

THE SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF THE MURRAY
of the Anglican Church of Australia Incorporated

REPORT OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE SIXTEENTH TRIENNIAL SYNOD

**HELD AT WOODCROFT COLLEGE, MORPHETT VALE
ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY 26th AND 27th MAY 2017**

COMMENCEMENT

The Synod assembled in the Woodcroft College Hall, Morphett Vale at 4.00pm on Friday 26th May. The Bishop outlined the format of the Synod, indicating that the business session would commence at 5.00pm and be finalised by 7.00pm for the dinner and fellowship adjournment.

Mr Mark Porter, Headmaster of Woodcroft College welcomed all in attendance, before thanking all in the school community who had prepared the school facilities and the catering arrangements for the members of Synod.

The President presided with 20 clerical and 40 lay members of Synod in attendance.

MEMBERSHIP

The President announced that he had appointed the Reverend Wayne Corker as the Clerical Assistant Secretary, Mrs Vicki Plummer as the Lay Assistant Secretary and the Reverend Paul Devenport as Synod reporter and timekeeper.

The Register of Members was made available for sighting.

The following members were excused from attendance at this Session of Synod:

The Reverend R McEwin	Onkaparinga Valley
The Reverend R Morony	Southern Suburbs
Mrs L Bedford	Mannum-Mount Pleasant
Mrs J Fiebiger	Millicent and Penola
Mr D Leake	Millicent and Penola
Mrs J Van Beest	Southern Suburbs
Mrs J Drought	Southern Vales
Mr B Landseer	Strathalbyn
Mr J Hender	Victor Harbor
Mrs Y Scrutton	Yankalilla and Delamere

A mandate had been issued to the following substitutionary lay members of Synod:

Mr G Stephens	Mannum-Mount Pleasant
Mr D Burrow	Millicent and Penola
Mr P Stevens	Mount Barker
Mrs S Russell	Southern Suburbs
Mrs L King	Yankalilla and Delamere

DOCUMENTS MADE AVAILABLE FOR SIGHTING

The Synod Accounts and the Parochial Statistics.

REPORTS PRESENTED FOR INFORMATION

The following reports were circulated with the Synod papers:

The Murray Anglican submitted by the Reverend Paul Devenport.

The Annual Report of the Professional Standards Committee.

The Report of Mothers' Union, Diocese of The Murray submitted by Mrs Eileen Smith, President.

The Report of Anglicare SA submitted by Mr Philip Evans, Diocesan Representative on the Board.

The Report of Anglicare SA submitted by the Reverend Peter Sandeman, CEO.

The Report from Mr Jim Raw, Anglican Schools Liaison Officer.

The Report of Woodcroft College submitted by Mr Mark Porter, Headmaster.

The Report of Investigator College submitted by Mr Don Grimmett, Principal.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Bishop John delivered his Presidential Address during Evening Prayer.

PROCEEDINGS

The Licensing's of the Reverend Peter Simmons to his ministry in the Diocese for his work enabling good stewardship of our diocesan resources and of the Reverend Nathanael Reuss as Assistant Priest of the Parish of Onkaparinga Valley both occurred during Evening Prayer.

The President called over the Notice Paper. Those motions for which no member called "object" were put immediately without debate.

Standing orders were not suspended during this Session.

All other business proceeded in accordance to the Notice Paper.

Good News Stories from around the Diocese were presented by various personnel.

Mr Jeff McHugh provided a property portfolio report.

The Venerable Dr Peter Carlsson and Mrs Ruth Daws launched the new Diocesan Website.

Mr Jeff McHugh, on behalf of the Finance, Audit and Investment Committee presented a report on parish finances.

The Reverend Paul Devenport promoted the display of materials from Australian Board of Mission.

Sessional Orders were generally followed during the sitting.

Mr Rob Foggo, retiring CEO of ac.care was the guest speaker at the Synod Dinner.

The President closed the Session of Synod at 12.25pm on Saturday 27th May.

DINNER SPEECH PRESENTATION

Mr Rick Fisher presented Mr Rob Foggo with a gift in appreciation of his service with ac.care.

Mr Foggo responded with thanks.

OBSERVERS

The President welcomed the observers from both the Diocese of Adelaide and the Diocese of Willochra.

Diocese of Adelaide – Dr Baden Teague stated that he loves the vision of growth and is excited with the growth and life that is already evident in The Murray – he offers us his blessings for the transformation of the changes. The Diocese of Adelaide has said goodbye to Keith Stephens as Registrar, Archdeacon David Bassett is Acting Registrar at present; they have a new Archbishop Bishop Geoffrey Smith and looking forward to stability and growth also. Greetings on behalf of the Diocese from everyone to all of us.

Diocese of Willochra – The Very Reverend Dr Mary Lewis stated that Willochra is greatly encouraged about the growth in The Murray but remember leaders need disciples first before people; the people of Willochra pray with us for us – also it was stated that Willochra Diocese is putting in place a Formation Programme similar to ours in The Murray. Greetings from Willochra Diocese; love our Diocesan prayer and would like to share it.

RESOLUTIONS OF SYNOD

RECORDING OF SYNOD

Mover: Mrs DM Jones

That this Synod agrees to the recording of this Session of Synod for the purpose of accurate recording of the minutes but not for publication.

SESSIONAL ORDERS

Mover: Mrs DM Jones

That during this Session, the Synod sits:

on Friday from	4.00 pm	to	7.00 pm
on Saturday from	8.30 am	to	9.30 am
	10.00 am	to	12.30 pm

OBSERVERS TO THE SYNOD

Mover: Mrs DM Jones

That this Synod warmly welcomes the Synod Solicitor, Mr John Strachan, the Chair of the Finance, Audit and Investment Committee, Mr Jeff McHugh and the observers from the Diocese of Adelaide, The Reverend Canon Simon Bailey, the Venerable Paul Mitchell and Dr Baden Teague and the observers from the Diocese of Willochra, the Very Reverend Dr Mary Lewis and Dr Owen Lewis, and grants them a seat on the floor of Synod with the right to speak, but not to propose or second motions or vote.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mover: Mrs DM Jones

Seconder: Mr MH McFarlane

That the Report of the Synod Auditor, and the Synod Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2016, as tabled, be received and adopted.

DRAFT BUDGET OF SYNOD EXPENSES

Mover: Mrs DM Jones

Seconder: The Reverend DA Price

That the draft budget of Synod Expenses for the year 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017, presented by the Diocesan Council, be received and adopted.

RATE OF ASSESSMENT

Mover: Mrs DM Jones

That in order to meet the estimated Synod Expenses, the minimum rate of Assessment from the 1 January 2017 until 31 December 2017 be 12% on all assessable income.

REPORT OF THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL

Mover: Mrs DM Jones

That the Report of the Diocesan Council be received.

REPORT OF ANGLICAN COMMUNITY CARE

Mover: Lay Canon MH Bleby

Seconder: Mr MH McFarlane

That the report of Anglican Community Care be received.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED WITH NOTICE

Submitted by: Dr KJ Pidgeon

Could Synod please be advised in detail (meaning listing how much spent for each site) how much Diocesan expenditure has occurred on developments under consideration at various sites, especially detailing the possible Murray Bridge Cathedral and other facilities Complex and those within the Southern Suburbs Pastoral District such as thought about at Christies Beach and O'Halloran Hill, and

Also be further advised as to the sources of funding for these preliminary explorations?

Response provided by: Mr Jeff McHugh

Christies Beach/O'Halloran Hill

Initial work undertaken by Trice Project Managers on behalf of the Diocese and Anglicare.

Cost \$4,250 shared equally by Diocese/Anglicare, our share \$2,125.

Source Diocesan general funds, no further expenditure.

Cathedral development

Expenditure of \$90,954 as detailed in the Diocesan accounts for 12 months ended 31/12/2016.

\$17,145 spent in 2015. The Parish of Murraylands contributed \$11,909 as part of the initial investigations of the site. Total cost to date is \$120,000. The cost was to advance the project to secure Development Approval which was received from Council on 7th March 2017.

Expenditure was approved by Diocesan Council at its April 2016 meeting. Diocesan Council acknowledged that the cost to advance to Development Approval would be mainly offset by the leasing of the two Clara Street properties for a two year period.

Source Diocesan general funds.

Submitted by: Dr KJ Pidgeon

Could Synod please be provided with a list indicating what amounts have been received from Special Purpose Funds as a result of the plea for 12% of accessible SPF's to be provided to the Home Mission Fund or its current equivalent, together with an indication of how long such present funds can sustain the Stipends of newly appointed members of the Clergy, and further

Can Synod be assured that no Trust Funds, nor Capital received from land sales, will be used for the purpose of sustaining additional Stipends and allowances?

Response provided by: Mr Jeff McHugh

It was not a plea but request for financial support for implementing the Walking the Way program.

11 parishes have provided \$126,000 to date. These parishes are

Kingston/Robe

Tatiara/Bordertown/Mundulla

Port Elliot/Goolwa

Southern Vales

Yankalilla/Delamere

Onkaparinga Valley

We have drafted a letter to all parishes thanking them for their support where appropriate and requesting a response if they have not done so. During the round of meetings Feb–April, FAI members offered to meet for any further discussion and remain available for those discussions.

We are reviewing Diocesan provisions with a view that 12% of appropriate provisions be transferred to the HMF. This could be around \$125k and will be discussed at Diocesan Council.

These funds were never meant to sustain the additional Stipends.

The program is based on districts increasing members and therefore income by an average of 5% pa each year over the next 5 years. Based on current Diocesan wide revenue of \$2m pa the compound effect of such an increase will bring in an additional 28% of \$560k of revenue which is more than enough to sustain the additional 3.5 clergy. The \$500k we are seeking supports clergy payments in the early years. It is up to each district in conjunction with new and existing clergy to achieve this. If this is achieved there will be sufficient additional income to fund the additional clergy.

I can give no assurance as to what decision may be made by DC or Synod in the future. I assume that both parties will work within Diocesan Ordinances and Regulations.

Submitted by: Mrs JMD Malpas

Would the Diocesan Council and/ or the Finance Committee please explain what is meant by clause 11 of the Special Purpose Fund Diocesan Regulation?

Is Diocesan Council aware that clause 11 would only apply to money deposited in that fund after October 2016?

Were Parishes/ Pastoral Districts made aware of the meaning of this regulation and their rights under the legislation before being asked for money from the fund in view of the fact that it is a trust fund?

Response provided by: Mr Murray McFarlane

When one looks at Clause 11 one has to look at the regulation as a whole particularly clauses 4 and 5. Clause 11 was inserted because requests were already being made and to clarify Clauses 4 and 5 where there may have been confusion as to the use of the funds. These requests were being made well before the change and subsequent 12% contribution request was made or even considered.

The word 'Mission' is just as much about the local as the external.

It gives Diocesan Council the right to approve use of funds if a request by the Parish is made and the request seems to be outside Clauses 4 & 5.

There is nothing to be aware of because that statement is not correct. SPF funds are just like a bank account.

Mrs Malpas acknowledged in her question that Parishes were/are being asked to contribute funds. What is wrong in asking a Parish to gift, what is in effect what they saved in payment of Synodal assessment by putting funds into a fund held at the Registry? Parish Councils are still the ones making the final decision.

The regulation, bar clause 11, has been in effect since 2007 so Parishes should know the regulation.

Prior to Bishop John coming to the Diocese it was decided that it was not practical to issue new CD's like the one issued in 2007 so it was decided to put the ordinances etc. on the website so they could be kept up to date which is precisely what happened the very next working day. As the clause was only a clarifying clause, there was no specific notification as any requests for use of the funds would still be coming from Parishes.

Very few SPF funds are trust funds. Some funds have been deposited with no use in mind. Proceeds from the Sale of Land is covered by a different regulation.

A significant amount of work has gone in to looking at each fund and assessing the use thereof and also significant effort has been made by Bruce Stanley (twice) and others going out to the Parishes and talking about the request.

Submitted by: Mrs JC Hervé and Mrs WS Day

Given the request for Parishes/Pastoral Districts to contribute extra funds to the Diocese, can the FAI Committee on behalf of Diocesan Council please supply to every parish/pastoral district a detailed report setting out:

Which Parishes are currently able to meet their financial obligations and how many have either a full time or part time priest?

Which parishes have now become Pastoral Districts and how many have a full time or part time priest?

Where are the extra clergy required and how they are to be funded for a five year period?

What plan is in place in the event that the funding does not eventuate?

Response provided by: Mr Jeff McHugh

Parish's financial obligations - parts 1,2 have been answered previously in the presentation of Parish Finances. DC needs to consider at its next meeting as to how this information is to be distributed.

Technically no parishes have become Pastoral Districts, but all Parishes have been asked to operate "as if they are Pastoral Districts". Our reporting reflects that.

Allocation of extra clergy is up to the Bishop and I do not intend to comment here. How they are funded has been discussed at the meeting with Parishes and in response to 10(2) above.

What if funding does not occur? If we continue as we are and income continues to decline, we need to match our allocation to our resources. The answer is fairly obvious, few parishioners, little income, lots of buildings and SPF's?

Submitted by: Mrs JC Hervé and Mrs WS Day

As people and congregations need consistency of ministry to develop relationships that will enhance their Christian growth what commitment will parishes be given that their parish priest will have some degree of security of tenure under the new clergy licence system.

Response by Bishop John

In accordance with diocesan regulations all clergy licences are always issued by the bishop on the terms and conditions that he determines. A major consideration is, as the question rightly identifies, the need for stability in the relationship between all ministers of the gospel in a particular area of the diocese so that the Good News can be lived and proclaimed.

To enhance this necessary provision all licenses are now explicit in the provision that priests exercise their ministry as part of a Diocesan College, working with the bishop and all lay ministers to further the life and mission of this Local Church. Such familial belonging, by definition, accentuates rights and responsibilities and underlines the fact that we all belong to the one Church and accordingly share in mutual and reciprocal commitments.

All licences remain terminable upon three months' notice.

Submitted by: Mrs JC Hervé and Mrs WS Day

Given that parishes are being encouraged to sell off excess buildings and land and given the current state of diocesan finances why is the diocese still considering the building of a new cathedral complex at Murray Bridge?

Response provided by: Mr Jeff McHugh

These are two separate issues

In relation to buildings the emphasis is not on sale of excess buildings for no reason but on being good stewards with our property assets. Also making sure that the properties we retain or develop are complimentary to the future direction and structure of the diocese.

The cathedral complex is not a fait accompli. But again looking at future direction of the diocese

- *The current cathedral size limits the potential of Murray Bridge to expand (people)*
- *There is a need for kitchen, meeting space for the Murraylands parish*
- *It could provide multipurpose space not only for services but also for conferences etc*
- *Co locating services eg AC care in one spot has advantages*
- *It will raise the profile of the Anglican Church in Murray Bridge*
- *It should become a focal point for the Diocese*

The cathedral project has been advanced to Development approval status which allows us to talk to partners with certainty.

Funding is an issue that is yet to be resolved.

Submitted by: Mrs JC Hervé and Mrs WS Day

How does the diocese intend to fund the proposed MYOB accounting system throughout the diocese and will it provide computers to any parish which does not have this facility together with the necessary training to use the software?

Response provided by: Mr Jeff McHugh

The cost to roll our MYOB across the Diocese should not be huge in relation to the benefits of a standard accounting and reporting system.

Yes we will provide computers to parishes that do not have them or cannot afford them.

We have licences for MYOB that can be used and will get more of necessary.

Fr David Price or whoever operates the IAS system and will provide training if it cannot be done at a local level.

Submitted by: Mrs JC Hervé and Mrs WS Day

Given that we only have 13.5 stipended clergy in the diocese at present and we are told that we need to find funding and suitably trained clergy to bring this number up to 17, is it possible to use the services of

- a. those clergy currently housed and paid a stipend by the diocese who are not currently attached to a specific parish or pastoral district or
- b. retired clergy working on a part time basis (not just as occasional locum)

as parish priests where there are vacancies ie make use of the clergy we already have?

Response by Bishop John

The need for 3.5 clergy in addition to those appointments either held or in vacancy was identified by the Diocesan Council in discussion over many months. The additions are made up of two stipendiary curates, since it is essential that we grow clergy within the diocese, one more priest for the Riverland and an extra half-time appointment for the Southern Vales, the fastest growing area of the Diocese.

The only non-parochial posts are the Bishop and the Archdeacon.

The ministry of retired clergy is valued and appreciated. However, they are retired and should not be relied upon to provide priestly cover on a day to day basis; their discipleship should be exercised in different ways that are conducive to their stage in life. Their ministry is a bonus and gift from them within the bounds of their availability. By definition they are not curates being introduced to priestly ministry and, even if it were acceptable to use them in this way, there are none currently available in the identified places of need.

General response about the questions by Bishop John

There are some underlying theological misunderstandings that are revealed by many of the questions. They concern the nature of the Church and the ways in which our Local Church participates in God's mission towards the world.

Firstly, as part of the catholic church of Jesus Christ we do not minister to a gathered congregation. Rather each of the groups of disciples that have been called out in particular areas of the diocese have been so called to serve the neighbourhood in which they are set. This service needs to be characterised by the fullness of Christian ministry, social, catechetical, evangelistic, liturgical and pastoral. The life, work, worship and witness of each particular congregation is ordered in such a way as to present the Good News of the risen Lord to all and invite them to participate in his eternal life here and now. The provision of ordained ministry within this broader common life is not to provide chaplaincy services to the like-minded and accordingly is not a function that can be bought in when either needed or wanted. Rather it is part of the gift of God to the world.

The next area of clear misunderstanding concerns the nature of our Church and our prime belonging. The Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia is very clear: the base unit of the Church is the Diocese which is the way by which and through which our membership of the universal church is guaranteed.

Historically and theologically a diocese is "a particular church". In other words, a diocese is at the local level everything the Universal Church is at the worldwide level. So long as it fulfils the fundamental requirement of being in fellowship (communion) with every other diocese, sharing the common gospel, scriptures, sacraments and ministry of the universal church, it contains within itself everything that is necessary to be the "one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church" of Jesus Christ. The Diocese of The Murray with all its constituent mission partnerships and Eucharistic communities is in this sense a "particular church", a concrete expression of the Universal Church.

As Anglicans, we believe that our bishop has been called and ordained to be a member of that same apostolic fellowship to whom Jesus first revealed himself and which he sent to take his gospel to all nations. Gathered around the message of the resurrection which he brings, our task is to proclaim the gospel to all nations, to baptise and to teach obedience to everything he taught us.

This vision inspires everything we do and should dictate how we approach everything and that includes finance and budgeting and all of our associated regulations, and it is by their faithfulness to this vision that everything else will be judged.

MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE – A LETTER OF CONDOLENCE

Mover: The Right Reverend JF Ford

That this Synod wishes to assure Pope Tawadros II of its support and prayers at this time in response to the killing of 28 Coptic Christians in Egypt, and the wounding of other pilgrims on 26th May and prays that the Risen Lord will continue to provide strength for you and your community.

Carried with acclamation.

MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE – THANKS AND APPRECIATION

Mover: Mr DI Fleming

Seconder: Mrs A Stanley

That this Synod expresses grateful thanks to Bishop John for his leadership and challenge from his Presidential Address, to the Vicar General and the Registrar, Mrs Donna Jones, and the Registry for the wonderful work both for this Synod and throughout the year, to Murray McFarlane for his significant technological support and general preparations, to Mark Porter and the staff of Woodcroft College for the arrangements, catering and the use of these wonderful facilities.

MOTION LOST

USE THE PRAYERS AND WORDING AS FOUND IN A PRAYERBOOK FOR AUSTRALIA

Mover: Mr A Jeffery

Seconder: Mrs JC Hervé

That this Synod, conscious of the need to minimise divisions within the Diocese and mindful in particular of articles I and XXII of the Articles of Religion as outlined in A Prayerbook for Australia, recommends that Diocesan Eucharists use the prayers and wording as found in A Prayerbook for Australia and avoid wording which reflects the theology of the Roman Catholic Church.

Vote by Houses was called.

Agreed amendment

That this Synod, conscious of the need to minimise divisions within the Diocese and mindful in particular of articles I and XXII of the Articles of Religion as outlined in A Prayerbook for Australia, recommends that Diocesan Eucharist's use the prayers and wording as found in, Prayer Books for use in the Anglican Church of Australia and avoid wording which reflects the theology of the Roman Catholic Church.