

3. GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

CONGREGATIONS

THE CONGREGATION

3.1.1

(a) A Congregation, as the embodiment in one place of the one holy catholic and apostolic church, shall be those members and adherents who worship, witness and serve as a fellowship of the Spirit in Christ, and who meet regularly to hear God's Word, to celebrate the sacraments, to build one another up in love, to share the wider responsibilities of the Church, and to serve the world, and who are recognised as a Congregation by the Presbytery.

(b) In fulfilling its purpose a Congregation shall:

- (i) bear witness to that unity that is both Christ's gift and his will;
- (ii) build up the members and adherents in faith and love;
- (iii) sustain the members and adherents in hope;
- (iv) nurture the members and adherents in their growth in grace;
- (v) equip the members and adherents for engagement in worship, witness and service in the world as they participate in the mission of Christ;
- (vi) discipline its members in love;
- (vii) maintain pastoral oversight;
- (viii) encourage each member and adherent to participate in the life of the Congregation and endeavour to provide opportunity for that participation; and
- (ix) provide means whereby the members and adherents may be sustained in fellowship, in prayer and in confession, in baptism and in the Lord's Supper, in mutual reception of and mutual exertion in the Gospel proclamation and service.

FORMING AND RECOGNISING CONGREGATIONS

3.1.2

(a) A Congregation shall be recognised by resolution of a Presbytery.

(b) A Presbytery may recognise a Congregation when:

- (i) a group of people apply to be so recognised, and demonstrate that their life and mission is consistent with the definition of a Congregation, and
- (ii) the group of people applying have amongst them persons who hold membership of the Church in another Congregation or recorded with the Presbytery, and who seek to transfer their membership upon recognition being given, and/or those who are seeking to be recognised as members;

(iii) the Pastoral Relations Committee or another body authorised by the Presbytery recommends that the group applying be so recognised; and

(iv) the group of people applying shall include sufficient voting members to constitute a quorum at a meeting of the Congregation [refer Regulation 3.1.9(h)].

(c) The Presbytery shall assist the nurture and care of a new Congregation by designating an appropriate person to liaise with the Congregation on behalf of the Presbytery until the Presbytery determines such a liaison role is no longer warranted.

(d) The Presbytery shall make provision for the sacraments to be celebrated in the life of a new Congregation.