



THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA



PRESBYTERY OF TASMANIA

# CALLED TO PREACH



HANDBOOK FOR LAY PREACHERS, PROSPECTIVE  
CANDIDATES AND CHURCH COUNCILS

REVISED 2008



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**Please photocopy all forms, keeping originals for future use. Alternatively, down load this document from the Presbytery web site.**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

***The Discipleship, Development and Education Committee would like to thank Heather and Lance Cowled for their work in producing this document.***

## **INTRODUCTION**

This manual is designed to provide relevant information concerning training and accreditation of Lay Preachers and the ongoing responsibilities of Accredited Lay Preachers, Ministers, Church Councils and the Presbytery Committees within the Uniting Church in Australia Presbytery of Tasmania.

The ministry of Lay Preacher within the Uniting Church in Australia is an honourable and important calling by God. It is a calling, which the Church acknowledges, to exercise gifts for building up the people of God through the leadership of their public worship of God and the preaching of the Word.

This information provides guidelines for the individual candidate, the Minister, Church Council, and the relevant Presbytery Committee, which at the time of this review is the Discipleship, Development and Education Committee here after abbreviated to DDEC.

The course, which is referred to here, is that approved by this Presbytery, Synod and the Ministerial Education Commission of the Assembly as appropriate for the training of Lay Preachers.

These courses are also suitable for the continuing education of Lay Preachers who have been accredited for some years.

## **BACKGROUND - THE BASIS OF UNION**

Each of our former traditions made use of the Holy Spirit's gifts poured out on lay people to lead or to share in leading the public worship of God's people.

The Uniting Church sought to recognise the significance and God-given nature of these ministries and committed herself to their continuance. This is affirmed in the "Basis of Union", paragraph 14 (d):

*'The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as lay preachers those who at the time of union are accredited lay preachers (local preachers) in any of the Uniting Churches and who adhere to the Basis of Union. She will seek to recognise those endowed with the gift of the Spirit for this task, will provide for their training, and will gladly wait upon that fuller understanding of the obedience of Christians which should flow from their ministry. Such members will be called Lay Preachers'.*

## **WHAT IS THE MINISTRY OF LAY PREACHER?**

*"The Ministry of Lay Preacher is one in which lay persons may participate in the proclamation of the Gospel and in witness to Christian faith and experience, and for which they have received gifts and are called by the Holy Spirit."* [Regulation 2.8.1]

## **WHO IS A LAY PREACHER?**

*"A Lay Preacher is a member of the Church who is authorised to conduct services of worship in the Congregation in which such Lay Preacher holds membership and in any other Congregation to which the Lay Preacher may be invited by the Minister thereof."* [Regulation 2.8.2]

*The Church recognises as Lay Preachers:*

- (a) *persons who at the time of the inauguration held the office of Lay Preacher or Local Preacher in any one of the Uniting Churches, and who signified adherence to the Basis of Union;*
- (b) *Persons who are subsequently accredited as Lay Preachers in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Assembly.* [Regulation 2.8.3]
- (c) *A former Minister whose recognition has been withdrawn under the provisions of Regulation 2.4.23(a), and who is in good standing with the Church, may upon request be accredited as a Lay Preacher."*

## **WHO CAN BE A LAY PREACHER?**

These regulations can be summarised as follows: Lay Preachers are people who:

- are recognised by their Church Council and the Presbytery as having the gifts of the Spirit for this ministry and as suitable in character, personality and spiritual maturity and ability to exercise the responsibilities of Lay Preacher.
- are confirmed members of the Uniting Church in Australia, and have been so for at least 12 months.
- have completed an approved course of study (or an accepted equivalent).
- show that they are competent by the conduct of six services of worship, which shall be assessed by people appointed by the Discipleship, Development and Education Committee.
- have been acknowledged as such at a service of worship and have been issued with a Certificate of Accreditation by the Presbytery. [Regulation 2.8.4 - 2.8.13]

## **FOR PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES**

**“I believe I am ‘called’ to become a Lay Preacher! What do I do?”**

### **ACCEPTANCE AS A CANDIDATE**

1. You must be a confirmed member of the Uniting Church, and have been so for at least 12 months prior to your application, or have held similar status in another Church acknowledged by the Uniting Church. [Regulation 2.8.4. (a) (i)]
2. Make written application to the Secretary of the Discipleship, Development and Education Committee through the Minister (or lay leader, if no minister) of the Congregation in which you hold membership. [Regulation 2.8.4(b)]
3. The Church Council will interview you and forward your application, with their report and recommendations, to Presbytery via DDEC within 90 days of receipt by the minister. [Regulation 2.8.4(c)] The Church Council will be concerned about your character, personality, spiritual maturity and ability to exercise the responsibilities of a Lay Preacher. [Regulation 2.8.4(a)(ii)]

4. The Presbytery Committee, DDEC, will make such investigations and inquiries as it sees fit and may interview you as well. They will then either accept or reject your application as a candidate for training as a Lay Preacher. [Regulation 2.8.4(d)]

## **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

1. You must complete and pass the training requirements established by the Education for Ministry Commission of this Synod, or equivalent subjects approved by the Ministerial Education Commission. [Regulation 2.8.5(a) and (b)]
2. You begin a period of practical training to gain experience in the conduct of worship and preaching. You must acquire practical experience in the conduct of a minimum of six services of worship of which at least three shall be assessed and accepted as satisfactory. Preaching appointments may commence during the period of academic study and DDEC may allow some of these to be included in those assessed.
3. Once you have completed all the training requirements, you will need to apply to the Church Council to be considered for accreditation. After prayerful consideration, they will make a recommendation to the Presbytery via DDEC either to proceed or not. [Regulation 2.8.6(a)]

## **ACCREDITATION**

1. If the Presbytery determines to accredit you as a Lay Preacher, they will arrange for a service of worship to acknowledge this and issue you with your Certificate of Accreditation as a Lay Preacher. [Regulation 2.8.6(b), (c) and (d)]
2. Any Lay Preacher transferring membership from one Congregation to another shall be recognised as such in the Congregation to which transfer is made. [Regulation 2.8.7]

## **ONGOING EDUCATION AND ASSESSMENT**

1. In common with Ministers and other ministry workers, as a Lay Preacher you will be expected to participate in a program of continuing education. The equivalent of one hour per week should be set aside for further study, reading and participating in conferences or workshops relevant to the role of Lay Preacher. Your Church Council is responsible to encourage and oversee your continuing education.
2. You remain under the oversight of the Presbytery for the exercise of your ministry. They will receive a review of your ministry from your Church Council not less frequently than every five years when the Presbytery conducts a consultation with the Congregation. [Regulation 2.8.8]

### ***What if I am not sure about my 'call'?***

Can I do some study before applying as a candidate for training as a Lay Preacher?

You are free to apply at any stage either during or on completion of your training program. Be guided by the counsel of your Minister and other spiritual advisers.

It is recommended that you participate in the Period of Discernment, which provides opportunity for study, practical experience and regular reflection with a mentor. Study undertaken may be counted towards your training requirements.

However, students who complete a Period of Discernment or use their training to test their call should understand that completion of the course is not in itself an affirmation of their calling. Calling is determined by the Church through a Church Council and the Presbytery. The Uniting Church is not under obligation to recognise you because you have completed your course or components of it.

### ***Is there a required course of study and what is involved in it?***

The requirements for the training are set by the Education for Ministry Commission in this Synod and are approved nationally by the Ministerial Education Commission of the Assembly. [Regulation 2.8.5]

The course of study approved for use within the Presbytery of Tasmania is the Coolamon College Award in Lay Preachers Studies.

The Award in Lay Preachers Studies requires the completion of the following six subjects:

CMBT 236 *Introduction to the Old Testament\**

CMBT 003 *Introduction to the New Testament\**

CMBT 244 *Theology - Uniting Church Perspectives\**

CMBT 242 *Further Thinking about Christology*

CMLW 215 *Preaching: God's word in human speech*

CMLW 222 *Introduction to Worship in the UCA*

\*Textbooks for these topics are available for sale from Coolamon College.

These Subjects are from the Explore Stream and in 2008 cost \$250 per topic.

### ***Formation Weekend***

This weekend is primarily focussed around making sure candidates for Lay Preacher are well and truly familiar with the information and expectations contained in the Basis of Union and the Code of Ethics.

It is organised in Tasmania and in Victoria but not every year. It is suggested that those people studying to become Lay Preachers do this course whenever it becomes available regardless of how far into their studies they are.

Copies of the Coolamon College Handbook may be obtained from:

Coolamon College  
34 Lipsett Terrace  
Brooklyn Park SA 5032  
E-mail: [coolamon@flinders.edu.au](mailto:coolamon@flinders.edu.au)

Students may apply at any time in the academic year (beginning of February to the end of November) and will have 20 weeks to complete each unit. When a student enrolls near the end of the academic year, student support services will not normally be available during the period 1 December to 31 January and this time will not count as part of the 20 weeks.

Students may apply to do more than one subject at any one time, but are encouraged not to enrol for more than two subjects at any one time.

For each subject, students will receive any or all of the following:

- A unit outline providing an overview of the unit, administrative arrangements and assessment requirements;

A study guide; taking you through the content of the material to be studied.

- Non-print materials (eg. cassette tapes, charts, video tapes);
- A set of bound photocopied readings.

Students may also be required to purchase a textbook and will be advised of a library they can join.

Administration support – you need to organise your own support person usually an Ordained Minister.

A variety of forms of assessment will be used. The work sent in for assessment will be expected to demonstrate:

- Familiarity with the content of the subject materials;
- A capacity to integrate what has been learned with previous understanding and spiritual experience;
- A capacity to relate what has been learned to the practice of ministry.

### ***Are there costs associated with Lay Preacher training?***

Yes. You will need to commit at least 70 hours over 20 weeks per topic. This may mean asking your congregation to release you from other responsibilities while you are studying.

Each of the Coolamon College courses will cost around \$250.

As your training is intended to benefit your congregation, it is fitting that they contribute towards the cost of your studies. An application for assistance to your Church Council is appropriate. Unfortunately the Discipleship Development and Education Committee has no budget for Lay Preacher training but appeals for assistance in the case of particular hardship will be considered. Coolamon College may also be able to offer support in these circumstances. The Lay Preachers Association offers an annual scholarship and at times assistance is available through Presbytery sources.

Text books for all Coolamon College topics may be borrowed from the Ida Birchall Library at Pilgrim Church, Launceston. [Phone 6327 3275]

## **FOR CHURCH COUNCILS**

### ***What is our ministry in all this?***

1. Paragraph 13 of the Basis of Union makes it clear that the Uniting Church in Australia is committed to the Biblical understanding of a diversity of Spirit-given gifts each with "its corresponding service. The Uniting Church will thereafter provide for the exercise by men and women of the gifts God bestows upon them...'

Your first task is to be constant in your endeavours to discern the gifts with which God has blessed the Church in the congregation under your care.

2. When you discern gifts suited to the ministry of Lay Preacher you may be required to challenge the person involved to recognise them, to prayerfully consider using them, to test them through sharing in worship and participating in the training program towards accreditation.
3. When an application to become a candidate in training is received through the Minister, it is your responsibility, on behalf of the Church, to examine the applicant with regard to their membership in the Uniting Church; and the suitability of their character, personality, spiritual maturity and ability to exercise the responsibilities of a Lay Preacher within 90 days of receiving the application from the Minister. [Regulation 2.8.4.]

### ***Do we have any ongoing responsibility once a person begins training/study?***

1. YES! It is important that you continue to support the person with your prayers and share with them regularly concerning their studies and journey of faith.
2. Consideration should be given as to how the Church Council can assist with the cost of study. Fees of \$250 [in 2008] are payable for each of the Coolamon College courses plus the cost of text books. As the person is preparing for ministry in your congregation it is appropriate for the congregation to offer financial support.
3. It is also important that you are aware of the study requirements that they are working to fulfil so that you may initiate the final steps towards accreditation when they are due.
4. It is important that you recognise the time and energy required to fulfil the study requirements for this ministry. Releasing a candidate from other responsibilities for the periods of the year when they are working on their study program may be a significant recognition of this.

### ***When the study is completed, what then?***

1. When an application is received from a Lay Preacher in Training who has completed the course of training, you will need to satisfy yourselves that the candidate is still called to the ministry of Lay Preacher and that the study/training requirements have been met.
2. Forward the application for accreditation, a transcript of all course results, and your report to the Secretary of DDEC who will then organise for the required Church services to be assessed.

***What if someone has completed study in subjects that they believe are a suitable substitute for the Lay Preacher subjects?***

1. If a person presenting for interview indicates that they have completed studies in the areas required for accreditation, they do not automatically receive exemption from them.
2. It is the responsibility of the Church Council to refer to DDEC the issue of determining whether a specific subject will be accepted in place of one of the approved Lay Preacher subjects.
3. If someone does apply in this way you will need to obtain
  - (a) complete details of the specific subject(s) for which they are seeking exemption
  - (b) details of when the course was completed and through what organisation/program;
  - (c) details of how the course was assessed and the grades received;
  - (d) a detailed outline of the content of each subject for which equivalence is sought.
4. Forward all the above information as soon as possible to DDEC for evaluation and response.
5. All other matters - interview, reports etc. set out in the Regulations still apply.

***What responsibility do we have after the lay preacher has been commissioned?***

1. Continue to give him/her encouragement and support.
2. When the Presbytery conducts a five yearly consultation with the Congregation to inquire whether the lay preachers continue to perform the ministry to which they have been accredited and recommend to the Presbytery whether they continue to satisfy the requirements, have retired or whether recognition should be withdrawn. (Regulation 2.8.8) Forms for use in these reviews are included in the Appendix.
3. Encourage and oversee the continuing education of lay preachers. Forms for use in these reviews are included in the Appendix.
4. Pay the Petrol Allowance, at the rate set annually by Synod, to visiting Lay Preachers.

## ***ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRESBYTERY***

1. The responsibilities belonging to a Presbytery are in Regulations 2.8.4, 2.8.6, 2.8.8, 2.8.9, 2.8.11.
2. The Presbytery's responsibilities are carried out by the Discipleship Development and Education Committee (DDEC).

Presbytery will:

- follow directions of the Synod on which courses of training, approved by the Assembly Ministerial Education Commission, will be used in Tasmania.
  - The Presbytery will appoint the committee responsible for Lay Preachers (Reg 2.8.5(a)).
  - decide any appeals against the decisions of DDEC.
  - develop any policies for Lay Preacher education.
3. DDEC is responsible for:
    - determining all applications for acceptance as a Candidate for Training as a Lay Preacher and for accreditation as a Lay Preacher.
    - maintaining a register of Accredited Lay Preachers and Lay Preachers in Training.
    - oversight of the Lay Preacher course on the Basis of Union and Ethics at the Formation Weekend. •
    - arranging the assessment of services of worship conducted by Lay Preachers in Training.
    - promoting and planning opportunities for continuing education for Lay Preachers.
    - recommending to the Standing Committee of Presbytery the withdrawal of recognition of any Lay Preacher whom it considers to be no longer acceptable to the Church as a Lay Preacher.

## ***CONTINUING EDUCATION***

The preacher who is concerned to proclaim the Gospel in a way that is relevant to the changing needs of the church and community will want to continue to study, learn and grow. Congregations who want to participate in God's mission will need preachers who are relevant, vital and enthusiastic about understanding God's message for today. The core of that message will remain the same, but its presentation will vary over time to enable effective engagement with the culture.

The Presbytery and the Lay Preachers Association offer programs and activities to encourage Lay Preachers in their ongoing learning. The local Church Council is responsible for encouraging its Lay Preachers to engage in continuing education in a systematic way.

As a general rule Lay Preachers should set aside the equivalent of one hour each week for continuing education. The following is provided as a **guide for the Lay Preacher and the Church Council** in assessing continuing education and is offered as one approach to organising continuing development as a lay preacher. There are a number

of TAFE and Theological Hall Courses available from various states and courses like Clinical Pastoral Education, available through hospitals, are also suitable. The important thing is that a course be relevant to the Lay Preacher's work.

There are five groups of continuing education opportunities of varying complexity and time commitment. The Lay Preacher is expected to be self-directive in choosing his or her own topics and opportunities of self-improvement. Each point represents approximately 5 hours work. The expectation is that ten points be gained over a period (up to two years) which **the local Church Council can monitor**.

### **Group A (1 point per 5 hours can be claimed)**

- Visiting speakers, tapes, books, congregational workshop, etc. relevant to Lay Preaching
- participation in a local Bible study group (maximum of 2 points can be claimed per year)
- Regular use of a lectionary based daily Bible study; e.g. With Love to the World (maximum of 2 points can be claimed per year)
- Reading associated with sermon preparation (maximum of 4 points can be per year)
- Intentional conversations reflecting on services preached with mentor/minister/other lay preacher.
- Intentional visiting of members of the local congregation eg. Using CPE skills.

### **Group B (1 point per 5 hours can be claimed)**

Participation in:

- The Annual Lay Preachers Conferences: Presbytery, Synod or National.
- Prayer Retreats arranged by the Presbytery or Synod
- Special courses arranged by the Presbytery
- Training nights for Lay Preachers conducted by the Local Minister.

### **Group C (four points)**

A self directed study on a particular topic related to Lay Preaching that is submitted for assessment to a qualified person, (e.g. a Minister).

Examples:

- A written book review that showed how the reviewer would use the contents.
- Request the assessment of a Service of Worship conducted by the Lay Preacher. The Lay Preacher concerned to list strengths and weaknesses with a plan to maximise the strengths and improve the weaknesses.

### **Group D (five points)**

- Study for credit through eg.Coolamon College requiring approx. 70 hours work, including personal study time; e.g. a subject at Coolamon College Explore Stream.
- Study at Certificate level provided by other institutions.
- Attend the Formation Weekend of the LP in training course.

## **Group E (ten points)**

- Study for credit through eg. Coolamon College at Deepen Level –Degree Level – about 190 hours per subject.
- Study at degree or postgraduate level offered by other institutions.

Note: Each point represents approximately 5 hours work.

Group A or B activities may individually take less than 5 hours. Different activities may be grouped to make up one point; e.g. visiting speaker (1.5 hours) + tape on preaching (2 hrs) + workshop on music in worship (1.5 hours) = 5 hours = 1 point.

Lay Preachers are encouraged to engage in a variety of learning activities.

### ***LAY PREACHERS ASSOCIATION***

All Lay Preachers and Lay Preachers in Training are encouraged to participate in the activities of the Lay Preachers Association.

The Lay Preachers Association exists to:

- provide mutual support and encouragement for those exercising the ministry of Lay Preaching in the Uniting Church.
- encourage lay people within the Church to participate in the proclamation of the Gospel and in witnessing to the faith and love of God in Jesus Christ.
- support the continual equipping and nurturing of people in the ministry of Lay Preaching through inservice education and continuing education.
- represent the concerns and interests of Lay Preachers within the life of the Church.
- work in conjunction with the Discipleship, Development and Education Committee of the Presbytery

Membership of the Association is open to:

- accredited and recognised Lay Preachers;
- Lay Preachers in training;
- other members of the Uniting Church whose names appear on the preaching plan of a Uniting Church Congregation

The Lay Preachers Association

- holds an annual conference to support its members in ongoing education.
- publishes a magazine, Seeds and Sowers

Every two years a national gathering of Lay Preachers is held.

Details of the contact person for your region may be obtained from the

Tasmanian Presbytery Office  
96 Margaret Street  
Launceston Tas. 7250  
Phone: 6331 9784  
Fax: 6334 1480  
E-mail: [tas.office@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:tas.office@victas.uca.org.au)  
9.00am – 4.30pm Monday to Friday

### ***THE IDA BIRCHALL LIBRARY***

The Ida Birchall Library was established in 1995 at Pilgrim Uniting Church, 36-38 Paterson Street, Launceston, to support and encourage spiritual growth with monies bequeathed by the late Dr. Ida Birchall.

Over 2,500 items are catalogued including books on church history, comparative religions, Christian life, Bible studies, biographies and commentaries on the Old and New Testament. The collection contains copies of the text books for Coolamon College courses and other material suitable for use by Lay Preachers.

The library is open from 10.00 am - 2.00 pm on weekdays. Annual Membership fee is \$15.00. Loan period is three weeks but extensions for people studying can be requested. Parking is available at the Patterson Street Car Park opposite the church.

For more information contact the Pilgrim Church Office (03) 6331 8466

### ***CONTACT PERSONS***

Your first point of contact should be local:

- Your Minister (or, where there is no minister, your lay ministry worker or lay ministry team leader).
- The secretary of your Church Council.

Further information can be obtained through:

The Secretary,  
Discipleship, Development and Education Committee  
Presbytery of Tasmania  
96 Margaret Street,  
Launceston 7250  
Ph. (03) 6331 9784  
Fax (03) 6334 1480  
E-mail: [tas.office@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:tas.office@victas.uca.org.au)

## **Appendix 1: LAY PREACHERS REGULATIONS**

### **MINISTRY OF LAY PREACHER**

2.8.1 The ministry of Lay Preacher is one in which lay persons may participate in the proclamation of the gospel and in witness to Christian faith and experience, and for which they have received gifts and are called by the Holy Spirit.

### **DEFINITION**

2.8.2 A Lay Preacher is a member of the Church who is authorised to conduct services of worship in the Congregation in which such Lay Preacher holds membership and in any other Congregation to which the Lay Preacher may be invited by the Minister thereof.

### **RECOGNITION**

2.8.3 (a) The Church recognises as Lay Preachers:

- i. persons who at the time of the inauguration held the office of Lay Preacher or Local Preacher in any one of the uniting churches, and who signified adherence to the Basis of Union;
- ii. persons who are subsequently accredited as Lay Preachers in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Assembly.
- iii. A former Minister whose recognition has been withdrawn under the provisions of Regulation 2.4.23(a), and who is in good standing with the Church, may upon request be accredited as a Lay Preacher.

### **SELECTION**

2.8.4 (a) Any person offering for service as a Lay Preacher shall be required to satisfy the Presbytery with respect to the following:

- i. Church Membership. The applicant must be a confirmed member of the Church and must have held the status of a confirmed member for twelve months or more or have held equivalent status in another church acknowledged by the Church.
- ii. Suitability. The applicant must be a person suitable in character, personality, spiritual maturity and capacity to exercise the responsibilities of Lay Preacher.

(b) Applicants shall make written application to the Presbytery through the Minister of the Congregation (or through the appropriate member of the ministerial team in the Congregation) in which the applicant holds membership.

(c) The Church Council shall interview the applicant and forward the

application, with its report and recommendations, to the Presbytery within ninety days after receipt of the application by the Minister.

(d) The Presbytery, via DDEC, shall make such investigations and inquiries as it sees fit and may interview the applicant and shall either accept the applicant as a candidate for training as a Lay Preacher or reject the application providing that a two-thirds majority vote of members present shall be required for acceptance.

## **TRAINING**

2.8.5 (a) The Synod shall establish or approve training centres to assist in the training of Lay Preachers and shall establish a committee or other such body to direct such training and to conduct such examinations as are prescribed at a standard determined by the Ministerial Education Commission.

(b) Candidates for training as Lay Preachers shall be required to participate in lecture and/or correspondence courses, attend such residential training conferences as may be required, undertake practical training and gain experience in preaching, and pass such examinations as are prescribed by the Ministerial Education Commission.

## **ACCREDITATION**

2.8.6 (a) Candidates who have fulfilled the training requirements and passed the prescribed examinations may apply to the Presbytery through their Church Council for accreditation as Lay Preachers.

(b) Accreditation is dependent upon the candidate demonstrating an understanding of and affirming adherence to the Basis of Union.

(c) The Presbytery shall determine whether or not a candidate is to be accredited as a Lay Preacher and shall, where appropriate, arrange for a service of worship at which such accreditation will be acknowledged before the Church, and shall issue a certificate of accreditation as a Lay Preacher.

(d) The Presbytery shall exercise oversight of Lay Preachers within its bounds and may withdraw accreditation from persons whom it determines to be no longer acceptable to the Church as Lay Preachers.

(e) Any decision to accredit or withdraw accreditation shall require a two thirds majority of the members present at the meeting of the committee of the Presbytery or the Presbytery.

(f) Each Presbytery shall maintain a roll of Lay Preachers and on the advice of the appropriate Church Council shall from time to time enter the names of Lay Preachers according to the following classifications:

- i. active;
- ii. inactive - unavailable for an extended period;
- iii. retired.

### ***TRANSFER TO ANOTHER CONGREGATION***

2.8.7 Any Lay Preacher transferring membership from one Congregation to another shall be recognised as such in the Congregation to which transfer is made.

### ***REVIEW AND REPORT***

2.8.8 At the time of any consultation on the life and witness of a Congregation, in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 3.4.5, the Church Council shall review the list of Lay Preachers recognised within the Congregation, and shall enquire as to whether they continue to perform the ministry to which they have been accredited. The result of that review shall be reported to the Presbytery.

In cases of doubt as to whether a Lay Preacher satisfies the requirements of the office, explanation or amendment of the situation shall be sought by the Church Council. If still unsatisfactory the Lay Preacher concerned shall be warned that recognition may be withdrawn.

### ***WITHDRAWAL OF RECOGNITION***

2.8.9 (a) Recognition shall be withdrawn by the Presbytery if the Lay Preacher ceases to be a member of the Church.

(b) The Presbytery may withdraw recognition by a two thirds majority of those present, if after receiving a report from the Church Council, it determines that the Lay Preacher:

- (i.) has failed to maintain a satisfactory relationship with the life of the Church or
- (ii.) is no longer conforming to standards of a member and Lay Preacher of the Church or
- (iii.) is no longer complying with the discipline of the Church.

### ***RIGHT OF APPEAL***

2.8.10 Any Lay Preacher whose recognition has been withdrawn by the Presbytery may make appeal to the Synod which shall appoint a committee to review the matter and the determination of this committee shall be final.

### ***REINSTATEMENT OF A LAY PREACHER***

2.8.11 If a Lay Preacher whose recognition has been withdrawn in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 2.8.9 seeks to be reinstated, the Church Council shall consider and determine the matter, after consultation with the Presbytery by which recognition was withdrawn.

## ***LAY PREACHERS ASSOCIATION***

2.8.12 Each Synod and each Presbytery may arrange for the formation of a Lay Preachers' association.

2.8.13 (a) Each Presbytery will appoint a Lay Preacher contact person and notify the Synod accordingly.

(b) Each Synod shall maintain a register of Presbytery Lay Preacher contact persons.

## Appendix 2: PART 15

### LAY PREACHERS ASSOCIATION- CONSTITUTION

15.1 The name of the organisation shall be the “Uniting Church Lay Preachers Association of Tasmania” hereinafter called “the Association”.

#### *PURPOSES*

15.2 The purposes of the Association are to:

- (a) provide mutual support and encouragement for those exercising the ministry of lay preaching within the Uniting Church;
- (b) encourage lay people within the Church to participate in the proclamation of the Gospel and in witnessing to the faith and love of God in Jesus Christ through the ministry of lay preaching;
- (c) support the continual equipping and nurturing of people in the ministry of lay preaching through in-service education and continuing education;
- (d) represent the concerns and interests of Lay Preachers within the life of the Church; and
- (e) work in conjunction with the Discipleship Development & Education Committee.

#### *MEMBERSHIP*

15.3 Membership of the Association shall be open to:

- (a) accredited and recognised Lay Preachers;
- (b) Lay Preachers in training; and
- (c) Other members of the Uniting Church whose names appear on the preaching plan of a Uniting Church Congregation.

#### *ANNUAL CONFERENCE*

15.4 The governing body of the Association will be the Annual Conference, normally held in May each year, at a time and place determined by the Association.

15.5 All members of the Association shall be entitled to attend and participate in the Annual Conference.

15.6 The Annual Conference shall:

- (a) receive and adopt the annual report and the audited financial statements of the Association;
- (b) elect the officers of the Association and the members of the Executive Committee.
- (c) elect members of the Association to represent the Association on the Presbytery of Tasmania as provided in the By-Laws for Presbytery membership;
- (d) make any other decisions deemed necessary in regard to the work of the Association.

### *OFFICERS*

15.7 The officers of the Association shall be:

- (a) a President, who shall hold office for an initial term of two years, but be eligible for re-election on an annual basis for a maximum term of five years; and
- (b) a Secretary-Treasurer, who shall hold office for an initial term of two years, but be eligible for re-election on an annual basis for a maximum term of five years.

### *EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE*

15.8 The Executive Committee shall manage the business and affairs of the Association between Annual Conferences.

15.9 The Executive Committee shall consist of:

- (a) the President,
- (b) the Secretary-Treasurer; and
- (c) three members, normally one from each pastoral region of the Presbytery, elected at each Annual Conference.

### *BRANCHES*

15.10 Regional and/or local branches of the Association may be formed in accordance with the purposes of the Association and with the approval of the Association. Such Branches shall organise themselves as appropriate to their local circumstances.

### *FINANCES*

15.11 Members will be invited to make an annual contribution to the funds of the Association at a rate determined by each Annual Conference.

### *FUNDS AND ACCOUNTS*

15.12 All moneys received by the Association shall be paid into a bank account. All payments shall be made by cheque, signed by at least two appointed signatories. A cash book shall be kept and the annual accounts shall be audited in accordance with the Regulations of the Church.

## *AMENDMENTS TO THESE REGULATIONS*

Amendments shall be made by the Presbytery in accordance with By-Law 1.14. If the Association wishes to request an amendment, then such amendment shall be approved by the State Conference and notice shall be given to all members at least one month prior to the State Conference.



### Appendix 3:

## QUESTIONNAIRE: ANNUAL REPORT INTERVIEW

### ANNUAL REPORT INTERVIEW WITH LAY PREACHERS

Presbytery of Tasmania

<b>Bold: Compulsory</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Personal Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How do you grow your own spiritual life?</b></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any medical issues that impact upon your work as a lay preacher?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you considering retirement from lay preaching?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are your joys and sorrows about lay preaching?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would you describe the frequency of your attendance at worship in the local congregation?</li> </ul>	
<b>Availability for Preaching</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How many occasions have you preached in the last twelve months? In the local community?</b></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Describe one of those occasions</b></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What availability do you have for preaching in the next 12 months?</b></li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you conducted services of worship in other places?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you available for preaching beyond the local congregation?</li> </ul>	
<b>Bold: Compulsory</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Professional Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What programme of continuing development as a lay preacher do you undertake?</b></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What insights have you gained from this and/or how have you incorporated this into your preaching tasks?</b></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are your strengths and weaknesses as a lay preacher?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you stronger as a preacher or worship leader?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How have you developed as a worship leader and preacher in the last 12 months?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What Presbytery, Synod, Assembly or LPA/Tas events have you participated in during the last 12 months?</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you intend to develop as a worship leader and preacher in the next 12 months?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What awareness do you have of opportunities offered by Coolamon College?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How often do you seek evaluation of worship leadership and preaching?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comment about a book, internet site, magazine, novel, piece of music, or film that has helped you as a preacher?</li> </ul>	

<b>Bold: Compulsory</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Working with Others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What issues have arisen from your discussions with your mentor?</b></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you available to offer your services as a mentor to another lay preacher?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How have you demonstrated that you have worked collaboratively?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What issues have arisen from your meeting/s with the Church Council/Elders for pastoral support and professional oversight?</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your understanding of the Code of Ethics for Lay Preachers?</li> </ul>	
<b>Theological Understanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pick out one phrase, sentence or section from the Basis of Union and describe how it informs your preaching.</b></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Describe your faith journey</b></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe your continued sense of call as a lay preacher.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do you preach?</li> </ul>	

<b>Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How can we support you better as a lay preacher?</b></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How might the wider church better support your ministry as a lay preacher?</li> </ul>	

**Notes:**

1. This questionnaire is to be approached in the form of a conversation rather than the form of an examination
2. The interviewers choose up to three non-compulsory questions
3. The lay preacher is to be given a copy of this form at least one week before the conversation with the questions to be asked
4. The lay preacher chooses up to three remaining non-compulsory questions for a response

**APPENDIX 4: ANNUAL REPORT ON LAY PREACHERS  
FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**



**Presbytery of Tasmania**

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ engaged in a  
conversational interview with \_\_\_\_\_ on the  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**A.** With regard to the compulsory section of the interview these are our observations:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ has engaged in the following tasks relating to a  
program of continuing development as a lay preacher:

---

---

---

2. has...

- applied effectively
- made some attempt to apply
- has not applied

...this continuing education to the role of lay preaching.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ has conducted worship in local congregations on \_\_\_\_\_ occasions.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ commented on the service of worship held on \_\_\_\_\_ and made the following observations:

---

---

---

4. \_\_\_\_\_ is available to continue as a lay preacher in the next year on the following basis:

---

---

5. \_\_\_\_\_ is available to be called as a lay preacher to other congregations within the presbytery on the following basis:

---

---

6. \_\_\_\_\_ chose \_\_\_\_\_ from the Basis of Union and made the following observations connecting that with the role of lay preaching:

---

---

7. \_\_\_\_\_ has engaged in a mentoring relationship with \_\_\_\_\_. Some of the issues discussed in this relationship have been:

---

---

8. \_\_\_\_\_ expressed the need for support in the following areas:

---

---

**B.** As interviewers we chose the following questions from the non-compulsory questions;

1. \_\_\_\_\_

We make the following observations:

---

---

2. \_\_\_\_\_

We make the following observations:

---

---

3. \_\_\_\_\_

We make the following observations:

---

---

C. \_\_\_\_\_ chose the following questions from the non-compulsory questions.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

We make the following observations:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

We make the following observations:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

We make the following observations:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**D.** We consider \_\_\_\_\_'s strengths as a lay preacher to be:

---

---

We consider that \_\_\_\_\_ would benefit from further development in the following areas:

---

---

We recommend/do not recommend that \_\_\_\_\_ continues in the ministry of lay preacher.

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

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

## Appendix 5

# CODE OF ETHICS AND MINISTRY PRACTICE FOR LAY PREACHERS IN THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Christian community is called into being by God through the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit. As the Basis of Union says:

“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.” (paragraph 4).

The church is sustained by Christ through baptism, the Eucharist and preaching of the Word. Its life and fellowship is derived from the fact that the Church is the Body of Christ, the presence of Christ in the world. We are united in a fellowship of love, service, suffering and joy through our shared faith in Christ.

We worship, pray, give our witness, study Scripture and other sources of faith, offer pastoral care to each other, develop deep friendships, and seek to be mutually accountable. We are, for this reason, a deeply intimate community.

- 1.2 Lay Preachers have a particular place within that community. They help people to encounter God in worship and to hear and respond to God's word.
- 1.3 In this role, Lay Preachers are in a position to touch people's lives and exercise considerable influence and power. It is essential that each individual Lay Preacher recognises the power they have, and understands the boundaries that the church requires to be observed within their ministry.
- 1.4 The Uniting Church understands that, as we are called to live out God's call to ministry, all relationships shall be characterised by the love, care and compassion that was embodied in Jesus Christ. Lay Preachers are required to act with integrity, under the supervision of their congregational minister or the Presbytery.
- 1.5 People enter the ministry of Lay Preacher as a response to a call from God and the Church. It is this call that requires that all Lay Preachers carry out their ministry in a professional and accountable manner.
- 1.6 It is recognised that rural and isolated communities present particular difficulties in terms of ministry oversight and support. This intensifies the responsibilities of presbyteries for care of such persons, and in assisting all Lay Preachers to fulfil the Code of Ethics.

## **2. AT TIMES LAY PREACHERS WILL FIND THEMSELVES IN A POSITION WHERE ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES ARE PLACED ON THEM**

- 2.1 Recognising that all relationships in the Christian community are intended to nurture the church and people's relationship with Christ who is Lord of the Church, in the context of this Code of Ethics, Lay Preachers must conduct themselves in such a way that they honour this relationship with Christ and enable people to experience fullness of life and maturity in Christian life.
- 2.2 It is expected that Lay Preachers provide leadership:
- (a) in a mutual manner, recognising and valuing other peoples' gifts, and working cooperatively with their ministry;
  - (b) through working for justice and peace;
  - (c) by striving for peace and unity among all Christian people;
  - (d) by engaging in ongoing study;
  - (e) by respecting the guidance and decisions of the councils of the church;
  - (f) within the discipline of the church.
- 2.3 Lay Preachers shall exercise their ministry in a manner that expresses:
- (a) commitment to God;
  - (b) inclusiveness of the Gospel;
  - (c) accountability;
  - (d) commitment to the call of the church to ministry;
  - (e) the professional nature of the relationship,
  - (f) and ensures:
    - i. that Lay Preachers do not seek to meet their personal needs through their ministry;
    - ii. that clear boundaries are recognised and observed (ie. The relationship and behaviour are appropriate);
    - iii. respect, sensitivity and reverence for others;
    - iv. confidentiality
    - v. non-abusive use of power;
    - vi. commitment to justice.

## **3. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

- 3.1 Relationships with others in ministry
- (a) Lay Preachers shall work within the polity of the Uniting Church as guided by the Basis of Union and defined in the Constitution and Regulations, respecting the rights and responsibilities of those who share leadership in the Uniting Church, both lay and ordained;
  - (b) Lay Preachers shall respect the call and placement of others with whom they are in ministry. They shall recognise those with whom they are in team ministry;
  - (c) Lay Preachers shall:

- (i) accept the theological validity of both women and men in ministry in Christ's church as a Minister;
  - (ii) be willing to work with and support women and men in ministry;
  - (iii) be willing to encourage, equip and support both women and men in all forms of ministry in the Church and to teach the Church's position in this regard; and
- (d) Lay Preachers shall respect the professional expertise of members of other disciplines/professions with whom they work in the Church or other institutions.

### 3.2 Teaching

The Basis of Union reminds us that the Uniting Church comes out of a tradition of literary, historical and scientific enquiry, that we don't and never will know all there is to know about God or the scriptures (Para 11). It is, therefore, vital that Lay Preachers continue to seek opportunities to learn and grow in their understanding of the scriptures.

Lay Preachers have a responsibility to represent accurately the teachings of the Scriptures and of the Church. When teaching, preaching or leading worship, Lay Preachers have an obligation to present the gospel of Jesus Christ, guided by the witness to Christ in the Scripture, to take seriously the tradition of faith and worship of the church catholic; and to share that faith in the language and forms of the particular worshipping community and to address its issues

In particular, Lay Preachers shall:

- (a) live out the vision of the Basis of Union;
- (b) accurately represent the meanings of biblical passages;
- (c) accurately represent the degree to which experts in a discipline support their views;
- (d) accurately represent opposing views;
- (e) uphold the theological and liturgical tradition of the Church;
- (f) be guided by the decisions of the Assembly; and
- (g) be open to challenge and correction from colleagues.

### 3.3 Relationships with Church Councils

- (a) Lay Preachers shall respect the guidance and decisions of the councils of the church, and maintain accountability within the discipline of the church; and
- (b) Lay Preachers may not use their preaching role to inflame conflict within the Congregation, or between the congregation and other councils of the church. Processes and decisions of church councils should be reported accurately and fairly.

### 3.4 Competence

- (a) Lay Preachers have a responsibility to maintain high standards of knowledge and skills in all the areas of ministry relevant to their preaching and worship. This responsibility requires that Lay Preachers undertake continuing education appropriate to this ministry;
- (b) Lay Preachers shall not misrepresent their competence, qualifications, training or experience; and
- (c) Lay Preachers shall refrain from offering to undertake and or engage in work beyond their professional competence; and shall make appropriate referrals.

### 3.5 Professionalism

- (a) Lay Preachers shall recognise the power that is inherent in their role and shall not use this power in a manner which is abusive or unprofessional;
- (b) Lay Preachers shall exercise their ministry to others in a professional manner. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - (i.) offering the best quality leadership of worship and preaching
  - (ii.) offering appropriate Christian teaching;
  - (iii.) being sensitive to people's different social contexts;
  - (iv.) being sensitive to the needs and vulnerability of the children and young people with whom they work, ensuring that the professional nature of the relationship is made clear in an appropriate way; and
  - (v.) being sensitive to the needs of, and ways of relating to, people from any different cultures with whom they have contact.

### 3.6 Self care

Lay Preachers shall take responsibility:

- (a) to maintain their physical, spiritual and emotional health;
- (b) to give adequate priority to their relationship with their family;
- (c) to nurture personal relationships which assist them in their wholeness.

### 3.7 Supervision

- (a) Lay Preachers have a responsibility to recognise that they are also vulnerable, requiring them to maintain their professionalism in difficult circumstances;
- (b) Lay Preachers have a responsibility to ensure that they receive regular supervision from their congregational minister or the Presbytery. This supervision is to ensure that Lay Preachers maintain the quality of their ministry as well as to receive support and guidance.

## **4. GIFTS AND FEES**

There may be occasions when a Lay Preacher is offered gifts and fees beyond those recognized by the Church. It is not appropriate for Lay Preachers to seek financial gain for themselves or their families from their ministry beyond recognised fees and travel costs. However, where gifts are accepted to satisfy cultural traditions the Lay Preacher should look at the appropriate use of the gift to benefit the community of faith.

## **5. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LAW**

- 5.1 Lay Preachers shall inform the Synod Secretary of any matter which may lead to legal action against themselves and/or the Church; and
- 5.2 It is unethical for Lay Preachers deliberately to break the law or encourage another to do so. The only exception would be in instances of political resistance or civil disobedience.

## **6. BREACH OF CODE OF ETHICS**

Breach of the Code of Ethics refers to any violation of the requirements or principles of the Code by Lay Preachers. It includes any instance where Lay Preachers have deliberately encouraged another to breach the terms of the Code.

- 6.1 When Lay Preachers know of a Code violation by another Lay Preacher, and it seems appropriate, they shall informally attempt to resolve the issue by bringing the matter of concern to the attention of their Minister or a Presbytery officer.
- 6.2 The Minister or Presbytery Officer are required to inform the appropriate council or officer of the Church if the behaviour of any Minister, lay employee or lay appointee could be considered as sexual misconduct (as defined in Regulation 7.7.5).
- 6.3 It is the responsibility of the Presbytery in the first instance to deal with an allegation of a breach of this Code in accordance with the Regulations. An allegation of a sexual misconduct which could amount to a breach of the Code should be forwarded immediately to the chairperson of the Synod Sexual Misconduct Complaints Committee as required under Regulation 7.7.9.



## Appendix 6

# ASSESSMENT SHEET FOR THE EVALUATION OF A SERVICE OF WORSHIP Presbytery of Tasmania

*To be completed and returned to the Secretary of DDEC (96 Margaret Street, Launceston 7250) as soon as possible after the service.*

### Candidate:

Name: .....

Address: .....

Phone No.: .....

### Assessor:

Name: ..... Phone No.: .....  
[Minister, Lay Preacher, Elder, other *(circle one)*]

Candidates for accreditation as a Lay Preacher must conduct six services of worship. Assessment of three of these must be sent to the Secretary of DDEC who will arrange for the appointment of the assessors. It is desirable that the Congregation Minister assess at least one.

### COMMENTS

#### 1. Order of Service

- (a) Style, Structure, development of theme, integration
- (b) Call to Worship
- (c) Hymns or Songs or Choruses
- (d) Prayers
- (e) Congregational participation
- (f) Involvement of children/children's address
- (g) Use of Scripture
- (h) Commissioning & Benediction
- (i) Other (e.g. creeds, etc)

**2. Sermon**

- (a) Structure and Development
  
- (b) Exposition of Bible Passage or Text
  
- (c) Use of Language, including Vocabulary
  
- (d) Illustrations:     Biblical and/or Life
  
- (e) General Application (Relevance, Practical, Challenge)

**3. Effectiveness of the candidate as a leader of worship**

**4. Presentation (dress, speech, personal manner, etc)**

**5. Response from members of congregation**

**6. Other comment**

**Recommendation:** (tick where appropriate)

<i>outstanding</i>						<i>satisfactory</i>					<i>not yet satisfactory</i>
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

*(Attach additional sheets if insufficient room on this form)*

**Signed** .....

**Date** .....



## Appendix 7

# APPLICATION FOR TRAINING AS A LAY PREACHER

## Presbytery of Tasmania

### DECLARATION OF INTENT

I believe that God is calling me to train for a preaching ministry within the Uniting Church in Australia. In obedience to that call, I present myself to the Church for acceptance as a candidate for training as a Lay Preacher. I understand that my discernment of call will be tested as my application is considered by the various councils of the Church. -

Signature of applicant: ..... Date: .....

### PERSONAL DETAILS

Surname: ..... Given names: .....

Preferred title (Ms etc.): ..... Date of Birth: .....

Postal Address: .....

..... Postcode:..... Telephone

(daytime): ..... (evening): .....

E-mail/fax: .....

### CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Present Congregation: .....

Are you a confirmed member of the Uniting Church in Australia? .....

If `Yes`, number of years: ..... If `No` give details: .....

### EDUCATION

General education: .....

.....

.....

Christian education.....

.....

.....

CHARACTER REFERENCES: Please attach written statements from two referees.

A Name .....

Address: .....

Telephone:..... Postcode:.....

B Name: .....

Address: .....

Telephone:..... Postcode:.....

Completed form with references to be handed to your minister (or if no minister your ministry worker or lay ministry team leader).

TO BE COMPLETED BY MINISTER, MINISTRY WORKER OR LAY MINISTRY TEAM LEADER

Name:..... Position:.....

Signature:..... Date:.....

Attach any comments on a separate sheet and forward application to the Church Council.

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CHURCH COUNCIL

Date: ..... VOTING: For ..... Against ..... Abstain .....

Name of secretary: .....

Signature: ..... Date forwarded: .....

Attach any comments on a separate sheet and forward to:- SecretaryDDEC, 96 Margaret St., LAUNCESTON, 7250.

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE DISCIPLESHIP, DEVELOPMENT and EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Date received: ..... Date of meeting: .....

Application approved: [ ] YES [ ] NO

VOTING:For ..... Against ..... Abstain .....

Reasons if not accepted for training:

Applicant advised (date) : ..... By whom: .....

Minister/Church Council advised:.....

Signature (Secretary): .....Date: .....



## Appendix 8

# APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION AS A LAY PREACHER

## Presbytery of Tasmania

### DECLARATION OF INTENT

I believe that God is calling me to a preaching ministry within the Uniting Church in Australia. In obedience to that call, I present myself to the Church for accreditation as a Lay Preacher.

I understand that my discernment of call will be tested as my application is considered by the various councils of the Church.

I recognise that my education for the ministry of Lay Preacher has just begun and am prepared to commit myself to the discipline of ongoing education and review of my call to ministry.

Signature of applicant: ..... Date: .....

### PERSONAL DETAILS

Surname: ..... Given names: .....

Preferred title (Ms etc.): ..... Date of Birth: .....

Postal Address: .....

..... Postcode:.....

Telephone (daytime): ..... (evening): .....

E-mail/fax: .....

Present Congregation: .....

### EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Date of acceptance as a candidate for training as a Lay Preacher? .....

Synod of Victoria and Tasmania YES/NO Other synod (please name) .....

Have you completed the required studies for the Lay Preachers Course or been granted exemption for any part? YES/NO  
(Please attach copies of your subject results and/or approved exemptions.)

Do you adhere to the Basis of Union of the Uniting Church in Australia? YES/NO

Your application can only proceed if you answer YES to these questions.

Three Services for assessment, organised by DDEC, must be completed BEFORE this application is received. Please contact secretary to arrange.

TO BE COMPLETED BY MINISTER, MINISTRY WORKER OR LAY MINISTRY TEAM LEADER

Name:..... Position:.....

Signature:..... Date:.....

Attach any comments on a separate sheet and forward application to the Church Council.

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CHURCH COUNCIL

Date: ..... VOTING: For .....Against .....Abstain .....

Name of secretary: ..... Signature:

.....Date forwarded: .....

Attach any comments on a separate sheet and forward to:- Secretary, Lay Preachers Committee, 96 Margaret St., LAUNCESTON, 7250.

TO BE COMPLETED BY DISCIPLESHIP, DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Date received: ..... Date of meeting: .....

Accreditation granted: ( ) YES [ ] NO [ ] DEFERRED

VOTING: For ..... Against ..... Abstain .....

Reasons for non-acceptance or deferral:

[Empty rectangular box for reasons]

Applicant advised (date) : ..... By whom:.....

Minister/Church Council advised: .....

Education for Ministry Commission advised: ..... Certificate issued: .....

Commissioning service arranged. Date: ..... Time: .....:.....

Place: .....

Name added to Synod and Presbytery database: ..... Signature

(Secretary): ..... Date: .....

## Appendix 9

### THE BASIS OF UNION

(See <http://nat.uca.org.au/basisofunion/Basis1992.htm>)

#### 1. THE WAY INTO UNION

The Congregational Union of Australia, the Methodist Church of Australasia and the Presbyterian Church of Australia, in fellowship with the whole Church Catholic, and seeking to bear witness to that unity which is both Christ's gift and will for the Church, hereby enter into union under the name of the Uniting Church in Australia. They pray that this act may be to the glory of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They give praise for God's gifts of grace to each of them in years past; they acknowledge that none of them has responded to God's love with a full obedience; they look for a continuing renewal in which God will use their common worship, witness and service to set forth the word of salvation for all people. To this end they declare their readiness to go forward together in sole loyalty to Christ the living Head of the Church; they remain open to constant reform under his Word; and they seek a wider unity in the power of the Holy Spirit. In this union these Churches commit their members to acknowledge one another in love and joy as believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, to hear anew the commission of the Risen Lord to make disciples of all nations, and daily to seek to obey his will. In entering into this union the Churches concerned are mindful that the Church of God is committed to serve the world for which Christ died, and that it awaits with hope the day of the Lord Jesus Christ on which it will be clear that the kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of the Christ, who shall reign for ever and ever.

#### 2. OF THE WHOLE CHURCH

The Uniting Church in Australia lives and works within the faith and unity of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. The Uniting Church recognises that it is related to other Churches in ways which give expression, however partially, to that unity in faith and mission. Recalling the Ecumenical Councils of the early centuries, the Uniting Church looks forward to a time when the faith will be further elucidated, and the Church's unity expressed, in similar Councils. It thankfully acknowledges that the uniting Churches were members of the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical bodies, and will seek to maintain such membership. It remembers the special relationship which obtained between the several uniting Churches and other Churches of similar traditions, and will continue to learn from their witness and be strengthened by their fellowship. It is encouraged by the existence of United Churches in which these and other traditions have been incorporated, and wishes to learn from their experience. It believes that Christians in Australia are called to bear witness to a unity of faith and life in Christ which transcends cultural and economic, national and racial boundaries, and to this end the Uniting Church commits itself to seek special relationships with Churches in Asia and the Pacific. The Uniting Church declares its desire to enter more deeply into the faith and mission of the Church in Australia, by working together and seeking union with other Churches.

#### 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 effected 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 is a 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.

#### 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 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.

#### 5. THE BIBLICAL WITNESSES

The Uniting Church acknowledges that the Church has received the books of the Old and New Testaments 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.

#### 6. SACRAMENTS

The Uniting Church acknowledges that Christ has commanded his Church to proclaim the Gospel both in words and in the two visible acts of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Christ himself acts in and through everything that the Church does in obedience to his commandment: it is Christ who by the gift of the Spirit confers the forgiveness, the fellowship, the new life and the freedom which the proclamation and actions promise; and it is Christ who awakens, purifies and advances in people the faith and hope in which alone such benefits can be accepted.

#### 7. BAPTISM

The Uniting Church acknowledges that Christ incorporates people into his body by Baptism. In this way Christ enables them to participate in his own baptism, which was accomplished once on behalf of all in his death and burial, and which was made available to all when, risen and ascended, he poured out the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Baptism into Christ's body initiates people into Christ's life and mission in the world, so that they are united in one fellowship of love, service, suffering and joy, in one family of the Father of all in heaven and earth, and in the power of the one Spirit. The Uniting Church will baptize those who confess the Christian faith, and children who are presented for baptism and for whose instruction and nourishment in the faith the Church takes responsibility.

#### 8. HOLY COMMUNION

The Uniting Church acknowledges that the continuing presence of Christ with his people is signified and sealed by Christ in the Lord's Supper or the Holy Communion, constantly repeated in the life of the Church. In this sacrament of his broken body and outpoured blood the risen Lord feeds his baptized people on their way to the final inheritance of the Kingdom. Thus the people of God, through faith and the gift and power of the Holy Spirit, have communion with their Saviour, make their sacrifice of praise

and thanksgiving, proclaim the Lord's death, grow together into Christ, are strengthened for their participation in the mission of Christ in the world, and rejoice in the foretaste of the Kingdom which Christ will bring to consummation.

## 9. CREEDS

The Uniting Church enters into unity with the Church throughout the ages by its use of the confessions known as the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed. The Uniting Church receives these as authoritative statements of the Catholic Faith, framed in the language of their day and used by Christians in many days, to declare and to guard the right understanding of that faith. The Uniting Church commits its ministers and instructors to careful study of these creeds and to the discipline of interpreting their teaching in a later age. It commends to ministers and congregations their use for instruction in the faith, and their use in worship as acts of allegiance to the Holy Trinity.

## 10. REFORMATION WITNESSES

The Uniting Church continues to learn of the teaching of the Holy Scriptures in the obedience and freedom of faith, and in the power of the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, from the witness of the Reformers as expressed in various ways in the Scots Confession of Faith (1560), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647), and the Savoy Declaration (1658). In like manner the Uniting Church will listen to the preaching of John Wesley in his Forty-Four Sermons (1793). It will commit its ministers and instructors to study these statements, so that the congregation of Christ's people may again and again be reminded of the grace which justifies them through faith, of the centrality of the person and work of Christ the justifier, and of the need for a constant appeal to Holy Scripture.

## 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.

## 12. MEMBERS

The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as members all who are recognised as members of the uniting Churches at the time of union. Thereafter membership is open to all who are baptized into the Holy Catholic Church in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The Uniting Church will seek ways in which the baptized may have confirmed to them the promises of God, and be led to deeper commitment to the faith and service into which they have been baptized. To this end the Uniting Church commits itself to undertake, with other Christians, to explore and develop the relation of baptism to confirmation and to participation in the Holy Communion.

## 13. GIFTS AND MINISTRIES

The Uniting Church affirms that every member of the Church is engaged to confess the faith of Christ crucified and to be his faithful servant. It acknowledges with thanksgiving that the one Spirit has endowed the members of Christ's Church with a diversity of gifts, and that there is no gift without its corresponding service: all ministries have a part in the ministry of Christ. The Uniting Church, at the time of union, will recognise and accept the ministries of those who have been called to any task or responsibility in the uniting Churches. The Uniting Church will thereafter provide for the exercise by men and women of the gifts God bestows upon them, and will order its life in response to God's call to enter more fully into mission.

#### 14. MINISTERS, ELDERS, DEACONESSES AND LAY PREACHERS

The Uniting Church, from inception, will seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to recognise among its members women and men called of God to preach the Gospel, to lead the people in worship, to care for the flock, to share in government and to serve those in need in the world.

To this end:

- (a) The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as ministers of the Word all who have held such office in any of the the uniting Churches, and who, being in good standing in one of those Churches at the time of union, adhere to the Basis of Union. This adherence and acceptance may take place at the time of union or at a later date. Since the Church lives by the power of the Word, it is assured that God, who has never failed to provide witness to that word, will, through Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit, call and set apart members of the Church to be ministers of the Word. These will preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments and exercise pastoral care so that all may be equipped for their particular ministries, thus maintaining the apostolic witness to Christ in the Church. Such members will be called Ministers and their setting apart will be known as Ordination.

The Presbytery will ordain by prayer and the laying on of hands in the presence of a worshipping congregation. In this act of ordination the Church praises the ascended Christ for conferring gifts upon men and women. It recognises Christ's call of the individual to be his minister; it prays for the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to equip the minister for that service. By the participation in the act of ordination of those already ordained, the Church bears witness to God's faithfulness and declares the hope by which it lives. In company with other Christians the Uniting Church will seek for a renewed understanding of the way in which the congregation participates in ordination and of the significance of ordination in the life of the Church.

- (b) The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as elders or leaders those who at the time of union hold the office of elder, deacon or leader appointed to exercise spiritual oversight, and who, being in good standing in any of the uniting Churches at the time of union, adhere to the Basis of Union. It will seek to recognise in the congregation those endowed by the Spirit with gifts fitting them for rule and oversight. Such members will be called Elders or Leaders.
- (c) The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as deaconesses those who at the time of union are deaconesses in good standing in any of the uniting Churches and who adhere to the Basis of Union. It believes that the Holy Spirit will continue to call women to share in this way in the varied services and witness of the Church, and it will make provision for this. Such members will be called Deaconesses.

The Uniting Church recognises that at the time of union many seek a renewal of the diaconate in which women and men offer their time and talents, representatively and on behalf of God's people, in the service of humanity in the face of changing needs. The Uniting Church will so order its life that it remains open to the possibility that God may call men and women into such a renewed diaconate: in these circumstances it may decide to call them Deacons and Deaconesses, whether the service is within or beyond the life of the congregation.

- (d) The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as lay preachers those who at the time of union are accredited lay preachers (local preachers) in any of the uniting Churches and who adhere to the Basis of Union. It will seek to recognise those endowed with the gift of the Spirit for this task, will provide for their training, and will gladly wait upon that fuller understanding of the obedience of Christians which should flow from their ministry. Such members will be called Lay Preachers.

In the above sub-paragraphs the phrase "adhere to the Basis of Union" is understood as willingness to live and work within the faith and unity of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church as that way is described in this Basis. Such adherence allows for difference of opinion in matters which do not enter into the substance of the faith.

The Uniting Church recognises that the type and duration of ministries to which women and men are called vary from time to time and place to place, and that in particular it comes into being in a period of reconsideration of traditional forms of the ministry, and of renewed participation of all the people of God

in the preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, the building up of the fellowship in mutual love, in commitment to Christ's mission, and in service of the world for which he died.

## 15. GOVERNMENT IN THE CHURCH

The Uniting Church recognises that responsibility for government in the Church belongs to the people of God by virtue of the gifts and tasks which God has laid upon them. The Uniting Church therefore so organises its life that locally, regionally and nationally government will be entrusted to representatives, men and women, bearing the gifts and graces with which God has endowed them for the building up of the Church. The Uniting Church is governed by a series of inter-related councils, each of which has its tasks and responsibilities in relation both to the Church and the world.

The Uniting Church acknowledges that Christ alone is supreme in his Church, and that he may speak to it through any of its councils. It is the task of every council to wait upon God's Word, and to obey God's will in the matters allocated to its oversight. Each council will recognise the limits of its own authority and give heed to other councils of the Church, so that the whole body of believers may be united by mutual submission in the service of the Gospel.

To this end the Uniting Church makes provision in its constitution for the following:

- (a) The 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. Its members meet regularly to hear God's Word, to celebrate the sacraments, to build one another up in love, to share in the wider responsibilities of the Church, and to serve the world. The congregation will recognise the need for a diversity of agencies for the better ordering of its life in such matters as education, administration and finance.
- (b) The Elders' or Leaders' Meeting (the council within a congregation or group of congregations) consists of the minister and those who are called to share with the minister in oversight. It is responsible for building up the congregation in faith and love, sustaining its members in hope, and leading them into a fuller participation in Christ's mission in the world.
- (c) The Presbytery (the district council) consists of such ministers, elders/leaders and other Church members as are appointed thereto, the majority of elders/leaders and Church members being appointed by Elders'/Leaders' Meetings and/or congregations, on a basis determined by the Synod. Its function is to perform all the acts of oversight necessary to the life and mission of the Church in the area for which it is responsible, except for those agencies which are directly responsible to the Synod or Assembly. It will in particular exercise oversight over the congregations within its bounds, encouraging them to strengthen one another's faith, to bear one another's burdens, and exhorting them to fulfil their high calling in Christ Jesus. It will promote those wider aspects of the work of the Church committed to it by the Synod or Assembly.
- (d) The Synod (the regional council) consists of such ministers, elders/leaders and other Church members as are appointed thereto, the majority being appointed by Presbyteries, Elders'/Leaders' Meetings or congregations, on a basis determined by the Assembly. It has responsibility for the general oversight, direction and administration of the Church's worship, witness and service in the region allotted to it, with such powers and authorities as may from time to time be determined by the Assembly.
- (e) The Assembly (the national council) consists of such ministers, elders/leaders and other Church members as are appointed thereto, the majority being appointed by the Presbyteries and Synods. It has determining responsibility for matters of doctrine, worship, government and discipline, including the promotion of the Church's mission, the establishment of standards of theological training and reception of ministers from other communions, and the taking of further measures towards the wider union of the Church. It makes the guiding decisions on the tasks and authority to be exercised by other councils. It is obligatory for it to seek the concurrence of other councils, and on occasion of the congregations of the Church, on matters of vital importance to the life of the Church.

The first Assembly, however, will consist of members of the uniting Churches, appointed in equal numbers by them in such manner as they may determine, and is vested with such powers as may be necessary to establish the Uniting Church according to the provisions of the Basis of Union.

Until such time as councils other than the Assembly can be established, the Uniting Church recognises and accepts the various agencies for the discharge of responsibility which are in existence in the uniting Churches. It invites any such continuing bodies immediately to enter a period of self-examination in which members are asked to consider afresh their common commitment to the Church's mission and their demonstration of its unity. The Uniting Church prays that God will enable them to order their lives for these purposes.

#### 16. PARTICULAR FUNCTIONS

The Uniting Church recognises the responsibility and freedom which belong to councils to acknowledge gifts among members for the fulfilment of particular functions. The Uniting Church sees in pastoral care exercised personally on behalf of the Church an expression of the fact that God always deals personally with people, would have God's loving care known among people, and would have individual members take upon themselves the form of a servant.

#### 17. LAW IN THE CHURCH

The Uniting Church acknowledges that the demand of the Gospel, the response of the Church to the Gospel, and the discipline which it requires are partly expressed in the formulation by the Church of its law. The aim of such law is to confess God's will for the life of the Church; but since law is received by human beings and framed by them, it is always subject to revision in order that it may better serve the Gospel. The Uniting Church will keep its law under constant review so that its life may increasingly be directed to the service of God and humanity, and its worship to a true and faithful setting forth of, and response to, the Gospel of Christ. The law of the Church will speak of the free obedience of the children of God, and will look to the final reconciliation of humanity under God's sovereign grace.

#### 18. THE PEOPLE OF GOD ON THE WAY

The Uniting Church affirms that it belongs to the people of God on the way to the promised end. The Uniting Church prays that, through the gift of the Spirit, God will constantly correct that which is erroneous in its life, will bring it into deeper unity with other Churches, and will use its worship, witness and service to God's eternal glory through Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.