



## That the Synod:

Request the Moderator to write to the Queensland State Premier requesting that the government establish continuous and comprehensive real-time monitoring in all areas where CSG operations are taking place within two (2) kilometres of people's homes with appropriate follow up and reporting back to the community by the Department of Health and Department of Environment and Heritage Protection.

## Request for comprehensive testing in CSG areas

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### The scope of a Proposal

Request the Moderator to write to the Queensland State Premier requesting that, following on from Recommendation 7(d) in the report on "Coal seam gas in the Tara Region: Summary risk assessment of health complaints and environmental monitoring data" (March 2013), the government establish continuous and comprehensive real-time monitoring in all areas where CSG operations are taking place within two (2) kilometres of people's homes with appropriate follow up and reporting back to the community by the Department of Health and Department of Environment and Heritage Protection. That such monitoring should be permanent, comprehensive, readily available and include measurements of noise and vibration, air, soil and water, and be conducted independently of Government Departments and Mining companies.

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### Rationale

The coal seam gas (CSG) industry has developed significantly in the Tara region over recent years. Its development has coincided with complaints from some residents alleging impacts on the health of themselves and family members. (Introduction p-4 "Coal seam gas in the Tara Region: Summary risk assessment of health complaints and environmental monitoring data" - March 2013)

As a result of these complaints, a study was undertaken by the Queensland Department of Health, and whilst the report, which was released in March 2013, concluded that, “a clear link cannot be drawn between the health complaints by some residents in the Tara region and impacts of the local CSG industry on air, water or soil ...” (ibid Conclusions p-18), the report did recommend that a strategic program of monitoring as per the recommendation above be established. Three years later, no such monitoring is taking place and reports of ill health continue to rise.

The constant monitoring of air, soil and water is necessary due to the fact that residents regularly report the presence of particular odours prior to falling ill and private testing have identified high levels of volatile organic compounds in the air, and high levels of lead, radioactivity, hydrocarbons, volatile and microbiological elements in dam and tank water in and around residents' homes. In many instances, residents are unable to use their own tank water for either bathing or drinking.

Independent and permanent testing is necessary because the monitoring mentioned in the Department of Health Report was of a short term nature, and undertaken by Mining Companies. Subsequent to this adhoc and incomplete testing which occurred in 2012 there has been massive expansion of the industry. By the report's own admission, the monitoring that did take place was insufficient for any significant conclusions to be drawn either way (ibid).

A reference to a critique of the report by the National Toxic Network is <http://www.ntn.org.au/wp/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Critique-of-CSG-Health-Study-april20131.pdf>

Monitoring, as per 7(d) of the report is urgently required, and although the issue of Solastalgia (stress caused by rapid environmental change) has been raised as a possible cause for resident's health complaints. Soastalgia, for instance, does not cause nose bleeds, a common complaint of people living in the gas fields, and it seems inconceivable that this has not been investigated further. Furthermore, no satisfactory explanations have been provided for the presence of pollutants in the air (including noise), soil and water inside and around residents' homes.

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## Proposers

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Slaughter', is written above a horizontal blue line.

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rob Callow', is written above a horizontal blue line.



## That the Synod:

Request the Moderator to write to the Queensland State Premier requesting that comprehensive baseline studies be conducted prior to the commencement of any new mining development or expansion of existing mining operations.

# Inclusion of comprehensive baseline testing in mining approval processes

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## The scope of a Proposal

Request the Moderator to write to the Queensland State Premier requesting that comprehensive baseline studies be conducted prior to the commencement of any new mining development (including coal, oil and gas mining) or expansion of existing mining operations. These studies should be conducted over a minimum 13 month period and include but not be limited to establishing baselines for:

- environmental conditions, including air, soil and water quality
- the physical and mental health of the neighbouring population
- the social character/capital of neighbouring communities
- infrastructure and economic strength of neighbouring towns and communities.

Studies should be conducted independently and once complete made readily available to the public to track both favourable and unfavourable changes in the surrounding communities, populations and environments as a consequence of mining processes.

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# Rationale

In order to track change one needs to have a baseline. In view of the significant controversy attached to mining developments to date, it is essential that appropriate baseline studies are put in place before any further mining licences are issued. Gushes of methane are now bubbling from long stretches of the Condamine River. One CSG company has claimed it was always like that but residents living along the river for 60 years have not seen it to this extent in their lifetime. Researchers from Southern Cross University have found levels of Radon and Methane in the Tara gas fields three times higher than in surrounding areas. The gas industry says it is natural.

Similar circumstances are occurring in the health of individuals and families living near mining projects. Reports of adverse health conditions from neighbours of current mining developments are frequent, along with a growing body of international literature supporting their concerns. But proving the source of these changes in health and wellbeing is widely contested.

The social and economic benefits to mining regions are also widely contested. Proponents of mining projects regularly “talk up” the benefits of their proposals, it can be hard to assess the true benefit of these projects. Recent experiences in the CSG industry have seen “boom” followed by “bust”, often tearing at the social and economic fabric of surrounding townships. Whilst the economic advantage might be evident in the initial years of a project, the long term cost-benefit for the economy and the community must also be considered.

Appropriate baselines from which individuals, communities, corporations and governments can accurately and effectively track changes will settle the science and leave no room for doubt or excuses. It is essential that the science be in place before any further mining developments are permitted.

Baseline monitoring should not be an ad hoc, one-off event. It is important that it is comprehensively measured over a long period thus measuring the fluctuations of the seasons and other events. With the extremes of our climate it is essential that baseline testing of air, soil, water and noise covers the resultant seasonal variations. In any given year there may be times of extremely high rainfall, and long periods with no rainfall, there may be hot dry conditions, hot humid conditions and cold periods. A river may be fast flowing, or not flowing. Dams and domestic rainwater tanks may be almost stagnant or diluted. Soil may be saturated or deeply cracking. Air may be still or wind may blow from the coast or inland depending upon the season. In order to obtain an accurate baseline environmental assessment appropriate measurements should be taken throughout all four seasons. At a minimum that would mean 13 months to ensure at least some overlap of repeatable data.

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# Proposers

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## That the Synod:

That the Synod commends the One in Christ Covenant of Intercession and encourages congregations to:

- (a) Share in Bible Study based on "Intercession" by Lukas Vischer and the accompanying online Study Guide.
- (b) Commit to praying regularly and intentionally for other parts of Christ's Church in their area, including the use of a photographic prayer wall.
- (c) Share in a regular exchange of information and points for prayer with congregations of other denominations.
- (d) Consider a public commitment in the form of a Covenant of Intercession in which all participating denominations would share.
- (e) Explore ways in which they can foster a sense of fellowship with fellow Christians beyond the Uniting Church.
- (f) Share their story with the Synod through the Ecumenical Relationships Committee.

# One in Christ Covenant of Intercession

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## The scope of a Proposal

Lukas Vischer wrote: "Could the divided churches not give expression to the communion which already exists among them by praying regularly for one another?" Prayer for all the churches who confess Christ is a standing protest against the *status quo* of our divisions; God's gift of reconciliation can and should find full expression so that the Church might be a real sign of reconciliation in the world. Scripture urges us to pray for one another, and in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5 the Apostle Paul speaks of the ministry of reconciliation committed to the Church.

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1. That the Synod receives the report “Weaving a New Cloth: Anglican and Uniting Churches Working Together” and commends it to Presbyteries for study and further action (see Attachment A).
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## Rationale

This short document is the work of the Joint Working Group of the Anglican and Uniting Churches. It is theologically based, but simple and practical in its orientation. As the Preamble states, “The Joint Working Group ... offers this framework in the hope that it will assist both our churches to encourage and support cooperation at the local level”.

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## Proposers

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Signature:



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Signature:





## Anglican and Uniting Churches Working Together



*Weaving a New Cloth*

# Weaving a New Cloth

## Anglican and Uniting Churches Working Together

### Preamble

This document proposes a framework for local cooperation between Anglican and Uniting churches throughout Australia.

Local cooperation is the most promising avenue for ecumenism today, with growing numbers of congregations working and worshipping together. Increasingly, it is here that fruitful “ecumenical space” is to be found, in which different Christian communities can walk together in the way of Christ, and each discover the gifts the other tradition has to offer.<sup>i</sup>

The Joint Working Group of the Anglican Church of Australia and the Uniting Church in Australia offers this framework in the hope that it will assist both our churches to encourage and support cooperation at the local level. In doing so, we build upon the work of previous dialogues, trusting that the benefit of many years’ conversation will be more fully realized in time to come.

This document honours each church’s understanding of the relationship that can exist between us, setting out what is possible, and what is not, within current constraints. At present, this includes eucharistic hospitality but precludes formal intercommunion and the mutual recognition of ordained ministries. It seems to us that this is a constructive ecumenical step that can be taken now, in openness to whatever future directions might emerge for conversation out of a strengthened experience of locally shared worship and mission.

### A Biblical Vision of Christian Unity

The unity of Christians is a gift from God before it is a task for the church. Our unity is in Christ. He is our peace, creating in himself one new humanity across humankind’s divisions, reconciling Jew and Gentile to God in one body through the cross (Eph. 2:14-16). In Christ we are built together spiritually, across our differences, into a dwelling place for God (2:22). This is a *spiritual* unity, grounded in the unity and mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son and in the unity of believers with the Son and the Father (John 17:20-21).

However, the unity of believers with each other, for which Jesus prays, a unity in diversity, is also a *visible* unity. Moreover, not an end in itself, it is a *missional* unity.<sup>ii</sup> The unity of Christians serves the mission of the triune God: that the world may believe that the Father has sent the Son (John 17:21) and the Spirit (John 14:26). To fail to make this unity visible and concrete is to dishonour the gift of God in Christ.

All Christian churches are called to give expression to this gift. Together with other churches,<sup>iii</sup> our two churches have pledged, through the “Covenanting Together” process of the National Council of Churches in Australia, “to explore such further steps as will be necessary to make more clearly visible the unity of all Christian people in this country”. The possibilities outlined in this document, approved by our two churches at national level, are significant steps for Anglican and Uniting parishes and congregations to consider taking together in their local worship, education and mission.

### **Theological Affirmations**

1. Each of our churches stands in the continuity of the apostolic faith, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the Apostles’ Creed and the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.
2. Each of our churches is part of the one holy catholic and apostolic church. Acknowledging our failure to enact fully our calling, both our churches witness faithfully to the gospel and seek to be more fully engaged in God’s mission in the world.
3. In each of our churches the Holy Spirit gives to the whole people of God gifts for the upbuilding of the church and for its continuation in the mission of Jesus Christ.
4. The ordained ministry in both our churches is given by God as an instrument of grace, notwithstanding our different understandings of it. By this ministry, the people of God are called to faith, strengthened to witness to the gospel and empowered to serve in hope and love.
5. In each of our churches the word of God is faithfully preached and the sacraments of baptism and holy communion are duly administered in accordance with each church’s tradition.
6. Personal, communal and collegial oversight (*episcopate*) is exercised in both our churches, albeit in different forms, to serve the church’s unity and its faithfulness to the gospel.

### **Forms of Cooperation**

Local inter-church covenants across Australia give expression to the commitment of church people to make visible the unity that we have in Christ.

Possibilities listed below are not sequential but have developed out of particular circumstances—some out of ecumenical commitment, others because of changed

conditions. In all situations, consideration must be given to every aspect and implication of cooperating arrangements and the different approvals and agreements required for different levels of cooperation.

### *Hospitality*

Hospitality can take many forms. Anglican and Uniting Church members are welcome to attend services in each other's churches. Eucharistic hospitality may be offered to baptized and communicant members of each other's churches. Hospitality can also include the sharing of buildings, and shared activities are encouraged as common witness and mission in local communities.

### *Shared Witness*

A stronger visible expression of the unity we share as a gift from God is seen as we deepen our relationships in shared worship, bible study and fellowship groups, and these occasions give witness to the Christian faith we hold in common. Formal shared events are more meaningful when planned by representatives of both church communities.

### *Shared Ministry in Mission*

In some circumstances, Anglican and Uniting churches decide to share resources to better provide ministry and pastoral services. These resources may include staff or volunteers, buildings or finances. Ministry may be for specific communities, e.g. chaplaincies in schools or aged care, or for the wider community within a specific geographic area.

The vision for such shared ministry may come from the local community, or the missional imperative from the leadership of either church in a specific area. Where the impetus comes from local congregations, plans for these shared ministries are presented to the relevant Anglican Diocesan Bishop and the relevant Uniting Church Presbytery.

### *Joint Congregations*

The establishment of a joint congregation, i.e. one congregation made up of members of the two ecclesial traditions, requires the agreement of the local councils of both churches and the approval of the appropriate governing bodies of the two churches. Each of the original congregations retains its separate identity, membership and links (spiritual, doctrinal, sacramental, liturgical and financial) to its church, according to the provisions and degree of collaboration. They share resources such as church buildings and ministries, and unite in local mission.

Agreement must be reached within the Anglican Parish Council and Uniting Church Congregation and Church Council. Approval is also required from the relevant Anglican Diocesan Bishop and the relevant Uniting Church Presbytery. Depending on circumstances, approval of the relevant Property Trusts may also be required.

### *Planned Common Witness*

In areas of new growth or rejuvenation it is possible for both churches to work together to construct buildings for shared usage, common witness and ministry. Constitutional issues of both churches must be addressed, but the witness of the unity we have in Christ to the wider community presents opportunities and challenges which are invaluable.

### **Conclusion**

Arguably the most significant development in the last decade or so for ecumenism has been the development of the concept of Receptive Ecumenism. At the heart of this endeavour is the conviction that the primary ecumenical responsibility is to ask not “What do the other traditions first need to learn from us?” but “What do we need to learn from them?”. If our two churches were asking this question seriously and acting upon it, then we would be moving in ways that would both deepen our authentic respective identities and draw us into more intimate relationship.

The Joint Working Group offers “Weaving a New Cloth: Anglican and Uniting Churches Working Together” for the prayerful consideration of our two churches. We remain convinced that, building on the work already undertaken between our churches, the most fruitful next step in our ecumenical journey is the fostering of local cooperation between us. This will offer tangible evidence of our commitment to the relational unity which is both the desire and the command of our Lord (John 17:20-23). We commend the report to the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia and the National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia.

## Recommendations

1. That the report “Weaving a New Cloth: Anglican and Uniting Churches Working Together” be received and endorsed.
2. That the report be commended to Dioceses and Presbyteries for their further action.

The Rt. Rev’d John Parkes AM

The Rev’d Prof. Christiaan Mostert

*Co-chairs of the Joint Working Group*

Date:

Date:

## Notes

<sup>i</sup> The recent encouraging development of “Receptive Ecumenism” is helpfully discussed in Gerard Kelly, “A New Ecumenical Wave”, public lecture, National Council of Churches Forum, Canberra, 12 July 2010

([www.ncca.org.au/files/Forum/7th/Documents/Ecumenical\\_Address.pdf](http://www.ncca.org.au/files/Forum/7th/Documents/Ecumenical_Address.pdf)).

<sup>ii</sup> The emphasis on the church’s unity as spiritual, visible and missional is borrowed from the ‘Biblical Reflection’, Section 3 of the draft report of the Anglican-Methodist International Commission for Unity in Mission (AMICUM), 2013.

<sup>iii</sup> The following Churches have signed the Future Pledge of the Covenanting Document: the Anglican Church of Australia, the Antiochian Orthodox Church, the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Assyrian Church of the East, the Churches of Christ in Australia, the Congregational Federation of Australia, the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, the Indian Orthodox Church, the Lutheran Church of Australia, the Mar Thoma Church, the Religious Society of Friends, the Roman Catholic Church in Australia, the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Syrian Orthodox Church, the Salvation Army and the Uniting Church in Australia.

[www.ncca.org.au/files/Departments/Faith\\_and\\_Unity/Covenanting/2010\\_July\\_Australian\\_Churches\\_Covenanting\\_Together.pdf](http://www.ncca.org.au/files/Departments/Faith_and_Unity/Covenanting/2010_July_Australian_Churches_Covenanting_Together.pdf)

## **For Further Information**

### **Covenanting**

<http://ncca.org.au/departments/faith-unity/covenanting>

<http://toorak.unitingchurch.org/aboutus> and

<http://saintjohnstoorak.org/#/about-st-johns-toorak/community>

More Covenants and Agreements are listed in 'When Churches Join' (see below).

### **Shared Witness**

<http://www.worlddayofprayeraustralia.org>

<http://www.ncca.org.au/departments/faith-unity> for 'Week of Prayer for Christian Unity' resources

### **Shared Ministry**

<http://www.pastoraljournal.findaus.com>

<http://www.ecumenical.ucaqld.com.au/ecumenical-schools>

<http://www.bendigoanglican.org.au/parishes/central-mallee>

<http://www.anglicanrock.org.au/churches/winton.html>

<http://www.bathurstanglican.org.au/parishes/canowindra>

### **Joint Congregations**

<http://www.ucalpine.org.au/history.html> and

<http://snowyanglicanparish.weebly.com/>

<http://www.cckensington.org.au/history.html>

<http://www.wa.uca.org.au/mthawthorn/about>

(The search for St. Peter and Emmaus Church on the Anglican website leads to this UCA link.)

### **Planned Ecumenical Witness**

<http://www.seafordecumenical.org.au>

<http://www.emmanuel.unitingchurch.org.au> (the website listed by both the Anglican Diocese and the Uniting Presbytery)

## Further Resources:

- **Anglican-Methodist International Commission for Unity In Mission (AMICUM) Report**, due to be made public in 2014. Access to this report will be publicized in due course.
- The **Trinity Declaration and Code of Practice** for Local Co-operation in Victoria between the Anglican Church of Australia and the Uniting Church in Australia.  
<http://assembly.uca.org.au/unity/when-churches-join/item/953-developing-ecumenical-co-operating-partnerships>
- **When Churches Join** (a good summary of issues that arise as Christian communities begin to discuss developing ecumenical cooperating partnerships, plus listings of Covenants and Agreements).  
<http://assembly.uca.org.au/unity/when-churches-join>
- **The Gift of Each Other; Learning From Other Christians, a Parish Workbook on Receptive Ecumenism**, published by the New South Wales Ecumenical Council, 2013.

[www.nswec.org.au](http://www.nswec.org.au)

## Membership of the Joint Working Group

### *Anglican*

The Rt Rev'd John Parkes AM  
Ms Helen Baddeley  
The Rt Rev'd Peter Danaher  
The Rev'd Canon Dr Colleen O'Reilly

### *Uniting*

The Rev'd Prof. Christiaan Mostert  
The Rev'd Margaret Blair  
Ms Maureen Postma  
The Rev'd Martin Wright



## That the Synod:

improves communication from Synod Property Committee to Presbytery Property Committees and directly to concerned congregations with beneficial interests.

# Improved Communication from Synod Property Committee

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## The scope of a Proposal

To ensure that Synod decisions regarding sale, purchase or development of properties within a Presbytery are discussed with Presbytery Property Committee and the concerned Church Council prior to action.

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## Rationale

Improved communication is essential in order to:

- Align property management with missional activities in congregations; and
  - Better avoid discontent and division as a consequence of decisions concerning property management. Local congregations will benefit from being better informed of Synod structure and processes. Conversely, Synod will be able to make better informed decisions when they are aware of the wishes and history of property within the local congregations and Presbytery.
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# Proposers

Name: Mr Alan Hobson, Member of Church Council, Proserpine-Whitsundays Uniting Church  
Phone: 0408-198620

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Mr David Horton, Presbytery Property Convenor, Central Queensland Presbytery  
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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## That the Synod:

Records its appreciation of the thesis of Dr Keith Suter entitled *The Future of the Uniting Church in Australia*, and directs its Standing Committee to do all things necessary and convenient to effect the below.

# The Future UCA in Queensland

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## Proposal

### ***Within Four Months***

- a) Record and publish some simple videos and articles:
  - i. Promoting Dr Suter's thesis and the need for each Congregation to think about their futures and changes they might need to embrace, and
  - ii. Explaining that wherever the future takes each Congregation and the Uniting Church, we individually and with other believers witness Christ's love to others through our lives, wherever we are.
- b) Rapidly collate and provide electronically quantitative data about the entire population of Queensland Congregations to all Congregations and specific information for Congregations about their nearest six Congregational neighbours, including but not limited to:
  - i. Basic demographic and economic data about their region, available for free from the Queensland Statistician,
  - ii. Attendance and turnover for the last three years,
  - iii. Minister and Office Bearer contact details, and
  - iv. A one page guide encourage Congregational leaders to meet and talk about relationships they might form to support each other into the future.

### ***Within Five Months***

- a) Appoint a Synod Change Champion until the next Synod in Session, for remuneration to be decided by Standing Committee, being a person selected as:
  - i. a committed member of a protestant denomination,
  - ii. a person who has never been a member (lay or ordained) of any Queensland Synod or Presbytery,
  - iii. has demonstrated medium-large business turn-around or change management skills.
- b) Having free access and communication through Queensland and access to external advice and resources as reasonably required, Commission the Change Champion to independently develop options – including alternative legal or other structural and functional changes – that Congregations might adopt.

### ***Within twelve months***

Publish a draft of options so that all Presbyteries and Congregations can start considering their futures and which options might be taken up.

### ***By the next Synod in Session***

Make the options available to Congregations, empowering them to determine their futures.

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## The scope of the Proposal

The proposal aims to:

- a) Equip Congregations with information to enable them to better understand the shape and nature of Uniting Church Congregations throughout Queensland and how they compare to their neighbours,
- b) Stimulate discussion within and between Congregations about how they can adapt their witness of Christ to the changes in their community and in neighbouring Congregations,
- c) Offer new options to Congregations about how they relate to and operate with other Councils of the Church – Synod, Presbyteries and other Congregations.
- d) New options for interrelationship could be expected to incorporate technology-driven efficiencies for Congregations keen to take them up – for example:
  - i. The handling of suitable business by videoconferencing,
  - ii. Turnkey options for recordkeeping through digital banking, accounting, event-management and pastoral care systems,
  - iii. Streamlined decision-making for suitable business.

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## Rationale

The Synod acknowledges that:

1. Each Uniting Church Congregation is the embodiment, in one place, of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, worshipping, witnessing and serving as a fellowship of the Spirit in Christ,

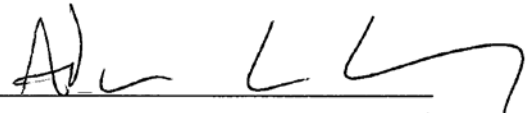
2. Dr Keith Suter's thesis *The Future of the Uniting Church in Australia*, offers timely insights, that the Uniting Church is facing a crisis as to its mission and the continued viability of so many Congregations,
3. Various activities are undertaken directly by Synod and its agencies with paid employees and government-provided economic resources but without substantial Congregational involvement,
4. Given the long-term crisis currently faced by the Congregations, Congregations need to be empowered with choices for different for options that do not resemble old structures for doing things,
5. The Uniting Church within Queensland enjoys a legal structure that functions under State law, but conveyance of property to other legal structures is readily possible,
6. This resolution does not seek to displace Assembly's role, but nor does it require their approval, and
7. It is appropriate for the Queensland Synod to provide urgent leadership and take prompt action now before the situation of Congregations in Queensland deteriorates further.

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## Proposers

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Signature:  13/4/2016

Name: Anne Roseler

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Signature:  13-4-16.



## That the Synod:

Request the Synod Standing Committee to develop and implement a mechanism for the publishing and reporting of changes to Synod By-Laws or policies that affect Congregations and/or Presbyteries to the broader Synod community; and for Congregations and /or Presbyteries to be able to request such decisions be referred to the next Synod-in-session for further discussion prior to their implementation.

# Synod Standing Committee Communications

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## The scope of a Proposal

This proposal is at best about better communication and at worst lessening the need for control. While recognising the significant leadership role the Synod Standing Committee (SSC) plays, it seeks to urge the SSC to ensure that other Councils of the Church are aware of potential changes to the Synod's life and witness before decisions are made; and to be amenable for other Councils to request a delay of such decisions until fuller consultation has occurred on the floor of Synod.

# Rationale

As it stands, the Synod Standing Committee exercises the full authority of the Synod in Session between its meetings. This is important, as changes often need to be made that require this authority to respond to a rapidly changing world. That being said, one of our Together on the Way Enriching Community aims is to be a prayerful, listening church and the lines of communication between the Synod Standing Committee, the Synod in Session, the Presbyteries and Congregations need some work to fulfil the vision of mutually listening councils working in their own spheres of responsibility as envisioned in the *Basis of Union*. This was seen when the first many members of the Synod heard of a proposed change to the role of the Moderator was when it was released in one edition of Journey and then retracted in a later edition.

There are some decisions that the Standing Committee is required to handle with confidence and certainty, and it is appropriate that they stay in the sphere of operation of this committee and do not get published.

That being said, any changes to policies or to the By-Laws affect the operations of the Synod as a whole, and thus there should be a mechanism by which the Synod Standing Committee engages with the Synod as a whole as a part of the decision making process.

In the case of the Assembly Standing Committee there are clear reports generated from each meeting that respect that certain matters need to be held in confidence while informing the Church at large of the changes being made on their behalf. There is also a mechanism by which should a number of Synods or Presbyteries request that further review such discussions are held before such decisions are implemented. This is a wise choice that balances the need for decisions to be made between the gathering of the council and the need for communication in order to allow a diverse community to come alongside such decisions, and one that is worthy of consideration and adaptation for the situation of our Synod.

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# Proposers

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## That the Synod:

1. Acknowledges, in relation to the closure of the Blue Care residential aged care facility known as Winston House in Gympie:
  - a) the sense of marginalization and disassociation felt by the Gympie Congregation and Minister, and
  - b) the Presbytery's severe disapproval of, and outrage in, the processes engaged in the communication of such closure by Blue Care and the Uniting Care Queensland Board.
2. Urges the Synod, through the Moderator and General Secretary, to ensure that the UCQ Board, and its Executive Officers enter into open, transparent, compassionate and honest consultation at the local level (at least the Presbytery Minister and the Minister / Congregation) prior to any decision being promulgated, particularly where significant pastoral concerns are likely to be raised.

## BlueCare Processes

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### The scope of Proposal

This proposal centres on the communication between the various Councils of the Church and its Agencies. Appropriate and effective local communication and consultation (two of Blue Care's stated goals) were non-existent in the case in question and are seen as critical at all times - particularly and especially when decisions made by any Council / Agency are likely to incur substantial pastoral issues for a local congregation.

# Rationale

The March meeting of the Presbytery heard of the anger within many across the Gympie Congregation, other churches in Gympie and the community at large following the UCQ Board decision to close Winston House. Winston House is a Blue Care residential facility of long-standing in Gympie. Of particular concern was the lack of local consultation, the lack of due process in the closure procedure, and the lack of living up to Blue Care's own stated values. Unfortunately, we are also aware of significant pastoral pain caused in other areas for similar reasons.

It needs to be said that this proposal in no way focuses on the outcome – ie the actual closure of Winston House and the subsequent relocation of some 52 residents to 'other' services. This proposal is aimed at the lack of due process and communication / consultation at the local level prior to any announcement, which had it have happened may well have seen a number of other options become available.

The proposal conveys our disappointment and calls the Board and its officers to account and reminds them who it is they are serving when decisions are made.

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# Proposers

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