



THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA SYNOD OF NEW SOUTH WALES AND THE ACT

MINUTES of the thirty-ninth Meeting of the Synod of New South Wales and the ACT of the Uniting Church in Australia held **7 and 10 April 2021**.

CANDLE

The Moderator lit the candle at the commencement of the Synod meeting to signify the Synod in Session is a Safe Place

OPENING WORSHIP & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Was developed and lead by the Leichhardt Uniting Worship team including.

- Laura McGilvray
- Matthew Powell
- Rev. Radhika Sukumar-White
- Marcie Santos
- Gabrielle Cadenhead
- Raul Sugunananthan
- Paige Owen

SYNOD PRAYER

As the grain once scattered in the fields
and the grapes once dispersed on the hillside
are now reunited on this table in bread and wine, so, Lord, may your whole Church
soon be gathered together
from the corners of the earth into your Kingdom.
Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!

God of each and all of us,
We are gathered because of you, to worship you;
to attend to your Word;
to open ourselves to your Spirit's movement;
to confess Jesus as Lord, over all aspects of our Church's life.
Bless, disturb, astonish and reform our Synod
for the task before us.

We are scattered across our Synod's breadth by the whims of a virus;
Assemble us through our intent to serve you,
each other
and the world for which Christ died.

Keep us mindful in each session of the task before us;
inspire us to be creative, courageous and hopeful.

For those who are daunted by technology,
or who miss the chance to gather physically,
may we discover new possibilities through this way of meeting.

Remind us to celebrate those
who are ministering across our community and our Church and those who have served so faithfully.

Help us to pay attention
to those things we might let slip by too easily; help us to give voice
to those who find speaking up somewhat daunting.

Lord Jesus, constitute, rule and renew us in this Synod meeting
that we might hear your voice, answer your call,
and witness to your presence in your world.

In, with and through Christ we pray. Amen.

DECISIONS

Decisions recorded in these Minutes were reached by consensus unless otherwise indicated.

MEMBERS OF SYNOD FOR 7 and 10 APRIL 2021

Resolved 36/21S

That the members of Synod for the 7 and 10 April be recorded and attached as [Appendix A](#).

AGENDA

Resolved 37/21S

That the Synod adopt the agenda for 7 and 10 April 2021 as published on the Synod 2021 Portal.

SAFE PLACE

Resolved 38/21S

That the Synod

- (i) determine the Respectful Communication Guidelines will be the basis for the Synod to be a safe place for all who participate.
- (ii) note the Policy on the Prevention of Vilification and Harassment within the Uniting Church in Australia as <https://assembly.uca.org.au/policies/item/169-policy-on-the-prevention-of-vilification-and-harassment-within-the-uca>

CELEBRATION OF MINISTRY

Resolved 39/21S

That the Synod noted the names tabled in the Celebration of Ministry video

- 60 and 70 years ordained.
- Newly ordained.

GENERAL SECRETARY REPORT

This report provided the opportunity for the General Secretary to share information not covered elsewhere in the Synod 2021 agenda including:

- The role of the Synod Leadership Team
- The Synod Culture and Values Program
- Presbytery Health
- UCA Schools
- National Redress Scheme

Resolved 40/21SC

That the Synod note the General Secretary Report.

SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT No. 1

The Synod Standing Committee report provided the Synod, as per Regulation 3.7.4.1 (g) with an overview of the Committee's substantive decisions made since August 2019 to March 2021.

Substantive decisions included:

- Establishing the COVID-19 Response Working Group
- Recommending Future Directions for the People of God on the Way
- UCA Schools Incorporation
- Synod Structure Review
- Synod Risk Management Framework
- South West Sector School – Due Diligence Evaluation
- Safe Church Unit Policies and Guidelines

Resolved 41/21S

That the Synod note the Synod Standing Committee Report No 1.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD ON THE WAY

Resolved 42/21S

That the Synod on the recommendation of the Synod Standing Committee

- (i) Affirm a commitment to being a contemporary, courageous and growing church proclaiming Jesus Christ in worship, witness and service.
- (ii) Reaffirm the following future directions
 - a renewed commitment to rural and regional ministry
 - a renewed commitment to ministry with people in the first 1/3 of their lives
 - a renewed commitment to walking together with First Peoples and to the covenant with Congress
 - an ongoing and active commitment to the stewardship of the earth
 - an ongoing commitment to working with presbyteries to organise ourselves to promote growth within and through our congregations.
- (iii) Approve Future Directions for the People of God on the Way noting that the Resourcing Framework will be discussed in the June meeting.

WALKING TOGETHER ACTION PLAN 2021- 2024

Resolved 43/21S

The Synod on the recommendation of the Synod Standing Committee

- (i) Request that the Synod, in discernment groups, review and provide feedback on the draft Walking Together Action Plan 2021 -2023
- (ii) Note that feedback will be reviewed by the Synod Standing Committee
- (iii) A revised proposal will be presented to the August meeting for discernment and decision.



SYNOD CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGY UPDATE

The Synod Climate Action Strategy Update provided information on action undertaken since Synod 2019 including

- Synod Emissions Task Group
- Youth Climate Actions Task Group
- Climate Anxiety and Pastoral Care Task Group
- Church and Individual Emissions Task Group
- Advocacy Task Group

Point of Clarification

At the April Synod, Head of Advocacy & Media, Emma Maiden, made an error in her response to Ross Johnson in relation to metallurgical coal. Metallurgical coal is a fossil fuel but many organizations treat it differently to thermal coal because of the much higher emissions from thermal coal and the readily available alternatives. When the advocacy team advocates for replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy sources it is primarily referring to thermal coal because this is the immediate problem to be tackled that will have a huge impact on emissions. It should also be noted that the Synod 2013 meeting resolved to be explicit in the Ethical Investments policy that the Church would divest from investments in fossil fuel extraction. This exclusion covered all coal, including metallurgical.

Resolved 44/21S

That the Synod note the Climate Action Strategy Update.
(By agreement)

MODERATOR REPORT

The Moderator's Report included information on the review of Formation a decision from Synod 2019.

Resolved 45/21S

That the Synod note the Moderator's Report.