

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF TASK GROUP

ON ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION ON ELDERSHIP IN THE UNITING CHURCH

23 September 2015 (revised 25 January 2016)

PREAMBLE

Grounded in the reformed tradition of historic Christianity, the Uniting Church affirms that all aspects of congregational life and mission have a spiritual dimension and fall under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. This transformative worldview does not recognise a strict duality between “sacred” and “secular” dimensions in church life. Rather, the church and its leaders strive to faithfully seek to discern God’s will in all that it does in advancing the kingdom of God.

The new regulations reaffirm the importance of Eldership in the life and mission of the Church, in particular the role of spiritual oversight. The proposed model of church governance reflects a single council comprised of elected elders who corporately exercise and fulfil the multiple roles of elder.

REGULATIONS

Understanding of new regulations

All Elders are Church Councillors – all Church Councillors are Elders.

Church Council may co-opt 2 other members of the Congregation to membership of Church Council for up to 2 years

Role of Elders (from regulations) and commitment statement (St Andrews)

- Those recognized as Elders will share with the Minister in exercising pastoral oversight and building up the Congregation in faith and love, sustaining its members in hope and leading them into a full participation in Christ’s mission in the world.

- Eldership is exercised corporately within the Church Council by ensuring that the agenda for Church Council meetings gives priority to the following matters as listed in the regulations 3.1.2:
 - (i) sharing with the Minister(s) in mission and in the pastoral care and spiritual oversight of the Congregation;

 - (ii) nurturing the members and adherents in their growth in grace;

 - (iii) making decisions in accordance with the Regulations concerning baptism, confirmation and membership, and the keeping and reviewing of the rolls of the Congregation;

 - (iv) assisting the Minister(s) in the conduct of worship and in the administration of the sacraments;

 - (v) determining the time and place of services of public worship;

 - (vi) carrying out its functions in accordance with the Regulations concerning applicants for the specified ministries;

(vii) managing the financial affairs and the general administration of the Congregation including the reception, preparation and presentation of all necessary budgets, statements and reports;

(viii) arranging for audit, presentation and examination of the accounts of all the funds of the Congregation; (See Reg. 3.8.7)

(ix) managing and controlling property in accordance with the Regulations; (See Reg. 4.4.1)

(x) preparing and presenting to a meeting of the Congregation an annual report concerning the life and work of the Congregation including its worship, mission and service, and making recommendations with regard to the program for the ensuing year;

(xi) exercising oversight of the appointment of officers and leaders of Congregational organisations;

(xii) referral of matters to Presbytery as prescribed;

(xiii) discipline of members (See Reg. 5.1.2 – 5.2.5);

(xiv) carrying out its functions in relation to Ministers- in-Association (See Reg. 2.11.1).

Commitment

In accepting the ministry of Elder, I am willing to prayerfully commit myself to the following roles and responsibilities:

- Purposeful spiritual growth in my life
- Modelling the Christian life
- Commitment to regular prayer for myself and others
- To encourage the congregation to share in mission
- To attend the regular Church Council meetings
- To encourage local ecumenical activities
- To encourage congregational members to share their gifts and talents in the life of the church

ELECTIONS

3 year terms All nominated as Elders Call for nominations from the congregation

Each nominee to provide a written statement of gifts, skills, experience, qualities based on the regulations in collaboration with nominator and seconder to be provided to the congregation 2 weeks before the annual meeting

MEETING TIMES Quarterly meetings of Church Council

STANDING COMMITTEES OF CHURCH COUNCIL ST. ANDREWS UNITING CHURCH

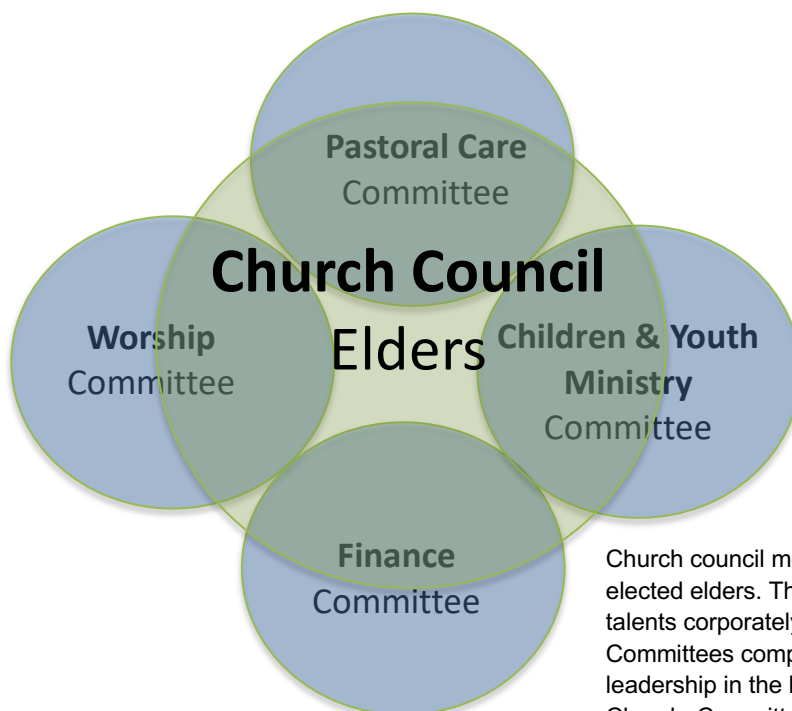
Committees of the church council shall include elders as chair and secretary, and additional elders as needed or desired. In addition, each committee may include other members of the congregation as deemed necessary to participate in the work of the committee. It is expected that committees meet formally (with scheduled meetings and minutes), although committees may organise informally in conducting their affairs. Committees may from time to time be tasked by church council to consider certain matters that arise. Committees are empowered to prepare reports and motions for discussion and action by church council. Committees may be formed or discontinued by Council.

Pastoral Care – *To ensure the pastoral care of the members of St. Andrew’s Uniting Church, Glenbrook.* The Committee shall along with the minister, collectively function as a coordinated pastoral care team. The pastoral care committee is responsible for the physical and spiritual care of members and friends of the congregation through communication, visitation, and prayer.

Children and Youth Ministry – *To cultivate the spiritual growth and development of children and youth in the life of St. Andrew’s and the broader church.* The committee shall collectively function as a children and youth ministry team. The committee shall be responsible for oversight, coordination and delivery of programs related to engaging children and youth in worship, mission, faith formation, social activities and outreach to the community and beyond.

Worship – *To assist the minister in conduct of worship and in administration of the sacraments of St. Andrew’s Uniting Church.* The committee shall assist the minister in tasks such as planning and conducting worship services and other tasks as deemed necessary.

Finance – *To assist the Council of St. Andrew’s Uniting Church in stewardship of finances.* The committee shall include the Church Treasurer. The Committee shall provide financial reports to Council, authorise payments and assist in annual budget planning and preparation for Council and Congregation approval.



Church council model in which all council members are elected elders. The elders, differing in spiritual gifts and talents corporately exercise the multiple roles of eldership. Committees comprised of elders share responsibility in leadership in the life and mission of St. Andrew’s Uniting Church. Committees may include members of the church in fulfilling their mission.

QUESTIONS

I do not have all the spiritual gifts necessary to serve as an Elder in the church. How then can I serve as Elder?

Answer. The church has long recognised the diversity in gifts underpinning the role of Elder and church leader. However, as diverse members of one body, no individual is expected to fulfill all the roles of Elder. The elected group of Elders collectively and corporately fulfill the multiple roles of the office of Elder.

What is the relationship between the Elders of the church council, the committees and the larger congregation?

Answer. The Elders of the church council are elected leaders who serve the congregation and wider church in fulfilling its mission in the world. Elders seek to serve, encourage and empower members of the congregation in sharing in the work of the church. As such, committees (led by one or more Elders) may include members of the congregation and should seek to do so where possible in sharing their work. The various committees may choose to organise formally or informally as needed.