

# Parramatta City Uniting Church Council

## Draft charter

### 1. Preamble<sup>1</sup>

1.1 In October 2022 the Leigh Fijian, Leigh Memorial, Northmead, Parramatta Centenary and Westmead congregations of the Uniting Church in Australia (**UCA**) determined to form one entity. The Parramatta-Nepean Presbytery (**Presbytery**) subsequently resolved to amalgamate those congregations to form one congregation, as from 1 July 2023, to be provisionally known as Parramatta City Uniting Church (**PCUC**).

1.2 On 24 September 2023 a congregational meeting of PCUC elected leaders of PCUC (**leaders**) who together would form the PCUC Congregation Leadership Team (**CLT**). The congregation of PCUC, mindful of its responsibility to form a church council, approved this charter to establish its council, to be provisionally known as the Parramatta City Uniting Church Council (**Council**) and elected six of its members to sit on the Council.

1.3 PCUC acknowledges the UCA Basis of Union, which relevantly states:

“The Uniting Church recognises that responsibility for government in the Church belongs to the people of God by virtue of the gifts and tasks which God has laid upon them. The Uniting Church therefore so organises her life that ... government will be entrusted to representatives, men and women, bearing the gifts and graces with which God has endowed them for the building up of his Church. The Uniting Church is governed by a series of inter-related councils, each of which has its tasks and responsibilities in relation both to the Church and the world.

The Uniting Church acknowledges that Christ alone is supreme in his Church, and that he may speak to her through any of her councils. It is the task of every council to wait upon God’s Word, and to obey his will in the matters allocated to its oversight.”

### 2. Responsibility of Council<sup>2</sup>

2.1 The Council is charged to give priority in its life to building up the congregation in faith and love, sustaining members in hope, and leading the congregation to a fuller participation in Christ’s mission in the world. This priority is to be reflected in the agenda of its ordinary meetings.

2.2 Under UCA regulations the responsibilities of the Council include:

(i) sharing with the Minister(s) in mission and in the pastoral care and spiritual oversight of the congregation;

(ii) nurturing the members and adherents in their growth in grace;

(iii) making decisions in accordance with the regulations concerning baptism, confirmation and membership, and the keeping and reviewing of the rolls of the congregation;

(iv) assisting the Minister(s) in the conduct of worship and in the administration of the sacraments;

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<sup>1</sup> See Basis of Union [15]; regs 3.1.1, 3.3.2, 3.4.5.

<sup>2</sup> See UCA Const cl 24; reg 3.1.2.

- (v) determining the time and place of services of public worship;
- (vi) carrying out its functions in accordance with the regulations concerning applicants for the specified ministries;
- (vii) managing the financial affairs and the general administration of the congregation including the reception, preparation and presentation of all necessary budgets, statements and reports;
- (viii) arranging for audit, presentation and examination of the accounts of all the funds of the congregation;
- (ix) managing and controlling property in accordance with the regulations;
- (x) preparing and presenting to a meeting of the congregation an annual report concerning the life and work of the congregation including its worship, mission and service, and making recommendations with regard to the program for the ensuing year;
- (xi) exercising oversight of the appointment of officers and leaders of congregational organisations;
- (xii) referral of matters to Presbytery as prescribed in the regulations;
- (xiii) discipline of members;
- (xiv) carrying out its functions in relation to Ministers-in-Association.

2.3 The responsibilities set out in paragraphs (i) to (vi), (xiii) and (xiv) are delegated to the CLT and the responsibility for preparing the annual report referred to in paragraph (x) is to be exercised jointly with the CLT. The Council may also delegate to the CLT such other functions as it considers are appropriate to be exercised by it.

### **3. Membership of the Council<sup>3</sup>**

3.1 The Council shall comprise:

- the Lead Minister serving within PCUC;
- up to six members or members-in-association of PCUC elected by the congregation of PCUC;
- up to two members or members-in-association of the UCA co-opted by the Council;
- Up to two persons appointed by Presbytery.

3.2 Elected and co-opted members shall serve for a period of 12 months and be eligible for reappointment. Arrangements for the membership of the Council will be reviewed by a congregational meeting after 12 months.

3.3 In making appointments of church council members elected by the congregation, co-opted members or Presbytery members to the Council, the relevant appointing body shall have regard to the current role description for members of the Council.

3.4 Membership of the Council is subject to the member obtaining a Working with Children Check and undertaking Safe Church Awareness Training approved by the Safe Church Unit of the UCA.

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<sup>3</sup> See regs 3.3, 3.6.1.

3.5 Members are expected to fulfil the requirements of their role description and to comply with the PCUC Code of Conduct for Lay Leaders approved by the Council.

3.6 The Council shall elect annually members as chairperson, secretary and treasurer.

#### **4. Meetings of the Council<sup>4</sup>**

4.1 The Council shall meet at least quarterly at such dates, times and places as it shall determine.

4.2 A special meeting will be convened as soon as practicable after a written request for a meeting, signed by at least three Council members, is provided to the Chairperson.

4.3 At least 7 days' notice of all Council meetings will be given to each member (unless all members agree to waive this requirement for a particular meeting).

4.4 The quorum for meetings is a majority of Council members. No business may be transacted unless a quorum is present.

4.5 If the Chairperson is unavailable then the meeting shall elect a chairperson for that meeting.

4.6 Council meetings are to be conducted in accordance with *A Manual for Meetings in the Uniting Church* except to the extent that the Council has adopted other procedures.

4.7 The preference is for the meetings of the Council to be held in person. However, if the Chairperson and Secretary agree, a meeting may be held with some or all members participating by telephone or audio-visual link (such as zoom).

4.8 A resolution may be passed outside a meeting provided:

- a) all members aside from those on approved leave are sent a copy of the proposed resolution and are given a reasonable time to respond considering the nature of the matters under consideration;
- b) all members are provided copies of any substantive questions, responses and discussion involving other members;
- c) the resolution is passed by all of the current members (excluding any member on leave from the Council or any member who, despite reasonable effort, is unable to be contacted for at least 48 hours after circulation of the proposed resolution); and
- d) the approval of members of a resolution may be communicated to the Chairperson or Secretary by letter or email, by telephone or by audio visual link.

#### **5. Committees<sup>5</sup>**

5.1 The Council may appoint an Executive and other committees or task groups to assist it in any of its responsibilities.

5.2 Membership of committees and task groups shall not be restricted to members of the Council but at least one member of each of such committee or task group shall be appointed from among the members of the Council.

5.3 Any Executive, committee or task group shall have only an advisory role, unless it has been given a specific power to act, and shall report to the Council on a regular basis.

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<sup>4</sup> See regs 3.5.2, 3.5.3, 3.8.

<sup>5</sup> See regs 3.7.1 and 3.8.2.