



24.08 Act2

In response to the Act2: The Gift of the Spirit report:

to open ourselves to the gift of the Spirit, given in order that we may not lose the way. With thanksgiving for the past 47 years of our life, and after taking a long, loving look at the reality of our present, and with hope in God's faithfulness for our future, we commit to continue our journey together. We believe now is the time to reshape our life so we may better live into God's call in our time and place. By centring life-giving communities of discipleship and mission, cultivating a flourishing theological culture and deeply sharing in our common life and wealth we will treasure Christ's gift of abundant grace, share this gift with our world and pass it to future generations.

Stream A

24.08.01 to adopt a vision for local communities of faith:

Communities of faith will sustain a life of worship, build one another up in love, grow disciples of Jesus and participate in God's mission. These diverse communities of faith will shape their life in response to God's call in their context and deepen their relationship with God, one another, the wider church and the world.

25.03.02.01 Call on the Church to orient its life towards life-giving communities of discipleship and mission that include:

- a) being intentional, consistent, relational and contextual, to make and grow disciples within our communities of faith;
- b) encouraging our various expressions of the Uniting Church within local communities (e.g. UAICC, communities of faith, agencies and schools) to seek structural and relational ways to deepen connections to be more intentional about participating in shared mission; and
- c) resourcing (e.g. theological and missional, financial, personnel, property) and supporting communities of faith towards this task;

25.03.02.02 Adopt the principle that communities which exhibit the marks of a Congregation as described in the Basis of Union may be recognised as a Congregation;

25.03.02.03 Review and amend the regulations to:

- a) align the regulations with the principle established in 14.2.3;
- b) increase the flexibility for communities of faith to be governed by fit-for-purpose governance arrangements. Include in the review the fulfillment of the following principles:
 - (i) moving away from the normative structure being one Congregation with one Church Council;
 - (ii) enabling various types of communities of faith to be governed by a single Church Council;
 - (iii) providing for effective structures under a Church Council to support local ministry and mission overseen by the Church Council;
 - (iv) encouraging clustering of communities of faith under a single Church Council;
 - (v) encouraging Presbyteries to ensure alignment between local ministry arrangements and local governance arrangements;
 - (vi) providing mechanisms by which Presbyteries can assure themselves that local governance arrangements are adequate to fulfil the responsibilities of a Church Council;
 - (vii) providing flexibility to new and emerging communities to evolve their governance as their life matures over time; and
 - (viii) seeking to consolidate Regulations 3.9 (Alternative Local Church Structures) into revised Regulations for Congregations and Church Councils;
- c) provide for a Presbytery to vary the responsibilities of a Congregation and/or a Church Council; and
- d) provide for Presbyteries, with appropriate safeguards and limits, to appoint people from the wider Church to be members of a Church Council;

- 25.03.02.04 Urge UAICC, Synods and Presbyteries, as appropriate, to simplify pathways for communities of faith such as new and emerging communities, CALD communities, church plants and fresh expression to belong to and participate in the life of the Church including:
- a) ensuring fit-for-purpose governance arrangements;
 - b) using the ability to vary responsibilities of Congregations and Church Councils to align responsibilities with the capacity, capability and needs of a community;
 - c) ensuring access to and participation in the wider councils of the Church; and
 - d) providing opportunities for two-way learning between communities;
- 25.03.02.05 Urge Synods and Presbyteries to exercise their responsibilities pastorally and effectively regarding the dissolution and/or amalgamation of Congregations, including:
- a) timely intervention when a Congregation or Faith Community is reaching the end of their current form;
 - b) provision of resources to manage any transition; and
 - c) exploring the application of any financial resources from the dissolution or amalgamation of Congregations to areas of ministry and mission across the life of the Church based on need, opportunity and responsibility;
- 25.03.02.06 Provide guidance to the Church on the recognition of Congregations and local fit-for-purpose governance arrangements consistent with any amended Regulations and continue to monitor implementation, reflect on and refine guidance and Regulations; and
- 25.03.02.07 Review and bring a report and proposals to the 18th Assembly (including any changes to the Constitution and Regulations) required to implement a simplified approach to Church membership.

24.09 Act2 – Constitutional Change Process

- 24.09.01 if, as a result of the 17th Assembly and the decisions made, consequential amendments to the Constitution are required to be made, then pursuant to the powers inherent in clause 47 of the Constitution, the Assembly Standing Committee undertake the following steps:
- (a) produce an exposure draft of the proposed constitutional amendments;
 - (b) receive advice from the Legal Reference Committee on that exposure draft;
 - (c) seek a response from Synods and Presbyteries on the exposure draft; and
 - (d) receive advice from the Legal Reference Committee on the final version of the Constitutional amendments to be proposed.
- 24.09.02 that upon completion of these steps, the Assembly Standing Committee follow the measures provided in clause 72 of the Constitution to adopt the Constitutional amendments; and
- 24.09.03 that the time prescribed by the Assembly under Article 73 of the Constitution be no longer than 12 months after clause 24.9.01(d) has been completed.

Resolutions from the November 2025 ASC related to 25.03.02.02 to 25.03.02.06 (communities of faith) and 25.03.02.07 (Church membership) above

1. Determine that the term “Congregation” should be the used for references in the Regulations and Constitution to the single flexible entity defined by the criteria in Basis of Union (15(a));
2. Determine that the proposals concerning Church Membership Regulations and Constitutional amendments should be brought the Standing Committee for consideration within the current triennium;
3. Advise ARU that the Standing Committee is willing to consider any changes to the Constitution regarding Church Membership utilizing the Constitutional Change Process approved by the 17th Assembly (Assembly Minute 24.09).