



## Requirements of Visiting Preachers and speakers from other denominations

C/2.1.10.6

### Purpose

Provide guidelines for visiting preachers and speakers who have a responsibility and obligation to honour the foundations and beliefs of the Uniting Church congregations.

### Scope

Applies to all visiting preachers from other denominations or organisations. If a congregation has a formal covenantal relationship with another denomination to form a local joint/co-operative congregation, then that agreement takes priority over these guidelines.

### Definition

A “visiting preacher” includes any person who is asked to lead worship in a congregation or faith community of the Uniting Church, but who comes from another denomination. This includes visitors from Gideons, Bible Society, Leprosy Mission, local school chaplains and other religious organisations. It also includes speakers who are given the opportunity to contribute to a service of worship.

### Supporting congregations

The Uniting Church Basis of Union, its ethos and Code of Ethics give meaning and direction to the life of all Uniting Church congregations. Visiting preachers/speakers can enhance and support the life of a congregation and its people by upholding the beliefs and practices of the Uniting Church.

### Procedure

1. Congregations must send to the preacher/speaker (well in advance) a copy of:
  - 1.1. The Statement of Agreement (attached to the end of this document)
  - 1.2. A copy of Paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 11 of the Basis of Union (1992 Edition) Appendix 1
  - 1.3. A link or copy of the [Safe Church Policy](#) of the Qld Synod  
A link or copy of the [Code of Conduct for Lay Leader](#)  
A link or copy of the [Person of Concern Policy](#)
2. Congregations **must** do the following:
  - 2.1. Keep an up-to-date record of the signed Statement of Agreement **and** Letter of Recommendation on file.
  - 2.2. Note the expiry date on the Statement of Agreement.
  - 2.3. Obtain a photocopy of a current Working with Children Blue Card, making sure to validate the Blue Card online, keeping a copy of all of this information on file.
    - 2.3.1. A religious representative is defined as a person who leads worship or preaches on 7 or more occasions in a 12-month period.
    - 2.3.2. A religious representative is required to hold a current Working with Children Blue Card.
  - 2.4. Forward a complete, signed copy of the Statement of Agreement to the Pastoral Relations Committee.
3. Two years is considered an optimal maximum period of any Agreement. Unless stated otherwise, all Statement of Agreement documents **must have** an expiry date of 2 years.
  - 3.1. Congregations are encouraged to make their own decisions within the 2-year time limit of a suitable expiry date. This means that each Statement of Agreement expires after 2 years **unless** an earlier timeframe is agreed upon by a congregation.
  - 3.2. Once the Statement of Agreement has expired, a new Statement of Agreement **must be** completed in order for the guest speaker/preacher to be able to participate in worship within Uniting Church congregations.
4. If a congregation experiences difficulties in obtaining a signed Statement of Agreement or a Letter of Recommendation, or if you have any questions, please contact the Pastoral Relations Committee, or your Presbytery office.

## Statement of Agreement of visiting Preachers and speakers

BETWEEN

(insert name of presbytery) Pastoral Relations Committee

AND

(insert name) Uniting Church

AND

(insert full name of visiting preacher or speaker)

### Principles

1. Visiting Preachers and speakers need to be aware of their obligations to respect the core values and beliefs of the Uniting Church as described in the attached paragraphs of the Basis of Union before preaching in a Uniting Church setting. The core values and beliefs of the Uniting church include the validity of the leadership and ordination of women, and of infant baptism.
2. Visiting Preachers and speakers are entitled to promote their organisations, mission, or chaplaincy but not within the context of the proclamation of the Word.
3. Visiting Preachers and speakers must not promote their denomination or seek to influence members to leave the Uniting Church.
4. Visiting Preachers and speakers must provide a Letter of Recommendation from their sponsoring body recognising the preacher is qualified to act on their behalf.
5. Visiting Preachers and speakers must agree to comply with the Safe Ministry with Children Policy and The Person of Concern Policy.
6. Congregations inviting a visiting preacher/speaker from another denomination require the visiting preacher to sign a Statement of Agreement to work within the Basis of Union. This Statement of Agreement enables the preacher/speaker to participate in a Uniting Church service of worship.

### Agreement

When I preach or contribute to worship in Uniting Church congregations, I agree to abide by the following principles:

- I am entitled to promote my organisation/s, mission, or chaplaincy but not within the context of the proclamation of the Word.
- I will not promote my denomination, if applicable, and I will not seek to influence members to leave the Uniting Church.
- I have provided a Letter of Recommendation from my sponsoring body which recognises that I am qualified to act on their behalf.
- I agree to work within the Basis of Union which enables me as a visiting preacher/speaker to participate in a Uniting Church service of worship.
- I have read and agree to comply with the Safe Ministry with Children Policy.
- I have read and agree to comply with the Person of Concern Policy.

I confirm that I have been provided with a copy of each of the following documents: *(tick the box when the document has been provided)*

- A copy of Paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 11 of the Basis of Union (1992 Edition) *Appendix 1*
- A link or copy the [Safe Church Policy](#) of the Qld Synod
- A link or copy of the [Code of Conduct for Lay Leader](#)
- A link or copy of the [Person of Concern Policy](#)

I confirm that I have provided a copy of each of the following documents: *(tick the box when the document has been provided)*

- Details of my current Working with Children Blue Card *(please provide a photocopy of your card)*

<b>Name on Card</b>	
<b>Card Expiry Date</b>	
<b>Number on card</b>	/
<b>Card Type</b>	

- A Letter of Recommendation from my sponsoring organisation.

<b>Name of Sponsoring Organisation</b>	
--	--

This Statement of Agreement must be reviewed **at least** every 2 years unless an earlier timeframe is agreed upon by the congregation.

Date of Agreement: \_\_\_\_\_

## Signatures

X

\_\_\_\_\_  
Full name  
Visiting Speaker or Preacher

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

X

\_\_\_\_\_  
Full name  
Church Council Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

X

\_\_\_\_\_  
Full name  
Presbytery Representative (if applicable)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

X

\_\_\_\_\_  
Full name  
Pastoral Relations Committee Representative

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **PARAGRAPH 3 - BUILT UPON THE ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST**

The Uniting Church acknowledges that the faith and unity of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church are built upon the one Lord Jesus Christ. The Church preaches Christ the risen crucified One and confesses him as Lord to the glory of God the Father. In Jesus Christ "God was reconciling the world to himself" (2 Corinthians 5: 19 RSV). In love for the world, God gave the Son to take away the world's sin. Jesus of Nazareth announced the sovereign grace of God whereby the poor in spirit could receive God's love. Jesus himself, in his life and death, made the response of humility, obedience and trust which God had long sought in vain. In raising him to live and reign, God confirmed and completed the witness which Jesus bore to God on earth, reasserted claim over the whole of creation, pardoned sinners, and made in Jesus a representative beginning of a new order of righteousness and love. To God in Christ all people are called to respond in faith. To this end God has sent forth the Spirit that people may trust God as their Father, and acknowledge Jesus as Lord. The whole work of salvation is affected by the sovereign grace of God alone.

The Church as the fellowship of the Holy Spirit confesses Jesus as Lord over its own life; it also confesses that Jesus is Head over all things, the beginning of a new creation, of a new humanity. God in Christ has given to all people in the Church the Holy Spirit as a pledge and foretaste of that coming reconciliation and renewal which is the end in view for the whole creation. The Church's call is to serve that end: to be a fellowship of reconciliation, a body within which the diverse gifts of its members are used for the building up of the whole, an instrument through which Christ may work and bear witness to himself. The Church lives between the time of Christ's death and resurrection and the final consummation of all things which Christ will bring; the Church in pilgrim people, always on the way towards a promised goal; here the Church does not have a continuing city but seeks one to come. On the way Christ feeds the Church with Word and Sacraments, and it has the gift of the Spirit in order that it may not lose the way.

### **PARAGRAPH 4 - CHRIST RULES AND RENEWS THE CHURCH**

The Uniting Church acknowledges that the Church is able to live and endure through the changes of history only because its Lord comes, addresses, and deals with people in and through the news of his completed work. Christ who is present when he is preached among people is the Word of the God who acquits the guilty, who gives life to the dead and who brings into being what otherwise could not exist. Through human witness in word and action, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ reaches out to command people's attention and awaken faith; he calls people into the fellowship of his sufferings, to be the disciples of a crucified Lord; in his own strange way Christ constitutes, rules and renews them as his Church.

### **PARAGRAPH 5 - THE BIBLICAL WITNESSES**

The Uniting Church acknowledges that the Church has received the books of the Old and New Testament as unique prophetic and apostolic testimony, in which it hears the Word of God and by which its faith and obedience are nourished and regulated. When the Church preaches Jesus Christ, its message is controlled by the Biblical witnesses. The Word of God on whom salvation depends is to be heard and known from Scripture appropriated in the worshipping and witnessing life of the Church. The Uniting Church lays upon its members the serious duty of reading the Scriptures, commits its ministers to preach from these and to administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as effective signs of the Gospel set forth in the Scriptures.

**PARAGRAPH 11 - SCHOLARLY INTERPRETERS**

The Uniting Church acknowledges that God has never left the Church without faithful and scholarly interpreters of Scripture, or without those who have reflected deeply upon, and acted trustingly in obedience to, God's living Word. In particular the Uniting Church enters into the inheritance of literary, historical and scientific enquiry which has characterised recent centuries, and gives thanks for the knowledge of God's ways with humanity which are open to an informed faith. The Uniting Church lives within a world-wide fellowship of Churches in which it will learn to sharpen its understanding of the will and purpose of God by contact with contemporary thought. Within that fellowship the Uniting Church also stands in relation to contemporary societies in ways which will help it to understand its own nature and mission. The Uniting Church thanks God for the continuing witness and service of evangelist, of scholar, of prophet and of martyr. It prays that it may be ready when occasion demands to confess the Lord in fresh words and deeds.

**FURTHER REFERENCE MATERIAL**

Dutney, Andrew 2008 Introducing the Uniting Church in Australia Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia, Sydney.

Uniting Church in Australia Basis of Union, 1992 Edition – full version – National Assembly website: <https://uniting.church/basisofunion/>

**Revisions**

Document number		C/2.1.10.6			
Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
2.0	16.01.2024	Strategic Risk Manager	16.01.2024	Strategic Risk Manager	Safe Church Assurance and Support Officer
Next scheduled review		14.09.2027			