



11 June 2024

Dear friends,

As you might be aware, the Queensland Synod has been focused, since the 37th Synod, on the challenge of renewal and growth for the church. Our first 6 months since the Synod in Session have been about intentional listening to the needs of the church, resetting the Synod Office as the previous strategic plan comes to an end, and preparing for the next 3-4 years in our shared life. We have worked to discern God's call in this new season, and I am pleased to have the opportunity to share the next steps of our strategic planning with you.

On the 6th June 2024, the Synod Standing Committee considered and approved the [Uniting Church Synod Strategic Plan](#) for FY 25-27 which provides our foundations for renewal and growth.

The Strategic Plan highlights the Synod's vision, the Synod Office purpose, Who We Are – our identity and commitments, and the five strategic foundations which are mission renewal and growth, flourishing presbyteries, forming leaders, fit-for-purpose governance and stewarding resources. Its aim is to prioritise mission impact, lighten the burden, and build a better future. The Strategic Plan serves the overarching whole of Synod Plenty vision of a flourishing church and flourishing communities.

The document details our strategic actions for year one, the 24/25 financial year, outlining key actions, measures, timings, accountabilities, and dependencies and importantly the continuation of and alignment to specific Plenty initiatives.

We trust this Strategic Plan will provide guidance and strategic direction as we collaborate on our key priorities and seek to shift the dial as the Synod Office works to enable, equip, and encourage a renewing and growing Church across Queensland.

I want to thank our team, our Presbyteries for their insights and commitment to collaboration, and our church members and friends for their commitment to the mission of God as we continue to work together to further His kingdom.

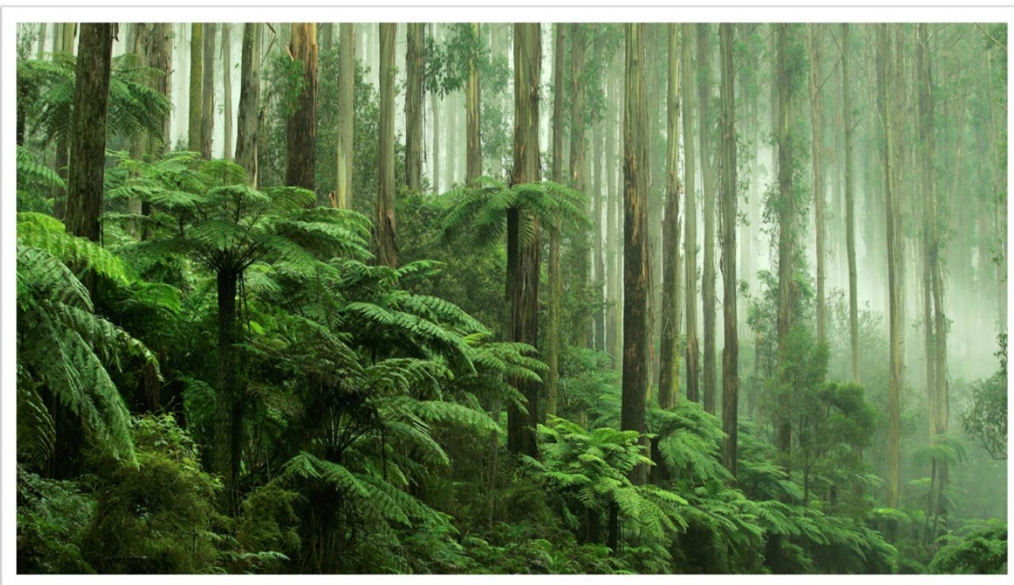
Blessings,

Rev Dr Adam McIntosh
General Secretary



The Uniting Church in Australia
QUEENSLAND SYNOD

Synod Office Strategic Plan



We grow together...

Synod Office

OUR FOUNDATIONS FOR RENEWAL AND GROWTH Strategy on a Page FY 25-27



The United Church in Australia
QUEENSLAND SYNOD

SYNOD VISION

We are **ONE CHURCH** active in every Queensland community, bearers of Christ's offer of life in all its fullness. Through our shared life we are committed to a flourishing future for Church and community.

SYNOD OFFICE PURPOSE

The purpose of the Synod Office is to **ENABLE, EQUIP** and **ENCOURAGE** a renewing and growing Church across Queensland.

WHO WE ARE

MISSION-DRIVEN

Entering more deeply into the faith and mission of the Church in Australia (Basis of Union para 2)

SERVICE-ORIENTED

Practicing servant leadership, driven by a clear vision and purpose

RELATIONALLY-FOCUSSED

Effective collaboration and support for the wider Church in pursuit of our shared Vision

STRATEGIC FOUNDATION

MISSION RENEWAL AND GROWTH

We will accompany the Church, supporting renewed discipleship, new growth and missional development. We will deepen our covenant with the UAICC and advocate and act for Social Justice for all.

FLOURISHING PRESBYTERIES

We will co-create plans to support Presbyteries, developing new approaches to shared services and delegated responsibilities.

FORMING LEADERS

We will embed, build, and optimise the Synod's leadership principles and pathways, and develop emerging leaders across Queensland.

FIT-FOR-PURPOSE GOVERNANCE

We will improve whole-of-church governance processes and structures, implement governance review outcomes for institutions, and develop the capability of governing bodies and councils of the Church.

STEWARDING RESOURCES

We will steward our resources and innovate and diversify funding sources to improve financial sustainability for the Office of the Synod and the wider Church in Queensland.

renewal



The United Church in Australia
QUEENSLAND SYNOD

Strategic Priorities

Each of the five Strategic Foundations is supported by several Strategic Priorities. Alongside ongoing business-as-usual tasks, these Strategic Priorities will form the basis of ongoing operational planning and activity for each Synod Office team.

MISSION RENEWAL AND GROWTH	FLOURISHING PRESBYTERIES	FORMING LEADERS	FIT-FOR-PURPOSE GOVERNANCE	STEWARDING RESOURCES
1.1 Support renewed discipleship culture across generations 1.2 Accompany the church, building missional capacity to enable new growth including new expressions of church and church planting 1.3 Support and equip congregation revitalisation 1.4 Encourage missional development in CALD communities 1.5 Support deepening of covenant relationship with UAICC 1.6 Resource the church for advocacy and action in social justice, and promote the public voice of the church 1.7 Resource the church for advocacy and action in environmental sustainability 1.8 Lead planning for Plenty 2.0 - for Post 2025 1.9 Build alignment across the Church for a new season of renewal and growth	2.1 Co-create with each Presbytery a plan for sustainable and effective Synod Support Services located within each Presbytery and enhance the effective delivery of services in areas of administration, compliance and governance 2.2 Together with Presbyteries, develop new approaches to shared services and the delivery of delegated responsibilities 2.3 Facilitate a review of Presbytery financial sustainability and operations	3.1 Build or optimise leadership pathways across the Synod 3.2 Embed the Synod Office's Leadership Framework 3.3 Attract and intentionally develop emerging leaders for the Synod Office and the wider church 3.4 Expand access to theological education and leadership development across the State	4.1 Develop the capability of Synod governing bodies and councils of their church and their officers and members 4.2 Co-create with Uniting Education and our Property Trust Schools, an optimised governance structure and develop a strategy for implementation. 4.3 Implement governance review outcomes for agencies 4.4 Improve whole-of-Church governance processes and structures 4.5 Further develop Synod Office Culture Roadmap	5.1 Steward capital to achieve missional and commercial priorities 5.2 Optimise the functioning of the Synod Office 5.3 Improve financial sustainability for the Synod Office 5.4 Improve financial sustainability for the wider Church by diversifying funding sources

Strategic Actions: FY24/25

Strategic Actions for the 2024/25 financial year for the Synod Office will support the accomplishment of the Strategic Priorities identified above. Internal strategy reporting for each team within the Synod Office will be based on these Strategic Actions. At this stage, reporting on business-as-usual activity will remain separate.

The Strategic Actions will guide operational planning which may include the development of more granular metrics than the higher-level measures in the table below.

The Plenty program of work has significantly influenced the work of the Synod Office since 2021. While much work has been completed, there remain agreed Actions from within Plenty* that are active, incomplete or on hold. As Plenty has progressed since 2021, the specifics of individual actions have in some instances altered as needs and context demand, and as new strategies and plans emerge. The Strategic Actions listed below are mapped to Plenty Initiative areas, with the Lead Team responsible for aligning the Strategic Actions with those Plenty Initiatives.

In 2025, the Synod Office will report to the 38th Synod on progress against the Plenty program.

The strategic actions mapped below relate specifically to the work of the Synod Office. We recognise that the role of the Office is to execute the decisions and determinations of the Synod, and to work with and support other councils of the Church, and its institutions and organisations.

Mission Renewal and Growth

Action	Measure	Plenty Alignment*	Lead Team	Due	Dependency & Relationships
1.1 Support renewed discipleship culture across generations					
1.1.1 Finalise and roll out discipleship framework and develop a plan for ongoing communication of a discipleship culture in a manner consistent with agreed Plenty initiatives	<p>Discipleship Framework resources completed</p> <p>Pilots completed and reviewed Framework widely available, including training</p> <p>Appropriate statistical measures to identify progress in discipleship are agreed</p>	D2, D4, D5, D6, D8	Mission & Ministry	Q3 FY25	
1.1.2 Establish mission and discipleship resourcing model for intergenerational and children and youth ministry within the work of the MAT	<p>MAT strategy and operational plan developed, agreed and being implemented</p> <p>At least one member of the MAT team with three years intergenerational, children and youth ministry experience</p>	D11, D12, D13, D14, D15	Mission & Ministry	Q2 FY25	
1.2 Accompany the church, building missional capacity to enable new growth including new expressions of church and church planting					
1.2.1 Establish the Mission Accompanying Team (MAT), including recruitment and communications, in consultation with Presbyteries with the shape of the Team reflective of the Mission Renewal and Growth priorities	<p>Recruitment complete</p> <p>MAT is established, fully staffed and operational</p>		Mission & Ministry	Q2 FY25	
1.3 Support and equip congregational revitalisation					
1.3.1 Co-create Presbytery-specific approaches to support congregation revitalisation	<p>MAT/Presbytery service agreements in place Presbyteries & congregations being actively supported in mission & discipleship activities</p> <p>Establish, with Presbytery support, agreed statistical measures to monitor congregational revitalisation</p>		Mission & Ministry	Q2 FY25	Presbytery mission and strategy plans

1.3.2 Develop an operational plan for MAT, with a focus on a frontline resourcing approach (coaching, education, mentoring, peer learning etc) for discipleship, mission, new growth, discipleship and church planting	MAT operational plan developed for mission support, equipping and resourcing, agreed upon and being implemented, including appropriate data set and mechanisms for monitoring and reporting		Mission & Ministry	Q4 FY25	SLT feedback during plan development.
1.3.3 Develop or determine mission and discipleship tools to support congregational development and renewal	Library of mission & discipleship tools established and available via the Hub. Congregations accessing the tools and supported by MAT to implement them Collaborate with Communications team to contribute stories of success	D5, D6, D7, D8	Mission & Ministry	Q4 FY25	Congregational mission plans Communications team support
1.3.4 Develop a draft church planting strategy, including Statewide targets, for the Queensland Synod to be presented to the 38 th Synod in May 2025	Church planting strategy (including leadership development pathways and funding mechanisms is drafted, and presented to the 38 th Synod	D9	Mission & Ministry	Q3 FY25	MC3 5.1.1, 5.1.2
1.4 Encourage missional development in CALD communities					
1.4.1 Establish CALD mission resourcing focused role within the MAT and ensure CALD focus within the operational plan of the MAT	MAT operational plan co-designed with CALD peoples and is being implemented At least one identified CALD person as a member of the MAT team Effective consultation with MCCRG is undertaken to identify the appropriate relationship between MAT and MCCRG with a focus on mission support and resourcing		Mission & Ministry	Q1 FY25	MCCRG
1.4.2 Establish a current state report on CALD communities in Queensland	CALD Community Mission Report complete		Mission & Ministry	Q1 FY25	Presbyteries MCCRG
1.4.3 Co-design a Queensland Synod CALD mission renewal and growth strategy for consideration by Presbyteries and Synod in May 2025	CALD mission renewal and growth strategy co-designed, agreed and available for consideration		Mission & Ministry	Q4 FY25	
1.5 Support deepening of covenant relationship with UAICC					
1.5.1 Define and recruit for the role of Executive Officer UAICC & Covenanting	Executive Officer UAICC & Covenanting recruited		Secretariat	Q1 FY25	

1.5.2 Develop UAICC & Covenanting operational plan including alignment with existing Plenty initiatives	Operational Plan co-designed with Regional Council and Elders	T8, T9, T10	Secretariat	Q2 FY25	
1.5.3 Establish a congregation-based covenanting approach through Presbyteries	Pilot completed and reviewed. Resources rolled out to presbyteries & congregations		Secretariat	Q4 FY25	
1.6 Resource the church for advocacy and action in social justice, and promote the public voice of the church					
1.6.1 Enact Social Justice Advocacy & Action operational plan, including updating for 2025 to enhance the Church's contribution to social justice action and advocacy across Queensland	Operational plan updated and agreed and enacted	T2, T3, T4, T6	Secretariat	Q2 FY25	1.7.1 Stakeholders incl congregations, presbyteries, agencies and other institutions.
1.6.2 Resource the Moderator's Advocacy and Social Justice Team, to assist its work in supporting the church in advocacy and action	MAST meets to an agreed schedule MAST resourced to complete its work	T1, T2, T3, T6	Secretariat	Q4 FY25	1.7.1
1.6.3 Establish a communications strategy for the elevation of the Church's public voice across Queensland	Communications strategy developed and agreed, with clear metrics for measuring the elevation of the Church's public voice	L1, L2	Secretariat	Q2 FY25	
1.7 Resource the church for action in environmental sustainability					
1.7.1 Develop environmental sustainability operational plan, which is aligned with agreed Plenty initiatives and the implementation of the Flourishing Creation Strategy	Operational plan developed and agreed	T4, T12, T13, T14	Mission & Ministry	Q2 FY25	1.6.1, 1.6.2
1.8 Lead planning for Plenty 2.0 - for Post 2025					
1.8.1 Compile Plenty report for the 38 th Synod in May 2025, including a status report on previous decisions and commitments, and a proposal for Plenty post-2025	Plenty Report completed Consultation with key stakeholders to develop a post-2025 proposal completed Report and proposals brought to Synod May 2025		Secretariat	Q3 FY25	
1.9 Build alignment across the Church for a new season of renewal and growth					
1.91. Develop and deliver a communications strategy to share the narrative of our life together and promote the Uniting Church, our mission, our vision to be "One Church", and faith for a new season of renewal and growth	Communication strategy developed, agreed and being implemented	L1, L2	Secretariat	Q4 FY25	Stakeholders incl Presbyteries, congregations, agencies and other institutions

Flourishing Presbyteries

Action	Measure	Plenty Alignment*	Lead Team	Due	Dependency & Relationships
2.1 Co-create with each Presbytery a plan for sustainable and effective Synod support services located within each Presbytery and enhance the effective delivery of services in areas of administration, safe church, compliance and governance					
2.1.1 Identify a vision for flourishing for each Presbytery and co-create a model for Synod support services that increases efficiencies and effectiveness in administration, compliance, Safe Church, reporting and governance	Vision established and targets agreed	D3	Secretariat	Q1 FY25	Presbyteries Services offered by Finance Property & Enterprises (FPE), Presbytery Support Services, Synod Services
2.1.2 Establish Presbytery Support Services and determine the scope of support including end-to-end service and escalation processes with a focus on efficiency, reduced duplication and lightening the compliance and administrative burden of each Presbytery	Presbytery Support Services design complete Scope of support (service offering) developed and documented and within the boundary of what Synod can reasonably provide		Secretariat	Q1 FY25	FPE, Presbytery Support Services, Synod Services SLT input
2.1.3 Recruit for Presbytery Support Services	Recruitment complete and team in place		Secretariat	Q2 FY25	2.1.1, 2.1.2
2.1.4 Explore technology solutions for supporting those we serve including standardisation where this results in efficiency and effectiveness gains	Technology plan developed and implemented		Synod Services	Q2 FY25	2.1.1, 2.1.2, Information Technology
2.1.5 Develop the capacity of the Presbytery Support Services, Synod support services processes and resources to support Presbyteries	Operational plan and budget agreed, and being implemented Establish, with Presbytery support, agreed statistical measures to monitor the delivery of services		Secretariat	Q3 FY25	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4 Presbytery operating plans SLT input to planning process
2.2 Together with Presbyteries, develop new approaches for the delivery of delegated responsibilities					
2.2.1 Undertake collaborative review with presbyteries to identify opportunities for revisiting delegated responsibilities	Collaborative review completed		Secretariat	Q3 FY25	
2.2.2 Develop and embed complaints and discipline triage model	Complaints and discipline triage model developed, agreed, and implemented		Secretariat	Q3 FY25	

2.3 Facilitate a review of Presbytery financial sustainability and operations					
2.3.1 Facilitate a review of presbytery financial operations, including a. Combined Presbyteries Mission Pool b. Presbytery financial conduct including financial structures, accounting practices, and banking practices c. Presbytery operations including exploring Presbytery boundaries and resourcing d. Consider what Fee for Service initiatives will be introduced and by when	Review scoped and undertaken by Presbytery Support Services Any proposals brought to Presbyteries for decision		Secretariat	Q3 FY25	FPE, Presbytery Support Services, Presbyteries Act2 Project funds from project pool

Forming leaders

Action	Measure	Plenty Alignment*	Lead Team	Due	Dependency & Relationships
3.1 Build or optimise leadership pathways across the Synod					
3.1.1 Mapping Leadership Qualities to church entity leadership development programs	Leadership qualities mapping completed		Synod Services	Q2 FY25	People and Culture
3.1.2 Identify and map the suite of leadership development programs and initiatives available throughout the Church	Library of leadership development opportunities available and being accessed	F7, F8	Synod Services	Q2 FY25	People and Culture
3.2 Embed the Synod Office's Leadership Framework					
3.2.1 Review leadership capability framework and align with the Synod Office strategy a. Define practical outcomes to be realised b. Align Synod Better Together staff framework with strategy and leadership capability framework	Leadership capability framework reviewed and operationalised		Synod Services	Q2 FY25	SLT input & feedback, People and Culture
3.2.2 Undertake workforce planning for short-medium term needs	Workforce plans reviewed and updated		Synod Services	Q3 FY25	People and Culture, FPE, Ministry & Mission, Secretariat SLT input & feedback
3.2.3 Succession planning for leaders and key roles	Succession planning framework agreed upon and operationalised		Synod Services	Q4 FY25	People and Culture, BCF & TCQ, Secretariat

3.3 Attract and intentionally develop emerging leaders for the Synod Office and the wider church					
3.3.1 Tactically support targeted leadership initiatives across the Synod, including alignment with existing Plenty initiatives	Emerging Leadership development strategy developed, agreed and being implemented		Synod Services	Q3 FY25	People and Culture, Monitor BCF and TCQ review regarding leadership (leadership pathways to be considered FY26)
3.3.2 Plan and deliver a governance leadership program for Uniting Church members, including younger generations	Program is planned, participants recruited, and delivery underway, across church institutions, leveraging where feasible the broader resources of Christian churches and other recognised professional bodies		Synod Services	Q4 FY25	People and Culture, Secretariat
3.4 Expand access to theological education and leadership development across the State					
3.4.1 Support reviews of BCF and Trinity College Queensland to deliver quality theological formation and theological education programs and offerings working in collaboration with Presbyteries.	BCF and TCQ reviews scoped, agreed and underway		Mission & Ministry	Q2 FY25	Act2 report and related Assembly decisions.
3.4.2 Liaise with TCQ to establish a statewide access project pilot on theological education, catering for different educational levels across the Synod	Statewide access project scoped and underway		Mission & Ministry	Q3 FY25	

Fit-for-purpose Governance

Action	Measure	Plenty Alignment*	Lead Team	Due	Dependency & Relationships
4.1 Develop the capability of Synod governing bodies and councils of their church and their officers and members					
4.1.1 Develop and implement training on governance and polity of the Church for new and existing members of boards and committees.	Training developed and being accessed by >80% of current governing body members.		Secretariat	Q3 FY25	Synod Services

4.2 Co-create with Uniting Education and our Property Trust Schools, an optimised governance structure and develop a strategy for implementation					
4.2.1 Develop governance arrangements and strategy for Property Trust schools a. Finalise Uniting Education Schools and Colleges strategy including consultation with Property Trust schools and other key stakeholders b. Finalise Identity statement with Property Trust Schools and other key stakeholders c. Determine incorporation model & implementation roadmap d. Develop 25/26 and 26/27 governance roadmap	Uniting Education Schools & Colleges strategy agreed and being implemented Identity statement agreed Governance model agreed and implementation underway Roadmap for 25/26, and 26/27 developed		Synod Services	Q4 FY25	Uniting Education, Uniting Education Schools and Colleges Commission
4.3 Implement governance review outcomes for agencies					
4.3.1 Support UnitingCare and WMQ to implement governance review outcomes	Incorporation process is reviewed to ensure alignment with principles from 37 th Synod, and presented to the 38 th Synod		Secretariat	Q2 FY25	Legal
4.4 Improve whole-of-Church governance processes and structures					
4.4.1 Increase capacity of congregational office-bearers a. Consideration of coaching, mentoring approach b. Host an annual office-bearers' gathering including training & collaborative planning	Presbytery Support Services oversees training and professional development 24/25 Office Bearers' Gathering planned and completed	D14	Secretariat	Q2 FY25	FPE, Presbytery Support Services, Synod Services
4.4.2 Respond to Assembly governance requirements such as ACT2	Queensland Synod actively participating in Act2 Related proposals prepared for consideration at the 38 th Synod		Secretariat	Q4 FY25	
4.5 Further develop Synod Office Culture Roadmap					
4.5.1 Review and align the Synod Office culture blueprint with the Synod Office	Culture blueprint reviewed and operationalised Playbook relaunched		Synod Services	Q4 FY25	People and Culture, SLT input & feedback

Stewarding Resources

Action	Measure	Plenty*/FIP Alignment	Lead Team	Due	Dependency & Relationships
5.1 Steward capital to achieve missional and commercial priorities					
5.1.1 Develop and implement a Capital Plan including a new growth area strategy	Capital/liquidity plan developed, agreed and being implemented		Fin, Prop & Enterprises	Q2 FY25	5.3.1 Ext: UCQ liquidity requirements Ext: Significant church body capital plans (UCQ, WMQ, School, MDF, Synod Office, UEL)
5.1.2 Establish a church renewal specified fund	Fund scoped, planned, established & operating	D10	Fin, Prop & Enterprises	Q2 FY25	See also 5.4.2
5.1.3 Development of a funding strategy for a mission/church renewal fund	Strategy developed and agreed upon, with implementation underway	F5, L1, D10	Fin, Prop & Enterprises	Q2 FY25	L1a/F5b – Synod Services/Secretariat 1.2.4
5.2 Optimise the functioning of the Synod Office					
5.2.1 Review and align business-as-usual activities with strategic priorities to identify financial efficiencies a. What can we put down? b. Explore fee-for-service opportunities c. Review procurement policy	New structure implemented Initial review of operations scoped, agreed and planned 1% operational expenditure savings		SLT + each team	Q3 FY25	5.2.4
5.2.2 Develop digital roadmap a. Develop reporting capability to maximise business intelligence from existing data sources	Digital roadmap project scoped and implementation underway	F3	Synod Services	Q3 FY25	Information Technology, Secretariat
5.2.3 Streamline management reporting across governing bodies a. Strategic reporting framework and system b. Operational reporting framework and system	Management reporting agreed and underway, including any necessary support systems/structures		Secretariat	Q1 FY25	5.2.2
5.2.4 Review and align BAU functions with strategic priorities a. Payroll Audit (PMO project) b. Induction course	BAU functions reviewed on a department-by-department basis		Secretariat	Q3 FY25	Payroll, People and Culture, 5.2.1

5.3 Improve financial sustainability for the Synod Office					
5.3.1 Develop and implement a property development acceleration plan including agreed returns on investments.	Property Development Acceleration Plan developed and agreed, with implementation underway Any related Synod decisions identified and presented to the 38 th Synod	FIP Board Strategy for more detail	Fin, Prop & Enterprises	Q2 FY25	5.1.1 FIP Board Strategy
5.3.2 Optimise the activities of existing mission enterprises a. Agree on performance measures b. Review operational functionalities c. Wage-to-revenue opportunities	Review of mission enterprises scoped, agreed and underway		Fin, Prop & Enterprises	Q2 FY25	
5.3.3 Optimise UEL including harnessing resources to support the growth of UEL a. Revisit procurement opportunities b. Wage to revenue opportunities (including data reporting issues) c. Growth Strategy d. Agree on performance measures e. Review operational functionalities	Review of UEL scoped, agreed and underway		UEL	Q4 FY25	b. Synod Services (Payroll Manager & UKG - Kronos Optimise) c. FPE Support
5.4 Improve financial sustainability for the wider Church by diversifying funding sources					
5.4.1 Review fundraising strategy	Fundraising strategy review complete, including identifying any recommendations for change, implementation underway		Fin, Prop & Enterprises	Q1 FY25	
5.4.2 Establishment of a Covenant Ministry specified fund	Covenant Ministry specified fund scoped, agreed and operating		Secretariat (Cov/UAICC XO)	Q4 FY25	Int: See also 5.1.2 Int: Covenant/UAICC XO Int: FPE Support
5.4.3 Development of a funding strategy for a Covenant Ministry Fund	Covenant Ministry Funding Strategy agreed upon and implementation underway		Fin, Prop & Enterprises	Q4 FY25	
5.4.4 Development of property policies to be presented to the 38 th Synod in May 2025 a. Property Provenance Proceeds b. Property Development	Policies developed and agreed Policies presented to the 38 th Synod for decision		Fin, Prop & Enterprises	Q3 FY25	

* Full details, together with the status of Plenty Initiatives and Actions are outlined in the *Shared Life, Flourishing Communities* progress Reports of October 2021 and October 2023, and in quarterly Plenty dashboards available from the Secretariat's Program Management Office.