



Assembly Resourcing Unit

14 Appreciation: Chris Walker

That the Assembly resolve:

To thank Chris Walker for his faithful service, and ask that God grants him happiness and fulfilment as he continues to journey as one of God's pilgrim people on the way to the promised end.

Chris Walker began his ministry at the Assembly in November 2008 as National Consultant, Theology and Discipleship. In October 2013, he became the National Consultant, Christian Unity, Doctrine and Worship.

To both these roles, Chris brought a depth of experience and wisdom from academic achievements (degrees from the University of Sydney, Garrett Theological Seminary in Illinois and a PhD in theology from Claremont University near Los Angeles), congregational ministry (Chapel by the Sea at Bondi Beach, Moree and Jannali), mission roles and consultancies for presbyteries and synods (Queensland Synod and the Parramatta-Nepean Presbytery), and in ministerial and lay education (lecturer at United Theological College, Trinity College Queensland and as principal of Parkin-Wesley College in South Australia).

In his significant work at the Assembly, Chris resourced the work of the Working Groups on Doctrine, Worship and Christian Unity, and the Assembly Mission and Evangelism Network. With Chris support, these groups have developed significant documents and publications for the life of the Uniting Church, including editing and contributing to *Building on the Basis*, and *Being and Doing Church: a Uniting Church Perspective*; and Doc.bytes and Belief Matters papers, as well as the Calendar of Commemorations which included brief biographies of notable people. Chris also resourced national conferences such as 'Basis of Union – Catalyst for Renewal', 'Preaching for Transformation', 'Transforming Worship', and Christian Unity National Conferences.

As an author in his own right, Chris also wrote *Peace Like A Diamond* (2009) and *Thinking the Faith, Living the Faith: an introduction to Christian theology* (2017) during the time he worked for the Assembly.

Chris demonstrated his commitment to ecumenism as he represented the Uniting Church at NCCA meetings, the World Council of Churches Assembly in Busan, South Korea, the Christian Conference of Asia in Jakarta, the World Methodist Conference and Council (Durban and Houston), and a WCC Ecumenical Officers gathering in Geneva. He also was involved in the Uniting Church's responses to significant ecumenical documents, such as *The Church Towards a Common Vision, An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace, Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World* and *Weaving a New Cloth*.

Chris has faithfully spoken to candidates in each of the theological colleges, sharing with them the work of the Assembly; and presented Bible studies for various Synods.

Chris has a history of service to the Church in his family. Chris's grandfather Rev A. E. Walker was President of the NSW Methodist Conference, his father Rev Dr Sir Alan Walker was internationally known as the outspoken superintendent of The Central Methodist

Mission, Sydney (now Wesley Mission), the founder of Lifeline, the Director of World Methodist Evangelism and the founder of the Alan Walker College of Evangelism (now the Alan Walker lecturer in Mission, Evangelism and Leadership at the United Theological College). Chris is the chairperson of the Alan Walker College board.

Chris has had a long involvement in non-violent action going back to protests against the Vietnam War, Apartheid, anti-nuclear and anti-war marches, for refugees and asylum seekers, and in solidarity with First Peoples. Faithful church leadership that spans generations, even centuries, is inspiring as we contemplate ministry and mission, and particularly as we consider mission from the margins in an increasingly antagonistic public square.

Proposer: Rob Floyd

Seconder: Colleen Geyer