



THURSDAY PROGRAM 24TH OCTOBER 2024

SESSION 1 PLENARY

Welcome to Country & Worship including Communion	Information	Mr Allen Edwards, Moderator & Worship Team
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Mr Allen Edwards officially welcomed all to the 2024 Synod Meeting through music and words.

Worship led by Elissa Inglis, Jethro Buxton and Jo Palmer. All songs used with permission from the artist.

The Moderator led the Synod in Communion assisted by Rev Sue Page. President Charisa Suli, President-elect Rev Dr Paul Goh, Pastor Denis Msema and Dr Deidre Palmer led the Synod in prayer.

Welcome	Information	Moderator
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The Moderator welcomed and recognised:

- President, Charisa Suli
- Assembly General Secretary, Andrew Johnson
- President-elect, Rev Dr Paul Goh
- New members to the Synod

Apologies - Rev Mark Kickett, National Chair of UAICC (sorry business Thursday and Friday)

(Proposal 1) S24.01	Procedural	Deliberative & Decision	Moderator & Gen Sec
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The General Secretary moved Proposal 1.

The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:

1.
 - a. ADOPT standing orders and rules of debate as set out in 'A Manual for Meetings in the Uniting Church', as recorded in the Constitution and Regulations, 2018 edition. (Reg. 3.8.4)
 - b. APPROVE that the style of decision making shall be by the use of coloured cards unless a written ballot is called for by the Moderator.
 - c. AGREE that in the event that a procedural motion for the council to move into "Private sitting" is carried by a simple majority then ALL those who are not members of the Council must leave the meeting. The required Uniting Technology and Synod staff will be able to remain to execute their respective tasks.
 - d. DETERMINE that all discussions or decisions will be conducted in ways which comply with the Church's responsibilities under the "Synod Work Health and Safety Corporate Policy and Procedures" and the Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2012 (SA).



2. NOTE that at the beginning of each session the Moderator will deal with the business coming before the house in the following order:
 - a. Minutes of any meeting requiring to be approved or confirmed.
 - b. Letters or other communications to be received.
 - c. Reports from the Business Committee or other special committee appointed by the Synod.
 - d. Confirmation or variation of the proposed hours of session and order of the day.
 - e. Formal Business.
 - f. The order of the day.
3. RECEIVE all reports as provided (electronic and hard copy) in the Reports and Business Papers of the Synod of South Australia 24th – 26th October 2024 and Supplements thereto.
4. NOTE that:
 - a. Questions relating to the proposals brought before the Synod by the Business Committee will be answered at the time when the proposals are being considered by a plenary session of the Synod.
 - b. Questions relating to the reports and proposals which are not considered by a plenary session of Synod because of time constraints, will be referred along with the particular proposals to the Synod Standing Committee.
 - c. Comments and/or questions from the floor and replies to questions shall be limited to three (3) minutes unless otherwise determined by the house.
5. DETERMINE that the Roll shall only contain the names of those members listed on the roll present at the meeting or have advised the Synod Event Manager of extenuating circumstances at 11.30 am on Thursday 24 October 2024.
6. DEFINE the boundaries of the house to be the main auditorium and creche room of the Adelaide West Uniting Church.
7. ADOPT the Hours of Session as listed hereunder:

Sessions 1 - 5	Thursday 24 th October	9:15am – 5.30pm
Sessions 6– 9	Friday 25 th October	9:00am – 6.00pm
Sessions 10 -13	Saturday 26 th October	9.00am – 1.00pm
8. APPOINT the following officers for this Synod meeting:
 - a. Assistant Secretaries
Ms Michelle Harris
Mr Travis Turner
Rev Sue Page



b.	Minute Secretary	Ms Michelle Cavallaro Ms Johanne Manning
c.	Chief Scrutineer Ballot Scrutineer	Ms Anne Wilson Mr Peter Wilson
d.	Chaplains	Rev Anne Hewitt Rev Mark Dickens
e.	Business Committee	Moderator, Rev Peter Morel, General Secretary, Rev Philip Gardner Event Manager, Rev Sue Page, Mr Travis Turner Ms Michelle Harris
f.	Facilitation Team	Mr Malcolm Wilson (Convenor) Rev Leanne Davis Mr Andrew Telfer Rev Ann Phillips Mr Jacob Blackwell
g.	First Aid Officers	Mr. Tim Lee Dr Joanna Palmer
9.	Associate the following people with the meeting for the purposes of participating in presenting reports, proposals and report electives: Rev Gary Stuckey	
10.	Co-opt the following people to membership of the Synod: Rev Sue Page Associate General Secretary (G & O) Mr Mark Waters (Director, UnitingCare SA)	
	In order to meet categories set out by Synod Standing Committee the following persons are co- opted:	
	• Mrs Margreet Diment – MOP, rural • Rev Matthew Carratt – rural • Mr Trevor Carter – lay, rural • Mr Jordon Lee-Coats – lay U25	
11.	DECLARE that proposals be dealt with in the following order:	
	- Those which must be dealt with by Synod in full session which cannot be referred (in an order decided by the Business Committee). - Those which arrive by 5pm on Thursday 13 September (in an order decided by the Business Committee). - All others (in an order decided by the Business Committee).	
12.	ADOPT the following procedure in respect of ballots:	
	Note that nominations for all councils, committees and boards will close at 3.30 pm on Thursday 24th October 2024.	



- b. Agree that any necessary ballots be held during the meeting with ballots conducted electronically via Survey Monkey with secure links sent to members at a time determined by the Business Committee and that ballots will close at a time to be determined by Business Committee.

13. ASK that proposals with costing implications:

- a. include a process for raising new revenue and/or
- b. be submitted to the next year's budget process to be determined by Synod and/or
- c. be submitted to annual Synod grant processes.

(Proposal 2)
S24.02

Ministerial Matters

Deliberative
& Decision

Moderator & Gen Sec

The General Secretary moved Proposal 2.

The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to AFFIRM the record of Ministerial Matters from July 2023 to October 2024:

Deacons

Received by ordination	Presbytery of Southern SA Rev Robert Cartridge
Transfers into the Synod of SA	Generate Presbytery Rev Dr Tim Hodgson from Qld Synod (Defence Force Chaplain) Presbytery of Southern SA Rev Peter Wait from Northern Synod from 1 March 2024

Ministers of the Word

Received by ordination	Wimala Presbytery Rev Leanne Davis Generate Presbytery Rev Timothy Littleford Presbytery of Southern SA Rev Nola Gibbons
Received by admission or readmission	Generate Presbytery Rev Barry Luke
Ministers who have retired since the last Synod meeting	Wimala Presbytery Rev Cliff Birch Rev Owen Roberts



	Generate Presbytery Rev Dean Whittaker Rev Peter Sorensen Presbytery of Southern SA Rev Michael Dowling Rev Casey Lau Rev Gary Stuckey
Ministers whose recognition has been withdrawn	Nil
Ministers who have resigned from the Uniting Church in Australia	Andrew Everson Douglas Monaghan
Transfers into the Synod of SA	Rev Frank Tuppin from Synod of VIC/TAS
Transfers out of the Synod of SA	Wimala Presbytery Rev Andrew Morris to Synod of NSW/ACT (Defence force Chaplain) Rev Alan Williams to Synod of NSW/ACT (Defence force Chaplain)

Specified Youth Workers & Lay Pastor

Transfers into the Synod of SA	Presbytery of Southern SA Dr Craig Mitchell from the Synod of VIC/TAS
Lay Pastor who has resigned	Wimala Presbytery Mr Rob Morgan

(Proposal 3) S24.03

In Memoriam

Deliberative
& Decision

Moderator & Gen Sec

The General Secretary moved Proposal 3.

The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:

STAND in silence to acknowledge the ministry of the following Ministers who have died since the 2023 Meeting of the Synod, and in gratitude to God for their contribution to the ministry and mission of the Uniting Church.

- Rev Keith Alfred Batt
- Rev Dr Charles Richard Biggs
- Rev Dean Wells Brook
- Rev Ellis Gladstone Carlier
- Rev Anthony (Tony) Chapman
- Rev John Cyril Flaherty
- Rev Dr Ross Frederick Gaskin
- Rev John (Jack) William Goodluck
- Deaconess Betty Leak



- Rev Judith Ann McAllister
- Rev Eric Lewis March
- Rev Dr Brian Douglas Phillips
- Rev David William Purling
- Rev Rex Malcolm Thomas OAM
- Rev Ruth Syliva Threapleton
- Rev Adrian Ben Usher

Formally recognise the extensive number of people who have faithfully offered lay leadership and who have died since the 2023 meeting of the Synod.

The Moderator closed the session with prayer.

Venue logistics, nominations process, close of roll & other information

Information

Rev Lynne Aird

Rev Lynne Aird orientation to the site and WHS matters. Rev Sue Page provided orientation to the event program and logistics.

The Moderator expressed a reminder to Synod Members that to become a member of Synod is through a nomination by your Presbytery. By-Laws for the membership of the Standing Committee nominations were explained to the gathering. Anyone seeking further clarification on these matters are encouraged to approach Rev Sue Page, Associate General Secretary Governance & Operations including any additional nominations for the Moderator Nominating Committee.

Mediacom

Information

Rev Paul Turley

For over 40 years, Mediacom Education Inc. has provided Christian resources to the church in Australia, particularly the Uniting Church. Mediacom has published and championed Australian authors, developed lectionary-based worship and education resources, and distributed international Christian publications. It is now time for this way of serving the church to end. While Mediacom will no longer exist as an entity, some areas of its work will continue.

Two lectionary-based worship resources, Liturgy, Learning and (Purposeful) Life, the home-grown replacement for Seasons of the Spirit, and Words for Worship will continue. You can order these resources through the new website liturgylearninglife.com [What's Included – L3](#) . The Upper Room Daily Devotion resource will continue to be available, and information about how to order will soon be available.

Wayzgoose publishing company in SA is making arrangements with Assembly to publish lectionary, baptism certificates etc and some of the ongoing publications that assembly does. The Mediacom website will have a link to wayzgoose publishers who will be the agent moving forward.

SESSION 2 PLENARY

Assembly Report

Information

President & General Secretary

President Charisa Suli and the Assembly General Secretary Andrew Johnson presented to the Synod on a range of recent activities at National Assembly including the World Methodist Conference in Sweden in August of 2024, the

week of Prayer for Peace in the Middle East (29 September to 5 October) thanking the Moderator for his addition to the call to prayer as we seek peace and healing in these troubled areas.

Andrew Johnson introduced the three agencies in the life and work of the Assembly being: Frontier Services (Bush Chaplains funded with the assistance of Outback Links) the 2024 Leaders' Forum (Largest network of community services in the country. Opportunity to speak with political leaders. New Aged Care Act pending) and Uniting World (partnerships in the Pacific and Africa. Gifts available that will help these communities such as goats, chickens)

Key Staff Changes for Assembly included:

Welcome to Assembly – Rev Kath Behan and Rev Dr Sunny Chen

Farewell from Assembly – Colleen Geyer and Rebecca Beisler

New Roles at Assembly – Rev Lindsay Cullen, Associate General Secretary and Bethany Broadstock, National Manager Communications.

And a congratulations to South Australia for the nomination of President-elect Rev Dr Paul Goh.

The Moderator led prayer for Assembly President and Assembly General Secretary.

Introduction to reports and proposals for working groups

The Moderator invited Rev Sue Page and Rev Philip Gardner to present on the report for Proposal 6.

(Proposal 6) S24.06	Strategy & Planning Mission & Property report (MAPS)	Information	Strategy and Planning Working Group
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Rev Sue Page invited the working group members to the stage to present to the Synod. After acknowledgement of First Peoples Land, covenant and reconciliation the working group presented on:

- The Story So Far for Mission and Property
- Conversation Categories
- What we've learned so far
- Metrics and Markers
- Proposal and Working Group Questions

Mark Elford gave a summary of the Working Group tasks from 2021 to date and highlighted to synod members that by the end of 2026 Synod will have a map which shows the locations of missionally vibrant buildings. Philip Gardner acknowledged that it is a challenging process ahead, and the need for difficult conversations over 2024, 2025 and 2026 where there will be an update at the next Synod. The overall aim is to have vital and vibrant missional congregations and advised the Synod to avoid getting hung up on the challenges of the maintenance of the buildings instead we need to bring the focus in our hearts and minds to the Holy Spirit.

The Moderator invited any questions for clarification prior to Working Groups before closing the session.

(Proposal 7) S24.07	Disability Access & Inclusion Policy (DAIP)	Information	Disability Royal Commission Task group
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The Synod Task Group – Disability Royal Commission members were acknowledged and joined Mark Waters (Director UnitingCare SA) to present to the Synod noting the apology of Bruce Ind.



Peter McDonald spoke on behalf of Bruce Ind (Chair National Disability Task Group and member of the Assembly Disability Task Group) on the need to see disability needs in all its forms: including sensory; mobility; intellectual and mental health and asked members to focus on the key point of keeping an openness to engage with people with disabilities as outlined in the Disability Access and Inclusion Policy. Peter related that Bruce Ind has commented that he has benefited greatly for the inclusive behaviours he has received, but he knows that this is not the same for all. Encouragement was given for all to be active in inclusivity. There is a need to be better equipped to engage with those with lived experiences. Real change occurs when self-determination and making decisions is made by those with lived experiences.

Examples of how to go deeper, hearing what's going on for people with lived experiences were given by:

- Peter McDonald, experiences when introducing Anna Wilson to a church service
- Kate Baker, experiences of living with family members with neurodiversity
- Mark Waters, sharing experiences of people living with hidden disabilities

The Moderator invited Synod to pray for Bruce Ind's continued improvement in health and a Shout for Joy for the worship ministry at Adelaide West UC presenting the opportunity for this movement to extend to other congregations.

The Moderator closed this session by leading the Synod with Grace.

SESSION 3 PLENARY

Uniting Foundation Grant presentations	Information	Moderator, UFGC Chair UC-Invest Chair
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Lisa Forest Chair of the Uniting Foundation Grants Committee presented the Grants with Alice Hammer, Historical Records and Grants Officer. Two Grant recipients presented to Synod on their applications.

Rev Tim Littleford & Cara Horner – Encounter Henley

Mobile Coffee Van Grant to raise profile in the community with the shared facilities of the netball club and school. Use the grant to purchase the van and decking out of the van for the coffee machine, then use the coffee to deliver mission and outreach for the Church. Connect over coffee and build relationships with people already in our community.

Rev Haydn Lush – Up the Hill Mt Barker UC

Grant for Playground equipment, shade cloth and fencing. The building is an old church which is not fit for purpose, toilets are outside, working towards having toilets inside or connected to the building. The playground equipment we did have was decommissioned and as part of our hunger no more program, and others, we have lots of families in with young children. We see this as an opportunity to connect with families that are coming for food support and connect them with programs that we run. We are working towards buildings that are fit for mission and will be applying for another grant in the future to achieve toilets that are suitable.

Grant categories A and B were administered in 2024 Grants Program and the 2024 Uniting Foundation approved grants were presented to the following groups:

**Category A – Enduring grants**

Applicant	Project description
Brougham Place UC	Expansion of Youth Ministry Program
Lighthouse Family Church	Renewal Port Pirie
Murraylands UAICC	Murraylands Congress Minister
Murraylands UAICC	Murraylands Youth & Children's Worker
Outpost UC	Continuation of funding for Associate Pastor
Playford UC	Children's Ministry & Outreach Worker
Port Augusta UAICC	Decolonising Scripture: An Adnyamathanha Bible Translation Project
Salisbury UC	Intergenerational Project Worker - Limitless
Seeds UC	Building the Future
Sunset Rock UC	Sunset Rock Church Community Connections Café Initiative
Trinity Alberton UC	Discipleship Pathway Strategy
UAICC Oodnadatta	Employment of Youth & Children's Worker and Men's Worker

Category B – Springboard Grants

Applicant	Project description
Adelaide West UC	Reaching our world with Church online
Balaklava Port Wakefield UC	Outside Play area
Croydon Park UC	Second Generation Connections Person
Encounter Henley	Encounter Henley Coffee Van
Jamestown UC	Kitchen Upgrade
Malvern UC	Malvern Young Adults
Mount Barker UC	Children & Families Engagement
Outpost UC	Resourcing, inclusion & safety for babies, toddlers & youth project
Renmark UC	Infrastructure and equipment update
The Corner UC	Intentional Immersion Services for Neurodivergent People
Trinity Alberton UC	Investing in the growth & renewal of our Village
Unity Hill UC	Cooking group / grease trap
Westbourne Park UC	New Accessible Toilet

Andrew Fechner, General Manager Investments and Finance presented on the UC Invest programs that supported the Grants in 2024 and advised that further support will be provided over the coming years.

The Moderator led the Synod in prayer.



(Proposal 4) S24.04	Future Synod meeting dates	Deliberative& Decision	AGSGO & Gen Sec
The Moderator declared a conflict of interest and passed the duties of Chair to Ex-Moderator Bronte Wilson to officiate the session while he left the room. Bronte Wilson Ex-Moderator invited the Synod to consider Proposal 4 and asked Sue Page, Associate General Secretary, Governance and Operations to present the proposal. The (Ex-)Moderator moved Proposal 4 to the Synod. The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:			
AFFIRM the decision of the Synod Standing Committee that: 1. The next Synod meeting be held in June 2026 2. The following Synod meeting be held in June 2028. 3. The current Moderator's term be extended to June 2028. 4. The Synod hold a resourcing event in 2025. 5. Synod members be encouraged to attend the public sessions of the 18th Assembly in 2027.			
Rev Sue Page gave a brief verbal summary of the Proposal as approved by Synod Standing Committee and brought to Synod for affirmation. The Ex-Moderator invited any questions and comments then discussion topics included: - Resourcing day who would be invited (members of Synod, potentially wider than the Synod) - Appreciate the comments that have been made and rationale, concerns about spreading into three or four churches (presbyteries). Don't get together as a Synod and as a combined church often enough. Some warmth was indicated for this. - Lots of work in hosting the 18th Assembly and nomination of the President-elect in 2027, this proposal allows space for the Synod of SA to properly resource the events without compromising Synod. Warmth indicated for this comment. - In favour of the proposal to go to two years as long as there is an opportunity to gather in between the Synods. Strong Warmth in the room for that comment. - Resourcing gathering in 2025 will be meeting together and sharing what we are doing now, Sue Page offered that there will be annual gathering of the Synod either at resourcing event, synod or the Assembly.			
(Proposal 5) S24.05	Stipends Committee	Deliberative & Decision	Peter Battersby, Executive Officer Resources
The Moderator moved Proposal 5 to the Synod. The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:			
AFFIRM the decision of Synod Standing Committee on 26 September 2024 to APPROVE the 2025 minimum Stipends and Allowances Schedule A as found in Attachment 2 of the Proposal as tabled.			

Peter Battersby, Executive Officer Resources presented Proposal 5 on behalf of the Stipends Committee.

Peter advised the committee meets to analyse economic circumstances when setting stipend levels – CPI, Fair work Commission award rates minimum, comparisons with other Synods and the Synod's capacity to pay.

Questions and discussion points included:

- Lay preachers were not included in the list of ministry agents in the Stipends award, this was possibly an omission and would apply to Lay preachers.
- The application of Ministers Benefit fund is limited to those who are MoW or Deacon and doesn't apply for MoP. MoP are covered under the Workcover Act. Legislatively unable to include Lay people in return to work act for ordained people.
- Northern Terr synod stipend is 80% average working male's income - SA is approx. at 66% allowances in SA is extensive some at the higher end and some at the lower end. It is difficult to compare accurately in this case as like for like. SA stipend is means tested against the cost of living. Variety in taxing allowances applied between Synods.

The Moderator closed the session in prayer.

SESSION 4 WORKING GROUPS

There were two working groups that members could participate in

1. Synod Strategy and Planning Mission and Property Working Group
2. Disability & Inclusion Policy Working Group

The Facilitation teams provided a summary of discussions, feedback and comments which were undertaken by each of the working groups in relation to the two proposals:

- Proposal 6 Synod Strategy and Planning Mission and Property Report
- Proposal 7 Disability Access and Inclusion Policy.

The facilitation team (identified in S24.01(f)) were thanked for their contribution and the members to consider the discussion prior to deliberation on the proposals scheduled later in the program.

SESSION 5 PLENARY

Reports

The Moderator invited Wimala Presbytery representatives to speak to Synod members.

Wimala Presbytery	Information	Diane Holden, Chair of Wimala Amy Duke, Secretary of Wimala
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During the recent Synod gathering, Dianne Holden, the chairperson of Wimala Presbytery, and Amy Duke, the secretary, shared updates on their community's developments since their last meeting. Dianne, who assumed her role in April, highlighted the hopes and dreams expressed by Presbytery members during an initial retreat, emphasizing a desire for open communication about positive stories, increased resources for lay-led congregations, and encouragement for innovative thinking in response to God's call amidst broader church changes. They noted



the growth of a vibrant youth group and a successful collaboration between the rural Kimba congregation and urban Morialta, which has enhanced ministry during staffing shortages. Celebrations at Woodville Uniting Church and Village Church Alberton were also mentioned, showcasing their community engagement efforts. The leaders acknowledged a busy year of inductions and discernments in ministry, while also addressing pressing issues like building safety and missional viability, particularly in light of Isaiah 43:18-19's call for renewal. They underscored the need for the Presbytery to FLOURISH—growing spiritually, congregationally, and in leadership—while recognizing that this might require difficult conversations and strategic planning for future growth and vitality.

Presbytery of Southern South Australia	Information	Peter McDonald, Chair of POSSA Jenny Esots, Secretary of POSSA
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Peter McDonald (Chair) and Jenny Esots (Secretary) presented to the Synod on Presbytery of Southern South Australia (POSSA) central values which are being connected to Christ, congregations and community.

Positives (Jenny):

- Facebook site gets updated a lot with photos
- Preaching, worshiping and visiting congregations
- Lawrie Linggood, Anne Hewitt, Bronte Wilson, Jenny Esots and Peter McDonald have made a lot of pastoral connections
- There is a POSSA social every month which is well attended
- There are shared meals throughout the year at different church venues
- Four workshops planned for 2025
- Provide an annual spiritual retreat (good opportunity for anyone in ministry to have replenishment)
- The presbytery seeks to support congregations in all of their property matters and all of those concerns need to come via presbytery.
- POSSA legendary room, for those who attend standing committee, formation panels, other committees and working groups thank you for your time.
- As secretary send out a monthly newsletter, if you haven't been getting it please approach Jenny directly or reach out on social media.
- POSSA website being constructed, watch this space.

Challenges (Peter)

- As Chair of POSSA presbytery we have ten placements and ten congregations we cannot provide leadership and ministry to. What impact does that have on people, we have internal roles we cannot fill. We have a standing committee that is over-represented by ordained people and we don't have the people needed to respond and support our congregations in a meaningful way and are at risk of missing things.

Generate Presbytery	Information	Scott Button, Chair of Generate Presbytery Steph Tai, Secretary of Generate Presbytery
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Scott Button (Chair) and Stephanie Tai (Secretary) reflected on five years of progress and challenges since the formation of the Presbytery/Synod Model in 2019. They emphasised the importance of nurturing congregational



health, fostering relationships, and structuring effective leadership pipelines to support key goals: increasing faith, cultivating passionate disciples, raising courageous leaders, and renewing church missions. They highlight achievements, such as sustaining the number of congregations and faith communities (116) through the initiation of church plants and successful leadership development initiatives. They also celebrated various community engagement efforts, including faith-sharing activities and congregational renewals, while acknowledging ongoing challenges like open placements and regional ministry revitalization. Their commitment to collaboration and mutual support within the presbytery is seen as essential for future successes, underlining a collective journey of faith and growth and providing courage in the relationships around as they support people in what they hope to do.

CLOSE OF DAY 1 (Thursday 24th October)

The Moderator expressed thanks to all of the presbytery leaders and encouraged members to approach their presbyteries for conversations and be encouraged amidst the challenges ahead.

The Moderator led the synod members in prayer.

FRIDAY PROGRAM 25TH OCTOBER 2024

Worship & Bible Study

Moderator, Worship Team
& Bible Study leader

Rev Nathan Willas opened the day with prayer. Songs were Come People of the Risen King and This I Believe (The Creed). The Moderator invited Dr Toar Hutagalung to lead the Synod in Bible Study on Joy.

Dr Hutagalung started with John 15:9-14 read in Korean and English, exploring the theme of Joy within friendship and creation asking Synod Members to reflect what is Joy and how do we enjoy God's Joy for us, closing with Romans 15:13.

SESSION 6 PLENARY

Reports

Information

Sue Page advised the Synod members of the changes to the Nomination Profiles made overnight and released this morning for Ballott in the afternoon.

The Moderator invited the General Secretary to report to the Synod.

General Secretary & the Synod Standing Committee

Information

General Secretary

The General Secretary expressed thanks to the Synod Standing Committee and spoke to Strategic Planning, the Mission and Leadership Development Framework, the five marks of mission, the place of covenanting and the plans for the coming year.

Questions from the members for the General Secretary



- Excited to read in the standing committee report of funding of the Possum Project
Good example of the Church taking responsibility for the harm that has been caused by the sexual abuse of children in our organisation. It was a national collaboration to meet the cost of the Prospective Redress Compensation Scheme.
- Suggested workshop/presentation on leadership at the floor of Synod
Recommend that presbytery give space for the conversations started by Steph Tai (Generate) and insights from the report can inform what we do.

Moderator	Information	Moderator
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The Moderator reflected on the loss of ministers during the past year and their service records. God calls people to ministry. The Moderator highlighted the sudden death of Rev Brian Phillips and encouraged members to access the pastoral list email service contacting Engagement Team if not receiving those updates. He expressed thanks for the quality of staff and their work in the Synod Office including the Uniting College for Leadership and Theology.

The Moderator advised of his activities including:

- Road trips for the Moderator and General Secretary in 2025.
- PROK partnership trip later in 2024
- Strengthening partnerships in the Philippines
- Continuing to work with UAICC

SERC Ecumenical Award to congregation	Information	Don Hopgood Rev Anne Hewett
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The Synod Ecumenical Relations Committee (SERC) presented the 'one in the spirit' SERC Award going to Barmera and Berri Uniting Churches. A Certificate and \$600 towards the Ministry of the Berri and Barmera leaders was presented. The committee made an additional presentation of certificate and \$400 to the Kangaroo Island Uniting Church submission where they have been working tirelessly to build an ecumenical ministry to renew the Holy Spirit in the community after the devastating bush fires of 2020.

The Moderator led the Synod in prayer.

Robert Iles publishing	Information	Video
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Rev Dr Georg Robert Iles presented his publications available for sale at the Synod: 'Kierkegaard and the Church Today' and 'The life and writings of George Robert Iles'.

SESSION 7 ELECTIVES

Members chose two electives to attend

Elective Topic	Provider
Awaken Adelaide Learning Plenary for Missional & Multicultural Leadership	Rev Dr Paul Goh
Disaster & Recovery Ministries	Wendy Perkins

MINUTES FOR SYNOD 24-26 October

Synod '24



Good advice for churches, congregations and faith groups to assist ministry before, during and after disasters in their communities	Placements & Safe Church Unit
Environmental Action Group Net Zero by 2040	David Shephard
Finance 2023 Synod Financial Report	Andrew Fechner, Manager Finance & Operations and Peter Battersby Executive Officer Resources
Mission Resourcing & The Missional Framework The Missional Framework	Rev Jenni Hughes, Executive Officer: Mission Resourcing
Placements and Safe Church Unit Safeguarding for all: Children and Young People Policy	Linda Vinall, Called to Care Officer and Rev Andrew Robertson, Associate General Secretary Placements and Safe Church
Property What happens when a congregation returns property (to the Synod)	Matt Wilson, Manager Property and Projects and Peter Battersby, Executive Officer Resources
Uniting Aboriginal & Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) Congress in 2024	Rev Ken Sumner
UCA Historical Society SA History Festival with the History Trust of SA	Rev Dr Dean Eland
Uniting College for Leadership & Theology (UCLT) Ministry in a secular age. What is the College doing to form and educate ministry agents who are equipped for today's challenges.	Rev Prof Vicky Balabanski
UnitingCare SA Food Relief & Cost of Living Support	Mark Waters, Director UnitingCare SA
Work, Health & Safety Safety of volunteers (op-shop, ERCs) requirements by SafeWork	Wayne Booth, Synod WHS Officer

SESSION 8

Celebration of Ministry Service including Induction and Commissioning of staff

Moderator

Celebration of Ministry was led by the Moderator Peter Morel starting with a Call to Worship, Song (Love Divine all Loves Excelling), Prayer of Confession, Declaration of Forgiveness and Scripture Readings (Psalm 126 and Mark 10:46-52), Song (Tapestry, Weave us together), Nicene Creed, Service of Induction and Commissioning, Song (Great is Your Faithfulness), Prayer of Thanksgiving, awarding certificates for the ordination milestones as listed in Proposal 2 Ministerial Matters.

SESSION 9 PLENARY

Facilitation Team report

Information

Facilitation Team

Mission and Property Strategy Workgroup (MAPS)

The MAPS discussions highlighted the need for flexible metrics to assess church viability, suggesting that attendance should encompass a broader range of engagement beyond just services, potentially factoring in community demographics. Evaluative conversations were emphasized as crucial for future discernment, advocating for proactive collaboration with congregations. Concerns were raised about the language used in audits and the crippling cost of insurance for churches, which can impede mission work. Metrics should trigger meaningful discussions rather than serve as sole identifiers of viability, with suggestions for context-dependent minimum numbers of adults involved in congregational activities. The conversation also addressed the distinction between faith communities and congregations, emphasizing that transitioning to a faith community should not be viewed as failure. Engagement with the wider community and stewardship of property were deemed essential for mission effectiveness, with metrics proposed to include community impact, stories of faith, and participation in worship. Ultimately, the focus should be on vibrant, outward-focused ministries.

Regarding metrics for viable congregations, there was general support for the proposed metrics, though participants emphasized the need for flexibility and a broader range that includes mid-week activities and community connections. The appropriateness of metrics in rural contexts and the importance of both objective and subjective measures were highlighted. Participants expressed that conversations between congregations and Presbyteries are essential for discerning future directions. Concerns were raised about the anxiety caused by using "viable" as a descriptor, suggesting that terms like "vitality" and "vibrancy" are more encouraging. Financial viability is crucial, but not solely determined by numbers; the ability to maintain property and meet legal requirements was also stressed. The potential for small congregations to sustain outreach amidst financial burdens was questioned, with calls for a focus on missional metrics and community engagement. Overall, the discussions underscored the need to balance institutional metrics with a clear sense of purpose and mission to ensure the church's relevance and impact in the wider community.

Disability Access and Inclusion Policy Workgroup

The church is committed to disability inclusion, viewing it as an opportunity for joy and a vital aspect of following Christ. This new policy aims to foster a safe and welcoming environment for everyone, encouraging congregations to proactively consider access and inclusion rather than reacting to barriers as they arise. Many groups shared positive developments within their congregations regarding physical spaces and cultural attitudes, demonstrating a collective enthusiasm for welcoming all people. The initiative emphasizes love in action, urging members to learn, increase awareness, and understand how the church can better reflect the diversity of the whole people of God.

However, challenges remain, particularly concerning financial implications and the need for training and understanding among congregations. While there is excitement about the potential for change, there is also concern that the policy sets a high bar for implementation, necessitating careful and gracious communication to avoid overwhelming expectations. Participants shared personal experiences that highlighted the importance of making spaces and activities more accessible and welcoming. There is a call for collaboration among churches to share

resources and learn from one another, such as incorporating Auslan to enhance accessibility. Overall, the policy is viewed positively as a means to make congregations more inclusive and help individuals feel known to Christ, although practical implementation questions still need to be addressed.

MLDB report

Information

Rev Prof Vicky Balabanski,
Rev Jenni Hughes

It was noted that the Mission and Leadership Development Board encompasses the ministries of the Uniting College for Leadership and Theology (UCLT) and Mission Resourcing. In 2023 under Rev Dr Tim Hein a review of missional needs of the Synod of SA was undertaken by Angel Wings and was structured around 3 questions: What are the Missional Priorities for Synod? Where are the creative options? and What are the threats?

Priorities formed from the review

- First family Relationships
- Celebrating Identity and Strengths
- Mission as Fuller Expression of Reconciliation
- Faith Formation in Communities of Jesus' People
- Lightening the load
- Uniting in Charge
- Threats to the fulfilment of these priorities

The Missional Framework from the MLDB report was discussed. Rev Prof Vicky Balabanski took the Synod members through the five aspects of the Mission and Leadership Development Framework that the College are focussing on resourcing:

- Spiritual retreats & Silent retreats
- Rev Dr Tim Hein is conducting a research intensive on congregational renewal
- Dr Rosemary Dewerse focuses on covenanting coming alive, publishing and teaching, working with IL to shape two new walk on country units.
- Dr Toar Hutagalung is building intercultural capacity accepting invitations to preach and have fellowship with CALD communities
- Prof Bart Bruehler is working on local community evangelism and has been on Life FM radio broadcasting show and writing a paper for ACT2 on mission evangelism and discipleship

New initiatives further elaborate from the report

- Partnership with Arrow Leadership
- BMin Social Work Pathway (MOU with Flinders University)
- Community Ministry Pathway
- Graduate Certificate in Leadership (Grants support available)
- Two indigenous units through UCLT
 - I. Yartha Wandatha, the Land is speaking, the People are speaking (Adnyamathanha Wisdom)
 - II. Kungan Kaldowinyeri, Listening to Country (Ngarrindjeri Wisdom)

The Moderator invited questions and expressed gratitude for the leadership and comprehensive programs that the College provides the Church.

CLOSE OF DAY 2 (Friday, 25th October)

The Moderator led the synod members in prayer.

SATURDAY PROGRAM 26TH OCTOBER 2024

Worship & Bible Study	Information	Moderator, Worship Team & Bible Study leader
Worship Songs: Take You At Your Word, I Speak Jesus and All Hail King Jesus Prof Bart Bruehler led Bible Study on the theme of Joy exploring different synonyms and the expression of Joy and Emotion generally in popular culture. He then led the Synod into groups to reflect the theme of Joy alongside the following Bible Passages: Luke 1:11-17; Luke 6:20-23; Luke 8:11-15; Luke 10:17-24; Luke 15:7, 10, 31-32 and Luke 22:1-6. The Moderator gifted a thank you to Dr Toar Hutagalung and Prof Bart Bruehler for their commitment to move from lands afar to join the Uniting College Team and continue to rejoice in the team.		

SESSION 10

Blessing of Presbyterian Republic of Korea (PROK) trip group	Information	General Secretary
The Moderator invited the Presbyterian Republic Of Korea (PROK) group to the front table to introduce to the Synod. Rev Lawrie Linggood advised the Synod that the Presbyterian Republic of Korea Church (PROK) partnership is the longest standing partnership from synod to synod. Over 30 years we have shared cultural exchanges, learnt and shared our faith together and supported each other through difficulties learning together. In four weeks' time the group presented will be going to Seoul, Korea for a trip with the group being a young person's trip this year. We have 16 people going with 12 young people representing all the presbyteries going with the Moderator. The Engagement Team have helped to order a special Hoodie for the participants of the trip, with a logo on the back identifying the group. Lawrie presented a hoodie to the Moderator who demonstrated it for the Synod. Participants in the trip include the Moderator Peter Morel and Anna Wilson, Liam Burgess, Emelia Haskey, Michael Grace, Tara Shirlock, Christian Kriek, Leanne Taking, Hayeon Kim, Steph Gardiner, Rachel VanEck, Holly Letcher, Megan Letcher, Naomi Duke, Adrian Duke and Rev Lawrie Linggood. A special thanks to UCFAMS, the synod, churches and their presbyteries for making this trip possible. Lawrie invited the General Secretary to lead the Synod in a blessing and prayer for the trip. The General Secretary invited Rev Paul Goh to lead the prayer of blessing in Korean.		

Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC)	Information	Rev Mark Kickett (National) & Rev Ken Sumner (SA)
Rev. Ken Sumner provided an update to the Synod on revitalizing the Covenant and Ministry centres within the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress of South Australia (UAICC-SA). He highlighted progress on the Oodnadatta Church, attributing its success to support from UCFAMS, Frontier Services, Uniting Foundation Grants, and various congregations. The Port Augusta minister has successfully opened an op-shop, benefitting the community, while the Salisbury service in Adelaide remains unique in delivering services in the Pitjantjatjara language. The UAICC State Office is located at UCLT, staffed by Rev. Sumner and Ian Dempster. Training is ongoing for ministry workers, with two classes graduating from Nunga Leaders College. Additionally, Jordan Sumner and Sean Weetra began discernment at the Uniting College for Leadership and Theology, a promising development for Congress's future. Special appreciation was extended to the Uniting Foundation, acknowledging their invaluable support with much sorry business acknowledging the first Aboriginal Moderator appointed to a Synod this year. Ken invited Aunty Denise to speak. Aunty Denise encouraged Synod members to read the Covenanting Statement and Preamble, emphasizing integrity in the church and the restoration of communities affected by colonization. She spoke on the importance of decolonizing the church and creating a culturally safe space. During the session, the Adelaide Salisbury congregation shared a song in one of the world's oldest languages, led by Pastor Melissa, who also led a prayer. The session continued with reflections on the UAICC's goals, including self-determination, partnerships, youth empowerment, and faith community development. Concluding, the UAICC called for action aligned with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) principles. Join us in times when the opportunity is there and look for ways to restore integrity in our church again. The Moderator invited Rosemary Dewerse to lead the Synod in prayer for regional congress. Rev Mark Kickett, National Chair of UAICC spoke to the Synod members with a reminder of the importance to respect the autonomy and the freedom of the Congress to establish ministry. He expressed thanks to the SA Synod Moderator and General Secretary for the office space and support from staff from time to time when in the office. Mark presented the foundations of the UAICC and the Covenant, sharing the UAICC Purpose Statement: ‘for first peoples to be autonomous and live freely in decision making as we minister with first peoples and engage all peoples in theological culturally safe and holistic ways’ The UAICC Strategic Plan was shared with a focus on Partnerships, Self-determination, Youth, Leaders of the future, Congregations and Faith Communities. The proposals agreed at the 17th Assembly were shared leading to the creation of a Covenant Revival Working Group and the commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) principles. He concluded with a call for action and shared the call-to-action statement prepared by UAICC with the Synod available on the National Assembly Website UCA Assembly The Moderator led the Synod in Prayer to close the session.		
SESSION 11		



UCFAMS video		Information	UCFAMS
Presented on return of members to Synod.			
(Proposal 10) S24.10	TACL Note of Appreciation	Deliberative & Decision	Business Committee
The General Secretary moved Proposal 10.			
The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:			
1. NOTE with appreciation the leadership and dedicated services of Aboriginal People provided by Mr Nelson Varcoe in communication, training and music.			

(Proposal 6) S24.06	MAPS Proposal 6	Deliberative & Decision	MAPS working group
The General Secretary moved Proposal 6.			
The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:			
- NOTE the Synod Strategy and Planning (Mission and Property) Working Group report (2024). - REQUEST the Working Group continue to develop a map by the end of 2026 that shows and describes strategic locations for Uniting Church in Australia congregations and faith communities that are missionally vibrant, in safe buildings that are fit for purpose. - REQUEST the presbyteries report to the working group on congregational conversations before the next Synod meeting. - REQUEST the Working Group (which includes Presbytery Leaders) consider the input from the 2024 Synod working groups on congregation attributes. - CONDUCT congregation reporting about mission viability (via a questionnaire and other research methods) every two years, commencing in 2025. - REQUIRE congregations to submit their annual property returns to their Presbytery and the Synod (Regulation 4.4.3 and 4.11.8). - DEVLEOP the framework and tools for sharing of property and distribute across presbyteries. - REQUEST the General Secretary to seek suitable resourcing for the project moving forward (including for Presbytery Leaders and the future role of the Working Group) and bring a report to the next Synod meeting. - NOTE the change of name of the working group to Missional and Property Strategy (MAPS) working group.			



The discussion highlighted joy in church developments across various regions but also concerns over a narrowing theological and missiological focus, particularly the need to engage in evangelism without exerting power and to ensure robust, inclusive missiology across all contexts, not just CALD communities. Emphasis was placed on thoughtful reflection to maintain integrity in mission, with support for presbyteries to engage in this. General Secretary noted that theological engagement has been strong over the past decade. Mapping congregations with property and mission viability scores was discussed, with a shift in terminology from "viability" to "vitality." An easier questionnaire system was supported to gather congregational data. An annual property return, though challenging, remains a regulatory requirement. Past data collection indicates 80% of congregations have completed viability questionnaires, enough for planning, with value seen in survey repetition for tracking progress. The importance of contextual narratives alongside data was also emphasized for a complete understanding of congregational life.

Safe Church / Redress

Information

Rev Andrew Robertson, Moderator

Andrew encouraged members to reach out with any questions or concerns regarding the Safe Church Program, emphasizing the importance of finding joy even in challenging situations. He introduced the Placements and Safe Church team, highlighting their proactive approach to education and engagement. The enormity of creating a safe church can feel overwhelming, especially in light of ongoing redress claims, which serve as stark reminders of past harms. Andrew stressed the church's responsibility to care for the vulnerable and ensure that all who enter feel safe and welcomed. The new safeguarding policy integrates safety into all church activities, reflecting a commitment to accountability and care. The statistics of redress claims are not just numbers; they represent real individuals and families affected by harm. Creating a culture of safety is not merely a compliance issue, but a fundamental aspect of the church's mission to embody God's love in the community. Safe church practices are central to ministry, essential for fostering an environment where everyone feels valued and protected.

The Moderator acknowledged the sixth anniversary of the National Update and led the Synod in Prayer.

Acknowledgement

Information

Moderator

Acknowledgement of Admission of Minister of the Word: Rev Barry Luke. The Moderator expressed acknowledgement by the Synod of Admission of Minister of the Word: Rev Barry Luke and led the group in prayer and blessing of his new placement.

SERC Award

Information

Moderator

Thank you from Berri/Barmera UC and Kangaroo Island who gave thanks to the SERC for the award and the contributions received.

Declaration of Ballot

Information

Rev Sue Page

Confirmation of appointments as follows:

Synod Standing Committee

11 members were appointed with two rural vacancies to be co-opted by Synod Standing Committee

- Jethro Buxton



- Benji Callen
- Mia Cartledge
- Leanne Davis
- Simon Dent
- Anne Hewitt
- Peter Hollister
- Elissa Inglis
- Christa Megaw
- Trevor Phillips
- Andrew Telfer

Stipends Committee:

- Valerie Aloa
- Margaret Davidson
- Rev Richard Telfer
- Malcolm Wilson

Placements Committee Chair

- Rev Barry Littleford

Moderator Nominating Committee:

- Elissa Inglis
- Rev Do Young Kim
- Rev Sue Page
- Dr Deidre Palmer
- Andrew Telfer

Acknowledgements

Information

Moderator's Chaplains

The Moderator's Chaplains gave thanks to all that support in delivering the Synod event.

Closing Worship

Aunty Denise

The Moderator invited Aunty Denise to close the Synod in prayer and song.

CLOSE OF SYNOD MEETING