



23 December 2016

To Secretaries of the Church Councils

Greetings!

We have entered a new stage of life as a result of changes implemented at the rising of the Presbytery on 5 November 2016. If you have any questions, cares or concerns that have arisen as a result of these changes, please feel free to contact me.

The primary purpose of this letter is to remind you of some of the responsibilities and processes associated with electing members to the Presbytery and nominating persons for Synod membership.

The purpose of a Presbytery is, in particular, "...encouraging [congregations] to strengthen one another's faith, to bear one another's burdens, and exhorting them to fulfil their high calling in Christ Jesus" [Basis of Union, 15 (c)].

These words remind us that members of the Presbytery are called to have a heart for other congregations, a willingness to serve others, and a desire to share their gifts and wisdom as they seek the will of God. Prayerful discernment, therefore, is an integral part of the process as you elect members to this position of responsibility.

The attached information is a guide to assist you with this process.

What do you need to do?

- Congregations need to hold formal elections to appoint the appropriate number of members (and alternate members) of Presbytery for the Annual Meeting in May 2017.
- If members have already been appointed, and even if those names have previously been provided, we ask you to complete the attached form advising
 - the elected lay confirmed member's name(s),
 - the date they were elected,
 - any positions of responsibility held within the congregation
 - their preferred postal address, email address, and telephone number.
 - These forms should be emailed to pa.deputygensec@wa.uca.org.au or can be returned by mail to Frances Stanley at the Uniting Church Centre.
- The Church Council should forward relevant details and rationale for any suggested co-options for Presbytery membership.
- Please forward the names and details of persons proposed for nomination as members of the Synod, advising whether or not they are also members of Presbytery.

May God bless all you do in response to the call to follow Jesus Christ and serve God's world.

Grace and Peace

Rev Dr Ian Tozer
Secretary, Presbytery of Western Australia

MEMBERSHIP OF PRESBYTERY (Regulation 3.3.4)

MINISTERIAL MEMBERS (Regulation 3.3.4 (b))

All ministers who are in active service are members of the Presbytery.

LAY MEMBERS (Regulation 3.3.4 (d) (i))

- Each congregation elects one Confirmed member of the church as a member of Presbytery.
 - However, where the congregation has more than 150 confirmed members and members in association in total, it may elect two;
 - and where the congregation has more than 250 confirmed members and members in association, it may elect three.

It is possible for lay confirmed members of the congregation to be elected to attend as alternates should members be unable to attend a particular meeting.

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (Regulation 3.3.4 (f))

Lay Co-opted Members (Regulation 3.3.4 (f) (i))

- Lay persons who are confirmed members of the Church may be co-opted to the Presbytery membership. Lay members may be co-opted to the Presbytery membership “for such reasons as the Presbytery considers sufficient, including persons with special gifts not otherwise available to the Presbytery, to ensure that the number of lay members is not less than the members who are ministers and to establish a better proportion of younger and older persons... .”

Only three lay co-opted members may come from any one congregation. **(Regulation 3.3.4 (f) (iii)).**

Ministerial Co-opted Members (Regulation 3.3.4 (f) (ii))

- Ministers who are not in active service may be co-opted to the Presbytery membership. “for such reasons as the Presbytery considers appropriate, including persons with special gifts not otherwise available to the Presbytery and engaged in a significant ministry within the bounds of the Presbytery.”

Only three co-opted ministerial members may come from any one congregation. **(Regulation 3.3.4 (f) (iii)).**

The names of proposed persons for co-option need to be forwarded to me as Secretary of the Presbytery (deputy.gensec@wa.uca.org.au).

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SYNOD (REGULATION 3.3.7)

Ministers and those in Lay Specified Ministries (Regulation 3.3.7 (a) (iii)).

The Synod consists of Ministers (Deacons, Ministers of the Word), Community Ministers and Pastors who are members of a Presbytery within the Synod bounds, and appointed by their Presbytery.

Lay Members (Regulation 3.3.7 (a) (iv)).

The lay Synod members are also appointed or elected by their Presbytery. Please note that laypersons nominated by the congregations need to be confirmed members. *However, lay Synod members may or may not be members of the Presbytery.* Congregations are free to choose. In other words, congregations may nominate a different person to be a Synod member than they elect to be a Presbytery member.

The Presbytery of Western Australia will meet twice a year, with the Annual Meeting in May. Each May Presbytery meeting must elect the members of the Synod of Western Australia on its behalf.

Regulations can be found on-line at: <https://assembly.uca.org.au/resources/regulations>