

2.5 SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

STATUS

- 2.5.1 These By-Laws provide for the exercise of the powers of the Synod in regard to social justice.

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

- 2.5.2 In accordance with Reg 3.5.38, the Synod has established the Social Justice Commission, hereinafter called "the Commission".

MEMBERSHIP

- 2.5.3 The Commission is appointed by each ordinary Synod and consists of:
- (a) the Chairperson;
 - (b) the General Secretary;
 - (c) a staff person appointed by the General Secretary; and
 - (d) up to nine other persons.
- 2.5.4 The Commission may co-opt up to two further members to ensure balanced representation or to provide the Commission with knowledge, abilities or experience not otherwise available to the Commission.

PURPOSE

- 2.5.5 The purpose of the Commission is to affirm the Uniting Church's understanding, particularly as contained in the Basis of Union and the Assembly's Statement to the Nation, that serving the Gospel of Jesus Christ entails a commitment to working for reconciliation, justice and peace, and that faithfulness to the Gospel involves the Church in social and national affairs.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.5.6 The Commission will:
- (a) work to enable the Church in Western Australia to maintain a vision of wholeness of life for all people that includes a commitment to human rights and integrity in public life;
 - (b) hold before the Church the importance of standing alongside those at the fringe of society, the poor, the marginalised and the oppressed, in a commitment to solidarity and advocacy as a direct implication of faith in the Gospel; and
 - (c) assist the Church to address issues of social concern and to take action where appropriate.
- 2.5.7 To this end, the Commission will:
- (a) identify issues, undertake research, provide position papers, develop resources and organise seminars;
 - (b) prepare reports and recommendations for the Synod and its officers;
 - (c) make public statements within the areas of its responsibilities and take action as authorised by the Synod or on urgent issues acting in its own name;
 - (d) work closely with congregations and support local social justice groups, to enable them to relate the Christian faith to issues and events in contemporary society;

- (e) provide opportunities and support for people within the Church who seek to stand alongside poor, powerless and oppressed members of society;
- (f) monitor ways in which the development and implementation of public policy affect people, and especially how they affect those with the least voice in society;
- (g) prepare submissions and representations to government, politicians, official bodies and public enquiries; and
- (h) develop and maintain a network of relations, across the Church, ecumenically, and with community groups working on common issues;

MEETINGS AND REPORTING

2.5.8 The Commission will:

- (a) meet at least six times each year; and
- (b) report to the Synod annually and to the Synod Standing Committee as requested or when necessary.