

# Media release

**18 SEPTEMBER 2014**

## **Synod gathering to debate a range of issues**

The 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Uniting Church's Synod of Victoria and Tasmania will be held at La Trobe University, in Bundoora, from September 19-24.

Over the six days of the gathering about 300 Synod members will receive and discuss more than 50 reports as well as a range of proposals from presbyteries, congregations, and Church commissions.

Items listed for discussion include the Church's ongoing involvement with ACCESS ministries, the Synod's Major Strategic Review and a final report on the *Uniting our future* project.

The Synod's Christian Religious Education Task Group will report findings and present recommendations following its review of the Church's relationship with ACCESS ministries, undertaken at the request of the May 2013 Synod. The Uniting Church has previously raised concerns regarding Christian religious education curriculum material and the training and support provided to volunteer instructors.

Other proposals to be discussed include alcohol reform, protections for people with disabilities, an amendment to property transaction arrangements and support for rural ministries.

UCA Funds Management, in consultation with the Synod's Justice and International Mission unit, will present a revised ethical investment policy.

The Synod will also appoint a Moderator Elect 2016-2019, who will be chosen by a ballot of members. Three nominees have been put forward by the nominating committee – Rev Ian Brown, Rev Dr Sunny Chen and Rev Sharon Hollis.

Mr Brown has held a variety of leadership roles within the church and is currently the chair of the Board of Mission and Resourcing.

Dr Chen has been very involved with the cross-cultural community of the Church and has a particular passion for youth work.

Ms Hollis is the continuing education co-ordinator at the Centre for Theology and Ministry and is co-coordinator of the Synod's Response Group to *Uniting our future*.

The Moderator-elect will be installed as Moderator at the Synod meeting in May 2016.

An opening worship will be held at 7.30 pm on Friday in the Union Hall.

The Synod meets every 18 months.

For further enquiries, please call Penny Mulvey, Director Communications and Media Services, 0437 672 018.