



**WODEN VALLEY UNITING CHURCH**

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## CONTENTS

Chapter	Subject
1	Code of Conduct
2	Safe Church Policy
3	Privacy Policy
4	Guidelines for the Use of Photographs
5	Delegations
6	Approved Activities
7	Risk Assessment

## **CHAPTER 1. CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Introduction**

Woden Valley Uniting Church has adopted the UCA Code of Conduct in its entirety, as contained in the following paragraphs.

The Uniting Church in Australia is committed to providing safe places where people are cared for, nurtured and sustained. In order to fulfil this commitment, the church needs to have accountability and consistency, across Presbyteries and Synods, in all our services and activities.

A Code of Conduct is an important document for communicating the kinds of behaviours expected from people in the life of the Church. The existence of a Code of Conduct, when it is known and applied, gives confidence to the wider community and assists the witness of the Christian community. It is an instrument to raise awareness within the Church of what is expected and what kinds of behaviour it does not condone.

This Code of Conduct for Lay Leaders (Code of Conduct) outlines the behaviours expected of persons who participate in the life of the Uniting Church in Australia as leaders. It applies to all the Church's lay leaders, including but not exclusively Church Councillors, elders, worship leaders, chairs of committees, team / activity leaders. That is, any lay person who accepts a leadership role within a Congregation, Presbytery, Synod or Assembly. It does not apply to those holding paid positions as it is expected that employment contracts will bind employees to the organisation's code of conduct.

Lay leaders within a Congregation, Presbytery, Synod or Assembly should be recognised in that role through a short commissioning service, to be held within the normal worshipping life of that Council of the Church. This is so that everyone, including the leader, understands that they have formally taken on a leadership role and are subject to the discipline of this Code of Conduct.

Ministers of the Word, Deacons and lay people serving in an approved Ministry of Pastor role are bound by the national Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice for Ministers of the Uniting Church in Australia.

### **Leadership within the Church**

Lay leaders are called to minister out of a relationship with God by:

- joining regularly in the life and ministry of the Church
- studying the Scriptures in private and in groups
- praying regularly in private and in fellowship with and for the people and ministry of the Church

### **Conduct**

- treat all people of the Church, including those engaged in Church activities and programs, with respect, courtesy, honesty and fairness, and have proper regard for their interests, rights, safety and welfare.
- act according to the legislative requirements, policies and ethical codes that apply to

- their areas of leadership
- make decisions fairly, impartially and promptly, considering all available information, legislation, policies and procedures
- be aware of and careful not to abuse any social or professional power that comes with any personal attribute, or role or position held in the Church or professionally or in the community
- show others what healthy relationships look like by modelling them
- avoid behaviours that could be experienced as bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, spiritual abuse, sexual abuse or any kind of sexual misconduct
- be sensitive to the particular needs and vulnerability of children and young people.

### **Confidentiality**

- treat as confidential any personal or sensitive information acquired through their work or other involvement in the Church, other than as required by law or where proper authorisation is given.
- adhere to legal requirements, policies and all other lawful directives regarding the use of personal or sensitive information.
- use personal information only for the purpose stated or understood when the information is gathered.

### **Relationship with the Law**

- Obey Australian laws while recognising that the long standing Christian tradition of political resistance and civil disobedience may lead to exceptions.
- Not act violently or intentionally provoke violence when engaging in civil disobedience.
- Not take property belonging to others, including intellectual property (copyright).
- Not knowingly make false, misleading, deceptive or defamatory statements.
- Disclose to the Church leadership if they are or have been investigated for any criminal offences or have any knowledge of serious criminal activity.
- act with financial integrity, including having accountable and transparent systems in place in financial matters.
- be responsible in their use of addictive substances and services (for example, medications / alcohol).

### **Conflict of interest**

- ensure personal or financial interests do not conflict with Church related roles and responsibilities to be undertaken or in which a leader is involved.
- manage and declare any conflict between personal interests and Church duty.
- where conflicts of interest do arise, seek the support of the relevant Council (Congregation, Presbytery, Synod or Assembly) to ensure they are managed in the public interest, according to community standards of the highest order.

## **When the code is breached**

This code will only be effective if it is widely known and available throughout the Church, practised consistently and implemented justly. All lay leaders have a responsibility to ensure that personal behaviour and practices that are not consistent with this code are neither tolerated nor covered up.

- If there is knowledge or reason to believe that another lay leader of the Church has not followed this code, then that person should be approached and the concern identified.
- If the lay leader can be considered as persisting in disregarding the code without good reason and a person has suffered or is at risk of suffering harm, then the behaviour should be reported to the council of the Church with responsibility for the member.
- If in doubt, seek advice from a colleague or Minister

## CHAPTER 2. SAFE CHURCH POLICY

### PREAMBLE

#### **Protection of vulnerable people is our responsibility.**

This policy takes into consideration all vulnerable people in our churches without exception, whether they be children, young people, elderly, those with disabilities or the emotionally and/or spiritually vulnerable. Indeed, at any time any of us may become vulnerable.<sup>1</sup>

#### **As a Congregation we affirm that all people have the right to be emotionally and physically safe, respected and have their views and opinions always valued.**

We also live in a country that legislates for people's safety, particularly around child protection. Our policy has been developed to help us live out our Biblical mandate and our responsibilities under relevant legislation.

Our policy has the following goals:

- To minimise the risk of abuse, ministry misconduct and the misuse of positional power within the church.
- To ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and ministry misconduct are handled in a consistent, unbiased, and thorough manner.
- To ensure that leaders, programs and participants in our care are safe.
- To ensure that all people are respected and valued, irrespective of any categorization such as race, gender, age, country of origin, cultural heritage, socio-economic background, membership or ability.

#### **Leadership**

For the purposes of this policy, our 'leaders' are defined as all those in the Congregation who provide guidance or direction in any of our activities. This includes, but is not limited to, standing positions: our Minister, the Chair and members of Church Council, Pastoral Carers, Sunday School teachers, Worship Planning Team and Worship Leaders/Presiders and employees. Council will nominate individuals or positions requiring Safe Church Awareness Training and certification of WWVP.

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<sup>1</sup> Effective from April 2021 the ACT Crimes Act has been amended to include three offences relating to the abuse of vulnerable adults. See <https://justice.act.gov.au/vulnerablepeople>

## SAFE CHURCH LEADERSHIP

### 1. Safe recruitment and employment of leaders.

- a. All prospective ministry coordinators, team leaders and team members in our ministries are to be screened before they are appointed.
- b. All prospective volunteer leaders must have been members of Woden Valley Uniting Church for at least 6 months prior to appointment and have maintained reasonably regular church attendance during that time (at least monthly).
- c. All employees and leaders are to hold a valid ACT Working with Vulnerable People card.<sup>2</sup>
- d. All employees and leaders are to attend a Safe Church Awareness Training workshop within their first year of ministry/leadership role and attend a refresher workshop within every 3 years thereafter.<sup>3</sup>
- e. Should an employee or designated leader fail to complete a Refresher course within three years, they are to complete the initial Safe Church Training again to maintain accreditation and be authorised to engage in safe church ministries.
- f. Employees and leaders may be required by the Church Council to attend other appropriate ministry-specific training.

### 2. Continued supervision of leaders

- a. We will provide appropriate ongoing leadership training, supervision, and support for leaders.
- b. All employees and leaders will agree to operate within this policy and follow the Code of Conduct for Working with Vulnerable Persons.
- c. The Safe Church Officer will maintain a Register of all individuals who must meet training and WWVP certification requirements.

### 3. Responding to allegations of risk of harm (abuse) and serious ministry misconduct

- a. All employees and leaders will report to the relevant government authority disclosures or suspicions of child or vulnerable person abuse, according to relevant legislation and guidelines.
- b. Where an employee, leader or helper has an allegation of ministry misconduct made against them, the UCA processes will be followed.
- c. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the persons involved in any allegation within the context of the processes documented below.

If any member is in immediate danger, the Police are to be called on 000, and the person or persons at risk are to be removed or protected from the situation as far as is safely possible.

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<sup>2</sup> ACT Government, *Working with vulnerable people (WWVP) registration*, at <https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/s/article/working-with-vulnerable-people-wwvp-registration-tab-how-to-apply>

<sup>3</sup> The cost of attending Workshops approved by Council is to be met by WVUC.

## A SAFE CHURCH ENVIRONMENT

### 4. An emotionally safe environment

- a. We will offer all participants, including children, the opportunity to provide input into the programs and activities in which they participate by fostering and valuing their ideas and encouraging participation in all areas of the life of the church, as far as is safe, sensible, and practicable.
- b. We will seek appropriate information relating to program participants, including children's health and family situation, to ensure that we conduct programs that care for their physical and emotional needs.

### 5. A safe physical environment

- a. Council will appoint a Safe Church Team of 3-4 members including a Church Safety Officer to ensure that the following areas are incorporated into establishing and maintaining a safe physical environment:
  - physical risk assessment,
  - fire safety,
  - building safety,
  - first aid facilities/equipment,
  - food safety practices,
  - risk assessment for activities,
  - adequate ministry supervision for activities,
  - transport,
  - critical incident and emergency requirements.
- b. The Church Safety Officer is to complete a written review to Council annually at the last meeting prior to the AGM to include an annual audit (see Appendix 1).
- c. All members of the team are to have completed Safe Church Awareness Training and WHS training.

### 6. Reporting

#### a. Mandatory reporting

'Mandated' reporters in the ACT are those people who are required by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect to specified government authorities.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Under new laws from 1 September 2019 ministers of religion, religious leaders, and members of the clergy of a church or religious denomination will be mandated reporters. The laws have been introduced in response to recommendations made by the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*. See [https://www.act.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1397665/Mandatory-Reporting-Changes.pdf](https://www.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1397665/Mandatory-Reporting-Changes.pdf)

- i. Guidance on Mandatory Reporting is at <https://nswact.uca.org.au/media/9666/policy-mandatory-reporting-synod-nsw-and-act.pdf>.
- ii. When a mandatory report is to be made about a child or young person who is a member of the church community, it is Synod policy that the report be made through the Synod Safe Church Unit to the General Secretary of the Synod. The Synod will lodge a report on behalf of the church with Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) in the ACT. The **Mandatory Reporting** form is at <https://nswact.uca.org.au/safe-church-unit/mandatory-reporting-form/>
- iii. If the concern relates to children who are not members of the church community or activities, then the report should be made direct to CYPS.
- iv. In the ACT reporting on instances of suspected child sexual abuse is not restricted to mandated reporters; all adults have a legal obligation to report instances, and failure to make a report is an offence. <https://www.act.gov.au/childabuseroyalcommission/formalresponse/new-laws-to-improve-reporting-of-child-abuse>
- v. The steps to making a report via the Synod are as follows:
  - a) If reporting as a mandatory or mandated reporter and are not a ministry agent, speak to our ministry agent or Presbytery Minister in the first instance.
  - b) If the concerns involve the ministry agent, contact the General Secretary of the Synod of NSW and the ACT directly - Office Phone: 02 8267 4300 (Main switchboard)
  - c) Note that child protection concerns which relate to church leaders, workers and volunteers are to be reported.
  - d) Ministry agents will report the concern to the General Secretary via the Safe Church Unit as soon as practicable. Synod will lodge a report using the online portal in accordance with the procedure in NSW and the ACT and inform the mandatory/mandated reporter that this has taken place.
  - e) Any further instructions will be given by the relevant authority. This may include recommendations about support services. The Safe Church Unit will assist the mandatory/mandated reporter to continue to support the child or young person.
  - f) There may also be other reporting required, such as to Police. Details of the specific reporting requirements are found in the ACT Guidelines.

**b. Direct reporting.**

Mandatory reporters can report directly to the appropriate authorities, such as in cases where there are significant sensitivity or confidentiality concerns which mean the person is not

comfortable in reporting via the Synod. If such a direct report relates to a child in the church community, the reporter must inform the General Secretary of the report with its reference number.

### **c. Reporting Abuse of a Vulnerable Person**

If there is immediate danger, the Police are to be called on 000, and the person or persons at risk are to be removed or protected from the situation as far as is safely possible for all involved.

Complaints of abuse or neglect of a vulnerable person can be made to the **ACT Human Rights Commission** to help address concerns without involving police. For more information on this process visit the Commission's website:  
<https://hrc.act.gov.au/complaints/>.

Suspected or known instances of Elder Abuse can be referred to the ACT Older Persons Abuse Prevention Referral Line on 6205 3535

The **National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline** is a free, independent and confidential service for reporting abuse and neglect of people with disability. To make a report, contact the Hotline on 1800 880 052 or send an email to [hotline@workfocus.com](mailto:hotline@workfocus.com). More information can be found at <https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/complaints/hotline>.

### **d. Domestic Violence**

Suspected or known instances of domestic violence can be reported to the Domestic Violence Crisis Service's 24/7 crisis telephone line 02 6280 0900. If it isn't urgent another contact option is to email [crisis@dvcs.org.au](mailto:crisis@dvcs.org.au) but note that this email is only monitored during business hours.

## **7. Support for Mandatory Reporters.**

Mandatory reporters are encouraged to seek support for vicarious trauma which may arise out of dealing with child protection concerns. Support can be provided by the Synod Employee Assistance Program or further guidance can be given by the Synod Safe Church Unit.

## **8. Speaking Out.**

The Synod of NSW & ACT provides a program for reporting complaints called 'Speaking Out' administrated by Core Integrity. Core Integrity's Hotline platform provides a safe, simple, and secure platform to report a wide range of issues either confidentially or anonymously. All reports are treated in the strictest of confidence. Contact details are:

- a. Independent and confidential hotline: 1800 951 145
- b. Independent online Speak Out [website](#).

This Policy was adopted by the Woden Valley Uniting Church Council on xx xxxx 2021.

## References:

Uniting Church of Australia, Synod of NSW and ACT, *Update Safe Church Awareness Training* dated Monday 23 August 2021

Safe Church Unit, Uniting Church of Australia, Synod of NSW and ACT, at <https://nswact.uca.org.au/safe-church-unit/>

Mandatory Reporting Policy, Synod NSW and the ACT at <https://nswact.uca.org.au/media/9666/policy-mandatory-reporting-synod-nsw-and-act.pdf>

ACT Government, *Working with vulnerable people (WWVP) registration*, at <https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/s/article/working-with-vulnerable-people-wwvp-registration-tab-how-to-apply>

Changes to Mandatory Reporting Factsheet at [https://www.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1397665/Mandatory-Reporting-Changes.pdf](https://www.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1397665/Mandatory-Reporting-Changes.pdf)

ACT Integrity Commission, *Mandatory Reporting*, at <https://www.integrity.act.gov.au/reporting-to-the-commission/mandatory-reporting>

ACT Human Rights Commission at <https://hrc.act.gov.au/complaints/>.

Uniting Church in Australia Speak Out Integrity Hotline at <https://www.clearviewconnects.com/#/reporter/submit-report?org=unitingchurchinaustralia&lang=en&vanity=true>

WODEN VALLEY UNITING CHURCH  
SAFE CHURCH AUDIT FORM

Date of Audit:

Category	Specific Type	Issue	Current Situation/Items	Action Required	Code
Policies	Safe Church	Currency and coverage.		Council to endorse. Publish.	
	COVID	Currency and coverage.		Council to endorse. Publish.	
	Code of Conduct	Currency and coverage.		Council to endorse. Publish.	
	Privacy	Currency and coverage.		Council to endorse. Publish.	
<b>Risks</b>	General physical safety	Identification and of Risks.		Council to review risk assessment. Removal or reduction of risks.	
<b>Specific Risks</b>	Physical Risks	Worship		Review and implement any improvements.	
		Building(s)		Property Management Team to review.	
		Grounds		Property Management Team to review.	
	Risk relating to Groups/Participants/Leaders	Children		Council to review requirement for risk assessment.	
		Elders and pastoral care		Council to review requirement for risk assessment.	
		Activities		Council to review requirement for risk assessment.	
		Welcomers		Council to review requirement for risk assessment.	
		Preachers/Worship Leaders		Council to review requirement for risk assessment.	

		Activity/Group Leaders		Council to review requirement for risk assessment.	
<b>Oversight/ Compliance</b>	Registers	WWVP Registration		All leaders are to obtain WWVP. A list of leaders is to be created.	
		Safe Church Training		All leaders are to complete Safe Church awareness training, including refresher if applicable.	
		First aid qualifications		Review members who hold qualification and consider sponsoring attendance at training.	

### Code Legend

<b>Urgent</b>	
<b>Requires Prompt Attention</b>	
<b>Requires Review and remediation</b>	
<b>Adequate or Satisfactory</b>	

## CHAPTER 3. PRIVACY POLICY

Woden Valley Uniting Church (WVUC) is covered by the Privacy Policy of the Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of NSW and the ACT (“Synod”).<sup>1</sup> That Policy has been adapted below to specifically relate to Woden Valley Uniting Church.

**Woden Valley Uniting Church is committed to protecting the privacy and the rights of individuals in relation to their personal information.**

Woden Valley Uniting Church respects the rights of its members and visitors to privacy under the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (Act) as amended, and we commit to complying with all of the Act’s requirements in respect to the collection, management and disclosure of personal information.

### 1. What is your personal information?

When used in this privacy policy, the term “personal information” has the meaning given to it in the Act. In general terms, it is any information that can be used to personally identify you. This may include your name, address, telephone number, email address and profession or occupation. If the information we collect personally identifies you, or you are reasonably identifiable from it, the information will be considered personal information.

### 2. What personal information do we collect and hold?

We may collect the following types of personal information:

- name;
- mailing or street address;
- email address;
- telephone number;
- facsimile number;
- age or birth date;
- any additional information relating to you that you provide to us directly through our websites or indirectly through use of our websites or online presence, through our representatives or otherwise;
- information you provide to us through our activities and services, surveys or visits by our representatives from time to time.<sup>2</sup>

We also collect and hold the Baptism, Membership and Marriage Rolls of the Congregation.

- These three volumes are usually held by the Minister; between Ministerial appointments, those Rolls are held by one of the Carers.

Some other information we collect is not personal information because it does not identify you or anyone else. Examples: anonymous answers to surveys, aggregated information e.g. how users use our website.

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<sup>1</sup> See Privacy Policy of the Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of NSW and the ACT at <https://nswact.uca.org.au/media/1915/privacy-policy-march2014.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> A representative of WVUC is an individual specifically authorized by the Minister or Council, or holding an elected position relevant to the nature of any contact with you.

### **3. How do we collect your personal information?**

We collect your personal information directly from you unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so. It may be collected:

- during conversations and via correspondence between you and our representatives;
- when you participate in Church activities;
- when you volunteer your services and assistance; or
- when you complete a survey or donate.

The information we collect may include some sensitive information (as defined in the Privacy Act), e.g. health information, information about your beliefs or information that is relevant to the services or assistance you receive from the Church.

### **4. Anonymity**

We will generally provide you with the option of not identifying yourself when contacting us, participating in activities, or obtaining services or assistance from us, unless we are authorised by law not to do so or it is impracticable for us to deal with individuals who have not identified themselves or have used a pseudonym (in such circumstances we will only obtain as much personal information as is necessary to provide you with the service or assistance you require).

### **5. What happens if we can't collect your personal information?**

If you do not provide us with the personal information described above, some or all of the following may happen:

- we may not be able to provide the requested activities or services to you, either to the same standard or at all;
- we may not be able to provide you with information about activities and services that you may want; or
- we may not be able to contact you in relation to the various activities we undertake and services we provide.

### **6. For what purposes do we collect, hold, use and disclose your personal information?**

We collect personal information about you so that we can perform our activities and functions and to provide best possible quality of service.

We collect, hold, use and disclose your personal information for the following purposes:

- to provide services to you and to send communications requested by you;
- to arrange the various activities of the Church;
- to answer enquiries and provide information or advice about existing and new services;
- for the administrative, planning, and research purposes of WVUC;
- to update our records and keep your personal information and contact details up to date;
- to establish and maintain your involvement with WVUC;
- to answer your enquiries;
- to process and respond to any complaint made by you; and

- to comply with any law, rule, regulation, lawful and binding determination, decision or direction of a regulator, or in co-operation with any governmental authority of any country (or political sub-division of a country).

Your personal contact details as provided for the purpose will be included in the WVUC Directory with your permission.

- The Directory will not be made publicly available electronically.

Your personal information will not be shared, sold, rented or disclosed by us other than as described in this Privacy Policy.

- Should we be asked for your contact details we will refer the request to you for response.

## **7. To whom may we disclose your information?**

We may disclose your personal information to:

- our Minister, and other appointments on WVUC Council or Pastoral Carers on a case by case basis, subject to any restrictions imposed by you, when required to provide care or other services to you;
- any organisation for any authorised purpose with your express consent
- a government agency if requested and we are legally obliged to do so.

## **8. Direct marketing materials**

We do not provide your personal information to other organisations for the purposes of direct marketing.

## **9. Use of Government identifiers**

We will not collect Commonwealth government identifiers, such as Medicare numbers or your driver's licence numbers, as its own identifier of individuals.

- We will record your WWVP details on our Register if you are required to hold this card.
- We will not provide this information to anyone not authorised to receive it.

## **10. How can you access and correct your personal information?**

You may request access to any personal information we hold about you at any time by contacting us (see the details below).

Where we hold information that you are entitled to access, we will try to provide you with suitable means of accessing it (for example, by mailing or emailing it to you). Depending on the nature of the request, we may ask you to verify your identity or to put your request in writing.

There may be instances where we cannot grant you access to the personal information we hold, for example, if granting access would interfere with the privacy of others or would result in a breach of confidentiality. In such instances we will give you written reasons for any refusal.

If you believe that personal information we hold about you is incorrect, incomplete or inaccurate, then you may request us to amend it by contacting us via the contact details below. We will consider if the information requires amendment. If we do not agree that there are grounds for amendment then we will add a note to the personal information stating that you disagree with it.

#### **11. What is the process for complaining about a breach of privacy?**

If you believe that your privacy has been breached or your personal information has been mishandled by us, please contact our Privacy Officer (details below) and provide, preferably in writing, a brief description of the matter and why you think we have mishandled your personal information (what happened, when, and any consequences) and what you would like us to do about it.

We will inform you whether we will conduct an investigation, the name, and contact details of the investigating officer and the estimated completion date for the investigation process.

We will contact you, usually in writing, after we have completed our enquiries, to advise the outcome and offer you the opportunity to respond. If we receive a response from you, we will assess it and advise if we have changed our view. If you are unsatisfied with the outcome, we will advise you about further options, such as lodging a complaint with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

#### **12. Do we disclose your personal information to anyone outside Australia?**

We do not disclose personal information to overseas recipients.

#### **13. Photographs**

Privacy Guidelines for the taking and use of photographs have been implemented to ensure, as much as possible, that photographs are protected from misuse. Key points are:

- Any member may require that photographs including them not be used.
- General photographs taken at WVUC events/activities (including Services of any kind) may only be used in or on any public medium not controlled by WVUC with the written permission of all persons or their Responsible Person.
- Photographs taken at public events, such as marches that include members in general pictures, can be displayed on WVUC platforms, (as they might be by the general media) but will be removed if the subject requests.
- General photographs may be used on the WVUC bulletin boards for display during events/activities, but must be taken down or secured at the end of the activity.
- Where children are to be shown in photographs, the applicable Parent/Responsible Person should be advised that the photographs are to be displayed.

#### **14. Security**

We take reasonable steps to ensure your personal information is protected from misuse and loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. We may hold your information in either electronic or hard copy form. Personal information is destroyed or de-identified when no longer needed.

As the internet is inherently insecure, we cannot provide any assurance regarding the security of transmission of information you communicate to us online. In particular we cannot guarantee that the information you supply will not be intercepted while being transmitted over the internet. Accordingly, any personal information or other information which you transmit to us online is transmitted at your own risk.

## **15. Links**

Our website may contain links to other websites operated by third parties. We make no representations or warranties in relation to the privacy practices of any third-party website and we are not responsible for the privacy policies or the content of any third party website. Third party websites are responsible for informing you about their own privacy practices.

## **16. Contacting us**

If you have any questions about this privacy policy, any concerns or a complaint regarding the treatment of your privacy or a possible breach of your privacy, please use the contact link on our website or contact our Privacy Officer using the details set out below.

We will treat your requests or complaints confidentially. Our representative will contact you within a reasonable time after receipt of your complaint to discuss your concerns and outline options regarding how they may be resolved. We will aim to ensure that your complaint is resolved in timely and appropriate manner.

## **17. Changes to our privacy policy**

We may change this privacy policy from time to time. Any updated versions of this privacy policy will be posted on our website.

If you have any questions about this Policy, the Privacy Officers for Woden Valley Uniting Church are as follows:

### **David Cran**

Telephone: 0437 869 621  
Email: [david.cran1950@gmail.com](mailto:david.cran1950@gmail.com)

### **John Robbins**

Telephone: 62814715  
email: [meljonby@gmail.com](mailto:meljonby@gmail.com)

The Synod Privacy Officer can be contacted as follows:

Tel: 02 8267 4300  
Email: [privacyofficer@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:privacyofficer@nswact.uca.org.au)  
By mail: PO Box A2178, Sydney South NSW 1235

## CHAPTER 4. PRIVACY GUIDELINES – PHOTOGRAPHS

### Introduction

The privacy of the members of Woden Valley Uniting Church, as well as any of our visitors or guests, is a key component of our care. Particular care must be applied to safeguard our children.

The guidelines in this document are intended to ensure, as much as possible, that personal information, including photographs, is protected from misuse.

### Guidelines

#### General Veto

Any member may require that photographs including them or any person for whom they are responsible not be used publicly.

- This requirement may include exceptions or bounds (such as permission for use in INFO but not a website);
- This requirement should be advised to the Privacy Officer, who will record all requests;
- Parents/Guardians/Carers (hereafter ‘Responsible Person’) may exercise this option on behalf of their charges.

#### Public Sites

General photographs taken at WVUC events/activities (including Services of any kind) may only be used in or on any public medium not controlled by WVUC with the written permission of all persons or their Responsible Person.

- Examples of public sites are websites, social media such as Facebook, magazines and newsletters (but not including Service broadcasts, INFO or the WVUC website);
- This guideline does not apply to photographs that are provided by individuals acting in a private capacity;
- Written permissions are to be retained by the Privacy Officer;
- Persons shown in photographs will not be named, unless this is necessary for the purpose.
  - The authority to use a person’s name against a photograph is to be specifically included in the written permission.

#### WVUC Bulletin/Notice Boards

General photographs may be used on the WVUC bulletin/notice boards for display during events/activities, unless containing images of individuals who have specifically requested that images of them not be used.

- As a courtesy, wherever possible adult persons shown in photographs should be advised that the photographs are to be displayed.

Where children are to be shown in photographs, the applicable Responsible Person, should be advised that the photographs are to be displayed.

- A Responsible Person may request that particular photographs not be displayed.

## **General photographs in newsletters or INFO**

Where children are to be shown in photographs in newsletters or INFO, the applicable Responsible Person should be advised that the photographs are to be displayed.

- A Responsible Person may request that particular photographs not be used.

As a courtesy, wherever possible persons shown in photographs should be advised that the photographs are to be displayed.

- A general agreement with specific terms may be advised by those individuals who are likely to feature regularly (for example, the Minister or Children's activities organisers);
- A general agreement with limitations may be obtained for those individuals who wish to remain private (for example, an individual may permit a photograph but with the proviso that name are not to be used at any time)

Photographs supplied to newsletters or INFO will have implied consent only for the individual (and/or family) providing the photographs, unless accompanied by either specific approval or general consent from any other person(s) included in the photographs.

- A member or Responsible Person may request that photographs are not displayed.

**CONSENT OR CONSTRAINTS FOR THE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS**

**Name:**

**Relationship** (please circle): Self Parent Guardian Carer Other (please state)

Please fill in and sign one of the boxes below

I do not wish photographs that include (name)  
to be used in any form.

Signed:

Date:

Or

I hereby consent for photographs of (name)  
to be used for the following purposes:

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> WVUC Bulletin/Notice Boards | <input type="checkbox"/> With Name |
| <input type="checkbox"/> INFO                        | <input type="checkbox"/> With Name |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WVUC Website                | <input type="checkbox"/> With Name |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WVUC Facebook page          | <input type="checkbox"/> With Name |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Public sites          | <input type="checkbox"/> With Name |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)        | <input type="checkbox"/> With Name |

The following restrictions or limitations apply:

Signed:

Date:

## CHAPTER 5. DELEGATIONS

**Notes:**

Approvals are to be authorised by Council. These Delegations were authorised on 14 October 2021.

All expenditure authorised by a delegate/counter signer is to be advised to the Treasurer and presented to the next Council meeting for endorsement.

Item	Activity	Approval Limit	Approver	Countersign/second approval	Remarks
Manses and Curtin buildings	Urgent Safety, Security or Liveability.	Unlimited within budget	Council Chair, Secretary, Treasurer or full Property Committee.	No countersign required. Advice to Council as soon as practicable. <u>Treasurer's advice to be sought where possible.</u>	Includes items such as, but not limited to, loss of power, water or sewage, loss of key facilities such as refrigerator or oven/stove, damage to structure.
	Repairs of a non-urgent nature.	\$5,000 per incident	Council Chair, Secretary, Treasurer or full Property Committee.	Treasurer.	Items such as torn curtains, damaged floor coverings, fallen trees not causing danger. Within budget limits.
	Upgrade/renovations.	Within budget	Council.		Items to be presented to Council with three quotes for work.
Emergency personal care	Urgent practical and personal assistance.	\$1,000	Minister or one Carer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minister does not require second approval.</li> <li>• Carer requires approval from Minister, Chair, Secretary or Treasurer.</li> </ul>	<u>Exec to be informed as soon as practicable.</u>
Wider Work	Annual contributions.	Within budget.	Congregation.		Amount available to be confirmed by Council prior to presentation to Congregational Meeting for approval.

Item	Activity	Approval Limit	Approver	Countersign/second approval	Remarks
	Support for fundraising activities.	\$500 per activity.	Council Chair, Secretary or Treasurer.	One other member of council.	Sponsoring for fundraising activities (craft, knitting, cakes) which may return a monetary profit, but this is not a prerequisite. The social/community returns on such an expenditure must also be factored in.
Worship	Essential articles for worship.	Within budget.	Any member of council.	None.	This item would include communion wine, bread, candles etc. Provision to be included in Annual Budget. Spending over budgeted amount to be reviewed by Council. Treasurer/Asst Treasurer to be advised.
Community	Morning Tea.	Within budget.	Any member of council.	None.	Cost of consumables. Provision to be included in Annual Budget. Treasurer/Asst Treasurer to be advised.
	Lunches/Dinners.	Within budget.	Council.		Provision to be included in Annual Budget.
	Special events	Up to \$500.	Council.		Proposal to be considered by Council.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Approval Limit</b>	<b>Approver</b>	<b>Countersign/second approval</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
	Illness or death of a member or family of a member.	\$500.	Minister, Council Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Carers Representative.	One other member of Council.	For items such as flowers etc.
	Carols Under the Stars, Carols on the Block.	\$2,000.	Council Chair Secretary or Treasurer.	To be put to Council at first opportunity.	Expenses for sound, lighting, printing. Items would normally be included in budget.
General	Administration.	Within approved budget and according to approved procedures, particularly for Credit Card.	Council Chair, Secretary or Treasurer.	Expenditure to be noted in next Treasurer's Report to Council.	Items specifically included in approved budget, such as stipend, insurance, rental, post office box, consumables (printing, photocopying etc).

## CHAPTER 6. APPROVED ACTIVITIES

Note: Approvals are to be authorised by Council. These activities were authorised on 14 October 2021.

- Regular worship services conducted by the congregation, and others as authorised by the Church Council or Minister including Memorial or Funeral Services. This includes, but is not limited to, gatherings/attendance at Goodwin Village for Worship Services, technical support, pastoral care and related activities.
- Any activity of the congregation following Church services, including but not limited to morning tea, lunches, and meetings such as Congregational Meetings, AGM, committees or ad hoc planning meetings.
- Meetings, including but not limited to meetings for coordination and preparation, of Council or Council committees /sub-committees and planning groups such as, but not limited to, worship planning, mission planning and social justice (irrespective of the current name of the group)
- Sunday School, including but not limited to, meetings to coordinate and prepare for activities, and any additional activities approved by Council.
- Music, including but not limited to, meetings to prepare and rehearse at any location.
- Carers including but not limited to, coordination meetings, visits to members and any other activities associated with pastoral care.
- Hospitality, Community and Social Inclusion, including but not limited to, morning teas after worship services, group meals provided for sharing and hospitality.
- Social Justice, including but not limited to, meetings to discuss programs and activities, and participation as representatives of WVUC in marches, gatherings or meetings approved by Council.
- Hospital Chapel, including but not limited to, preparation, conduct and attendance at Chapel Services.
- Chaplaincy and Pastoral Support to Alexander Maconochie Centre including, but not limited to, training and preparation, conduct and attendance at pastoral care and ministry activities.
- Meditation on Sunday evenings.
- Gathering@6.
- Craft Group.
- Phoenix Knitters.
- Christmas Cakes, including but not limited to, preparation, cooking and sale activities.
- Carols Under the Stars and Carols on the Block, including but not limited to, preparation, set up, participation (as singers and as support staff) and put away.
- Communications and Set-up/Put Away at Curtin and Pearce, including but not limited to, all activities necessary to create a worship space and to refurbish after the conclusion of services and any social activities, Including the organisation and management of technology to enable worship and other activities to be recorded, broadcast or amplified at any location.
- Attendance and participation in the following meetings and associated activities:
  - Presbytery
  - Training courses approved Synod and Presbytery (for example, Lay Presiders, Safe Church)
- Other activities authorised by the Church Council.

## CHAPTER 7. PHYSICAL RISK ASSESSMENT

Developed August 2021.

### Introduction

Terrorism related events within Australia and overseas, plus the national alert level, indicate that an ongoing assessment of physical risks to the community of Woden Valley Uniting Church is sensible.

### External Risk Assessments

#### ASIO risk Level.<sup>1</sup>



As at 12 December 2018, the national terrorism threat level for Australia was assessed as **PROBABLE** — credible intelligence, assessed to represent a plausible scenario, indicates that individuals or groups have developed both an intention and capability to conduct a terrorist attack in Australia.

**ACT Government Warnings.** There does not appear to be a separate terrorism alert level specifically for the ACT.<sup>2</sup>

**Presbytery Assessments.** The Presbytery of Canberra and Region has been asked for advice of any assessment that they have undertaken regarding the risk to the Uniting Church.

#### Risk Environment in Canberra

**Canberra Islamic Centre Monash.** The Islamic Centre was vandalised twice in April 2014, and previously about 8 years before. These attacks occurred after hours and appeared to target objects rather than people. They were focussed on the Islamic faith.

**Australian Christian Lobby.** The Australian Christian Lobby was damaged in December 2016 by explosion of a carload of gas cylinders outside the Eternity House building in Deakin. The Australian Federal Police state that the man involved in the incident had been trying to kill himself and not targeting the activist group.

**2017 Queanbeyan stabbing attacks.** On 7 April 2017, two teenage boys entered a service station in the small town of Queanbeyan in NSW and stabbed to death a 29-year old man Pakistani decent and Zeeshan. Three other men were also attacked and injured at the scene. The mother of one of the boys told police that she believed that her son had been radicalised in recent weeks and that he sympathised with Islamic State and had also posted concerning posts on Facebook.

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/securityandyourcommunity/pages/national-terrorism-threat-advisory-system.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.police.act.gov.au/safety-and-security/national-security>

**Summary.** There have been no recent serious incidents that indicate a threat to WVUC recently. Previous incidents have been isolated, spread over a long period, and there does not appear to be a connection between any of them. Christian places of worship have not been specifically targeted. There do not appear to have been any public reports of a worrying level of radicalisation in this region.

**Risk Factor:** **Low.**

#### **Risk Factors to WVUC at Curtin.**

**Visibility.** WVUC is clearly identified as a Christian congregation. It is publicised in the following ways:

- It is in listings of Congregations on the Canberra Region Presbytery website;<sup>9</sup>
- It has its own website that lists location and times of worship;<sup>10</sup>
- It has permanent signs;
- It advertises at the main religious events (Easter and Christmas) in the local media;
- It advertises in the media (radio and print) and by pamphlet drop for the Carols under the Stars (Pearce) and Carols on the Block (Curtin) events.

**Assessment.** WVUC is one of many Christian or other religious groups in Canberra, and is one of three in its immediate area (the others being Holy Trinity Catholic Church and Good Shepherd Anglican Church, the latter being a co-occupant of the Gillies Street location). All three churches have identifiable, sign-posted buildings.

**Risk Factor:** **Low.**

**Location.** The suburb of Curtin is quiet, and although the hall faces onto Caruthers Street which is a busy through access route, it is not an obvious or prominent target of itself.

**Risk Factor:** **Low.**

**Manse.** The Curtin manse is located away from the place of worship and is not identified as the residence of the Minister.

**Risk Factor:** **Low.**

**Building used for Worship.** There is a higher risk at times of worship because security measures are not in place after hours and there is no permanent security on site. There are no security cameras.

**Risk Factor:** **Low-Medium.**

**Vehicle Access.** Vehicle access is relatively easy off Gillies Street but is somewhat restricted on Sundays due to the Good Shepherd Anglican Church conducting their Services at the same time. There is vehicle access close to the main entrance to the building from Gillies Street. A vehicle

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<sup>9</sup> <https://canberra.uca.org.au/find-a-church/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://southwoden.wordpress.com> (site soon to be removed) and <https://woden-valley.uca.org.au>

could gain speed through the car park leading to the main entrance of the building, but would not easily access the building. A vehicle from Caruthers Street could mount a curb, then avoid the low brick wall to hit the facing wall. A vehicle with any sort of explosive device or materials on board could gain close access by either means to the worship area.

**Risk Factor: Low.**

**Entrances.** There is one main entrance to the building (Number 1 on the diagram at Attachment 1) and another via an unlocked side gate (Number 2) allowing access to the courtyard and meeting rooms (Numbers 3, 4 & 5), the Minister's Office (Number 6) and the kitchen (Number 7) as well as the main hall (Number 8). There is an emergency exit at the rear of the hall (Number 9). None of the entrances offer any security to prevent access, except Number 9. Most entrances are unlocked during our use of the building.

**Risk Factor: Low - Medium.**

**Exits.** There are three exits off the main hall used for worship. One is an emergency exit – Number 9. The other two exits are also entrances – Numbers 1 & 8. Neither of these entrances offer any security to prevent access.

**Risk Factor: Low.**

**Secure Areas.** There is no lockable secure area (Safe Haven) available should there be a need to lock down. There is currently has no way of preventing determined entry from intruders into the main hall and/or meeting rooms and kitchen.

**Risk Factor: Medium.**

**The Congregation.** The average age of the Congregation is over 70 years.<sup>11</sup> Some members have restricted mobility.

**Risk Factor: Medium.**

### **Other Factors**

**Communications.** There are fire alarms that would be automatically activated in the event of a fire or related incident, and could be activated in the event of an emergency. There is no other alarm system, nor a landline telephone. Many members of the Congregation carry mobile phones.

**First Aid.** A comprehensive First Aid kit is kept in the kitchen, and is available to WVUC members when the hall is in use.

There is not an accessible Automatic External Defibrillator (AED).

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<sup>11</sup> For example see <http://reports.2016ncls.org.au/profile/ChurchLifeProfile/TD6L2L/> for the former SWUC's profile in 2016. The average age then for that Congregation was 72.

## Assessment of Risk

Although there are inherent risk factors, the overall risk of WVUC being specifically targeted is assessed as **LOW**.

Factor		Low	L-M	Med	M-H	High
Environment		L				
Visibility		L				
Location		L				
Manse		L				
Building			LM			
Vehicle Access		L				
Entrances			L-M			
Exits		L				
Secure Areas				M		
Congregation				M		
<b>Overall</b>		<b>L</b>				
Communications						
First Aid						

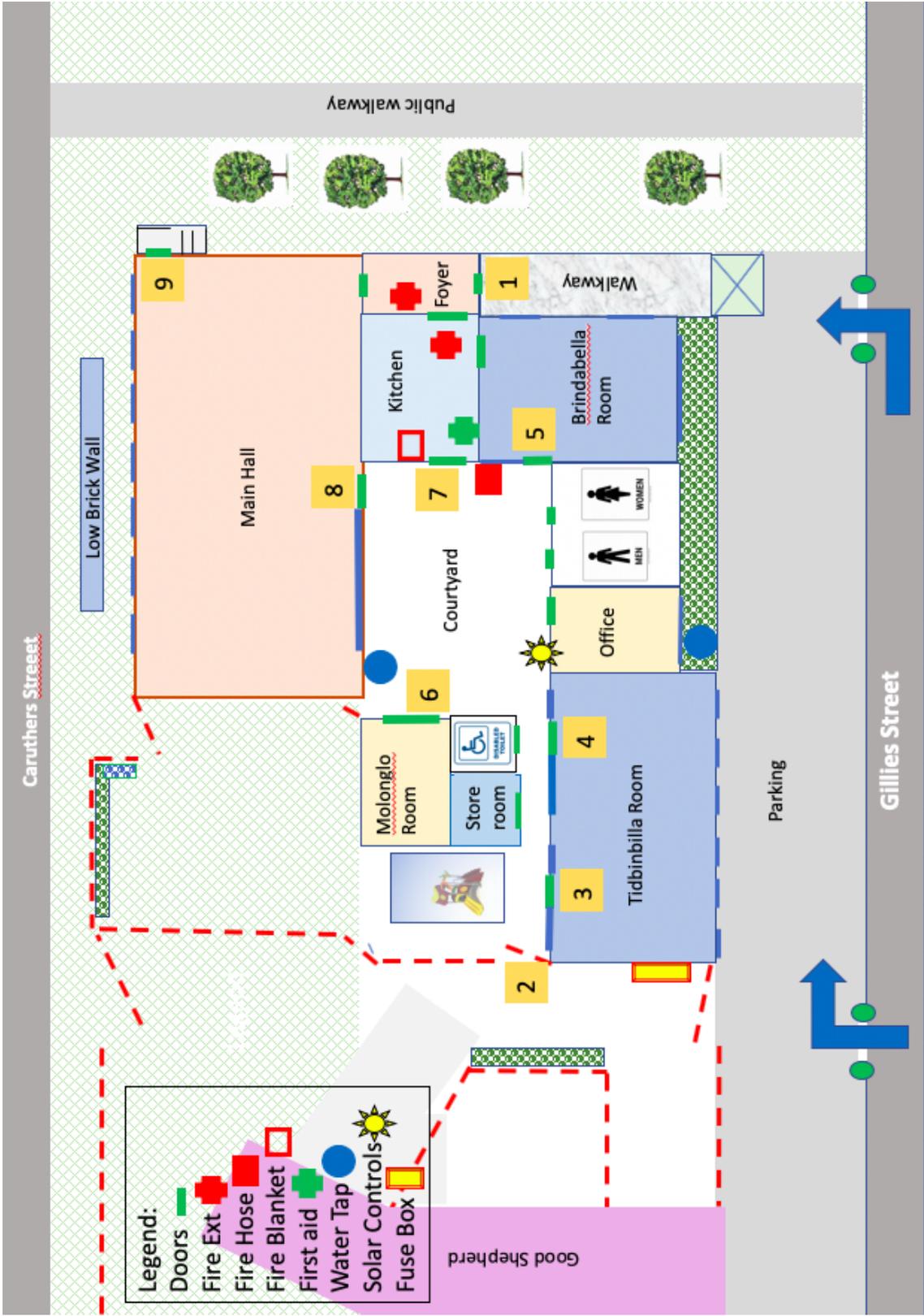
## Mitigation Strategies

The following actions should be taken routinely to mitigate any risks:

- First arrivals undertake visual check for evidence of irregular access;
- Regular reminders of actions to be taken in the event of an emergency (See Attachment 2).
- Regularly review risks as indicated by changes to official risk level.
- Undertake annual Safe Church audit (see Attachment 3).

CURTIN

Diagram not to scale



## **EMERGENCY BRIEF**

**In any emergency, the priority is the safety of our people.**

You should know:

- Location of the exits
- Placement of extinguisher, hose reel and fire blankets
- Emergency evacuation point

And - where is the First Aid kit?

The priority is: **RACE**

**R**emove people in danger

**A**lert - raise the alarm (000)

**C**onfine the fire – if you can safely

**E**vacuate safely

Ring 000 even if an alarm is activated; and

**Evacuate** even if you think it's a false alarm

If trying to extinguish a fire - 1 fire extinguisher used is a small fire: anything more is a major fire – **get out**.

Smoke is the greatest danger (and it will contain noxious gases):

- it can be as hot or hotter than fire

A higher ceiling gives more time to evacuate as smoke will rise:

- get close to the ground and **get out**

**WODEN VALLEY UNITING CHURCH  
SAFE CHURCH AUDIT**

Date of Audit: 14 October 2021

Category	Specific Type	Issue	Current Situation	Action Required	
<b>Guidance</b>	Safe Church Policy	Currency and coverage.	Policy drafted	Requires review and approval by council.	
	Code of Conduct	Currency and coverage.	Policy drafted	Requires review and approval by council.	
	Privacy	Currency and coverage.	Policy drafted	Requires immediate review and approval by council	
<b>Risks</b>	General physical safety	Identification and removal or reduction of Risks.	Partial identification and remediation.	Review of all physical risks required and identified risks to be recorded.	
<b>Specific Risks</b>	COVID		Draft COVID Plan and instructions	Comply with ACT Govt and UCA guidelines or directives.	
	Physical Risks	Set up & put away of heavy items		Review to identify better solution.	
		Injury/Accident		Ensure First Aid Kit at Curtin. Check AED Curtin & Pearce.	
		Serious illness/accident	Some members First Aid or medically trained.	Sponsor attendance at courses.	
	Risk relating to Groups/Participants/Leaders	WWVP Registration	Requirement put in place and advised to Congregation.	Review and list all positions that must have WWVP registration	
		Children	Draft Policy.	Photographs policy requires review and approval by council. Review requirement for specific	

				policy for children/Sunday School.	
		Elders and pastoral care	No specific policy	Review requirement for specific policy.	
		Activities	No specific policy. Activities to be endorsed at AGM	Review requirement for specific policy.	
		Welcomers	No specific policy	Review requirement for specific policy.	
		Preachers/Worship Leaders	No specific policy	Review requirement for specific policy.	
		Activity Group Leaders	No specific policy	Review requirement for specific policy.	
<b>Oversight</b>	Registers	WWVP		Register to be updated.	
		First aid qualifications		Register to be updated.	
		Safe Church Training		Register to be raised.	
	Audit	Routine regular auditing		Report semi-annually to Council	

### Legend

<b>Urgent</b>	
<b>Requires Prompt Attention</b>	
<b>Requires Review and remediation</b>	
<b>Adequate or Satisfactory</b>	