our God-blessed best. This is what we are aiming for – our goals or vision. This paper describes our way of BEING as well as our ordered system of DOING.

What is most important to us?

The Presbytery of Western Victoria risks living the way of Jesus, and engages in God's action in the world.

The Presbytery has adopted the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania's Life-Giving Themes as its strategy for ministry and mission. These themes are:

Encountering Christ in community
Living God's transforming story -
Spirited listening, giving voice
Engaging diversity
Liberating stewardship

How do we do it? . . . in 2 ways

We focus on generating and nurturing faith, inspiration and power that underpins all else in our work and witness, ministry and mission.

Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Romans 12:11-12

Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. 1 Peter 4:10

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. . . . All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God Acts 2:42, 44-47a

This generative or LIFE-GIVING perspective refers to worship, pastoral care, education, spiritual life and resourcing and incorporates the Synod’s priorities for 2011 – 2015.

Encourage and Equip
DISCIPLESHIP
Identify and Build
LEADERSHIP

Create Neighbourly PARTNERSHIPS
RISK-TAKING for the sake of the
Gospel

Presbytery must be well organised with regard to ministry, property and finances. Our ORGANISATIONAL perspective attends to these aspects of the presbytery’s life ensuring its smooth and faithful operation, **valu- ing the voice of all in conciliar models.**

LIFE-GIVING (generative) perspective

We Encourage and Equip DISCIPLESHIP

In trying to live Jesus’ Way, we give sustained attention to growing disci- ples - moving from piety to passion, habit to risk-taking and from law to love

The Presbytery of Western Victoria encourages active discipleship, often affirming, and at times challenging its members while -

- ensuring all congregations have ac- cess to ministerial oversight and care
- establishing and arranging gatherings for networks of support and resourcing (e.g. training in the use of in- formation technology) so that none are isolated
- attempts to identify and engage the strengths and giftedness of its members appropriately
- discerning and promoting missional opportunities, and telling stories of church at mission.
- prayerfully supporting each other (e.g. using a presbytery prayer calendar)
- providing engaging opportunities for learning about faith and Christian practices for people of all ages, and occasions for experiencing ‘sacred space’ (e.g. retreats)

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. John 13: 34-35

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all cir- cumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. 1 Thessa- lonians 5: 16-19

Once your assessment sheets are completed please return them to the Presbytery at P.O. Box 4157, Alfredton, 3500 marked attention Joy Robinson.

You will be required to attend a formation weekend.

Upon completion of these requirements you will be accredited as a Lay Preacher preferably at a Presbytery Meeting. However if this is not practical your congregational minister will be asked to commission you in your home congregation.

Records of Lay Preachers.

The Pastoral Relations Committee shall keep a record of all Lay Preachers within the Presbytery bounds

Applicants from Different Denominational Backgrounds

Should applicants for Lay Preacher accreditation from different de- nominational backgrounds and or bring other theological qualifications the Pastoral Relations Committee in consultation with appropriate agencies, shall determine that an appropriate course of study has been completed (e.g. Bachelor of Theology) shall determine that the assessment regarding competency as a leader of worship be re- viewed.

MISSION AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE (M+EC)

Mission Vision:

We seek to develop ‘missional leadership’ and enrich congrega- tions to engage in mission in their local communities.

- Support the Presbytery Minister – Mission and Education
- Work collaboratively with the Administration Committee on matters that impinge on the Presbytery’s administration such as property and financial matters
- Develop a mission plan for the Presbytery, and strategies for its implementation [this may include issues to do with property and buildings]
- Assist and support congregations to develop their own minis- try and mission plans as part of the Presbytery mission plan
- Liaise with Uniting Church Camp Committee with respect to camps within the Presbytery’s bounds

LAY PREACHERS' POLICY STATEMENT

(To be read in conjunction with the U.C.A. regulations 2.2.3, 2.3.4, 2.4.4, 2.10.4)

DEFINITION: Reg. 2.2.3(b)

A member of the Church who is recognised as a Lay Preacher may conduct services of worship in the Congregation in which such Lay Preacher holds membership and in any other Congregation to which the

Lay Preacher may be invited by the Minister, or where there is no Minister in placement, the Church Council.

ACCREDITATION CRITERIA:

Accreditation shall be given to a candidate who has been a confirmed member of the U.C.A. for at least twelve months.

A person desiring to become a Lay Preacher is to

Undertake prescribed Lay Preachers Studies through CTM or the Presbytery Lay Intensives which are provided in conjunction CTM.

During the course of your studies you are required to lead and preach at least six (6) sermons.

One of these is to be assessed during your studies in order to offer feedback and encouragement. The other is to be assessed upon completion of your studies and prior to accreditation.

At least one assessment is to be outside your own congregation and/or to be a different worship context/style.

Two people are required to do the assessment. One of whom is to be an ordained person and the other an experienced accredited lay preacher or at the discretion of the PRC.

One person doing the assessment is to come from another ministry location.

You are required to find your own assessors.

A copy of the Evaluation of a Service sheet which you are able to photocopy is attached.

We Identify and Build LEADERSHIP for Missional Church

We endeavour to cultivate and empower spiritually formed, visionary leaders. We enable leaders to grow and lead other leaders, through personal maturity and abiding witness to the faith of Christ

The Presbytery of Western Victoria believes that God provides the leadership we need, and cultivates this visionary leadership by -

- creating opportunities for inspiration and nurture of leaders
- affirming the significance of inspiring worship by offering training for worship leaders at a level to suit anyone who feels called to this ministry
- encouraging all leaders to have a mentor with whom to share the journey
- discerning and encouraging leadership potential, at all ages and stages, identifying and affirming emotionally mature leaders.

Effective leadership begins with an intimate relationship with God, resulting in Christlike character and a clear sense of God's calling for leader's lives.

As this base of spiritual maturity increases, effective leaders multiply, guide, empower and equip disciples to realise their full potential in Christ and work together to accomplish God's vision

- building confidence and competence by offering regional training appropriate to leaders' potential for, or practice of ministry. E.g., funerals, sacraments, worship leading, partnerships.
- giving permission for passionate innovation, imagination and creativity in leaders

The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-12

- seeking to manage change creatively and effectively – in tune with the Spirit of God
- developing and maintaining active ongoing communication between presbytery and local leadership
- encouraging lively, inclusive, contagious discipleship in leaders, encouraging collegiality
- spirited listening, giving voice – listening to all, advocating when appropriate
- creating Intentional Temporary Communities that offer time for reflection on wider issues of ministry and mission (e.g. two Norval days)

We Create Neighbourly PARTNERSHIPS

We seek out and respond to opportunities for friend-making partnerships. Our churches live and grow in the world through partnerships with friends in our communities.

Western Vic Presbytery promotes friend- making partnerships:

- with other churches, agencies and community groups who share our values
- Seeking to work towards reconciliation in continuing conversation with UAIC Congress
- with UCA Schools and Camps within our boundaries
- and is open to forming partnerships with other faiths
- with other presbyteries, especially with those who share our borders, in order to make best use of training opportunities.
- encourages and assists the establishment of life-giving relationships with the wider community.

Jesus' tradition was to call people into friendship. Christ-like friendship is grounded in shared convictions, values and commitments. Joining with others to participate in God's mission requires us to befriend partners and to recognise the Christ in those with whom we travel.

1 Cor 9:22b-23. I have become all things to all people, so that I might by any means save some. I do it for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

- promotes wider aspects of the work of the church committed to it by Synod or Assembly
- encountering Christ in community and engaging diversity

We engage in RISK-TAKING for the sake of the Gospel.

We are developing a culture of inspired innovation

The Presbytery of Western Victoria:
- equips and encourages churches and faith communities to discover new life in the Spirit the Spirit

Innovation is about being the incarnate body of Christ in order to witness faithfully to the gospel

- looks for creative and contextual missional opportunities
- is imagining God's mission of radical and gracious inclusiveness
- encourages liberating stewardship, ensuring the gospel is our priority
- promotes justice and environmental responsibility
- models transparency, sharing and trust
- urges congregations to fulfil their high calling in Christ Jesus

INDUCTIONS AND RETREATS

In consultation with the Congregation, Cluster or Agency and the Minister involved, the Chairperson of Presbytery arranges the Induction of clergy taking up placement in the Presbytery. Presbytery requires that clergy do not commence their ministry in a new placement prior to their Induction.

As these are Presbytery Services, not a service of the local Congregation members of Presbytery are expected to attend these services of the Presbytery. It is not the tradition of the Presbytery that clergy are formally attired, but the chairperson may ask all members of presbytery to enter the service in procession. At all Presbytery Services of worship where an offering is made, the proceeds are used by the Presbytery to provide support to ministerial candidates and/or for a book allowances to be made to accredited lay preachers

Clergy may be offered a period of Retreat prior to their Induction which would gather together some elders from the congregation/s into which the minister is to be inducted, and neighbouring clergy.

Ministers in their exit appointment are offered a structured support group which is set up by the Presbytery Minister (Pastoral Care). Ministers in team settings may also expect that the Presbytery Minister lead them in some team meetings and planning activities.

SERVICE OF RELEASE

At the conclusion of a placement within a Congregation or Cluster, either from a minister accepting a call elsewhere, or through retirement, the Presbytery recognises this occasion in a Service of Release from the congregation. Again, this is a Presbytery Service and is encouraged to be held at a time other than the normal morning worship time so that members of Presbytery can participate in this service. Also, an opportunity to debrief by reflecting on their ministry with the Presbytery Minister and/or elders or their support group is offered.



Uniting Church in Australia
Presbytery of Western Victoria
Statement of Supply Arrangements 2011



Congregation / Agency: _____ Minister: _____

Period of proposed Supply: Commencement: _____ Conclusion: _____

*Supply arrangements should be made for a maximum of 3 months at a time.
Extensions must be approved by PRC.*

Short Term Supply (less than three months) Synod approved

	One service per day	Two services per day	More than two services per day
Less than one month:			
One month to three months:			
Pastoral Ministry:			
Travel reimbursement:			

Long Term Supply (more than three months) Synod approved

	Agreed Stipend	Time Fraction	Total
Car Allowance:	Calculated at _____,000 kms per year pro rata		
Travel reimbursement:			

Ministers Insurance	Paid by congregation at current rate for one month or more	
Workcover	Current rates can be obtained from Synod Insurance Office	
Personal Resources Allowance		
Housing	Manse provided or	Manse Allowance - \$
	Other arrangements	
Compulsory Superannuation payments	Where Supply payments exceed \$450 per calendar month to ministers compulsory superannuation of 9.5% of supply fees and travel allowance applies and should be paid to an accumulation fund which is administered by the Beneficiary Fund or superannuation fund of choice.	

Telephone	All ministry related calls to be met by congregation up to _____ \$ per month Summary log book required <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Postage & Stationery	All ministry related needs met by congregation up to _____ \$ per month
Recreation & Study Leave	Per Annum: Synod requirements – 28 days Recreation Leave + 14 days Study Leave + one Sunday per quarter Part time: Supply over one month pro rata
Other payments:	
Specify any special conditions which apply under this agreement: _____	

Method of Payment Centralised Stipends Other (specify) _____

Signatures

Church Council Chairperson / Secretary _____ Date _____

PRC Chairperson / Secretary _____ Date _____

Supply Minister _____ Date _____

Leadership as Service

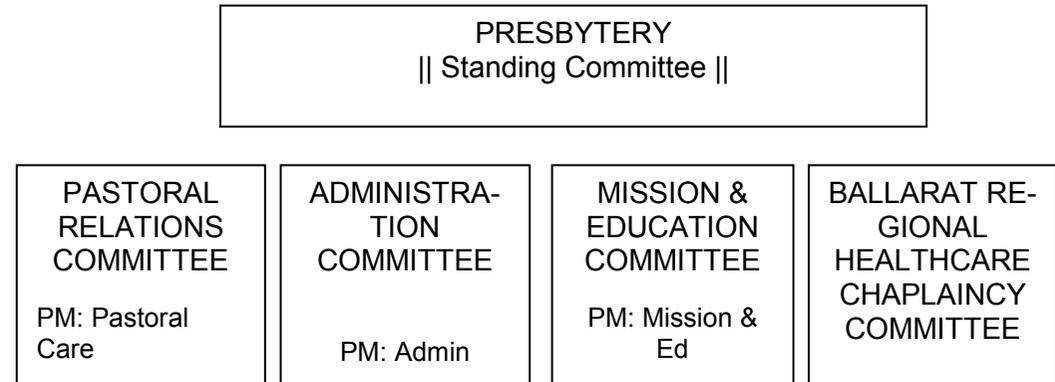
The PRESBYTERY of Western Victoria serves its SIX REGIONS which serve all CLUSTERS and CONGEGATIONS within their boundaries. These in turn serve their MEMBERS and the COMMUNITIES in which God has placed them. The PRESBYTERY also co-operates with UCA AGENCIES, SCHOOLS and CAMPS within its boundaries

John 13: 1-11 Jesus washes his disciples' feet and calls his followers to serve

Acts 6:1-7 discerning and delegating tasks for ministry and mission in the early church

UCA Agencies in our Presbytery – Ballarat Parish Mission –Uniting Care Ballarat// Wimmera UnitingCare
UCA Schools: Ballarat and Clarendon College//Hamilton & Alexandra College//Wesley at Clunes
UCA Camps: Acacia, Norval, Wonderland Cabins at Halls Gap//Adekate at Creswick//

Organisational Structure - Presbytery bodies who enable this service



Organisational Structure – teams, committees and networks

Presbytery Meetings give priority to celebrating and enhancing the life and mission of the regions. Presbytery maintains oversight of, and receives reports from the Presbytery Chairperson and the Presbytery's working committees. Presbytery Ministers also report to each of the four meetings per year.

Presbytery Representatives ... are elected by their congregations or organisations on the basis of their skills and gifts for this work and they need to have excellent relationships with the organisations they represent. Representatives enjoy coming to Presbytery gatherings because of the sense of community, new insights and sense of being involved. Decisions that need to be made by the whole Presbytery happen with a sense of participation and the feeling that we discern together and are "at one" about the outcome. Presbytery meetings incorporate elements of information sharing, story-telling and growing skills in discernment and leadership. Each gathering has a combination of keynote events and mission narratives from across the Presbytery.

Regions and Committees ... provide written reports about their activity on a regular basis so that the whole Presbytery can appreciate the journey towards a decision or outcome. This particularly includes the journeys of those discerning a call to ministry, and new mission directions being discerned by congregations, agencies and schools.

Presbytery Ministers Team

The team consists of Presbytery Ministers for Pastoral Care, Administration, and Mission & Education. They are responsible for relational oversight and support to Regional Networks, Congregations, Agencies, Schools and Campsites and are accountable to the presbytery and to their relevant presbytery committees.

Standing Committee

Standing Committee has the specific task of continuing the business of the Presbytery between meetings so that all aspects of the life of Presbytery work smoothly and are well resourced in a timely manner. Standing Committee members keep asking great questions about the most effective ways to be at mission, and provide a helpful environment for Presbytery Ministers to reflect on the overall life of the Presbytery. Standing Committee creates patterns for meeting in Council and in Regions that are engaging, participative and empowering for members of Presbytery.

The Standing Committee shall have the full powers of the Presbytery between meetings of the Presbytery, except in relation to those matters stated in the UCA regulations.

8.4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPPLY MINISTER

Upon arrival in the Congregation(s), the Supply Minister shall, as soon as possible, meet with the Church Council to consider the tasks that need to be done and matters relating to them.

Frequent consultation with officers of the Congregation(s) is essential.

Those serving in supply ministries need to be aware of local Congregation(s) practices regarding such matters as baptismal and pre-baptismal procedures and should adhere to the established practice in consultation with the Church Council.

Care should be taken to provide adequate preparation for couples who are to be married during the supply period.

Where a program has been begun by the local Congregation this should be supported but extreme care must be exercised in starting anything new during a supply ministry unless the person has been sent to the Congregation(s) to initiate some specific new venture.

Sensibility and sensitivity are the essential attributes of a Supply Minister.

8.5 SHORT TERM SUPPLY MINISTRIES

Supply for Ministers on sick leave, long service leave, continuing education programs, extended holiday leave, etc., where the Minister of the Word is temporarily absent from his/her placement for a few weeks or months, must be seen clearly for what it is. The purpose of such supply is to maintain the ministry rather than to initiate changes, unless the Congregation has already begun the process before the resident Minister commenced leave. A great deal of common sense and sensitivity is required here.

8.6 DANGERS

Those serving in supply ministries should refrain from becoming involved in stewardship and financial matters. If they do become involved it should be at the request of the Congregation(s) and, even then, only in an advisory capacity.

The Code of Ethics for Ministers demands that no criticism or adverse comment should be made regarding the Minister who is on leave, particularly if there have been tensions in the Congregation(s).

8.7 STIPEND AND ALLOWANCES

Both the Supply Minister and the Congregation(s) Treasurer retain a printed copy of the statement containing the agreed stipend and the rate at which travelling is to be paid.

8.8 LEAVE

The Supply Minister is entitled to annual leave and study leave on a pro rata basis within the period of the supply placement.

Time off should be agreed in the negotiations so that the Supply Minister will be given adequate time to relax.

GUIDELINES FOR SUPPLY MINISTRY

Guidelines for the Placement of Supply Ministers from the National Handbook of Procedures for the Placements of Ministers (2006)

- 8.1 DEFINITIONS** Supply ministry is used to describe a ministry of short duration, usually extending from a few weeks to twelve months, most commonly when the placement is vacant or the Minister is on extended leave.
- Persons providing ministry in a supply capacity will not normally be considered for permanent call to that placement. Should such persons consider themselves suitable for call to the placement, they should either not allow their names to be considered for supply ministry in that placement or if already engaged in supply ministry withdraw from that arrangement.
- 8.2 PURPOSES OF SUPPLY MINISTRY** The tasks of a Supply Minister are determined by the Church Council and approved by the Presbytery.
- 8.3 CHOICE OF PERSON TO FILL THE POSITION** The appointment of a Supply Minister will normally be made by the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee in consultation with the Congregation(s) concerned. Supply ministries are exercised by Ministers awaiting placement, Ministers seconded from another placement, Ministers who have retired, Lay Pastors, certificated candidates, ministers of other denominations who are in the Reception of Ministers Committee processes and lay persons.
- The Minister [ordained or lay] being approached to fill the vacancy on a supply basis after appropriate dialogue with people from within the Congregations, is sent the following information by the Church Council or the PRC.
- Information on the Congregation(s), e.g. a recent profile.
 - The agreed tasks and hours.
 - Starting and finishing dates.
 - Precise details of stipend and other allowances offered including the rate to be paid for travelling. [Accommodation or an accommodation allowance should be arranged by negotiation between the Supply Minister, the Congregation(s) and the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee.]
 - A brief inventory of manse furnishings and contents [if appropriate].
- The agreement is signed by the Minister and Church Council and sent to the Presbytery.

Presbytery Working Committees

These working committees undertake responsibilities specific to particular areas of work. They ensure that there is an appropriate balance of maintenance, stimulation encouragement, and strengthening. Committees collaborate with and support agencies, schools and congregations in their participation in Christ's mission. Regional input is consistently sought and provided in order for committees to do preparation work so that Presbytery or Region decisions are well informed, use good processes, and rarely come up with "surprise" outcomes at the last minute. Committees are made up of Representatives who have followed their passion or sense of calling into a particular committee. See the material further in this handbook for a list of responsibilities for each of these committees: PRC, Administration Committee Mission & Ed. Committee, Ballarat Healthcare Chaplaincy.

Pattern of Meetings

Presbytery: 4 times a year in February, May, August, November. One of these is held at Norval from mid-Friday to Saturday afternoon. A Quorum for the Presbytery is 1/3 of the members from ½ the Congregations.

Standing Committee Eight times a year, on the months when Presbytery does not meet.

Pastoral Relations Committee monthly (except January)

Administration Committee meets 2nd Tuesday bi-monthly (even months)

Mission & Education Committee alternate months

Regional Networks

The Presbytery is comprised of six Regional Networks which consider mission together, exchange insights, ideas and learnings regularly, and carry out mission in their Region. Regional Networks are working towards sharing ministry resources across the area, including taking an intentional approach to placements and sharing of ministry agents and leaders across a Region.

Decisions in relation to mission directions and subsequent stewardship of property, provision of ordained and lay ministry placements, and external funding are made by the Region in partnership with the wider church, with each body taking heed of the insights and discernment of the other. Regional Leadership meets at least twice a year to provide support, share ideas and resources, and to coordinate mission and ministry activities across the Region. Meetings use processes that allow for careful listening, insightful planning and real community building.

Meeting Procedure – Decision Making

When a Council of the Church, whether it be a Congregation, Church Council or Presbytery makes decisions it is aiming to discern the guidance of the Spirit in response to the word of God.

The *Manual for Meetings* is a booklet which contains the official standing orders and “rules of debate”. Decision-making in the Uniting Church is based on seeking consensus and not using the power of the tongue or argumentative debating techniques in order to ensure that the proposition is “won” or “lost” in debate.

When we gather as a Presbytery we may come with some preconceived ideas and also under some pressure from those whom we represent. The Uniting Church believes that we hear the voice of God in the Councils of the Church and that therefore our Council meetings should be meetings that encourage community and through listening with both openness and humility we are more likely to discern the will of God

Four questions may be helpful about our meetings:

- What are you bringing to the meeting?*
- What do we need to hear?*
- What do we need to decide?*
- What do you need to take back to your congregation , and how will you do that?*

Reaching consensus does involve providing a structure to the meeting—but that structure is different. Motions or recommendations still need to be moved and seconded, but Secretaries do not record the person’s name. Reaching consensus is more than the use of coloured cards which may be used by members to indicate their preference or give a sense of how they are feeling concerning a matter in debate. Resolutions are reached by consensus and this may be indicated by showing an orange card (you are “warm to that proposal”) or a blue card (this leaves you “cold”) A yellow card signifies you want to ask a question or make a statement.

The following diagram, taken from the manual, may help you in knowing where you are in the various stages of a debate.

CODE OF ETHICS

The Code of Ethics is to be read in conjunction with other documents of the Church such as the Basis of Union, the Constitution and Regulations.

The Code of Ethics is for Ministers whether they are in approved placements or not and includes Candidates, Deacons, Pastors, Youth Workers, Ministers of the Word. Within the Presbytery of Western Victoria, a program is also offered to retired but active ministers.

The Code also makes specific reference to retired ministers and ministers in non-congregational placements.

The Code sets out basic principles for effective and acceptable ministry practice and is a tool for enabling ministers to be accountable for their practice in any setting. Its key concepts are intimate community, pastoral relationships, boundaries, confidentiality and power.

Following an Introduction, the sections of the Code are:

- The Pastoral relationship
- Relationship with the law
- Professional Conduct
- Particular relationships
- Working within institutions, organisations, the wider church and other professions
- Gifts and fees
- Breaches of the Code

It covers not just behaviour, but language which Ministers shall have, shall not, may not and should not have. There are similar guidelines for members and adherents of the Church. It is a requirement that Ministers engage twice a year in a Code of Ethics workshop

FOR A CONGREGATION CONTEMPLATING ITS FUTURE

Congregations considering their future may find these documents helpful:
BECOMING A FAITH COMMUNITY

If considering closure then the Church Council will need to work through the Presbytery document:

CHECKLIST FOR CLOSING A CONGEGATION

Both are available from the Presbytery Secretary or the PRC.

Sexual misconduct can also include physical or verbal behaviour initiated by the minister or person in a leadership role All of this is wrong and it is not right for a minister or leader to abuse the difference in power between themselves and the person with whom they are working or for whom they have a pastoral responsibility.

Procedures are in place to hear complaints of sexual misconduct:

PROCEDURE WHEN A SEXUAL COMPLAINT IS MADE AGAINST A MINISTER, LAY PASTOR, PASTOR, YOUTH WORKER

1. If a complaint is made to you, you must accept the complaint at face value. **Do not ask for a full explanation.**
 2. If a complaint is made to you, you must inform the Presbytery Chairperson immediately. The complaint will then be handled by the Presbytery Chairperson and the Presbytery Chairperson will inform the Sexual Misconduct Complaints Committee immediately.
 3. If the complaint is about the Presbytery Chairperson, the complaint must be made to the Presbytery Secretary. The complaint will then be handled by the Presbytery Secretary.
 4. The complaint is to be made in writing and signed with a request that the matter be investigated.
- If the complainant is not prepared to offer a written statement, at that time, it does not invalidate the complaint. This then becomes the role of the Synod Sexual Misconduct Committee to investigate and appoint an advocate.

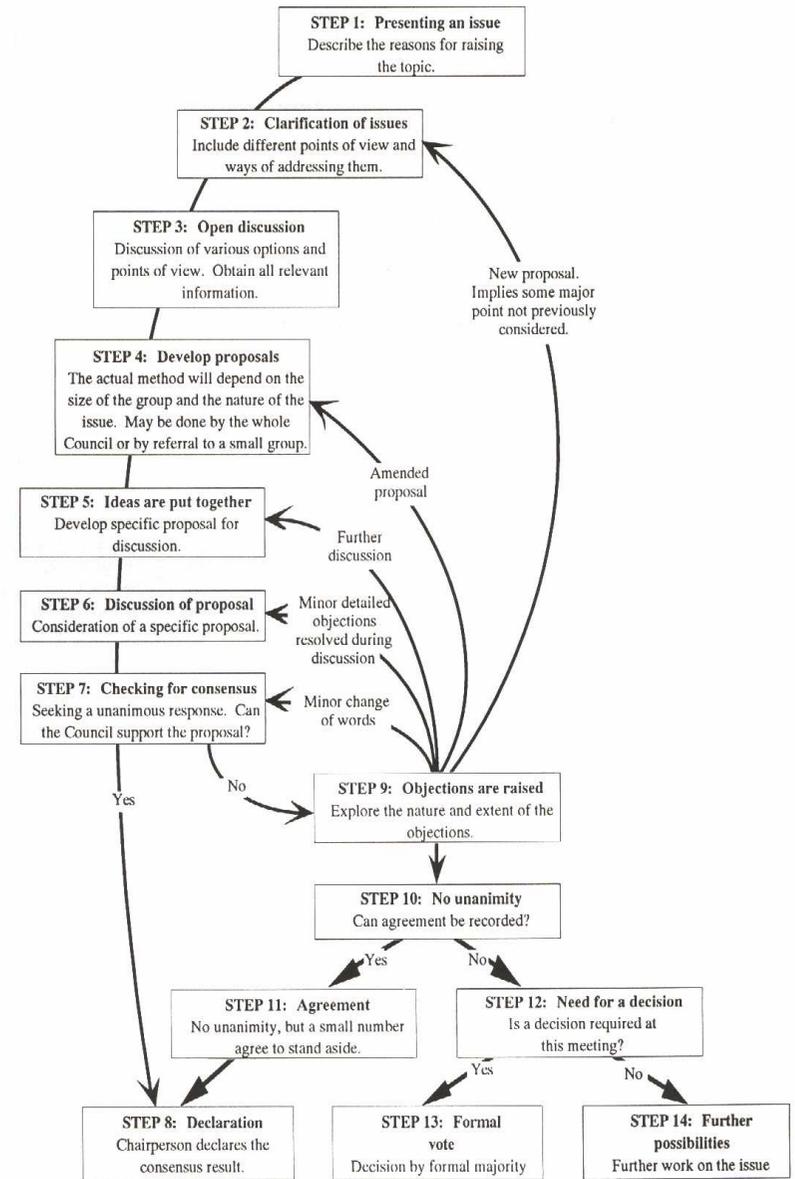
The person receiving the complaint must follow the above procedure and not do anything else .

PROCEDURE WHEN A SEXUAL COMPLAINT IS MADE AGAINST A MEMBER OR AN ADHERENT OF A CONGREGATION OR A VOLUNTEER

1. If a complaint is made to you, you must accept the complaint at face value. Any complaint must be taken seriously and with dignity, respect and confidentiality. Any complaint must be acted on appropriately.
2. If a complaint is made to you , you must inform the Presbytery Chairperson immediately. The Presbytery Chairperson will then inform the Synod Sexual Misconduct Complaints Committee immediately. The complaint can be received verbally or in writing in the first instance. A complaint can be made to the Presbytery or to the Synod.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: Must be handled under Mandatory Reporting Procedure.

Making decisions by consensus



PRESBYTERY MEMBERSHIP

Regulation 3.3.4 sets out the parameters for membership of the Presbytery. One confirmed lay member elected by each Congregation. Where a Congregation includes more than 150 confirmed members and members-in-association in total, one additional confirmed lay member may be elected by the Congregation or where a Congregation includes more than 250 confirmed members and members-in-association in total, two additional confirmed lay members may be elected by the Congregation.

Clause (e) permits the Presbytery to include confirmed members of the church to represent other bodies recognised by the Presbytery.

Clause (f) allows the Presbytery to co-opt other people to be members of the Presbytery on a ratio of 1 person for each 5 lay members of presbytery. (Or a retired Minister one for each 5 ministers in placement) Presbytery may appoint people to any of its Committees who are not members of the Presbytery. However, there may be occasions when co-option to the Presbytery may be undertaken in order to include people on the Presbytery who have special gifts not otherwise available to the Presbytery. Standing Committee may be given the authority to make co-options to the Presbytery between the annual meeting of the Presbytery.

Election and appointment of representatives from other bodies or co-options takes place at the February/March meeting. All co-options and appointments are for one year duration.

ELECTIONS FOR OFFICE OR TO A COMMITTEE

Election is for a two year term. Election to Committees takes place on alternate years to the election of the three main office bearers.

Presbytery elections for Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer takes place at the February meeting with nominations called at the November meeting and takes effect from the Commissioning Service held at the February meeting.

Elections of Chairperson-elect, Committee Convenors and committee members and representatives takes place at the February meeting, prior to the Commissioning Service. Committee members do not have to be members of Presbytery but it is possible, and perhaps desirable, that they attend Presbytery meetings when they can. All are eligible for re-election.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

The UCA believes that all people are made in the image of God and accepts every individual regardless of race, age, creed, or gender. As a Christian community it believes that God reaches out to us in love and acceptance, and that our relationships with each other shall express love and commitment and not be abused. As a community of faith the UCA is committed to providing a place in society where human beings can explore what it means to be made in the image of God.

As an expression of this commitment, the Uniting Church in Australia recognizes its responsibility to provide worshipping and pastoral communities that are free from all types of abuse, including sexual misconduct. The Church has worked hard to educate ministers and other leaders to be aware of the issues involved in sexual misconduct and abuse, and of the damage that can be done, to individuals and the church.

If you have any concerns about sexual misconduct or bullying there are documents that should be consulted. They are available on the UCA website at <http://nat.uca.org.au> or from the Assembly Secretariat whose address is found in the Directory, from Bethel Centre in Melbourne or by contacting the Chairperson of the P.R.C..

The Regulations (Discipline Regulations for Ministers ch.7)
The Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice
Guidelines for dealing with a complaint of Sexual Misconduct made against a Lay staff person or Voluntary worker of the UCA and its Agencies.
Policy for Dealing with a complaint of sexual misconduct made against a member or adherent of the Uniting Church in Australia
Pastoral procedures for responding to allegations of sexual misconduct at special events run by the Uniting Church in Australia
'A Safe Place for Children'

The Regulations and policies of the Uniting Church provide for this expression of commitment with regard to sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct occurs when a person in a position of power or a leadership role, for example, a minister, elder, youth leader, counsellor or parish assistant, uses their position and their power to harm someone for whom they have pastoral responsibility in a sexual manner. This type of harm can extend to, and include, a broad range of behaviours, from wolf whistles and sexual jokes, to inappropriate touching, sexual advances and ultimately - rape.

- the woman and man make a public covenant with each other and with God in the company of family and friends:
- the couple affirm their trust in each other and in God:
- the Church affirms the sanctity of marriage and nurtures those who pledge themselves to each other in marriage and calls upon all people to support, uphold and nurture those who pledge themselves to each other in marriage.

Where sexual union takes place the partners seek to express mutual delight, pleasure and tenderness, thus strengthening the union of their lives together.

In marriage, children may be born and are to be brought up in love and security thus providing a firm foundation for society.

2. Separation, Divorce and Re-marriage

- An inability to sustain the marriage relationship breaks the commitment to be together for life and may be painful for the couple, the children in their care, as well as for parents, friends and the Church community.
- In cases of the irretrievable breakdown of marriage, the Church acknowledges that divorce may be the only creative and life giving direction to take.
- The Church has a responsibility to:
 - (a) care for people, including children, through the trauma of the ending of a marriage:
 - (b) help people where appropriate to grieve, repent, grow in self- understanding, receive affirmation, grace and forgiveness;
 - (c) support them as they hear God's call for new life.
- The grace and healing of God are available to people who are divorced, which may free them to marry again."

(Assembly minute 97.31.12)

Election of members to Synod is held in either May or February. The Presbytery has resolved that the Chairperson and the Presbytery Ministers be members of Synod.

The Presbytery elects people to be its representatives on other bodies. Election of these representatives to Synod bodies takes place at the February meeting. These appointments are for one year.

- 1) Advisory Committee on Ministerial Placements: The Presbytery Minister Pastoral Care and one other lay person is elected.
- 2) BOMAR: The Presbytery Minister Administration and a lay person is elected along with an alternate.
- 3) Ecumenical Relations Committee: One person is elected.
- 4) UCAF State Council: One person is elected.

(The Synod when it meets twice every 3 years, when appointing the Synod Standing Committee, tries to ensure that there is one person from each Presbytery.)

Presbytery has representatives for:
 Anglican and Uniting Church Dialogue
 Ecumenical Relations

Task groups and ad hoc Committees are appointed for limited periods and for specific tasks and are discharged when the task is completed.

CORRESPONDENCE

It is preferable for all correspondence to be directed through the Secretary of the Presbytery. However, some matters concerning pastoral matters or property issues are best directed to the Chairperson or Convenor of those committees. Correspondence received by the Presbytery is presented in the following manner:

Correspondence which is a copy of that already received by church councils. No debate will be necessary and is listed as "Noted"

Correspondence already referred by the secretary to the appropriate committees, which in their reports will indicate action taken and will be listed for the appropriate committee (e.g. - "SC" = Standing Committee.)

Correspondence to be dealt with by the Presbytery, to be presented individually by the Secretary. No referral.

REIMBURSEMENT OF PRESBYTERY EXPENSES

Officers of Presbytery and its Committees may claim for expenses incurred in carrying out Presbytery responsibilities.

Presbytery meetings - No reimbursement is made to members for expenses relating to the attendance at Presbytery meetings.

Presbytery Chairperson - Claims to be forwarded to the Presbytery Treasurer.

Presbytery Secretary - Claims for reimbursement of secretarial expenses to be forwarded to the Presbytery Treasurer.

Presbytery Committees – Lay Presbytery members who are Committee Convenors, Secretaries and members are entitled to claim expenses incurred whilst acting on behalf of and **with the approval of Presbytery**.

Claims are to be forwarded after each meeting to the Presbytery Treasurer under the signature of the Committee Convenor. Claims may include phone, postage and travel. Travel will be paid at the marginal ad hoc rate.

Reasonable expenses will be paid where they are not claimable elsewhere.

Presbytery members are urged to co-ordinate activities, particularly travel.

REPORTS

Committees and task groups have the responsibility of considering matters referred to them, to report and/or recommend appropriate action by the Presbytery at its meeting. If the committee or task group considers the matter urgent, and that action needs to be taken prior to a Presbytery meeting, the committee may act on behalf of the Presbytery. It should then report the action taken and the reason for it and seek the Presbytery's endorsement of it. Reports are to be in writing and in the hands of the Secretary no later than 10 days prior to the meeting of Presbytery so they can be circulated to members. At the meeting the convenor presents the report briefly, answers questions, moves to the reception, and the recommendations are dealt with in order. Committees are expected to report regularly to Presbytery and persons appointed by Presbytery as representatives to Synod bodies, or other activities are expected, at least once in each calendar year, to report on the work of that body.

MARRIAGE

Ministers in the Uniting Church are recommended to and authorised by the Commonwealth to conduct marriages and as such are referred to as an "Authorised Minister of Religion". Such Ministers can **only** conduct a marriage service according to the Rites of the Uniting Church in Australia and must include the compulsory asterisk items in the services from either UiW 1 or 2. Authorised ministers are also governed by the Code of Ethics. For a more detailed statement please see the letter from the Assembly General Secretary dated 24th April, 2015.

Some things to note:

A Uniting Church minister can not conduct a civil service, nor can any authorised minister from another denomination preside over a marriage according to the Rites of the Uniting Church – they are only authorised to conduct a marriage according to the rites of their ordaining body.

There is a further convention offered as guidelines to Congregations that it is completely inappropriate for a Civil Celebrant (even if the Celebrant is a church member) to use the Church to conduct a marriage service.

The Notes in the Marriage Service indicate that any request by a couple for someone other than the Minister in Placement to conduct the service in the Church must be at the agreement of that Minister in Placement, usually with the minister having some involvement in the service.

'The Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia declares that

1. Marriage

Marriage for Christians is the freely given consent and commitment in public before God of a man and a woman to live together for life. It is intended to be the mutually faithful lifelong union of a woman and man expressed in every part of their life together.

In marriage the man and the woman seek to encourage and enrich each other through love and companionship.

In the marriage service

FUNERALS

Where there is a minister in placement then it is expected that the Uniting Church Minister would conduct Uniting Church funerals, and particularly if that service is to be conducted in any of the churches for which that Minister has oversight.

In reality, the deceased or a member of the family may have made other arrangements or, for example, entered into commitments with a past minister. The reality is also impractical across the whole cluster given its size and diversity and other policies need to be developed. Consequently, the conduct of funerals will need to be very much an aspect of Ordained/ Lay shared ministry where each work together in a team ministry.

The Presbytery of Western Victoria may on occasions provide opportunity for lay people to receive training in the conduct of funerals

Notwithstanding these approvals, it would be expected, as well as being both respectful and polite, for the Funeral Directors to make their initial contact with the Uniting Church through the Minister and not through the Lay Presider. The Minister will then make the decision as to who is the best person, or the most available person to conduct the Uniting Church service.

Since this is a ministry of the Church, and not of the individual, lay presiders should never assume, nor usurp the ministry of the person in the Placement. Since most Uniting Church Ministers will waive fees if the deceased is a member of the Congregation Lay Presiders should also consider this convention. The ministry of a Lay Presider (whether funerals, or baptisms) is quite distinct from that of a civil celebrant.

Presbytery does not authorise a Lay Funeral Presider to act independently in the name of the Uniting Church but such a ministry is always under the direct oversight of the Minister in Placement and/or the Presbytery, whether the Uniting Church service is being conducted in the Church, in the Funeral Director's Chapel, or at the graveside.

PRIVACY POLICY STATEMENT

The Presbytery of Western Victoria acknowledges and respects the privacy of individuals. We support and endorse the National Privacy Principles contained in the *Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000* and will comply with these principles whenever personal information as defined by the Act is collected by us.

In accordance with the National Privacy Principles

1. We will only collect personal information from you with your prior knowledge and consent;
2. We will only use personal information provided by you for the purposes for which it was collected;
3. We will not disclose your personal information to a third party without your consent;
4. We will not disclose your personal information to other institutions and authorities except if required by law or other regulation;
5. We will remove personal information from our records when it is no longer required (except where archiving is required);
6. We have processes and policies to protect the personal information that we have under our control from:
 - * unauthorised access;
 - * improper use;
 - * alteration;
 - * unlawful or accidental destruction and accidental loss.
7. You may access your information on written request to the Presbytery Secretary.
8. The following people occupy positions in the Presbytery which would require them to collect or store personal information: The Presbytery Ministers, The Presbytery Chairperson, The P.R.C. Chairperson, the Presbytery Secretary, the Presbytery Treasurer. At present the Rev David Thompson is overseeing the collection of information for the Presbytery Directory.

Our contact details are as follows:

Presbytery of Western Victoria
P.O. Box 4157,
Alfredton, 3350

Assessments due before end of August.

A note about assessment beyond initial authorization

Any assessment in relation to a 'Refresher Course' for those seeking re-authorisation will not be too onerous although it is important to assess the nature of ongoing reflection on the role and practice of being a Lay Presider. Those people requiring a 'Refresher Course' will be asked to attend the one day 'Accreditation Course' every three years prior to any possibility of re-authorisation. In this instance the full assessment required of this day will not be expected. Instead PRC may wish to consider attendance at the annual Continuing Development days to be sufficient evidence of 'assessment' before a renewed application for authorisation can be considered.

9. Beyond Authorisation – Continuing Development Days

A process of Continuing Development Days for those who are authorized as Lay Presiders in the Presbytery will be provided. This will include the requirement to attend a 'Reflection Day' once a year. On these days Lay Presiders will have the opportunity to reflect together on their experiences and practices. It will provide the opportunity for Lay Presiders to offer each other mutual support and encouragement. It will also provide the opportunity of introducing new resources and for the PMM&E to keep in contact with Lay Presiders and to be aware of some of the issues Lay Presiders are facing. This will provide a context for any 'review' at the end of the first year of authorization.

10. Code of Ethics issues

A process will be put in place to ensure that issues relating to Code of Ethics are covered for Lay Presiders. The PMM&E will work with the PRC and the PMPC in this regard.

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The committee has the oversight of the pastoral relations between ministers and congregations, on behalf of the Presbytery, and exercises delegations relating to placements, etc.. It meets at the Lake Bolac Uniting Church at 10.00am on the first Thursday of the month.

Membership: Nine (9) members (three ex-officio and seven elected by Presbytery in such a way as to balance, as far as possible, lay/ordained, gender and regional representation).

Ex-officio: Presbytery Chairperson, Immediate Past Chairperson/ Chairperson-elect, the Presbytery Minister (Pastoral). Full Presbytery also elects the Chairperson of the PRC.

PRC shall have the powers of the Presbytery in respect of the following responsibilities:

- The pastoral and administrative oversight of all ministers and pastoral charges within the bounds
- Matters of pastoral discipline
- Consultations on the life and witness of congregations
- The placement of those in specified ministries, including the approval of profiles, appointment of Presbytery members of JNC's, the approval to congregations to issue a call and termination of placements
- Selection, pastoral care and oversight of candidates for the specified ministries
- Supervision of placement vacancies
- Authorization of lay persons to preside at the Sacraments
- Recommendations to the Placements Committee re the classification of ministers
- Consultations concerning requests for extension of placements beyond ten years
- Approval of the appointment of Ministers-in-Association
- Terminations of placement
- Collegiate ministries & ministry teams

Annual Delegation of Authority:

In addition to the responsibilities of the PRC as set out in the Presbytery Statement of our Life and Mission (SooLaM) the responsibilities of PRC are designated in Reg 3.7.3. Under Reg 2.6.5.d, the

Presbytery may delegate all matters of placements to the PRC. The Presbytery responsibilities in Reg 3.1.3 a, b, c, d ii, f, g, j, k, l, m, p, q and Reg 3.4.2 are delegated to the PRC. PRC, will consult with the Mission and Education Committee on matters associated with Reg 3.4.3 Dissolution of Congregations and 3.4.4 Division and Amalgamation of Congregations

3.1.3 Oversight of Ministers

(a) pastoral and administrative oversight of all Ministers and pastoral charges within the bounds, including:

- (i) counselling and disciplining of Ministers in accordance with Regulations 5.4.1 – 5.4.3
- (ii) ensuring Ministers receive regular professional supervision;
- (iii) providing opportunities for further training;
- (iv) determining the intervals at which Ministers shall be counselled by its Pastoral Relations Committee in accordance with Regulations 3.7.3 (b) and 5.4.3(a)

(b) maintaining and reviewing annually the roll of Ministers;

(c) including on its roll of Ministers:

- (i) Ministers in approved placements in the Assembly or a Synod who are placed on the roll of the Presbytery by designation of the Assembly or that Synod;
- (ii) Ministers in approved placements in the Presbytery;
- (iii) Ministers in approved placements in Congregations or other pastoral charges within the bounds of the Presbytery; and
- (iv) Ministers who are listed on the rolls of confirmed members of Congregations within the bounds of the Presbytery other than those who are on the rolls of other Presbyteries by reason of (c)(i), (ii) or (iii) above or by decision of the Synod.

Oversight of Congregations

(d) oversight of all Congregations within the bounds, including:

- (i) the formation of, the alteration of the bounds of and the dissolution of Congregations and other pastoral charges within the bounds; (See Reg. 3.4.1 and 3.4.4)
- (ii) conducting consultations on the life and witness of Congregations within the bounds in accordance with Reg. 3.1.4;
- (iii) receiving and dealing with matters referred to it by Congregations and the transmission of those matters where appropriate;

Wider Work of the Church

Questions that participants may be asked to explore during the course could include:

- Background — How I came to be undertaking this course
- How do I understand Sacramental Ministry?
- How do I consider my own Baptism?
- How do I approach participating in Communion?
- What is the context where I might be involved in Sacramental Ministry?
- What type of support might I need as a Lay Presider? (supervision, mentoring, etc...)
- What are my concerns?
- What resources would I need?

What are my personal limitations and constraints?

Assessment possibilities/directions

The assessment is not designed to be too onerous, but it is important to know that the participant has understood the material and the role and responsibility of being a Lay Presider.

Participants will be asked to develop a small 'portfolio'. This portfolio could include:

- some written reflection. Questions to respond to will be provided. Short reflection/report on a conversation with their local or nearby minister regarding their understanding of the Sacraments in the Uniting Church and their role as a Lay Presider.
- Confirmation reflection from their local minister that this conversation has taken place and affirmation about understandings. Guideline questions will be provided to help with this process.
- Evidence of having participated in the leadership of Lay Presidency. This could be within the context of their own congregation, or arrange to set up a 'mock' service wherein it could occur. A supervisor/assessor will need to 'sign off' that this has happened and to provide a report on conduct and perceived understandings.
- Provide an outline of a service of worship which you would be responsible for as a Lay Presider, providing a brief explanation of why you have included different components.
- Evidence of a current 'Working With Children check, valid in the state of Victoria.

- What kind of supervision and accountability would we require?
- What arrangements could we make about ongoing evaluation? How long would be reasonable for us to authorise someone for Lay Presidency on an ongoing basis, or a location as being suitable for a Lay Presider to offer leadership? What limitations would be helpful/desirable?

8. Draft overview of curriculum content

DAY 1

Understanding the Uniting Church

Basis of Union	Ethos and theology
History of UCA	How we order our life.
Appropriate resources	

Understanding Sacraments in the Uniting Church

Baptism	Eucharist
Sacraments held together	The sacraments and Worship
Appropriate resources	

DAY 2

Baptism

Theology of	History of
Uniting Church understanding of (recap)	
Ecumenical Questions	Appropriate resources

Eucharist

Theology of	History of
Uniting Church understanding of (recap)	
Ecumenical questions	Appropriate resources

1 DAY ACCREDITATION

Recap on understandings of sacraments
 Responsibilities of presiding – accountability
 Role of Church Councils
 Developing Worship outline – where do the services ‘fit’ within worship and why
 Practicalities
 Assessments outline
 Appropriate resource

Selection and Oversight of Candidates

(f) taking such part in the selection, pastoral care and oversight of candidates for the specified ministries of the Church as required by the Synod and/or Assembly;

(g) dealing with applications from Ministers of the Word or Deacons concerning change of ordained ministry in accordance with Reg. 2.3.2.6;

Ordination, Accreditation or Recognition of Specified Ministries

(h) the ordination of candidates who have fulfilled the prescribed requirements for the office of Minister of the Word or Deacon;

(i) recognising specified ministries;

Placement and Appointment of Specified Ministries and Supervision of Vacancies

(j) the supervision of vacancies in pastoral charges and the filling thereof subject to any right of the bodies concerned to take part in the placement of Ministers;

(k) the placement of Lay Pastors and Youth Workers as may be required;

(l) designating appointments for the Ministry of Pastor and recognizing and commissioning Pastors;

(m) in the exercise of its responsibility for the supervision of vacancies in pastoral charges, appointing one or more Presbytery Liaison Persons who shall have the right to attend and speak at any meeting of the Congregation or its Church Council during the vacancy. In most cases this role will be given to one or more of the Presbytery appointed members of the Joint Nominating Committee.

Other

(p) providing for persons other than Ministers of the Word or Deacons to preside at the celebration of the sacraments where, in the opinion of the Presbytery, circumstances so require;

(q) determining from time to time, and for good and sufficient reasons, the extent to which a Minister who is designated as on leave of absence, retired or not available for placement (See Reg. 2.6.1) shall be limited in the exercise of all or any of the functions of ministerial office. Any such determination shall be immediately reported to the Moderator and the Secretary of the Synod;

CONSULTATIONS ON LIFE AND WITNESS OF A CONGREGATION

3.1.4 (a) Consultations on the life and witness of a Congregation shall be conducted by the Presbytery with the Congregation including any Ministers, Youth Workers, Pastors or Lay Pastors serving in placements in the Congregation and any Community Ministers serving in the Congregation.

(b) The purpose of the consultation shall be to strengthen the life and witness of the Congregation, to assess future ministerial and lay leadership needs, and to review the records of the Congregation.

(c) A consultation shall normally take place every five years at the discretion of the Presbytery regardless of the duration of any current placement.

(d) The Presbytery may conduct a consultation at any time on its own initiative, or at the request of the Church Council or of a Minister serving in a placement in the Congregation.

(e) The persons appointed by the Presbytery to undertake the consultation shall:

- (i) consult with such bodies and persons within the Congregation as it determines;
- (ii) report to the Presbytery and the Congregation; and
- (iii) make such recommendations regarding the life and witness of the Congregation (including matters relating to placements and property) as they think fit.

3.4.2 A Congregation may relate to one or more other Congregations for the better exercise of their mission, at the initiative of a Congregation or of the Presbytery. Ongoing structured relationships between Congregations require Presbytery approval.

The Pastoral Relations Committee may:

- (a) respond to approaches by a congregation and/or minister, or may itself initiate action (including the required consultation with the Placements Committee) which could lead to termination of a placement. If it appears that a placement should be terminated, the Committee shall bring an appropriate recommendation to the Presbytery or, in the case of urgency, to its Standing Committee.
- (b) may consider it inappropriate for the whole committee to be involved in consulting with a minister and/or church council and may appoint members to consult on its behalf. Opportunity is provided for the minister and Church Council (or its representatives) to meet with the P.R.C. where termination of a placement is being considered.

The P.R.C. is responsible for matters relating to approvals for celebrating the Sacraments and for handling matters concerning sexual abuse and ministerial code of ethics.

The following documents are important to your understanding of some of the policies and procedures adopted by the Church for its good ordering. Some of them originate from Assembly, some from Synod, and some from the Presbytery. Although each should be somewhere in your Church Council records, they have been included here for your benefit.

- conversation with the local Church Council and with any potential Lay Presiders;
- questionnaire (to clarify local need and context);
- application form (the PRC may wish to specify what should be addressed in any application, e.g. place, frequency, proposed Presider, proposed supervision arrangements, relationship with Church Council, etc...)
- clarification of expectations and a process for accountability
- see samples of work and monitor progress
- PRC may choose to request a 'mentor partner' for the applicant be appointed from within the local context.
- The PRC will need to check that a current Working With Children card valid for the state of Victoria is held by a potential Lay Presider before authorisation can be granted. A photocopy of card to be provided for filing with application.

The PRC will require confirmation that an applicant has been a Confirmed Member of the Uniting Church for at least 12 months.

It will be helpful that when a person who participates in the course with the support and expectation of the Church Council intending that they be authorised as a Lay Presider that *other* members of the local Congregational Church/Regional Council also participate in the 2 day component of the course. In this way, a Church Council can become clearer about the responsibilities of the local Council in supporting Lay Presiders appropriately and fulfilling their own responsibilities of enabling the nurture of leaders within their communities.

7. Policy Issues for the PRC/Presbytery to consider

Some of the issues that could be addressed by the PRC regarding those who may be considered suitable to offer leadership as a Lay Presider within a local context include:

- Under what kind of situations and circumstances can we imagine Lay Presidency being exercised within the bounds of this Presbytery?
- How will we address any local ecumenical concerns?
- What are the gifts we would want to identify in people we would consider as potential Lay Presiders?
- What kinds of training do we want to emphasize and what kind of ongoing learning might we expect of authorised Lay Presiders?

Some people will miss some things. Time will be spent focusing on different aspects of sacramental ministry at different locations. Different questions throughout the process will elicit different discussions.

The course will be offered in a face-to-face group setting with a collection of Readings available for reflection. Some participants will be stimulated and absorb everything and use this as a starting point for further research and reflection. Others may struggle with the meaning of some of the readings and will need time to process new ideas. It will be important for local clergy to be aware of who from their congregation may be attending so that they can be available for any follow up questions which could arise as a result of a parishioner's participation in the course. It is recommended that a 'mentor' be appointed for those who are authorized as Lay Presiders.

5 Monitoring, Development and Assessment of the course.

There will be a review of the content and delivery methods of the course from time to time in order to keep abreast of what is happening in other Presbyteries and Synods. The course content and Policy can be adjusted as is necessary.

Some questions which may be helpful to keep in mind include:

- What do we hope for across this Presbytery when it comes to Baptism and Communion, especially in relation to Lay Presidency?
- What is essential?
- What are the ecumenical issues?
- What are the pastoral issues?
- What role does the PRC have in oversight?
- How will we exercise oversight?
- What are our current limitations?

What ongoing education/reflection would be helpful to provide for Lay Presiders in our Presbytery?

6. Dealing with Applications for Authorisation of Lay Presiders

It is the local Congregational Church Council or Regional Council (not an individual) that makes application to the Presbytery (via the PRC) to consider a person's possible authorisation as a Lay Presider. Authorisation of such persons is dealt with by the PRC.

The PRC may choose to develop a procedure for dealing with such applications which could involve:

Policy, Process and oversight of training for Lay Presidency

1. The course and what the PRC/Presbytery needs to know about the course.

The 'course' will be called *The Uniting Church and its Sacrament*. It aims to cover understandings about the Uniting Church and its ethos, and the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion as described in:

- the Basis of Union;
- the Regulations of the Uniting Church;
- key documents published by the Assembly (from Doctrine, Worship and related to Codes of Ethics);
- Guidelines regarding Lay Presidency approved by the Assembly Standing Committee in July 2013 ('Guidelines');
- various writings by UCA theologians, liturgists, educators and practitioners.

Other relevant writings and practices from wider ecumenical sources will be used as well.

Participants will primarily work with the liturgies published in *Uniting in Worship 2 (UIW2)*. They may also become familiar with other liturgical resources, but are encouraged to use the frameworks and examples found in *UIW2* and use the guidance of the 'Ordered Liberty' contained within these resources.

The course will be offered over two days, with a 1 day 'Accreditation' process following that. The course will be offered twice a year in different locations in the Presbytery. In 2016 the course will be offered during the first half of the year. The two day course is open to anyone in the Uniting Church who would be interested in understanding more about the ethos of the Uniting Church and its understanding of sacramental ministry regardless of whether they are interested in being Lay Presiders or not. It will be of particular interest to members of Church Councils and other leaders in the local congregations.

Those participants whom the Church Council has determined may be suitable to offer leadership as a Lay Presider (under the guidelines determined by the PRC) will be required to attend the 2 day course *The Uniting Church and its Sacraments* in addition to the 1 day 'Accreditation' course, and complete any assessment requirements before the Church Council can apply to the PRC for recognition as a Lay Presider within a particular context. .

The course will be provided under the leadership of the Presbytery Minister: Mission and Education. Various Ministers in Placement will be invited to share in the leadership of the course in different locations.

A draft curriculum outline of the course is included within this document.

2. PRC responsibility

(a) PRC has the responsibility for assessing the suitability of Lay Presiders on the application and recommendation of a local Church Council or Regional Council. If the PRC is satisfied that a person is suitable to offer leadership in this way it will authorise that person to do so. Authorisation is granted for a period of three years, with a review after the first year (as per suggestion in *ASC Guidelines* July 2013). The local Church Council will need to make another application for renewed authorisation at the conclusion of three years. Participation in the one day 'Accreditation' course will constitute fulfilling requirements to be considered for renewed authorization. However, Lay Presiders would be encouraged to complete the full course again at any time if they so wish as new material and resources will be available from time to time.

(b) When the PRC, on behalf of the Presbytery, authorises a lay person to preside at the sacraments this person's leadership will be recognised in a service of worship in the community/context in which his/her responsibility is to be exercised (as per '*Guidelines*'). PRC and PMM&E will develop a relevant liturgy for such an occasion. The local minister or a Presbytery representative may preside over such a liturgy.

(c) PRC maintains the list of who is authorised as a Lay Presider and has responsibility for monitoring when a person's authorisation has lapsed and to contact the relevant Church/Regional/Cluster Council in order to determine if the need for a Lay Presider is still present, and if so, to request that a 'refresher' course be undertaken before a renewed authorisation can be considered and/or granted.

(d) PRC (in consultation with the Presbytery Minister: Mission and Education) will be responsible for the setting of Policy and Process of training for Lay Presidency.

(e) On matters relating to the training and oversight of Lay Presiders the Presbytery Minister: Mission and Education will consult with and report to the PRC (*reflecting Profile for PMM&E*).

(f) PRC to be the body which communicates with Church/Regional/Cluster Councils in all matters relating to oversight of Lay Presidency and Training. The PRC may delegate some communication tasks to the PMM&E.

3. Leadership Responsibilities

(a) The PRC will request the Presbytery Minister: Mission and Education to provide the course on behalf of the PRC/Presbytery.

(b) The Presbytery Minister: Mission and Education may request the Mission and Education Committee to help facilitate the logistics for providing the course.

(c) The Presbytery Minister: Mission and Education will be responsible for informing the PRC regarding the names of those who have completed the course and who may be eligible for authorisation.

(d) The Presbytery Minister: Mission and Education will take responsibility for the content and conduct of the course, and will identify other ordained or lay people to assist with its delivery.

(e) The Presbytery Minister: Mission and Education will provide an annual report to PRC regarding issues relating to the training and oversight of Lay Presidency and Lay Presiders in the Presbytery.

(f) The Presbytery Minister: Mission and Education will prepare information about the following year's program for presentation no later than the October meeting of the PRC.

(g) The Presbytery Minister: Mission and Education will prepare an Information Brochure outlining details for Lay Presidency Training for the following year. This brochure to be available by the November meeting of Presbytery.

(h) The PRC, together with the Presbytery Minister: Mission and Education, will determine the required frequency of conducting Lay Presidency Training (eg. depending on situational need, it may not need to run each year).

4. Limitations and implications of the course

No course on the sacraments can be comprehensive and every course delivery will be unique, although the material offered in each place will be the same.