

Working Together

The shape of how we do things in our community

Updated November 2017

Church Council

Guiding

VISION:

Brunswick Uniting Church strives to be a Christian community who loves God, seeks wisdom, cares for and engages with each other, the wider community and the earth, travelling with justice and love.

VALUES:

1. We worship
2. We welcome all
3. We care for each other and nurture our faith
4. We engage with the local and global community
5. We enable the ministries of our church

These **Roles & Responsibilities** are the **fourth level** of the package and describe the ministry and/or mission of the named committee, group or individual as indicated in the Level 3 Church Council & Committees Guidelines acknowledging the Value Statement addressed.

Why

We worship
We welcome all
We care for each other and our congregation
We engage with the local and global community
We enable the ministries of our church

The Church Council shall 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 shall be reflected in the agenda of its ordinary meetings.

The bulk of the information contained in this document has been taken from the UCA Constitution & Regulations 2008, 3.Government & Administration – Church Council. These may be found on the Assembly website at: <http://assembly.uca.org.au/resources/regulations>

Who

- Minister of the Word
- The Council has 10 elected members who are also Elders of the congregation.
- The Council may decide to co-opt other members as needed.

When

- The Council meets at least ten times each year on the second Tuesday of the month.
- An annual retreat is held.

What

The duties and responsibilities of the Church Council include the following:

- 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;
- v. determining the time and place of services of public worship;
- vi. carrying out its functions concerning applicants for the ministries of Minister of the Word, Deacon, Community Minister, Lay Pastor, Lay Preacher and Youth Worker, having regard to the Regulations;
- 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. managing and controlling property in accordance with the Regulations;
- ix. 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;
- x. exercising oversight of the appointment of officers and leaders of Congregational organizations;
- xi. referral of matters to Presbytery as prescribed.

How

1. Council & Committees

- In fulfilling its role and to assist its functioning the Church Council may appoint an Executive and other committees and/or task groups to assist the Church Council in any of its responsibilities.
- Membership of the committees and/or task groups of the Church Council shall not be restricted to members of the Church Council but at least one member of each of such committees and task groups shall, ideally but not always, be appointed from among the members of the Church Council.
- Any Executive, committee or task group shall have only an advisory role unless it has been given a specific power to act by Church Council, and shall report to the Church Council on a regular basis.
- The Church Council may delegate to any committee the power to determine its own rules and procedures unless otherwise prescribed.

2. Strategic Plan

- Develop a Strategic Plan which defines the objectives and strategies by which we will follow and live out our stated Vision and Mission.
- Establish a Resourcing Plan which demonstrates in detail how the plan is to be implemented through paid ministry and the gifts of the congregation
- Oversee the implementation of the Strategic Plan.
- Review annually.

3. Ministry Team

- Provide active support to the members of the Ministry Team.
- Ensure that Support Groups have been established for members of the Ministry Team.
- Receive & respond to reports from the members of the Ministry Team.

4. Meetings

- Recognition of the Wurundgeri people of the Kulin nation as the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet opens all Council & Congregational Meetings.
- Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with “A Manual for Meetings in the Uniting Church” unless the Congregation has adopted or shall adopt other standing orders or meeting procedures. A copy of the Manual for Meetings can be found on the Assembly website at: <http://assembly.uca.org.au/resources/regulations>
- Meetings will begin with a time of worship and will include time for Council members to reflect on their role as leaders of the congregation.

5. Agenda & Reporting

- The Chairperson, in consultation with the Secretary, will review reports & recommendations submitted by the Ministry Team & Committees to prepare the Agenda.
- All reports for Council meeting are to be sent to the Secretary in accordance with timelines established by Church Council.
- Members wishing to include items on the Agenda must do so in accordance with the timelines set by Church Council. If a discussion is requested, information about what must be discussed is to be included accompanied by a recommended time for discussion.
- Items on the Agenda may include a recommendation that will need to be approved (or not) at the meeting. It is expected that all Council Members are familiar with the published reports before coming to the meeting.

6. Council representatives on Committees

- Council members on committees will
 - Report in writing to Council using the provided template (see Guidelines for Reporting to Church Council) in accordance with the timelines set by Church Council. N.B. *Another member of the committee may prepare this report on behalf of the council member.*
 - Report decisions & requests made by Council back to the committee.
 - Ensure that the Committee’s Annual Report is prepared in accordance with the established timeline.

7. Elections

- Elections for Council members (Elders) will be held at the December Congregational Meeting.
 - The Congregational Chair and Secretary have oversight of this election.
 - In electing Elders the Congregation shall recognise and appoint confirmed members or members-in-association who are endowed with gifts fitting them for the responsibilities of the office.
- Election shall be by written ballot in a meeting of the Congregation.

- Prior notice of intention to hold such a ballot must be given and the names of nominees shall be publicly announced at least two weeks prior to the ballot being held.
- Nominations must be made in writing to the Congregation secretary or other appropriate officer over the signature of two persons who are confirmed members or members-in-association of the Congregation.
- The meeting shall not be obliged to fill any or all positions vacant and shall declare to be elected only such persons as receive the support of a two-thirds majority of those participating in the ballot.
- The maximum number of Elders to be elected shall be determined by the Congregation from time to time after advice from the Church Council.
- The term of office of an elected Elders is a period from one to five years as is stipulated by the nominee and for which period the person is then elected by the Congregation. At the expiry of the term the Elder shall be eligible for re-election.
- Elders shall be set apart, commissioned, by prayer in a service of worship conducted by the Minister of the Congregation, or if unavailable, by another person appointed to perform this duty by the Presbytery.