THE
BASIS OF
UNION

For
The Congregational Union of Australia
The Methodist Church of Australasia
The Presbyterian Church of Australia

AS REVISED
1971
Basis of Union

being the 1971 revision by the

Joint Commission on Church Union

of

THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF AUSTRALIA,
THE METHODIST CHURCH OF AUSTRALASIA

and

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

The Aldersgate Press, Normanby Chambers,
430 Little Collins Street,
Melbourne, 3000.
(2) At the November 1970 meeting, the Rev. J. F. Dickinson (Congregationalist) was present as alternate for the Rev. J. H. Bennett, Mr. J. F. Dey (Congregationalist) as alternate for the Rev. F. W. Whyte, the Rev. Dr. A. W. Loy (Methodist) as alternate for the Rev. Dr. I. H. Grimmett, the Rev. Dr. H. D. Wood (Methodist) as Secretary of the Commission and the Rev. Professor Crawford Miller (Presbyterian) as alternate for the Rev. J. M. Owen. Mr. A. J. Kilgour was unable to be present at that meeting.
To the Conveners and members of the following committees:

The Church Union and Ecumenical Affairs Committee of the Congregational Union of Australia;

The Committee on Church Union of the Methodist Church of Australia;

The Committee on Christian Unity of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Dear Sirs,

The Joint Commission on Church Union, which was set up by the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Australasia in May 1957, by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in September 1957, and by the Executive Council of the Congregational Union of Australia and New Zealand later that same year, was given responsibilities which included:

(a) The examination and amendment of any suggested Basis of Union and any documents submitted to it by the Federal Courts or by the Federal Committees on Christian Unity.

(b) The holding of regular conferences and preparation and circulation of relevant study material.

(c) The submission of reports to the Federal Committees on Christian Unity.

(d) The presentation, if possible, of a proposed Basis of Union to the Federal Committees on Christian Unity for submission to the next meeting of the three Federal Courts.

We wish to report that this work has now been completed, and we therefore present to you the Basis of Union that the Commission has prepared.

The work of the Commission was undertaken in three main stages. First, a statement of the Faith of the Church was prepared and presented to the churches in 1959. Comments on this First Report were received and taken into account in the preparation of the Second Report - The Church, its Nature, Function and Ordering. This report, together with a proposal for a Basis of Union, was presented to the churches in 1964, and was subsequently discussed very widely and at every level of the churches' life.

The third stage began with a detailed examination of all the comments and suggested amendments to the proposed Basis of 1964. This was an arduous task, although made easier by the freedom which the Federal Courts of the churches gave to the Commission in its work of revision, since none of the recommended changes was passed on as mandatory. Because of the wide variety of these recommendations, and because some
PREFACE TO THE 1971 EDITION

The Basis of Union, published in 1970, is here presented in a revised form. For the sake of clarity it will be referred to as the 1971 edition.

Most of the changes in this revised edition of the Basis were made in response to the request of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in September, 1970. The Joint Commission met in November, 1970. Of all except one of the revisions, the Commission members felt that they were being asked to make clearer what was to them already clear. If, however, the points were not sufficiently clear to others, then they ought to be made clear, for they are important points: and the Commission is glad to try to do so.

For the convenience of readers acquainted with the 1970 edition, we draw attention to the places where revisions were undertaken.

Paragraph 3: At the end of the second sub-paragraph of this section we have added the words, "The whole work of man's salvation is effected by the sovereign grace of God alone". The Commission wishes it to be understood that it is not hereby adding a point which is strange to the rest of the document. It is, at the request of one of the negotiating Churches, summarizing what might be said to be the "basis of The Basis". Because God has acted graciously towards us all, and on that basis alone we have faith and hope, we are called to acknowledge one another, and to seek together the way of renewal opened up by God's sovereign grace. The Basis would point the united churches and the Uniting Church, to the places where that grace and renewal are to be found: to Christ, to Christ preached among men and received by them in Word and Sacrament; to Christ in whom decisive witness is borne in Scripture; to Christ acknowledged in the Church in credo and confession; to Christ served in his body the Church, to the diversity of gifts and tasks in the one Spirit.

Paragraph 5: This paragraph has been revised first by the insertion of the word "unique" before the words "prophetic and apostolic testimony"; this (it is hoped) will make doubly clear the authoritative character of the canon of Holy Scripture. Secondly, in place of the more general phrase, "The Word of God addressed to men . . ." the third sentence now reads "The Word of God on whom men's salvation depends . . ." This does two things: it helps to tie paragraph 3 to paragraph 4, where Christ is referred to as the Word of God. What is preached from Scripture is the personal sovereign Christ, "the Lord Jesus Christ" as the apostle Paul would have put it. Moreover, the revision makes clear that what is to be found as the centre of Scripture is not random information on a number of subjects, but the Word of God on whom men's salvation depends.

In general, it may be pointed out that a Basis of Union is not the appropriate place for a new definition of the authority or inspiration of Scripture. Such a statement, in our day, would need to be presented at length and would be out of place in such a document. The aim of a basis should be to point those who enter into union to the places where faith is to be found, and so speaks, however briefly, of how Scripture is to be used in the life of the Church.

Readers will note that in the last sentence of this paragraph and in Question (ii) in Appendix II, the Commission omits the word "texts". Its use, apparently, had given rise to misunderstanding, as though preachers had the right to pick and choose a few words here or there on which to hang their discourse. This was, of course, far from the intention of the Commission. The word texts was used as one might use "documents" or "books", and preferred on stylistic grounds alone. It is now better omitted.

Paragraphs 7 and 8: The opening sentence has been revised to remove any possibility of a misinterpretation, such as that detected by some members of the Presbyterian Assembly, namely, that the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper may be regarded as optional activities in the life of the Church. The revision has the advantage of making absolutely clear that it is Christ who is the chief minister in these sacraments, incorporating, signifying and sealing his presence.

Paragraph 14 is the one place at which some new material has been added. Here three points may be noted, the first reinforcing what was said in the previous edition, the second and third introducing topics not previously alluded to within the Basis, although perhaps implied:

(i) The greater elucidation of the character of the ministry of Word and Sacrament was prompted by a desire to stress the faithfulness of God in maintaining a continuous witness to Christ, since the time of the apostles, calling men to this ministry so that Christ's name may be known and owned. In view of what is said in paragraph 13, it was not felt necessary to stress, in the words of the Proposed Basis of 1963, that this ministry "is exercised within the corporate priesthood of the whole Church". It was felt necessary to make the distinctive character of the ministry of Word and Sacraments to the maintenance of this ministry the Uniting Church will be committed.

(ii) The description of the act of ordination. In the 1970 edition where the Basis refers to the setting apart of ministers as ordination, the new and revised edition says something of how this is to be done and therefore something of what it means. The hesitations which the Commission previously had on this point derived from the fact that in every part of the Christian Church the understanding of ordination is being investigated afresh. The Uniting Church commits itself in the Basis to seek the deeper understanding of ordination which may be expected to result from this wide ecumenical study.

(iii) It is made clear that adherence to the Basis of Union allows for difference of opinion on matters which do not enter into the substance of the faith. The Commission also considered the need for a more general statement of the Church's commitment to liberty of opinion; but it was felt that the freedom of the Church to live subject
The Uniting Church lives and works within the faith and unity of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. She recognises that she is related to other Churches in ways which give expression, however partially, to that unity in faith and mission. Recalling the Ecumenical Councils of the early centuries, she looks forward to a time when the faith will be further elucidated, and the Church’s unity expressed, in similar Councils. She thankfully acknowledges that the uniting Churches were members of the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical bodies, and she will seek to maintain such membership. She remembers the special relationship which obtained between the several uniting Churches and other Churches of similar traditions, and will continue to learn from their witness and be

Basis of Union

1. The Congregational Union of Australia, the Methodist Church of Australasia and the Presbyterian Church of Australia, in fellowship with the whole Church Catholic, and seeking to bear witness to that unity which is both Christ’s gift and his will for the Church, 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. They praise God for his 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 continuing renewal in which God will use their common worship, witness and service to set forth the word of salvation for all mankind. To this end they declare their readiness to go forward 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 she 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 his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.

2. The Uniting Church lives and works within the faith and unity of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. She recognises that she is related to other Churches in ways which give expression, however partially, to that unity in faith and mission. Recalling the Ecumenical Councils of the early centuries, she looks forward to a time when the faith will be further elucidated, and the Church’s unity expressed, in similar Councils. She thankfully acknowledges that the uniting Churches were members of the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical bodies, and she will seek to maintain such membership. She remembers the special relationship which obtained between the several uniting Churches and other Churches of similar traditions, and will continue to learn from their witness and be
The Uniting Church acknowledges that Christ has commanded his Church to proclaim the Gospel both in words and in the two visible acts of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. He himself acts in and through everything that the Church does in and for his Name.

3. The Uniting Church acknowledges that the faith and unity of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church are built upon the one Lord Jesus Christ. The Church preaches Christ the risen crucified One and confesses him as Lord to the glory of God the Father. In Jesus Christ God was reconciling the world to himself. In love for the world, God gave his Son to take away the world’s sin.

Jesus of Nazareth announced the sovereign grace of God whereby the poor in spirit could receive the Father’s love. He 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 live and reign, God confirmed and completed the witness which Jesus bore to him on earth, he reasserted his claim over the whole of his creation, he pardoned sinners, and made in Jesus a representative beginning of a new order of righteousness and love. To God in Christ men are called to respond in faith. To this end God has sent forth his Spirit that men may trust him as their Father, and acknowledge Jesus as Lord. The whole work of man’s salvation is effected by the sovereign grace of God alone.

The Church as the fellowship of the Holy Spirit confesses Jesus as Lord over her own life, she also confesses that he is Head over all things, the beginning of a new creation, of a new mankind. God in Christ has given to men in the Church the Holy Spirit as a pledge and foretaste of that coming reconciliation and renewal which is the end in view for the whole creation. The Church’s call is to serve that end: to be a fellowship of 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 he will bring; she is a pilgrim people, always on the way towards a promised goal; here she does not have a continuing city but seeks one to come. On the way Christ feeds her with Word and Sacraments, and she has the gift of the Spirit in order that she may not lose the way.

4. The Uniting Church acknowledges that the Church is able to live and endure through the changes of history only because her Lord comes, addresses, and deals with men in and through the news of his completed work. Christ who is present when he is preached among men is the Word of the God who acquires the guilty, who gives life to the dead and who brings into being what otherwise could not exist. Through human witness in word and action, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ reaches out to command men’s attention and awaken their faith; he calls them into the fellowship of his sufferings, to be the disciples of a crucified Lord; in his own strange way he constitutes, rules and renews them as his Church.

5. The Uniting Church acknowledges that the Church has received the books of the Old and New Testaments as unique prophetic and apostolic testimony, in which she hears the Word of God and by which her faith and obedience are nourished and regulated. When the Church preaches Jesus Christ, her message is controlled by the Biblical witnesses. The Word of God on whom man’s salvation depends is to be heard and known from Scripture appropriated in the worshipping and witnessing life of the Church. The Uniting Church lays upon her members the serious duty of reading the Scriptures, commits her ministers to preach from these and to administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper as effective signs of the Gospel set forth in the Scriptures.

6. The Uniting Church acknowledges that Christ has commanded his Church to proclaim the Gospel both in words and in the visible acts of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. He himself acts in and through everything that the Church does in
7. The Uniting Church acknowledges that Christ incorporates men into his body by Baptism. In this way he enables them to participate in his own baptism, which was accomplished once on behalf of all in his death and burial, and which was made available to all when, risen and ascended, he poured out the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Baptism into Christ's body initiates men into his life and mission in the world, so that they are united in one fellowship of love, service, suffering and joy, in one family of the Father of all in heaven and earth, and in the power of the Spirit. The Uniting Church will baptize those who confess the Christian faith, and children who are presented for baptism and for whose instruction and nourishment in the faith the Church takes responsibility.

8. The Uniting Church acknowledges that Christ signifies and seals his continuing presence with his people in the Lord's Supper or the Holy Communion, constantly repeated in the life of the Church. In this sacrament of his broken body and out-poured blood the risen Lord feeds his baptized people on their way to the final inheritance of the Kingdom. Thus the people of God, through faith and the gift and power of the Holy Spirit, have communion with their Saviour, make their sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, proclaim the Lord's death, grow together into Christ, are strengthened for their participation in the mission of Christ in the world, and rejoice in the foretaste of the Kingdom which he will bring to consummation.

9. The Uniting Church enters into unity with the Church throughout the ages by her use of the confessions known as the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed. She receives these as authoritative statements of the Catholic Faith, framed in the language of their day and used by Christians in many days, to declare and to guard the right understanding of that faith. She commits her ministers and instructors to careful study of these creeds and to the discipline of interpreting their teaching in a

later age. She commends to ministers and congregations their use for instruction in the faith, and their use in worship as acts of allegiance to the Holy Trinity.

10. The Uniting Church continues to learn of the teaching of the Holy Scriptures in the obedience and freedom of faith, and in the power of the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, from the witness of reformation fathers as expressed in various ways in the Scots Confession of Faith (1560), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647), and the Savoy Declaration (1658). In like manner she will listen to the preaching of John Wesley in his Forty-Four Sermons (1793). She will commit her ministers and instructors to study these statements, so that the congregation of Christ's people may again and again be reminded of the grace which justifies them through faith, of the centrality of the person and work of Christ the justifier, and of the need for a constant appeal to Holy Scripture.

11. The Uniting Church acknowledges that God has never left his Church without faithful and scholarly interpreters of Scripture, or without those who have reflected deeply upon, and acted trustingly in obedience to, his living Word. In particular she enters into the inheritance of literary, historical and scientific enquiry which has characterised recent centuries, and thanks God for the knowledge of his ways with men which are open to an informed faith. She lives within a world-wide fellowship of Churches in which she will learn to sharpen her understanding of the will and purpose of God by contact with contemporary thought. Within that fellowship she also stands in relation to contemporary societies in ways which will help her to understand her own nature and mission. She thanks God for the continuing witness and service of evangelist, of scholar, of prophet and of martyr. She prays that she may be ready when occasion demands to confess her Lord in fresh words and deeds.

12. The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as her members all who are recognised as members of the uniting Churches at the time of union. Thereafter membership is open to all who are baptized into the Holy Catholic Church in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The Uniting Church will seek ways in which the baptized may have con-
The Uniting Church recognises that at the time of union many seek a renewal of the diaconate in which men and women offer their time and talents, representatively and on behalf of God's people, in the service of God.

(b) The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as deaconesses those who at the time of union are deaconesses in good standing in any of the uniting Churches and who adhere to the Basis of Union. She believes that the Holy Spirit will continue to call women to share in this way in the varied services and witness of the Church, and she will make provision for this. Such members will be called Deaconesses.

The Presbytery will ordain by prayer and the laying on of hands in the presence of a worshipping congregation. In this act of ordination the Church praises the ascended Christ for conferring gifts upon men. She recognises his call of the individual to be his minister; she prays for the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to equip him for that service. By the participation in the act of ordination of those already ordained, the Church bears witness to God's faithfulness and declares the hope by which she lives. In company with other Christians the Uniting Church will seek for a renewed understanding of the way in which the congregation participates in ordination and of the significance of ordination in the life of the Church.

(c) The Uniting Church recognises and accepts as deaconesses those who at the time of union are deaconesses in good standing in any of the uniting Churches and who adhere to the Basis of Union. She believes that the Holy Spirit will continue to call women to share in this way in the varied services and witness of the Church, and she will make provision for this. Such members will be called Deaconesses.

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of mankind in the face of changing needs. She will order her life that she remains open to the possibility that God may call men and women into such a renewed diaconate: in these circumstances she may decide to call them Deacons and Deaconesses, whether the service is within or beyond the life of the congregation.

(d) 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. She 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 the Christian man which should flow from their ministry. Such members will be called Lay Preachers.

In the above sub-paragraphs the phrase “adhere to the Basis of Union” is understood as willingness to live and work within the faith and unity of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church as that way is described in this Basis. Such adherence allows for difference of opinion in matters which do not enter into the substance of the faith.

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

15. The Uniting Church recognises that responsibility for government in the Church belongs to the people of God by virtue of the gifts and tasks which God has laid upon them. The Uniting Church therefore so organises her life that locally, regionally and nationally government will be entrusted to representatives, men and women, bearing the gifts and graces with which God has endowed them for the building up of his Church. The Uniting Church is governed by a series of inter-related councils, each of which has its tasks and responsibilities in relation both to the Church and the world.

The Uniting Church acknowledges that Christ alone is supreme in his Church, and that he may speak to her through any of her councils. It is the task of every council to wait upon God’s Word, and to obey his will in the matters allocated to its oversight. Each council will recognise the limits of its own authority and give heed to other councils of the Church, so that the whole body of believers may be united by mutual submission in the service of the Gospel.

To this end the Uniting Church makes provision in her constitution for the following:

(a) The Congregation is the embodiment in one place of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, worshipping, witnessing and serving as a fellowship of the Spirit in Christ. Its members meet regularly to hear God’s Word, to celebrate the sacraments, to build one another up in love, to share in the wider responsibilities of the Church, and to serve the world. The congregation will recognise the need for a diversity of agencies for the better ordering of her life in such matters as education, administration and finance.

(b) The Elders’ or Leaders’ Meeting (the council within a congregation or group of congregations) consists of the minister and those who are called to share with him in oversight. It is responsible for building up the congregation in faith and love, sustaining its members in hope, and leading them into a fuller participation in Christ’s mission in the world.

(c) The Presbytery (the district council) consists of such ministers, elders/leaders and other Church members as are appointed thereto, the majority of elders/leaders and Church members being appointed by Elders’/Leaders’ Meetings and/or congregations, on a basis determined by the Synod. Its function is to perform all the acts of oversight necessary to the life and mission of the Church in
the area for which it is responsible, except over those agencies which are directly responsible to the Synod or Assembly. It will in particular exercise oversight over the congregations within its bounds, encouraging them to strengthen one another’s faith, to bear one another’s burdens, and exhorting them to fulfill their high calling in Christ Jesus. It will promote those wider aspects of the work of the Church committed to it by the Synod or Assembly.

(d) The Synod (the regional council) consists of such ministers, elders/leaders and other Church members as are appointed thereto, the majority being appointed by Presbyteries, Elders’/Leaders’ Meetings or congregations, on a basis determined by the Assembly. It has responsibility for the general oversight, direction and administration of the Church’s worship, witness and service in the region allotted to it, with such powers and authorities as may from time to time be determined by the Assembly.

(e) The Assembly (the national council) consists of such ministers, elders/leaders and other Church members as are appointed thereto, the majority being appointed by the Presbyteries and Synods. It has determining responsibility for matters of doctrine, worship, government and discipline, including the promotion of the Church’s mission, the establishment of standards of theological training and reception of ministers from other communions, and the taking of further measures towards the wider union of the Church. It makes the guiding decisions on the tasks and authority to be exercised by other councils. It is obligatory for it to seek the concurrence of other councils, and on occasion of the congregations of the Church, on matters of vital importance to the life of the Church.

The first Assembly, however, will consist of members of the uniting Churches, appointed in equal numbers by them in such manner as they may determine, and is vested with such powers as may be necessary to establish the Uniting Church according to the provisions of the Basis of Union.

Until such time as councils other than the Assembly can be established, the Uniting Church recognises and accepts the various agencies for the discharge of responsibility which are in existence in the uniting Churches. She invites any such continuing bodies immediately to enter into a period of self-examination in which members are asked to consider afresh their common commitment to the Church’s mission and their demonstration of her unity. She prays that God will enable them to order their lives for these purposes.

16. The Uniting Church recognises the responsibility and freedom which belong to councils to acknowledge gifts among members for the fulfilment of particular functions. She sees in pastoral care exercised personally on behalf of the Church an expression of the fact that God always deals with men personally: he would have his fatherly care known among men; he would have individual members take upon themselves the form of a servant.

17. The Uniting Church acknowledges that the demand of the Gospel, the response of the Church to the Gospel, and the discipline which it requires are partly expressed in the formulation by the Church of her law. The aim of such law is to confess God’s will for the life of his Church; but since law is received by man and framed by him, it is always subject to revision in order that it may better serve the Gospel. The Uniting Church will keep her law under constant review so that her life may increasingly be directed to the service of God and man, and her worship to a true and faithful setting forth of, and response to, the Gospel of Christ. The law of the Church will speak of the free obedience of the children of God, and will look to the final reconciliation of mankind under God’s sovereign grace.

18. The Uniting Church affirms that she belongs to the people of God on the way to the promised end. She prays God that, through the gift of the Spirit, he will constantly correct that which is erroneous in her life, will bring her into deeper unity with other Churches, and will use her worship, witness and service to his eternal glory through Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.
APPENDICES

The uniting Churches will enter into union on the Basis set out in the preceding eighteen paragraphs. In doing so they commit their representatives to bring before the first Assembly of the Uniting Church the material in the following Appendices.

APPENDIX I

Concerning the Celebration of the Sacraments

In paragraphs 7 and 8 of the Basis of Union the Uniting Church receives the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and in paragraphs 5 and 6 she sees these acts as proclamations of the Gospel set forth in Scripture. In order that the sacraments may be administered with due regard to the ends for which they were instituted, the Uniting Church will on an early occasion set up a Committee on Public Worship (or a Liturgical Commission, or some such body) to guide the Church's life of worship. Until the work of such a Committee has been assessed and approved by the appropriate council or councils of the Church, ministers and congregations will continue to be guided by the books used for these purposes in the three Churches at the time of union, namely The Methodist Book of Offices, The Book of Common Order of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, A Book of Public Worship and A Book of Services and Prayers.

In particular the Uniting Church draws the attention of ministers and congregations to the following matters:

1. CONCERNING BAPTISM

(i) The sacrament of Baptism is normally to be celebrated in the presence of a congregation of God's people, or their representatives, who welcome and take responsibility for the one baptised.

(ii) The context of celebration of the sacrament will be the preaching of the Gospel, an affirmation of faith, and the prayers of the people.

(iii) A passage of scripture bearing on the significance of the sacrament should be read.

(iv) Baptism is by water, in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

(v) It should be made clear to all present that baptism makes
the baptised person a member of the Holy Catholic Church.

(vi) In normal circumstances, ministers of the Word will administer the sacrament of baptism.

2. CONCERNING HOLY COMMUNION

(i) The sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated by a congregation of God's people who wait upon his presence in words read from scriptures, proclaimed in the life of the Church and made evident in the sacramental acts.

(ii) In every service of the Lord's Supper bread and wine shall be set apart with the use of Christ's words of institution as found in the Gospels or Epistle, and the manual acts there commanded: the breaking of the bread, the taking of the cup, and participation in both kinds by minister and people.

(iii) In normal circumstances a minister of the Word will preside at celebrations of the sacrament of Holy Communion.

(iv) The Lord's Table is open to all members of the Uniting Church and to all persons who in any fellowship of Christ's people may receive Holy Communion in that fellowship.

APPENDIX II

Concerning the Ordering of the Ministry

In paragraph 14 of the Basis of Union, the Uniting Church recognises those who have been set apart to various ministries or services in the uniting Churches and are in good standing at the time of union. The Uniting Church will in due course lay down its own procedures for the selection, training and designation of men and women called to various ministries. Meanwhile, the Uniting Church declares its intention in certain important matters in this Appendix to the Basis of Union.

1. THE EDUCATION OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD.

The Uniting Church requires that normally ministers of the Word shall before ordination have received at least six years of formal education after being qualified for matriculation at a recognised University. At least three years shall be spent in preliminary study, preferably at a University, and three in theological study.

2. CENTRES OF THEOLOGICAL STUDY.

The Uniting Church undertakes to support and develop centres of theological study and teaching in as many of the University centres as is necessary, where the University itself does not provide adequately for such study; and she further undertakes to secure and support scholars in the main fields of theological study, in order that they may give their full time to this work.

3. ORDINATION.

(a) The Uniting Church lays down questions to be asked and answered at the Ordination of Ministers in the following form:

(i) Do you, depending upon the gift and power of the Holy Spirit, confess anew Jesus Christ as Lord; and, acknowledging him as the Word of God, do you undertake to set him forth for the salvation of mankind?
I do.
(ii) Do you receive the witness to Christ in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; and do you undertake to preach from these?
I do.

(iii) Do you undertake to administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper so that the Gospel of Jesus Christ may be clearly proclaimed and made effective in the lives of believers?
I do.

(iv) Do you intend to live in fellowship with all God's people, confessing the name of the One Lord Jesus Christ, in the power of the One Spirit, and do you receive for use in instruction and worship the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds?
I do.

(v) Do you adhere to the Basis of Union of this Church?
I do.

(vi) Will you continue to allow your mind to be illuminated, your conscience quickened, and your prayers deepened by study of the confessional documents specified in the Basis of Union?
I will.

(vii) Will you seek the peace of this and of all the Churches of God, speaking the truth in love, watching over those people and things entrusted to your charge, obeying lawful authority with a good conscience, committing your ministry to God who is able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or conceive?
I will.

The presiding minister shall then say:
May God give you strength to fulfil these vows, and to him be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus from generation to generation forever.

And all the people shall say:
Amen.

(b) Ordination in the Uniting Church shall be by prayer with the laying on of hands of members of the Presbytery or those commissioned by the Presbytery. While hands are laid upon the head of the ordinand, the presiding minister shall use these words in the ordination prayer:

Almighty God, who hast called thy Church to be thy people and promised to be their God, continue in her, we pray thee, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and grant power to this thy servant whom we ordain in thy name that he may fulfil thy commandments, preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and exercise pastoral care, in the name of Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, Amen.