

User's Guide to 2010 Assembly

In the name of Jesus Christ, WELCOME to all participants in the 2010 General Assembly at St Andrew's College, Christchurch.

What is the General Assembly?

The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand has a hierarchy of governing bodies - church council/session (local), presbytery (regional) and Assembly (national). Assembly is the top governing body of the Church. All parishes are entitled to send commissioners to Assembly. The commissioners discuss and vote on the recommendations and proposals brought to Assembly. This participatory style of decision-making is a feature of the Presbyterian Church.

Assembly's functions are:

- **Legislative** – making the regulations that give order to the life of the Church
- **Administrative** – exercising general oversight of the Church. Assembly is the major policy-making body of the Church. It establishes and develops the basic beliefs, overall strategies and direction for the whole Church
- **Judicial** – deciding appeals and complaints. Assembly delegates its judicial function to Judicial Commissions. Reports from Commissions may be lodged with Assembly, but Assembly does not debate them.

One of the General Assembly committees, the Council of Assembly, has a major responsibility for implementing General Assembly decisions.

Who are the key people and what are their roles?

Moderator: Right Rev Peter Cheyne

Peter will be installed as Moderator during the opening service on Thursday morning. His role is to preside at the Assembly, to help us deliberate, and to lead us in worship. He may be assisted by the immediate past Moderator, the Very Rev Dr Graham Redding and other past Moderators.

Assembly Executive Secretary: Rev Martin Baker

Martin is Clerk of the Assembly. He and Deputy Clerk Heather McKenzie give advice regarding procedures, and keep records. The convener of the Book of Order Advisory Committee, Peter Whiteside, advises on regulatory matters.

Assembly Business Work Group Co-conveners: Revs David Coster and Brett Johnstone

David, Brett and Rev Hugh Perry and Margie Apa manage and guide Assembly business.

Assembly and Local Arrangements Co-ordinator: Cecile Pierce

Cecile Pierce and her team: Frank Carter (Venue) Ian Gray (IT), Bruce McKessar (Displays), Helen McKessar (Enhancements), Stephen Price (Sound), Neville Ross (Transport), Dorothy Thawley (Catering) and Rev Hamish Galloway (Consultant) are responsible for a host of essential items to keep us working comfortably.

Guest Speakers

At the Assembly, the keynote addresses will be given by Mick Duncan. Mick is a Baptist pastor who works part-time at Carey Baptist College and part-time as an itinerant speaker. He is a very good communicator who is used as a speaker across many denominations and internationally.

Mick was converted out of the drug culture and nurtured in his faith by Murray Robertson at Spreydon Baptist Church. He has since disciplined many others and will speak out of those experiences.

From 1985 to 1994 Mick and his family lived in a third world squatter community in the Philippines where they sought to bring about holistic transformational development through relief work, community development, social justice, evangelism and church planting.

Mick has also pastored churches in Dunedin, Melbourne and Auckland and has written several books on mission and social justice issues. His Masters degree was on the German activist, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and he is currently working on a PhD with the subject *The Moral Pathway toward the Stranger in the Life and Thought of John Wesley*.

Mick is involved in a number of ministries including Alongsiders, Intermission and Red Letters. If you are interested in more information, Mick's web site is:

<http://www.michaelduncan.org>

Workshops

Workshops will be held on Friday and Saturday, where speakers from a number of Christian ministries will be presenting eight different topics over the two days. You will receive with the late papers a request for you to choose the two workshops you would like to attend. Please post this back to the address shown or bring to Assembly and hand in at Registration. Workshop lists will be allocated and lists displayed by Thursday afternoon.

Te Aka Puaho

Te Aka Puaho (the Maori Synod) has a special place in our church. Te Aka Puaho may choose at any time to address the Assembly on matters that affect its life and spirituality. At times, the Moderator of Te Aka Puaho, Amiria Te Kaawa, may be seated beside the Assembly Moderator.

Communications Team

Amanda Wells and her team will be managing media enquiries, updating the Church's website, sending out e-newsletters to those who can't attend, taking photographs, and issuing a paper newsletter every morning for those at GA10.

Please be aware that only the Moderator has the authority to speak on behalf of the Assembly. Feel free to refer any media inquiries to the Communications Team.

Who will be at Assembly?

There will be over 400 people attending, including commissioners (elders, ministers and youth), observers, associates and overseas guests. There will also be volunteers and national staff assisting.

Your responsibilities as a commissioner

You have been commissioned by your presbytery or union district council. You bring your own gifts, informed by the views of others, to build up the body of Christ. You are not a delegate so you do not necessarily represent the views of your presbytery, union district council, session, parish council, congregation or anyone else. The views of others may inform yours, but they cannot direct you.

Assembly Chaplains

The Moderator has asked the Revs Russell Denne and Anne Stewart to be the pastoral chaplains to the Assembly. Their role will be to provide pastoral support to anyone in need of that during the Assembly. They will be assisted by the Rev Phil King if extra help is required.

A private space will be set aside near the Assembly Hall. Please feel free to contact them. A prayer room will also be located in the vicinity for those wishing to take time to reflect on the Assembly.

We aim for all voices to be heard equally and without prejudice. The Moderator will ask the chaplains to advise him and the Assembly as to how well we are achieving that aim.

Worship Team

The worship team has come from the Moderator's home church, Calvin Community Church, Gore. They will lead the two main worship events: the opening service on the Thursday and Sunday morning worship. They will also lead worship at the beginning and end of each day of the Assembly.

How does the Assembly work?

Standing Orders

On Thursday, the Assembly will be asked to adopt a set of rules for conducting its business, called the ***Standing Orders***, in the front section of the *Assembly Reports*. There are different ways and stages in how Assembly considers matters - including dialogue groups, facilitation, and the full Assembly. The Assembly Business Work Group will make it clear which process is being used.

Only matters that require a decision will be referred to dialogue groups or dealt with on the floor of the Assembly.

Full Assembly

The full Assembly meets together to hear matters introduced for debate, to hear from the Facilitation Group as to the mind of the dialogue groups on certain matters, and to make decisions.

When the full Assembly meets, commissioners will be asked to sit in the front section of the auditorium and associates and observers (non-voting) in the back section.

In full Assembly, there may be debate on recommendations followed by voting or discussion that does not have to result in a decision.

Dialogue Groups

The dialogue group process is a way of seeking the mind of the Assembly before business is presented for debate. The response may be questions, statements or new or amended notices of motion.

Each commissioner at the Assembly will be a member of a dialogue group (comprising 15-20 members) to discuss the matters that need to be studied in depth. Information about which group you have been allocated to will be included in the pack you receive on the first day of Assembly.

At the end of the discussion time, the dialogue group moderator will check to see if the group is in agreement on what feedback it wishes to give to the matters being raised, to be reported to the Facilitation Group (see below).

Facilitation Group

The Facilitation Group, which will be appointed in the opening session of the Assembly, will monitor the progress of matters, especially those being considered by dialogue groups.

Sometimes they will arrange a meeting between those presenting reports and commissioners who have raised issues, in order to facilitate a resolution or ascertain a common mind. After each dialogue group meeting, they will report back to the full Assembly on all the issues raised and resolved, before debate and decision resume.

Voting

If you are a voting member you will have received two "indicator cards" – one for "yes" and one for "no". The Moderator will ask you to show one of these to indicate your mind both in formal voting and in gauging the mind of the Assembly informally (e.g. "Are you ready to vote?"). Keep your cards with you at all times.

If you feel you have heard enough debate on a particular matter, you may indicate your desire to move on by holding the cards in a cross formation across your chest. This will indicate to the Moderator the mood of the Assembly. The cards are for your use only.

You will also be issued with a set of ballot papers that will be used when the Moderator agrees to a request from the floor "that a decision should be made by secret ballot." These are for your use only, and you need to keep them and the voting cards with you.

Occasionally cards and voting papers are lost. If this happens, please see the Deputy Clerk of Assembly.

Processes for dealing with matters before the Assembly

The ***Standing Orders*** agreed to at the start of Assembly set the rules for conducting Assembly business, so please read these thoroughly. In the meantime, a brief overview is provided here.

Before the Assembly meets, the Assembly Business Work Group will identify the appropriate process by which business will be considered.

Reports that do not require any decision other than "the report be received", will not receive speaking time at the Assembly, and will be included in the comprehensive motion.

Most matters will follow the procedure of:

- (a) **Presentation.** The business is presented to the Assembly. The timing of the business and time for presentation are set by the Assembly Business Work Group.
- (b) **Clarification.** This is a time to seek clarification by asking questions of the presenter(s) of the item of **business**.
- (c) **Debate** (*Standing Orders* 15.3). The Assembly follows the normal rules of debate, on matters presented by notices of motion. They will be introduced briefly and seconded, and debated until such time as the Moderator asks the Assembly if it is ready to vote (i.e. move to a decision).
If the vote is unanimous it is declared **agreed**

If it receives support of at least 60 percent of those voting it is declared **carried**

If it receives less than 60 percent support it is declared **lost**.

There are a number of procedural motions (see *Standing Orders 15.3*) that apply during debate. These require 60 percent to pass.

- (d) **Decisions by Comprehensive Motion** (*Standing Orders 15.4*). Matters that are considered to need no debate or study will be offered as part of a "comprehensive motion", which is a collection of recommendations that will be considered *en bloc*.

In dialogue groups, or by notifying the Assembly Business Work Group on the appropriate form, any matter in this category can be removed from the comprehensive motion for debate, study or discussion.

Those matters left in the comprehensive motion will be put to the full Assembly as one motion, on which there will be no debate.

Some items of business may need additional steps in the process.

Matters for Study (*Standing Orders 15.2*)

Other items may be referred for study. This is time made available for talking together, either in dialogue groups or the full Assembly, without any decision being made.

Notices of Motion

Any voting member can move a notice of motion, as long as it is seconded. If your notice of motion does not arise from the business of the Assembly the Assembly Business Work Group must receive it by **9pm Thursday 30 September 2010**.

Other deadlines will be clearly given to the Assembly by the Assembly Business Work Group.

Timing

Presenters of reports will have had time allocated to them by the Assembly Business Work Group.

Presenters of proposals for legislative action and notices of motion will have a total of four minutes to speak, move and second a motion. Other speakers will have two minutes, unless the Moderator decides otherwise.

Though presenters of reports will speak from a lectern at the front of the auditorium, during discussion and debate "roving microphones" will be used. These will be handed to commissioners in their seats when the Moderator indicates that they have right to speak.

During debates lights to indicate speaking time will be visible to all in the auditorium. The green light will turn to orange when there are 30 seconds left and red when time is up.

Before Assembly

Towards the end of September you will receive a second pack of papers. More papers will be distributed at Assembly. We suggest you bring a ring binder to keep the papers together.

Arriving at Assembly

You need to register at the **Registration Desk** situated in the Senior College Common Room as soon as you arrive at St Andrews College (*look for signs*). Registrations are open from 3pm – 8.30pm on Wednesday 29 September and 7.30am – 10.30am on Thursday 30th September.

On registration, you will be given an assembly pack that includes your name tag, dialogue group number, workshop confirmation, voting papers, a map of the venue, and other sundry items. Please take time to read this material.

The **Information Desk** in the Senior Common Room will be attended during each day of the Assembly.

Medical Assistance

If you indicated medical concerns when you enrolled, please make yourself known to the Assembly Registered Nurses Joy Coster and Elizabeth Taggart. Joy and Elizabeth will be available throughout Assembly for any medical concerns that you have.

Joy Coster: 021 176-5813

Elizabeth Taggart: 021 201-6059

The Venue

The plenary sessions of the General Assembly will be held in the Gymnasium of St Andrew's College.

The Dialogue Groups and Workshops will be held in rooms and theatres, some of which may involve steps and stairs. If you have mobility needs please advise at the time of enrolment or tell a Local Arrangements person at St Andrew's on arrival.

Commissioners are reminded that this is a school, which means no smoking is permitted anywhere in St Andrew's College buildings or grounds.

Powhiri and Opening Service

The Powhiri will commence at 11.00am at the College Gymnasium, with the Opening Service to follow at 11:30pm.

Meals

Breakfast for commissioners staying in the St Andrew's Hostels and evening meals will be served in St Andrews' dining hall.

Commissioners staying at the Rangi Ruru Hostel will have breakfast at Rangi Ruru.

Lunches will be 'Pick- Your- Own- Pack' available for collection at the close of the morning session. If you are, or have a visitor for the day you may order lunch for that person at **the Information Desk by 9am** on that day. The cost will be \$15 per person.

There will be some set times for morning teas, but tea and coffee will be served continuously in the Senior College Cafeteria during the afternoon.

Happy Hour

Commissioners are invited to attend Happy Hour hosted by the Assembly Staff in the Senior College Common Room on Thursday evening from 5pm prior to dinner being served at 5:30pm.

Transport and Parking

Commissioners without their own transport, staying at the Rangī Ruru School hostel, will be ferried to and from St Andrew's by mini buses. Information regarding departure times will be given each day.

Mini bus transport will be provided for Commissioners travelling to the airport on Sunday evening after Assembly.

Car parking on site at St Andrews is limited and will be signed, however there is good street-parking available in the vicinity close to the school (*please refer to Enrolment Pack*).

Safe environment

The Assembly would wish to be a safe environment for all who come to bring their concerns. We ask that you be respectful of all people, and keep to the "ground rules" that will be issued at the Assembly.

It is not appropriate to make personal remarks during debates nor to applaud.

Though these days the Assembly is more relaxed than in earlier years, it is still the highest court of the Church, so appropriate standards in discussion, debate and dress are expected.

The Church has for some time chosen to use inclusive language as it addresses the people of God. We encourage you to do so wherever you can.

The Moderator has appointed Assembly chaplains to be available to anyone who finds the matters discussed or the process of the Assembly distressing. They will also be available as contact persons for matters of sexual harassment.

Attendance

The Assembly will open with a powhiri at 11am on Thursday 30 September 2010 and conclude at 4:30pm on Sunday 3 October. You need to be present for the whole Assembly.

If for some urgent reason you need to be absent, you must seek permission from the Assembly Business Work Group. Please contact the Deputy Clerk of Assembly, Heather McKenzie at heather@presbyterian.org.nz, 0800 424-872 (before Tuesday 28 September) or 027 455-0124 (during Assembly).

Help is always available

Even "seasoned" Assembly attendees need help from time to time. Those responsible for various parts of the Assembly are keen to discuss questions with anyone. They are a friendly lot!

On matters of procedure or wording for notices of motion and guidance on the Church's regulations, see the Assembly Clerk (Martin Baker), the Deputy Clerk (Heather McKenzie) or one of the Assembly Business Work Group.

For questions on the order of business, see one of the Assembly Business Work Group.

If you need to seek medical assistance, please ask at the Information Desk in the Senior Common Room, to speak to the Registered Nurse on duty.

On matters relating to the buildings, the facilities, accommodation or transport, ask at the **Information Desk** to see a Local Arrangements person who will assist you.

Emergency numbers

The emergency contact phones for the Assembly are:

Brett Johnstone 027 601-3764	Co-convener Assembly Business Work Group
David Coster 027 220 5765	Co-convener Assembly Business Work Group
Cecile Pierce 027 64 4114	Assembly & Local Arrangements Coordinator
Heather McKenzie 027 455 0124	Deputy Clerk of Assembly

Standing Orders of the General Assembly

Before the General Assembly 2010

- 1 All reports of committees, associated bodies and Assembly officials with any recommendations shall be sent to the Assembly Clerk no later than eight weeks before the date of the General Assembly. All such reports and recommendations shall be printed and circulated to all those commissioned to attend the Assembly so as to arrive before the Assembly opens.
- 2 Late reports may deal only with matters that arise after the closing date above, such late reports to be in the hands of the Assembly Clerk no later than two weeks before the opening of the Assembly.
- 3
 - i Proposals for legislative action from presbyteries/UDCs or church councils and any other papers from these courts shall be in the form of certified extracts (signed as such) from the records or minutes of the court with a suitably worded notice of motion and be in the hands of the Assembly Clerk no less than eight weeks before the meeting of the Assembly. Late proposals may deal only with matters that arise after the eight week closing date, such late proposals to be in the hands of the Assembly Clerk no less than two weeks before the opening of Assembly.
 - ii Appeals or references from presbyteries/UDCs or church councils and any other papers from these courts shall be in the form of certified extracts (signed as such) from the records or minutes of the court and be in the hands of the Assembly Clerk no less than two weeks before the opening of the Assembly. The procedure to be followed in any judicial proceeding shall be recommended by the Assembly Business Work Group after consultation with the Book of Order Advisory Committee.
 - iii Notices of motion received by the Assembly Business Work Group earlier than two weeks before the opening of the Assembly will be printed with late reports. The Assembly Business Work Group will advise the time by which all notices of motion must be presented. Thereafter only motions arising from dialogue or debate will be accepted.
 - iv Any amendment to a recommendation or any notice of motion requiring a change to the *Book of Order* regulations shall be referred to the convener of the Book of Order Advisory Committee (or their nominee) before it is considered by the Assembly; and the convener, on request, will be granted reasonable time to consider the proposed changes and report to the Assembly before it is debated.
- 4 The records of presbyteries/UDCs and committees of the Assembly shall be examined by auditors appointed by the Presbyteries. Auditors shall return to the Assembly Clerk their report on these records not less than two weeks before the Assembly, and the Clerk shall report to the Assembly on these returns.
- 5 All commissions shall be sent by presbyteries/UDCs to the Assembly Clerk not less than one month before the Assembly. In exceptional circumstances, commissions for representative members unable to attend Assembly may be

replaced by presbyteries/UDCs up to one week before Assembly, after consultation with the Assembly Clerk.

- 6 The Clerk shall prepare a list of ministerial changes for reporting to the Assembly and a list of those names submitted by presbyteries/UDCs for the Act of Commemoration.
- 7 The Assembly Business Work Group shall prepare and circulate a programme of business for the first full day of the Assembly.
- 8 All applications for persons to be received by the Assembly shall be made to the Assembly Business Work Group, which shall make the necessary arrangements, if approved.

Opening of General Assembly

- 9 The retiring Moderator or, in the retiring Moderator's absence the immediate past or any past Moderator, shall open the Assembly with worship, including the constitution of the Assembly. The roll is tabled and accepted, the new Moderator elected who shall then address the Assembly.
- 10 The opening shall include the Act of Commemoration and a celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion, presided over by the newly elected Moderator or the Moderator's nominee.
- 11 It will be normal practice following the opening service of worship as above, for the Assembly to meet over a fellowship meal or similar gathering during which members attending their first Assembly will be welcomed.

Procedure and Business

- 12 The ordinary hours of meeting shall be from 8.30 am to 9.30 pm. Business being discussed at 9.30 pm may be completed, but no new business may be started unless by agreement of the Assembly at the time.
- 13
 - i Most recommendations/notices of motion shall be considered by Assembly through the following procedure:
 - 1) Presentation
 - 2) Clarification
 - 3) Debate
 - 4) Decision
 - ii Some items of business and their recommendations may be selected by the Assembly Business Work Group to be considered through the following procedure:
 - 1) Presentation
 - 2) Clarification
 - 3) Discussion in Dialogue Groups
 - 4) Facilitation
 - 5) Debate
 - 6) Decision
 - iii For other items, the procedure may be "study" (see para 15.2)
 - iv Reports to the Assembly, matters from presbyteries/UDCs, and notices of motion shall be presented in the manner described by the Assembly Business

Work Group. Reports of committees and matters from presbyteries/UDCs in proposals for legislative action and appeals shall normally have precedence over other notices of motion.

- v In relation to reports, only those that require a decision of the Assembly, other than “That the report be received,” may be allocated time for presentation in the plenary sessions. The Assembly Business Work Group may allow other presentations in exceptional circumstances.
- vi The Assembly Business Work Group can recommend which of the procedures outlined above should be used to deal with an item of business.
- 14 At the first business session of the Assembly, the Assembly Business Work Group shall move that the reports of committees, the recommendations, the proposals for legislative action, appeals, references and notices of motion which have been printed, be received, and be the working documents of Assembly.
- 15.1 **Procedure for Matters for “*discussion in Dialogue Groups*”**
 - i Matters for discussion are referred to dialogue groups as arranged by the Assembly Business Work Group. These groups will be chaired by a nominee of the Moderator. Prior to the issues being discussed in dialogue groups, presenters of committee reports, matters from presbyteries/UDCs and notices of motion will move the recommendation/motion in Assembly, may briefly address the Assembly and may answer questions by way of clarification. If called upon to answer questions, the presenters may also be available to dialogue groups.
 - ii The Assembly Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Assembly Business Work Group, shall appoint a facilitation group.
 - iii Dialogue groups will decide how they will handle the issue and come to agreement on the answer to one of the following questions:
 - a) Has general agreement been reached to support the recommendation?
Yes/No
 - b) Has general agreement been reached not to support the recommendation?
Yes/No
 - c) Are there any amendments to the recommendation that our Dialogue Group as a whole wishes to be considered by the Assembly? These are recorded.
 - d) Are there any new recommendations/notices of motion concerning this issue that our Dialogue groups wishes to move? These are recorded.
 - e) Are there any comments our group wishes to be fed into the facilitation process? Recorded.
 - iv When the dialogue group moderator puts the questions, only the answers of commissioners must be considered, and the answers will be reported to the facilitation group to process the responses.
 - v In the event that there is agreement from all dialogue groups on one of the questions in (iii) the facilitation group shall report this to the next decision session of the Assembly.

- vi The facilitation group shall consider the amendments/new notices of motion and comments received from dialogue groups and take one of the following actions:
 - a) Refer the issue back to the movers of the motion concerned, for a new proposal to be considered by the Assembly
 - b) Formulate a suitable amendment or a new recommendation in the light of comments, consult the movers of the motion concerned and submit the amendment or new recommendation to the Assembly
 - c) Recommend to the Assembly a way for the matter to be further considered, or
 - d) Place the recommendation before Assembly as a matter for debate under 15.3.

15.2 Procedure for Matters for “Study”

- i The Assembly Business Work Group, the Moderator or the Facilitation Group, under 15.1 (vi) (c), may present recommendations, issues or motions for study by the Assembly in either plenary or dialogue groups. During study, no motions may be put. The Moderator shall exercise discretion as to when and if to move from study to debate and decision
- ii At any time a voting member of the Assembly may ask that the Assembly move into study. The Moderator will exercise discretion as to when to move into study.

15.3 Procedure for Matters for “Debate”

- i Recommendations/issues/motions are presented for debate by the Assembly Business Work Group, the Moderator or by the facilitation group under 15.1 (vi) (d), or by the Assembly itself.
- ii The convener of the group bringing the issue or the convener’s representative or, in the case of overtures, the presbytery/UDC representative, shall move the motion in terms of the recommendation or the notice given. The Assembly Business Work Group will have advised the speaker of time limits. Several recommendations may be grouped, presented and debated together. Such a grouping will be arranged by the Assembly Business Work Group.
- iii Amendments to a recommendation must be given in writing as a notice of motion, unless in the view of the Moderator, it has arisen in the debate, in which case the Assembly will be asked, if leave is given, to allow the presentation of the amendment, in which case it shall be given to the Clerk in writing as soon as it is read to the Assembly.
- iv When a recommendation or amendment has been seconded it may be debated. The Moderator has the right to call speakers alternately for or against the recommendation or amendment.
- v The following procedural motions will normally be relevant when Assembly is in debate or decision mode, but may be moved in order to move out of study mode. Procedural motions that may be moved, seconded and voted on are:
 - a) Leave sought to introduce an amendment (or a notice of motion)
 - b) Leave sought to withdraw a recommendation or motion given on notice
 - c) Leave sought for extension of speaking time
 - d) Leave sought for extension of normal business hours
 - e) That the debate be adjourned
 - f) That Assembly now move to study

- g) That Assembly now move to decision
 - h) That Assembly pass to the next business.
- vi All procedural motions will be lost unless there is a 60 percent majority of those voting in favour. All the motions are moved and seconded with no speeches and there is no debate. (e), (f), (g) and (h) can only be moved by someone who has not spoken in debate. In the case of (h) being carried, the Assembly moves to the next business without any further discussion. (The effect of the motion in this case is that the Assembly simply does not complete the business.)
 - vii When the procedural motion “That the debate be adjourned” is carried, the mover of that motion has the right to speak first on the debate being resumed.
 - viii When a motion is being debated and an amendment is moved and seconded, normally the vote is taken on this amendment before any other amendment may be moved.
 - ix When a recommendation or motion is given on notice, it may only be withdrawn with the leave of the Assembly.
 - x The time limit for all speakers shall be two minutes, except that a mover of a motion may negotiate with the seconder to use part or all of the seconder’s time. If a presenter of a number of recommendations groups those recommendations, time limits may be negotiated with the Assembly Business Work Group.
 - xi The length of time spent in debate on any issue is in the hands of the Moderator, who may rule at the end of that time to continue the debate, refer the matter to study or decision. The decision of the Moderator may be challenged by the Assembly in the normal manner.
 - xii **Rights of Reply**
When a motion is referred from the debate mode for decision (except when part of a comprehensive motion), before being put to the Assembly, the mover of the motion has the right of reply. When an amendment is to be voted on, the mover of the motion being amended may exercise a right of reply if the mover has not spoken to the amendment in the debate. The mover of an amendment does not have a right of reply.
 - xiii The motion or amendment is then put to the Assembly. Following debate procedure, where a number of motions are being proposed together, any member of the Assembly has the right to request that the motions be voted on separately.
 - xiv **Voting**
The Moderator or any member may call for a ballot. Each voting member of Assembly will be issued with a “yes” voting card (orange) and a “no” voting card (blue). Normally, voting will be by the showing of these cards when called by the Moderator. At any stage during the debate, the Moderator may call for an indication of the mind of the Assembly by the use of the voting cards. The Clerk reports the voting in a ballot or count of cards to the Moderator. Twelve or more voting members may require the calling of the roll – in which case the names of the members arranged in presbyteries/UDCs are called one by one

- by the Clerk, each member's vote being recorded. The votes are then totalled and announced by the Moderator.
- xv Members may ask for their dissent to a decision to be recorded, with or without reasons.
- xvi To be carried by the Assembly a motion or an amendment to a motion must be supported by at least 60 percent of those voting. If less than 60 percent of those voting support the motion or amendment, the motion or amendment is lost. To be valid, a vote must indicate a clear preference for or against a motion or amendment. Informal votes and abstentions are not valid votes, and are not recorded.
- xvii Whenever it is proposed that a matter under the special legislative procedure be adopted *ad interim*, such a proposal shall be considered as a motion separate from, and after that, which refers the issue under the special legislative procedure. This motion will be lost unless there is a 60 percent majority of those voting in favour.
- 15.4 Procedure for "Comprehensive Motions"**
- i Recommendations/issues/motions are presented for decision by the Assembly Business Work Group at the commencement of Assembly, by the facilitation group (see *also* 15.1 (v) and (vi)) and by Assembly itself following debate. (see *also* 15.3 (v) and (x))
- ii Some recommendations or motions that the Assembly Business Work Group is presenting for decision may be formulated into one or more comprehensive motions. Any member of the Assembly having first shared any views or concerns and sought explanation and clarification from the convener or presenter, and still being of the view that the matter should not proceed as proposed, may ask for the matter contained in any of the reports, recommendations, proposals for legislative action and notices of motion to be reserved and withdrawn from a comprehensive motion. The comprehensive motion, except matters that have been reserved, is then put to the Assembly. The Assembly Business Work Group will make arrangements for items that have been reserved to be dealt with by the Assembly.
- 16 In the presentation of an appeal or reference, the parties to the case are identified, heard, and may answer questions, but may not take part in the discussion or the vote on any resolution arising from the proceeding. Where a party is a presbytery the prohibition on taking part in the discussion or the vote applies to all members of that presbytery. Where there are one or two parties, two speeches are allowed from each. Where there are more than two parties involved, only one speech from each is allowed.
- 17 A member may raise a point of order or may challenge the ruling of the Moderator. In doing so, the member simply states the point without discussion. The matter is determined by the Moderator, or may be referred by the Moderator to the Assembly for decision by debate and vote. If the ruling of the Moderator is challenged the question is referred to the Assembly.
- 18 A motion carried may be rescinded on the same day only with the unanimous consent of members present. Otherwise notice of motion must be given.

- 19 Between debates, the Moderator may lead the Assembly in worship or reflection. Any such request from a member of the Assembly is to be addressed to the Moderator who shall decide whether to so lead the Assembly.
- 20 The minutes of those Assembly sessions that have been printed and distributed to members during the time Assembly is meeting, subject to corrections, shall be taken as read and confirmed before the Assembly closes. Minutes of later sessions may be approved by the Council of Assembly.

Close of Assembly

- 21 The Moderator shall announce the time and place of the next Assembly and close the Assembly with worship.
- 22 Travel expenses shall be paid only to those who attend the Assembly for its duration unless leave of absence is granted. Applications for leave should be given to the Clerk as soon as the need arises, who shall submit them to the Assembly Business Work Group.

Te Aka Puaho and Decision Making in the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

In 1998 the General Assembly agreed to guidelines that enable the decision-making process of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand to reflect more truly the Church's bicultural nature. The guidelines seek to give Te Aka Puaho freedom to contribute cultural wealth to the wider church consistent with the Gospel and with the practices of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The guidelines are as follows:

- 1 Te Aka Puaho representatives may meet at any time during meetings.
- 2 Te Aka Puaho may either before or during the meeting, give notice of its request to make a statement with the following provisions:
 - (a) In making its statement, the number of speakers and the time allowed will be determined by Te Aka Puaho and the Assembly Moderator, and the Assembly Business Work Group advised.
 - (b) If possible, the statement shall be made after the motion is moved and seconded, and before any general debate or discussion.
 - (c) The rights of those who have spoken on behalf of Te Aka Puaho to speak in general debate or discussion are reserved.
 - (d) If, after making such a statement, an amendment or motion of which no notice has been given is introduced, any member of Te Aka Puaho may require an adjournment to allow Te Aka Puaho representatives to meet.
 - (e) Te Aka Puaho may advise the Assembly that, because of a distinctive Maori perspective or value on a matter affecting Maori, it wishes to stand aside from the decision-making process for a time in order to undertake full consultation amongst the Maori people, the results of which will be reported no later than at the next General Assembly.

Rev David Coster and Rev Brett Johnstone

Co-Conveners

Assembly Business Work Group