

# MODERATOR

**Context:**

Giving general and pastoral leadership to the ministry agents and people within the bounds of the Queensland Synod and assisting and encouraging the expression and fulfilment of the mission and witness of the Church and such other duties and initiatives that arise from the Regulations 3.6.3.1 – 3.6.3.2.

Speaking publicly on behalf of the Synod and representing the Uniting Church at events and celebrations within the Uniting Church and in the wider community. Gathering stories, making links and promoting the Call and Vision of *Together on the way, enriching community* towards 2020 across the Uniting Church in Queensland.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod	Working towards our Priority Directions in the future
<i>Enabling a demonstrated commitment to the shared call and vision</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Journey articles seek to keep the <i>Together on the way, enriching community</i> Call and Values before the membership. Stories from congregations, schools and community services used to illustrate the elements of the Call in preaching opportunities and public appearances.</li> <li>• Regularly affirm congregations and Presbyteries who have taken aspects of the <i>Together on the way, enriching community</i> process to focus their energy or grow their capacity.</li> <li>• Visits to events such as school and community services celebrations remind the gathering of their place in the whole church, belonging to a wider story of Christian service and living and celebrating the long historical connections between God's story and our story.</li> <li>• Along with the General Secretary the Moderator participates in Induction Programs of senior staff of Uniting Care Queensland and Synod Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to gather stories as examples of engagement with <i>Together on the way, enriching community</i> Call and Values.</li> <li>• Responding to invitations to represent the Uniting Church in Queensland and seek and facilitate fresh opportunities as appropriate.</li> <li>• Foster confidence in the Uniting Church in Australia as a place to meet Jesus, grow in faith and as a context for belonging and serving, at any stage of life.</li> </ul>
<i>Promoting a discipline of prayer and spirituality</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying the many expressions of a "Prayerful Listening Church"</li> <li>• Encourage people to tell the story of their prayer groups and make links with other groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to gather resources and to explore ways of linking congregation's prayer groups.</li> <li>• Fostering short courses in developing Spiritual Disciplines such as that provided at The Downs Presbytery in February 2013.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All official meetings of the synod are book-ended by prayer.</li> <li>• Monday Midday Prayer which was launched at the last synod has been taken up with enthusiasm. Prayers for the Church and the world are routinely offered in congregations and are often led by lay people. Encouraging individuals to practice a wide range of Spiritual Disciplines and private prayer and Bible Study.</li> <li>• Community Prayer at Synod Office was an initiative of the General Secretary which provides opportunity for staff to worship together and to observe the seasons of the Christian year and special days of observance and focus in the wider community. eg Holy Week and World Environment Day</li> <li>• Identifying the opportunities for members of the Uniting Church to access Spiritual Direction and Prayer Workshops and Retreats run by groups such as "Still Point" at Toowong in Brisbane. Foster sharing of that information across Presbyteries.</li> <li>• Moderator has appreciated opportunities to attend and lead Presbytery's Retreats and Partners-in-ministry Retreat.</li> <li>• Sponsoring "Stretching Faith" - Young Adults wanting to go deeper in the faith. This continues to be an annual event for young adults wrestling with theology.</li> <li>• Supporting congregations and presbyteries who take initiatives and develop opportunities to experience prayer and spiritual disciplines eg Living Faith Congregation has developed an Experience of Prayer Weekend and The Downs Presbytery - Spiritual Disciplines practices and styles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging those congregations who have a special prayer ministry to offer hospitality to members of other congregations who would like to learn and grow in their prayer life. eg Living Faith Congregation.</li> <li>• Enable prayer resources to be evaluated and shared</li> <li>• Promote the work of the Assembly Worship Group in developing prayers and liturgies for use in corporate worship across the church.</li> <li>• Encourage participation in the Assembly initiative of one week of prayer and fasting prior to the gathering in Canberra in 2014</li> <li>• Encourage young ministry agents to lead and nurture young adults who are engaged with Stretching Faith initiatives and foster connections through Presbytery Stretching Faith events.</li> </ul>
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*Developing sustainable mission oriented organisation for the Church in Queensland*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steering the renewed life of Synod Standing Committee</li> <li>• Participating in the establishment phase of the Governance, Nomination and Remuneration Committee (GNRC)</li> <li>• Supporting the General Secretary and Synod Office staff in efforts to introduce new systems for Synod Office to improve services to the rest of the Church.</li> <li>• Advocating for and supporting Presbyteries to be adequately resourced for the task of delivering regulated responsibilities and leading healthy Christian communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring the new rhythms of meetings and impact on participants and the life of the Uniting Church in Queensland.</li> <li>• Participating in GNRC processes as they mature and monitor and evaluate to ascertain effectiveness of these changes and new directions.</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate as required in Project Group conversations exploring relationships, delegations and funding matters within the Synod across congregations, missions and community services.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Facilitating renewal of leadership for the mission of the Church</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrating Milestones in Ministry and with long term staff of Community Services</li> <li>• Fostering relationships with youth and young adults. Stretching Faith – Young adults going deeper in faith, National Young Adult Leaders Conference, Summer Madness youth camp, National Christian Youth Convention</li> <li>• Working with leaders of Congress and Calvary Presbytery to understand the particular challenges of renewing leadership in that context.</li> <li>• Considering how to support ministry agents across a lifetime of service – development, challenge, adaptation, refreshment for new seasons of service, retirement</li> <li>• Exploring ways for preparing and developing leaders and ministry agents for particular leadership roles across the church in Queensland</li> <li>• Working with Board for Christian Formation for re-invigorating the Network for Christian Formation.</li> <li>• Enhance the work of Synod Selection Panel by strengthening the pool of panel members and clarifying criteria for interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending celebratory events and send greetings to ministry agents reaching significant milestones in ministry</li> <li>• Support Presbytery ministers as they seek to maintain healthy placement context and agile, responsive, spiritually mature and prayerful teams for ministry across the church.</li> <li>• Chairing Advisory Committee on Ministerial Placements with the needs of the whole church in view.</li> <li>• Identify means for increasing the capacity of the Synod and Presbytery to promote Continuing Education for Ministry and monitor the participation and choices of ministry agents.</li> <li>• Work with Network for Christian Formation to identify opportunities for Continuing Education for Ministry.</li> <li>• Sponsor the project designed to explore ministry in Queensland Synod focussed on Deployment and Development of Vital Christian Communities in the State of Queensland particularly around strategies for deployment and development of Ministry Agents as leaders in Qld Synod.</li> <li>• Monitoring the results of decisions of 2012 Assembly to transform the Ministerial Education Commission into a Working Group.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Engaging in opportunities for intentional, open community connections and partnerships</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participating in conversations with Heads of Churches group bi-monthly</li> <li>• Attending Queensland Churches Together and fostering local, regional and statewide conversations, ecumenical covenants and initiatives. The Moderator joined in celebrating the signing of the ecumenical covenant at Mt Mee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing attention to building relationships across the Christian Churches</li> <li>• Responding to opportunities to speak into the public space regarding social issues as they arise</li> </ul>

- The Moderator has sought to attend to the covenant relationship with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress by engaging in conversations with leaders of Calvary Presbytery and Congress. There are three aspects to that engagement. Firstly, through mapping the range of activities that involve aboriginal people in Qld UCA. Secondly, looking for ways to educate the wider church regarding aboriginal issues. Thirdly, through responding to particular situations as they arise in congregations, community services, educational institutions and presbyteries.
- Across the State the church has responded to Disaster situations in a variety of ways. In many cases the local church are working with other community groups such as Red Cross, State Emergency Services, Police Chaplains, service clubs and Regional Councils. Life Line Community Recovery Teams respond as required by the government in response to the declared disasters. Local congregations and the leaders and ministry agents are often involved in multiple ways to provide relief and ongoing long term support for their communities. The Moderator will continue to respond to invitations to visit and gather stories and affirm the enormous effort across the state.
- The appointment of two part-time research officers working with Uniting Communications have been able to research and prepare material for conversations in the wider community and with the media about social justice issues.
- Together with Uniting Care Australia the Moderator sought to raise awareness of the opportunity to promote Gambling Reform through proposed changes to legislation. While the legislative changes were significantly modified, informative material regarding the issues of problem gambling were distributed through our networks.
- Collaborating with Uniting Care and other parties to apply for an ARC linkage grant for research into the impact of the mining resources boom on the most vulnerable people in our society and on service providers.
- Corresponding with government regarding matters of social justice such as TB Clinics in Torres Strait and Uranium Mining in this state.
- Partnering with UnitingCare Queensland to make submissions to government on issues eg. Discussion Paper on Red Tape reduction and other reform proposals for regulation of liquor and gaming, Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse.

- Continuing to work towards re-invigorating the Covenant with Congress as it is expressed through the Regional Council in Queensland, Calvary Presbytery. Foster opportunities for fresh expressions of that covenant and build healthy relationships with existing and emerging indigenous leaders in this state. Promote opportunities for the second peoples to grow in understanding of the history and the current situation faced by the indigenous people of this land.
- Stream-lining the capacity of congregations and presbyteries to respond to natural disasters and in particular increase the number of presbyteries who have been able to provide peer support training for ministry agents and key lay leaders.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aged Care Funding issues brought to the attention of the wider church through promotion of the Age Well Campaign developed by the National Aged Care Alliance including 28 member of NACA</li> <li>• Representing Uniting Church at the launch of the policy to address appropriate labelling and tracking of the source of timber sold in Australia.</li> <li>• Refugees and Asylum Seeker solidarity expressed through Uniting Church representation on Brisbane Refugee and Asylum Seeker (BRASS)</li> </ul>	
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**Key achievements/initiatives:**

Keep the possibilities of the Together on the Way journey before the church in Queensland and to keep the church in her daily prayers.

Maintain passion for enabling Presbyteries to be healthy and effective as they discharge their regulated responsibilities and to look for ways to increase that capacity.

Focus attention on an intentional conversation with Congress and Calvary Presbytery leaders in order to re-invigorate the Covenant and to work together to identify indigenous leaders who can build on the best of the past and to develop ways to provide support and resources for the future ministry.

**Challenges/risks as we progress:**

The Challenge for the church to recruit, retain and refresh ministry agents who can grow, adapt and develop the attitudes, skills and spiritual maturity to lead the church in discerning and performing God’s mission in each community. Dealing with the trend towards part-time and fractional ministry placements and balancing new models for mission engagement with the expectations for congregations to have a ministry agent and for ministry agents to be placed.

To continue to strengthen relationships across the various arms of the church recognising the different constraints experienced in each context. Acknowledging the need to keep telling the story of the many expressions of the Uniting Church in Queensland and how each person and part can be Uniting in Christ, Acting with Love, Living with Hope, Witnessing in faith and Working for Justice.

**Recommendations/issues to be addressed:**

1. Re-introduce a series of Ministry Development opportunities across a lifetime of ministry.
2. In collaboration with National Disaster Coordinator and other churches and faith groups in Queensland, develop a strategy to establish ecumenical chaplaincy to disaster situations with appropriate training, accreditation, peer support and self-care.

**Contact for Report questions:**

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