

APRIL 2003

THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA QUEENSLAND SYNOD INTENTIONAL MISSIONAL STRATEGY

...a future with Heart and Soul

This document has been developed by the Synod Leadership Team in order to fulfil its part in the mission of the Church. It is a navigational framework designed to assist the Synod Leadership Team and others as they determine their agenda and focus their efforts. Resource documents during the formation of this framework include The Basis of Union, Assembly reports, previous Synod of Queensland strategy planning documents and Queensland Synod reports (particularly the Growth Areas Task Group and the interim reports of the Future of Ministry Task Group. Presbyteries, Congregations, Agencies, Schools and Colleges are encouraged to refer to this document as they are involved in their own forward planning.

The process of formulation was undertaken with the initial assistance of a professional facilitator. Consultation occurred between many groups and individuals, including the Mission Advisory Forum of the Queensland Synod, the Synod Mission Consultants and the Youth and Children's Ministry Unit. The process of discernment was guided by prayer, Bible readings and reflection at each stage, and grateful acknowledgement is expressed to the then Moderator, Rev Dr Ray Reddicliffe and the Synod General Secretary Rev Jenny Tymms for their oversight. Thanks are also expressed to the Youth and Children's Ministry Unit for generously permitting the part-time secondment of Mr Bruce Mullen to assist in the writing of this document.

A companion set of Bible Studies, "A Future with Heart and Soul", is available from the Queensland Synod office.

GUIDING VALUES

The Uniting Church 'risks living the way of Jesus'. We are a 'Pilgrim People' called to be a fellowship of reconciliation and sent by God to be an instrument through which Christ transforms the world. We constantly seek to discern, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, where God is calling us and leading us as we serve the world for which Christ died.

We are committed to God's transformation of the Church and understand that the viable future will be different from the Church as we know it. Living this adventurous life of faith will mean fragility, tension and risk, but will also be characterised by openness and flexibility. We are committed to journey in partnership together, valuing our theological and spiritual diversity and celebrating our oneness in Christ.

The Church is focussed, purposeful and proactive about creating space for thinking and planning for our missional activity. We value hospitality, inclusiveness, community, justice, compassion, evangelism, stewardship and ecumenism and these guide our thinking, planning and actions.

As we seek to be the Church in answer to God's leading, we will be open and transparent, permission giving, faith focussed and will operate out of an understanding of grace.

CHURCH

DESIRED OUTCOMES

The Uniting Church in Queensland will seek to discern God's will and proactively fulfil its task and mission.

1. The Uniting Church in Queensland will show evidence of being a confident, purposeful and diverse community where people will grow in their experience, understanding and practice of Christian faith in all aspects of daily life. This will include meaningful engagement with people beyond the congregation and a compassionate response to the needs of others through intentional service. As a Church it will be known and visible in the community for what it stands for and what it does.
2. The Uniting Church in Queensland will show evidence of being committed to God's ongoing transformation of the church and the community. It will become a Church which provides a context for people to experience the grace and mercy of God and come to a personal and corporate understanding of God's redemptive activity in the world. It will demonstrate a capacity to be proactive and responsive about issues of social justice.
3. The Uniting Church in Queensland will represent the demographics of the general community, and will be committed to ensuring that ever increasing numbers of children, youth and early adults will feel part of the life of the Church and have opportunity for growth, service and leadership.
4. The Uniting Church in Queensland is in covenant relationship with the Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) and acknowledges them as members of the communities of the original owners of the land. It values the gifts, wisdom and spiritual understandings of the UAICC and their representation of the indigenous community.
5. The Uniting Church in Queensland values the participation of those congregations that enrich the Church with multi-cultural diversity.
6. The Uniting Church in Queensland will work actively to enhance community and ecumenical links while continuing to value and develop its own unique identity and ethos.

KEY STRATEGIES FOR THE SYNOD

- 1 The Synod will engage in a process of continuous theological reflection and prayerful discernment of God's direction for the future ministry and mission of the Church in the contemporary context.
2. The Synod will resource a discipleship and educational focus for the Church.
3. The Synod will actively encourage and adequately resource the development of ministry with children, youth and early adults.
4. The Synod will actively encourage congregations, agencies, schools/colleges and Synod activities to engage issues of social justice.
5. The Synod will enhance our Church's presence in the community through the use of contemporary media.

CONGREGATIONS

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Uniting Church congregations will live out their unique and historical faith responding to the emerging cultural contexts in which they are located.

1. Throughout Australia, Uniting Church congregations minister the Gospel in an increasingly complex, pluralistic and multicultural context which continues to be shaped by advances in scientific and technical knowledge and new forms of communication. The Uniting Church in Queensland will be characterised by the way it responds to the rapidly changing context in which it finds itself. It will be constantly looking to new models of congregations and missional strategies, and will work to develop a variety of sustainable congregational styles that will support ministry in every area and region throughout the state. There will be a deliberate strategy to establish new congregations and to see the church grow.

2. The Uniting Church in Queensland will be composed of people from all generational and cultural groups and will embrace a diverse range of worship styles which will explicitly and visibly proclaim the Kingdom of God in their forms, symbols and practices. Uniting Church congregations will be characterised by their vibrant, inclusive, hospitable and serving nature.

3. Congregations will be faith-forming cultures where people practice the disciplines of faith, give account of the hope within them and live out their Christian vocation. Uniting Church members will respectfully and enthusiastically share the gospel of Jesus Christ and will be mindful of the church's commitment to serve the world for which Christ died.

KEY STRATEGIES FOR THE SYNOD

1. The Synod will encourage a culture which celebrates and affirms vibrant, inclusive, hospitable, evangelical and serving congregational life.

2. The Synod will actively encourage, promote and resource initiatives to establish new congregations and faith communities.

3. The Synod will promote and evaluate the effectiveness of new models of congregational life (ie regional congregations, virtual faith-congregations, clustered congregations, ecumenical congregations).

4. The Synod will encourage and support congregations to explore new ways of expressing congregational life and organisation.

AGENCIES, SCHOOLS/COLLEGES AND SYNOD

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Agencies, schools/colleges and Synod services will express the ethos and mission of the Uniting Church.

- 1. Agencies, schools/colleges and Synod services will express the mission of, and are publicly identified with, the Uniting Church.** *(The term “Agencies” will include hospitals, aged care services, health and domiciliary care, ministry with people with disabilities, counselling services, child care services and congregational based community programs. The term “Synod services” will include commercial and congregational support services.)*
- 2. While working in concert with others, agencies will be recognised as an integral part of the Church. Extraordinary service provision will be evidenced by agencies as they provide a prophetic voice in and to the community and where those in greatest need will be the focus of the mission. New services will be created to meet emerging community needs.**
- 3. The quality of life and interaction between staff and clients will reflect Christian values. Agency employees will understand and express the ethos, aims and objectives of the Uniting Church and will have opportunities to take part in theological reflection about the work of their agency.**

KEY STRATEGIES FOR THE SYNOD

- 1. The Synod will ensure that agencies, schools/colleges and synod services are strongly identified with the Uniting Church and reflect its mission and values.**
- 2. The Synod will develop clear and appropriate relationships between the Synod and Uniting Church schools and colleges.**
- 3. The Synod will require the governance bodies of agencies, schools/colleges and Synod services to ensure that there are processes and practices which induct staff and board members into the mission and values of the Uniting Church.**
- 4. The Synod will ensure that all agencies, schools/colleges and Synod services make significant benefit for those in greatest need in the community.**
- 5. The Synod will ensure that there are opportunities for all staff in agencies, schools/colleges and Synod activities to take part in theological reflection about their work.**

STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES

DESIRED OUTCOMES

The Uniting Church in Queensland will deploy the material and financial resources of the Church in intentional and flexible ways for strategic missional and transformational outcomes.

1. The effective stewardship of resources in the Uniting Church in Queensland and its agencies will be demonstrated by responsible management and development of these resources; and their flexible utilization across the Church for the purpose of mission. At the same time there will be a culture of self-reliance, initiative and sustainability with regard to management and mission initiatives. Good stewardship will be seen as a corporate and individual responsibility and privilege. Good stewardship will be demonstrated by innovative strategies and appropriate risk-taking and risk management processes. The Church will be infused by an ethos of generosity.
2. The Uniting Church in Queensland will undertake intentional missional planning. Councils of the Church will have data which allows analysis of the impact of their mission strategies, and congregations and agencies will demonstrate how their mission planning will reflect Christ's call to be engaged in the transformation and salvation of the world.

KEY STRATEGIES FOR THE SYNOD

1. The Synod will promote and model intentional missional planning.
2. The Synod will develop and promote new models of stewardship and a culture of generosity.
3. The Synod will provide a system for state-wide data collection and analysis that will assist with the task of intentional missional planning by congregations, presbyteries and synod agencies.
4. The Synod will evaluate the process used to determine mission grant allocations.
5. The Synod will utilize consultative processes to enhance the governance of agencies, schools/colleges and synod services.

LEADERSHIP

DESIRED OUTCOMES

The Uniting Church calls, equips and supports people in lay and specified ministries for leadership in the church and community.

1. The Uniting Church in Queensland will be characterised by a strong values-focussed leadership culture that affirms diversity and inclusiveness. This leadership culture will centre on discerning and articulating God's vision for participating with God in the transformation of the world. Congregations and agencies will recognise that leadership is more than management. The Church will identify, train, appoint and equip leaders according to their giftedness. There will be an integrated mix of behavioural styles and a culture that encourages and supports a pioneering spirit.

2. Within congregations there will be a culture of identifying and mentoring people for leadership which includes a transparent process for preparing people for key leadership roles. There will be provision for young people to exercise leadership that is specific and valued. God calls people to servant leadership which is both apostolic and prophetic. Worship will reflect our recognition and celebration of leadership and ministry exercised beyond the gathered congregation.

3. The Uniting Church in Queensland will seek to ordain and commission those in specified ministries who are positive, encouraging, growing, continuously learning and whose skills are available to the whole church. These leaders will feel called, empowered to act and will be equipped with multiple skills that are relevant to their particular ministry contexts. The Church will provide appropriate, flexible and ongoing education for these specified ministers so that they might help the Church understand and engage emerging culture, discern and embody the Church's vision and values, and resource the Church in theological reflection.

4. The people in specified ministries will be engaged in mentoring, proclamation, teaching, team building and equipping. They will be visionary, self-aware, emotionally mature risk-takers in Christ with a high level of morale. They will feel supported and resourced for inspiring, caring, equipping others and participating in the wider community. They will be Christ-centred, team players, ecumenically oriented, effective, relaxed and flexible.

KEY STRATEGIES FOR THE SYNOD

1. The Synod will facilitate training and formation opportunities for lay people identified as having gifts for leadership.

2. The Synod will assess its future ministry needs and develop strategies to ensure there are enough adequately equipped, ordained and specified ministers to meet these needs.

3. The Synod will ensure that there are review and professional development processes for all employed staff and ministerial agents.

4. The Synod will enhance the provision of appropriate and adequate continuing education for ordained and other specified ministries.