

Synod Summary – September 2024

DATE: 4 October 2024

ATTENTION: Rectors, Synod representatives, wardens and parish
councillors

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Synod at a glance

The Second Session of the 53rd Synod commenced with an opening Service and the Presidential Address on Saturday 14 September at Rouse Hill Anglican College. The Synod then met in the Wesley Theatre, 220 Pitt Street Sydney, on 16, 17, 18, 23 and 24 September 2024.

The Synod made 51 resolutions, passed 8 ordinances and 2 policies, and filled 86 positions on boards, councils, and committees. This circular outlines the key features of the Synod’s proceedings with respect to **parishes**.

The full proceedings of the Synod (including reports received, questions and answers and resolutions) will be made available on the [SDS website](#) in the coming weeks.

Presidential Address

The full text of [Archbishop Raffel’s Presidential Address](#), as well as the [video](#), is available from the [Sydney Anglicans website](#).

Mission Hour

Bishop Malcolm Richards led Mission Hour. The presentation included a focus on the Gafcon Australasia Conference held in Brisbane in July 2024, the Preliminary Theological Certificate (**PTC**) program in the Anglican Diocese of Mauritius, and partnerships with the Anglican Church of Tanzania.

Synod's key decisions

The Synod adopted a new [Diocesan Governance Policy](#), setting out the Synod's expectations for the governance of organisations in the Diocese. The Synod also repealed the former *Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations*, which had been in place since 2014.

The *Diocesan Governance Policy* includes as an appendix a Statement required to be signed by the members of the governing body of a Level C or D organisation (as defined and categorised in the Policy). The Synod considered in detail the contents of such a Statement, and agreed it would include –

- (a) a Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness, and
- (b) a Statement of Personal Faith, which will only be required for chief executive officers and for members of the governing body elected or appointed by Diocesan Appointors.

The Synod declined to include a clause about the Christian doctrine of marriage in the Statement; nevertheless, by resolution 14/24, the Synod affirmed the doctrine of marriage. The Synod also declined to require members of the governing body elected or appointed by Non-Diocesan Appointors (e.g., by an alumni group) to sign the Statement of Personal Faith component.

The Synod also adopted a [Parish Governance Policy](#), setting out the Synod's expectations for persons responsible for the financial and property affairs of a parish. By resolution 36/24, among other things, the Synod acknowledged and gave 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. The Synod also requested the Standing Committee to review the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008* and other ordinances to bring them into conformity with the Parish Governance Policy. In the meantime, parishes may wish to familiarise themselves with the Policy and implement it locally.

The Synod considered the central organisational structures of the Diocese and, among other things –

- (a) By resolution 17/24, endorsed the creation of **Sydney Anglican Property**, which was formed in 2024 by appointing a common membership of the boards of the Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney, the Anglican Church Growth Corporation, New Church for New Communities, and St Andrew's House Corporation. The Synod has encouraged the Standing Committee to take the necessary steps to consolidate this structure.
- (b) By resolution 18/24, approved the formation of **Sydney Anglican Services** from 1 January 2025, by reconstituting Sydney Diocesan Services to be the corporate body through which the Synod supports and regulates the central governance and administration of the affairs of the Diocese.
- (c) By resolution 19/24, approved in principle the restructuring of the **central media, evangelism, and ministry training organisations of the Diocese** into a single entity. The Synod has requested the Standing Committee to continue to consult with the bodies involved in this proposal, including Evangelism and New Churches (ENC), Ministry Training & Development (MT&D), and the Anglican Media Council (AMC), to determine the optimal structure to achieve the purposes and priorities for the Diocesan Fellowship.

By resolution 33/24, the Synod agreed to create a position known as the **Director of Indigenous Ministry**, which is to be –

- (a) appointed by the Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples' Ministry Committee with the concurrence of the Archbishop,
- (b) funded initially 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, and
- (c) an ex officio member of the Synod as an additional Nominated Indigenous Representative, and an ex officio member of the Standing Committee.

The Synod considered the matter of **attendance patterns and mission in the Diocese**. By resolution 47/24, among other things, the Synod –

- (a) gave thanks to God for the recent “partial post-Covid recovery” in church attendance,
- (b) called 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,
- (c) recommitted to support our Archbishop's purpose and priorities for the Diocesan fellowship to multiply Christians, churches and leaders,
- (d) invited people and groups across the Diocese to give a special five year focus to respond to our attendance decline, making prayer, evangelism, church health and leadership development our chief priorities.

Parishes, mission areas, and the Standing Committee were asked to further consider the data and recommendations of the report. By resolution 48/24, the Synod encouraged that further consideration be given to prioritising ministry to youth and children.

By resolution 49/24, the Synod, among other things –

- (a) endorsed a series of theological (and other) principles to guide the **use of Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs)** and the like in the Diocese,
 - (b) endorsed certain circumstances in which the limited ongoing use of NDAs is appropriate,
 - (c) lamented and condemned NDAs where they are, or have been used to cover up sin, silence victims, or avoid accountability, and
 - (d) called to repentance anyone who has knowingly and intentionally used NDAs for the purpose of covering up sin, silencing victims or avoiding accountability.
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Actions for parishes and Synod members

The Synod passed a number of resolutions that included calls to action from parishes and Synod representatives. Each of these are provided in summary below for ease of reference (specifically as they relate to parishes); but should be read in the context of the complete resolution. The full terms of all of the resolutions passed by the Synod at its recent session are provided in the Attachment.

Professional Development for Ministry Workers: By resolution 1/24, among other things, the Synod invited members of the Synod to provide feedback on the proposed arrangements for all ministry workers in the Diocese to undertake mandatory, regular professional development as contemplated in the report [Professional Development for Ministry Workers](#) (Feedback to diocesansecretary@sydney.anglican.asn.au by 31 December 2024.)

Feedback
invited

Shaping Parish Structures for Mission: By resolution 4/24, among other things, the Synod invited members of the Synod to provide feedback on the proposed changes to the categories of church and parish within the Diocese, as contemplated in the report [Shaping Parish Structures for Mission](#) (Feedback to diocesansecretary@sydney.anglican.asn.au by 30 November 2024.)

Feedback
invited

National Online Gambling Reform: By resolution 10/24, among other things, the Synod requested all concerned Anglican church members to write to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, calling on them to lead bipartisan legislative action to enact the Murphy Committee's unanimous cross-party recommendations, especially the phased but rapid removal of all sports bet advertising from TV in Australia.

NSW Poker Machine Reform: By resolution 16/24, among other things, the Synod requested all concerned Anglican church members to write to the Premier of NSW calling for prompt implementation of –

- (a) a universal cashless gambling card with mandatory harm reduction measures, taking account of the learnings from the trial currently underway,
- (b) an independent, state-wide self-exclusion register, and
- (c) the powering down of all club and pub-based poker machines between midnight and 10:00am.

Significant challenges to Religious Freedom (Federal): By resolution 20/24, among other things, the Synod asked all churches to consider informing their members of issues related to religious freedom in Australia, encouraging them to write to their Federal Member of Parliament to seek commitments for a Religious Discrimination Act and positive protections to conduct one's affairs in accordance with religious beliefs.

Significant challenges to Religious Freedom (NSW): By resolution 27/24, among other things, the Synod asked all churches to consider informing their members of issues related to religious freedom in NSW, 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.

Ministry Planning and use of Church Life Surveys: By resolution 28/24, the Synod encouraged churches to –

- (a) engage in ministry planning on a regular basis, noting that a planning horizon of 2-3 years is a commendable common practice, and

- (b) 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.

Teaching Christian sexual ethics: By resolution 31/24, among other things, the Synod exhorted churches to continue to teach all of their members, 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.

Attendance Patterns and Mission in the Diocese: By resolution 47/24, among other things, the Synod –

- (a) invited Senior Ministers, other ministers and lay ministers to give a special five year focus to respond to our attendance decline, making prayer, evangelism, church health and leadership development our chief priorities, and
- (b) asked parishes to prayerfully consider the data and recommendations of the report [Attendance Patterns and Mission in the Diocese](#), to decide on appropriate steps to take in light of the report.

Prioritisation of ministry to youth and children: By resolution 48/24, among other things, the Synod requested parishes to consider how they might be encouraged to strategically allocate financial, property and human resources so that ministry to children and youth is prioritised, even over other important ministries, for the future health of our churches.

Use of Non-Disclosure Agreements in the Diocese: By resolution 49/24, among other things, the Synod –

- (a) encouraged all parishes to –
 - (i) adopt a policy in relation to the use of Non-Disclosure Agreements (**NDAs**) which reflects the principles of the report [Use of Non-Disclosure Agreements in the Diocese](#) and the recommendations made therein, or
 - (ii) make a public “pledge” in relation to the use of NDAs which reflects the principles of the Report and the recommendations made therein,
 noting that the Standing Committee will be asked to develop and publish a model policy and a model pledge for parishes to adopt, and
- (b) encouraged all parishes to consider whether they have used NDAs in the past which contravene the principles and recommendations of the Report, and, if they have done so, to welcome approaches from those who may have been subject to such NDAs (or their representative) with a view to considering the offer of an apology for the use of such NDAs, and, the offer of a formal (written) release from the terms of the NDA.

SRE and the Office of the Children’s Guardian: By resolution 50/24, among other things, the Synod –

- (a) noted that Special Religious Education (**SRE**) teachers and helpers must hold a verified current Working with Children Check (**WWCC**) clearance (among many other qualifications) in order to be authorised by a parish, and can no longer be authorised if their WWCC expires, or notification is received that their WWCC status is closed, barred, or interim barred; further noting the requirement to inform the NSW Department of Education of changes to WWCC status for SRE workers,
- (b) reminded all parishes that authorise SRE teachers and helpers to proactively monitor WWCC expiry dates and maintain up to date contacts with the Office of the Children’s Guardian so as to receive any notifications in a timely manner, and

- (c) requested the Youthworks SRE Office and the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry, as a matter of urgency, to communicate clear guidelines to parishes regarding the process to be followed for removing the authorisation of an SRE teacher/helper who no longer has a current WWCC clearance, including the mechanism for notifying the Department of Education.

Matters for prayer and consideration in parishes

Following are further resolutions calling for prayer.

11/24 Archbishop of Melbourne

Synod –

- (a) notes that the current Archbishop of Melbourne, the Most Rev Dr Philip Leslie Freier, will retire next year, and
- (b) **prays** for Melbourne’s Board of Nominators and election Synod, that God would give them wisdom and guide them as they nominate and elect a new Archbishop.

25/24 40th anniversary of the establishment of Sports and Leisure Ministries

Synod **thanks God** for –

- (a) the 40th anniversary of the establishment of Sports & Leisure Ministries,
- (b) for the tenacity of clergy and lay people from several denominations, including Sydney's the Rev David Tyndall, in the establishment and development of this ministry,
- (c) the sports chaplaincy organisations that grew from this root, including Sports Chaplaincy Australia, Australian Racing Christian Chaplaincy, Life Saving Chaplaincy Australia and Motor Racing Chaplaincy, and
- (d) the over 500 people involved in sports chaplaincy across Australia who continue to show the love of Jesus in the sporting arena of our land,

and **commits to pray** for this vital ministry.

32/24 90 years of ministry of Church Army and its closure this year

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.

34/24 Nepali Church Plant in South Western Area

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.

43/24 New Ministry to Sex Workers

Synod –

- (a) acknowledges the new ministry to sex workers involving team members from four churches who are part of Together for Canterbury Bankstown: St Paul's Canterbury, Embassy Church, Marrickville Road Church and St Alban's Belmore,
- (b) is reminded of God's love for the poor and oppressed and gives glory to Him for opening the door for this ministry, and
- (c) **prays** for the team and for the women they seek to reach.

45/24 Ministry in Ashbury

Synod –

- (a) acknowledges the ministry of previous generations of saints who served the Lord Jesus and witnessed to the parish of Ashbury,
- (b) recognises the grief that came with closing church services in February 2022,
- (c) **gives thanks** for the new congregation that was planted in March this year, and rejoices with the angels at the lost who have been found, and
- (d) **commits to praying** for the Rev Daniel and Renee Gale as they shepherd the congregation and witness to the local community.

46/24 Amalgamation of the parish of Croydon with the parish of Concord and Burwood

Synod, noting the amalgamation of the parish of Croydon with the parish of Concord and Burwood on 1 July 2024, commends the parishioners of both parishes for embracing this ministry opportunity, and **prays** that God will bless the new parish of Croydon, Burwood and Concord, and their plans to plant a new congregation in 2025.

47/24 Attendance Patterns and Mission in the Diocese

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) 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 ministers, training colleges and other diocesan organisations, to give a special five year focus to respond to our attendance decline, making prayer, evangelism, church health and leadership development our chief priorities,
- (c) 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,
- (d) ...

Further resolutions of interest to parishes

The Attachment to this circular sets out all the resolutions passed by the Synod at its recent session. The following resolutions may be of particular interest to rectors, wardens and parish councillors –

- 7/24 Mr Greg Hammond OAM
- 8/24 Retirement of the Rev Eric Percival
- 9/24 Giving thanks to God for the ministry of Cursillo
- 14/24 Doctrine of marriage in the Diocese of Sydney
- 23/24 Retirement of Canon Daniel Willis as Gafcon Global Operations Manager
- 24/24 90th Anniversary of founding of the Archbishop of Sydney’s Anglican Aid
- 30/24 Merger of Church@thepeak and Christ Church Mortdale
- 36/24 Parish Governance Policy – implementation
- 38/24 Appointment of the Rev Jodie McNeill as Gafcon Global Operations Manager
- 39/24 The Rev Jodie McNeill and the parish of Jamberoo
- 41/24 Variable Parochial Cost Recoveries percentage
- 44/24 Giving thanks to God for the life and ministry of the Right Reverend Timothy Dudley-Smith OBE
- 51/24 Synod in the Greenfields

Parish classifications

- 12/24 Sadleir: Classification as a Parish
 - 37/24 Sussex Inlet: Classification as a Parish
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Ordinances and policies

The Synod passed eight (8) ordinances and two (2) policies. Following are brief notes on each of them.

The **Synod Membership Ordinance 1995 Amendment Ordinance 2024** amended the *Synod Membership Ordinance 1995* to better regulate and provide for communications to members of Synod and access to information.

The **Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019 Amendment Ordinance 2024** amended the *Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019* with respect to asking questions during debate on motions, objecting during the callover of motions, asking questions in relation to unresolved disputes, and other matters.

The **Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney (Delegation of Powers and Quorum) Amendment Ordinance 2024** amended the *Delegation of Powers Ordinance 1998* and the *Sydney Anglican Property (Provisional Restructuring) Ordinance 2023* to enable the Standing Committee to exercise further powers and functions under the *Anglican Church of Australia Trust Property Act 1917*, and to amend the quorum for the Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney.

The **Archbishop of Sydney Election Ordinance 1982 Amendment Ordinance 2024** amended the *Archbishop of Sydney Election Ordinance 1982* to amend the nomination process and procedure for the election Synod.

The **Consecration of the Archbishop of Sydney Ordinance 2021 Amendment Ordinance 2024** amended the *Consecration of the Archbishop of Sydney Ordinance 2021* to provide for a pool of suitable bishops from whom a consecrating bishop may be selected.

The **Leadership of Indigenous Ministry in the Diocese Amendment Ordinance 2024** provided for the Director of Indigenous Ministry to be a member of both the Standing Committee and the Synod.

The **Synod Appropriations and Allocations Ordinance 2024** appropriated and allocated Synod funds for 2025, and indicated Synod's intentions for 2026 and 2027, in a manner that is consistent with the Statement of Funding Principles and Priorities 2025-2027.

The **Parochial Cost Recoveries Ordinance 2024** provided for the charges to be recovered from and levied on parishes in 2025, and an indication of the amounts for 2026 and 2027.

The **Diocesan Governance Policy** set out the expectations of Synod in relation to the governance of organisations, particularly in relation to Christian leadership and conformity to the doctrine of the Diocese which are essential to the furtherance of the purposes and priorities of the Diocese, through the pursuit of the purposes of each organisation. [See also *Synod's Key Decisions*, page 2.]

The **Parish Governance Policy** set out the governance standards that the Synod considers should apply to persons responsible for the financial and property affairs of a parish, in support of the shared gospel ministry of the parishes and organisations of the Diocese, and the purposes and priorities of the Diocese. [See also *Synod's Key Decisions*, page 2.]

Resolutions of the 2024 Synod

1/24 Professional Development for Ministry Workers

Synod, noting the report “Professional Development for Ministry Workers” –

- (a) invites members of the Synod to provide feedback to the Diocesan Secretary by 31 December 2024 on the proposed arrangements for all ministry workers in the Diocese to undertake mandatory, regular professional development as contemplated in the report, and
- (b) requests the Standing Committee to implement arrangements for professional development for all ministry workers having given regard to any feedback received.

(Bishop Chris Edwards 16/09/2024)

2/24 Acknowledgement of former ACPT, SAHC, and ACGC members

Synod noting that, as a consequence of the formation of the transitional Sydney Anglican Property (**SAP**) Board on 1 January 2024, the following 14 former members of the Anglican Church Property Trust, St Andrew’s House Corporation, and Anglican Church Growth Corporation did not continue as members of the SAP Board –

Canon Christopher Allan	Mr Richard Neal
Mr Howard Bellchambers	Mr David Nelson
Mr Andrew Buckley	Mr Trevor Ratcliff
Mr Marcin Firek	Mr Peter Rusbourne
Mr Robert Freeman	The Rev James Sneddon
The Rev Dr Raj Gupta	Dr Robert Tong AM
Mr Peter Janssen OAM	The Rev Philip Wheeler,

- (a) acknowledges the collective 133 years of service represented by those 14 former members, and
- (b) thanks each of them for their contribution to the wise stewardship of these organisations over many years.

(Mrs Melinda West 16/09/2024)

3/24 Partnership with Anglican Schools

Synod, noting the report “56/23 Partnership with Anglican Schools” –

- (a) notes that the draft statement on Reformed Anglican Education has been presented to heads and chaplains as requested by the Synod, and thanks heads and chaplains for their thoughtful engagement with the statement and for their detailed feedback,
- (b) reaffirms Synod’s acknowledgement of, and thanks for, Anglican Schools, as partners in the mission and ministry of the Diocese,
- (c) requests the Standing Committee to form a suitably qualified committee to review the Diocesan Policy Statement on Education, to report back to the next ordinary session of the Synod in 2025, and provide the committee with all the feedback received on the draft statement on Reformed Anglican Education,
- (d) requests that the revision of the Diocesan Policy Statement on Education address (among other things) the specific areas raised in the report,
- (e) requests that the revised Diocesan Policy Statement on Education incorporate key insights and principles contained in the draft statement on Reformed Anglican Education, and
- (f) requests the Diocesan Secretary communicate the substance of this resolution to heads and chaplains of Diocesan schools, including a copy of the Diocesan Policy Statement on Education, and expressing Synod’s commitment to continuing dialogue with schools regarding these matters.

(Bishop Chris Edwards 16/09/2024)

4/24 Shaping Parish Structures for Mission

Synod, noting the report “Shaping Parish Structures for Mission” –

- (a) invites members of the Synod to provide feedback to the Diocesan Secretary by 30 November 2024 on the proposed changes as contemplated in the report, and
- (b) requests the Standing Committee to implement the proposed changes in light of feedback received.

(Archdeacon Anthony Douglas 16/09/2024)

5/24 Doctrine Commission Report: The Relationship of Church and State and Religious Freedom

Synod, noting the report “The Relationship of Church and State and Religious Freedom” –

- (a) endorses the report, and
- (b) approves its publication on the Commission’s website.

(The Rev Dr Mark Thompson 16/09/2024)

6/24 Implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Synod, noting the report “12/23 Implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to 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.

Ms Nicola Warwick-Mayo 16/09/2024)

7/24 Mr Greg Hammond OAM

Synod, noting that on 31 July 2024, Mr Greg Hammond OAM retired as Chairman of Anglican Community Services (Anglicare Sydney) after eight years of faithful service –

- (a) gives thanks to God for His work through Anglicare Sydney during Mr Hammond’s chairmanship of the organisation including –
 - (i) the successful formation of Anglicare Sydney with the merger of Anglican Retirement Villages and the Sydney Anglican Home Mission Society in 2016,
 - (ii) the increased alignment of Anglicare Sydney with the Diocesan Mission and the firm commitment of the organisation to partnerships with parishes to further the Gospel of Christ,
 - (iii) successfully managing the succession of the Chief Executive Officer of the organisation in 2021-2022,
 - (iv) the expansion of Anglicare Sydney’s footprint to include the Armidale and Bathurst Dioceses and the growth of services to older Australians, and families and people in marginalised communities,
 - (v) leaving Anglicare Sydney in a robust financial position after the uncertainty and challenges following the Royal Commission into Aged Care, and
 - (vi) representing Anglicare Sydney on the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Sydney and Anglicare Australia as Chair of the Anglicare Australia Chairs Network, and
- (b) thanks God for Mr Greg Hammond’s leadership and Mrs Beth Hammond’s support, and prays for their ongoing commitment to the Gospel and contribution to the Diocese and beyond through service on the Standing Committee, the Governance Policy Review Committee and the Board of the Australian College of Theology.

(Ms Evelyn Horton 16/09/2024)

8/24 Retirement of the Rev Eric Percival

Synod gives thanks for the ministry of Eric and Christine Percival. After nineteen years of ministry to the Parish of Greenwich, Eric will retire from full-time ministry later this year. The Parish have expressed their thanks for Eric's emphasis on small groups as a means of helping spiritual growth and providing pastoral support. They have valued his wise and insightful preaching and are especially thankful for how he brought the congregation through Covid and we all pray God's blessings on them as they retire.

(Bishop Chris Edwards 16/09/2024)

9/24 Giving thanks to God for the ministry of Cursillo

Synod gives thanks to Almighty God for the ministry of Cursillo, Diocese of Sydney, noting that –

- (a) over the past 30 years, this lay led ministry has been used by God to grow disciples and to lead women and men into a clear and vital relationship with our Lord Jesus,
- (b) many hundreds of people have shared in the program and we are grateful to them for their service and dedication,
- (c) after extensive consultation, prayer, and dialogue with the Archbishop, the Cursillo Secretariat wound up the ministry and formally concluded activities with a public celebration on 3 August 2024.

(The Rev Robert Happer 16/09/2024)

10/24 National Online Gambling Reform

Synod, noting that –

- (a) it has been over a year since the parliamentary report "You Win Some, You Lose More", from the committee chaired by the late Peta Murphy, was tabled with 31 recommendations to minimise the growing harm occurring in Australia from sports betting and other online gambling,
- (b) online gambling rates are increasing rapidly and a recent ANU survey found that 1.2 million adults were personally affected by someone else's gambling in the past 12 months, and
- (c) regretfully, the federal Government has still not announced its response to this urgent matter of public health and welfare,

again requests the Archbishop, along with all concerned Anglican church members, to write to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, calling on them to lead bipartisan legislative action to enact the Murphy Committee's unanimous cross-party recommendations, especially the phased but rapid removal of all sports bet advertising from TV in Australia.

(Dean Sandy Grant 16/09/2024)

11/24 Archbishop of Melbourne

Synod –

- (a) notes that the current Archbishop of Melbourne, the Most Rev Dr Philip Leslie Freier, will retire next year, and
- (b) prays for Melbourne's Board of Nominators and election Synod, that God would give them wisdom and guide them as they nominate and elect a new Archbishop.

(Mr Samuel Doherty 16/09/2024)

12/24 Sadleir: Classification as a Parish

Synod assents to the classification of Sadleir as a parish with effect from 1 November 2024.

(The Rev David Morgan 16/09/2024)

13/24 Diocesan Governance Policy, Appendix 3 – addition of Statement of Personal Faith paragraphs

Synod, noting the report “33/23 Review of the Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations”, agrees that the following two paragraphs be inserted in the form of Appendix 3 of the proposed Diocesan Governance Policy as new paragraphs 1 and 2 (with consequential re-numbering) –

- “1. I believe –
 - (a) that all the canonical scriptures of the books of the Old and New Testaments are the ultimate rule and standard of faith given by inspiration of God and contain all things necessary to salvation,
 - (b) in the Christian faith as professed by the church of Christ from primitive times, and in particular as set forth in the creeds known as the Nicene Creed and the Apostles’ Creed, and
 - (c) that there is only one way to be reconciled to God which is through his Son, Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and was raised for our justification, and that we are justified before God by faith only.
2. I also believe that all the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct and am personally committed to living in obedience to the commands of Christ.”

(Bishop Chris Edwards 16/09/2024)

14/24 Doctrine of marriage in the Diocese of Sydney

In keeping with the teaching of Scripture, the Book of Common Prayer and previous resolutions of this Synod and of the General Synod, this Synod continues to declare that the doctrine of this Diocese reflects and upholds that –

- (a) all people, regardless of sex, gender, sexual orientation, and marital status, are made in the image of God and so should be treated with dignity and respect in our churches and organisations, and
- (b) marriage is the exclusive union of one man and one woman arising from mutual promises of lifelong faithfulness, consistent with the teaching of Christ that, “from the beginning the Creator made them male and female”, and that outside such marriage, Christ calls people to chastity in singleness, as he himself modelled (see Matthew 19:4-5, 10-12).

(Dean Sandy Grant 17/09/2024)

15/24 Governance Policy Review Committee

Synod thanks the members of the Governance Policy Review Committee, especially Mr Greg Hammond OAM, for their work in bringing the Diocesan Governance Policy and Parish Governance Policy to the Synod.

(Dr David Nockles 17/09/2024)

16/24 NSW Poker Machine Reform

Synod, noting that –

- (i) the NSW Budget 2024-25 expects “increased gaming machine activity” and has revised gambling tax revenue estimates much higher over the forward estimates, with taxation revenue on hotel gaming devices, principally poker machines, expected to grow fastest of all at 8% p.a., while gambling tax revenue is already expected to be \$3.5 billion in 2023-24 alone, and
- (ii) a recent survey from Wesley Mission found 30% of respondents know someone who has experienced harm through poker machine use. Such research and forward estimates indicate that recent modest harm minimisation steps by the Government have made negligible difference to the deleterious impact of poker machine gambling on public health and welfare in NSW,

requests the Archbishop, along with all concerned Anglican church members, to write to the Premier of NSW calling for prompt implementation of –

- (a) a universal cashless gambling card with mandatory harm reduction measures, taking account of the learnings from the trial currently underway,
- (b) an independent, state-wide self-exclusion register, and
- (c) the powering down of all club and pub-based poker machines between midnight and 10:00am.

(The Rev David Yung 17/09/2024)

17/24 Sydney Anglican Property

Synod, noting –

- (i) the initial steps taken by the Standing Committee outlined in the report “Review of the central organisational structures of the Diocese” to form Sydney Anglican Property (**SAP**) with effect from 1 January 2024 through the appointment of a common transitional board membership for –
 - (A) Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney,
 - (B) Anglican Church Growth Corporation,
 - (C) New Church for New Communities, and
 - (D) St Andrew’s House Corporation, and
- (ii) the metrics approved by the Standing Committee outlined in the report by which progress in consolidating the central property undertaking of the Diocese will be measured,
- (a) endorses the initial steps taken by the Standing Committee in forming SAP,
- (b) approves in principle the reduction in the number of bodies corporate operating in the SAP structure,
- (c) encourages the Standing Committee to consider and, as appropriate, to take this and such further steps it considers necessary or desirable to realise the full benefit of the consolidation, and
- (d) requests the Standing Committee to report progress to the next ordinary session of the Synod in 2025.

(Canon Phillip Colgan 17/09/2024)

18/24 Sydney Anglican Services

Synod, noting the proposal to form Sydney Anglican Services (SAS) outlined in the report “Review of the central organisational structures of the Diocese” approves –

- (a) the formation of SAS from 1 January 2025 with the purpose, functions, structure and membership in or to the effect of those outlined in the report,
- (b) the Glebe Administration Board continuing as a separate specialist board but as part of the broader SAS structure with its membership appointed by SAS, and
- (c) the loans function currently administered by the Sydney Anglican Loans Board being administered by SAS with appropriate input from clergy at board level,

and requests the Standing Committee to –

- (i) implement these outcomes and take such other associated action it considers necessary or desirable to realise, as far as possible, the full benefit of SAS’s formation as the corporate body through which the Synod supports and regulates the central governance and administration of the affairs of the Diocese under the oversight of the Standing Committee, and
- (ii) report progress, with any further recommendations, to the next ordinary session of the Synod in 2025.

(Dr Laurie Scandrett 17/09/2024)

19/24 Evangelism and Ministry Partnerships

Synod, noting the proposal to form Evangelism and Ministry Partnerships (**EMP**) outlined in the report “Review of the central organisational structures of the Diocese” –

- (a) approves in principle a restructuring of the central media, evangelism, and ministry training organisations of the Diocese into an entity with the purpose, functions and membership as or to the effect of those outlined in the report,
- (b) requests the Standing Committee to continue to consult with the boards of Evangelism and New Churches (ENC), Ministry Training & Development (MT&D), the Anglican Media Council (AMC) and the other bodies involved in this proposal to determine the optimal structure to achieve the purposes and priorities for the Diocesan Fellowship and to consult with specialists in organisational design and change management as necessary, and
- (c) requests the Standing Committee to take such other steps it considers necessary or desirable to achieve this outcome and report progress to the next ordinary session of the Synod in 2025.

(Bishop Michael Stead 17/09/2024)

20/24 Significant challenges to Religious Freedom (Federal)

Synod –

- (a) expresses its disappointment that the Albanese Government has indicated that it does not intend to honour its election commitments to pass a Religious Discrimination Act and to maintain the ability of faith-based schools to preference people of their faith in the selection of staff under the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth),
- (b) calls on the Government and the Opposition to recommit to passing a Religious Discrimination Act to protect individuals against discrimination, and also to commit to introducing a positive right for religious individuals and organisations to conduct their affairs in accordance with their religious beliefs, and
- (c) asks all churches to consider informing their members of these issues, encouraging them to write to their Federal Member of Parliament to seek these commitments for a Religious Discrimination Act and positive protections to conduct one’s affairs in accordance with religious beliefs.

(Bishop Michael Stead 18/09/2024)

21/24 Dinner for younger members of Synod

Synod notes that there will be a dinner for its younger members on Wednesday 18 September 2024 for the purposes of encouragement and nourishment. The dinner group will meet at the Pitt St entrance of the Wesley Theatre at the conclusion of the evening session, with the intention of dining in Centrepoint Westfield food court.

All Synod members feeling their youth places them in a minority, or otherwise feeling the weight of their inexperience, are warmly invited to attend.

(Mr Tristan Anlezark 18/09/2024)

22/24 Declarations regarding disqualifying offences

Synod, noting –

- (i) the “Declaration” in clause 6 of the *Synod Membership Ordinance 1995* in which the declarant affirms, inter alia, that they have not been convicted of a disqualifying offence listed in Schedule 2 of the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*,
- (ii) the equivalent declarations made by persons nominated or appointed as a parish councillor or warden in the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008*, and
- (iii) that the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (the Act)* states in section 18 that Working With Children Check clearances must not be granted to “disqualified persons”, defined (in part) as a person convicted of an offence specified in Schedule 2, “if the offence was committed as an adult” (emphasis added),

requests the Standing Committee to –

- (a) examine (or ask a suitable body to examine) the wording of these declarations in the light of the qualification contained in the Act,
- (b) consider whether the ordinance declarations should be amended to bring them in line with the Act, and
- (c) report and, if necessary, bring a suitable bill, to the next session of the Synod.

(Mr Samuel Doherty 18/09/2024)

23/24 Retirement of Canon Daniel Willis as Gafcon Global Operations Manager

Synod gives thanks to God for the work and ministry of Canon Daniel Willis, formerly the Rector of Frenchs Forest, an Assistant Minister of St Andrew's Cathedral and the Chief Executive Officer of the Bible Society, who will soon retire as the Gafcon Global Operations Manager.

Daniel previously served as the Conference Director of GAFCON III, which was held in Jerusalem in 2018, before taking on the role of Gafcon Global Operations Manager in 2020. Daniel brought very strong administrative, organisational and strategic planning skills to this role, and in particular led the Gafcon Global Secretariat with composure through the COVID years when travel was difficult and, as a result, relationships strained. Yet in all he has done Daniel has sought to honour God and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in and beyond this Diocese. In all this Daniel was, and is still, supported by his loving wife, Karen.

Synod recognises that Daniel and Karen will continue to contribute fruitfully to gospel ministry and prays for God's ongoing blessings on them.

(Dr Laurie Scandrett 18/09/2024)

24/24 90th Anniversary of founding of the Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid

Synod –

- (a) celebrates with thanks the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid, founded originally as the Archbishop of Sydney's Winter Appeal in 1934 by Archbishop Howard Mowll,
- (b) notes the addition in 1971 of the Archbishop's Overseas Relief and Aid Fund by Archbishop Marcus Loane, the addition in 2000 of the Archbishop's Overseas Ministry Fund by Archbishop Harry Goodhew, and the amalgamation of the three funds under the umbrella name of The Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid by Archbishop Peter Jensen in 2010, and
- (c) rejoices at the tens of thousands of needy people helped, and is grateful for the widespread ongoing support for Anglican Aid from across the Diocese.

Canon Tim Swan 18/09/2024)

25/24 40th anniversary of the establishment of Sports and Leisure Ministries

Synod thanks God for –

- (a) the 40th anniversary of the establishment of Sports & Leisure Ministries,
- (b) for the tenacity of clergy and lay people from several denominations, including Sydney's the Rev David Tyndall, in the establishment and development of this ministry,
- (c) the sports chaplaincy organisations that grew from this root, including Sports Chaplaincy Australia, Australian Racing Christian Chaplaincy, Life Saving Chaplaincy Australia and Motor Racing Chaplaincy, and
- (d) the over 500 people involved in sports chaplaincy across Australia who continue to show the love of Jesus in the sporting arena of our land,

and commits to pray for this vital ministry.

(The Rev Dr Richard Wenden 18/09/2024)

26/24 Diocesan Governance Policy – acknowledgements and thanks

Synod –

- (a) acknowledges and gives thanks for the persons responsible for governing Diocesan organisations, who give generously of their time, energy and skills to exercise the responsibilities with which they have been entrusted,
- (b) encourages the persons responsible for governing Diocesan organisations to work in partnership with the Synod in seeking standards of governance appropriate to their context. Such standards are to be underpinned by prayer, sacrificial service, a dependence upon God for wisdom and a proper regard to best practice so that decisions made will enhance the effectiveness of each Diocesan organisation in proclaiming and commending Jesus Christ as Lord and pursuing their purposes,
- (c) commits to having due regard to the principles set out in the Diocesan Governance Policy in formulating rules and policies for the conduct of its own affairs and business, and
- (d) commits to working in partnership with Diocesan organisations, seeking to be informed of both their purposes and contexts to communicate and collaborate with them in the pursuit of their purposes and the furtherance of the purposes and priorities of the Diocese.

(Bishop Chris Edwards 18/09/2024)

27/24 Significant challenges to Religious Freedom (NSW)

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 consistent 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.

(Bishop Michael Stead 23/09/2024)

28/24 Ministry Planning and use of Church Life Surveys

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.

(Mr Peter Mayrick 23/09/2024)

29/24 Confidential Lifestyle Questionnaire

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.

(Mrs Nicky Fortescue 23/09/2024)

30/24 Merger of Church@thepeak and Christ Church Mortdale

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.

(The Rev Stuart Maze 23/09/2024)

31/24 Teaching Christian sexual ethics

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.

(The Rev Andrew Schmidt 23/09/2024)

32/24 90 years of ministry of Church Army and its closure this year

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.

(Mr Robert Gifford 23/09/2024)

33/24 Leadership of Indigenous Ministry in the Diocese

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.

(The Rev Nigel Fortescue 23/09/2024)

34/24 Nepali Church Plant in South Western Area

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.

(Canon Brian Tung 23/09/2024)

35/24 Diocesan Governance Policy – implementation

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,
- (b) 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,
- (c) 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),
- (d) 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,
- (e) 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.

(Mr Greg Hammond OAM 23/09/2024)

36/24 Parish Governance Policy – implementation

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.

(Mr Greg Hammond OAM 23/09/2024)

37/24 Sussex Inlet: Classification as a Parish

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

(The Rev Martyn Davis 23/09/2024)

38/24 Appointment of the Rev Jodie McNeill as Gafcon Global Operations Manager

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.

(Dr Laurie Scandrett 23/09/2024)

39/24 The Rev Jodie McNeill and the parish of Jamberoo

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.

(The Rev Andrew Lim 23/09/2024)

40/24 Funding for research

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.

(Canon Phillip Colgan 23/09/2024)

41/24 Variable Parochial Cost Recoveries percentage

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.

(Dr Laurie Scandrett 23/09/2024)

42/24 Tertiary Education Ministry Oversight Committee

Synod, noting the defunding of the Tertiary Education Ministry Oversight Committee (**TEMOC**) in the 2025-2027 Diocesan budget, cutting TEMOC funding from \$112k in 2024 to zero –

- (a) gives thanks for the work of TEMOC since 2010 in supporting and encouraging ministry among Tertiary students, including the distribution \$1.5 million of Synod funding used to leverage growth of a wide range of tertiary ministries and the training of Ministry Apprentices,
- (b) gives thanks for the way TEMOC has helped fund 32 theologically trained gospel workers and 185 Ministry Apprentices over this time, focusing on providing seed funding for new trained worker positions with a special emphasis on Western Sydney University, cross-cultural workers and female workers,
- (c) asks TEMOC to continue its work to encourage Tertiary Education Ministries in whatever way possible despite the current lack of funding, and
- (d) requests the Standing Committee to continue to consider how funding for TEMOC might be possible in the production of future Synod funding Ordinances.

(The Rev Richard Blight 24/09/2024)

43/24 New Ministry to Sex Workers

Synod –

- (a) acknowledges the new ministry to sex workers involving team members from four churches who are part of Together for Canterbury Bankstown: St Paul's Canterbury, Embassy Church, Marrickville Road Church and St Alban's Belmore,
- (b) is reminded of God's love for the poor and oppressed and gives glory to Him for opening the door for this ministry, and
- (c) prays for the team and for the women they seek to reach.

(Mrs Greta Morris 24/09/2024)

44/24 Giving thanks to God for the life and ministry of the Right Reverend Timothy Dudley-Smith OBE

Synod –

- (a) notes that the Right Reverend Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024) passed into glory on 12 August 2024,
- (b) gives thanks to God for the life and ministry of the Right Reverend Timothy Dudley-Smith, who served as –
 - (i) Curate in Northumberland Heath, London Borough of Bexley, UK (1950 – 1953),
 - (ii) Head of the Cambridge University Mission, Bermondsey, London, UK (1954 – 1955),
 - (iii) Editor and Education Secretary for the Evangelical Alliance, UK (1955 – 1959),
 - (iv) Assistant Secretary (1959 – 1964) and General Secretary (1965 – 1973) of the Church Pastoral Aid Society,
 - (v) Archdeacon of Norwich, Diocese of Norwich, UK (1973 –1981),
 - (vi) Commissary in England for Archbishop of Sydney (1977 – 1996),
 - (vii) Bishop of Thetford, Diocese of Norwich, UK (1981 – 1992),
 - (viii) President of the Evangelical Alliance (1987 – 1992), and
 - (ix) Honorary Assistant Bishop, Diocese of Salisbury, UK (1992 – 2024),
- (c) gives thanks to God for the approximately 450 hymns written by the Right Reverend Timothy-Dudley-Smith over the course of sixty years, and
- (d) prays that God would raise up, illuminate and inspire a new generation of hymn writers who will equip his people to “proclaim the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Peter 2:9).

(Mr Sherwin Titus 24/09/2024)

45/24 Ministry in Ashbury

Synod –

- (a) acknowledges the ministry of previous generations of saints who served the Lord Jesus and witnessed to the parish of Ashbury,
- (b) recognises the grief that came with closing church services in February 2022,
- (c) gives thanks for the new congregation that was planted in March this year, and rejoices with the angels at the lost who have been found, and
- (d) commits to praying for the Rev Daniel and Renee Gale as they shepherd the congregation and witness to the local community.

(The Rev Stephen Gardner 24/09/2024)

46/24 Amalgamation of the parish of Croydon with the parish of Concord and Burwood

Synod, noting the amalgamation of the parish of Croydon with the parish of Concord and Burwood on 1 July 2024, commends the parishioners of both parishes for embracing this ministry opportunity, and prays that God will bless the new parish of Croydon, Burwood and Concord, and their plans to plant a new congregation in 2025.

(The Rev Alan Lukabyo 24/09/2024)

47/24 Attendance Patterns and Mission in the Diocese

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) 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 ministers, training colleges and other diocesan organisations, to give a special five year focus to respond to our attendance decline, making prayer, evangelism, church health and leadership development our chief priorities,
- (c) 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,
- (d) asks the Standing Committee to consider the data and recommendations of the report, to decide on appropriate steps to take in light of the report, and to bring a report to the next session of the Synod with an update on progress, and
- (e) 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).

(The Rev Dominic Steele 24/09/2024)

48/24 Prioritisation of ministry to youth and children

Synod –

- (a) gives thanks to the Lord for the faithful ministry efforts of both laity and clergy in the Diocese of Sydney since 1788, the crucial work of Moore Theological College, Anglicare, Youthworks, Anglican schools and other ministry organisations in supporting the ministry of the Diocese’s churches, the visionary and theological leadership of Archbishops and other leaders, and the property and financial resources which facilitate the ministry of the Word,
- (b) laments the decline in attendance throughout the Diocese as a whole over the last decade,
- (c) therefore requests the Standing Committee, as it considers the “Attendance Patterns and Mission in the Diocese” report, to also consider–

- (i) what might be the possible operational, clergy recruitment and training, property and financial consequences for the whole diocesan fellowship, if the rate of church attendance decline continues for another decade, and
- (ii) what measures could be taken by parishes and other diocesan organisations and leaders to address the possible operational consequences identified in paragraph (c)(i), and
- (d) requests both parishes and the Standing Committee to consider how parishes might be encouraged to strategically allocate financial, property and human resources so that ministry to children and youth is prioritised, even over other important ministries, for the future health of our churches.

(The Rev Zac Veron 24/09/2024)

49/24 Use of Non-Disclosure Agreements in the Diocese

Synod, noting the report “Use of Non-Disclosure Agreements in the Diocese” –

- (a) endorses the principles articulated by the Report,
- (b) endorses the recommendations made at paragraphs 36, 37, and 38 of the Report, and the following additional uses of a Non-Disclosure Agreement (**NDA**) deemed not to contravene any of the Report’s principles –
 - (i) where an NDA is employed to ensure confidentiality with respect to other financial settlement terms in an employment separation, namely the nature of the financial settlement itself, and other benefits in addition to a financial sum,
 - (ii) where an NDA is employed to ensure appropriate confidentiality of personal information (e.g., for the purposes of compliance with privacy legislation),
 - (iii) where an obligation is included in a contract which requires an employee or contractor to maintain confidentiality in respect to information they become aware of in the course of their employment/engagement, except insofar as disclosure is necessary for the proper performance of their duties, to disclose allegations of misconduct to a relevant authority, or to comply with the law, and
 - (iv) where a confidentiality agreement is, for any reason, required by law,
- (c) laments and condemns non-disclosure agreements where they are, or have been used to cover up sin, silence victims, or avoid accountability,
- (d) calls to repentance anyone who has knowingly and intentionally used non-disclosure agreements for the purpose of covering up sin, silencing victims or avoiding accountability,
- (e) encourages all parishes, diocesan organisations, and schools to –
 - (i) adopt a policy in relation to the use of Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) which reflects the principles of the Report and the recommendations made at paragraphs 36, 37, and 38, or
 - (ii) make a public “pledge” in relation to the use of NDAs which reflects the principles of the Report and the recommendations made at paragraphs 36, 37, and 38,
- (f) requests the Standing Committee to develop and publish a model policy and a model pledge in relation to the use of NDAs which reflects the principles of the Report and the recommendations made at paragraphs 36, 37, and 38 and to circulate this policy and pledge to all parishes, diocesan organisations and schools with an encouragement to consider adopting one or the other,
- (g) encourages all parishes, diocesan organisations, and schools to consider whether they have used NDAs in the past which contravene the principles and recommendations of the Report, and, if they have done so, to welcome approaches from those who may have been subject to such NDAs (or their representative) with a view to considering the offer of an apology for the use of such NDAs, and, the offer of a formal (written) release from the terms of the NDA, and
- (h) agrees to consider a motion at the next session of Synod by which the Synod will apologise to all those who have, historically, been subject to NDAs which contravene the principles and recommendations of the Report.

(Archdeacon Simon Flinders 24/09/2024)

50/24 SRE and the Office of the Children's Guardian

Synod –

- (a) thanks God for the privilege of Special Religious Education (SRE) in New South Wales public schools that empowers parents with the dignity of choice in the faith education of their child/ren,
- (b) notes that SRE teachers and helpers comprise Australia's largest weekly volunteer labour force and contribute to the spiritual and psychological wellbeing of students, strengthen the multicultural fabric of local school communities, and deliver other societal benefits,
- (c) notes that SRE teachers and helpers must hold a verified current Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance (among many other qualifications) in order to be authorised by a parish, and can no longer be authorised if their WWCC expires, or notification is received that their WWCC status is closed, barred, or interim barred; further noting the requirement to inform the NSW Department of Education of changes to WWCC status for SRE workers,
- (d) reminds all parishes that authorise SRE teachers and helpers to proactively monitor WWCC expiry dates and maintain up to date contacts with the Office of the Children's Guardian so as to receive any notifications in a timely manner, and
- (e) requests the Youthworks SRE Office and the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry, as a matter of urgency, to communicate clear guidelines to parishes regarding the process to be followed for removing the authorisation of an SRE teacher/helper who no longer has a current WWCC clearance, including the mechanism for notifying the Department of Education.

(Ms Polly Seidler 24/09/2024)

51/24 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.

(Bishop Peter Lin 24/09/2024)