

## General Proposal 5

### Project Plenty

#### That the Synod

1. Accept the Project Plenty report *Shared life. Flourishing communities* and thank the Synod Standing Committee and Project Plenty team for their work
2. Adopt the 2025 ambition, four mission priorities and the commitments contained within the report as a set of mission priorities and directions that will guide its work for the period 2020-2025
3. Invite congregations, presbyteries, agencies, schools and other bodies of the church to consider committing to the ambition, mission priorities and commitments in their own context
4. Invite congregations, presbyteries, agencies, schools and other bodies of the church to partner with it in developing and agreeing the specific commitments contained in the report and any resulting budget and implementation arrangements by 30 April 2021 (with the process to be determined pending COVID-19 limitations)

#### The scope of a proposal

Project Plenty is the name given to a whole-of-Synod mission planning process we have shared since the 34<sup>th</sup> Synod in May 2019, and which reaches a critical point at the 35<sup>th</sup> Synod with the consideration of the report *Shared life. Flourishing communities* which forms part of this submission.

The report outlines the process of discernment taken in that time, offering as its outcome a set of mission priorities and directions for the next few years in our shared life. The report is not a detailed operational plan, nor a set of instructions to be followed in every part of our church. It is the shared voice of our church, gathered, sifted and discerned through a careful process of listening and discovery, in response to the simple question “what is the Spirit calling us to offer our world?”

The proposal is simple in nature: to accept the report, to adopt it as naming priorities in the life of the Synod, to invite other councils and bodies of the church in Queensland to similarly consider it, and to commit ourselves to further work in pursuit of the mission priorities and directions the report names.

Adopting this proposal does not commit us to a full and final outcome, or to a detailed step-by-step blueprint, but acknowledges the directions and priorities we share, and commits to working toward them intentionally and collaboratively, open to further discernment along the way.



## Rationale

We live in a world in which change is relentless and accelerating. This was evident before Covid-19 arrived and is even more clearly the case now. The extraordinary rate and reach of change that confronts us all, and that defines the context in which the church lives and works and participates in God's mission is before us every day.

Faced with a context such as this, we owe it to ourselves, to our church, to God, to continually keep a discerning eye turned toward our missional life in the world. We can continually ask one another "what is God saying to us as church, and in turn to our society at a time such as this?". We ought continually ask "what does the Kingdom of God look like here and now?" and "how do we proclaim God's kingdom in fresh words and deeds in this context?"

We are collectively a large, complex organism. We are a church that gathers in more than 200 places across the state with something like 15,000 people every week to worship, to disciple, to pray, to be community. We are a church that employs more than 20,000 Queenslanders to work with us in our shared commitment to Jesus' purpose that all might have life in all its fullness. We educate thousands of young people. We care for the sick. We commit to our Queensland community. We visit the imprisoned. We stand against injustice wherever it is found and our courage and compassion allows. We are richly blessed with extraordinary people, incredible skills, astonishing degrees of passion and commitment, a remarkable inheritance of property and financial assets, and a collection of relationships that reaches into every corner of Queensland's society.

To be this church, to do justice to our collective commitment to worship, witness and service, we have to pay attention to our context. We have to continually pray, and wonder, and notice both what is going on around us, and what God is calling us to do and be in any given moment.

We know and rightly say that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. We cannot however, ignore the constantly changing context that demands our attention and informs our practice.

This call to be always open to God's calling and correcting is deeply embedded in our *Basis of Union*. This call to fresh words and deeds to bear witness to timeless Kingdom truth is clear within the *Basis*. This call to follow Christ, to do justice, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God is loud and clear in our foundational documents, and in our ongoing commitments to our nation.

All of this is the background to Project Plenty.

Project Plenty is our attempt to contribute to this ongoing work of discernment. A period in which we pause, however briefly, to take stock of what's going on both within and beyond our church; a period in which we collectively and intentionally pray and wonder and seek the Spirit's guidance for our collective next steps.



Over the 18-month period we have shared for Project Plenty, we have not attempted to produce a detailed operational plan that reaches into every corner of our church. We have not attempted to develop a complete set of strategic objectives for the assent of every council of the church, and each of our component committees, boards or organisations.

What we have done is listened carefully to one another, and through that listening, believe we have heard God’s Spirit. We have found ourselves reminded of our essential purpose in God’s mission. We have been reminded of our identity, of what makes us who we are and how we are to organise ourselves. We have recalled our commitment to realising the kingdom of God come near.

We have found (or been reminded of) some themes, or signposts – what we have called our “mission priorities and directions” that will help guide us along the way for the next few years. If we pay attention to these, we can be re-energised in our commitment, reconnected in our relationship, newly encouraged in our service, better equipped in our understanding. We can both live out our own discipleship, as well as inviting others more deeply into that same discipleship adventure.

*Shared life. Flourishing communities* presents a comprehensive overview of the journey we’ve shared during 2019 and 2020, and the mission priorities and directions we’ve together discerned. The document represents, to the best of the ability of the Synod Standing Committee and the Project Plenty team, the voice and discernment of the church. It is offered to the 35<sup>th</sup> Synod, the meeting of the council for consideration, adoption and guidance. It may, if we allow it, help point the way for the years to come.

## Proposers

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.Ruhle", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



The Uniting Church in Australia  
QUEENSLAND SYNOD

# Shared life. Flourishing communities.

## **Project Plenty**

Our mission priorities and directions  
2021-2025

October 2020

# The Project Plenty journey to date

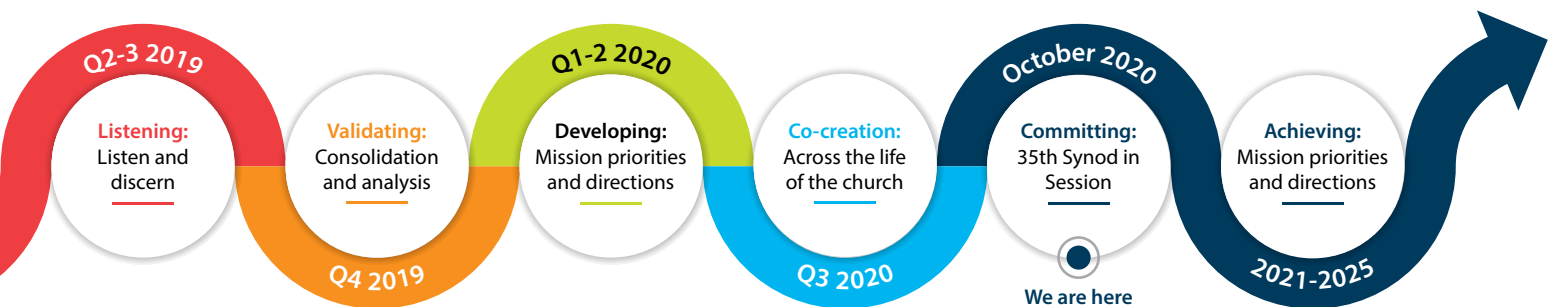
This document outlines the mission priorities and directions we have discerned together through the shared work of **Project Plenty**. The document “**Shared life. Flourishing communities**” provides an overview of the Project Plenty journey to date, where we are up to now, and the next steps in order to commit to and reach our mission priorities and directions. We invite each of you across the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod (from here on referred to as Queensland Synod) to reflect on the document and prayerfully consider where you can give life to local expression of the mission priorities and directions in ways that are real and authentic to you.

The journey has been an exciting one. We have spent 18 months praying, listening, engaging, consulting, consolidating, analysing and co-creating across the life of the church. Our work began after the 34th Synod with the “What we heard” consultation exercise that generated over 2000 comments from over 600 participants from all corners of the wider church.

We took an evidence-based approach, listening to what the wider church had to say, and validating those insights through an analysis of the church’s current state—missionally, operationally and financially. We analysed the external environment in which the wider church is currently operating, looking at the political, economic, socio-demographic, technological and legislative trends and the opportunities and challenges they present across the life of the church moving forward.

We then again engaged across the breadth of the church to co-create and refine the draft mission priorities and direction into the final mission priorities and directions contained here.

The development of the mission priorities and directions was underpinned by a set of guiding principles which are included in this report. The mission priorities and directions are built with three elements: a 2025 ambition, four mission priorities and a number of commitments to support these mission priorities. This document outlines each of these elements in further detail, including the process that was taken to arrive at each.



But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

Ephesians 4:15-16



Rev Andrew Gunton  
Photo: Megan Haryanto

It has been great to see the participation in the journey of **Project Plenty**—as Congregational Minister, as Presbytery Chairperson, and of course as Moderator-elect as my attention increasingly turns to the call to serve our church in this role.

The emergence of a call to a renewed discipleship culture as one of the strongest and most consistent themes calls on every part of our church to reengage as Christ's people in the world.

For our church to place sustained attention on inviting and encouraging a life of discipleship through our congregations, agencies, schools and so on is tremendously encouraging.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic we were aware that our world was changing, and that our approach to discipleship must respond to those changes—and that's true now more than ever.

Likewise the other three mission priorities ring true in my own context, and I believe will help chart a way forward for our work and ministry together. To consider deeply whether our systems, structures and presence are helping us to be the people of God in our communities today will position us well for the years to come. I encourage you to reflect upon all that this document offers and ask,

“What is the Holy Spirit saying in your community through this **Project Plenty** journey?” Has COVID-19 and the impact that it has had upon your community changed the role of the church in your local context?

So, what now?


At the 35th Synod in Session, we will consider the acceptance of the **Project Plenty** “Shared life. Flourishing communities” report and the mission priorities and directions it outlines. We invite congregations, presbyteries, agencies, schools and other bodies of the church to similarly consider these mission priorities and directions in their own context. We're conscious that COVID-19 has changed all of our lives, some more profoundly than others, and that while these mission priorities and directions outline a way forward for us, we also need to move at a pace that allows us to travel together. These considerations will be part of our discussions at the 35th Synod.

**Rev Andrew Gunton**  
Moderator  
Uniting Church in Australia,  
Queensland Synod



Rev Heather den Houting  
**Photo:** Megan Haryanto

Craig Barke and  
Geoff Batkin  
**Photos:** Supplied



How good and  
pleasant it is when  
God's people live  
together in unity!

Psalm 133:1

## Joint agency foreword

In the *Basis of Union*, we declare that the Uniting Church is open to ongoing change in or practice of worship, witness and service. We know that the world has been significantly transformed in recent years, including such influences as rapidly developing technology, the rise of digital engagement, changing social contexts and growing awareness of global issues.

The time is right for us to balance how we operate in a hyper-connected world, even as the world cries out for meaning and belonging. Christ's church should be grounded in responding to that cry.

**Project Plenty** is our intentional discernment process – our first in ten years - to reflect on who we are as a church, and what the Spirit is calling us to. Even before COVID-19, **Project Plenty** was a vital body of work, but the impact of the pandemic upon our mission context and the business operations and activities of our church has only heightened the need for change and action.

**Project Plenty** has been a true whole-of-church initiative. Engagement

sessions were held across the state in congregations and presbyteries. The Executive Leadership Teams at our agencies have been involved in strategic workshops and briefings, and the “Shared life. Flourishing communities” document has mission values and commitments that can be applied in a wide range of contexts including within our agencies.

One particular mission priority is “Life together”. COVID-19 has meant that there has been an increased amount of collaboration between our agencies and different parts of the church. As part of this commitment to a life together, we will continue to seek opportunities for collaboration and identify how we can work better together moving forward.

Our respective organisations are committed to the mission priorities and directions and will continue to identify opportunities to implement the commitments. We look forward to working collaboratively while making a stronger Uniting Church and a stronger Queensland.

**Rev Heather den Houting**

General Secretary  
Uniting Church in Australia,  
Queensland Synod

**Craig Barke**

Chief Executive Officer  
UnitingCare Queensland

**Geoff Batkin**

Chief Executive Officer  
Wesley Mission Queensland



## Messages of support from across the church

“Amazing how well it captures sense of the church, breadth and depth of it is **extraordinary and timely**. If we went through COVID without this it would be difficult.”

“This document is very good to bring people together, to work together, to share in our journey forward.”

“COVID-19 has proven that we need to innovate and adapt - two words that are highly over used but still remain true and I believe **Project Plenty** is an ideal vehicle to allow us to continue to think and act creatively.”

“We are in this **together!**”

“We are richly blessed, and we need to draw on those blessings in and for our own life.”

“COVID has stripped away some of the inherited norms and taken us back to some of the **essentials** of being church.”

“I appreciate the mix of ‘right-now’ and ‘future’ orientation of the document.”

“It’s helpful to see that we have a part to play in the whole church, it helps us feel part of the whole.”

“More important now than ever to focus on this – the pandemic is calling us as society to be more focussed on the simpler things of life, and the four priorities are aligned with that.”

“Discipleship resonates. Reviewing church structures is important. Continuity with some themes from the past.”

“Mental health is a very important focus now and ongoing and is already part of many of our ministries.”

“As we’ve been pushed in different directions over past few months, we’ve become aware of our weakness – so focus areas like life together and fit for purpose help us orient ourselves.”

“Our little congregation couldn’t do it all – but we can definitely use this to help shape our priorities.”



The Church's  
call is to  
serve; to be a  
fellowship of  
reconciliation,  
a body within  
which the **diverse gifts** of its members are **used  
for the building up of the whole**, an **instrument  
through which Christ may work** and bear witness  
to himself. The Church is a pilgrim people, **always  
on the way towards a promised goal**; here she  
**does not have  
a continuing  
city but seeks  
one to come.**

On the way  
Christ feeds her  
with Word and  
Sacraments,  
and she has the  
gift of the Spirit  
in order that  
she may not  
lose the way.

From paragraph 3,  
*Basis of Union*

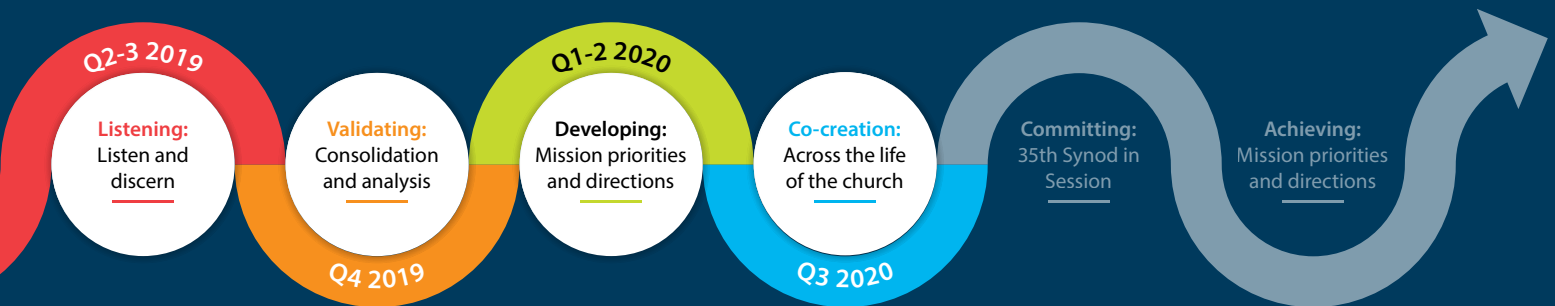
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## Where we have been; our journey so far

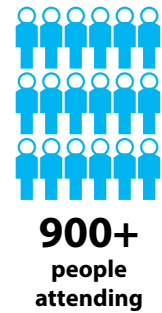
This section documents the **Project Plenty** journey we have travelled together; from prayerful listening through validating, developing and co-creation of the final mission priorities and ambition.



Where we have been; our journey so far

## A shared journey to date

Throughout Project Plenty, we have been working together on developing our shared journey through a process of deliberate and continual engagement. This is part of our commitment to closer collaboration across the life of the church.



**2691**  
notes and comments  
collected



**656**  
actionable  
ideas



**203**  
social media  
posts



**293**  
social media  
comments



**371**  
Facebook group  
members



**2278**  
social media  
reactions



**124**  
emails  
received



**5707**  
total video views



**9352**  
website page views

**6370**  
unique page views

**2177**  
users



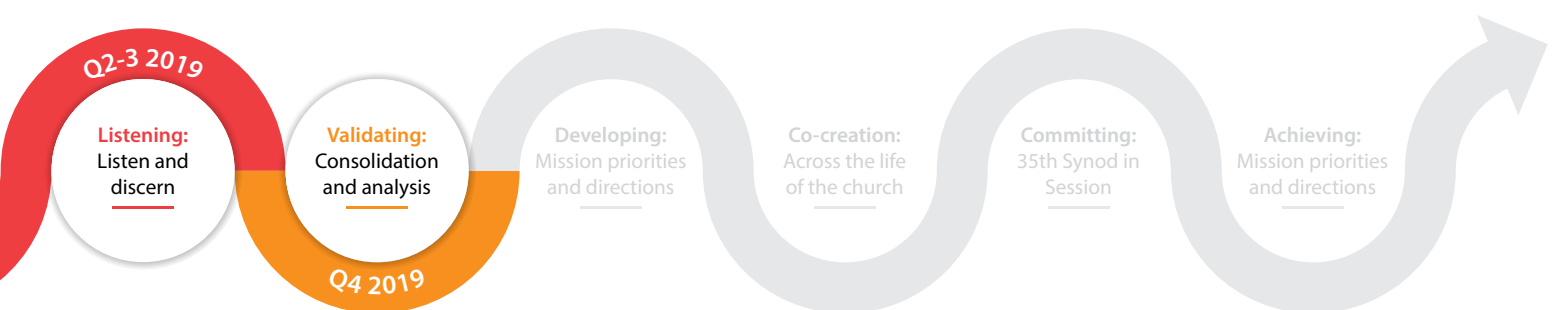
**1862**  
podcast plays  
(16 episodes)

For the period 17 May 2019 to 13 August 2020.



## Listening and validating

In developing the mission priorities and directions, we took an evidence-based approach. We listened to what the wider church had to say and then validated those insights through an analysis of the church's current state—missionally, operationally and financially. We also analysed the external environment in which the wider church is currently operating; from looking at the political, economic, socio-demographic, technological and legislative trends to the opportunities and challenges they present across the life of the church moving forward. The results of these activities are the mission priorities and directions.





# The environment in which we exist

Along with extensive consultation and engagement across the life of the church, we looked outside the church to understand the key trends occurring around us. Specifically, we looked at the political, economic, socio-demographic, technological, environmental and legislative trends, and how they might impact us positively or negatively in the future. Some of our key observations include:

## Political, economic and technological

### Light government

- There is greater distribution of government funding for the partnered and privatised delivery of community services.

### Rising cost of living

- Increased spending on essential services has a related decrease in discretionary expenditure for items such as private health care and education.

### Labour disruption and urbanisation

- Increases in automation and AI are impacting on traditional employment roles with the greatest current impact in regional communities.

### Digital literacy

- Whilst 87 per cent of Australians have access to the internet, the access rate is only 55 per cent for those aged 65 and over.

## Environmental, legislative and socio-demographic

### Climate change

- Climate change-related extreme weather events are increasing in severity and frequency taking an emotional, financial and environmental toll, especially on rural communities. There is increased community expectation for organisations to take an active role in minimising overall impact.

### Compliance

- Legislative tools such as the Religious Discrimination Bill 2019, workplace health and safety and compliance related legislation and the National Redress Scheme are imposing increasing compliance pressures on organisations.

### Social isolation

- Social isolation is manifested through issues such as drug use, suicide, mental health, relationship breakdowns and domestic violence. Half of all Australians are likely to experience a mental health related illness in their lifetime.

## Religious affiliation

### Decline in Christianity

- Increased secularisation of society is contributing to the marginalisation of Christian belief.
- Most mainstream Christian denominations have experienced decline over the decade between 2006 and the 2016 census. In 2016, those selecting “no religion” have been the fastest growing group, particularly in younger age groups.

### Ageing congregations

- Our congregations are not being renewed with young people. Less than 19 per cent of young people polled in the [2019 Mission Australia Youth Survey](#) said they participated in religious activity.

### Decline in Queensland Synod affiliation

- There has been a decline in Queensland Synod affiliation in almost all age categories over the

last three census periods except for in the 65-74 and 75-84 age cohorts. When looking at the progression over time of an age group, all 2006 cohorts shrank by 2016. *Data from the 2006, 2011 and 2016 Census.*

## COVID-19 considerations

### What we have seen

- Strong government intervention and support for businesses and the community.
- Increased job displacement and instability, both from the direct health crisis and the impending economic challenges.
- Increased cases of isolation, loneliness, mental ill-health and domestic and family violence.
- Acceleration into new ways of living – including worship, health care, education and work.

### Future considerations

- COVID-19 will be part of our lives into the future and will pose challenges for the way we live and the way we engage as church.
- Feedback received from across the church suggests that our mission priorities and directions are more relevant now than ever.
- Whilst we need to continue our journey, COVID-19 has affected us all differently and we need to go at a pace that allows everyone to walk with us.

# What we heard from you

There were eight recurring themes in the feedback coming from our 2019 consultation and engagement across the life of the church, representing what you believe to be the most important foci for the church over the coming years. These were circulated to the wider church in the “What we heard” report in January 2020. Both anecdotal feedback following the release of the report and structured feedback through co-creation indicate that the themes resonate across the breadth of the church.

1

## Discipleship

Focus on discipleship as core business.

2

## Training

Refreshed training of lay people and ministers to equip with skills to read context, understand the community and practise evangelism.

3

## Communities

Active in things that matter in our communities—particularly mental health.

4

## Church hubs

Churches as community hubs (21st Century manner, not 1950s).

5

## Hard decisions

Develop capacity and willingness to make hard decisions.

6

## Governance

Improved church structures, governance and compliance to ensure we enhance rather than inhibit mission.

8

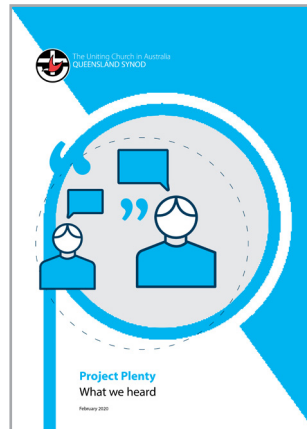
## Collaboration

Develop tighter collaboration and integration across the Queensland Synod.

7

## Effective assets

More effective use of assets for revenue, mission and community (including physical assets).



What we heard report

## Validating what we heard

We examined the current state of the church across a number of lenses—missional, operational and financial—to validate the eight key themes. Outlined below are some of the key findings and observations which were considered throughout the development of the mission priorities and directions.

1

### Discipleship

Focus on discipleship as core business.

- Opportunity to engage those that affiliate as “Uniting Church” but are not active in their local congregation
- Opportunity to engage youth, especially as leaders of the church
- Breadth of theological identity across the church
- Diversity in our church including through gender diversity in our leadership and through our multicultural communities

2

### Training

Refreshed training of lay people and ministers to equip with skills to read context, understand the community and practise evangelism.

- Opportunities to better equip staff and volunteers across the organisation
- Opportunities to draw on the breadth of experience and knowledge across the church to provide training and development opportunities for our leaders

3

### Communities

Active in things that matter in our communities—particularly mental health.

- Unparalleled diverse service offerings across the church to the communities of Queensland
- Potential duplication of effort
- Opportunities to leverage and share resources (i.e. mental health tools, programs)

4

### Church hubs

Churches as community hubs (21st Century manner, not 1950s).

- Opportunities to host multi-agency community services
  - Potential new approaches to fostering stronger communities
- Opportunity to maximise broad physical presence across the state

5

## Hard decisions

Develop capacity and willingness to make hard decisions.

6

## Governance

Improved church structures, governance and compliance to ensure we enhance rather than inhibit mission.

7

## Effective assets

More effective use of assets for revenue, mission and community (including physical assets).

8

## Collaboration

Develop tighter collaboration and integration across the Queensland Synod.

- Opportunities to align staff and volunteers across the organisation
- Opportunities for improved tracking, sharing and utilisation of data and information internally which will lead to improved decision making

- Governance structure allows flexibility for mission delivery, but is challenging for accountability and reporting
- Risk attribution is distributed across entities
- Good transparency and accountability demonstrated through external reporting

- Assets not explicitly linked to strategic delivery on mission or to financial returns
- Overall operating deficit across the breadth of the church

- Opportunities to leverage available skills, expertise and tools across the life of the church
- Opportunities to provide seamless cross-entity service to individuals through strengthened cross-entity collaboration

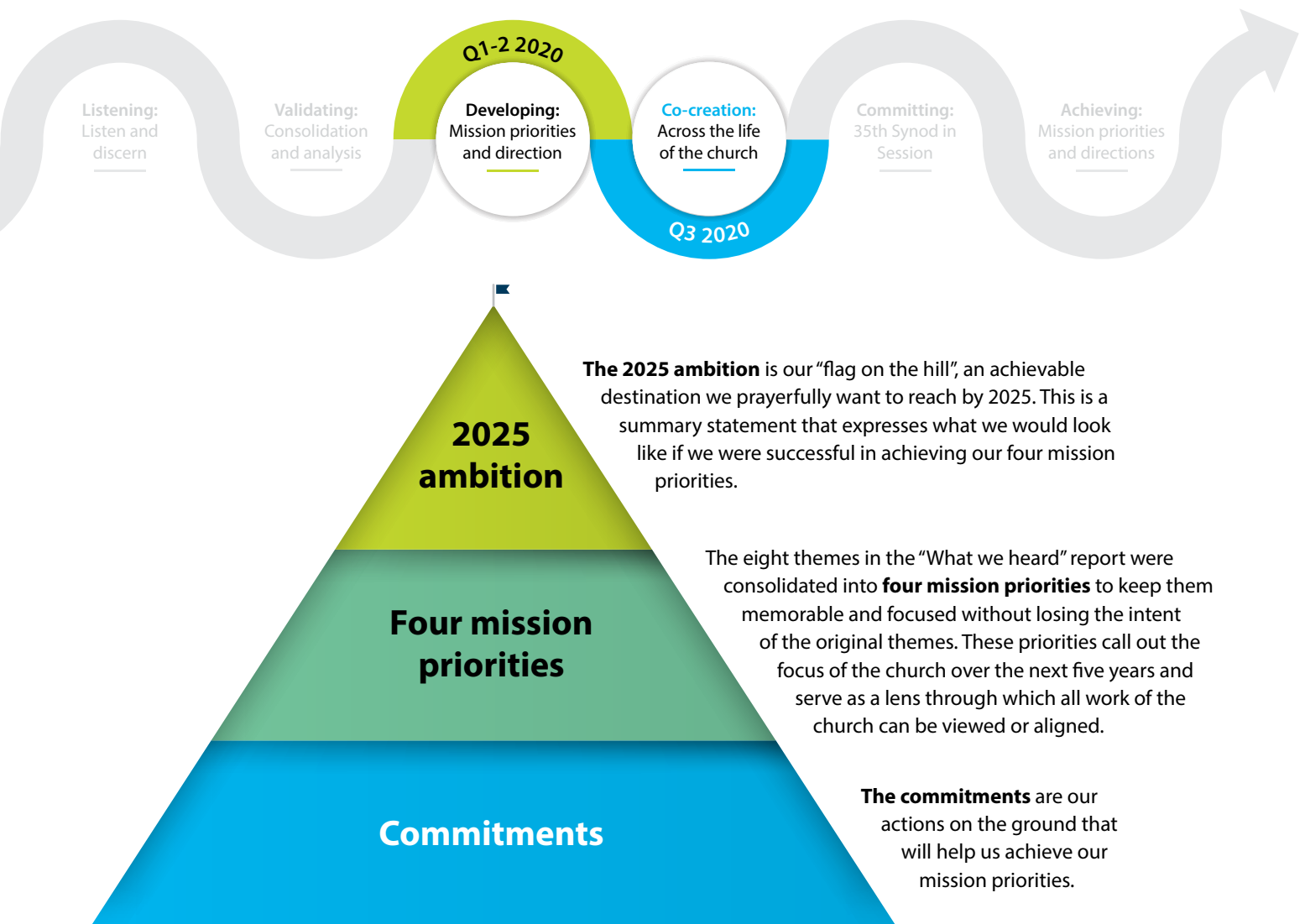
# Developing and co-creation

Once we collated insights gathered through the listening and validating phases of **Project Plenty**, we worked with leaders from across the church to organise the information in a manner that would resonate across our diverse communities. A process of participation and co-creation was then undertaken where everyone from across the church had the opportunity to further refine the mission priorities and directions. This will serve as guidance throughout the life of the church as we unite to deliver on our mission.

Commit your work to the Lord and your plans will be established.

Proverbs 16:3

The development of the mission priorities and directions was underpinned by a set of guiding principles which are included in this report. The mission priorities and directions are built with three elements: a 2025 ambition, four mission priorities and a number of high-level commitments to support these mission priorities:



# Our guiding principles

Throughout our engagement and consultation a number of principles emerged to support the development of the mission priorities and directions. We coupled these with best practice to develop our guiding principles to ensure that our decision making was authentic and reflective of our values.

## Aligned

to the vision and values of the church in Queensland.

## One church

ensuring that we bring light to the elements that unite us, rather than divide us, and build a one church identity.

## Enhanced collaboration

by working with each other to understand interdependencies and reduce silos to deliver more effectively on God's mission.

## Invitational

in understanding that the entities of the church will align to the one church view in different ways. The approach will not be overly prescriptive, and will invite the church in Queensland to pledge their participation.

## Supportive

of our church to pursue mission as a local expression of Christ's presence in the world.

## Measured risk taking

that contributes to re-imagining how we transform our church.

## Meaningful

to our members and customers, holding true to the life of the church and God's mission.

## Sustainable

by using our resources in the most effective ways to ensure that we nurture a flourishing church.

## Measurable

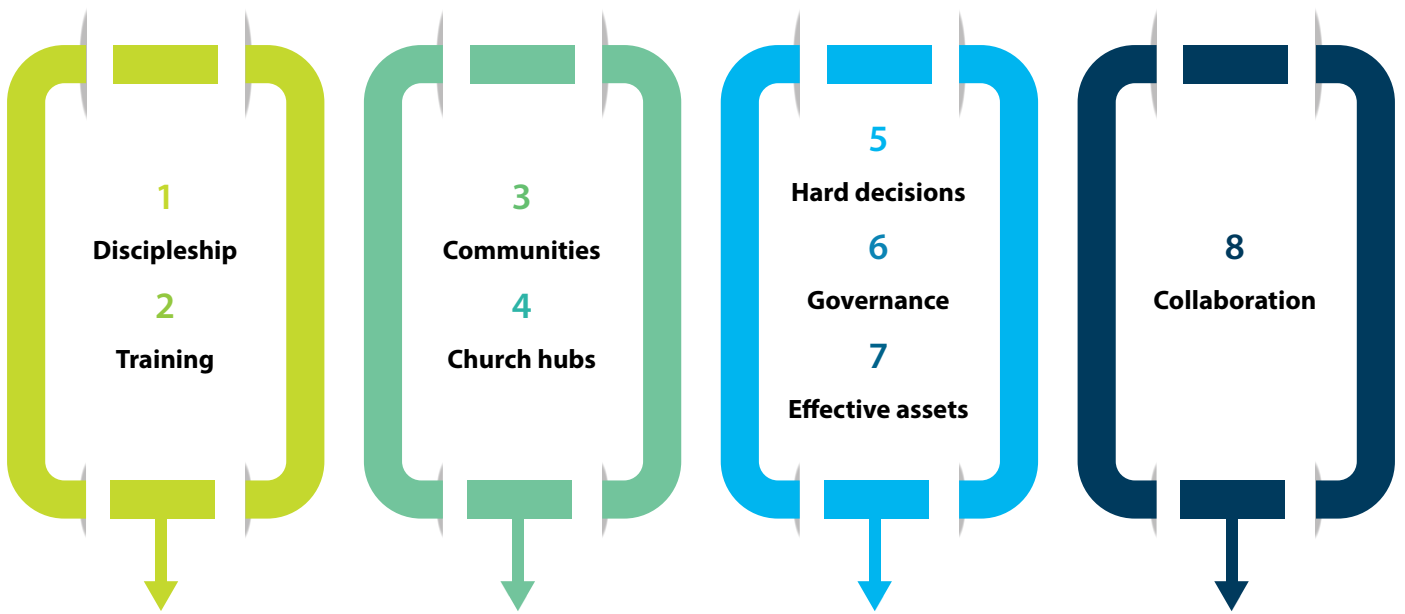
to ensure that we are working in the achievable scope of our resources and timelines.

## Grounded and mission focused

to clearly communicate our contribution to mission in a non-bureaucratic manner.

# Our draft mission priorities – May 2020

After the release of the “What we heard” report, we worked with leaders across the wider church to consolidate the eight key themes into four mission priorities to keep them memorable and focused without losing sight of the original themes.



**We are one church**

1

2

3

4

## Discipleship

Foster a renewed discipleship culture within the church through modelling, educating, training and equipping.



## Transforming communities

We will be active partners in meeting existing and emerging needs and building upon the strengths of the communities and world in which we live.



## Fit for purpose

Our governance, service delivery and use of assets are shaped to support the missional priorities of our church, with effectiveness and efficiency as two key markers.



## Life together

Across the life of the church we seek closer collaboration to bring God’s gifts to the world.



## Our draft shared ambition – May 2020

Our 2025 ambition is our “flag on the hill”, an achievable destination we prayerfully want to reach by 2025. We are describing what it will look like if we are successful in achieving our four mission priorities. Each mission priority links to an element of the ambition.

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.

2025 ambition



### Discipleship

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

Matthew 28:19



### Transforming communities

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”

Matthew 25: 35-36, 40



### Fit for purpose

“For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, ‘This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.’”

Luke 14: 28-30



### Life together

“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”

Ephesians 4: 15-16



# Our draft commitments – May 2020

Our commitments are our actions on the ground that will help us achieve our mission priorities. In developing these commitments we went back to our engagement notes and extracted all the ideas that people had mentioned that were actionable (over 650). Many people were saying similar things but in slightly different words. These ideas became 11 whole-of-church commitments.

Each mission priority is influenced and enacted by a number of commitments—they are all linked. Each commitment is inter-related—they're not independent. The hope is that each part of our church can find its place in the delivery of one, or many, of the commitments and together we will realise our mission priorities, and ultimately our 2025 ambition.

The commitments as outlined here were then taken through a further period of reflection and co-creation during June and July 2020, leading to the version outlined in the next section of this document.



## Discipleship



## Transforming communities



## Fit for purpose



## Life together

- Refresh discipleship culture across the life of the church through discovery, development and deployment of discipleship and evangelism training and toolkits.
- Pursue innovation in church and mission models and practices to suit a constantly changing world.
- Encourage and empower young people to nurture their faith, serve God and practise leadership in church and the world.

- Develop tools, training and practices to support mental health and wellbeing in our communities.
- Pursue covenantal relationship with First Peoples.
- Deliberately engage in environmentally conscious processes and practices.

- Review the governance structures and develop a contemporary, agile operating model.
- Pursue operational efficiencies across the life of the church.
- Progress a strategic review of missional presence, health and vitality.
- Develop leadership across all levels and entities of the wider church.

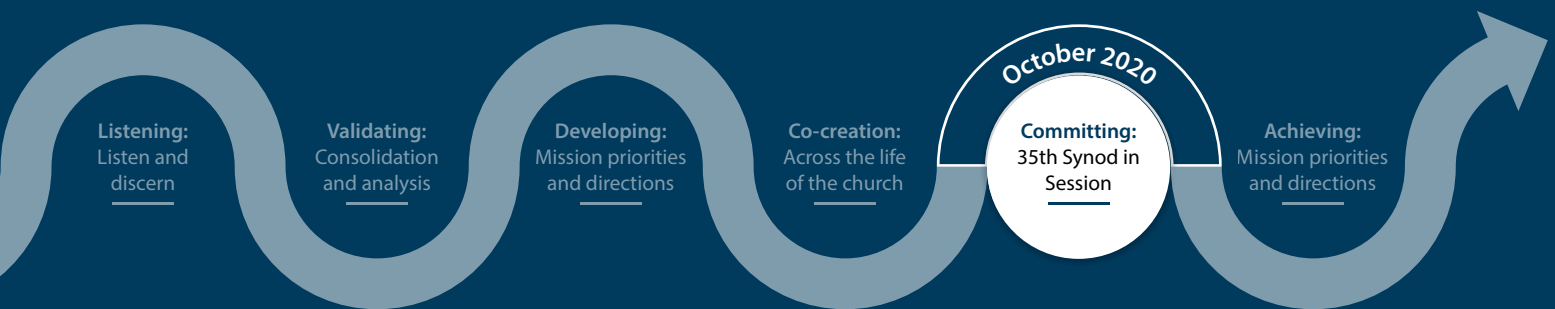
- Encourage and resource local and regional mission partnerships.



## Where are we now; committing

This section documents the point we have now reached in our journey. It articulates the ambition, mission priorities and commitments we have developed together through our co-creation process.

We have, through this process, affirmed the importance of these mission priorities and directions at this time in our church's life. We've also recognised that each body within our church will have its own part to play in realising the mission priorities and directions as it responds prayerfully to God's leading. In a challenging time, we will move carefully forward, listening to and trusting one another and the Spirit. To this end, we invite you, as you are able, to give life to our mission priorities and directions within your context. Let us walk together as we continue our journey ahead.



# Our shared life for flourishing communities

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.

2025 ambition



## Discipleship

Foster a renewed discipleship culture within the church through modelling, educating, training and equipping.

As a key directional pillar for the Queensland Synod, a fresh focus on discipleship will help renew the local church, and to grow disciples who will live out God's mission.



## Transforming communities

We will be active partners in meeting existing and emerging needs and building upon the strengths of the communities and world in which we live.

As a key mission priority for the Queensland Synod, a focus on transforming communities will see the church being active in things that matter within local communities, shaping new community hubs, empowering the church to connect with the community, and more broadly the world in which we live.



## Fit for purpose

Our governance, service delivery and use of assets are shaped to support the missional priorities of our church, with effectiveness and efficiency as two key markers.

As a key enabler to the Queensland Synod's direction, a focus on being fit for purpose will see the church develop the capacity and willingness to make hard decisions and streamlining systems and processes to enhance local mission including considered use of church assets.



## Life together

Across the life of the church we seek closer collaboration to bring God's gifts to the world.

As a key focus of our direction, a healthy shared life for our church will enable all facets of the church to collaborate more effectively, develop tighter relationships and ultimately benefit our missional purposes.

# Discipleship

Foster a renewed discipleship culture within the church through modelling, educating, training and equipping.

## Overview

A call for a renewed focus on discipleship was heard consistently throughout the listening and discernment process. Many voices from across the church called for this focus on discipleship, evangelism, learning and living.

As a key directional pillar for the Queensland Synod, a fresh focus on discipleship will help renew the local church, and grow disciples who will live out God's mission.

## Scripture

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Matthew 28:19

## Quotes

- "Focus on evangelism as living out faith in word and deed is good - goes hand in hand with discipleship."
- "Discipleship is critical element - if we get that right everything else follows, don't get that right and none of the rest matter."
- "Innovation to reach the younger generations is absolutely necessary."
- "Emphasis on discipleship in order that people may be sent into mission."
- "Uniting Church in Australia can have a distinctive approach to discipleship which is about an approach that holds diversity and difference within a coherent framework and practice around what it means to be Christian."
- "Refresh discipleship and renew innovation vital."
- "Most resonating: young people - focus on the youth we connect with. Development and growth for them."
- "So glad discipleship is here. Love us to focus on what is an approach to discipleship we can share. COVID-19 is really challenging people's questions and perceptions, and creating new openness to conversations about faith. There are people out there ready to connect to Jesus."

## Mission priorities in action

- Bremer Brisbane Presbytery's investment in a discipleship officer to support discipleship work of congregations
- Toowong Uniting Church are partnering with Power to Change to support and engage university students in discipleship
- Newlife church plants in Brisbane CBD and Coolangatta in 2019 and 2020
- Trinity College Queensland's renewed commitment to developing discipleship practices

# Transforming communities

We will be active partners in meeting existing and emerging needs and building upon the strengths of the communities and world in which we live.

## Overview

A focus on transforming communities was discerned from the many voices of the church calling for a focus on community engagement, meeting real needs, and developing a sense of church as community hub.

As a key mission priority for the Queensland Synod, a focus on transforming communities will see the church being active in things that matter within local communities, shaping new community hubs, empowering the church to connect with the community, and more broadly the world in which we live.

## Scripture

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'"

Matthew 25: 35-36, 40

## Quotes

- "The whole idea of wellbeing, looking at mental health and transforming communities."
- "Mental health is a very important focus now and ongoing and is already part of many of our ministries."
- "People emerging from COVID-19 with a bit of a sense of loss, not sure what values are etc - church ideally positioned to be active in supporting our communities, sharing the good news etc."
- "Word "partnerships" in second priority area - critical as we look to build and model flourishing."
- "Partnership approach vital. One local success story talked about partnering with a local organisation to supply goods to homeless families with needs. Working with other groups vital. Time to implement is not easy."
- "Mental health and well-being ministries are important to develop."

## Mission priorities in action

- UnitingCare Queensland, through LifeLine are offering mental health first aid training, and domestic violence awareness training for ministry workers
- Wesley Mission Queensland's ORCA Project in partnership with local congregations
- Uniting North Coomera community chaplaincy project
- Redcliffe Uniting Church shaping a community hub in partnership with UnitingCare Queensland and other community service providers
- Kawana Waters Uniting Church offering free prayer and support to Lifeline customers and staff
- Synod commitment to redress and relationship with survivors of institutional child sexual abuse
- Engaging with Queensland Community Alliance and using community organising to work with other groups

## Fit for purpose

Our governance, service delivery and use of assets are shaped to support the missional priorities of our church, with effectiveness and efficiency as two key markers.

### Overview

A focus on “fit for purpose” was discerned from the many voices of the church calling for developing capacity to make hard decisions, using assets effectively and improving church structures, governance and compliance to enhance local capacity for mission.

As a key enabler to the Queensland Synod’s direction, a focus on being fit for purpose will see the church develop the capacity and willingness to make hard decisions, streamlining systems and processes to enhance local mission including considered use of church assets.

### Scripture

“For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, ‘This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.’”

Luke 14: 28-30

### Quotes

- “**Project Plenty** gives evidence of serious consideration of how we meet some of the future objectives.”
- “Health of congregations and agencies, currently many are not healthy, we need to be transformed communities, not just institutions.”
- “Looking at governance and trying to simplify things is great.”
- “Governance getting in the way of mission - making sure this does not impede the work of the church/discipleship.”
- “We do need to fit our governance for a post COVID world.”
- “It is interesting to think how every council actually has the capacity to make their governance model fit for purpose.”
- “Really pleased to see the governance review included - including training requirement, equipping congregations for their part in and approach to governance, compliance etc.”
- “Developing the leadership across all levels- most important!”

### Mission priorities in action

- Transformation process at UnitingCare Queensland
- Review of Chaplaincy Commission
- Synod office reviews of safe ministry with children processes and practices

## Life together

Across the life of the church we seek closer collaboration to bring God's gifts to the world.

### Overview

A focus on life together was discerned from the many voices of the church calling for greater collaboration, integration and development of relationships across the Queensland Synod.

As a key focus of our direction, a healthy shared life for our church will enable all facets of the church to collaborate more effectively, develop tighter relationships and ultimately benefit our missional purposes.

### Scripture

"Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

Ephesians 4: 15-16

### Quotes

- "Love the one church effect. Would be great if all congregations could benefit from the work of others especially with admin."
- "Good emphasis on finding your partners. Could be local or regional. About finding where we can work together."
- "From a multicultural perspective, even more important and also more challenging to address the one church priority for multi/cross-cultural local communities."
- "These mission priorities resonate. From a Synod office perspective, the critical initiative is "life together". How do we work effectively with our agencies? What opportunities are there for collaboration?"

### Mission priorities in action

- South Moreton Presbytery's Flagstone community project
- McKay Patrol partnership with UnitingCare Queensland for flood recovery work in the Gulf country
- UnitingCare Queensland Mission Team hosting regional gatherings around the state
- Central Queensland Presbytery rural ministry project
- Forming Moderator's Social Action, Justice and Advocacy Group to work together on key issues of concern

# Putting it all together and achieving our shared life

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.

2025 ambition



## Discipleship

Foster a renewed discipleship culture within the church through modelling, educating, training and equipping.



## Transforming communities

We will be active partners in meeting existing and emerging needs and building upon the strengths of the communities and world in which we live.



## Fit for purpose

Our governance, service delivery and use of assets are shaped to support the missional priorities of our church, with effectiveness and efficiency as two key markers.



## Life together

Across the life of the church we seek closer collaboration to bring God's gifts to the world.

Each body within our church has its own part to play in realising the mission priorities and directions as it responds prayerfully to God's leading.

- Refresh discipleship culture across the life of the church through discovery, development and deployment of discipleship and evangelism training and toolkits.

- Pursue innovation in church and mission models and practices to suit a constantly changing world.

- Encourage and empower young people to nurture their faith, serve God and practise leadership in church and world.

- Develop tools, training and practices to support well-being in our communities, including areas such as mental health and domestic and family violence.

- Pursue covenantal relationship with First Peoples.
- Deliberately engage in environmentally conscious processes and practices.

- Create enabling mechanisms to develop a contemporary, agile operating model, including reform of governance structures

- Pursue operational efficiencies across the life of the church.
- Progress a strategic review of missional presence, health and vitality.
- Develop leadership across all levels and entities of the wider church.

- Encourage and resource local and regional mission partnerships.



## Understanding our commitments

The commitments are our actions on the ground that will help us achieve our mission priorities. We analysed each commitment, confirming each will make an impact on the mission priorities and reviewing timelines, financials and anticipated benefits, as well as identifying where we can learn from others that have done this well.

**Project Plenty** is not a blank sheet-of-paper exercise, so some of these initiatives are already underway, with the message from the church being to amplify and resource them further. Others may represent something new and transformational that will contribute to a flourishing of church and community. Either way, the commitments are designed to give focus and intentionality to the work of our church over the coming years.

There is still work to do in order to further develop and understand each of the commitments, and their dependencies and links with each other and the work we are already doing. We know we need to keep moving forward and keep discerning these commitments further, but we need to do this side-by-side with our brothers and sisters across the church at a pace that is understanding of the other commitments and challenges we are all facing. We invite you, as you are willing and able, to not only start giving life to local expression of these commitments, but to work together on further developing them.

We recognise that we can't do everything, but through prayer, and focusing our resources and our efforts, we can work more effectively toward the mission God is calling us to in Queensland and beyond. We know that we are stronger together – as one church. If each of us focuses on the mission priorities and commitments most applicable to our circumstance, together we will be working on the whole.

The following pages provide additional detail on each of the commitments, including:

- Description
- Suggestions received in consultation and engagement sessions that help to identify and define the commitments
- Who might lead each commitment?
- Who would be involved?
- The mission priorities that the commitment supports, and
- A selection of the quotes that we captured throughout the listen and discern phase of engagement.



# Discipleship:

## Refreshed discipleship culture

### Refresh discipleship culture across the life of the church through discovery, development and deployment of discipleship and evangelism training and toolkits

Support, train and resource our Uniting Church community to prioritise discipleship in their context. This should consider:

- Reaffirming ourselves in the discipleship of Jesus and fostering a "whole-of-life" approach to discipleship.
- Learning new ways to proclaim the gospel and engage our community.
- Encourage and model a lived discipleship, our faith in action.
- Intentionally resourcing (including sharing and leveraging already available resources) evangelism and discipleship to equip our people (ministry agents and lay people) with the required training and skills to proactively support their communities.

### Suggestions from consultation sessions

- Nurture and invest in talented discipleship advocates from across the church to focus on building discipleship capability, culture and resources
- Learn from those that are leading this and doing this well. We need to develop an approach that challenges the culture of how we currently understand and practise discipleship.
- Roll out theoretical and practical discipleship programs across all interested congregations supported by Trinity College Queensland, Newlife and others.
- Celebrate the diversity of our church, by ensuring that all members of the community are invited into the church and celebrated.
- Develop interest and awareness in the Uniting Church, by championing the contributions that it makes (across the life of the church) to the community.
- Publicly living and sharing our faith by demonstrated action in the communities that we live in.

### Who might lead?

- Presbyteries and congregations
- UnitingCare Queensland
- Wesley Mission Queensland

### Who else would be involved?

- Schools and residential colleges
- Synod Chaplaincy Commission
- Synod office
- Trinity College Queensland



### What we heard from you

"Focus on core business: being and making disciples."

"Discipleship skills training—simple, actionable."

"Listen and engage more effectively and more deliberately with our communities."

# Discipleship: Church innovation



## Pursue innovation in church and mission models and practices to suit a constantly changing world

Use our resources to achieve the greatest missional impact, including:

- Seeking innovation in the way we do things.
- Seeking innovation in the way we worship.
- Learning from the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic in the ways that we have engaged with our communities.
- Paying attention to contemporary society in terms of style and practice of worship and mission.

## Suggestions from consultation sessions

- Curating collective worship, prayer and sermon artefacts.
- Church online—streaming of Sunday services and prayer sessions—collecting and deploying resources and lessons learned in COVID-19 time.
- Mission Shaped Ministry and Fresh Expressions training.
- Mission coaching.
- Examine non-traditional forms of worship community, including those without a physical presence.

## Who might lead?

- Presbyteries and congregations

## Who else would be involved?

- Schools and residential colleges
- Synod Chaplaincy Commission
- Synod office
- Trinity College Queensland
- UnitingCare Queensland
- Wesley Mission Queensland



## What we heard from you

“Discovering alternate ways of worship.”

“Innovation in methods of worship (e.g. not all can attend Sunday morning church, other times/methods of engaging).”

“Moving to new models of ministry—rather than a minister-centric model of congregations.”

# Discipleship:

## Engaging young people



### Encourage and empower young people to nurture their faith, serve God and practise leadership in church and the world

Growing our engagement, encouragement and support of young people is a critical activity for the survival and growth of the contemporary church, and for the support of young people and the development of their faith and practice.

#### Suggestions from consultation sessions

- Championing and supporting young people to take a leadership role within the wider church, including the election of young people to church councils or appointment of young people to significant leadership roles.
- Supporting and funding initiatives where young people have indicated an interest and could lead (e.g. improving our environmental footprint).
- Foster engagement between schools and local congregations, to ensure young people are thoughtfully engaged.
- Refining engagement mechanisms such as religious instruction, Messy Church, Easter Madness, etc.
- Developing and providing innovative parent engagement activities such as parents night out initiatives, youth camps, etc.
- Look across the breadth of the church to identify, champion and foster opportunities for youth leadership or work experience.
- Refreshing the valuable work already undertaken, including the Synod Youth Ministry Strategy (2018/19) and Digital Discipleship research paper (2019).

#### Who might lead?

- Presbyteries and congregations
- Schools
- Schools and Residential Colleges Commission

#### Who else would be involved?

- Residential colleges
- Synod Chaplaincy Commission
- Synod office
- Trinity College Queensland



#### What we heard from you

“Take up the challenge to focus on young Christians.”

“We need to be more strategic about investing into the faith formation and leadership development of our children, youth and young adults.”

“Nurture and release young leaders.”

# Transforming communities: Wellbeing and mental health support



## Develop tools, training and practices to support wellbeing in our communities, including areas such as mental health and domestic and family violence

Identify and further develop cross-entity processes for sharing resources that can be leveraged across the church to support the things that matter most in our communities including mental health, which includes:

- Bringing the weight of our agency resources to intervene, support and educate our community in matters such as preventing and responding to mental health issues and domestic and family violence.
- Providing the wider church with the toolkits to reach out and support their communities proactively.
- Developing a collaborative model that can be utilised in responding to other priority areas such grief and loss and poverty.

## Suggestions from consultation sessions

- Develop an approach and process to introduce and deploy support programs such as mental health first aid training, including:
  - Promote acknowledge and acceptance through advocacy.
  - Ensure training and workshops are accessible.
- Tailored programs for different age and demographic (e.g. Uniting Church schools, aged care centres)—youth mental health is assessed as an area requiring prioritisation.
- Visibility for what is being done (by the church) through effective communication.
- Early intervention tools.
- Mental health channels and tools available when you need them, and when someone else needs them.
- Proactive self-care tools to avoid burn-out and encourage support to one another.
- Focus should be on collaborating and leveraging materials, support and resources that already exist. Likewise deployment could occur through existing channels, or the proposed regional missional partnerships.

## Who might lead?

- UnitingCare Queensland
- Wesley Mission Queensland
- Supported by the Synod Chaplaincy Commission

## Who else would be involved?

- Congregations
- Presbyteries
- Schools and residential colleges
- Synod office



## What we heard from you

“Support for families of those with mental health issues.”

“Educate users on self-management strategies (mental health).”

“Understand and invest in health professionals that deal with mental health, that speak into these areas, and balance this input with faith/theological input (mental health).”

# Transforming communities: Covenant with First Peoples



## Pursue covenantal relationship with First Peoples

Undertaking an intentional journey together:

- Discovering and building relationships based on shared experiences.
- Learning from First Peoples approach to discipleship and spirituality for the life of the whole church, and share this learning in all that we do.
- Enacting our commitment to justice initiatives across the spectrum of education, health care, and social services in support of First Peoples.

## Suggestions from consultation sessions

- Foster education opportunities for Indigenous students including sponsored pathways to higher education.
- Incorporate Indigenous leadership models in leadership program (invite Indigenous leaders to lead modules in Queensland Synod leadership programs).
- Learning from First Peoples, especially on items of thought leadership such as environmental management.
- Increased advocacy for Indigenous affairs.

## Who might lead?

- Presbyteries
- UnitingCare Queensland
- Wesley Mission Queensland
- Schools

## Who else would be involved?

- Carpentaria Presbytery
- Congregations
- Residential colleges
- Synod office
- Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress



## What we heard from you

“Give people stability and hope—supporting the community.”

“Helping to do more for Indigenous education.”

“Connecting with leaders in the community—especially in the Indigenous community.”

# Transforming communities: Environment and sustainability



## Deliberately engage in environmentally conscious processes and practices

As a church valuing all that is good about God’s creation, the Queensland Synod has the opportunity to deliberately engage in environmentally conscious practices and processes. This will include:

- Working collaboratively to maximise every opportunity to reduce our environmental impact.
- Developing consistent policies and practices around use of resources.
- Advocating constantly and modelling the way.

## Suggestions from consultation sessions

- Adopt alternative energy solutions in our own context—leading by example.
- Investigate the upgrade of property facilities to be greener (energy and water efficient).
- Become recycling points for bottle exchange, batteries etc.
- Encourage use of Ecosia web browsers in churches (funding tree planting from advertising revenue—ecosia.org).
- Leverage learnings through COVID-19, such as:
  - Reduction of travel impost by incorporating remote meeting practices into everyday activities.
  - Reducing paper usage by taking a digital first approach.
- Champion specific localised initiatives through whole-of-church collaboration and/or a focused passion for the youth of the church to take a leadership role in.

## Who might lead?

- Moderator’s Social Action, Justice and Advocacy group
- UnitingCare Queensland

## Who else would be involved?

- Alexandra Park Conference Centre
- Congregations
- Presbyteries
- Schools and residential colleges
- Synod Chaplaincy Commission
- Synod office
- Trinity College Queensland
- Wesley Mission Queensland



## What we heard from you

“Increasing awareness of climate change and ways that we as a community can reduce our carbon footprint.”

“Educate people of the facts of climate change and support green options.”

“Initiatives on weather/climate change.”



# Fit for purpose:

## Governance reform

### Create enabling mechanisms to develop a contemporary, agile operating model, including reform of governance structures

Revision of church governance structures to enhance local mission capacity, reduce the burden of administrative processes and develop and adopt contemporary and agile approaches to operations where governance and decision making is streamlined and empowered. This should be applicable to church structures established in the *Basis of Union* as well as the risk relationship with agencies and affiliated entities.

#### Suggestions from consultation sessions

- Revise suitability of levels of control to enable timely decision making, including:
  - Questioning the consensus model—we need to streamline decision making processes.
  - Giving agency to some people to make decisions away from multiple sets of hands.
- Review of Synod, Synod office and Presbytery model including roles, operating costs and funding model.
- Reducing the load of keeping the machinery of the church running, including:
  - Reducing the top-heavy administrative burden.
  - Reducing compliance—ensuring it is right-sized or fit-for-purpose for the relevant entity.
  - Standardising templates, processes and work practices for some of the entities to utilise (e.g. templates to fit a range of situations).
- Reviewing affiliations across the life of the church (including Assembly) to optimise benefits to missional outcomes.

#### Who might lead?

- Synod Standing Committee
- Presbyteries

#### Who else would be involved?

- Congregations
- National Assembly
- Schools and residential colleges
- Synod Chaplaincy Commission
- Synod office
- Trinity College Queensland
- UnitingCare Queensland
- Wesley Mission Queensland



#### What we heard from you

- “Restructure governance model that builds alignment structurally and relationships.”
- “Lighten compliance load.”
- “Reduce resource duplication.”





# Fit for purpose: Operational efficiencies

## Pursue operational efficiencies across the life of the church

Identify, develop and implement opportunities for efficiency throughout the non-service delivery operations of the church, including:

- Develop a contemporary operating model that unites the church.
- Seek to leverage the benefit of technology in creating an agile and shared information environment.

## Suggestions from consultation sessions

- Collaboration on back and middle office activities and tools (purchasing, fleet, HR, etc.), particularly with larger entities (e.g. Synod office, Wesley Mission Queensland and UnitingCare Queensland). Focus on partnering for value creation.
- Provision of church “better practice” guides, tools and resources that smaller entities can leverage for their use (i.e. Xero project for treasurers)
- Provision of shared business resources (including technology) at congregations and presbyteries to support business operations (including compliance, project management and tech for pastoral care, giving, administration, community engagement, connection and internal communication, etc.).
- Develop and implement a platform and supporting processes to share and test better practice ideas for adoption by other parts of the church.

## Who might lead?

- Synod office

## Who else would be involved?

- Congregations
- Presbyteries
- Schools and residential colleges
- Synod Chaplaincy Commission
- Trinity College Queensland
- UnitingCare Queensland
- Wesley Mission Queensland



## What we heard from you

“Presbyteries need proper admin and business staff who report to the Synod office to implement and champion our activities, initiatives and projects.”

“Back office collaboration between large entities.”

“Leverage back office business support services of the Synod.”

# Fit for purpose:

## Missional presence, health and vitality



### Progress a strategic review of missional presence, health and vitality

Strategically review the missional health, vitality and presence of the church, with a view to ensuring alignment and enablement of mission, including:

- Identifying communities and missional activities where the work of God seems to be flourishing, new missional development opportunities and places where mission may need take a new form to serve the community.
- Re-imagining the use of our assets to support missional activities and direction.
- Redesigning and diversifying the way we govern and administer our property assets, including optimise the spare capacity of physical assets and reinvest the proceeds of strategic sales (including diversifying sources of revenue that contribute to the sustainability of the church).

### Suggestions from consultation sessions

- Use assets from across the church to support mission objectives for benefit of the community (this can lead to increased discipleship and also be a small revenue generation). Some examples include: childcare, café/restaurant, Men’s Shed, Community Garden, Men’s Breakfast, Music, Language or other Community Learning including "Seniors University", charity shop or area for non-threatening community gatherings and activities.
- Consolidation of assets across the whole of the church and review of assets that can make market returns (these assets can be managed in a property trust), followed by divestment of assets where there is duplication and market returns are not able to be achieved.
- Management of property resources in a commercial property trust format where market returns are expected.
- Investment for refurbishment of reduced asset pool, to ensure that assets remain contemporary and welcoming for community use.
- Highlight the work of Frontier Services in rural and remote Australia.

### Who might lead?

- Presbyteries
- Synod office

### Who else would be involved?

- Alexandra Park Conference Centre
- Congregations
- Schools and residential colleges
- UnitingCare Queensland



### What we heard from you

“Looking at alternate funding models to help fund/provide for needs.”

“Re-imagined use of facilities as sources of revenue (e.g. centre for excellence in music—both internal and external opportunities (community ensembles etc.).)”

“Work of Frontier Services in rural and remote Australia continues to be vital and a priority.”

# Fit for purpose: Leadership development



## Develop leadership across all levels and entities of the wider church

Review leadership development strategy and initiatives with intent to:

- Develop fit for purpose leadership across different entities of the church.
- Develop leadership capacity in youth and young adults.
- Develop leadership capacity in the ministry worker cohort.
- Deepen our understanding of the relationship between leadership and discipleship.

## Suggestions from consultation sessions

- Plentiful Leadership program.
- Development of leadership capacity in youth and young adults.
- Develop and deploy Leadership Development Framework Version 2.
- Uniting Leadership national partnership.
- National Executive Leadership Program.
- Postgraduate Leadership Initiative.
- Trinity College Queensland realignment/restructure.
- Leading Teams training.
- Collaboration across church (Synod office, Wesley Mission Queensland, Trinity College Queensland etc.) executive teams to focus on real issues and build real, integrated solutions through training.
- Ensure there are clear leadership and development pathways for our staff.
- Highlight the success of our staff and champion the broader church as an employer of choice.

## Who might lead?

- Synod office
- Board for Christian Formation

## Who else would be involved?

- Congregations and presbyteries
- Schools and residential colleges
- Synod Chaplaincy Commission
- Trinity College Queensland
- UnitingCare Queensland
- Wesley Mission Queensland



## What we heard from you

“Develop pathways for credentialed and experience-based learning.”

“Establish leadership programs for staff and students building on the faith foundations of the Uniting Church.”

“Opportunity for the Queensland Synod to provide leadership to the church and agencies nationally.”

# Life together:

## Mission partnerships



### Encourage and resource local and regional mission partnerships

Shaped, led and managed locally, local and regional mission partnerships will have the freedom and support to design and implement community-partnered solutions to local needs, developing resources, sharing skills and strengthening partnerships across and beyond the church.

Localised initiatives will enhance collaboration across the life of the church (including congregations, agencies and schools), will be community specific and will focus on the benefits to the entity’s mission through collaboration, as well as the benefits that can be shared. Partnerships involving entities beyond the church would be encouraged.

### Suggestions from consultation sessions

- Cross-utilisation of volunteers across the church, including:
  - Social well-being programs in aged care residences
  - Students interning in agencies
  - UnitingCare Queensland training congregants on social well-being support.
- Assisting vulnerable people with social interaction and assisting with grocery shopping, meal preparation, outdoor tasks, etc.
- Creating awareness of activities and needs regionally and providing a mechanism to meet that need, such as environmental action groups.
- Engaging with the local community through other community groups such as community centres, service groups and other faith communities.
- International partnerships are also included as possibilities, where local congregations might reach out to congregations overseas, or schools might work with the local mission partnership to explore the opportunities to access international secondary schooling market.

### Who might lead?

- Presbyteries with UnitingCare Queensland
- Wesley Mission Queensland

### Who else would be involved?

- Congregations
- Schools and residential colleges
- Synod Chaplaincy Commission
- Synod office
- Trinity College Queensland



### What we heard from you

“Encourage agencies to have strong relationships with congregations.”

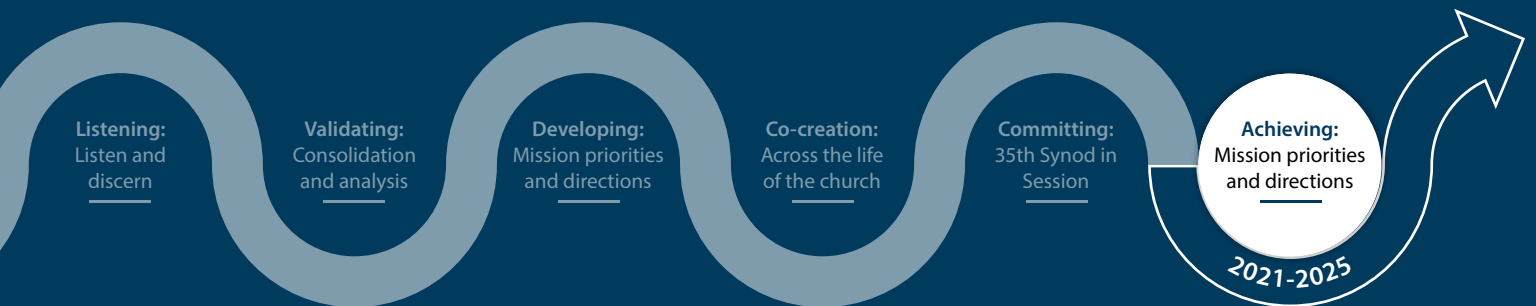
“Identify opportunities, connections, neighbours, needs—and respond accordingly (starting with where we’re already at, what’s already happening, what God is already up to).”

“Work more 'synergistically' with other Uniting Church schools and school organisations (e.g. Uniting Church schools, PMSA schools) both for own benefit and to develop and increase the Uniting Church schools “brand””



## Where are we going?

In this section of the document we outline how we can journey together to achieve our mission priorities and directions. Although we have been working on **Project Plenty** together for some time, we are just now at the beginning of our joint journey to achieving our mission priorities and directions. There is further work for us to do together to develop and discern our commitments as we work toward giving life to the mission priorities and directions in our own contexts.



# We invite you to walk together on this journey

We invite you to walk together on this journey, because it is together that we will achieve our mission priorities and directions

## Project Plenty at the 35th Synod

In October 2020 the 35th Synod will receive this report and be asked to prayerfully consider:

- Adopting the mission priorities and directions described in the report and ordering its life in order to pursue them
- Committing to further developing and implementing the commitments described in the report
- Inviting other parts of the church to adopt the mission priorities and directions described in the report; and
- Inviting other parts of the church to partner in developing and implementing the commitments

The 35th Synod will be encouraged to consider the pace at which it proceeds with **Project Plenty** given the current COVID-19 context.

## After the 35th Synod

Each part of the Queensland Synod is encouraged to consider this report, determine which elements will guide its own life, and its willingness to commit to the shared journey of **Project Plenty**. The work each of us contributes will lead to the whole being realised.

Synod Standing Committee will shape its work in accordance with elements of **Project Plenty** adopted by 35th Synod and assist the church to pursue them, including the further development of the commitments outlined in this report.

The Synod office, as may be directed by the 35th Synod, and/or the Synod Standing Committee will:

- Shape its work to support the church in pursuing the mission priorities and directions in this report
- Facilitate further development of the commitments outlined in this report including potentially:
  - Support the establishment of church-wide reference groups and advocates for each of the four mission priorities
  - Identify or develop supporting resources for (optional) use by different bodies of the church
- Support bodies of the church who commit to leading our church in specific areas
- Ensure clear, regular, helpful communication on progress toward **Project Plenty** mission priorities and directions

## Project Plenty and you

The **Project Plenty** journey to date has involved prayerful and extensive dialogue, listening and co-creation. The elements within this report have been drawn directly from conversations across the life of the Queensland Synod and in response to the question “what is the Spirit calling us to?”.

In that sense, the mission priorities and directions contained within this report belong to the whole church together, and to each part of it. The report is offered as a reflection back to our church of those things we together consider important.

The invitation to you, therefore, is to consider this report, the mission priorities and directions it describes, and how you will shape and enact them in your own context. Some elements will be of great importance, relevance or priority to you, others may not. In some elements you may consider entering into partnerships with other bodies of our church or offering a leadership role to the wider church. You may be able to share with the wider church the approaches and resources that you find helpful.

These are the discernments you are invited to consider.

As you consider **Project Plenty** and your context, remember the central message of **Project Plenty**: God has blessed us richly.

Remember too, the central question that arises from it: How are we to use those blessings for the sake of the mission of God in the life of the world?

# Find out more

. You are welcome to contact the **Project Plenty** team at any time. We'd be delighted to hear your input or perspectives and to support you.

We invite you to join the **Project Plenty** conversation, share your voice and stay connected and up to date.

- Talk to your congregation's **Project Plenty** champion (if you don't know who this is, ask your church council secretary).
- Visit the **Project Plenty** website to access resources, listen to podcasts and read reflections at [ucaqld.com.au/projectplenty](http://ucaqld.com.au/projectplenty)
- Join the **Project Plenty** Facebook group to comment, like and share at [facebook.com/groups/projectplenty](https://facebook.com/groups/projectplenty)
- Subscribe to and read the weekly Uniting News at [ucaqld.com.au/uniting-news](http://ucaqld.com.au/uniting-news)
- Contact the **Project Plenty** team via email [projectplenty@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:projectplenty@ucaqld.com.au)

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