

53rd Synod of the Diocese of Sydney

Second Session

Minutes of Proceedings of the Synod for Monday 23 September 2024

1. Assembly

The Synod assembled in the Wesley Theatre at 3.15 pm.

2. Prayers

Archdeacon Simon Flinders led the Synod in prayer.

3. Bible study

The Rev Kevin Kim led the Bible study.

4. Minutes

The President signed the minutes for Wednesday 18 September 2024.

5. Procedural motions

5.1 Recommendations from the Order of Business Committee

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

'Synod agrees to reschedule items of business as shown in marked form on the Timetable for Synod Business.'

Seconded and carried

5.2 Expedited time limits and procedures

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

'Synod –

- (a) adopts all the expedited time limits and all the expedited procedural rules, set out at subclauses 4.19(1) and 4.19(2) of the *Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019*, for Monday 23 September 2024,
- (b) notes that, among other things, the expedited procedural rules mean the Archbishop is not required to read aloud the answers to questions,
- (c) agrees to consider the time allocated to the mover of B6 (Synod Appropriations and Allocations Ordinance 2024) and B7 (Parochial Cost Recoveries Ordinance 2024) as a total time allocation for both proposed ordinances (i.e., a total of up to 24 minutes to move that each ordinance be approved in principle), and
- (d) agrees that M40 (Appointment of the Rev Jodie McNeill as Gafcon Global Operations Manager), M41 (The Rev Jodie McNeill and the parish of Jamberoo), and M44 (Nepali Church Plant in South Western Area) will each be moved formally, without a speech of the mover or seconder, followed by prayer, and
- (e) agrees to retain any specific arrangements already passed by the Synod by procedural motion, including speech time limits,

and suspends so many of the Standing Orders as would prevent the arrangements in paragraphs (c) and (d).'

Seconded and carried

6. Answers to Questions asked on Tuesday 17 September

Pursuant to the procedural motion passed at item 5.2, answers to questions were not read aloud.

6.1 Breaches of Faithfulness in Service

Miss Jan Syme asked the following question –

- (a) How many clergy and lay workers have been investigated by the Professional Standards Committee over the last 6 years?
- (b) How many of these were found to have breached one of the Faithfulness in Service conditions?
 - (i) How many of these were stood down?
 - (ii) How many of the breached conditions were about bullying?
- (c) How many breached two or more of the Faithfulness in Service conditions?
 - (i) How many of these were stood down?
 - (ii) How many of these included bullying as at least one of the breaches?
- (d) The Archbishop in the latest Southern Cross has written “no place for misconduct and abuse”. Does this apply to bullying?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be given on a subsequent day.

6.2 Higher Education Loan Program (HELP)

The Rev Dr Stephen Anderson asked the following question –

- (a) What planning has commenced around the impact of –
 - (i) the renewable HELP loan limit and
 - (ii) the 7-year HELP entitlement limit (introduced respectively in 2020 and 2022) upon those pursuing formal theological training?
- (b) Is there some suitably qualified group designing a pathway to ameliorate the foreseeable financial impediments to theological training, and especially the track towards ordination?
- (c) If so, what is the envisaged timeline until this is reflected in Synod's Allocations and Appropriations Bill?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be given on a subsequent day.

6.3 Anglicare research funding

Mr Gavin Jones asked the following question –

Can you please give a rationale for why Anglicare Research is proposed to be defunded in the next triennium?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be given on a subsequent day.

7. Answers to Questions asked on Wednesday 18 September

Pursuant to the procedural motion passed at item 5.2, answers to questions were not read aloud.

7.1 License/consecration of former Church of St Mark's, Freemans Reach

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

Why was the licence of the former Church of St Mark's, Freemans Reach revoked?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

7.2 License/consecration of Grace West Anglican Church

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

Why has (as at the time of publication of the 2022 – 2023 Year Book) Grace West Anglican Church – Silverdale not been licensed or consecrated as a church?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

7.3 Clergy Demographics

The Rev Michael Leite asked the following question –

In each year from 2013 to 2023 within all Diocesan Parishes:

- (a) How many full time Presbyters in total were licensed in the Diocese?
- (b) How many part time Presbyters in total were licensed in the Diocese?
- (c) How many full time Deacons in total were licensed in the Diocese?
- (d) How many part time Deacons in total were licensed in the Diocese?
- (e) How many full time licensed lay ministers in total were employed in the Diocese?
- (f) How many part time licensed lay ministers in total were employed in the Diocese?
- (g) How many ordained ministers left Parish work in the Diocese (excluding retirement)?
- (h) How many full time licensed lay ministers left Parish work in the Diocese (excluding retirement)?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

7.4 Retirement demographics

The Rev Michael Leite asked the following question –

In each year from 2024 to 2034 within all Diocesan Parishes:

- (a) How many of the current ordained ministers will reach the retirement age of 67?
- (b) How many of the current licensed lay ministers will reach the retirement age of 67?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

7.5 Deeds of Release

The Rev Michael Doyle asked the following question –

Noting the Archbishop's answers to question (b)(i) on item 4.21 on the business papers on 17/9/2024, of the 8 deeds the Archbishop is aware of:

- (a) Would any, if signed, have prevented the staff member or office holder from reporting any allegations of unacceptable behaviour to the relevant bishop or to the ODSM? If so, how many?
- (b) Was the Archbishop's office (Archbishop, senior clergy, archdeacons or similar) or any SDS employee in any way involved in the formatting, signing, passing on, recommendation or communication of these deeds to the staff members or assistant ministers?
- (c) Did the Archbishop's office (Archbishop, senior clergy, archdeacons or similar) or any SDS employee in any way encourage or advise the relevant senior minister, wardens, parish council, assistant minister or employee in the use of these deeds?
- (d) What was the nature of this encouragement or advice?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

7.6 Proceedings under the *Assistant Ministers Ordinance 2017*

The Rev Michael Doyle asked the following question –

Since the passing of the *Assistant Ministers Ordinance 2017*:

- (a) How many Notices of Intention to Terminate are the Archbishop's office (Archbishop, senior clergy, archdeacons or similar) or SDS employees aware of?
 - (i) Were any given for reasons that included performance concerns? If so, how many?
 - (ii) Have any been given for reasons that included the relevant assistant minister or employee making a claim that the parish is an unsafe workplace? If so, how many?
 - (iii) Have any reviews been requested as allowed under section 3B of the Assistant Ministers Ordinance? If so, how many?
 - (iv) What was the result of those reviews?
- (b) If any notices were given for reasons that included performance concerns:
 - (i) Were any preceded by a written performance plan? If so, how many?
 - (ii) Were any of the relevant assistant ministers or employees not previously given three written warnings that if their performance did not improve they would be terminated?
 - (iii) Did any result in the assistant minister resigning? If so, how many?
 - (iv) Did any result in the assistant minister being terminated? If so, how many?
 - (v) Did any result in performance being improved to an acceptable level? If so, how many?
- (c) Where the Archbishop's office (Archbishop, senior clergy, archdeacons or similar) or SDS employees have been involved in the process of the termination or performance management of employees or assistant ministers:
 - (i) Have the Archbishop's office or SDS employees acted on behalf of or request of the relevant senior minister in any instance? If so, in how many cases?
 - (ii) Have the Archbishop's office or SDS employees acted on behalf of or request of the relevant employee or assistant minister in any instance? If so, in how many cases?
 - (iii) Have the Archbishop's office or SDS employees attended meetings with the relevant employee or assistant minister at the request of the senior minister, or in the role of support person or representative for the senior minister? If so, in how many cases?
 - (iv) Have the Archbishop's office or SDS employees attended meetings with the employee or assistant minister at the request of the employee or assistant minister, or in the role of support person or representative for the employee or assistant minister? If so, in how many cases?
- (d) Since the employment by SDS of HR expertise:
 - (i) Have any employees or assistant ministers contacted SDS to ask for assistance? If so, how many have done so?
 - (ii) Has assistance been offered to any employee or assistant minister who has asked for it? If so, to how many?
 - (iii) Have there been any times that employees or assistant ministers have contacted the SDS and asked for help, and help was not provided? If so, for how many people is this the case?
 - (iv) If assistance by an employee or assistant minister was requested but was not offered or denied, why was it not offered or denied?
- (e) Noting Synod resolution 45/18 of the 2018 Synod, which "requests the Standing Committee to consider providing appropriate human resources expertise to support bishops, rectors, wardens and church staff", what human resource expertise has been provided to parish employees or assistant ministers?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

7.7 Donating funds from the MDBA

The Rev David Clarke asked the following question –

With respect to the Circular of 2nd May 2024 sent by SDS on behalf of Standing Committee to Rectors, Wardens and Treasurers, 'Minister's Discretionary Benefits Accounts: Donating Funds from the MDBA':

- (a) Are there recent changes to taxation legislation that clergy and parishes should be aware of, since the distribution of the Guidelines for the Remuneration of Parish Ministry Staff for 2024, that prompted these mid year changes to clergy remuneration packages?
- (b) From whom was professional tax advice sought on this matter?
- (c) Did Standing Committee see a copy of any professional advice given upon which it appears the Circular and advice was based?
- (d) In reaching the conclusion that 'Ministry staff should not request that tithes, offertories or any charitable donations be paid from their MDBA', were alternative definitions of 'expenses' considered by Standing Committee or any of its sub committees?
- (e) After sending out the circular, did the Standing Committee or any subcommittees receive the feedback given to SDS staff regarding:
 - (i) the potential impact on parish offertory and parish special projects by restricting how ministers may give to support their local church?
 - (ii) the potential impact on designated giving for missionaries, ministry trainees, Anglican Aid, SRE boards, child sponsorship and other donations where payments are made for a specific purpose or outcome?
- (f) As the circular states 'additional work continues to be undertaken', is there a time frame when clergy, wardens and treasurers will be given further clarity on these matters?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

7.8 **Aboriginal and Torres-Strait Islander-related results from the NCLS Survey**

The Rev Andrew Barry asked the following question –

From the most recent NCLS Survey:

- (a) How many in total in the diocese identified in the NCLS category "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin"?
- (b) How many of those were in ministries led by Indigenous leadership? (raw number)
- (c) How many of those were in ministries led by non-Indigenous leadership? (raw number)
- (d) Which five churches had the largest numbers (not percentages) of those who identified in the NCLS category of being of "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin"?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) In the 2021 NCLS, there were 238 survey participants who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. It should be noted that the number of survey participants cannot be used as an estimate of the total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attenders in the Diocese.
- (b) There are three Aboriginal churches in the Diocese which have unique NCLS code numbers that would enable their participation in the survey as separate entities: Shoalhaven Aboriginal Church, Nowra; Living Waters Community Fellowship, Redfern; and Macarthur Indigenous Church, Campbelltown. However, none of these churches participated in the 2021 NCLS and so none of the 238 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survey participants can be linked to these three churches.
There may be other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministries or groups meeting within parishes. However, where these exist, none have been identified as separate entities by the Diocese in the NCLS.
- (c) In light of the answer to part (b), it is very likely that virtually all 238 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attenders would be found in parish congregations led by non-Indigenous leadership. The 2021 NCLS Leader Survey found that, of 615 Sydney Anglican ministry staff who participated in the survey, only 1 identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- (d) The table below shows the five churches with the largest numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survey participants in the 2021 NCLS. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survey participants were widely distributed across the parishes. Of the churches that took

part in the survey, 131 had at least one Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander survey participant.

Church Name	No. of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander NCLS 2021 participants
Rooty Hill Anglican	9
Menai Anglican	8
Glebe Anglican	5
Maroubra Anglican	5
Pitt Town Anglican	5

7.9 Anglican Reserve Chaplains in the Australian Defence Force

The Rev Trevor Young asked the following question –

- (a) How many of the clergy in the Diocese of Sydney are Anglican Reserve Chaplains in the Australian Defence Force?
- (b) Of the number in part (a), how many, if any:
 - (i) are in the Army Reserve?
 - (ii) are in the Navy Reserve?
 - (iii) are in the Airforce Reserve?
- (c) Of the number in part (a), how many, if any:
 - (i) are women?
 - (ii) are men?
- (d) Of the number in part (a), how many, if any:
 - (i) are rectors of parishes, or curates-in-charge?
 - (ii) are deacons?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

7.10 Attendance patterns analysis – relation between attendance and educational level

Mrs Lyn Miles asked the following question –

With regard to the analysis of attendance patterns across the diocese, is it possible to determine if there is any correlation at a regional level between decline in attendance and educational levels attained?

If so, what observations have been made?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

7.11 Preschools/Long Day Care centres

Mr Chris Hamam asked the following question –

- (a) Of all the Preschools/Long Day Care centres within our diocese:
 - (i) How many have a Christ Centred Constitution?
 - (ii) How many have a Christian Director?
 - (iii) How many have a Christ Centred Curriculum?
 - (iv) Total number existing or planned currently?

- (b) If answers to any of the above are not readily available, then how may this data be ascertained?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

7.12 SAP Consolidation Success Metrics

The Rev Mark Collins asked the following question –

Relating to the SAP Consolidation Success Metrics Attachment 3 (Bk 1 p. 161-162) –

- (a) Was consideration given to a measure which included the completion of major SAP building projects (i.e. those major building projects in ACPT, URPP and ACGC pipeline prior to the passing of motion 5) over 2024, 2025 and 2026?
- (b) What project dollar value does SAP consider as a major building project?
- (c) And if consideration was not given to a measure which included the completion of major SAP building projects, why not?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

7.13 Leadership development data

The Rev David Lanham asked the following question –

Regarding leadership development programs such as 'CMD', 'City to City' or 'Reach Australia' –

- (a) Can the Synod be informed what data is being recorded to understand the impact on ministry development, church health or mission effectiveness within churches?
- (b) What data or evidence is available to identify innovation in Gospel effectiveness?
- (c) What data or evidence is available for improving outcomes of maturing disciples within these parishes?
- (d) What data or evidence is available for a growth in newcomer rates?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

7.14 Leadership development in parishes

The Rev David Lanham asked the following question –

Regarding leadership development within diocesan parishes:

- (a) What percentage of parishes have had rectors complete a two year leadership development course?
- (b) What percentage of parishes have had rectors complete a one year leadership development course?
- (c) Are there any known reasons for reservations from Rectors or Assistant Ministers undertaking leadership development programs as offered by 'CMD', 'City to City' or 'Reach Australia'?
- (d) Is there a procedure to assist parishes wishing to undertake Ministry Development yet are unable to for economic or resourcing issues?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

7.15 Centre for Ministry Development's Developing Rectors Program

The Rev David Lanham asked the following question –

- (a) How many parishes have participated in the Developing Rectors Program (DRP) led by the Centre for Ministry Development (CMD)?
- (b) How many rectors have undertaken the CMD DRP?
- (c) What data has been collected regarding the outcomes of the course?
- (d) What levels of numeric growth have been recorded in parishes who have undertaken the DRP?

- (e) What levels of Newcomers have been recorded in parishes who have undertaken the DRP?
- (f) What is the rate of course completion for rectors commencing the DRP?
- (g) What reasons are given from rectors who do not complete the 2 year DRP?

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be provided on a subsequent day.

8. Calling of motions on the business paper

The President called the motions in the order in which they appeared on the business paper, except those motions about a proposed ordinance or policy, to be considered at a time fixed by the Synod, or appearing in their substantive form for the first time on the business paper for that day.

8.1 Notice of motion regarding funding for research

Canon Phillip Colgan moved –

‘Synod –

- (a) accepts the following notice of motion –

“Synod, noting the discussions at this session of Synod regarding increasing Diocesan attention on the collection of, and research into, church attendance data and related statistical analysis, requests the Standing Committee to work with Anglicare to determine appropriate ways to support and fund such work over the 2025-27 funding triennium.”

- (b) agrees to consider the motion at paragraph (a) immediately following the conclusion of consideration of B7 Parochial Cost Recoveries Ordinance 2024, prior to consideration of M48 Variable Parochial Cost Recoveries percentage, and
- (c) suspends so many Standing Orders as would prevent these arrangements.’

Seconded and carried

8.2 Notice of motions of thanks

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

‘Synod accepts the following notice of motions, with the names of movers and seconders to be provided on the business paper for tomorrow –

“Leadership of Bible studies

Synod records its appreciation for the preaching of the Rev Graeme Howells at the Synod Service and the encouraging Bible Studies of the Rev Kevin Kim during this session.

Synod in the Greenfields

Synod gives thanks for the partnership in ministry expressed by Rouse Hill Anglican College, the Western Regional Council, the parishes of Annandale, Stanhope, Rouse Hill, Quakers Hill, Cambridge Park, Richmond, Marsden Park and Rooty Hill, and all the volunteers who served so eagerly to make the Synod in the Greenfields such a wonderful and helpful occasion.

Committees and Officers of the Synod

Synod records its appreciation for –

- (a) the President and his chairmanship,
- (b) the Chair and Deputy Chairs of Committee and their work in the consideration of the text of ordinances,
- (c) the members who helped during the session by giving advice and serving the Synod, especially the Chancellor and Deputy Chancellors, Registrar,

- Archdeacon to the Archbishop, Chair of Committee, the Synod Secretary, as well as the Order of Business and Minute Reading Committees, and
- (d) the services given by the staff of SDS and the Archbishop's Office, Anglican Media, the music team, Bible readers, Wesley staff, and all those who have helped facilitate this session of Synod.

Minutes of 24 September 2024

Synod authorises the President to sign the minutes of 24 September 2024 upon the production to the Standing Committee of the certificate of any 2 members of the Minute Reading Committee."

and agrees to consider these 'closure motions' at a time to be determined by the President on Tuesday 24 September 2024 and suspends so many of the Standing Orders as would prevent these arrangements.'

Seconded and carried

8.3 Significant challenges to Religious Freedom (NSW)

Bishop Michael Stead moved –

'Synod –

- (a) notes the increasing number of laws in NSW that inhibit religious freedom, including –
- (i) the Abortion Law Reform Act 2019, which forces doctors with a conscientious objection to abortion to provide information to direct their patients to another doctor to perform those practices,
 - (ii) the Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2022, which requires faith-based providers to allow euthanasia on their premises, and
 - (iii) the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023, which if passed will significantly erode the rights of religious institutions to act and employ consist with their religious ethos,
- (b) notes that it continues to be lawful in NSW to discriminate against people on the basis of their religious belief, and that the NSW Government has deferred addressing this until it received a report from the New South Wales Law Reform Commission,
- (c) commends the recommendations of the bipartisan NSW Parliament Joint Select Committee in support of the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Freedoms and Equality) Bill 2020 which proposed protections against religious discrimination within NSW, and
- (d) asks all churches to consider informing their members of these issues, encouraging them to write to their local State Member of Parliament commending the recommendations of the bipartisan NSW Parliament Joint Select Committee on the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Freedoms and Equality) Bill 2020.'

Seconded and carried

8.4 Ministry Planning and use of Church Life Surveys

Mr Peter Mayrick moved –

'Synod encourages –

- (a) churches to engage in ministry planning on a regular basis, noting that a planning horizon of 2-3 years is a commendable common practice, and
- (b) churches to utilise an additional National Church Life Survey (**NCLS**) at the beginning of such planning cycles to gather information to be used as part of this process, even though this may be out of sync with the 5 yearly census and historical NCLS rhythm.'

Seconded and carried

8.5 Confidential Lifestyle Questionnaire

Mrs Nicky Fortescue moved –

- 'Synod requests a review of the Confidential Lifestyle Questionnaire (**CLQ**) by the ODSM to –
- (a) consider the purpose and necessity of every question for individuals who have experienced significant trauma in their past,
 - (b) consider extending the offer of professional support to people who fear the experience of completing the CLQ in case it is experienced as a re-traumatising event, and
 - (c) consider including a space to testify to the work of Christ in their life.'

Seconded and carried

8.6 Merger of Church@thepeak and Christ Church Mortdale

The Rev Stuart Maze moved –

- 'Synod –
- (a) gives thanks to God for the 16 years of ministry and mission of Church@thepeak that was originally planted out of Beverly Hills with Kingsgrove Anglican in 2008 at Peakhurst South Public School as an initiative of the then rector, Bishop Peter Hayward, and then went on to become an independent parish in 2018, and under God grew to be a church of 200 across two services,
 - (b) thanks God for the many years of sustained ministry and mission by Christ Church Mortdale and its predecessor churches, noting that under God, in 2023 these churches entered into a ministry partnership which resulted in the congregations of the two churches formally coming together in January this year under the new name Crosslight Anglican Church,
 - (c) looks forward to seeing God at work in and through Crosslight for his glory in the years to come.'

Seconded and carried

Bishop Peter Lin led the Synod in prayer for Crosslight Anglican Church.

8.7 Teaching Christian sexual ethics

The Rev Andrew Schmidt moved –

- 'Synod exhorts churches and schools to continue to teach all of their members and students, in an age-appropriate way, God's life-giving design for marriage, relationships and sex. As those committed to the authority, goodness and power of Scripture, we aim that all at least come to understand (even though not all will accept) the Christian sexual ethic, resolving to teach in a positive, factual, winsome and hopeful way.'

Seconded and carried

8.8 90 years of ministry of Church Army and its closure this year

Mr Robert Gifford moved –

- 'Synod –
- (a) gives thanks to God for the work of Church Army Australia across the past 90 years, working specifically to raise up Evangelists for the Anglican Church of Australia,
 - (b) rejoices that Church Army-trained Evangelists have been used by God across the decades to bring many people to faith in Christ, including in our Diocese, and that many of our diocesan Clergy have benefited from Church Army's training,
 - (c) notes that Church Army Australia formally ceased its evangelistic and training ministries in May 2024,

- (d) prays that the Lord of the Harvest would continue to raise up workers for His harvest fields, and that new organisations and initiatives in Sydney would continue the essential work of training Evangelists for the church,
- (e) notes that the work and ministry of Church Army Australia has been chronicled and digitally archived; and is available at churcharmy.com.au.’

Seconded and carried

Mr Gifford led the Synod in prayer for the training of evangelists for the church.

9. Public gallery

Members of the Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples’ Ministry Committee and other members of Indigenous Anglican churches in attendance in the public gallery were welcomed with acclamation by members of the Synod.

10. The Rev Wilfred See-Hing Chee

In accordance with Standing Order 3.6(1), the President invited Bishop Peter Lin to address the Synod.

Bishop Lin led the Synod in prayer, giving thanks for the life and ministry of the Rev Wilfred See-Hing Chee.

11. Personal explanation

With the permission of the President under Standing Order 6.4, the Rev Geoff Bates gave a personal explanation.

Archdeacon Simon Flinders led the Synod in prayer for Mr Bates.

12. Motions

12.1 Leadership of Indigenous Ministry in the Diocese

The Synod viewed a video presentation regarding Indigenous ministry in the Diocese of Sydney.

The Rev Nigel Fortescue moved –

‘Synod, noting the report “Leadership of Indigenous Ministry in the Diocese” –

- (a) agrees to the creation of a position known as the Director of Indigenous Ministry, to be appointed by the Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples’ Ministry Committee with the concurrence of the Archbishop,
- (b) agrees that the role of the Director of Indigenous Ministry should be funded through an increase from 1% to 1.5% in the amount of the total available income for Synod that is applied to the Indigenous Peoples’ Ministry Trust Fund,
- (c) agrees that the Director of Indigenous Ministry should be an ex officio member of the Synod as an additional Nominated Indigenous Representative, and an ex officio member of the Standing Committee, and
- (d) requests the Standing Committee amend the *Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples’ Ministry Ordinance 2002* as required to give effect to the creation of the Director of Indigenous Ministry.

Seconded and carried with acclamation

12.2 Leadership of Indigenous Ministry in the Diocese Amendment Ordinance 2024

The Rev Nigel Fortescue moved –

‘That Synod agree to consider passing the Leadership of Indigenous Ministry in the Diocese Amendment Ordinance 2024 formally.’

Seconded and carried

Mr Fortescue spoke in support of the proposed ordinance.

The President asked –

‘Does any member have a question about the proposed ordinance?’

There were no questions.

Mr Fortescue moved –

‘That the proposed ordinance pass formally as an ordinance of the Synod.’

Seconded and carried

The Rev Michael Duckett led the Synod in prayer for Indigenous ministry in the Diocese.

12.3 Nepali Church Plant in South Western Area

Canon Brian Tung moved –

‘Synod, noting –

- (i) the increasing number of Nepalis moving into Australia, particularly in the Liverpool and South Western area,
 - (ii) that the Nepali community remains largely unreached by the Gospel, with the vast majority identifying as Hindu (84%) or Buddhist (8.5%), and
 - (iii) that as the Nepali population continues to grow, so does the opportunity to reach them with the hope of Christ,
- (a) gives thanks to God for the Evangelism and New Churches (**ENC**) church plant in partnership with St George's Hurstville, St Luke's Liverpool, the St George and St George West Mission Areas and the South Western Regional Council, under the leadership of Bijaya and Kate Shrestha, who have faithfully responded to the growing spiritual need among the Nepali community in Sydney,
 - (b) commends the vision of this church plant to establish a vibrant Nepali-speaking congregation where none currently exist, which seeks to mobilise existing Nepali believers and foster partnerships with other local churches to make Christ known in their community, the goal of which is to plant a sustainable church within two years and lay the foundation for further church plants in other areas,
 - (c) encourages the churches in the Diocese to commit this work to prayer and support, asking God to bring about lasting Gospel transformation within the Nepali community, and
 - (d) invites churches to partner in prayer and financially with this strategic church planting effort, recognising the immense opportunity to reach an unreached people group here in Australia.’

Seconded and carried

The Rev Tim Booker led the Synod in prayer for ministry among the Nepali community in Sydney.

Mr Bijaya and Mrs Kate Shrestha, in attendance in the public gallery, were welcomed with acclamation by members of the Synod.

12.4 Diocesan Governance Policy

Mr Greg Hammond OAM moved –

‘That the Diocesan Governance Policy pass as a policy of the Synod.’

Seconded and carried

12.5 Diocesan Governance Policy – implementation

Mr Greg Hammond OAM moved –

‘Synod, noting the *Accounts Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995* includes an obligation for diocesan organisations to report to the Synod every three years on their conformity to the Diocesan Governance Policy and explain any areas of non-conformance –

- (a) repeals the Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations made by the Synod on 20 October 2014, as amended from time to time,
- (b) requests the Standing Committee to amend the *Interpretation Ordinance 1985* to provide that –
 - (i) any reference in an ordinance to the “Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations made by the Synod on 20 October 2014, as amended from time to time”, be taken to be a reference to the Diocesan Governance Policy, as adopted by the Synod at this session,
 - (ii) any reference in an ordinance to the “Statement of Personal Faith set out in the Synod Governance Policy” or a similar expression, be taken to be a reference to Appendix 3 of the Diocesan Governance Policy as adopted by the Synod at this session, and
 - (iii) prior to July 2026 a person may sign a statement in the form of Appendix 3 to the Diocesan Governance Policy rather than a “Statement of Personal Faith” annexed to an ordinance constituting an organisation to which the person is to be elected or appointed as a member of the governing body,
- (c) requests the Standing Committee make arrangements for an outline of, and references to, the doctrine of the Anglican Church of Australia in the Diocese of Sydney to be made available on the Sydney Anglicans website,
- (d) requests each Diocesan organisation to promote amendments to its constituting ordinance by July 2026 to achieve conformity with the Diocesan Governance Policy noting that where appropriate, provisions of the Diocesan Governance Policy may be included in a charter (or similar document),
- (e) requests the Standing Committee to –
 - (i) review the *Accounts, Audits, and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995*, the *Synod Elections Ordinance 2000*, and other relevant ordinances with a view to amending them to ensure conformity with the Diocesan Governance Policy, noting that it may not be appropriate for a particular ordinance to conform to the Diocesan Governance Policy in all respects,
 - (ii) consult with each Diocesan organisation before any amendments are made to the ordinance by which the Diocesan organisation is constituted, and
 - (iii) report progress to the next session of the Synod,
- (f) authorises the Standing Committee to make amendments to the Diocesan Governance Policy, including the form but not the substance or content of Appendix 3, unless before such amendment is made, any 3 members of the Standing Committee request in writing that the amendment be referred to the Synod, and provided any amendment made by the Standing Committee is reported to the next ordinary session of the Synod.’

Seconded and carried

12.6 Parish Governance Policy

Mr Greg Hammond OAM moved –

‘That the Parish Governance Policy be approved in principle.’

Seconded

Mr Hammond spoke in support of the proposed policy.

The President asked –

‘Does any member have a question about the proposed policy?’

There was a time for questions.

The motion that the policy be approved in principle was put and was carried.

The President asked –

‘Does any member wish to move an amendment to the text of the proposed policy?’

There was no member who wished to move an amendment to the text of the proposed ordinance.

Mr Hammond moved –

‘That the Parish Governance Policy pass as a policy of the Synod.’

Seconded and carried

12.7 Parish Governance Policy – implementation

Mr Greg Hammond OAM moved –

‘Synod –

- (a) requests the Standing Committee to review the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008*, other ordinances relating to the financial and property affairs of parishes, and other ordinances (as applicable) with a view to amending them to achieve conformity with the Parish Governance Policy by or at the next session of the Synod,
- (b) authorises the Standing Committee to make amendments to the Parish Governance Policy, unless before such amendment is made, any 3 members of the Standing Committee request in writing that the amendment be referred to the Synod, and provided any amendment made by the Standing Committee is reported to the next ordinary session of the Synod,
- (c) acknowledges and gives thanks for the persons responsible for the financial and property affairs of parishes who give generously of their time, energy and skills to exercise the responsibilities with which they have been entrusted.’

Seconded and carried

Dean Sandy Grant led the Synod in prayer for persons responsible for the financial and property affairs of parishes.

12.8 Attendance Patterns and Mission in the Diocese

Debate resumed on the following motion, moved by the Rev Dominic Steele, as amended on Wednesday 18 September –

‘Synod, noting the report “64/23 Attendance Patterns and Mission in the Diocese” –

- (a) gives thanks to God for the recent “partial post-Covid recovery” and calls for confession and humble repentance, where we have fallen short in not giving

sufficient priority, attention, reflection and resources to seeing the lost throughout the Diocese of Sydney saved by Jesus,

- (b) asks the Standing Committee to consider the recommendations of the report (paragraphs 111-129), to take appropriate steps to enact those recommendations it chooses to prioritise, and to bring a report to the next session of the Synod with an update on progress, and
- (c) asks the Standing Committee to review how we collect our attendance and mission data (based on appropriate age cohorts) and to schedule a detailed attendance report (by region and mission area) for the first session of each subsequent synod (including where possible alignment with NCLS church health and leadership statistics).'

Having been granted leave, the Rev Toby Neal moved as an amendment to Mr Steele's motion –

'Insert the following as an additional subparagraph, suitably ordered –

"(#) recommits to support our Archbishop's purpose and priorities for the Diocesan fellowship to multiply Christians, churches and leaders, and invites our Archbishop, Bishops, Regional Councils, Mission Area Leaders, Senior Ministers, training colleges and other diocesan organisations (Anglicare, schools etc), to give a special five year focus to turn around our attendance decline, making evangelism, church health and leadership development our chief priorities.'

Seconded

The Rev Andrew Schmidt moved as an amendment to Mr Neal's amendment –

'Following the word "making", insert the matter "prayer,".'

Seconded

Mr Peter Mayrick moved as an amendment to Mr Neal's amendment –

'Following the matter "Senior Ministers," insert the matter "other ministers, and lay leaders,".'

Seconded

Having been granted leave, the Rev David Shead moved as an amendment to Mr Neal's amendment –

'Omit the words "turn around" and insert instead the words "respond to".'

Seconded

Dean Sandy Grant moved as an amendment to Mr Shead's amendment –

'Immediately prior to the words "respond to", insert the words "seeking to".'

Seconded

The Rev Michael Doyle moved as an amendment to Mr Neal's amendment –

'Omit the words "turn around our attendance decline" and insert instead the words "seeking to see sinners saved".'

Seconded

Having been granted leave, Dean Grant withdrew his amendment to Mr Shead's amendment.

Mr Schmidt's amendment to Mr Neal's amendment was put and was carried.

Mr Mayrick's amendment to Mr Neal's amendment was put and was carried.

Mr Doyle's amendment to Mr Neal's amendment was put and was not carried.

Mr Shead's amendment to Mr Neal's amendment was put and was carried.

Mr Neal's amendment, as amended, was put and was carried in the following form –

'Insert the following as an additional subparagraph, suitably ordered –

“(#) recommits to support our Archbishop's purpose and priorities for the Diocesan fellowship to multiply Christians, churches and leaders, and invites our Archbishop, Bishops, Regional Councils, Mission Area Leaders, Senior Ministers, other ministers, and lay leaders, training colleges and other diocesan organisations (Anglicare, schools etc), to give a special five year focus to respond to our attendance decline, making prayer, evangelism, church health and leadership development our chief priorities”.'

Mrs Tara Sing moved as an amendment to Mr Steele's motion –

'Omit all the matter in paragraph (b) following the words “asks the”, and insert instead the matter, “parishes and mission areas of the Diocese to prayerfully consider the recommendations of the report, and take appropriate steps to prioritise and implement the recommendations in their parish contexts.”.'

Seconded

Consideration of this matter was adjourned in accordance with the procedural motion passed on Monday 16 September.

12.9 **Sussex Inlet: Classification as a Parish**

The Rev Martyn Davis moved –

'Synod assents to the classification of Sussex Inlet as a parish with effect from 1 January 2025.'

Seconded and carried by acclamation

Parishioners from Sussex Inlet, in attendance in the public gallery, were welcomed with acclamation by members of the Synod.

Bishop Peter Hayward led the Synod in prayer for the parish of Sussex Inlet.

Adjournment

At 5:55 pm, Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved –

'That the Synod adjourn and resume at 7.00 pm tonight.'

Seconded and carried

Resumption

The Synod resumed at 7.00 pm.

13. Mission Hour

Bishop Malcolm Richards led Mission Hour.

The presentation included the following –

- An interview with the Rev Jodie McNeill, reporting to Synod as the chair of the organising committee of the Gafcon Australasia Conference held in Brisbane in July and introducing Mr McNeill as the recently appointed Global Operations Manager of Gafcon Global.
- Focus on the Anglican Diocese of Mauritius including a video interview with the Ven Eric Ma Fat speaking about the Preliminary Theological Certificate (PTC) program in the Diocese of Mauritius.
- Focus on the Anglican Church of Tanzania, with Canon Tim Swan (CEO Anglican Aid), Judith Calf (Anglican Aid) and video interviews with Bishop Mwita Akiri (Bishop of Tarime, Tanzania), the Rev Mike Taylor (CMS Missionary Tanzania), Brenton and Mel Kilby (CMS Missionaries Tanzania).

Following the presentations, Bishop Richards led the Synod in prayer for the continuing mission of the gospel.

14. Motions

14.1 Appointment of the Rev Jodie McNeill as Gafcon Global Operations Manager

Dr Laurie Scandrett moved –

‘Synod congratulates the Rev Jodie McNeill, currently the Rector of Jamberoo, on his appointment as the new Gafcon Global Operations Manager, commencing part-time from 1 September and then full-time on 1 January 2025.

Jodie has extensive executive-level ministry experience, as well as gifts in preaching and pastoral ministry, and is a passionate supporter of Gafcon. He served on the organizing committee for the GAFCON III Conference in Jerusalem in 2018 and the GAFCON IV conference held in Kigali in 2023. He has also chaired the organising committees for the Gafcon Australasia conferences held in Canberra in 2022 and Brisbane in 2024. Jodie will bring significant administrative and strategic planning skills to the role, while his generosity of spirit will serve the Gafcon Secretariat well. Through all this Jodie has been, and will continue to be, supported by his wife Mandy, who has enthusiastically served alongside him in Gafcon ministries and who continues to share with him a deep passion for this movement that they love.

Synod prays for God’s blessings on Jodie and Mandy as Jodie takes up this new international role.’

Seconded and carried

14.2 The Rev Jodie McNeill and the parish of Jamberoo

The Rev Andrew Lim moved –

‘Synod recognises with profound gratitude the evident blessings God has bestowed upon the parish of Jamberoo under the Rev Jodie McNeill's guidance. The flourishing of this community stands as a testament to his pastoral care and joyful leadership. Jodie's impact on the spiritual life of this church has been significant, and his ministry there will be remembered fondly.

As Jodie and his wife Mandy prepare to bid farewell to their beloved church family, we lift them up in prayer. We ask for God's grace to smooth their transition in both work and family life as they embark on this new chapter together.

May God's wisdom guide Jodie in his new role, and may His presence comfort the Jamberoo parish as they navigate this change. May God uphold unity within the congregation, binding them together in love, purpose, and vision. And may He grant

wisdom and discernment to the nominators and all those involved as they seek a new under-shepherd, someone with a pastor's heart, sound doctrine, and a passion for Your Word and Your people.'

Seconded and carried

Bishop Malcolm Richards led the Synod in prayer for the Rev Jodie and Mrs Mandy McNeill.

Mr Lim led the Synod in prayer for the parish of Jamberoo.

14.3 **Synod Appropriations and Allocations Ordinance 2024**

Canon Phillip Colgan moved –

'That the Synod Appropriations and Allocations Ordinance 2024 be approved in principle.'

Seconded

Canon Colgan spoke in support of the proposed ordinance.

The President asked –

'Does any member have a question about the proposed ordinance?'

There was a time for questions.

The motion that the ordinance be approved in principle was put and was carried.

The President asked –

'Does any member wish to move an amendment to the text of the proposed ordinance?'

There was no member who wished to move an amendment to the text of the proposed ordinance.

Canon Colgan moved –

'That the Synod Appropriations and Allocations Ordinance 2024 pass as an ordinance of the Synod.'

Seconded and carried

14.4 **Parochial Cost Recoveries Ordinance 2024**

Canon Phillip Colgan moved –

'That the Parochial Cost Recoveries Ordinance 2024 be approved in principle.'

Seconded

Canon Colgan spoke in support of the proposed ordinance.

The President asked –

'Does any member have a question about the proposed ordinance?'

There was a time for questions.

The motion that the ordinance be approved in principle was put and was carried.

The President asked –

'Does any member wish to move an amendment to the text of the proposed ordinance?'

There was no member who wished to move an amendment to the text of the proposed ordinance.

Canon Colgan moved –

‘That the Parochial Cost Recoveries Ordinance 2024 pass as an ordinance of the Synod.’

Seconded and carried

14.5 Funding for research

Canon Phillip Colgan moved –

‘Synod, noting the discussions at this session of Synod regarding increasing Diocesan attention on the collection of, and research into, church attendance data and related statistical analysis, requests the Standing Committee to work with Anglicare to determine appropriate ways to support and fund such work over the 2025-27 funding triennium.’

Seconded and carried

14.6 Variable Parochial Cost Recoveries percentage

Having been granted leave, Dr Laurie Scandrett moved –

‘Synod, noting that the variable Parochial Cost Recoveries (**PCR**) percentage payable by parishes with property has increased from 5.2% to 8.3% over the last 10 years, requests the Standing Committee to bring to the 2025 Synod –

- (a) a report on the feasibility of putting a maximum cap on the variable PCR percentage payable by parishes with property, after seeking feedback from parishes about the effect on them of the seemingly ever-increasing variable PCR percentage,
- (b) a recommendation of what the long-term maximum cap on the variable PCR percentage payable by parishes with property might be, and
- (c) any other relevant recommendations.’

Seconded and carried

14.7 Attendance Patterns and Mission in the Diocese

Debate resumed on the following amendment moved by Mrs Tara Sing to the motion moved by the Rev Dominic Steele regarding Attendance Patterns and Mission in the Diocese –

‘Omit all the matter in paragraph (b) following the words “asks the”, and insert instead the matter, “parishes and mission areas of the Diocese to prayerfully consider the recommendations of the report, and take appropriate steps to prioritise and implement the recommendations in their parish contexts,”.’

The Rev Dr Stephen Shead moved as an amendment to Mrs Sing’s amendment –

‘Omit all the matter following the words “prayerfully consider”, and insert instead the matter, “the data and recommendations of the report, to decide on appropriate steps to take in light of the report.”.’

Seconded

The Rev Dr Raj Gupta moved as an amendment to Mrs Sing’s amendment –

‘Amend the amendment as follows –

- (a) omit the matter, “Omit all the matter in paragraph (b) following the words “”, and insert instead the matter, “Insert the following as an additional subparagraph, suitably ordered – (#)”, and
- (b) omit the matter, “”, and insert instead the matter, “”.’

After a time for debate the President asked –

‘Does the Synod consider that the matter has been sufficiently debated and should now be voted on?’

The majority of members present answered in the affirmative.

Dr Shead’s amendment to Mrs Sing’s amendment was put and was carried.

Dr Gupta’s amendment to Mrs Sing’s amendment was put and was carried.

Mrs Sing’s amendment, as amended, was put and was carried in the following form –

‘Insert the following as an additional subparagraph, suitably ordered –

“(#) asks the parishes and mission areas of the Diocese to prayerfully consider the data and recommendations of the report, to decide on appropriate steps to take in light of the report.”’

Adjournment

At 9.39 pm, Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved –

‘That the Synod adjourn and resume at 3.15 pm tomorrow.’

Seconded and carried

We certify that, to the best of our recollection, these minutes are a correct record of the Synod’s proceedings.

Two Members of the
Minute Reading Committee)
)

Signed by the President

24 September 2024