

Proposal 8

Synod Action Plan for Becoming a Flourishing CALD and Intercultural Church 2026–2030

That the Synod of SA resolves to:

1. **ACKNOWLEDGE** with gratitude the work undertaken through the Synod Action Plan for Becoming a CALD and Intercultural Church: 2022–2025, including the report to the Mission and Leadership Development Board (October 2025), (Appendix 2) and **RECOGNISE** the continuing relevance of the Mapping Intercultural Neighbourhoods in SA survey (2021).
2. **REAFFIRM** its commitment, as expressed in the 2012 Synod resolution, to the Assembly statements: We Are a Multicultural Church (1985); A Church for All God's People (2006); and One Body, Many Members (2012), as guiding theological and practical frameworks.
3. **ENDORSE** the Synod Action Plan for Becoming a Flourishing CALD and Intercultural Church (2026–2030) as the Synod's strategic framework, and its implementation through a CALD and Intercultural Ministry Community of Practice, facilitated by Mission Resourcing under the oversight of the Mission and Leadership Development Board (MLDB).
4. **CALL UPON** all Synod bodies, presbyteries, congregations, faith communities, and associated organisations to implement relevant actions of the Action Plan within their contexts.

Proposers: Rev Paul Turley

Rev Cyrus Kung



The Uniting Church in Australia
Synod of South Australia

Rationale

The Uniting Church in Australia declared itself a multicultural church in 1985, grounded in the *Basis of Union*'s vision of "a unity of faith and life in Christ which transcends cultural, economic, national and racial boundaries" (para. 3). This commitment has been reaffirmed through *A Church for All God's People* (2006) and *One Body, Many Members* (2012), which together call the Church to full participation, shared leadership, hospitality, and mutual accountability in culturally diverse contexts.

In South Australia, the 2012 meeting of the Presbytery and Synod affirmed the Church's identity as belonging to a national multicultural church called to live its life and faith cross-culturally, inviting councils and agencies to report on progress, learning, and challenges as part of ongoing accountability.

The 2021 *Mapping Intercultural Neighbourhoods in SA* survey provided important diagnostic insight. While culturally and linguistically diverse faith communities are flourishing across Greater Adelaide, CALD participation within the Uniting Church in South Australia remains disproportionately low. Structural barriers continue to affect participation, leadership pathways, and partnership. At the same time, the research identified significant gifts within CALD communities—vitality in worship, evangelistic confidence, strong intergenerational connections, resilience, and deep communal bonds—that enrich the common life and witness of the Church.

The 2022–2025 Synod Action Plan gave practical expression to these commitments through the establishment of the *Awaken Adelaide* Congregation Pilots, the resourcing of Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday, strengthened ecumenical and CALD partnerships, the recognition of new CALD faith communities, and the development of leadership networks. Reporting to the MLDB in October 2025 confirmed encouraging progress, while identifying the need for deeper integration across the Synod's mission, clearer accountability pathways, and sustained resourcing.

The proposed 2026–2030 Action Plan builds deliberately on this foundation. It does not introduce a new direction but consolidates four decades of theological commitment into a coherent Synod-wide framework. It recognises that intercultural ministry is not a specialist program, but a way of being Church and a source of renewal, shaping worship, formation, evangelism, leadership, governance, property stewardship, and relationships with First Peoples through the Covenant with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC).

Central to the plan is the establishment of a CALD and Intercultural Ministry Community of Practice, through which strategic direction is shaped by lived experience and mutual learning rather than primarily by institutional processes. The plan has been developed through consultation with the MLDB, CALD leaders and communities, and congregational ministers, and is designed to operate within existing structures and budgets, with clear reporting and review points.

In endorsing this proposal, the Synod commits itself to continuing the faithful journey of becoming a flourishing CALD and intercultural church, responding to the Spirit's call within the changing cultural landscape of South Australia.

APPENDIX I

Synod Action Plan for Becoming a Flourishing CALD and Intercultural Church: 2026–2030

1. Purpose

This Action Plan provides a Synod-wide strategic framework to guide priorities, resourcing, and accountability in becoming a *flourishing* CALD and intercultural church, while enabling contextual expression across the life of the Church.

2. Theological Foundations

This Action Plan is grounded in:

- Biblical vision: Genesis 1:26; Matthew 28:19; Acts 2; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:14–22; Revelation 7:9
- Basis of Union
- *We Are a Multicultural Church* (1985)
- *Covenanting Statement* (1994)
- *A Church for All God's People* (2006)
- *One Body, Many Members* (2012)

3. Core Theological Vision

- Diversity belongs to the very life and intention of God.
- Cultural diversity is embraced as a gift from God, through which the Church is enriched, challenged, and renewed.
- Pentecost affirms unity through diversity, not sameness.
- Intercultural ministry is not optional but intrinsic to the Church's participation in God's mission of reconciliation and renewal.

4. Scope: Dimensions of CALD Engagement

The Synod engages CALD communities across six interconnected dimensions, all shaped by the Covenant relationship with UAICC:

Dimension	Description
CALD and Intercultural Congregations and Faith Communities	Congregations where CALD communities gather for worship, formation, and mission within the UCA.

Dimension	Description
Congregations Engaged in Intercultural Mission	Existing congregations actively pursuing intercultural engagement in their neighbourhood.
CALD Communities Sharing UCA Property	Non-UCA CALD faith communities in relationship through property partnerships.
CALD Individuals and Families within Congregations	CALD members integrated within predominantly Anglo or other congregations.
CALD Neighbours and Wider Community	Intercultural mission and service beyond church membership.
International Partner Church Relationships	Engagement with global partner churches enriching local mission.

5. Governance and Accountability

Role	Body
Oversight	Mission and Leadership Development Board (MLDB)
Coordination	Mission Resourcing
Accountability	CALD & Intercultural Ministry Community of Practice

Reporting

- Annual reporting to Synod (via MLDB)
- Formal mid-point review in 2028, including updated survey

6. Strategic Priorities (2026–2030)

FOUNDATIONAL PRIORITIES

#	Priority	Key Actions
1	Ground the Work in Lived Experience	• Establish a Community of Practice for shared learning and discernment • Foster relational networks, storytelling, and grassroots leadership

#	Priority	Key Actions
2	Deepen Intercultural Worship and Discipleship	• Develop multilingual worship resources • Sustain Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday • Encourage anti-racist discipleship practices

DEVELOPMENTAL PRIORITIES

#	Priority	Key Actions
3	Strengthen CALD and Next-Generation Leadership	• Mentoring, formation, and governance pathways • Accessible pathways into UCA systems and leadership
4	Build Intercultural Neighbourhood Mission	• Strengthen reciprocal partnerships • Expand Awaken Adelaide and similar initiatives • Deepen ecumenical collaboration
5	Support CALD Children, Youth, and Families	• Intergenerational discipleship • Culturally informed pastoral and wellbeing support
6	Embed Intercultural Capacity Across the Synod	• Use One Body, Many Members (16 Marks) as framework • Develop anti-racism policy and formation pathways
7	Renew Congregations through Intercultural Partnership	• Recognise intercultural partnership as a vital pathway for congregational renewal, innovation in ministry, and faithful stewardship of physical and cultural resources • Encourage partnership-based ministry and property sharing • Foster mutual transformation, theological imagination, and missional creativity through shared life, worship, and leadership

EXPANSION PRIORITIES

#	Priority	Key Actions
8	Formation through Intercultural Learning	• Immersion experiences • International partner church engagement

#	Priority	Key Actions
9	Strengthen Participation in Governance	• Affirmative action practices • Explore AI-assisted translation for inclusion
10	Develop Presbytery-based Networks	• Regional CALD and intercultural ministry networks • Shared learning and coordinated mission

7. Resourcing

This plan will be resourced through:

- Existing Mission Resourcing budgets
- Targeted funds (e.g., Highbury Street Fund)
- External grants

No new permanent staffing positions are assumed.

8. Review and Evaluation

Mechanism	Detail
Annual reporting	Through MLDB to Synod
Mid-point review	2028 — includes updated intercultural survey
Ongoing refinement	Through Community of Practice

Evaluation will include reference to the measurable implementation outcomes outlined above.

9. Indicative Benchmarks

- Growth in measurable intercultural partnerships and shared ministries
- Increased CALD participation in governance and leadership pathways
- Expansion and uptake of multilingual worship and discipleship resources
- Increased number of congregations engaged in intercultural ministry
- Evidence of congregational renewal through intercultural partnerships
- Strengthened Synod-wide participation in Communities of Practice

10. Implementation and Measurable Outcomes (2026–2030)

To strengthen focus, accountability, and Synod-wide alignment, each Strategic Priority will be accompanied by measurable implementation outcomes. These will be reviewed annually through the MLDB reporting process and refined through the Community of Practice.

Indicative implementation targets include:

Area	Indicative Target
Communities of Practice	Establish and sustain at least 3 active Communities of Practice by 2027, with growing participation across presbyteries.
Worship and Formation Resources	Develop and publish at least 5 multilingual worship and discipleship resources by 2028, including materials for Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday and ongoing congregational use.
Intercultural Partnerships	Facilitate at least 10 formal partnerships between UCA congregations and neighbouring CALD faith communities by 2030, including shared ministry, property use, or mission collaboration.
Leadership Pathways	Support 10+ CALD and second-generation leaders annually into identifiable leadership pathways (governance, ministry formation, or recognised leadership roles).
Congregational Engagement	Increase the proportion of congregations intentionally engaged in intercultural mission by at least 25% by 2030, measured through survey and reporting.
Governance Participation	Achieve measurable growth in CALD representation across Synod, Presbytery, and agency governance bodies by the 2028 review point, strengthening and extending the Synod By-Law provision that specifies a minimum of 5% CALD membership in the Synod meeting.

These targets remain indicative and adaptable, ensuring the plan is both aspirational and accountable within diverse local contexts.

11. Conclusion

This Action Plan consolidates decades of theological commitment and recent learning, seeking to deepen intercultural life as a shared way of being Church — one body, richly diverse in Christ, witnessing to reconciliation and renewal in South Australia.

APPENDIX II

Report to the Mission and Leadership Development Board

Report on Synod CALD Action Plan 2022–2025

Prepared by: Paul Goh and Cyrus Kung, Mission Activators

Date: 9 October 2025

Executive Summary

This report to the Mission and Leadership Development Board summarises the achievements of the Synod CALD Action Plan 2022–2025, recent related developments, and recommends a process for developing the next action plan for 2026–2030.

Key Achievements

- Adoption and resourcing of Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday
- Revision of leadership and placement profiles to integrate intercultural competencies
- Creation of a vibrant intercultural ministry network and resources for formation and supervision
- Recognition and support of new CALD faith communities
- Establishment of intercultural leadership forums and networks

Additional Developments

- Updated Terms of Reference for the Highbury Street Fund and transfer of oversight to the Uniting College Grant Committee for 2025 (pending MLDB review)
- Development of the Awaken Adelaide — Intercultural Congregation Pilot Project (2023–present) to cultivate missional and intercultural leadership capacity across Anglo and CALD congregations
- New opportunities for second-generation ministry with the appointment of Rev Cyrus Kung as Mission Activator

Recommendation

That the Board:

1. **APPOINT** a Task Group to review the current Action Plan and develop a proposal for the next Synod CALD Action Plan (2026–2030), engaging congregations, presbyteries, and leaders—including those involved in second-generation ministry.
2. **CONTINUE TO RESOURCE** intercultural ministry, including INS, leadership formation, and support for CALD faith communities.

1. Introduction

At the 2022 Synod meeting, the Synod adopted the *Synod Action Plan for Becoming a CALD and Intercultural Church: 2022–2025*. This plan, informed by the *Mapping Intercultural Neighbourhoods in SA: CALD–Intercultural Ministry Survey 2021 Report*, affirmed ten recommendations to guide the Church’s intercultural ministry.

This report summarises key achievements under the current action plan, updates on related developments, and recommends the appointment of a Task Group to review the plan and propose the next phase of action for 2026–2030.

2. Summary of Key Achievements (2022–2025)

2.1 Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday (INS)

- Annual adoption of the 3rd Sunday in July as Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday
- Development of resources for INS (2023, 2024, 2025), including multilingual liturgies and worship guides, in collaboration with the Assembly Resourcing Unit, Being a Multicultural Church Circle and Communication team
- Preaching and participation in INS services across congregations, including a major celebration in 2025 marking the 40th anniversary of the “We Are a Multicultural Church” declaration
- Hosting and contributing to the national theological consultation on Being a Multicultural Church: 40 Years On (June 2025), with over 100 participants and strong cross-synod engagement, including Adelaide hub at Yarthu-Apinthi

2.2 Leadership, Placement, and Participation

- Review and update of the Minister Leadership Profile and Congregation Placement Profile to integrate intercultural competencies
- Consultation with Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committees to simplify protocols for faith community recognition and to foster CALD participation

2.3 Intercultural Leadership Formation

- Establishment of a virtual platform/network (CALD & Intercultural Ministry UCA SA) with over 120 members for peer support and resource sharing
- Compilation and distribution of resources for CALD and second-generation ministry formation and education
- Delivery of workshops and contributions to forums on intercultural leadership, cultural intelligence, and cultural humility

2.4 Support for CALD Ministers, Congregations, and Faith Communities

- Recognition and support for emerging CALD faith communities: South Sudanese, Burundian, Congolese, Zimbabwean, Korean, and Fijian communities
- Facilitation of property-sharing and relational engagement with non-UCA CALD communities
- Support for leadership and congregation development, including governance, worship, and cultural integration

2.5 Networking and Ecumenical Engagement

- Hosting Harmony Week events and participation in ecumenical prayer services
- Launch of SA Christian Forum for Intercultural Leadership to strengthen intercultural relationships and capacity building
- Formation of African Leaders' Network for mutual support and collaboration
- Connecting with Asian Ministry Pastors' Network and the Northern Christian Leaders Network, including participation in their annual Pentecost Multicultural Celebrations

2.6 Additional Developments

- **Highbury Street Fund:** Terms of Reference updated, and oversight responsibility transferred from the Public Theology and Mission Subcommittee to the Uniting College Grant Committee for 2025, pending a review by the MLDB.
- **Awaken Adelaide — Intercultural Congregation Pilot Project:** Since 2023, this project has engaged both Anglo and CALD congregations and ministry agents to cultivate missional and intercultural leadership capacity.
- **Second-Generation Ministry:** The appointment of Rev Cyrus Kung as Mission Activator creates a new opportunity to explore and develop ministry initiatives specifically for second-generation CALD leaders and communities.

3. Strategic Reflection

The CALD Action Plan 2022–2025 has significantly advanced the Synod’s intercultural profile. It has strengthened congregational engagement, fostered intercultural leadership, supported emerging faith communities, and positioned the Synod as a national leader in intercultural mission and ministry.

The additional developments above further strengthen the foundation for the proposed plan, including enhanced resourcing, expanded leadership formation, and emerging strategic priorities such as second-generation ministry.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Mission and Leadership Development Board:

4.1 Appoint a Task Group for Review and Planning

Purpose: To review the Synod CALD Action Plan 2022–2025, evaluate its impact, and prepare a proposal for the next action plan (2026–2030) that aligns with the new Synod Mission Framework.

Membership: CALD and intercultural leaders, representatives from presbyteries, Synod staff, and other stakeholders.

Mandate:

- Review the implementation of the current plan and assess its effectiveness
- Engage broadly with congregations, faith communities, presbyteries, and partners for consultation
- Identify emerging opportunities, challenges, and priorities, including second-generation ministry
- Explore pathways to strengthen the participation of CALD leaders in congregations, presbyteries, and the Synod
- Develop a draft action plan proposal for 2026–2030 to be presented to Synod 2026

Timeline: Interim report by May 2026; final proposal by Synod 2026.

4.2 Continue Resourcing Intercultural Ministry

- Maintain initiatives such as Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday, intercultural leadership formation through Awaken Adelaide, and networking forums
- Strengthen resourcing and pastoral support for CALD faith communities, leaders, and congregations by providing practical assistance with funding applications—including the HSF and Uniting Foundation—fostering understanding of processes and supporting mission planning
- Establish a stronger network of CALD youth and young adults across SA and develop stronger bridge connections interdenominationally and with the YDT

5. Conclusion

The Synod CALD Action Plan 2022–2025 has achieved significant outcomes in fostering a culturally and linguistically diverse Uniting Church in South Australia. The additional developments—updated Highbury Street Fund oversight, the Awaken Adelaide pilot project, and emerging opportunities in second-generation ministry—provide fertile ground for the next phase. A dedicated Task Group will ensure the Synod enters the next stage of intercultural mission and leadership development with a clear, collaborative, and visionary action plan for 2026–2030.



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