



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

MINUTES

of the

THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE

SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

Held at Box Hill, Victoria
8 – 13 September 2017



Moderator: Rev Sharon Hollis

General Secretary: Rev Dr Mark Lawrence

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Table of Contents

MINUTES	M5
Resolutions	M35
APPENDICES	
Roll of Synod	AA1.1
Membership of Boards, Commissions, Committees etc	AA2.1
Placements finalised since Synod 2016	AA3.1
'In Memoriam' from Union to Synod 2017	AA4.1
Memorial Minutes	AA5.1
INDEX	



THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SYNOD HELD IN MELBOURNE

8 – 13 SEPTEMBER 2017

All activities, except for the opening service, were held at Box Hill Town Hall, 1022 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill.

17.1 FRIDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2017

17.1.1 PRE-SERVICE SINGING

A pre-service singing session took place at 7.20pm.

17.1.2 OPENING SERVICE

A Service of Worship, including Holy Communion, was held at 7.30pm at St Michael's Uniting Church, cnr Collins & Russell Streets, Melbourne.

The Moderator led the service, with Rev Tim Matton-Johnson co-presiding at Eucharist and Rev Dr Robyn Whitaker preaching.

The theme of the service was 'Following Christ'. The reading that was preached on was Genesis 32: 22-31.

17.2 SATURDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2017

17.2.1 COMMENCEMENT

The Moderator occupied the chair at 9am and welcomed members.

17.2.1.1 Welcome

The Moderator welcomed Colleen Geyer, General Secretary of the National Assembly and announced that Stuart McMillan, Assembly President and Dr Deirdre Palmer, President-Elect would be joining the meeting on Monday (11 September 2017).

The Moderator reminded members that the meeting is a safe place and all opinions are honoured.

The Moderator introduced the general chaplains, Rev Rosalie Rayment-Hewitt, Rev Jason Kioa, Rev Trevor Bassett and David Reeve.

17.2.2 DEVOTIONS

The Moderator introduced Rev Deacon Denise Savage who led the daily devotion with Rev Jinseon Park.

17.2.3 OPENING BUSINESS

17.2.3.1 Theological and General Orientation

Rev Sue Withers and Rev David Withers presented a theological and general orientation for the Synod meeting.

17.2.4 Occupational Health and Safety Announcement

Cameron Walker, Synod Safety Officer, addressed the meeting regarding occupational health and safety issues, and emergency procedures throughout the Synod meeting.

17.2.5 BUSINESS COMMITTEE (REPORT C3)

Rev Sue Clarkson, Convenor, Business Committee, spoke to a written report. She thanked the Creative Design Team for their contribution to planning the meeting and expressed appreciation to the staff of Box Hill Town Hall for their support.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.2.6 SYNOD 2017 PROCEDURES

17.2.6.1 Appointments and Associations

Rev Sue Clarkson spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To appoint the following people for the whole of the 2017 Synod Meeting:

Minute Secretaries:	Robyn Hansen and Natalie Brown
Returning Officer:	Rod Mummery
Deputy Returning Officer:	Rev John Mann
Timer Operator and notices:	Rev Kevin Dobson Rev Ross Pearce

- (b) To associate the following people for the whole of the 2017 Synod Meeting:

- (a) Alison Overeem
- (b) Cath James
- (c) Angela Goodwin
- (d) Laura Cregan
- (e) Dr Deirdre Palmer
- (f) Dr Jason Talbot
- (g) Dr Margaret Campbell
- (h) Rev David Withers

- (c) To associate the following people for specific sessions of the 2017 Synod meeting:

Rev Peter Weeks	For the business of the Ecumenical Relations Committee
Shawn Whelan	For the business of the General Secretary End of Term Review
Sam Nicholas	For the business of Administration and Finance
Josh Woollett	For the business of Culture of Safety

17.2.6.2 Confirmation of Minutes of Synod 2017

Rev Sue Clarkson spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

That the Moderator, General Secretary, Associate General Secretary and Business Manager be authorised to confirm the minutes of the 2017 meeting of Synod.

17.2.6.3 Date of Synod 2019

Rev Sue Clarkson spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To meet in May 2019 or as close to that month as possible; and
- (b) To authorise the Standing Committee to finalise a date for Synod 2019 after receiving advice from the Business Committee and the Creative Design Team.

17.2.6.4 Synod 2017 Procedures

Rev Sue Clarkson spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) That any proposal which may include financial commitment not at present included in the Mission Support Fund or other appropriate budget of the Synod be subject to comment by a representative of the Board of Mission and Resourcing (BOMAR) after consultation, where possible, with representatives of the Synod Finance and Risk Management Committees;
- (b) That the closure time for receiving proposals be 7.30pm on Saturday 9 September 2017;
- (c) That the closure time for receiving nominations for the Assembly membership be 7.30pm on Saturday 9 September 2017;
- (d) That the closure time for receiving nominations for the Standing Committee be 7.30pm on Sunday 10 September 2017;
- (e) That any necessary elections for chairpersons be held at 10.25am on Tuesday 12 September 2017, and that the ballots close at 2.00pm on that same day;
- (f) That any elections for members of boards, commissions and committees be held at 10.25am on Tuesday 12 September 2017 and that the ballots close at 2.00pm on that same day;
- (g) That the election of members of Standing Committee be conducted as follows:

Event	Ballot commences	Ballot closes
Determine majority support for nominees	2.00pm Monday 11 September 2017	4.00pm Monday 11 September 2017
Standing Committee, Assembly and other ballots	10.25am Tuesday 12 September 2017	2.00pm Tuesday 12 September 2017

- (h) That the business of the Synod be dealt with in accordance with the following timetable unless the Synod specifically determines otherwise:

Regular items throughout the Synod meeting will be as follows:

Event	Times
Devotions	Sat, Sun, Mon, Tues, Wed 9.00am
Bible study	Sat 10.00am, Mon, Tues, Wed 10.30am
Morning tea	11.00am–11.30am
Lunch	1.00pm–2.00pm
Afternoon tea	Sat, Mon, Tues 3.30–4.00pm Sun 3.00–3.30pm
Dinner break	Sun 6.00–7.15pm, Sat, Tues 6.00pm–7.30pm

Event	Times
Start of evening session	Sat, Tues 7.30pm, Sun 7.15pm
Close of evening session, unless extension of time is approved by Synod	Sat 9.15pm, Sun, Tues 9.00pm

The close of business will be 3.00pm Wednesday 13 September, prior to the closing Eucharist;

Business on Monday will finish at 6.00pm; and

An initial timetable showing those items with fixed time allocations on Saturday 9, Sunday 10, Monday 11, Tuesday 12 and Wednesday 13 September 2017 is contained in the attached table.

17.2.7 CREATIVE DESIGN TEAM (REPORT C3.1)

Aaron Blakemore, Convenor, Synod Creative Design Team, spoke to a report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.2.8 MODERATOR'S ADDRESS

Dan Wootton, the Ex-Moderator, took the chair. The Moderator spoke to a report which was received with acclamation.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.2.9 BIBLE STUDY

Bible study was led by Rev Tim Matton-Johnson on the Synod Meeting theme, *Following Christ, Walking together as First and Second Peoples.*

17.2.10 UNITING ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER CHRISTIAN CONGRESS (VICTORIA) (REPORT F2)

The Moderator announced the resignation of Rev Ken Sumner as State Director and Chairperson for the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) (Victoria).

Rev Vladimir Korotkov (Resource Worker, UAICC), Craig McGough (Narana Manager) and Amelia Livesey (Aboriginal Culture Educator, Narana) presented a video on the Narana Aboriginal Cultural Centre and spoke to a written report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.2.11 UNITING ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER CHRISTIAN CONGRESS (TASMANIA) (REPORT F1)

Rev Tim Matton-Johnson (UAICC Tasmania Chair) and Alison Overeen (Leprena Centre Manager) spoke to a written report and presented a video on Leprena UAICC Tasmania.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.2.12 GENERAL SECRETARY (REPORT E1)

The General Secretary spoke to a written report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.



17.2.13 SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE (REPORT C1))

The General Secretary spoke to a written report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.2.14 PRESBYTERY TRANSITION TEAM (REPORT D1)

Rev Paul Stephens, Convenor, Presbytery Transition Team, Anna Harrison, Project Officer, Presbytery Transition Team, and team members Richard Allen, Rev Fiona Morrison and Rev Sani Vaeluaga spoke to a written report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.2.15 UNITING (REPORT B9)

Bronwyn Pike, Chairperson of the Uniting Board and Quinn Pawson, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Uniting spoke to a written report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.2.16 ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE (REPORT E2)

Pauline McGillivray, Executive Director, Administration and Finance and Heather Ackland, Director, Accounting Services spoke to a written report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.2.17 PROPERTY BOARD

17.2.17.1 Property Board (Report B4), Property Trust Tasmania (Report B5.1) and Property Trust Victoria (Report B5.2)

Rev David Parker, Chairperson of the Property Board; Peter Thomas, Director Property Services; Pauline McGillivray, Executive Director, Administration and Finance; and Sam Nicholas, Deputy Executive Director, Administration and Finance, spoke to written reports.

The Synod resolved to receive the reports of the Property Board, the Property Trust Tasmania and the Property Trust Victoria.

17.2.17.2 Minute of Appreciation – Rev David Parker

Jim Milne, Synod Property Officer and Secretary of the Property Trust (Vic) and the Property Trust (Tas) spoke to a proposal and Rev David Parker responded.

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To give thanks to God for the ministry of David Parker and for his significant contribution to the Uniting Church as Chairperson of The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Tas.) and The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Victoria) from June 2010 to September 2017 and as Chairperson of the Synod Property Board from June 2010 to November 2017.

David Parker has made an enormous contribution to the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania as the Chairperson of three of the Synod's major decision making bodies: The Synod Property Board, The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Tas.) and The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Victoria). He has held these positions since June 2010 and will step down from the Trusts at this Synod meeting. He will continue as Chairperson of the Property Board until November 2017 when the Board, in its current format, will cease to exist.

The period while David served in these leadership roles has been a time of extraordinary change for the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, particularly in the area of property. Some of the most challenging and far-reaching decisions faced by this Synod took place, including the 'Uniting our future' project, the Major Strategic Review and the Wesley Place redevelopment.

Following the Synod meeting in May 2013, which approved property divestments as part of the Uniting our future project, David, as Chairperson, undertook the important role of coordinating this work. On top of his regular responsibilities, he chaired a number of additional special meetings of the Property Board purely related to Uniting our future.

The Major Strategic Review (MSR), which was also initiated by Synod 2013, was a momentous project for the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania. David contributed without hesitation and in a variety of ways to this review. The recommendations from the MSR led to the establishment of the Strategic Review Implementation Team and David has freely made his time and experience available to this team.

Wesley Place is the largest property redevelopment project in the Synod's history. It will provide many benefits, including restoration and ongoing maintenance of the historic church and a functional building for Wesley Mission Victoria and the Synod. David has been involved at every stage.

As well as providing strong oversight for these and many other major projects, David has continued to advance the functioning of the Property Board. By drawing on his extensive senior level corporate experience and engaging his passion for continuous improvement, he has led the Property Board to operate at higher levels in both governance standards and efficiency.

One of David's great talents – his ability to gently twist arms – has been used continually as he persuaded talented people to join the Board and Property Trusts. This ensured smooth functioning of all bodies, including the various transition times when members were retiring.

One of David's personal characteristics is commitment. The role of Chairperson requires a significant commitment of time, with a minimum of monthly meetings of the Property Board and Property Trusts and participation in meetings of the Synod Standing Committee, and special meetings. This commitment was magnified because for most of these meetings, David has travelled from just south of Hobart to the Synod Office in Melbourne. The few times that he did not travel were generally due to David timing his holidays so that he would transit through Melbourne when a meeting was scheduled.

In undertaking these property roles, David has given his time willingly and graciously and in addition to his many other responsibilities in the local and wider Church. David has also filled positions such as Chairperson of UnitingCare Tasmania, Board Member of UC Camping, Member of Presbytery Standing Committee, Member of Synod Risk Committee and countless more. He is actively involved in his local Kingston Uniting Church.

When asked to contribute to this Minute of Appreciation, a fellow member of the Property Board and Property Trusts provided the following:

,"David is compassionate, intelligent and has a deep love of God and the work of the Uniting Church. David's in-depth knowledge of the Church and its mission combined with his ability to think strategically has been invaluable to the work of the Property Board. As chair he has been able to facilitate complex deliberations while ensuring members are heard and respected. He will be missed by those people fortunate to have worked directly with him."

David continues to serve the Church in many ways and will do so in the years to come. His wisdom and faithful discipleship will continue to be a gift to the Uniting Church. The Synod thanks God for his faithful exercise of ministry as Chairperson of the Property Board and the two Property Trusts.

17.2.18 BOARD OF MISSION AND RESOURCING (BOMAR) (REPORT B1)

Rev Graeme Harrison, Chairperson of BOMAR; Heather Ackland, Director, Accounting Services; and Pauline McGillivray, Executive Director, Administration and Finance spoke to a written report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.2.19 VOX POP

The meeting viewed a video of a selection of Synod members who spoke about their impressions of the Synod meeting.

17.2.20 WORKING GROUPS

The Synod met in working groups for worship, community building and to discuss the Presbytery Transition Team report.

17.2.21 MODERATOR-ELECT NOMINATING COMMITTEE (REPORT D2)

Dr Jill Tabart, convenor of the Moderator-elect Nominating Committee presented the Moderator-elect Nominating Committee report. The meeting viewed video presentations of responses to questions by the three candidates: Rev Sani Vaeluaga, Rev Denise Liersch and Rev Stan Clarke.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.2.22 PRESBYTERIES PANEL

The life and work of the presbyteries was reported via a panel moderated by Rev Dr Sally Douglas. Panel members were:

Gippsland:	Rob Kiddell
Loddon Mallee:	Rev Gordon Bannon
North East Victoria:	Helen Collins
Port Phillip East:	Rev Andrew Boyle
Port Phillip West:	Rev Bruce Watson
Tasmania:	Rev Deacon Michelle Cook
Western Victoria:	Rev Dr Graeme Sutton
Yarra Yarra:	Rev Lauleti Tu'inauvai

Each spoke about the area that they came from, and current highlights and challenges in their presbytery. They also addressed the question of how they sensed the Spirit at work and key concerns in their presbytery. The session concluded with silent prayer.

17.2.23 THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

The Moderator introduced the theological reflector, Dr Margaret Campbell, who presented a reflection on the first day of the Synod meeting.

17.2.24 CLOSING PRAYER

Moderator's chaplain Kaylea Fern closed the day with a prayer.

17.3 SUNDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2017

The Moderator opened the session. Isabel Thomas Dobson, Associate General Secretary took the General Secretary's chair.

17.3.1 DEVOTIONS

Moderator's chaplains, Rev Hoon You and Kaylea Fearn, led worship.

The Moderator reminded the meeting that a film crew from ABC's *Lateline* program would be present during the morning.

17.3.2 STRATEGIC REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION TEAM (REPORT C1.1)

The General Secretary and Dr Jason Talbot, Director, Strategic Review Implementation spoke to a written report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.3.3 SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE

17.3.3.1 Amendment to Synod Standing Committee By-Laws

The General Secretary and Dr Jason Talbot, Director, Strategic Review Implementation spoke to two proposals and discussion followed.

Geoffrey Grinton spoke to a proposal, discussion followed and the matter was adjourned.

Rev Dr Mark Lawrence resumed the General Secretary's chair.

17.3.4 ASSEMBLY MARRIAGE CONVERSATION

The Moderator welcomed the Assembly General Secretary, Colleen Geyer who introduced the Assembly's request for each Synod to conduct a conversation, using the 'space for grace' process, regarding marriage.

17.3.5 VISION & MISSION PRINCIPLES AT WORK IN CONGREGATIONS

A video was presented showing what it means for members of the Sale Congregation to follow Christ in their everyday lives.

17.3.6 PROCEDURAL RESOLUTION

The Synod resolved that the Synod Roll would now be closed.

17.3.7 WORKING GROUPS

The Synod met in working groups to discuss marriage.

17.3.8 SERVICE OF TRIBUTES AND THANKSGIVING

The Moderator welcomed the special guests to the Service of Thanksgiving for the life and witness of ministers.

The Synod resolved:

To give thanks to God for the life and witness of ministers who:

- (a) have died since the 2016 meeting of Synod and to record their names as follows:

Rev Kenneth Blackwell	Rev Myrle Lancaster
Rev Sally Craven	Rev Douglas Mathews
Rev Dr Kenneth Dempsey	Rev David Poynton
Rev George Durinck	Deaconess (Ida) Shirley Renshaw
Rev Deacon Rosemary Edwards	Rev Walter Rolley
Rev Joseph (Joe) Fraser	Rev Barry Rowe
Rev Joan Gilchrist	Rev Norma Spaulding
Rev Rowan Clifford Gill	Rev W Duncan Spiers
Rev Arnold James	Rev Dr Frederik Vanclay

Rev C Richmond S Kenyon Rev Reynolds Waters
Rev Malcolm Lamont

- (b) have retired since the 2016 meeting of Synod and to record their names as follows:

Rev Christine Aisbett	Rev Robert Humphreys
Rev Greg Beck	Rev Dr Gwen Ince
Rev Carol Bennett	Rev Russell Jones
Rev Peter Burnham	Rev Dr Francis Macnab
Rev Peter Cook	Rev Geoff Needham
Rev Dr Ken Dempsey (Dec)	Rev Jen Pretty
Rev Mark Dunn	Rev Nicholas Randall
Rev Joan Francis	Rev Robert Renton
Rev Jeff Gray	Rev Helen Robinson
Rev Colin Gurteen	Rev Lorraine Saultry
Rev Dr Ian Hickingbotham	Rev Prof Howard Wallace
Rev Chris Howard	Rev Peter Welsh
Rev Dr Philip Hughes	

- (c) have celebrated 50 years of ordination or commissioning from January 2017 to March 2018, and to record their names as follows:

Rev Ian Collings	Rev Ivan Poole
Rev James Colville	Rev Clive Skewes
Rev Clem Dickinson	Rev Peter Barnes
Rev Justin Gooderham	Rev Dr Brian James
Rev R Colin Johnston	Rev Gerald Leicester
Rev Kenneth Lindsay	Rev J Allan Thompson
Rev Dr Paul Moore	

- (d) have celebrated 60 years of ordination from January 2017 to March 2018, and to record their names as follows:

Rev Dr John Bodycomb	Rev L Warren Clarnett
Rev M Steve Box	Rev C Drew Lelean
Rev Bruce Prewer	Rev Allan McLaren
Rev John Richards	Rev William Pugh
Rev Max Stansall	Rev Lloyd Shirley
Rev W Leigh Swaby	Rev Robert Wheeler

- (e) have celebrated 65 years of ordination from January 2017 to March 2018, and to record their names as follows:

Rev Murray Allen	Rev S Warnock Lowry
Rev Alfred Foote	Rev G Laurie Turner
Rev Boyd Granzow	Rev Alfred Webber

- (f) have celebrated 70 years of ordination from January 2017 to March 2018, and to record their names as follows:

Rev Malcolm Lamont (Dec)	Rev Howard Secomb
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- (g) have celebrated 75 years of ordination from January 2017 to March 2018, and to record their names as follows:

Rev Kenneth Blackwell (Dec)

- (h) have been ordained since the 2016 meeting of Synod and to record their names as follows:

Rev Nathaniel Atem
Rev Sue Clarkson
Rev Bruce Crowle
Rev Dr Julie Hall
Rev Tawk Kap

Rev Nigel McBrien
Rev Jinseon Park
Rev Kharis Susilowati
Rev Ian Turrnidge

- (i) have been received from another denomination since the 2016 meeting of Synod and to record their names as follows:

Rev Sylvia Akauola-Tongotongo
Rev Dr John Flett
Rev Kevin Kim
Rev Dr Jong Soo Park

Rev John Rigby
Rev Judy Rigby
Rev Dr Christine Sorensen

Rev J Allan Thompson responded on behalf of those recognised in the tributes.

17.3.9 BALLOT – MODERATOR-ELECT

Ballot papers were distributed for the Moderator-elect ballot. The Moderator led the Synod in prayer. Ballot papers were collected and the Moderator declared the ballot closed.

17.3.10 PROCEDURAL RESOLUTION

The Synod resolved that the closing time for receiving nominations for Standing Committee be extended to 9am on Monday 11 September 2017.

17.3.11 SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE

17.3.11.1 Amendment to Synod Standing Committee By-Laws

The mover of proposal 37 Geoffrey Grinton presented Proposal 44 as revision of Proposal 37 which incorporated changes that arose out of debate. The Moderator sought and received leave for Proposal 44 to replace Proposal 37 and discussion continued. The matter was adjourned.

17.3.12 BALLOT MODERATOR ELECT (SECOND BALLOT)

The Moderator advised that a ballot was required to confirm that the preferred candidate had the support of two-thirds of the Synod members.

Ballot papers were distributed for the second Moderator-elect ballot.

17.3.13 FACILITATION GROUP: PRESBYTERY TRANSITION TEAM

Rev David Fotheringham, Convenor of the Facilitation Group, presented feedback from the Presbytery Transition Team Working Group sessions.

Rev Paul Stephens, Convenor, Presbytery Transition Team, responded to the feedback and discussion continued.

17.3.14 VOX POP

The meeting viewed another video of a selection of Synod members who spoke about their impressions of the Synod meeting.

17.3.15 BALLOT – DECLARATION OF MODERATOR 2019 - 2022

The Moderator announced the election of Rev Denise Liersch as Moderator 2019-2022. This was received with acclamation.

The Moderator-elect addressed the meeting.

The Moderator thanked the other nominees and a blessing was sung for the Moderator-elect.

17.3.16 THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

The theological reflector, Dr Margaret Campbell, presented a musical reflection.

17.3.17 STORIES ABOUT SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP AND GENERATIONAL CHANGE

Aaron Blakemore, Convenor; Bethany Broadstock and members of the Synod Creative Design Team presented an evening program on the topic of 'Generational change and leadership sustainability' which included story-telling and prayer.

Story tellers were Hannah Dungan, Rev Robin Yang, Rev Lucas Taylor, Jen Shields, Anika Jenson and Rev Jennie Gordon.

17.3.18 CLOSING PRAYER

Bethany Broadstock and Aaron Blakemore closed the day with a prayer.

17.4 MONDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

The Moderator opened the session.

Isabel Thomas Dobson, Associate General Secretary took the General Secretary's chair.

17.4.1 DEVOTIONS

Rev Deacon Denise Savage led worship with Matthew Julius.

17.4.2 ADOPTION OF THE ROLL OF SYNOD

The Associate General Secretary, Isabel Thomas Dobson, proposed the adoption of the Synod Roll.

The Synod resolved:

That the Roll of Synod as finalised at 3.30pm on Sunday 10 September be adopted. (Refer to Appendix AA1.1.)

The Moderator led a prayer for Max Cook who was in hospital.

17.4.3 VOTE OF THANKS – JOAN McRAE

The Moderator gave a vote of thanks to Joan McRae for her time as Chief Steward which spanned at least twenty years. The Synod responded with acclamation.

Joan McRae responded with thanks.

17.4.4 GENERAL SECRETARY END OF TERM REVIEW (REPORT D3)

Shawn Whelan, Convenor, and Rev Sue Withers, member of the General Secretary End of Term Review Task Group spoke to a written report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

A ballot was conducted for the reappointment of the General Secretary.

The Moderator thanked the End of Term Review Task Group for its work and the thoroughness of its review. Synod responded with acclamation.

17.4.5 SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE BY-LAWS

17.4.5.1 Amendment to Synod Standing Committee By-Laws

The Moderator reintroduced discussion on this matter.

The Synod resolved by formal majority to remove clause (b) provision for representation of Tasmania and rural presbyteries from proposal 44.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- A To approve the revised Synod Standing Committee bylaws with effect from the end of the September 2017 meeting of the Synod after the following amendments to Clause 5 of the draft originally circulated, and as shown in the revised version below:
- (a) An increase in the number of elected members from ten to twelve, with six appointed at each ordinary Synod meeting;
 - (b) Limitation of the term of co-opted members to the next ordinary meeting; and
 - (c) Minor and non-material formatting and grammatical amendments.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- B To amend the Standing Committee by-laws Clause 5.1(c) to include the following sub clause, and subsequent clause re-numbering to follow:

To be eligible for inclusion on the list of nominations for election, a nominee must receive the support of a majority of members of Synod

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- C (a) To approve the revised Synod Standing Committee bylaws (as attached to the original of these minutes) with effect from the end of the September 2017 meeting of the Synod;
- (b)(i) Subject to approval of proposal no.20 (Legislative Incorporation), to authorise the Synod Standing Committee to make changes to the Synod Standing Committee bylaws, if required as a consequence of the potential Legislative Incorporation of the Church in Victoria and Tasmania; and
- (ii) To report any such changes for ratification to the 2019 Synod meeting

17.4.6 GENERAL SECRETARY END OF TERM REVIEW BALLOT

The Moderator announced that there was overwhelming support for the reappointment of Rev Dr Mark Lawrence as General Secretary. The Moderator thanked Mark and his family for his dedication to the role and gave thanks in prayer.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To affirm the integrity, commitment, competency, wisdom and grace that Rev Dr Mark Lawrence has brought to the General Secretary placement;

and by written ballot:

- (b) To reappoint the Rev Dr Mark Lawrence as General Secretary for up to five years from 1 November 2017.

Rev Dr Mark Lawrence resumed the General Secretary's chair.

17.4.7 FACILITATION GROUP: PRESBYTERY TRANSITION TEAM

Rev David Fotheringham, Convenor of the Facilitation Group, outlined the feedback received from working groups and requested that this matter be continued in plenary session after morning tea, instead of in working groups.

The Synod agreed to meet in plenary session during the time assigned to Working Group 3.

17.4.8 BIBLE STUDY

Bible study was led by Dr Jan Morgan and Rev Dr Graeme Garrett on the theme of Following Christ for all creation.

The Moderator thanked the bible study leaders for their focus on the earth as a gift. The Synod responded with acclamation.

17.4.9 FACILITATION GROUP: PRESBYTERY TRANSITION TEAM

Rev David Fotheringham, Convenor of the Facilitation Group, spoke to the proposals and discussion followed.

A Presbytery Transition – General Proposals

The Synod resolved by consensus:

Recalling the key role of oversight exercised by Presbyteries in the Uniting Church, to give thanks to God for the ongoing commitment and faithfulness of Presbytery office bearers, ministers and members within the Synod.

- (a) To request Presbyteries, in the light of Synod 2016 resolution 16.6.20F which outlines core relational expectations of Synod and Presbyteries working together, to engage collaboratively and in a coordinated manner with the Synod to enable Presbyteries to function in ways that are “lighter and simpler”, and so be free to give priority to the Presbyteries’ vital task of oversight involving pastoral-missional leadership;
- (b) To request the Standing Committee to put in place a process to continue the work of the Presbytery Transition Team in order to:
 - (i) have oversight of the implementation resolutions arising from the report of the Presbytery Transition Team to the 2017 Synod; and
 - (ii) offer support to Presbyteries during this time of implementation, including training and pastoral care as resolved at Synod 2016 (Minute 16.6.20 G b)

B Relationships across the Synod

The Synod resolved by consensus:

To request the Standing Committee to consult with Presbyteries in the development of Terms of Reference for a relational entity (possibly called the Presbytery-Synod Interface) consisting of key leaders of Presbyteries and Synod, to enhance coordination between Presbyteries, and Presbyteries and Synod.

C Presbytery Team Leadership

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) Under the provisions of Regulation 3.6.2, to grant approval to Presbyteries within the Synod to appoint officers, including the Chairperson, with remuneration based on a full or part-time stipend;
- (b) To encourage Presbyteries in their discernment of team models, to use Regulation 2.11.3 re Ministry Teams in each Presbytery; and

- (c) To request Presbyteries to work together to develop a model position description for Presbytery Chairperson to clarify the role across Synod

17.4.10 PROCEDURAL RESOLUTION: SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE BALLOTS

The General Secretary noted that one person on the Standing Committee ballot list was a Synod staff member until the end of the week (15 September 2017), which would be in breach of Bylaw 5.2.1 which stipulates Synod staff cannot be elected to the Synod Standing Committee.

The Synod resolved by consensus to allow an exemption to be made to Bylaw 5.2.1 to allow that person to be included in the ballot for Standing Committee.

Ballot papers were distributed.

17.4.11 UNITING AGEWELL

17.4.11.1 Uniting AgeWell Report (REPORT B7)

Rev Allan Thompson, Board Chairperson and Andrew Kinnersly, Executive Director and CEO, Uniting AgeWell spoke to a written report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.4.11.2 MINUTE OF APPRECIATION – REV ALLAN THOMPSON

Wendy Quinn, Deputy Chair of Uniting AgeWell Board, spoke to a proposal and Rev Allan Thompson responded.

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To record its appreciation to Rev Allan Thompson for his leadership of the Uniting AgeWell Board and his exemplary nine years' service on the Uniting AgeWell Board, of which the last three years have been served as Board Chair.

Rev Allan Thompson has made a significant contribution to Uniting AgeWell over the past nine years, both as a Board member and then as Board Chair for the past three years. Prior to Allan's appointment as Board Chair he served on Uniting AgeWell's Audit and Risk Committee and Property and Development Committee from 2009 to 2014. Allan was the inaugural Chair of Uniting AgeWell's Mission Committee and was instrumental in guiding and shaping the Committee's work.

Allan commenced on the Uniting AgeWell Board in 2008 and has seen many milestones in the life of Uniting AgeWell, including the opening of Queenborough Rise, Kingsville and Noble Park residential aged care facilities; development of 50 affordable housing units in Tasmania; and the increase of several hundred Home Care Packages throughout the Gippsland and Swan Hill regions. More recently, Uniting AgeWell has broken ground on the Manningtree Road, Hawthorn and Preston sites that are being re-developed.

All Uniting AgeWell residential aged care facilities have achieved consistent accreditation through the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency during Allan's time at Uniting AgeWell.

In 2014 the organisation re-branded from Uniting Aged Care to Uniting AgeWell and introduced a different approach to ageing, Uniting AgeWell's philosophy of supporting older people to experience a sense of wellbeing, choice and independence at every age and stage of their lives; to feel valued members of their community and to have easy access to the services they need to live the life they want.

In 2016 Uniting AgeWell established an Aged Care Advisory Committee which recommends improvements from a consumer's point of view to improve the services Uniting AgeWell provides to people ageing in the community.

As Board Chair Allan has steered the Board through an increasingly competitive industry and major industry changes such as consumer directed care; deregulation of home care packages; and changes to the Aged Care Funding Instrument, while maintaining and fostering Uniting AgeWell as an expression of the Church.

During Allan's time on the Uniting AgeWell Board he has been involved in the recruitment of CEOs and the creation of numerous strategic plans, all of which have seen the organisation grow in strength and size. Allan has maintained the Board's focus on continuous improvement and the drive for Uniting AgeWell to get better and stronger. His knowledge of the church has been integral to fostering and strengthening the relationship between Uniting AgeWell and the Church. Allan has demonstrated excellent governance and stewardship through his time on the Uniting AgeWell Board and particularly as Board Chair.

The Board thanks Allan for his commendable service over the past nine years and more recently as Board Chair and wish him all the very best for the future.

17.4.12 UCA FUNDS MANAGEMENT

17.4.12.1 MINUTE OF APPRECIATION – JOHN ETHERINGTON

Michael Walsh, Executive Director UCA Funds Management spoke to a proposal and John Etherington responded.

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To give thanks to God for John Etherington and to celebrate his extraordinary contribution to The Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, for the positions held as:

- Chairperson – UCA Funds Management Limited Board, July 2016 to December 2017
- Chairperson – UCA Funds Management Limited Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee, December 2012 to June 2016
- Non-executive Director – UCA Funds Management Limited, January 2008 to December 2017
- Member – The Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania Audit Committee, 2010. The Audit Committee became the interim Finance Committee in August 2012. In October 2013, John was appointed to the Synod Finance Committee.

We would like to thank him for his dedication, care, wisdom and deep faith, and wish him and his family God's rich blessings as he moves on to future endeavours.

John Etherington was appointed a Non-executive Director of UCA Funds Management (UCFM) in January 2008. In December 2017, John will conclude his 10-year term in this position. John has served as the UCFM Chairperson since July 2016.

During John's tenure with UCA Funds Management:

- Funds under management grew from \$700 million to \$1.1 billion
- Grants to the Synod have totalled \$24 million.

John's stewardship and professional experience assisted UCA Funds Management to become the first not-for-profit or faith-based organisation to be fully licensed by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission as a Responsible Entity. With this license, UCA Funds Management obtained the highest standards of governance and compliance in the funds management industry.

Additionally, John was instrumental in the development and approval of the UCFM Workplace Values and Diversity Policy. The Policy mandates the UCA Funds Management Board consists of a minimum of 30 per cent female and males, with the remaining 40 per cent of either gender. At the end of this year, the UCA Funds Management Board will consist of 50 per cent female and 50 per cent male non-executive directors.

John will continue to serve the Church as a member of the Synod Finance Committee.

John is thanked for his considered yet inspirational manner. We thank him for his service to UCA Funds Management, and the broader Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania.

17.4.12.2 MINUTE OF APPRECIATION –MICHAEL WALSH

John Etherington, Chairperson of the UCA Funds Management Board spoke to a proposal and Michael Walsh responded.

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To give thanks to God for Michael Walsh and celebrate his contribution to the Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania as Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of UCA Funds Management and as a member of the Synod Senior Leadership Team since January 2013.

Michael has provided strong leadership and guidance to UCA Funds Management.

Michael came to UCA Funds Management with a long career in the financial sector and a deep commitment to ethical or responsible investment. He has drawn on this experience to assist in the further development and growth of UCA Funds Management and position the organisation well for the future. Under his leadership, funds under management have grown and UCA Funds Management has continued to develop its approach to responsible investment.

During his tenure, UCA Funds Management became the first not-for-profit or faith based organisation with a Responsible Entity license by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, ensuring the highest standards of governance and compliance for investors. Two of the existing funds were converted into managed investment schemes and, more recently, the important custody function has been outsourced to Northern Trust. The investment team has been consolidated and other organisational improvements adopted.

Funds under management have grown by around 46% since 2013, from \$820 million to nearly \$1.2 billion.

Michael has worked closely with the Synod Justice Unit in developing ethical investment policies, including policies relating to fossil fuels and payday lenders. He has led active engagement with businesses on ethical issues such as female representation on Boards and use of credit cards for gambling purposes.

Michael has contributed positively and creatively to Synod ministries and operations as a member of the Synod Leadership Team and provided sound advice for organisations within the Uniting Church on investment matters.

Michael has indicated he will be returning to Sydney when he completes his 5 year term with UCA Funds Management.

17.4.13 ENERGY REDUCTION MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

17.4.13.1 Energy Purchase and Renewable Generation Opportunities

Adrian Pyle, Chairperson of the Energy Reduction Management Committee, spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To request the Standing Committee to appoint a Working Group to develop an aggregated energy purchase policy and process for Councils of the Church, institutions and other bodies within the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania which will report its findings and bring proposals to the Standing Committee by May 2018 and which will have regard to:
 - (i) The research already conducted by the Energy Reduction Management Committee;
 - (ii) Any work conducted with respect to energy purchase improvement as part of the cost savings planning work of the Strategic Review Implementation Team;
 - (iii) The feasibility of all entities across the Synod having electricity and gas services purchased from a mandated retailer or group of retailers;
 - (iv) The ways in which item (iii) might improve the ability to track energy usage measurement across Synod;
 - (v) Ethical considerations with respect to selection of energy retailers, including the degree to which retailers provide options for energy to be sourced from carbon neutral and renewable sources.
 - (vi) The sharing of any savings resulting from the implementation of possible proposals across the Councils of the Church, institutions and other bodies within the Synod while still allowing some portion of savings to be devoted to broader energy use reduction initiatives.
 - (vii) Researching and finding a central solar provider/providers to be used throughout the Synod to ensure quality and conformity.
- (b) To request the General Secretary to convene a joint meeting or meetings of the chairpersons of the Property and Operations Committee (POC) and the Energy Reduction Management Committee before 31 December 2017, to develop parameters by which the development and support of a revolving renewable energy fund can be considered by the POC when deciding upon investments to be made with excess property sales proceeds under the new property sales proceeds policy, and to report the outcome of these meetings to the Standing Committee at its first meeting of 2018.

17.4.14 UCA FUNDS MANAGEMENT (REPORT B6)

John Etherington, Chairperson of UCA Funds Management and Michael Walsh, Executive Director of UCA Funds Management, spoke to a written report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.4.15 VISION & MISSION PRINCIPLES AT WORK IN CONGREGATIONS

The meeting viewed a video regarding 'seeking community'.

17.4.16 CENTRE FOR THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY (CTM)

17.4.16.1 Centre for Theology and Ministry (CTM) (REPORT B2))

Dr Jill Tabart, Board Chairperson Rev Dr Jennifer Byrnes, immediate past Executive Director, CTM; and members of the CTM community spoke to a written report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.4.16.2 MINUTE OF APPRECIATION – Dr Jill Tabart

Rev Dr Jenny Byrnes, immediate past Executive Director, CTM spoke to a proposal and Dr Jill Tabart responded.

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To give thanks to God for the ministry of Dr Jill Tabart and for her significant contribution to the Uniting Church as Chairperson of the Centre for Theology and Ministry (CTM) Board in the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania from July 2011 to November 2017.

Dr Jill Tabart has served as Chairperson of the CTM Board since 1 July 2011 and concludes this appointment on 30 November 2017, having served over six years in this significant leadership and governance position. Dr David Beckett was the inaugural Chairperson of the CTM Board and Jill stepped into this role to continue the implementation of the vision that founded the establishment of the CTM. Over the past six years this vision has continued to evolve under Jill's leadership.

Jill was appointed specifically for the skills, passion and leadership that she would bring to the Synod in this role as the CTM was still evolving and consolidating. The Synod has been well served and Jill has more than ably fulfilled that hope.

The contribution that Jill has given into the Synod in this leadership role is deep and broad.

Jill has led the Board at its meetings with diligence, attention to detail, wisdom and gentleness. Jill has ensured that the Board is resourced for its role, that decisions are well-founded, clear and specific. Much of the detailed work of the Board is reporting and responding to its various stakeholders: the Assembly working group on Education for Ministry, the Synod Standing Committee, Synod and the University of Divinity. In each of these cases Jill has exercised careful oversight and reporting of the Board's obligations and accountabilities.

In the establishment of Pilgrim Theological College, Jill offered a steady and consistent space for discernment and decisions that enabled an effective yet dramatic shift in the delivery of theological education within the Synod.

Jill has exercised a strong and public representative role in leadership of the Board and the CTM activities. Always ready and able to participate in the significant events that form the markers for the work of the CTM, Jill has been present at keynote events such as research seminars, public lectures, celebratory services and events with students, candidates and staff. In these moments Jill has embodied a gentle support and encouragement to those who work within the CTM and she has given public witness to the importance of ongoing education and engagement for life-long learning and discipleship. This has been greatly appreciated by the staff of the CTM.

Jill has the ability to bring out the different voices in formal and informal gatherings in a pastoral and sensitive manner. Her faith and leadership are always observable in the exercising of her role which has delivered a strong expression of discipleship and gospel values to be at the foundation of the Board's work.

In the challenging times of the last year and a half Jill has been tireless in representing the vision of the CTM and the work of the Board in many forums as the Synod discerned the way forward into the future.

We give thanks to God for the leadership and faithfulness, the gifts and skills that Jill has given to the role of Chairperson of the CTM Board.

17.4.17 COMMISSION FOR MISSION (CFM)

17.4.17.1 Commission for Mission (CFM) Report (REPORT B3)

Rev Greg Crowe, Board Chairperson, CFM and Cheryl Lawrie, Acting Executive Director, CFM, spoke to a written report.

Rev Greg Crowe noted an error in the report and requested the inclusion of Rev Barry Prior in the list of former Executive Directors of the CFM. The Synod supported the request by consensus.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.4.17.2 MINUTE OF APPRECIATION – Rev David Pargeter

Rev Greg Crowe, Chairperson CFM Board and Interim Governance Committee spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To give thanks to God for the ministry of Rev David Pargeter and for his significant contribution to the Uniting Church as Executive Director of the Commission for Mission in the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania from 2003 to 2016.

David brought to his role as Executive Director of the Commission for Mission (CfM) a grounded understanding of the importance of the Gospel being located in dialogue between faith and context. Whether it was Cross Culture or Intercultural, Interfaith, Justice and Peacemaking, and Community Services, for David all Mission developed from this immersion in dialogical engagement. For David it was central that the church take initiative in this dialogue as a foundational response to its calling as a Pilgrim People and as followers of Jesus in the world.

David has been a visionary leader within this Synod, yet perhaps not in the way that most would normally describe visionary leadership. The role of the Commission for Mission is to serve the church by offering leadership in the area of Mission. At the heart of the Mission of the Church is the self-giving and self-emptying love of Jesus Christ as a reflection of the nature of God. Any good theologian knows that this self-giving and self-emptying love is not confined in history to one person's work in the incarnation, but is the ongoing work of God reflected in the self-emptying of God's people in, with and for the world.

David has been a leader of self-emptying and selfless giving in who he is, which has been expressed in his leadership of the CfM and in the Ministry of the CfM with the Church. This has been witnessed to in his service to the staff of the CfM, to the Board and in wider relationships of the Commission, in his service to the Standing Committee, among his colleagues of the Senior Leadership Team, and in his commitment to the First peoples, people of other faiths, other cultures and to all those who suffer dispossession and disempowerment in our world.

David has had an incredible ability to maintain a breadth of understanding of the vast issues under the CfM's responsibility as they emerged. David has exhibited a pastoral heart towards the CFM staff, interested in both their work and welfare. He encouraged people to think, speak and share their ideas creatively, honestly and openly. David has always acted professionally with an emphasis on holding the church to account, reminding us of our call as God's people to justice and fairness. David' strength was in working with people. He was sympathetic, empathetic and considerate, yet also challenging and confronting.

And this self-less way often came at a great cost.... but doesn't it always?

The Synod owes a debt of gratitude to David Pargeter for his commitment and persistence in calling the church to right relationships, to Justice and to Peacemaking.

We thank God for the gift of self-less giving that many have experienced through David's leadership and friendship as Executive Director of the Commission for Mission.

17.4.17.3 MINUTE OF APPRECIATION – Rev Greg Crowe

Cheryl Lawrie, Acting Executive Director of the Commission for Mission spoke to a proposal and Rev Greg Crowe responded.

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To give thanks to God for the ministry of Rev Greg Crowe and for his significant contribution to the Uniting Church as Chair of the Commission for Mission (CFM) Board, 2011 – 2016, and Chair of the Commission for Mission Interim Governance Committee, 2016 – 2017.

Greg Crowe has made a significant contribution as Chair of the CFM Board since the time of his appointment in June 2011 until its dissolution in September 2016, and as Chair of the CFM's Interim Governance Committee since that time.

Greg has exercised this ministry with the same commitment to justice and reconciliation that have always marked his faith and ministry. Being the chair during this time has enabled that to be expressed in deeply significant ways. Greg has sought not just to ensure that the CFM is doing the work of justice and reconciliation, but also to ensure that it is embodying it through the way it does this work. He is a person of high ideals, with great expectations of the church and those who serve in it – including himself – yet he has also measured those expectations through a lens of grace and compassion.

Greg has also brought to this role his gifts of theological reflection and exploration, along with a deep appreciation for the contemporary world in which the church is called to live. Through this he has encouraged the development of contextual missiology among the Board and staff. As a result, in the time that Greg was Chair of the CFM Board, the CFM was able to advance a number of significant projects, in particular deeply transformative peace and reconciliation work within the Sri Lankan community, and the development of strong interfaith relationships.

Among the more challenging parts of the role of chair over these last years has been the complex journey with the UnitingCare agencies and boards. Over this time, Greg earned great respect from Board chairs and CEOs for his ability to be a peace-maker and bridge-builder; to speak truth to power, and to seek always to understand the complexity of situations. He has developed a reputation among these groups for his integrity and courage. We know that at times that has come at great cost.

Greg has been deeply supportive of the staff and leadership of the CFM through his time as Chair. His advice, wisdom and support have been greatly valued by the directorate and staff, particularly during times of high stress and conflict. He has approached the role of chair with curiosity and imagination, humility and honesty, always holding the CFM accountable to a greater vision, and publicly advocating and championing the work of its staff.

The Synod thanks God for his faithful exercise of Ministry as Chair of the CFM Board and Interim Governance Committee.

17.4.18 JUSTICE AND INTERNATIONAL MISSION (JIM) UNIT

17.4.18.1 Family Violence

Dr Mark Zirnsak, Director, JIM Unit, CFM, spoke to a proposal.

An amendment was requested to clause (c) and was approved by consensus.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) That family violence is unacceptable and requires action by the community and all levels of government in Australia;
- (b) To call on the Commonwealth Government to implement the recommendations relevant to it made by the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence, including:
 - (i) amending the Family Law Act 1975 so that a breach of an injunction for personal protection is a criminal offence;
 - (ii) introducing a Medicare item number for family violence counselling and therapeutic services distinct from a general practitioner mental health treatment plan;
 - (iii) broadening the definition of family violence in the Migration Regulations 1994 so that it is consistent with the Victorian Family Violence Protection Act 2008 and to therefore ensure that people seeking to escape violence are entitled to crisis payments, regardless of their visa status; and
 - (iv) amending the Telecommunications Consumer Protections Code to make family violence grounds to be able to access a hardship program with a telecommunications provider and including grounds to splitting jointly held debt and removing an account holder's name if family violence has occurred.
- (c) To call on the Commonwealth Government to introduce a Medicare item number for counselling to end violent behaviour; and
- (d) To write to the Prime Minister, the Minister for Women, the Leader of the Opposition and the Shadow Minister for Women to inform them of this resolution.

17.4.18.2 Political Donations

Dr Mark Zirnsak, Director, JIM Unit, CFM, spoke to a proposal.

An amendment was requested to clause (a)(iii) and was approved by consensus.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To call on the Australian Parliament:
 - (i) To place caps on how much can be provided in political donations and how much candidates and third parties can spend in elections;
 - (ii) To amend the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 to ban political parties, independent candidates and associated entities from receiving 'gifts of foreign property';
 - (iii) To increase the transparency of political donations by requiring:
 - That they be disclosed in as close to real time as is possible, rather than once a year;
 - That donations of \$1,000 or more must be publicly disclosed; and
 - That a ban be imposed on anonymous donations above \$50 to political parties, associated entities, independent candidates and Senate groups.
- (b) To call on the Commonwealth Government to ensure that the Australian Electoral Commission is properly resourced to enforce the laws governing political donations; and
- (c) To write to the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Greens, the Leader of the National Party and the Leader of the Nick Xenophon Team to inform them of this resolution.



17.4.19 BOARD OF MISSION AND RESOURCING (BOMAR)

17.4.19.1 Minute of Appreciation – Rev Graeme Harrison

Dan Wootton, member of the Board of Mission and Resourcing, spoke to a proposal and Rev Graeme Harrison responded.

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To give thanks to God for the ministry of Rev Graeme Harrison in his role as chairperson of the Board of Mission and Resourcing in the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania from June 2016 to November 2017.

Rev Graeme Harrison was appointed as chairperson of the Board of Mission and Resourcing (BOMAR) by the June 2016 Synod. Prior to that Graeme had been deputy chairperson for many years – in fact Graeme has served on BOMAR in various capacities for perhaps as long as sixteen years.

Graeme has also served as Convenor of the Board's Strategy Committee which became the Mission Policy Committee in 2009. This has involved many ad hoc meetings in formulating policy for consideration by the Board and, in turn, helping the wider church to understand that policy.

A major piece of work in which he was involved was the production of the booklet, *Discerning Mission and the Use of Property* in 2011.

Graeme has a huge heart for developing creative options for the Church to deal with the proceeds of property sales and property income in an endeavour to sustain a mission-minded church. He has shown tremendous leadership in helping the Board to assist the various parts of the Church in identifying sources of funding for mission or capital development for mission.

His mantra has always been 'mission, mission, mission' and this has been fed by a deep understanding of scripture and a sincere desire to resource and share the commonwealth of the Church.

As chairperson of BOMAR, Graeme has demonstrated patient listening, careful discernment, thoughtful prayer, openness to new learning and a readiness to lead and be led in new directions.

Even though Graeme has only served as Chairperson of BOMAR for a relatively brief time, the Synod can be well served by being reminded of how the Nigerian Hausa peoples put it when it comes to expressing gratitude: "Give thanks for a little and you will find a lot".

The Synod gives thanks to God for Graeme's faithful exercise of Ministry as Chairperson of BOMAR, as in so many ways he has helped this Synod 'find a lot'.

17.4.19.2 Board of Mission and Resourcing (BOMAR) (REPORT B1)

The Moderator invited questions and comments from members regarding the BOMAR report which was presented in an earlier session.

17.4.20 VOX POP

The meeting viewed another video of a selection of Synod members who spoke about their impressions of the Synod meeting.

17.4.21 THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

A theological reflection was presented by Dr Margaret Campbell.

The meeting session closed with prayer by Kaylea Fern, Moderator's Chaplain.

17.5 TUESDAY 12 SEPTEMBER

The Moderator opened the session.

17.5.1 DEVOTIONS

Rev Deacon Denise Savage presented the daily devotion with Rev Berlin Guerrero.

17.5.2 BALLOT – DECLARATION OF BALLOT (MAJORITY SUPPORT) SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE

The Returning Officer, Rod Mummery announced the names of nominees who gained majority support in the Synod Standing Committee Majority Ballot.

17.5.3 UNITING (VICTORIA AND TASMANIA)

17.5.3.1 MEDICALLY SUPERVISED INJECTING CENTRES

Rev John Clarke (Director of Mission, Uniting) and Rev Dr Sally Douglas (Minister at Richmond UC Congregation) spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To adopt as its policy statement the following *“Medically Supervised Injecting Centres are an important additional support to reducing the harm and death rates of people affected by drug addiction”*.
- (b) To write to the Federal Health Minister, the Shadow Ministers of Health and the State Health Ministers of Victoria and Tasmania to inform them of this resolution and urge action on a coherent public policy in support of Medically Supervised Injecting Centres.
- (c) To write to the Premiers of Victoria and Tasmania and Leaders of Opposition informing them of this resolution and urging the formation of policy, legislation and funding to support the development of Medically Supervised Injecting Centres in Victoria and Tasmania.
- (d) To request Synod Communications Unit and Uniting Communications Unit develop a media and communications strategy to support engagement with the public on this resolution.

The Moderator led the meeting in prayer.

17.5.4 FACILITATION GROUP

Rev Rachael Kronberger and Phil Morris from the Facilitation Group presented a summary of the working group responses on the marriage conversation.

17.5.5 SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP AND GENERATIONAL CHANGE

Aaron Blakemore, Convenor of the Synod Creative Design Team, Bethany Broadstock and members of the Creative Design Team introduced the process for table group discussion on Sustainable Leadership and Generational Change following on from the presentation on this issue on Sunday evening.

Discussion followed in table groups.

17.5.6 ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE – MEMBERS OF YOUTHFUL AGE

17.5.6.1 Procedural proposal

The Business Manager, Rev Sue Clarkson spoke to a procedural proposal.

The Synod resolved:

To waive the requirement for a 24 hour period to pass following the distribution of a proposal.

17.5.6.2 Appointment of members of Assembly 2018

The Returning Officer, Rod Mummery introduced a proposal.

The Synod resolved:

To authorise the Standing Committee to make an appointment to fill any vacancies for lay persons of youthful age to Assembly 2018.

17.5.7 BALLOTS – SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE, ASSEMBLY AND OTHER BALLOTS

The Returning Officer, Rod Mummery outlined the ballot process for members of Synod Standing Committee, lay and ordained members of Assembly, and Victorian Council of Christian Education (VCCE) representatives.

Ballot papers were distributed.

17.5.8 BIBLE STUDY

Bible study was led by Rev Dr Apwee Ting, on the topic *Following Christ – seeking community, compassion and justice*.

The Moderator thanked Rev Dr Apwee Ting and the Synod responded with acclamation.

17.5.9 VISION & MISSION PRINCIPLES AT WORK IN CONGREGATIONS

The meeting viewed a video presenting members of the Wodonga congregation talking about resilience and what it means to be 'seeking community'.

17.5.10 NATIONAL ASSEMBLY REPORT: Transforming lives and communities since 1977

Stuart McMillan, President, and Colleen Geyer, General Secretary of the National Assembly, presented a report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report with acclamation. Members' questions were addressed. The Moderator led the meeting in a prayer for the Assembly, its leaders, its staff and its work.

17.5.11 SOVEREIGNTY AND TREATY

Rev Rachel Kronberger, Rev Jennie Gordon and Rev Tim Matton-Johnson gave an introduction to the working group 'Sovereignty and Treaty' discussion.

17.5.12 INTRODUCTION TO SYNOD REPORTS 'CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE'

Aaron Blakemore, Convenor, and Bethany Broadstock, member of the Synod Creative Design Team, introduced the 'Reports: Choose your own adventure' session.

17.5.13 ECUMENICAL PANEL

Rev Peter Weeks, Chairperson of the Ecumenical Relations Committee, introduced the panel members: Pastor Gordon Wegener, Lutheran Church of Australia; Very Rev Dennis Stanley EV, Catholic Church in Australia; and Rev Denise Liersch, UCA, who discussed their Church's views of the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

The Moderator thanked panel members for their willingness to participate in the panel.

17.5.14 PRAYER

Moderator's Chaplain, Rev Hoon You offered a prayer before the meeting adjourned for lunch.

17.5.15 WORKING GROUPS

The Synod met in working groups to discuss Sovereignty and Treaty.

17.5.16 'REPORTS: CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE'

The members engaged with selected Synod reports of their choice.

17.5.17 VOX POP

The meeting viewed another video of a selection of Synod members who spoke about what they have valued and what they will take away from the Synod meeting.

17.5.18 MINUTE OF APPRECIATION: RUSSELL RECHNER

Pauline McGillivray, Executive Director, Administration and Finance, presented a Minute of Appreciation for Russell Rechner, Chairperson of the Synod Finance Committee.

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To give thanks to God for the ministry of Mr Russell Rechner and for his significant contribution over many years to the Uniting Church as the inaugural Chairperson of the Synod Risk Management Committee from December 2007 to December 2014, as Chairperson of the Synod Finance Committee since 2014, and a member of the Synod Property Board since 2014.

As Chairperson of the Risk Management Committee, Russ led the shaping of the Committee as a body committed to identifying and understanding the risks for the whole Synod and its entities. He played a pivotal role, as Chairperson of the Finance Committee, in providing leadership, financial analysis and wise financial stewardship and guidance in decision making to support the Church as a whole.

His commitment to the Church, his faithfulness, his reinforcing of the importance of good stewardship and his understanding of God's mission have been constantly demonstrated through the sharing of his wealth of financial experience (retail and banking) and his input into shaping the strategic vision for the Church.

Russ has the aptitude to clearly determine the critical and complex issues that have been brought to committees to consider, and his ability to wordsmith clear and succinct minutes and resolutions is exceptional.

Russ is a sensitive and insightful person who has supported management in the delivery of the best practice principles in the way information and practices are provided to the wider Church. He is highly respected by committee members and management, and when he speaks people listen.

The Finance Committee will miss his extraordinary leadership and we thank him most sincerely for his willingness, graciousness and commitment he has given to the Synod and the wider Church.

The Moderator led the meeting in a prayer for Russell Rechner and his family.

17.5.19 PRESBYTERY TRANSITION TEAM

Rev David Fotheringham, Convenor of the Facilitation Group, addressed the meeting regarding proposals relating to Presbytery Transition.

Rev Paul Stephens, Convenor of the Presbytery Transition Team, addressed the meeting.

Discussion took place.

A procedural motion was passed to withdraw 51(d) to request the Standing Committee to form a task group to give consideration as to whether the position of Presbytery Chairperson could be designated and listed as a placement.

Discussion continued regarding funding options. The matter was referred back to the Facilitation Group.

17.5.20 THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

A theological reflection was presented by Dr Margaret Campbell.

17.5.21 CLOSING PRAYER

Moderator's chaplain, Rev Hoon You led the Synod in a closing prayer.

17.6 WEDNESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER

The Moderator opened the session.

17.6.1 DEVOTIONS

Rev Deacon Denise Savage presented the daily devotion with Hannah Dungan and a video that featured Denise's daughters.

17.6.2 CULTURE OF SAFETY (REPORT E1.3)

Rev Sue Clarkson, Ethical Standards Officer and Josh Woollett, Safe Church Educator spoke to a written report.

The Synod resolved to receive the report.

17.6.3 SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE

17.6.3.1 Committee Diversity Task Group

The General Secretary spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

Further to Synod resolution 16.6.21.2 and Standing Committee resolution 17.52.2:

- (a) To extend the reporting time for the Committee Diversity Task Group to April 2018; and
- (b) To request the Committee Diversity Task Group to report to the Standing Committee, instead of the Synod; and
- (c) To authorise the Standing Committee to act on recommendations as appropriate, and to distribute the Task Group's report, and resolutions resulting from the report, to presbyteries and Synod reporting bodies.

17.6.4 JUSTICE & INTERNATIONAL MISSION UNIT

17.6.4.1 Privatisation

Rev David Fotheringham, Convenor of the Facilitation Group, and Dr Mark Zirnsak spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To affirm governments have an important role in providing high quality human services that are accessible to all people;
- (b) To call on the Commonwealth Government:
 - (i) to work from the starting point that changes to existing publicly run human services must always pursue the common good;
 - (ii) not to privatise existing publicly run human services unless there is an assured improvement in the level of service quality and accessibility, with effective regulation and oversight; and
- (c) To write to the Prime Minister, the Treasurer, the Leader of the Opposition and the Shadow Treasurer to inform them of this resolution.

17.6.4.2 Youth Justice

Dr Mark Zirnsak spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To ask the Tasmanian and Victorian Governments to continue to have a focus on addressing the causes of crime and the rehabilitation of teenagers and young people who break the law, with imprisonment being a last resort;
- (b) To ask the Tasmanian and Victorian Governments to adequately resource the youth justice systems in both states with sufficient numbers of appropriately qualified staff to ensure issues of past abuse, mental health issues, and drug and alcohol dependency of the youth are addressed; and
- (c) To write to the Premiers and Leaders of the Opposition in both states, as well as the Victorian Minister for Youth Affairs, the Victorian Shadow Minister for Families and Children, and the Tasmanian Minister for Human Services to inform them of this resolution.

17.6.5 LEGISLATIVE INCORPORATION TASK GROUP (REPORT D4)

The General Secretary spoke to a written report.

17.6.5.1 Legislative Incorporation

Rev Dr John Evans, convener of the Legislative Incorporation Task Group spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To note:
 - (i) that the Synod Standing Committee in December 2015 (SC Minute 15.53.9) established the Legislative Incorporation Task Group to “develop a framework for legislative incorporation” in response to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Handling Of Child Abuse By Religious and other Non-Government Organisations Betrayal of Trust report recommendation 26.2: ‘That the Victorian Government work with the Australian Government to require religious and other non-government organisations that engage with children to adopt incorporated legal structures’, and the subsequent endorsement of this recommendation from the Victorian Government;
 - (ii) that the Legislative Incorporation Task Group has diligently undertaken its Terms of Reference, developed a possible model for incorporation,

engaged with government, the Assembly and other synods, and kept the Standing Committee apprised of its work;

- (iii) that the political context for the Uniting Church in Victoria (and Tasmania) as a 'religious body adopting an incorporated legal structure' has become unclear, for reasons including:
 - a. the slow response of the Victorian Government to implementing all of the *Betrayal of Trust* report's recommendations,
 - b. the now stated desire of the Commonwealth to develop a 'national' redress scheme for victims and survivors of sexual abuse (and the consequent need for negotiation with the states), and
 - c. the anticipated release of the Royal Commission into the Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in December, 2017; and
 - d. that the Task Group, as result of this (above clause iii) considers that it is unable to advise the Synod to proceed with regard to a 'framework for legislative incorporation' at the present time.
- (b) To confirm its willingness to adopt a legal structure which best fulfils its responsibility to victims and survivors, best reflects the Church's polity, and fulfils its responsibility to the community and the state with regard to past child sex abuse and that these arrangements work towards having the safest environments possible for children.
- (c) To request the Standing Committee to continue engagement with the other synods and the Assembly in a national discussion regarding the possible incorporation of the Uniting Church in Australia.
- (d) To authorise the Standing Committee:
 - (i) to develop an appropriate legal structure for the Church that responds to victims and survivors, the community and the state with regard to child sex abuse; the Church's faithfulness to the Gospel, and its own identity as the Uniting Church in Australia;
 - (ii) to request advice from the Assembly as to the appropriate mechanism for resolving that the Uniting Church in Australia within Victoria and Tasmania incorporate through legislative processes;
 - (iii) if it considers it to be appropriate following reports from the Legislative Incorporation Task Group (or subsequent entity), to present any proposed changes to the legal structure of the Uniting Church in Australia within Victoria and Tasmania to the Synod, and to the Assembly of the Church; and
 - (iv) to undertake an education program within the wider Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania regarding appropriate legal structures for the Church in the current context.
- (e) To advise the Assembly and other synods of these decisions and of any subsequent developments regarding legislative incorporation of the Uniting Church in Australia within Victoria and Tasmania.

17.6.6 PROPOSALS FROM MEMBERS

17.6.6.1 Response to Potential Assisted Dying/Suicide Legislation in Victoria

The General Secretary and Dr Mark Zirnsak spoke to a proposal and discussion followed.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) In the event of the Parliament of Victoria passing legislation to allow assisted dying/suicide, to request the Synod Standing Committee to initiate a process including, but not necessarily limited to, consultation with Uniting AgeWell, Uniting Victoria-Tasmania, the faculty of Pilgrim Theological College and the Assembly Standing Committee, and taking into account the feedback from the wider Church through the current consultation process in relation to this matter being conducted by the Justice and International Mission Unit, to present a report with proposal(s) to the 2019 Synod meeting regarding the Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania's response to the assisted dying/suicide legislation, including a position on how the Synod and relevant UCA institutions and staff should be asked to respond to such legislation; and
- (b) To support the recommendation of the Victorian Government Ministerial Advisory Panel on Voluntary Assisted Dying that any voluntary assisted dying legislation include a broad provision to allow all health professionals and facilities the right of conscientious objection to participation in such legislation.

17.6.6.2 Family Violence

Bethany Broadstock and Anna Harrison spoke to a proposal and discussion followed.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To theologically affirm that all people are created in nothing less than the image of God, are loved by God, and inherently deserve to live in safety and free of any form of physical or emotional violence as these demean humanity, dignity, and a sense of self-worth;
- (b) To give thanks to God for:
 - (i) the prophetic courage and witness of those who have come forward to share their experiences of family violence within the Church and Christian community, through whom God works to correct what is wrong in the life of the church (Basis of Union, paragraph 18); and
 - (ii) the various ways in which light has been shed on the place of church and theology in the serious issue that is family violence, including through the work of public figures, journalists, and government commissions;
- (c) To acknowledge and lament with sorrow and humility:
 - (i) the presence of domestic and family violence within the Church, Christian community, and wider society, and the role that theologies grounded in gender inequality have played in its legitimization;
 - (ii) the reality that Christian communities have sometimes failed to acknowledge the presence of such violence, whether physical, emotional, spiritual or financial, in their midst.
- (d) To reject any abuse of theology to legitimate family violence, recognising that theologies which affirm gender equality and human dignity have been identified as having an essential role to play in the prevention of family violence and/or bringing it to light; and
- (e) To request the Standing Committee:
 - (i) to consider recommendation 165 arising out of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence, which suggests faith communities review processes for receiving and managing reports of family violence, and report any progress on this matter to the 2019 Synod meeting; and

- (ii) to consider a process, which might include the provision of resources, by which the Synod, its presbyteries, and congregations, can mark the '16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence' each year.

The Moderator led the meeting in prayer.

17.6.6.3 Amendment to the Constitution and Regulations

Geoffrey Grinton spoke to a proposal and discussion followed.

This matter was adjourned.

17.6.7 BIBLE STUDY

Bible study was presented by Rev Deacon Michelle Cook, Bethany Broadstock, Joy Han, Anna Harrison and Kelly Skilton on *Following Christ – A Basis of Union perspective*. The meeting responded with acclamation.

17.6.8 VISION & MISSION PRINCIPLES AT WORK IN CONGREGATION

A video on the theme 'seeking compassion and justice' was shown and the meeting heard from participants at a weekly lunch at Warrnambool Uniting Church.

17.6.9 MEMBERS' PROPOSAL

17.6.9.1 Amendment to the Constitution and Regulations

The meeting resolved not to continue with this proposal.

17.6.10 FACILITATION GROUP: SOVEREIGNTY AND TREATY

Rev Rachel Kronberger and Paul Chandler, members of the Facilitation Group, reported on the Working Groups' discussion on Sovereignty and Treaty.

17.6.11 PRESBYTERY TRANSITION TEAM

17.6.11.1 Presbytery Funding Model

Rev David Fotheringham, Convenor of the Facilitation Group, addressed the meeting regarding a revised proposal.

Rev Sue Withers, Rev Graeme Harrison and Rev Dr Jenny Byrnes spoke to the proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To conclude the current mandated model of three designated Presbytery Minister roles (Administration, Pastoral Care, and Mission and Education) by the 30 September 2018;
- (b) To request Standing Committee to make funds available to each Presbytery for the equivalent of a minimum of two full-time ministry positions (with allowances) based on approved stipend to contribute to the Presbyteries' capacity to fulfill their calling and function as a council of the Church;
- (c) To request the Standing Committee:
 - (i) to create a fund of at least \$400,000 per annum for additional resourcing of Presbyteries;
 - (ii) to develop, in discernment with the Presbyteries, a distribution model for the above-mentioned fund (clause (i)) which builds on the strengths and

principles learned from the Rural Ministry Leadership Fund and takes account of equity and need;

- (iii) to develop a process to review the arrangements for this fund, to report to the 2020 Synod meeting.
- (d) To request each Presbytery and the Mission & Capacity Building Unit (working title) to enter into a process of conversation and discernment as part of the implementation process to develop a ministry team model appropriate for its life and for effective resourcing for enabling mission;
- (e) To encourage Presbyteries to explore creative options for managing meetings and gatherings; and to request the General Secretary to allocate resources and facilities (including information and communications technology) to support Presbyteries seeking to use creative options for managing meetings and gatherings; and
- (f) To encourage Presbyteries to develop sources of income beyond that provided through the Synod budget, and to encourage Presbyteries to seek ways to do this through the appropriate stewardship of property that does not deprive the wider church of just and appropriate sharing.

17.6.12 INVESTMENTS IN UCA FUNDS MANAGEMENT

Michael Walsh, Executive Director, UCA Funds Management, and Pauline McGillivray, Executive Director, Administration and Finance, spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

Noting the resolution of the Synod of Victoria (95.6.7.11) 'that parishes, presbyteries, agencies and programs of the Uniting Church be required to deposit funds which are not required for day to day operations in the Synod Principal Common Funds or the Development Fund'

- (a) To require all Congregations, Presbyteries and Institutions operated by or on behalf of the Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania to invest funds which are not required for day to day operations in the UCA Enhanced Cash Portfolio, and/or UCA Growth Portfolio and/or the UCA Australian Equities Portfolio, or any other fund offered by UCA Funds Management whose purpose is to provide investment for Church organisations.
- (b) That any other Institutions and Councils of, and associated with, the Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania are requested to consult with UCA Funds Management and to give favourable consideration to UCA Funds Management as their preferred provider of investment services, subject to their governance requirements.

17.6.13 PEACE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA

Rev Swee Ann Koh spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To express concern at the tense situation on the Korean peninsula and to call on the Commonwealth Government to work with the governments of South Korea, China, the USA and allies to reduce tensions on the Korean peninsula through negotiation rather than escalating confrontation.
- (b) Noting Assembly Resolution 82.56 supporting global nuclear disarmament, to call on the Commonwealth Government to support the complete elimination of nuclear weapons everywhere, including on the Korean peninsula where the risk of nuclear conflict is by far the greatest at this time.

- (c) To call on the Commonwealth Government to work to deconstruct the barriers to dialogue and engagement to resolve the situation on the Korean peninsula peacefully, and to ensure that any use of sanctions be only directed at the North Korean leadership and will not harm the ordinary people living in North Korea.
- (d) In recognition of the Uniting Church's partnerships with the Korean Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church of Korea, the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea and the National Council of Churches in Korea, to request congregations of this Synod to pray for a peaceful resolution and to request them to stand in solidarity with our Korean sisters and brothers.
- (e) To write to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Leader of the Opposition and the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs to inform them of this resolution.

17.6.14 SUPPORT FOR ASYLUM-SEEKERS

Geoffrey Grinton spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To congratulate the Victorian Government for its compassionate response to the needs of asylum-seekers facing homelessness, as reported in Fairfax media on 9th September 2017, by providing \$600,000 to establish a housing fund, cover for basic food, medical, clothing and transport expenses, and funding for caseworkers, for those who face being sent back to Nauru as a result of recent decisions by the Federal Government; and
- (b) To write to the Premier and Leader of the Opposition in Victoria to inform them of this resolution.

17.6.15 NOMINATION PROCESS FOR STANDING COMMITTEE

Harriet Ziegler and Rev Sue Withers spoke to a proposal.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

To request that the Standing Committee make alternations as necessary to nominating processes and the skills matrix for Synod Standing Committee to ensure that rural experience and outlook is highlighted and can be assessed along with other skills, experience and attributes.

17.6.16 TRIBUTE TO CTM, CFM, BOMAR AND PROPERTY BOARDS

Rev Sue Withers and Rev Rachael Kronberger presented a minute of appreciation for the boards of the CTM, CFM, BOMAR and Property and the Finance, Risk Management and Audit committees.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

To give thanks to God for the ministry offered by the people who have served on the following Boards and Committees in the Synod of Victoria and the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania:

- the Property Board,
- the Board of Mission and Resourcing,
- the Centre for Theology and Ministry Board,
- the Commission for Mission Board,
- the Finance Committee,
- the Risk Management Committee, and
- the Audit Committee.



The work of boards and committees within the life of the Church often goes unseen and yet it is an essential ministry offered by a wide range of committed, experienced and highly skilled people.

It seems any committee, board or task group receives its own personal acronym in the Uniting Church: CFM, CTM, BOMAR, MSR, SRIT, PRC, FiCo, RMC, AC, PB, SSC, PART to name just a few. Within this UCA alphabet soup we ought not forget that the work undertaken by the boards and committees is vast and often complex.

The Synod has recently made decisions in regard to new governance arrangements and four boards will conclude on 30 November 2017 – the Commission for Mission Board (CFM), the Board of Mission and Resourcing (BOMAR), the Centre for Theology and Ministry Board (CTM) and the Property Board (PB).

The Finance Committee, Risk Management Committee and Audit Committee have had their Terms of Reference revised.

BOMAR, established in 1996, has encouraged the Church at the grass roots to discern the will of God for ministry and mission. On an annual basis BOMAR has considered mission proposals for funding for a variety of projects. BOMAR has also developed and reviewed policies regarding the use of property sale proceeds and the types of projects and programs for which the proceeds may be used.

The Property Board has worked to ensure property held within the trust of the Uniting Church is used carefully, wisely and missionally. The Board, among many other tasks, has engaged in mission motivated discussions when the various councils of the Church consider applications to acquire, build, lease or sell property. Members have been advocates for mission purposes and the commonwealth of the Church.

The CFM Board has provided oversight for the work of Commission for Mission, ensuring the work has been undertaken in good order, in terms of compliance, accountability and adherence to the Regulations. The Board has been a place for reflective examination of missional assumptions and has assisted in setting key directions for the Commission's work.

The CTM Board has exercised governance of the Centre as a whole, along with the Regulated responsibilities of being the Ministerial Education Board for the Synod, and more recently the responsibilities for governance of the Pilgrim Theological College; and adhered to a mandate to develop and implement policies that have resulted in the provision of staff, facilities and other resources necessary for all aspects of education for ministry and discipleship throughout the Synod.

Over the years many people have offered their time, gifts and graces to the work of the Church in serving on the above mentioned boards and committees. They have given careful attention to financial detail, offered wise strategic planning, people management, forensic analysis of budget forecasts, imaginative thinking and careful theological work and always with an eye to managing risk and stewardship.

We give thanks for the many hours spent by members reading reports, writing proposals, presenting rationales for new ideas, learning to appreciate the UCA consensus decision making processes without too much alarm, and being brave enough to speak the truth when it needed to be spoken.

The work offered by these boards and committees will not stop. Many of the people who have served will still offer their talents but the work will take on a different shape.

The Synod gives thanks to God for the many people who have served on BOMAR, the CTM Board, the CFM Board, Property Board and the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committees.



17.6.17 THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

A theological reflection was presented by Dr Margaret Campbell and the Moderator thanked her for her contribution to the Synod Meeting. This was supported by acclamation from the Synod members.

17.6.18 PRAYER

Kaylea Fern, Moderator's chaplain, led the Synod in prayer.

17.6.19 DECLARATION OF BALLOT RESULTS

17.6.19.1 Synod Standing Committee Committee

The Moderator introduced, and the General Secretary announced, the result of the ballot for Synod Standing Committee members. (See *appendix AA2.1*)

17.6.19.2 Victorian Council of Christian Education (VCCE)

The Returning Officer, Rod Mummery, announced the following people were appointed to the Victorian Council of Christian Education to commence 14 September 2017 and retire at the 2020 Synod meeting:

Rev Sandy Brodine	Chris Barnett
Rev Andrew Delbridge	
Rev Dr Jong Soo Park	

17.6.20 NOMINATIONS ADVISORY PANEL

17.6.20.1 Appointments to Committees, Commissions and Ecumenical Bodies

A procedural motion to a remove clause (H) was agreed by consensus.

The Synod resolved by consensus:

To appoint the following people to the named bodies:

A Australian Church Women

To commence 14 September 2017 and retire at the 2020 Synod meeting

Joy Morley
Margaret Pedler

B Business Committee

To commence 14 September 2017 and retire at the 2020 Synod meeting

No nominations

C National Council of Women

To commence 14 September 2017 until the next ordinary meeting of Synod

Rev Juliette Tautala'aso

D Placements Committee Chairperson

To commence 14 September 2017 until the next ordinary meeting of Synod

Rev David Fotheringham

E Property Trust (Victoria and Tasmania)

To commence 14 September 2017 until the next ordinary meeting of Synod

Helen Geard
Bob Hodges
David Rowe
Ken Tabart
Bronwyn Wellings

F Property Trust (Victoria and Tasmania) Chair

To commence 14 September 2017 until the next ordinary meeting of Synod

Bob Hodges

G Terms of Placement Committee

To commence 14 September 2017 and retire at the 2020 Synod meeting

Rev Dhirendra Narayan
Rev David Thompson

17.6.21 ASSEMBLY MEMBERSHIP BALLOT

Members were informed that the Assembly ballot had not been counted and they would be advised of those who were elected.

The result of the ballot was as follows:

Ex-officio:

Moderator Rev Sharon Hollis
Moderator-elect Rev Denise Liersch
General Secretary Rev Dr Mark Lawrence

Elected:

Rev Sylvia Akaoula-Tongotongo	Aaron Blakemore
Rev Stan Clarke	Bethany Broadstock
Rev Sue Clarkson	Alison Clarkson
Rev Michelle Cook	Emily Davies
Rev David Fotheringham	Joy Han
Rev Dr Avril Hannah-Jones	Anna Harrison
Rev Graeme Harrison	Alanee Hearnshaw
Rev Jason Isileli Kioa	Sione Hehepoto
Rev Rachel Kronberger	Cheryl Lawrie
Rev Alistair Macrae	Joan McRae
Rev Dr Geoff Thompson	Carlynn Nunn
Rev Sani Vaeluaga	Bronwyn Pike
	Rohan Pryor
	Jennifer Shields
	Kelly Skilton
	Isabel Thomas Dobson
	Lorraine Threlfall
	Dan Wootton

17.6.22 REPORTS FROM BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES, REPORTING BODIES AND PRESBYTERIES NOT RECEIVED DURING PRESENTATIONS AT SYNOD 2017

The Synod resolved to receive the following reports:

UnitingCare Housing Victoria Ltd	B08
Strategic Review Implementation Team	C01.1
Royal Commission Task Group	C01.2
Audit Committee	C02
Creative Design Team	C03.1
Committee for Counselling	C04
Committee for Discipline	C05
Ecumenical Relations Committee	C06
Finance Committee	C07
Pastoral Assistance Committee	C09
Placements Committee	C10
Risk Management Committee	C11
Synod Sexual Misconduct Complaints Committee	C12
Terms of Placement Committee	C13
People and Culture	E01.1
Synod Safety	E01.1.1
Communications and Media Services	E01.2
Bethel Pastoral Centre	G01
Working Group on Christian-Jewish Relations	G02
Presbytery Reports	
Gippsland	H01
Loddon Mallee	H02
North East Victoria	H03
Port Phillip East	H04
Port Phillip West	H05
Tasmania	H06
Western Victoria	H07
Yarra Yarra	H08

17.6.23 ONE MINUTE SPEECHES

Twenty-one members made one minute speeches to the Synod.

17.6.24 MINUTE OF APPRECIATION

The Moderator thanked the out-going Synod Standing Committee members for their service during their term of office.

Jen Shields and Cam Shields spoke to a proposal, thanking all those people who had contributed to the successful organisation and running of the Synod Meeting.

The Synod resolved by acclamation.

17.6.25 CLOSING WORSHIP AND EUCHARIST

Members and visitors joined in the closing service which was led by the Moderator, with Rev Dr John Broughton preaching.

RESOLUTIONS

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

17.2.16 Administration and Finance Report

The Synod resolved:

To receive the Administration and Finance report.

17.5.18 Minute of Appreciation – Russell Rechner

The Synod resolved:

To give thanks to God for the ministry of Mr Russell Rechner and for his significant contribution over many years to the Uniting Church as the inaugural Chairperson of the Synod Risk Management Committee from December 2007 to December 2014, as Chairperson of the Synod Finance Committee since 2014, and a member of the Synod Property Board since 2014.

As Chairperson of the Risk Management Committee, Russ led the shaping of the Committee as a body committed to identifying and understanding the risks for the whole Synod and its entities. He played a pivotal role, as Chairperson of the Finance Committee, in providing leadership, financial analysis and wise financial stewardship and guidance in decision making to support the Church as a whole.

His commitment to the Church, his faithfulness, his reinforcing of the importance of good stewardship and his understanding of God's mission have been constantly demonstrated through the sharing of his wealth of financial experience (retail and banking) and his input into shaping the strategic vision for the Church.

Russ has the aptitude to clearly determine the critical and complex issues that have been brought to committees to consider, and his ability to wordsmith clear and succinct minutes and resolutions is exceptional.

Russ is a sensitive and insightful person who has supported management in the delivery of the best practice principles in the way information and practices are provided to the wider Church. He is highly respected by committee members and management, and when he speaks people listen.

The Finance Committee will miss his extraordinary leadership and we thank him most sincerely for his willingness, graciousness and commitment he has given to the Synod and the wider Church.

ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE

17.5.6.2 Appointment of members of Assembly 2018

The Synod resolved:

To authorise the Standing Committee to make an appointment to fill any vacancies for lay persons of youthful age to Assembly 2018.

BOARD OF MISSION AND RESOURCING

17.2.18 Board of Mission and Resourcing

The Synod resolved:

To receive the Board of Mission and Resourcing report.



17.4.19.1 Minute of Appreciation – Rev Graeme Harrison

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To give thanks to God for the ministry of Rev Graeme Harrison in his role as chairperson of the Board of Mission and Resourcing in the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania from June 2016 to November 2017.

Rev Graeme Harrison was appointed as chairperson of the Board of Mission and Resourcing (BOMAR) by the June 2016 Synod. Prior to that Graeme had been deputy chairperson for many years – in fact Graeme has served on BOMAR in various capacities for perhaps as long as sixteen years.

Graeme has also served as Convenor of the Board's Strategy Committee which became the Mission Policy Committee in 2009. This has involved many ad hoc meetings in formulating policy for consideration by the Board and, in turn, helping the wider church to understand that policy.

A major piece of work in which he was involved was the production of the booklet, Discerning Mission and the Use of Property in 2011.

Graeme has a huge heart for developing creative options for the Church to deal with the proceeds of property sales and property income in an endeavour to sustain a mission-minded church. He has shown tremendous leadership in helping the Board to assist the various parts of the Church in identifying sources of funding for mission or capital development for mission.

His mantra has always been 'mission, mission, mission' and this has been fed by a deep understanding of scripture and a sincere desire to resource and share the commonwealth of the Church.

As chairperson of BOMAR, Graeme has demonstrated patient listening, careful discernment, thoughtful prayer, openness to new learning and a readiness to lead and be led in new directions.

Even though Graeme has only served as Chairperson of BOMAR for a relatively brief time, the Synod can be well served by being reminded of how the Nigerian Hausa peoples put it when it comes to expressing gratitude: "Give thanks for a little and you will find a lot".

The Synod gives thanks to God for Graeme's faithful exercise of Ministry as Chairperson of BOMAR, as in so many ways he has helped this Synod 'find a lot'.

BUSINESS COMMITTEE

17.2.6.1 Appointments and Associations

The Synod resolved:

(a) To appoint the following people for the whole of the 2017 Synod Meeting:

Minute Secretaries:	Robyn Hansen and Natalie Brown
Returning Officer:	Rod Mummery
Deputy Returning Officer:	Rev John Mann
Timer Operator and notices:	Rev Kevin Dobson Rev Ross Pearce

(b) To associate the following people for the whole of the 2017 Synod Meeting:

- (a) Alison Overeem
- (b) Cath James
- (c) Angela Goodwin

- (d) Laura Cregan
- (e) Dr Deirdre Palmer
- (f) Dr Jason Talbot
- (g) Dr Margaret Campbell
- (h) Rev David Withers

(c) To associate the following people for specific sessions of the 2017 Synod meeting:

Rev Peter Weeks	For the business of the Ecumenical Relations Committee
Shawn Whelan	For the business of the General Secretary End of Term Review
Sam Nicholas	For the business of Administration and Finance
Josh Woollett	For the business of Culture of Safety

17.2.5 Business Committee Report

The Synod resolved:

To receive the Business Committee report.

17.2.6.2 Confirmation of Synod 2016 Minutes

The Synod resolved:

That the Moderator, General Secretary, Associate General Secretary and Business Manager be authorised to confirm the minutes of the 2016 meeting of Synod.

17.2.6.3 Date of Synod 2019

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) To meet in May 2019 or as close to that month as possible; and
- (b) To authorise the Standing Committee to finalise a date for Synod 2019 after receiving advice from the Business Committee and the Creative Design Team.

17.2.6.4 Synod 2017 Procedures

The Synod resolved:

- (a) That any proposal which may include financial commitment not at present included in the Mission Support Fund or other appropriate budget of the Synod be subject to comment by a representative of the Board of Mission and Resourcing (BOMAR) after consultation, where possible, with representatives of the Synod Finance and Risk Management Committees;
- (b) That the closure time for receiving proposals be 7.30pm on Saturday 9 September 2017;
- (c) That the closure time for receiving nominations for the Assembly membership be 7.30pm on Saturday 9 September 2017;
- (d) That the closure time for receiving nominations for the Standing Committee be 7.30pm on Sunday 10 September 2017;
- (e) That any necessary elections for chairpersons be held at 10.25am on Tuesday 12 September 2017, and that the ballots close at 2.00pm on that same day;
- (f) That any elections for members of boards, commissions and committees be held at 10.25am on Tuesday 12 September 2017 and that the ballots close at 2.00pm on that same day;
- (g) That the election of members of Standing Committee be conducted as follows:

Event	Ballot commences	Ballot closes
Determine majority support for nominees	2.00pm Monday 11 September 2017	4.00pm Monday 11 September 2017
Standing Committee, Assembly and other ballots	10.25am Tuesday 12 September 2017	2.00pm Tuesday 12 September 2017

- (h) That the business of the Synod be dealt with in accordance with the following timetable unless the Synod specifically determines otherwise:

Regular items throughout the Synod meeting will be as follows:

Event	Times
Devotions	Sat, Sun, Mon, Tues, Wed 9.00am
Bible study	Sat 10.00am, Mon, Tues, Wed 10.30am
Morning tea	11.00am–11.30am
Lunch	1.00pm–2.00pm
Afternoon tea	Sat, Mon, Tues 3.30–4.00pm Sun 3.00–3.30pm
Dinner break	Sun 6.00–7.15pm, Sat, Tues 6.00pm–7.30pm
Start of evening session	Sat, Tues 7.30pm, Sun 7.15pm
Close of evening session, unless extension of time is approved by Synod	Sat 9.15pm, Sun, Tues 9.00pm

The close of business will be 3.00pm Wednesday 13 September, prior to the closing Eucharist;

Business on Monday will finish at 6.00pm; and

An initial timetable showing those items with fixed time allocations on Saturday 9, Sunday 10, Monday 11, Tuesday 12 and Wednesday 13 September 2017 is contained in the attached table.

CENTRE FOR THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY

17.4.16.1 Centre for Theology and Ministry Report

The Synod resolved:

To receive the report of the Centre for Theology and Ministry.

17.4.16.2 Minute of appreciation – Dr Jill Tabart

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To give thanks to God for the ministry of Dr Jill Tabart and for her significant contribution to the Uniting Church as Chairperson of the Centre for Theology and Ministry (CTM) Board in the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania from July 2011 to November 2017.

Dr Jill Tabart has served as Chairperson of the CTM Board since 1 July 2011 and concludes this appointment on 30 November 2017, having served over six years in this significant leadership and governance position. Dr David Beckett was the inaugural Chairperson of the CTM Board and Jill stepped into this role to continue the implementation of the vision that founded the establishment of the CTM. Over the past six years this vision has continued to evolve under Jill's leadership.

Jill was appointed specifically for the skills, passion and leadership that she would bring to the Synod in this role as the CTM was still evolving and consolidating. The Synod has been well served and Jill has more than ably fulfilled that hope.

The contribution that Jill has given into the Synod in this leadership role is deep and broad.

Jill has led the Board at its meetings with diligence, attention to detail, wisdom and gentleness. Jill has ensured that the Board is resourced for its role, that decisions are well-founded, clear and specific. Much of the detailed work of the Board is reporting and responding to its various stakeholders: the Assembly working group on Education for Ministry, the Synod Standing Committee, Synod and the University of Divinity. In each of these cases Jill has exercised careful oversight and reporting of the Board's obligations and accountabilities.

In the establishment of Pilgrim Theological College, Jill offered a steady and consistent space for discernment and decisions that enabled an effective yet dramatic shift in the delivery of theological education within the Synod.

Jill has exercised a strong and public representative role in leadership of the Board and the CTM activities. Always ready and able to participate in the significant events that form the markers for the work of the CTM, Jill has been present at keynote events such as research seminars, public lectures, celebratory services and events with students, candidates and staff. In these moments Jill has embodied a gentle support and encouragement to those who work within the CTM and she has given public witness to the importance of ongoing education and engagement for life-long learning and discipleship. This has been greatly appreciated by the staff of the CTM.

Jill has the ability to bring out the different voices in formal and informal gatherings in a pastoral and sensitive manner. Her faith and leadership are always observable in the exercising of her role which has delivered a strong expression of discipleship and gospel values to be at the foundation of the Board's work.

In the challenging times of the last year and a half Jill has been tireless in representing the vision of the CTM and the work of the Board in many forums as the Synod discerned the way forward into the future.

We give thanks to God for the leadership and faithfulness, the gifts and skills that Jill has given to the role of Chairperson of the CTM Board.

COMMISSION FOR MISSION

17.4.17.1 Commission for Mission Report

The Synod resolved:

To receive the report of the Commission for Mission.

17.4.17.2 Minute of appreciation – Rev David Pargeter

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To give thanks to God for the ministry of Rev David Pargeter and for his significant contribution to the Uniting Church as Executive Director of the Commission for Mission in the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania from 2003 to 2016.

David brought to his role as Executive Director of the Commission for Mission (CfM) a grounded understanding of the importance of the Gospel being located in dialogue between faith and context. Whether it was Cross Culture or Intercultural, Interfaith, Justice and Peacemaking, and Community Services, for David all Mission developed from this immersion in dialogical engagement. For David it was central that the church

take initiative in this dialogue as a foundational response to its calling as a Pilgrim People and as followers of Jesus in the world.

David has been a visionary leader within this Synod, yet perhaps not in the way that most would normally describe visionary leadership. The role of the Commission for Mission is to serve the church by offering leadership in the area of Mission. At the heart of the Mission of the Church is the self-giving and self-emptying love of Jesus Christ as a reflection of the nature of God. Any good theologian knows that this self-giving and self-emptying love is not confined in history to one person's work in the incarnation, but is the ongoing work of God reflected in the self-emptying of God's people in, with and for the world.

David has been a leader of self-emptying and selfless giving in who he is, which has been expressed in his leadership of the CfM and in the Ministry of the CfM with the Church. This has been witnessed to in his service to the staff of the CfM, to the Board and in wider relationships of the Commission, in his service to the Standing Committee, among his colleagues of the Senior Leadership Team, and in his commitment to the First peoples, people of other faiths, other cultures and to all those who suffer dispossession and disempowerment in our world.

David has had an incredible ability to maintain a breadth of understanding of the vast issues under the CfM's responsibility as they emerged. David has exhibited a pastoral heart towards the CFM staff, interested in both their work and welfare. He encouraged people to think, speak and share their ideas creatively, honestly and openly. David has always acted professionally with an emphasis on holding the church to account, reminding us of our call as God's people to justice and fairness. David' strength was in working with people. He was sympathetic, empathetic and considerate, yet also challenging and confronting.

And this self-less way often came at a great cost.... but doesn't it always?

The Synod owes a debt of gratitude to David Pargeter for his commitment and persistence in calling the church to right relationships, to Justice and to Peacemaking. We thank God for the gift of self-less giving that many have experienced through David's leadership and friendship as Executive Director of the Commission for Mission.

17.4.17.3 Minute of appreciation – Rev Greg Crowe

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To give thanks to God for the ministry of Rev Greg Crowe and for his significant contribution to the Uniting Church as Chair of the Commission for Mission (CFM) Board, 2011 – 2016, and Chair of the Commission for Mission Interim Governance Committee, 2016 – 2017.

Greg Crowe has made a significant contribution as Chair of the CFM Board since the time of his appointment in June 2011 until its dissolution in September 2016, and as Chair of the CFM's Interim Governance Committee since that time.

Greg's has exercised this ministry with the same commitment to justice and reconciliation that have always marked his faith and ministry. Being the chair during this time has enabled that to be expressed in deeply significant ways. Greg has sought not just to ensure that the CFM is doing the work of justice and reconciliation, but also to ensure that it is embodying it through the way it does this work. He is a person of high ideals, with great expectations of the church and those who serve in it – including himself – yet he has also measured those expectations through a lens of grace and compassion.

Greg has also brought to this role his gifts of theological reflection and exploration, along with a deep appreciation for the contemporary world in which the church is called to live. Through this he has encouraged the development of contextual missiology among the Board and staff. As a result, in the time that Greg was Chair of the CFM Board, the CFM

was able to advance a number of significant projects, in particular deeply transformative peace and reconciliation work within the Sri Lankan community, and the development of strong interfaith relationships.

Among the more challenging parts of the role of chair over these last years has been the complex journey with the UnitingCare agencies and boards. Over this time, Greg earned great respect from Board chairs and CEOs for his ability to be a peace-maker and bridge-builder; to speak truth to power, and to seek always to understand the complexity of situations. He has developed a reputation among these groups for his integrity and courage. We know that at times that has come at great cost.

Greg has been deeply supportive of the staff and leadership of the CFM through his time as Chair. His advice, wisdom and support have been greatly valued by the directorate and staff, particularly during times of high stress and conflict. He has approached the role of chair with curiosity and imagination, humility and honesty, always holding the CFM accountable to a greater vision, and publicly advocating and championing the work of its staff.

The Synod thanks God for his faithful exercise of Ministry as Chair of the CFM Board and Interim Governance Committee.

Justice and International Mission Unit

17.4.18.1 Family Violence

The Synod resolved:

- (a) That family violence is unacceptable and requires action by the community and all levels of government in Australia;
- (b) To call on the Commonwealth Government to implement the recommendations relevant to it made by the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence, including:
 - (i) amending the Family Law Act 1975 so that a breach of an injunction for personal protection is a criminal offence;
 - (ii) introducing a Medicare item number for family violence counselling and therapeutic services distinct from a general practitioner mental health treatment plan;
 - (iii) broadening the definition of family violence in the Migration Regulations 1994 so that it is consistent with the Victorian Family Violence Protection Act 2008 and to therefore ensure that people seeking to escape violence are entitled to crisis payments, regardless of their visa status; and
 - (iv) amending the Telecommunications Consumer Protections Code to make family violence grounds to be able to access a hardship program with a telecommunications provider and including grounds to splitting jointly held debt and removing an account holder's name if family violence has occurred.
- (c) To call on the Commonwealth Government to introduce a Medicare item number for counselling to end violent behaviour; and
- (d) To write to the Prime Minister, the Minister for Women, the Leader of the Opposition and the Shadow Minister for Women to inform them of this resolution.

17.4.18.2 Political Donations

The Synod resolved:

- (a) To call on the Australian Parliament:

- (i) To place caps on how much can be provided in political donations and how much candidates and third parties can spend in elections;
- (ii) To amend the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 to ban political parties, independent candidates and associated entities from receiving 'gifts of foreign property';
- (iii) To increase the transparency of political donations by requiring:
 - That they be disclosed in as close to real time as is possible, rather than once a year;
 - That donations of \$1,000 or more must be publicly disclosed; and
 - That a ban be imposed on anonymous donations above \$50 to political parties, associated entities, independent candidates and Senate groups.
- (b) To call on the Commonwealth Government to ensure that the Australian Electoral Commission is properly resourced to enforce the laws governing political donations; and
- (c) To write to the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Greens, the Leader of the National Party and the Leader of the Nick Xenophon Team to inform them of this resolution.

17.6.4.1 Privatisation

The Synod resolved:

- (a) To affirm governments have an important role in providing high quality human services that are accessible to all people;
- (b) To call on the Commonwealth Government:
 - (i) to work from the starting point that changes to existing publicly run human services must always pursue the common good;
 - (ii) not to privatise existing publicly run human services unless there is an assured improvement in the level of service quality and accessibility, with effective regulation and oversight; and
- (c) To write to the Prime Minister, the Treasurer, the Leader of the Opposition and the Shadow Treasurer to inform them of this resolution.

17.6.4.2 Youth Justice

The Synod resolved:

- (a) To ask the Tasmanian and Victorian Governments to continue to have a focus on addressing the causes of crime and the rehabilitation of teenagers and young people who break the law, with imprisonment being a last resort;
- (b) To ask the Tasmanian and Victorian Governments to adequately resource the youth justice systems in both states with sufficient numbers of appropriately qualified staff to ensure issues of past abuse, mental health issues, and drug and alcohol dependency of the youth are addressed; and
- (c) To write to the Premiers and Leaders of the Opposition in both states, as well as the Victorian Minister for Youth Affairs, the Victorian Shadow Minister for Families and Children, and the Tasmanian Minister for Human Services to inform them of this resolution.

CULTURE OF SAFETY

17.6.2 Culture of Safety report



The Synod resolved:

To receive the Culture of Safety report.

ENERGY REDUCTION MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

17.4.13.1 Energy Purchase and Renewable Generation Opportunities

The Synod resolved:

- (a) To request the Standing Committee to appoint a Working Group to develop an aggregated energy purchase policy and process for Councils of the Church, institutions and other bodies within the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania which will report its findings and bring proposals to the Standing Committee by May 2018 and which will have regard to:
 - (i) The research already conducted by the Energy Reduction Management Committee;
 - (ii) Any work conducted with respect to energy purchase improvement as part of the cost savings planning work of the Strategic Review Implementation Team;
 - (iii) The feasibility of all entities across the Synod having electricity and gas services purchased from a mandated retailer or group of retailers;
 - (iv) The ways in which item (iii) might improve the ability to track energy usage measurement across Synod;
 - (v) Ethical considerations with respect to selection of energy retailers, including the degree to which retailers provide options for energy to be sourced from carbon neutral and renewable sources.
 - (vi) The sharing of any savings resulting from the implementation of possible proposals across the Councils of the Church, institutions and other bodies within the Synod while still allowing some portion of savings to be devoted to broader energy use reduction initiatives.
 - (vii) Researching and finding a central solar provider/providers to be used throughout the Synod to ensure quality and conformity.
- (b) To request the General Secretary to convene a joint meeting or meetings of the chairpersons of the Property and Operations Committee (POC) and the Energy Reduction Management Committee before 31 December 2017, to develop parameters by which the development and support of a revolving renewable energy fund can be considered by the POC when deciding upon investments to be made with excess property sales proceeds under the new property sales proceeds policy, and to report the outcome of these meetings to the Standing Committee at its first meeting of 2018.

GENERAL SECRETARY

17.2.12 General Secretary)

The Synod resolved:

To receive the report of the General Secretary.

MEMBERS' PROPOSALS

17.6.6.1 Response to Potential Assisted Dying/Suicide Legislation in Victoria

The Synod resolved:

- (a) In the event of the Parliament of Victoria passing legislation to allow assisted dying/suicide, to request the Synod Standing Committee to initiate a process

including, but not necessarily limited to, consultation with Uniting AgeWell, Uniting Victoria-Tasmania, the faculty of Pilgrim Theological College and the Assembly Standing Committee, and taking into account the feedback from the wider Church through the current consultation process in relation to this matter being conducted by the Justice and International Mission Unit, to present a report with proposal(s) to the 2019 Synod meeting regarding the Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania's response to the assisted dying/suicide legislation, including a position on how the Synod and relevant UCA institutions and staff should be asked to respond to such legislation; and

- (b) To support the recommendation of the Victorian Government Ministerial Advisory Panel on Voluntary Assisted Dying that any voluntary assisted dying legislation include a broad provision to allow all health professionals and facilities the right of conscientious objection to participation in such legislation.

17.6.6.2 Family Violence

The Synod resolved:

- (a) To theologically affirm that all people are created in nothing less than the image of God, are loved by God, and inherently deserve to live in safety and free of any form of physical or emotional violence as these demean humanity, dignity, and a sense of self-worth;
- (b) To give thanks to God for:
 - (i) the prophetic courage and witness of those who have come forward to share their experiences of family violence within the Church and Christian community, through whom God works to correct what is wrong in the life of the church (Basis of Union, paragraph 18); and
 - (ii) the various ways in which light has been shed on the place of church and theology in the serious issue that is family violence, including through the work of public figures, journalists, and government commissions;
- (c) To acknowledge and lament with sorrow and humility:
 - (i) the presence of domestic and family violence within the wider church, Christian community, and wider society, and the role that theologies grounded in gender inequality have played in its legitimization;
 - (ii) the reality that Christian communities have sometimes failed to acknowledge the presence of such violence, whether physical, emotional, spiritual or financial, in their midst.
- (d) To reject any abuse of theology to legitimate family violence, recognising that theologies which affirm gender equality and human dignity have been identified as having an essential role to play in the prevention of family violence and/or bringing it to light; and
- (e) To request the Standing Committee:
 - (i) to consider recommendation 165 arising out of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence, which suggests faith communities review processes for receiving and managing reports of family violence, and report any progress on this matter to the 2019 Synod meeting; and
 - (ii) to consider a process, which might include the provision of resources, by which the Synod, its presbyteries, and congregations, can mark the '16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence' each year.

17.6.13 Peace on the Korean Peninsula

The Synod resolved:

- (a) To express concern at the tense situation on the Korean peninsula and to call on the Commonwealth Government to work with the governments of South Korea, the USA and allies to reduce tensions on the Korean peninsula through negotiation rather than escalating confrontation.
- (b) Noting Assembly Resolution 82.56 supporting global nuclear disarmament, to call on the Commonwealth Government to support the complete elimination of nuclear weapons everywhere, including on the Korean peninsula where the risk of nuclear conflict is by far the greatest at this time.
- (c) To call on the Commonwealth Government to work to deconstruct the barriers to dialogue and engagement to resolve the situation on the Korean peninsula peacefully, and to ensure that any use of sanctions be only directed at the North Korean leadership and will not harm the ordinary people living in North Korea.
- (d) In recognition of the Uniting Church's partnerships with the Korean Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church of Korea, the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea and the National Council of Churches in Korea, to request congregations of this Synod to pray for a peaceful resolution and to request them to stand in solidarity with our Korean sisters and brothers.
- (e) To write to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Leader of the Opposition and the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs to inform them of this resolution.

17.6.14 Support for Asylum-Seekers

The Synod resolved:

- (a) To congratulate the Victorian Government for its compassionate response to the needs of asylum-seekers facing homelessness, as reported in Fairfax media on 9th September 2017, by providing \$600,000 to establish a housing fund, cover for basic food, medical, clothing and transport expenses, and funding for caseworkers, for those who face being sent back to Nauru as a result of recent decisions by the Federal Government; and
- (b) To write to the Premier and Leader of the Opposition in Victoria to inform them of this resolution.

17.6.15 Nomination Process for Standing Committee

The Synod resolved:

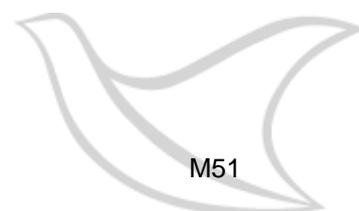
To request that the Standing Committee make alternations as necessary to nominating processes and the skills matrix for Synod Standing Committee to ensure that rural experience and outlook is highlighted and can be assessed along with other skills, experience and attributes.

17.6.16 Tribute to CTM, CFM, BOMAR and Property Boards

The Synod resolved:

To give thanks to God for the ministry offered by the people who have served on the following Boards and Committees in the Synod of Victoria and the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania:

- the Property Board,
- the Board of Mission and Resourcing,
- the Centre for Theology and Ministry Board,
- the Commission for Mission Board,



- the Finance Committee,
- the Risk Management Committee, and
- the Audit Committee.

The work of boards and committees within the life of the Church often goes unseen and yet it is an essential ministry offered by a wide range of committed, experienced and highly skilled people.

It seems any committee, board or task group receives its own personal acronym in the Uniting Church: CFM, CTM, BOMAR, MSR, SRIT, PRC, FiCo, RMC, AC, PB, SSC, PART to name just a few. Within this UCA alphabet soup we ought not forget that the work undertaken by the boards and committees is vast and often complex.

The Synod has recently made decisions in regard to new governance arrangements and four boards will conclude on 30 November 2017 – the Commission for Mission Board (CFM), the Board of Mission and Resourcing (BOMAR), the Centre for Theology and Ministry Board (CTM) and the Property Board (PB).

The Finance Committee, Risk Management Committee and Audit Committee have had their Terms of Reference revised.

BOMAR, established in 1996, has encouraged the Church at the grass roots to discern the will of God for ministry and mission. On an annual basis BOMAR has considered mission proposals for funding for a variety of projects. BOMAR has also developed and reviewed policies regarding the use of property sale proceeds and the types of projects and programs for which the proceeds may be used.

The Property Board has worked to ensure property held within the trust of the Uniting Church is used carefully, wisely and missionally. The Board, among many other tasks, has engaged in mission motivated discussions when the various councils of the Church consider applications to acquire, build, lease or sell property. Members have been advocates for mission purposes and the commonwealth of the Church.

The CFM Board has provided oversight for the work of Commission for Mission, ensuring the work has been undertaken in good order, in terms of compliance, accountability and adherence to the Regulations. The Board has been a place for reflective examination of missional assumptions and has assisted in setting key directions for the Commission's work.

The CTM Board has exercised governance of the Centre as a whole, along with the Regulated responsibilities of being the Ministerial Education Board for the Synod, and more recently the responsibilities for governance of the Pilgrim Theological College; and adhered to a mandate to develop and implement policies that have resulted in the provision of staff, facilities and other resources necessary for all aspects of education for ministry and discipleship throughout the Synod.

Over the years many people have offered their time, gifts and graces to the work of the Church in serving on the above mentioned boards and committees. They have given careful attention to financial detail, offered wise strategic planning, people management, forensic analysis of budget forecasts, imaginative thinking and careful theological work and always with an eye to managing risk and stewardship.

We give thanks for the many hours spent by members reading reports, writing proposals, presenting rationales for new ideas, learning to appreciate the UCA consensus decision making processes without too much alarm, and being brave enough to speak the truth when it needed to be spoken.

The work offered by these boards and committees will not stop. Many of the people who have served will still offer their talents but the work will take on a different shape.



The Synod gives thanks to God for the many people who have served on BOMAR, the CTM Board, the CFM Board, Property Board and the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committees.

MODERATOR-ELECT NOMINATING COMMITTEE

17.2.21 Moderator-elect Nominating Committee

The Synod resolved:

To receive the report of the Moderator-elect Nominating Committee.

NOMINATIONS ADVISORY PANEL

17.6.20.1 Appointments to Committees, Commissions and Ecumenical Bodies

The Synod resolved:

To appoint the following people to the named bodies:

A Australian Church Women

To commence 14 September 2017 and retire at the 2020 Synod meeting

Joy Morley

Margaret Pedler

B Business Committee

To commence 14 September 2017 and retire at the 2020 Synod meeting

No nominations

C National Council of Women

To commence 14 September 2017 until the next ordinary meeting of Synod

Rev Juliette Tautala'aso

D Placements Committee Chairperson

To commence 14 September 2017 until the next ordinary meeting of Synod

Rev David Fotheringham

E Property Trust (Victoria and Tasmania)

To commence 14 September 2017 until the next ordinary meeting of Synod

Helen Geard

Bob Hodges

David Rowe

Ken Tabart

Bronwyn Wellings

F Property Trust (Victoria and Tasmania) Chair

To commence 14 September 2017 until the next ordinary meeting of Synod

Bob Hodges

G Terms of Placement Committee



To commence 14 September 2017 and retire at the 2020 Synod meeting

Rev Dharendra Narayan

Rev David Thompson

17.6.25.1 Victorian Council of Christian Education (VCCE)

The Returning Officer, Rod Mummery, announced the following people were appointed to the Victorian Council of Christian Education to commence 14 September 2017 and retire at the 2020 Synod meeting:

Rev Sandy Brodine

Chris Barnett

Rev Andrew Delbridge

Rev Dr Jong Soo Park

PRESBYTERY TRANSITION TEAM

17.2.14 Presbytery Transition Team Report

The Synod resolved:

To receive the Presbytery Transition Team report.

17.4.9 Presbytery Transition Team resolutions

A Presbytery Transition - General Proposals

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) Recalling the key role of oversight exercised by Presbyteries in the Uniting Church, to give thanks to God for the ongoing commitment and faithfulness of Presbytery office bearers, ministers and members within the Synod.
- (b) To request Presbyteries, in the light of Synod 2016 resolution 16.6.20F which outlines core relational expectations of Synod and Presbyteries working together, to engage collaboratively and in a coordinated manner with the Synod to enable Presbyteries to function in ways that are “lighter and simpler”, and so be free to give priority to the Presbyteries’ vital task of oversight involving pastoral-missional leadership;
- (c) To request the Standing Committee to put in place a process to continue the work of the Presbytery Transition Team in order to:
 - (i) have oversight of the implementation resolutions arising from the report of the Presbytery Transition Team to the 2017 Synod;
 - (ii) offer support to Presbyteries during this time of implementation, including training and pastoral care as resolved at Synod 2016 (Minute 16.6.20 G b)

B Relationships across the Synod

The Synod resolved by consensus:

To request the Standing Committee to consult with Presbyteries in the development of Terms of Reference for a relational entity (possibly called the Presbytery-Synod Interface) consisting of key leaders of Presbyteries and Synod, to enhance coordination between Presbyteries, and Presbyteries and Synod.

C Presbytery Team Leadership

The Synod resolved by consensus:

- (a) Under the provisions of Regulation 3.6.2, to grant approval to Presbyteries within the Synod to appoint officers, including the Chairperson, with remuneration based on a full or part-time stipend;
- (b) To encourage Presbyteries in their discernment of team models, to use Regulation 2.11.3 re Ministry Teams in each Presbytery; and
- (c) To request Presbyteries to work together to develop a model position description for Presbytery Chairperson to clarify the role across Synod

17.6.11.1 Presbytery Funding Model

The Synod resolved:

- (a) To conclude the current mandated model of three designated Presbytery Minister roles (Administration, Pastoral Care, and Mission and Education) by the 30 September 2018;
- (b) To request Standing Committee to make funds available to each Presbytery for the equivalent of a minimum of two full-time ministry positions (with allowances) based on approved stipend to contribute to the Presbyteries' capacity to fulfill their calling and function as a council of the Church;
- (c) To request the Standing Committee
 - (i) to create a fund of at least \$400,000 per annum for additional resourcing of Presbyteries;
 - (ii) to develop, in discernment with the Presbyteries, a distribution model for the above-mentioned fund (clause (i)) which builds on the strengths and principles learned from the Rural Ministry Leadership Fund and takes account of equity and need;
 - (iii) to develop a process to review the arrangements for this fund, to report to the 2020 Synod meeting.
- (d) To request each Presbytery and the Mission & Capacity Building Unit (working title) to enter into a process of conversation and discernment as part of the implementation process to develop a ministry team model appropriate for its life and for effective resourcing for enabling mission;
- (e) To encourage Presbyteries to explore creative options for managing meetings and gatherings; and to request the General Secretary to allocate resources and facilities (including information and communications technology) to support Presbyteries seeking to use creative options for managing meetings and gatherings; and
- (f) To encourage Presbyteries to develop sources of income beyond that provided through the Synod budget, and to encourage Presbyteries to seek ways to do this through the appropriate stewardship of property that does not deprive the wider church of just and appropriate sharing.

PROPERTY BOARD

17.2.17.1 Property Board, Property Trust Tasmania and Property Trust Victoria Reports)

The Synod resolved:

To receive the reports of the Property Board, the Property Trust Tasmania and the Property Trust Victoria.

17.2.17.2 Minute of appreciation – Rev David Parker

The Synod resolved by acclamation:



To give thanks to God for the ministry of David Parker and for his significant contribution to the Uniting Church as Chairperson of The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Tas.) and The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Victoria) from June 2010 to September 2017 and as Chairperson of the Synod Property Board from June 2010 to November 2017.

David Parker has made an enormous contribution to the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania as the Chairperson of three of the Synod's major decision making bodies: The Synod Property Board, The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Tas.) and The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Victoria). He has held these positions since June 2010 and will step down from the Trusts at this Synod meeting. He will continue as Chairperson of the Property Board until November 2017 when the Board, in its current format, will cease to exist.

The period while David served in these leadership roles has been a time of extraordinary change for the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, particularly in the area of property. Some of the most challenging and far-reaching decisions faced by this Synod took place, including the 'Uniting our future' project, the Major Strategic Review and the Wesley Place redevelopment.

Following the Synod meeting in May 2013, which approved property divestments as part of the Uniting our future project, David, as Chairperson, undertook the important role of coordinating this work. On top of his regular responsibilities, he chaired a number of additional special meetings of the Property Board purely related to Uniting our future.

The Major Strategic Review (MSR), which was also initiated by Synod 2013, was a momentous project for the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania. David contributed without hesitation and in a variety of ways to this review. The recommendations from the MSR led to the establishment of the Strategic Review Implementation Team and David has freely made his time and experience available to this team.

Wesley Place is the largest property redevelopment project in the Synod's history. It will provide many benefits, including restoration and ongoing maintenance of the historic church and a functional building for Wesley Mission Victoria and the Synod. David has been involved at every stage.

As well as providing strong oversight for these and many other major projects, David has continued to advance the functioning of the Property Board. By drawing on his extensive senior level corporate experience and engaging his passion for continuous improvement, he has led the Property Board to operate at higher levels in both governance standards and efficiency.

One of David's great talents – his ability to gently twist arms – has been used continually as he persuaded talented people to join the Board and Property Trusts. This ensured smooth functioning of all bodies, including the various transition times when members were retiring.

One of David's personal characteristics is commitment. The role of Chairperson requires a significant commitment of time, with a minimum of monthly meetings of the Property Board and Property Trusts and participation in meetings of the Synod Standing Committee, and special meetings. This commitment was magnified because for most of these meetings, David has travelled from just south of Hobart to the Synod Office in Melbourne. The few times that he did not travel were generally due to David timing his holidays so that he would transit through Melbourne when a meeting was scheduled.

In undertaking these property roles, David has given his time willingly and graciously and in addition to his many other responsibilities in the local and wider Church. David has also filled positions such as Chairperson of UnitingCare Tasmania, Board Member of UC Camping, Member of Presbytery Standing Committee, Member of Synod Risk Committee and countless more. He is actively involved in his local Kingston Uniting Church.

When asked to contribute to this Minute of Appreciation, a fellow member of the Property Board and Property Trusts provided the following:

“David is compassionate, intelligent and has a deep love of God and the work of the Uniting Church. David’s in-depth knowledge of the Church and its mission combined with his ability to think strategically has been invaluable to the work of the Property Board. As chair he has been able to facilitate complex deliberations while ensuring members are heard and respected. He will be missed by those people fortunate to have worked directly with him.”

David continues to serve the Church in many ways and will do so in the years to come. His wisdom and faithful discipleship will continue to be a gift to the Uniting Church. The Synod thanks God for his faithful exercise of ministry as Chairperson of the Property Board and the two Property Trusts.

SERVICE OF TRIBUTES AND THANKSGIVING

17.3.8 Service of Tributes and Thanksgiving

The Synod resolved:

To give thanks to God for the life and witness of ministers and deaconesses who:

(a) have died since the 2016 meeting of Synod and to record their names as follows:

Rev Kenneth Blackwell	Rev Myrle Lancaster
Rev Sally Craven	Rev Douglas Mathews
Rev Dr Kenneth Dempsey	Rev David Poynton
Rev George Durinck	Deaconess (Ida) Shirley Renshaw
Rev Deacon Rosemary Edwards	Rev Walter Rolley
Rev Joseph (Joe) Fraser	Rev Barry Rowe
Rev Joan Gilchrist	Rev Norma Spaulding
Rev Rowan Clifford Gill	Rev W Duncan Spiers
Rev Arnold James	Rev Dr Frederik Vanclay
Rev C Richmond S Kenyon	Rev Reynolds Waters
Rev Malcolm Lamont	

(b) have retired since the 2016 meeting of Synod and to record their names as follows:

Rev Christine Aisbett	Rev Robert Humphreys
Rev Greg Beck	Rev Dr Gwen Ince
Rev Carol Bennett	Rev Russell Jones
Rev Peter Burnham	Rev Dr Francis Macnab
Rev Peter Cook	Rev Geoff Needham
Rev Dr Ken Dempsey (Dec)	Rev Jen Pretty
Rev Mark Dunn	Rev Nicholas Randall
Rev Joan Francis	Rev Robert Renton
Rev Jeff Gray	Rev Helen Robinson
Rev Colin Gurteen	Rev Lorraine Saultry
Rev Dr Ian Hickingbotham	Rev Prof Howard Wallace
Rev Chris Howard	Rev Peter Welsh
Rev Dr Philip Hughes	

(c) have celebrated 50 years of ordination or commissioning from January 2017 to March 2018, and to record their names as follows:

Rev Ian Collings	Rev Ivan Poole
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Rev James Colville	Rev Clive Skewes
Rev Clem Dickinson	Rev Peter Barnes
Rev Justin Gooderham	Rev Dr Brian James
Rev R Colin Johnston	Rev Gerald Leicester
Rev Kenneth Lindsay	Rev J Allan Thompson
Rev Dr Paul Moore	

- (d) have celebrated 60 years of ordination from January 2017 to March 2018, and to record their names as follows:

Rev Dr John Bodycomb	Rev L Warren Clarnett
Rev M Steve Box	Rev C Drew Lelean
Rev Bruce Prewer	Rev Allan McLaren
Rev John Richards	Rev William Pugh
Rev Max Stansall	Rev Lloyd Shirley
Rev W Leigh Swaby	Rev Robert Wheeler

- (e) have celebrated 65 years of ordination from January 2017 to March 2018, and to record their names as follows:

Rev Murray Allen	Rev S Warnock Lowry
Rev Alfred Foote	Rev G Laurie Turner
Rev Boyd Granzow	Rev Alfred Webber

- (f) have celebrated 70 years of ordination from January 2017 to March 2018, and to record their names as follows:

Rev Malcolm Lamont (Dec)	Rev Howard Secomb
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- (g) have celebrated 75 years of ordination from January 2017 to March 2018, and to record their names as follows:

Rev Kenneth Blackwell (Dec)

- (h) have been ordained since the 2016 meeting of Synod and to record their names as follows:

Rev Nathaniel Atem	Rev Nigel McBrien
Rev Sue Clarkson	Rev Jinseon Park
Rev Bruce Crowle	Rev Kharis Susilowati
Rev Dr Julie Hall	Rev Ian Turrnidge
Rev Tawk Kap	

- (i) have been received from another denomination since the 2016 meeting of Synod and to record their names as follows:

Rev Sylvia Akauola-Tongotongo	Rev John Rigby
Rev Dr John Flett	Rev Judy Rigby
Rev Kevin Kim	Rev Dr Christine Sorensen
Rev Dr Jong Soo Park	

STRATEGIC REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

17.3.2 Strategic Review Implementation Review Team Report

The Synod resolved:

To receive the report of the Strategic Review Implementation Review Team.



SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE

17.2.13 Standing Committee Report

The Synod resolved:

To receive the report of the Synod Standing Committee.

17.4.5.1 Amendment to Synod Standing Committee By-Laws

The Synod resolved:

A To approve the revised Synod Standing Committee bylaws with effect from the end of the September 2017 meeting of the Synod after the following amendments to Clause 5 of the draft originally circulated, and as shown in the revised version below:

- (a) an increase in the number of elected members from ten to twelve, with six appointed at each ordinary Synod meeting;
- (b) limitation of the term of co-opted members to the next ordinary meeting; and
- (c) minor and non-material formatting and grammatical amendments.

B To amend the Standing Committee by-laws Clause 5.1(c) to include the following sub clause, and subsequent clause re-numbering to follow:

To be eligible for inclusion on the list of nominations for election, a nominee must receive the support of a majority of members of Synod

- C
- (a) To approve the revised Synod Standing Committee bylaws (as attached to the original of these minutes) with effect from the end of the September 2017 meeting of the Synod;
 - (b)(i) Subject to approval of proposal no.20 (Legislative Incorporation), to authorise the Synod Standing Committee to make changes to the Synod Standing Committee bylaws, if required as a consequence of the potential Legislative Incorporation of the Church in Victoria and Tasmania; and
 - (ii) To report any such changes for ratification to the 2019 Synod meeting

17.6.3.1 Committee Diversity Task Group

The Synod resolved:

Further to Synod resolution 16.6.21.2 and Standing Committee resolution 17.52.2:

- (a) To extend the reporting time for the Committee Diversity Task Group to April 2018; and
- (b) To request the Committee Diversity Task Group to report to the Standing Committee, instead of the Synod; and
- (c) To authorise the Standing Committee to act on recommendations as appropriate, and to distribute the Task Group's report, and resolutions resulting from the report, to presbyteries and Synod reporting bodies.

17.4.4 & 17.4.6 General Secretary End of Term Review

The Synod resolved:

- (a) To receive the report of the General Secretary End of Term Review Task Group.
- (b) To affirm the integrity, commitment, competency, wisdom and grace that Rev Dr Mark Lawrence has brought to the General Secretary placement; and

- (c) To reappoint the Rev Dr Mark Lawrence as General Secretary for up to five years from 1 November 2017.

17.6.5.1 Legislative Incorporation Task Group

The Synod resolved:

- (a) To note:
- (i) that the Synod Standing Committee in December 2015 (SC Minute 15.53.9) established the Legislative Incorporation Task Group to “develop a framework for legislative incorporation” in response to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Handling Of Child Abuse By Religious and other Non-Government Organisations Betrayal of Trust report recommendation 26.2: ‘That the Victorian Government work with the Australian Government to require religious and other non-government organisations that engage with children to adopt incorporated legal structures’, and the subsequent endorsement of this recommendation from the Victorian Government;
 - (ii) that the Legislative Incorporation Task Group has diligently undertaken its Terms of Reference, developed a possible model for incorporation, engaged with government, the Assembly and other synods, and kept the Standing Committee apprised of its work;
 - (iii) that the political context for the Uniting Church in Victoria (and Tasmania) as a ‘religious body adopting an incorporated legal structure’ has become unclear, for reasons including:
 - a. the slow response of the Victorian Government to implementing all of the *Betrayal of Trust* report’s recommendations,
 - b. the now stated desire of the Commonwealth to develop a ‘national’ redress scheme for victims and survivors of sexual abuse (and the consequent need for negotiation with the states), and
 - c. the anticipated release of the Royal Commission into the Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in December, 2017; and
 - d. that the Task Group, as result of this (above clause iii) considers that it is unable to advise the Synod to proceed with regard to a ‘framework for legislative incorporation’ at the present time.
- (b) To confirm its willingness to adopt a legal structure which best fulfils its responsibility to victims and survivors, best reflects the Church’s polity, and fulfils its responsibility to the community and the state with regard to past child sex abuse and that these arrangements work towards having the safest environments possible for children.
- (c) To request the Standing Committee to continue engagement with the other synods and the Assembly in a national discussion regarding the possible incorporation of the Uniting Church in Australia.
- (d) To authorise the Standing Committee:
- (i) to develop an appropriate legal structure for the Church that responds to victims and survivors, the community and the state with regard to child sex abuse; the Church’s faithfulness to the Gospel, and its own identity as the Uniting Church in Australia;



- (ii) to request advice from the Assembly as to the appropriate mechanism for resolving that the Uniting Church in Australia within Victoria and Tasmania incorporate through legislative processes;
 - (iii) if it considers it to be appropriate following reports from the Legislative Incorporation Task Group (or subsequent entity), to present any proposed changes to the legal structure of the Uniting Church in Australia within Victoria and Tasmania to the Synod, and to the Assembly of the Church; and
 - (iv) to undertake an education program within the wider Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania regarding appropriate legal structures for the Church in the current context.
- (e) To advise the Assembly and other synods of these decisions and of any subsequent developments regarding legislative incorporation of the Uniting Church in Australia within Victoria and Tasmania.

SYNOD PROCEDURES

17.4.2 Adoption of the Roll of Synod

The Synod resolved:

That the Roll of Synod as finalised at 3.30pm on Sunday 10 September be adopted. (Refer to Appendix AA1.1.)

17.6.22 Reports from Boards, Commissions, Committees, Reporting Bodies and Presbyteries not received during presentations at Synod 2017

The Synod resolved to receive the following reports:

UnitingCare Housing Victoria Ltd	B8
Strategic Review Implementation Team	C1.1
Royal Commission Task Group	C1.2
Audit Committee	C2
Creative Design Team	C3.1
Committee for Counselling	C4
Committee for Discipline	C5
Ecumenical Relations Committee	C6
Finance Committee	C7
Pastoral Assistance Committee	C9
Placements Committee	C10
Risk Management Committee	C11
Synod Sexual Misconduct Complaints Committee	C12
Terms of Placement Committee	C13
People and Culture	E1.1
Synod Safety	E1.1.1
Communications and Media Services	E1.2
Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress Tasmania	F1
Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress Victoria	F2
Bethel Pastoral Centre	G1
Working Group on Christian-Jewish Relations	G2
Presbytery Reports Gippsland	H1

Loddon Mallee	H2
North East Victoria	H3
Port Phillip East	H4
Port Phillip West	H5
Tasmania	H6
Western Victoria	H7
Yarra Yarra	H8

UCA FUNDS MANAGEMENT

17.4.14 UCA Funds Management Report)

The Synod resolved:

To receive the report of UCA Funds Management.

17.4.12.1 Minute of Appreciation – John Etherington

To give thanks to God for John Etherington and to celebrate his extraordinary contribution to The Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, for the positions held as:

- Chairperson – UCA Funds Management Limited Board, July 2016 to December 2017
- Chairperson – UCA Funds Management Limited Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee, December 2012 to June 2016
- Non-executive Director – UCA Funds Management Limited, January 2008 to December 2017
- Member – The Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania Audit Committee, 2010. The Audit Committee became the interim Finance Committee in August 2012. In October 2013, John was appointed to the Synod Finance Committee.

We would like to thank him for his dedication, care, wisdom and deep faith, and wish him and his family God's rich blessings as he moves on to future endeavours.

John Etherington was appointed a Non-executive Director of UCA Funds Management (UCFM) in January 2008. In December 2017, John will conclude his 10-year term in this position. John has served as the UCFM Chairperson since July 2016.

During John's tenure with UCA Funds Management:

- Funds under management grew from \$700 million to \$1.1 billion
- Grants to the Synod have totalled \$24 million.

John's stewardship and professional experience assisted UCA Funds Management to become the first not-for-profit or faith-based organisation to be fully licensed by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission as a Responsible Entity. With this license, UCA Funds Management obtained the highest standards of governance and compliance in the funds management industry.

Additionally, John was instrumental in the development and approval of the UCFM Workplace Values and Diversity Policy. The Policy mandates the UCA Funds Management Board consists of a minimum of 30 per cent female and males, with the remaining 40 per cent of either gender. At the end of this year, the UCA Funds Management Board will consist of 50 per cent female and 50 per cent male non-executive directors.

John will continue to serve the Church as a member of the Synod Finance Committee.

John is thanked for his considered yet inspirational manner. We thank him for his service to UCA Funds Management, and the broader Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania.

17.4.12.2 Minute of Appreciation – Michael Walsh

The Synod resolved by acclamation:

To give thanks to God for Michael Walsh and celebrate his contribution to the Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania as Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of UCA Funds Management and as a member of the Synod Senior Leadership Team since January 2013.

Michael has provided strong leadership and guidance to UCA Funds Management.

Michael came to UCA Funds Management with a long career in the financial sector and a deep commitment to ethical or responsible investment. He has drawn on this experience to assist in the further development and growth of UCA Funds Management and position the organisation well for the future. Under his leadership, funds under management have grown and UCA Funds Management has continued to develop its approach to responsible investment.

During his tenure, UCA Funds Management became the first not-for-profit or faith based organisation with a Responsible Entity license by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, ensuring the highest standards of governance and compliance for investors. Two of the existing funds were converted into managed investment schemes and, more recently, the important custody function has been outsourced to Northern Trust. The investment team has been consolidated and other organisational improvements adopted.

Funds under management have grown by around 46% since 2013, from \$820 million to nearly \$1.2 billion.

Michael has worked closely with the Synod Justice Unit in developing ethical investment policies, including policies relating to fossil fuels and payday lenders. He has led active engagement with businesses on ethical issues such as female representation on Boards and use of credit cards for gambling purposes.

Michael has contributed positively and creatively to Synod ministries and operations as a member of the Synod Leadership Team and provided sound advice for organisations within the Uniting Church on investment matters.

Michael has indicated he will be returning to Sydney when he completes his 5 year term with UCA Funds Management.

17.6.12 Investments in UCA Funds Management

The Synod resolved:

Noting the resolution of the Synod of Victoria (95.6.7.11) 'that parishes, presbyteries, agencies and programs of the Uniting Church be required to deposit funds which are not required for day to day operations in the Synod Principal Common Funds or the Development Fund'

- (a) To require all Congregations, Presbyteries and Institutions operated by or on behalf of the Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania to invest funds which are not required for day to day operations in the UCA Enhanced Cash Portfolio, and/or UCA Growth Portfolio and/or the UCA Australian Equities Portfolio, or any other fund offered by UCA Funds Management whose purpose is to provide investment for Church organisations.
- (b) That any other Institutions and Councils of, and associated with, the Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania are requested to consult with UCA Funds

Management and to give favourable consideration to UCA Funds Management as their preferred provider of investment services, subject to their governance requirements.

UNITING

17.2.15 Uniting Report

The Synod resolved:

To receive the report of Uniting.

17.5.3.1 Medically Supervised Injecting Centres

The Synod resolved:

- (a) To adopt as its policy statement the following *'Medically Supervised Injecting Centres are an important additional support to reducing the harm and death rates of people affected by drug addiction'*
- (b) To write to the Federal Health Minister, the Shadow Ministers of Health and the State Health Ministers of Victoria and Tasmania to inform them of this resolution and urge action on a coherent public policy in support of Medically Supervised Injecting Centres.
- (c) To write to the Premiers of Victoria and Tasmania and Leaders of Opposition informing them of this resolution and urging the formation of policy, legislation and funding to support the development of Medically Supervised Injecting Centres in Victoria and Tasmania.
- (d) To request Synod Communications Unit and Uniting Communications Unit develop a media and communications strategy to support engagement with the public on this resolution.

UNITING ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER CHRISTIAN CONGRESS (TASMANIA)

17.2.11 Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (Tasmania))

The Synod resolved:

To receive the report of Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (Tasmania).

UNITING ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER CHRISTIAN CONGRESS (VICTORIA)

17.2.10 Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (Victoria))

The Synod resolved:

To receive the report of Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (Victoria).

UNITING AGEWELL

17.4.11.1 Uniting AgeWell Report

The Synod resolved:

To receive the report of Uniting AgeWell.

17.4.11.2 Minute of Appreciation – Rev Allan Thompson

The Synod resolved:



To record its appreciation to Rev Allan Thompson for his leadership of the Uniting AgeWell Board and his exemplary nine years' service on the Uniting AgeWell Board, of which the last three years have been served as Board Chair.

Rev Allan Thompson has made a significant contribution to Uniting AgeWell over the past nine years, both as a Board member and then as Board Chair for the past three years. Prior to Allan's appointment as Board Chair he served on Uniting AgeWell's Audit and Risk Committee and Property and Development Committee from 2009 to 2014. Allan was the inaugural Chair of Uniting AgeWell's Mission Committee and was instrumental in guiding and shaping the Committee's work.

Allan commenced on the Uniting AgeWell Board in 2008 and has seen many milestones in the life of Uniting AgeWell, including the opening of Queenborough Rise, Kingsville and Noble Park residential aged care facilities; development of 50 affordable housing units in Tasmania; and the increase of several hundred Home Care Packages throughout the Gippsland and Swan Hill regions. More recently, Uniting AgeWell has broken ground on the Manningtree Road, Hawthorn and Preston sites that are being re-developed.

All Uniting AgeWell residential aged care facilities have achieved consistent accreditation through the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency during Allan's time at Uniting AgeWell.

In 2014 the organisation re-branded from Uniting Aged Care to Uniting AgeWell and introduced a different approach to ageing, Uniting AgeWell's philosophy of supporting older people to experience a sense of wellbeing, choice and independence at every age and stage of their lives; to feel valued members of their community and to have easy access to the services they need to live the life they want.

In 2016 Uniting AgeWell established an Aged Care Advisory Committee which recommends improvements from a consumer's point of view to improve the services Uniting AgeWell provides to people ageing in the community.

As Board Chair Allan has steered the Board through an increasingly competitive industry and major industry changes such as consumer directed care; deregulation of home care packages; and changes to the Aged Care Funding Instrument, while maintaining and fostering Uniting AgeWell as an expression of the Church.

During Allan's time on the Uniting AgeWell Board he has been involved in the recruitment of CEO's and the creation of numerous strategic plans, all of which have seen the organisation grow in strength and size. Allan has maintained the Board's focus on continuous improvement and the drive for Uniting AgeWell to get better and stronger. His knowledge of the church has been integral to fostering and strengthening the relationship between Uniting AgeWell and the Church. Allan has demonstrated excellent governance and stewardship through his time on the Uniting AgeWell Board and particularly as Board Chair.

The Board thanks Allan for his commendable service over the past nine years and more recently as Board Chair and wish him all the very best for the future.



INDEX TO THE MINUTES

	Report	Resolution	Page
Administration and Finance	E2	17.2.16	9, 41
Appointments and associations		17.2.6.1	6, 42
Appointments to committees, commissions and ecumenical bodies		17.6.20.1	38, 53
Assembly membership		17.5.6.2, 17.6.21	39, 41
Assembly membership, youthful age		17.5.6.2, 17.6.21	28
Assembly report		17.5.10	28
Assisted dying/suicide		17.6.6.1	32, 49
Asylum seekers, support for		17.6.14	36, 51
Audit Committee	C2	17.6.22	40, 61
Bethel Pastoral Centre	G.1	17.6.22	40, 61
Board of Mission and Resourcing	B1	17.2.18	41
Board of Mission and Resourcing	B1	17.2.18, 17.4.19.2	11, 26
Business Committee	C3	17.2.5	43
Business Committee	C3	17.2.5	6
Centre for Theology and Ministry	B2	17.4.16.1	44
Centre for Theology and Ministry	B2	17.4.16.1	21
Commission for Mission	B3	17.4.17.1	23, 45
Committee Diversity Task Group		17.6.3.1	30, 59
Committee for Counselling	C4	17.6.22	40, 61
Committee for Discipline	C5	17.6.22	40, 61
Communications and Media Services	E1.2	17.6.22	40, 61
Creative Design Team	C3	17.6.22	40, 61
Creative Design Team		17.2.7	8
Culture of Safety		17.6.2	30, 48
Date of Synod 2019		17.2.63	7, 43
Ecumenical Panel		17.5.13	28
Ecumenical Relations Committee	C6	17.6.22	40, 61
Energy Reduction Management Committee		17.4.13	20, 49
Family violence		17.4.18.1, 17.6.6.2	24, 33, 47, 50
Finance Committee	C7	17.6.22	40, 61
General Secretary review	D3	17.4.4, 17.4.6	15, 16
General Secretary	E1	17.2.12	8, 49
Justice and International Mission Unit		17.4.18, 17.6.4	24, 30, 47
Korea, peace on the Korean Peninsula		17.6.13	35, 51
Legislative incorporation		17.6.5.1	31, 60
Marriage, Assembly conversation		17.3.4, 17.3.7	12
McRae, Joan – vote of thanks		17.3.15	15
Medically supervised injecting centres		17.5.3.1	27, 64
Minutes of Appreciation			
Crowe, Rev Greg		17.4.17.3	24, 46
Etherington, John		17.4.12.1	19, 62
Harrison, Rev Graeme		17.4.19.1	26, 42
Pargeter, Rev David		17.4.17.2	23, 45
Parker, Rev David		17.2.17.2	9, 55
Rechner, Russell		17.5.18	29, 41
Tabart, Dr Jill		17.4.16.2	22, 44
Thompson, Rev Allan		17.4.11.2	18, 64
Walsh, Michael		17.4.12.2	20, 63
Moderator 2019 - 2022		17.3.15	14
Moderator-elect Nominating Committee	D2	17.2.21	11, 53
Moderator's address		17.2.8	8

Pastoral Assistance Committee	C9	17.6.22	40, 61
People & Culture	E1.1	17.6.22	40, 61
Placements Committee	C10	17.6.22	40, 61
Political donations		17.4.18.2	25, 47
Presbytery funding model	C1	17.6.11.1	34, 55
Presbytery reports	H1-H8	17.2.22	11
Presbytery reports	H1-H8	17.6.22	40, 61
Presbytery Transition Team 17.5.19, 17.6.11	C1	17.2.14, 17.3.13, 17.4.7, 17.4.9, 9, 14, 17, 29, 34	
Presbytery Transition Team	C1	17.2.14, 17.4.7, 17.4.9	54
Privatisation		17.6.4.1	30, 48
Property Board	B4	17.2.17.1	9, 55
Property Trust Tasmania	B5.1	17.2.17.1	9, 55
Property Trust Victoria	B5.2	17.2.17.1	9, 55
Reports			
'Choose you own adventure'		17.5.12, 17.5.16	28, 29
Risk Management Committee	C11	17.6.22	40, 61
Roll of Synod, adoption	AA1	17.4.2	15
Royal Commission Task Group	C1.2	17.6.22	40, 61
Sovereignty and treaty		17.5.11, 17.5.15, 17.6.10	28, 29, 34
Standing Committee			
By-Laws		17.3.3.1, 17.3.11.1, 17.4.5.1	12, 14, 16
Standing Committee election		17.5.2, 17.6.19.1	27, 38
Standing Committee nomination processes		17.6.15	36, 51
Strategic Review Implementation Team	C1.1	17.3.2	12, 58
Strategic Review Implementation Team	C1.1	17.6.22	40, 61
Sustainable Leadership and Generational Change		17.3.17, 17.5.5	15, 27
Synod minutes, confirmation of		17.2.6.2	6, 43
Synod procedures		17.2.6.4	7
Synod Safety	E1.1.1	17.6.22	40, 61
Synod Sexual Misconduct Complaints Committee	C12	17.6.22	40, 61
Synod Standing Committee report	C1	17.2.13	9, 59
Terms of Placement Committee	C13	17.6.22	40, 61
Tribute to CTM, CFM, BOMAR and Property Boards		51	
Tribute to CTM, CFM, BOMAR and Property Boards			17.6.16
	36		
Tributes and thanksgiving service		17.3.8	12
UCA Funds Management, investments in		17.6.12	35, 63
Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress			
Tasmania	F1	17.2.11	8
Tasmania	F1	17.2.11, 17.6.22	64
Victoria	F2	17.2.10	8
Victoria	F2	17.2.10, 17.6.22	64
Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress Tasmania	F1		17.6.22
	61		
Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress Victoria	F2		17.6.22
	61		
Uniting AgeWell	B7	17.4.11.1	18, 64
Uniting Funds Management	B6	17.4.14	21, 62
Uniting report	B9	17.2.15	64
Uniting report	B9	17.2.15,	9
UnitingCare Housing Victoria Ltd	B8	17.6.22	40, 61
Victorian Council of Christian Education		17.6.19.2, 17.6.25.1	38, 54
Vision & Mission Principles		17.5.9, 17.6.8	28
Working Group on Christian-Jewish Relations	G2	17.6.22	40, 61
Youth justice		17.6.4.2	31, 48

