



Presbytery Member's Role Description

Introduction

A person elected to be a member of the Presbytery needs to be a vibrant conduit between the Presbytery gathered and the Congregation or Agency from which they come. Being a member of Presbytery is both a source of encouragement and a window to the wider church. It can be a place to grow in your faith and to be a member of Presbytery is both a privilege and a blessing.

Your appointing body has elected you to be a member of the Presbytery because you have gifts for this role and you have time and energy to contribute to the role.

We encourage Congregations to be strategic in nominating their Presbytery members. The Presbytery will be enriched and do its work better if the membership includes those with vision, discernment and passion for this area of the Church and God's mission.

Before a Presbytery Meeting

- Check with your local community as to whether there are matters that are being referred to the Presbytery and ensure you are appropriately briefed about these matters. Discuss how these matters will get onto the agenda and who will carry that through.
- Read and pray over the meeting papers, especially any matters that relate to your community. Follow up with the authors of reports if you have any questions.
- Pray for those who will gather, especially the leadership
- Plan to travel with others from your congregation/agency/area to maximise the sense of community and minimise the draw on resources in relation to travel.
- Advise the Presbytery Secretary/Presbytery office of your availability and attendance.
- Take note of any local arrangements in relation to food/ cost of food/ celebratory worship.
- Promote the meeting or gathering within your community and invite their prayer for you and for those who will gather to undertake the work of Presbytery.
- Ensure you are familiar with the Uniting Church Manual for Meetings and know how to use consensus decision making procedures. (see Manual for Meetings <http://assembly.uca.org.au/resources/regulations>)

At the Meeting

- Arrive in good time so there is time for fellowship and greeting those you don't see often.
- Sit at a table with those whom you might not have met before. These gatherings are a good time to hear how other communities are travelling in their journey of discipleship.
- Enter whole heartedly into the worship and fellowship opportunities provided during the day.
- Listen carefully and discerningly to the matters being discussed.
- Use the consensus processes confidently when appropriate and invited, eg showing your cards to indicate to the Chair of the meeting how you feel about a particular discussion.
- Offer your contribution as is appropriate, especially during table group discussion.
- Be alert to hearing the movement of the Holy Spirit in the conversation.

- Be observant and discerning about the gifts that other members offer and support those with appropriate gifts in offering them to further build up the body of Christ that is this Council of the Church.
- Be careful to ensure that the gathering is maintained as a safe place for all people, eg care with language and behaviour that others might experience as bullying.
- Remember that each person carries the image of God in some way and so has value.

After the Meeting

- The Sunday after the meeting make a verbal report to your congregation of the three key decisions or events that happened at the gathering. Indicate that you would welcome further discussion on any thing people are interested in and be prepared to share minutes and meeting papers (unless confidential matters have been discussed).
- For the next Church Council meeting – provide a one page report of the major decisions made or areas discussed, drawing out the impacts and implications that you have discerned for your appointing body, eg congregation or agency.
- Make a note of those matters that need further work or follow up. Follow through on those issues with the appropriate body.
- Remember to undertake and work for the Presbytery you have committed to in a timely manner according to what has been decided.

What Presbytery means to me

"I attend Presbytery meetings to connect with the whole that I am a part of, but don't often see, because of being in ministry around the geographical edges. The church is people, and Presbytery is a great gathering of the church. I also value those who sometimes join us from the wider church and enrich us with what they bring to share. Also I love that we do the business that we must do and use the rest of our time for sharing, learning and enjoying together." G Loftus

"Three main reasons for attending Presbytery events.

"One is I enjoy having input into decision making about what is important to do, be or help with as Uniting Church Christians in Tasmania. A second is the pleasure of meeting people from around the state who share my interest in serving God in my community. Thirdly we get the chance to hear each other's activities and learn from others whether experts or wise people who come and share their knowledge and experience, stimulating us to try new things and share what we have learnt in our congregations and home communities." O Glenn

Some of the Regulations relating to Presbytery

See the Assembly web site at

<http://assembly.uca.org.au/images/stories/Regulations/AmendedRegulations.pdf>

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PRESBYTERY

3.3.4 The membership of the Presbytery shall consist of:

- (a) The chairperson and secretary of the Presbytery
- (b) Ministers who are
 - (i) in active service;
 - (ii) associate members appointed officers of the Presbytery, and co-opted by the Presbytery to full membership during all or part of their term of office;
- (c)
 - (i) Pastors in approved ministry locations within the bounds;
 - (ii) Lay Preachers classified as active who are elected by the Presbytery, of such number as the Presbytery shall determine;
 - (iii) Lay Pastors, Youth Workers and Community Ministers in accordance with Regulation 2.9.7;
- (d)
 - (i) One confirmed lay member elected by each Congregation. Where a Congregation includes more than 150 confirmed members and members-in-association in total, one additional confirmed lay member may be elected by the Congregation or where a Congregation includes more than 250 confirmed members and members-in-association in total, two additional confirmed lay members may be elected by the Congregation.
 - (ii) Such further confirmed lay members as may be determined by the Synod in consultation with the Presbytery and, as appropriate, to be appointed by the Congregations, the Presbytery or the Synod;
- (e) Two confirmed members representing each of such bodies as may be determined by the Presbytery, to be appointed by those bodies, and with at least one of such representation being a lay person.
- (f)
 - (i) Confirmed lay members as co-opted persons up to a maximum of one for each five lay members of Presbytery, such co-options being made for such reasons as the Presbytery considers appropriate, including to include 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 balance in the proportion of younger and older persons who comprise the members of the Presbytery.
 - (ii) Ministers who are not otherwise members of the Presbytery as co-opted persons up to a maximum of one for each five ministerial members of the Presbytery (Ministers of the Word, Deacons and Deaconesses) such co-options being made for such reasons as the Presbytery considers appropriate, including to include persons

with special gifts not otherwise available to the Presbytery and engaged in a significant ministry within the bounds of the Presbytery.

(iii) Co-options shall be for a period of one year. A co-opted member is eligible for further co-option. The number of co-opted members from any one Congregation shall not exceed three lay members and three ministerial members.

(g) In the event of any person who is a member of the Presbytery by virtue of paragraph (c)(i), (d)(i) and (e) hereof being unable to attend a meeting of the Presbytery, the place of such a person may be taken by an alternate designated for that purpose by the appointing body.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF THE PRESBYTERY

- 3.3.5** (a) Ministers who are on leave of absence, retired or awaiting placement and candidates for Community Minister shall be associate members of the Presbytery which has oversight of them, unless they are members of the Presbytery in accordance with Regulation 3.3.4.
- (b) Associate members of the Presbytery may participate in discussion but not in the deliberation or determination of any item of business of the Presbytery.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE PRESBYTERY

- 3.3.6** (a) Lay persons who are members of Presbytery in accordance with Regulation 3.3.4(c)(ii) and (d) shall be elected or appointed for a period of one year and shall be eligible for re-election or re-appointment.
- (b) Should any casual vacancy occur among the lay membership of the Presbytery the vacancy may be filled by the appropriate electing body for the balance of the term of the person replaced.
- (c) No person may hold membership in more than one Presbytery at any one time.