



Draft Minutes of Annual General Meeting | Saturday May 4, 2013

Welcome, Worship, Dwelling in the Word

Delegates and other participants were welcomed

Worship was led by a member of the Discovery church worship and creative arts team

The Executive Officer led a Dwelling in the Word based on Matthew 25:14-30, the Parable of the Talents, and invited the group to share what they have heard and how they have been read with each other.

Ash Barker presented a challenging address to Delegates and participants.

The Chair, Milton Oliver, then introduced the Annual General Meeting of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Inc. (CCVT), and explained the process of the day (AGM elements plus input and dialogue), and then indicated the manner of conversation sought throughout the day.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of May 5, 2012 be approved.

Moved: Paul Cameron, **Seconded:** Rod Brown

The Chair introduced a primary theme for the day, the Renewal Challenge, with an affirmation of the season CCVT is entering, the extension of the EO's term of appointment and the Renewal conversation that has begun at Council and with the Partner Department boards.

The Executive Officer then presented a statement (see attached) that launched the Renewal Challenge Conversation Paper (also attached) after which Delegates and other participants spent time in small groups reflecting on what had been said, and what they were hearing.

AGM Notices of Motion A—Affiliations

All proposed Affiliations were communicated to churches in accordance with the Constitution and there being no objections received, those gathered at the celebration event on Friday May 3, 2013 celebrated the affiliation of the churches and agency as listed below; and as has been our past practice the AGM formally adopted the Motions by acclamation.

Motion 1: New Start Church of Christ

That New Start Church of Christ be affirmed and welcomed as an **Affiliated Church** of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Inc.

Motion 2: Friends of Dismas

That Friends of Dismas be affirmed and welcomed as an **Affiliated Church** of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Inc.

Motion 3: Vetamorphous (elev8 Youth Ltd t/a)

That Vetamorphous be affirmed and welcomed as an **Affiliated Mission Agency** of Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Inc.

Moved by Martin Boutros and **Seconded** by Paul Cameron, *without discussion and by acclamation.*

Partner Department Reports

Community Care

The ED Paul Arnott spoke briefly to the report; the Community Care board chair Robyn Millership (Doncaster) in her comments welcomed Paul Arnott to the role and expressed thanks to outgoing board member Alan Niven. She then led in a prayer commissioning Paul.

There were no questions.

Mission and Ministry

M&M team members and board chair provided a brief commentary on the year's activities:

Martin Boutros expressed thanks to the 100+ people involved in various M&M Taskforces. M&M have hundreds of conversations through a year of so many kinds. Be in prayer for those of our churches who are in tension.

Brenton Killeen indicated that our movement is healthy, we see it in working with young people, and they will be taking our movement into the future. It's healthy and strong and our movement is well setup for the future.

Janet Woodlock shared that she keeps bumping into people who have been coached, coaching fast tracks the development of people and makes a difference. It is an incredible gift to assist our leaders develop into the future. Last night was evidence of the importance of investing and releasing others into mission and ministry.

Michael Vanderree noted that something happens in churches when they discover the biblical story of their birth as a church.

Andrew Evans affirmed that yesterday, last night and today are absolute examples of what is good for our ministers and what our future will become. This includes facilitating habits and personal developments that grow health.

David Brooker, M&M board chair (Southern Community), informed delegates that M&M is in a season of discernment, that out of a healthy place it is exploring what M&M needs to be for the future, and that this connects with the challenges in the Renewal paper.

There were no questions.

Stirling Theological College

The Principal, Andrew Menzies, commenced with some reflections on the difference between adaptive and technical challenges: Technical is for colleges to train people in accredited courses. *Adaptive is to explore how to train apostles, evangelists, prophets, teachers and pastors as God needs etc.* Technical is to develop governance and structures to do CCVT well. *Adaptive is how to be Churches of CHRIST together.*

At Stirling, enrolments are trending up. Partnerships are so special, e.g. UNOH. Ongoing Masters ministerial cohort is so valuable and encouraging, and an opportunity for deeper collegiality. There is a growing interest in research. One project we're working on is a property development that will deliver a library extension, a place for Churches of Christ archives and history that will be used to tell our story. Soon people will be invited to prayerfully and financially support this initiative. The emerging EAST Alliance, in partnership with Tabor, is wonderful while still in transition, our hope is that EAST will grow.

There were no questions.

Prop Corp

The Trustees' chair, Terry McCredden (Northern Community) indicated that Prop Corp has provided over 100 years of service, and that the last six years have been very exciting.

The Prop Corp CEO Joel Plotnek then spoke to the report. GAP is more than just an acronym, Grow A Plant, it describes bridging the gap for newly planted churches, based on the release of the proceeds of the sales of church properties gathered in the Capital Development Fund; glad to have Russell Hoath leading the insurance area, now going national with Churches of Christ in Western Australia and Queensland now joining, together delivering national savings of \$400 000pa; we continue to provide property and financial services, compliance advice for churches including issues related to the new Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission.

The chair expressed his appreciation for the contribution made by Joel, Frank Morabito and Russell Hoath and staff, and indicated to Delegates and participants the urgent need for new trustees, and sought suggestions from churches.

Questions:

Alan Matheson (member, Surrey Hills) asked with \$1.2billion in assets, and it being no secret that we're the beneficiaries of land stolen from Indigenous people, and while one recent sale had placed \$500 000 into an Indigenous trust, is there a policy of doing this more often?

The Trustees' chair responded that it is the members of a closing church that determine how funds are to be used, but I intend to work with Council to explore this option.

Andrew Menzies asked whether in the light of the need for new Trustees, and noting that gender balance is a serious issue, and the reality of increasing complexity of governance requirements, could Council and the Departments look at creative ways of addressing the situation?

Glen Cox (Discovery) asked about CCVT involvement in the current Royal Commission, how are we helping this?

The Council chair responded that the Working with Children policy had been recently updated and recommended; that we will need to see what Royal Commission might suggest about any further policy changes.

The CCVT EO added that a statement about CCVT and the Royal Commission had been approved, and would be sent out soon.

Rohan Dredge (Discovery) inquired as to the current CCVT thinking about where Melbourne is growing, where people are moving, and whether we're considering landbanking to allow for ministry development down the track.

The Prop Corp CEO acknowledged it was an exciting prospect, that the rate of growth is phenomenal, that we are in process of formulating a response, and that GAP is the first rung on a ladder of looking at it; GAP2 will be churches approaching us initially and exploring what could be done from the beginning, and then other rungs will emerge, and we're looking forward to this developing.

The CCVT EO also indicated there were emerging possibilities of co-developments with Churches of Christ Queensland through their Care services arms, including on the the margins of Melbourne.

Lunch Break

Presidential Handover

The Executive Officer introduced and interviewed the incoming CCVT President (Ann Fair, Door of Hope, Launceston); the outgoing President Paul Burnham read the Charge to Ann; and Lynette Leach (UNOH and Williamstown) prayed for Ann as she stood among the congregation.

The new President then thanked Paul Burnham for his two years of significant leadership and presented him with a Bible.

Finance report

CCVT Treasurer Lindsay Cutler (One Community) spoke to the published Financial Report. In doing so he acknowledged that the introduction of the Ministry Contribution has gone well, and expressed thanks to churches for their participation; noted that while the world financial downturn has had some impact we have managed budgets very carefully, with the budgeting process improving each year, with the capacity to generate pretty much a balanced budget each year.

The Chair expressed the thanks of CCVT to Lindsay for the role that he performs.

Notices of Motion B—First Peoples Statement, including a Procedural Motion re timing of Notice

Motion 4—Procedural Matter

Resolved: That in accordance with Constitution clause 10.4.2 this Annual General Meeting agrees that the Notice of Motion entitled First Peoples Solidarity Statement, already distributed to churches, although not in accordance with clause 10.3, be permitted to be introduced for discussion and decision.

Mover: Robyn Millership, **Seconder:** Paul Cameron

Motion 5—First Peoples Solidarity Statement

That Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania adopts the following First Peoples Solidarity Statement; that the Statement be incorporated in the CCVT Constitution and Affinity and be contained in an appropriately constructed page on the CCVT website; and that CCVT Council be requested to form the necessary amendments to the Constitution and Affinity for presentation and adoption at the 2014 CCVT AGM.

Mover: Tony Riches, **Seconder:** David Brooker

First Peoples Solidarity Statement

As part of a continuing journey to express our desire for reconciliation and solidarity with the First Peoples of Australia, the Aboriginal and Islander people, Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania:

ACKNOWLEDGES with respect the First Peoples, their nations, their elders and their families, past and present;

AFFIRMS that Australia is a land created and sustained by God and inhabited for thousands of years by the First Peoples, as the custodians of the land and its resources;

EXPRESSES deep sadness and regret at the injustice and mistreatment suffered by the First Peoples as a result of European colonisation, which includes dispossession of their land and cultural losses, leading to profound suffering, grief and loss by generations of First Peoples;

CONFESSES that the Gospel witness of the Churches of Christ of Victoria and Tasmania, although well intentioned and done in a spirit of servant-hood, was at times insensitive to existing cultural and linguistic traditions and contributed to their permanent loss;

FURTHER CONFESSES we have been complicit with other non-Indigenous Australians in promoting and defending the paternalistic, racist and economic values of the dominant society at the expense of the First Peoples and in denial of their human rights;

SAYS SORRY and seeks forgiveness for any hurt we have caused from any wrong that we have done.

REJOICES in the common humanity of all Australians, equally created in the Image of God; and in the deeper spiritual relationship shared by those who confess Jesus Christ as Lord;

STANDS in solidarity with, and give thanks for, all who pursue justice and reconciliation for the First Peoples in sincerity and truth; and welcomes dialogue that leads to action.

CONCEDES that complete justice can never be achieved as it would require restoration of all that was taken from the First Peoples.

CALLS ON all in Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania to work together with the First Peoples and with all governments and authorities to redress the wrongs of the past and help to heal the prevailing wounds inflicted in order to establish Australian society on a more just and harmonious foundation; and

URGES every church and agency affiliated with Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania to consider ways to intentionally engage with the First Peoples, in their local communities or beyond and to consider ways in which they might support and sustain Indigenous ministry initiatives as a sign of our commitment to unity and reconciliation in the Kingdom of God.

Discussion on the Motion was introduced by Tony Riches, chair of the Indigenous Ministry Taskforce, who expressed his thanks to all who have been involved in process, his sense of having been honoured to have carried on the work of many others.

Comment: This is a proud moment for us, we've talked about it for 5-6 years, we feel like the white ones of us have made this tough, a time of lament, in this new season it is so humbling and wonderful that we are bringing this motion to the AGM (Ian Smith, Thornbury)

Question: Not discriminating but wish to raise concern that this document be used only as a statement rather than part of constitution, as we could be open to legal consequences (Judy Bergan, New Life Wodonga)

Response: This has been addressed on legal advice as part of the process along the way; there is no need to go back into those concerns; I stand with a feeling of pride that so much conversation and consultation has been done (Merryl Blair, Hartwell)

Comment: I'm new to CCVT but I think it's really exciting and encouraging; I feel as though we are responsible and we need to acknowledge the past and seek to heal it and to demonstrate that we care, so I voice my support for this motion and want it to go forward (Liz Hunter, Williamstown)

Comment: I appreciate the assurances on the legal side but I still have some worries; however, if something goes into the Constitution it can get lost. Can each church be required to display the Statement where everyone can see it? (Ray Baker Wodonga) *Response: Council is tasked to do this and agree that it must be broad communication.*

Comment: I'd like to affirm Tony and Francine Riches publicly, and affirm that we won't have healing in our nation until we deal with this issue; and to remind you that an Indigenous Engagement kit is available already, and all churches can use that as a basis for going on the journey of reconciliation themselves (Paul Crothers, Gisborne)

Comment: I am ashamed that this has taken so long, but it is about time! (Judy Rogers, Balwyn)

Comment: One of our greatest privileges (at Mildura church) has been to partner with John and Ruth Saulo at Dareton; it has been scary, challenging and wonderful to see the connections made; our church has been more blessed than I think they have, I would love to hear from anyone wanting to explore this way of connecting. (Andrew Tonkin, Mildura)

Tony Riches wrapped up the conversation by again expressing his thanks to Delegates and others for their input and comments, including those about legal concerns, noting that when Kevin Rudd made a National Apology there were fears of litigation but none came; as Christians our duty is to God not systems of government, or fears of potential litigation.

The Chair thanked everyone for their work and then put the Motion.

The Motion was passed unanimously, with acclamation.

The Chair commented that this is the start of something, and that it adds to our new season. As Paul Crothers (Gisborne) pointed out, how we do this is about our theology and all the things that really matter.

Motion to accept all Reports

Resolved: That all Reports be adopted as published in the 2013 Report book and as distributed.

Moved: Milton Oliver, **Seconded:** Robyn Millership

Ash Barker made a brief presentation and challenge including Brad Coath (UNOH, Broadmeadows) singing

The Chair expressed his appreciation for the support of CBM and commended them and other sponsors to delegates and participants, encouraging all to engage with their information.

What has the Spirit been saying to us?

- Something is different this year, I've been to 5 years of these, but something is happening here and it is good, I want to be part of it (Rohan Dredge, Discovery, through Milton)
- Since last night I've been thinking about what Don Smith has invested in, so, who is the 'Timothy' we're investing in? Ask God now to bring a picture to mind for who we should feed into (Janet Woodlock, M&M, Ringwood)
- Proverbs 3:5-6 says "trust in the Lord with all your heart.....in all your ways acknowledge him". TRUST is a key word, from here on try not to take the trust back from him, leave it in him (Andrew Scarborough , Discovery)
- I'm wondering what can I do as a regular pew sitter to move this dream forward? (John Bailey, Doncaster)
- It's a long way for me to come, but this is worth it. Seeing our heroes be celebrated was so important and needs to be something we continue to do. When Ash Barker shared that story of 'Blah'...powerful... So many important things to be focussing on... (Andrew Tonkin, Mildura)
- Thinking of living lives of hospitality, I saw Jesus in the team of Discovery looking after us so well (Graeme Blair, Hartwell)
- Thank you for your support, and on behalf of my people thank you for what you've done today. So many of my forefathers were displaced and killed, but people of God made places for them, giving havens to scattered tribes. I'm from the Kimberleys but God was with us all the way. It was through men and women like you, we carry this together with you and move on from the past. (Francine Riches, Melbourne Indigenous Church Fellowship)

- I've been in my role with M&M for 2 years, I've tried to hold new eyes/old eyes, there's something powerful around us as a movement when we want to take the call of our origins seriously, when I hear stories of the pioneers, there is something that does something for me in my heart and to hear that story being extended today in a new way, it is heartening. We're seeing what this means, let's go for it! (Michael Vanderree, M&M, Boronia)
- In my five years in my role in M&M, there's been a shift in identity, identity in Christ and doing what needs to be done in his Kingdom rather than what this movement is and what we mean by it (Martin Boutros, M&M, Living Faith)
- These two days I've experienced a movement that does not want to be ordinary (Andrew Evans, M&M, Wallan)

The Tension Summit and AGM concluded in prayer.

The EO then invited all to be part of the Renewal Challenge process as it continues. He also noted that Ash Barker, Mary Fisher and Ann Fair all needed to leave earlier, that recordings of some of the weekend will be available, and that the Pioneers multimedia presentation will be available for all too.