

# The Faithful Futures Respecting Country Goal Group Terms of Reference

## 1 Name and Source of Authority

- 1.1 The name of this body shall be **Faithful Futures Respecting Country Goal Group**.
- 1.2 Source of Authority – Synod resolution 25.3.14.1, clause (f), and Faithful Futures Steering Committee clause 26.13.1.

## 2 Statement of Purpose

The Faithful Futures Respecting Country Goal Group’s purpose is to support the presbyteries and the Synod to fulfil the Shared Vision and, specifically, the Respecting Country goal: “Honouring the Church’s Covenant with the Uniting Aboriginal and Island Christian Congress, all communities of faith will listen to and be able to tell about some of the histories of the Country on which they are located by the end of 2028, and be invited to develop local and appropriate ways to respond”. (Ref: Synod resolution 25.3.14.1(b)B).

## 3 Responsibilities and Functions

The Goal Group will:

- 3.1 Prepare and curate resources, including coaching, that will assist communities of faith to engage in respectful listening, research and storytelling about some of the histories of the Country on which they are located or regularly gather.
- 3.2 Identify and learn from communities of faith who have had experience in actively listening and storytelling about some of the histories of their local Country, to assist with clause 3.1.
- 3.3 Undertake conversations with the Victorian and Tasmanian Regional Committees of Congress.
- 3.4 Engage with the Walking Together in Covenant Committee and other groups, as needed.
- 3.5 Make recommendations to the Faithful Futures Steering Committee about the tools and methods that could be used to effectively measure achievement of the Respecting Country goal.
- 3.6 Make recommendations to the Faithful Futures Steering Committee about the ‘next steps’ that the Synod and presbyteries can take to continue developing local and appropriate ways to respond to Shared Vision of “Walking together as first and second peoples” beyond the end of 2028.

## 4 Membership

### 4.1 Members

- 4.1.1 The membership of this group shall consist of four to six people, including the Chair, who have specialist skills, experience or interest in listening to and telling about some of the histories of Country. At least two of these people will be from congregations, faith communities or agencies who have lived experience of listening to and telling about some of the histories of the Country where they gather to worship.
- 4.1.2 These members will be nominated through Expressions of Interest and appointed by the Faithful Futures Steering Committee.
- 4.1.3 Faithful Futures Steering Committee members, and staff wholly employed or placed within Synod Ministries & Operations and Presbyteries may not be members of the Goal Group, with the exception of those who are members due to these terms of reference.

### 4.2 Participants

The participants, as associated members of the goal group, shall include, but not be limited to:

- 4.2.1 the Faithful Futures Project Lead (or nominee)
- 4.2.2 Members of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress Regional Committees in Victoria and lutruwita/Tasmania will be welcome to participate at any meeting.
- 4.2.3 Members of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania 'Walking Together in Covenant Committee' will be welcome to participate at any meeting.
- 4.2.4 Subject matter experts, including those who are not eligible for membership, may be invited to attend as participants from time to time to support the goal group in fulfilling their responsibilities.

### 4.3 Chairperson

- 4.3.1 The chairperson will be appointed by the Faithful Futures Steering Committee.
- 4.3.2 The chairperson may be required to attend, and/or provide a written report to, the Faithful Futures Steering Committee no more than bi-annually.

## 5 Casual Vacancies

- 5.1 When a member ceases to be eligible for membership by reason of:
  - i. resignation; or
  - ii. death; or
  - iii. moving outside the bounds of the Synod; or
  - iv. for such other reasons as the Faithful Futures Steering Committee determines,then a casual vacancy shall arise.
- 5.2 The casual vacancy shall be filled by appointment of the Faithful Futures Steering Committee after it has consulted with the Faithful Futures Respecting Country Goal Group, and must maintain the same profile as the former member.
- 5.3 Persons appointed to fill a casual vacancy shall hold office for the duration of the term of the person who they replace.

## 6 Length of Service

- 6.1 Members shall be appointed for an initial term of not more than 3 years (end of term of Goal Group: December 2028).
- 6.2 Persons appointed to fill a casual vacancy shall be appointed for the remainder of the time period until December 2028.

## 7 Meetings

- 7.1 The Goal Group shall meet at least 4 times per year, at a time and place to be determined by the Group.
- 7.2 A quorum shall be a minimum of three appointed members of the Goal Group.
- 7.3 Confirmed meeting notes detailing all resolutions passed at each meeting shall be kept and provided to the Chair of the Faithful Futures Steering Committee.
- 7.4 Meetings may be held in person or through the use of technology.

## 8 Indemnity

- 8.1 Any person acting as a member of the Goal Group shall be entitled to be indemnified in accordance with Regulation 4.11.2.

## 9 Definitions

In these **Terms of Reference** unless the context indicates otherwise:

Term	Definition
“Church”	Means the Uniting Church in Australia
“Congregation”	Means any congregation within the Synod
“Congress”	Means the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress
“Committee”	Means the Faithful Futures Steering Committee
“Member”	Means a person appointed as a member to participate in the activities and decisions of the Committee / Goal Group.
“Participant”	Means an associated member of a Committee who is given permission by the Committee to participate in meetings of the Committee for all or part of the proceedings as appropriate (Manual for Meetings, Chapter 5). A participant may contribute during the worship, general, information and deliberative sessions of a meeting but not in the decision. The leave of the Committee is required for a person to be recognized as a participant
“Presbyteries”	Means any presbytery within the Synod.
“Regulations”	Means the Regulations of the Uniting Church in Australia.
“Synod”	Means the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

## Document Control

<b>Document Owner:</b>	The <b>Faithful Futures Project Lead</b> is responsible for the management and maintenance of this document.			
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<b>0.1</b>	April 2026	Faithful Futures Project Lead	Initial version	Initial draft for committee consideration
<b>1.0</b>	April 2026	Faithful Futures Program Officer	Updates to align the Faithful Futures Steering Committee feedback.	22/04/2026
<b>1.1</b>	May 2026	Faithful Futures Program Officer	Update to clause 1.2, with no change to existing authority.	01/06/2026