

# Synod '23



## Minutes of the Meeting

**Wednesday 21 JUNE 2023**

### **SESSION 1**

The Installation of Rev Peter Morel as Moderator, South Australian Synod, Uniting Church in Australia occurred at a public service at Adelaide West Uniting Church at 7.00pm.

**Thursday 22 JUNE 2023**

### **SESSION 2**

#### **WELCOME TO COUNTRY**

Allen Edwards officially welcomed all to the 2023 Synod Meeting through music and words.

#### **WORSHIP**

Welcome and Call to Worship: Rev Liz Dyson - Isaiah 40

Song: How great is our God

Prayer

Song: King of Kings:

Scripture: Corinthians 5:11-21

Reflection: Rev Peter Morel – Theme Reconciliation

Song: In Christ Alone

Prayer

Song: Deep Stillness

Benediction

#### **BUSINESS SESSION**

Rev Peter Morel, Moderator opened the business with an acknowledgement of Country.

The Moderator welcomed and recognised:

- Assembly General Secretary, Ms Colleen Geyer
- All members of the Synod including new members
- Visitors, Staff and Volunteers
- Those who received a Kings Honour within the Kings Birthday Honors List:
  - Mr Bruce Ind OAM
  - Ms Anthea Pavy AM
  - Mr Kenneth Wells OAM
  - Mrs Susanne Harris, OAM

It was acknowledged that both Rev Sue Page and Rev Philip Gardner would, for the purposes of the meeting, act as General Secretary at various times and would both sit on the Top Table.

Rev Sue Page, Acting General Secretary summarised the procedures for the Synod meeting.

## PROPOSAL 1 PROCEDURAL

S23.01 It was AGREED (by consensus) that the Synod of SA resolve to:

1.
  - a. ADOPT standing orders and rules of debate as set out in 'A Manual for Meetings in the Uniting Church', as recorded in the Constitution and Regulations, 2018 edition. (Reg. 3.8.4)
  - b. APPROVE that the style of decision making shall be by the use of coloured cards unless a written ballot is called for by the Moderator.
  - c. AGREE that in the event that a procedural motion for the council to move into "Private sitting" is carried by a simple majority then ALL those who are not members of the Council must leave the meeting. The required Uniting Technology and Synod staff will be able to remain to execute their respective tasks.
  - d. DETERMINE that all discussions or decisions will be conducted in ways which comply with the Church's responsibilities under the "Synod Work Health and Safety Corporate Policy and Procedures" and the Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2012 (SA)
2. NOTE that at the beginning of each session the Moderator will deal with the business coming before the house in the following order:
  - a. Minutes of any meeting requiring to be approved or confirmed.
  - b. Letters or other communications to be received.
  - c. Reports from the Business Committee or other special committee appointed by the Synod.
  - d. Confirmation or variation of the proposed hours of session and order of the day.
  - e. Formal Business.
  - f. The order of the day.
3. RECEIVE all reports as provided (electronic and hard copy) in the Reports and Business Papers of the Synod of South Australia 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and Supplements thereto.
4. NOTE that:
  - a. Questions relating to the proposals brought before the Synod by the Business Committee will be answered at the time when the proposals are being considered by a plenary session of the Synod.
  - b. Questions relating to the reports and proposals which are not considered by a plenary session of Synod because of time constraints, will be referred along with the particular proposals to the Synod Standing Committee.
  - c. Comments and/or questions from the floor and replies to questions shall be limited to three (3) minutes unless otherwise determined by the house.
5. DETERMINE that the Roll shall only contain the names of those members listed on the roll present at the meeting or have advised the Synod Event Manager of extenuating circumstances at 11.30 am on Thursday 24 June 2022.

6. DEFINE the boundaries of the house to be the main auditorium and creche room of the Adelaide West Uniting Church.
7. ADOPT the Hours of Session as listed hereunder:
- |                 |                                 |                 |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Session 1       | Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> June | 7.00 pm.        |
| Sessions 2 - 5  | Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> June  | 9:15am – 5:30pm |
| Sessions 6– 9   | Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June    | 9:00am – 5:30pm |
| Sessions 10 -13 | Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> June  | 9.00am – 5.00pm |
8. APPOINT the following officers for this Synod meeting:
- a. Assistant Secretaries Michelle Harris  
Travis Turner
  - b. Minute Secretary Gill Morel
  - c. Chief Scrutineer Anne Wilson
  - d. Chaplains Rev Ruthmary Bond  
Rev Darren Lovell
  - e. Business Committee Moderator, Rev Sue Page,  
Travis Turner, Michelle Harris, Malcolm Wilson
  - f. Facilitation Team Rev Sue Ellis (Convenor)  
Rev Christa Megaw  
Mr. Andrew Telfer  
Rev Ann Phillips  
Mr. Brenton Smith  
Mr. Jacob Blackwell
  - g. First Aid Officers Mr. Tim Lee  
Dr Joanna Palmer
9. Associate the following people with the meeting for the purposes of participating in presenting reports, proposals and report electives.
- |                   |                 |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Mr Brian Hern     | Mr David Bailey | Mr Ben Moore    |
| Mr Mark Waters    | Mr Daniel Cox   | Ms Leesa Story  |
| Dr Harry Randhawa | Mr Steve Taylor | Ms Lynne Taylor |
| Mr Andrew Johnson | Ms Kayli Taylor |                 |
10. Co-opt the following people to membership of the Synod:
- Rev Sue Page (Associate General Secretary (G & O)
  - Malcolm Wilson (Event Manager)
  - Rev Gary Stuckey (Moderator's Chaplain)
  - Allen Edwards
11. DECLARE that proposals be dealt with in the following order:
- a. Those which must be dealt with by Synod in full session which cannot be referred (in an order decided by the Business Committee).
  - b. Those which arrive by 3pm on Thursday 19 May 2023 (in an order decided by the Business Committee).
  - c. All others (in an order decided by the Business Committee).

12. ADOPT the following procedure in respect of ballots:
  - a. Note that nominations for all councils, committees and boards will close at 5.30 pm on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2023.
  - b. Agree that any necessary ballots be held during the meeting with ballots conducted electronically via Survey Monkey with secure links sent to members at a time determined by the Business Committee and that ballots will close at a time to be determined by Business Committee.
13. ASK that proposals with costing implications:
  - a. include a process for raising new revenue and/or
  - b. be submitted to the next year's budget process to be determined by Synod and/or
  - c. be submitted to annual Synod grant processes.
14. ENDORSE the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023 Synod Standing Committee decision that the next meeting of the South Australia Synod be held at Adelaide West Uniting Church and Uniting College for Leadership and Theology during the period 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> October 2024.
15. AGREE that the SA Synod use a 67% majority vote for the General Secretary appointment by written (electronic) ballot.

#### PROPOSAL 2 IN MEMORIAM

The Moderator invited members to stand in silence to remember those who have died since the 2022 Synod meeting.

S23.02 It was AGREED (by consensus) that the Synod of SA resolve to:

STAND in silence to acknowledge the ministry of the following Ministers who have died since the 2022 Meeting of the Synod, and in gratitude to God for their contribution to the ministry and mission of the Uniting Church:

Rev John Mauviel  
 Rev Ian Moulton  
 Rev Jim Murton  
 Rev Margaret Polkinghorne  
 Rev Don Catford  
 Rev Dr Paul Trudinger

Formally recognise the extensive number of people who have faithfully offered lay leadership and who have died since the 2022 Meeting of the Synod.

## PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA, IKSAN PRESBYTERY AND THE SIGNING OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.

The following members of the Iksan Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea attended the meeting:

- Rev Tae Hoi Heo, Chairperson of Iksan Presbytery
- Mrs Seon Yeoung Baek
- Rev Bang Hwan Na Overseas Mission Committee
- Rev Jong Bum Park, Ex-Chairperson

Rev Lawrie Linggood spoke of the international Partnership mission which has existed for more than 30 years. In that time there has been learning and sharing, through support and prayer.

A Memorandum of Understanding for a further 5-year period was signed. Following this, gifts and prayers for each other, for the churches and for the respective countries were exchanged.

## BRONTE WILSON, EX MODERATOR REPORT

Bronte Wilson, Ex Moderator provided a written and verbal report of his time as Moderator.

Bronte began by thanking all those who had helped him during his term. He spoke of his theme "Connections" - Connections with God, with communities and with each other. Connections which were more important than ever, especially during the challenges of the last few years of fires, flood and COVID-19. Bronte prayed Gods blessings on everyone as together we continue ministry, for the on-going witness and service of the Church and for our continuing connections as God leads us forward.

Rev Philip Gardner Interim General Secretary provided a vote of thanks to Bronte and prayed for him and his family.

## 46<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY OF THE UCA

Moderator Rev Peter Morel cut a cake in celebration of the 46<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the UCA.

## THURSDAY 22 JUNE 2023

### SESSION 3

## INTRODUCTION TO REPORTS AND PROPOSALS FOR WORKING GROUPS

The authors of the reports listed below presented an overview of their reports. In this session questions for clarification were invited. The Synod would discuss the proposals in working groups in subsequent sessions with a facilitation team to consider the feedback sheets.

### Strategy & Planning Mission & Property report S1.7.1, 2, 3 (Proposal 7)

Rev Sue Page, David Bailey, and Darcy Pullman spoke to the Strategy and Planning Mission and Property Working Group report.

This report has been borne out of conversations about mission and property which has spanned more than 15 years and had included the work on missional viability and building safety. As a church, we have reached a sense of urgency for this situation.

This report had sought to collect as much data as possible from multiple sources to inform the conversations going forward.

The Proposal recommends that: conversations continue in 2023/24; structured consultations then ensue; and a plan be created for a missionally viable church going forward.

#### Voice to Parliament Report (Proposal 4)

Rev Jesse Size introduced Proposal 4 about the Voice to Parliament and the invitation to enter a fuller expression of our Nationhood and work together.

Aunty Rev Dr Denise Champion also spoke of the importance of The Voice. That it is important to make the right decisions, and to have the right conversations. In the past decisions have been made without thinking of the consequences for Aboriginal people and for all in our communities. There have been failed policies, after failed policies, and The Voice will allow indigenous communities to have a say. It won't be a case of making decisions on behalf of Aboriginal people but in consultation with them. Denise urged all to listen to what the spirit is saying to the Church at this time.

#### MLD Mission Review Presentation

Rev Tim Hein introduced AngelWings Ltd: Steve Taylor, Kayli Taylor and Lynne Taylor. They are in the process of reviewing the Missional needs and opportunities in the Synod of SA: Conversations would continue over lunch for those who were interested, and a further survey was opened for those in the Uniting Church SA to provide their feedback on mission.

#### Act2: IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S CALL

Assembly General Secretary, Rev Colleen Geyer and Andrew Johnson (Project Manager for Act2) spoke to their report: 'Act2: In Response to God's Call.'

At present, the Uniting Church is engaged in a national conversation about its future. This is a whole-of-Church process and approach, to discerning the future to which God is calling us. It is a process with many parts. Phase 1 Exploration has concluded and Phase 2: Collective Discernment has begun. Between June and November 2023 all in the church are invited into an intentional period of discernment. To begin this time the whole Church has also been invited into a time of intentional prayer: [Uniting in Prayer](#).

Act2 seeks to invite all to join in discerning the future of the Uniting Church guided by the Holy Spirit. The Act2 Team were available at lunch for further discussion.

**THURSDAY 22 JUNE 2023****SESSION 4 Working Groups**

The Synod met in working groups to consider the following reports – Feedback sheets on the first two items were given to the Facilitation group, who brought the responses and recommendations on Friday. Feedback on the MLD Missional Review and Act2 was sent directly to those groups.

- Strategy & Planning Mission & Property report
- The Voice to Parliament
- MLD Misisonal Review
- Act2

**THURSDAY 22 JUNE 2023****SESSION 5 Presbytery Reports and UAICC Report****GENERATE PRESBYTERY S1.4**

As hoped, 2022 brought a more focused and steady year in the life of the Presbytery. This allowed a focus on strategic priorities and managing the ongoing life of the Presbytery and allowed congregations, faith communities, ministry agents and leaders, to serve one another in their shared desire to see people come to faith in Jesus, grow as passionate disciples, raise courageous leaders and plant and renew churches.

There was a focus on three main themes:

- Spiritual Renewal
- Emotional Renewal
- Structural Renewal.

This is both rewarding and challenging work. The Presbytery is immensely grateful for the extensive number of people throughout Generate who contribute to the heartbeat of this Presbytery, who say yes to the opportunities to serve, to meet, to gather, to encourage, to equip, to strengthen, to pray, to discern and to lead. The strength of Generate is in everyone finding a way to reach out and encourage the mission and ministry of others.

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN SA S1.6**

The Presbytery reported an overview of the life and work of the Presbytery of Southern SA including the leadership group, gatherings, committees, administration and relationships with Synod, UAICC and its congregations. New developments included a proposed Presbytery Pool of leaders for ministry. It also included a description of their support for Carolyn and Fuzz Kitto's anti-slavery ministry which reaches across the world.

**WIMALA PRESBYTERY S1.5**

Central to Wimala Presbytery's ministry is to Gather as the community of Christ, to Connect with God and with each other, and to Go in the power of the Spirit to be witnesses to God's love, foster discipleship, and engage in acts of outreach and works for justice, peace, reconciliation and the renewal of creation.

A highlight of the past year was 'The Great Debate' led by Rev Paul Turley. The debate topic being: 'The Uniting Church should divest itself of all its property.' We have around 400 properties owned collectively in the Uniting Church, and it is important that we think about how we best steward and utilise our vast number of properties. No-one has all the answers and debates are a good fun way to explore the ins and outs of a particular issue and this is what we hoped to achieve.

#### UNITED ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER CHRISTIAN CONGRESS

Rev Ken Sumner spoke to the UAICC Report including reporting that the Congress National Conference was held in Darwin at Nungalinga College in April this year. The theme of the conference was 'Weaving and Awakening: A Renewal of Faith, Community and the UAICC.' In addition to business sessions there were some public evening sessions including opening worship, and a seminar on the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*, with Nathan Tyson from NSW being the keynote speaker. Uncle Rev Ken Sumner and Aunty Rev Dr Denise Champion also spoke at key sessions. Aunty Denise and two other speakers spoke on what it means to be a First Nations Christian. These speeches and the public events are all available for viewing on the Assembly website.

SA Congress has also been involved in two other significant events this year. The first was a course titled, 'Who is Jesus?' taught by Rev Dr Michelle Cook from Nungalinga College. The second was the Walking on Country program held on Adnyamathanha country in the northern Flinders Ranges on the June long weekend.

Thanks were extended to Pastor Julia Lennon who continues to minister in and from Oodnadatta as part of the Frontier Services and UAICC ministry. It was noted that the contract signing for the building of the Church at Oodnadatta is imminent.

#### FRIDAY 23 JUNE 2023

#### WORSHIP

The Moderator welcomed everyone to Day 2 of the Synod meeting and acknowledged that we meet on the land of the Kurna people.

Called to Worship 'Acapella ' Rejoice in the Lord always.

Prayers

Song: Sing out

Scripture: Psalm 46

Prayer

Blessing: Open us up O God

#### BIBLE STUDY

The Moderator then introduced Rev Steve Francis, Past Moderator from the Synod of WA to provide the Bible Study. Steve spoke on a selection of Paul's letters to the Philippians, acknowledging that the letter is



the warmest and most pastoral letters. Paul at his best. In these difficult and demanding days, Steve believes this letter has meaning for us today. Firstly, in listening to the passion of Paul. In this letter Paul pours out his heart. 'For me to live is Christ to die is gain.'

Knowing Jesus Christ, being in a relationship with Christ is the deepest, richest, most wonderful encounter that is possible on this planet. Can you hear Paul's passion for Christ; it is the singular driving force of his life and the basis of his hope for the future. Is that your passion too?

'I consider everything as loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.' (3:8). There is a love affair going on between Paul and Jesus; that flows through to others in the church and in the community. We might say 'mission' is about overflow, the overflow of the love of Christ. Sometimes we get tired and disappointed. Ministry is hard. Passion can evaporate. That's why we need to be renewed through prayer, worship and scripture. Renewed through the source – Jesus Christ.

Paul has a passion for Christ like behaviours – as God works in us, we are transformed. He challenges the Philippians to do all things without complaining. How challenging is that? Paul calls out an argumentative spirit as opposed to constructive debate. Paul has a passion for the highest standards.

Paul has a passion for Christology. The incarnation of Christ, the suffering of Christ, the servanthood of Christ, the victory of Christ, the risen Christ, the exhortation of Christ and a God who is self-emptying and pours himself out.

Paul also demonstrated a passion for friendship. His affection runs deep, he prays, shares and partners with the Philippians.

Members were asked to reflect on, and discuss with those sitting near them:

Which of the four passions, Christ, Christ like behaviour, Christology and Christian friendship do we need more of?

**FRIDAY 23 JUNE 2023**

**SESSION 6**

#### ASSEMBLY REPORT

Colleen Geyer (National Assembly General Secretary) presented an Assembly Report.

Rev Sharon Hollis (National Assembly President) sent a message via video as she is currently attending the World Council of Churches Central Committee.

Highlights included:

- Frontier Services
- UnitingCare Australia
- UnitingWorld

- Act2
- 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly which will take place July 2023
- Joining in our covenant with UAICC around the Voice to Parliament.'

#### GENERAL SECRETARY REPORT

Rev Philip Gardner and Rev Sue Page presented the General Secretary's Report.

Rev Philip Gardner spoke of the uncertainty this time last year; and that Synod Standing Committee had asked both he and Sue to share the role of General Secretary. Rev Dr Jenny Byrnes had worked with the team of Executive Officers and had also conducted professional development training for all staff.

Rev Sue Page reflected on the Synod office this past year. A Managers' workshop day and two professional development sessions were undertaken with staff. She also reported that in line with many organisations there had been 25% of staff resignations - some through retirements; some through personal choices; all were challenging to manage. Significant corporate knowledge and wisdom has been lost. The positions were slowly being filled. and currently the Synod has 12 vacancies.

Thanks were expressed to all staff for their work and contributions under trying circumstances. Sue also thanked the Executive Officers for their on-going support and commitment to their respective ministry centres.

#### SERC ECUMENICAL AWARD TO CONGREGATION

Velvy Holden, Chair of the Synod Ecumenical Relations Committee (SERC) presented the Ecumenical award for 2023.

Yankalilla Uniting Church won this year's award with a certificate of achievement being awarded to Burra Uniting Church.

#### CHAPLAINCY

Rev Andrew Robertson, Placements Officer (Supply) presented a video in which various Chaplains spoke of their work. Rev Peter Morel, Moderator prayed for the ministry of Chaplaincy.

#### MEDIACOM BOOK LAUNCH

Rev Andrew Robertson and Rev Paul Turley presented on the work of MediaCom and the books and resources that they provide. Paul spoke of 'Seasons of the Spirit,' and advised that it is coming to an end.

MediaCom is working on an Australian specific resource called L3 which is currently under development, and when ready it will be marketed and available to coincide with the new church year in Advent.

Aunty Rev Dr Denise Champion's book '[Yarta Wandatha](#),' is back in print

MediaCom is also seeking to do more work of 'creatives' in this space and marketing the work of people that self-publish.

The book '[A Cry Went up in the Desert](#),' by Rev Dr Tom Atherton and Margaret Gunn was officially launched during the meeting. The book relates confidential emails from an 'ordinary' Australian, reacting to the appearance of Woomera Detention Centre in his back yard from January–June 2000.

<b>Elective provider</b>	<b>Elective focus</b>
Mission & Leadership Development (MLD)	Mission Review
Mission Resourcing	Awakening Adelaide
	Mission Resourcing activities, programs and resources
	Mission Resourcing activities, programs and resources
Resources	Explanation and further detail of Resources Report (S2.6) inc. 2022 financials, MSF and Q&A.
Stipends	Stipends and associated allowances
Uniting Foundation	Fund development, 2023 Grant application criteria and processes
Uniting Care	Responding to Affordable Housing and Homelessness
	Chaplaincy in Uniting Church Schools; a current view
	Uniting Country: 57 programs across 33 sites
Synod Engagement Team	Resources designed to support congregations. From websites to social media, and everything in between
Uniting College Leadership & Theology	Changes in education and formation for ministry students (candidates and MoP's and PoD's)
Placements and Safe Church	Placements procedures
	Safe Church processes

#### **FRIDAY 23 JUNE 2023**

#### **SESSION 7 Electives**

Members chose 3 thirty-minute sessions to attend from the following ministry areas.

#### **FRIDAY 23 JUNE 2023**

#### **SESSION 8**

#### **General Secretary Joint Nominating Committee**

Rev Rob Brown was invited to present a report from the Joint Nominating Committee (JNC) for the General Secretary appointment. Thanks were extended to the members of the JNC as they brought the name of **Rev Philip Gardner** as the nominee for the role of the next General Secretary of the Synod of South Australia. A Ballot was then conducted.

## FACILITATION TEAM REPORT

The Facilitation Team provided a summary of discussions which were undertaken by the working groups. A range of feedback, comments and perspectives were presented in relation to the following Proposals:

- Proposal 4: Voice to Parliament
- Proposal 7: Strategy and Planning Mission and Property

The Facilitation Team were thanked for their contribution and the meeting then moved into the deliberative process for proposals.

## PROPOSAL 4: VOICE TO PARLIAMENT

S23.03 Guided by our Covenant Relationship as First and Second Peoples It was AGREED (by agreement) that the Synod of SA resolve to:

Support the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution to empower First Nations Peoples to have a greater say in policy and legislation which govern their affairs.

In so doing, affirm First Nations People's Voice in the decision-making of our country and their right to self-determination.

## PROPOSAL 7 SYNOD STRATEGY AND PLANNING (MISSION AND PROPERTY) WORKING GROUP

S23.04 Based on the intent to foster missional vibrancy and missional viability information received, it was AGREED (by consensus) that the Synod of SA resolve to:

1. NOTE the Synod Strategy and Planning Mission and Property Working Group report.
2. REQUEST Presbyteries to work with their congregations to:
  - a. Consider the draft property strategy based on missional viability as it relates to congregational property in the context of all Uniting Church congregations, regional population change, opportunities for sharing of properties, and exploration of greater use by culturally and linguistically diverse congregations/ faith communities and church plants.
  - b. Complete and/or update the Missional Viability Questionnaire by the end of November 2023.
3. REQUEST the General Secretary to facilitate the work with Presbyteries and Congress to identify missionally vibrant congregations in safe properties in each region.
4. MAKE the 2019 Building Safety reports for all congregation properties available to the relevant presbytery.
5. REQUEST the General Secretary to investigate suitable resourcing for the project moving forward – including the future role of a Working Group - and to bring a report to the next Synod meeting.

## OUTCOME OF GENERAL SECRETARY BALLOT

In accordance with the nomination received and the results of the election, the Chief Scrutineer Mrs Anne Wilson, **RECOMMENDS** that the Synod **DECLARE** the following person to be **APPOINTED as General Secretary of the Synod of South Australia :**  
**Rev Philip Gardner**

## CELEBRATION OF MINISTRY SERVICE

The Celebration of Ministry service recognised and honoured the following:

### **Recognition of Lay Preachers**

#### **50 years**

Doug Warmington  
Margaret Pope  
Wes Bray

#### **40 years**

Peter Egan

### **Recognition of 20 years of ordination**

Rev Jennifer Swanbury  
Rev Jenny Walker  
Rev Sarah Williamson  
Rev Kaye Colliver

### **Recognition of 30 years of ordination**

Rev Geoff Tiller  
Rev Jonathan Button  
Rev Scott Button  
Rev Ashley Davis

### **Recognition of 40 years of ordination**

Rev Dr Kevin Sarlow  
Rev John Blanksby  
Rev Brian Zeitz  
Rev Rob Brown  
Rev Eric Kirkham  
Rev Peter Moss  
Rev Trevor Klar

### **Recognition of 50 years of ordination**

Rev Phil Carr OAM  
Rev Roger Simpson  
Rev Thelma Holmes  
Rev Esmond Dowdy  
Rev John Minchin

### **Recognition of 60 years of ordination**

Rev Dr Dean Eland

### **The celebration also acknowledged the retirement of the following ministers:**

Rev Dr Peter Trudinger  
Rev Alan Biglow  
Rev Lyn Leane  
Rev Alison Whish

Rev Andrew Everson  
Rev Andrew Diprose  
Rev David Ingleton  
Rev Christine Ostle  
Rev Sue Ellis  
Rev Diane Bury

**SATURDAY 24 JUNE 2023**

**SESSION 9**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

The acknowledgement of country came from the students at Pilgrim School via a pre-recorded video.

**WORSHIP**

Song: This is the day

Scripture: Psalm 100

Reflection and Video: World Blessing 2023

Song: May our Lives and our Prayers be One

Benediction

**BIBLE STUDY**

Rev Steve Francis asked, "Who are we?" Identity really matters. In the letter of joy.' Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15 'I have become all things to all people, so that by all possible means I might save some ... I do this for the sake of the gospel.'

In the letter to the Philippians, we receive some great clues about who we are called to be as disciples of Christ.

In Chapter one, verse one Paul writes, 'Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus.' He doesn't say Paul the apostle, the theologian, the church planter, the evangelist, the missionary pioneer. He says, 'Paul servant of Christ Jesus,' a great place to begin. Just as Jesus was a servant so we too share that identity.

In Chapter two, verse five Paul reminds us 'Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.' We are servants of Christ Jesus. Christian Service as modelled by Jesus Christ means doing the small things. The core of our identity is to service one another.

We are Workers – Philippians 2 vs 12 Work out your salvations with fear and trembling. Paul is thinking about who Jesus Christ is for us and seeking to earth that in how we live together. The light of the gospel needs to be before us in all we do with fear and trembling that is reverence for God. Building community is a sacred business. Mutually honour Christ and each other. Philippians 2 vs 13 It is God who works in you. We are coworkers of and with God.

We are Stars. Philippians 2 vs 15. Not in the Hollywood sense. But we are beacons in a dark world. Christian communities who are bearers of light.

All were asked to share/consider one thought about Paul's words that continues to linger with you.

#### Proposal 3 RAISING THE AGE OF CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY

S23.05 It was AGREED (by consensus) that the Synod of SA resolve to:

1. AFFIRM AND SUPPORT the campaign to raise the age of criminal responsibility to 14 years old in South Australia.
2. REQUEST the Moderator to inform the relevant Minister, the Premier of the SA Government and the Leader of the Opposition of the Synod resolution.

#### PROPOSAL 8 ASSESSMENT OF PLACEMENT STRUCTURES

S23.06 It was AGREED (by consensus) that the Synod of SA resolve to:

Bearing in mind the discussion at this meeting, REQUEST the Placements Committee and Presbyteries investigate creative placement processes and inform the Act2 Task Group of their discussions.

#### DECLARATION OF BALLOT - SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE

In accordance with nominations received and the results of the election, the Chief Scrutineer Mrs Anne Wilson, **RECOMMENDS** that the Synod **DECLARE** the following persons to be **ELECTED**:

Rev Lynne Aird	Mr Peter Hollister	Rev Andrew Robertson
Mr Jacob Blackwell	Mr Bruce Ind	Mr Andrew Telfer
Rev Dr Benji Callen	Pastor Elissa Inglis	Rev Nathan Whillas
Pastor Leanne Davis	Rev Christa Megaw	
Mr Scott Davis	Mrs Darcy Pullman	

#### PROPOSAL 9 - JUSTICE AND RIGHTS FOR PALESTINIANS AND PEACE WITH ISRAEL

S23.07 It was AGREED (by consensus) that the Synod of SA resolve to:

1. **ENDORSE** the statement 'Seeking Justice and Peace for all in the Middle-East' of the World Council of Churches (**WCC**) 11<sup>th</sup> Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany in September 2022 and commend it to members, congregations, and agencies in the Synod of SA in their advocacy for a just peace in the Holy Land.
2. **AFFIRM** that there is no place in our society for any form of antisemitism and hate speech, and the imperative to speak out against discrimination, racism and hate.
3. **ENCOURAGE** congregations to pray, advocate and stand in solidarity with people in the Holy Land during the annual World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel (WWPPI), to be observed on the third week of September.

4. **REQUEST** the Assembly Standing Committee to CONSIDER the statement from the World Council of Churches and, in turn, REQUEST the 11<sup>th</sup> National Forum of the National Council of Churches of Australia (NCCA) to:
  - a. Take a lead in advocating for justice for the people of Palestine/Israel and the restoration of rights for Palestinians living in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza.
  - b. Invite a Palestinian Christian to speak at the Forum.

#### PROPOSAL 6 CHURCHES TOGETHER SA

S23.08 It was AGREED that the Synod of SA resolve to:

1. CONTINUE to engage in ecumenical relationships and missional opportunities across Churches in South Australia through Churches Together SA Ltd, its Committees and Teams to create ecumenical learning, missional and worship opportunities. **(By Consensus)**
2. Taking heed of the comments from the Synod refer the matter of the annual financial contribution to Churches Together SA to the General Secretary. **(By Agreement)**
3. CONTINUE UCA SA formal ecumenical Dialogues with other Churches to strengthen ecumenical relationships, understanding and missional outcomes with support through Churches Together SA Ltd. **(By Consensus)**
4. CONTINUE to support Synod Ecumenical Relationships Committee (SERC) as they continue the mission of UCA SA Synod, to work towards deeper unity with other Churches. **(By Consensus)**

#### PROPOSAL 5 JUSTICE FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS

S23.09 It was AGREED (by consensus) that the Synod of SA resolve to:

1. CALL ALL members of the Uniting Church in South Australia to pray and work for justice for refugees and asylum seekers in our communities and in offshore detention.
2. REQUEST the Moderator and members of the Uniting Church in South Australia to write to *The Hon Andrew Giles MP*, Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Multicultural Affairs to:
  - a. Thank the Minister for the work the government is doing on removing people from offshore detention;
  - b. Urge the government to move faster on the processing of permanent (Resolution of Status) ROS visas for refugees who arrived in Australia by boat;
  - c. Urge the government to ensure that all long-term asylum seekers still held in detention are released into Community Detention or given Bridging visa E with permission to work and access to Medicare.
  - d. Urge the government to change the restrictions for those refugees and asylum seekers on Bridging visa E to enable them to study and to have their overseas qualifications more quickly assessed and recognised.
  - e. Urge the government to increase the refugee intake to make up for the decrease during the Covid pandemic and to process the Afghan caseload especially, more quickly.
  - f. Recommend that people who are not found to be in need of Australia's protection but are determined to be stateless, be eligible for the grant of a permanent Protection Visa.



- g. Urge the Government to provide concession fees of at least 33% discount for partner and child visa applications where the sponsor is a refugee or ROS visa holder;
  - h. Develop a visa category for persons who are deemed to be stateless.
  - i. Fast track the partner/child visas for those who have been separated for an extended period.
  - j. Reduce by at least one-third the fees charged to refugees seeking to reunite their families.
3. Encourage all members of the Uniting Church in South Australia to inform themselves of the current situation for refugees and asylum seekers in Australia and consider with their congregations/communities' ways they can support refugees and asylum seekers with the following resources:
  4. Invite congregations to observe Refugee Week and Refugee Sunday on the Sunday before or after World Refugee Day (20 June) and to pray, raise awareness, and advocate for refugees and asylum seekers and request Mission Resourcing to source or produce Worship Resources for congregations.

#### DECLARATION OF BALLOT – 17<sup>th</sup> ASSEMBLY

In accordance with nominations received and the results of the election, the Chief Scrutineer Mrs Anne Wilson, **RECOMMENDS** that the Synod **DECLARE** the following persons to be **ELECTED**:

Rev Dr Benji Callen	Rev Do Young Kim	Mr Andrew Telfer
Pastor Leanne Davis	Mr Tim Littleford	Mr Travis Turner
Rev Ian Dow	Rev Amel Manyon	Pastor Jenny Wardrop
Rev Linda Driver	Rev Sue Page	Ms Anna Wilson
Rev Dr Paul Goh	Dr Joanna Palmer	Mr Bronte Wilson
Rev Andrew Hogarth	Mrs Darcy Pulman	Mr Malcolm Wilson
Rev David Hoffman	Mr Nathan Pullman	Rev Mark Schultz
Mr Bruce Ind	Rev Andrew Robertson	Pastor David Sigley
Pastor Elissa Inglis	Rev Stephanie Tai	

Declaration of the following Ballots would occur post meeting

- Synod Placements Committee Chairperson
- Synod Covenanting Committee

#### CLOSING WORSHIP

Call to Worship: Rev Peter Morel

Song: Gather us in

Scripture: Romans 12: 9-21

Prayer

Thank you's to all by the Moderators Chaplains

Song: In Christ Alone

Communion

Song: Oceans

Benediction

Song: Joyful, Joyful.