



## Ministry Description

# Associate General Secretary

<b>Reporting to:</b>	General Secretary
<b>Unit:</b>	Secretariat
<b>Team:</b>	Office of the General Secretary
<b>Location:</b>	130 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne
<b>Tenure:</b>	Placement
<b>Hours per week:</b>	37.5
<b>Cost centre:</b>	[insert cost centre]
<b>Date:</b>	March 2023

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Name

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Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Mark Lawrence**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
General Secretary Name

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Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Ministry Context- Synod of Victoria and Tasmania**

As part of the Uniting Church in Australia, the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania is the Council of the Church responsible for the general oversight, direction and administration of the Church's worship, witness and service in the region allotted to it. It exercises pastoral, executive, administrative and discipline responsibilities in relation to the Presbyteries within its bounds. In particular, it promotes and encourages the mission of the Church, assisting congregations and presbyteries within its bounds in their faithful participation in the mission of God.

In June 2016 Synod adopted a Strategic Framework that seeks to guide and enable a coordinated, intentional focus on mission and embrace the diverse contemporary context of Church life.

Through the implementation of this framework the Synod is working to enhance cooperation between the Synod and presbyteries to share together in worship, witness and service and to encourage proactive spiritual discernment for mission across the life of the Church.

### **Strategic priorities & Areas of focus**

Recognising the Church's diverse ministry amongst all generations, and walking together as First and Second Peoples, the Synod has adopted a number of strategic priorities. Currently the strategic priorities of the Synod are:

- (i) ministries which foster diverse gathered communities of renewal, Christian practice and renewal;
- (ii) Culturally diverse mission and ministry; and
- (iii) Mission and ministry with children, youth, their families and young adults.

These strategic priorities are to be informed by informed by areas of focus, which are:

- 1) The identity of Jesus Christ and Christianity in a post-Christendom world;
- 2) Multi-cultural and multi-faith Australia and its relationship to its First Peoples;
- 3) Peace-making, power and powerlessness, being with and for the poor; and
- 4) Inter-faith and intercultural engagement, encounter and learning.

Along with the Vision and Mission Principles, the strategic priorities and areas of focus will provide shape and context to the work of the Synod at this time.

## **Secretariat**

The Secretariat Unit within Synod Ministries and Operations incorporates the Office of the General Secretary, the Office of the Moderator, Culture of Safety, Synod Trusts, and Legal Services.

### **Office of the General Secretary**

The Office of the General Secretary (OGS) incorporates a range of responsibilities to ensure compliance and risk, strategic, pastoral and relational activities align with the Synod's new strategic direction and fulfilling Constitutional responsibilities<sup>1</sup>. Working across the life of the Church the OGS provides strategic direction, governance administration, legal services, and safe church support and resources.

The OGS holds responsibility for the overall stewardship of resources allocated to Synod ministries and operations. Through this stewardship the General Secretary fosters the Synod's mission and

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<sup>1</sup> In particular under paragraph 32 , Uniting Church in Australia Constitution

ministry, capacity building and supports the highest level of accountability so that the Church's resources are responsibly and sustainably managed.

The OGS plays a pivotal role in nurturing relationships, building partnerships and connections. The OGS administers Synod Ministries and Operations (SMO) to ensure accountability, and that collaborative, light and simple work systems exist to benefit congregations and presbyteries, and the Synod's engagement with its institutions.

## **Key Relationships**

Whilst the role reports to the General Secretary, it will also require developing strong relationships with a number of key committees/groups, including, but not limited to:

- Presbyteries and Congregations (as appropriate)
- Synod Standing Committee
- Mission & Ministry Committee and sub-committees
- Property & Operations Committee and sub-committees (as appropriate)
- Placements Committee
- Admission of Ministers Committee
- Terms of Placements Committee
- Synod discipline committees
- Synod Senior Leadership Team
- Key staff in the Synod's institutions
- Other synods and the Assembly
- Synod Crisis Response Team

## **Ministry purpose**

The Associate General Secretary (AGS) acts as deputy to the General Secretary and in the role of Acting General Secretary as required. The AGS will support the General Secretary to assist in the overall pastoral, advisory and administrative requirement of the role.

The AGS plays a key part in promoting the Synod's strategic direction and aligning the work of the Synod Ministries and Operations (SMO) to the strategic priorities and areas of focus and includes assisting with budget management and review.

The AGS assumes delegated responsibility, as requested, for ministry conduct and complaints and discipline procedures.<sup>2</sup> The role will build a stronger culture of safety addressing the existing and emerging risks and compliance challenges inherent with the introduction of new laws, new processes, reputation and relationship management required.

The AGS manages the Manager: Administration & Secretariat Governance, the Culture of Safety Team Manager and is the key Synod liaison person with the Bethel Pastoral Centre Coordinator. The AGS offers support, guidance, and general oversight to those managers in the undertaking of their roles.

The role works to ensure the Church lives out its calling to a safer place for all people, including the safety of children. And that accurate and timely administration support for a broad range requirement within the OGS are provided.

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<sup>2</sup> This includes coordinating the Synod's responsibilities in relation to the Committee for Counselling, Committee for Discipline, and the Synod Sexual Misconduct and Complaints Committee. And the provision of support for the Synod Sexual Misconduct and Complaints Committee Advisory Panel.

This role will also offer pastoral care and guidance regarding matters including to formal discipline procedures, pastoral responses to ministers in need, and advising ministers from other denominations who are discerning ministry within the Uniting Church.

## Key selection criteria

### Qualifications and experience

The successful person for this role will have the following personal qualifications and experience:

- Maintains active membership as a committed Christian within a UCA congregation/faith community.
- Tertiary qualifications/relevant experience in theology, administration, management and/or related field.
- Proven experience and achievements in leadership/senior management roles.
- Understanding/appreciation of the Synod's Strategic Framework.

### Skills and abilities

The successful person for this role will have the following skills and abilities:

1. **Technical expertise:** Extensive knowledge of the Uniting Church in Australia, its polity, systems and practices; knowledge of legislative frameworks regarding child safety, institutional responses to Child Sexual Abuse Royal Commission recommendations, UCA Regulations, UCA Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice, complaints handling and governance best practice and the part these play in congregational / faith communities life and discipleship.
2. **Leadership:** Promotes the strategic priorities and areas of focus with high integrity. Builds team commitment by demonstrating personal conviction. Supports a process of strategic planning incorporating intentional theological reflection and spiritual discernment. Effectively leads change and remains flexible. Models the Uniting Church ethos and workplace values.
3. **People management:** Clearly defines role expectations, monitors performance, provides timely and constructive feedback and facilitates staff development. Supports staff and people in placement to ensure they are effectively engaged and motivated. Ensures a safe workplace for self and others.
4. **Team work:** Cooperates and works well with others in the pursuit of team goals; collaborates and shares information; shows consideration, concern and respect for others' feelings and ideas. Accommodates and works well with the different working styles of others.
5. **Financial sustainability:** Adopts sound accountability measures. Ensures budgeting is accurate, achievable and monitored. Takes a common-wealth approach to financial management.
6. **Conceptual and analytical ability:** Deals with concepts and complexity comfortably. Uses analytical and conceptual skills to reason through problems. Has creative ideas and can project how these can link to innovations.
7. **Relationship development:** Engages with the life of local and regional faith communities to identify issues in common and seeks knowledge to build mutually beneficial partnerships. Identifies and responds to other people's underlying needs. Uses understanding of the context to ensure outcomes are achieved and issues are resolved.
8. **Planning and organising:** Sets clearly defined objectives and priorities and operates accordingly, review and adjust as required. Identifies processes, tasks and resources

required to achieve a goal. Establishes systems and procedures to guide work and track progress.

### **Personal competencies/qualities**

The successful person for this role will have the following personal competences and qualities:

- 9. Communication skills:** Demonstrates excellent verbal and written communication skills. Confidently conveys ideas and information in a clear and interesting way. Demonstrates excellent interpersonal skills and abilities to effectively interact with a diverse range of individuals, groups and committees members.
- 10. Awareness of culture and diversity:** awareness of issues related to inclusion and fairness; understanding of diversity in culture (importance of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse – CALD – communities), ability, age, gender and sexuality (issues related to Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex – LGBTI – communities); capacity to embrace the values and benefits of diverse communities, including in faith-based gatherings and

### **Other requirements**

Applicants will be required to obtain a Working with Children's Check, and their appointment will be subject to satisfactory completion of a National Criminal History Check.

Flexibility is required in terms of working hours, with work on weekends and/or in evenings being necessary on a relatively regular basis. Generally, this means availability to engage with various Church entities during the evening and over weekends, including potentially, travel to regional centres in Victoria and Tasmania and other interstate locations.

Annual leave may not be taken immediately prior to and during a Synod Meeting.

The AGS must support the directions outlined in the Synod's document 'Our Vision Statement, Mission Principles, Statements of Intent, Strategic Priorities and Areas of Focus'.

If the appointee is a Minister of the Word or Minister of Deacon within the UCA, it will be expected that they will exercise the Duties of a Minister (Reg. 2.2.1) in undertaking the role. These duties include: preaching the word; witnessing in the community to the gospel of Jesus Christ; guiding and instructing members of the Church and equipping them for ministry in the community; careful attention to administrative responsibilities; due observance of the discipline of the Church; the enhancement of the Minister's own gifts for the work of ministry; pioneering new expressions of the gospel and encouraging effective ways of fulfilling the mission of the Church. As a minister, the appointee would also be subject to the UCA's Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice.

If the appointee is a lay person they will be engaged under the discipline and accountability of the Church through the ministry of Pastor Regulations and subject to the UCA's Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice. They will also be expected to perform the role aligned to SMO workplace policy framework and the Synod Workplace Values and Characteristics (see below).

## Key Accountabilities

Key Accountabilities	Key Activities
<p>Deliver strategy awareness, governance, regulatory requirements and administration</p>	<p>Lead the promotion and integration of the Synod's strategic directions to champion the integration and use of Synod strategic directions in Synod Ministries and Operation's (SMO) and Synod Committee approaches, activities and decision making.</p> <p>Work closely with the Moderator and General Secretary to plan and foster Synod strategic directions alignment within SMO, Synod Committees and across other councils of the Church.</p> <p>As the Executive Secretary of the Ministry &amp; Mission Committee (M&amp;M) provide assistance to the M&amp;M Chair in all aspects of meeting preparation, conducting, and follow up and including planning meeting agendas, liaising with Chairs of M&amp;M sub-committees and other committees.</p> <p>Contribute to the Synod meeting, participate in the Synod Meeting Planning Committee and Business Committee. Support the General Secretary and Moderator in the fulfilment of their responsibilities. Deputise for the General Secretary as needed at the Synod meeting.</p> <p>Attend Synod Standing Committee as an associated member. Contribute to pre and post planning and follow up requirements to ensure effective Standing Committee meetings.</p> <p>Perform the role of the General Secretary as deputised. This includes on committees, the Synod meeting, SMO Senior Leadership Team and the day to day operations of the Office of the General Secretary.</p> <p>Liaise with ministers in placement regarding a range of ministry services, including, for example, housing removal, pastoral assistance, guidelines and provisions, discipline processes, informal and formal complaints, counselling sexual misconduct and other relevant factors that apply to ministers in placement.</p> <p>Liaise with the Committee for Counselling, Committee for Discipline and Synod Sexual Misconduct and Complaints Committee as delegated by the General Secretary.</p> <p>Fulfil the responsibilities of the Secretary Synod Admission of Ministers committee and attend to all correspondence including that required by Regulations. Be the first point of contact and ongoing engagement with ministers from other denominations considering admission to the UCA.</p> <p>Liaison with other denominations regarding ascertaining ministers Good Standing.</p> <p>Ensure the Terms of Placements Committee is appropriately resourced and fulfil the responsibilities of its Secretary.</p> <p>Chair the Synod Crisis Response Team when significant crises arise and present risk to SMO and/or the wider Church. Provide leadership and liaise, as appropriate, with SMO staff and units, presbyteries and institutions.</p>
<p>Financial management</p>	<p>Liaise with the Manager Administration &amp; Secretariat Governance in preparing and monitoring the OGS's and Moderator's budget.</p>

	<p>Oversee the Synod Meeting Budget Cost efficiencies and accurate forecasting in consultation with the Manager Administration &amp; Secretariat Governance.</p> <p>Develop an annual budget and ensuring expenditure takes place within the delegation of the role (as outlined in the table of delegations) and as approved by the General Secretary.</p> <p>Report regularly and/or at the request of General Secretary, on program/project outcomes as defined within the annual work plan and reflective of financial considerations.</p>
Lead others	<p>Ensuring clearly defined goals are established, annual operational plans are in place and that team position descriptions remain accurate.</p> <p>Maintain clarity of purpose relevant to the team's purpose and the unit as a whole.</p> <p>Coaching and mentoring others and role model the Synod Workplace Values and Characteristics.</p> <p>Build and maintain a team culture that thrives on mission, expertise and service orientation.</p> <p>Demonstrate a commitment to developing self, learning new skills and gaining new insights into own effectiveness.</p>
Manage others	<p>Increase the OGS's effectiveness by recruiting, selecting, orienting, training, coaching, counselling, and supervising managers, communicating values, strategies, and objectives.</p> <p>Assign accountabilities, planning, monitoring performance in line with UCA performance review programs.</p> <p>Maintain a climate for positively offering information and opinions.</p> <p>Be responsible for relevant compliance measures and managing risk to statutory requirements.</p> <p>Remain approachable and consistent and providing sound reasons about decisions that are made.</p> <p>Ensure that professional development opportunities are available and undertaken, so that people working in the team (including self) have contemporary skills and knowledge to do their jobs.</p>
Develop and maintain strong relationships	<p>Develop and maintain effective relationships across the life of the Church, in particular presbyteries and Synod Support and Resources Teams.</p> <p>Maintain a clear and current understanding of overall life within presbyteries and congregations to ensure effective mission planning and the wise stewardship of resources for the mission of the Church.</p> <p>Build partnerships with external organisations, as relevant.</p>
Communicate effectively	<p>Confidently convey ideas and information in a clear and interesting way, clearly understanding the target audience and the objectives of the communication, using feedback to refine communication and handling difficult and sensitive communications well.</p> <p>Write briefs, emails and reports using clear, concise and grammatically correct language, editing written communications to ensure they contain the information necessary to achieve their purpose.</p>

	Use multiple communication channels to tailor communication to relevant audiences.
Demonstrate team work	<p>Openly share insights with others. Maintain effective and respectful relationships.</p> <p>Participate in team meetings and conversations with peers in a way that encourages collaboration, connection, and lighter and simpler systems.</p> <p>Remain open and flexible to new ideas and the sharing of resources, to ensure the wisest use of the Church's resources.</p> <p>Resolve any conflict that may arise through effective reconciliation methods.</p> <p>Participate in team development activities and exercises to enhance own leadership and foster a culture of team-work across synod ministries and operations.</p>

### Synod Vision

Following Christ, walking together as First and Second Peoples, seeking community, compassion and justice for all creation.

### Synod Ministries and Operations Mission

To inspire, resource and enable presbyteries, congregations and agencies to live Synod's vision.

### Values and Characteristics

**Trust** – *a dependable partner* - being a dependable partner that builds trust through: respectful, just and honest action; acting with integrity; ensuring the safety of all children and vulnerable people is paramount; aligning policy and practices; and fulfilling promises.

**Collaboration** – *a shared responsibility* - taking responsibility and collaborating through; knowledge sharing; inclusive decision making; and walking together as First and Second Peoples.

**Growth** – *an expansive culture* - embracing a culture of generosity and growth by: nurturing new ways of doing things; continuous improvement to practices, systems and processes; hearing all voices, contributions; welcoming diversity and consultative leadership.

**Sustainability** – *a healthy ecosystem* - maintaining a vibrant environment by: the intentional use of resources and ensuring we have the right skills, development, gifts and talents where we and our work flourish.