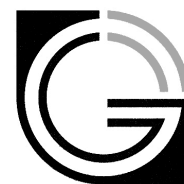


## **Non-Geographical Presbytery Information Sheet**

Prepared for NGP information sessions in March 2019  
Taken from the NGP proposal, rationale and the constitution of the UCA



# GENERATE

### **The NGP is now called the Generate Presbytery.**

#### **Why does the Generate Presbytery exist?**

1. To vigorously pursue the Great Commission
2. To strongly encourage effective mission and discipleship that leads to conversion growth, disciples being made, leaders being empowered, churches being planted and churches being renewed and growing.
3. To passionately stimulate Gospel renewal in the Uniting Church, starting with congregations, who are the embodiment in one place of One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church (B of U Para 4 and 15(a))
4. To hold the position that marriage is the covenantal relationship of one man and one woman while at the same time recognising the integrity of each minister and / or congregation/church council to make its own decisions on this matter.

#### **How do you join the Generate Presbytery?**

The Synod has asked for congregations to call a congregational meeting to decide which presbytery they would like to be allocated too. Congregations need to have a 2/3 majority to join the Generate Presbytery. Congregations can join before or after July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019, however the to be part of the Generate Presbytery in time for the first meeting please return the form by 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2019.

While individuals can not join a presbytery, options and arrangements to come under the oversight of a presbytery will be discussed with Ministers not in congregational placements shortly.

#### **When does the Generate Presbytery begin?**

By July 1, 2019, the Synod Moderator and General Secretary will hold a meeting of congregation representatives for the Generate Presbytery and a chair, secretary and treasurer will be appointed. Other committees or officers will be appointed as the presbytery decides.

#### **What will the Generate Presbytery be responsible for?**

The Generate Presbytery will be responsible for everything the regulations allow it to be responsible for except what the Generate Presbytery Task Group agree it should delegate to the Synod.

#### **Responsibilities of a Presbytery.**

- Oversight of Ministers
- Oversight of Congregations
- Wider Work of the Church [including collection of funds]
- Selection and Oversight of Candidates

- Ordination, Accreditation or Recognition of Specified Ministries
- Placement and Appointment of Specified Ministries and Supervision of Vacancies Administration [can include property]
- Other [as needed or as prescribed by Synod]
- Consultations on the life and witness of a congregation [every 5 years]

### **What are the responsibilities of a Synod?**

- Issues beyond the regulations as needed
- Promotion and encouragement of the mission of the church
- Appointing a Standing Committee and determining who and how they are to be elected.
- Placements Committee
- Theological and Ministerial Education
- The Property Trust [State Act] and appointing the members of the Property Board
- Oversight and management of Synod funds, policy and procedures relating to property
- Forming, naming, varying or dissolving Presbyteries within the Synod
- Selecting people from the Synod to be members of the Assembly
- Co-operating in the selection of candidates, MoP applications and receiving ministers from other denominations.
- Overseeing the colleges and schools and other institutions within the bounds
- Determining the amount of Synod and Assembly money to be asked of other councils and bodies
- The discipline of the Church in accordance with the Regulations and providing for the hearing of appeals.
- Establishing by-laws relating to the Constitution and Regulations

### **Why are we doing this?**

We believe that God is calling us to form this new Generate Presbytery primarily to enable us together to more effectively and vigorously pursue the Great Commission to make disciples. While the Assembly decision (see below) prompted this move, the Generate Presbytery is not primarily a reaction to the Assembly decision but is a proactive move towards exponentially ramping up our engagement in mission together that leads to conversion growth, disciples being made, leaders being empowered, churches being planted and churches being renewed and growing.

The decision of the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly marked a significant turning point with which the Uniting Church had been wrestling with for 30 years or more. It was about more than marriage. The Assembly accepted that there are [at least] two very different understandings of marriage and with those understandings, [at least] two very different theological, missional and ecclesiological frameworks in the Uniting Church. These were named as “mutually exclusive.”

The broad evangelical framework which we believe is at the heart of the Basis of Union is one of those frameworks. Those who believe they have received that revelation of the Gospel, after significant prayer and discernment, agreed to do three things:

1. Stand firm in the worship, witness and service of the broad evangelical faith we have received.

2. Stand aside from other theological, missional, ethical and ecclesiological frameworks that are beyond the broad evangelical faith in the basis of union.
3. Move forward in obedience to Jesus Christ's great commission central to the evangelical faith in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Out of the decision to stand firm, stand aside and move forward came the proposal to form a non-geographic presbytery that, while not able to or wanting to prescribe an individual's or congregation's faith, mission or ethic; would enable a fruitful collection of congregations within the polity of the UCA to express their witness, worship and service in an uninterrupted and broad evangelical expression.

### **Why now?**

The decision of the 15<sup>th</sup> UCA Assembly has come at a time of significant concern at the lack of baptisms and conversions in UCA congregations. In addition, we have been confronted with the reality of 30% of Australians [50% + of Australians under 40] responding as a "none" when it comes to religious and specifically Christian faith. In the light of the Great Commission and the urgency of people's need to hear and know Jesus Christ, we believe the time is now to act. If not now, when?

### **Will networks continue?**

The initial findings from the Restructuring Task group's work is that some Networks may choose to continue but in a different form and on a voluntary basis.

### **What will all this cost?**

The cost structures for congregations, presbyteries and the synod have not yet been determined. Different synods have different arrangements in this matter.

### **What about rural congregations?**

The Generate Presbytery is non geographical so that it can encompass rural and urban churches who will choose to join together in order to enrich our mission to our communities as we seek to see people come Christ and grow in their faith. Suggestions and ideas are beginning around how we ensure strong relationships across the breadth of the presbytery and when it is formed there will be an emphasis on how we structure and resources ourselves to ensure that rural congregations are supported.

### **What are the other options besides the Generate Presbytery?**

The Synod is currently working hard to provide options for up to two other presbyteries in the SA Synod. The Generate Presbytery is required to and will work together with other presbyteries in a spirit of goodwill, integrity and for the greater good.

### **How does the national Catalyst network "fit" with this?**

Catalyst [soon to be renamed] is a national organisation committed to similar goals and aspirations as the Generate Presbytery and other groups. While many of its members are in the UCA, some are not. The Generate Presbytery is a Presbytery which means it works within the polity of the UCA. Catalyst is a network/incorporated body that, while supporting where they can, are not formally a part of the UCA [or any other denominational] polity. ACC has similar priorities to Catalyst and the two support each other where possible.