




**UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA**  
**THE GAP CONGREGATION**



**GUIDELINES**  
**FOR**  
**CHURCH COUNCIL**

(Version 2012.1)



# The Gap Uniting Church Guidelines for Church Council

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<b>Document Status:</b>	
<b>Purpose:</b>	This document has been developed to assist members of The Gap Uniting Church who are elected to the Church Council. They are to be read in conjunction with the current Regulations of The Uniting Church in Australia.
<b>History:</b>	This document was originally prepared by members of the Congregation of The Gap Uniting Church and endorsed by the Moreton Rivers Presbytery and approved in principle by a meeting of The Gap Uniting Church Congregation on 10th November 1998. The Church Council was implemented following The Gap Uniting Church Congregational Meeting held on the 2nd March 1999.
<b>Revisions</b>	Significant revisions to this document have been approved at Congregational Meetings held on the following dates: 25 November 2003 22 November 2005 30 September 2007 24 November 2009 20 November 2011

# CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE GAP UNITING CHURCH

## **Membership**

The Church Council shall consist of:

- a) Members of the Ministry Team, and
- b) No more than 16 members who are members or members-in-association of The Gap Uniting Church Congregation duly elected by the Congregation from a pool of Elders and Congregational Representatives nominations.
- c) Up to two persons who may be co-opted from time to time for special purposes.
- d) A quorum of at least 50% of members is required for meetings to take place.

## **Frequency of Meetings**

The Church Council shall meet at least quarterly and preferably bi-monthly on dates to be determined by the Council to deal with all matters relating to the responsibilities of the Church Council having particular regard to any matters referred to the Council by the Congregation. Additional meetings shall be held when convened by the Chairperson or at the direction of a Congregational meeting, Presbytery, Synod or Assembly.

Recommended meeting months: February, April, June, August, October, December.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

The Church Council shall give priority in its life to building up the Congregation in faith and love, sustaining its members in hope, and leading the Congregation to a fuller participation in Christ's mission in the world. This priority shall be reflected in the agenda of its ordinary meetings. The duties and responsibilities of the Church Council include the following:

- a) Sharing with the Ministry team in mission and in the pastoral care and spiritual oversight of the Congregation;
- b) Nurturing the members and adherents in their growth and grace;
- c) Pursuing a vision for the development and longer term growth of the Congregation through the adoption of a Strategic Plan for the expansion of Christ's Kingdom amongst people of the Gap and beyond;
- d) Making decisions in accordance with the regulations concerning baptism, confirmation and membership, and the keeping and reviewing of the rolls of the congregation;
- e) Assisting the Ministry team in the conduct of worship and in the administration of the sacraments;
- f) Determining the time and place of services of public worship;
- g) Carrying out its functions concerning applicants for the specified ministries of Minister, Deacon, Community Minister, Lay Pastor, Lay Preacher, Pastor and Youth Worker, having regard to the regulations;
- h) Managing the financial affairs and the general administration of the Congregation including the reception, preparation and presentation of all necessary budgets, statements and reports;
- i) Managing and controlling property in accordance with the regulations;
- j) Preparing and presenting to a meeting of the Congregation an annual report concerning the life and work of the Congregation including its worship, mission and service, and making recommendations with regard to the program for the ensuing year;
- k) Exercising oversight of the appointment of officers and leaders of Congregational organizations;
- l) Following the Synod approved Manual for Meetings in the conduct of its meetings including decision making using consensus procedures; and
- m) Referral of matters to Presbytery as prescribed.

## **Election Process**

In determining the composition of the Church Council or any committee or other body, the Congregation shall have regard to the principle, that in accordance with the call and gifts of the spirit, each member shall have a part in the ministry of the Church; and that government of the Church will be "entrusted to representatives, men and women, bearing gifts and

graces with which God has endowed them for the building up of the Church." In furtherance of this principle, the Church Council, committees and other bodies shall as far as practicable include a significant proportion of members of the younger age groups to enable them to exercise their gifts.

Election shall be by written ballot at the November meeting of the Congregation. Prior notice of intention to hold such a ballot must be given and the names of the nominees shall be publicly announced at least two weeks prior to the ballot being held. Nominations must be made in writing to the secretary or other appropriate officer over the signature of two persons who are confirmed members or members-in-association of the Congregation.

At the same meeting approval will be gained from the Congregation for the appointment of up to two (2) nominated representatives to the Moreton Rivers Presbytery.

The term of office of an elected Church Councillor is such period from two to five years as is stipulated by the nominee and for which period the person is then elected by the Congregation. At the expiry of the term of office the Church Councillor shall be eligible for re-election.

## **Elders**

The ministry of Elder is one of spiritual oversight, and may also be exercised in pastoral visitation, teaching, encouraging members of the congregation to share in mission, and assisting the Minister in leadership of worship and administration of the sacraments and other areas in the life of the Congregation. Elders who serve on the Church Council have a particular responsibility to ensure that matters of spiritual oversight, pastoral care and the Mission of the Church have priority in the work of the Church Council. Within the Care Team, the Elders will work to provide pastoral care and spiritual oversight within the congregation.

Elders have the freedom to exercise their ministry in one or more of the following ways.

- a) Serving on the Church Council.
- b) Assisting the Ministry Team in pastoral care and visitation.
- c) Assisting the Ministry Team in services of worship.

Election of Elders shall be by written ballot at the November meeting of the Congregation. Prior notice of intention to hold such a ballot must be given and the names of the nominees shall be publicly announced at least two weeks prior to the ballot being held. Nominations must be made in writing to the secretary or other appropriate officer over the signature of two persons who are confirmed members or members-in-association of the Congregation.

The term of office of an elected Elder is such period from two to five years as is stipulated by the nominee and for which period the person is then elected by the Congregation. At the expiry of the term of office the Elder shall be eligible for re-election.

## **Office Bearers and Executive**

The Church Council shall elect annually from amongst its members a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.

The full Executive of the Council shall consist of:

- a) Members of the Ministry Team employed on a 0.5 or more stipend basis
- b) Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, and
- c) Convenors of all Teams

The Church Council Executive has the authority to make decisions regarding the operation of the Church and its members, which will later be referred to Church Council or a Team for ratification. A quorum of more than 50% is required to make any such decisions. The Church Council is the final arbiter in these decisions.

The Church executive should meet at least once between each Church Council meeting and at other times as required and can be called by any two members.

## **Teams and Committees of the Church Council**

The following activities remain the overall responsibility of the Church Council which may appoint and endow Teams or other Committees or Individuals with responsibility for specific programs and activities.

Church Council shall appoint from within its membership a Convenor for the following Teams and other members of Church Council will be requested to serve on at least one Team with each team having at least one additional Church Councillor. Members of Teams shall be appointed to serve for 12 months.

- a) Finance and Administration Team
- b) Care Team
- c) Outreach Team
- d) Discipleship Team
- e) Worship Team

Teams will have the power to act within their budget and delegated areas of responsibility and to form committees/groups as necessary to undertake the tasks that fall within the responsibilities of the Team.

Each Team shall operate with a minimum of three (3) members **not** including ex officio members. A quorum will consist of 50% or a minimum of three (3) including ex officio members, whichever is larger.

Members of the Ministry Team and the Church Council Chairperson will be ex-officio members of all Teams.

The Convenor may co-opt other members of the Congregation to serve on their Team.

Certain activities will remain the direct responsibility of the Church Council and not be the responsibility of a Team. This includes activities such as Child Safe Church and Kids Hope Aus.

## **Team Responsibilities – All Teams**

Teams are directly responsible to the Church Council and are required to:

- a) Prepare a yearly budget and plan including a calendar of events for endorsement by the Church Council and subsequent inclusion of each Team's budget in a whole of church budget which Church Council will present to the November meeting of the congregation for approval;
- b) Meet at least once before each Church Council meeting and preferably every two months;
- c) Submit a written report to each Church Council Meeting on the various activities within their responsibility and, where necessary, make recommendations for approval by the Church Council;
- d) Provide a written report at the end of each Calendar year for inclusion in the Annual Report for that year, covering all the various activities with their responsibility;
- e) Provide the flexibility for all groups/programs under their concern to work within the budget approved at the congregational meeting. Additional or changes to approved expenditure in excess of \$1,000.00 will need Church Council Executive ratification;
- f) Appoint leaders of groups/programs within their responsibility;
- g) Liaise with and support other Teams, committees and groups;
- h) Be responsible for all aspects of planning for activities within their responsibility, both long and short term and their implementation;
- i) Respond to requirements and directions of the Church Council and pursue plans and activities that assist in the implementation of the Congregation's Strategic Plans;
- j) Build each other up in faith and love sustaining its members in hope, and leading its members to a fuller participation in Christ's mission in the world; and
- k) Provide pastoral oversight and encouragement to all leaders.

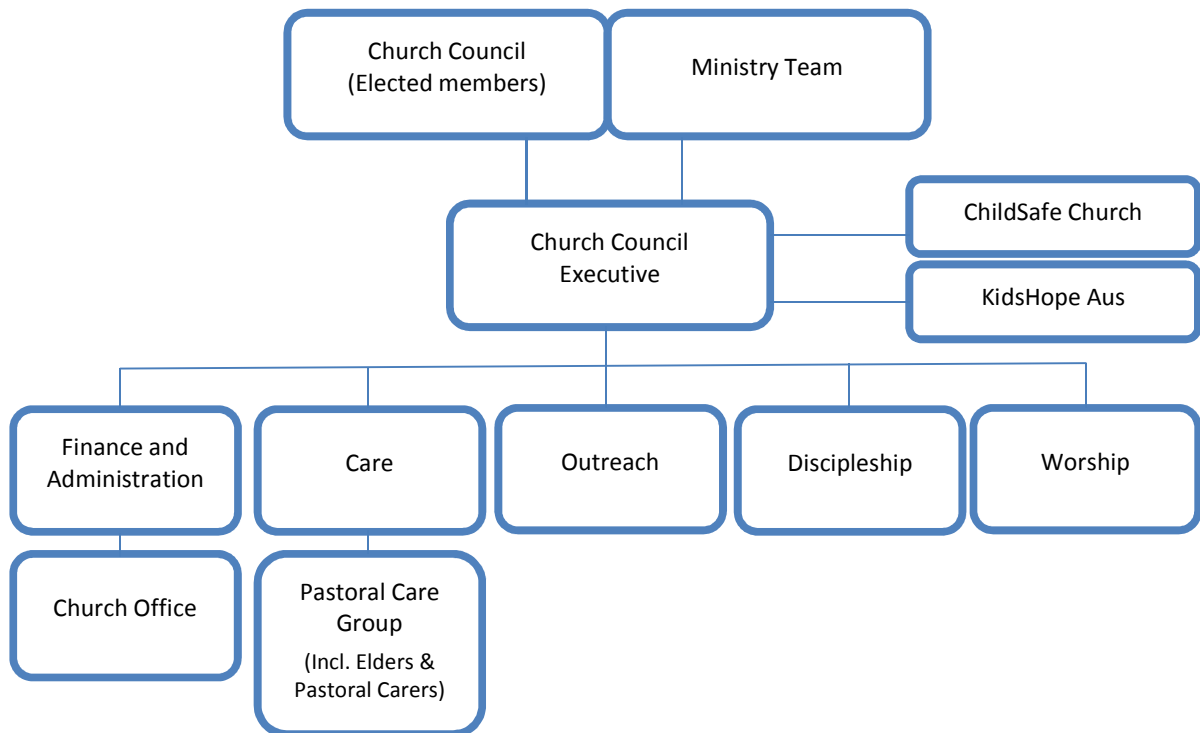
## Team Responsibilities – Individual Teams

	FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION	CARE	OUTREACH	DISCIPLESHIP	WORSHIP
MOTIVATION & PURPOSE	To provide the financial, administration, property management and communication services needed for the Congregation to function effectively according to its mission and Strategic Plan.	To facilitate and encourage activities which support and care for all members of our Congregation through supporting the development of their spiritual and physical well-being.	To help our neighbours by sharing God’s love, on a local, regional and international basis.	To teach, encourage and grow followers of Jesus	To celebrate the life changing power of God through innovative contemporary worship & support the Ministry Team in enabling dreams to become reality having due regard to traditional liturgies & worship practices.
RESPONSIBILITIES	<p>Develop, implement &amp; review a strategic plan for the property, finances, office administration &amp; systems of the Congregation</p> <p>Oversight all finances of the Congregation including stewardship &amp; major fund raising activities</p> <p>Oversight &amp; resourcing of the administration, resourcing &amp; systems of the church office</p> <p>Oversight maintenance of the property (grounds / buildings &amp; facilities)</p> <p>Oversight communications including preparation of regular notices &amp; newsletters; data input into database systems; internet site, etc.</p> <p>Prepare a financial statement for the Church Council as required</p> <p>Ensure the accounts of all Church organisations are duly audited &amp; presented to the Church Council &amp; Congregation</p> <p>Other tasks as required by Church Council</p>	<p>Share with the Ministry Team in building up the Congregation in faith and love.</p> <p>Nurture the members and the adherents in their growth in grace through regular contact, caring and praying for those in need.</p> <p>Share with Church Council and the Ministry team in the spiritual oversight of the Congregation.</p> <p>Review membership rolls annually and recommend to Church Council alterations where and when necessary.</p> <p>Recommend Membership Recognition to Council for baptism, members applying to be received by transfer and those who on profession of faith seek to become members.</p> <p>Oversight Circles of Care</p> <p>Other tasks as required by Church Council</p>	<p>Develop, implement and review plans for the outreach mission of the Congregation.</p> <p>Communicate information on mission &amp; outreach activities / events.</p> <p>Approve fund raising events conducted by suitable outreach focused groups.</p> <p>Interact appropriately &amp; caringly with individuals and/or communities in need (e.g. refugees or other marginalized persons).</p> <p>Inform and make recommendations to the Church Council concerning local, Australian and overseas missions.</p> <p>Provide oversight and action as necessary to meet community outreach needs (e.g. food parcels, gifts, hampers etc.).</p> <p>Provide a referral process for crisis management of local families/individuals.</p> <p>Other tasks as required by Church Council</p>	<p>Ensure that members of the congregation are provided with opportunities to learn about God and His Word</p> <p>Ensure that activities are age appropriate</p> <p>Provide oversight and ensure activities comply with Christian beliefs</p> <p>Mentor and develop members and attendees of the church with the intent of equipping them with the skills to be responsible for their own faith development</p> <p>Provide resources, materials and opportunities to assist in faith development</p> <p>Other tasks as required by Church Council</p>	<p>Facilitating innovative contemporary worship in the life of the Congregation that celebrates the life changing power of God</p> <p>Supporting the Ministry team in the conduct of worship and in administration of the sacraments</p> <p>Focusing on the provision of this worship on Sunday mornings and evenings.</p> <p>Facilitating combined, family and other special services that involve a cross section of ages and interests</p> <p>Assisting in the provision of other worship related activities including rosters</p> <p>Other tasks as required by Church Council</p>

## Appendix A – Activities/Groups reporting to Teams 2011/2012

	FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION	CARE	OUTREACH	DISCIPLESHIP	WORSHIP
ACTIVITIES / GROUPS	<p><b>Office Administration:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resourcing of administration functions</li> <li>• Reviewing/oversight of administrative activities</li> <li>• Flow of administrative work, copying, etc.</li> <li>• Records</li> <li>• Processes/procedures and systems</li> <li>• Support for special events</li> <li>• Blue Cards</li> </ul> <p><b>Property Management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Property Committee</li> <li>• Grounds</li> <li>• Maintenance</li> <li>• Usage of facilities (sound and technology)</li> <li>• Cemetery Trust</li> <li>• Camp Constable</li> </ul> <p><b>Communications:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal, eg. newsletter, notices</li> <li>• External (web page)</li> </ul> <p><b>Fundraising:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April Fair</li> <li>• Garage Sale</li> <li>• Craft Bazaar</li> <li>• Spring Sunday</li> </ul> <p><b>Financial Management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget development</li> <li>• Reporting</li> <li>• Banking</li> <li>• Insurance</li> <li>• Ensure relevant audits are properly prepared &amp; reflected upon</li> </ul>	<p><b>Support:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pastoral Care / Spiritual Oversight through Circle of Care / Pastoral List / Group</li> <li>• Elders / Pastoral Carers</li> <li>• Emergency Meals</li> <li>• Prayer Chain</li> </ul> <p><b>Relationship Building:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ladies Day Fellowship</li> <li>• Ladies Evening Fellowship</li> <li>• Friendship Groups</li> <li>• Walking Group</li> <li>• Baptisms and Cradle Roll follow up</li> <li>• Welcome Elders</li> <li>• Care cards / new attendee follow up</li> <li>• Funeral follow up</li> <li>• Membership Rolls</li> <li>• Whole church camp</li> <li>• Noosa Camp at Marnane's</li> </ul>	<p><b>Local:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play Groups</li> <li>• First Steps in music</li> <li>• Kids Club</li> <li>• Youth Group</li> <li>• GUCCE</li> <li>• Luncheons for Those Who Eat Alone</li> <li>• Senior Friendship Group</li> <li>• Men's Group</li> <li>• Regis Worship Service</li> <li>• Fit after Fifty</li> </ul> <p><b>Wider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Pantry</li> <li>• Wider Church Auxiliaries</li> <li>• International mission</li> <li>• Refugee Support</li> <li>• Walking on Country</li> <li>• Reconciliation Action Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GROW Sunday School</li> <li>• Religious Education</li> <li>• Bible Study</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Preaching &amp; Teaching Months including study workshops</li> <li>• Confirmation Classes</li> <li>• Day Camp</li> <li>• September Camp (High School Age)</li> <li>• Wednesday Prayer Group</li> </ul>	<p><b>Worship services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communion</li> <li>• Morning worship</li> <li>• Evening worship</li> <li>• Combined services</li> <li>• Family services</li> <li>• Special liturgical events (Advent, Christmas, Easter)</li> <li>• Creche during services</li> </ul> <p><b>Workshops:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing skills that aid worship (musicians, computer, sound, drama, puppetry, etc.)</li> <li>• Mentoring of younger members of the congregation to be involved in worship</li> </ul> <p><b>Preparing the Church for Worship:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaning roster &amp; provision of a variety of stimuli to enhance worship (flowers, banners, CDs, sculptures)</li> </ul> <p><b>Rosters:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stewards</li> <li>• musicians</li> <li>• sound &amp; computer</li> <li>• morning tea/supper</li> <li>• bible readers</li> <li>• pastoral prayer</li> <li>• worship leaders</li> </ul>

**Appendix B – Organisational Chart**



## **Appendix C – Circles of Growth\***

*\*Based on a publication from Saddleback Church, USA*

This is a framework/graphic that can help identify where individuals are in their journey in relation to The Gap Uniting Church. The aim is for people to travel into the centre or 'core' circle as they spend time in The Gap Uniting Church. It is also helpful to see if we have appropriate strategies in place to resource and help people as they travel on their journey.



**Community:** Any non-churched person who lives within a realistic driving distance of The Gap UC. Spiritually, this person is committed to living apart from Jesus.

**Crowd:** Any non-churched person who lives within a realistic driving distance of The Gap UC who has some kind of connection with The Gap UC. Spiritually, this person is either committed to living apart from Jesus, lacks energy or commitment to learning about Jesus or is open to learning about Jesus.

**Congregation:** Anyone who attends one of The Gap UC Worship Services. These people make up our regular attendees and are both Christians and non-Christians. Spiritually, this person is committed to hearing about Jesus.

**Committed:** Anyone who attends one of The Gap UC Worship Services and has taken up some kind of leadership, helper or supporting role. Spiritually, this person is committed to living their lives according to Jesus.

**Core:** A committed person who has discovered his or her giftedness, is serving in a ministry, and shows an understanding and expression of evangelism. This student is committed to serving because of Jesus. Spiritually, this person has taken direction of their faith development.

Teams will be encouraged to develop strategies to assist people in their journey to discovering the fullness of Christ and being committed to living a life of service to Christ.