

Operational plan 2019-2022

Vision

**A church for the whole life, where the encounter with Jesus Christ
transforms - me, you and the world**

The mission

Follow me! said Jesus (Mark 1:17) and everything becomes new. In that call, the church is born and renewed every day. Jesus Christ is the center and we want a church that is drawn and strives towards the center and is shaped by the Lord. We want to be a church that expresses the reality - a true voice in the world challenged by the kingdom of God. - Extract from the introduction of the Strategic platform which together with the Theological Foundation constitutes supporting documents for all activities by the Uniting Church in Sweden.

A holistic view of the mission

The essence of the church is mission. In mission, the church becomes distinct, visible and prepared to act. Diakonia, testimony and fellowship are together expressions of God's mission. A holistic view of mission means that these characteristics are pursued and that the work is kept together locally and globally, nationally and internationally. **The holistic view of the mission and the global perspective is therefore the basis for all actions.** The assignment is shared with the global church and is performed in reciprocity with churches and cooperating organizations. In the national and worldwide ecumenical community, the gospel, resources, and needs are shared in respect of each other's beliefs. Together we are called to work for sustainable development, global justice and peace at various levels; peace between people, in society and with creation.

Renewal, development and growth

Based on the gifts God gives us, we want to make available and deepen the gospel in our time and our contexts. We want local congregations where people find faith in Jesus Christ for the first and hundred times - a faith that transforms and challenges us to share the gospel in fellowship, service and witness and make this world a more peaceful and just place for all. In and through the work of local congregations the gospel is shared and the encounter with Jesus becomes reality. **Therefore, one of the most important tasks of the Uniting Church in Sweden, together with the church worldwide, is to support congregations' renewal, development and growth.** Through, and together with Ecuemnia the church also carries a special responsibility for children and young people to grow and reach a founded faith.

(Five four year goals were decided in the yearly Church Conference in May 2018)

Areas of work, Operational plan goals and Intermediate objectives

This operational plan covers four (4) years and describes goals in five areas, our common direction and what we as a church want to contribute to, while at the same time it clarifies what the church can and would like to contribute with as a united organization. The intermediate objectives are planned for 2 years.

The church yearly conference decides on the work areas and operational plan goals, while the church board and the church management have to define and follow up on the intermediate objectives. The regional councils are involved in the process. The church staff is responsible for finding suitable activities to achieve the goals.

1. Congregational development

Congregations in Sweden and in cooperating churches are growing and developing

Faith is born in the encounter with Jesus Christ. The Uniting Church, in association with the world wide church, wants to support local congregations in order for such encounters to take place and provide tools to support new faith, with the goal that the Uniting Church from 2022 welcomes 3% new members each year.

Intermediate objectives for the period 2019-20

- 1.1 The number of members welcomed on confession / baptism increases annually to be 3% from 2022.
- 1.2 Congregations involved in specific development work with mentors feel that positive change has taken place.
- 1.3 Cooperation with Equmenia has increased regarding e.g. discipleship for young adults.
- 1.4 International cooperation for congregational development has been initiated in 5 new places.

2. Church Planting

New congregations and communities are formed and replanting begins

The Uniting Church wants to create conditions for new congregations and communities with the goal that during the period 2017-2025, 50 new communities / congregations are founded in Sweden. In addition, replanting in 2 new places has been initiated annually.

Intermediate objectives for the period 2019-20

- 2.1 Another 10 congregations have decided to become mother congregations.
- 2.2 Replanting has taken place in at least 2 new places each year.
- 2.3 In the regions, additional resources have been created that can inspire and provide tools.
- 2.4 The Uniting Church has co-operation on 4 additional church plantings in cooperating countries.

3. International relations

The Uniting Church in Sweden deepens and prioritizes collaboration in global mission, where diaconia and witness are kept together

The Uniting Church wants to strengthen the mission assignment through the mutual cooperation with partner churches in witness about Jesus Christ in words and actions. The Uniting Church national organization wants to be a channel for congregations to engage in international relations.

Intermediate objectives for the period 2019-20

3.1 Another 8 congregations have become involved in a particular international project or area of interest.

3.2 The holistic view of mission and the global perspective has a natural place in the competence development program and in the curriculum to become pastors and deacons.

3.3 Where possible, agreements and action plans with co-operating churches are in place to clarify the content of the cooperation during the operational plan period.

3.4 Five new missionaries to and from Sweden have been identified and opportunities for voluntary work have been developed.

4. Engagement in society

The Uniting Church in Sweden is a prophetic actor in society

The Uniting Church is determined to be present for people in vulnerable life situations and is active in the areas of philosophy of life and current social issues. Diaconia is clearly expressed in the work on diversity and integration as well as topics regarding sustainability.

Intermediate objectives for the period 2019-20

4.1 The Uniting Church has participated in 10 strategically selected public meeting places each year where faith, philosophy of life and current social issues have been discussed.

4.2 Environment and climate issues are obvious in all advocacy work as well as in activity planning.

4.3 40% (approx. 280) of the congregations are involved in diaconal work within the areas of diversity and integration.

4.4 In the encounters with cooperating churches current social issues (such as sustainability and human rights) as well as the church as a prophetic voice and advocacy actor have been highlighted and have led to concrete action.

5. Trusteeship

The Uniting Church in Sweden is sustainable and relevant for its mission and equip for service

The Uniting Church wants to be prepared and equipped for future needs and challenges in congregations and society. This requires a sustainable trusteeship and strategic training and competence development.

Intermediate objectives for the period 2019-20

5.1 The Uniting Church's education and programs for competence development (KUP) have been evaluated and further developed. Every year, 200 employees participate in KUP.

5.2 The basic documents of the Uniting Church are transparent and updated on the basis of current external analysis and work on church ecclesiology.

5.3 The Uniting Church has further developed forms to run an efficient and sustainable organization with high quality.

5.4 The Uniting Church has, after mutual agreement, contributed to strengthening the education for pastors and leadership in cooperation churches.

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