

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The UCA also belongs to national and international groupings of diverse Christian groupings through the World Council of Churches, Christian Conference of Asia and the National Council of Churches in Australia.

## UNITING AND DIVERSE



The Uniting Church has a diverse range of congregations which may:

- be rural or urban
- have many young members or a majority of older people
- serve the members of a particular migrant ethnic group
- be in Aboriginal communities
- offer worship in contemporary or traditional styles
- meet in a large suburban church, a small community building or under a tree in the outback.

The UCA is a multicultural church with worship regularly conducted in 40 different languages and diverse cultural styles.

## ORIGINS

Born in 1977, the Uniting Church in Australia is the nation's only truly indigenous mainstream Christian movement.

It stands with the people of this land in their search for spiritual life, justice, identity and dignity.

The UCA resulted from the coming together of the Congregational Union of Australia, the Methodist Church of Australasia and the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

The UCA is the third largest church in Australia with 1.3 million people claiming an association.

## LEADERSHIP

All leadership positions in the UCA are open to ordained and lay men and women. The UCA is non-hierarchical and is governed by a series of interrelated councils. The congregation is the foundation council of the church. Presbyteries are regional groupings of congregations. Each state has a council called the synod and its leader is called the moderator, who is elected for a two or three year period. The national council of the church is called the Assembly. Its leader is called the president and is elected for a three year term.

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# What is the... Uniting Church?



## THE UCA CELEBRATES

Marriages, funerals, baptisms and thanksgiving for the birth of a child are important milestones in life. UCA ministers share God's blessings with families through celebrations in congregations and groups in diverse settings.

## THE UCA GOES OUT TO WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE...

Uniting Church chaplains touch the lives of millions of people each year.

UCA Chaplains work in:

- hospitals
- schools
- prisons
- defence forces
- aged care
- hospice care
- detention centres



## THE UCA WORKS IN OUTBACK AND REMOTE AUSTRALIA

Frontier Services provides ministry and community services across the whole of outback and remote Australia covering about 85% of the continent. These services are:

- Patrol ministry to isolated families and communities
- community services
- aged care services
- preschool programs
- remote area housing
- health services
- student accommodation



## COMMUNITY SERVICES

UnitingCare Australia advocates for justice, equity and participation of all with other non-government and community service providers to government.

UnitingCare agencies touch every corner of the Australian community serving many millions of Australia and their families each year.

Agencies help:

- children and families
- youth
- elderly
- people with disabilities
- refugees

Agencies provide:

- clothing and household items
- emergency relief, food and shelter
- counselling
- information and advocacy
- legal assistance
- employment and training assistance
- drop-in centres



## THE UCA WALKS WITH ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Aboriginal people are encouraged to explore their Aboriginality and to look for ways to express Christian faith in cultural ways. The church recognises the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to introduce structures and ways that better serve their communities and provide their own leadership and direction. UAICC is the national agency that exercises oversight of ministry with Aboriginal people within the UCA.

## THE UCA STANDS FOR JUSTICE

The Uniting Church is committed to social justice, valuing the uniqueness, equality and dignity of all people. The UCA seeks to work in solidarity with people in and beyond Australia who experience injustice, oppression, or abuse of their human rights. It also works for justice in social and economic structures. Some issues supported are:

- native title and reconciliation
- environmental issues
- refugees and asylum seekers
- rights of homosexual people

## THE UCA NURTURES

In each state there are theological colleges working with universities providing theological education for both lay and ordained people from basic certificate courses to post-graduate degrees. Theological courses are available by distance education through Coolamon College. Resources are available for work with adults, youth and children within congregations and public schools. UCA schools provide education curricula and programs based on Christian values and some have boarding facilities.

## THE UCA RELATES INTERNATIONALLY

The UCA has partnership relations with many churches in the Pacific and Asia who have similar denominational traditions, through sharing resources, ministry, practical support, crisis relief and community development.