



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

Engaging the Areas of Focus

Informing a whole of Church conversation



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



The four *Areas of Focus* help remind us that, as a people of God called to share in God's mission, our ministry takes place in particular contexts and in particular times. This booklet will help you have conversations about the culture of our age and how we might best be at ministry at this moment.

Central to the Christian story is God entering into a particular human culture and history in Jesus Christ. As we seek to live as people shaped in life and faith by this story, we need to take seriously the cultures and history of our own age. We trust that God's Spirit is our companion so that we do not lose our way.

The *Areas of Focus* inform important conversations for us to have. I commend this booklet as an initial guide to these conversations and as a beginning to a whole-of-church conversation in the coming years.

May they bear fruit in the ministry that your gathered community offers.



Sharon Hollis
Moderator
Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
November 2017

Engaging the Areas of Focus is one in a series of four booklets that explores key elements of the Synod's Strategic Framework. The Framework seeks to support an environment that invites discussion, provokes questions and gives intentional focus for discerning the renewing work of the Spirit in our day.

To enhance the explorations of this booklet, it is helpful to read the other booklets: *An Introduction to the Vision and Mission Principles* (March 2017), *Supporting Information on the Statements of Intent* (July 2017) and *Understanding the Strategic Priorities (2016-2022)* (November 2017).

On the pages that follow...

This booklet explores each of the four *Areas of Focus*. As part of this exploration, reflections and exercises are offered to help individuals and groups discover how to engage with each *Area* in their own context. The Synod hopes that this resource, together with all the resources in the Strategic Framework booklet series, assists the conversations and actions of everyone across the Church.

This booklet, *Engaging the Areas of Focus*, identifies the four *Areas of Focus* adopted by the Synod in 2016. The *Areas of Focus* identify four key themes that will inform a whole of Church conversation and commit the Church to a posture of learning about our contemporary Australian context.

The inside back cover of this booklet contains the *Vision and Mission Principles*, the 10 *Statements of Intent*, the three *Strategic Priorities* and the four *Areas of Focus*.



Areas of Focus: informing a whole-of-Church conversation

The Synod recognises that working with the *Strategic Priorities* requires an ongoing commitment from the whole church to learn about the changing realities of our contemporary Australian context. Indeed, the same is true for our use of the *Vision and Mission Principles* and *Statements of Intent* as an aid for discernment by the Synod. Paragraph 11 of the Basis of Union reminds us that the Uniting Church is committed to ‘an informed faith’, that is open to learning from biblical scholarship and contemporary enquiry ‘in ways which help it to understand its own nature and mission’.

As a result, the Synod seeks to encourage a whole-of-church conversation and resolved to resource and guide that conversation over the coming years. There is much to discuss and explore as we seek to live faithfully as church in our time. This involves learning about our local, regional and global contexts, and facing the challenges and opportunities before us. With the Spirit’s help, there is much to inform us and to discern together.

The Synod seeks to encourage a whole-of-Church conversation and resolved to resource and guide that conversation over the coming years.

Introducing four AREAS OF FOCUS

Four particular themes were named as important in helping guide this whole-of-church conversation. These themes are called *Areas of Focus* and are listed as follows:

- 1. The identity of Jesus Christ and Christianity in a post-Christendom world;**
- 2. Multicultural 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.**

Our Church’s engagement with the three *Strategic Priorities* is informed by these four *Areas of Focus* and is complemented by the Synod’s *Vision and Mission Principles* and *Statements of Intent*.

While the adopted *Areas of Focus* will initially guide our conversation and our learning, the themes will be refined and expanded as the conversation unfolds.

The following pages expand on the four *Areas of Focus* and provide brief introductory comment on each one. Various exercises and prompts are provided to begin the conversation and for individual or group reflection.

Reflection: Changeless and changing

The four *Areas of Focus* recognise that the context for the Church's life and witness is a changing social landscape, where numerous worldviews and ideologies are competing for attention. Many describe this changing context as post-modern or pluralist. For the church, some refer to the 'cracking of Christendom' or post-Christendom, where the church finds itself on the margins of mainstream society and has less influence and power.

Yet the church knows it is called to participate in society as a sign and instrument of God's mission, by anchoring its life in the seemingly unchanging character of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Diverse gathered communities across the Church seek, with the Spirit's help, to follow Christ. They will express the changeless Gospel of Jesus Christ in new ways, for the sake of the world that God loves. Theologian Miroslav Volf, in his 2010 book *Against the Tide*, summarised this changing and unchanging tension. He wrote:

'Can we, whether pastors, lay people, or theologians, live authentically a changeless Gospel in ever-changing cultures?'

It is also reflected in the Synod's first resource booklet in this series, *Introducing the Vision and Mission Principles* (March 2017) which noted:

'This is a time we believe that the Spirit is calling us forward to new things and back to the hope in the gospel of Jesus'.

The church is a community gathered by God's love for the world.

God comes in love into the world and seeks its divinely intended healing, wholeness and fullness of life. In expressing this love in Jesus Christ, the Spirit of God gathers people into the stream of that love, reconciles them to God and one another and forms them as a community we call 'church'. In this way, the church takes form as various women and men are gathered into and bound together by the flow of God's love for the world. The church does not constitute itself, but is an outworking of God's unchanging faithfulness and loving action in Jesus Christ.

*Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you".
And with that he breathed on them and said,
"Receive the Holy Spirit".*

- John 20:21

The Church is sent in the name of Jesus Christ to love the world.

As the Church is formed, the Holy Spirit nurtures the call of God's converting love, so that the Church is united as a co-worker with God in loving action towards the world. Through its life, the Church witnesses to the way of Jesus Christ - the way of God in and for the world. The Church's love-inspired service in the world points to the promised future that is God's hope and gift for all creation.



The Church is both *changeless* and *changing*

Our gathered communities find their life and their being in the changeless love and mission of God for the world. They live and breathe within the flow of God's love toward the world; a love revealed decisively in Jesus Christ.

As a people called to love the world with that same self-giving love of God, our gathered communities apply their Spirit-given gifts to the world around them. They express the love of Christ in ever-changing circumstances, needs, cultures and contexts. American missiologist Darrell L. Guder said it well in a 2002 study series called *Unlikely Ambassadors: Clay Jar Christians in God's Service*, when he wrote:

'Every Christian community, therefore, should understand itself as God's communication to the world ... to be known and read by all [2 Corinthians 3:2] ... Our witness is to be clear, accessible, unambiguous'.

We need to talk about such things.

The whole-of-church conversation, informed by the four *Areas of Focus*, seeks to strengthen the worship, witness and service of our changeless and changing Church.

Individually or as a group, in the light of the reflections on page 4 and 5 consider and discuss the following questions:

1. What do you find reassuring, or unsettling, about a church that stays anchored to a changeless Gospel?
2. What do you find reassuring, or unsettling, about a church that is called to change its ways of expressing its life so it can better share the Gospel and serve the world?

3. What may result when the Church foregoes the need to be changing? And vice versa, what may happen when the church is changing without a changeless Gospel anchor?
4. How might your gathered community nurture a healthy and life-giving tension between being changeless and being changing? What practices can you embrace to help you?

AREA OF FOCUS 1

The identity of Jesus Christ and Christianity in a post-Christendom world

This *Area of Focus* acknowledges we are in the midst of a major paradigm shift involving fundamental changes to Australian society. In some ways, our society is becoming more secular. But it is also more pluralist; increasingly diverse worldviews and ideologies shape people's lives. The church in Australia today stands more on the margins of society than in past decades, and our understanding of our colonial past is changing. The Uniting Church is caught up in these changes.

"We're dealing with some complex questions. The Church can either pretend they're not there and keep going the way it always has, or it can confront them head on. And I think I'd prefer to see the Church going in the second direction. And I'm starting to see some signs of that."

- Bethany (Workshop participant), March 2017.

This *Area of Focus* recognises that these changes require continuing exploration and demand a faithful response. The Church's calling in Christ always involves living out the Gospel in the context of a changing world.

As a result, this movement of change raises questions for all Australian churches, and our ecumenical partners around the world. How is God active in the world? How is the Church called to participate in God's mission today? As reflected in the Basis of Union, a deeper understanding and engagement with our contemporary context will continue to inform the Church's missional calling. Paragraph 11 notes:

'Within that [world-wide fellowship of Churches] the Uniting Church also stands in relation to contemporary societies in ways which help it to understand its own nature and mission'.

This so-called post-Christendom context may offer the Church new opportunities to express its distinctiveness and faithful authenticity in a diverse and complex culture.

This *Area of Focus* points to 'the identity of Jesus Christ and Christianity' for the Church today. This may involve the distinct naming of Christian faith and the way in which the Church expresses its faith and its lived witness to the Gospel. This will be informed by our own Basis of Union and the sources of the Christian tradition.

These are difficult questions for our Synod to wrestle with; not only difficult, but perhaps disturbing and painful as the influence of church in our society moves from a place of privilege and power to a position of vulnerability and marginality.

It is understandable that this wide-ranging *Area of Focus* underpins the other three, for it includes consideration of both

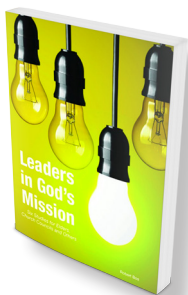
- (i) our identity as church (Who we are? Why we are?), and
- (ii) our contemporary context (Where we are? When we are?).

DESCRIBING OUR CHANGING TIMES

Consider the three quotes below.

The first two quotes are from available study series by contemporary Uniting Church writers. The last is a 1963 quote taken from one of the key foundational reports of the Joint Commission on Church Union (the body responsible for drafting the Basis of Union). For each quote, individually and/or in a group, ask:

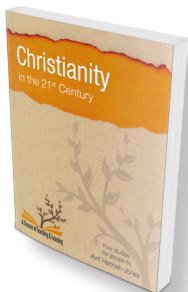
1. How do you, or your community, experience what the writer is trying to describe?
2. What particular parts of each quote invite or challenge you?
3. What are some of the implications of each writer's claim for the Church today?



Rev Dr Rob Bos, *Leaders in God's Mission* (MediaCom Education, 2015)

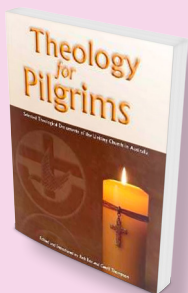
“Up until around the 1960s, Australia saw itself as a ‘Christian nation’. The boundaries between church and the wider society were blurry. To be a Christian and to be a good citizen were regarded as largely over-lapping, or even the same thing ...

That is no longer the case. Church and nation are no longer necessarily mutually supportive social structures. To be a Christian in Australia today is to be counter-cultural, perhaps to be regarded by others with indifference, amusement, hostility or even a sense of bewilderment”.



Rev Dr Avril Hannah-Jones, *Christianity in the 21st Century* (MediaCom Education, 2014)

“We live in the modern world and in the various postmodern worlds, and there is no escape from that. Christianity is a religion that always seeks to exist inside a culture. In the same way that God was incarnate, or made flesh, in Jesus Christ, Christianity is incarnate, or made flesh, in the languages, ideas, values and patterns of behaviour of particular societies. Every generation of Christians must ask: ‘Who is Jesus Christ for us, today?’ ... Christianity in twenty-first century Australia must both exist in its cultural setting and be counter-cultural.”



Joint Commission on Church Union, ‘The Church : its nature, function and ordering’ (1963) (in *Theology for Pilgrims*, Uniting Church Press, 2008)

“The Church must carry out her mission by assuming this servant form and, as Christ wore the garb, spoke the language and lived within the social patterns of first century Israel, so the Church must take on relevant forms in particular circumstances of every age... This means that in asking questions as to the form and order that the Church should assume if it is to fulfil the mission of Christ, we must take seriously the particular setting in which the Australian Church finds itself.”

AREA OF FOCUS 2

Multicultural and multi-faith Australia and its relationship to its First Peoples

“As the Church believes God guided it into union, so it believes that God is calling it to continually seek a renewal of its life as a community of First Peoples and of Second Peoples from many lands”.

- Preamble to the UCA Constitution

First and Second Peoples

From the 2015 Assembly study series *Walking Together*, Chris Budden notes: ‘The terms “First Peoples” and “Second Peoples” are new to the Uniting Church and originated in the drafting of the revised Preamble. The Preamble defines the First Peoples as the Aboriginal and Islander peoples. While the Second Peoples are not defined as such, certainly the term is used to speak of those not of Aboriginal or Islander descent who came later to Australia... the main purpose of the terms is to be clear about who was in this land first, regardless of who came later, and to make important statements about the First People’s relationship with the land, their law, custom and ceremony, and their experience of colonisation.’

This *Area of Focus* points to a pivotal concern in the life of our nation – the relationship with Australia’s First Peoples. As participants in a colonialism that painfully disrupted and dispossessed the First Peoples of this land, the Church bears a profound weight of history and its associated injustices.

Without authenticity in this relationship, the Church as a missionary instrument of God is diminished and suffers a lamentable loss of credibility.

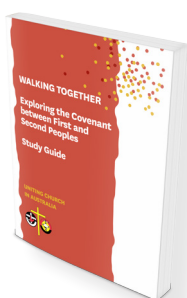
This *Area of Focus* is concerned with justice. At the heart of the Old Testament and the teaching of Jesus is the theme of justice. This is more than simply righting wrongs; it is a statement about the nature of the community we want to see created. It is when all are in ‘right relationship’ with God, each other and the whole creation. It is closely associated with ‘shalom’, the peace of God. As Christ has blessed the Church with a continuing ministry of reconciliation, the Church seeks to fulfil a particular call to walk with the First Peoples in ways that are worthy of the Gospel.

We do so as a sign of hope for all Australians. Our rich diversity of peoples from many lands includes Australians of many cultures, many faiths and of no faith; those who have been here for generations and those who are new to Australian shores. The Church and our wider Australian community will look for ways to partner together in striving for justice.

SHARING TOGETHER

As an individual or a group, take time to read through the following three quotes.

1. What do you find affirming in what you have read in this section? What do you find puzzling? What do you find confronting?
2. Consider how you and/or your community need to be better informed about our history and the experience of Australia's First Peoples?
3. What possible responses and actions might individuals or gathered communities make to seek justice for and with Australia's First Peoples?

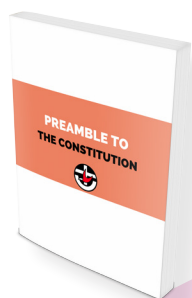


First Peoples voicing their experience

'Time and again, missionaries discovered that the faith that they brought was entwined with their own western culture. Their gospel was in some way a colonial gospel, often accompanied by power, privilege and a denial of the culture, language and beliefs of the Indigenous people. A further step has taken place throughout the last century, namely, allowing indigenous people to voice their experience of God in their own culture and to express how they see this connected with the Triune God revealed in the Scripture'.

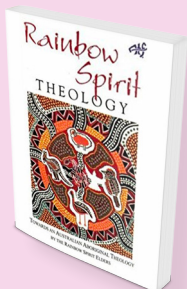
From study series *Walking Together*, Assembly UCA, 2015.

Items 4 and 5 from the Preamble to the UCA Constitution



Item 4 - Some members of the uniting churches approached the First Peoples with good intentions, standing with them in the name of justice; considering their wellbeing, culture and language as the churches proclaimed the reconciling purpose of the Triune God found in the good news about Jesus Christ.

Item 5 - Many in the uniting churches, however, shared the values and relationships of the emerging colonial society including paternalism and racism towards the First Peoples. They were complicit in the injustice that resulted in many of the First Peoples being dispossessed from their land, their language, their culture and spirituality, becoming strangers in their own land.



The voice of Indigenous spirituality

'If the Gospel is to be expressed fully in the wider Australian context, it needs to take into account the voice of God now being discerned in our Aboriginal culture by Aboriginal people. Aboriginal culture, Aboriginal spirituality and the Aboriginal experience of the Gospel are not to be viewed as curios of mission history, but as integral to the work of God in Australia'.

Rainbow Spirit Elders, *Rainbow Spirit Theology*

AREA OF FOCUS 3

Peace-making, power and powerlessness, being with and for the poor

What does it mean to walk the way of Jesus today? What does such a life look like? What characteristics does it have? In what ways is the Church called to walk such a path?

This *Area of Focus* challenges how, as followers of Christ, we live in the world today.

The way of Christ – revealed in his life, death and resurrection – overturns our perspectives on power and wisdom. The strength of Christ is seen in his surrendering of worldly power and in his determination to serve rather than be served (Mark 10:45). The wisdom of God seems as foolishness to many (1 Corinthians 1:19-25). Jesus, the Prince of Peace, dies upon a criminal's cross amidst religious and political controversy and conflict.

How do gathered communities in today's Uniting Church faithfully express their life and witness in response to, and in light of, the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

Early in its work, the Joint Commission on Church Union signalled a particular Gospel orientation when it declared:

'[Christ] chose to reveal his lordship through becoming a servant, and identifying himself with humankind ... His greatest glory is seen in his stooping, his lordship in the love that serves. So also the Church must carry out her mission by assuming this servant form ...' JCCU, *The Church: its nature, function and ordering*. (1963)

In adopting this servant orientation, the Church follows Christ into the world. The risen Christ commissioned his disciples: 'As the Father has sent me, I am sending you' (John 20:21). Gathered communities are called into being by the Lord of the Church

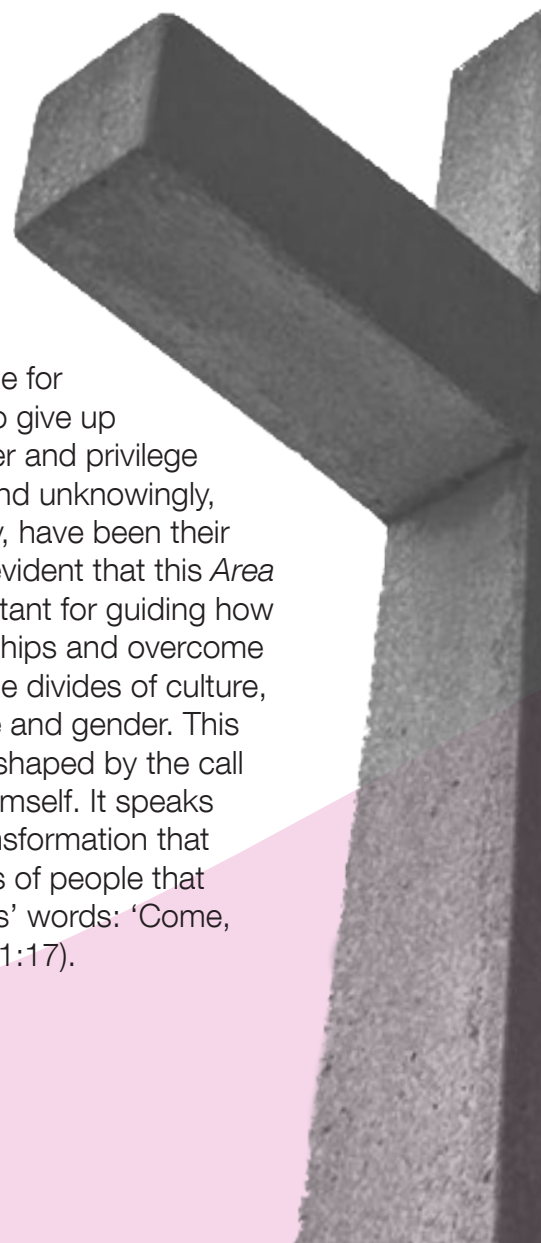
that they might learn of God's love for the world, and so be formed and sent as bearers of that love. But further, the way of Christ in the world is decisively the way of the cross. Paragraph 4 of the Basis of Union reminds us that Christ 'calls people into the fellowship of his sufferings, to be the disciples of a crucified Lord'.

How do today's followers of Christ walk this distinctive way?

It is the way of the beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12) – giving up power and privilege, expressing humility and repentance before others, and being people of grace, peacemakers, healers and reconcilers.

This distinctive way of Christ will continue to challenge how we companion the poor and those in need in the world.

This challenge may be formidable for those called on to give up positions of power and privilege that, knowingly and unknowingly, justly and unjustly, have been their inheritance. It is evident that this *Area of Focus* is important for guiding how we build relationships and overcome barriers across the divides of culture, social status, age and gender. This *Area of Focus* is shaped by the call of Jesus Christ himself. It speaks to the radical transformation that is possible in lives of people that are open to Jesus' words: 'Come, follow me' (Mark 1:17).



WALKING THE WAY OF JESUS TODAY

Consider this third Area of Focus by reflecting upon these four readings from scripture. Share with a friend and/or your gathered community. In what ways do these readings speak of the distinctive path that is shaped by the way of Jesus Christ?

Mark 10:42-45

So Jesus called them and said to them, “You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognise as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Philippians 2:5-8

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross.

1 Corinthians 1:22-25

For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.

Matthew 5:5-9

Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst
for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
Blessed are the merciful,
for they will receive mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted
because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

AREA OF FOCUS 4

Inter-faith and intercultural engagement, encounter and learning

This *Area of Focus* explores the wondrous complexity of our contemporary Australian society.

The Uniting Church has a strong track-record of pursuing vital ecumenical relationships.

Dialogue and co-operation is part of our history. The Basis of Union is resolute about the importance of our relationship with other churches. It commits us to ‘enter more deeply into the faith and mission of the Church in Australia by working together and seeking union with other Churches’ (Paragraph 2).

The complexity of multi-faith Australia also calls for intentional relationships. The nurturing of mutual respect and dialogue between faiths is vital. From this come opportunities for learning, growth and community.

Inter-faith dialogue respectfully acknowledges:

- (i) the uniqueness of each faith tradition and how faith communities strive to live out their traditions in the world, and
- (ii) the overlapping wisdom and experience discovered in the respectful sharing of a common search for meaning and fullness of life.

“It’s about trying to readjust to a new time and new space, and how do we actually start meeting people with where they are at.”

- Anna (Workshop participant), March 2017

Such dialogue can create a desire to rejoice, as well as stimulate new thinking and learning.

The importance of nurturing the blessings of this diversity is reflected in the Strategic Framework and focused in the adopted *Strategic Priorities*.

This *Area of Focus* acknowledges that when someone meets a person from another culture, misunderstandings can arise.

Thankfully, opportunities for **encounter and learning** are plentiful.

This *Area of Focus* invites us to explore how we will encounter, engage and learn as faithful followers of Christ in this social diversity.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS OF RESPECT

Consider quietly, prayerfully, the following words (two recommendations from *Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct*, a 2011 statement by the World Council of Churches, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, and the World Evangelical Alliance):

Mutual respect and solidarity. Christians are called to commit themselves to work with all people in mutual respect, promoting together justice, peace and the common good. Interreligious cooperation is an essential dimension of such commitment.

Building interreligious relationships.

Christians should continue to build relationships of respect and trust with people of different religions to facilitate deeper mutual understanding, reconciliation and cooperation for the common good.

‘Engagement, encounter and learning’

In 2012, the World Council of Churches’ Commission on World Mission and Evangelism released a statement of affirmation entitled *‘Together towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes’*.

Paragraphs 94 and 97 state:

(94) The gospel takes root in different contexts through engagement with specific cultural, political, and religious realities. Respect for people and their cultural and symbolic life-worlds are necessary if the gospel is to take root in those different realities. In this way it must begin with engagement and dialogue with the wider context in order to discern how Christ is already present and where God’s Spirit is already at work.

(97) Dialogue is a way of affirming our common life and goals in terms of the affirmation of life and the integrity of creation. Dialogue at a religious level is possible only if we begin with the expectation of meeting God who has preceded us and has been present with people within their own contexts. God is there before we come (Acts 17) and our task is not to bring God along, but to witness to the God who is already there. Dialogue provides for an honest encounter where each party brings to the table all that they are in an open, patient and respectful manner.

EXPLORING YOUR OWN INTER-FAITH AND INTERCULTURAL CONTEXT

1. As you look around your local community, what opportunities are there for you and/or your gathered community to engage with those of another faith or an unfamiliar culture?
2. What is one practical step you could take to respectfully reach out? After acting on this commitment, return to share with another person, or your group, what you have learned from the experience.
3. Perhaps you could share experiences of visiting and travelling in communities where Christianity is a minority faith. How did it feel? What questions did it raise for you?
4. Try to name ways each of us, and our gathered communities, can foster a respectful encounter that leads to dialogue with people of other faiths and no faith.

An invitation to join the conversation

The Synod of Victoria and Tasmania has committed the four *Areas of Focus*, together with the three *Strategic Priorities*, to an ongoing whole-of-church conversation. This booklet briefly explores the intention and scope of the *Areas of Focus*, and should be read as a complement to the booklet *Understanding the Strategic Priorities* (2016-2022). The Synod is committed to encourage, support and resource the conversations that arise.

In your own pilgrimage, and that of your gathered community, draw upon some of the activities and reflections in this resource booklet.

Explore questions together, such as:

- How can the *Areas of Focus* inform our conversations and learning?
- How can we seek to nurture continued learning and understanding of God's mission?
- What does it mean to walk faithfully as a follower of Christ in our day?
- How can we encourage this conversation in gathered communities across the Synod?

As well as this booklet, additional resources are available that describe related components of the Synod's Strategic Framework. These can be downloaded from the Synod's website:

ucavictas.org.au/visionandmission/

Other booklets in the series include:

- *Introducing the Vision and Mission Principles* (March 2017);
- *Supporting information on the Statements of Intent* (July 2017); and
- *Understanding the Strategic Priorities* (2016-2022) (November 2017).

These booklets are offered as conversation partners in the Church's ongoing spiritual discernment that seeks an intentional and coordinated life-giving focus on the mission of God.

Together we pray that we will be open to discerning the call of God's Spirit. It is a journey of planning, visioning and shaping the path of faithful pilgrimage. God's Spirit has woven the Church together. We pray that this same Spirit will continue to weave the Church faithfully into the tapestry of God's loving purposes for the world.

If you would like to share how you have created initiatives in your community that reflect the *Areas of Focus*, please send your stories or photos to

Email: strategic.reviewimplementation@victas.uca.org.au

Phone: 03 9251 5479

Mailing address:

Attn: Rev David Withers
Uniting Church in Australia
Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
130 Little Collins Street
Melbourne 3000

Further information and additional resources referred to in this booklet can be found at:

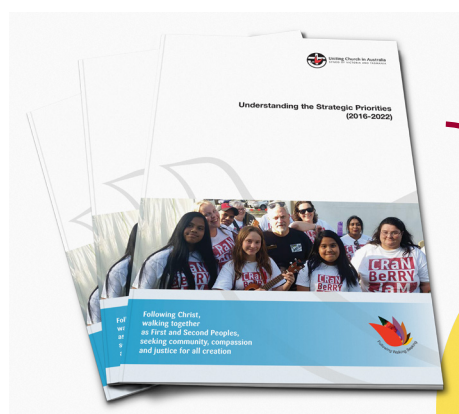
ucavictas.org.au/visionandmission/

The three Strategic Priorities

1. ministries which foster diverse gathered communities of renewal, Christian practice and mission
2. culturally diverse mission and ministry;
3. mission and ministry with children, youth, their families and young people.

The Four Areas of Focus

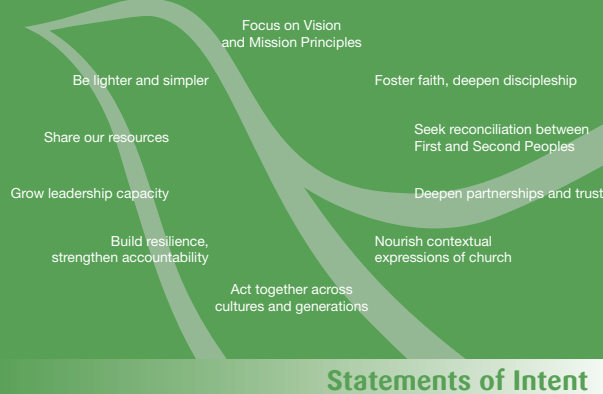
1. The identity of Jesus Christ and Christianity in a post-Christendom world;
2. Multi-cultural and multi-faith Australia and its relationship to its First Peoples;
3. Peace-making, power and powerlessness, being with and for the poor;
4. Inter-faith and intercultural engagement, encounter and learning.



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

God in Christ is at mission in the world and sends the Church in the Spirit to:

1. share the Good News of Jesus Christ
2. nurture followers of Christ in life-giving communities of reconciliation
3. respond in compassion to human need
4. live justly and seek justice for all
5. care for creation
6. listen to each generation and culture so as to live out the Gospel in fresh ways
7. pursue God's mission in partnership





Helping enable an intentional focus on God's mission

