

**The Third Session of the 50th Synod of
the Diocese of Bathurst
Saturday 16th Sept 2023
Holy Trinity Parish and Community Centre, Kelso**

WELCOME AND PRAYERS

The Synod commenced meeting at 9:00am with a welcome by the Synod Chaplain, the Rev'd Phil Howes, an acknowledgement of country and opening prayers.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

9.05-9:46am The President, Bishop Mark Calder, addressed the Synod on the theme of indications of and opportunities for new life across the diocese.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The President warmly welcomed all Synod members, and especially those present for the first time, and gave a few explanatory remarks regarding the operation of Synod along with some instructions for members. He then noted some errors in the printed version of his presidential address which was to be distributed to members present at Synod; a digital copy will be corrected before being distributed more widely.

The President also advised Synod of the following changes in Synod representatives as listed on page 19 of Book 1 of the papers for this session of the 50th Synod:

- Bathurst: vacancy filled by Graham Leatherland;
- Canowindra: Ross Burnett as substitute for Pamela Byrnes;
- Dubbo: Michelle Lyons as substitute for Therese Garnsey;
- Orange: vacancies filled by Michael Middleton and Rod Wykes; and
- Warren: Ruth Wright is no longer a representative.

MOTIONS OF WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

M1 Order of Business

Mover: Dr Warwick Baines (Bishop's Registrar)

Seconder: Mr Mark Galbraith (Clause 403)

Synod adopts the Order of Business recommended by the Steering Committee, as tabled.

CARRIED

M2 Reports

Mover: The Rev'd Andrew Thornhill (Coonabarabran)

Seconder: Mrs Lisa Milton (Clause 403)

That the reports as listed in the Synod Handbook be tabled.

CARRIED

M3 Permission for presentations by people other than Synod members

Mover: The Rev'd James Daymond (Clause 318)

Seconder: Ms Sue West (Bathurst)

Synod gives leave for Mr Brandon Howard to address the synod on behalf of Anglicare, for the Rev'd Canon John Lovell to address the synod on behalf of the Church Missionary Society (CMS), and for material related to Anglicare to be distributed to members of Synod.

CARRIED

Prior to moving this motion, Mr Daymond made the following statement: "We recall with great sadness that last year we welcomed Barry (Baz) Porter from Anglicare, who opened our understanding of Anglicare locally and then was tragically killed a month or so after."

M4 Finance and Accounts for 2022

Mover: Dr Warwick Baines

Seconder: Mr Mark Galbraith

Synod receives the audited financial statements and accounts for the Synod Management Fund, the Anglican Property Trust, the Anglican Managed Investment Fund and the Endowment of the See for the year ended 31 December 2022.

CARRIED

M5 Synod Management Fund Budget Estimates for 2024

Mover: Dr Warwick Baines

Seconder: Mr Mark Galbraith

Synod adopts the 2024 Synod Management Fund Budget Estimates.

CARRIED

M6 Schedule of Synod Contributions for 2024

Mover: Dr Warwick Baines

Seconder: Mr Mark Galbraith

Synod adopts the 2024 Schedule of Synod Contributions.

CARRIED

Leave was then granted for the following motion to be proposed without notice:

Mover: The Ven. Jono Williams (Canowindra)

Seconder: The Rev'd Ben Mackay (Parkes – Peak Hill)

Synod expresses its sincere thanks to Dr Baines and team for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and accounts for 2022 and of the schedule of Synod contributions for 2024.

Synod adjourned for Morning Tea at 10:25am and resumed at 11:00am.

At the resumption, Mr Brandon Howard spoke about the work of Anglicare in the region, and the opportunities to work with local churches.

Then the Rev'd Canon John Lovell spoke about the vision and mission of CMS, and the great value of local churches partnering with missionaries in praying, caring, and providing financial support for them.

Following these presentations the Bishop led the synod in prayer for the work of Anglicare and CMS.

M7 Bishop's Sermon and study resources

Mover: The Rev'd Andrew Thornhill

Seconder: Mrs Jennifer Tunks (Coolah-Dunedoo)

Synod recognises the immense blessing to many across our diocese from Bishop Mark's weekly sermons, Bible studies and the Lenten Studies organised and provided through the period of Lent; and respectfully requests and offers any support needed to enable him to continue faithfully proclaiming the Gospel through this teaching, as together we continue to share Jesus for life.

CARRIED

M8 The Ven. Brett Watterson

Mover: The Ven. Jono Williams

Seconder: The Very Rev'd James Hodson (Bathurst)

Synod congratulates the Ven. Brett Watterson on his appointment as Rector of the Parish of Nelson Bay (Diocese of Newcastle), gives thanks to God for his and the Rev'd Michelle Watterson's faithful service to the Bathurst Diocese, and assures them and their family of our prayers during this time of transition.

CARRIED

Immediately following carriage of the motion Jono Williams led the synod in prayer for Brett, Michelle and their family.

M9 Safe families

Mover: The Ven. Jono Williams

Seconder: The Rev'd Phil Howes (Bathurst)

Synod expresses sorrow and repugnance at all incidences of domestic violence or intimidation as being opposed to God's design, and actively promotes a culture of safe families, and in doing so urges:

- a. each parish to clearly display the "10 Commitments" on a notice board along with a contact number where help can be found;***
- b. each parish to make available a copy of the booklet "Renew" to parishioners;***
- c. Bishop-in-Council to establish a working group in the diocese to encourage increased cultural awareness both inside and outside of our churches, and which reports annually to Synod;***
- d. the working group to operate with reference to existing Safe Churches procedures and utilising their expertise; and***
- e. the Bishop to invite recognised ministry practitioners in this area to be invited to speak to clergy, licenced lay ministers and/or diocesan gatherings each year.***

CARRIED

M10 Review of Professional Standards Ordinance 2007

Mover: The Rev'd Ben Mackay (Parkes – Peak Hill)

Seconder: Mr Mark Olson (Parkes – Peak Hill)

Synod respectfully requests Bishop-in-Council to undertake a review of the Professional Standards Ordinance 2007, with such review to include:

- a. a survey of similar ordinances in other dioceses;***
- b. consultation with the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian; and***
- c. consultation with the Director of Professional Standards;***

and as a result of that review to bring recommendations to Synod 2024 regarding any proposed changes to the Professional Standards Ordinance 2007 (including any resultant legislation).

CARRIED

M11 Professional Standards Committee decisions

Mover: The Rev'd Ben Mackay

Seconder: Mr Mark Olson

Withdrawn with leave of the synod.

M12 Clergy Pastoral Supervision Policy

Mover: The Rev'd Andrew Thornhill

Seconder: Mr Adrian Ahern (Bishop's Chancellor)

Synod agrees to adopt the Clergy Pastoral Supervision Policy.

M13 Presentation of the Parishes Ordinance 2023 and the Administration Ordinance Amendment Ordinance 2023.

Mover: The Rev'd Robert Cameron (Orange East)

Seconder: Mr Adrian Ahern

Synod agrees to:

- i. consider the Parishes Ordinance 2023 and the Administration Ordinance Amendment Ordinance 2023 together, except in the case that Synod, should it so decide, sit as a Committee of the Whole for either ordinance; and***
- ii. allow the Mover and Seconder to speak to both ordinances in one joint presentation of up to 20 minutes, and suspends so much of the Synod Rules of Debate as would prevent them doing so.***

CARRIED

QUESTIONS OF WHICH NOTICE WAS GIVEN

1 Work Health Safety (WHS) risk management in parishes

Mr Michael Middleton asked the following questions:

- a. Does Bathurst Diocese require parishes to conduct WHS risk management reviews/audits?**
 - (i) If so, at what frequency (e.g., yearly)?**
 - (ii) If so by what date each year (e.g., end of October), are Parish WHS review reports expected to be to diocesan office?**
- b. What standards/guidelines are the bases of such reviews/audits?**
 - (i) Is it Ansva's WHS risk management guide that parishes should 'apply' when conducting such reviews?**
 - (ii) If not Ansva's guide, which 'standards' apply/can be applied?**
 - (iii) What is the expected level of competence of parish personnel, to manage respective WHS Programs?**
 - (iv) Are rectors and wardens deemed to be 'officers' of the Diocese or only their respective parish?**
 - (v) Similarly, what level of competence is required of Parish personnel to conduct such WHS reviews?**
- c. Insurance of parish WHS program**
 - (i) Are all Bathurst Diocese parishes under the same insurance policy, or on an individual, parish by parish payment plan and therefore based on respective parish's safety record?**
 - (ii) Could/would the respective, annual parish's assessment amount (insurance component) be reduced if its WHS record was 'faultless'?**

To which the President replied:

"I'm advised that the answers are as follows:

- a. *With reference to the current Administration Ordinance, there is a requirement for the parish priest and the wardens to conduct an annual inspection of all grounds and buildings and submit a signed statement (known as Form 5) to that effect as part of the annual parish return process, due by 31 March of the following year. It is acknowledged that the 'Form 5' process is largely focused on the condition and maintenance of buildings and grounds and so does not constitute a comprehensive risk review.*

Our ultimate insurers, Ansva, do however conduct regular risk reviews of our properties. In 2023 Ansva risk engineers inspected properties in the parishes of Dubbo, Cudgegong Valley, Orange, Kelso, Forbes, and Cowra. In 2022 they inspected properties in the parishes of Bathurst and Parkes — both those parish councils were presented with a report and list of risk improvements in order of priority. We are yet to receive reports from the 2023 reviews.

Our insurance brokers, Anglican Insurance and Risk Services (AIRS) have recently partnered with Ansva to develop an online portal (known as 'Love My Church') which will allow parishes to complete and upload a comprehensive risk survey for each of their buildings. There is no mandated requirement but our advice from AIRS is that these risk surveys should be completed every 3 years and the accompanying building maintenance checklist (also uploaded to the online portal) every year. The 'roll-out' of the online risk surveys was tabled for discussion at a recent Anglican Property Trust Diocese of Bathurst meeting with the intention to implement from 2024.

- b. *With regard to standards or guidelines:*

(i) *Yes. The questions on the comprehensive risk survey are the same ones Ansva's risk engineers use to conduct their reviews, referred to above.*

(ii) *Refer to the previous response.*

(iii) *A level that would be reasonably expected of a diligent volunteer, i.e., not the standard of those in heavily regulated sectors such as mining. AIRS are fully aware that management of risk in parishes is likely to be the responsibility of volunteers and so have set the questions on the online risk survey accordingly. That said, as part of the 'roll-out' of the online risk surveys APT will consider how parishes lacking in suitable volunteers can best be supported.*

(iv) *Unless they also have a diocesan leadership role, parish priests and wardens are essentially officers of their respective parish, but in terms of insurance coverage the distinction is not important. This is because the diocesan wide management liability insurance policy is deliberately broad, covering all members of governing entities in the diocese including those on parish councils.*

AIRS also stated that personal liability for breaches of WHS legislation vary from state to state but that in NSW there are personal liability exemptions for the not-for-profit sector.

(v) *Refer to the response to b(iii).*

- c. *Insurance of parish WHS program*

(i) *Premiums are impacted by revenue, claims history and risk profile. AIRS notes that our public liability risk profile, and therefore our premium, is low. Our management liability premium (which is a small overall share of the total premium) is higher than average due to the CBA case.*

All insurance policies are diocesan wide, and all premiums are paid by the diocese. The method for recovering each parish's share of each premium is a decision of the diocese. For management and public liability policies it is informed by each parish's share of average Sunday attendance. A parish's individual safety record currently has no impact on insurance recoveries.

(ii) As per the above we don't currently adjust parish recoveries according to parish level claims history or risk management practice, but this possibility will be explored by APT in 2024.

2 Minimum standards for provision of a parish car

The Rev'd Phil Howes asked the following questions:

Regarding the minimum standards mandated as of last year for the provision of a parish car,

- a. *How was the minimum standard for the provision of a parish car determined?*
- b. *Have other dioceses implemented similar standards?*
- c. *What determines a 'safe' vehicle in these standards?*
- d. *Why is the 6 year limit deemed to make a vehicle safer than older cars?*
- e. *Why is it crucial that this be implemented?*
- f. *After a vehicle reaches 6 years of age, does it then require replacement again?*
- g. *If the vehicle standard is 6 years or younger, and the issue is safety, why is there not a requirement for the minister's car also to meet these requirements?*
- h. *Why is a 2-litre engine set as the minimum?*
- i. *Why is the choice either of a large sum each year or an expensive car, the only options?*

To which the President replied:

"I'm advised that the answers are as follows:

- a. *The Business Manager and the Bishop set the standard based on three driving factors:*
 - (i) to encourage parishes to get out of the business of running parish cars;*
 - (ii) to ensure that the parish car provided was safe and suitable for long driving; and*
 - (iii) to help guarantee that there was some equity between what might be provided in a parish car and what a minister might provide for themselves by the provision of a car benefit.*
- b. *We asked for information from other Anglican dioceses. Some currently have no policy (Adelaide, Willochra, North-West Australia). Some have a policy of not offering a parish car as an option but only a car benefit (Armidale, Wangaratta, Bendigo, Newcastle, Riverina). In some cases, the benefit is paid to the minister, in others, the amount is held by the diocese so that it accumulates and is used to purchase a new vehicle. In the two dioceses we heard from that have policies that allow parishes to purchase cars directly, the requirements are more exacting than ours. For example, in:*

Canberra-Goulburn – cars must have a 5-star ANCAP safety rating, a date stamp no more than 3 years old and they must all have electronic stability control, lane support systems, autonomous emergency braking and reverse collision avoidance systems such as cameras and/or monitors.

Ballarat – cars must be chosen by the Registrar in consultation with the minister and take into consideration special conditions in the parish and the size of the family. Cars must have automatic transmission, air conditioning, cruise control, floor mats, Bluetooth phone connectivity, rear parking sensors and a reversing camera. Cars are reviewed for possible replacement at 4-5 years and 100,000 km.

- c. What the Business Manager and the Bishop thought sounded reasonable.*
- d. For the minister’s protection from parishes providing something unsuitable.*
- e. It is difficult to inspire ministers to leave the city and come to regional and remote areas. The stipend difference between here and Sydney is around \$10,000. Providing a reasonable car benefit can help reduce the sacrifice we expect ministers to make in coming to minister in the West. It is acknowledged that at \$11,590 our car benefit is higher than most dioceses (some are around \$5,000 and Sydney’s is \$8,047) but this is offset by a lower stipend in Bathurst than most.*
- f. Under the existing policy, yes. Given that we can attract a fleet owners’ discount, claim exemption from stamp duty and claim back the GST, some parishes actually break even on selling a vehicle after three years.*
- g. Private vehicles are at the discretion of the minister as it is their own vehicle.*
- h. It may be the wrong measurement, which perhaps should relate to horsepower, but the Bishop, who does a lot of country driving himself, was concerned that there be sufficient power to safely overtake road trains on our highways.*
- i. Refer to the response to e.*

After answers were given to the questions, the Bishop encouraged Synod members to take advantage of the provision for asking questions as a constructive opportunity which can contribute positively to the work of the synod.

Synod then adjourned for Lunch at 12:30pm and resumed at 1:15pm.

M14 Parishes Ordinance 2023

Mover: The Rev’d Robert Cameron

Secunder: Mr Adrian Ahern

Synod grants leave for the introduction of the Parishes Ordinance 2023.

CARRIED

That Synod agrees to consider the Ordinance.

CARRIED

That the Ordinance now do pass.

CARRIED

M15 Administration Ordinance Amendment Ordinance 2023

Mover: The Rev’d Robert Cameron

Secunder: Mr Adrian Ahern

Synod grants leave for the introduction of the Administration Ordinance Amendment Ordinance 2023.

CARRIED

That Synod agrees to consider the Ordinance.

CARRIED

That the Ordinance now do pass.

CARRIED

M16 Parish car minimum standards

Mover: The Rev'd Phil Howes

Seconder: Mr Brett Dicks (Coonabarabran)

Synod respectfully requests the Stipends and Clergy Welfare Commission to revisit the standards laid down for a parish car, with special reference to smaller, less-resourced parishes, and taking into consideration the questions posed from the floor of Synod in this session.

CARRIED

QUESTIONS OF WHICH NOTICE HAD NOT BEEN GIVEN

No notices of questions were received.

MOTIONS OF WHICH NOTICE HAD NOT BEEN GIVEN

Synod gave leave for the following motions to be proposed without notice.

M17 Motion regarding Indigenous representation to Synod

Mover: Mrs Michelle Lyons (Dubbo)

Seconder: Miss Merylyn Nevell (Coonabarabran)

Synod respectfully requests Bishop-in-Council to make provision for the appointment of up to two members of Synod to represent Indigenous Australians at the next session of Synod.

CARRIED

M18 Motion of thanks re the running of Synod

Mover: The Very Rev'd James Hodson

Seconder: Mr Graham Leatherland

Synod gives thanks to Dr Warwick Baines, Mrs Louise Hickey and Mrs Alissia Galbraith for all the work that has gone into preparing for this session of synod. Synod gives thanks for the clear communication and presentation of the materials. Synod also thanks Archdeacon Brett Watterson for his sermon at the synod service and the bishop's chancellor, Adrian Ahern, for his guidance and for travelling to be present with us. Synod thanks Mark Olson as Chairman of Committees and the Rev'd Bob Cameron and Mrs Joy Ritchie for their work as secretaries of synod. Synod also gives thanks for the parish of Holy Trinity Kelso and for their generous hospitality in providing a place for synod to meet and the team who provided catering to sustain us. Synod thanks our bishop for his presidential address which was affirming and challenging.

Above all Synod gives thanks to Almighty God for the signs of new life among us that we may continue to share Jesus for life.

CARRIED

PRAYER

2:20pm Closed with prayers led by Mr Mark Galbraith, Mrs Joanna Watts (Clause 319), and the Rev'd Ben Connelly (Cowra), a song and a benediction given by the Bishop.

ADJOURNMENT OF SYNOD

2:30pm The synod adjourned without setting another day for meeting.

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



R. C. CAMERON

Clerical Secretary of Synod



J.C. Ritchie

Lay Secretary of Synod



Signed by the President

on 9/10/23