

## The Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa New Zealand Standing Committee

### Report

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- 1 The Standing Committee of Partner representatives and elected Cooperating Ventures congregation's representatives has continued to meet three times a year. The 2005 Biennial Forum of Uniting Congregations was held in Dunedin. The Theme of the Forum was 'Braided Rivers' with the Rev Dr Kevin Ward as the guest speaker. Partner church leaders shared their thoughts with the Forum on the future of ecumenical cooperation. The Forum elected the Cooperative Venture representatives to the Standing Committee and the Rev Dave Mullan of Bay of Islands was elected as Chairperson.
- 2 Discussion groups at the 2003 Biennial Karori Forum asked for more work to be done on the suggestions detailed, at that time, on ministry appointments. At the July 2005 Partner/Committee Consultations, recommendations were made on the revision of ministry appointment and settlement procedures. Following the endorsement of the new principles by the Partners Leaders Group, the Standing Committee at its July 2006 meeting agreed to incorporate the settlement procedures into Section 421.1 of the UCANZ Guideline Papers. The significant changes in the settlement guidelines now adopted include the review of the parish ministry strategy by the parish, the parish partners and the Joint Regional Committees, leading to identification of the ministry model and the kind of ministry leadership required in the coming years. The parish will then, in conjunction with the JRC and partner representatives, choose the oversight denomination. A search committee will then be formed consisting of partner and congregation representatives. The final recommendation must be acceptable to all of the partners and to the congregation. The appointment will be made by the oversight denomination but the ministry will not be confined to a ministry from that denomination. If there is no change of ministry within ten years and there has been continual oversight by one denomination, then at the end of ten years, this oversight will normally change.
- 3 The July 2005 Work Group Consultation on Local Shared Ministry provided understandings that have been incorporated into new Draft Guideline Papers, section 426.
- 4 Information on various proposals of Council of Assembly task groups was sent to uniting congregations with Presbyterian participation, inviting them to respond. A number of parishes made submissions on Stipends and Remuneration Task Group proposals. The Standing Committee has heard about the report from the Stipends and Remuneration Task Group and made the recommendation that UCANZ partner denominational stipend committees (and associated remuneration body representatives) be invited to meet to consider the implications of that report. UCANZ has offered to facilitate a meeting of partner denominational committee representatives.
- 5 The work ahead of the Standing Committee includes the preparation of an ecumenical liturgy for induction services, and the updating of the Guide to Procedures. In preparation for a meeting of JRC representatives scheduled for March 2007, consideration is being given to the functions of Joint Regional Committees.

- 6 The next Biennial Forum of Uniting Congregations is planned for November 2007, to be held in the Wellington area, after the Methodist Conference.

**Dave Mullan**

Chair

**John Jones**

Executive Officer