



Uniting Church in Australia

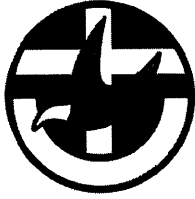
ASSEMBLY

Assembly Standing Committee

11-13 March 2022

DOCUMENT 15

Title	Letter from Northern Synod re Exemption from Regulations
Type of Paper (Information/Decision)	For decision
Assembly or ASC Minute	Not applicable
Consultation	
Purpose	To seek an exemption from Regulation 3.6.3.3
Rationale & Findings Summary	See the letter
Attachments	
Proposal/s	That the Assembly Standing Committee: 1. Grant the Northern Synod an exemption from Regulation 3.6.3.3 in order that the Northern Synod Standing Committee can make a normal five-year appointment of a General Secretary.
Submitted by	Stuart McMillan General Secretary (interim), Northern Synod stuart.mcmillan@ns.uca.org.au



The Uniting Church in Australia
NORTHERN SYNOD

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24th February 2022

Colleen Geyer
General Secretary
National Assembly
Uniting Church in Australia
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For ASC – Northern Synod Exemption from Regulation 3.6.3.3

I am currently serving as the 'interim' General Secretary of the Northern Synod. The Rev Dr Andrew Williams was in this 'interim' role from August through to November 2021 when the Synod Standing Committee (SSC) ask me to fill the role. Rev Kailahi's engagement as General Secretary of the Uniting Church, Northern Synod came to an end in November 2021.

The Synod has begun a process to recruit a new General Secretary. The SSC would like to fill this significant ministry position as soon as possible. Regulation 3.6.3.3 allows the SSC to make an interim appointment only until the next ordinary meeting of the Synod.

Respectfully, we seek your agreement for an exemption from this Regulation in order for the Northern Synod Standing Committee to make a normal five-year appointment. Our request is made given the following considerations:

1. There has been an extensive period of uncertainty for the Synod and our staff, including two interim General Secretaries.
2. We have not had folk working in the other two senior leadership roles for over 6 months. That is the Pilgrim Presbytery of Northern Australia (PPNA) Presbytery Minister and the Northern Regional Council of UAICC (NRCC) Presbytery Minister. There will be a half-time three-month supply for PPNA beginning in May. However, there won't be a new placement commencing until 2023. The Administration Manager for NRCC has been placed on higher duties this calendar year, to provide leadership.

I would like to acknowledge that I live and work on the lands and waters of the sovereign Larrakia Nation and pay my respects to all Elders past, present and future generations.

3. Calling a 'special Synod' face to face is not an option for us because:
 - a. The current COVID biosecurity measures in the NT prevent travel between regions. The NT has had 'lock in' arrangements for all NT communities and SA has done the same for the APY Lands. WA as you know has had hard boarder closures. More than half our Synod members are First Peoples.
 - b. The Synod has major cash flow issues which will take the remainder of this year at least to rectify, this prevents the expenditure required for a Special Synod meeting.
4. Online meetings are how we are meeting for SSC but given internet accessibility and technology options for many of our members an online Special Synod would not work.

The next normal Synod we are planning for will be in October this year. If we have a nomination for General Secretary by the end of July, we would like the exemption to apply, so the SSC can appoint. Should a name come later then we would take it to the normal October Synod meeting.

Grace and peace,



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