



9th August 2007

To those concerned

The Youth Connection (YC) committee, with representatives from the Reformed Churches Youth Committee (RCYC), met last night as planned to discuss the resignation of the Convention Planning Committee (CPC) for the 2008 Youth Convention in Victoria. First of all, the YC would like to acknowledge the flood of correspondence circulated after the announcement last week and we are heavily burdened by the enormity of this situation. Convention has always been a transformative event in the lives of young people in our denomination for the past 54 years. It has interconnected the stories of church members' lives, both young and old, across the nation.

YC undertook discussions on the correspondence and reasoning for the CPC's resignation, as well as the viability of the upcoming convention, and the following conclusions were reached:

1. Regarding the CPC resignation:

YC unanimously agreed that the CPC maintained integrity and followed sufficient processes in its speaker analysis, as well as in its dealings with the concerns raised with these processes. We feel that the CPC demonstrated good leadership, wisdom and maturity in their decision to reconsider their choice and to request correspondence for consideration from concerned parties. Similarly, the CPC also demonstrated good leadership in their decision to maintain their original choice, due to their vision for transforming young lives.

We sincerely regret that the situation led to the CPC's resignation. We understand both the awkwardness and disillusionment this has caused, as well as the deep sense of personal pain and grief that they have expressed. We declare our unreserved support for their decision and also for them as individuals. Many thanks go to them for their commitment and vision for the transformation of young people lives and the two years of convention planning they have contributed to this point.

2. Regarding the 2008 Convention:

From discussions held prior to the meeting, YC was made aware that there was no chance of the CPC reconsidering its position. Therefore, the 2008 convention planned for Ballarat could only proceed if:

- a. A suitable new CPC could be formed.
- b. The new CPC could complete the planning in the remaining time.
- c. When formed, they would feel empowered and released to proceed with enthusiasm and widespread support, given the denominational diversity and means by which that is expressed at this time.

Considering the concern the CPC resignation has caused, YC believes that there would be some enthusiastic people to form a new CPC, however a CPC needs to be made up of the 'right people for the right job' and that this is even more critical at this late stage. Due to this, YC feels that finding a 'suitably gifted CPC to be able to organise the event in time left', is impossible. YC recognised that there might be a remote possibility that Convention could happen with a new CPC, but the likelihood of the committee getting total support from the churches is questionable. Considering all the issues above and the fact that a large amount of time has been lost during the resolution of these issues, Convention faces a serious financial loss and a dwindling volunteer base. YC feels that though painful and upsetting, the wisest course of action at this time is to cancel the 2008 Youth Convention in Victoria.

3. Regarding future Conventions:

YC feels that the ministry of a nationally based youth gathering has a vital place in our churches and her mission. We will be meeting with representatives of the RCYC in future months to explore the viability and make-up of future national Youth Conventions. At this stage, we will not be forming a CPC for the scheduled 2010 Youth Convention in Tasmania until we know the outcome of the aforementioned meeting. We ask the nation to partner with us in prayer, that deliberations into the future make-up and model of Youth Conventions be led by the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray that the outcome will be what is right and appropriate for this stage and time, for the transformation of young peoples' lives in Christ and the up-building of His church.

We acknowledge that we are in a challenging and significant time in our churches' history. Around our churches, this event has brought some grief and despair, as well as raising questions or disappointment. Some people are simply quite impartial or content. Whatever it raises for you, we ask that you 'hope'. God is very good at making great things out of things that go wrong. The position of YC is that we can only pray and hope that God will use this time in our history to shape in us and in our Conventions something that brings about greater good, increased faith and a larger Kingdom impact in this land. We commend to you the former CPC, and their desire together with our churches to see ministry to young people be done as best we can. While that may raise some differences of view, we pray as we all move forward that we can do so in a way that proclaims loud the Glory of God, His great news and our love for His church.

Yours in Christ,

Youth Connection Committee.