

## Assembly Business Plan July 2020 – June 2023

Updated as at August 2021

### Reporting the Business Plan

The Intention will be that the Business Plan will outline the areas of work for the Assembly, the expected outcomes of that work and the key activities involved in achieving the work.

Status	Colour Code
Planned activity	
Complete/In Progress	
Some delay / concern	
Major delay/concern	

### An example:

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
<b>ABCD Task Group</b>			
<i>Expected outcomes</i> This Task Group will ...			
- Activity 1 – This activity is progressing well			
- Activity 2 – This activity is delayed slightly because....			
- Activity 3 – This activity has experienced a major obstacle because ....			

## **Strategic Direction 1: Respond to the Church**

**Respond to the ongoing needs of the whole Church and other Councils**

### **Strategy 1: Respond to the specific issues within areas of mandated responsibility**

Respond to issues arising in determining doctrine and worship, ecumenical and international relationships, government and discipline including guiding decisions on the tasks and authority to be exercised by other Councils, and the general oversight and promotion of the life and mission of the Church

#### ***Activities:***

Generally, this is undertaken on an ad-hoc basis, responding to inquiries and requests from across the Church. These will be added to this section or another more relevant section and reported accordingly.

## Strategy 2: Enact Decisions of the Assembly

Support Task Groups arising from Assembly/ASC: Sovereignty, Continuing Witness, Disability Access; Enact decisions on Domestic and Family Violence, Climate Change.

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
<b>Assembly Decisions</b>			
<b>Sovereignty Affirmation – Practical Outcomes Task Group</b>			
<p><b>Expected Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research the arrangements in place between the Assembly and National UAICC, Synods and Regional Councils with respect to practical implications of the affirmation including concepts of redistributive justice, and as a result, make recommendations for any changes to regulations, policies or guidelines which may be required.</li> <li>• Investigate how this affirmation might shape training for ministry and lay education within the UCA, identifying what is already in place.</li> <li>• Consider what might be required for Congregations, Presbyteries, Agencies and Schools to respond to this affirmation in their contexts.</li> <li>• Consider what foci, in response to the affirmation, the UCA should have in respect to advocacy with Federal and State Governments.</li> </ul> <p><b>COMPLETE</b> The work of this Task Group is completed. The Task Group will be thanked and dismissed at August 2021 ASC. This will then be removed from the BP.</p>			
- Ongoing work			
- Report to ASC in Nov 2020			
- Final Report to 16 <sup>th</sup> Assembly (via ASC Report and potentially to Reconvened Assembly)			
<b>Continuing Witness Task Group</b>			
<p><b>Expected Outcomes</b></p> <p>To scope the task of exploring the reception and endorsement by the Assembly of specific statements of “Continuing Witness”; to oversee research concerning which documents might be included for such reception and endorsement; and to undertake appropriate consultation with the wider Church, prior to bringing proposals to the ASC for the 16th Assembly.</p>			
- Preparation of potential documents			
- Update Report to March 2021 ASC			
- Interim report to 16 <sup>th</sup> Assembly (via ASC Report) <b>The report was made – will report to Reconvened Assembly</b>			
- Wide UCA Consultation			

<b>Apology to LGBTIQ Australians Task Group</b>			
<b>Expected Outcomes</b> To develop the wording of an official apology from the Uniting Church in Australia to LGBTIQ Australians for the Church's role in the silence, rejection, discrimination and stereotyping of LGBTIQ people, couples and families.			
- Consultation with LGBTIQ community – <b>Planned for FY 2022</b>			
- Update Report to March 2021			
- Final / Interim Report to 16 <sup>th</sup> Assembly (Reconvened)			
<b>Domestic and Family Violence Resolution</b>			
<b>Expected Outcomes</b> Requests the Assembly Resourcing Unit, liaising with Synod and Agency personnel, to scope educational and theological materials relating to the Statement on Family and Domestic Violence adopted by the 15th Assembly, and bring proposals relating to their development to the November 2018 meeting of the ASC <b>COMPLETE</b>			
- Raising awareness of Thursdays in Black			
- Collation of resources			
- Raising awareness through social media channels			
- Interim report to March 2020 ASC			
- Final Report to March 2021 ASC and 16 <sup>th</sup> Assembly (via ASC Report) <b>This is completed and will come out of the BP</b>			
<b>Climate Action Plan</b>			
<b>Expected Outcomes</b> Taking into account Resolution 18.12.01.01 of the 15th Assembly, request the Assembly Resourcing Unit, liaising with UAICC, and Synod and Agency personnel to prepare a National Climate Action Plan and Reporting Framework, and supporting educational and theological materials, to resource the wider church to take action on climate change, and report back to the July 2019 meeting of the ASC;			
- Continue to deliver on Climate Action Plan			
- Advocacy based on <b>Build Back Better Our Vision for a Just Australia July 2021</b>			
- Promote Climate Action across Church			
- Support Climate Actions as they arise			
- Finalise Baseline Carbon Footprint			
- Measure carbon footprint for upcoming FY			
- Set additional goals towards carbon footprint reduction			
- Annual Reporting to ASC			



### Strategy 3: Standards for Ministries (Education for all specified ministries and admission of ordained

Committee conducts consultations with MEBs and Colleges, revise Ministry of Pastor competencies and related Lay Preacher competencies, revise Admission processes, revise Phase 3 and Phase 4 standards including guidelines for supervision

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
<b>Standards for Ministries</b>			
<b>Expected Outcomes</b> To advise the Assembly and the Assembly Standing Committee on the standards required for Specified Ministries within the Uniting Church and to ensure that the Assembly's responsibilities in relation to training for Specified Ministries and admission of ministers from other denominations are met			
Consultations			
- South Australia – <b>Report being finalised</b>			
- Western Australia – <b>Team and plans in place</b>			
- NSW/ACT			
- Northern Synod			
- Qld			
- Vic/Tas			
Other areas of focus			
- Admission procedures – <b>Completed</b>			
- Revision of Phase 4 standards – <b>Work is being undertaken</b>			
- Revision of Ministry of Pastor – <b>Work is being undertaken</b>			

#### Strategy 4: Maintain and extend the work of Circles of Interest

Support the work of Advocates, publicise Circles in the wider Church, further develop the mechanisms by which the Circles and Panels can support and extend the work of ASC and Assembly Staff

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Circles of Interest			
<b>Expected outcomes</b> Involve people in the national life of the church, providing a mechanism for sharing and learning, seeking broad input, disseminating information widely, encouraging growth and deepening discipleship and discerning together God's will.			
- Circles operating effectively			
- Report to ASC			
- Preparation for nominations of Advocates and Panel members - <b>Completed</b>			
- Report to 16th Assembly (at Assembly) - <b>Completed</b>			
- Appointment of Advocates (at Assembly) - <b>Completed</b>			
- Appointment of Panels (ASC August 2021) – <b>To be done at August 2021 ASC</b>			
- Training and orientation			

## Strategic Direction 2: Identity

Communicate a clear and concise message — who are we as the UCA and what is our distinct role in working toward the coming of the Kingdom of God in Australia

### Strategy 1: Find ways of telling the UCA Story

Remind the Church of our foundational values and commitments; sharpen ways of describing the vision and purpose of the Uniting Church in our context

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Telling the UCA Story			
<b>Expected outcomes</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Assembly communications contributing to a wider awareness of the identity, values, context and make-up of the UCA.</li> <li>UCA communities are encouraged to understand our foundational values and commitments.</li> <li>UCA communities know the UAICC UCA journey and the significant markers in this journey</li> <li>All members are able to participate in the Act 2 Conversation from a position of understanding</li> </ul>			
- Basis of Union is translated into key languages including a simple English version			
- UCA Commitments are widely available in multiple languages – <b>Awaiting meeting of National Conferences</b>			
- An online course introduces the UCA and these Commitments			
- Commitments are clearly communicated through our resources			
- Online conversations are used to enable people to participate and share their perspectives			
- Assembly is clear about how it demonstrates and embodies these Commitments			
- Act 2 Study series on Basis of union			
- UAICC and Covenant Journey developed into online course – <b>Delayed due to COVID travel bans. Will take place</b>			
- Regular reporting on Act 2 to ASC			
- Regular communications regarding Ecumenical and Other Faith relationships			
- Seeking Common Ground Circle operating effectively – <b>New Advocate and Panel being appointed</b>			



## Strategy 2: Continue working on the practical implications of the Covenant

Remind the Church of the Covenant, encourage exploration of the practical consequences of the Covenant, stimulate further thinking regarding the practical and theological implications of the Preamble to the Constitution.

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Covenant			
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and deepen Covenant relationships</li> <li>• The Covenant is central to the life of UCA, and the journey involves the whole Church.</li> <li>• Covenant conversations in the Church involve First Peoples.</li> <li>• All UCA communities are included and feel included as part of the UCA journey of Reconciliation</li> <li>• First Nations theological writing is being championed</li> </ul>			
- Elevate First Nations voices in conversations and submissions			
- Assembly has a Covenant Action Plan in place			
- Key Covenant resources are available and being used -Acknowledgement, Covenant journey			
- Preamble is translated into key languages including a simple English version – <span style="color: red;">awaiting meeting of National Conferences</span>			
- Church engages in theology of the Preamble			
- Leaders including National Conference leaders participate in Walking on Country			
- Local communities have connected with local First Nations Groups – Day of Mourning Resources and Worship			
- Invest in young people to engage in, learn and share in Covenant relationships			

### Strategy 3: Address National issues in the public space for the Gospel

Respond to calls for submissions; facilitate regular review of “Our Vision for a Just Australia” and evaluate how Australia and the Uniting Church are performing against the benchmarks set

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Justice and Advocacy			
<b>Expected outcomes</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly has regularly reviewed and updated its “Vision for a Just Australia”</li> <li>• Assembly has advocated to in the public space on key themes within the Vision.</li> <li>• Assembly has identified, communicated and worked towards the Uniting Church’s commitments within these areas.</li> </ul>			
- Annual review of Vision document, reporting progress and recalibrating against benchmarks			
- Annual Review and progress report to ASC and communicated to Synods and wider stakeholders <b>(Build-Back-Better)</b> <b>Revised Our Vision for a Just Australia July 2021 released</b>			
- Assembly commitments from the Vision Document are explicitly identified and communicated			
- Climate Action Plan in place and being measured			
- Assembly collaborates with Synods and Agencies, collates and reports shared work – <b>strong collaboration in development of Revised document</b>			
- Resources for engagement of members will be provided and promoted to enable their participation in advocacy and practical response			

### Strategy 4: With Synods, implement the Safe Church Framework

Work collaboratively with Synods to implement the National Safe Church Framework, contribute to a National Curriculum using the UnitingLearning platform

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Safe Church			
<b>Expected outcomes</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly actively engaged in reviewing and implementing the Safe Church Framework</li> <li>• Assembly participating in the development, distribution and participation in appropriate training</li> </ul>			
- Staff engaged in appropriate training and practices (at March staff briefing)			
- Communications reinforce our commitment to being a safe church			
- Resource the UnitingLearning platform as a vehicle for national training – <b>Online modules now available</b>			

## Strategic Direction 3: Innovation

Take risks, experiment and shape our church to respond to the needs of today and those of the future.

### Strategy 1: Support networks and councils of the church exploring emerging expressions of the church

Support and communicate the work of networks exploring emerging expressions of the Church, and encourage sharing of models, resources and approaches between Synods and Presbyteries

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Emerging expressions of church			
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly communications channels including Circles are actively sharing ideas and resources and stories about innovative mission and new ways to be the church. Circles are seen as an important place for people to participate.</li> <li>• Intentional connections with international groups offering leadership in this, including from non-European</li> <li>• Innovation is seen as part of our DNA / core-business in our thinking</li> <li>• We have a culture of scanning the horizon and permission-giving</li> </ul>			
- Encourage a culture of scanning the horizon and permission-giving			
- Engagement with and encouragement of Mission shaped ministry and Pioneering networks			
- Online platforms are sharing and resourcing, connecting and caring for people in ministries			
- Exchange learnings across different areas of the Church including our culturally diverse communities			
- Communicating good news stories across the Church			
- Church in the Digital Age Task Group work (Interim report to ASC Nov 2021, Final report to ASC Nov 2022) <i>Task Group formed and now meeting</i>			

## Strategy 2: Enable collaboration on Uniting Learning platform

Work with Synod Lay Educators, Safe Church stakeholders and other Synod and Agency groups to enable generous sharing of educational resources and develop creative online learning material.

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Uniting Learning			
<b>Expected outcomes</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uniting Learning platform is being used by the majority of ministers and lay leaders for their core safe church awareness training.</li> <li>The platform is providing reminders and activity reports to relevant internal and external stakeholders regarding safe church</li> <li>The platform is being used for onboarding of staff and upskilling of staff</li> <li>The platform has a wide and growing range of discipleship modules</li> </ul>			
- Development of modules and communications (NSCU – modules available, plans for Covenant and Intercultural)			
- Intentional engagement with diverse stakeholders in development of modules and use of platform			
- Drawing on expertise across the Church including Circles, Panels and Advocates as developers, deliverers and participants			

## Strategy 3: Address the structures and regulatory framework of the whole church

Address the issue of whether the current structures and regulations of the Church are ‘fit for purpose’ in our context; specifically review how regulations have encouraged or have caused barriers to exploring and forming new forms of Church.

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Regulatory Framework			
<b>Expected outcomes</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16<sup>th</sup> Assembly sets clear pathway for Act 2</li> <li>UCA members are engaged in Act 2</li> <li>Project is meeting its schedule and deliverables</li> </ul>			
- Regulation review project is underway			
- Act 2 is underway (Consultations have taken place, some additional ones being planned)			

#### Strategy 4: Develop ways for future sustainability of Assembly

Identify alternative funding models and sources to enable the work of the Assembly to be supported in a sustainable manner

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Future Assembly Sustainability			
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly has a consistent, sustainable income stream</li> <li>• Reserves are accumulating to enable financial resilience</li> </ul>			
- AFARC Future Sustainability Project and work of Assembly Investment Advisory Committee			
- Engaging with and encouraging people to invest in our projects (insurance, SLA engagement)			
- Technology is being used well - communication, promotion, using our platforms to engage with people and invite participation			
- Clear focus on our purpose - transforming communities			

## Strategic Direction 4: Intergenerational

Welcome, equip and hold together the different generations, in the life, ministry, decision making and leadership of the church.

### Strategy 1: Growing emerging generation faith/leadership

Contribute to the development of models and opportunities for growing the faith and leadership of members of emerging generations, with focus on the unique experiences of different generations

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Growing faith and leadership			
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are strong examples of, and sharing of experiences and learnings regarding               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different generations are supporting each other rather than separate silos</li> <li>• Key Church conversations and discussion/decision happen intergenerationally</li> <li>• Children and younger people are involved in Church processes, for example calling a minister.</li> <li>• All generations learn together - Church is a reflection of the community</li> </ul> </li> <li>• All Circle Panels contain a proportion of members who are from younger generations</li> <li>• Discipling the Next Generations Circle operating effectively</li> <li>• Intentional mentoring programs in place for mutual learning between younger and older generations for leadership in the Church and wider community</li> <li>• Assembly activities would be in different spaces, not just inside offices</li> </ul>			
- Gathering and sharing stories of success			
- Internship model in place – COVID and its impacts have delayed this			
- Resources to facilitate the outcomes are in place and being used (several workshops undertaken, supporting President’s Roundtables / NYALC Online, Let’s Talanoa webinars) Connection with young adults continues			

## Strategy 2: Develop an Intergenerational ministry framework

Develop a framework for intergenerational ministry, including a rationale for how and why different aspects of this work should be carried by particular Councils of the Church

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Intergenerational Ministry Framework			
<b>Expected outcomes</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intergenerational relationships are intentionally modelled across the life of the Church (Assembly leading with examples)</li> <li>• Clear and clearly understood definition(s) of intergenerational church and intergenerational ministry</li> <li>• Intergenerational church focus has a missional edge</li> <li>• Intentional connections with Schools have begun to develop</li> </ul>			
- Collaboratively develop a framework with Circles and other Synod and Presbytery stakeholders			
- Framework is launched at the 16th Assembly (Reconvened)			
- Different generations are consulted about “Our Vision for a Just Australia”, about our justice commitments <b>This happened to some extent through the drawing together of people across the Church</b>			
- Mentoring (and reverse mentoring) is developed			

## Strategy 3: Support and take part in national youth events as negotiated with synods

Together with the President and emerging generation workers in Synods, plan, organise and deliver a National Young Adult Leaders Conference for 2021 and take part in any other Youth Events as Negotiated with Synods

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
National Youth Events			
<b>Expected outcomes</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly runs one bi-annual youth event</li> <li>• Assembly facilitates interactions between Synods to encourage other youth events</li> </ul>			
- Events planned and implemented (a number of online events replaced the cancelled 2021 NYALC)			
- Support and participate in gatherings of Synod and Presbytery staff, including Panel members of DNG Circle			

#### Strategy 4: Partner with Congress in enabling work with emerging generations

Goals and outcomes for this area of work will be developed in consultation with Congress.

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Partner with Congress in emerging generations work			
<b>Expected outcomes</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in National Youth Events</li> <li>• Assembly facilitates interactions between Synods to encourage other youth events</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Events planned and implemented (a number of online events replaced the cancelled 2021 NYALC)</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connect Congress National Youth Committee into gatherings of Synod and Presbytery staff and DNG Circle <i>DNG and WTFSP Circles have new Advocates who have begun meeting together and with staff to further this</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Congress included in Internship Program – <i>COVID has delayed this program</i></li> </ul>			



## Strategic Direction 5: Intercultural

Learn from and enable diverse cultural groups within the church to flourish together

### Strategy 1: Engage National Conferences

Attend and support National Conferences representing the wider UCA; enable two-way communication between the National Conferences and the Assembly.

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Engage National Conferences			
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Conferences working closely together and with the Assembly</li> <li>• NCs are a resource for the wider Church</li> <li>• Assembly has a database of intercultural congregation and key leaders</li> <li>• Being a Multicultural Church Circle operating effectively</li> </ul>			
- Creating links between National Conferences, encouraging other sharing experiences and exchanges			
- Raise awareness of National Conferences as a resource for issues like Admission of Ministers or Conflict within Congregations – <b>Has been incorporated into Guidance Document</b>			
- Invite National Conferences to consider the particular part they play in enabling the future of the UCA as an intercultural church (Webinars through 2020 will continue) – <b>Webinars are underway</b>			
- Support other ethnic groups in their understanding and participation in the UCA			
- Encourage National Conference members participation in Circles and the life of the Assembly			

## Strategy 2: Develop a vision for intercultural ministry

Develop, test and deliver training and resources across the Church, establish training of trainers, share best practice, enable online components to be delivered by UnitingLearning

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Intercultural ministry			
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear understanding of what we mean by intercultural and being an intercultural Church.</li> <li>• Move from a multicultural to an intercultural Church</li> <li>• Church has theological resources that includes culturally diverse voices and perspectives</li> <li>• Resources and training in place to support all UCA groups to move to a more intercultural understanding and practice (meeting practice, worship, fellowship, community engagement)</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop, test and deliver training and resources across the Church, establish training of trainers, share best practice, enable online components to be delivered by UnitingLearning – <b>Online components planned for this FY</b></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage and support diverse theological thinking and writing</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage theological education that truly reflects the contextual diversity of our people in the UCA <b>Standards for Ministries are pursuing this in all MEB and College interactions</b></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facilitate Basis of Union language conversations</li> </ul>			

### Strategy 3: Collate and publicise language resources

Ensure that language resources are collected and easily available, develop new language resources, increase the accessibility of the Assembly website to CALD communities

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Language resources			
<b>Expected outcomes</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major documents are available in multiple languages, in written, audio and video formats</li> <li>A process is in place to identify appropriate documents</li> <li>We have a pool of professional (paid) as well as volunteer translators</li> <li>Church meetings take into account diverse languages</li> <li>Assembly website and social media platforms reflect diverse languages</li> </ul>			
- Key languages are identified			
- Key documents identified and translated			
- A pool of translators in place and being resourced			
- Meetings reflect sensitivity to language needs			
- Website and platforms reflect diverse languages – <b>Investigating web site translator software</b>			

### Strategy 4: Support engagement of Congress with National Conferences

Work with Congress to support the ongoing engagement of National Conferences with First Peoples and the broader intercultural conversation within the UCA

Activities	July 2020- June 2021	July 2021- June 2022	July 2022- June 2023
Engagement with UAICC			
<b>Expected outcomes</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CALD communities within the UCA have a strong understanding of the Covenant and the UAICC</li> </ul>			
- Resources in place (including Acknowledgement, Day of Mourning, Covenant Banners, Covenant Course)			
- Opportunities for engagement between UAICC and National Conferences are in place			
- Walking on Country opportunities for diverse CALD communities			
- Preamble is translated in different languages with accompanying resources to enable reflection <b>Awaiting meeting with National Conferences – possible use of translation software.</b>			