



Assembly of Confessing Congregations Inc

Assembly of Confessing Congregations within the Uniting Church in Australia

Confessing the Lord Jesus Christ, Proclaiming the truth, Renewing the church

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Dear ACC members,

By now you will have heard the concerning news about the proposal the Assembly Standing Committee is bringing to Assembly in July to change the doctrine and understanding of marriage within the UCA to any 'two people'. Along with many of us, you may be feeling deeply disturbed that the UCA could even talk about, let alone propose such an idea that is so alien and foreign to what we believe is written in God's Word about the matter. Some of you may already be wanting to leave the church. However, the ACC Prayer network encourages you remain steadfast in the faith and to follow the process already outlined in the first ACC pastoral letter regarding what to do before, during and after the National Assembly. The ACC prayer network has put together the 40-day Sacred Season of prayer and fasting to help provide encouragement, strength and direction for the church during this important time in our history.

SACRED SEASON OF PRAYER AND FASTING

Once again, as we have since 2009, we are having the Sacred Season of Prayer and Fasting in the 40 days in the lead up to and during the Assembly. This goes from 5th June – 14th July and is in partnership with Uniting Prayer and Fasting. **(This is not to be confused with the 40 days of prayer that the UCA Assembly is coordinating)**. There are resources currently being written for the ACC Sacred Season which will be available on the School of Faith Website, PDF form, hard copies for those who need them, and by daily email for the 40 days with prayer points. Find the resources and subscribe to receive daily emails during the 40 days of the Sacred Season at <https://www.confessingschooloffaith.com/subscribe-sacred-season>

TRUMPET SOUND CALLING FOR PRAYER

There is a trumpet being sounded and our Living Head the Lord Jesus Christ is calling the ACC and our partners, who believe that marriage is between a man and a woman, to be united in prayer. We are looking for prayer groups of two or more people who will covenant to pray during the Sacred Season, hopefully on a weekly basis or more frequently for the following key matters.

- The protection of the Uniting Church's current position on marriage being between a man and a woman alone
- The Lord Jesus Christ would lead us to repentance and raise us up as the UCA (even as a remnant) to become who were called to be.
- Strength, wisdom, courage and protection for all ACC connected people who are members of the 15th Assembly, including Rev Dr Hedley Fihaki (chair of ACC) and Rev Lulu Senituli.

TRUTH, HUMILITY AND LOVE

We ask that that God will help us all come humbly in prayer, not trusting in our righteousness but by his grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray that the Lord would help us not be bitter or proud. May we instead, speak the truth courageously whilst at the same time loving those who think differently in this matter, who come from different and increasingly incompatible worldviews to our own.

Let us pray for one another that we will not give in to harshness, but let the Lord soften our hearts even as we stand firm. It is God's peace that can guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus through this difficult time. (Phil 4:7)

VISION OF ROSTER OF ACC PRAYER GROUPS

Our vision through the 40 days of the Sacred Season is to have a roster of prayer so that every day is covered. Do you already pray with a regular prayer group that could focus on the prayer points above, or could you form one in your area? The group may be ecumenical or ACC/UCA alone. It only needs two or three people. We would love you to tell us when you are praying so we can cover every day. You may like to also have your group listed on the ACC School of Faith website for praying on that particular day. You would need to be aware before agreeing, that in the long run there may be a long term cost such as discrimination for standing publicly for your faith in such a way. However, there is also a promise of great blessing from the Lord (Matthew 5:10-12). May we all rise to the challenge!

So if you have a prayer group that can pray during the Sacred Season, for the UCA to keep her traditional view on marriage and would like to commit to certain days please let us know. Email: accoffice@confessingcongregations.com (The office will forward emails to the Prayer Convenor). Please include your name or group's name, where you are from (region, state), what congregation or cluster (if ACC), when you are committed to pray (date and time) and if you are willing to have your name on the public website. We would like as much time covered as possible. If you would like to receive a text when the voting will occur so you can pray, please let us know.

ZOOM PRAYER GROUPS

The preference would be to pray in person with others, but if you wish to you can join in our state zoom prayer meetings. We are offering weekly prayer zoom groups for ACC members, run by different states during the Sacred Season. Hopefully there will be some ACC or Uniting Prayer and Fasting prayer zoom group every day of the week at different times. We will send you more details shortly if you are interested. You can connect by either phone or internet.

FASTING - humble submission to the Lord's will

We would also encourage you to fast in some way. We encourage everyone in ACC to eat simply throughout the 40 days. Eat natural foods – vegetables, fruit, grains, protein – lean meat, fish, chicken, dairy, eggs. Do not eat sweets, take away, limit processed food and strong spices, flavours etc and drink mostly water (comparable to a Daniel Fast). Also similar to Wesley's Friday fasting, you may like to miss a meal or even two each day for the 40 days, but check with your doctor if in doubt. This can be tailored down to one, two or three days a week depending on your health. Do not eat more to catch up for the meals you miss. That is not fasting. Some of you who are seasoned fasters, with doctor's supervision may like to go on a liquid fast or even not eating at all for a few days except for drinking water. You may also consider fasting from something else such as TV, computer games etc, to focus on prayer. Fasting is not to think in any way that our effort can change the Lord's mind on the outcome, but rather to humble ourselves and declare our total submission and dependence on the Lord's will and purpose in our own lives and the life of the church.

We believe our Lord Jesus Christ is supreme in the life of the church. Let us together be a people of prayer and fasting so we can discern what he is calling us to do and then be obedient to His will for the glory of God our Father and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Yours in Christ's Service

Rev Anne Hibbard

On behalf of the ACC National Prayer Network

16 May 2018