

Profile Form for Nominees for President-elect

Regulation 3.7.5.1 requires that the Assembly Standing Committee provide advice to the Church on the challenges and issues which may be faced by the President and the Assembly in the next seven years. This is to assist the discernment process as the Church nominates and elects the President – elect.

In July 2017 the ASC addressed itself to this responsibility and offers this guidance to the Church.

“As the Uniting Church continues to move through a season of significant change, the ASC believes that the challenges and issues likely to be faced by the President and the Assembly in the next seven years will include:

The Covenant

- The Covenant relationship with UAICC
- Sovereignty and how we understand this in the practices of the Uniting Church

Belonging

- Ways in which we can be a people of hope where God’s grace upholds us
- Call to the renewal of God’s church by listening to what the Spirit is saying to the Uniting Church
- Being, and identifying as, members of the Uniting Church and what this means
- Holding our identity as the Uniting Church in amongst diversity

Discipleship

- Call to disciple-making
- Importance of investing in leadership for now and the future
- The changing form of faith communities, and the importance of resourcing them

Being the Church in the public space

- Being the Church as a prophetic voice in the public space
- Re-establishing our place of trust in civil society
- Managing and critiquing how we understand the relationship between Church and State

Responding to changing contexts

- How we are the Church in a changing world, including the importance of having a national perspective
- Responding to demographic forces in the Church eg changing membership profile
- Understanding and educating ourselves about the world of social media



Name:

David Baker (Rev.)

Nominated by:

Mary Burnett Presbytery, Bremer Brisbane Presbytery

Synod of residence:

Queensland

Age range:	60 - 69
Personal Interests	current affairs, history, gardening, cooking
Personal	married to Joan, three children
Placement / employment:	Minister of the Word: Brisbane Valley Parish 1992-1995; Moggill/Karana Downs 1996-2000; Karana Downs 2000-2007; Bremer Brisbane Presbytery Minister 2008-2014; Moderator, Qld Synod 2014- present
Passion:	a healthy and fruitful church; a society that provides opportunity for all to find life and life in all its fullness; a culture that is a good steward of creation.
Vision for the UCA	<p>That it live out its commission in all the diverse ways in which the Spirit empowers and enlivens the church.</p> <p>That it be grounded in the gospel of Jesus Christ, forming disciples who live out their faith in the whole variety of situations in which they live.</p> <p>That it build communities of faith which are deeply connected to their wider contexts, bringing the transforming power of the gospel to bear in situations where people are not experiencing life, and life in all its fullness.</p> <p>That it continue to bear witness to the church catholic the gospel imperative of being “one” as Jesus and the Father are one.</p> <p>That its schools and educational institutions are places where the gospel is engaged in intelligible accessible ways.</p> <p>That its community services agencies continue to bear witness to the God-given dignity of all, and are institutions that set the standard for human services.</p> <p>That it organise its life such that the vision and passion of its members and its constituent councils are resourced and enabled to pursue the gospel calling in their context.</p>

In the light of the advice provided by the ASC on the challenges and issues likely to be faced by the President and the Assembly in the next seven years, I would reflect the following themes:

I will ceaselessly promote the covenant that the Assembly, on behalf of the church, entered into with the UAICC. The covenant is the church’s way to bear witness to the reconciliation of the gospel, and the reconciliation that is at the heart of Australia becoming a just and fair nation. This reconciliation includes how we as a church recognise that which has been repressed and ignored about our history, and “bear fruits worthy of repentance”.

I see the President’s prime role is to deepen and strengthen the integrity of the church’s life and mission. That is, calling the church to an ongoing discernment of what the gospel is and what it calls of us as a people baptised into the life of Christ. The diversity of cultural expression in our life is a gift that helps us see the breadth of the people of God, and enriches us all in our lives in Christ.

The confession of faith in the Basis of Union, and in the ancient creeds of the church are foundational to our celebration of the diversity of life and witness that we share in as God’s people. Built on the rock which is Jesus Christ, we can, as we contemplate his life and ministry, see a myriad of ways in which his life is made manifest amongst us. Our structures come out of a particular time, and we must be prepared to look at new structures that serve the need to be adaptable in our expression of Christian life and community.

Our challenge as a church is to grow disciples who are both grounded in the foundations of the faith, who know the story of the church, and are able to “discern the times”, and lead in transformational ways – particularly leaders who can communicate in the idioms of the day.

This “discernment of the times” is a critical capacity of our life, as we discern and challenge the assumptions of the dominant culture. We have a strong base from which to engage the political processes, and we should do that out of our strengths in discernment. Above all, our engagement with the body politic needs to be shaped by clear focussing on achieving just outcomes.

The church’s fundamental calling is to be a sign, foretaste, and instrument of God’s coming Kingdom; to be fruitful in our life in Christ.