

Assembly Executive Secretary Appointment

Executive Summary

The selection panel has prayerfully considered its task and brings this nomination to the General Assembly. We have full confidence in the gifts and expertise of the Reverend Martin Baker and recommend his appointment to the position of Assembly Executive Secretary.

Recommendation

That the Rev Martin Baker be appointed as the Assembly Executive Secretary.

Report

1 Calibre of Candidates

- 1.1 The panel was delighted with the high standard of the applications and the skills and experience of the candidates for the position. We were pleased to receive applications from both lay and ordained people with a range of ministry and vocational experience.
- 1.2 The final decision was particularly challenging as we interviewed three excellent candidates bringing quite different strengths and gifts to the role. The panel affirms the call and contribution of all three and is appreciative of their willingness to put themselves forward for this position.
- 1.3 The Rev Martin Baker displays a good understanding of the role of the Assembly Executive Secretary and a strong sense of call. He has the appropriate mix of qualifications and experience for this role and an excellent track record of effectiveness in mission. The selection panel has full confidence in his gifts and his expertise.
- 1.4 His qualifications include a Bachelor of Social Science, a Bachelor of Divinity from Otago and a Master of Sacred Theology from Union Theological Seminary, New York. More recently Martin has completed courses in organisational leadership and human resource management at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.
- 1.5 Martin has extensive experience in parish ministry (in three parishes located in Wellington, Auckland and then Dunedin) as well as in the initiation and management of services to the general community, in both a mission and community development context.
- 1.6 Martin maintains good networks within the Church, among both lay and ordained people, and is well connected to the wider context of New Zealand society. He has developed his media skills with numerous articles published in the daily newspapers and a regular radio slot. Martin is also regular contributor to various church publications on issues relating to contemporary mission challenges. He demonstrates an in depth understanding of the context of mission for the Church in Aotearoa New Zealand today.

2 Appointment Process

- 2.1 The job description of the Assembly Executive Secretary has been updated to reflect a greater focus on mission leadership in the Church (see Appendix 2 for the full job description and person specification). The four key roles include:
- Leadership in mission locally, regionally and nationally
 - Policy and strategic advice and implementation
 - Clerk of Assembly (some aspects of which may be delegated)
 - Service team leadership.
- 2.2 The selection panel was agreed by the Council of Assembly at its March 2006 meeting: Helen Beaumont (Convener), Viv Coleman, Kerry Stotter, Garry Marquand, Millie Te Kaawa, John Craig, and Murray Talbot.
- 2.3 Extensive advertising was carried out through Presbyterian publications – both paper and electronic – and the search was extended by word of mouth. Presbyteries, synods and union district councils were encouraged to consider who might have the skills and experiences necessary for the position.
- 2.4 The panel selected three candidates for further consideration by face-to-face interviews. The short listing criteria included:
- Proven leadership and contemporary management practice knowledge and experience
 - Strong relationship management and communication skills
 - Demonstrates a strong faith and theological thinking skills
 - Knowledge of the Presbyterian Church or equivalent organisation (ie able to work in a consensus decision making environment within various committee and council structures).
- 2.5 The selection panel met over a full day in Wellington to interview the short listed candidates. A structured interview was used to ensure that all three had the opportunity to demonstrate their competence across the range of tasks and responsibilities detailed in the job description. Each candidate was also given the opportunity to make any other comments and ask questions of the panel.
- Two candidates were then short listed for further consideration by undertaking referee checks. The questions posed to the referees explored the candidates' abilities in building and maintaining relationships, their style and effectiveness in leadership and managing the involvement of others, and their personal organisation and resilience in a busy role such as this. The referees were able to confirm the strengths of the candidates and helped to explore those areas of potential weakness identified by the interviews.
- 2.6 The final decision was arrived at after prayerful consideration of the written applications, the interviews, and the referees' comments.
- 2.7 The recommendation was tabled at the Council of Assembly meeting in July 2006 for their information. The Council unanimously endorsed the nomination of Martin Baker.

3 Job description, terms and conditions

- 3.1 The job description was agreed by the Council of Assembly and distributed to presbyteries, union district councils, and synods for comment. Feedback was received and considered by the March 2006 meeting of Council and the final version of the job description confirmed.
- 3.2 The appointment is for a period of four years with the possibility of a second term of two years.
- 3.3 Remuneration is stipend and a half plus the usual allowances.
- 3.4 Once Assembly makes the appointment, the employment agreement will be confirmed with the appointee. The appointee will take up the role following the General Assembly. The induction period will include introductions to key people, familiarisation with the systems of the national office, and a handover period with the present Assembly Executive Secretary.

Helen Beaumont

Convener

Assembly Executive Secretary Selection Panel

Appendix 1: Application and CV for Martin Baker

I wish to apply for the position of Assembly Executive Secretary.

The Presbyterian Church faces a period of unprecedented change. For some this will be perceived as a crisis. And for others, including myself, it is this moment, at the beginning of the 21st century, which represents a great opportunity to unite and reinvigorate the Church.

Greater diversity of congregations' shape, size and ethnic make up coupled with the cohort who filled the church with their baby-boomer children in the 1950's and early 60's coming to the end of their natural lives, point to a period of significant upheaval in the life of many of our congregations. The need to strengthen a sense of organisational cohesiveness and unity of purpose will be foremost among the challenges faced by those with National Church leadership responsibilities.

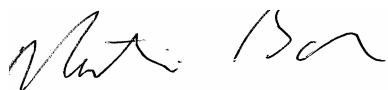
I have a broad experience and knowledge of Presbyterian Church. I also have a strong base of theoretical and academic understanding of social systems and have management and leadership training. I have enjoyed the benefits of some of the best theological education available nationally and internationally and I have had a history of supporting and encouraging successful and relevant church-based mission and outreach activity. I have also contributed regionally and nationally to the development and reform of Church structures.

Recent work by a number of church committees and review groups representing a breadth of theological viewpoint and church experience point to a commonality of purpose and direction. Supported by a national structure unique among New Zealand churches, this recent work and the reforms that are being advocated, convey, in their excitement, a real sense of the working of the Spirit and point to a future of hope and possibility for our Church.

I have a strong personal commitment to the proclamation of the Gospel and a continuing desire to fulfil a sense of God's call on my life. I would fully commit myself to this task, which I think represents one of the most exciting and challenging roles in the life of our church.

Thank you for considering my application.

In Christ's service

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin Baker', written in a cursive style.

Martin Baker

Curriculum Vitae

Career to Date:

2003–present	Senior Minister, First Church of Otago
1991–2003	Minister and Executive Officer St Heliers Church and Community Centre
1984–1991	Minister Seatoun and Strathmore Presbyterian Church

Work Experience:

My work over 22 years of ministry within the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand has been characterised by a commitment to see the Church fulfil Christ's call to mission and outreach. This is a call which I believe is at the heart of the Gospel message.

My experience in Ministry has been broad. I have worked to support community worship and outreach from a small hall in the state housing area in Strathmore, to the leadership and management of an outstanding community focused ministry in St Heliers employing 20 staff. I now work in a multi cultural and historic church in the heart of Dunedin.

My work has been underpinned by early tertiary study in sociology and analytical methods, through to the completion of advanced degrees in theology at Knox and Union. More latterly, I have sort to refine some of my management and leadership skills by completing courses in organisational leadership and human resource management at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Studying under Jim Wallis, co-founder of the Washington based Sojourners Community, has further strengthened my theoretical and practical understandings of Christian faith-based communities and their mission.

I am experienced at working in complex environments involving multiple stakeholders. While I have championed and articulated a vision for the churches and communities that I have worked within, my work style is collaborative and team focused.

I have had the opportunity to develop my communication and media skills, contributing op/ed pieces on an on-going basis to the *Otago Daily Times* and, previously have had articles published in the *Dominion* and the *New Zealand Herald*. I have also contributed to various church publications on issues identifying and relating to contemporary mission challenges.

Building projects, development of a child care centre, the oversight of an important historic place and activities associated with the two small private companies of which I am a Director, have all provided experience in understanding locally and nationally enforced health and safety, environmental, heritage, taxation, planning and employment issues. As a member of the Board of Governors at Columba College, during a period of rapid change in the life of the school, I have gained further insights into organisational structure, management and governance issues.

Overseeing a recent vice-regal visit to First Church, organising the Otago Anniversary Services and providing for a variety of civic events while working between three quite culturally distinct congregations who make up this church are examples of the ways my current ministry demands good organisational and management skills as well as a high degrees of diplomacy and social competence.

Academic Career:

2001 Harvard Divinity School and Kennedy School of Government

1990 Master of Sacred Theology Union Theological Seminary, New York

1984 Bachelor of Divinity, Otago University

1979 Bachelor of Social Science, Waikato University.

Distinctions/Honours:

2001: Merrill Fellow, Harvard University

1990: Masland Fellow, Union Theological Seminary

Current positions of responsibility in the Presbyterian Church

Convener of the Leadership sub-Committee of the Council of Assembly

Member of Presbytery Ministry Committee

Convener of the Dunedin Presbytery Reform Leadership Group

Member of Introduction Work Group

Other positions of responsibility

Columba College Board of Governors

Convener, Membership Committee, Dunedin Rotary Club

Personal:

I am married to Dr Sandy Callister and we have 13-year-old twins, Max and Lou Lou Callister-Baker.

Appendix 2: Assembly Executive Secretary Job Description

Context

The Presbyterian Church, in common with other Western churches, is undergoing a major transition. The changing context is bringing new opportunities for engaging emerging cultures and the Church faces reduced human and financial capacity in the Assembly Office, and fewer people wanting to be involved in more institutional expressions of church. The Assembly Executive Secretary is an important contributor to leading the transition to ways, cultures, forms, and processes for engaging in mission today.

Purpose of Position

The Assembly Executive Secretary is appointed to:

- Provide policy advice to and implement the decisions of the General Assembly and the Council of Assembly, and related groups
- Lead the service team to ensure efficient and effective delivery of national services
- Facilitate the processes by which the Presbyterian Church organises and develops itself to carry out God's mission in the world.

Reporting Relationships

Reports to:

- Council of Assembly through the Convener.

Direct reports (7):

- National Mission Enabler
- Principal, School of Ministry
- Global Mission Enabler (0.25 position)
- Human Resources Manager
- Communications Manager
- Finance Manager
- Archivist

The Assembly Executive Secretary oversees and facilitates task groups and work groups to achieve the plans and work of the General Assembly.

Key relationships:

- Moderator of the General Assembly
- Members of the Council of Assembly
- Council of Assembly sub-committees, reference groups, work groups, task groups
- Moderator Designate
- Service team members
- Moderators and clerks of presbyteries, sessions and synods of the Presbyterian Church
- Presbyterian organisations, e.g. Presbyterian Support, Church schools
- Ecumenical Agencies, e.g. Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa NZ
- Overseas churches
- External agencies, eg Council for World Mission

Location

Assembly Office, in Wellington

Person Specification / Knowledge and experience:

- Church law, order and theology
- General Assembly meeting procedures
- Relevant government and local body legislation
- Governance and its inter-relationships with management
- Contemporary management principles and practices
- Application of Treaty of Waitangi.

Skills - Demonstrated excellence in:

- Theological thinking and discernment – where and how God is seeking to lead the Church
- Analytical thinking, logical reasoning and problem solving
- Oral and written communication and an ability to reach a wide variety of audiences
- Contemporary management practices, particularly change management in a voluntary or not-for-profit organisation
- Project management and financial management
- Negotiation and facilitation of group decision making including conflict management
- Strategic leadership in a team context and the ability to support and develop staff
- Application of the Treaty of Waitangi in the context of multi-cultural mission challenges
- Self-management and ability to work under pressure.

Personal attributes:

- Christian faith, hope and love
- Commitment to the Church as the Body of Christ in the mission of God
- Membership of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, or a church with closely aligned polity and practices – if not already a member of the Presbyterian Church, the appointee shall join and become involved in a Presbyterian congregation
- Integrity and credibility
- Emotional intelligence including self-awareness and leadership skills, ability to earn respect, and willingness to accept accountability
- Sensitivity to bi-cultural, multi-cultural, gender and generational issues
- Open to new ideas, processes and points of view, able to listen

Key Result Areas and Responsibilities

Leadership in mission locally, regionally and nationally.

Lead the Service Team which provides:

- Leadership development.
- Mission support.
- Human resource support.
- Global mission.
- Financial, communication, administrative and archival services.
- Champion mission across the Church.
- Share in representing the Presbyterian Church to other organisations and churches, nationally and internationally
- Network with and facilitate participation by the Church's various cultural groups.

Policy and strategic advice and implementation:

- Identify opportunities for improvement, propose and implement changes
- Maintain and update policies and regulations
- Respond to enquiries and provide support to Council of Assembly, sub-committees, work groups and other groups.

Clerk of Assembly: (some of the following may be delegated)

- Facilitate decision making processes at General Assembly and within other groups in the Church, including commissions.
- Liaise and advise on polity and judicial matters.
- Facilitate and support judicial processes.
- Support Moderator and Moderator-Designate.
- Act as Agent of the Assembly in legislative and compliance matters.

Service Team leadership:

- Lead, motivate and develop the talents of the service team
- Provide objectives and goals for performance and ensure accountability for results
- Recruit and retain key staff.

Terms of Employment

- Fixed term of four years with the possibility of reappointment for a further term of two years.
- If a minister, stipend and a half with usual allowances – housing, Beneficiary Fund contribution, seniority allowance, hospitality allowance, professional development leave, reimbursement of actual expenses.
- If not a minister, remuneration will be negotiated taking into account, among other things, what people are paid in similar positions in the not-for-profit sector and that the appointee would have a sense of call to the position.

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