The Uniting Church in Australia
Synod of South Australia

Uniting Church in SA

Synod of South Australia

Congregational Website Style Guide

LAST UPDATED: 19 March 2020

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Introduction

A fresh, vibrant and innovative visual identity is essential to building the future of Uniting Church in South Australia. An inviting image reflects a positive and welcoming appearance for the Uniting Church SA, making people more likely to frequent church and engage with the church community. The look and visual identity of the Uniting Church SA is expressed not only through its logo and signage, but in the online presence (websites, social media and other online communications) of its individual parts – including ministry centres, congregations and faith communities.

The Congregational Website Program aims to unify congregations' web presence through a consistent look and feel – while ensuring websites are innovative, easy to use and provide an accurate reflection of the Uniting Church SA. This style guide has been created to assist congregations in establishing websites that are clearly a part of the wider Uniting Church SA, while also expressing their individuality.

Contained in this document are helpful tips and guidelines for adding content and images to your congregational website. It is essential that all congregational websites hosted by Uniting Church SA within the Congregational Website Program, adhere to the style guidelines and standards outlined in this guide.

This style guide is best read in conjunction with the Uniting Church in Australia guidelines for the use of the Uniting Church logo. These guidelines are available through the Uniting Church SA Communications team, or via the [Assembly website](#).

If you have any questions regarding any of the information presented in this guide, please contact the Congregational Website Team on (08) 8236 4260 or email congregationalweb@sa.uca.org.au.

Template & CSS

The congregational website template was designed by the Uniting Church SA Graphic and Digital Designer. The technical elements of the website have been developed by a local, external contractor (Edynam) utilising the WordPress web platform.

Each congregational website, including its domain, email accounts and pages are initially set-up by the Congregational Website team. Once the initial content has been supplied by the congregation, the Congregational Website team add the content to the site. The congregation's website administrator/s will be provided access to the website as 'Content Editor/s'.

The design of the congregational website, provides each congregation with an option to express their own individuality, while maintaining a look and feel consistent with the overall Uniting Church SA. The website contains minimal text and plugins, to ensure the site is free of 'clutter'. The website structure allows for a variety of exciting elements and features to be added to the website, catering for the varying needs of different congregations. Congregations participating in the program may not alter the structural formatting of their websites; however, if a required feature is not included in the structure or design, congregations can submit a written request to the Congregational Website team.

Layout 1: Home Page

This sample has been taken from the pilot website created for Playford Uniting Church. It includes the following features and elements:
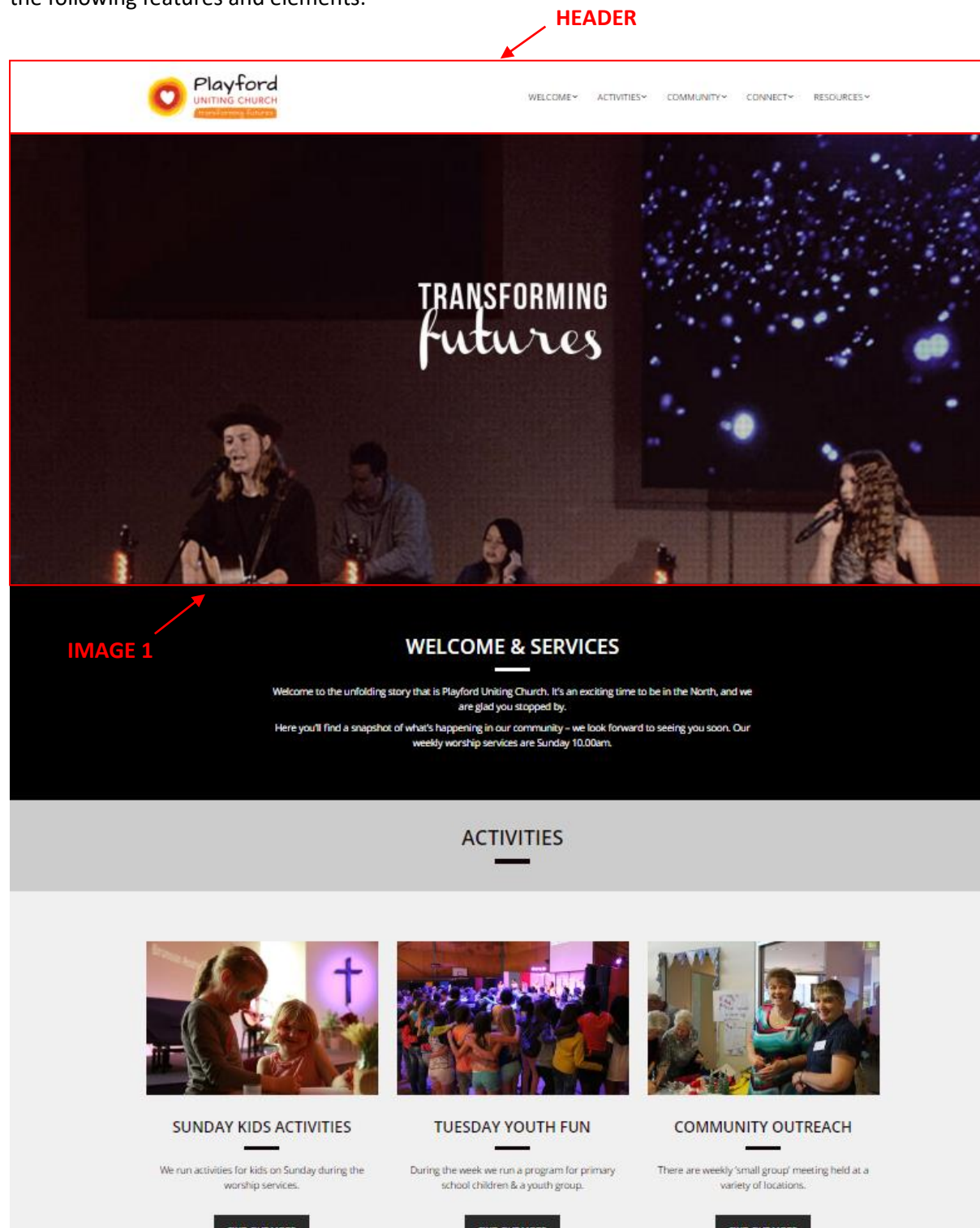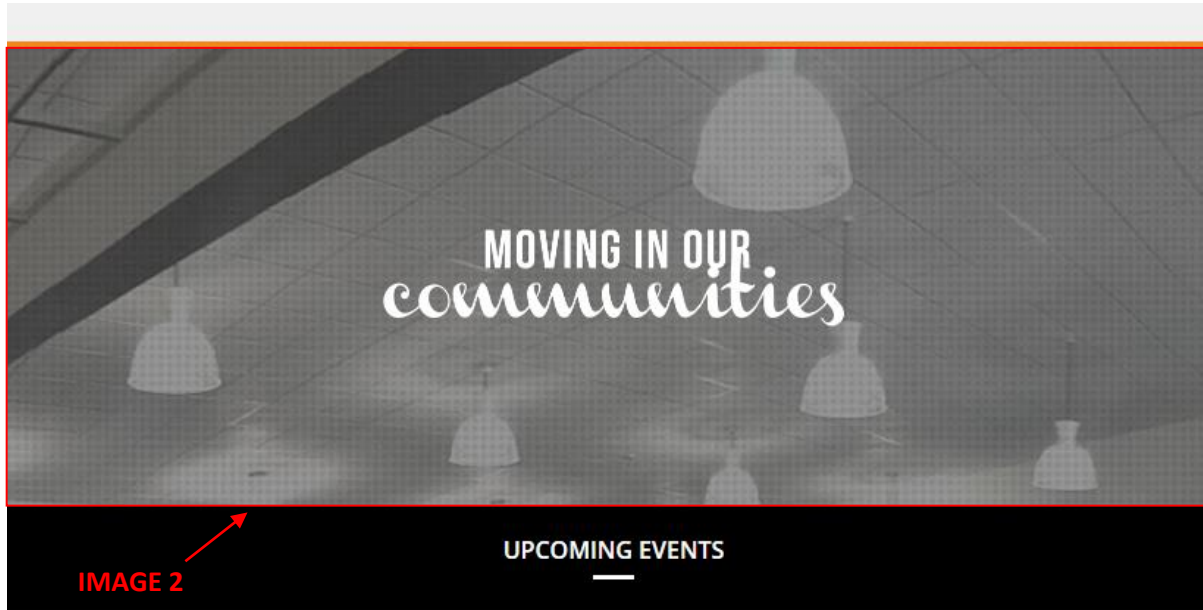
HEADER

IMAGE 1

IMAGE 2

LATEST FROM BLOG

SEP
20

SEP
10

SEP
5

Tradition

Pilgrimage [pil-gruh-mij]

Mondays

READ MORE

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER

Name* (required)

Email* (required)

SUBSCRIBE

CONNECT

Get in touch with us...

For general enquiries feel free to email us to enquiries@playforduc.org.au. We will get back to you as soon as possible.

WE WOULD LOVE TO CONNECT WITH YOU

INTEGRATED FACEBOOK FEED

Contact Us

Your Name (Required) *

Your Email (Required) *

Subject

Message

I'm not a robot
reCAPTCHA
Privacy - Terms

SEND MESSAGE

Church Office

IMAGE 3

Church Office Hours:
TUE, WED & THU 9.30am to 3.00pm

Ph. 08 7228 5300
E. office@playforduc.org.au

Church Office:
Corner of Curtis Road and Douglas Drive, Munno Parra

Facebook

Playford Uniting Church
4 days ago

Sunday

Join us tomorrow as we continue our series Called.

All Welcome!

View on Facebook · Share

Playford Uniting Church
2 weeks ago

SUNDAY

Join us tomorrow as we continue looking at Ephesians 1:3-14, with Rev. Pete Riggs bringing us the word.

All Welcome! We look forward to seeing you!

View on Facebook · Share

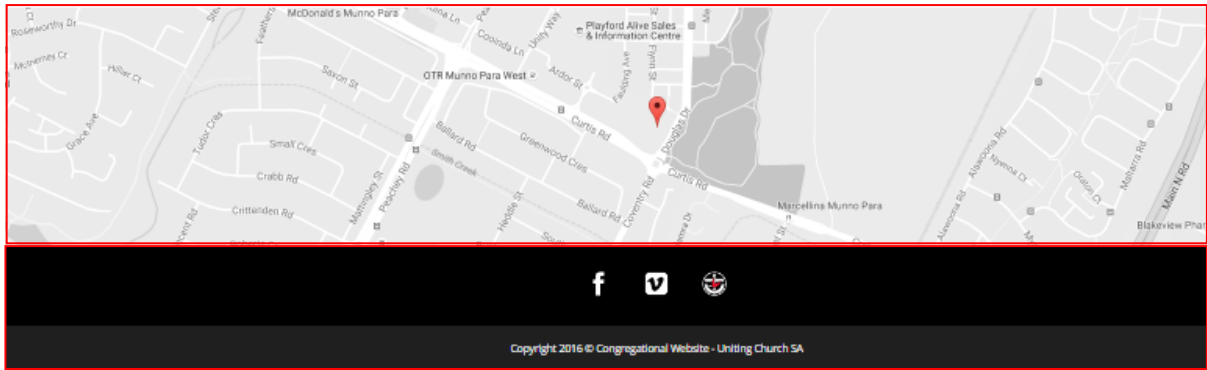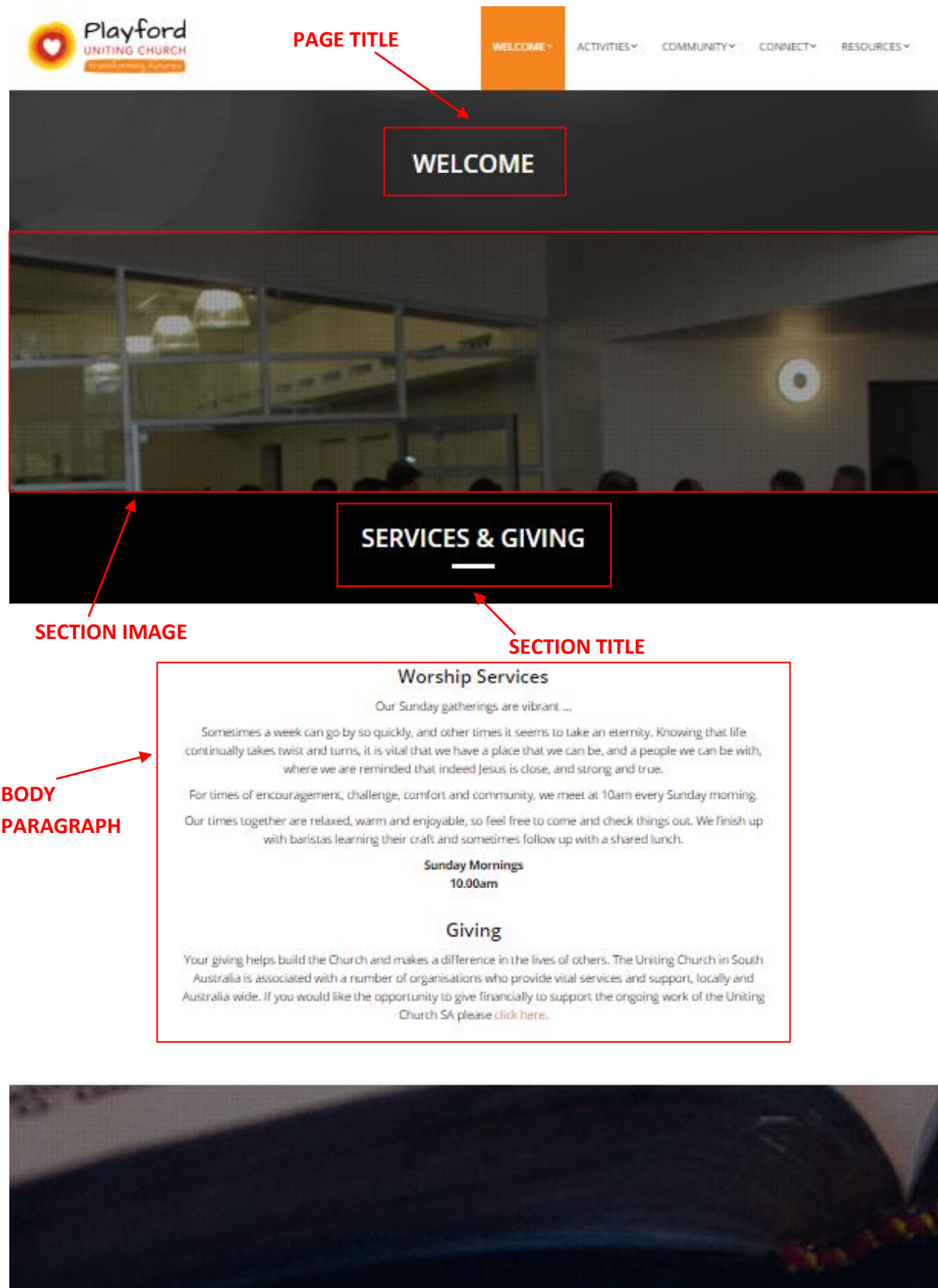**Playford Uniting Church**
3 weeks ago

GOOGLE MAP

The Uniting Church in Australia
Synod of South Australia

Copyright 2016 © Congregational Website - Uniting Church SA

FOOTER

Layout 2: Lower Level Pages

PAGE TITLE

WELCOME

SECTION IMAGE

SERVICES & GIVING

SECTION TITLE

BODY PARAGRAPH

Worship Services

Our Sunday gatherings are vibrant ...

Sometimes a week can go by so quickly, and other times it seems to take an eternity. Knowing that life continually takes twist and turns, it is vital that we have a place that we can be, and a people we can be with, where we are reminded that indeed Jesus is close, and strong and true.

For times of encouragement, challenge, comfort and community, we meet at 10am every Sunday morning.

Our times together are relaxed, warm and enjoyable, so feel free to come and check things out. We finish up with baristas learning their craft and sometimes follow up with a shared lunch.

Sunday Mornings
10.00am

Giving

Your giving helps build the Church and makes a difference in the lives of others. The Uniting Church in South Australia is associated with a number of organisations who provide vital services and support, locally and Australia wide. If you would like the opportunity to give financially to support the ongoing work of the Uniting Church SA please click here.

WE ARE THE UNITING CHURCH

The Uniting Church SA seeks to be an innovative, growing church proclaiming Jesus Christ, empowered by the Spirit to transform God's world. Read More.

The Uniting Church is a young church – formed on 22 June 1977, when the Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches united to become one. The Basis of Union is the document which affirms our Christian faith and is the guide to what is central to the life of the Uniting Church in Australia. Read the Basis of Union here.

HISTORY, MISSION & VISION

Mission

Welcome! to the growing community that is Playford Uniting Church.

Whatever your experience has or hasn't been of church, we believe that church is far more than the building it is in, or the service time, but a people who are discovering that Jesus is indeed the way and the truth of life itself. Church is a living, breathing community full of the hope and love of Jesus. Our heart is captured by a desire to be:

"A people awakened by the spirit, moving in our communities, cultivating hope and transforming futures"

WELCOME TO CHURCH – MEET THE TEAM

Rev Pete Riggs
Lead Pastor
peter.riggs@playforduc.org.au
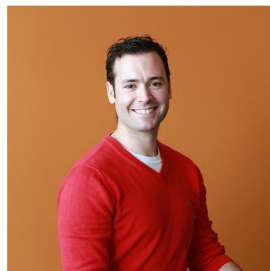
Josh Scherer
Associate Pastor
josh.scherer@playforduc.org.au

Nat Tretheway
Community Space Administrator
nat.tretheway@playforduc.org.au

Consistent Page Elements

The Congregational Website Program aims to enable those browsing web pages to quickly identify a website as belonging to the Uniting Church SA. This is achieved through the design of some consistent page elements. These page elements have been created to be visually appealing and to provide easy access to key information for visitors to the site:

Header

1) **Church Logo**
   This will be the congregation's logo (if available) or the general "The Uniting Church in Australia" Logo. It provides quick navigation to the home page of the congregational website.

2) **Horizontal Navigation Bar**
   The horizontal navigation bar consists of five top-level menus (this is the maximum amount the template allows) and comprises drop-down, sub-level menus.
   The five top-level menus for the Full Website - Preset Layout option are titled with the same headings: Welcome, Activities, Community, Connect, Resources (refer to layout 1). If a congregation does not have elements that fit one of those headings, the heading will not be included on the website. If you would like different Menu items you will need to consider the Full Website - Customised Layout option.
   Sub-level menus will differ for each congregation, as it depends on what the individual community offers. There are a number of predetermined headings which will be identified by the Congregational Website team with the initial content. They could include headings such as 'Meet the Team', 'Venue Hire', 'Youth (Ages 12-18)', etc.

Body

1) **Home Page Welcome Images**
   There are two welcome images on the home page (refer to images 1 & 2). Image one can either be a standard banner image (as pictured) or a Slider. If your congregation has chosen to have the Slider feature you will be required to email up to 5 images, which are 1440px wide x 600px high, to congregationalweb@sa.uca.org.au

2) **Page Title (Top-Level Menu)**
   The title of each page will be automatically displayed, based on the page's assigned title. For top-level menu items of congregations on the Full Website – Preset Layout option, this will include: Welcome, Activities, Community, Connect or Resources.

3) **Section Images**
   There will be one image in a banner to break up most sections of text – these images will differ between pages and sections, and images will need to be supplied by the congregation (where possible).

4) **Section Title (Sub-Level Menu)**
   The section title will be automatically displayed, based on the headings selected, to go under the top-level menu headings.

5) **Body Paragraph**
   Each section will include a paragraph of text provided by the congregation. It is important that text is kept short and succinct.

Footer

1) **Social Media Links on Home Page**
   Links to the congregation's social media pages are provided at the bottom of the home page. If your congregation does not have social media pages, then social media icons are able to be linked to the general Uniting Church SA pages.

2) **Copyright Information**
   This information is essential and will be duplicated for each website: Copyright 2020 @ Congregational Website – Uniting Church SA

Typography

To assist with creating a consistent look and feel across all Uniting Church SA websites, the typography of each website, incorporates similar fonts and sizes.

Websites in the Congregational Website Program will use the 'Open Sans' font. If the 'Open Sans' font is unavailable on the web browser, it will be automatically replaced by 'Helvetica' font. Alternatively, if 'Helvetica' is unavailable, it will move to 'Arial', then 'Verdana', and finally 'Sans-Serif'.

Different font sizes will be used in different locations on the website, as identified below:

HEADING 1 SAMPLE

HEADING 2 SAMPLE

HEADING 3 SAMPLE

HEADING 4 SAMPLE

Body Text Sample

Graphics

Home Page Image Text

The home page of each website includes two banner images which are to be supplied by the congregation where possible. Each of these images can include a text overlay. There are two options for the text style; but only one text style can be chosen for use across the two home page images. If you would like home page image text, please advise congregationalweb@sa.uca.org.au of your choice of text, from the two different options below:

Option 1: Script Handwriting Type (maximum two lines)
Sample:

CHRISTMAS SERVICE
dates

Option 2: San Serif Type (maximum three lines)
Sample:

COME
JUST AS YOU ARE
9.30AM & 5PM

Web Logos

Congregations with their own logo must provide a high resolution PNG / EPS file of the logo file to the Congregational Website team, so it can be embedded in the header of the website. Congregations without their own logo will default to using the general "Uniting Church in SA" logo.

Colours

Congregations are invited to choose their own accent colour for use across all pages of the website. The accent colour is simply a consistent colour which is used throughout all design elements of the website. Congregations may choose to use a colour element from their logo (if that is an option), or choose another accent colour that reflects their congregation. These will be preselected by the congregation for integration into the website template by the Congregational Website team.

Images

Images are one of the most vital parts of modern websites, with those visiting your website often skim reading or scanning over text. It is important for congregations to use high quality images that are visually appealing and communicate messages about a congregation's identity or activities. The congregational websites have been designed to include a number of high quality images.

Image Requirements
When uploading images to the congregational website, please follow the guidelines listed below:

- **File Types**
  Recommended file types/formats are: **.jpg, .gif, or .png**. Other formats, such as.pdf, .psd, .tiff, and .doc files, are not web compatible and cannot be used.
- **File Names**
  Only use **letters, numbers, underscores and hyphens** in file names. Other characters (like question marks, percent signs and ampersands) may upload incorrectly or cause unexpected behaviour in the image gallery.
- **File Sizes**
  Each website has an image upload limit of **20MB total**. There are also size recommendations and limits for each image on the editable pages contained in the website. The **banner** images will be predetermined and added as part of the initial content.
  In the **gallery**, it is best to use images between **20KB** and **100KB**. Files smaller than this can result in a pixelated or blurry image, therefore they cannot be used. Files larger than the recommended image size will slow the website down considerably when being viewed.
- **Image Resolution**
  There is an image resolution limit of **800px**.

- **Colour Mode**
  Uploaded images should be in the **RGB colour mode/ sRGB colour profile**. Print mode (CMYK) colour will not render in most browsers. If images cannot be viewed correctly on mobile devices, it is probably because they are not in the right sRGB colour profile. If you are unsure, please contact the Congregational Website team.

Image Best Practices

- **Image Dimension/Width**
  Different image widths are used in different parts of the website due to the template design.
  All gallery images should be a maximum of 800 pixels wide. A standard digital camera set up will capture 800 pixels wide, which is the ideal image width for the congregational website, in general.
- **Image Orientation**
  Ensure that images are in the correct orientation before uploading. Most areas of the site require images to be in landscape orientation. However, portrait images may be uploaded to the gallery.
- **Image Titles**
  Gallery images titles should be 20 words maximum. The ideal title consists of the following format: date, brief title (e.g. event name).

Social Media Icons

Congregations with their own social media presence are asked to provide links to their various pages. The links can then be added to the social media icons when the initial website is being populated with text and images. The Uniting Church SA icon, which links to the Uniting Church SA website home page, will be added automatically and must be included on all websites in the program.

Call to Action Buttons

Call to action buttons such as 'FIND OUT MORE', 'LOAD MORE', 'READ MORE', and 'SUBSCRIBE' will be added with the initial content by the Congregational Website team.

Writing for the Web

Writing for the web is very different than writing a sermon, essay or email. Here are 10 tips to engage your audience with your website – and your church community!

1) Keep it simple
Use language that is short and concise. Don't say in three sentences what you could say in one. Most web users scan content and are less likely to engage with a large chunk of text. Ask yourself, for example, does your audience really need the entire history of each of your ministries? Or do they just need to know how to engage with them?

2) Prioritise the most important information
As mentioned in relation to the first tip, web users typically only scan text, so it's important to ensure the most important information is placed prominently. This information will differ from church to church – it may include your location/address, contact information, or one or two lines about who you are.

3) Think about your audience
While church websites are often useful tools for current congregation members, they also provide the best way to connect with people outside of your church. As you write for the website, keep in mind the information you would want to know as a visitor or new attendee. You may also want to consider how people of different ages, cultures and backgrounds might engage with the information provided.

4) Use inviting language
Many people now visit church websites before choosing to visit the physical buildings so it's important to use inviting, inclusive language. By using others-centered language – for example, using the word "you" in your welcome or calls to action – you are inviting the web user to connect with your community. But don't go overboard! Stick with using this kind of language in welcome lines, introductions, conclusions, etc. rather than in every line of your text.

5) Avoid abbreviations and jargon
Communities and organisations often develop their own language, using abbreviations, slang or acronyms to refer to certain ideas or groups. This sort of language can be difficult for people outside of your community to understand so make sure you simplify these things as much as possible.

6) Ensure information is up-to-date
Making sure the information on your website is correct and updated frequently is very important. Your contact information, as well as the times and days of your different services and ministries, should always be correct. If you are including a calendar, blog and/or sermon section this should also be kept regularly updated. Web users are less likely to engage with information when they can see nothing new has been added to the site – or if old items have not yet been removed.

7) Think about what sets you apart

When writing about your church and different ministry areas it is important to think about what makes your community/ministry unique. Why will people want to engage with it? And how can they do so?

8) Include calls to action

What do you want visitors to your website to do? Come along to a service or activity? Contact someone from your community? Give to a particular ministry or cause? Providing a clear call to action can help you to achieve this – and helps web users to find the best way to engage. Provide clear directions through text and/or titles asking web users to take action – Get involved, Contact us, Find out more, Subscribe to our newsletter, etc.

9) Don't make promises you can't keep

When writing web text it can be tempting to make your church sound even bigger and better than it already is. While it's good to keep your language positive, it's also important to ensure the information you include accurately represents your community.

10) Learn from others

If you're having trouble phrasing your information in engaging and welcoming ways, seek out other ideas and advice! Friends, family and members of other churches may have different experiences and perspectives that you can learn from or consider. Inspiration can also come from other websites – but be sure to adapt any ideas to your church's own unique context!

More Information

We trust the information included in this style guide has enabled you to understand the capabilities of your congregational website. We also hope it enables you to understand the opportunities the website creates for your church – opportunities to connect with the wider Uniting Church SA, your local community and also those searching for the Uniting Church via the web.

If you require more information about any of the items outlined in this style guide, please contact the Congregational Website team on **(08) 8236 4247** or **congregationalweb@sa.uca.org.au**