



Uniting Church
SYNOD OF NSW & ACT

Identity Kit: Our Shared Purpose, Values and Behaviour





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GENERAL SECRETARY

OUR CULTURE AND VALUES CREATE A SHARED AWARENESS of the breadth of what the organisation (the UCA, the Synod) is and does, they've enabled us to appreciate the rich diversity within the Synod – of background, faith, skill, experience, talent – and, in doing that, they've opened new channels of communication, strengthened relationships and increased opportunities for collaboration.

It's easy to forget, when you work in a large, diverse and complex organisation like the Synod, that it's not just a 'workplace' – it is also a community and the creation and sustaining of community requires attention and intention. Culture and Values has invited all of us to reflect on the foundation of that community and to contribute to its ongoing 'formation'; the process has tapped into the hearts and minds of all those who work in the Synod office.

Community building doesn't just happen and it can't be taken for granted. We now have a shared purpose – our job in the Synod is to serve the church so that the church can get on with its job of making a Jesus-shaped difference in the world.

We also have shared values – integrity, respect, compassion and collaboration – the distillation of what matters most to the members of the Synod work community. Just as everyone has contributed to this work, so will the ongoing creation of community require us to continue to work together to keep the flame of this common spirit alive among us.

Each time we come into contact with members of the Uniting Church we have the opportunity to tell the Uniting Church story. Our story is formed by the purpose, values and behaviours that shape us. This booklet will walk you through the shared values of the organisation in which you work and lays a framework for the way we speak to each other and the wider Uniting Church, Wits Congregations, Presbyteries and Agencies.

We're in this together

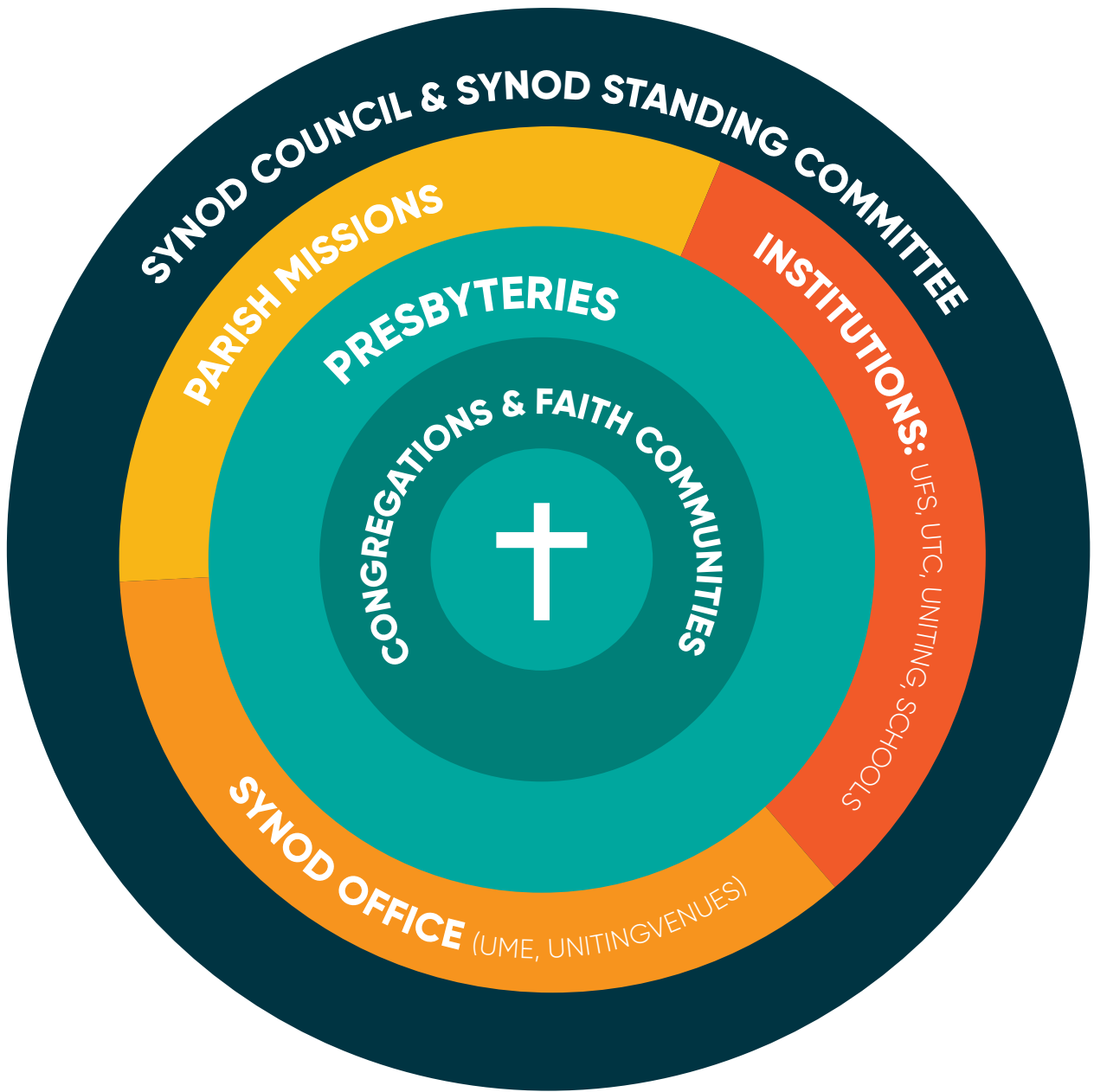


AS A SYNOD, WE ARE COMPRISED OF OVER 300
CONGREGATIONS, 45,000 MEMBERS AND
13 PRESBYTERIES, 9 SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.

Our story is one of our most valuable assets.
It's part of what makes us unique.
How we tell our story speaks volumes about
who we are and what people think of us.

Our story helps form connections with people on an
emotional level. It's enduring and engaging, and is something
that needs to be protected, nurtured and evolved.

What is Synod?



THE CROSS



PRESBYTERIES



SYNOD COUNCIL
& SYNOD STANDING
COMMITTEE



CONGREGATIONS
& FAITH COMMUNITIES



SYNOD OFFICE
PARISH MISSIONS
INSTITUTIONS

The Synod Explained

SYNOD COUNCIL AND SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE



The Synod Council is a gathering of around 400 members of the Uniting Church in NSW and the ACT that happens every 18 months.

The Synod Council has responsibility for the general oversight, direction and administration of the Church's worship, witness and service in the region allocated to it with such powers and authorities as may from time to time be determined by the Assembly (*Basis of Union Paragraph 15*). Synod Standing Committee is appointed every 18 months to carry forward the decisions of the Synod Council.

SYNOD OFFICE

The Synod Office supports the Uniting Church in the areas of resourcing, training, compliance, governance and important service functions that assist Congregations and Presbyteries to concentrate on making a Jesus-shaped difference in their communities.

PARISH MISSIONS



Our Parish missions provide an extensive range of services from youth support to aged care and just about everything else in between. They are actively involved in health, welfare, housing and other community services and advocacy on behalf of vulnerable people.

Parish Missions are staffed by highly skilled professionals and teams of committed volunteers from Congregations and from the wider community.

INSTITUTIONS

Uniting is responsible for the social justice, community services and chaplaincy work of the Uniting Church in NSW and the ACT, providing care and support for people through all ages and stages of life and with a focus on people experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability.

Uniting Financial Services is the trading name of The Uniting Church (NSW) Trust Association Limited ('Trust Association') which operates as the treasury for UCA entities and organisations that operate in NSW and the ACT. It manages funds, undertakes investments and provides loans to organisations of the Uniting Church.

PRESBYTERIES



Presbyteries are responsible for supervising day-to-day church life and work in their region.

Ministers and Deacons are ordained ministers who are accountable to the Presbytery which is responsible for their care. There are 14 Presbyteries in the Synod of New South Wales and the ACT.

CONGREGATIONS AND FAITH COMMUNITIES



Congregations are communities who seek to follow Jesus, learn about God, share their faith, care for each other, serve the local community and to live faithfully with real joy.

Currently there are around 400 Congregations made up from around 45,000 members in NSW and the ACT. While they are vastly different, each Congregation aims to embrace all people which is demonstrated by having an "open table" for Holy Communion. Unity in diversity of thought, action and theology is what characterises a Congregation or Faith Community in the Uniting Church.

THE CROSS – OUR FOCUS



The Uniting Church seeks to be a fellowship of reconciliation, living God's love and acting for the common good to build a just and compassionate community.

Our purpose

Serving the church to make

a Jesus-shaped difference
in the world

OUR PURPOSE...

Helps us work towards our mission
To be a living church in mission together.

So we can:

Grow healthy congregations

Develop vital ministries

Engage with the community in transformative ways.

We do this through our lived values.



Our Values



Integrity

We have the courage to do the right thing



Respect

We treat each other the way we want to be treated



Collaboration

We work together to create positive outcomes



Compassion

We treat those we serve with empathy and kindness

Our behaviours

WHAT BEHAVIOURS DO WE EXPECT TO SEE ACROSS THE ORGANISATION THAT FLOW FROM OUR PURPOSE AND VALUES.

respect
compassion
integrity
collaboration

CORE *behaviours* THAT UNDERPIN EACH VALUE

VALUE: **INTEGRITY**

BEHAVIOURS:

- Takes ownership of their role and manages expectations
- Operates from a place of trust and transparency
- Makes fair, just and respectful decisions

VALUE: **RESPECT**

BEHAVIOURS:

- Treats everyone with dignity and does not discriminate
- Welcomes and encourages diverse points of view and ways of working
- Builds personal credibility by following through

VALUE: **COMPASSION**

BEHAVIOURS:

- Values and acknowledges the experiences and feelings of others
- Fosters connection and understanding
- Demonstrates awareness and empathy

VALUE: **COLLABORATION**

BEHAVIOURS:

- Promotes a 'One team, One Church' environment
- Works together to resolve problems and achieve common goals
- Supports team members by encouraging participation and listening to other's ideas

Our Tone of Voice

Our tone of voice reflects our values and behaviours.

It describes how we say and what we say. It's who we are when we write or speak, and it shapes how we express our personality through the words we choose and the way we use them.

It is essential that we all use our tone of voice. Whether written or spoken, our words shape our behaviours and actions and leave a lasting impression on each other and those we speak to.

The more we use our tone of voice, the stronger our story will become.





We sing from the same hymn sheet

Our voice should be conversational; it should imbue enthusiasm and always be community focussed.

It needs to be versatile and work across different channels and mediums – speaking to a diverse audience. Tonally, however, all our messages should share the same values and be recognisable as the Uniting Church.



We speak with one voice

We are a Christian organisation. We work together for one cause. We are proud of our foundations, but not boastful. We assist those with less and speak for a more just, compassionate and inclusive society. We offer a strong sense of belonging and leadership, but stand beside those in need.

Our voice fosters an emotional and spiritual connection between our members and our church.

Our values mean we must communicate in a way that is inclusive, honest and supportive and doesn't exclude particular groups of people. This means simple, honest language. It means talking with people not at them. It means talking about 'you and us', not 'we' and 'them'. And our voice needs to be inspiring to build faith.

