

Financial support for the Diocese of Bathurst

(A report from the Standing Committee.)

Purpose

1. To provide a mission update from the Diocese of Bathurst following the Diocese of Sydney's commitment of financial support; and to seek an extension of financial support for a further six years.

Recommendations

2. Synod receive this report.
3. Synod agree in principle to provide financial support of \$250,000 per year towards the costs of a Bishop and his registrar for the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst for a period of six years from 2025, subject to the Bishop of Bathurst during that time having the written support of the Archbishop of Sydney.

Background

4. At the Second Ordinary session of the 51st Synod, the Synod received a report from Bishop Michael Stead and passed the following resolution about financial support for the Diocese of Bathurst –

8/18 Financial support for the Diocese of Bathurst

Synod, noting the report Proposal to financially support the Diocese of Bathurst, agrees in principle to provide financial support of \$250,000 per year towards the costs of a Bishop and his registrar for the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst for a period of six years, subject to the Bishop of Bathurst during that time having the written support of the Archbishop of Sydney.

5. Synod's initial six year financial commitment covers 2019-2024. Mark Calder was elected bishop on 30 August 2019.
6. The Diocese of Bathurst has provided the **attached** report as a mission update on the impact of the support from Sydney. This will be supplemented by a short audio-visual presentation to the Synod.
7. The Sydney Synod will consider the *Funding Principles and Priorities* that will underpin Synod budgets for the next triennium at Synod next year (2023). By passing the suggested motion to agree in principle to continue to support gospel ministry in the Diocese of Bathurst, this commitment will be incorporated into the *Funding Principles and Priorities* that come to Synod next year.
8. A commitment for a further 6 years is sought, as this will provide time to consolidate the gains already made, implement the new Strategic plan, and provide certainty in the transition to the next Bishop of Bathurst. (Mark Calder reaches the statutory retirement age as Bishop in June 2029. A six year funding commitment from 2025 goes through until the end of 2030, giving an 18 month buffer after the appointment of the next Bishop of Bathurst). The proposed funding commitment has the same condition as the current commitment: ongoing funding is conditional on "the Bishop of Bathurst during that time having the written support of the Archbishop of Sydney." Bathurst's Bishop's Election Ordinance also replicates this same condition.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

DANIEL GLYNN
Diocesan Secretary

22 August 2022

Diocese of Bathurst – with heartfelt thanks

With heartfelt thanks for your generous gift and a request that renewal of the gift might be considered

1. History

- (a) **Bathurst Diocese – ‘financially distressed’** – The General Synod Diocesan Financial Advisory Task Force lists only the Bathurst Diocese as ‘financially distressed’.¹ Due to unwise financial decisions in the past, the diocese was faced with a \$40M debt to the Commonwealth Bank (CBA). Settlement required the sale of all Diocesan schools and many significant properties – many of which had been income producing. Thankfully, the bank issued a deed of release, and we have no further obligation to the CBA. However, during this time, the Endowment of the See had also been run down to zero as the capital was spent. Tragically, redress payments have also cost the diocese \$6M to this point and claims continue to be made. Only the sale of further property can fund these payments.
- (b) **Bishop Palmer and Archbishop Glenn Davies** – Archbishop Raffel, in an interview with Bishop Calder recorded in February 2022, commented that a renewed relationship between Bathurst Diocese and Sydney Diocese, began when Bishop Ian Palmer and Archbishop Glenn Davies struck up a personal friendship which grew into a gospel partnership. Both bishops then worked with their own synods to see what might develop. Kanishka observed that the decision of the two bishops and the two synods to work together in this way was a work of God. You can see this section of the interview here: <https://youtu.be/cA24vBuqx4M?t=481>.
- (c) **A generous offer** – The Standing Committee and Synod of Sydney offered a generous gift to the Bathurst Diocese of \$250,000 a year for 6 years to fund our bishop and registrar/business manager. This is year 4 of that gift. Without such generosity, the future of the diocese would not have been viable.
- (d) **Subsequent change to the Bathurst Diocese bishop’s election ordinance** – it is significant to note that, without objection, Bathurst Diocese agreed to the request of the Sydney Synod, that their bishop’s election ordinance be changed to include the requirement that the Archbishop of Sydney must agree to the list of final nominees for Bishop of Bathurst, prior to the final election by the bishop’s election board. It is believed that this reflected not only the serious nature of the financial need, but a desire from the Synod, for a bishop who would assist in bringing a gospel-focused, Jesus- centred change to the diocese.
- (e) **Election of Mark Calder as bishop 30 August 2019** – Archbishop Glenn Davies indicated his approval of all the names on the final list which the election board considered. Subsequently, the Rev’d Mark Calder, rector of the parish of Noosa in the Diocese of Southern Queensland, was elected. Mark studied at Moore Theological College and served as Rector of St Andrew’s Roseville for 18 years prior to serving 10 years as Rector of Noosa.

2. COVID-19

- (a) **Delay in physically getting around the diocese** – just four months following Bishop Calder’s consecration and installation (21 and 23 of November 2019), COVID lockdown occurred. This severely limited Mark’s plans in getting around the diocese and getting to know people and observe ministry.
- (b) **Increased exposure across the diocese and in every church** – when lockdown began in late March 2020, only two parishes (out of 30 at the time), were able to offer any online ministry. Mark set about immediately to offer two complete pre-recorded services each week via his YouTube channel – one traditional and the other contemporary. This meant that for four months, most people across the diocese were watching Mark’s services and hearing him preach. The impact of this ministry is still being felt. It assisted many in the diocese to get to

¹ Report to Standing Committee of General Synod 12-13 November 2021.

know Mark. Many found the teaching in the weekly sermon inspiring and encouraging. Some became Christians. Others grew in their understanding of the gospel and became assured of their salvation. Some people who had attended traditional services all their life, found they preferred the contemporary service as they loved the fresh approach, the music and seeing young people involved. Mark still produces a sermon each week which is screened in the Sunday service of many parishes without clergy.

3. Return for investment

By the close of 2022, \$1M will have been given to Bathurst Diocese by the Sydney Diocese. How is it possible to measure the impact of such a gift? Without the gift, the parish levies necessary to support the bishop and business manager would have crippled local ministry. Instead, parishes are now able to put their limited resources into ministry at the coalface.

However, more significantly, the appointment of a Bishop with a charge from the election board to implement not just any change but Jesus-focused change has brought a greater emphasis on gospel proclamation, expositional Bible teaching, ministry with a strategic intent and equipping each member so that members might use their gifts in the service of their church and community.

The appointment of a bishop with Sydney connections has also meant he has been able to recruit Bible college graduates for ministry in the West who are having their own profound effect in the parishes they serve.

- (a) **New clergy** – in 2½ years, Mark has ordained and/or appointed
1. Andrew Thornhill from SMBC to Coonabarabran
 2. Wally Cox from Moore College to Blayney
 3. Steven Klouth from SMBC to an assistant role at the cathedral
 4. Kevin Simington – an experienced pastor – as honorary ministry consultant in the diocese
 5. Roger and Sally Phelps from SMBC to Parkes
 6. James Daymond (Moore and SMBC) as deacon evangelist in Mudgee
 7. Bec Choi as an assistant in Blayney (currently studying through Ridley College)
 8. Ben Mackay from SMBC to Parkes
 9. David Blackmore (an experienced minister ordained in Newcastle) to Cudal-Molong
 10. Matthew Brooks-Lloyd from Sydney Diocese to Rylstone-Kandos in Cudgegong Valley parish
 11. Cathy Brooks-Lloyd to youth and children's work in Rylstone-Kandos
 12. Andy Martin from Oak Hill College UK, to Holy Trinity Orange (starts Oct 2022)
 13. Tim Smith from Moore College to Grenfell (starts 2023)

Appointments pending

14. An appointment to Cowra of a Moore College graduate (in partnership with BCA)
15. Jonny Lush – location under discussion – will be ordained in December - a graduate of the Brisbane School of Theology
16. Pending – location under discussion – another graduate from Moore College

Mark is also in discussion with another 4-5 ministers or students considering ministry in the diocese.

- (b) **Renewed leadership** – we are thankful that there is renewed leadership in the following boards and positions:
- i. Bishop-in-council (BiC); Anglican Property Trust (APT); and Bishop's election board
 - ii. Business manager/registrars
 - iii. Office administration

- (c) **Parish partnerships** – we are grateful that several Sydney parishes have formed partnerships with parishes in our diocese for the purposes of mutual support, financial assistance, and the possibility of doing mission together. For example:
- i. Norwest and Blayney – doing an Easter mission with SU next year
 - ii. Lithgow and Coonabarabran – pulpit exchange, prayer points, possible mission team visiting Coonabarabran
 - iii. St Andrew’s Roseville and St Philip’s South Turrumurra providing financial support for the Rev’d Bec Choi in Blayney parish. Bec has visited, and the bishop has preached at both parishes in recognition of the partnership
 - iv. Springwood and the 10am service at the Cathedral – prayer, preaching, possible mission
- (d) **Bishop-in-council taskforces** – following the Synod in September last year, Bishop Calder was instrumental in the establishment of the following task forces of bishop-in-council:
- i. **Strategic planning** – to work towards formulating a strategic plan for the diocese which would be capable of adoption by each parish by adapting the plan for their own context. The plan was launched on 30 July 2022 at the annual diocesan conference.
 - ii. **Recruitment pathways** – to investigate and target people at all different stages to recruit as gospel workers in the diocese: those we can send to college to return to minister here; those in various Bible colleges at present; those already serving in ministry elsewhere. Bishop Calder, for each of the last two years, has visited and either preached or led seminars and met with students at Moore College, SMBC, Ridley, Queensland Theological College, and Brisbane School of Theology. We are excited by the possibility of working with Bishop Rod Chiswell in Armidale Diocese who is keen to help funnel trained curates via Armidale to Bathurst Diocese for appointment. Our inability to supply training roles for graduates, with the necessity they move directly into leading a parish, means that some do not feel able to consider serving here directly from college.
 - iii. **Financial sustainability** – the initial focus of this taskforce is to obtain a clear picture of the current financial position of our parishes and determine possible ways towards financial sustainability for both parishes and the diocese in the future. The work of this task force is continuing, however, in the end, we recognise that the only way to long term financial sustainability is good gospel proclamation and Bible teaching ministry in our parishes which brings growth and generosity.
 - iv. **Ordinance review** – this taskforce is currently working through our administration ordinance with a view to achieving greater clarity, removing inconsistencies, and reflecting a deeper gospel focus on the purpose and intent of our parish and diocesan administration.
- (e) **A strategic plan for the diocese launched 30 July** (see appendix) – with the catch phrase, ‘*SHARING JESUS for LIFE*’, the plan reflects our desire to inspire and equip our people to become disciples who are so focused on, and enlivened by the Lord Jesus that they cannot help but share the news of the life we have through him with others. Members of the strategic planning taskforce will make themselves available between now and the end of 2022 to consult with each parish to assist with implementing 3-4 ideas from the plan immediately, and work towards longer term implementation over the next 3-4 years.

The bishop’s keynote address from the launch may be viewed here:

<https://youtu.be/sMvIPyuQm-4>

4. The present

We have 28 parishes, 14 without clergy. Many are unable to support full-time clergy; some are unable to support any.

Here are our parishes with stipendiary clergy:

	Parish	Clergy	Full time/part time	Comment
1.	Cathedral	Dean James Hodson Phil Howes Steven Klouth (BCA)	5 days Full time Full time	Phil established a contemporary service which is growing. Phil is funded by donors
2.	Kelso	Canon Tim Fogo	5 days	Tim is our Ministry Development officer, 1 day a week.
3.	Blayney	Wally Cox Bec Choi	4 days 3 days	Funded by Sydney parishes
4.	Forbes	Roger and Sally Phelps	4 days between them	Deacon team leaders
5.	Parkes	Ben Mackay	5 days	Newly ordained
6.	Dubbo	Brett Watterson	Full time	Has some assistance from honorary clergy
7.	Cudgegong Valley	Jono Williams Matthew-Brooks-Lloyd James Daymond (BCA)	Full time 3 days 5 days – evangelist	Takes in Mudgee, Gulgong, and Rylstone-Kandos
8.	Holy Trinity Orange	Andy Martin	Full time	Starts October
9.	St Barnabas Orange East	Bob Cameron	4 days	
10.	Canowindra	Joy Harris	4 days	Cooperating parish – UCA
11.	Cudal-Molong	David Blackmore	4 days	
12.	Coonabarabran	Andrew Thornhill	Full time	
13.	Grenfell	Tim Smith	Full time	Starts 2023, fundraising 40% of his stipend
14.	Wellington	Carl Palmer	Part time	Deacon - honorarium

Here are our parishes *without* clergy:

	Parish	Future	Full time/part time	Comment
1.	Cowra	Appointment pending	Full time – due to BCA	Thanks BCA
2.	West Wyalong	Hopeful of appointment	Full time – due to BCA	Thanks BCA
3.	Cobar	Hopeful of appointment	Full time – due to BCA	Thanks BCA
4.	Narromine	No one in pipeline	Bishop wants full time	Will need help
5.	Gilgandra	No one in pipeline	Bishop wants full time	Will need help
6.	Oberon	Hopeful of appointment	Outside funding pledged	Very thankful/hopeful
7.	Coonamble	May afford two days a week No one in pipeline	Bishop wants full time	Will need generous help
8.	Nyngan	May afford two days a week No one in pipeline	Bishop wants full time	Will need generous help
9.	Coolah-Dunedoo	Currently has house-for-duty minister	Bishop wants full time	Will need generous help
10.	Cumnock	May afford a day a week No one in pipeline	Needs to be linked	And will need help!

	Parish	Future	Full time/part time	Comment
11.	Trundle	Can afford a day a week No one in pipeline	Bishop wants full time	These two parishes may be able to work together with someone working full time across both parishes
12.	Condobolin	Can afford a day a week No one in pipeline	Bishop wants full time	
13.	Bourke/Brewarrina	Can afford a day a week No one in pipeline	Bishop wants full time	Will need generous help
14.	Warren	Might afford a day No one in pipeline	Perhaps link to Nyngan	Will need generous help

More generally, we are currently reviewing our property portfolio to identify more properties to sell; finalising new arrangements regarding levels of insurance for various parish buildings; recommending a new stipend and allowances package; ensuring our safe ministry screening and practices are in line with policies; working with Bishop Chiswell to create pathways to serve in Bathurst via Armidale, and preparing for Synod on 16-17 September.

5. The future

Under God, we feel that the future is very encouraging. We have a bishop who is committed to teaching God's word and proclaiming the Gospel. We are seeing more people coming to minister in the West and enquiring about the same. We have a strategic plan in place to give direction and practical help to parishes to reach our lost generations. We are seeing growth in some parishes with new families joining us. We have leadership in BiC and APT committed to good governance and wise stewardship, and who are also gospel focussed and Jesus centred. We have a business manager who is working to identify greater efficiencies in all that we are doing.

However, we know that turning around a diocese and its parishes is hard, slow work. By the end of 2024, we will not be in a position to replace the Sydney gift either from our own parishes nor anywhere else. To expect our parishes to double their current Synod contributions would cripple ministry at the coal face. To re-establish the Endowment of the See would require at least a \$5M capital injection, which would be needed to provide the equivalent of the gift via interest.

It is with great thanks to God for all that has occurred so far for the good of gospel ministry; and with dependence on God and trust in his sovereign hand, that we ask you to consider renewing your generous gift for a further six years.

2024 is the final year of the Synod's six-year funding commitment. We understand that the Sydney Synod in 2023 will consider and approve the *Funding Principles and Priorities* that will underpin the Synod budgets for the next triennium. We humbly ask the Synod to indicate its desire to continue its commitment to supporting gospel ministry in the Diocese of Bathurst at Synod this year, so that this can be included in the *Funding Principles and Priorities* that come to the Synod next year.

The Synod's first six-year commitment has led to a renewal of gospel focussed ministry in our diocese. A commitment for a further 6 years will undoubtedly consolidate the transformation currently underway, as gospel proclamation and clear Bible teaching releases the lost from sin and death, prepares the saints for works of service, and builds up the body of Christ until we are unified in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to all the measure of the fullness in Christ.

Signed with heartfelt thanks,

The Rt Rev'd Mark Calder
Bishop

Dr Warwick Baines
Business Manager and Registrar

Canon Tim Fogo
Ministry Development Officer



SHARING JESUS *for* LIFE

Sharing

Jesus

Life

VISION

A **MISSIONAL** church that is lovingly connecting with their community and effectively sharing Jesus.

A **JESUS - CENTRED** church where Jesus is worshipped in spirit and truth and the Bible is clearly taught.

A **DISCIPLING** church producing life-long disciples of Jesus who are trained and equipped for ministry.

SERVICES

- Church services that are welcoming, engaging and compelling
- Minimising formality and ritual to effectively communicate the Gospel to a contemporary world

- Church services in which Jesus is central, and God's Word is preached clearly and applied powerfully
- Clear, relevant prayers, Bible readings and songs that are Jesus-centred and Gospel focused

- Church services that involve and develop the gift ministry of believers
- Preaching which transforms and equips believers for life-long discipleship

BIBLE STUDIES

- Regular courses for introducing people to Jesus and the Christian faith
- Effective discipleship of new Christians

- Develop a growing number of ongoing Bible study groups that are Bible-based and Jesus-focused
- Co-ordination of Bible studies with the preaching program

- All church members encouraged to join a Bible study group
- Structure and content of Bible study groups facilitate personal growth in all aspects of discipleship

POSSIBLE PROGRAMS & STRATEGIES

- Develop an invitational culture
- Occasional non-threatening social events for inviting friends
- Occasional Gospel events and/or evangelistic services for inviting friends
- Effective welcoming and follow up of newcomers
- Effective advertising and promotion of the church within the community
- More effective connection with existing contacts (baptisms, confirmations, weddings, etc)
- Special annual services to honour and pray for key community groups (RFS, local council, etc)
- Develop a needs-based outreach ministry providing practical care in Jesus' name
- Develop age-appropriate ministries (eg, children, seniors, young mothers)
- Training courses to equip believers to share Jesus simply and effectively
- Develop appropriate pathways and resources for evangelising and discipling

- Foster dependence upon Jesus by a commitment to regular corporate prayer that underpins and upholds all church programs and ministries
- Encourage obedience to Jesus by the intentional pursuit of personal and corporate holiness
- Reflect the love of Jesus by the intentional pursuit of love, forgiveness, unity and hospitality within the church
- Revel in the grace of Jesus through the joyful and reverent celebration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- Honour Jesus through the generous, sacrificial giving of time, talents and money by church members
- Faithfully serve Jesus through wise governance of the church and good stewardship of resources
- Model Jesus by the establishment and nurturing of godly leaders who are led by the Spirit of Christ and reflect Jesus to the church.

- Develop and promote resources to facilitate personal daily Bible reading and prayer
- Encourage and facilitate personal prayer partners, for the purposes of mutual encouragement, accountability and support in walking with Jesus.
- Train and equip Bible study leaders
- Train and equip pastoral carers
- Train and equip lay service leaders
- Train and equip Bible readers and pray-ers for church services
- Train and equip a welcoming team for services and events
- Train and equip people to disciple others
- Train, equip and develop a growing team of preachers and teachers
- Develop and resource age-appropriate ministries (such as children, youth, young adults, retirees, young mothers, etc)
- Encourage and facilitate participation in conferences, seminars and online courses for people wanting to go deeper in their faith

INDICATORS

- New people coming into relationship with Jesus and incorporated into the church family
- Practical care provided to the community in the name of Jesus
- Growth of the church's favourable reputation in the community

- ↑ understanding of the Gospel
- ↑ number of Bible study groups
- ↑ obvious love and unity
- ↑ hospitality in each other's homes
- ↑ people attending prayer meetings
- ↑ people attending services regularly
- ↑ health of finances and resources

- ↑ trained leaders for ministries
- ↑ people in Bible study groups
- ↑ number of ministries
- ↑ people involved in ministries
- ↑ number of people across all ages and backgrounds within the church

CHALLENGES

- ISSUES:**
1. Ageing buildings requiring high maintenance
 2. Parishes spread thinly between multiple worship centres
 3. Ageing congregations with limited energy
 4. Limited finances in many parishes
 5. Many parishes without clergy
 6. Too many worship services in some churches

- CONSIDER:**
1. Renovate or sell and relocate, either buy or rent
 2. Close smaller worship centres and combine for ↑ impact and ↑ efficiency of resources
 3. Pray for young families and create an environment to attract them (contemp. service)
 4. Seek financial advice from Diocese re: priorities and possible steps forward
 5. Utilise occasional locum ministries and short-term missions.
 6. Consolidate services to enhance unity and maximise resources