

Proposal to change the status of the provision parish of Ashbury to a parish

(A report from the South Sydney Regional Council.)

Initiation of Proposal

1. A proposal was made to the Archbishop by the churchwardens of the provisional parish of Ashbury under clause 4(1)(b) of the Parishes Ordinance 1979.

Details of Meeting

2. A meeting of the South Sydney Regional Council held on 28 June 2006 considered the proposal under clause 5 of the ordinance. Council certified that all requirements under clauses 4, 5 and 6 have been complied with and recommends that the provisional parish of Ashbury becomes a parish from 1 January 2007.

Proposal

3. The proposal is to change the Provisional Parish of Ashbury to the Parish of Ashbury.

4. The provisional parish has applied for a change in classification following its growth in membership and ministry in recent years.

Parish Information

5. The provisional parish of Ashbury has been in existence since 1935 and had been blessed and encouraged by a number of significant ministries which drew to an end in 1995. At that point, the parish was joined with the parish of Summer Hill. Services were stopped and the only use of the church building was by a Korean congregation who rented it and the hall. In 2000 the Greek Bible Fellowship occupied the building until moving to St David's, Arncliffe in 2002. In early 2003, the Inner West Bible Fellowship, a congregation of St Matthias', Centennial Park, moved to St Matthew's from Marrickville West Public School where it had been meeting for several years. Peter Sholl, having founded this Bible Fellowship several years earlier and who at that time was in fourth year at Moore College, continued as the pastor. The congregation became part of the parish of Summer Hill with Ashbury under the general oversight of the Rev Trevor Oakley.

6. At the diocesan Synod in 2004, the provisional parish of Ashbury was recreated with the Rev Peter Sholl, now ordained, as the curate-in-charge. Slow but steady growth experienced over the life of the Bible Fellowship has continued with average adult attendance rising slightly from 42 to 48, the average number of children rising from 25 to 45, much of this growth coming from increased resources available to the Sunday Kids Church program.

7. The Sunday ministry format is one morning meeting with creche and Kids Church running in parallel for children aged 0 to 10. Sunday afternoons see regular training courses being run, which aim to equip St Matthew's partners with skills for personal ministry. On Sunday night, the St Matthew's preaching training workshop (Greenhouse4.2 named after Timothy 4.2) runs. This group of seven to eight people meets to hear a sermon and then together offer encouragement and critique to the preacher as well as spending time in prayer for approaching preaching opportunities. This is a great training opportunity for the parish's home-grown preachers as well as for several Moore College and SMBC students who join them each year.

8. Throughout the week, the majority of St Matthew's partners are involved in one of six prayer and Bible study groups which meet in various formats: women's groups, men's groups and mixed groups. St Matthew's partners are encouraged to be involved in global mission, particular through CMS. Each year, the congregation sends Peter Sholl to Kenya to teach the Moore College PTC course to Kenyan pastors; while also supporting gospel work amongst international students at UNSW. Introducing God and Simply Christianity courses are run regularly. Parishioners are active in door-to-door visitation in conjunction with Anglicare food collections.

9. The parish staff consists of one senior minister, a Sundays only assistant minister, two student ministers. In this the parish is assisted by a small grant from the Regional Council.

10. Sunday attendance is 60 adults and 35 children as follows –

10.00am	Main Sunday meeting	45 + 35 (NOTE above, average ch. 45)
6.00 pm	Preaching class	15

11. Besides the above activities and ministries, St Matthew's partners are active in teaching scripture at two local public schools and run an after school kids club which aims to reach out to local primary school children. They also run a play group which is popular with parents and young children, and provides excellent opportunities for gospel conversations.

12. The 2001 ABS census recorded the population of Ashbury at 3,089. 18.3% of these people claim adherence to a protestant religion. The estimated number of Anglicans is thought to be about 423.

Future plans

13. The provisional parish intends to continue to strengthen its ministry to people in the parish area and outside. It plans to both strengthen and increase its ministry in the schools and build relationships with families by contact with their children. There are plans to increase the level of employment of a children's worker and hopes to revive the now in recess evening church meeting. A sign of

the parish's life and entrepreneurial spirit is their willingness to be involved with Peter Sholl's ministry in Kenya and to see how that can be grown, and in the hands-on training of preachers not only from within their own congregation but from outside.

Particulars of Church Trust property

13. Details of property held by the Property Trust upon trust for the provisional parish are as follows –

Details	Insured Value
St Matthew's church building, corner Leith and Crieff Streets, Ashbury	\$1,358,000
St Andrew's church hall	\$676,000
St Andrew's rectory, 44 Goodlet Street, Ashbury	\$369,000

Summary of consolidated receipts and payments

14. A summary of the financial position over the last three years and the budget for 2006 is set out below:

Receipts	2004	2005	2006
Offerories	\$99,814	\$99,707	\$100,500
Missions	10,960	3,964	4,500
Interest	6,790	21,668	22,009
Grants		10,000	5,741
Other receipts	2,761	3,044	3,500
TOTAL	120,325	138,383	136,250
Payments			
Stipends/salaries	\$74,901	\$83,993	\$86,515
Cost recoveries	16,274	14,455	16,742
Operations	11,724	3,028	3,500
Events	7,056	9,652	5,000
Missions	10,960	4,787	5,000
Maintenance/ capital improve	1,574	8,049	14,000
Children's Ministry Equip	1,113	1,518	2,900
Other	1,205	398	2,593
TOTAL	124,807	125,880	136,250

15. The parish has no loans.

16. Archdeacon Deryck Howell supports the application.

Recommendation

17. The South Sydney Regional Council recommends that the provisional parish of Ashbury (St Matthew's) becomes a parish from 1 January 2007.

For and behalf of the South Sydney Regional Council.

DERYCK HOWELL
Archdeacon of South Sydney Regional Council

4 July 2006