

Affiliation of Churches and Agencies

Notice of Motion 1: Affiliation of Lifespring Church of Christ

That the Lifespring Church of Christ be admitted to the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania.

Background

Lifespring, located at Caroline Springs, commenced in March 2004 when three families met together in a lounge room for worship and prayer. This gathering followed a range of conversations in 2003, including an ongoing one with Mission and Ministry (M&M) team members. Like the founding families the then M&M staff was committed to a church plant in that area. The church was formally launched in June 2004, under the leadership of Beng Wong, with its mission as "Touching our community... Transforming our World!".

Seed funding was provided from the income of the Church Development Fund in 2004 and 2005, and the trustees of the Austral Trust made a further small grant. The church experienced a number of challenges along the way, during which it received significant support from the Moonee Ponds Baptist church, as well as various members of the M&M team.

The church has matured a lot since then. As a healthy and growing church it has a group of gifted and passionate leaders, coordinated by current church-planting Pastor Isidro Sulte. Currently there are 23 adult members, 10 children and around 25 regular attendees, representing around 10 different cultures.

Lifespring looks forward to a growing two-way partnership with Churches of Christ, including connecting with other congregations in the western area of Melbourne and beyond.

Notice of Motion 2: Affiliation of Liquid Church

That Liquid Church be admitted to the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania.

Background

Liquid is a church plant that commenced in Safety Beach in March 2008 with just twelve people. It was birthed out of a slowly dawning discernment that God was calling its leaders to start a fresh, new and alternative expression of faith on the Mornington Peninsula. Now an average of 90 attend the 5pm Sunday gathering. Because of its growth Liquid has needed to move location regularly. Currently it meets at Mornington Secondary College while the Mt Martha Community Centre undergoes renovations. Its attendees are drawn from central areas of the Peninsula.

Paul Cameron (Executive Officer of Churches of Christ) and Ted Keating (minister at Bayview Community Church, Rosebud) have been conversation partners with the church's leaders. The senior pastor Murray Holmes also participated in the 2009 Leadership 21 study tour of west coast USA for emerging leaders in Churches of Christ. This year the church has received some seed funding from the income of the Church Development Fund towards the development of its children's ministry.

Liquid sees a clear alignment between its vision, values and expectations and those of Churches of Christ. For them a local church must be connected with something greater than itself; thus affiliation creates synergy through an accountable relationship, where the Kingdom of God is advanced.

Notice of Motion 3: Affiliation of Careforce LifeKeys as a mission agency

That Careforce LifeKeys Inc be admitted to the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania as a mission agency.

Background

Careforce Lifekeys emerged from a need that Allan and Helen Meyer recognized through their leadership of the Church of Christ at Mt Evelyn, that later became Careforce Church—Mt Evelyn. They needed to solve an ongoing problem: effectively managing the rapidly growing demands of counselling and pastoral care. Visits to a church in Phoenix, Arizona gave them a glimpse of an innovative model of helping hurting people inside and outside the church, using everyday members of the church (supported by small groups with trained leaders and a competent teacher) to introduce others to an experience of the grace of God. Helen and Allan redeveloped the model for their ministry setting, and in 1992 Careforce Recovery Ministries (as it was known then) was established. Since re-named Careforce Lifekeys, over 2 300 churches around the world are using its resources. Between them they have authored and developed the Lifekeys programs.

The Meyers concluded a 26 year ministry at Careforce Church in January 2009, a ministry that saw the church becoming one of the largest congregations in Australian Churches of Christ. They and the Lifekeys team are now committed to focus on its ministry in Australia and overseas. They look forward to further developing their resourcing local congregations within Churches of Christ.

Careforce Lifekeys recognizes that its ministry was birthed in Churches of Christ and its leaders believe that affiliation is part of its ongoing maturity as a missional organization; that Churches of Christ is a part of the Body of Christ that is oriented to the advance of the Kingdom of God; and that affiliation will help preserve a valuable legacy, as well as provide a foundation to take its mission worldwide.

Notice of Motion 4: Affiliation of Third Place Communities Inc as a mission agency

That Third Place Communities Inc be admitted to the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania as a mission agency.

Background

The relationship between the Hobart-centred mission agency Third Place Communities (TPC) and Churches of Christ began in 2001 through existing relationships with Mission and Ministry team members Milton Oliver, Alan Hirsch and John Gilmore and then Executive Officer Lynette Leach. TPC had just commenced, and these relationships grew into a strategic missional alliance by way of a covenant agreement that has continued until now.

TPC was birthed sensing God's call to be missionaries in Third Places. It is helpful to note that the First Place is the home environment, the Second Place is the school, college, university and work context, while Third Places are any social context outside the first two Places, egs pub, cafe, park, interest based groups etc.

TPC is a community of missionaries called primarily to incarnate into third places, engage in the social rhythms there and practice the presence of Christ. Their particular calling and gifting from God rests in their engagement with third place culture, in the name of Christ, as their primary spiritual act of worship. Their particularity is defined as 'mission through hospitality in third and first places'; creating an environment where people can experience the character of God through life together, experience community and feel a sense of belonging before believing, and explore their spirituality with freedom and creativity.

TPC is a grass-roots mission organization with an active member base. Its volunteers include qualified social workers, ministers, counsellors, medical practitioners and community development workers. TPC is active in school mission projects (eg mentoring in low socio-economic area schools) and other community service and personal development projects. Darren Altclass is the team leader. At different times Churches of Christ have provided financial support to TPC, including from income of the Church Development Fund. TPC have also operated in partnership with CareWorks.

TPC has always valued and welcomed its relationship with Churches of Christ, and understands that this affiliation is the next step in it.

Amendments to the Constitution of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Inc

Notice of Motion 5: Alteration to membership of Council (clause 13)

That clauses 13.1.2, 13.1.3, 13.1.4, 13.1.5 be deleted; and
That clause 13.1.6 become 13.1.2; and

That clause 13.1.7 become 13.1.3 and have the first word changed to *six*; and
That a new clause 13.1.4 as follows be inserted *Any two board chairpersons of the Properties Corporation, Department of Community Care, CCTC and Mission and Ministry, or their nominated persons, on a rotation basis, or when their particular area of responsibility needs further explanation*

[Clause 13.1 to now read as follows:

13.1 *The Conference Council shall consist of a maximum of ten members made up as follows:*

13.1.1 *Conference President. The President Elect shall act as alternate to the President.*

13.1.2 *Conference Executive Officer.*

13.1.3 *Six members elected by the Conference AGM following nomination by the Conference Council or a member in good standing and fellowship with an Affiliated Church.*

13.1.4 *Any two board chairpersons of the Properties Corporation, Department of Community Care, CCTC and Mission and Ministry, or their nominated persons, on a rotational basis, or when their particular area of responsibility needs further explanation.]*

Background

At present the makeup of Conference Council means that the majority of members Partner Department board chairs (or their nominee). This tends to weaken the four elected conference members' position when coming to setting directions and policies. It is easy for an elected member to not feel as confident when these folk are present and can be often seen as the 'in' group.

The Executive Officer should in fact represent the totality of the Conference's mission and ministry. The Conference Executive Officer is a member of all Boards and Partner Departments of Conference and receives all minutes. This should ideally bring a balance and an emphasis on setting directions and policies without the dangers of micro management with so many Partner Department board chairs (or their nominee), present.

Notice of Motion 6: Alteration to Membership of Council (clause 13)

That 13.1 be amended as follows:

The Conference Council shall consist of a maximum of twelve members made up as follows:

That 13.1.7 be amended as follows:

13.1.7 *A maximum of six members elected by the Conference AGM, following nomination by a member in good standing and fellowship with an Affiliated Church, or the Conference Council*

Council. Moved: Seconded

Background

Council understands the dilemma that exists in the interplay of the need to manage the size of a governance group, and the parallel need to give opportunities for a range of voices to be heard. It therefore recommends the above which seeks to deliver a broader voice to those elected by Affiliated Churches, and yet maintains the opportunity for Partner Department board chairs (or their nominee/s) to be engaged in the broader policy, strategy and collaborative conversations that form the primary agenda of Council. Council values the input of these four nominees, and acknowledges that they, being also members of affiliated churches, bring that consideration to each conversation too.

Council is committed to a broad basis for its membership as it seeks to fulfil its constitutional functions, and works together with churches and Partner Departments towards a diversity of healthy and growing churches. This means it seeks diversity of age, gender and culture; of region or state of origin; as well as church shape and size. Council encourages Partner Department boards and task groups to seek the same breadth.

It is timely to remember that, according to the constitution, affiliated churches share with Council the responsibility of nominating people for Council, and with the proposed Nominations Committee (see Notice of Motion 12) could also be charged with the responsibility to suggest possible members of all boards and task groups. Council looks forward to developing this partnership in the future through that Committee and in other ways.

Notice of Motion 7: Affiliation Fees/Ministry Contribution (clause 7)

That the Constitution clause 7 heading be amended from Affiliation Fees to *Ministry Contribution*

That Constitution 7.1 be replaced with the following:

Every Affiliated Church shall contribute each year to the annual operating Budget of Conference and the Council of Churches of Christ in Australia, on a percentage basis of the Affiliated Church's income (excluding giving designated for mission or building funds), as indicated on the statistical return of the previous year.

That after conversations with each Affiliated Church, the percentage basis for the calculation of fees is implemented at AGM 2011, at which time an appropriate percentage will be resolved in accordance with the Constitution.

That Constitution 7.3 be replaced with the following:

If an Affiliated Church's annual Ministry Contribution provided for in clause 7.1 remains unpaid for a period of two consecutive years, such Affiliated Church shall not be entitled to official representation at the Conference AGM until all outstanding contributions are paid; and the procedure outlined in clause 17 shall be applied.

Background

Please see attached FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) for background to this Notice of Motion. This includes additional information to that already communicated to churches.

Notice of Motion 8: Eligibility for Office (clause 11)

That 11.3 be added as follows:

11.3 No person shall be eligible for simultaneous election or appointment to more than one department or office of Conference, except where otherwise provided in this constitution.

Background

A major theme of the Notices of Motion at this AGM are the well-acknowledged need to broaden the representation from affiliated churches on Council and Partner Department boards and Task Groups (see also Notices of Motion 5, 6, 12 and 13). This proposed amendment seeks to cover one aspect of this need, as well as being an expression of good governance and transparency, and fairness and equity.

Rather than this amendment being a reflection of any past or present people who have or are currently holding simultaneous elected or appointed positions, it is a reminder that we must involve as many appropriately skilled, passionate and imaginative people as possible in the strategic thinking and policy-making processes of Churches of Christ (i.e. within Council, Partner Department boards and task groups). Council acknowledges that this is a challenging task.

Council believes however that there are people who could contribute to the health and growth of our movement, while still contributing at a local level, or while taking a constitutional or self-designed sabbatical or break from such a local contribution. Council looks forward to the development of a prayerful partnership in the discovery of these people (through the proposed Nominations Committee for example), and the release of the new and unique thinking as together we discern God's dream for our movement for this time in history, and beyond.

Notice of Motion 9: Disputes and Mediation (clause 17)

That the following be inserted:

17.1.6 A minister or church member and Conference Council and/or a Partner Department

Background

Council acknowledges that when the Constitution was adopted in 2006 it omitted this potential area for dispute and subsequent mediation. This amendment ensures that all areas are now covered by this important clause.

Other Motions

Notice of Motion 10: Concern about Violence against Ethnic Minorities

That we as the Conference of Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas abhor the violence against ethnic minorities that has been occurring over the past twelve months. We as churches take seriously our role as peacemakers and reconcilers in our communities and seek to make our concerns known to the State government through signing a joint letter expressing concern over the increase in violence in our communities. .

Background

The Social Justice Network is concerned that the increased level of violence in parts of Melbourne is becoming entrenched. Notably, over the past year violence against ethnic minorities has increased. Much has been made of the incidence of violence against the Indian community in Melbourne in the media, both here and overseas. We are calling on the Vic/Tas Conference of Churches to pass a motion condemning this violence and to band together as one in calling the Victorian Government to take proactive measures to protect ethnic minorities in our community. We note that measures have been taken by both our Federal and State Churches of Christ leadership, and support those initiatives.

We suggest that as part of the Body of Christ we seek to promote peace and stand up for those in our community whose voices may not be heard or are ignored. Letters sent by each of our churches to their local Member of Parliament will continue to bring this vital issue before our State Government, particularly in an election year.

Here's content for the proposed letter for churches to send to their MP's:

We, as your local Church of Christ, are writing to express our concern regarding the incidences of violence against ethnic minorities in Victoria, particularly in metropolitan Melbourne against Indian nationals.

We want to encourage the Victorian State Government to continue to proactively work against the culture of violence that is becoming visible and to continue to do what it can to protect those people who are our guests in this State from other nations.

We would appreciate hearing your response to these issues.

Notice of Motion 11: Reaffirming our Carbon Neutral Commitment

Further to the resolution of the 2008 Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Annual General Meeting that encouraged affiliated churches to become carbon neutral by 2010; that affiliated churches re-affirm our commitment to being good stewards of creation; to acknowledge that stewardship involves reducing the environmental impact of our churches; and to undertake energy audits and consequently a reduction in our carbon footprint.

Background

At the 2008 AGM Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas resolved to encourage local Churches to take seriously their responsibility to be good environmental stewards. To this end local churches were encouraged to undertake an energy audit, and look at how they were using or consuming energy. The motion of 2008 suggested that churches strive to be environmentally responsible by 2010.

It's 2010, and in the light of the political strivings around the world in this past 12 months, the Copenhagen Climate Summit, the U.S.A.'s Energy Bill that is currently before Congress, the European Union's endeavours to strengthen their carbon reducing policies, and our own Federal Government's stated quest for a carbon tax or the like to bring Australia into a more environmentally friendly lifestyle, and the real likelihood of a number of our near neighbours losing their land due to rising sea levels, the Social Justice Network wishes to remind all Churches of the 2008 Resolution, and asks this conference AGM to reaffirm and re-state our shared commitment to being good stewards of this earth that our God calls us to till and maintain.

The Social Justice Network has a number of resources available for Churches to fulfil their pledge: an energy audit document, metering machines to check energy consumption, and a list of web resources for information. Please

contact the Social Justice Network either via the web - www.cocsjn.org.au or www.churchesofchrist.org.au and follow the links, or you can ring Ian Smith on 0408 313 610.

Notice of Motion 12: Nominations Committee

That a Nominations Committee be formed to process and assist in filling positions for the Conference Council and Partner Department Boards.

Background

In light of the fact that often it is difficult to foster nominations for Conference President and elected members of the Conference Council, this group could encourage nominations from appropriate people. The group would have representatives on it of country, city, Tasmanian and multi-cultural churches. They could meet by "phone conference calling" to save travel and would only have to meet when required.

Boronia church. Moved: Rod Brown Seconded:

Council affirms this motion, and independent to it has been having similar thoughts, including the following possible process:

Committee to meet 2/3 times pa (or as needed); be made up of the best networkers, including Board members, President and past President, Asian Ministry Council and Youth Vision representatives, and contain a mix of gender/age/location/culture. The committee would actively seek feedback from larger church ministers and have full awareness of each Board's membership criteria, current skills needs etc.

Each Board will be asked to construct a member position description, construct a detailed orientation process which may involve 2/3 conversations with the relevant chair/EO, as well as the possibility of sitting in on a meeting before a decision is made.

Notice of Motion 13: Interview of Prospective Presidents

That the Conference Council interview all nominations for the role of Conference President.

Background

At present nominees are not interviewed and those that are elected by Conference Council need to be known by this small group of predominantly Melbourne city people. This means that very appropriate and gifted people from country and city areas can be overlooked if they are not known to Conference Council members. Interviewing each nominee would bring about equality and also ensure that the best-suited person should be appointed.

Notice of Motion 14: Affiliation Fees 2010-2011

That the Affiliation Fee for churches in Victoria for 2010-2011 be set at a total of \$22.75 per Member and Christian in Fellowship (pm);

That the Affiliation Fee for churches in Tasmania for 2010-2011 be set at a total of \$20.25 pm

Background

As part of the proposed transition process of changing the calculation of Affiliation Fees (proposed to be re-named Ministry Contribution) from a per capita to a percentage of church income basis, it is recommended that there be no increase to the Fees for Victorian churches this year, other than an increase of \$0.75pm to \$2.75 as requested by the Council of Churches of Christ in Australia (CCCA), resulting in the total 2010-2011 Fee of \$22.75pm.

Further to this, Tasmanian Conference, including its relationship to Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas, is also in transition. Council, after consultation with the Executive of Churches of Christ in Tasmania, believe that it is therefore timely to introduce a single Fee for Tasmanian churches, and to continue a move towards Fee parity between Victorian and Tasmanian churches by 2011-12, thus addressing an historical difference in the amount of Fees (Tasmania's being significantly lower). In 2010-11 this results in an increase of \$2.75pm and a total Fee for Tasmanian churches of \$20.75pm (made up of \$2.75pm to CCCA and \$18pm to Vic/Tas).

Churches should note that CCCA have already given notice of requesting a further increase to \$3.50pm in 2011.

It is noted that the figure of \$22.75pm for Victorian churches and \$20.25 for Tasmanian churches also includes an amount of \$2pm towards the salary of the Minister Care position. Council is appreciative of the willingness of all churches to support this initiative over the last year, and is pleased to report that the ministry of Greg Illingworth (providing pastoral support of ministers as part of the Mission and Ministry team) is already having a significant impact in both Tasmania and Victoria.

	2009-10		2010-11		2011-12
Vic churches	CCCA \$2	Total \$22pm	CCCA \$2.75	Total \$22.75pm	Proposed percentage basis
	V/T \$20*		V/T \$20*		
Tas churches	CCCA \$2	Total \$18pm	CCCA \$2.75	Total \$20.75pm	
	Tas \$1 V/T \$15*		V/T \$18**		

*including \$2pm for Minister care

**including \$2pm for Minister care and incorporating \$1pm for Tas

FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions



From Affiliation Fees to Ministry Contribution

Notice of Motion 7

That the Constitution clause 7 heading be amended from Affiliation Fees to *Ministry Contribution*

That Constitution 7.1 be replaced with the following:

Every Affiliated Church shall contribute each year to the annual operating Budget of Conference and the Council of Churches of Christ in Australia, on a percentage basis of the Affiliated Church's income (excluding giving designated for mission or building funds), as indicated on the statistical return of the previous year.

That after conversations with each Affiliated Church, the percentage basis for the calculation of fees is implemented at AGM 2011, at which time an appropriate percentage will be resolved in accordance with the Constitution.

Affiliation Fees are a significant source of revenue for Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas (Churches of Christ), and particularly support the ongoing operation of the Mission and Ministry Partner Department. At the All Churches Summit on May 15 we will consider changes to what we currently call Affiliation Fees. Affiliation Fees have always been calculated on a *per capita* basis (i.e. a dollar amount per each church member). It is being proposed that a more equitable way is to align Affiliation Fees with the annual income of an affiliated church, and for Fees to be calculated on a *percentage* of that income.

The proposed motion is listed above. The idea of changing the calculation of Affiliation Fees from a *per capita* basis to a *percentage* of income basis was introduced at the 2009 AGM at Ballarat. Since then conversations have been held with groups of church leaders and ministers around Victoria and Tasmania. More than 200 people from around 60 churches participated in these conversations. The response to the proposed change has been warm and positive, although not without rigour.

Q1 Why the proposed change from *per capita* to *percentage*?

Per capita has become an increasingly inefficient and inequitable way of calculating Affiliation Fees.

Q2 How has the per capita basis become inefficient and inequitable?

- *Churches in the 21st century have a changing emphasis on, and criteria for, membership.*
- *The maintenance and review of membership rolls varies greatly.*
- *Some churches with reasonable attendances have comparatively low membership numbers, and vice versa.*
- *Some churches with significant membership numbers have lower per capita giving based on many factors, and vice versa.*

Q3 How does this impact churches?

One important consequence is that mission-focused churches, with low income, can be disadvantaged.

Q4 Why a percentage basis for the calculation of Fees?

It takes into account the actual financial ability of churches to meet Fees, and therefore contribute to the work of Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas.

Q5 What will be included as 'income'?

All income used to meet the church's operating budget.

Q6 Can 'all income' be defined?

'All income' includes tithes and offerings, 'rent' for buildings (including the church manse), investment income (except where the funds invested are designated for Mission or a Building Fund), 'business'

income (the surplus from any 'business' the church operates that is allocated to the church's operating budget), and income derived from weddings and funerals.

Q7 What income is exempt?

Exemptions would include any giving specifically designated for Mission (including any amount given for a specific CareWorks project that is covered by a Memorandum of Understanding with Community Care and Mission and Ministry), or for a Building Fund.

Q8 What about local, state and federal government grants?

These would also be exempt.

Q9 If a church tithes its income for mission, is the Fee determined before the tithe is applied?

The percentage basis described previously is based on income, not expenditure. It is merely a new way of calculating Affiliation Fees that are already included in a church's budgeted Expenditure, along with other Expenditure items, including any amount a church's leadership has decided to give from its income towards mission. Therefore the new basis for Fees (or Ministry Contribution) includes all income as defined above, and doesn't include exempt income as defined above. A church's mission tithe would be applied to the total income, like the Fee. Further clarity in specific situations can be resolved in the dialogue to be held in 2010-2011 prior to the implementation of this new basis.

Q10 What time period will be used to calculate a church's income?

The calculation of income will be based on the church's most recent completed year. A copy of the church's accounts (audited if possible) will be requested to support the information provided.

Q11 Why is this change being proposed?

Most importantly, a percentage basis for the calculation of Fees is fairer and more equitable, and gives the opportunity for more funds for a church's mission and ministry to be released. Capacity to pay becomes the basis of the Fee rather than the number of people in membership. Not only that:

- It is based on partners of the church, those who are there and are able to financially contribute.
- This basis for calculation better reflects a church's life cycle.
- This basis is fairer too because it takes into account changes in the economic climate (both macro and micro).
- Churches in lower socio-economic areas, or with higher proportions of retirees or students (for example), would no longer be disadvantaged on a 'one size fits all' member-based fee.
- As churches grow income of Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas will grow accordingly and an annual revision of fees will no longer be necessary.

Q12 Is this just a 'money grab by Fairfield'?

The goal of the proposed change is not more money for Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas, but equality in giving from affiliated churches as well as the release of financial resources for a church's mission and ministry.

Q13 Will there be a time of transition?

The challenge of a change like this for individual churches is understood. That's why there will be individual dialogue with every church if the constitutional change is approved.

As the starting point for the change is fairness and equity based on a church's capacity to pay, individual churches may feel they have a case for further exemptions (or for a phasing in of any potential projected increase).

Q14 What percentage is being considered? Is it the same percentage for every church?

Council is currently completing modeling of Fees based on actual financials received from a majority of affiliated churches. This modeling is based on 2% of church's annual income up to the current recommended minimum Minister's salary package (this has been chosen as the benchmark because generally the employment of a minister is the aspiration of all churches), and 1.5% for income that exceeds that. This provides a 'cap' for both higher and lower income churches which will increase as the Minister's salary package increases. You will see the basis of current modeling on the Draft Contribution Calculation Form below.

The motion this year is to adopt the percentage basis for Fees, an actual percentage will be presented for adoption next year, in accordance with the Constitution, and following consultation with all churches around current modelling. Any adjustment to the percentage will require a resolution of an AGM as current Fees require.

- Q15** **When is it proposed to implement the change?**
As the motion states, a constitutional change is proposed for this year, with a view to the appropriate percentage being adopted and implemented in 2011, following conversations with every church based around the modeling outlined.
- Q16** **Is it 'Affiliation Fees' or a 'Ministry Contribution'?**
It is proposed in the motion that 'Affiliation Fees' be changed to 'Ministry Contribution'.
- Q17** **Why this change in terminology?**
The words 'Affiliation Fees' don't really provide the best description of the purpose of the contribution churches make to Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas. It sounds like what clubs require of club members; it doesn't sound like the expression of a commitment to continuing the ministry of Jesus. On the other hand, the notion of a 'Ministry Contribution' is a better descriptor. In making their regular Ministry Contributions churches will be contributing to the wider ministry and mission of Churches of Christ. This relationship is not about membership of a club, rather a prayerfully considered and generous partnership with Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas (and all the churches and ministries affiliated with it) as we continue the mission and ministry of Jesus.
- Q18** **How will all this work?**
A Form (along the lines of the one below) will be sent to all Treasurers at the time of the Annual Census request. This Form (signed, and with a copy of the church's most recent financial report attached, audited if possible) will assist a church in providing the information that will enable the Ministry Contribution to be calculated, and an invoice will then be issued based on this information.
- Q19** **When will the Ministry Contribution be due?**
It will be due quarterly, the same as Affiliation Fees are now. A new monthly payment option will also be offered, which will help the cash flows of local churches and Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas.
- Q20** **What if its felt a church can't afford the extra money?**
Firstly, it may not be extra money. Many churches will actually pay less, which is one reason for the change. However, secondly, if in dialogue it is agreed that an increase is beyond the church's capacity to pay in the short-term an agreement will be entered to phase any such increase in over a two-year period.
- Q21** **And anyway, what do we get for 'our money'?**
*Firstly, a question to be considered is this: is it really 'our' money? Churches and church leaders and Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas actually act as stewards of resources (financial, people, building, history) of that which is actually God's, these resources need therefore to be managed well.
 Secondly, a further question to be considered is: who really is the 'we' in the above? It could be said that the 'we' is inclusive of the local church asking the question, all other affiliated churches and agencies, as well as the 'system' that supports and nurtures them.
 Thirdly, the distributed draft Relationship Agreement document lists in detail the benefits that churches receive in the covenant relationship with Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas. Included here is a brief summary of that more detailed list:*
- *A sense of belonging to something bigger, and ready-made partnerships with other like-minded and like-spirited congregations*
 - *Training, formation, endorsement, support and nurture of 'minister-leaders'*
 - *Assistance in ministry search and appointment*
 - *Training, support and nurture of 'leader-leaders' in all areas of its mission and ministry including elders and those leading among children and young people*
 - *Other support from Mission and Ministry, CCTC, the Properties Corporation, including the provision of mission-shaped resources to develop healthy and growing churches*
 - *Ways of engaging mission overseas (through GMP and COCOA) and among Indigenous people (through ACCIM)*
 - *Church loans and financial services, insurance program and trusteeship of property, including legal accountability and risk management*
 - *Support and advice if a church experiences crisis, conflict, tension or uncertainty about its future viability*
 - *Opportunity for conversation with Churches of Christ when membership falls below 25 (other than specialist, alternative or 'boutique' churches)*
 - *A connection with the wider church, locally and globally*

Proposed Tiered Process

The calculation of the Ministry Contribution is proposed to be based on a church's annual income (for the church's most recent financial year) and is calculated in the following way:

	Annual Church Income	Annual Ministry Contribution
A	\$0 to \$7 500	\$150
B	\$7 501 to \$67 139 ¹ (i.e. the amount equivalent to one Minister's salary package)	2% of income
C	\$67 140 to \$1 000 000	\$1 342.80 (maximum B) plus 1.5% of income over \$67 140
D	Over \$1 000 000	\$1 342.80 (maximum B) plus \$13 992.90 (maximum C)

Draft Contribution Calculation Form

Church Name	
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Please complete the following information based on your church's last completed financial year

Total Church Income	
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Less Excluded Income	
Missions: Giving designated to be passed directly to a mission agency	
Building Fund: One off appeals and regular giving designated for the church's Building Fund	
Other ¹	
Total Excluded Income	

Total Income less Total Excluded Income <i>Basis to calculate Ministry Contribution</i>	
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Please attach a copy of the audited financial statement used to complete this form.

Does the church wish to pay its annual Ministry Contribution in monthly or quarterly instalments during 20xx?	Monthly <input type="checkbox"/>
	Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/>

Tithing, Stewardship and Generosity

All the above is based on the premise that churches regularly explore and teach on stewardship-related themes. How we responsibly and generously steward (manage/care for) God's resources—finance, time, skills and abilities, buildings, friendships, as well as this planet—says much (if not everything) about our covenant relationship with him and his people (those inside and outside the church community).

In the olden days, deep in the last millennium, many of our churches conducted periodic 'Planned Giving Programs'. These events gave opportunity for such teaching. While a range of issues were covered, tithing personal income and releasing it to the church for mission and ministry was clearly included. Churches who didn't have these programs were generally the ones who had the stewardship question worked out for one reason or another.

If your church hasn't explored tithing, stewardship and generosity recently, maybe it's time it did. You could start with conversations that grapple with 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 and Romans 12:1-2, as well as Malachi 3:6-12.

¹ 2010-2011 Recommended Minimum Ministers Salary Package, including Superannuation and LSL. This amount will increase as the Minister's salary package increases.

NOMINEE TO THE CONFERENCE COUNCIL 2010-2012



Your Name: Greg Warmbrunn

Age Range: 51-65

Occupation/Training:

Economics degree from Monash University
Employment at Shell Oil as an Economist
Primary and Secondary teaching degree at Monash University
On staff at Carey Baptist Grammar School for the past 25 years!
Post graduate degree – Master of Education

Involvement in leadership in the local church:

Youth Group leader for many years
Deacon on church Board for 15 years
Sunday School teacher for many years
Currently runs an activity group for teenage boys
Currently co-organise a social group for men of all ages (40+ attending)
Elder for 7 years
Lead a Small study group of adults

Involvement in Conference/wider work of Churches of Christ:

Lead youth camps at Banksia
Co-led Churches of Christ 'Masters Games'
Member of Conference Board
Chaired committee investigating purpose and position of Halls Gap camp
Inaugural member of Conference Council, Chair for 2 previous years

Involvement in missional activities/inter-church activities:

Board member and Vice Chair of Scripture Union for 7 years
Led many camps and outreach activities for SU since 1972
Organised and led many student Christian groups at Carey Grammar

Your response to the desired qualities for Conference Council members:

Be connected to grass root activities in a local church
Be able to look at the big picture for future missional activities
Be fully prepared and organised before each Board meeting
When required, be able to contribute robust discussion on agenda items
Be godly people – that is, people willing to make themselves available to God's service wherever that may lead
Be passionate about the faith journey of Australians seeking a relationship with God
Be able to bring some specific ability to Conference Council – be it spiritual, leadership, financial, legal, or organisational

Other information:

Council members should ideally have interests outside of the church that might be used both to relax and recharge the batteries or might even be used by God to bring others into a relationship with Him. Accordingly ... I love to ski, cycle, play squash, travel, drive my MG on fine days, sail, bush-walk, socialise and drink good coffee! In 2007 I took a group of students to Tanzania to do community work at a very poor primary school; in 2008 I climbed to base-camp of Mt Everest; in 2009 I cycled from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City and this year (2010) I hope to climb Mt Kilimanjaro!

2009 AGM Minutes, Saturday May 2 Held at York St Church of Christ, Ballarat



Chair: Merryl Blair, Conference President and Deputy Chair, Conference Council

Welcome and Welcome to Country

From the Chair: As we commence this meeting together I respectfully acknowledge the past and present traditional owners of this land on which we are meeting, the Wathaurong people. It is a privilege to be standing on Wathaurong country.

Worship was led by the Ballarat churches, and included a Dwelling in the Word led by the Conference Executive Officer around Ephesians 4, followed by one-to-one sharing. This was followed by a keynote address by Billy Williams.

From the Chair: As you are all aware, this year we experienced significant production challenges around the timely production and dissemination of printed reports. For this we apologize, and we acknowledge that is less than best practice, but circumstances prevented the outcome we all hoped for, and were responsible to produce. The collection and collation of reports is never easy.

Apologies: Greg Warmbrunn, Max Carr, Lindsay Cutler, Gordon Stirling

Notices of Motion

No.1 Church Affiliation – Shekinah Church of Christ

Resolved: That the Shekinah Church of Christ be admitted to the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania. **Moved:** Nathan Nhan **Seconded:** Agus Budiman

No.2 Church Affiliation – Bayview Community Church

Resolved: That the Bayview Community Church be admitted to the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania. **Moved:** Paul Cameron **Seconded:** Grant Mackenzie

No.3 Church Affiliation – Joyful Church of Christ

Resolved: That the Joyful Church of Christ be admitted to the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania. **Moved:** Nathan Nhan **Seconded:** Agus Budiman

No.4 Church Affiliation – Cornerstone Community Church

Resolved: That the Cornerstone Community Church be admitted to the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania. **Moved:** Nathan Nhan **Seconded:** Agus Budiman

The Affiliation of the above churches was confirmed by acclamation, following which Grant Mackenzie (Chair, Mission and Ministry) led Conference in prayer.

State of Conference (Paul Cameron)

The Conference Executive Officer presented a State of Conference address, after which delegates reflected on the issues raised in small conversation groups.

Statement from Conference Council (Merryl Blair, President)

On Wednesday April 22 Conference Council convened an 'all boards' meeting to receive the report of the Review into Conference Structures and Relationships. The Report, initiated by Council, was received with appreciation for the work completed by Ted Keating.

The meeting planned an ongoing conversation to be managed by Council, through the Partner Department CEOs and Chairs. All boards and Council will consider the Report and its recommendations, as well as key Partner Department staff. Council will receive feedback and will

subsequently consider specific actions including a possible further 'all boards' meeting. Any constitutional changes that may emerge will be brought to the 2010 AGM. It was also agreed that the proposed adoption at the 2009 AGM of the Mission and Ministry Constitution be deferred pending the outcomes of this conversation. The Council has already affirmed the M&M constitution, and this deferral will not complicate any of M&M's operational processes.

Questions

Alan Matheson (Camberwell) asked several questions about the timing of the adoption of the M&M Constitution including, 'affirmed by council – what does that mean?' and 'when do we see Ted Keating's report, as promised in the Newsletter?'

Council responded that the deferral of the M&M Constitution does not interfere with its operation, in affirming the Constitution Council gives an operational mandate to M&M; the report on the Review into Conference structures and relationships was tabled at an all boards meeting and dealt with on the basis of a process it determined.

Rod Brown (Boronia) reminded delegates of a motion of the 2006 AGM that the governance shape be reviewed three years later, so it should really be seen by the AGM not just the Council.

Council responded that the review has taken place, and the all boards group decided on this process. Delegates noted the comment of Ron Buckland (Montrose) that such reviews take time and,

Resolved: That the 2009 Conference AGM give Conference Council another year for the review process and requests that it report to the 2010 Conference AGM.

Moved: Ron Buckland, **Seconded:** Ian Smith

Mission and Ministry Focus and Report

Grant Mackenzie (Chair, Mission and Ministry) introduced Executive Director Martin Boutros to assembled Conference delegates.

Martin gave an overview of M&M's activities, including its Mission Statement and a broad overview of its Strategy Framework (summarised in the Report Book).

Conference affirmed David Brooker (Southern Community) and Steve Jackson (Parkdale) as new members of the M&M Board.

Conference then commissioned two new M&M Team members, Martin Boutros (Executive Director) and Greg Illingworth (Director—Minister Care) through a prayer offered by Robyn Millership (Conference President Elect).

Conference was reminded that M&M exists to serve local churches.

The AGM Process: A Comment from the Chair

This Conference gathering, the Annual General Meeting, has changed. It will continue to change. For a range of legal and corporate reasons CCTC, Community Care (as companies limited by guarantee) and the Properties Corporation (operating under an Act of the Victorian Parliament) have their own reporting processes and procedures. All of us are learning the best way, within the Conference constitution that is based on an accountability lived out in relationship and trust, for these Partner Departments to give feedback on their activities to Conference as assembled. Bear with us as we continue the learning process. Give us constructive feedback (not necessarily today...) so we can improve it.

Minutes of the 2008 AGM

Resolved: that the 2008 AGM Minutes be approved as distributed.

Moved: Russell Kilgour, **Seconded:** Robyn Millership

Conference Council Report

The Report was introduced by Meryll Blair.

The Executive Officer noted that Council had approved as from 1 July 2009 an increase to the Recommended Minimum Salary for Ministers within Churches of Christ of an amount equivalent to the 3.28% CPI increase, but that the actual impact on the budget of churches will be less than that as the percentage that can be paid to a Ministry Expense Account has been increased to 50% (45% previously).

Financial Reports

1. Conference

The report was presented by Frank Morabito on behalf of Lindsay Cutler (Conference Treasurer)

Resolved: That the Conference Financial report be accepted as published.

Moved: Frank Morabito **Seconded:** Russell Kilgour

2. Mission and Ministry

The report was presented by Frank Morabito on behalf of Lindsay Cutler (M&M Treasurer)

Resolved: That the M&M Financial report be accepted as published.

Moved: Frank Morabito **Seconded:** Kaye Reid

Frank concluded his reports by expressing his thanks to Kaye Reid (M&M).

The Chair commended Properties Corporation for the financial support services they provide both Conference Council and M&M.

Delegates were reminded that copies of full financial reports were available, and in the event of the supply running short, invited to register with Claire for a copy to be sent out.

Properties Corporation (Joel Plotnek)

John Bailey (representing the Trustees) introduced Joel Plotnek who reported that while it was a hard year it was also rewarding: A new insurance scheme offering price stability, better claims management and the ability to offer further services was initiated (with assistance from the Baptists); a Red Book risk management scheme is being implemented; there are lots of new property developments taking place; a possible church banking service is being considered. In summary, Joel reported that a healthy and forward thinking Properties Corporation enables the broader church work to thrive.

Joel also noted with regret the sad loss of Karen Mitchell, a valued long-term member of staff; and also the retirement of Ian Loft as a trustee (and at the same time encouraged churches to suggest people who could be considered as future Trustees).

Community Care (Jillian Carson)

Delegates noted that all sites have achieved accreditation; that a current priority is safety systems; that CareWorks has been strengthened through its restructured relationship with M&M and particularly through the contribution of Tamra Maddox; that the number of church services for residents is increasing, with family members being impacted; that the Department's debt has been reduced, with the goal of clearing its debt by 2010; and that key changes in government policy have affected funding.

Jillian also acknowledged the valuable chaplaincy internship partnership with CCTC through Alan Niven and Merrill Kitchen; and the hard work of staff at all sites, the Board, as well as the invaluable support of Conference Council.

The Chair expressed thanks to Jillian for keeping 'the mission of care' at the forefront of Community Care's work.

CCTC (Merrill Kitchen)

Delegates noted the Principal's comments that things are going very well at CCTC as it: trains people for aged care ministries (in partnership with Community Care); offers training to school chaplains (an essential mission field to tell the 'story'); has about 10% of students preparing for 'traditional' church ministry, hopefully addressing some gaps.

Merrill noted that the Conference CEO's meet regularly, and while they each do different work they are not isolated but in communication; and acknowledged the faculty at College and their deep commitment to the ethos of Churches of Christ; and that she is part of a panel talking with government about funding for higher education, and that while extra government funding would be helpful the panel is not willing 'to sell our souls' for it.

The Chair noted that this was Merrill's last time of reporting as she plans to conclude as CCTC Principal at the end of 2009.

Tasmania Report (Kay Groves, Tasmanian President)

Kay reported that Tasmanians do feel very isolated, but this is not Victoria's fault, as there is a culture of isolation in (and within) Tasmania. The Tasmanian executive appreciated a recent visit of the Conference Executive Officer to begin looking at ways to lessen the perceived divide.

Kay also reported that the churches are 'ticking along'; that the recent Tasmanian convention went well; that there is some minister movement; that she is leading a mentoring initiative; and that the biggest current issue is discussion and decisions about the use of the proceeds of the sale of Camp Seaview at Bicheno (delegates were invited to join in prayer for the next week's Executive meeting and for the process).

Kay concluded with a request for the prayers of delegates and churches for this decision, and to increase the feeling of partnership with Victoria.

Questions on Reports

Pat Grieg (Ringwood): Tell us more about CareWorks.

Martin Boutros responded that CareWorks would recommence in June with Monique ten Hoopen whose role while broader in the encouragement of a wholistic strategy for mission awareness and training will have a primary focus on CareWorks; CareWorks takes place in conjunction with Community Care and it offers churches tax exemption for specific mission projects. Jillian Carson added that CareWorks also gives churches and projects access to funding opportunities (eg suicide prevention workshops funded by the State Government).

Rod Brown (Boronia): Asked the CEO to explain the sixth paragraph of the Future Directions report on p12 of the Report 2009, in response to the question 'does the left have a place in today's church?' *The CEO responded¹ acknowledged that the paragraph was rather clunky or clumsy and that the words 'theological left' and 'theological right' can be unhelpful. The key, of course, is that in Christ there is no left or right but a new creation, and a key question therefore is Jesus Christ as the way, truth and life being articulated today. The issues raised here and the statistics mentioned in this morning's State of Conference piece deserve a more dignified response than satire. When a Christian community, Churches of Christ indeed, has nearly 23% who don't see 'Salvation through Christ alone' as 'Central to (their) understanding of Churches of Christ', we have a necessary conversation theme around Christology. When added to that we have nearly 30% who don't hold as a central value 'The Gospel compels us to be a missional movement' we have another theme, and a possible trend, emerging. The question then needs to be considered: What do we belong around, and 'Who' do we belong around? Again I acknowledge that some of the words can be unhelpful but can we have the conversations?*

Ken Ryall (Southern Community) asked for clarification around the apparent changed reporting of net market value of market securities and funds in the Properties Corporation accounts.

Joel Plotnek responded that there has been a change in accounting policy regarding the reporting of investments. In past we recorded the full market change, but in 2008 we applied a new accounting standard that didn't require market changes to be shown on the income statement.

Reports

Resolved: That all reports be accepted as published in the Report 2009 book.

Moved: Anne Spoelder (One Community), **Seconded:** Anthony Risson (Hartwell)

Other Business

Notice of Motion 5 From the Social Justice Network—Local Indigenous Connections

After discussion around whether the words 'endeavour to' needed to be inserted in the Motion delegates **Resolved** to amend the motion in that way.

Moved: Ron Buckland (Montrose), **Seconded:** Andrew Tonkin (Mildura)

¹ This requires further editing once a recording of the response is received.

Delegates also noted a comment by Alan Matheson (Camberwell) that at the 1998 AGM the Indigenous Ministry Unit reported that 'the health of conference is directly linked to health of indigenous ministry'.

It was then **Resolved** that: Following the resolution at the 2008 AGM (which affirmed the Federal Parliament's apology to the Stolen Generations and added our own apology) and believing that local churches have the capacity to help reveal Christ to, and promote justice for, our indigenous brothers and sisters by relationally connecting with appropriate local bodies and networks, the Conference of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania resolves that churches affiliated with the Conference endeavour to form local connections with indigenous peoples, cultures and organisations in the spirit of partnership, practicality and humility, including working ecumenically where appropriate.

Moved: Craig Brown **Seconded:** Ian Smith

Elective Conversations

Delegates then moved into elective groups.

Notice of Motion 6—Affiliation Fees 2009-2010

Resolved: *That* the affiliation fee for Victorian churches for 2009-2010 be set at a total of \$22 per Member and Christian in Fellowship (pm), including an amount of \$2pm that Conference contributes to the Council of Churches of Christ in Australia and a further \$2pm towards the salary of a Minister Care position that will facilitate pastoral support of ministers and be part of the Mission and Ministry Team;

That the affiliation fee for Tasmanian churches for 2009-2010 be set at \$15 per Member and Christian in Fellowship (pm), including \$2pm towards the salary of a Minister Care position that will facilitate pastoral support of ministers and be part of the Mission and Ministry Team.

It is noted: that the Tasmanian Council pays its own affiliation fee to National Council, and also charges a fee per member as an affiliation to the Tasmanian Conference, hence the lower amount.

Moved: Anthony Risson **Seconded:** Paul Cameron

Delegates noted that Council acknowledges the impact of this increase, but affirms the need to provide ongoing support and care for ministers.

Other Reports

Church as Employer (Alan Niven)

Delegates noted that the facilitator's disappointment to not have a final report completed; that there had not been a great level of interest in attending focus group/s; and that an interim report containing process recommendations had been distributed.

Delegates noted the recommendation to Conference Council that each Partner Department be invited to engage with this process, and to form a new group to manage the process.

Delegates were also invited to suggest people or resources to Alan Niven.

Review into our Work and Ministry among Indigenous People (Ian Smith)

Delegates were reminded that the Vic/Tas Conference have had a long and good engagement with indigenous ministries, and that while some connection has been lost, that we are now returning to this level of engagement. The Review group is seeking to create a theological framework for our movement to operate in, as well as documenting the journey so far including the collection of oral histories.

Interim recommendations included the earlier SJN motion and:

- That council recommission a group to become an Indigenous Ministry group of Conference
- The creation of a calendar with significant dates related to the Indigenous for distribution to churches
- That each church recognise the original owners of their land, and erect appropriate signage

Delegates were reminded that the recommendations were made to Council and not the AGM; that the full report will be made at the 2010 AGM; and also noted that copies of the interim report would be distributed to all churches.

ACCIM Snapshot (Avon Moyle)

Avon expressed appreciation for the support and prayers of Vic/Tas Conference in difficult financial times; for the support of the Dareton project which is a unique partnership between Vic/Tas Conference, local people and ACCIM (noting the comment from mayor at the induction of John Saulo—"there are many problems in this region, but today I can see some of the answers are on the way"); and encouraged delegates that 'a lot is going on'.

GMP Snapshot (John Gilmore)

John expressed deep thanks to Jack Edwards who is retiring at the end of this year; welcomed Greg Illingworth who will be working as 1.5 day per week GMP Mobiliser in Vic/Tas; acknowledged the ongoing worth of COCOA; and invited delegates and church members to become GMP Personal Partners.

Federal Co-ordinator (Craig Brown)

Craig outlined the changes at what is now the Council of Churches of Christ in Australia; introduced the October 4 Great Communion celebration and the resources available, including the 'D&A is in our DNA' study guide; and indicated that the national values survey was nearing completion and that a youth resources kit had been prepared.

Closing

Keynote speaker Billy Williams then reflected on the day, and made several observations about what he had seen; in affirming the freedom and flexibility of our movement he also reminded us of the need to follow through on conversations about important issues like the Indigenous resolution and review process.

The Chair then concluded the AGM, inviting delegates to send further questions and suggestions to the Conference Centre.