

Resolutions of the First Session of the 53rd Synod

1/23 Amendments to Faithfulness in Service

Synod, noting the report 'Amendments to Faithfulness in Service: A national code for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry by clergy and church workers', adopts the amendments to Faithfulness in Service as set out in the report.

(Mrs Briony Bounds 11/09/2023)

2/23 Consumption of alcohol in the parish context

Synod, noting the report 'Consumption of alcohol in the parish context: update to the 2009 report' and the associated updated report on 'Consumption of Alcohol in the Context of Parishes, Churches, Congregations and Fellowships in the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney' (the updated Report) –

- (a) requests that a copy of the updated Report be sent to all parish ministers and wardens,
- (b) requests that all parish ministers and wardens be reminded of the 'Policy on Consumption of Alcohol in the Parish Context' adopted by Synod in 2009,
- (c) encourages all wardens to implement a parish policy on alcohol, or review their existing policy, in the light of the updated Report and existing Synod policy, and
- (d) requests the General Synod to consider the impact of social media on parishioners, especially the vulnerable, and educate clergy on faithful usage of these media. This may include instruction on any potential harm of posting photographs of leaders consuming alcohol.

(Dean Sandy Grant 11/09/2023)

3/23 Response to Newmarch House 2020 COVID-19 Outbreak

Synod, noting that it resolved in 2022 that when all inquiries and legal matters are resolved, and the matter was no longer sub judice, Anglicare Sydney prepare a report on the steps and actions that have been taken to address the specific and broader issues and challenges revealed by the COVID-19 outbreak at Newmarch House in 2020 –

- (a) notes that the Newmarch House 2020 COVID-19 outbreak remains *sub judice* as –
 - (i) the Report of the coronial inquest into the Newmarch House 2020 COVID-19 outbreak has not yet been released, and
 - (ii) a class action has been filed in relation to the outbreak, and
- (b) requests that, when all inquiries and legal matters are resolved, the Board and executive team of Anglicare Sydney prepare a report to the Standing Committee on the steps and actions that have been taken to address the specific and broader issues and challenges revealed by the COVID-19 outbreak at Newmarch House in 2020.

(Mr Simon Miller 11/09/2023)

4/23 Diocesan Doctrine Commission's terms of reference

Synod, noting the report 'The Diocesan Doctrine Commission's terms of reference', requests that the Commission appointed by the Archbishop in consultation with the Standing Committee pursuant to resolution 19/81 –

- (a) be comprised of ten persons, to serve for a term of three years,
- (b) have a Chair, appointed by the Archbishop from among the members, and
- (c) consider and report on issues which may be referred to it from time to time only by the Synod, the Standing Committee, or by the Archbishop,

and encourages the Standing Committee to approve suitable Terms of Reference for the Commission that reflect the recommendations of this motion.

(Archdeacon Simon Flinders 11/09/2023)

5/23 Discontinuation of the Affiliated Churches Program

Synod, noting the report 'Discontinuation of the Affiliated Churches Program', notes that following discussion with and support from current Affiliated Churches, the Standing Committee intends to discontinue the Affiliated Churches Program in 2024.

(The Rev Philip Wheeler 11/09/2023)

6/23 50th Anniversary of Robert Menzies College

Synod notes that 2023 marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of Robert Menzies College and gives thanks to God for the caring community, and Christian teaching and equipping it has provided to thousands of university students for over half a century.

Synod values the important contribution the College makes to university life in our city and recognises the many faithful people who have been involved in the ministry of the College since its conception. Synod encourages the Master and all those involved today to faithfully continue this heritage for the glory of God.

(Ms Nicola Warwick-Mayo 11/09/2023)

7/23 World Mental Health Day – 10 October 2023

Synod, noting that over two in five Australians aged 16-85 years (43.7% or 8.6 million people) are estimated to have experienced a mental disorder at some time in their life, encourages our parishes to raise awareness of the prevalence of mental health issues in our churches and communities, and of available resources and support, by promoting, participating in and praying for World Mental Health Day (October 10), including by using the resources from The Mental Health and Pastoral Care Institute (<https://mentalhealthinstitute.org.au/for-churches/world-mental-health-day/>).

(Bishop Gary Koo 11/09/2023)

8/23 Youthworks' ministries

Synod, noting that almost 80% of church-goers say that they made decisions to follow Christ before their nineteenth birthday and 56% say they had a formative spiritual experience on a Christian camp, thanks God for the ministries of Youthworks, particularly –

- (a) the Port Hacking conference centres that are undergoing significant improvements to their accommodation units to enable more people from more churches to have more time in temporary Christian community, and
- (b) the creation of a secure Salesforce portal to assist local church SRE coordinators in more easily administering their SRE teachers thereby freeing up more volunteer ministry time for face to face gospel ministry,

and seeks God's blessing on these endeavours that more young people in our city and beyond might question, explore and discover life-giving faith in Jesus Christ.

(The Rev Tom Hargreaves 11/09/2023)

9/23 Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017

Synod, noting that the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017 (MSO)* has been in operation for five years, asks Standing Committee to investigate –

- (a) the impact of the complaints processes of the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry (**ODSM**) under the MSO on church workers, their families, and their parish ministry, including duration of complaints handling, impact of confidentiality requirements, perceptions of the investigation process, and general confidence in the process,
- (b) the adequacy of support arrangements for complainants and respondents involved in ODSM processes,
- (c) the cost of processing complaints that ultimately do not proceed, or return no finding of unfitness, and how those costs can be minimised,

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- (d) what steps can be taken to minimise negative impacts on church workers and their families that result from false, trivial or vexatious complaints,
 - (e) whether the shift to a fitness for office test has achieved the intended objectives, what costs it has involved, and whether it should be maintained,
 - (f) whether complaints of child sexual abuse and bullying are best governed by a common process and/or ordinance, or whether these complaints require different approaches, processes and/or ordinances,
 - (g) the extent to which the biblical necessity for church discipline and the practical requirements of such church discipline are properly considered in our approach to, and definitions of, bullying and harassment, and
 - (h) how we can make better use of the Diocesan policy for dealing with allegations of unacceptable behaviour and other processes in resolving conflict apart from the MSO,
- and report its findings and recommendations to the 2024 session of Synod.

(The Rev Craig Schafer 11/09/2023)

10/23 Leadership of Indigenous Ministry in the Diocese

Synod, noting the report 'Leadership of Indigenous Ministry in the Diocese' –

- (a) expresses its gratitude for the work of the volunteers who serve on the Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples' Ministry Committee (SAIPMC),
- (b) notes the report from the SAIPMC that Indigenous ministry in the Diocese is hampered because a committee of volunteers is not able to lead and drive the vision for Indigenous ministry (and true gospel reconciliation) across our Diocese and beyond,
- (c) expresses in-principle support for the recommendation of SAIPMC for the recognition and appointment of an Indigenous person (or persons) to lead and represent Indigenous ministry in our Diocese,
- (d) requests the Standing Committee to appoint a committee to explore how best to implement the recommendation of SAIPMC. The committee should consider –
 - (i) the scope of the role,
 - (ii) whether this role should be full time or part time, and/or a possible staged implementation,
 - (iii) whether there should be Indigenous representation on the Standing Committee,
 - (iv) the appropriate form of appointment (e.g., Canon, Archdeacon or Bishop), and
 - (v) the funding of this role, and
- (e) requests, to the extent that the recommendations of the committee require ordinance changes, that such changes be brought to the next session of the Synod for consideration.

(Bishop Michael Stead 11/09/2023)

11/23 Commencement of voluntary assisted dying in NSW

Synod, noting the report 'The commencement of voluntary assisted dying in NSW' –

- (a) gives praise and thanks to God for his continued goodness in the provision of care and support to older persons living in residential aged care homes by Anglican Community Services (Anglicare Sydney),
- (b) thanks the members of the Archbishop's Working Group on Voluntary Assisted Dying and recommends the Working Group's Report to all who consider the passage of the Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2022 (NSW) (Act) to be a tragedy for our society and a profound challenge for the church,
- (c) commends the decision by Anglicare Sydney to continue providing aged care services whilst adopting an approach that refuses to actively support euthanasia but complies with the Act, regulations and guidelines as far as a biblically informed Christian conscience will allow,
- (d) prays for the care and protection of all residents, their families and friends, and the staff, executives, and Board of Anglicare Sydney, as access to voluntary assisted dying becomes available on 28 November 2023 and beyond,
- (e) reaffirms its opposition to voluntary assisted dying and calls on the NSW Parliament to repeal the Act, and failing that to administer the Act in such a manner as to permit faith-based organisations,

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including residential aged care providers, who oppose euthanasia on the grounds of institutional conscientious objection, not to participate in, facilitate or permit voluntary assisted dying in or at their premises, facilities or services in any way,

- (f) affirms its commitment to supporting Anglicare Sydney as, confident in the goodness of God and the goodness of his word, it continues to work out the contours of faithfulness to Christ in humble obedience to the teaching of Scripture, even when faithfulness to this teaching is opposed by our governments, other institutions or prevailing popular opinions, and
- (g) resolves to stand with Anglicare if, like many faithful saints who have gone before us and many others around us, it is required to make costly decisions in order to maintain faithfulness to Christ.

(Mr Greg Hammond OAM 11/09/2023)

12/23 Implementation of recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Synod, noting the report '7/22 Implementation of the Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse', requests the Standing Committee to provide a further update to the next session of the Synod in relation to implementation of the actions set out in the table to the report.

(Mr Lachlan Bryant 12/09/2023)

13/23 New Diocesan Bishops

Synod –

- (a) notes that, since it last met –
 - (i) the Ven Darrell Parker was consecrated at St Andrew's Cathedral on 3 February 2023 and installed as the eighth Bishop of North West Australia at Holy Cross Cathedral in Geraldton on Wednesday 15 February 2023,
 - (ii) the Right Rev Jeremy James was installed in the Cathedral of St Peter and St Paul, Port Pirie as the eighth Bishop of Willochra on 25 February 2023, and
 - (iii) the Right Rev Jeremy Greaves was elected on 26 August 2023 as the tenth Archbishop of Brisbane and Metropolitan of the Province of Queensland, and will be installed on 16 December 2023 at St John's Cathedral, and
- (b) assures these bishops of our prayers and good wishes in their episcopal roles, praying –

Lord, bless your servants Darrell, Jeremy and Jeremy called to the work and ministry of a bishop. So fill them with the truth of your doctrine and clothe them with holiness of life, that they may faithfully minister in this office to the glory of your name and the benefit of your Church. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

(Adapted from The Consecrating of a Bishop, AAPB p.617)

(Bishop Michael Stead 12/09/2023)

14/23 Ordination Policy

Synod, noting that the current Ordination Policy was last updated in 2019, and that the world and ministry environment has changed significantly since, recommends that the Archbishop review and update the Ordination Policy with a view to increasing the quality and quantity of Gospel workers across the Diocese.

(The Rev Dr Raj Gupta 12/09/2023)

15/23 Funding for Work Outside the Diocese

Synod notes that –

- (a) the Work Outside the Diocese allocation for 2024 in the *Synod Appropriation and Allocations Ordinance 2023* is based on 4.5% of the total income available to Synod,
- (b) this is despite a 22% increase in available income compared to 2023,
- (c) past Synods have requested 5% of the available income to be applied for this purpose, and

(d) the relevant report states that the percentage reduction is temporary, and therefore requests Standing Committee to work towards appropriation bills that return to the policy of applying 5% of available income for Work Outside the Diocese in future years.

(The Rev Gavin Poole 12/09/2023)

16/23 Anglicare's Disaster Recovery

Synod notes that –

- (a) 2023 marks 25 years of the Disaster Recovery ministry in NSW led by Anglicare Sydney,
- (b) the ministry was first established by the Province in 1998 as a response to the bushfires of 1994 and 1997, with the intention of providing an Anglican presence, support and relief to communities experiencing natural disasters,
- (c) over the 25 year of Disaster Recovery, Anglicare Sydney has been the authorised agent of the Province to represent all the Dioceses in NSW, coordinating a parish based volunteer response in partnership with other Anglicare agencies, and
- (d) Anglicare's Disaster Recovery volunteers are trained, registered and ready to go at a moment's notice to provide material aid and general support in evacuation and recovery centres, during natural and other significant disasters.

Synod thankfully acknowledges –

- (a) the significant role that parishes and more than 750 current trained volunteers have played in supporting communities in times of natural disasters, including fires, floods, storms and displacement of communities by war,
- (b) the ongoing importance of this ministry in building recovery resilience and connection, especially in times of loss, and grief and dislocation, and
- (c) the central role that Anglicare Sydney has played in coordinating and managing this ministry across the whole State.

Synod also encourages parishioners to consider becoming Disaster Recovery volunteers, given the concerns being expressed at the expected scale and severity of the imminent bushfire season, and its very real potential to again impact communities across NSW. Noting that interested people can find out more by emailing: disasterrecovery@anglicare.org.au.

(The Rev Dr Andrew Ford 12/09/2023)

17/23 ABC Documentary: Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds

Synod respectfully invites all members to watch the ABC documentary *Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds* on iView, which can be found at the following link –

<https://iview.abc.net.au/show/old-people-s-home-for-4-year-olds>

(Mr Chris Hamam 12/09/2023)

18/23 SBS Documentary: The Children in the Pictures

Synod respectfully invites all members to watch the SBS documentary *The Children in the Pictures* at SBS On Demand which can be found at the following link –

<https://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/tv-program/the-children-in-the-pictures/1957876291797>

(Mr Chris Hamam 12/09/2023)

19/23 Christian Preschools

Synod encourages all Preschools and Long Day Care centres over which our parishes have influence to –

- (a) have a Christ-centred constitution,

- (b) have a Christian Director, and
- (c) have a Christ-centred curriculum.

(Mr Chris Hamam 12/09/2023)

20/23 Purpose and priorities for our Diocesan Fellowship

Synod, noting that the horizon envisaged by Mission 2020 has now passed –

- (a) gives thanks to God for the way he used Mission 2020 to further the work of the gospel in the Diocese,
- (b) welcomes the leadership of the Archbishop as expressed in the document *Purpose and Priorities for our Diocesan Fellowship*, and
- (c) calls on all our churches, schools, and organisations prayerfully to consider how they can contribute to the purpose and priorities the Archbishop has articulated.

(Archdeacon Simon Flinders 12/09/2023)

21/23 Diocesan Organisations pursuing the broader charitable purposes of the Diocese

Synod, recognising the increasing need for, and benefits of, diocesan organisations working together as part of the broader diocesan network –

- (a) recognises the document *Purpose and Priorities for our Diocesan Fellowship* as an expression of the 'broader charitable purposes of the Diocese' for the purposes of the Synod's *Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations*,
- (b) notes that, in conformity with the Synod's Governance Policy, a number of diocesan organisations have sought and obtained amendments to their constituting ordinances which expressly permit them to pursue their specifically mandated purpose in a manner which also advances the broader charitable purposes of the Diocese,
- (c) regards such amendments as a tangible expression of commitment to working together as part of the broader diocesan network and encourages all diocesan organisations, to the extent they are legally able to do so, to consider seeking such amendments,
- (d) requires all Category Two and Category Three diocesan organisations (under the *Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995*), except for schools, to annually report to Synod a summary of the steps they have taken in pursuit of the broader charitable purposes of the Diocese, and
- (e) encourages all Diocesan schools (mentioned in Category Three of the *Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995*) to annually report to Synod a summary of the steps they have taken in pursuit of the broader charitable purposes of the Diocese.

(Mr Simon Miller 12/09/2023)

22/23 SAIPMC Statement on the Voice Referendum

Synod welcomes the statement of the Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples' Ministry Committee about the Voice referendum, as follows –

'The Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples' Ministry Committee affirms that God's voice is sovereign over all peoples and lands, and notes –

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been denied a voice following European settlement in this land,
- that there are benefits and challenges for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through a recognised Voice to the Australian parliament,
- the passing of Resolution 33/22 'First Nations Voice' by the Sydney Anglican Diocesan Synod, and
- the 'Statement on the Voice to Parliament' as affirmed by the General Synod Standing Committee of the Anglican Church of Australia.

We encourage all church members to prayerfully seek God's voice as they search his wisdom in considering a 'yes' vote for the approaching referendum.'

(Mrs Briony Bounds 12/09/2023)

23/23 Statement of Funding Principles and Priorities 2025-2027

Synod approves the 'Statement of Funding Principles and Priorities 2025-2027'.

(Canon Phillip Colgan 12/09/2023)

24/23 South Western Region buildings and property strategy

Synod, noting the report 'South Western Region buildings and property strategy' –

- (a) notes that the members of Synod have been invited to provide feedback on the draft South Western Region Buildings and Property Strategy, and that they can send their feedback on the Strategy to the Diocesan Secretary (DiocesanSecretary@sydney.anglican.asn.au) by 30 November 2023,
- (b) requests the Standing Committee to consider approving the South Western Region Buildings and Property Strategy, having taken into account the feedback from Synod members, and
- (c) requests the Standing Committee to prepare the remaining four Regional strategies and an overarching Diocesan-wide property strategy in support of ministry and report back to the next session of the Synod.

(Bishop Peter Lin 12/09/2023)

25/23 Online Sports Betting – Federal Harm Reduction

Synod, noting that the Bible says, 'Whoever mocks the poor insults his Maker; he who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.' (Proverbs 17:5) –

- (a) thanks the Federal Government for the steps they have already taken to address the public health crisis that is caused by online sports betting; in particular that the Federal Government has –
 - (i) introduced the 'You win some, you lose more' campaign which mandated clearer warnings about the harms of online sports betting,
 - (ii) mandated that advertising for online sports betting include contact details of support services that can assist individuals experiencing gambling harm, and
 - (iii) held a wide ranging Parliamentary inquiry titled 'You win some, you lose more: Inquiry into online gambling and its impacts on those experiencing gambling harm' producing unanimous bipartisan recommendations,
- (b) calls on the Federal Parliament, in light of this above inquiry and report, to implement the full 31 recommendations of the committee; in particular, that –
 - (i) the responsibility for online gambling harm reduction be held by a single Australian Government Minister (Recommendation 1),
 - (ii) the Australian Government prohibit all online gambling inducements and inducement advertising, without delay (Recommendation 16), and
 - (iii) the Australian Government implement a comprehensive ban on all forms of advertising for online gambling, with the phased implementation commencing as soon as possible (Recommendation 26),
- (c) requests that the Diocesan Secretary communicate the contents of this resolution to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Federal Opposition, along with the Minister for Communications, and the Minister for Social Services, and
- (d) encourages all members of Synod to write to their local Federal Members of Parliament urging them to support and implement all the recommendations of the 'You win some, you lose more: Inquiry into online gambling and its impacts on those experiencing gambling harm' report.

(Dean Sandy Grant 12/09/2023)

26/23 NSW Poker Machine Use – State Harm Reduction

Synod, noting that –

- (i) Almighty God calls on governing rulers to ‘defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed; (Psalm 82:3),
 - (ii) \$8 billion is lost annually through poker machines in NSW (i.e., approximately \$23 million every day), disproportionately from lower socioeconomic areas of NSW, where poker machines are often most concentrated, and
 - (iii) documents recently tabled in the NSW Parliament from a 2021 series of club inspections, as part of an Anti-Money Laundering Project run by NSW Liquor and Gaming and the NSW Crime Commission, revealed investigators suspected \$5.5 million was laundered through 178 venues, just in a seven week period, with ten venues accounting for more than 40% of that total, mainly located in south-west Sydney,
- (a) thanks the NSW State Government for the steps it has already taken to address the public health crisis that is caused by poker machine gambling in NSW; in particular that the NSW State Government has –
- (i) shepherded legislation through the NSW Parliament to ban political donations from licensed clubs with poker machines,
 - (ii) instructed Liquor & Gaming NSW to enforce laws already in place to eliminate external gambling-related advertising, and
 - (iii) committed to a trial of a mandatory cashless gambling card system for poker machines in NSW, to be overseen by an independent advisory panel comprised of industry, harm minimisation, academic, cyber crime, police, and union representatives,
- (b) calls on the NSW Government to implement this trial as swiftly as possible, within a framework of pre-implementation testing for a mandatory cashless gaming card, which public health, law enforcement and welfare policy experts have already recommended as a most effective harm minimisation method, both for problems caused by gambling and by money-laundering,
- (c) supports urgent consideration by the NSW Government of the calls from NSW MPs –
- (i) requesting a Royal Commission into the conduct, integrity and influence of the gambling industry in NSW, and
 - (ii) transferring regulation and oversight of ‘casino-like’ clubs operating more than 250 gaming machines from the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority to the NSW Independent Casino Commission,
- (d) requests that the Diocesan Secretary communicate the contents of this resolution to the Premier of NSW, the NSW Leader of the Opposition, and the Minister for Gaming and Racing, and
- (e) encourages all members of Synod to write to their local Members of the Parliament of NSW urging them to work diligently towards reducing the misery caused by poker machine gambling.

(The Rev David Yung 12/09/2023)

27/23 Hungry or Homeless – Tough Choices in a Cost-Of-Living Crisis

Synod –

- (a) notes the excellent qualitative research report ‘Hungry or Homeless – Tough Choices in a Cost-Of-Living Crisis’ published in May 2023, that details the confronting strategies that low income households are utilising to cope with current high inflation environment, involving rising rental, interest rates, food and energy prices, such as going without food or heating or medical care so as to avoid eviction and the threat of homelessness,
- (b) acknowledges that too many are impoverished in our society and are unable easily to experience the contentment that Scripture both prays for and urges, when it says, ‘Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread’ (Proverbs 30:8) and ‘if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that’ (1 Timothy 6:8),
- (c) is thankful for our churches’ partnership with Anglicare in delivering emergency food and financial aid, financial counselling, access to case management and advocacy, since we remember that ‘If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?’ (1 John 3:17), and recommits our members to this partnership,

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- (d) notes that report's conclusion that, 'A coordinated, multifaceted approach by all levels of government is required which targets the low level of JobSeeker and rapidly expands the supply of social and affordable housing. The levels of hardship being experienced by so many in our community, many of whom are children, need to be addressed if we are to ensure that people are not going hungry, can pay their bills and are not at risk of homelessness', and therefore
- (e) encourages local church ministers and members to contact their federal and state MPs urging prompt practical action in light of the above, towards the improvement of our social welfare safety net and increased supply of affordable and public housing.

(Dean Sandy Grant 12/09/2023)

28/23 Questions during debates on motions

Synod, noting that –

- (a) Part 4 – Resolutions of the *Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019 (the Ordinance)* provides no clear permission for questions to be asked during debate on motions, and
- (b) it is often desirable for questions to be asked during debate on motions, requests Standing Committee to consider whether the Ordinance should be amended, and if so, to bring any amendment to a forthcoming Synod.

(The Rev Nigel Fortescue 13/09/2023)

29/23 Prayer for the Brisbane 2024 Gafcon Australasia Conference

This Synod –

- (a) gives thanks to God for his work in and through the Gafcon movement to promote the gospel, uphold mission and welcome orthodox Anglicans whoever and wherever they are,
- (b) recognises the importance of the next Gafcon Australasia conference in Brisbane next July and encourages each parish and diocesan organisation to send delegates,
- (c) delights in the choice of the Reverend Mike Dicker, Principal of Youthworks College, as the keynote Bible speaker, and encourages prayer for him and the conference that they may sit humbly under the word of God and grow in their confidence in the power, clarity and goodness of his word, and
- (d) commits to pray that this conference will strengthen faithful Anglican ministry throughout Australasia, so that the gospel will go forward, the church will be built and the Lord will be honoured.

(The Rev Jodie McNeill 13/09/2023)

30/23 Implementation of the Domestic Abuse Policy

Synod respectfully encourages parish councils to –

- (a) familiarise themselves with the newly revised Diocesan Domestic Abuse Policy,
- (b) adopt the revised model parish domestic abuse policy (Appendix 7),
- (c) display and otherwise utilise resources such as –
 - (i) posters from the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry (**ODSM**),
 - (ii) the Policy's flow chart and table of contacts,
 - (iii) 'The Use and Misuse of Scripture with Regard to Domestic Abuse' (Appendix 2), and
 - (iv) other language resources of the same, where available from the ODSM,
- (d) make links to local domestic violence services,
- (e) appoint a domestic abuse contact person within the parish, and
- (f) request their rector to –
 - (i) teach clearly and periodically in this area in line with the policy,

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- (ii) ensure training for parish clergy and church workers in the area of domestic abuse response is ongoing and refreshed,
- (iii) consider primary prevention programs such as 'Before It Starts' for youth groups,
- (iv) review the approach used by parish clergy to marriage preparation and enrichment for sensitivity to domestic abuse dynamics (noting Appendix 9), and
- (v) consider training in the dynamics of trauma, with resources from Anglican Deaconess Ministries' Mental Health & Pastoral Care Institute providing a possible starting point.

(Archdeacon Kara Hartley 13/09/2023)

31/23 Australian Racing Christian Chaplaincy

Synod thanks God for twenty years of faithful service by Australian Racing Christian Chaplaincy, encourages it to continue to share the love of God with the 160,000 people who work or are volunteers in the Racing Industry, and assures them of our prayers.

(Mr James Flavin 13/09/2023)

32/23 Performance Appraisals of Ministry Workers

Synod, noting the report 'Performance Appraisals of Ministry Workers' –

- (a) invites members of the Synod to provide feedback to the Diocesan Secretary by 31 December 2023 on the proposed arrangements for all ministry workers in the Diocese to undergo regular performance appraisals as contemplated in the report, and
- (b) requests the Standing Committee to implement arrangements for regular performance appraisals for all ministry workers in light of feedback received.

(The Rev Dr Raj Gupta 13/09/2023)

33/23 Review of the Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations

Synod, noting the report 'Review of the Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations' –

- (a) affirms that churches, schools and organisations to which the policy is proposed to apply, in pursuing their individual charitable purpose(s), are partners in our shared ministry, and part of a network collectively seeking to advance the broader charitable purposes of the Diocese while maintaining high standards of governance,
- (b) confirms the importance of churches, schools and organisations to which the policy is proposed to apply pursuing their individual charitable purpose(s) in a manner which is consistent with the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Sydney,
- (c) requests Synod members, churches, schools and organisations to which the policy is proposed to apply, to review the Exposure Draft and provide feedback to the Governance Policy Review Committee by 31 December 2023, and
- (d) requests that a further revised form of the Governance Policy be brought back to the Synod in 2024 incorporating, as appropriate, comments and feedback from Synod members, churches, schools and organisations to which the policy is proposed to apply.

(Bishop Chris Edwards 13/09/2023)

34/23 Diocesan Governance Policy – tiered model of governance

Synod endorses the approach of creating a tiered model of governance as outlined in the Exposure Draft of the revised Diocesan Governance Policy, noting that feedback has been requested regarding the churches, schools and organisations to be included in each tier.

(Mr Greg Hammond OAM 13/09/2023)

35/23 Diocesan Governance Policy – Christian faith and character

Synod endorses the approach of requiring governors and leaders to be of Christian faith and character, as outlined in the Exposure Draft of the revised Diocesan Governance Policy, noting that feedback has been requested on the definition of ‘Christian faith and character’ included in the Exposure Draft, and how this requirement can be best ensured.

(Bishop Chris Edwards 13/09/2023)

36/23 Encouragement to speak of the Christian hope

Synod recognises –

- (i) that in his death and resurrection, Jesus Christ defeated sin, death and the devil (Col 2:14, Heb 2:14),
- (ii) that through Jesus’ death and resurrection, Christians have the sure hope of life with God and his people forever (1 Peter 1:3, 2 Cor 4:14),
- (iii) that God has given life and it is not ours to take away (Job 10:12, Deut 30:19-20, Gen 9:5-6, Exo 20:13), and
- (iv) the tragedy when a person desires to end their life or the life of the unborn,

and encourages –

- (a) Christians to speak of –
 - (i) the hope that can be found in Jesus for all people, including any who are considering ending their life or the life of the unborn (2 Cor 4:13), and
 - (ii) the life of faith and love that can be found following Jesus (Col 1:5),
- (b) local church leaders to consider how they can equip their members for this task, and
- (c) pastors, youth group leaders, chaplains and other faith leaders to commend that this priority of cherishing life flows out of the fullness of God’s salvation story in creation, fall, redemption, and glorification.

(The Rev Chris Braga 18/09/2023)

37/23 Professor Penelope Coombes

Synod gives thanks to God for the life, work, and lay ministry of the late member of the Synod, Professor Penelope (Penny) Coombes, and prays for her widowed husband Warwick.

Professor Penny Coombes was Head of Occupational Therapy at the NSW College of Paramedical Studies (from 1975, the Cumberland College of Health Sciences) from 1972 to 1981, and Managing Director of People for Places and Spaces from 1982. Penny was a dedicated Synod lay member, representing Woollahra (2004-2006), and Bondi and Waverley (2016-2022).

(Mr Chris Hamam 18/09/2023)

38/23 The Kigali Commitment – Gafcon IV 2023 Global Conference

Synod, noting the Kigali Statement from the gathering at Gafcon IV 2023 –

- (a) gives thanks for –
 - (i) the Gafcon movement which guards and proclaims the unchanging Biblical truth in a changing world,
 - (ii) God’s grace in gathering together over 1,300 faithful Anglicans (including 315 bishops, 456 other clergy and 531 laity) from around the world at the Global Anglican Future Conference in Kigali, Rwanda in April 2023,
 - (iii) the generous hospitality of Archbishop Laurent Mbanda, his family, and the Anglican Church of Rwanda,
 - (iv) the faithful commitment of The Rev Canon Daniel Willis as Gafcon Director and Mr Paul Mirrington as Conference Director with their teams and volunteers in organising the conference,

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- (b) receives 'The Kigali Commitment' (available online at <https://www.gafcon.org/news/gafcon-iv-the-kigali-commitment>) with thanksgiving, and encourages Sydney Anglicans to read it for encouragement and prayer,
- (c) rejoices in the generous provision, through the Work Outside the Diocese Committee, of 48 bursaries, allowing delegates from 9 under-resourced partner countries to attend Gafcon IV, and
- (d) undertakes to pray for Gafcon to remain a Bible-based, orthodox Anglican, and gospel mission focused global movement under the direction of His Spirit for the honour of our Lord Jesus.

(The Rev Robin Kinstead 18/09/2023)

39/23 Persecution of Christians in Manipur

Synod –

- (a) expresses its deep concern and prayers regarding the violent persecution of Christians in the Indian state of Manipur,
- (b) recognises the media reporting about the burning of Christian churches and the brutality of ongoing violence suffered by the Kuki-Zo tribe, particularly the sexual violence perpetrated against women. Further recognises that within the two tribes clashing (Meitai & Kiki-Zo), Christians and Churches of both communities are affected,
- (c) calls on the Australian Government to formally call upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his administration to take immediate and substantial measures to address the ongoing violence in Manipur, and
- (d) requests parishes to pray for the protection of our brothers and sisters in Manipur and encourages churches to support through Anglican Aid's tax-deductible "Aid for Manipur" fund <https://anglicanaid.org.au/projects/aid-for-manipur/>.

(The Rev Stephen Cook 18/09/2023)

40/23 50th Anniversary of Sydney Diocesan Services

Synod –

- (i) noting that Sydney Diocesan Services was first constituted as the central administrative service provider of this Diocese 50 years ago on 30 July 1973 - initially with a membership comprising all members of the Standing Committee, and
- (ii) recognising the significant contribution made by SDS, and its members and staff, during this time in supporting our shared purpose of making disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ,

gives thanks to God for the work of SDS and prays that SDS will continue to faithfully and effectively serve this Diocese as its central provider of professional services and administrative support during this time of increasing change and complexity.

(Mr John Pascoe 18/09/2023)

41/23 New Anglican Youthworks Year 13 Director

Synod praises God for the crucial ministry of Anglican Youthworks and the exciting news of the appointment of the new Year 13 Director, the Rev Steve Carlisle of Helensburgh Anglican, starting 27 November 2023.

(The Rev James Warren 18/09/2023)

42/23 Long Term Pooling Fund

Synod –

- (a) notes that the transfer of trusteeship in the Long Term Pooling Fund from the Anglican Church Property Trust to the Glebe Administration Board has been completed in accordance with the resolution of Synod last year,
- (b) commends the Anglican Church Property Trust on its successful trusteeship of the Fund over 25 years,

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- (c) prays for the continued successful stewardship of the Fund by the Glebe Administration Board, and
- (d) notes that parishes holding funds not immediately needed for ministry may consider, in a spirit of good stewardship, investing them in the Long Term Pooling Fund and further notes that the *Long Term Pooling Fund Ordinance 2012* provides that the Trustee is to maintain the real value of the Fund.

(The Rev Andrew Schmidt 18/09/2023)

43/23 Appreciation of AFES and FIEC

Synod notes, with appreciation, our gospel partnership with the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES) and the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC) and is thankful, in particular, for their raising up of men and women for ministry, and study at Moore Theological College.

(The Rev Andrew Barry 18/09/2023)

44/23 Sports Chaplaincy

Synod, noting that Sports Chaplaincy Australia has nominated the second Sunday in September as 'Sports Sunday' encouraging churches to hear about, pray for and encourage involvement in the ministry of Sports Chaplaincy,

- (a) gives thanks –
 - (i) for the ministry of Sports Chaplaincy Australia over many years in placing chaplains in sporting clubs & communities, and
 - (ii) for the chaplains involved across many different sporting codes in our diocese and beyond, and
- (b) asks ministers to prayerfully consider how to support the work of Sports Chaplaincy Australia through promotion in our local churches and encouraging those already involved in sport to consider training as chaplains in a ministry which seeks to be a faithful presence and witness for the Lord Jesus in a mission field that sees 14 million people participating across the country.

(The Rev Dr Richard Wenden 18/9/2023)

45/23 Anglicare Northern Inland

Synod –

- (a) gives thanks for vibrant work of Anglicare in the Diocese of Armidale,
- (b) notes that in 2018 –
 - (i) the Diocese of Armidale and Anglicare Northern Inland approached Anglicare Sydney with a request for help and proposed a possible merger,
 - (ii) the viability of Anglicare Northern Inland was significantly compromised due to the inability to undertake effective tendering, branding and marketing, and
 - (iii) Anglicare Northern Inland had 13 staff, 3 volunteers and insufficient funds to sustain its operations,
- (c) acknowledges the careful negotiations between Anglicare Sydney, Anglicare Northern Inland and the Diocese of Armidale that led to the merger of Anglicare Northern Inland and Anglicare Sydney in July 2018,
- (d) notes that in 2023 Anglicare Northern Inland –
 - (i) has 40 staff and 20 volunteers,
 - (ii) has more than \$3.5million in funding, including government and donation income,
 - (iii) offers services in Mental Health, Aged Care, Counselling, Financial Counselling & Assistance, Community Pantries, Housing, Out of Home Care, Aboriginal Cultural Advisors and Trainees, Chaplaincy, Partnership Development with local churches and a revamped Disaster Recovery team, and
 - (iv) serves around 1,000 people in need each year across the Diocese of Armidale,

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- (e) notes that –
 - (i) since the merger the Diocese of Armidale and Anglicare have built a fresh, mutually beneficial relationship that has seen rapid growth in services and local parish/Anglicare partnerships,
 - (ii) the relationship with the Diocese of Armidale is on a strong footing with both the former Bishop and the current Bishop Rod Chiswell, supportive of the work of Anglicare, and
- (f) commits to pray for the ongoing growth in the partnership between Anglicare Northern Inland and the parishes of the Diocese of Armidale, that together their love and concern for the local communities might adorn the gospel and open doors into unreached communities and areas of need, so together they might share the love of Jesus in word and deed.

(The Rev Dr Andrew Ford 18/09/2023)

46/23 Assistant Director of Evangelism and New Churches

Synod, noting the increased allocation of funds to Evangelism and New Churches (ENC) in 2024 for the position of Assistant Director, gives thanks for the appointment of Mr David Jensen to this position with ENC for 2024. David will be known to many in the Diocese and comes to this role with experience as an evangelist, church planter, preacher/teacher and trainer in churches in Sydney, Ireland and the Central Coast of NSW. David will build on the good work begun by the Rev John Lavender assisting churches in the Diocese in their evangelistic endeavours to see lost people find life and hope in Jesus.

Synod encourages parishes to pray for David and others in the ENC team and to utilise him and the others available like him to sharpen their evangelistic effectiveness for the salvation of many to the glory of God.

(The Rev Philip Wheeler 18/09/2023)

47/23 Support for Anglican Defence Chaplaincy

Synod, noting –

- (i) the ongoing work of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, and
 - (ii) the recent loss of an Army MHR90 Taipan helicopter with four crew members in a training exercise,
- (a) acknowledges with thanks the daily commitment of every member of the Australian Defence Force as they protect our nation, and the significant cost of that service,
 - (b) recognises the vital ministry of the 101 Anglican Defence Force Chaplains currently serving alongside, and providing pastoral and spiritual support to, those sailors, soldiers and aviators (and their families) both at home and on operations around the globe, and
 - (c) commends the annual observance of Defence Sunday (the Sunday preceding Remembrance Day – see defenceanglicans.org.au) to parishes as a day to –
 - (i) remember the service and sacrifice of all who have served their nation in peace and war, especially those who died in theatre or afterward from injuries sustained,
 - (ii) pray for the physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of all serving ADF members and their families, and
 - (iii) hear from, support, encourage and pray for Defence chaplains as they seek to share Jesus' love with all who serve.

(The Rev Andrew Nixon 18/09/2023)

48/23 Non-Disclosure Agreements

Synod –

- (a) gives thanks for the important work of the committee established by the Standing Committee to review the use of Non-Disclosure Agreements and Non-Disparagement Clauses in the Diocese,
- (b) grieves that such agreements could be used to silence victims and cover up sin,
- (c) requests that the committee's report be presented at the next session of Synod with a recommendation concerning the use of such agreements in our Diocese, and
- (d) prays for those impacted negatively by these agreements.

(Canon Alistair Seabrook 18/09/2023)

49/23 Prayer for the recovery of Miss Michelle Seers

Synod prays for the recovery of Michelle Seers (Youth and Pastoral Worker at Blackheath) following the major car accident she was involved in last week, that she will have a speedy recovery, physically and mentally, and that God will be with her family as they support her, and with all the medical staff treating her.

(Miss Jenny Flower 18/09/2023)

50/23 Diocesan Governance Policy – Statement of Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness

Synod encourages the Governance Policy Review Committee to continue exploring the approach of requiring governors and leaders to provide a signed Statement of Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness substantially as proposed in the Exposure Draft, noting that this requirement is not intended to be a substitute for requiring that governors and leaders be of Christian faith and character, and that feedback has been requested on this approach.

(Ms Anne Robinson AM 18/09/2023)

51/23 Foster Carer and Kinship Week

Synod, on the occasion of 'Foster Carer and Kinship Week' (September 10-16) –

- (a) notes with grave concern the dire shortage of residential foster carers in New South Wales, resulting in an alarming number of children being placed in alternative emergency housing such as hotels, motels, and various sorts of group homes (<https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/no-safe-place-to-call-home-vulnerable-children-housed-in-hotels-amid-foster-carer-crisis-20230908-p5e35f.html>), and therefore
- (b) exhorts all rectors to –
 - (i) inform their parishioners about the current need for foster carers,
 - (ii) ask their parishioners to consider prayerfully whether foster care might be a way that they are called to fulfill the biblical injunction to care for children in need (cf. James 1:27),
 - (iii) connect their parishioners to Anglicare's excellent foster care information and resources (available at: <https://www.anglicare.org.au/what-we-offer/foster-care-adoption/foster-care/> and <https://fostercare.anglicare.org.au>),
 - (iv) encourage all parishioners to pray for, and to support practically, other Christians who serve as foster carers, and
 - (v) consider making 'Foster Carer and Kinship Week' each September something that their parish notes, celebrates, and prays for.

(The Rev Dr Matthew Wilcoxon 18/09/2023)

52/23 Pastoral Supervision in the Diocese of Sydney

Synod, noting the report 'Pastoral Supervision in the Diocese of Sydney' –

- (a) affirms the importance of Pastoral Supervision, both as a measure to enhance the ministry wellbeing and development of church workers in the Diocese, and to implement a recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse,
- (b) requests the Archbishop-in-Council to approve a Pastoral Supervision Policy as provided for by the *Pastoral Supervision Ordinance 2023*,
- (c) requests that the Pastoral Supervision Policy include a review date five years in the future, and
- (d) requests Standing Committee give consideration to facilitating professional research to evaluate the effect of the policy during the review period.

Synod also requests that –

- (i) consideration be given to exempting from the requirement for pastoral supervision new assistant ministers and other church workers undertaking the 3-year post-college Ministry Development program, given their program already involves guided reflection, mentoring, participation in 360-degree feedback and use of other psychometric tools,
- (ii) in the production of the Pastoral Supervision policy, consideration be given to including options for costless or low-cost forms of pastoral supervision, including but not limited to group pastoral supervision,
- (iii) alongside and in conjunction with the production of the Pastoral Supervision Policy, a holistic consideration of the whole suite of expectations on ministry workers' time (with regard to training, support and development) be conducted in order to determine if there are redundancies that can be eliminated to make up for the added time and potential cost of pastoral supervision, and
- (iv) the Pastoral Supervision Policy provide for the confidentiality of discussions between church workers and Pastoral Supervisors.

(Bishop Peter Lin 18/09/2023)

53/23 General Synod Long Service Leave Fund

Synod –

- (a) notes the General Synod Long Service Leave Fund was established by a General Synod canon more than 60 years ago when the forms of paid ministry were very different to the various ministries which exist now, and
- (b) asks the Standing Committee –
 - (i) to consider whether the circumstances have changed so much over the last 60 years that it may be wise to establish a Sydney Long Service Leave Fund which could have the flexibility to reflect modern ministry arrangements,
 - (ii) to consult with the Board of the General Synod Long Service Leave Fund, former members of the Board and others as appropriate, and take whatever action it considers to be in the best interests of the ongoing ministry both in the Diocese of Sydney and the wider Australian church.

(Dr Robert Tong AM 19/09/2023)

54/23 Temporary arrangements for diocesan schools

Synod, noting –

- (i) that it has endorsed the approach of requiring governors and leaders to be of Christian faith and character, as outlined in the Exposure Draft of the revised Diocesan Governance Policy, to be further considered at the Synod next year, and
- (ii) that the Synod has not yet made a decision whether the new Diocesan Governance Policy will require a signed Statement of Personal Faith,

encourages the Standing Committee to –

- (a) consider approving appropriate temporary arrangements for Diocesan schools based on the proposed 'Christian faith and character' model, provided that the temporary arrangements also

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require a signed Statement of Personal Faith in the form currently required by ordinance from the majority of Diocesan schools, and

- (b) report progress to each future session of Synod until these arrangements are no longer required.

(Bishop Michael Stead 19/09/2023)

55/23 Reformed Evangelical Anglican Church of South Africa (REACH-SA)

Synod, noting –

- (i) the long partnership between the Diocese of Sydney and the Reformed Evangelical Anglican Church of South Africa (REACH-SA), and
 - (ii) that the Synod of that Church met from 11 to 13 September 2023,
- (a) gives thanks to God for –
 - (i) the election of the Rev Dr Siegfried Ngubane as the eighth Presiding Bishop of the REACH-SA,
 - (ii) the faithful service of the current Presiding Bishop, the Rt Rev Glenn Lyons who will hand over leadership at a date to be announced, and
 - (iii) the election of three new Area Bishops for the largest regions (dioceses) in REACH-SA, and
 - (b) requests that the Archbishop's office write to Dr Siegfried and Mrs Maureen Ngubane and to Bishop Glenn and Mrs Sandra Lyons assuring them of the prayers of our people, expressing the congratulations of this Synod and the commitment of this Diocese to continued gospel partnership.

(Bishop Malcolm Richards 19/09/2023)

56/23 Partnership with Anglican Schools

Synod, noting the report 'Recommendations from the Education Committee' –

- (a) acknowledges and thanks Anglican Schools for their work as partners in the mission and ministry of the Diocese,
- (b) requests the draft statement on Reformed Anglican Education be presented to School Principals and ordained chaplains for their consideration and comment, particularly with reference to the nature and purposes of Anglican Schools within the larger context of Reformed Anglican Education,
- (c) requests the Standing Committee to form a suitably qualified committee, including current Anglican School principals and ordained chaplain(s), to prepare a draft statement for adoption by the Synod in due course, and
- (d) encourages participation by Anglican School staff in mentoring, professional development and networking through diocesan associations and professional bodies.

(The Rev Dr Michael Jensen 19/09/2023)

57/23 Training opportunities for Anglican educators

Synod recommends that the Standing Committee –

- (a) request SDS to include instructional training that provides contextual information about the Diocese and its structures in conjunction with SDS supported AICD governance courses, and to offer this training or an alternate version to diocesan school staff (possibly using a similar online platform as is currently operating for safe ministry training),
- (b) request the education advisor (or, in the absence of an education advisor, the Archbishop's delegate) to consult and work collaboratively with suitably qualified chaplains and heads of Christian Studies to determine time- and cost-effective models and pathways for inter-school Christian Professional Development for Christian teachers, including proposals for suitable tertiary institutional engagement (if any),
- (c) request the education advisor (or, in the absence of an education advisor, the Archbishop's delegate) to develop partnerships with university Christian fellowships in order to promote training opportunities and access to tertiary courses with cross-institutional credit which train teacher education students in distinctively Christian teaching,

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- (d) request the education advisor (or, in the absence of an education advisor, the Archbishop's delegate) to report to the Standing Committee the findings at (b) for review and presentation to Synod, and
- (e) consider ways to fund such requests.

(The Rev Dr Gavin Perkins 19/09/2023)

58/23 Grace City Church

Synod notes that Grace City Church, Waterloo, has been declared to be a recognised church by the South Sydney Regional Council from 1 January 2021 under clause 8 of the *Recognised Churches Ordinance 2000*. Grace City began as an initiative of Evangelism and New Churches, and held its first public service in May 2015. Synod thanks God that from small beginnings, Grace City has grown both numerically and spiritually, and joins in praising God as it celebrates its 8th year of ministry.

(The Rev Tim Clemens 19/09/2023)

59/23 Box Hill

Synod praises God for the acquisition of the property at 158 Boundary Rd, Oakville for the establishment of a new church in the Box Hill area. We thank God for the partnership of the parishes of Pitt Town and Rouse Hill, the Anglican Church Growth Corporation and Evangelism and New Churches, and for the appointment of the Reverend Chris Mann as the church planter.

(Bishop Gary Koo 19/09/2023)

60/23 Archdeacon Narelle Jarrett

Synod gives thanks to God for the life and ministry of Archdeacon Narelle Jarrett, who went home to be with the Lord on Friday 4 November 2022.

After graduating from the University of New South Wales (BA and Dip Ed), Narelle started teaching at Sydney Girls High School. There, she was led to Christ by another teacher and began attending St John's, Darlinghurst. After teaching, Narelle studied at Deaconess House, completing her ThL (Hons) in 1969 and London BD in 1970. She was active in ministry within the Sydney Diocese before she was admitted as a deaconess in 1985 upon her appointment as Principal of Mary Andrews College (formerly Deaconess House). She was ordained Deacon in 1989, among the first cohort of female deacons. As Principal of Mary Andrews College, Narelle had a significant role in training and development of the female students at Moore Theological College, as well as serving as a lecturer in Church History and Pastoral Care and training lay women across the Diocese. In 2002, she was appointed Archdeacon for Women's Ministry, while continuing as Principal of Mary Andrews College.

In 2008 she became Archdeacon full time and held this position until her retirement in 2012. Narelle also served on various boards such as the Council of Ministry Training & Development, the Mission Task Force, the Standing Committee and Synod of the Sydney Diocese as well as General Synod. She was active in the governance of the Archbishop's Overseas Mission Fund and Anglican Deaconess Ministries. She also served as an Honorary Minister at South Coogee. Synod gives thanks to God for Narelle's valuable contribution to the life of our Diocese, her passion for advancing the ministries of women and her commitment to biblical truth and making Christ known.

(Archdeacon Kara Hartley 19/09/2023)

61/23 Archdeacon Neil Atwood

Synod, noting that Archdeacon Neil Atwood begins leave on the 23 September 2023 and will officially retire in March 2024, gives thanks to God for Neil and his wife Robyn's service of the gospel for over 45 years. Having served in the parishes of Dapto, Normanhurst, Willoughby, Tregear, Mt Druitt, Toongabbie and Springwood before taking up his current role in the Western Region from 2011 first as the Assistant to the Bishop and most recently as Archdeacon, Neil has demonstrated a great love for the people of the Western Region with its great number of communities, cultures and churches. We are also thankful to God for the additional responsibilities he assumed in support of Bishop Ivan Lee, Bishop of Western

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Sydney, during his sustained illness. Further, we note that since 2014 Neil has combined his regional role with that of ODSM Parish Consultant, leading the production of online Safe Ministry Training, and supporting parish Safe Ministry Representatives.

As Neil and Robyn retire, Synod prays that the Lord would continue to use them to his honour and glory.

(The Rev Roger Cunningham 19/09/2023)

62/23 Bishop Rick Lewers

Synod notes that Bishop Rick Lewers is due to retire in October 2023 after 35 years of ordained ministry, and has served at Liverpool (1988-1992), Wanniasa in Canberra (1992-2002), the Department of Evangelism (2002-2005), Engadine (2005-2012), as Bishop of Armidale (2012-2021), and finally at Shoalhaven Heads (2021-2023).

Synod gives thanks to God for Rick, a sinner saved by grace, who is a lover of the Lord Jesus Christ, wonderfully partnered with Janene, persistent evangelist, shepherd of the flock, valiant for truth, pastorally caring, encourager of others in faithfulness, and always a "straight shooter", and prays for God's continued blessing on Rick and Janene in their life and ministry together.

(Dean Sandy Grant 19/09/2023)

63/23 Bishop Ross and Mrs Jenny Nicholson

Synod records its appreciation for the ministry of Bishop Ross and Mrs Jenny Nicholson and gives thanks to God for –

- (a) their faithful parish ministry in this Diocese,
- (b) their involvement in numerous diocesan organisations and pastoral ministry groups,
- (c) Ross' work as both a parish minister and as Bishop in Launceston, Tasmania, and
- (d) their zeal and passion for the cause of Christ,

and prays God would lead them and bless them and use them more and more in the next phase of their life together.

(Bishop Chris Edwards 19/09/2023)

64/23 Attendance Patterns and Mission in the Diocese

Synod –

- (a) gives thanks to the Lord for –
 - (i) the faithful Anglican ministry efforts of both laity and clergy since 1788,
 - (ii) the crucial work of Moore Theological College, Anglicare, Youthworks, diocesan schools and other ministry organisations, in supporting the ministry of the Diocese's churches,
 - (iii) the visionary and theological leadership of archbishops, past and present, and
 - (iv) the property and financial resources which facilitate the ministry of the Word,which have all contributed to almost 40% of the national Anglican Church's weekly attendance being within the geographical boundaries of the Diocese of Sydney,
- (b) therefore encourages all Sydney Anglicans to pray for the lost, so that the Lord would open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in Christ (Acts 26:18),
- (c) notes –
 - (i) the baby boomer generation, which constitutes a large percentage of the average attendance per week, has begun its progression to glory,
 - (ii) the population within the boundaries of the Diocese is booming and is projected to include an additional one million people by 2041,
 - (iii) the majority of that net population growth is expected to reside within the brownfield areas of Sydney, and

- (iv) the challenges of ministering with ageing and often inadequate infrastructure within those brownfield areas,
- (d) further notes the external, forthcoming government-imposed challenges to overcome, that may adversely affect the impact of our ministries, and
- (e) requests the Standing Committee to initiate an analysis of average attendance trends, and an assessment of the likely impact of social changes upon average attendance, and report back to Synod in 2024.

(The Rev Zac Veron 19/09/2023)

65/23 Conversion Practices Legislation

Synod –

- (a) reaffirms Synod Resolution 31 of 2018, in particular that –
 - (i) ‘the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Sydney does not practise, recommend or endorse “gay conversion therapy”, defined as psychological practices that ‘seek to re-orient sexual attraction to heterosexuality’, and that
 - (ii) Synod ‘values prayer for same-sex attracted Christians who wish to live celibate lives, noting that prayer is not a form of “gay conversion therapy”’,
- (b) notes that the Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2023 (NSW), introduced by Mr Alex Greenwich, has been closely modelled on the *Victorian Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021*, and adopts its expansive redefinition of Conversion Practices by including the broad and vague concept of suppression, according to which the following are illegal –
 - (i) a religious leader meeting one-on-one with a member of their congregation to encourage them not to act on same-sex attraction by practising celibacy,
 - (ii) religious teaching that someone is ‘broken’ because of their sexual orientation or gender identity,
 - (iii) the provision of support through group prayer to a young person to help them fight a desire to act on their feelings of same-sex attraction,
 - (iv) a religious leader telling a member of their congregation that they will be excommunicated if they continue their same-sex relationship,
 - (v) parents declining to support their child’s request for puberty blockers if a health professional recommends it, or otherwise restricting their child access to any health care services that would affirm their child’s gender identity, and
 - (vi) a teacher telling a student that God does not accept them unless they keep the sex they were assigned at birth and dress accordingly
(All examples from <https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/change-or-suppression-practices/have-you-experienced-a-change-or-suppression-practice/>),
- (c) notes the pre-election commitments of the Premier and other members of the ALP that its legislation would prohibit ‘dangerous and damaging’ conversion practices, but that it would not ban a consenting individual seeking prayer or other advice and assistance, nor would it ban the expression of religious belief through religious teaching,
- (d) notes that the government’s Consultation Paper on Banning Conversion Practices has proposed an approach that is very similar to the Victorian legislation and the Bill introduced by Mr Greenwich, which is inconsistent with the ALP’s pre-election commitments,
- (e) calls on the Minns Labor Government to uphold its commitments regarding LGBTQ conversion therapy by introducing legislation that –
 - (i) bans dangerous and damaging practices that seek or promise to change sexual orientation, but does not use the broad and vague concept of ‘suppression’,
 - (ii) does not prohibit a consenting individual from seeking the support and assistance that they consider appropriate for themselves,
 - (iii) does not prohibit religious instruction and guidance that encourages church members to live in conformity with the ethical teaching of the Scriptures by not acting on desires that are contrary to this teaching,
 - (iv) does not expose parents to prosecution for failing to affirm and support their child’s sexual orientation or gender identity, and

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- (v) does not introduce a bias towards gender-affirming treatment and the threat of prosecution for health professionals who recommend a different treatment approach, and
- (f) encourages Sydney Anglicans to meet with, or write to, their local MP to express their concerns and requests, and notes that Freedom for Faith has developed resources to assist in organising meetings and writing letters (<https://contactyourmp.org.au>).

(Bishop Michael Stead 19/09/2023)