



Your church community and Partnerships Opportunities that excite and ignite

Uniting Church communities Australia-wide are entering into healthy relationships with overseas partners and thereby experiencing a renewed sense of energy and purpose.

Developing genuine and just relationships is fundamental to living as God's people and an underpinning value for the Uniting Church. From its beginnings the Church has had a strong sense of being both global and local. Australian church communities are increasingly committing to relationships beyond national boundaries.

Australian communities can join with UnitingWorld and enter into long-term, respectful and mutual relationships with one of our international Partners. In so doing we open ourselves to perspectives, lifestyles and experiences that reveal more of God, deepen our discipleship and stretch our witness.

Through developing these relationships churches are finding a fresh sense of community and a renewed purpose as they bond together in solidarity and form lasting international friendships. In turn, they are often surprised by unexpected blessings.

Our experience with Rev. David was excellent. Whilst I am sure David received a lot of valuable learning and insight, I can assure you that he, in turn, gave so much to us in sharing his faith and his hopes and dreams for his people. Our lives have been greatly enriched by his being amongst us and we thank you for your involvement not only with his visit but for what I am sure will be a long, ongoing relationship with David and his Noro congregation.

Barry Jardine (Reflections after a visit from Rev David Vakipide from Vanuatu to Emmanuel UC QLD)

The Uniting Church believes that Christians in Australia are called to bear witness to a unity of faith and life in Christ which transcends cultural and economic, national and racial boundaries, and to this end the Uniting Church commits itself to seek special relationships with Churches in Asia and the Pacific. (Basis of Union, Paragraph 2)





UnitingWorld's Mission

Connecting church communities and people worldwide to partner in God's mission

UnitingWorld is committed to facilitating relationships that help Australian church communities live out their global identity and develop greater awareness and understanding about global issues. This leads to practical responses, connecting Australian church communities with overseas partners in relationships of mutual commitment and respect.

UnitingWorld's Vision

We, the people of the Uniting Church see:

Transformed communities where peace and justice reign and poverty is alleviated, reflecting our hope and life in Jesus Christ

Our overseas partners see:

Trusted friends for the long run who are committed to understanding and serving them. Australian church communities with global radars, educated and rejuvenated through meaningful and reciprocal engagement

A Harsh Reality...

Extreme poverty, limited access to education and healthcare, polluted water sources and poor sanitation, global warming, HIV/AIDS and Malaria, high infant mortality rates, gender inequity ...

These are big and overwhelming issues that often make us feel powerless. However, through partnership, education and a commitment to action, we can engage in opportunities that promote long-term change. By tapping into the UCA's overseas church partnerships, Uniting Churches in Australia have a unique opportunity to stand with those who are often impacted the most.

Participating in Development through Education & Partnership

UnitingWorld is able to facilitate a number of different ways for churches to build partnerships and play a part in overcoming injustice on a local level. Through UnitingWorld's on-line training, resources are available to help church communities as they grapple with and seek to understand the implications of partnership with one of our 35 overseas Partner Churches in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. With a focus on the philosophy and practice of good mission including development, we aim to build cultural sensitivity, global awareness and collaborative action.

Guest speakers including UnitingWorld staff or overseas visitors (when available), who work directly with partners and projects, can be arranged to speak at churches or other school community events.



"Partnership helps us become more visible in the global development radar"

Bena Seta- Program Manager, Port Morsby, PNG



"Relationship is everything. Ultimately, we achieve little if all we do is go, do and then leave without local participation and relationship."

Rob Floyd, Associate Director, Relief & Development





How UnitingWorld works

UnitingWorld Programs

Relief and Development

UnitingWorld is committed to good development practises that involve empowering local communities to utilise their strengths. Through recognition of Human Rights, UnitingWorld strives to facilitate an environment where local communities have access to facilities which enable skills development and creates opportunity while maintaining dignity. Relationship, partnership, respect and trust are all vital aspects of a good development approach. Many of UnitingWorld's Relief and Development Projects are initiated by our overseas partners and our role is to support these communities in doing what they know needs to be done in a way that is culturally relevant. This increases local ownership and supports the sustainability of the project outcome.

Experience

UnitingWorld Experience international volunteer placements are the ultimate learning opportunity. These placements provide suitably qualified participants with the opportunity to work alongside partner churches of the Uniting Church, in the Pacific, Asia and Africa. Placements can last for as little as four weeks to commitments spanning years. But each placement represents a unique opportunity to experience the deep connection between the Uniting Church in Australia, our international Church Partners and your own congregation.



Peacemaking

Our Peacemaking program, Young Ambassadors for Peace (YAP) strives to build a culture of peace and justice in communities in need of conflict resolution. YAP has centres in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Burma, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Each centre is supported by local staff who are passionate about growing peace in their communities, and are trained to run effective peace building workshops. YAP empowers people to create peace, resolve conflict and build friendships across barriers of tension and violence, paving the way for much needed development.

Church Solidarity

The Uniting Church in Australia has a long history of overseas partnerships through its Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational heritage. Some of these partnerships are over 100 years old and yet remain strong, active and authentic. They form 'a kind of international intimacy' between the Uniting Church communities in Australia and those of our partners. UnitingWorld advocates in Australia on behalf of our partners on the issues that effect them, transforming both their communities and ourselves in the process.





How you can connect

Good partnership will be evidenced by:

- Commitment - Trusted friends for the long term
- Mutual respect - Dedicated to valuing local culture and attitudes, to listening and learning and to supporting our overseas partners
- People with global radars – Aware and sensitive to global issues and the local implications, particularly as they affect our overseas partners
- Partnership – based in equality and reciprocal benefit
- Willingness– to give, receive, be challenged and changed

Connect

Through regular updates on UnitingWorld projects, partnering communities will have the opportunity to look more closely at specific UnitingWorld projects and examine the approaches taken. These updates may focus on area development, global issues, personal stories, country information, partner information, (this may include engaging with issues that relate to such as climate change, fair trade, HIV/AIDS, inter faith relationships etc), prayer points and project updates. By reflecting on the information provided in the updates your church community will be encouraged to commit to prayerfully supporting the partner and fundraising is encouraged as churches move from reflection on the issues to meaningful participation in change.

Communicate and Collaborate:

Should church communities wish to develop a deeper connection that allows for more personal interaction with partner communities, a specific, reciprocal partnership can be established.

Through the church partnership committee, church communities will be empowered to develop a greater understanding of good development practise and cross-cultural consideration allowing for participation at a deeper level of engagement. There are many opportunities for a rich and fulfilling learning experience through hosting leaders for a number of weeks or months, or sending an individual or group to work alongside their Church Partner.

In taking this journey, you will engage with your partner community in ways that are respectful and mutually rewarding, and will experience what it is to be a community connected globally in partnership in God's Mission. UnitingWorld envisages a time when every congregation, presbytery, school and body within the Uniting Church is so connected with communities overseas, that the whole church is known within Australia and partner countries for the quality and depth of its international life.

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