



## Standing Committee

### 11 Constitution: Affirmed Member

That the Assembly resolve:

- (a) To approve the following amendments to the Constitution regarding the establishment of the membership category “Affirmed Member”:
- (i) Insert the following definition of ‘Affirmed member’ in clause 3 after the definition of ‘Adherent’:
- Affirmed Member of a Congregation is a member of the Church or a Member in Association who has accepted the Church Council’s invitation to become an affirmed member and who the Congregation recognises as an affirmed member because of his or her active participation in the Congregation’s life.
- (ii) Insert the following clause 7A after clause 7:
- AFFIRMED MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION**  
7A The Assembly shall prescribe the manner in which members and members in association become affirmed members of the Congregation, and their rights and responsibilities as affirmed members.
- (iii) Insert a new paragraph (e) in clause 9 with the previous paragraph (e) becoming paragraph (f):
- 9(e) inviting members and members in association to become affirmed members of the Congregation and satisfying requirements relating to affirmed members that are prescribed by the Assembly.
- (iv) Amend clause 19(a) by replacing the words ‘confirmed members or members in association’ by the words ‘affirmed members’.
- (b) Subject to approval of the amendment by the majority of Synods and two-thirds of the Presbyteries, to authorise the Standing Committee, on the advice of the Legal Reference Committee, to make changes to the Regulations regarding Affirmed Members in keeping with the amendments to the Constitution.

Proposer: Ian Tozer

Seconder: Catherine Pepper

#### Rationale:

The Fourteenth Assembly resolved to establish a Task Group to write a definitive paper in response to the Assembly feedback on membership in the Uniting Church. The Task Group established by the Standing Committee recommended a new category of membership for the Uniting Church, Affirmed Member of the Congregation, which recognized membership of the Congregation based on baptism and active participation in the life of the Congregation.

If the Constitutional amendments included in this proposal are approved, the Assembly Legal Reference Committee considered that amendments to the Regulations may need to address:

1. The manner in which a person becomes an affirmed member of the congregation.
2. The rights and responsibilities of affirmed members including
  - a. The right to attend and vote at meetings of the congregation; and
  - b. Eligibility for election as church councillors and office bearers of the congregation.
3. Changes to the rights and responsibilities of confirmed members who are not affirmed members including
  - a. Ceasing to be eligible for election as elders by reason of the amendment of clause 19(a) of the Constitution; and
  - b. Any continuing right to attend and vote at meetings of the congregation.
4. Requirement for a roll of affirmed members in addition or instead of the existing requirements for rolls.

The attention of members of the Assembly is drawn to clause 72 of the Constitution which provides that the amendments will only have effect if the amendment is approved by a majority of Synods and two-thirds of the Presbyteries.