

# Shared life, flourishing communities

PROGRESS REPORT



The Uniting Church in Australia  
QUEENSLAND SYNOD

*Taking the initiative*  
**October 2021**

# Thank you

to all members of the working groups from all of these organisations. We are truly grateful.



Presbytery of Carpentaria

Presbytery of Mary Burnett

Presbytery of South Moreton

Presbytery of Bremer Brisbane

Atherton Uniting Church

BELLS Faith Community

Elanora Uniting Church

Graceville Uniting Church

Babinda River of Life Church

Uniting Life

Flagstone Community Centre

Oxley Uniting Church

Mornington Island Uniting Church

Real Life Christian Church

Toowong Uniting Church

Southside Uniting Church

Sherwood Uniting Church



Presbytery of The Downs

Presbytery of Central Queensland

Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

Board for Christian Formation

Central Downs Uniting Church

Rural ministry

Albert Street Uniting Church

Finance and Investment Property Board

Dalby/Jandowae Uniting Church

Emmanuel Uniting Church - Enoggera

Remuneration and Nomination Committee

Middle Ridge Uniting Church

Newlife Brisbane

Schools and Residential Colleges Commission

St Stephen's Toowoomba City Uniting Church

Redcliffe Uniting Church

Synod Standing Committee

West End Uniting church



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## We are *one* church

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.

This *Progress Report* marks almost a year since the **Shared life, flourishing communities** report was accepted by the 35th Synod.

It contains a series of unique initiatives and actions that have been proposed by the 11 working groups who are each looking at a separate commitment area. Each group has progressed along a similar methodology and yet they are currently at various stages of development as they work through their subject matter with depth and honesty.

As you read this *Progress Report*, we would ask that you keep front of mind that this is not a detailed strategic plan. The initiatives and actions proposed here, come from our own practitioners across the life of the church and seek to chart the work that will be needed over the next five years. There are many more things here than could be accomplished in the next 12 months and there is also further consideration needed to prioritise, operationalise and implement the initiatives and actions listed.

As you read, we would love to remind you that this effort is primarily about scaffolding the whole Uniting Church in Queensland: to move towards our ambition of a shared life and flourishing communities; to truly grow in our capacity to make disciples, transform our communities, be fit for purpose and engage in a rich life together.

Alongside these structured initiatives, there is also an enormous amount of organic work being done as congregations, presbyteries, agencies, schools and residential colleges seek to craft their own responses and projects representing their unique contribution to achieving our ambition.

We hope this document inspires you to consider your own unique contribution and to gain a sense of the hope and excitement of the new thing that God is doing among us.

We welcome your questions, discussion and debate as we seek to grow together as one church.



Sincerely

**Rev Heather den Houting**

On behalf of the Plenty Program Board.

*It will take the full five years*

# Introduction



Making change is not easy. Collaborating to do so, is essential but complex. Finding the points of agreement and unity within different perspectives, needs, and priorities sometimes seems impossible.

And yet ...

God was in this work, not necessarily in our imperfect plans or words, but in the process, in the room and in us. The Spirit has brought grace in disagreement and hope when we couldn't quite seem to find the way. Jesus has reminded us that our journey with him is a matter of taking the next right step, followed by the next right step, followed by the next right step.

Humility was here as we realised that we stand on the shoulders of giants and have been inspired anew by the *Basis of Union* and *Statement to the Nation* and the guidance they offer us.

There was rigour too — hours of discussion and planning with people from agencies, entities and congregations across the life of the church, who are experienced and committed, and believe in the necessity and possibility of making things better tomorrow than they are today.

Much has been done and there is much more to do. **Shared life, flourishing communities** is a five-year journey at the very least.

This *Progress Report* is intended to offer a clear summary of where the discussion and planning by the working groups is up to at this point in time. There are initiatives that are underway already, with the work being undertaken by the working groups themselves. There are initiatives where the work will be undertaken within current resourcing. There are also a range of initiatives which may require resources over a significant period of time. They will need to be considered, prioritised, and resourced.

They have been proposed because it is believed that they will bring more efficient, sustainable, and effective processes and outcomes and closer, healthier, and more positive relationships. They have been offered up as potential next right steps to foster discipleship, transform communities, make our governance and processes more fit for purpose and create for us all a real sense of partnership and trust, community and communion, a life together.



## Discipleship

- Refreshed discipleship culture
- Church innovation
- Engaging young people



## Transforming communities

- Wellbeing and mental health support
- Covenant with first peoples
- Environment and sustainability



## Fit for purpose

- Governance reform
- Operational efficiencies
- Mission presence, health and vitality
- Leadership development



## Life together

- Mission partnerships







# Discipleship

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

## Summary

In exploring discipleship, the working group affirmed that identifying this priority was a necessary return to what is deeply enshrined in the *Basis of Union*, to both hear anew the commission of the Risen Lord to make disciples of all nations, and to be disciples ourselves of the Risen Lord.

To recapture this in the commitments and initiatives, to be able to generate change to culture, innovation and working with children, youth, young adults and families, the group identified that significant overarching initiatives would be needed.

*changes would begin with a deep understanding and commitment to personal responsibility*

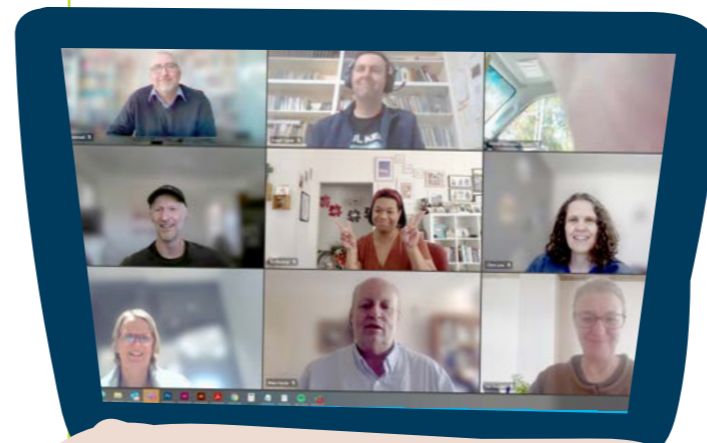
These changes would begin with a deep understanding and commitment to personal responsibility for practising discipleship and lending their own effort and influence towards re-placing it at the centre of our culture. The group also proposed initiatives for the structural and organisational change necessary to catalyse and embed real long-term culture change more broadly throughout the Uniting Church in Queensland.

## Working group

- Sharon Baker**  
Chaplain, UnitingCare Toowoomba/ Middle Ridge Uniting Church/ Presbytery of The Downs
- Rev Monique Coughlin**  
Chaplain, The Lakes College/ Presbytery of Moreton Rivers
- Simon Gomersall**  
Lecturer, Trinity College Queensland / Minister, Graceville Uniting Church, Presbytery of Bremer Brisbane
- Scott Guyatt**  
Connect100 Coordinator, UnitingCare
- Rev Linda Hanson**  
Associate Director of Mission, UnitingCare/NewLife Brisbane/Chair, Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

- Rev Brian Hoole**  
Minister, Emmanuel Uniting Church- Enoggera/Presbytery of Moreton Rivers
- Rev Willie Liebenberg**  
Minister Central Downs Uniting Church/ Presbytery of The Downs
- Clare Low**  
Chaplain, Calvary Christian College/ Intergenerational Pastor, Real Life Christian Church/Presbytery of South Moreton
- Rev Johnson Makoti**  
Minister, Atherton Uniting Church/Presbytery of Carpentaria
- Rev Fa Matangi**  
Synod Standing Committee Member, Youth Worker, Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

- Rev Beth Nicholls**  
Flagstone Community Centre mission support, Presbytery of South Moreton
- Rev Matt Smith**  
Minister, Toowong Uniting Church/ Presbytery of Bremer Brisbane
- Phil Smith**  
Mission Engagement, Presbytery of Mary Burnett/BELLS pastor
- Rev Catherine Solomon**  
Minister, Elanora Uniting Church/ Presbytery of South Moreton
- Rev Adam Tipple**  
Minister, Dalby/Jandowae Uniting Church/Presbytery of The Downs



## Initiatives

D1

Call out our intention to reset our hearts as the Uniting Church in Queensland to living as disciples of Jesus, who invite others to follow, too

D2

Intentionally recommit to and model discipleship culture and practice throughout the Synod

D3

Reshape resourcing at a presbytery level to enable presbytery leadership to refocus on all aspects of discipleship



## ACTIONS

### D1. Call out our intention to reset our hearts as the Uniting Church in Queensland on living as disciples of Jesus, who invite others to follow, too

a. For the season of Lent 2022 every congregation in the Synod will be asked to undertake a period of guided prayer, fasting and practice to reset our shared heart on being disciples of Jesus.

### D2. Intentionally recommit to and model discipleship culture and practice throughout the Synod

a. All people in the church in Queensland, including leaders at all levels, will actively lend their effort and influence towards the refreshing of a discipleship culture across the life of the church.

b. They will do so by intentionally engaging in relationships at all levels and structures within the Synod, and will model agreed on practices of discipleship for example:

- connecting with God
- love of neighbours and enemies
- generosity
- forgiveness

- ensuring rest and sabbath
  - acknowledging who they are sharing faith with, and who is sharing faith with them
- c. Annual reviews with ministry agents and other appropriate roles will include honest exploration of their engagement in discipleship practices with all groups within their congregation and workplace, and their ongoing commitment to both be discipled and to disciple others.
- d. In all gathered expressions and meetings across the church, space will be created to share stories of discipleship, and its practice in all forms to be shared.

### D3. Reshape resourcing at a presbytery level to enable presbytery leadership to refocus on all aspects of discipleship

- a. Employ a person designated to look after issues of administration including human resources and compliance in each presbytery, to free capacity for presbytery ministers to champion and engage in discipleship and strategic mission as key objectives of their roles.
- b. Refocus the current presbytery minister role as the 'Presbytery Minister Discipleship and Strategic Mission' with a primary emphasis on:
- discipling ministers within their presbytery
  - working with existing presbytery networks or establishing new networks of discipleship practice throughout their presbytery and across the state
  - working with other presbytery ministers

- to identify and provide a variety of discipleship tools to assist individuals and groups in their discipling journey
  - ensuring that stories of grassroots discipleship are central to all communication strategies
  - facilitate the use of the Foundational Discipleship Strategy tool (outlined below) and other relevant discipleship tools.
- c. Employ an additional role in each presbytery to nurture ministry with children, youth, young adults, and family (CYAF). This is considered necessary in order for presbyteries to embrace the full responsibilities of Discipleship Commitment three: to encourage and empower young people to nurture their faith, serve God and practise leadership in church and the world. This role ("Presbytery Minister CYAF Discipleship") would:

- This role ('Presbytery Minister CYAF Discipleship') would:
- facilitate the adoption and creation of practitioner networks
- collate and curate resources from within and outside the presbytery for use by congregations
- create links with congregations, schools and residential colleges, and Uniting Education Early Learning, to share educational and practical resources and create opportunities for congregations and learning institutions to undertake service and advocacy together
- ensure coaching and mentoring of all leaders engaging in CYAF ministry, and
- advocate locally, regionally, and state-wide for the importance of CYAF discipleship.

#### Commitment:

### Refreshed discipleship culture



The working group acknowledged that central to building discipleship culture throughout the entire Uniting Church in Queensland is a process of exploration of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus and focus on the means to share that understanding. These will require a willingness to learn, intentionally placing discipleship in all our gatherings and training, and resourcing capacity building to deeply imbed a long-term culture change.

### Initiatives

<p><b>D4</b></p> <p>Facilitate growth in discipling capacity through networking and coaching</p>	<p><b>D5</b></p> <p>Foster a deeper understanding of what it means to be a disciple of the way of Jesus and how to "reproduce/nurture" that in others</p>	<p><b>D6</b></p> <p>Provide tools to encourage the creation of a localised discipleship strategy</p>
<p><b>D7</b></p> <p>Ensure that the presbytery's Congregational Health and Vitality Consultation Process has an increased emphasis on discipleship</p>	<p><b>D8</b></p> <p>Curate and deliver online discipleship resources and materials</p>	<p>[Solid green box]</p>

## ACTIONS

### D4. Facilitate growth in discipling capacity through networking and coaching

- a. Presbyteries, schools and residential colleges, and agencies will identify discipling coaching and mentoring programs, both internal and external (e.g. Propel Network, 3DM, Building a Discipling Culture etc.). They will select programs that best facilitate their leaders' development in discipling skills in their unique context and provide funding for participation.
- b. Presbytery ministers and other key leaders will facilitate the creation of discipling communities of practice within the Uniting Church in Queensland.

### D5. Foster a deeper understanding of what it means to be a disciple of the way of Jesus and how to "reproduce/nurture" that in others

- a. Re-examine the role of the Board for Christian Formation (BCF) as the focal point and champion of all Christian formation throughout the Synod.
- b. Commission the BCF to implement a greater emphasis on discipleship and the skills needed for forming discipling relationships within the current educational and formational processes including:
  - Theological training
  - Ministerial formation
  - Code of Ethics training
  - Lay leadership training.

- c. BCF will also oversee the creation of a discipleship refresher training unit for ministry agents to be undertaken on a regular basis and used by presbytery ministers as part of annual review.
- d. BCF will prioritise continued work with both Trinity College Queensland (TCQ) and other key stakeholders to identify and promote additional educational resources and partnership opportunities for growth and development in discipleship.
- e. Develop and deliver a Discipleship Primer for each presbytery and senior leadership team of schools and residential colleges, agencies, and other parts of the organisation to host by July 2023. (The Discipleship Primer may be based on Simon Gomersall's existing training and could be shaped by the Synod Office's Mission Engagement team (MET), TCQ and presbytery leaders).
- f. Offer the Discipleship Primer to any congregation, school and residential college, agency, or other team to help them understand what discipleship means in their unique context.



### D6. Provide tools to encourage the creation of a localised discipleship strategy

- a. The MET, in conjunction with the members of the Discipleship working group, will consolidate and deliver a simple Foundational Discipleship Strategy tool, based on asking key questions around discipleship practice, to help individuals, churches, groups, schools and agencies design a localised/contextualised discipleship strategy for themselves.
- b. Develop and provide options of coaching and mentoring networks (both internal and external) to develop capacity in conjunction with the tool.
- c. Pilot the use of this tool with both an urban and rural congregation to ensure its efficacy. Extend the pilot process to include agency, school, and residential college contexts.
- d. Make the tool available in conjunction with the presentation of the Discipleship Primer above, to help congregations consider and design their strategy for making disciples of all ages.

### D7. Ensure that the presbytery's Congregational Health and Vitality Consultation Process has an increased emphasis on discipleship

- a. MET will work with presbytery ministers to integrate a simple process for using the Foundational Discipleship Strategy tool (discussed above), in conjunction with the presbytery's Congregational Health and Vitality Consultation Process.

### D8. Curate and deliver online discipleship resources and materials

- a. Presbyteries, congregations, TCQ and other key stakeholders from the Discipleship working group will create and curate discipleship content for use across the church, accessed from a Synod Office resourced web space.



*willingness to learn, intentionally placing discipleship in all our gatherings and training, and resourcing capacity building*



**Commitment:**

## Church innovation

The result of a reawakened culture of discipleship should be that new communities of faith emerge, in unexpected places and spaces, as new disciples are made. To best support and sustain these emerging communities we will be required to understand to their needs and develop the creativity and flexibility in our systems and practice to empower and nurture these leaders and groups towards being flourishing communities.

The working group articulated the belief that this is best achieved by supporting and resourcing presbyteries to undertake this important work.

*reawakened culture of discipleship should be that new communities of faith emerge, in unexpected places*



### Initiatives

**D9**

Pursue grassroots, discipleship-driven church planting and regeneration strategy

**D10**

Create sustainable funding streams to enable missional church regeneration

## ACTIONS

### D9. Pursue grassroots, discipleship-driven church planting and regeneration strategy

a. Create a framework to clarify church planting and church regeneration processes

- The MET will work with BCF and TCQ to ensure that there is a clear and consistent understanding of the natural progression from discipleship to pioneering missional endeavours, church planting and church regeneration.
- This understanding will be built into Formation and Continuing Education for Ministers (CEM) training.

b. Develop church planting and regeneration capacity in presbyteries

- Following the delivery of the Discipleship Primer in each presbytery, MET will run a revised and contextualised introduction to the Mission Shaped Ministry course, or similar.
- This course will provide a framework for further understanding the connection between discipleship and mission and spark creative missional imagination.

c. Develop church planting and regeneration capacity in congregations, agencies, and schools and residential colleges

- Presbyteries will encourage congregations, agencies, and schools and residential colleges to self-identify an interest in church planting

or regeneration through use of the Foundational Discipleship Strategy tool. MET will run the Introduction to Mission Shaped Ministry (or similar) with their leadership team as required.

d. As part of their strategic missional thinking, presbyteries will identify congregations, agencies, schools, and residential colleges that have the heart and the capacity to undertake a church plant or regeneration.

e. Presbyteries will review systems and processes to ensure adequate support is offered to sustain church planting and regeneration projects.

### D10. Create sustainable funding streams to enable missional church regeneration

a. Representatives from the Discipleship working group, Finance Investment and Property Board (FIPB) and Synod Business Innovation Function (previously known as the Business Development Unit) will collaborate to consider new income streams and establish a grant process to assist new church planting or regeneration projects.



**Commitment:**

## Engaging young people

While this Commitment refers only to “young people” it is essential to include children, youth, young adults and families in our consideration and planning.

The working group believe that adopting a set of principles to guide working in this space is crucial, combined with a significant reinvestment in leadership development, ministry recognition, and support for practitioner networks to emerge and grow.

*adopting a set of principles to guide working in this space is crucial*



### Initiatives

**D11**

Reawaken an understanding and passion for working with children, youth, young adults, and families (CYAF), across the life of the church

**D12**

Create a network of CYAF practitioners

**D13**

Provide central resourcing for CYAF ministries and support for events and peak experiences

**D14**

Enhance the voice of CYAF across the Synod

**D15**

Develop partnerships across the Synod to facilitate new faith exploration and discipleship opportunities for service, advocacy, and action for CYAF



## ACTIONS

### D11. Reawaken an understanding and passion for working with children, youth, young adults and families (CYAF), across the life of the church

a. The Synod will adopt a framework for working with CYAF such as [Here2Stay](#), which outlines eight key elements for forming faith:

- Serving together in mission
- Knowing God’s story
- Encountering Jesus
- Responding with compassion
- Creating positive peer community
- Facilitating peak experiences
- Providing mentoring and coaching
- Establishing new rites of passage.

b. BCF in conjunction with chaplains, practitioners and TCQ will create and deliver a CYAF Primer for congregations based on [Here2Stay](#) or similar material.

c. Pilot this CYAF Primer in two presbyteries in 2022.

### D12. Create a network of CYAF practitioners

a. The working group will collaborate with MET to identify existing networks of CYAF practitioners across the Synod or if none exist, establish a network to bring people together to encourage and disciple each other, as well as share ideas and create opportunities to serve in mission together.

b. The Synod will invest in coaching and mentoring of these leaders through relevant internal and external networks such as Plentiful Leadership, “Grit and Grace” and Fusion (Presbytery of Moreton Rivers), Propel Network, Assembly Children Youth Young Adult Network, Amplify, 3DM, Building a Discipling Culture (BDC) etc.



### D13. Provide central resourcing for CYAF ministries and support for events and peak experiences

a. The Synod Office will develop a resourcing website/hub to make resources available for faith formation, intergenerational worship and discipleship from multiple sources including churches, schools and external sources. This will facilitate the task of preparing and running intergenerational worship and discipleship activities:

- similar to [Growing Disciples](#) (VIC/TAS Synod) and [Pilgrim Uniting Church](#) (Adelaide) [website](#)
- including resources, material and curriculum developed as a part of the Uniting Education Early Learning mission partnerships.

b. Presbytery of Moreton Rivers will take the lead in forming a working group of CYAF practitioners and representatives of Alexandra Park campsite, to develop an annual gathering for youth and young adults from around the state to focus on increasing discipleship.

c. Consultation will be undertaken by the Synod Office with CYAF practitioners, to determine how greater subsidy can be given to make the Alexandra Park campsite more accessible for churches and families within the church.

### D14. Enhance the voice of CYAF across the Synod

a. The Synod Office will create policy that intentionally facilitates the active participation of those under the age of 35 in roles across all councils of the church.

### D15. Develop partnerships across the Synod to facilitate new faith exploration and discipleship opportunities for service, advocacy, and action for CYAF

a. Congregations and schools/educational facilities will work together to develop two-way partnerships to nurture new faith exploration and discipleship opportunities for children, youth and young adults.

b. MET will invite congregations currently connected to these facilities to undertake the Discipleship Primer and the Introduction to Mission Shaped Ministry to help stimulate new and creative ways of engaging in school contexts.

c. CYAF Practitioners will collaborate with schools and other agencies to explore partnerships and opportunities for CYAF to serve in the other areas of **Shared life, flourishing communities**, such as the commitments to engage in environmentally conscious practices or support mental health and well-being, and covenanting.

d. UnitingCare Queensland (UCQ) Connect 100 Team will identify potentially aligned projects that can connect the CYAF group with churches as part of their discipleship strategy to inform MET and presbytery strategic capacity building.

e. The Schools and Residential Colleges Commission and Synod Chaplaincy Commission will empower and encourage school chaplains to identify opportunities where children and youth can have greater participation in service, advocacy and action as a recognised part of their spiritual formation programs. The pilot program at The Lakes College developing relationships between aged care facilities and schools may serve as an example.

f. Presbyteries and congregations will promote and encourage the use of the Period of Discernment process by young people to encompass an understanding of the call to be active disciples in their unique context.







# 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.

## Summary

An overarching reference group was set up to discuss the Transforming Communities priority. They have explored a sustainable and coordinated approach to issues of social responsibility across the Synod. The group identified the need to leverage existing expertise in different parts of the church, as well as to resource and build capacity in local contexts.

The working group has identified next steps for shaping pro-active and responsible responses to social justice and environmental sustainability issues. These steps focus on a commitment to the Uniting Church's mission imperative to participate in the transforming of communities, an awareness of the social impact of the church's engagement, a collaborative response and local engagement and mobilisation.

*transforming of communities,  
an awareness of the social impact  
of the church's engagement*

## Working group

### Rev Andrew Gunton

Synod Standing Committee member, Moderator, Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod

### Rev Dr Adam McIntosh

Associate Director of Mission: Pastoral Care, UnitingCare, Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

### Dr Janice McRandal

Director, The Cooperative, Albert Street Uniting Church

### Rev Bruce Moore

Synod Standing Committee member, Director of Mission, UnitingCare/Newlife Brisbane/ Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

### Natalie Clements

Disability Royal Commission Project Officer and Social Justice and Advocacy Strategy, Synod Office



## Initiatives

T1

Further the mission imperative and identity of the Uniting Church in Queensland to stand up for what is fair, just and right for the sake of the whole of creation, both now and into the future

T2

Develop an integrated governance process to support collaboration in advocacy efforts across the Synod

T3

Create a systemic social and environmental advocacy infrastructure that enables effective advocacy efforts at a local, state and national level, where appropriate

T4

Support and build capacity for local expressions of social and environmental advocacy across all areas of the church, through engagement and mobilisation

## ACTIONS

**T1. Further the mission imperative and identity of the Uniting Church in Queensland to stand up for what is fair, just and right for the sake of the whole of creation, both now and into the future**

a. The Transforming Communities Reference Group (comprising nominated representatives from each entity) will engage throughout the whole Synod to develop agreed upon Position Statements on a range of issues, with a reasoned and prophetic voice, aligned with the origins and identity of the Uniting Church

b. The reference group will work with communication and policy teams in each organisation, to build awareness of a common purpose as the grounding and foundation for all advocacy efforts.

**T2. Develop an integrated governance process to support collaboration in advocacy efforts across the Synod**

a. The existing reference group will re-order its life to be a sustainable and strategic presence within the Synod's

governance structure. Its membership will include nominated representatives who have capacity to speak on behalf of each entity within the Synod. The core purpose of the group is to collaborate from a one church perspective in relation to social action and justice advocacy agendas.

### T3. Create a systemic social and environmental advocacy infrastructure that enables effective advocacy efforts at a local, state and national level, where appropriate

a. The reference group will review existing advocacy networks and processes across the church at a state and national level to form streamlined, integrated and effective cross-organisation advocacy infrastructure. This will include a local, state and national view of advocacy structures, networks, roles and responsibilities.

b. The reference group will develop an Advocacy Framework which will outline: guiding principles, prioritisation criteria, and a scalable model that provides opportunities to maximise influence and thought leadership at a local, state and national level. This Framework will align with processes, roles and responsibilities etc, which already exist within individual parts of the church.

c. The reference group will work with the Synod Office Communications Team to explore policy options regarding spokespeople in the church and build capacity to ensure a clear understanding of how the church's voice is represented externally.

d. The reference group will explore, determine and use good practice mechanisms for measuring the impacts of advocacy efforts both quantitatively and qualitatively.

### T4. Support and build capacity for local expressions of social and environmental advocacy across all areas of the church, through engagement and mobilisation

a. The reference group will explore and resource local networks and identify advocacy champions to build capacity on-the-ground for engaging in practical action and advocacy opportunities.

b. The reference group will consolidate, curate and share resources and tools to support advocacy at all levels of the church including congregations, presbyteries, entities etc.

c. MET will collaborate with presbyteries, the reference group and subject matter experts across the church to create and manage a **Shared life, flourishing communities** "roadshow". The roadshow will visit 12 locations across Queensland over 12 months, beginning June 2022. It will:

- share plentiful initiatives throughout the Synod to support engagement and participation in the church's life together,
- recognise and collect stories of local efforts in transforming communities across congregations, schools and colleges, and agencies to share hope, uplift and celebrate.

#### Commitment:

## Wellbeing and mental health support

The focus for the conversation of this working group was how difficult it is for people who need support to access practical, streamlined help, and that even within the Uniting Church network of services, there wasn't a consistent approach, despite the significant service offering that was provided.

The group developed initiatives to leverage expertise, share tools resources and training, develop integration, and build capacity within local communities. They discussed ways to ensure a holistic view of working with those in need from early identification through to resolution, of creating a network to help people receive the right support, from the right place, at the right time.



### Working group

- Emma Ashe**  
Mental Health practitioner, Wesley Mission Queensland
- Lee-Anne Borham**  
UnitingCare, Lifeline
- Rev Monique Coughlin**  
Chaplain, The Lakes College/Presbytery of Moreton Rivers
- Rev Dr Linda Hamill**  
Minister, St Stephen's Toowoomba City Uniting Church/Presbytery of The Downs
- Shele Liddle**  
General Manager, Mental Health, Wesley Mission Queensland
- Kemeri Lievano**  
Chaplain, Uniting Care/Southside Uniting Church/Presbytery of South Moreton
- Lisa Poore**  
Registrar, Raymont Residential College
- Aimee Prouse**  
Team Leader Logan City Services STARH, Wesley Mission Queensland
- Rev Dave Thomas**  
Minister, Oxley Uniting Church/Presbytery of Bremer Brisbane
- Rev Mel Wheeley**  
Minister, Albert St Uniting Church/Presbytery of Moreton Rivers
- Trent Wheeley**  
Treasurer, Presbytery of Bremer Brisbane/Albert Street Uniting Church

### Initiatives

T5

Explore and pilot a collaborative mental health and wellbeing service offering across all parts of the church

T6

Identify opportunities for collaborative advocacy in the areas of mental health, domestic and family violence and social isolation for internal and external audiences

T7

Develop and connect networks and communities of practice for people involved in delivering mental health, domestic violence and social isolation services





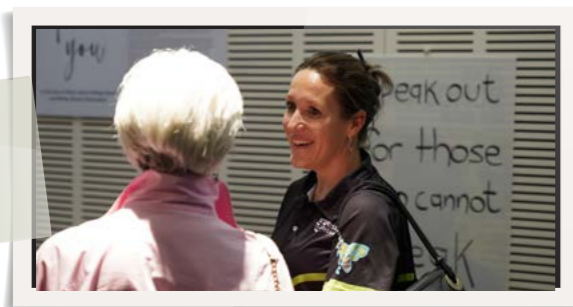
## ACTIONS

### T5. Explore and pilot a collaborative mental health and wellbeing service offering across all parts of the church

a. The working group will collaborate broadly to develop the “One front door, No wrong door” pilot to improve the overall experience for people needing support with mental health services and wellbeing. It will leverage skills and resources across the Synod and build community capacity to respond and refer people to trusted service providers. (See Appendix A).

The project aims to deliver:

- consistent, compassionate, and effective experiences for those accessing mental health, domestic violence services or experiencing social isolation
- clear pathways for users of these services
- community-based networks connecting Uniting Church services with others in the sector
- capacity building of local communities and congregations through using established training models, to support early identification of the need for support and appropriate referral
- awareness building of mental health and wellbeing issues



b. Pilot implementation will include:

- developing a single wellbeing brand that acts as a symbol of the consistent level of service that can be expected. Inherent in this brand is a consistent level of training, knowledge, approach, referral pathways and overall support. This will be provided across all parts of the church in a specific location, as well as, within the local community networks.
- identifying capacity building training resources in wellbeing, mental health, and social isolation across the whole Synod
- identifying two trial sites (south-east Queensland and regional or remote Queensland)
- conducting community needs analyses and identifying gaps in service delivery in the focus service areas
- determining the criteria for success aligned with objectives

### T6. Identify opportunities for collaborative advocacy in the areas of mental health, domestic and family violence and social isolation for internal and external audiences

a. The working group will reach out to build networks and formal communities of practice where people involved in delivering mental health, domestic violence and social isolation services can come together to share knowledge and resources, trouble shoot issues, explore new ideas and generally provide collegiality and support.

b. Resources will be collated and shared across all parts of church via an online platform.

### T7. Develop and connect networks and communities of practice for people involved in delivering mental health, domestic violence and social isolation services

a. The working group will reach out to build networks and formal communities of practice where people involved in delivering mental health, domestic violence and social

isolation services can come together to share knowledge and resources, trouble shoot issues, explore new ideas and generally provide collegiality and support.



**Commitment:**

### Covenant with First Peoples

The representative working group formed to consider this commitment, sought to hold together the work of the Covenanting Action Plan (CAP), alongside renewed conversations that commenced between the Moderator and the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) in May 2021.

The group affirmed that while there is particular work to be explored between First and Second Peoples within the church, about understanding culture and faith, there continues to be a clear ongoing priority for First Peoples to shape their own voice and journey. The working group — through its conversations, its silences, its listening to one another — has sought to act in such a way that there is space for sorrow to be named and valued, and for recognition that this work is a long journey of hope both separately and together.

### Working group

**Rev Gwen Fisher**  
BELLS/Presbytery of Mary Burnett

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

**Rev Garry Hardingham**  
Synod Standing Committee member, Presbytery Minister, Presbytery of Carpentaria

**Kym Korbe**  
Manager, Reconciliation Action Plan Program, UnitingCare/Board member, The Lakes College

**Natalie Lewis**  
Mission Resourcing, Synod Office/Newlife Brisbane/Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress

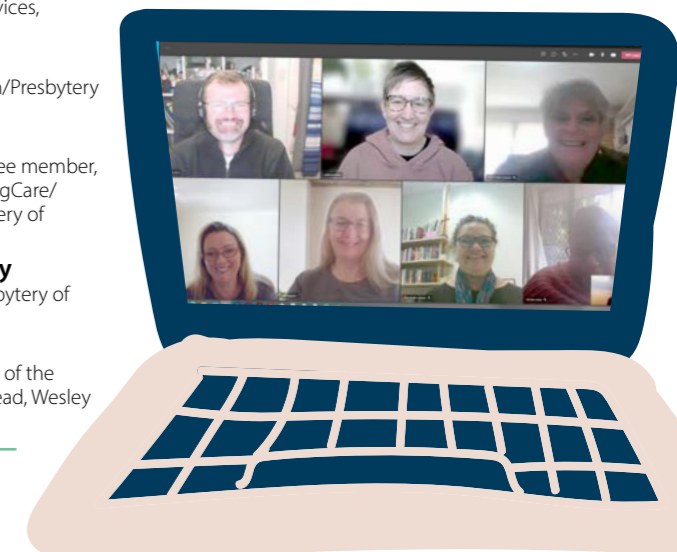
**Gavin Mackey**  
Manager, Executive Services, Aged Care and Community Services, UnitingCare

**Erin Mawhinney**  
Sherwood Uniting Church/Presbytery of Bremer Brisbane

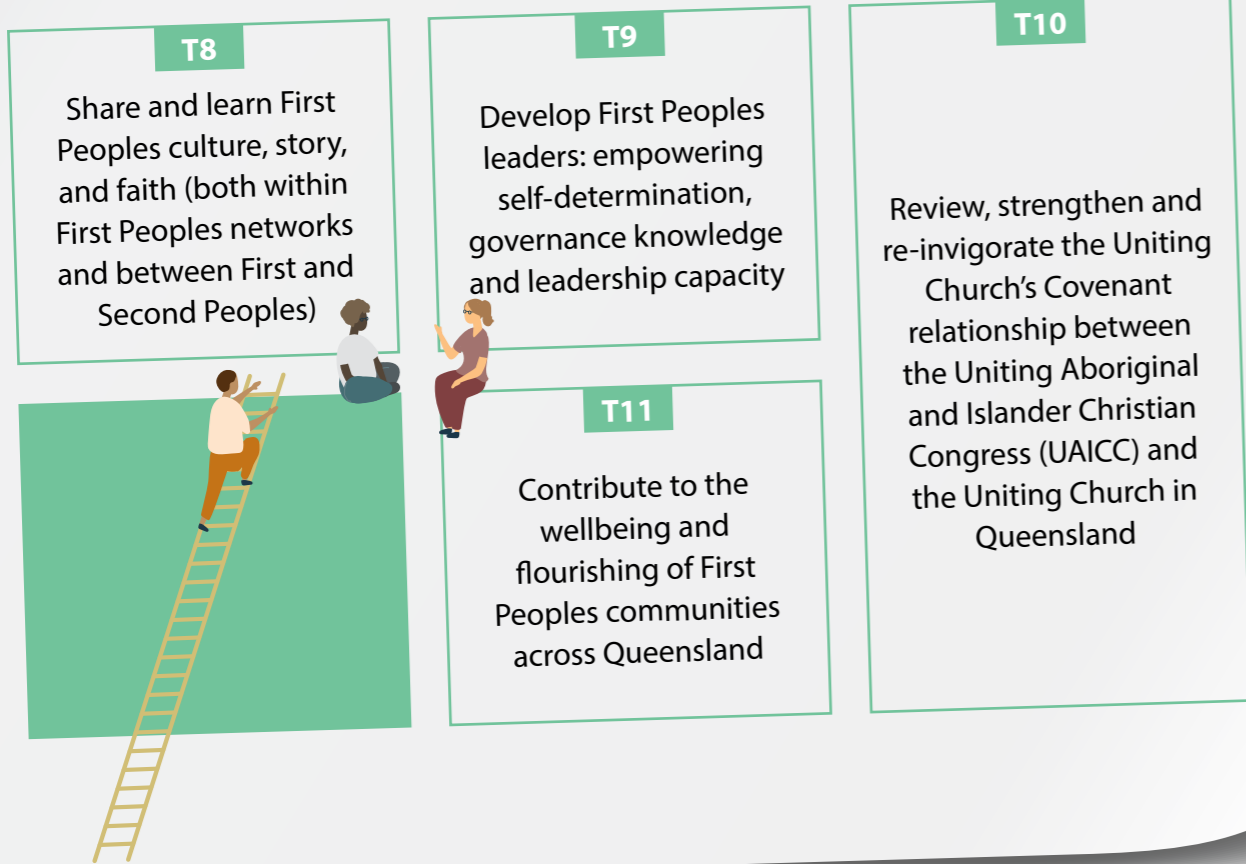
**Rev Bruce Moore**  
Synod Standing Committee member, Director of Mission, UnitingCare/Newlife Brisbane/ Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

**Rev Roberta Stanley**  
Babinda River of Life/Presbytery of Carpentaria

**Danielle Sullivan**  
Executive Manager, Office of the CEO and Reconciliation Lead, Wesley Mission Queensland



## Initiatives



## ACTIONS

### T8. Share and learn First Peoples culture, story, and faith (both within First Peoples networks and between First and Second Peoples)

a. The working group will revisit the Short Book initiative, together with the Statement from the Heart, to facilitate conversations with Indigenous people in key Indigenous

communities, that ask the questions — what does faith mean? and what is truth?

b. The working group will support collaboration including creating Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) groups and communities of practice, to connect the Indigenous cohort across the whole church, in an ongoing and regular way to build relationships and share stories together.

c. The working group will collaborate broadly to collate existing Uniting Church RAP modules and other relevant resources for cultural appreciation, to be offered widely across the Synod.

d. The working group will liaise with TCQ and other education stakeholders to review theological and ministry learning materials to ensure that the language used is culturally relevant and that the faith and spirituality connection for First Peoples is clearly understood. This will require working with someone who can teach multi-cultures such as an Indigenous theologian from Nungalinga College.

*a clear ongoing priority for First Peoples to shape their own voice and journey*

e. The working group will explore resourcing options for local Indigenous Uniting Church communities to create and host local Walk on Country experiences. This would build local capacity for Indigenous communities, including creating an income stream, as well as connect non-Indigenous people across the Synod to First Peoples culture, story, and faith.

f. The working group will develop a project to use Narrative Practice and mobile technology to capture oral history and story, from local First Peoples communities. This project engage with respect and acknowledge all those who share their story and knowledge. It will protect and share story, history and faith experiences, for future Indigenous and non-Indigenous generations.

### T9. Develop First Peoples leaders: empowering self-determination, governance knowledge and leadership capacity

a. The working group will develop a leadership development approach, framework and pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people which acknowledges local Eldership, together with church wide leadership programs.

b. The working group will identify First Peoples leaders and emerging leaders across the Synod. They will encourage them and intentionally invite them to step into the next stage of leadership development, based upon their particular learning needs and experience.

c. The working group will explore a mentoring and leadership development program with existing First Nations staff and lay people across the one church community.

d. The Synod Chaplaincy Commission will recruit and resource and First Peoples chaplains, to grow the presence of First Peoples working in Uniting Church in Queensland schools, residential colleges, aged care facilities, hospitals, youth work opportunities, and with children in early learning services.

e. The working group will liaise with appropriate employing authorities across the Synod, to explore pathways for 12 interns per year, using the CareerTrackers program

f. The working group, in collaboration



with presbyteries will liaise with TCQ to ensure that Indigenous candidates and theological students are provided with First Nations mentoring allies who will walk with students throughout the learning and development process. This is particularly crucial for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, new to identifying and / or actively working to deepen their cultural understanding and connections.

**g.** The working group will explore a foundational learning program and method of delivery for theological and ministry training, similar to the Shalom Certificate 4. This program should be accessible to Indigenous people as an entry level experience of study, with priority placed on delivering a culturally safe learning environment.

**h.** The working group will collaborate with TCQ to build stronger connections with Nungalinga College, to support and invest in future tertiary level educators.

### T10. Review, strengthen and re-invigorate the Uniting Church's Covenant relationship between the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) and the Uniting Church in Queensland

**a.** The Moderator and representatives of UAICC will host gatherings with the broader UAICC community during 2021 and 2022, to support the UAICC network in Queensland to shape its voice, story, hopes and participation in the ongoing Covenant relationship between UAICC and the church.

- Event one: UAICC representatives met



with the Queensland Synod Moderator and General Secretary in Cairns, May 2021

- Event two: A Christmas celebration, 12th December 2021, hosted by Zillmere Uniting Church
- Event three: UAICC gathering with the Queensland Synod Moderator, General Secretary and other key leaders in Weipa, July 2022, including a Walk on Country led by UAICC representatives from across the Cape.

**b.** BizCom will collaborate with First Peoples to build yarning circle practice into the process for 36th Synod in Session, integrating First Peoples way of "doing business" together.

**c.** The Moderator and representatives of UAICC will conduct a review of the existing Covenant relationship between UAICC and the church in order to inform and align the ongoing shape of UAICC in Queensland.

**d.** The working group will support First Peoples leaders to facilitate safe spaces (real and virtual) in which local First Peoples can practise respectful and robust conversations to build their own understanding of what covenanting means for them. These gatherings would initially tap into preferred connection channels (e.g. phones as opposed to "Teams" meetings)

**e.** The Synod Office will develop and map a shared resource to provide visibility of all Uniting Church services and supports available to First Peoples on the ground

### T11. Contribute to the wellbeing and flourishing of First Peoples communities across Queensland

**a.** The working group will identify and promote representation and membership from the Queensland Synod on the NAIDOC Committee, to enhance and encourage the engagement and church presence in this annual event. This could include hosting a "Mum's Tent" for the event to engage, build understanding of the communities' needs.

**b.** The working group will collaborate with the Environmental Sustainability working group to include First Peoples' unique perspective of healing country in the Care for Creation position statement.

**c.** The working group will collaborate with the Environmental Sustainability working group to include First Peoples' unique perspective of healing country in the Care for Creation position statement.

#### Commitment:

### Environment and sustainability

The members of this working group came together with energy and a passionate desire to move the conversation forward together and create change. Some had a long list of initiatives that had already produced significant outcomes in reducing our

combined footprint on the planet, while others were frustrated at the lack of progress and motivated by being part of a collective conversation.

There was acknowledgement of the work that had already taken place throughout the life of the church and the working

group wanted to leverage combined resources across the Synod and a commitment to work collectively to build a deeper understanding of what is possible as a church who is called to care for all of God's creation. They asked, "If not us, then who?"

*what is possible as a church who is called to care for all of God's creation.*



#### Working group

**Judene Andrews**  
Manager Environmental Sustainability,  
UnitingCare

**Peter Brandjeporn**  
West End Uniting Church,  
Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

**Kate Hands**  
Director of Corporate Services, The Lakes  
College/Schools and Residential Colleges  
Commission/Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

**John Livesey**  
Director, Finance and Business Operations,  
Wesley Mission Queensland

**Clare Low**  
Chaplain, Calvary Christian College/  
Intergenerational Pastor, Real Life Christian  
Church/Presbytery of South Moreton

**Rev Dr Adam McIntosh**  
Associate Director of Mission: Pastoral  
Care, UnitingCare  
Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

**Kylie Sessa**  
Manager, Business Innovation,  
Synod Office

## Initiatives



T12

Develop and promote a Care for Creation Position Statement and Action Plan

T13

Create an environmental sustainability community of practice

T14

Collate and curate shared resources and tools onto a centralised online platform

## ACTIONS

### T12. Develop and promote a Care for Creation Position Statement and Action Plan

a. The working group is collaborating with subject matter experts throughout the Synod to develop a Care for Creation Position Statement. (See Appendix B). This statement will centre and guide our program of work in the decades to come and will be socialised and presented at the 36th Synod. It will include:

- theological perspectives of stewardship and sustainability
- an overview of national and international trends in environmental sustainability advocacy and practice
- a set of guiding principles to support Synod decision making and environmental advocacy
- a summative and aspirational Position for the Synod to approve

b. The working group will collaborate with subject matter experts throughout the church to develop the Care for Creation Action Plan 2030 for consideration at the 36th Synod which will include:

- identification of state-based issues
- consideration of First Peoples unique perspective in relation to stewardship of country
- impact assessments e.g. the impact of climate change on vulnerable people
- environmental sustainability opportunities and options for consideration and prioritisation
- opportunities for energy procurement across the whole church
- a Care for Creation advocacy plan

### T13. Create an environmental sustainability community of practice

a. The working group will reach out to their networks across the life of the church to continue to share knowledge, experience, and resources and enable advocacy and change creation.

### T14. Collate and curate shared resources and tools onto a centralised online platform

a. The working group and others involved with the community of practice will collate and curate resources and tools that support the entire Uniting Church community engage in the Care for Creation strategy in local contexts.







# 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.

## Summary

The four Fit for purpose working groups, considered the central question: How do our governance structures, assets and resources, utilisation of property and leadership development best enable us to forward the mission of being one church, active in every Queensland community? Working groups acknowledged that the outcomes of other governance projects developed outside the Plenty frame of work, will align and connect with their work, and will ultimately support the overall objective of helping local mission to flourish.

*enable us to forward the mission of being one church,  
active in every Queensland community*



## Commitment:

### Governance reform

The Governance Reform working group quickly settled on the idea that what was needed was not a complete reinvention of our governance framework, but an upgrade to resolve some very specific pain points and build the flexibility needed to adapt to a rapidly changing social and regulatory environment. In acknowledging the Uniting Church's commitment to operating through interconciliar councils, the working group explored modern solutions to shift how this is outworked to empower our mission 45 years on.

They have debated and defined what good governance would look like for the Uniting Church in Queensland, and have mapped a way forward in collating and assessing a range of governance models, reviews and concepts in order to search for options, opportunities and solutions.

## Working group

**Gary Adsett**

Chair, Lakes College

**Geoff Batkin**

Chair, Finance and Investment Property Board

**Belinda Bones**

Governance Secretary, Synod Office

**Rev David Busch**

Presbytery Minister, Presbytery of South Moreton

**Rev Heather den Houting**

Synod Standing Committee member, General Secretary, Synod Office

**Malcolm Hinton**

General Counsel, Synod Office

**Suzanne Marlow**

General Counsel, UnitingCare

**Sue McKean**

Director Governance, UnitingCare

**Natalie Smith**

Finance and Investment Property Board Member/Chair, Remuneration and Nomination Committee

**Janelle van de Velde**

Executive Director, Shared Services, Office of the Synod

**Charles Ware**

General Counsel, Wesley Mission Queensland

## Initiatives

F1

Upgrade the current governance framework of the Uniting Church in Queensland to ensure that we are best able to drive our mission forwards, within the boundaries of external law and regulation, as well the internal polity of the church



## ACTIONS

### F1. Upgrade the current governance framework of the Uniting Church in Queensland to ensure that we are best able to drive our mission forwards, within the boundaries of external law and regulation, as well the internal polity of the church

a. The working group has considered a range of governance reviews and developed working criteria to aid in assessing good governance within the church. These criteria include:

- staying true to our purpose and values
- empowering our people
- adapting for context
- being accountable to our stakeholders
- connecting the parts of the “body” into a cohesive whole.

b. The working group will host a Governance Roundtable event to explore the specific pain points currently being faced within our existing governance structures and consider possible solutions. This would include a wide range of internal and external governance professionals including those within church, health and community sectors.

c. The working group will develop a research brief, based on the outcomes of the Governance Roundtable with a view to commissioning an external party if needed, to collate an overview of potential governance models and solutions to unresolved challenges.



*a desire to steward our resources as well as possible*

## Commitment:

### Operational efficiencies

The working group for operational efficiencies has identified that there are significant gains to be made in both efficiency and effectiveness within the Uniting Church in Queensland. The gaps seem to be largely in shared access to information, opportunities for shared procurement and the need for consistent, peer conversation around how we can work together. The need to integrate processes and information in this area across one church: including church, agencies and other entities was seen as key.

The working group discussed the issues at length and proposed the initiation of a structured forum to enable information and knowledge sharing and foster a culture of continual improvement, particularly in relation to finding operational and process efficiencies. At the heart of the discussion was a desire to steward our resources as well as possible, so that more energy, time and money can be meaningfully deployed towards the achievement of our overall purpose and mission.

## Initiatives

F2

Improve communication and collaboration in relation to procurement across the Synod as one church

F3

Foster a culture of continuous improvement that everyone can participate in, with particular emphasis on operational efficiencies

## Working group

**John Livesey**  
Director Finance and Business Operations,  
Wesley Mission Queensland

**Scott McDonald**  
Synod Standing Committee member,  
Procurement Hub, UnitingCareJon Moriarty  
Executive Officer, Schools and Residential  
Colleges Commission

**Danny Salzke**  
Manager, Alexandra Park Conference  
Centre

**Kylie Sessa**  
Manager, Business Innovation, Synod  
Office

**Janelle van de Velde**  
Executive Director, Shared Services,  
Synod Office





## F2. Improve communication and collaboration in relation to procurement across the Synod as one church

- a. Initiate a "Strategic Procurement Forum", with formalised and representative involvement. This would require involvement in the Forum for relevant roles across the Synod.
- b. The Forum will work with other subject matter experts to develop an education module for managers and leaders within the Synod, around operating and procuring services with a one church mindset.
- c. The Forum will work together to collate and promote procurement opportunities which can be accessed by different parts of the church.
- d. The Forum will list and promote corporate and professional services that are available across the life of the church, including which ones are free, fee for service, or subscription based.
- e. The Forum will work collaboratively to position and promote the Synod as one church — a significant purchaser within relevant markets

## F3. Foster a culture of continuous improvement that everyone can participate in, with particular emphasis on operational efficiencies

- a. The Synod Office will resource and develop a Synod-wide 'extranet' as a central hub for forms and processes, including a process for continual improvement feedback.
- b. The Forum will manage the development of a consistent training module on continual improvement for inclusion in upskilling programs for church councils, presbyteries, schools, agencies and Synod Office.
- c. The Forum will collaborate with communications teams across the Synod to celebrate, affirm and promote stories of operational efficiency and systemic improvements, as evidence of good stewardship of our resources.

### Commitment:

## Missional presence, health, and vitality

### Working group

- Stuart Christ**  
Director, Church Enterprises, Synod Office
- Rev Mark Cornford**  
Presbytery Minister, Presbytery of Moreton Rivers
- Rev John Cox**  
National Safe Church Unit
- Simone Dalley**  
Strategic Property, UnitingCare Queensland
- Karin Wiedemann**  
Property Development Manager, Synod Office
- Craig Wildermuth**  
Chief Financial Officer, UnitingCare

Missional presence, health and vitality is about hosting a broader and more holistic conversation around how our property and assets can best serve new mission endeavours. It was noted by this working group that often we have asked questions about mission, property and social demographics in separate places which has not allowed us to combine these three key areas in a way that sets up new projects for sustainable success.

This group has proposed the formation of a new process and forum to ensure that potential new projects can be supported to consider the broad range of both mission and resourcing questions to ensure both viability and missional vitality.



### Initiatives

F4

Create a Missional Presence Advisory Group to assist collaboration around new mission initiatives, property management and responding to the opportunities presented by social demographic trends

F5

Develop a consistent approach across entities throughout the Synod, in relation to how property is acquired, maintained and divested



## ACTIONS

### F4. Create a Missional Presence Advisory Group to assist collaboration around new mission initiatives, property management and responding to the opportunities presented by social demographic trends



a. The working group will collaborate with FIP Board to design the parameters of the Missional Presence Advisory Group (MPAG), any relevant delegations, and how it can best add value to projects seeking approval from FIPB.

b. The Missional Presence Advisory Group will work with the Presbytery Synod Interface (PSI group), to develop an approach to holistically exploring key questions in the areas of property, missional health and vitality, in the context of social demographic data and trends.

c. MPAG will define and document the principles and process which will trigger a consultation with MPAG in relation to any new project

d. MPAG will identify pilot initiatives for true co-located opportunities, both relationally and organisationally.

### F5. Develop a consistent approach across entities throughout the Synod in relation to how property is acquired, maintained and divested

a. Develop an asset and maintenance database across all entities in the Synod, leveraging existing systems.

b. Develop an education module that explains how all sections of the church can engage and explore options and opportunities around property held by the Property trust.

## Commitment:

### Leadership development

Leadership development programs across the Queensland Synod are many and varied, as each part of the church has invested time into helping to shape leaders who can respond to the particular needs of their part of the church. This working group has faced a challenging task in considering how, and if, a whole of church approach to leadership development is worthwhile.

### Working group

**Rev Peter Armstrong**  
Associate Director of Mission, Community Partnerships, UnitingCare/Chair, Board for Christian Formation/Newlife Brisbane/Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

**Rev Adam Low**  
Minister, Real Life Christian Church  
**Cherylynne Gostelow**  
Principal, Calvary Christian College

**Rev Linda Hanson**  
Associate Director of Mission, UnitingCare/Newlife Brisbane/Chair, Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

**Rev Graham Keech**  
Formation Coach, Wesley Mission Queensland

**Rev Nigel Rogers**  
Dean of Formation and Dispersed Learning, Trinity College Queensland/Uniting Life/Mary Burnett presbytery

**Rev Glen Schweitzer**  
Presbytery Minister, Bremer Brisbane presbytery

**Grant Weaver**  
Manager, People and Culture, Synod Office

The working group sought to affirm the diversity of leadership experience that is represented across the Synod, discuss essential leadership principles, and develop greater sharing of resources, a richer connection between leaders, and a level of accountability that holds our leaders to a way of leading that is distinctive as and reflective of the identity of the church as formed by Jesus.

### Initiatives

F6

Develop a common understanding of what constitutes good leadership in the Uniting Church and use this as the basis from which to develop a consistent leadership culture throughout the Synod

F7

Affirm and share existing leadership pathways and identify new opportunities for ongoing leadership development that contributes to the church's missional imperative, at all levels across the Synod

F8

Strengthen and resource the existing governance role of the BCF in its responsibility to develop leaders across all entities within the Synod, who reflect the missional imperative of the church





## ACTIONS

### F6. Develop a common understanding of what constitutes healthy leadership in the Uniting Church and use this as the basis from which to develop a consistent leadership culture throughout the Synod

a. The working group has reviewed the *Basis of Union* and other Uniting Church foundational documents in order to ground our leadership development efforts in the full mission of the Church.

b. The working group has reviewed existing leadership frameworks from across Synod entities and drafted a grounding statement with a shared set of leadership practices that can be used to develop a consistent leadership culture.

#### Grounding Statement

We acknowledge that in the Kingdom of God, Jesus is the only real leader. It is ultimately his mission and we are invited into the privilege of serving and participating in this great endeavour. To that end, we are forming people who are followers of Jesus first and leaders second. Leaders who will participate in forwarding the unfolding of God's Kingdom through the work of the church in all its forms.

The *Basis of Union* clearly articulates this reality for us, and we want to affirm this truth and commit to raising and developing as many leaders as are needed to see the mission of God advance in our communities and in our time. We recognise that God is concerned with the flourishing of all people and will draw us into productive work in every sphere of society. For this reason, we expect to find

and shape leaders with a surprising range of gifts, talents, experience, passion and calling. Leadership within the Uniting Church should have no uniform mould, and yet in all places we are looking to develop people who demonstrate and are growing in the following practices:

- go first — exemplify and model the way of Jesus Christ
- tell the story — inspire and invite people into a shared vision of God's mission in the world
- serve people — lead and serve for the benefit of others
- make it better — imagine, innovate, challenge prevailing systems and processes and work for what is fair and just
- extend grace — act first with acceptance and love, building and restoring relationships at all times
- stand on the margins — recognize the value of every person and choose to walk alongside the vulnerable and those in need
- build trust — act with such integrity and consistency that others will deem you worthy of their trust
- drive outcomes — steward every resource in your hands to forward the things you are responsible for
- care for yourself — make time to renew and replenish your soul, your emotional energy, and your body
- pass it on — intentionally identify and cultivate our emerging and future leaders
- go deep — be open to, and engaged in, the work of personal inner transformation.

### F7. Build an integrated understanding of existing leadership pathways and identify new opportunities for ongoing leadership development

a. The working group has collated existing training, education and leadership programs, across all synod entities, that contribute to shaping leaders.

b. The working group will address identified gaps including those in the early stages of identification and recruitment into a leadership pathway.

c. The working group will identify and promote opportunities for mentoring and peer learning, including leveraging existing mentoring programs such as the Plentiful Leadership Program and others.

### F8. Strengthen and resource the existing governance role of the BCF in its responsibility to develop and Form leaders across all entities within the Synod

a. BCF will adopt the Leadership Culture Framework outlined above as the foundational standard to align all Leadership Programs within the Uniting Church. It is not proposed that the BCF will conduct leadership training but rather that they provide a level of accountability, governance and strategy, to enable networking and coaching around how leaders are developed and formed in this consistent Uniting Church way.





# Life together

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

## Summary

While the single commitment in this mission priority was named as mission partnerships, it was clear to the working group that to establish healthy and viable missional relationships there first needed to be an opportunity to identify the obstacles to those partnerships.

Silos, misunderstandings, misaligned expectations, past hurts, and cynicism were all named as key issues that need to be addressed if we were to truly explore our future together as a whole church.

*recalling our holistic story, identity and aligned purpose to strengthen our relationships and collaborations*

It was collectively agreed that hope lies in our capacity to work together towards recalling our holistic story, identity and aligned purpose to strengthen our relationships and collaborations and new opportunities. It is our shared life together, formed in the story of Jesus, that will open up mission partnerships for the sake of the flourishing of the communities in which the church is present.



## Commitment:

## Mission partnerships

### Initiatives



L1

Collaborate widely to re-align and embed the Uniting Church story and identity across all entities of the Synod

L2

Create opportunities for inter-relationship to be established and nurtured across the life of the church

## Working group

### Greg Adsett

Standing Committee, Presbytery of Moreton Rivers/Board member, Sunshine Coast Grammar School

### Rev Peter Armstrong

Associate Director of Mission, Community Partnerships, UnitingCare/Chair, Board for Christian Formation/Newlife Brisbane/Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

### Belinda Bones

Governance Secretary, Synod Office

### Rev Alison Cox

Orca Program, Wesley Mission Queensland/Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

### Steve Eltis

Director, People and Culture, Wesley Mission Queensland

### Nicole Gregory

Principal, The Lakes College/Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

### Rev Tim Griggs

UnitingCare/Redcliffe Uniting Church hub/Presbytery of Moreton Rivers

### Rev Shane Kammermann

Chaplain, UnitingCare/Presbytery of Carpentaria

### Rev Peter Lockhart

Chaplain, Moreton Bay College/Presbytery of South Moreton

### Donna Muston

Chaplain, Blue Care Rockhampton/Rural Ministry, Presbytery of Central Queensland



## ACTIONS

### **L1. Collaborate widely to re-align and embed the Uniting Church story and identity across all entities of the Synod**

a. The working group will develop a clear and articulate narrative of the structure of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod, in order to explain the roles, relationships, purposes and limits of each part of the church, including a clear understanding of how the Property Trust works.

b. The working group will collaborate with Mission Engagement Team (MET) and other mission and communication teams throughout the Synod, to develop an integrated story of the Uniting Church in Queensland's history, ethos and calling, that reflects the diversity and interconnectedness of the church, drawing upon existing materials such as the *Basis of Union*, Statement to the Nation, and other foundation documents.

c. The working group will work with MET to develop and deliver written and visual resources showcasing this broader story, that can be promoted and shared in a coordinated, intentional way across the Synod.

d. The working group will work with MET to develop an engagement process that seeks to understand how best to embed this shared story across all systems and processes within the church. This process would emphasise that how we

come together, and how we participate in our shared mission, is as important as what we affirm about who we are.

e. People and Culture teams, presbyteries, Schools and Residential Colleges Commission (SRCC) and Synod Leadership will include the one church history, ethos and calling as part of all recruitment and orientation processes across the Synod, including with baptism and confirmation in congregations; council membership roles; board roles; and school and college, agency and Synod Office staff roles.

f. The working group will work with BCF to facilitate ongoing leadership formation processes that support the ability to tell the story of the church and actively hard-wire the church's commitment to God's mission in their particular work and context.

### **L2. Create opportunities for inter-relationship to be established and nurtured across the life of the church**

a. The working group will explore and facilitate opportunities for whole Synod gatherings including a "mid Synod-in-Session" conference to focus on connection and celebration rather than business.

b. The working group will collaborate with MET to design and deliver the next iteration of the Plentiful Leadership Program. This program will focus on building a culture in which leaders are

always being mentored by someone, and mentoring someone themselves, within the cross-Synod environment.

c. The working group will work with other entities to explore what building a collaboration-related Key Performance Indicator (KPI) into all paid and unpaid roles across the Synod could look like.

d. The working group will facilitate and encourage opportunities across the Synod to learn about the different parts of the church. This could include "open days" for wider church participation.





# Conclusion

This **Shared life, flourishing communities** Progress Report contains over 115 actions in response to the eleven Commitments and four Priorities. While there are many elements to consider, we can see similar types of work appear repeatedly, that can help us understand what lies before us and enable us to take the next right step, followed by the next right step followed by the next right step.

We need to work together to:

- **Affirm common ground** — shared ethos, policy, position statements
- **Realign responsibilities and resources** — governance groups, committees, staffing
- **Create cross-synod networks** — communities of practice, forums, working groups, partnerships
- **Build the capacity of our people** — coaching, mentoring, training, educating
- **Develop and deliver enablers** — tools, guidelines, programs, projects, events
- **Share resources and information** — platforms, content, communication, promotion

We are confident in the knowledge that we serve a God of plenty, who calls each of us to simply bring whatever we have in our hands, trusting that it will be enough. We know that God is more than capable of sustaining our work, multiplying our efforts and using them to build a shared life and flourishing communities.



*To be continued...*



The Uniting Church in Australia  
QUEENSLAND SYNOD