



**Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress  
Uniting Church in Australia  
UnitingCare Australia**

**30 August 2022**

**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**Uniting First Peoples Gathering reaffirms commitment to justice for First Peoples**

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First and Second Peoples from across the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC), the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA), and the UnitingCare Network have gathered on Turrbal and Jagera Land to reaffirm and recommit to lasting justice for First Peoples.

The First Peoples Gathering is a significant annual event in the life of the Uniting Church and brings to life its commitment to First Peoples.

The event was the first in-person Gathering since 2019, and was a significant occasion in which delegates could share stories, connect, and plan joint advocacy.

The Uniting Church in Australia has a deep and historical commitment to Covenanting, formally commencing with the recognition of the UAICC at the 4th Triennial Assembly in 1985.

The Covenant was renewed at the 16th Assembly earlier this year, led by UAICC Interim Chair Rev Mark Kickett and UCA President Rev Sharon Hollis. Through this Covenant, First Peoples' sovereignty is affirmed, First Peoples have a voice in the decision-making of the Church and are empowered to live out their right to self-determination.

Justice for First Peoples is a core strategic priority for UnitingCare Australia, the national body for the largest community services network nationally.

Over a two-day program delegates considered the intentions of Truth, Treaty, the Uluru Statement from the Heart, the Voice to Parliament, the campaign for a referendum and the relationship with the communities in which we live and work.

The meeting also explored ways to walk together as First and Second Peoples and mobilise our people to shape the historic movement for significant policy change.

At the Gathering, relationships were deepened, and memories made as the group ate, yarned, laughed and reflected on the important place First Nations peoples hold in this country.

The Gathering built strength as a collective and reaffirmed our commitment to stand up together towards self-determination for First Peoples.

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