

Overture 4

Election of Council of Assembly

By audioconference on the 4th July, 2006, the Presbytery of Taranaki met and was constituted.

Among other things the Presbytery agreed to adopt and transmit the following overture to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, appointed to meet in Auckland on 28th September 2006.

Whereas:

- (1) There are serious problems with our church nationally which must be addressed if we are to survive and flourish: membership is falling, parishes are struggling to present the Gospel effectively to contemporary New Zealanders; our collective voice appears divided, and we are in danger of losing hope.
- (2) The Council of Assembly, as the body which could give useful direction, needs to be aligned with local congregations and acting in their interest: this can best be achieved by the congregations themselves choosing who will be their Council Representatives.
- (3) The 2006 Assembly will be considering proposals to reconstitute the membership of the Council of Assembly.
- (4) Along with that Assembly needs also to consider the process by which Council members are appointed. In this day and age, the Church as a whole will never have confidence in nominations for the "at large" positions made by the Nominating Committee, for a body as significant as the Council of Assembly, when congregations are perfectly capable of directly electing their own Council
- (5) A Council of Assembly directly nominated by the parishes would enjoy wider confidence, and would have a much greater mandate to put up decisive proposals and to act for significant change.

It is therefore proposed:

1. That eight members of the Council of Assembly be directly nominated by the church at large with every Session/Parish Council able to vote.
2. That Assembly institute the following system of nomination:
 - (a) Nominations are to be sought from Session/Parish Councils and Presbyteries/UDCs, to be accompanied by a brief CV, photograph and statement
 - (b) Nominations received are to be distributed to each Session/Parish Council with sufficient time for them to be studied
 - (c) Each Session/Parish Council may vote for up to eight members of the Council, by post or electronic ballot
 - (d) General Assembly receives the nominations and makes the appointments.
 - (e) At the first meeting after each General Assembly, the Council of Assembly shall elect from its numbers, a chair and Deputy Chair

3. That the Council of Assembly take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that this system of election comes into effect from the end of the 2008 General Assembly

Or that the General Assembly determine otherwise as in its wisdom it shall consider best.

The Presbytery appointed Mr Neil Walker and Rev Paul Prestidge to support the Overture before the General Assembly.

Extracted from the records of Presbytery by Lynette Hodge, Presbytery Clerk.