

DECISIONS OF THE 2025 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE

1. The General Assembly adopts the Standing Orders contained in the papers circulated to the Assembly
2. The General Assembly adopts the final Agenda for the 2025 General Assembly.
3. The General Assembly notes that the decisions of the Executive Commission 2024 were sent to all the relevant stakeholders for attention and action.
4. The General Assembly thanks the Synod of JH Soga, the LOC and supporting teams for all their hard work and preparation in making this Assembly a success.
5. The General Assembly resolves that the Executive Commission 2026 will take place in Highveld Presbytery, at Gateway Presbyterian Church, Kempton Park from Saturday 20th to Wednesday 24th of June 2026.

6. The General Assembly appoints the following as Facilitating team:

Drafting Team:

Mamolotje Magagane (Convener)

George Marchinkowski (GS)

Vusi Mkhungo (Clerk)

Vusi Mabo

Lita Madaka

Luzuko Qina

Olwethu Phinzi

Ntomboxolo Currie

Christine Kasambara

Minutes Clerks: Rev. Zwai Mtyhobile and Ms Thozama Mpetha

Minute Scrutineers: Rev. Thembinkosi Nopapaza and Rev Michelle Black and Rev Thompson Mkandawire

IT Team: Melanie Cook, Christine Kasambara, Ryan Johnson, Solly Maleleke and Theo Groeneveld

THE RETIRING MODERATOR'S REPORT

1. The Assembly refers the Moderator's report to the Priorities and Resources Committee for action and instructs it to report progress at the 2026 Executive Commission.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

1. The General Assembly notes the General Secretary's expression of thanks for the warm way in which he has been received into office and resolves to express its own profound thanks to the Rev Dr Lungile Mpetsheni for the efforts he made to ensure a smooth handover.
2. The General Assembly endorses the concept of flourishing congregations and mobilised Fellowships as a means of renewal in the Church and a catalyst for growth.
3. The General Assembly celebrates the work of the Central office, offers thanks to God for the Staff and endorses the concept of the Central office as an enabler of the work and ministry of Synods, Presbyteries and congregations.
4. The General Assembly expresses its thanks to the Council for World Mission for agreeing to finance the Going for Growth General Assembly and for initiating a possible Onesimus Project among the congregations in the Democratic Republic of

Congo.

5. The General Assembly notes the General Secretary's participation in Ecumenical forums, bilateral ecumenical contact, representing the UPCSA at the University of Pretoria and on the Chaplaincy Advisory Board.
6. The General Assembly
 - (a) notes with concern the decline in the income of the denomination between 2019 and the present;
 - (b) reiterates its support for the Going for Growth campaign as a catalyst for redirecting the denomination's life and work; and instructs the MAD committee to develop a tool that will give guidelines & P&R to evaluate the Going for Growth campaign every two years to measure progress.
 - (c) instructs all Synods, Presbyteries, Congregations and Standing committees to align the focus of their work CIS, missional work and finances in the light of this decade long campaign.
7. The Assembly encourages the Mission and Discipleship Committee to continue training within the local congregations.
8. The Assembly encourages the Moderators to align their themes with going for growth campaign.
9. The General Assembly
 - (a) acknowledges the work of the Chief Financial Officer, the General Secretary and the Finance Committee of Assembly in addressing the income decline; and
 - (b) instructs the Assembly Standing Commission to review the structure and financial commitments of the denomination in the light of present situation in consultation with the Finance committee, the Priorities and Resources committee and the Church Office and HR committee and bring proposals for reform to the Executive Commission in 2026.
 - (c) authorises the Executive Commission to consider the report, granting it the powers of the General Assembly to act on the proposals.
10. The General Assembly
 - (a) acknowledges the sense of frustration and disappointment experienced by members of the UPCSA residing in Zambia, Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo;
 - (b) instructs the Priorities and Resources working together with the Ministry & Manual Committees to continue its exploration of solutions to these frustrations; and report with actionable recommendations to Executive Commission in 2026.
 - (c) instructs the General Secretary to engage other transnational denominations about the way those denominations express their transnationality.
11. The General Assembly instructs the General Secretary to explore ways, in consultation with the Gender Desk and the Women in Ministry, for the denomination to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the ordination of women to the ministry in the UPCSA.

CHURCH OFFICE & HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. The General Assembly notes the routine and special responsibilities fulfilled by the COHRC during its term of office.
2. The General Assembly notes that the COHRC's nomination for the position as the new Clerk of Assembly will be presented to the Executive Commission in 2026 for approval.

3. The General Assembly notes the policy adopted by the COHRC regarding the dates of employment for the General Secretary and Clerk of Assembly.
4. The General Assembly notes the strategy of the COHRC in granting lower percentage average increases to senior management to gradually address inequities in income.
5. The General Assembly notes and applauds the efforts made by the COHRC to launch a pilot project over six months for an intern at the Church Office from 1 May 2025.
6. The General Assembly approves the extension in the Rev Vusi Mkhungo's contract as Clerk of Assembly to 30 September 2026.
7. The General Assembly instructs GA Committees, Presbytery Clerks and recording Clerks to avail themselves to the training offered by the COHRC in the use of SharePoint and to utilize this platform as the central repository for UPCS records and documents.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

1. The General Assembly note that the Committee executed its work in line with its Terms of reference as approved.
2. The General Assembly notes the improved and positive profile of the UPCS.
3. The General Assembly encourage Congregations to subscribe to the MyPresby Church IT Management System.
4. The General Assembly mandate the Communications Committee to develop guidelines on the use of Church symbols and logo.
5. The General Assembly continues to encourage those Presbyteries which have not yet done so, to appoint Presbytery Communicators.

FINANCE COMMITTEE (Incl. PELE DEVELOPMENT NPC)

1. The General Assembly notes the various financial schedules and reports.
2. The General Assembly notes that the Finance Committee together with Rev Dr P Langerman have established and registered the Non-Profit Company for the stand-alone business unit, known as the "Pele Property Development Company NPC."
3. The General Assembly notes the establishment of a new Pension Fund in Zimbabwe, under the direction and control of the Presbytery of Zimbabwe.
4. The General Assembly expresses thanks to the Synod of Zambia for the report on the state of the pension funds in Zambia.
5. The General Assembly notes the work done by members of the Finance Committee with various Presbyteries.
6. The General Assembly expresses thanks to the Investment Committee members.
7. The General Assembly expresses thanks to those congregations who paid their Ministry Contributions during the past year.
8. The General Assembly reminds all congregations in all countries of their obligation to pay Ministry Contributions to their Presbytery and to the General Assembly.
9. The General Assembly approves the Sedibeng Trust audited accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024.

10. The General Assembly endorses thanks to the Sedibeng Trust for its on-going high levels of compliance and efficiencies.
11. The General Assembly notes the work done by the Guild Cottage and expresses thanks to all involved in its' operation.
12. The General Assembly expresses thanks to the Pension Fund Chairman, the Pension fund Administrators, the Investment Committee Members, the CFO and his Finance team at the Central Office, and all members of the Finance Committee.
13. The General Assembly
 - a) notes with concern the lack of reporting by Presbyteries about non-contributory congregations.
 - b) instructs all Presbyteries to request all non-contributory congregations to contribute or give reasons for non-compliance, by 30th September 2025
 - c) instructs Presbyteries to submit reports on non-contributory congregations with reasons for non-compliance of Ministry contributions, by 30th September 2025.
 - d) instructs Presbyteries to account to the Assembly Standing Commission and at "the bar" of Executive Commission for non-compliance.
14. The General Assembly reminds all Presbyteries to facilitate and ensure congregations transferring property and obtaining Title Deeds or permission to occupy certificates from their local municipalities or chieftaincies for properties still in the local municipality or traditional authorities' name, into the UPCSA's name by Executive commission 2026.
15. The General Assembly
 - (a) instructs all Presbyteries and congregations who have not submitted certified copies of their Title Deeds to the Central Office yet, to do so by latest 30th September 2025.
 - (b) instructs the Finance committee to put a caveat (endorsement) on the Title Deeds of properties registered in the name of congregations.
16. The General Assembly
 - (a) reminds Presbyteries to assist congregations who have Permission to Occupy certificates in place to submit these to the Central Office and where a certificate is not in place, to assist congregations in obtaining one, and then to submit it to the Central Office. Congregations must give reasons through a report to the Presbytery if they are unable to comply.
 - (b) instructs the Central Office to assists those congregations who experience challenges that cannot be resolved by the Presbytery.
17. The General Assembly notes with thanks the work done by the Finance Committee, SA Pension Fund Trustees, and all Service Providers in creating a third category (distressed congregations) of members on the current Pension Fund.
18. The General Assembly notes that the Finance Committee will determine which congregations should fall into the "distressed" category on a quarterly basis and notify both the Presbytery concerned and the SA Pension Fund accordingly.
19. The General Assembly informs Presbyteries that the Committee will no longer be making contributions towards ministers whose congregations fall into the distressed category, and that ministers and Sessions of these congregations will be communicated with regarding the risk and cover they no longer enjoy from the SA Fund.

20. The General Assembly approves the Audited Financial Statements for the 12 months of the 2024 financial year.
21. The General Assembly appoints CM and Associates Inc. as auditors for the 2024-2025 financial year.
22. The General Assembly endorses thanks to the Sedibeng Trust for its work and instructs the Trust to do what it takes to make a profit from now on, in consultation with the Ministry Committee & Pele Development NPC.
23. The General Assembly approves the budget for the 2025 financial year (01 July 2025 to 30 June 2026).
24. The General Assembly
 - (a) instructs the Manual committee to amend the Manual of Faith and Order to include a paragraph that deals with the sale of properties in South Africa, so that 50% of the Nett proceeds of a sale (where a congregation has been dissolved) go to the General Assembly, the remaining 50% to the Presbytery.

MANUAL COMMITTEE

1. The General Assembly notes that the Gender Justice policy has been published in the *Manual of Faith and Order*.
2. The General Assembly notes that the Manual Committee is ready to consider amendments to the section on the Retirement of ministers (paras 16.7. & 16.8.) in the *Manual*, so as to express "how Retirement Benefits are treated in the UPCSA" after the Assembly has considered the relevant section in the 2025 Finance committee report on that subject.
3. The General Assembly notes the Manual Committee's willingness to participate in a discussion with the UCCSA on how a national Synod structure may assist the UPCSA in expressing its transnational nature more effectively.
4. The General Assembly amends the following paragraphs of the *Manual of Faith and Order*:
 - (a) paragraph 10.41. (e) to read: "Presbytery may ask a special committee of Synod consisting of the Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer of the Synod (who are hereby authorised to act as such a committee of the Synod) or the Assembly Standing Commission to appoint a commission. The commission then has the powers assigned to Presbytery in paras 10.55-59. The commission reports to the Council whose special committee appointed it."
 - (b) paragraph 12.31. (b) by replacing the words "the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk(s), the Business Convener and the General Treasurer, who are hereby authorised to act as a Special Committee," with the words "the Assembly Standing Commission"
5. The General Assembly amends the Standing Orders paragraph 4.2.1. as indicated in the body of the report. **REFERRED BACK TO THE MANUAL COMMITTEE.**
6. The General Assembly amends paragraphs 13.59, 13.63, and 13.64. as indicated in the body of the report above.

ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMISSION

1. The General Assembly notes the work of the Assembly Standing Commission for the year between Executive Commission 2024 and the General Assembly meeting of 2025.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

1. The Assembly adopts to the changes in the Standing orders of General Assembly as proposed in Annexure 2 of the report

2. The Assembly adopts the revised Policy on the Nomination and Appointment of Committees and Commissions of Assembly taking into account the new way in which Conveners and Members of Committee's are to be appointed as outlined in Annexure 1 of the report.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMITTEE

1. The Assembly notes the HWC Activity Plan for the year 2025 attached as Annexure A.
2. The Assembly notes the HWC 2025 schedule of meetings attached as Annexure B.
3. Thank those Presbyteries who have heeded the instruction of Executive Commission 2024 to establish Health and Wellness committees at Presbytery level.
4. The Assembly instructs Congregations, Presbyteries and Synods that still do not have Health and Wellness Committees to establish these Committees and submit the name and contact details of their Convenor to the Clerk of the Assembly by 31 October 2025.
5. The Assembly encourages members of the UPCS with health sector skills and knowledge to avail themselves to participate in the activities of Health & Wellness.
6. The General Assembly encourages the committee to explore possibilities of more awareness webinars particularly contributing to the various governments' initiatives like the South African Department of Health's 1.1 million tracing campaign.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

1. The General Assembly notes the lack of leadership of Presbyteries in encouraging congregations to make ministry contributions.
2. The General Assembly expresses concern regarding Presbyteries' apparent lack of leadership in encouraging congregations to make ministry contributions.
3. The General Assembly instructs Presbyteries & congregational leadership to include matters related to ministry contributions in their agendas on regular basis.
4. The General Assembly instructs the Stewardship Committee to develop a Stewardship programme of action for the denomination and submit it to the Executive Commission 2026 for approval and implementation.

PRIORITIES AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

1. The General Assembly notes the Strategic Plan's Marketing/ advocacy slides.
2. The General Assembly notes the committee's work on implementation of General Assembly decisions attached as Annexure A.
3. The General Assembly notes the Priorities and Resources Committee Terms of Reference, workplan and progress made.
4. The General Assembly notes the report on financial sustainability and encourages all congregations to bring their payment of ministerial contributions up to date.
5. The General Assembly notes and encourages sustainable working relations between P&R and the Church Fellowships Committee.
6. The General Assembly endorses the work done in relation to the reviewed Strategic Plan (2021-2026).
7. The General Assembly adopts the Monitoring and Evaluation Tool and instructs the Clerk

to circulate it to all committees within the UPCSA for their use.

8. The General Assembly

- (a) notes the report on the Overture on Transnationality;
- (b) expresses concern about the non-response of Presbyteries regarding this critical issue in our denomination;
- (c) instructs all Presbyteries who have not responded to do so by 30 November 2025;
- (d) instructs the Clerk of Assembly to inform defaulting Presbyteries of this decision as soon as possible.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

1. The General Assembly

- (a) notes with appreciation the work done by the Worship Committee with regard to the draft isiXhosa translation of the Vows for the Induction of a minister, in Appendix A;
- (b) instructs the Communications Committee to establish a Translation and Editorial task team and refers the Vows for Induction of a Minister (and other services for translation into the languages of the UPCSA) by 31 December 2025; and
- (c) instructs the Worship Committee to include the final version in the Service book and Ordinal.

2. The General Assembly

- (a) adopts the "*Order for a Tenebrae Service*" in Appendix B;
- (b) refers the Order to the Communications Committee for translation.

3. The General Assembly receives the revised version of the document "*On Preaching: A Questionnaire and a Bibliography*," in Appendix C and instructs the Clerk:

- (a) to send this version, by email, to every student for the ministry, probationer, minister, lay preacher and preaching Elder in the UPCSA and urge them all to make use of both the questionnaire and the bibliography; and
- (b) to ensure that this version is placed on the UPCSA website.

4. The General Assembly

- a) adopts the document on "*The Christian Festivals and their Colours*" in Appendix D;
- b) instructs the Clerk to ensure that it is placed on the UPCSA Website and publish in the UPCSA Service book & Ordinal.

4. The General Assembly encourages the Committee to design liturgical policies for worship services of the UPCSA.

5. The General Assembly encourages ministers to teach their congregations and celebrate the Christian Festivals with their Colours.

ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS COMMITTEE

1. The General Assembly

- (a) affirms its membership of the Church Unity Commission and its participation in its programmes;
- (b) commends the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification and its role as an instrument which is drawing the churches into a closer working relationship based on a common understanding on Justification by faith;
- (c) acknowledges the Symposium on ecumenical theological education and encourages its Ministry committee to work together with other churches to explore further opportunities in this area.

2. The General Assembly

- (a) acknowledges with gratitude the work and witness of the Council for World Mission

- in the life of the UPCSA as a catalyst for engagement with our neighbourhoods and as a prophetic witness;
- (b) thanks the Council for World Mission for its Grant that has enabled the holding of this "Going for Growth" General Assembly;
 - (c) notes the Onesimus Project of CWM which seeks to minister in the realms of the legacy of slavery and that the UPCSA has two project proposals in this regard before CWM for consideration;
 - (d) notes that the Rev Dr Lungile Mpetsheni is serving as a Partner-in-Mission at Zomba Theological university sent by the UPCSA;
 - (e) notes that the UPCSA Team attended a Members Mission Forum with the African region of CWM in Blantyre, Malawi, from 18 to 21 March 2025.
3. The General Assembly
- (a) notes the GRAPE (Global Reformed Advocacy Platform on Engagement) programme run jointly between the Africa Communion of Reformed Churches and the World Communion of Reformed Churches in South Africa and focussed on the Basic Income Grant;
 - (b) encourages Sessions to make members of our congregations aware of this programme and encourage members to volunteer for advocacy training.
4. The General Assembly notes that the General Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches will take place in October 2025 in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and that the once in every seven year event will be attended by the Moderator, the General Secretary, Ms S Siwela and Ms Afika Babazile Rwayi, as decided by the 202 Executive Commission.
5. The General Assembly
- (a) notes that the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches has met in Johannesburg from 18 to 24 June 2025;
 - (b) expresses its thanks to the ministers and congregations who participated in hosting delegates for worship on Sunday 22 June and in many other practical aspects.
6. The General Assembly notes the bilateral ecumenical engagements between the UPCSA and its ecumenical partners in southern Africa and abroad with thanksgiving and encourages Presbyteries, Synods and the Ecumenical Relationships committee to seek out meaningful connections at every level.
7. The General Assembly
- (a) congratulates the Rev Mzwandile Molo on his appointment as General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches;
 - (b) congratulates the SACC on a successful and well-run Triennial Conference held in October 2024;
 - (c) commends the programme, "Thursdays in Black," as a protest against Gender based violence and encourages Synods and Presbyteries to call Presbyterians to participate in this programme by wearing black on Thursday.
 - (d) declares its support for the work of the South African Council of Churches as a unified Christian response to the socio-economic challenges faced in South Africa.
 - (e) implores the Ecumenical Relations Committee to reflect on the work done by the Council of Churches in other countries where the UPCSA is represented.
8. The UPCSA formally recognises the first Sunday in September annually as Grape Sunday for congregations in South Africa and that a special offering be collected on this Sunday for furthering the advocacy campaign of GRAPE
- (a) Resolves to appoint a dedicated Champion for the GRAPE project and the Basic Income Grant, who will work with the Ecumenical Relations Committee.
 - (b) instructs the nominations committee to appoint a dedicated champion.

ENVIROMENTAL JUSTICE REPORT

1. The General Assembly notes the participation of UPCSA School of intersectional Eco-theology and Ecojustice Witness.
2. The General Assembly notes the Eco-Bishops statement that was issued on 1 November 2024.
3. The General Assembly notes the launch of the Climate Change Justice in South Africa and encourages members of UPCSA in DRC; Zambia and Zimbabwe to participate in their respective countries as part of our trans-nationality.
4. The General Assembly:
 - (a) adopts the plan with its three focus areas of Eco-Justice;
 - (b) instructs the Clerk of Assembly to circulate the three year plan with the three focus areas; together with Addendum A to all Presbyteries and Sessions;
 - (c) impresses on Presbyteries, congregations & Fellowships the importance of implementing and adopting this with its focus areas (waste management; planting of trees, clean-up campaigns and advocacy).
5. The General Assembly notes the launch of the Climate Change Justice campaign in South Africa and encourages all members of the UPCSA to participate.

GENDER DESK

1. The General Assembly encourages Presbyteries and Congregations to participate in the 24-hour prayer and to send their prayer suggestion by the 30th September 2025.
2. The General Assembly encourages all its members to observe Thursdays in black.
3. The General Assembly notes the 16 days of Activism will start on Tuesday 25th November until 10th December 2025.
4. The General Assembly encourages Presbyteries to organise programs for the 16 days of activism.
5. The General Assembly
 - a) notes the concern from the "Women in ministry desk" on their misplacement under the Church in Society committee;
 - b) instructs the Priorities and Resources committee to engage the "Women in ministry" desk and the Ministry Committee to explore possibilities of it being a Task Team of the Ministry Committee.
6. The General Assembly instructs the Priorities & Resources, the Assembly Business, and Ministry Committees (including the Women in Ministry Task Team) to work together to design a programme for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women to the ministry.
7. The General Assembly instructs the Assembly Business Committee to include the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women to the ministry in the Executive Commission Agenda for 2026.
8. The General Assembly adopts the Sexual Harassment Policy.

THE JOINT COMMISSION ON UNION- Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa/Uniting Congregational Church in Southern Africa

1. The General Assembly notes the progress and lack of progress made by the Commission.
2. The General Assembly authorizes the "Joint Commission on Union" to change the name to the "Joint Liaison Committee with the UCCSA" and ERC develops the Terms of Reference and reports to the Executive Commission in 2026.
3. The General Assembly authorizes UPCSAs members of the Joint Commission/Committee to continue the exploration of how the UPCSAs may work together with the UCCSA in future.

MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP COMMITTEE

1. Assembly sets aside October as the Month of Mission, encourages its ministers to make use of the preaching plan that will be circulated and recommends the daily devotions to all members.
2. The General Assembly
 - (a) urges Presbyteries to use the Shared ministry guidelines when considering shared ministry appointments;
 - (b) encourages all Presbyteries to make the Interim Moderator's Manual available for all Interim Moderators.
3. The General Assembly instructs the Mission & Discipleship committee to update the 2016 report on Models of Ministry in collaboration with the Ministry Committee and to bring concrete and actionable proposals to the 2026 Executive Commission.

CHURCH FELLOWSHIPS COMMITTEE

1. The Assembly encourages all fellowships through the Church Fellowships Committee to use venues for AGMs that are accessible and not exclusive.
2. The Assembly grants permission to the CFC, in consultation with the Fellowships & P&R Committee, to explore possibilities for caring for young people who feel excluded in the current set-up of the fellowships and report progress at the next Executive Commission.
3. The Assembly notes the progress made by the fellowships of the UPCSAs in developing the bylaws.
4. The Assembly notes with appreciation the work done by the CF and P&R committees and encourages the committees to do more in strengthening the transnationality of the UPCSAs fellowships.
5. The General Assembly
 - a. notes the work on developing the Fellowships uniform is in progress.
 - b. notes the presented artwork for the logos of all Fellowships and instructs the CFC to start the process of consultation.
6. The General Assembly endorses the submitted terms of reference for the uniform Task team.
7. The General Assembly agrees that the appointment of members of the Task Team be effective until the task is done, irrespective of whether the member is still serving in the fellowship executive committee or not.
8. The General Assembly
 - a. strongly discourages members of the church in using social media as a platform to critique fellowships

- b. instructs the Church fellowships Committee to place on their agenda the discussion around POPIA & PAIA with fellowships executives
- c. instructs the communications committee to craft a policy on the creation of the WhatsApp group or any social media platform in the name of the church.
- d. CFC creates ways of engagement across fellowships.

9. The General Assembly adopts four five key areas namely; evangelism, church in society, spiritual growth, stewardship and discipleship to be the areas that the fellowships need to focus on and together with the CFC develop strategies that will enable local churches to actively participate; getting more resources through the "Going for Growth" program.

10. General Assembly

- a. notes the Notice of Motion on holding fellowships Conferences biennially and refers it back to the CFC for further consultation with the fellowships and report at the 2027 General Assembly.
- b. CFC collects data from all the Presbyteries that hosted conferences of fellowships in 2024 and 2025.

1.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

- 1. The General Assembly acknowledges, and thanks ministers and congregations involved in the schools of UPCS.
- 2. The General Assembly thanks those who have made contributions to PEF and encourages others to do the same.
- 3. The General Assembly reminds our congregations and congregants about PEF Sunday as 7 June 2026.
- 4. The General Assembly encourages fellowships and individuals to make donations to PEF.
- 5. The General Assembly recommends that minimum donation be at least R1000.00 each congregation.

MINISTRY COMMITTEE

- 1. The General Assembly notes the review that the Ministry Committee has done on the approved Theological Institutions for Students for the Ministry in the UPCS.
- 2. The General Assembly notes the names of Students for the ministry and their years of study.
- 3. The General Assembly notes the names of students to be removed from the list of recognized students for the Ministry of the UPCS.
- 4. The General Assembly notes the role of the Ministry Committee in supporting those students who are experiencing difficulty with their studies.
- 5. The General Assembly notes the list of Probationers for 2025.
- 6. The General Assembly notes that the discernment Conference took place from 5 to 7 June 2025.
- 7. The General Assembly encourages Presbyteries to participate as partners in the study being conducted by the Ministry committee which seeks to ascertain the ministerial needs of the UPCS.

8. The General Assembly congratulates those Presbyteries who sent Fellowship of Vocation and Ministry Committee Conveners to the workshop that was held within the bounds of Tshwane Presbytery this year.

9. The General Assembly notes that the next Empowerment workshop will take place in September 2025.

10. The General Assembly notes that the disciplinary matter involving the Rev Eric Masikane has not yet been finalized.

11. The General Assembly notes the removal of Mr Ngcambu from the list of approved students for ministry.

12. The General Assembly notes the interest expressed by ministers from other denominations in the ministry of the UPCSA.

13. The General Assembly notes the list of seconded Ministers and congratulates them for representing the UPCSA so well.

14. The General Assembly notes that the Rev Dr Buhle Mpofu continues to be seconded to the Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of Pretoria.

15. The General Assembly notes that the training of the Democratic Republic of Congo pastors has not taken place due to lack of funds.

16. The General Assembly thanks the Fellowship of Women for the generous donation made to the life and work of the Committee.

17. The General Assembly notes that the Sedibeng house of studies has been opened to receive any UPCSA students from other fields of study.

18. The General Assembly notes that the proposed minimum increases across the board for the Presbytery of Zimbabwe were done in consultation with the Ministers within the Presbytery of Zimbabwe.

19. The General Assembly commends the Ministry Committee for arranging the Ministers' consultation on stipends and encourages Ministers to participate in future consultations.

20. The General Assembly notes that the Ministry Committee discerned a call on eight candidates.

21. The General Assembly

(a) resolves that supervisors for Probationers should be ordained as ministers for at least 5 years if possible;

(b) amends paragraph 17.34 of the *Manual of Faith and Order* as follows: "The Presbytery appoints, as the Supervisor of each Probationer, a Minister who has at least five years of ordained ministry."

22. The General Assembly

(a) approves the new practice of placing prospective Probationers in Presbyteries and finding Congregations to place them in, with the Ministry Committee of the General Assembly in liaison with Presbyteries;

(b) resolves to add the following paragraph to chapter 17 of the *Manual of Faith and Order*: "When a Student is in the final year of study, the Ministry Committee may commend to the General Assembly or Executive Commission the placement of that Student in a particular Presbytery until the end of his or her Probation

period. In doing so, the Committee considers the gifts of the Student and the value of being exposed to people of other races, cultures and nations. The Committee may subsidize the Probationer's allowance."

23. The General Assembly

- (a) notes with great concern that three Probationers have not been placed this year;
- (b) records its dissatisfaction with the non-placement of some Probationers due to the alleged unavailability of congregations and unwillingness of Interim Moderators to receive them in vacant congregations;
- (c) calls upon Gender Desk
 - (i) to draft a strong statement condemning discrimination against two female Probationers
 - (ii) arrange an awareness campaign to sensitize congregations to the issue of discrimination against female probationers;
- (d) instructs the Assembly Standing Commission to issue the Statement on the Assembly's behalf;
- (e) instructs the Ministry Committee to investigate allegations of non-placement of female probationers and bring a comprehensive report to the Executive Commission.

24. The General Assembly seconds

- (a) the Rev Bongiwe Ngebulana to the South African Police Service as Chaplain;
- (b) the Rev Sisanda Mpafi to the South African National Defence Force as Chaplain.
- (c) the Rev Thembazana Ngalwana to the Department of Correctional Services as Chaplain.
- (d) the Rev Dr Wonke Buqa to the Department of Correctional Services as Chaplain.

25. The General Assembly encourages ministers to attend the Trauma Counselling course scheduled for October 2025.

26. The General Assembly

- (a) increases the minimum Stipend for ministers in South Africa by 4,5% per year for the next two years and notes that this proposal was prepared in consultation with the Ministers.
- (b) encourages Presbyteries not to stick to the bare minimum.

27. The General Assembly increases the minimum Stipend for ministers in Zambia by 10% per year for the next two years and notes that this proposal was prepared in consultation with the Ministers.

28. The General Assembly resolves that Presbyteries should determine the upward adjustment of minister's monthly travel allowances based on their contexts.

It was agreed by Consensus that this proposal be sent back to the Assembly Ministry and Finance committees to work on and report by January 2026. The Assembly granted the Ministry Committee the power to set the Transport Allowance for 2026.

APPLICATIONS TO RETIRE

1. The General Assembly grants the Rev Jennie Moyo Nyirongo permission to retire on 30 April 2025, grants her the status of Minister Emerita and a seat on the Presbytery in which she resides.
2. The General Assembly grants the Rev Sello P Molepo permission to retire on 31 October 2025, grants him the status of Minister Emeritus and a seat on the Presbytery in which he resides.
3. The General Assembly grants the Rev Lindani Edwin Sokhela permission to retire on 31 December 2025, grants him the status of Minister Emeritus and a seat on the Presbytery in which he resides.

4. The General Assembly grants the Rev Michael Muller permission to retire on 31 August 2025, grants him the status of Minister Emeritus and a seat on the Presbytery in which he resides.
5. The General Assembly grants the Rev Mukondeleli E Ramulondi permission to retire on 31 August 2025, grants him the status of Minister Emeritus and a seat on the Presbytery in which he resides.
6. The General Assembly grants the Rev Isak Saul Williams permission to retire on 31 December 2025, grants him the status of Minister Emeritus and a seat on the Presbytery in which he resides.
7. The General Assembly grants the Rev Nzimane Debruin Jita permission to retire on 31 July 2025, grants him the status of Minister Emeritus and a seat on the Presbytery in which he resides.

CHURCH IN SOCIETY COMMITTEE

1. The General Assembly
 - a. encourages Presbyteries to facilitate workshops on Accra Confession and the São Paulo Statement.
 - b. refers the same to the Communications Committee for translation and report to the 2026 Executive Commission.
2. The General Assembly revisits the system of how ministers without charge are appointed to vacant congregations and therefore follows a code of good practice from CUC partners that successfully curbed the terrible trends of greed and abuse of UPCSA governance.

The proposal was referred to the Ministry committee for consideration and report to the 2026 Executive Commission.

3. The General Assembly reaffirms the UPCSA pledge to fight against Gender-based violence and the commitment to create a safer environment for spiritual growth and well-being for all.
4. The General Assembly instructs Presbyteries to ensure that congregations empower their respective communities to stand up for their rights on Gender Justice and instructs the Manual Committee to include policies in the Manual of Faith and Order that address sexual abuse and misconduct.
5. The Assembly encourages theologians and social activists in the UPCSA to actively participate in advocacy programs for Gender Justice.
6. The General Assembly encourages Presbyteries and congregations' Church in Society committees to engage in community development programs, focusing on education, healthcare, and economic empowerment, working with relevant stakeholders within their communities.
7. The General Assembly
 - a) instructs the committee to work with other organisations such as Scripture Union and 'Protective Behaviours Practitioners' who have excellent tried-and-tested materials and programmes that have been developed especially for children in collaboration with social workers, child psychologists and other experts in the field of child protection and advocacy
 - b) urges congregations to use Sunday School time for teaching the Bible, whilst arranging courses for parents and children at other times during the week.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES COMMITTEE

1. The General Assembly resolves that Presbyteries shall submit names of persons with

disabilities Committee Convenors to the Clerk of Assembly by 31st December 2025.

2. The General Assembly instructs Presbyteries to commission inclusive infrastructure accessibility audits of congregations within their bounds and submit the report to the Clerk of Assembly by 31st January 2026.
3. The General Assembly adopts, in principle, the concept of Disability-inclusive Budgeting and instructs the Finance Committee to come up with policy guidelines in the Executive Commission 2026.

ETHICS AND DISCIPLINE

The Convener of the Drafting Committee reported that Insaka Groups were not in Consensus about a way forward in regard to this report.

The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer.

1. The General Assembly appoints a Task Team to construct a document seeking consensus on this matter, bearing in mind the Committee's Report and the two Notices of Motion tabled at the 2025 General Assembly, and in consultation with the Ethics and Discipline Committee, and to report to the Executive Commission 2026.

DOCTRINE COMMITTEE

1. The General Assembly affirms the "*Creation – Fall – Redemption – Sanctification – Glory*" framework as a guiding theological approach to ethical and social issues both within and outside the Church.

2. The General Assembly upholds a biblical sexual ethic that recognizes gender as a divine creation of male and female in mutually supporting and complementary roles.

It was agreed by Consensus that this proposal be referred to the Human Sexuality Task Team.

3. The General Assembly affirms that there is one divinely ordained model for sexual orientation, i.e. heterosexuality; and that sexual orientation or activity apart from that is a departure from God's good design and arises from the Fall.

4. The General Assembly affirms that the Bible presents one God-honouring context for sexual intimacy, namely: heterosexual marriage.

5. The General Assembly affirms the definition and sanctity of Christian marriage as a covenanted life-long union between one man and one woman.

6. The General Assembly agrees to excise the term "sexual orientation" from the two Confession of Faith non-discrimination articles specified and initiates the relevant processes for this purpose.

It was agreed by Consensus that proposals 3 to 6 be referred to the Task Team on Human Sexuality.

7. The General Assembly affirms its primary view that Scripture is the divinely inspired and infallible Word of God, free from error in its original manuscripts, and is uniquely sufficient and trustworthy as the ultimate authority for faith and life.

8. The General Assembly approves the deletion of the aforementioned footnote 2 to article 6.4 of chapter 2, page 9 in the Confession of Faith which divides the UPCS on the views of Scripture.

It was agreed by Consensus that proposals 7 and 8 be referred back to the Committee.

9. The General Assembly instructs the Doctrine Committee to continue its work on the topic of extra-biblical revelation in light of modern trends in so-called "apostolic" and "prophetic" circles of the wider church.

10. The General Assembly instructs all ministers and elders that all adult converts of "lapsed parents" be especially encouraged in the truth of God's covenantal faithfulness; and recommends the use of the existing liturgy "Order for the Public Profession of Faith and Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant", or the order for "Reaffirmation of Covenant" to give these converts the proper opportunity to declare their faith in Jesus Christ in a service of public worship. (These liturgies can be sourced on the UPCS website.)

11. General Assembly encourages ministers, Sessions and Presbyteries of the UPCS to read and critically evaluate the "The Ethiopian Fulfilment, Pentecost and Israel" pdf booklet for their own context.

DOCTRINE SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT – Confessions of Faith

4. The Assembly instructs the webmaster
 - (a) to restore the key text, Jn. 1:1-18, to the beginning of the parenthesis at the end of the third bulleted point in Art. 6.4, footnote 2, in the version of the UPCS Confession of Faith on the UPCS website (from which it has somehow inadvertently fallen out);
 - (b) to add Rev. 19:13 at the end of the same parenthesis (see footnote 1 on the first page of the report); and
 - (c) to strengthen the final sentence of the footnote by amending it to read: "All three of these views are permitted within the UPCS, provided that those holding them all confess that Jesus Christ is the living Word of God, and that the Scriptures, as the indispensable witness to Jesus Christ, are inspired by God and are the unique, adequate and ultimate authority for all the Church's doctrine, teaching, preaching, theology and ethics."
5. The Assembly
 - (a) approves Section A of the report on 'Different Views of Scripture';
 - (b) reaffirms its acceptance of the three different views of Scripture listed in footnote 2 attached to Art. 6.4 of the UPCS Confession of Faith, along with the proviso in the final sentence, as amended; and
 - (c) instructs the webmaster to place Section A on 'Different Views of Scripture' on the UPCS website as an aid to the better understanding and teaching of this issue in the Confession of Faith.
6. The Assembly reaffirms both
 - (a) the statement in Art.2 0.3 of the UPCS Confession of Faith that: Because God created all people equally in that image [the image of God] and Christ gave his life to restore it, every person's life is sacrosanct. Everyone has a God-given dignity and a right to be treated with respect and protected from violence and abuse, no matter their gender, age, race, social status, sexual orientation, religion and despite any mental or physical handicap; and
 - (b) the parallel summary statement in clause 2 of The Essential Points of Doctrine that: In Christ there is no ground for separation or discrimination between people on grounds of race, colour, social status, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation, either in Church or in State.

It was agreed by Consensus that all the Supplementary Report proposals be referred to the Doctrine Committee.

NOTICE OF MOTION 1

The General Assembly of the UPCS affirms and celebrates its approach to and understanding of the Holy Scriptures.

It was agreed by consensus that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Doctrine Committee.