

Methodist Church of Australia, in fellowship with the whole Church Catholic, and 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, and 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 common renewal in which God will use their common worship, witness and service as the word of salvation for all people. To this end they declare their readiness to be gathered 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.

(Basis of Union para 1)

1. From the Known Into the Unknown

The Death of Moses vv 1,2

The Way Forward v 3

2. The Promises of God

A new land vv 4,5

A continued relationship vv 5,6

3. The Foundations of Confidence

God's Faithfulness vv 5,6

1. What is the Church?

- The Church
- a) local
 - b) global (catholic)
 - c) visible
 - d) invisible

Is a denomination a Church?

2. John's Vision of the Church

- a) A numerous people v 9
- b) A various people v 9
- c) A cleansed people vv 9, 14
- d) A thankful people v 10
- e) A persecuted people v 14
- f) A rescued people vv 14,15

Apostolic Church are built upon the one Lord Jesus Christ. The Church preaches Christ among people as the risen crucified One and confesses him as Lord to the glory of God the Father. 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 heaven, God confirmed and completed the witness which Jesus bore to God on earth, as the 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 love their Father, and acknowledge Jesus as Lord. The whole work of salvation is the sovereign grace of God alone.

The Church as the fellowship of the Holy Spirit confesses Jesus as Lord and it also confesses that Jesus is Head over all things, the beginning of a new humanity. God in Christ has given to all people in the Church the pledge and foretaste of that coming reconciliation and renewal which is the 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 city but seeks one to come. On the way Christ feeds the Church with Sacraments, and it has the gift of the Spirit in order that it may not lose the way.

Revelation 1:1 – 8 Our Foundation – Christ

The Book of Revelation is to:

- a) The Seven Churches in Asia
- b) To all Churches throughout time

The Book of Revelation is about:

- a) The fulfilment of God's plans and purposes
- b) Jesus

- Who is:
- i) Prophet
 - ii) Priest
 - iii) King
 - iv) Saviour

5. THE BIBLICAL WITNESSES

The presiding Church acknowledges that the Church has received the preaching of the New Testament as unique prophetic and apostolic testimony, in which its faith and obedience are nourished and renewed. This effect of the Word of God on whom salvation depends is to be heard and known in the worshipping and witnessing life of the Church. It is the serious duty of reading the Scriptures and to administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist. The signs of the Gospel set forth in the Scriptures.

#4 Our Rule – The scriptures Psalm 1

1. The Bible – a unique book: The Bible is a library... written over a period of possibly 4000 years. It is a book containing a variety of literature – historic; biographical; allegories, prophecy; literature that is meant to be read in different ways

a record of God revealing Himself to people through the Revelation to John

God spoke through people eg the prophets
 God spoke through His Son Jesus – the Word
 God's inspired Word to us 2 Peter 1:20,21
 v 1

2. We need the Bible in order to:

- a) know God & know God's will
- b) have a right heart before God

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 his body by Baptism. In this way Christ enables them to participate in his which was accomplished once on behalf of all in his death and burial, and made available to all when, risen and ascended, he poured out the Holy Spirit. Baptism into Christ's body initiates people into Christ's life and mission in the world, and that they are united in one fellowship of love, service, suffering and joy, in 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 prepared for baptism and for whose instruction and nourishment in the faith the Church takes responsibility.

8. HOLY COMMUNION - The Uniting Church acknowledges that the presence of Christ with his people is signified and sealed by Christ in the Holy Communion, constantly repeated in the life of the Church. In this his broken body and outpoured blood the risen Lord feeds his baptized people to the final inheritance of the Kingdom. Thus the people of God, through the and power of the Holy Spirit, have communion with their Saviour, make their praise and thanksgiving, proclaim the Lord's death, grow together into Christ strengthened for their participation in the mission of Christ in the world, and foretaste of the Kingdom which Christ will bring to consummation.

Ephesians 4:1 – 16 Our Food for the Walk – The Sacraments

1. Talking the Talk & Walking the Walk

- a) Eph Chs 1 – 3 Doctrine (talk the talk): Knowing what we believe
- b) Eph Chs 4 – 6 Duty (walk the walk): Knowing how to live

2. The Walk of Unity Eph. 4:1 – 3

- a) Called by God v1
- b) Recipe for Unity vv 2,3

Mix humility, gentleness, patience & compassion with the bonding agent of peace, stirred in by the Holy Spirit.

3. Food For the Walk of Unity Eph 4: 4 – 6

- a) Beginning the journey – Baptism (NOT Christening) Qn: Who should be baptised?
- b) Sustenance for the journey – The Lord's Supper (remembering)
On: Who should participate in the Lord's Supper?

10. REFORMATION WITNESSES

The Uniting Church continues to learn of the teaching of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost in the world, and freedom of faith, and in the power of the promise from the witness of the Reformers as expressed in various ways in the Uniting Church (1950), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), the Westminster Confession (1647), and the Savoy Declaration (1658). In like manner the Uniting Church takes the preaching of John Wesley in his Forty-Four Sermons (1793) as a guide for ministers and instructors to study these statements, so that the people may continually and again be reminded of the grace which justifies and sustains them to Holy Scripture.

11. SCHOLARLY INTERPRETERS

The Uniting Church acknowledges that God has never left the Church without the gift of scholarly interpreters of Scripture, or without those who have acted trustfully in obedience to, God's living Word. In particular the Uniting Church enters into the inheritance of literary, historical and scientific endeavours characterised recent centuries, and gives thanks for the knowledge of the Christian community which are open to an informed faith. The Uniting Church is a worldwide fellowship of Churches in which it will learn to sharpen its faith and purpose of God by contact with contemporary thought. With this in mind the Uniting Church also stands in relation to contemporary societies and cultures to understand its own nature and mission. The Uniting Church therefore continues its witness and service of evangelist, of scholar, of prophet and of peacemaker, that it may be ready when occasion demands to confess the Lord

alone; and of the Evangelical Awakening: born again by the Spirit of God.

1. Paul's Charge

vv 1,2

- We are accountable to Christ for what we teach/preach.
- We are accountable to Christ for the spiritual welfare of others.

2. Paul's Warning

vv 3 – 5

- People won't always want to hear the truth.

3. Paul's Example

vv 6 – 8

- Paul was focussed on the Gospel, even to his own detriment.

4. Paul's Needs

vv 9 – 15

- Paul was not superman, he needed the help of God and friends.
- God is the best judge of character.

5. Paul's Hope

vv 16 – 18

- In spite of opposition, the Gospel will be proclaimed.
- God will bring him home.

alized may have confirmed to them the promises of commitment to the faith and service into which they have been b
Uniting Church commits itself to undertake, with other Christian
the relation of baptism to confirmation and to participation in the

13. GIFTS AND MINISTRIES - The Uniting Church affirms t
Church is engaged to confess the faith of Christ crucified and to
Church with thanksgiving that the one Spirit has endowed
Church with a diversity of gifts, and that there is no gift without
all ministries have a part in the ministry of Christ. The Uniting C
union, will recognise and accept the ministries of those who hav
or responsibility in the uniting Churches. The Uniting Church w
the exercise by men and women of the gifts God bestows upon t
in response to God's call to enter more fully into mission.

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**Basis of Union #7 Romans 12:1 – 13 Our Gifts:
What Gifts Do You Bring To The Body of Christ?**

1. What Gift We Bring:

v 1

We bring ourselves – all we are

SHAPE

Spiritual gifts, Heart (passion), Abilities, Personality, E
Membership in the Body of Christ = offering yourself to God fi

2. How We Bring This Gift

vv 1 – 3

- a) Sacrificially surrendered to God. – this pleases Him
- b) Willing to be transformed

“God accepts me as I am, but loves me too much to leave me tha

- c) Humbly, but not self-deprecating

3. What We Do With What We Bring

vv 4 – 8

- a) Offer self as a gift to each other – we belong to one
- b) Recognize the differences and use the gifts

4. What Impact Will Our Gift Have?

vv 9 – 13

We will build up the body of Christ in

- love and goodness
- service and devotion
- joy, hope, patience and prayer
- generosity and care

people in worship, to care for the flock, to share in government and to serve in the world. To this end:

(a)... Since the Church lives by the power of the Word, it is assured that the Church acknowledges that Christ alone is supreme and 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. They will preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments and exercise pastoral care within the limits of its own authority and give heed to other ministries. Such members will be called Ministers and their setting apart will be known as Ordination. In this act of ordination the Church praises the ascension of Christ in the Church. Such members will be called Ministers and their setting apart will be known as Ordination. In this act of ordination the Church praises the ascension of Christ in the Church. Such members will be called Ministers and their setting apart will be known as Ordination.

(b)... It will seek to recognise in the congregation those endowed by the Spirit of God for service. Such members will be called Elders or Rulers.

(c) (Regarding Deaconesses.)

(d)... It will seek to recognise those endowed with the gift of the Spirit for service. Such members will be called Lay Preachers.

... The Uniting Church recognises that the type and duration of ministries and men are called vary from time to time and place to place, and that in a period of reconsideration of traditional forms of the renewed participation of all the people of God in the preaching of the Word and administration of the sacraments, the building up of the fellowship in mutual commitment to Christ's mission, and in service of the world for which he

#8 Our Ministry – The Gospel Acts 20:17 – 38

Ministry in the Church is not a position of power or tyrannical authority. To be a minister = a servant. Ministers are servants of the Gospel

1. Paul's Example of Ministry

vv 18 - 27

- a) A ministry of humility
- b) A ministry of compassion
- c) A ministry of encouragement
- d) A ministry of confrontation
- e) A ministry of surrender
- f) A ministry of sacrifice
- g) A ministry of faithfulness

is governed by a series of inter-related councils, tasks and responsibilities in relation both to the Church and the world. To this end: (a) The Church acknowledges that Christ alone is supreme and 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. They will preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments and exercise pastoral care within the limits of its own authority and give heed to other ministries. Such members will be called Ministers and their setting apart will be known as Ordination. In this act of ordination the Church praises the ascension of Christ in the Church. Such members will be called Ministers and their setting apart will be known as Ordination.

(a) **The Congregation** is the embodiment in one place of the Ordination. In this act of ordination the Church praises the ascension of Christ in the Church. Such members will be called Ministers and their setting apart will be known as Ordination. In this act of ordination the Church praises the ascension of Christ in the Church. Such members will be called Ministers and their setting apart will be known as Ordination.

(b) **Leaders' Meeting** (or Church Council - the council within a congregation) consists of the minister and those who are called Elders or Rulers. It is responsible for building up the congregation in hope, and leading them into a fuller participation in the world.

(c) **The Presbytery** (the regional council) is to exercise oversight within its bounds, encouraging them to strengthen one another's ministry, and exhorting them to fulfil their high calling in Christ.

(d) **The Synod** (the state council) has responsibility for the general administration of the Church's worship, witness and service in the world.

(e) **The Assembly** (the national council) has determining responsibility for doctrine, worship, government and discipline, including the promission, the establishment of standards of theological training and from other communions, and the taking of further measures towards the Church. It makes the guiding decisions on the tasks and authority of the congregations of the Church, on matters of vital importance to the Church.

16. PARTICULAR FUNCTIONS - The Uniting Church has responsibility and freedom which belong to councils to acknowledge members for the fulfilment of particular functions.

2. The Testimony vv 7 – 12
Peter's experience of God
Paul's witness of God's grace to the Gentiles

3. The Solution vv 13 – 21
James: testing experience by Scripture
The Council affirmed the authority of God's Word.
Their resolution: *"Let's not stand in God's way!"*

promised end. The Uniting Church prays that, through the gift of
constantly correct that which is erroneous in its life, will bring it
other Churches, and will use its worship, witness and service to
through Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

#10 Our Pilgrimage – The End Rev. 2

From the Garden to the City: Genesis to I

- 1. The Garden** Gen 1,2
The promises: Abundance
Relationship
Life
- 2. What went wrong?** Gen 3
Human rebellion
- 3. What did God do about it?** Gen 3
God's verdict – the punishment
God's solution – the promise
- 4. The City: God's promised end**
A new heavens and a new earth Rev. 21
A City with a garden Rev. 22

The Fulfilment - Removal of the curse
Abundance
Relationship
Life
- 5. So what?**