Position Description

Social Justice Officer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting to:</th>
<th>Priorities, Focus &amp; Advocacy Director</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit:</td>
<td>equipping Leadership for Mission (eLM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>29 College Crescent Parkville</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tenure:</td>
<td>On going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours per week:</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost centre:</td>
<td>C.J.100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>September 2018</td>
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Employee Name

Signature

Date

Rev Dr Jennifer Byrnes

Executive Officer

Signature

Date
Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
As part of the Uniting Church in Australia, the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania is the Council of the Church responsible for the general oversight, direction and administration of the Church’s worship, witness and service in the region allotted to it. It exercises pastoral, executive, administrative and discipline responsibilities in relation to the presbyteries within its bounds. In particular, it promotes and encourages the mission of the Church, assisting congregations and presbyteries within its bounds in their faithful participation in the mission of God.

Strategic priorities & areas of focus
Recognising the Church’s diverse ministry amongst all generations, and walking together as First and Second Peoples, the Synod has adopted a number of strategic priorities. The strategic priorities of the Synod for the next 3 – 5 years are:

(i) Ministries which foster diverse gathered communities of renewal, Christian practice and renewal;
(ii) Culturally diverse mission and ministry; and
(iii) Mission and ministry with children, youth, their families and young adults.

These strategic priorities are to be informed by areas of focus, which are:
1) The identity of Jesus Christ and Christianity in a post-Christendom world;
2) Multi-cultural and multi-faith Australia and its relationship to its First Peoples;
3) Peace-making, power and powerlessness, being with and for the poor; and
4) Inter-faith and intercultural engagement, encounter and learning.

Along with the Vision and Mission Principles (see appendices), the strategic priorities and areas of focus will provide shape and context to the work of the Synod at this time.

equipping Leadership for Mission ( eLM)
eLM is a pivotal unit in developing the capacity to undertake the mission-based activities of the Synod. It is central to supporting a coordinated focus on mission and supporting gathered communities to discern and engage in mission in their local context. It is committed to inter-connectivity across the Church to enable all aspects of the Synod’s mission and capacity building activities occur collaboratively and holistically.

With a theological foundation and working relationally across the life of the Synod, eLM aims to:

- Provide a range of services to support ministers and lay leaders during their time of ministry within the life of the Church.
- Serve the educative and formative needs of the Church for both lay and ordained ministry and leadership.
- Undertake activities that support, promote and assist all aspects of the Synod’s life to speak deliberately to the strategic priorities and areas of focus as resolved by the Synod from time to time.
- Inform and resource congregations through the administration of the Church’s grants program.
- Support justice, advocacy and research to enable well-informed and effective contextual expressions of ministry and service in the world.
- Proactively develop networks and building deep partnerships across the Synod based ministries and operations, together with all presbyteries and their congregations.
- Maintain strong engaged relationships with the presbyteries through regionally based participation and support.
eLM Characteristics

There are a number of clear characteristics that inform and guide the shaping of eLM around the four functional areas. These characteristics are applicable to the whole eLM and will be given life in functionally appropriate ways. The characteristics identified are provided below (in no particular order):

1. Mission and faith – keep conversations faith-focused and be guided by the Mission Principles and Strategic Priorities. Part of this is making sure contemporary communications and technology are used to support discipleship, our geographical distance and our gathered faith communities.

2. Theological foundation – the work undertaken by the unit must have strong theological foundations.

3. Change and renewal – the unit will be in a position to dream, discover, research and question as it seeks renewal. Ongoing listening is vital to respond to contextual needs, cultural diversity, social change and First Peoples. The unit will also reach outwards to learn how others respond to a changing world.

4. Formation, education and leadership – with excellent theological education already existing in Synod, the unit will build on this foundation. This will include embracing leadership development for a new world and leadership in different contexts, including rural communities, new ministries and different cultures and demographics.

5. Relationships, connections and collaborations – the Vision and Mission Principles call us to pursue God’s mission in partnership and therefore walk and work together, building positive relationships and greater connectedness. This helps build trust and opens the opportunities for a deeper understanding of different cultures and different age groups. It assists us to continue the important relationships that exist across UCA congregations, presbyteries and institutions and to explore faith in relational ways. Relationships will also be explored wider than our church, opening us to new ways of responding and learning from the experiences of organisations vastly different from our own.

6. Coherency – coherency and a common message will be emphasised. The unit will work together as a coherent whole and speak with a common message as we prepare to work in fresh ways. This will include maintaining clarity of purpose for each functional area.

7. Common wealth – whilst wealth is often associated with money, the great gift of common wealth is to share experiences, ideas, wisdom and capacity. Today’s world requires accountable practices in increasing ways and the ability to share and contribute to these for the good of all. Of course, the consideration of common wealth needs to be contextual and be mindful of the great diversity that exists within our Church.

8. Accountability – The unit will act with a strong sense of mutual accountability. This will include being clear about expected outcomes and delivering on promises.

These characteristics apply to all four teams including, 1. Priorities, Focus & Advocacy 2. Education & Formation for Leadership 3. Marketing, Functions & Administration, and 4. Relationships & Connections.
Social Justice Officer

The Priorities and Focus Team leads, resources, encourages and promotes the strategic priorities, areas of focus and justice work of the Synod. It undertakes research into the changed and changing contexts across the Synod to develop and implement resources including policies, guidelines, discussion papers and resource and training materials for the key priorities.

The team resources presbyteries and congregations in a) intergenerational ministry which includes the ministry to children and families, youth and young adults; b) the strengthening of CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) communities to actively engage in the wider Church; and c) development of new and renewing expressions of faith within their congregations and communities.

The Social Justice team provides expert advice and contemporary information related to social justice. It advocates and leads campaigns for social justice outcomes and provides advice and representation at the Synod and relevant sector forums.

Key Relationships

Whilst the role reports to the Priorities, Focus & Advocacy Director, it will also require developing strong relationships with a number of key groups, including:

- Other staff in the eLM Unit
- Presbyteries, presbytery leadership and congregations
- Other members of the Synod-Based Ministries and Mission Resources and Support teams
- Ecumenical networks
- Government agencies, non-government and faith based organisations and not-for-profit organisations including philanthropic bodies
- Key organisations in the community and voluntary sector, trade unions, professional associations, community-based organisations, inter faith-based organisations, social movements and networks, media and academia.

Role Purpose

The Social Justice Officer supports, assists and resources the Uniting Church Victoria and Tasmania membership to articulate and live out their discipleship through a Christian vision of social justice by;

- Contributing to and supporting campaigns within the Social Justice strategy that embody the Christian hope for a more just society and a more sustainable environment, that challenge injustice, and that make a long-term difference in the lives of people in Australia and around the world.
- Maintaining up to date knowledge of social justice, human rights, international mission issues and contributing towards relevant policy development
- Working cooperatively with ecumenical and community groups and developing good relationships with presbyteries and congregations to advance justice outcomes aligned with the Church’s mission, to foster justice-inspired discipleship, and to develop the capacity of the church to respond to questions of social justice.
- Engaging younger generations across a range of social justice issues, coordinating with the Youth and Young Adults ministry coordinators in PFA and the Next Gen community.
Requirements of the position

- A satisfactory National Criminal History Check.
- The Uniting Church in Australia is committed to keeping children safe, so a current Working with Children's check will be required.
- Current driver's licence.
- Annual leave may not be taken immediately prior to and during the Synod meeting.
- In this role flexibility of hours is necessary. Generally this means availability to engage with various Church entities over weekend days or in the evening, including travel to regional centres in Victoria and Tasmania and other interstate locations.

Key selection criteria

Qualifications and experience

This position requires the following knowledge and experience:

- Tertiary qualifications in the arts, education, political science, law, community development, journalism and/or related field, or relevant experience in a related role.
- Knowledge of the Uniting Church in Australia, its polity, systems and practices is desirable.
- Experience and engagement with the life of local and regional faith communities.

Skills and abilities

1. **Team work**: Cooperates and works well with others in the pursuit of team goals; collaborates and shares information; shows consideration, concern and respect for others' feelings and ideas. Accommodates and works well with the different working styles of others.

2. **Conceptual and analytical ability**: Deals with concepts and complexity comfortably. Uses analytical and conceptual skills to reason through problems. Has creative ideas and can project how these can link to innovations.

3. **Relationship development**: Identifies issues in common and seeks knowledge to build mutually beneficial partnerships. Identifies and responds to other people's underlying needs. Uses understanding of the context to ensure outcomes are achieved and issues are resolved. Is committed to deepening the covenanting relationship between the UAICC and the Church. Is committed to developing and deepening interfaith and intercultural relationships.

4. **Planning and organising**: Works towards clearly defined objectives and priorities, contributing to reviews and adjustments as required. Identifies processes, tasks and resources required to achieve a goal. Uses systems and procedures to guide work and track progress.

5. **Communication skills**: Demonstrates good verbal and written communication skills. Confidently conveys ideas and information in a clear and interesting way. Demonstrates good interpersonal skills and abilities to effectively interact with a diverse range of individuals, groups and committees members.

Personal competencies/qualities:

6. **Spiritual awareness**: Demonstrates insight into the importance of faith. Reflects on one's own spiritual life and has translated insights to lead others in gathered faith communities.

7. **Culture & diversity**: Holds comprehensive awareness of the issues related to inclusion and fairness. Understands diversity in culture (CALD), abilities, age, gender (LGBTI) and the benefits of diverse communities, including faith based gatherings and workplaces.
Appreciates the importance of our First peoples and the church’s commitment to seeking compassion and justice for all.

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<tr>
<th>Key Accountabilities</th>
<th>Key Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Provide justice advocacy and support by</strong></td>
<td>Supporting, resourcing, encouraging and assisting the wider Uniting Church membership in Victoria and Tasmania to be active in biblically informed social justice advocacy and action, taking part in campaigns as required by the Director.</td>
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<td>Contributing to and coordinating effective campaigns that inspire hope for a more just society and a more sustainable environment, and that challenge injustice, by contributing to effective education and campaign materials, and organising events and programs to achieve the outcomes being pursued.</td>
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<td>Engaging younger generations in their social justice awareness and advocacy from the perspective of Christian discipleship, coordinating with other relevant members of the eLM Unit and NextGen community.</td>
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<td>Conducting research on social justice, human rights, international mission issues and contributing towards any policy development arising from such research.</td>
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<td>Providing promotional material and programs or events to engage the wider Uniting Church membership in social justice and international mission.</td>
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<td>Presenting materials and outcomes to social justice groups, congregations, presbyteries and other UCA VicTas groups, representing the justice work of the Synod accurately.</td>
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<td>Working cooperatively with ecumenical and community groups relevant to accomplishing the social justice objectives.</td>
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<td>Maintaining and expanding UCA social justice groups and supporter data base/s</td>
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<td><strong>Develop and maintain strong relationships by</strong></td>
<td>Developing and maintaining effective and relationships across the life of the Church, in particular congregations, presbyteries and Synod Support and Resources Teams.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Building partnerships with external organisations. These may include government and non-government agencies, faith based not for profit organisations, philanthropic bodies, universities, trade unions, and social justice advocacy groups.</td>
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<td>Maintaining a clear and current understanding of life within presbyteries and congregations to the wise stewardship of resources for the mission of the Church.</td>
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<td><strong>Communicate effectively by</strong></td>
<td>Promoting the Vision and Mission Principles and communicating widely the strategic intentions and sharing achievements aligned with these with others within the unit and outside.</td>
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<td>Confidently conveying ideas and information in a clear and interesting way, clearly understanding the target audience and the objectives of the communication, using audience feedback to refine communication and handling difficult and sensitive communications well.</td>
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<td>Writing briefs, emails, reports using clear, concise and grammatically correct language, editing written communications to ensure they contain the information necessary to achieve their purpose.</td>
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<td>Using multiple communication channels to tailor communication to relevant audiences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using social media to engage younger generations in social justice campaigns.</td>
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| **Demonstrating team work by** |
| Openly sharing insights and working well with other team members within the Unit (eLM). |
| Participating in team meetings and conversations with peers in a way that encourages collaboration, connection and light and simpler systems. |
| Remaining open and flexible to new ideas and the sharing of resources to ensure the wisest use of the Church’s precious resources. |
| Demonstrating enthusiasm for the strategic direction and the purpose and goals of the unit. |
| Reflecting the Vision and Mission Principles and Statements of Intent in team decision making. |
| Coaching and mentoring others and modelling the UCA ethos and values in advocacy and discipleship. |
| Maintaining effective and respectful relationships. |
| Resolving any conflict that may arise through effective reconciliation methods. |
| Participating in team development activities and exercises to enhance own leadership and foster a culture of team work across the unit. |

| **Manage self by** |
| Ensuring clearly defined goals are established, annual work plan is in place, and that own position description remains accurate. |
| Maintaining clarity of purpose relevant to the team’s purpose and the Unit as a whole. |
| Preparing own work plan annually with agreed measurable outcomes. |
| Demonstrating a commitment to developing self, learning new skills and gaining new insights into own effectiveness. |
Workplace ethos and values
As an employer, we express the ethos of Christianity to love one another, to live justly and to seek the
reconciliation and renewal of all creation by respecting ourselves and all whom we serve and employ. We
strive to do so by:

- Being inclusive
- Acting and advocating for a just society
- Working for peace and justice in the world
- Having an openness to the wisdom of people of other faiths and views
- Implementing environmentally sustainable practices

Our Vision Statement and Mission Principles, which guide our work and strategic direction, are:

**Vision**
Following Christ,
Walking together as First and Second Peoples,
 Seeking community, compassion and justice for all creation

**Mission Principles**
God in Christ is at mission in the world and sends the Church in the Spirit to:

1. share the Good News of Jesus Christ
2. nurture followers of Christ in life-giving in communities of reconciliation
3. respond in compassion to human need
4. live justly and seek justice for all
5. care for creation
6. listen to each generation and culture so as to live out the Gospel in fresh ways
7. pursue God’s mission in partnership

Our work is also shaped by the **Statements of Intent**, which are:

- **Focus on Vision and Mission Principles** - We will focus proactively and strategically on engaging in
effective and relational mission.
- **Foster faith, deepen discipleship** - We will support and inspire people of all ages to come to faith and
to grow in their faith, stimulating interest in Christ and his way in the wider community.
- **Be lighter and simpler** - We will be lighter and simpler in our practices and formal structures so we
can be more flexible and proactive in responding to the movement of the Spirit.
- **Grow leadership capacity** - We will grow the capacity of all forms of leadership in the current and
future Church.
- **Nourish contextual expressions of church** - We will recognise and nourish the diversity of forms in
which we gather as communities of faithful people.
- **Seek reconciliation between First and Second Peoples** - We will be active in pursuing a better way in
our shared relationships between First and Second Peoples, as modelled to us by Christ’s covenant.
We will work in solidarity with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress for the
advancement of God’s justice and righteousness in this land
- **Act together across cultures and generations** - We will develop and deepen our relationships to be,
in practice, an inter-cultural, inter-generational church.
- **Deepen partnerships and trust** - We will develop a more cohesive culture of trust, partnership and
support.
- **Share our resources** - We will be more strategic in the organisation and sharing of all our resources -
our people, property and finances - for the common good.
- **Build resilience, strengthen accountability** - We will act with faithful integrity by way of mutual
accountability, wise stewardship and good governance.
Our workplace is one that values:

Justice
- Welcomes people speaking for themselves and on behalf of others
- Hears all voices and contributions
- Actively removes discrimination

Inclusion
- Actively fosters diversity and open communication
- Welcomes different thoughts, ideas and contributions

Compassion
- Acknowledges and values the whole person
- Seeks to be responsive to people’s needs

Shared leadership
- Works collaboratively
- Shares knowledge
- Uses consultative decision-making

Respect
- Values all people, roles and contributions
- Creates an environment where we and our work flourish

Integrity
- Does the right thing for the right reasons
- Acts ethically with appropriate accountability and transparency
- Aligns policy and practice
- Expect honesty from all staff, in their relationships with each other, their external partnerships and with society

Wise stewardship
- Makes responsible and sustainable use of resources
- Ensures we have the skills to perform our jobs
- Provides opportunity for professional development
- Works collaboratively to utilise our strengths and diverse talents

Innovation
- Generates ideas and translates them into workplace improvements
- Reflects on experience and is open to new ways of doing things
- Values continuous improvement to our work practices and systems