



Presbytery Meeting- 16 March 2024

Proposal 2

CMC- Ordination of Susan Lord

That the WA Presbytery agrees:

To ordain Susan Lord as a Minister of the Word, subject to her receiving a Certificate of Satisfactory Completion of Studies from the Assembly and being called to a placement.

Rationale

Susan Lord (formerly Susan Sydney-Smith) was raised in the Anglican Church and in her teenage years made a faith commitment through involvement in church youth groups. Over the years, as she moved around Australia and overseas, her involvement in Christian churches was the focal point of her life. She was challenged in 2008 when her marriage broke down but through this painful time she held firmly to her faith and grew as a person. At this time she and her children found a home in Scarborough Uniting Church where she greatly valued the ministry of Rev Brian Thorpe. Later she worshipped in a range of other churches, most recently in Wembley Church of Christ.

In 2008 Susan became a YouthCare chaplain, a role she held for 13 years. She enjoyed this ministry, walking alongside young people who were struggling with big life issues. She grew in pastoral skills and deepened her understanding of God's grace and acceptance. However in late 2020 in conversation with her Mentor, Rev Kim Francis, she discerned that God was calling her into a new ministry.

In early 2021 she became a member of Maylands-Mt Lawley Uniting Church and began a Period of Discernment. She completed her POD in early 2022 and with the encouragement of her Mentor, Rev Dr Alison Longworth, applied for candidature for ordination as a Minister of the Word. She was accepted as a candidate in March 2022 and began her formation in July 2022.

During her candidature Susan began studies towards a Bachelor of Ministry degree from Vose (now Morling) College. By mid 2024 she will have completed all academic courses required by the Uniting Church. Her academic theological studies have been a highlight of her candidature enabling her to learn more about the Bible and deepen her faith. She has participated actively in the formation programme which has challenged her to grow and change. A time of spiritual direction proved to be life changing as it enabled her to better integrate her faith into her daily life. She completed field education units at Applecross and Noranda congregations, a Clinical Pastoral Education unit, and worked part time as a chaplain at King Edward Memorial Hospital. A trip to the Holy Land in 2023 pushed her out of her comfort zone and deepened her understanding of Scripture. Susan is committed to the covenantal relationship with Congress and is currently worshipping with Maaman "O" Mia congregation so she can grow in her understanding of First Nations people. Through

her candidature she has grown in confidence and demonstrated that pastoral care is deeply embodied in her ministry.

At the Readiness to Exit interview held in December, her Formation Panel “acknowledged Susan’s growth in confidence in expressing her faith in Jesus Christ and her understanding of God.” They also said that “Susan demonstrates a strong call to ordained ministry.....She sees the role of an ordained minister as empowering and equipping others to live out their faith. Susan has a strong calling to congregational ministry and is looking forward to being able to share of her faith freely. Susan has a pastoral heart that will strongly inform her ministry” They affirmed that she was demonstrating good progress on all 14 attributes expected of an ordained minister and recommended that she was ready to exit the formation programme in mid 2024.

When CMC met with Susan in February she affirmed that she now feels ready for ordination and feels equipped to teach and preach. She believes being a Minister of the Word will give her opportunity to be open and upfront about her faith and the hope we have in Jesus. She is ready to provide leadership in a congregation and will bring a strong pastoral heart to this ministry encouraging members to discover their gifts and ministries. Susan strongly affirms the Basis of Union, particularly the vision of an open and inclusive church, and is willing to accept the guidance and oversight of the Presbytery. After ordination, she plans to complete her degree in theology as she “loves to learn” and says she “can’t stop growing as a person”. Susan is clear about her need for self- care and prayer and personal devotions are an integral part of her life, enabling her to “continue journeying with God”

CMC had no hesitation in recommending to the Presbytery that she be approved for ordination as a Minister of the Word.

Mover: Rev Bev Fabb (Deacon)

Second: Rev Toby Keva