



Uniting Tasmania

Issue No. 239 | April 2026

UCA Tasmania

Walking Together

Charter Journey Plan 2026

More on Page 4

Please save the date **Saturday 23 May 2026** and plan to join one of three regional gatherings at three venues on the same day: 10:00am to 3:00pm with catering provided!

- Cam Rise UC: 3 Wragg Street, Somerset
- Longford UC: 3 High Street, Longford
- Kingston UC: 42 Jindabyne Road, Kingston

The purpose of each gathering is to

- hear voices, hopes, and needs from congregations and faith communities across Tasmania
- strengthen relationships across communities of faith
- discern shared themes of purpose and identity
- gather insights to guide next steps in the Charter Journey

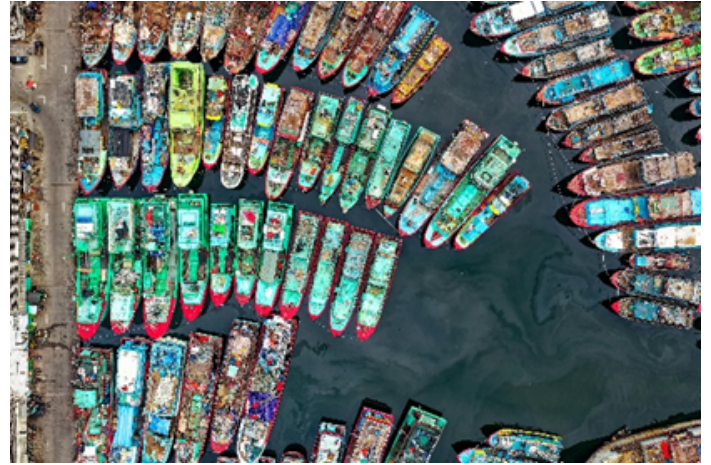
Bottom fishing: working for justice through the supply chain

Greenpeace and the Uniting Church have been examining aspects of the Indonesian tuna fishing fleet, uncovering some concerning issues that need to be addressed. This is part of the global supply chain to the tuna that we eat.

Continued on Page 3



Bottom fishing: working for justice through the supply chain



Continued from Page 1

The gospels speak into the fishing industry of the 1st Century CE Roman Empire in the Eastern Mediterranean. The gospels speak of justice and the burgeoning Kingdom of God (or of Heaven in this year of Matthew).

The Uniting Church is now operating in the 21st Century CE. The fishing industry is not controlled by the Roman Empire anymore, but it is tied into the global economic environment with all the advantages and disadvantages of that location.

Greenpeace and the Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania have presented a report, *Forced to the Bottom: Squeezing Indonesian Fishers and Oceans for Dirty Tuna Profits*. Mark Zirnsak, our Senior Social Justice Advocate was involved on behalf of the UCA.

The report can be found at https://www.greenpeace.org/static/planet4-southeastasia-stateless/2026/03/38b8fbb2-greenpeace-uca_id-au-tuna-report_2026_final-update-march-13.pdf

The report highlights two main areas of concern: indicators of modern slavery and problematic fishing practices.

Of the International Labour Organization's Forced Labour Indicators interviews with a sample of fishermen revealed at least three out of eleven that were significant in this part of the fishing industry; abuse of vulnerability, debt bondage and deception.

Problematic fishing practices refer to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing. Examples include shark finning, bycatching of other marine species, gaps in the recording of catches, problems with logbook compliance, and lack of independent observers on fishing boats. The report makes numerous recommendations to Indonesian stakeholders, Australian stakeholders and ASEAN Member States.

It is helpful to know more fully the origin of the food and resources we consume. Being Christians in the 21st Century CE means being aware of our environment, in the broadest sense of that word, and acting sometimes with partners of good will.

National Lay Preachers' Conference 4-6 September 2026

Our theme is building on the President's Assembly theme of *Threads of Love: weaving Christ's Love Across Cultures and Boundaries*

Weaving Christ's love as a Lay Preacher

UCA Tasmania

Walking Together

Charter Journey Plan 2026

This document guides our 2026 journey to develop a Charter for the Presbytery. It sets out how we will hear and hold stories, listen deeply across our communities, and work together to shape a clear and practical way forward in discerning God's call together.

Thank you to the people who helped shape this plan.



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA
Presbytery of Tasmania

Invitations to the 'Listening' workshops in May have already been distributed through the leaders of all Congregations and Faith Communities.

Throughout 2026 we hope you can add your voice to help shape the focus of our communities of faith and Presbytery for the next five years of the Uniting Church in Tasmania (and beyond).

We will hear and hold stories together with congregations and faith communities, including Leprena UAICC Tasmania, so that diverse voices and hopes are reflected in a Charter that guides us to respond to:

What do we need to do, and who do we need to be as a church, to faithfully live out our call to discipleship across lutruwita/Tasmania?

Please save the date of Saturday 23 May 2026, and plan to join one of three gatherings at three venues (see next page) on the same day from 10:00am to 3:00pm (with catering provided!).

The purpose of each gathering is to

- hear voices, hopes, and needs from communities of faith across Tasmania
- strengthen relationships across communities
- discern shared themes of purpose and identity

Context

We are creating a clear and practical Charter to guide the focus of our communities of faith and Presbytery over the coming five to ten years.

Engaging together will help us respond well to the changes we are facing:

- Fewer young people are involved than in the past
- There are fewer ordained ministers available
- Congregations are smaller, so fewer people are sharing the work
- Our properties need ongoing care and management and rationalising, and a dedicated property strategic focus
- The needs in our communities are changing.

We will hear and hold stories together with congregations and faith communities, including Leprena UAICC Tasmania, so that diverse voices and hopes are reflected in the Charter.

This process will aim to create carefully held, guided spaces for respectful conversation, where we can name differences, hold tensions with care, and build shared understanding and commitment.



Faithful Futures vision statement:

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



Walking Together

We will take what we hear to help guide the gathering in late June of the Presbytery Committees, Leprena UAICC Tasmania and Tas Office staff.

What is a Charter?

A Charter is a place where we write down our shared hopes together. It gives us something to return to when we need to make hard decisions and helps keep us moving in the same direction. We don't need to agree on everything, but the Charter captures what matters most to us as a faith community in Tasmania and how we connect with the wider Uniting Church. It also invites us to think carefully and together about where we want to go, and what it will take to get there, in ways that can unite and strengthen us over time.



The Charter Journey Plan sets out how we will hear and hold stories, listen deeply across our communities of faith, and work together to shape a clear and practical way forward. The Charter Journey Plan is attached, or you can download the [Charter Journey in Full](#), or in ['Plain English'](#).

A draft Charter will be refined by a further three gatherings in August, before consideration by the Presbytery in Council meeting in November.

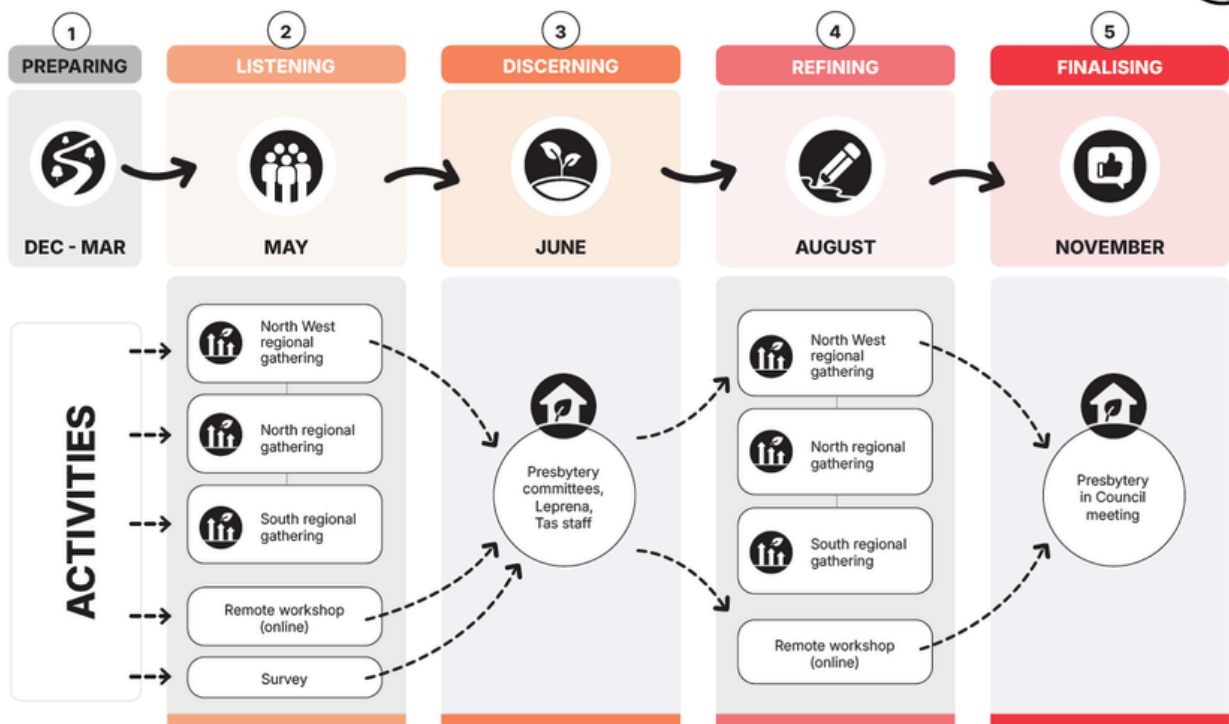
The three venues:

- Cam Rise UC: 3 Wragg Street, Somerset
- Longford UC: 3 High Street, Longford
- Kingston UC: 42 Jindabyne Road, Kingston Beach

Please RSVP to attend one of the three gatherings on Saturday 23 May, so we know how to cater for your needs: [Register now!](#) (or please RSVP to the Tasmanian Office by 14 May at the latest)

Can't attend? We will send a survey in late April so you can contribute your ideas.

Journey Overview



MORE FROM ASSEMBLY

New Director for Uniting Care

Tamara Thomas is the new director of Uniting Care. To find out more go to <https://uniting.church/tamara-thomas-the-new-national-director-unitingcare-australia/>

Defence Force Chaplains

The Uniting Church currently contributes about forty chaplains to the Australian Defence Forces who work within a multi-faith environment. To learn more go to <https://uniting.church/kaye-ronalds-walking-through-life-with-our-adf-personnel/>

Middle East Conflict

Charissa Suli, President of the Uniting Church posted a statement regarding the current conflict in the Middle East. She calls for us to:

- Pray for peace in the Middle East and for all whose lives are threatened by war.
- Support humanitarian assistance for displaced families and churches providing refuge.
- Advocate for peace, encouraging our leaders to pursue diplomatic and peaceful solutions.

For more, including a link to a prayer for peace go to <https://uniting.church/a-call-for-peace-and-the-protection-of-human-life-presidents-statement-on-middle-east-conflict/>

To find more updates on this issue you can select links within the site for more.

UAICC Chairperson Steps Down

Rev Mark Kickett has stepped down as Chairperson of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress. For photos and more about the contributions that he has made within the UAICC and the Uniting Church go to <https://uniting.church/rev-mark-kickett-steps-down-as-uaicc-chair/>

Northern Floods and Frontier Services

Your Frontier Services has a role to play in meeting the needs of flood affected people in the rural and isolated north of the country during and in the follow up to the floods. For more go to <https://uniting.church/frontier-services-stands-firm-with-flood-affected-communities/>

Seasonal Messages from Charissa Suli



Remain anchored in Christ

This one is a bit late, but worth having a look at. Charissa Suli, President of UCA, provides a reflection and a prayer for the Season of Lent.

<https://uniting.church/2026-lenten-invitation/>

Easter Message

Your Charissa Suli's Easter Message is available at <https://uniting.church/presidents-easter-message-2026/> You can view the video there or alternatively download a copy of the transcript. If you wish to download the video only go to the Vimeo site at <https://vimeo.com/1176072465?fl=pl&fe=vl>



Productivity with Purpose

2026-27 Pre-Budget Submission

Uniting Care has produced a 2026 Pre-Budget Submission focusing on productivity. Three themes are developed: productivity for inclusion, productivity for wellbeing and productivity for resilience. To read more about this go to https://unitingcare.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Pre-Budget-Submission-26-27-Productivity-with-Purpose_FINAL-1.pdf

UNITING CHURCH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY STRATEGY 2026-31

**Our Vision: Uniting in Christ
Flourishing Faith – Thriving Communities – Liberating Justice**



Cultivating our theological culture
We will deliver national resources for theological, discipleship and worship renewal.

Reviving our Covenant commitment
We affirm and will enact in our law and life the sovereignty and self-determination of Congress.

Accompanying the global church with purpose
We will purposefully deepen our relationships with the global church.

Ordering our life for God's mission
We will change our internal structures to better serve the mission of the church.

Promoting mission from the margins
We will listen to and make our churches more inclusive for all cultures and ages.

Speaking prophetically in the world
We will create a unified advocacy voice which is stronger and more impactful.

STRATEGIC MEASURES

- A. 90% of strategic initiatives are completed or on track
- B. Increasing response to "We are a truly national church"
- C. Increased engagement with strategic communications
- E. On track to reach net zero by 2040
- F. One Church wide advocacy activation per annum

STRATEGIC GOALS, INITIATIVES & WORKING GROUPS

GOAL 1: FLOURISHING FAITH
We extend the table to everyone, inviting them to follow Jesus with courageous faith.

1. A redesigned and revived Covenant with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (Secretariat)
2. Reach rural & remote communities (Frontier Services)
3. Deepen collaboration on theological education (Secretariat)
4. Theological culture work on mission, evangelism, discipleship and diaconal communities (Secretariat)
5. Liturgy renewal of our authorised services (Secretariat)

- Revival of the Covenant Working Group (1)
- Act2 Stream B (4 & 5) Transition from Standards for Ministers
- Support Continuing Witness Task Group (5 & 6)

GOAL 2: THRIVING COMMUNITIES
We work together so that we can be a truly national church and local communities can thrive.

1. Improving local regulatory environment for communities of faith (Secretariat)
2. Feasibility of 3 or 4 council model and other ways of deepening collaboration (Secretariat)
3. A contemporary standard for ministry agents (Secretariat)
4. Purposeful and strategic international engagement with the global church (Secretariat)
5. Strategic change communications to leaders (Secretariat)
6. Building strategic and productive collaboration between Assembly, Synods & Agencies (Secretariat)
7. National and international discipleship opportunities for building young leaders (Secretariat)

- Act2 Stream A Communities of Faith Reference Group (1)
- Act2 Stream C Governance, Resourcing and Administration (2)
- Code of Ethics Review Reference Group (3)
- Ecumenical Relationship Review Task Group (4)

GOAL 3: LIBERATING JUSTICE
We use our voice and our actions to confront injustice in Australia and the world.

1. Gain stature as influential player in faith-based climate adaption (UnitingWorld)
2. Extend engagement and support from UCA and adjacent communities (UnitingWorld)
3. Advocacy for justice for First Peoples (UnitingCare)
4. Advocacy for ageing to our full potential (UnitingCare)
5. Advocacy for economic equality & inclusion (UnitingCare)
6. Advocacy for Remote Australians (Frontier Services)
7. Reduce carbon emissions to zero by 2040 (Secretariat)
8. Assembly wide Advocacy (Secretariat)
9. Becoming an anti-racist Church (Secretariat)

- Net Zero Steering Committee (7)
- Working Group on COP31 Community Organisation (8)
- National Justice Network (9)

VALUES	HOPE	JUSTICE	COMPASSION	RESPECT	INTEGRITY	INNOVATION
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Assembly Strategic Goals

Andrew Johnson, Assembly General Secretary, has been posting recently on the Strategic Goals of the Assembly. See below for a portion of his comments about the first two goals. You can gain more context by following the links (or typing them into your browser) and by reading alongside the diagram on the facing page.

The first Strategic Goal is Flourishing Faith. It says, “We extend the table to everyone, inviting them to follow Jesus with courageous faith”. As a Uniting Church, over the past nearly 50 years we have worked hard to extend the table to all within our communities. We have entered into a Covenant with Congress, declared ourselves a Multicultural Church, extended ministry to the most remote parts of the country through Frontier Services, welcomed children to the Lord’s table and extended welcome to people regardless of their identity or background.

This image of the table is so central to our faith. In baptism, we invite all to join us at the table of our Lord. It is central to our life also, as week after week we come to be nourished and renewed at the table. It is the scandal of our divisions as a universal church that we cannot all sit at the one table and share of the one cup which drives our ecumenical endeavours. It is our longing as a Christian that we can share the life-giving, grace-filled story of the gospel so that more people may join us at the table.

“As a Church uniting in Christ at its foundation, we need to be a Church that proclaims the gospel, telling again the story of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, and the grace that abounds in our courageously following Jesus.”

<https://uniting.church/assemblys-new-strategy-for-2026-31-first-strategic-goal-explained/>

The second Strategic Goal is Thriving Communities. It says, “We work together so that we can be a truly national Church and local communities can thrive”. As a Uniting Church we believe that the local congregation is the heart of our Church. We believe we are called to serve our local communities as we bear witness to God’s love and grace. This Goal is particularly focused on the role the Assembly can play within its responsibilities to encourage thriving communities.

We are particularly implementing changes to Regulations on how local communities of faith are governed so we can be more flexible and make it easier to focus on the core mandate of communities to be places of worship, growth, loving and serving. We are also working hard on our wider structures so that they better serve our local communities and collaborate across boundaries. We are looking carefully again at the Code of Ethics so we can have healthy and effective ministry leaders.

We also want to close the gap between the global, national and local Church. We want to build the next generation of church leaders engaged with the concerns, experiences and passions of the global church. We also want to strengthen our communication so that national and local work of the Church are closer together

“As a Church we want to have thriving communities where we are living out our calling at its best...”

<https://uniting.church/assemblys-new-strategy-for-2026-31-second-strategic-goal-explained/>

WHAT'S ON!

FEB - MAR 2026

APR
03 | Good Friday

APR
05 | Easter Day

APR
06 | Easter Monday - office closed

APR
07 | Resource and Development
10.30am - 2.30pm

APR
23 | Presbytery Standing Committee
(Zoom) 10.00am - 3.00pm

APR
25 | Anzac Day
Tasmanian Office Closed

MAY
05 | Pastoral Relations Committee
10.30am - 4.00pm

MAY
18 | Broad Engagement Sessions
(remote communities)

MAY
19 | Resource and Development
10.30am - 2.30pm

MAY
23 | Charter Journey Day (regional)

MAY
28 | Presbytery Standing Committee
10.00am - 3.00pm

“After close study, I have concluded that Jesus believed there are two kinds of people:

- 1) Your neighbours whom you are supposed to love;*
- 2) Your enemies whom you are supposed to love.”*

Rev. Dr. Mark Sandlin