



# Synod Ecumenical Relations Committee Report

## 1. Composition

The Committee comprises Velvy Holden and Don Hopgood (Co-chairs), Marelle Harisun (Secretary), Rev Greg Elsdon, Rev Anne Hewitt (SA Council of Churches), Rev Steve Thompson, and Rev Geoff Tiller. All are Synod nominees. We are keen to expand our membership and would invite expressions of interest.

## 2. Programme

The Committee has met on three occasions through the calendar year – 5 February at St Oswald's, Parkside, September 23 at Findon UCA and on 25 October at St Oswalds.

As the above venues would indicate, we have focussed in dialogue with the Anglicans. At Findon, Greg Elsdon took us through a paper by Andrew Dutney on decision-making in the Uniting Church. At the return visit to St Oswalds the Anglicans, in turn, explained how decisions are made in Anglicanism.

Our aim is 'Receptive Ecumenism' whereby no assemblage of Christ's followers would claim a monopoly on ultimate truth. The dialogue with the Anglicans will continue.

The pursuit of other matters has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic including especially a proposal to make presentations to congregations which demonstrate ecumenical initiative.

## 3. Immediate and Long Term Aim

Our Strategic Plan for the period to end 2021 includes:

- Meeting with the Roman Catholic-Uniting Church Dialogue Group to share information re the work of each and to deepen relationships
- Inviting congregations to contact us via the web page about how they are engaged in ecumenical action
- Inviting congregations to submit entries for our Ecumenical Action Awards (\$500) as indicated above
- Continuing to communicate with Ecumenical bodies of the UCA in other Synods and with NCCA
- Seeking a closer relationship with the Seminary, its faculty and students.
- Inviting the three Presbyteries to each nominate one of their members to our ranks

It is noted in some quarters that ecumenical enthusiasm has abated somewhat in the UCA since the early **'heady' days when we seriously debated with which denomination we would next merge. If there has been** an ebbing of ecumenical enthusiasm we find this disturbing and we hope to redouble our efforts in terms of Christ's High Priestly Prayer that his followers might all be one. God's church is often described as 'One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church'. Are we prepared to bring closer the dream that we may all be one?

**Velvy Holden, Don Hopgood**