

**THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA – SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA
BY-LAWS FOR
THE LAY PREACHERS' ASSOCIATION**

	<p>PREAMBLE:</p> <p><i>The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as lay preachers those who at the time of union are accredited lay preachers (local preachers) in any of the uniting Churches and who adhere to the Basis of Union. It will seek to recognise those endowed with the gift of the Spirit for this task, will provide for their training, and will gladly wait upon that fuller understanding of the obedience of Christians which should flow from their ministry. Such members will be called Lay Preachers.</i> Basis of Union 14(d)</p> <p><i>The ministry of Lay Preacher is one in which lay persons may participate in the proclamation of the gospel and in witness to Christian faith and experience, and for which they have received gifts and are called by the Holy Spirit.</i> UCA Regulations 2.8.1</p> <p><i>A Lay Preacher is a member of the Church who is authorised to conduct services of worship in the Congregation in which such Lay Preacher holds membership and in any other Congregation to which the Lay Preacher may be invited by the Minister thereof.</i> UCA Regulations 2.8.2</p>
<p>1</p> <p>1.1</p> <p>1.2</p> <p>1.3</p> <p>1.4</p>	<p>NAME, SOURCE OF AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY:</p> <p>The name of the body shall be the Lay Preachers' Association.</p> <p>The source of authority is UCA Regulations 2.8.12: <i>Each Synod and each Presbytery may arrange for the formation of a Lay Preachers' Association. (enacted initially through the Commission for Mission [Minute 99.84.3.2 and 07.56])</i></p> <p>The Association shall relate to the Centre for Theology and Ministry (CTM) in matters of education, and to presbyteries in maintenance of standards for leadership of worship.</p> <p>An annual report of the Association shall be submitted to the Synod through the CTM.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>DEFINITIONS:</p> <p>In these By-Laws, unless the context indicates otherwise:</p> <p>AGM means the Annual General Meeting of the Association Associate members means Lay Preacher candidates (approved as such by their presbyteries) Association means the Lay Preachers' Association of the Synod CTM means the Centre for Theology and Ministry Jubilee Thanksgiving Fund means the fund established in 1886 by the former Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Church, the income from which is to be applied at the discretion of the Association for the relief of Lay Preachers in the Synod (or "their widows") in needy circumstances; any surplus income each year can be paid to the General Fund of the Association. The Property Trust may revoke, add to or vary the conditions of the Fund. Members means all accredited Lay Preachers in the Synod Property Trust means the Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Victoria) and the Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Tas), the legal entities in which all property of the Synod is vested. Synod means the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>PURPOSE:</p> <p>The Lay Preachers' Association shall support and encourage the specified ministry of Lay Preaching in its contribution to the Church's mission of encouraging and enabling people in congregations and communities to discover, accept and express the Gospel of Jesus Christ.</p>

4	<p>RESPONSIBILITIES:</p> <p>The Association shall have responsibility:</p> <p>4.1 ➤ to provide mutual help and spiritual encouragement to Lay Preachers;</p> <p>4.2 ➤ to facilitate and encourage the continuing education of Lay Preachers, liaising with presbytery Lay Preachers' Committees and the CTM;</p> <p>4.3 ➤ to provide relief for Lay Preachers and/or their dependents in need, through the Jubilee Thanksgiving Fund and other measures as appropriate;</p> <p>4.4 ➤ to co-ordinate relationships between presbyteries and Synod bodies in matters relating to Lay Preachers;</p> <p>4.5 ➤ to administer grants for assisting in the training of Lay Preachers;</p> <p>4.6 ➤ to publish a regular newsletter (<i>Witness</i>);</p> <p>4.7 ➤ to circulate information and resources relevant to the ministry of Lay Preachers;</p> <p>4.8 ➤ to nominate Lay Preacher representatives to Synod and Assembly agencies and consultations as required;</p> <p>4.9 ➤ to appoint representatives to the National Lay Preachers' Committee;</p> <p>4.10 ➤ to prepare an annual report for the Synod, to be submitted through the CTM after adoption by the AGM;</p> <p>4.11 ➤ to maintain registers:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">(i) of contact persons appointed by each presbytery [Reg 2.8.13]</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">(ii) of accredited Lay Preachers as advised by presbyteries [Reg 2.8.6(f)]</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">(iii) of candidates for Lay Preacher as advised by presbyteries</p> <p>4.12 ➤ to do whatever else is necessary in fulfilling the purposes of the Association</p>
5	<p>STRUCTURE:</p> <p>5.1 Annual Conference</p> <p>The Association shall normally gather at an Annual Conference, in which other worship leaders are warmly welcomed to participate.</p> <p>5.2 Annual General Meeting</p> <p>During the Annual Conference, the Annual General Meeting shall normally be held. All Members present at the AGM are responsible for participating in decision-making in the business of the AGM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to receive reports from Officers and the Awards Committee ▪ to elect Officers ▪ to commission the Committee of Management ▪ to appoint an Awards Committee to administer grants to Lay Preacher candidates ▪ to appoint representatives to the National Lay Preachers' Committee, normally for a three year term ▪ to receive the financial reports ▪ to approve the annual budget ▪ to determine matters of policy for the Association ▪ to propose any changes to the By-Laws ▪ to fulfil any other responsibilities as necessary.

5.3	Committee of Management At the AGM, the Association shall commission a Committee of Management to carry out the responsibilities of the Association. It shall meet at least three times each year.
5.4	Executive of the Committee of Management An Executive shall be authorised to act as the Committee of Management in the case of urgent emergent matters arising between meetings of the Committee of Management.
5.5	Awards Committee The AGM shall appoint an Awards Committee to administer grants to Lay Preacher candidates.
6	MEMBERSHIP, TERMS AND DUTIES:
6.1	The Association: All accredited Lay Preachers in the Synod shall be Members of the Association. Lay Preacher candidates (approved as such by their Presbyteries) shall be designated Associate Members. The Officers of the Association , elected at the AGM by a simple majority of Members present and voting, shall be:
6.1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ President: elected for a 2-year term, normally following 12 months as President-elect. Duties shall include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chairing the AGM, Committee of Management and Executive meetings ○ Arranging for the organisation of the Annual Conference ○ Preparing an annual report for submission to the Synod through the CTM ○ General oversight of the work of the Association
6.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ President-Elect: elected for a 12-month term at the mid-term AGM of the President's term, to take up office at conclusion of the President's term. In the event of the President-Elect not being able to assume the role of President, the Committee of Management shall appoint a President-Elect.
6.1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Immediate Past-President: shall fulfil the role of President in the absence or inability of the President.
6.1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Secretary: elected for a 12-month term; one person normally may hold this office for no more than five years consecutively. If vacated during the term of office, the position shall be filled by the Committee of Management. Duties shall include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recording and distributing minutes of the AGM and meetings of the Committee of Management and the Executive; ○ Receiving and responding to Association correspondence; ○ Preparing for the activities of the AGM including notifying Members and Associate Members, and arranging for the ballot process; ○ Other secretarial duties as required.
6.1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Treasurer: elected for a 12-month term; one person normally may hold this office for no more than five years consecutively. If vacated during the term of office, the position shall be filled by the Committee of Management. Duties shall include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keeping financial records of the Association; ○ Presenting financial reports to the AGM; ○ Preparing the annual budget; ○ Arranging for the annual audit of financial records; ○ Participating in the work of the Awards Committee ○ Overseeing application of the income of the Jubilee Thanksgiving Fund.
6.1.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Editor of <i>Witness</i>: elected by the AGM for a 12-month term; one person normally may hold this office for no more than five years consecutively. If vacated during the term of office, the position shall be filled by the Committee of Management. Duties shall include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Producing the newsletter of the Association, <i>Witness</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensuring a current mailing list of Members is maintained ○ Ensuring a current mailing list of Associate Members is maintained ○ Arranging for the newsletter circulation to Members and Associate Members. <p>6.2 Committee of Management: Membership of the Committee of Management shall be :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Officers of the Association ▪ One Lay Preacher appointed by each presbytery (on nomination of the presbytery Lay Preachers' Committee if one exists) and notified to the AGM ▪ A nominee from the CTM ▪ Current representatives to the National Lay Preachers' Committee <p>6.3 Executive of the Committee of Management: Membership of the Executive shall be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ President ▪ Secretary ▪ Treasurer ▪ One of the presbytery representatives to the Committee of Management (appointed by the Committee of Management at its first meeting following the AGM). <p>6.4 Awards Committee Membership of the Awards Committee shall be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Treasurer ▪ two Members each appointed by the AGM for a three year term. <p>The convenor (one of these three) shall be drawn from the membership of the Committee of Management. Duties shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ administering any grants to Lay Preacher candidates according to guidelines established by the AGM ○ reporting any action to the next Committee of Management meeting ○ making a full report to the AGM.
<p>7</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p> <p>7.3.1</p> <p>7.3.2</p> <p>7.3.3</p> <p>7.3.4</p>	<p>ADMINISTRATION</p> <p>Quorum: If the designated quorum is not present, in each case the meeting shall be reconvened: - for the AGM: representation from not less than half of the presbyteries; - for the Committee of Management: not less than half the membership with at least half of the presbyteries being represented; - for the Executive: three of the members participating.</p> <p>Procedures: Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with <i>A Manual for Meetings in the Uniting Church (2000)</i>.</p> <p>Minutes:</p> <p>Minutes of resolutions at the AGM shall be confirmed by the next meeting of the Committee of Management, and made available to all Members of the Association (e.g. e-mailed, posted or published in <i>Witness</i>).</p> <p>Minutes of proceedings and resolutions of meetings of the Committee of Management shall be circulated by the Secretary to members of the Committee of Management and confirmed at its next meeting.</p> <p>Any action or decision taken by the Executive shall be reported to the next meeting of the Committee of Management, and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.</p> <p>Any grants made to Lay Preacher candidates by the Awards Committee shall be reported to the next meeting of the Committee of Management and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.</p>

8	<p>FINANCES</p> <p>The Association shall be managed and administered in accordance with the financial, property and insurance policies and practices determined by the Synod, including an annual audit of the financial records.</p>
9	<p>AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS</p> <p>The Committee of Management or any two Members of the Association may propose in writing to the AGM an amendment to these By-Laws. If agreed to by a simple majority of those voting at the AGM, the proposed amendments shall be submitted to the General Secretary of the Synod for determination by the appropriate Synod body. The amendment shall take effect from the date of that determination.</p>
10	<p>WIND-UP CLAUSE</p> <p>In the event of the Association being disbanded any funds or other assets remaining after payment of all liabilities shall be applied by the Synod for its work of a similar nature to that undertaken by the Lay Preachers Association.</p>

Approved by the Committee of Management
Lay Preachers' Association
Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

February 2010

Approved: Synod Standing Committee
Minute No. 10.31(d)
Date: 19 June 2010