

Ministry Spouse Support Fund Preliminary Report

(A preliminary report from the Professional Standards Unit.)

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the operation of the Ministry Spouse Support Fund (**MSSF**).

Recommendations

2. Synod receive this report.

Background

3. At its meeting on 15 April 2019, the Standing Committee, among other things, asked that –
 - (a) a report be provided regarding the Ministry Spouse Support Fund (MSSF) to the Standing Committee by June each year (commencing in 2020) detailing the total amount distributed from the MSSF and the number of ‘cases’ involved in the previous calendar year; along with an indication of the ongoing suitability of the level of funding and any additional commentary felt useful, and
 - (b) a preliminary report be provided to the Standing Committee in July 2019 indicating the initial use of the MSSF in its first six months (for promotion to the Synod).

Initial use of the MSSF

4. To date three payments have been made to ministry spouses who have been historical victims of domestic abuse, totalling \$69,701.82.
5. The spouses who have received payments have conveyed their gratitude and thanks for the establishment of the fund and have said that the impact of the funds are significant. The payments have mostly contributed to housing which has resulted in considerable stability for the spouses and their children at a time of major emotional, financial and often spiritual upheaval. All of the spouses who have received payment to date have been women.
6. The partnership with Anglicare in the areas of advice from Lynda Dunstan (the Family and Domestic Violence Advisor), counselling (personal and financial), the Shift Housing program and the skills of Family Relationship Centre counsellors and mediators has meant that the spouses are supported by skilled professionals with united aims to protect children and scaffold victims towards financial and sustained independence.
7. There is the likelihood of two or three more payments in this calendar year.

For and on behalf of the Professional Standards Unit

THE REV CATHERINE WYNN JONES
Chaplain and Manager Pastoral Care and Education

15 August 2019