



# Living cross culturally as a multicultural, intercultural church.

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## That the Synod

Set out the action to be taken by the Synod, e.g. requests encourages, directs, adopts the statement/report, appoints a committee/task group, records its appreciation, approves the guidelines, making reference to the body to whom it is directed.

## Proposal 5

That the Synod add a sixth direction - "Living cross-culturally as a multicultural, intercultural church" to its strategy *Future Directions for the people of God on the way* and accompanying resource framework.

## Proposal 5.A

That the Synod revise the wording of the *Growth and Resource* goals to fully reflect the diversity of the UCA as a multicultural, cross cultural and intercultural church the following ways:

### 1.A.1 GROWTH GOALS

#### a) Activate

**Original:** We will lead large, healthy, vibrant and younger congregations that flourish.

**Proposed:** We will lead large *multicultural, cross cultural, intercultural*, healthy, vibrant, and younger congregations that thrive.

#### b) Transform

**Original:** We will engage with the community in transformative ways that enhance mission.

**Proposed:** We will engage *the various cultures within* the community in transformative ways that enhance mission.

#### c) Amplify (no change)

We will amplify our influence by being a leading and respected voice on relevant contemporary issues.

Proposed: *We will amplify our influence by being a leading and respected **multicultural cross cultural, intercultural** voice on relevant contemporary issues.*

## 2.1 RESOURCE GOALS

### a) Simplify

**Original:** Our governance is effective and fit for purpose.

**Proposed:** *We will simplify our governance reflecting the diversity of our church as effective and fit for purpose.*

### b) Liberate

**Original:** Our resources will drive growth and enable entrepreneurial leadership.

**Proposed:** Our resources will drive growth, *multicultural, cross cultural, intercultural ministry* and enable entrepreneurial leadership.

### c) Unite (no change)

We work together across and beyond the Synod to utilise our diverse strengths.

## Proposal 5.B

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**That the Synod commit to living cross culturally as a multicultural and intercultural church by:**

**3.1 Missional Governance:** That Synod liberate policies and practices that simplify processes, which enhances mission and leadership; that activates & transforms the church for growth.

- a) Synod will set up an advisory board to the Synod Standing Committee to ensure it meets its obligations regarding this Future Direction priority and we encourage Presbyteries to do likewise. **[activate and transform]**
- b) To commit to diverse and inclusive ministry with presbyteries across the NSWACT Synod.
  - i. **Minister Leadership Profile Transformation:** In consultation with ACOMP and Presbytery Pastoral Relation Committee to review and revamp the Ministry Leadership Profile, the Placement Profile and Minister Update Form; to unite the ethos and characteristics expressed in Living with the Neighbour Who is Different (9th Assembly, 2000) and One Body Many Members: Living faith and life cross culturally (13th Assembly, 2012).
  - ii. **'TUA' in Mission with Seasonal Workers:** That the Synod resource presbyteries to missionally reach out to Seasonal Workers currently under the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM), to Transform, Unite and Activate (TUA) local communities through hospitality. TUA means 'behind' in most Pacific Islands, so working behind the scenes to pastorally link and care for the workers in their vicinity.
  - iii. That we as a Synod make a commitment to be intentional about confronting our cultural biases that leads to systemic racism including those perpetuated in its own processes, and to ensure diversity across the Synod committees, governance bodies and councils, and encourages all councils of the church to do the same. **[simplify and liberate]**

c) **Collaborate with Assembly:**

- i. to reconsider the NATIONAL PROPERTY POLICY FOR THE UCA with regard to the clause 1.2.: “Where a UCA congregation is sharing property with a non-UCA congregation, Faith Community or Fellowship Group”.
- ii. Synod will work with Assembly to amplify the resources around the inter-cultural worship and to provide educational resources relevant to worship inter-culturally to Presbyteries and congregations.

d) **Consultation with Uniting:**

- i. Encourage the Uniting Church Engagement team to support and activate the mission of local Presbyteries to liberate and transform Multicultural Communities.
- ii. Amplify the spirit expressed in One Body Many Members: Living faith and life cross culturally (13th Assembly, 2012 by multiethnic residents).
- iii. Ask Uniting to review their Regulations and Policies in light of the changes proposed to Future Directions.

**3.2** Develop relevant contextual multicultural, cross-cultural, intercultural forms of leadership through theological education, formation, and intercultural supervision training in collaboration with the United Theological College and Uniting Mission and Education.

**3.3** At all Synods events, formally recognise we are a multi-cultural/cross cultural/inter-cultural church and encourage all councils of the church to do likewise. **[activate]** |

## The scope of a proposal

*Be concise and clear e.g. what this consists of; what is and isn't part of this proposal. The more specific you can be, the better.*

The objective of this scope is to propose the inclusion of a sixth direction, titled "Living cross-culturally as a multicultural, intercultural church," in the Synod's strategy framework, Future Directions for the people of God on the way. This scope also encompasses the development of an accompanying resource framework to support the implementation of this new direction, as well as calls all of Synod's work, to live into this named commitment.

In this proposal, the Synod recognises the increasing importance of embracing multiculturalism and interculturalism within the Church and agencies of the Church. As Australian society becomes more diverse and interconnected, it is essential for the Synod to reflect and adapt. To engage with individuals and communities from different cultural backgrounds actively. The proposed sixth direction aims to guide and strengthen the Synod's actions towards building a contemporary, courageous, and growing church. |

## Rationale

*A rationale is a kind of sub-proposal within a proposal: it offers the reasons for proceeding to address a particular problem with a particular solution.*

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3: 27-29

The history and identity of the Uniting Church has already shaped us into being a multicultural Church. In 1985 the Uniting Church officially declared itself a multicultural church. This declaration was followed by two further key statements; “A Church for all God’s People” (2006) and “One Body, Many Members: Living faith and life cross-culturally” (2012). These vision statements are a foundational basis of the Uniting Church’s identity to living faith and life cross culturally as a multicultural and intercultural church. Each of these statements issues a compelling invitation to the Uniting Church to live into that vision in all aspects of its ecclesial life.

Acknowledging and embracing our diversity is crucial to the Future Directions of the Synod of NSW and the ACT. By unpacking the concept of multiculturalism, we recognise the need to go beyond mere coexistence and strive for cross-cultural understanding and engagement. Our aim is to create intercultural spaces where individuals, communities and Congregations from various backgrounds can come together, share their experiences, and enrich our collective journey as a people on the way. Since 1985, we have pledged to embrace, live and express our diversity in the following three different ways.

### **MULTICULTURAL CHURCH:**

The UCA has developed into a vibrant multicultural Church, reflecting the diverse backgrounds and experiences of our members. Embracing this multicultural identity allows us to appreciate the richness that each individual, community and Congregation brings and fosters a sense of belonging for all. By recognising and celebrating our multiculturalism, we affirm our commitment to cultural inclusivity, uniting, as the body of Christ, as Church.

### **CROSS-CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT:**

While being a multicultural church is an important aspect of our identity, we recognise the need to move beyond multiculturalism and actively engage in cross-cultural interactions. Cross-cultural engagement involves developing understanding, empathy, and respect for cultures other than our own. It allows us to bridge divides, break down barriers, and build meaningful relationships with individuals, communities, and Congregations from different cultural backgrounds.

The Cross of Christ is central and it is our meeting and crossing point, a poignant reminder that Jesus crossed cultural boundaries and effected transformative change. Crossing boundaries involves a willingness to make the effort to do so, sometimes placing ourselves in spaces outside our comfort zone. This obligation rests especially on those in the dominant culture, and the cross of Christ is a reminder in this context of our calling to follow in Christ’s footsteps in service of others.

### **INTERCULTURAL SPACES:**

As we strive to become a cross-cultural church, our aspiration is to create intercultural spaces where the diverse tapestry of our community and Congregations can interweave harmoniously and creatively. Intercultural spaces go beyond the surface level of cultural coexistence; they encourage genuine interaction, collaboration, and mutual learning. These spaces cultivate an environment where different cultures are not just tolerated but embraced, to enable a fuller expression of the growth of the Church’s worship, witness and service in Jesus Christ.

## BOLD WITNESS

By adding the sixth direction, "Living cross-culturally as a multicultural, intercultural church," to the Synod's future directions, we take a proactive approach towards our vision of being a contemporary, courageous, and growing Church. This direction acknowledges our existing multiculturalism, urges us to engage in cross-cultural interactions, and sets the vision of creating intercultural spaces as part of our growing edge. Through this holistic approach, we will deepen our understanding, foster unity, and strengthen our worship, witness, and service as a multicultural, cross-cultural, and intercultural Church in the Synod of NSW and the ACT.

The proposed sixth direction will not only strengthen our internal ecclesial life, it will inform, and sharpen our witness to boldly live into the vision of a growing, courageous, contemporary church in a society and world so needing a model of diversity that is held together in authentic unity. |

## Proposers

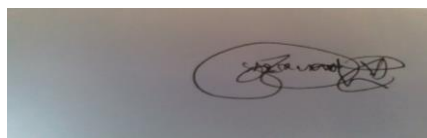
*A proposer and the seconder must be attending the Synod in Session as members. If the proposal is from one of Synod's reporting bodies (committee, board, presbytery, task group), it should be submitted and signed by an authorised officer of that body.*

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