



The Synod of the Diocese of The Murray of
the Anglican Church of Australia Inc.
ABN 11 456 974 518

MINUTES OF THE SECOND ANNUAL SESSION OF THE NINETEENTH TRIENNIAL SYNOD

**HELD AT ST NICHOLAS, SEAFORD
ON FRIDAY 20, SATURDAY 21 AND SUNDAY 22 JUNE 2025**

FRIDAY 20 JUNE 2025

The Synod commenced on Friday afternoon at 4:00 pm with the Synod Eucharist presided over by the Diocesan Administrator, Br Simon Waters, the sermon delivered by the Rev Wayne Langford. Following the Eucharist the Administrator delivered the Presidential Address, at the conclusion of which Synod adjourned until Saturday morning.

SATURDAY 21 JUNE 2025

At 8:40 am. Synod recommenced.

The President presided with 14 clerical and 36 lay members of Synod in attendance.

MEMBERSHIP

The Registrar announced the following appointments: Rev David Patterson and Mrs Vicki Plummer as Assistant Secretaries; Mr Jeffrey McHugh and Mr Richard Earley as Scrutineers; Rev Andrew Forder as Timekeeper.

The Register of Members was made available for sighting.

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

Mr Fred Luckhurst Smith	Lower Limestone Coast
Mr Philip Evans	Mount Barker District
Mrs Natalie Jones	Mount Barker District
The Reverend Ian Jansse	Murraylands
Mrs Leonora Lyons	Murraylands

Mr Murray McFarlane	Murraylands
Mr John Hender	South Coast
Mrs Sue Hender	South Coast
Mr Andrew Jeffery	South Coast
Mrs Madeleine Jenkins	South Coast
Mr Paul Dolan	Upper Limestone Coast
Mr Stephen Banner	Western Fleurieu

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

Mrs Margaret Philpott	Mount Barker District
Mr Paul Stevens	Mount Barker District
Ms Gillian Colaruotolo	South Coast
Mrs Vicki Plummer	South Coast
Mr Peter Edson	South Coast
Mr Lachlan Haynes	Upper Limestone Coast
Mrs Anne Chittleborough	Western Fleurieu

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Nil

PETITIONS

Nil

MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Noted below as they occurred during Synod.

REPORTS PRESENTED FOR INFORMATION

The following reports were circulated with the Synod papers:

- The Report of AnglicareSA submitted by Mr Grant Reubenicht, CEO
- The Report of the Anglican Board of Mission submitted by Mrs Meagan Schwarz, Key Relationships Manager
- The Report of Mothers' Union, Diocese of The Murray submitted by Mrs Jocelyn Williamson, President
- The Report of Kooyoora (Professional Standards) submitted by Ms Fiona Boyle, CEO
- The Report of Investigator College submitted by Mr John Robinson, Principal
- The Report of Woodcroft College submitted by Ms Shannon Warren, Head of College
- Parish Statistics for 2024.

RESOLUTIONS OF SYNOD

SESSIONAL ORDERS

That during this Session, the Synod sits on:

Friday from	4:00 pm	to	6:00 pm
Saturday from	8:30 am	to	10:30 am
	11:00 am	to	12:30 pm
	1:30 pm	to	3:00 pm
Sunday from	9:00 am	to	10:00 am
	10:30 am	to	11:30 am

Mover: Mr Richard Earley

Seconder: Mr Jeff McHugh

PASSED

OBSERVERS TO THE SYNOD

That this Synod warmly welcomes:

- the Observer from the Diocese of Adelaide (Rev Paula Bullock)
- the Observers from the Diocese of Willochra (Rev Anne Ford and Mrs Geraldine Smedley)
- the CEO of Kooyoora, Ms Fiona Boyle
- the Manager, Mission & Anglican Community Engagement, AnglicareSA, The Rev Ben Falcon
- the Key Relationships Manager, Anglican Board of Mission, Mrs Meagan Schwarz

and grants them a seat on the floor of Synod with the right to speak, but not to propose or second motions or vote.

Mover: Mr Richard Earley

Seconder: Mr Jeff McHugh

PASSED

FINANCIAL REPORTS

That the Report of the Synod Auditor, and the Synod Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024, as tabled, be received and adopted.

Mover: Mr Jeff McHugh

Seconder: Mr Richard Earley

PASSED

DRAFT BUDGET OF SYNOD EXPENSES AND RATE OF ASSESSMENT

That the draft budget of Synod Expenses for the year 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026 presented by the Diocesan Council, be received and adopted.

AND

That to meet the estimated Synod Expenses, the minimum rate of Assessment from 1 January 2026 until 31 December 2026 be 16% on all assessable income.

Mover: Mr Jeff McHugh

Secunder: Mr Richard Earley

PASSED

REPORT OF THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL

That the Report of the Diocesan Council be received.

Mover: Mr Richard Earley

Secunder: Mr Jeff McHugh

PASSED

REPORT OF ANGLICAN COMMUNITY CARE

That the Report of the Anglican Community Care (ac.care) Convenor be received.

Mover: Mr Rick Fisher

Secunder: Mr Richard Mills

PASSED

REPORT OF THE LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

That the Report of the Legislation Review Committee be received.

Mover: Mr Brian McMillan

Secunder: Mr Richard Earley

PASSED

MOTIONS SUBMITTED (in order of receipt)

ANGLICAN BOARD OF MISSIONS MOTIONS

That this Synod:

1. Rejoices with the Anglican Board of Mission (ABM) as it celebrates its 175th Anniversary of serving God's mission, on the 29th October, 2025.
2. Acknowledges with gratitude the involvement of this diocese in this service, remembering those who have worked for God's love, hope and justice as staff, missionaries and volunteers, in Australia and abroad. We particularly honour the deep commitment of the members representing this Diocese on the SA Provincial Committee over many years.
3. Encourages participation in the 175th Anniversary events organised by ABM and the diocese, including the 175th Anniversary service and dinner in Sydney on 29 October and other events in this Diocese as communicated.

Mover: Rev Bruce Hicks

Seconder: Mr Peter Edson

PASSED

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED WITH NOTICE

Submitted by Mrs Cathy Cobbledick

1. Please confirm how Holy Communion is to be served.
2. Please confirm amount spent on legal fees/proceedings to do with Bishop Keith's case, and the budgeted timeline for this expense?
3. Please confirm amount spent in 2024 for Brother Simons wages, and the budgeted timeline for this expense?
4. Please confirm amount spent in 2024 for Bishop Keith's wages, and the budgeted timeline for this expense?
5. Can we be provided with further information that is discussed at Diocesan Council meetings? At the moment we receive a one-page summary, and why is it received so late after the meeting?
6. Insurance for 2024/2025 was paid in November. Why does it take so long for each Parish to receive details of the amount that is payable? It is June, and we still don't know what the amount is for the 2024/25 year.
7. What is cost for valuations for each Parish and how is this calculated? Who is doing the valuations?

Response

1. The 'how' of Communion is at the discretion of the priest with congregational consultation.

2. Episcopal Standards matters are the responsibility of the national Anglican Church and are handled by the Episcopal Standards Commission. The cost of legal fees and any proceedings related to the Episcopal Standards matter for Bishop Dalby is met by General Synod.

Pursuant to Section 15(2) of the Episcopal Standards Canon 2007, during his suspension Bishop Dalby is “entitled to receive whatever stipend, allowances and other benefits that would otherwise have accrued and which are to be met or reimbursed by the body normally responsible for their payment.” Those costs are met by the Diocese. This will continue while the the Episcopal Standards matter is ongoing.

3. Br Simon Waters, as Administrator of The Murray, is paid the same rate as Bishop Dalby, which is 150% of the Diocesan Council set stipend for a full-time priest. This will continue while Br Simon is the Administrator.
4. Bishop Dalby is paid 150% of the Diocesan Council set stipend for a full-time priest. This will continue while the Episcopal Standards matter is ongoing.
5. News from DC provides a summary of pertinent matters discussed at each Diocesan Council meeting. Some matters discussed are confidential, at least for a period, and not able to be shared. The timing of the distribution of News from DC is a resourcing issue. The Registry will endeavour to provide these updates in a more timely fashion.
6. The Registry pays the annual insurance invoice in November, covering 31 October of that year to 31 October of the following year. There is a complicated spreadsheet that divides the cost across parishes based on property insured (for parish property premium) and parochial clergy stipend packages (for salary continuance premium). It takes some time to ensure any changes from the previous year have been correctly reflected (e.g. sale of property, changes in type of property insurance, changes in agreed value of property insurance, changes in stipend values, variations in parochial clergy appointments). Additionally, the salary continuance premium for the same insurance year is not usually received until March-May of the following year. Rather than issue an invoice to parishes and then have issue a credit or additional invoice, the Registry has waited to incorporate the known salary continuance premium amount.

Most parishes choose to continue paying the same monthly rate from the previous year until the Registry issues the annual insurance invoice. The Registry encourages this practice.

7. The proposed valuations will be carried out through a program developed by Anglican Insurance and Risk Services (AIRS) called “Love My Church”. AIRS has partnered with a licensed valuation company that provides valuations remotely based on information provided by the Parish related to each building. The cost varies depending on the type of building, but ranges from approximately \$150 to \$220 per building. This is a substantial saving on typical licensed valuation costs. The program will provide the details of the information required for the valuation, for example, a floor plan, building measurements

and particular photos. The work will be done by the local Parish, with remote assistance from the Registry. There are some buildings that will not be able to have a remote valuation provided, but these will be the exception rather than the norm. In such cases the Registry will work with AIRS and the Parish to find alternative options for obtaining a valuation.

Submitted by Mr Ken Pidgeon

1. Could Synod please be provided with both the Administrator's and Diocesan Council Reports 2 weeks prior to the cut-off date for Questions, Petitions and Notices of Motion? The aim would be to facilitate earlier consideration of these and have members well prepared.
2. Could Synod please be provided with some longer term, perhaps graphical, representation of the statistics surrounding Parishes so that trends positive and negative can be viewed, the declining areas supported. and the increasing areas to be identified so successful strategies for growth might be copied. 5 years of data should be sufficient.
3. Could Synod please be provided with either a summary or the full report on our Diocesan finances from the Diocesan Financial Task Force (a General Synod body that provides this yearly) together with actions taken to remedy any difficulties they might have been identified.
4. Has any thought been given to having a separate and independent expert body, with no connection to the Diocese, to investigate our viability given the shortage of licenced Clergy and the major changes in district status that have occurred, resulting in significantly fewer lay Synods persons. If not, could Synod please request Diocesan Council to do this.
5. Since the Church has been directed to "Feed my Sheep", and Priests are forever according to Melchizedek, why are so few older/retired Clergy not available to do this or being offered altars to celebrate the Eucharist? Is the balance right between the compliance with whatever regulations are required to continue to hold 'licences' and the above?
6. Can arrangements be made to complete the business of Synod by say 1pm Saturday so Clergy can return to their normal Pastoral duties by Sunday?
7. Without naming them for privacy reasons, could Synod please be provided with details of how many fully stipendiary Clergy, paid for entirely by Parishes, the Diocese have and details of the status of others i.e. number part time, not fully stipended, totally unpaid etc?
8. Could Synod please be provided with an update regarding Bp Keith?
9. Could Synod please be provided with a timeline regarding the rebuild of St Francis Christies Beach?

Response

1. As per the response to Cathy Cobbledick's question, Registry resourcing issues play into how soon material can be provided. The President's Report is not usually provided prior to Synod. The Registry will endeavour to provide Synod papers earlier in future.

2. Diocesan Council is currently doing backgrounding work. Future Directions workshops are being held locally, which is more significant than more general approaches. Archdeacon Sandeman is also involved in analysis.
3. The Diocesan Financial Advisory Task Force (DFATF) reviews the audited accounts of all dioceses and provides feedback to each diocese as well as a report (covering all dioceses) to the Standing Committee of General Synod. Unforeseen legal claims are common to all dioceses, especially smaller ones. The DFATF feedback is for Diocesan Council use and not designed for Synod use as such. Currently there are no adverse findings by DFATF relating to the Diocese of The Murray.
4. The matters raised are being looked at under the umbrella of Archdeacon Sandeman's Strategy and Mission portfolio, and Diocesan Council. No country diocese is particularly strong, and country SA has communities in decline, with only a few growing. Future trends need determining. The question is how to carry the Gospel message into communities where it is now unknown. We need to consider how can we harness the resources we do have, especially property, to assist where there are signs of life and hope.
5. There are retired clergy who hold PTOs who are available.
6. This would not be possible especially if there is legislation to be dealt with.
7. This information is available on the Diocesan website, and reflects the various definitions and requirements outlined in the Parochial Administration Ordinance 2021.
8. The Episcopal Standards matter regarding Bishop Dalby is in the hands of the Episcopal Standards Commission. When they have something to announce it will be communicated to the Diocese.
9. Mindful that building development is never quick, a building plan is with the City of Onkaparinga. If starting later this year/early next year, it could take 12 months to complete based on standard building program timelines.

MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE

That Standing Orders be Suspended to enable Synod and visitors to participate in Small Group Workshops.

Mover: Mr Richard Earley

Seconder: Mr Jeff McHugh

PASSED

WORKSHOP SESSION 1

Plenary – the President provided clarification of the current Licensed Lay Ministry arrangements.

Small group workshops

The following workshops were held.

1. MYOB and PAS Q&A and Electronic Giving (Margaret Cale, Jeff McHugh)
2. Developing Mission for Small Country Churches (Fr David McDougall)
3. Future Directions Workshop Introduction (Br Simon Waters)
4. Introduction to Diocesan Legislation (Richard Earley, Brian McMillan)

PRESENTATIONS

Woodcroft College – Marty Fox, Pastor-Chaplain. Spoke about the number of current students and staff, and about the Religious and Values Education subjects.

Investigator College – Edwina Bruce, Chaplain. Spoke about her work across the Victor Harbor and Currency Creek campuses.

St Barnabas College – Joan Riley, Principal. Spoke of various opportunities available for further theological education, especially for the laity. ‘Being Anglican’ online course being developed, as well as a Lay Leaders Toolbox short course in relation to leading Morning & Evening Prayer, Prayer Praise and Proclamation, etc.

Mother’s Union – Jocelyn Williamson, Diocesan President. Spoke concerning the current Mother’s Union project to provide relief to drought affected families across the Diocese.

OBSERVERS

The observers were given the opportunity to address the Synod.

The Rev Anne Ford, Willochra Diocese, brought greetings from Bishop Jeremy, the Clergy and Laity. She spoke of the drought situation being a current issue for the Diocese.

The Rev Paula Bullock, Adelaide Diocese, encouraged the Diocese of The Murray in its endeavours and sought prayer for Adelaide Diocese in their election of a new Archbishop.

Fiona Boyle, CEO, Kooyoora (Professional Standards), spoke about the expanded work Kooyoora is increasingly undertaking, including with non-Church bodies.

The Reverend Ben Falcon, Anglicare, spoke about Anglicare's work in the outer southern suburbs of metropolitan Adelaide. He drew attention to Anglicare's work with those affected by family violence, and with broken families as noted in the Anglicare Report.

WORKSHOP SESSION 2

Plenary – the President spoke regarding resources for Licensed Lay Ministers.

Small group workshops

The following workshops were held.

1. Leading Volunteers (Fr David McDougall)
2. How to archive parish documents (Michael Jamieson)
3. Chaining Parish Councils (Jeff McHugh)
4. Cemetery responsibilities (Margaret Cale, Peter Filsell)

MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE

That this Synod request all Parishes:

- a) To pray for Anglican Schools, especially Investigator College and Woodcroft College, seeking the support and guidance of God for their Chaplains, Principals, Staff, Students and their families;
- b) To give favourable consideration to the identification of opportunities to interact with Anglican Schools, especially those in their localities.

Mover: Mrs Julia Drought

Seconder: Rev Daniel Irvine

PASSED

At the conclusion of the day's business, Evening Prayer was held in the Baptistry, Seaford Ecumenical Mission (SEM), followed by the Synod Dinner at the SEM Café.

SUNDAY 22 JUNE 2025

Synod joined the Western Fleurieu Anglicans for their morning Eucharist in the Seaford Ecumenical Centre at which the Administrator presided and Fr Daniel Irvine preached. Synod resumed at 10:40 am.

An informal Q&A time was held.

MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE

That this Synod expresses grateful thanks for the leadership of the Administrator and for his Presidential Address, and to the Parish of the Western Fleurieu for their hospitality and hosting of the Synod.

Mover: Mr Rick Fisher

Secunder: Rev Andrew Forder

PASSED BY ACCLAMATION

The President closed the Annual Session of Synod at 11:52 am.