

**MINUTES**  
OF  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
OF THE  
**FORTY-SEVENTH**  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
OF THE  
*Presbyterian Church of Australia*



**HELD IN SYDNEY**  
**SEPTEMBER 2010**



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# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

*Presbyterian Church of Australia*

## 2010

### ASSEMBLY OFFICERS

**Right Reverend the Moderator:**

REV. DAVID NORMAN JONES, B.D., Cert.Past.Stud.  
3 Lachlan Drive, Mt. Nelson Tas. 7007  
(03) 6223 4701

**Clerk of Assembly:**

REV. DR PAUL G. LOGAN, O.A.M., B.A., D.Min., Dip.Ed.Stud., M.A.C.E.,  
PO Box 2196, Strawberry Hills N.S.W. 2012  
(02) 9955 1662 (H) (02) 9690 9371 (O)

**Deputy Clerk:**

REV. BRUCE M. MELLER, B.D., Th.L., M.A.(Theol)  
PO Box 2196, Strawberry Hills N.S.W. 2012  
(02) 9690 9375 (O)

**Business Convener:**

REV. PETER J. BARSON  
55 Chater Street, Carina Qld. 4152 (07) 3398 9823

**Procurator:**

MR GREGORY BURTON, S.C., B.C.L., B.A., LL.B.  
C/- Church Offices

**Law Agent:**

MR SIMON FRASER, B.A., LL.M.  
Colin Biggers & Paisley,  
Level 42, 2 Park Street, Sydney N.S.W. 2000  
Phone: (02) 8281 4555 Fax: (02) 8281 4567

**Assembly Officer**

MR PETER J. GRAHAM, OAM. Esq.,  
PO Box 2196, Strawberry Hills N.S.W. 2012

**Trustees for The Presbyterian Church of Australia:**

Persons who for the time being hold office as the Trustees of  
"The Presbyterian Church (New South Wales) Property Trust"

PO Box 2196, Strawberry Hills N.S.W. 2012  
Telephone: (02) 9690 9333 Fax: (02) 9310 2148  
DX 22502 Surry Hills

The Assembly will meet on Monday 9 September, 2013, in the  
Chinese Presbyterian Church, Corner Crown and Albion Streets, Sydney  
or in such other place as may be decided.

**PAST MODERATORS**  
of the  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF AUSTRALIA**

Rev. John Meiklejohn, D.D. ....	1901
Rev. Alexander Hay, D.D. ....	1902
Rev. David Bruce, D.D. ....	1903
Rev. P.J. Murdoch, M.A. ....	1905
Rev. T.E. Clouston, D.D. ....	1906
Rev. Peter Robertson ....	1907
Rev. John Ferguson ....	1909
Rev. W.S. Rolland ....	1910
Rev. J. Laurence Rentould, M.A, D.D. ....	1912
Rev. George Davidson, M.A, D.D. ....	1914
Rev. Ronald G. Macintyre, C.M.G., C.B.E., M.A., D.D. ....	1916
Rev. John Walker, D.D. ....	1918
Rev. James Gibson, M.A. ....	1920
Rev. John Mathew, M.A, D.D. ....	1922
Rev. James Crookston ....	1924
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Rev. Alexander Crow ....	1928
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Rev. John Mackenzie, M.A, D.D. ....	1936
Rev. John Flynn, O.B.E., D.D. ....	1939
Rev. R. Wilson Macaulay, B.A., D.D. ....	1942
Rev. Alexander C. Grieve, B.A. ....	1945
Rev. Julian R. Blanchard, C.B.E., B.A., D.D. ....	1948
Rev. Richard Bardon, O.B.E., B.A. ....	1951
Rev. Sir Francis W. Rolland, O.B.E., M.C., M.A. ....	1954
Rev. David J. Flockhart, M.A. ....	1957
Rev. Alan C. Watson, M.A., D.D. ....	1959
Rev. Hector Harrison, O.B.E., M.A., B.D. ....	1962
Rev. William Young, B.A. ....	1964
Rev. Norman Faichney, B.A. ....	1967
Rev. James Frederick McKay, C.M.G., O.B.E., M.A., B.D. ....	1970, 1971
Rev. Gillam Albert McConnel Wood, O.B.E., A.M., B.A. ....	1973
Rev. Neil MacLeod, A.M., M.A., D.D. ....	1974
Rev. Kenneth Joseph Gardner, O.B.E, D.D. ....	1977
Rev. James Mullan, B.A., Dip.R.E. ....	1979
Rev. Norman Monsen ....	1982
Rev. Edward R. Pearsons ....	1985
Rev. Alan C. Stubs, B.A., B.D., M.Th., Dip.R.E. ....	1988
Rev. Murray J.K. Ramage ....	1991
Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman, B.A., B.D., M.Litt., M.Th., Th.D. ....	1994
Rev. Bruce H. Christian, M.E., B.D. ....	1997
Rev. Jack J. Knapp ....	2001
Rev. Charles Robert Thomas, Th.D. ....	2004
Rev. Robert P.F. Benn, L.Th., Dip.R.E. ....	2007
Rev. David N. Jones, BD, CertPastoralStudies ....	2010

**CLERKS**  
**of the**  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF AUSTRALIA**

Rev. James S. Laing, D.D. ....	1901-1906
Rev. George Tait, M.A. ....	1906-1933
Rev. R. Wilson Macaulay, B.A., B.D. ....	1933-1942
.....	1945-1951
Rev. W.D. Marshall, M.A. ....	1942-1945
.....	1951-1957
Rev. G. Ross Williams .....	1957-1970
Rev. L. Farquhar Gunn, M.B.E., E.D., M.A., B.D. ....	1970-1974
Very Rev. Edward R. Pearsons .....	1974-1985
Raymond P.W. Jell, Esq, L.Th., A.R.E.I.A.I.C.M., A.A.I.M., J.P. ....	1985-1988
Very Rev. Kenneth J. Gardner, O.B.E., D.D. ....	1988-1991
Rev. Paul G. Logan, O.A.M., B.A., D.Min., Dip.Ed.Stud., M.A.C.E. ....	1991-

**DEPUTY (OR JUNIOR)**  
**CLERKS**

Rev. George Tait, M.A. ....	1901-1906
Rev. E.E. Baldwin, M.A., Dip.Ed. ....	1922-1939
Rev. W.D. Marshall, M.A. ....	1939-1942
.....	1945-1951
Rev. G.W. McAlpine .....	1942-1945
Rev. J.M. Stuckey, B.A. ....	1951-1962
Rev. C.M. Dyster, M.A., B.D., S.T.M. ....	1962-1964
Rev. L.F.F. Gunn, M.B.E., E.D., M.A., B.D. ....	1964-1970
Rev. A.M. McMaster, B.A., B.D. ....	1970-1974
Raymond P.W. Jell, Esq., L.Th., A.R.E.I., A.I.C.M., A.A.I.M., J.P. ....	1977-1985
Rev. J.J.T. Campbell, B.A. ....	1988-1991
Rev. B.M. Meller, B.D., Th.L., M.A. (Theol) .....	1991-

## LAW AGENTS

Messrs. Davies and Campbell .....	1901-1930
Mr Alexander Gerald Proudfoot .....	1930-1950
Mr J.P. Adam, M.A., LL.B., Dip.Ed. ....	1950-1972
Mr John G.R. McArthur, LL.B. ....	1972-1977
Mr Lindsay J. Moore, LL.B. ....	1977-1991
Mr Simon H. Fraser, B.A., LL.M. ....	1991-

## PROCURATORS

Mr John Garland, K.C., M.A., LL.B. ....	1901-1921
Mr John A. Ferguson, B.A., LL.B. ....	1921-1936
Mr Brian C. Fuller, Q.C., B.A., LL.B. ....	1936-1956
Mr Douglas M. Little, Q.C. ....	1956-1959
Mr F. Maxwell Bradshaw, M.A., LL.M. ....	1959-1992
Mr Garry K. Downes, A.M., Q.C., B.A., LL.B. ....	1992-2002
Mr Gregory K. Burton, B.C.L., B.A., LL.B. ....	2003-



**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**  
**ROLL OF COMMISSIONERS**

**ELECTED TO THE 2010 GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**The Assembly Officers**

<b>Moderator-General</b>	Rt Rev. D.N. Jones
<b>Clerk</b>	Rev. Dr Paul Logan
<b>Deputy Clerk</b>	Rev. B.M. Meller
<b>Business Convener</b>	Rev P.J. Barson
<b>Law Agent</b>	Mr S.H. Fraser
<b>Procurator</b>	Mr G.K. Burton

**Former Moderators-General**

Very Rev. Dr K.J. Gardner	Very Rev. J. Mullan
Very Rev. M.J.K. Ramage	Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman
Very Rev. B.H. Christian	Very Rev. J.J. Knapp
Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas	Very Rev. R.P.F. Benn

**NEW SOUTH WALES**

(Elected by the State Assembly)

Rev. C.D. Balzer	Mr W. Richards
Rev. J.R. Irvin	Mr M. Quirk
Rev. P.F. Cooper	Mr P.J. Graham
Rev. Dr I.K. Smith	Mr C.M. Langford
Rev. K.D. Murray	Mr A.W. Byleveld
Rev. W.G. Morrow	Dr M. Whitelaw
Rev. J. McClean	Mr J. Rolland
Rev. B.M. Gorton	Mr R. Holvast
Rev. D.M. Seaman	Mr D.M. Crawford
Rev. I.R. Schoonwater	Mrs. Y. Forsyth

**Presbytery of Canberra**

Rev. J.F. Bartholomew	Mr E.D. Mercer
Rev. G.J. Hooper	Mr B.C.E. McDowell

**Presbytery of The Central Coast**

Rev. M. Cropper	Mr D. Telfer
-----------------	--------------

**Presbytery of The Central Tablelands**

Rev. R. McKean	Mr B. Greig
Rev. D.B. Stone	Mr J.W. Read

**Presbytery of The Central West**

Rev. L.G. Fowler	Mr J. Greig
------------------	-------------

### **Presbytery of The Hawkesbury**

Rev. D.R. Balzer  
Rev. K. Boulden

Mr S. Mansour

### **Presbytery of The Hunter**

Rev. D. Haley  
Rev. M. Pittman

Mr D. Smiley  
Miss J. Kellett

### **Presbytery of The Illawarra**

Rev. P.J. Currie  
Rev. S. North

Mr G. Stewart  
Mr W. Henderson

### **Presbytery of The Mid North Coast**

Rev. S.B. Donnellan  
Rev. P.G. Harris

Mr J. Rooimans

### **Presbytery of Moree**

Rev. L. Sims

Mr D. Pottie

### **Presbytery of New England**

Rev. S.A. Andrews

Mr L. Jackson

### **Presbytery of The Northern Rivers**

Rev. A. Unwin

Mr M. Eleveld  
Mr D. Seymour

### **Presbytery of The Riverina**

Rev. P. Gobbo

Dr L. Thorpe

### **Presbytery of Sydney**

Rev. P.R. Dunstan  
Rev. P.W. Hastie  
Rev. I.F. Ransom  
Rev. M. Powell  
Rev. C.R. Tucker

Mr M.C. Beveridge  
Ms S. Maddrell  
Miss F. Perry  
Mr W. Thompson  
Mrs J. Thuaux

### **Presbytery of Sydney North**

Rev. R.A. Boase  
Rev. T.N. Cheetham  
Rev. M.S. Oates  
Rev. R.J. Quadrio  
Rev. J.N. Read

Dr A.E. Vaughan  
Mr J.R. Falls  
Mr J.A. Goodman  
Mr T.A. Nestel  
Mr C.C. Short

### **Presbytery of Sydney South**

Rev. Dr E.F. Brown  
Rev. Dr P.E. Barnes

Rev. A. Clausen

**Presbytery of Wagga Wagga**

Rev. A.C. McMillan  
Rev. A.D. Campbell

Mr A. Johnston  
Mr G. McGeorge

**QUEENSLAND**

(Elected by the State Assembly)

Rev. L.J. Hall  
Rev. G. Kettniss  
Rev. J. Langbridge  
Rev. L. Percy

Mr K. Booker  
Mr N. Hughes  
Mr D. Lewis  
Mr G. Newnham

**Presbytery of Brisbane**

Rev. P. Campbell  
Rev. Dr M. Kim  
Rev. S. Atkinson

Mr G. Rodgers  
Mr J. Miles  
Mr S. Liddell

**Presbytery of Central Queensland**

Rev. M.J. O'Connor

**Presbytery of Darling Downs**

Rev. D. Knott  
Rev. P. Dimond

Mr D. Mooney  
Mr N. Dimond

**Presbytery of Moreton**

Rev. J. Gilmour

**Presbytery of Mowbray**

Rev. R. van Delden  
Rev. D. Bigg  
Rev. P. Case

Mr K. Stewart

**Presbytery of North Queensland**

Rev. D. McDougall

Mr I. Putt

**Presbytery of Wide Bay-Sunshine Coast**

Rev. J. Roth  
Rev. W. Brown

Mr J. Tucker  
Mr W. Pivac

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

(Elected by the State Assembly)

Rev. G.J. Ware

Mr B. Johnson

**Presbytery of Penola**

Rev. A. Clarkson

Mr R. Bannister

### **Presbytery of Torrens**

Rev. C. ten Broeke

Miss M. McGregor

### **TASMANIA**

(Elected by the State Assembly)

Rev. R. White

Mr G. Roberts

### **Presbytery of Bass**

Rev. G. Munro

Mr I.D. Partridge

### **Presbytery of Derwent**

Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell

Mr D. Shephard

### **VICTORIA**

(Elected by the State Assembly)

Rev. G. Bradbeer

Mr B.D. Bayston

Rt. Rev. A. Bray

Mr R.S. Belcher

Rev. P.W. Phillips

Mr P. Betts

Rev. D. Robertson

Mr R. Herweynen

Rev. Dr J.P. Wilson

Mr B. Stasse

### **Presbytery of Ballarat**

Rev. W. Vandenberg

Mr N. Sharp

Rev. Dr J.S. Woodward

Mr R. Taylor

### **Presbytery of Benalla**

Rev. K. Ee

Mr M. Browning

### **Presbytery of Bendigo**

Rev. R. Schwartz

Mr A. Zirngast

### **Presbytery of Flinders**

Rev. D. Palmer

Mr R. McCarron

Rev. M. Wharton

Mr A. Forrester

### **Presbytery of Geelong**

Rev. D.I. Combridge

Mr L. Higgins

### **Presbytery of Gippsland**

Rev. Dr D. Clarnette

### **Presbytery of Kilnoorat**

Rev. B. Johnson

Mr R. Hansen

Rev. M. Fagan

Mr D. Selman

### **Presbytery of Maroondah**

Rev. D. Carroll

Mr W. Lawrence

### **Presbytery of Melbourne East**

Rev. P.D. Mercer

Mr P. Barton

Rev. G.J. Nicholson

Mr J. Singleton

Rev. Dr G.R. Goswell

Dr J. Hare

### **Presbytery of Melbourne North**

Rev. D. Elliott

Mr B. Miller

Rev. S. Kroeger

Mr R. Butcher

### **Presbytery of Melbourne West**

Rev. C.B. Riding

Mr D. Wright

Rev. R. Duncanson

Mr G. McConaghie

### **WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

(Elected by the State Assembly)

Rev. S.M. Bonnington

Mr W.A. MacRae

### **Presbytery of Western Australia**

Rev. P. Bloomfield

Mr B. Pierce

Rev. R. Fraser

## **COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY**

#### **New South Wales:**

Rev. J.R. Irvin

Mr C.M. Langford

Rev. P.F. Cooper

Mr A.W. Byleveld

Rev. K.D. Murray

Mr P.J. Graham

Rev. B.M. Gorton

Mr J. Rolland

#### **Queensland:**

Rev. L.J. Hall

Mr J. Tucker

Rev. G. Kettniss

Mr R. Wilkinson

#### **South Australia:**

Rev. G.J. Ware

Mr B. Johnson

#### **Tasmania:**

Rev. P.P. Thorneycroft

Mr G.K. Roberts

#### **Victoria:**

Rev. G. Lawry

Mr R. Belcher

Rev. I. Barker

Mr P. Betts

Rev. J.P. Wilson

Mr B. Stasse

#### **Western Australia:**

Rev. K.W. Morris

Mr W. MacRae

#### **Former Moderators-General:**

Very Rev. Dr K.J. Gardner

Very Rev. J. Mullan

Very Rev. M.J.K. Ramage

Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman

Very Rev. B.H. Christian

Very Rev. Rev. J.J. Knapp

Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas

Very Rev. R.P.F. Benn

#### **Assembly Officers:**

Moderator  
Clerk  
Deputy Clerk  
Business Convener  
Law Agent  
Procurator

Rt Rev. D.N. Jones  
Rev. Dr Paul Logan  
Rev. B.M. Meller  
Rev. P.J. Barson  
Mr S.H. Fraser  
Mr G.J. Burton

**Chairman:** The Moderator-General

## ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES

### Australian Presbyterian World Mission

A Convener elected by the General Assembly, the National Director, Convener of the APWM State Committees of Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia, 2 representatives appointed by the APWM State Committees of Queensland, Victoria and NSW, one of whom in each case shall be the Convener of the State Committees, 10 additional members elected by the General Assembly of Australia.

Mr I. Campbell  
Miss C. Moar  
Rev. W. Morrow  
Ex-officio:

Rev. C.J. Letcher  
Rev. Dr J. Leung  
3 vacancies  
Assembly Officers  
Mr A. Shaw

Rev. T. Cheetham  
Mr A. Shaw

**Convener:**

### Christian Education

12 members, ministers and elders, 5 of whom shall come from New South Wales, 2 each from Victoria and Queensland, and 1 each from Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia and the Convener of Christian Education (or a representative) from each state.

New South Wales:

Very Rev. B.H. Christian, Rev. A. Unwin, Mr M. Quirk, Mr M. Norman, one vacancy

Queensland:

Rev. P. Barson, Rev. L.J. Hall

South Australia:

Rev. A. Clarkson

Tasmania:

Mr G.K. Roberts

Victoria

Rev. Dr G. Goswell, Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas

Western Australia:

Mr W. McCrae

Ex-officio:

Assembly Officers

**Convener:**

Rev. Dr G.R. Goswell

### Church and Nation

A representative from each State Church and Nation Committee or its equivalent.

Ex-officio:

Assembly Officers

**Convener:**

To be elected from among the members of the Committee

### Code

3 members from New South Wales, 3 from Victoria, 3 from Queensland, and 1 each from South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania together with the Assembly Officers and the Clerk of Assembly as Convener.

New South Wales:

Rev. B.M. Gorton, J.R. Irvin, Mr M.C. Beveridge

Queensland:

Rev. R.C. Clark, L.J. Hall, A.M. Clarke

South Australia:

Rev. G.J. Ware

Tasmania: Rev. T.A. Bain  
 Victoria: Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman, Rev. Dr J.P. Wilson,  
 P.W. Phillips  
 Western Australia: Rev. K. Morris  
 Ex-officio: Assembly Officers  
**Convener:** The Clerk of Assembly

### College

The Convener of the Theological Education Committee of each State.  
 The full-time professors and lecturers at the Theological Colleges or Halls approved by the Assembly.

Ex-officio: Assembly Officers  
**Convener:** Appointed by the Committee

### Defence Force Chaplaincy

12 members elected by the Assembly. The Convener shall be appointed by the General Assembly from among the elected members.

Dr L. Thorpe	Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman	Rev. P. Harris
Rev. G.J. Hooper	Mr N. Hughes	Rev. J.R. Irvin
Rev. P.W. Phillips	Rev. J. Nicol	Rev. A. Unwin
3 Vacancies		
Ex-officio:	Assembly Officers	
<b>Convener:</b>	Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman	

### Finance

14 members: 10 shall be nominated by the state assemblies as follows:- New South Wales-3; Victoria-2; Queensland-2; 1 each from South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania. 3 members are elected by the General Assembly without reference to the State to which they belong. The other member of the Committee is the Chairman from time to time of the Presbyterian Church (New South Wales) Property Trust, who shall be the Convener of the Committee.

New South Wales:	Rev. P.R. Dunstan, L.G. Fowler, J.R. Irvin
Queensland:	Mr K. Booker, Rev. L.J. Hall
South Australia:	Rev. C. ten Broeke
Tasmania:	Mr G.K. Roberts
Victoria:	Clerk of Assembly, Chairman of the Trusts Corporation
Western Australia:	Rev. R. Fraser
Elected by the General Assembly:	Messrs J.M. Rolland, W.D. Richards, Rev. J.R. Irvin
Ex-officio:	Assembly Officers
<b>Convener:</b>	The Chairman for the time being of the Presbyterian Church (NSW) Property Trust.

### National Journal

A Convener and 9 members appointed by the General Assembly. At least 3 states shall be represented on the Committee.

Rev. S. M. Bonnington	Mr W. Bruining	Rev. A. Clarke
Rev. P. Hastie	Mr R. Holvast	Rev. G.K. Kettmiss
Rev. J. McClean	Rev. M. Powell	Mr B. Zwartz
Ex-officio:	Assembly Officers	
<b>Convener:</b>	Rev. P.W. Hastie	

### **Overseas Aid and Development (PresAid)**

4 members from Victoria (who shall form the executive), 2 members (ministers or elders) from NSW, 1 minister or elder from Queensland, the National Director of APWM, the Convener of the GAA APWM Committee and the state conveners of APWM.

Mr K. Childs	Rev. Dr G.R. Goswell	Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas
Rev. Dr J.P. Wilson	Rev. G.K. Kettniss	Rev. Dr E.F. Brown
Mr W. Thompson		
Ex-officio:	Assembly Officers	
<b>Convener:</b>	Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas	

### **Presbyterian Inland Mission**

13 members (including the Convener) elected by the General Assembly:- 3 each from New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, and 1 each from South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia. The Superintendent shall be an ex officio member of the Committee.

New South Wales:	Mrs. E. Mill, Rev. D.J. Bullen, L.G. Fowler
Queensland:	Mrs. H. Ross, Rev. P. Barber, Mr B. Clarke
South Australia:	Rev. A. Clarkson
Tasmania:	Rev. C. Kennedy
Victoria:	Rev. R.S. Duncanson, M. de Pyle, M. Smith
Western Australia:	Rev. R. Fraser
Northern Territory:	Dr L. Greenwood
Ex-officio:	Assembly Officers and the PIM Superintendent
<b>Convener:</b>	Rev. R.S. Duncanson

### **Public Worship and Aids to Devotion**

The Committee shall consist of 14 members:- 5 from New South Wales, 3 from Victoria, 3 from Queensland and 1 each from Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania.

New South Wales:	Rev. S.A. Andrews, J. Bartholomew, D. Seaman, Rev. A. Unwin, Dr M. Whitelaw.
Queensland:	Rev. J. Langbridge, Mrs. J. Brown
South Australia:	Rev. S. Slucki
Tasmania:	Rev. G. Munro
Victoria:	Rev. S. Kroeger, M. Wharton, Dr J.S. Woodward
Western Australia:	Rev. K.W. Morris
Ex-officio:	Assembly Officers
<b>Convener:</b>	Rev. M.A. Wharton

### **Reception of Ministers**

5 ministers and 5 elders elected by the General Assembly, the Principal of each Theological Hall of the Church recognized by the General Assembly and the Convener of the College Committee. Each State shall be represented by at least 1 person and the Convener shall be elected from the members of the Committee by the General Assembly.

Rev. P. Bloomfield	Mr A. Turner	Rev. B.M. Gorton
Rev. Dr G. Goswell	Mr N. Taylor	Rev. G.K. Kettniss
Rev. A. Clarkson	Mr H.W. Park	2 vacancies
Ex-officio:	Assembly Officers	
<b>Convener:</b>	Rev. G.K. Kettniss	



## Relations with Other Churches

9 members as follows-2 from Queensland, 2 from NSW, 2 from Victoria, 1 each from Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia. The Convener shall be elected by the General Assembly from among the elected members of the Committee.

**New South Wales:** Very Rev. R.P.F. Benn, Very Rev. B.H. Christian

**Queensland:** Rev. A. Clarke, 1 vacancy

**South Australia:** Rev. G.J. Ware

**Tasmania:** Rev. R. White

**Victoria:** Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas, Rev. J.P. Wilson

**Western Australia:** Rev. K.W. Morris

**Ex-officio:** Assembly Officers

**Convener:** Rev. Dr J.P. Wilson

## Panel of Assessors (Article 13)

Very Rev. Prof A.M. Harman	Mr B. Johnson
Rev. J.R. Irvin	Mr K. Booker
Rev. S.M. Bonnington	Mr W. Thompson
Rev. P.F. Cooper	Mr M.C. Beveridge
Rev. D. Mihailovic	Mr P. Betts
Rev. J.W. Langbridge	Mr K. Childs
Rev. D.B. Thatcher	Mr C.M. Langford
Rev. P.P. Thorneycroft	Mr G.K. Roberts

## AUTHORISATIONS, INSTRUCTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Moderator-General:

- Continue the Moderator-General's appeal for church planting in Western Australia (Min. 75)
- Moderator-General or his representative to attend assemblies of overseas churches (Min. 97(13))

### State Assemblies:

- State assemblies to reimburse the Finance Committee their share of GAA costs (Min. 30(9)(d))
- Note role of the National Journal in the distribution of news, views and promotional material throughout the Church (Min. 31(9))
- Prayers for the ongoing work of the Presbyterian Inland Mission (Min. 34(1))
- Oversight of the Darwin congregation transferred to the Presbytery of Melbourne West and the the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (Min. 34(5))
- Commemoration of the centenary of the Australian Inland Mission in 2012 (Min. 34(10))
- Commend the Timothy Partnership to the wider church (Min. 41(2))
- Commend the resources of the Public Worship Committee to the church (Min. 42(1))
- Approval for candidates for the ministry from Western Australia to undertake studies at Trinity Theological College, Perth (Min. 53(2))
- Commend serving defence force chaplains to the wider church (Min. 54(1))
- Deepening and extending global mission (Min. 69(1))
- Continue the Moderator-General's appeal for church planting in Western Australia (Min. 75)
- Women's Ministry and a complementarian view (Min. 82(3))
- Statement on the responsible use of alcohol (Min. 96(4))
- Statement on marriage (Min. 96(6))

### Presbyteries:

- Note role of the National Journal in the distribution of news, views and promotional material throughout the Church (Min. 31(9))
- Prayers for the ongoing work of the Presbyterian Inland Mission (Min. 34(1))
- Oversight of the Darwin congregation transferred to the Presbytery of Melbourne West and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (Min. 34(5))

- Commemoration of the centenary of the Australian Inland Mission in 2012 (Min. 34(10))
- Commend the Timothy Partnership to the wider church (Min. 41(2))
- Commend the resources of the Public Worship Committee to the church (Min. 42(1))
- Commend serving defence force chaplains to the wider church (Min. 54(1))
- Deepening and extending global mission (Min. 69(1))
- Requirements for presbyteries in applications to be received as ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Australia (Min. 72(13))
- Women's ministry and a complementarian view (Min. 82(3))
- Statement on the responsible use of alcohol (Min. 96(4))
- Statement on marriage (Min. 96(6))

#### **Sessions:**

- Note role of the National Journal in the distribution of news, views and promotional material throughout the Church (Min. 31(9))
- Prayers for the ongoing work of the Presbyterian Inland Mission (Min. 34(1))
- Commemoration of the centenary of the Australian Inland Mission in 2012 (Min. 34(10))
- Commend the Timothy Partnership to the wider church (Min. 41(2))
- Commend the resources of the Public Worship Committee to the church (Min. 42(1))
- Request sessions and committees/boards of management to give sympathetic consideration to supporting future PresAID appeals (Min. 43(2))
- Deepening and extending global mission (min. 69(1))
- Commend *Partnership in Mission* (Mark 3) (Min. 69(4))
- Urge sessions to make use of Mission Partners resources (Min. 69(7), (8), (9) and (10))
- Women's ministry and a complementarian view (Min. 82(3))
- Statement on the responsible use of alcohol (Min. 96(4))
- Statement on marriage (Min. 96(6))

#### **Committees of Management:**

- Request sessions and committees/boards of management to give sympathetic consideration to supporting PresAid appeals (Min. 43(2))
- Statement on the responsible use of alcohol (Min. 96(6))

#### **Congregations:**

- Note role of the National Journal in the distribution of news, views and promotional material throughout the Church (Min. 31(9))
- Prayers for the ongoing work of the Presbyterian Inland Mission (Min. 34(1))
- Commemoration of the centenary of the Australian Inland Mission in 2012 (Min. 34(10))
- Commend the Timothy Partnership to the wider church (Min. 41(2))
- Commend the resources of the Public Worship Committee to the church (Min. 42(1))
- Thank God for the generosity of His people in the PresAID appeals (Min. 43(1))
- Commend serving defence force chaplains to the wider church (Min. 54(1))
- Deepening and extending global mission (Min. 69(1))
- Commend *Partnership in Mission* (Mark 3) (Min. 69(4))
- Urge members of the church to make use of Mission Partners resources (Min. 69(7), (8), (9) and (10))
- Women's ministry and a complementarian view (Min. 82(3))
- Statement on the responsible use of alcohol (Min. 96(4))
- Statement on marriage (Min. 96(6))
- Invite members of the church to sign the Canberra Declaration (Min. 96(15))

#### **Assembly Committees:**

- Code Committee to review committee regulations concerning the nomination and election of committee members and conveners (Min. 19(3))
- Approval of committee expenditure for the triennium 2011-2013 (Min. 30(9))
- Finance Committee to review adequacy and rigour of the GAA budgeting process (Min. 30(10))
- Finance Committee to review the effectiveness of the National Journal in consultation with the National Journal Committee and its funding (Min. 30(10))
- Note role of the National Journal in the distribution of news, views and promotional material

- throughout the Church (Min. 31(9))
- Invitations to representatives of other churches to attend meetings of the General Assembly of Australia to be processed through the Assembly's Committee on Relations with Other Churches (Min. 55(2))
- Request each committee of the GAA to consider how it may encourage women's ministry as outlined in the report of the Committee on Women's Ministry (Min. 82(10))

**Members of the Church:**

- Note role of the National Journal in the distribution of news, views and promotional material throughout the Church (Min. 31(9))
- Prayers for the ongoing work of the Presbyterian Inland Mission (Min. 34(1))
- Thanks for generous support of the work of the Presbyterian Inland Mission (Min. 34(4))

**State Assemblies and Presbyteries under Barrier Act Procedure:**

- Overture (iii) from the Code Committee to amend Rules 3.01 and 3.02 in the Code of Discipline (Min. 20)
- Overture (iv) from the Code Committee to amend Parts 3, 4, 5 and 7 of the Code of Discipline (Min. 21, 46)
- Overture (i) from the Code Committee concerning a new Rule 1.12 in the Code of Discipline (Min. 59)
- Overture (ii) from the Code Committee concerning an amendment to Chapter 3 of *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* by the addition of rules regarding appeals and complaints (Min. 60)

**Amendments to *Constitution, Procedure and Practice*:**

- Amend 4.2 on the Administration of the Sacraments (Min. 18(2))
- Amend Chapter 9 on the Election of Standing Committees (Min. 19(2))



# REPORTS

## AD HOC COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

### *Introduction*

The 2007 General Assembly of Australia gave our committee the task of helping the church implement the report *A Partnership for God's Glory*. That report, produced by an earlier form of the committee, concluded that women feel respected, valued, confident, and enthusiastic about serving the Lord in the church, when they are:

1. taught about spiritual gifts and using them for God's service,
2. affirmed as partners in roles by the leaders in their church,
3. recognised for their gifts, abilities and strengths,
4. provided with opportunities and given encouragement to use their gifts,
5. provided with resources to equip themselves for service to the Lord and
6. given a voice in decision making in the church.

The report recognised that the Presbyterian Church of Australia, at the level of the General Assembly, had sought to support churches to provide such an environment and affirmed that the effort was reflected in the congregations. However it also indicated that further work was required at all levels of the church. The Assembly sent a copy of *A Partnership for God's Glory* to all state assemblies, presbyteries and sessions and encouraged them to implement the report. It also asked our committee "to oversee and further investigate implications and implementations" of the report. Those findings have set the direction for the work of the committee.

### *Flourish Conference*

The major initiative of the committee was to hold a national conference, *Flourish*. 215 people registered for *Flourish* which was held in the Chinese Presbyterian Church in Surry Hills, Sydney on October 23 and 24, 2009. Delegates came from all the states and the Australian Capital Territory, the vast majority (about 96%) from Presbyterian Churches. Craig Tucker, the minister of Drummoyne Presbyterian Church gave the two keynote addresses: "The Renewed Community for Men and Women – How the Cross Changes Everything" and "The Gathered Community – 1 Corinthians 11 & 14". Delegates could attend 2 of 17 workshops given by men and women from Queensland, NSW, Victoria and South Australia (details appear in Annexure 2).

*Flourish* was a unique conference for two reasons. First, we believe there has never been a national conference on women's ministry for the Presbyterian Church of Australia. Second, this was a conference on women's ministry which included men and women as delegates.

The theme of *Flourish* was based on Philippians 1:9-11 - "that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ — to the glory and praise of God." The Goals of *Flourish* and the Biblical Basis the committee adopted for the conference are set out in the annexure at the end of this report.

*Flourish* brought a strong sense of community. Delegates commented on their joy and encouragement in meeting together with likeminded people from all over the country to discuss ministry. For the committee, this is an important outcome for any future work in the area of women's ministry. Our prayer is that we may strengthen each other to press on with the ministry that Christ has laid before us in Christian community with each other.

The committee used an online survey and small group discussions to obtain feedback about the conference and delegates views of various issues relating to women's ministry. Most of the delegates were very positive about the quality of our key note addresses and the workshop presenters. While some delegates were expecting different presentations than were offered, most enjoyed the opportunity to meet people from other states. The involvement of men and women as delegates was well also received. Here are two quotes from the answers to the question: "Please make a comment on anything about the conference".

I am so pleased that we came. However, I found it to be very emotional - all the pain of being told "you can't do this or that" over many years! I actually cried when we walked back to the hotel. I'm wondering how many other women actually felt devastated by how wonderful and reasonable the conference was, compared to the trauma and sadness of their

own church experiences. It gave me tremendous encouragement that these things were engaged.

An excellent start to an integral part of developing WM in the PC in Australia. Well done! An amazing atmosphere of unity and peace, (but not complacency) in view of the past controversy of women in ministry. This may have been a result of the clearly stated goals of the conference.

A more detailed summary of the feedback received from the on line survey is found in annexure 3. The feedback can be summarized under six themes.

a. The Primacy of the Work of Christ

Many people stressed the need to maintain in all our deliberations the primacy of the work of Christ. There were reminders that our work should be pointing to people to reach out into the community with the gospel including the great need for women to be trained in evangelism. This is probably one reason many people wanted to stress the crucial ministry of ESL (teaching English as a second language).

b. Definitions

Some delegates suggested that there needed to be an exploration of what is meant by "Women's Ministry". The committee has taken a very general view of the topic understanding it to include the ministry of the church seeking to help women flourish in Christ, as well as ministries specifically conducted by and for women.

Some of the delegates wanted some clarification about the work of this or any further committee. For example, how would the work of any future committee be different to the work of the various Presbyterian Women's Associations or other organized women's organisations.

c. Employment

Some of the responses under this theme were simply passing on information. For example, that employment opportunities for women are few in the Presbyterian Church in Australia; or that often the third pastoral worker in a congregation is female. Some critical issues were highlighted. For example, there is no infrastructure to either promote the employment of women or support them in employment.

Also, communication from the various Assemblies to paid female staff workers is limited. There is a lack of information about employment opportunities for women.

It was noted that there seems to be a resistance to paying women to do ministry that traditionally has been undertaken by volunteers, (e.g. the minister's wife). Whenever a church moves from ministry done by volunteers to employing a person, dynamics change. Some who completed the on line survey felt that a "professionalisation" of ministry can be a detrimental change. No doubt the understanding of this dynamic comes from observing how existing paid ministries have "detrimentally" affected ministry, but should this limit the expansion of employing women in paid positions? The committee suggests it is better to encourage employment of female workers and to seek to do this in way that avoids unhelpful dynamics.

There was a strong response throughout the groups that there be a woman employed (or at least appointed) at the denominational level. The committee has no further proposal about such a role, but intends to consider it in detail in the future.

d. Funding for Employment

Delegates were aware that funding for the employment for women is pivotal to addressing the lack of opportunities for employment of women. Presently the amount of funding for female employment is very low. Many delegates expressed a wish to have more information about what funding is available.

e. Cultural/attitudinal issues

There is a general appreciation of the attitude of Sessions to encouraging women in the congregations. Women generally feel affirmed in what they are doing. However, there were responses that indicated that this is not a universal sentiment. The focus groups pointed out the crucial nature of the attitude of sessions to promoting women's ministry.

The recent debate on whether women can be ordained as elders has made the discussion of women's ministry controversial, particularly in NSW. A complementarian position is widely held throughout the national denomination but a comment was made that to not talk through the theology that divides us will affect any sense of community we are building through *Flourish* or similar conferences. (See the discussion of theology of gender below for a definition of a complementarian view). Also, some comments, particularly from the online surveys, show there is

still a measure of hurt experienced by women in the way some men within the church are treating them. The focus groups elicited these comments: There is “a seeming lack of commitment to women’s ministry”, “lack of valuing of women’s ministry” and unhelpful “stereotypes in ministry”.

Delegates identified that the Presbyterian Church was moving into “new territories”: ministers have traditionally been “lone rangers” and many congregations are now exploring team ministries. Also it was noted with approval that as Sessions saw themselves more as leading the congregation as opposed to ruling it, women’s ministry would be more fruitful. Associated with the desire to see changing denominational culture, delegates identified that many congregational members do not know much about State and National structures. Delegates identified that information from *Flourish* needed to be reported back to congregations.

#### f. Training and Resources

Responses ranged from comments on tertiary training, regional seminars, other resources and topics to be covered in churches. Also, delegates noted that there are many other ministry topics we should make more broadly available, such as encouraging men’s ministry and developing the ministries of creative Christians. Topics that were specified for exploration were singleness, training in mentoring and discipleship, gift development, roles of men and women in the church, marriage and families and Bible Study leading.

Delegates noted the “hit and miss” approach across the states to tertiary theological education for women. As numbers of female students can be low, it can be daunting for women in a predominantly male class. The Presbyterian Church has a strong rural presence but this can lead to isolation. To overcome this, delegates suggested that the existing training bodies undertake training outside of the cities where the colleges are situated.

The need to limit the cost of training was also highlighted.

There is a desire to see the Presbyterian Church of Australia develop denominationally appropriate resources, develop a national publication on women’s ministry and develop a national website on women’s ministry. One resource particularly requested was making Craig Tucker’s talks at *Flourish* widely available.

#### *Ongoing role of the committee*

State Assemblies have the direct responsibility for promoting effective ministry, including women’s ministry, in the churches. The states have various bodies which take responsibilities in this area. There is no need for the GAA committee to duplicate what is being done by these bodies nor is it productive for our committee to attempt to fill apparent gaps in State ministries. The most effective role this committee can play is to help the various state organisations to connect with each other and to support the development of networks between those who are concerned to advance women’s ministry. This task includes assisting the smaller states to develop appropriate structures to support women’s ministry. The other role for the committee is to raise relevant matters to the GAA and encourage GAA committees to consider how they can support women’s ministry.

#### *Networking*

It is clear from the various surveys conducted over a decade that there is a desire to have a strong network among members of the Presbyterian Church of Australia who are concerned to promote and develop effective ministry to and for women based on a complementarian position. Many of the plans for the future relate to building and resourcing a national network which supports state-based ministries.

#### *Consultation*

The committee proposes to invite a group of women and men from each state who are involved in relevant organisations and ministries to a consultation in early 2011 (possibly Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> February). The aim of the consultation will be to identify some of the needs in women’s ministries and to strengthen networks among leaders. The results of the Consultation will feed directly into the planning for *Flourish* the following year. At least the following groups should be involved in the consultation: PWA national and states; PWMU (Vic and Qld); WMPCQ; Special Committee NSW - including WINGS and Teach and Train; Vic CENC; Minister’s Wives and Deaconesses networks.

#### *Flourish 2012*

A second *Flourish* is proposed for 2012. The committee envisages that *Flourish* could be held in Sydney over a Friday evening and Saturday in May 2012 with a similar program to the 2009 conference.

The majority of the funding for which we have applied is intended to help fund Flourish. We would again expect to ask State churches and other bodies to help fund travel expenses for delegates.

*Discussion of theology of gender for the Presbyterian Church of Australia*

In our society there are a wide range of views on the relations and roles of men and women, and such questions are controversial in many churches. In Christian discussion the most common positions are often called “complementarian” and “egalitarian”. The “complementarian” view is that “male and female were created by God as equal in dignity, value, essence and human nature, but also distinct in role whereby the male was given the responsibility of loving authority over the female, and the female was to offer willing, glad-hearted and submissive assistance to the man.”<sup>1</sup> Complementarians hold that this should provide the pattern of relationships in the family and the church. Egalitarians hold that “woman and man were created for full and equal partnership ... are divinely gifted and empowered to minister to the whole Body of Christ, under His authority ... [and] women as well as men exercise the prophetic, priestly and royal functions”.<sup>2</sup> For egalitarians there is no differentiation of leadership roles on the basis of gender.

To a certain extent the Presbyterian Church of Australia reflects the diversity and the controversy. Since only men are admitted to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament the formal polity is complementarian. Different states take different views on the question of women elders. It seems that the practice of the majority of congregations reflects a belief that leadership and preaching positions in churches should be occupied by men. Yet even within this majority there is significant variation in how complementarianism is implemented. There are also churches that have a more egalitarian approach. At the level of the individual convictions of members of the Presbyterian Church of Australia there is a wide variety of positions.

The committee has taken the view that our task is to help the Presbyterian Church of Australia develop effective ministry to and for women in a complementarian framework. However we aim to be sensitive to those who take an egalitarian view. The committee does not expect that it should be the only voice on this issue in the church, and the complementarian perspective of the committee does not deny the right of those in the church who hold an egalitarian view to argue for that position. We hope that all can benefit from the work of the committee, even where they disagree with elements of the theological framework.

The committee believes that the church needs to discuss the issues of gender and ministry. This discussion is required for several reasons.

1. A complementarian view is counter-cultural and we cannot expect people to adopt it automatically. The complementarian position needs to be presented and defended in a way which shows its biblical basis and sensitively answers the theological and cultural objections which are raised against it.
2. There are a variety of views about how complementarian views should be implemented, and it is useful for us to understand these different views and practices.
3. The discussion on women’s ministry has been dominated by the debate about women’s ordination as ministers or as elders. As a result some women have felt that there has been little encouragement for them to contribute to the life of the church beyond very traditional ways.

A thoughtful and biblical discussion of our theology of gender and ministry can begin to address these concerns. To this end the committee commends to the church the recordings of Craig Tucker’s talks given at *Flourish* in 2009 which are available on the committee website. We also hope to provide on our website a range of resources and links which will help the church in discussing our theology of gender and ministry.

Such a discussion will need to be conducted carefully and with respect. It needs to be noted that men often have the loudest voices in such a discussion and women can easily be left

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<sup>1</sup> Bruce Ware, “Summaries of the Egalitarian and Complementarian Positions on the Role of Women in the Home and in Christian Ministry”, Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, <https://www.cbmw.org/Resources/Articles/Summaries-of-the-Egalitarian-and-Complementarian-Positions>

<sup>2</sup> Christians for Biblical Equality. *Men, Women and Biblical Equality*. Minneapolis, MN: 1989, [www.cbeinternational.org/?q=content/men-women-and-biblical-equality](http://www.cbeinternational.org/?q=content/men-women-and-biblical-equality).



feeling hurt and sidelined in the discussion. This is true for women who hold a complementarian view, as well for those who are egalitarians. So the committee encourages ministers and sessions to find settings in which the biblical basis for a complementarian view can be presented and in which the implications can be discussed. It cannot be stressed too strongly that the discussion of gender and ministry should not be conducted primarily in the courts of the church. Local churches and wider forums, such as *Flourish*, are places where men and women can hear teaching and engage in the discussion and will be far more productive for the discussion.

#### *The place of women in Presbyterian Church of Australia polity*

The Presbyterian Church of Australia needs to consider how women may participate in the polity of the church. There are several reasons for this. First, and most important, is the fact that God has given women as well as men in the church the gifts of wisdom and insight. Women also offer distinctive perspectives on matters that concern the church. When church courts make decisions without drawing on the wisdom of the women in the church they miss out on God's provision. Second, Christians are increasingly aware of the problems of authoritarian leadership and recognise that church leadership should be a servant leadership. Such an awareness should lead to governance structures which are consultative. In particular if women have a limited or no voice in our church courts, then it is important to find ways in which their insights can be gained. This need is heightened by the numerical decline of the traditional women's organizations in most states. These have, in the past, represented the concerns and insights of the majority of women in the church and have made appointments to Assembly committees in some cases.

There are several avenues which could be fruitfully explored in order to address these concerns. The workshop held at *Flourish* on this topic produced a range of suggestions and some of the comments from delegates highlighted areas of concern and offered suggestions. The committee hopes that these and other approaches can be considered more fully and that the committee could provide a fuller report to the GAA in 2013.

#### *Committee name and membership*

The committee has had the cumbersome title of the Ad hoc Committee (of the General Assembly of Australia) on Women's Ministries. If the Assembly agrees that the committee has an ongoing role it would be better to have a more streamlined name. The committee suggests "Women's Ministries - Presbyterian Church of Australia", which can be shortened to WMPCA.

Ngaire Moore has indicated that she will not stand for reappointment. The committee wishes to note, with great thanks, Ngaire's enormous efforts in preparation for *Flourish* and her great passion for promoting women's ministry. Ngaire's thoughtful analysis and wide experience have been a great asset to the committee. She will now be focussing her efforts in promoting women's ministry through the NSW Special Committee for Women's Ministry.

The remaining members of the committee, Cecelia Orford (QLD), Andrea Pryde (QLD), Mairi Girgis (VIC), and John McClean (NSW) are willing to serve for another triennium.

#### **Annexure 1**

##### **Flourish Goals**

1. To present and model the biblical vision of the Christian life and church in complementarian partnership.
2. To equip women to be fruitful in their personal lives and in their vocations in family life, church ministry, community involvement, paid work, and anywhere else.
3. To identify and develop resources which grow fruitful women.
4. To establish networks of people in the Presbyterian Church of Australia who are committed to encouraging women in fruitfulness.
5. To create an environment which brings some healing for the past, stimulates discussion in the present and identifies opportunities for future action.

##### **Biblical basis**

1. God created men and women in his image, yet different and complementary to one another Genesis 1:26-27, Genesis 2:18
2. God equally values and attaches dignity to the roles of both men and women Genesis 1:26-27, 2:18, Galatians 3:26-28
3. The Bible affirms the principle of male headship in the family and in the church. Genesis 2:18, Ephesians 5:21-33, Colossians 3:18-19, 1 Timothy 2:11-15

4. The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women in the church and in the home. Genesis 3:1-17
5. Redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation. Ephesians 5:21-33, Colossians 3:18-19, Titus 2:3-5, 1 Peter: 3:1-7, 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, 1 Timothy 2:11-15
6. Christ is the authority and head of the church, and within His church, authority is exercised by elders & overseers. Ephesians 5:23, 1 Timothy 3:1-11, Titus 1:5-9
7. Men and women are to use their spiritual gifts as servants of Christ for ministry within the authority structure of the church. Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4:1-16, John 13: 1-17, Philippians 2:1-11, 1 Peter 4:10-11
8. Throughout the Bible women were held in high esteem for their role in the work and support of Christ and the apostles. Luke 8:1-3, Romans 16:1-16, Acts 1:14
9. In the church women have significant roles to play. 1 Corinthians 12, 1 Peter 4:10-11

### **Annexure 2 - Flourish workshops**

Employing a women's worker - Mark Adams & Lynette Nancarrow

How to set up a Diaconal ministry - Reg Matthews

Invigorating your prayer life\* - Jan Gorton

Leading a church to encourage women - Peter Gobbo

Lifestages - Moving to retirement - John & Jan Langbridge

Listening with the Heart in Pastoral Ministry - Rhonda Daley

Ministering in and through the family - Mairi Girgis

Ministry of powerlessness and persuasion\* - Ngaire Moore

Ministry to GenY Women - Joy Venning

Ministry to women in crisis - Wendy Henry

Models of leadership: men & women leading together - Peter Moore

One to one mentoring for women\* - Heather Bradshaw

Optimising your congregation's outreach - use ESL ministry - Judy Rowlands

Refreshing your women's ministry\* - Karen McMillan

The Fall and The Restoration - Studies on Genesis 3\* - Carmelina Read

What's love got to do with it? - building healthy church relationships - John McClean & Cecelia Orford

Women and work - Andrea Pryde

(\* indicates a women only workshop)

### **Annexure 3 - Summary of feedback from Flourish**

The online response rate was approximately 70%. Of the respondents 90% were women, 96% were aged between 30 and 70 years old and 64% attended small to medium sized metropolitan Presbyterian churches. Respondents reported that 30% had women employed in the church in roles such as youth/children's workers, administration, volunteers and pastoral roles.

#### *Feedback about the conference*

Speakers were rated overall excellent, a number of people commented that they would prefer a keynote woman speaker. The overall assessment of the organization was positive and price was mostly good value, although there were comments that the cost of travel and accommodation was steep. General comments included that the conference should be advertised more widely, that there should be more discussion of women's roles in the PCA, that there were too many choices in workshops, that there was not enough time allowed for reflection, that more depth was needed and that the material could be more biblical.

Most agreed with the conference content and so were not persuaded to change their thinking. Some indicated that they were challenged and were going to go home and make changes. 71% reported that *Flourish* helped them realize the importance of women's ministry in their church.

73% want a future conference like *Flourish*

71% want a bi-annual conference

68% do NOT want facebook  
82% want website  
49 % Blog neutral (this might mean they just haven't tried it and need to)  
32% Blog positive  
76% Paid women's Ministry Coordinator

Question raised about this proposal: What is the goal? Are there sufficient resources?  
Should such a position be state based rather than federal?

*Women's roles and the church ministries*

Respondents were asked to comment on the teaching/encouragement for women in their local churches. The percentage figures show how many agreed with the following statements about their local church.

88% enables/encourages women to partner with men in the church work  
90% encourages women to work in and out of home  
90% encourages women to be in paid employment  
65% encourages women to balance both work and family  
70% women are not passive  
72% women are not listened to by leadership  
47% women are not encouraged to mentor/be mentored  
70% session generally connects with women's ministry  
*On desired encouragements and teachings of the church....*  
70% people wanted more on marriage and family  
68% wanted more encouragement as women in the church

*Other considerations:*

There were several comments along the lines that men's ministry also requires attention in churches and at assembly level.

J. McCLEAN, Convener.

## **AUSTRALIAN PRESBYTERIAN WORLD MISSION**

### **MISSION PARTNERS**

#### **THE AUSTRALIAN PRESBYTERIAN WORLD MISSION**

##### **1. INTRODUCTION**

We praise God for his provision and faithfulness to this Committee in its endeavours over the past three years. During a period of much change and no little turmoil, the Lord has allowed the ministry of *Mission Partners* to grow and flourish - and we give Him all the praise.

##### **2. OFFICE BEARERS and COMMITTEES:**

Convener: In spite of advancing years and health problems requiring heart surgery, Dr David Pilgrim continued to serve faithfully as Convener, steering the Committee through a difficult and exacting review of structures and procedures, particularly in regard to Federal-State working relations. In May 2010 the Committee was able to release Dr Pilgrim from the heavy responsibilities of the position, through the appointment of Mr Alex Shaw as Acting Convener. The Committee is very grateful to Mr Shaw for his willingness to step into this position; his appointment stands, according to GAA regulations, until the rising of this GAA. Dr Pilgrim served the Church, as Convener of the Federal Committee of the Australian Presbyterian World Mission, for fourteen years. The Committee owes a great debt of gratitude to Dr Pilgrim, and has made plans for a suitable occasion following the August 2010 meeting of the Executive Committee, at which to give appropriate expression to our appreciation.

Deputy Convener: The previous incumbent, Rev. Jim Elliott, resigned from the committee following the Executive meeting in November 2008, after many years of service. Rev. Cliff Letcher was appointed in May 2009 to take his place, and he continues to occupy that position.

Treasurer: Now in his eighteenth year as Treasurer to the Federal Committee, Mr Ian Campbell continues to serve the Church faithfully, efficiently, and with a zeal and stamina that belie his advancing years. Following the resignation of Rev. Phil Simmonds as Associate Director, Mr Campbell voluntarily undertook a large part of the office work formerly performed by Mr Simmonds, in addition to his ongoing duties as Treasurer. During that period, Mr Campbell was assisted by the faithful voluntary efforts of Mr Peter and Mrs. Alison Cooper. The Committee continues to be

grateful to God for Mr Campbell's exemplary service.

The Executive Committee: This Committee is comprised mostly of members from New South Wales, including the New South Wales Committee Convener, and with two interstate members - the Conveners of the Victorian and Queensland Committees. The Executive meets three times each year, usually in May, August and November, at Revesby Presbyterian Church. We greatly appreciate the generosity of the Revesby Session and Committee of Management in continuing to make available their very suitable facilities. The current members of the Committee are as follows: Mr Alex Shaw (Acting Convener), Rev. Cliff Letcher (Deputy Convener), Mr Ian Campbell (Treasurer), Rev. Bill Lutton (National Director), Miss Cecily Moar, Rev. Ewen Brown (NSW APWM Convener), Mr Andrew Lawson (alternate for NSW Convener), Rev. Peter Barber (Qld Convener), Rev. Philip Burns (Vic Convener), Mr Bob Quinn and Rev. Dr John Leung.

Others who have served on the Executive Committee during the last three years include Mr Martin Eagle, Mrs. Rachel Hodge, Mrs. Joanne Oakley, Mr Don Jamieson (as NSW alternate), Rev. Dr John Woods (as NSW alternate), and Rev. Don Smith. We give thanks for the valued service of each one, and note with sadness the passing to glory of Rev. Don Smith and Mr Don Jamieson.

The Committee has been enhanced by the service of Victoria APWM Convener, Rev. Philip Burns, and regrets the necessity of his departure from the Committee occasioned by the nine year limitation of Conventership within the regulations of PC Victoria.

The Full Committee: This Committee meets once each year, in February, and comprises of the members of the Executive Committee plus the Conveners of the State Committees of Tasmania, South Australia, and Western Australia, together with an extra member from each of the other three states. Currently, the members of the full Committee include: Mr Alex Shaw (Acting Convener), Rev. Cliff Letcher (Deputy Convener), Mr Ian Campbell (Treasurer), Rev. Bill Lutton (National Director), Miss Cecily Moar, Rev. Ewen Brown (NSW APWM Convener), Mr Andrew Lawson (NSW Rep), Rev. Peter Barber (Qld Convener), Mr John Tucker (Qld Rep), Rev. Philip Burns (Vic Convener), Rev. Peter Orchard (Vic Rep), Rev. Michael Jensen (Vic Alternate), Mr Bob Quinn, Rev. Dr John Leung, Rev. Gary Ware (SA Convener), Rev. Rod Waterhouse (Tasmania Convener), Rev. Stuart Bonnington (WA Convener), Rev. Renier van der Klashorst (WA Alternate), Mr Don Lewis (GAA Appointment), with Ex-Officio members – Rt Rev. Robert Benn, Rev. Dr Paul Logan, Rev. Peter Barson and Rev. Bruce Meller. Other Full Committee members who have served during the past three years include: Rev. Charlie Kennedy and Mrs. Edith Gaggin, both as Tasmania Conveners. The committee is very grateful for the services of all those (executive and non-executive) who have given their time, abilities and experience to serve the task of global mission within the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Sub committees: There are three standing subcommittees of the Federal Committee of the Australian Presbyterian World Mission. They are: The Administration Subcommittee consisting of Mr Alex Shaw, Rev. Bill Lutton, Mr Ian Campbell and Rev. Cliff Letcher; The Policy Advisory Subcommittee made up of Mr Alex Shaw, Rev. Bill Lutton, Rev. Cliff Letcher and Miss Cecily Moar; and The Aboriginal Ministry Subcommittee led by Rev. Cliff Letcher in liaison with Rev. Ricky Manton. These committees meet as required, usually a month prior to Executive Committee meetings.

### 3. HOME OFFICE STAFF

#### 3.1 The Associate Director

The 2004 GAA approved *Mission Partners'* recommendation to create the position of Associate Director. Rev. Phil Simmonds was appointed to that position and occupied it very effectively until March, 2009 when he resigned to return to parish ministry. The contribution made to the ministries of *Mission Partners* by Mr Simmonds, assisted by his wife, Glenda, are many and varied. From daily office management to the direction of Youthpartners and Tradespartners programs year by year, the Simmondses have left their mark on the global mission ministry of the Presbyterian Church, and the Committee expresses its gratitude to them.

#### 3.2 National Office Administration

Following unsuccessful endeavours to fill the position of Associate Director, the Committee took a wider look at our staffing situation, initiating a structural review which concluded that we would not pursue an appointment to the team-supported position of Associate Director, but seek to make a paid part-time appointment to undertake much of the office-based work previously the responsibility of the Associate Director.

The position was advertised, and after interviews, two part-time appointments were made in November 2009. Mr Jon Moorehouse commenced duties as Finance Officer (15 hours per week) in December 2009 and Mrs Amanda Enderby took up her duties as Administration Officer (15 hours per week) in February 2010.

The arrangements proving satisfactory, it has since been agreed, within the ongoing structural review, to abolish the position of Associate Director. This will involve the deletion of the dedicated position for the Associate Director on the Executive and Full Federal Committees.

It bears repeating that ***Mission Partners*** owes a great debt of gratitude to Mrs Jenny Lutton for her prodigious voluntary contributions to the office administration, publications, member care and deputation ministries. Without her efforts, the current program would not be possible. We also note here the considerable contributions made by Mrs. Glenda Simmonds (until March 2009) and by the office volunteer team. Particular mention should be made of Mrs Judith Dalby who faithfully attends the office voluntarily one day per week.

### 3.3 The National Director

Rev. Bill Lutton has now completed three terms as National Director and has indicated that he will step down from the position following the GAA. Bill has been admirably supported by his wife Jenny, in fulfilling the strenuous expectations of the role: promoting, enabling and developing the church's global mission, both within the PCA and in the wider church. The Director's role encompasses many areas of responsibility, including:

#### I. Administration

As the executive officer charged with the responsibility of implementing the decisions of the Federal Committee, he has helped to prepare, attended and reported at meetings of the Federal and Executive Committees, and the Administration and Policy Advisory Subcommittees. A considerable part of the business of each of these committees is also initiated by the Director.

In these responsibilities, he has been assisted by Mrs Jenny Lutton and by the Associate Director (until March, 2009) and a small but extremely valuable team of volunteers.

The Director has visited all Presbyteries and State committees of the Australian Presbyterian World Mission during his 9-year tenure, and in Queensland has conducted three annual one-day partnership workshops with the State Committee. The Federal Committee now receives, through the Director, minutes of meetings from the State Committees of Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales. In return, Federal and Executive Committee minutes are forwarded to all State Committees through their Conveners.

#### II. Pastoral and Member Care Duties

The Director liaises with the Convener and others from the Federal Executive, as well as appropriate State Committee Conveners and the leadership of Partner Agencies and Partner Churches, in addressing occasional pastoral concerns and developing and maintaining effective personal pastoral contact with our missionaries, both on the field and on home assignment. Hospitality is an important and frequently exercised ministry in this area, drawing particularly on the gifts and abilities of Mrs Jenny Lutton.

The Director has made five overseas trips since the previous General Assembly of Australia, visiting Partner Churches and Partner Church Missionaries in Vanuatu (2 times), Myanmar (2 times), and Bangladesh; and visiting Partner Agency Missionaries in Thailand en route to Bangladesh.

On the first of these visits to Vanuatu, he joined the Youthpartners Talua team, and also investigated future directions for Youthpartners and Tradespartners, leading to the establishment of the Tanna Youthpartners and Tradespartners teams. The second visit was in order to represent the Moderator-General at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu, on Tangoa Island, and to renew and widen the good relationships God has given us with our ni-Van brothers.

The Director intended to visit Myanmar in September 2007, en route to Bangladesh; however, the abortive rebellion in Myanmar prevented his entering the country at that time. It was not until December, 2009 that he was able to return to Yangon, accompanied by his son, Will. While Will (an experienced ESL teacher) taught English and built warm relationships with the student pastors, the Director helped to resolve matters of pastoral concern in the leadership of one Partner Church; participated in key discussions with Martin Eagle and Rev. Dr Thang Bwee in preparation for the commencement of Martin's full-time ministry within the Evangelical Reformed Church; and joined the teaching programs of the Reformed Bible Institute (ERC) and the Grace

Bible Seminary (FRCM).

It is with great sadness that we record the deaths of Mrs. Denny Pillar (February, 2010) who spent three years in College ministry in Hungary with her husband, Rev. Dr Granville Pillar; and of Rev. Dr J. Graham Miller (September, 2008). We were also saddened to hear of the passing of two of Rev. Dr Thang Bwee's brothers within a brief period in 2009, and of Elder J. Ram Luai, a leader in the Free Reformed Church of Myanmar, early in 2010.

Dr Miller was an outstanding missionary statesman, serving with his (late) wife Flora, for two extended periods in Vanuatu. Among many achievements, he was instrumental in establishing the independent Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu in 1948, and later helped to establish Talua Ministry Training Centre, becoming its first principal.

Our love and concern in the Lord continue to go out to the families and friends of each of these faithful servants.

### III. Publicity, Promotion & Teaching

#### A) Visitation/Speaking:

The Director's role involves a considerable amount of general mission publicity and promotion of **Mission Partners** as the denomination's mission agency. This role merges with his mission teaching responsibility. Over one third of his time is spent away from home and outside of Sydney, visiting parishes, presbyteries and Assemblies, conducting specific mission seminars, preaching and promoting the work of **Mission Partners** to all sections of the church.

Since the last General Assembly of Australia, he has addressed the following Assemblies:

2007 (after Sept): Victoria

2008: Queensland, Victoria, Western Australia. (NSW – Phil Simmonds)

2009: Victoria, NSW, Queensland

2010 (until Sept): NSW, Queensland.

The Director has been given further privileges in several Assemblies: Assembly Dinner Speaker in Tasmania and South Australia, Preaching at the Communion service of the South Australian Assembly, Biblical Exposition in Western Australia and Victoria, taking the opportunity at all occasions to highlight the importance of global mission.

#### B) Print/Electronic Publications:

The Director has developed, with the active support of the National Office team, a range of publications available to churches, church groups and individuals to promote and educate the church about global mission, with the aim of challenging our churches to become true partners with our missionaries in actively praying, sending, contacting, giving and going.

- *Basic Publications:*

These are produced by the National Office, under the editorship of Jenny Lutton and include the *Email Update* and the *Mini-Magazine*.

Originally conceived as a 4-page quarterly publication, the Mini-Magazine has grown in recent editions to extend to six (and sometimes eight) pages. The concept has always been to provide parishes with a good quality print master copy which we ask parishes to photocopy in sufficient numbers to distribute to all families. Some parishes have difficulty arranging for copying, and have asked us to supply a specific required quantity. We are happy to do so.

The *Email Update* provides additional up-to-date prayer and contact information six or seven times per year to an extensive email (and postal) subscription list (456 people at June, 2010). Ministers and church members are urged to email the National Office at **[national@missionpartners.org.au](mailto:national@missionpartners.org.au)** and ask to receive the Email Update regularly.

- *MISSIONChallenge:*

MISSIONChallenge has been vigorously promoted each year, and has been well supported by individuals, church groups and congregations. **Mission Partners** is grateful to the church for its generous support for this project over the years, and we trust that this support will continue for future programmes, which currently meet approximately 15% – 25% of our financial obligations each year.

Over the last eight years, the annual amounts received for MISSIONChallenge have averaged \$99,193, and these have made a considerable contribution to our budget as well as contributing to the funding of the following strategic projects:-

Vanuatu, especially the new library at Talua Ministry Training Centre

Support for our Partner Church ministry in Japan,

Assistance to Reformed Presbyterian (forwarded through Victoria APWM)

Church and Bible Colleges in Bangladesh (forwarded through NSW APWM)  
 Assistance to ERC and FRCM (Reformed churches) in Myanmar, and their Bible Colleges  
 Ministries with the Presbyterian Church in Malawi and Zambia (forwarded through Victoria  
 APWM)

Support for our Partner Church missionary, Isaac Yat in Sudan (forwarded through Victoria  
 APWM)

Helping to make up shortfalls in support for home-based missionaries, including:

- Rick and Kayleen Manton and the Indigenous Ministry in Western Sydney,
- Associate missionaries Ron and Jean Lyons in Cape York,
- The Director (and Associate Director, until March 2009), and
- The Muslim ministry in Australia through Rev. Fayek Iskander (until discontinued in May 2010)

- *Basic Documents:*

The essential publication, *Mission Partners Directory* was revised and re-issued in 2009 as an A5 spiral-bound, 135-page compendium of our missionary team. It is an extremely valuable reference tool for pastors, parish mission teams, prayer leaders and parish newsletter editors. It serves in many parishes as a basic guide to prayer for our denomination's missionaries. A censored version will be available on the new website and will be frequently updated. Amendments are distributed to print-copy holders twice each year.

A complete revision of the 2001 Centenary edition of *Mission Partners'* manual of practice, *Partnership in Mission*, has been prepared and it is hoped to have copies of *Partnership in Mission, Mk 3* available following the GAA's approval of recent changes and additions of various policies contained in it. These will be included in a supplementary report to be brought to the GAA for approval.

- *Website:*

Since 2004 the National Office staff, in conjunction with Mike Wharton (PresData Services Vic) has sought to develop the *Mission Partners* Website. The exercise was hampered by work overload and lack of expertise within our staff and volunteers. However, more recently, we have secured the voluntary services of an experienced Website designer, PTC 2<sup>nd</sup> year student and experienced short-term missionary, Tristan Merkel. Tristan is now developing the site: [www.missionpartners.org.au](http://www.missionpartners.org.au).

#### 4. FINANCES

Some key financial figures for the last three years are:

Item	2009 \$	2008 \$	2007 \$
Donations	565,824	459,054	465,341
Mission Challenge	138,379	177,312	91,293
Other income	164,089	150,197	158,018
<b>Total income</b>	<b>868,292</b>	<b>786,563</b>	<b>714,652</b>
<i>Support of Missionaries</i>	<i>617,549</i>	<i>560,403</i>	<i>479,874</i>
<i>Mission Challenge Support</i>	<i>140,627</i>	<i>159,727</i>	<i>91,806</i>
<i>Other expenditure</i>	<i>101,214</i>	<i>116,393</i>	<i>91,711</i>
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>859,390</b>	<b>836,523</b>	<b>663,391</b>
Net assets at end of year	574,343	536,032	585,992
Drawdown from Trusts	40,000	40,000	Nil

There has been an underlying steady growth in donations over recent years. The level of tied support for individual missionaries is usually below the expenditure needed to maintain them in the field, and we draw on general donations and contributions from State committees to make up the shortfall. MISSIONChallenge invites congregations to identify their giving and their prayer support with specific areas of our ministry – Indigenous Australians, Vanuatu, Japan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sudan, Malawi, Zambia, Home Office and unspecified– and the money received is directed to the chosen areas.

*Mission Partners'* general policy is to seek to have full support promised before a new Partner Church missionary takes up an appointment. We believe it is the responsibility of the sending church to supply the needed financial and prayer support, and we look to congregations,

the presbytery and friends to provide this. Partnership in Mission indicates clearly that it is the responsibility of State Committees to ensure that missionaries from their respective states are fully supported in prayer and finances, and to monitor their ongoing support, in collaboration with the appropriate sending churches. It is often the case that support in subsequent years declines, and this can lead to financial stress, especially where missionaries have continuing responsibilities as part of a team, and the pressure is strong to maintain them in their roles even though their support has fallen off.

#### 5. **RELIEF APPEALS AND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE**

Mission Partners was pleased to play a small role in the process of restructuring the Moderator-General's Disaster Relief Appeal system. The Committee has recently resolved to discuss the details of the governing Memorandum of Understanding with the other parties involved in the protocols.

We rejoice in the successful commencement of PresAID. On the following table from PresAID, indicating monies distributed by them to date, funds distributed by *Mission Partners* National Office are indicated by **NAT**; funds distributed by Victoria APWM are indicated by **VIC** and funds distributed by NSW APWM are indicated by **NSW**.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Appeal</b>	<b>Received by...</b>	<b>Amount (\$)</b>
Christmas 2005	Malawi Famine Relief	<b>Malawi</b> – CCAP synod grain for starving families	<b>VIC 95,309</b>
	Pakistan Cyclone Relief	<b>Pakistan</b> –	
Christmas 2006	Moderators Mercy Appeal for Africa	<b>Sudan</b> – candidates for Presbyterian ministry	<b>VIC 21,555</b>
		<b>Malawi</b> – CCAP orphan care	<b>VIC 13,481</b>
		<b>Zambia</b> – roofing churches for southern presbytery	<b>VIC 29,776</b>
		<b>Zimbabwe</b> – housing for displaced Presbyterian families	<b>VIC 9,778</b>
Easter 2007	Dehra Dun INDIA – orphanages	<b>India</b> – Bhogpur Children's Home	<b>3,917</b>
		<b>India</b> – Hope for Children Society	<b>3,917</b>
Christmas 2007	Mercy Appeal	<b>Myanmar</b> – Evangelical Reformed Church ministry	<b>NAT 25,671</b>
		<b>Bangladesh</b> – Grace Presbyterian Church ministry	<b>NSW 25,671</b>
		<b>Malawi</b> – CCAP Mulanje Mission Hospital	<b>VIC 25,705</b>
Easter 2008	Mercy Appeal	<b>Vanuatu</b> – building projects on Tanna	<b>NAT 14,874</b>
		<b>Indonesia</b> – Elim Hospital	<b>13,819</b>
Christmas 2008	Mercy Appeal	<b>Zambia</b> – Chasefu Theological College	<b>VIC 40,000</b>
		<b>Vanuatu</b> – water reticulation project	<b>NAT 21,000</b>
Easter 2009	Mercy Appeal	<b>East Timor</b> Evangelical Presb Church	<b>NAT 8,800</b>
		<b>Namibia</b> – Evangelical Bible Church, HIV/AIDS ministry	<b>8,800</b>
		<b>Malawi Orbus Ministries</b> – orphan and vulnerable children care	<b>VIC 8,800</b>
Christmas 2009	Mercy Appeal	<b>Myanmar</b> – famine relief	<b>NAT 2,302</b>
		<b>Zambia</b> – theological education, construction of principal's house	<b>VIC 22,302</b>
		<b>India</b> – IRFA, guest house	<b>22,302</b>
Easter 2010	Mercy Appeal	<b>India</b> – SEWAH – provision of vehicle	<b>NAT 8,300</b>



		<b>Bangladesh – correspondence courses</b>	<b>NSW</b> <b>8,300</b>
		<b>Vanuatu – Bible College of Southern Presbytery</b>	<b>NAT</b> <b>8,300</b>
<b>TOTAL PresAID FUNDS DISTRIBUTED THROUGH <i>MISSION PARTNERS/ STATE APWM COMMITTEES:</i></b>			<b>389,924</b>
<b>TOTAL PresAID FUNDS DISTRIBUTED THROUGH THE AGENCY OF OTHER APPLICANTS:</b>			<b>52,755</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			<b>\$ 442,679</b>

## **7. PARTNERSHIPS AND INVOLVEMENT WITH OVERSEAS CHURCHES**

7.1 Committee on Relations with Other Churches The Federal Committee is aware of its responsibilities in regard to liaison with the GAA Committee on Relations with Other Churches, and is endeavouring to bring its practices into conformity with these responsibilities. In this regard, the Committee endorses the regulatory proposals being brought to the Assembly by the Committee on Relations with Other Churches.

### 7.2 Involvement with Partner Churches

#### **Vanuatu**

##### **A) Short-term work teams:**

Since 2003, *Mission Partners* has progressively developed and promoted the Tradespartners and Youthpartners work teams. Their initial project was to assist our Partner Church, PC Vanuatu, in the building of their new Library at Talua MTC. The building was completed and opened in June 2008, in time for the first intake of BMin Foundation Year students in February, 2009. Named “The Don Lewis Pacific Partnership Library”, the name honours the unflinching zeal and vision of Don Lewis (“Don the Builder”), Trades Supervisor on each Trades/Youthpartners Team involved in the building of the library. It also acknowledges the co-operative partnership of Youth/Tradespartners team members with local ni-Van workers from Talua MTC and nearby Navota Farm.

The underlying premise of Youthpartners is the pursuit of three major ‘building’ objectives (1) Physical Building (Bricks and Mortar), (2) Partnership Building (Deepening Church to Church Relationships) and (3) Spiritual Building (Christian Character of Team Members). In this respect, it is heartening to see the ongoing mission involvement of alumni, often returning for later programs of Youth/Tradespartners (sometimes taking leadership roles), promoting mission involvement in home churches and undertaking further short- and long-term mission work with Partner Agencies. It is also heartening to see a growing interest by some parishes in developing their own short-term programs. When we have been made aware of these proposals at an early stage of development, we have been able to commend these ventures to the wider church for prayer and emulation, and to assist teams to follow best practice, becoming more aware of cultural and logistical issues and avoiding duplication of effort. It is also important that visiting teams and individuals ensure that they do not incur any costs to either the Partner Church or to *Mission Partners*, except where Mission Partners has commissioned the project and approved the budgeted expenses.

Trades/Youthpartners programs are now being conducted four times each year, at two locations: Tradespartners at Talua and Lenafa in June/July, and Youthpartners at these same locations in January.

The Committee is especially grateful to Len and Robyn Newton and to Graham Barnes for their willingness and ability to take up extra responsibility in the preparation, planning and leadership of the Trades/Youthpartners programs at Lenafa (Tanna Island), and Talua (Santo Island) respectively.

##### **B) Other ministries:**

While our Partnership Agreement with PC Vanuatu reflects our Partner Church’s concern for Mission Partners to maintain an active interest in the whole of the PC Vanuatu, it is nevertheless true that, at this time, most of our ministry in Vanuatu still centres on Talua MTC on Santo Island, and the Southern Islands Presbytery Bible College (SIPBC) at Lenafa on Tanna Island, and it is appropriate that we maintain this focus, given the significance and need of sound theological training there, and the theological diversity of that church’s other partners. In this regard, we have recently been pleased to see a growing involvement by Mission to the World (MTW), particularly in relation to the evangelisation, nurture and discipling of those who have recently left, and continue to leave, the John Frum movement in Tanna. The amazing account of God’s hand in turning well over 10,000 people to himself is briefly told in recent editions of Mission Partners’ Mini-Magazine, and on one of our DVDs, and is the subject of a book being written by

former missionary to Vanuatu, Rev. Robert McKean.

This priority in our ministry is demonstrated in the placements of our long-term and short-term missionaries.

**Long-Term:**

Pastor Glen and Mrs Rachael Connor and family served at Talua MTC under the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu during the past three years. Glen has been acting Bursar for much of this time, as well as fulfilling his role as a lecturer. It is an urgent need to find, train and appoint a ni-Van Bursar.

Rev. Andrew and Mrs Rosemary Williamson returned to Talua MTC for a two-year appointment in January this year. From the beginning of 2010 both of their daughters, Leila and Sarah, have been boarders at PLC, Sydney on full scholarships. Andy is Dean of Students for the BMin program, facilitating the Foundation Year Program for these students in 2009. Rosemary and Andrew continue in the crucial and demanding role of overseeing the writing and publishing of the proposed Bislama Bible Commentary. Finally, 2010 has seen the commencement of the full BMin course.

Approved short-term missions since September, 2007 (apart from Director's visits) include the following:

- Youthpartners Teams in Dec, 07(Talua); Dec 09, 10 (Talua, Tanna): ..... Building
- Tradespartners Teams in June/July 08, 09, 10 (Talua, Tanna): ..... Building
- Mr Tony and Mrs Yvette Barnes 2008 (Talua): ..... Building, Library
- Misses Betty Murray and Penny Wright in July/Aug 08 (Talua): ..... English Teaching
- Betty Murray in March – May 09; July 10, with Yvette Barnes (Talua):.... English, Curriculum
- Mr Brian Cullen July 09 (Talua):..... Foundation Maths
- Mr Peter Lee April 10 (Talua):..... Assistance with Management of College finances

In 2009 Rev. Philip and Mrs Sandra Burns represented the Presbyterian Church of Australia at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu, on behalf of the Moderator General

**Mission Partners** joins the Talua Committee of the General Assembly of Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu in expressing grateful thanks to Rev. Dr Ian Smith for his considerable contribution towards the introduction of the BMin course at Talua MTC. Dr Smith, an ex-missionary at Talua MTC, made two trips to Vanuatu to consult with staff and was primarily responsible for the design of the course, introduced in 2010.

**Myanmar**

The ministries of **Mission Partners** in Myanmar are under the primary oversight of the Queensland APWM Committee, working in collaboration with the Federal Committee. However, it is hoped and intended that all states will continue to be involved fully in our ministries in that country. Under the convenership of Rev. Peter Barber, the Qld Committee has been entering fully and responsibly into this role.

**A) Short Term Visits:**

During the past three years, several short-term ministry visits to Yangon have taken place, focusing mainly on partnership-building and teaching of English and Theological subjects.

- 2007: (December) ..... Rev. Peter Barnes: Bible Teaching (Hebrews)
- Dec 2007 – Jan 2008: ..... Miss Betty Murray: Teaching English
- 2008: (June/July)Rev. Peter Barber, Bill Lutton: Teaching English, Bible; Partnership Building
- 2009: (August).....Rev. Peter Barber and Esa Hukkinen, Mr Matthew Campbell: Bible Teaching, Partnership Building
- (December) ..... Rev. Bill Lutton, Mr Will Lutton: English and Bible Teaching, Partnership Building
- Dec 2009 – Jan 2010: .....Mr Martin Eagle: Bible Teaching (Galatians), Partnership Building

In April 2009 Mrs Jenny Lutton travelled to the Philippines to attend the Graduation ceremony and other associated functions of the International Graduate School of Leadership. This trip was graciously funded by the ladies of the Victoria PWMU. Jenny was the guest of James Hum Len Thang, a Burmese young man who was graduating with a Master's Degree in Theology. As well as attending these functions, Jenny had very positive interaction with other Burmese students, especially those from the Chin tribe, who were studying in Manila at that time.

## **B) Resident Missionary:**

Mr Martin Eagle expects to have completed TESOL training and theological studies by July 2010, and has undertaken an extensive itinerary of deputation to churches, particularly in Queensland, arranged by the Convener of Qld Committee of APWM, Rev. Peter Barber. Martin hopes to have his Team Building complete in time for Commissioning and departure for Myanmar in October. Once he is settled in Yangon, Martin will undertake Burmese language studies, before entering fully into his assigned duties under the direction of the Synod of the Evangelical Reformed Church and the Reformed Bible Institute. He will undertake English Teaching and other support, as a Partner Church missionary with the Evangelical Reformed Church. Martin will be responsible, in the performance of his day-to-day tasks in Myanmar, to Rev. Dr Thang Bwee, Principal of the Reformed Bible Institute.

## **C) Humanitarian Assistance:**

Our brothers and sisters in Christ in Chin State have undergone much privation in the past two years, because of the famine that followed the severe rat plague that ensued as a consequence of the "Maudam" – the 50-year cycle of Bamboo flowering. As a result of the generous responses to appeals by Mission Partners and PresAID, although the effects of the Maudam are still reverberating through many Chin Christians' lives, help continues to flow from Australian Presbyterians who care for others' needs. On behalf of our suffering fellow Presbyterians, *Mission Partners* expresses heartfelt thanks to all who have shared out of our relative abundance to meet the desperate needs of those who have so little capacity to help themselves.

### **Japan**

Miss Nerida Bell served in association with Mission to the World under our Partner Church, the Presbyterian Church in Japan. She returned to Japan in September 2006 to commence an initial four-year term as a career missionary. Nerida married Yas Shimizu in May 2009, and continued her ministry in Chiba, Japan. They have returned to Australia in June 2010 on Home Assignment and to await the birth of their first child in August 2010.

The seconding arrangement that has existed for many years to enable *Mission Partners* missionaries to serve the Presbyterian Church in Japan as part of the MTW team there has continued to be an admirable arrangement for all concerned.

Short term ministries in Japan have been exercised in the past three years by Mr Greg Elkins (twice), Miss Melinda Elkins, and Rev. Peter and Mrs Ayumi Tamsett and their children. In each case arrangements were made to associate with, and function under, the authority of MTW. Short term mission continues to provide many opportunities, particularly in college ministry. It is encouraging to note that the Tamsetts are applying for Partner Church missionary status and are planning to serve long term in Japan.

In December 2008 Mrs Jenny Lutton travelled to Japan, at the request of the Executive Committee, for a mid-term pastoral visit to Nerida. It was so encouraging to see the high esteem in which the members of the Presbyterian Church of Japan hold Nerida, and the impact that Nerida is having on the lives of Christian and non-Christian people in that country. Mrs Lutton's visit to Nerida was the first mid-term visit to a Partner Church missionary to be commissioned by the Federal Committee, and the results suggest that there is value in the Federal and State Committees conducting further mid-term visits to all of our Partner Church missionaries on the field.

## **AFRICAN COUNTRIES:**

The ministries of *Mission Partners* in Sudan, Malawi and Zambia are in the primary care of the Victoria APWM Committee. It is their desire, and the desire of the Federal Committee, to broaden the base of interest and involvement in these churches and to include more active participation by the church in all Australian states.

### **Sudan**

Motor Isaac Yat returned to his home country of Sudan in December 2008 to become involved in an evangelism ministry in the area around Malakal. He has suffered many hardships, including a time in hospital, but remains firmly convinced that he is where God wants him to be. In May 2010 Isaac announced his engagement to a young Sudanese lady by the name of Nyariek David Koak. Our partnership with Sudan remains a tenuous arrangement and is in need of a pastoral partnership development visit by the National Director and a small group from Victoria and other states.

## **Malawi**

Our partnership with the Presbyterian Church in Malawi, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Blantyre Synod involves us in the following priority projects:

Equipping the Theological Resource Centre, Blantyre, as a place of study and prayer for gospel workers in Malawi. This is a strategic project developed by the vision of Rev. Colin M'Bawa, equipped through loving gifts of churches throughout the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and managed by CCAP.

- Supporting the ministry of Rev. Colin M'Bawa in the strategic city of Zomba.
- Establishing a Christian ministry of love and care for vulnerable orphans at ORBUS.
- Sharing income generating skills and Bible teaching with widows at the Chigodi Women's Centre.
- Sharing practical skills such as building construction and vehicle maintenance.

It also involves the presence of a new missionary couple from Victoria, Craig and Jayni Manners, who took up residence in Malawi early in 2010. They are working under the auspices of ORBUS, a recently established Christian charity closely connected with CCAP Blantyre Synod. We would urge the church to pray for the Manners family and for Christ-honouring development of ORBUS.

STAMP (Short Term Africa Mission Program) has been developed by the Victoria APWM and sends intergenerational teams to Malawi annually. The Federal Committee is working with STAMP to broaden the involvement of its very valuable program, to make it possible for people from other states to be part of this challenging ministry.

## **Zambia**

The Presbyterian Church in Zambia officially known as the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Zambia Synod, is our latest Partner Church, being established as such at the AGM in 2008. Our partnership work with the CCAP Zambia Synod includes:

- Equipping the Allan Lendon Memorial library as a place of study and prayer for ministry trainees in Chasefu, NE Zambia.
- Occasional lectureships at Chasefu Theological College.
- Engaging in evangelistic preaching and church planting in regional towns of Zambia.
- Assisting the Synod in production of Bible study booklets and a larger-scale project of a CCAP hymnbook with hymns in three languages.

## **Bangladesh**

Several years ago the NSW APWM Committee was asked to exercise a primary oversight of the Bangladesh ministry on behalf of (then) APWM. The intervening period has been marked by crises in that nation and church, and difficulties in the working relationship between the NSW APWM Committee and the Federal Committee. Considerable time and energies have been expended in recent years, endeavouring to make relationships between the two committees normal and effective in the management of our ministries in Bangladesh. A recent crisis in the leadership of the third (and latest) Partner Church in Bangladesh suggests that we may not yet have learned how to make our ministry in that country a true and effective Partnership. Our confidence is in the Lord of the Harvest who alone can do marvellous things, but we are grateful for the determined good will of Dr Pilgrim, members of both committees, church leaders and ex-officio members of the Federal Committee for enabling the progress to be made that has been made. We plead for the prayers of the church in regard to these matters at home and in Bangladesh, that God will be glorified in our ministry of support to the Church there and in the way that we conduct it.

"Eleven years ago a ministry began in Bangladesh and the NSW Committee was given the responsibility of this ministry as each state was asked to pursue various country mission expressions. It is an Islamic Society so Christian ministry has high risks and many dramas. Only 0.3% are professing Christians. Through many difficulties including strained relationship with State and Federal Committees God has graciously helped as evident in maturing church leadership in dealing with discipline matters. We support through the NSW committee a bible college with 40 students and approximately 46 evangelists. Ongoing visits continue with Andrew Lawson (yearly), Dr. Christopher Hopwood (yearly), Mr Mark Bidwell (yearly) and Rev. Ewen Brown (2 or 3 times a year) These visits include Bible teaching, support and advice for 3-12 weeks at no cost to the Committees. The church continues to mature and is now called the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. It is a very high risk ministry and will continue to be so in the future." *Rev. Ewen Brown Convener NSW APWM Committee.*

## **Australia**

### *Indigenous Ministry*

Rev. Rick and Mrs Kayleen Manton have continued their extensive ministry to Indigenous Australians in western Sydney, and Rick has acted as liaison with the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship in developing training programmes for indigenous pastors. Both Rick and Kayleen have also had leading roles in the establishment of TEE courses for indigenous pastors being developed under AEF at Bimbadeen.

Ron and Jean Lyons were received as Partner Church missionaries with **Mission Partners** in May 2010. This development brings to a conclusion an extended process of negotiation with the Qld Home Missions Committee, and contributes to the structural review of the ministries of **Mission Partners**. Until this time they had been limited to Associate Missionary status. They have continued to serve faithfully in their ministry to Indigenous Australians in Far North Queensland. They are based in Weipa, but take ministry to Mapoon and Aurukun as well.

The *Aboriginal Ministry Subcommittee* is headed by Rev. Cliff Letcher, working in consultation with Rev. Ricky Manton.

The Committee has worked with AEF towards the establishment of the TEE program, soon to commence out of Bimbadeen College. Apart from Ricky and Kayleen Manton, Federal Committee member Bob Quinn is also active on the Bimbadeen Committee and in curriculum development. The Aboriginal Ministry Subcommittee wishes to urge all churches to support this TEE venture financially and with prayer.

### *Muslim Ministry*

Rev. Fayek Iskander, with Samira, maintained a ministry to Australian Muslims, and of informing the Australian Church about Islam. This ministry was discontinued at the end of May 2010 as part of the structural review of **Mission Partners** ministries. As a result Mr Iskander was made redundant. Since this time he has resigned from the Presbyterian Church of Australia. We wish him and his family well in their future directions.

### *National Office*

Rev. Bill Lutton, with Jenny, has been National Director in the National Office throughout the period and, as noted in Section 3, has resigned from this position, effective 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2010. If necessary they are willing to continue in this position until the end of 2010 to allow for a replacement to be found and introduced to the work. Bill and Jenny want to thank the many supportive people, groups and congregations who have encouraged them over the last nine years, sharing the Luttons' concern for and involvement in global mission.

Rev. Phil Simmonds, with Glenda, was Associate Director in the National Office until resigning to return to parish ministry early in 2009. They are enjoying pastoring the church at Melton, Victoria.

## **7.3 Involvement With Other Overseas Churches**

### *Grace Presbyterian Church of New Zealand –*

Some years ago the Director had contact with the Overseas Mission Committee of the Grace Presbyterian Church, New Zealand. At that time and through occasional correspondence since then, the OMC members have indicated their desire for some kind of collaborative partnership with **Mission Partners** to assist Grace Presbyterian Church to develop and extend its denominational missionary vision. To date no firm arrangement has been arrived at. It would seem worthwhile to pursue this interest.

### *Korea-*

The Committee considers it regrettable that a previously strong partnership between our church and Korean Presbyterians has long been inoperative. It would seem to be worthwhile to pursue the possibility of investigating the value and appropriateness of a mission partnership between our church and the Kocin, Hapdong, or Hapsin Presbyterian Church in Korea.

### *India –*

A Fraternal Agreement is being established with the Presbyterian Reformed Church in India. Following a visit in October 2009 from Rev. Hiralal Solanki, then Moderator of the PRC in India, details of our draft Fraternal Agreement were adjusted and submitted to the Presbytery of Nan Jewan. In the same month, Rev. Dr Mohan Chako, Principal of Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Dehra Dun, visited Sydney briefly and was a guest at Picnic Point. He also had profitable discussions with Rev. Dr Ian Smith, then Principal-elect of PTC Burwood, Sydney in regard to possibilities for future collaborations between the colleges. During the period since the

last GAA PTC, Melbourne has sponsored Rev. Suraj Chellaiah, a lecturer at PTS Dehra Dun, in his PhD studies in Old Testament. The PWMU of Victoria has been very active in the care of Suraj, Hedsiba and their children.

*East Timor –*

Following a contact from Rev. Arlindo Marcal, Moderator of the newly established Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Timor Leste, the Moderator General together with Rev. Rob Duncanson (Darwin PC) and Rev. Gary Ware (Convener SA APWM Committee) were asked by the Federal Committee to make a fact finding visit to Dili and several rural centres in Timor Leste in order to meet the leaders and people of the EPC and to assess the appropriateness and value of developing a ministry collaboration with that church, with a view to eventual Partner Church relationship.

Their visit was very warmly received and their report to the Federal Committee and to the Church recommended that we do all that we can to assist this new body of Christians to understand and apply what it means to be: The Church; Evangelical; and Presbyterian. The Committee appointed these three men to pursue ways and means to this end. In lieu of a State being asked to take primary oversight of our ministry with this national church, a consortium consisting of Darwin PC, and the Presbyterian Churches in South Australia and West Australia, has been developed. It is hoped that Indonesian and Portuguese congregations of the PCA may also become involved, owing to their language connections with Timor Leste.

Subsequently arrangements were made for Rev. David Burke (Orchard Rd P.C., Singapore), to conduct a teaching seminar in Dili. This seminar was very successful and more teaching ministry is planned. A fraternal relationship is being investigated.

*Vietnam-*

During the past three years we have been privileged to support the training of a Vietnamese Presbyterian pastor, Thien An (John) Le, at PTC, Sydney. John and his wife Minh Dieu (Sara) and young family were accommodated through the generosity of Canley Heights PC and trained essentially free of costs through the good graces of PTC. Other costs were underwritten by **Mission Partners**. MTW has encouraged **Mission Partners** to be involved, with them in their work with the Presbyterian Church in Vietnam. To this end, Rev. Steven Coxhead (a speaker of Vietnamese) has made several visits to Vietnam to undertake theological lecturing, accompanied on one occasion by his Vietnamese wife and children.

During this period the Le family was visited by John's parents from Vietnam. John's father is the founder of the Presbyterian Church in Vietnam, whose only western support comes from Mission to the World. In discussions with him, he was also keen for **Mission Partners** to consider establishing a Partner Church relationship with the Presbyterian Church in Vietnam. To date pressures of other responsibilities have prevented the Committee from giving due consideration to the request.

**8 MISSIONARIES AND THEIR PLACEMENTS**

**8.1 Current Missionary Team (All categories)**

*(The year on right indicates when new missionaries were approved in the last three years)*

<b>ARCHER</b> Rev. Tony & Mrs Shona #	PIONEERS	Middle East	2008
<b>AXON</b> Mr Richard & Mrs Bernadette	MAF	PNG	2009
<b>BANKS</b> Mr Alex & Mrs Tracey	OMF	South Korea	
<b>BELL</b> Miss Nerida—see <b>SHIMIZU</b>			
<b>BENN</b> Mr Keith & Mrs Kathleen	WBT & SIL	QLD Australia	
<b>BENNETT</b> Mr Douglas & Mrs Jeanette	WBT & SIL	VIC Australia	
<b>BLUMER</b> Mr Andrew & Mrs Michelle	PIONEERS	Austria	
<b>BREMNER</b> Mr Dion & Mrs Annette	WEC - NSW	Australia	
<b>BRIGGS</b> Mr Keith & Mrs Norma	PIONEERS	QLD Australia	
<b>BROWN</b> Miss Barbara	NAV	VIC Australia	
<b>BUCHANAN</b> Mr Malcolm and Mrs Elmari	CMS	NSW Tanzania	2010
<b>BUDDEN</b> Mr Jason & Mrs Renee	WEC International	VIC Australia	
<b>BURGE</b> Rev. David & Mrs Ashleigh #	PIONEERS	Mongolia	
<b>BURKE</b> Mr Peter & Mrs Anne	SIM	Nigeria	
<b>BUTLER</b> Mr Rowan #	INTERSERVE	INF Central Asia	
<b>BYRNE</b> Mr Matthew #	REACHACROSS	Middle East	
<b>CANAVAN</b> Mr Alan & Mrs Faye	WBT & SIL	VIC Australia	

<b>CARPENTER</b> Mr Noel & Mrs Catharine	WBT & SIL	to USA late 2009
<b>CARTER</b> Mr Phil & Mrs Glenda	PIONEERS	PNG
<b>CASE</b> Mr Ian & Mrs Christine	WEC	QLD Australia
<b>CHIPPS</b> Rev. Graham & Mrs Sandra	Associates	Cambodia
<b>CHO</b> Mr Richard & Mrs Lisa	OMF	Thailand
<b>CLARKE</b> Mr David & Mrs Lalit	Associates	Cambodia
<b>CONNOR</b> Mr Glen & Mrs Rachael	Mission Partners	Presbyterian Ch Vanuatu
<b>COXHEAD</b> Rev. Steven & Mrs Lan #	Itinerant Associates	Indochina 2007
<b>CROSSAN</b> Miss Phillippa	ECM	NSW Australia
<b>DAVIES</b> Miss Robyn	WBT & SIL	PNG
<b>DENNESS</b> Dr Ian & Mrs Dorcas #	REACHACROSS	South Asia
<b>DENNESS</b> Mr Paul & Mrs Janae	MAF	Cambodia
<b>DICKSON</b> Mr John & Mrs Denise	PIONEERS	Thailand
<b>EAGLE</b> Mr Martin	Mission Partners	ERC, Myanmar
<b>ELLIS</b> Rev. John & Mrs Lynette	Associates	South Asia
<b>FITTELL</b> Mr Wes & Mrs Diane	OAC	QLD Australia
<b>FRANCIS</b> Mr Andrew & Mrs Nellie	GRN	NSW 2009
<b>FUNG</b> Drs Patrick & Jenny	OMF	Singapore
<b>GILL</b> Miss Roslyn #	Associate	Cambodia/Middle East
<b>GOLDTHORPE</b> Miss Linda	IT	Austria
<b>GRAHAM</b> Mr Michael	Associate	based in USA
<b>GRIFFITH</b> Rev. Nathan & Mrs Kathy	ECM	Portugal 2008
<b>HALL</b> Mrs Rhondda & Mr Rhys	PIONEERS /ACROSS	Uganda
<b>HAMMOND</b> Mr Graham & Mrs Sue	WBT & SIL	QLD Australia
<b>HANDICOTT</b> Mr Robert	SIM	Ethiopia 2007
<b>HANSON</b> Mr James & Mrs Lee-Ann #	OMF	East Asia 2009
<b>HARVEY</b> Mr Robert & Mrs Beverley	WEC	QLD Australia
<b>HAYWOOD</b> Mr Graham & Mrs Irene	WBT & SIL	VIC Australia
<b>HILL</b> Mrs Joy	PIONEERS	Bosnia & Herzegovina
<b>JACKSON</b> Mr Daryl	PIONEERS	Japan 2009
<b>JOSEPH</b> #	Associate	Asia
<b>KERR</b> Dr Harland & Mrs Marie	WBT & SIL	NSW Australia
<b>KOWALENKO</b> Mr Alex	ECM	Portugal
<b>LETCHER</b> Mr Andrew & Mrs Fleur	WBT & SIL	VIC Australia
<b>LETCHER</b> Rev. Cliff & Mrs Sue	AIM	NSW NT Australia
<b>LEUNG</b> Rev. Dr John & Mrs Keit	Itinerant Associates	E. Asia
<b>LIHOU</b> Mr Allan & Mrs Bronwyn	OMF	Taiwan 2009
<b>LILLEY</b> Mr Stephen & Mrs Naomi #	WBT & SIL	South Asia
<b>LINKLATER</b> Miss Nicole	WEC	Chad
<b>LUKINS</b> Mr Paul & Mrs Carol	SIM	Ethiopia
<b>LUTTON</b> Rev. Bill & Mrs Jenny	Mission Partners	Nat Office Australia
<b>LYONS</b> Mr Ron & Mrs Jean	Mission Partners	Far North Qld 2010
<b>MAARSAVEEN</b> Mr Heinz and Mrs Jane	OM Australia	London 2010
<b>MANLY</b> Mr Ashley & Mrs Sarah #	MECO	Middle East
<b>MANNERS</b> Mr Craig and Mrs Jayni	ORBUS	Malawi 2010
<b>MANTON</b> Rev. Rick & Mrs Kayleen	Mission Partners	NSW, Australia
<b>MATHYS</b> Mr Calvin & Mrs Ruth	WBT& SIL	PNG
<b>McKERRELL</b> Mr Robert [Bob] & Mrs Deb	AIM	NT Australia 2007
<b>MIHALYI</b> Mr Laszlo & Mrs Eva	PIONEERS	Hungary
<b>MOAR</b> Miss Cecily	OMF	NSW Australia
<b>MORRIS</b> Rev. Paul & Mrs Judy	CWI NSW	Australia 2007
<b>PEARCE</b> Mr David & Mrs Lisa	MAF	Kenya
<b>PEARCE</b> Rev. Len & Mrs Wendy #	Associates	DIP Middle East
<b>PEARCE</b> Mr Paul & Mrs Anthea #	PIONEERS	Middle East
<b>POYNTER</b> Miss Sue	OMF	Japan
<b>PRICE</b> Miss Mavis	WBT & SIL	PNG
<b>PRIEST</b> Dr Daniel & Mrs Tammy	PIONEERS	PNG

<b>PROUDFOOT</b> Mr Daland & Mrs Corinne #		OMF	Indonesia
<b>REMPEL</b> Mrs Tracey (& Mr Rick)	MAF	Zambia	
<b>RICHARD</b> Miss Jenna #	OM	Middle East	2009
Rob & Theresa #	PIONEERS	East Asia	
Sandy #	OMF	Asia	
<b>SAYERS</b> Miss Barbara	WBT & SIL (ret)	VIC Australia	
<b>SCANDRETT</b> Mr Kester (& Mrs Que Anh) #		AOI	South East Asia
<b>SCOTT</b> Mrs Denise	TLM	QLD Australia	
<b>SCHWARZ</b> Mr Kym and Mrs Stephanie	International Teams	NSW Australia	2010
<b>SETA</b> Rev. Bargoos (& Mrs Konsita) #	Associate	Indonesia	
<b>SHAW</b> Mr Alex & Mrs Sybil	GRN	NSW Australia	
<b>SHIMIZU</b> Mrs Nerida (& Mr Yas)	Mission Partners	Presbyterian Ch Japan	
<b>SHORT</b> Mr Warwick & Mrs Natalie	SIM	Niger	2008
<b>SKERMAN</b> Mr Peter & Mrs Annie	PIONEERS	Study leave Qld 2010	2008
<b>SMITH</b> Miss Chandra #	SIM	Ecuador	
<b>SMITH</b> Mr Rob & Mrs Toni	BT & SIL	PNG	
<b>STUART</b> Mr Jim & Mrs Margot	SIM	Niger	2009
<b>STOCK</b> Mrs Nicolina (Nicky) #	I'SERVE	South Asia	
<b>TAN</b> Dr Lee-On & Mrs Evelyn #	OMF	East Asia	2009
<b>THATCHER</b> Mr Darrell and Margaret	WYCLIFFE	WA Australia	2010
<b>THALLON</b> Miss Catherine	WBT & SIL	Bangladesh	2007
<b>TRANTER</b> Mr Dennis & Mrs Glenys	AIM	NSW Australia	
<b>VANDER HEIDEN</b> Mr Matthew & Mrs Kiri	PIONEERS	Portugal	
<b>VINES</b> Mr Andrew and Mrs Suzi	PIONEERS	Middle East	2010
<b>WATSON</b> Mr Robin	SIM	Burkina Faso	
<b>WHIPP</b> Miss Carol	WEC	England	
<b>WILSON</b> Rev. Richard & Mrs Ann	IRFA	Qld Australia/India	2007
<b>WILLIAMSON</b> Rev. Andrew & Mrs Rosemary		Mission Partners, Vanuatu	
<b>WIN</b> Rev. Dr Daniel & Dr Esther	CCC(A) GAIN	NSW SE Asia	
<b>WOLDHUIS</b> Mr John & Mrs Karine	SIM	Equador	
<b>YAT</b> Mr Motor Isaac #	Mission Partners	Presbyterian Ch Sudan	2007
<b>YIP</b> Miss Penny	OMF	USA	
<b>YOUNG</b> Mary	WYCLIFFE	Vic Australia	2010

# indicates that the missionary is serving in a sensitive area; caution is needed with all communications.

#### 8.2 Summary of Missionary Team (as of June 2010):

	<b>Units</b>	<b>Individuals</b>
Partner Church Missionaries	8	13
Partner Agency Missionaries	88	149
Associate Missionaries	10	16
<b>Total (plus children)</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>178</b>

#### 8.3 New Partner Agencies accredited during the three-year period:

IRF Indian Reformed Fellowship  
 ORBUS A Christian charity working in Malawi

#### 8.4 Short Term Mission with Partner Agencies

The Federal Committee has been exercised for some time with the question of the value and appropriateness of requiring short term workers with our Partner Agencies to apply for Partner Agency status. There is value in the National Office being aware of individuals and teams who are undertaking short term ministry independently or in membership with any of our Partner Agencies (most of our Partner Agencies require people who undertake Short Term programs – even very brief Short Term programs to complete the Agency's application process). If the National Office is aware of such Short Term ventures it is able to commend those Short Term groups or individuals to the church at large for prayer support, and to report their experiences in our publications, encouraging others to consider similar service. The result of our deliberations has found expression in Partnership in Mission Mk 3

During the past three years we have been aware of, and have assisted, the following



people to conduct Short Term ministry with Partner Agencies:

Mr Andrew and Mrs Heather Greatbatch (DIP) Middle East

Mr Bruce Crotty (DIP) Middle East

Miss Rachel Russell (MAF) PNG

8.5 Missionaries who have Completed Service:

Since the General Assembly of Australia in September 2007, the following missionaries have ceased to be part of the **Mission Partners** team:

**BARNES** Mr Graham

**BUCHANAN** Mr Richard and Mrs Linda

**DAWSON** Mr Brent

**DE GARIS** Miss Cherie

**DONOVAN** Dr Kath

**ISKANDER** Rev. Fayek and Mrs Samira

**LAWRENCE** Miss Julie

**LOONEY** Mr Rob and Mrs Hazel

**PLATT** Miss Christine

**MYORS** Miss Ruth

**PARKER** Mr Myles and Mrs Robyn

**RICHARDSON** Mr Brett and Mrs Ruth

**SHANKS** Mr Allen and Mrs Marion

**SIMMONDS** Rev. Phil and Mrs Glenda

**SLATER** Miss Elspeth

**WARNER** Mr John and Mrs Pat

**WOODRUFF** Mr Michael & Mrs Katie

9. NOMINATIONS

The following nominations are for election or re-election, to fulfil the requirements of the GAA regulations for the positions of Convener and seven elected members of the Federal APWM Committee:

Convener:

Members:

Mr Ian Campbell

Rev. Cliff Letcher

Mr Don Lewis

Miss Cecily Moar

Rev. Dr John Leung

Mr Alex Shaw

Mr Bob Quinn

Rev. BILL LUTTON, National Director.

Mr ALEX SHAW, Acting Convener.

## BUSINESS

The Committee met to deal with the matters committed to it and, in particular, the venue for the 2010 General Assembly.

Following a comparison of the venues used for the 2004 and 2007 Assembly meetings and the mandate given to it by the 2007 Assembly, the committee decided that the Assembly meetings for 2010 would be held in the Chinese Presbyterian Church. This venue is central and has the advantage of close proximity to accommodation and eating establishments. The venue is spacious and its layout has a number of practical advantages both for commissioners and the assembly officers.

Tuesday evening sees the Assembly meet in Scots Church to commemorate the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Scottish Reformation where Rev. Dr Sinclair Ferguson will be the guest speaker. Dr Ferguson has also kindly agreed to give biblical expositions on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday during the assembly meetings. It was agreed that the expositions would be made available through PTC Media and the various State Assemblies.

The committee was also requested to consider the question of holding the next assembly in 2012 rather than 2013 in Melbourne to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Presbyterian Inland Mission. After deliberation, the committee decided that various commemoration activities could take place without the next General Assembly being brought forward to 2012.

P.J. BARSON, Convener.

## CAMBERWELL COMMITTEE

Report of the Committee established under Minute 53, July 2007 General Assembly of Australia.

**Preamble:**

In July 2007 the General Assembly of Australia (GAA) heard a series of appeals against

decisions of the General Assembly of Victoria (GAV) regarding the session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell. It also heard a petition from Associate Professor David Hare concerning the booklet 'Fractured Fellowship'.

In response to this petition the GAA determined that 'there exists a public rumour of abusive behaviour within the Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell evidenced, among other things by several articles in *The Age*; the broadcast of a programme of the *7.30 Report* on 8 March 2006 featuring claims by Mr Kingsley Davidson; the broadcast of two programmes on ABC Radio National on 18 December 2005 and 1 March 2006; and the publication of *Fractured Fellowship (1999)* and *Fractured Families (2004)* by the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and Mrs. Morag Zwartz'.

The Commission of Assembly was empowered to 'explore and resolve that rumour and, if necessary, initiate appropriate action against individuals under Ch. 8 of *Constitution, Procedure and Practice*.' A committee was appointed consisting of Rev. C. Balzer (Convener), M. Cropper, L. Hall, Dr A. Harman, J. McClean, I. McIver and Dr B. Winter, 'with authority to seek such advice as it may consider necessary and to meet with the minister and members of the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, and other parties, in order to explore the allegations of doctrinal or behavioural deviance contained in the documents mentioned'. Dr Bruce Winter initially accepted nomination to the Committee but when meeting times were set, he advised that he could not attend. Consequently, Dr Winter took no part in the deliberations, and it was then too late to appoint a substitute.

This report is the work of the committee, its purpose being to assist the Commission in its task to 'explore and resolve' the rumour of abusive behaviour.

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Before meeting in Melbourne the committee met once in Sydney. The members then read a large amount of literature and documents relating to the issues of 'the Fellowship' and Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell. The committee met in Melbourne (22-25 November and 7-8 December, 2007) and as directed by the GAA had a meeting with the minister and members of the session of Trinity Presbyterian Church. An advertisement was placed in *Australian Presbyterian* inviting interested parties to contact the Convener.

As a result, the committee met with thirty five other parties who had expressed a desire to meet with the committee, and the committee received and considered written submissions from thirteen people who were not interviewed. It also held a meeting with members of the Presbytery of Melbourne East. While aware that issues of 'the Fellowship' have affected other congregations, the committee, in accordance with the GAA directive, focused its business primarily on Trinity Camberwell.

#### **B. ANALYSIS**

Trinity Camberwell is a church which has (in the words of the Rev. Philip Mercer) a 'Fellowship' heritage. The history of this 'Fellowship' has been recounted in several documents and this report will not retrace that ground in detail. A simple outline is as follows.

An increasing number of families met together for Christian fellowship for several decades. These meetings consisted of a regular large meeting, several small groups and an annual weekend away. The group came to be known as 'the Fellowship' but those who were members of the group state that it had no official name or membership list, and so the title is placed in inverted commas in the report.

Within this group a form of teaching flourished (characterised by some as a 'holiness' teaching) which stressed the need for rigorous introspection, confession of sin to the group and close personal relationship to one another, especially to key leaders, in order to grow in holiness. There was also a teaching that what was considered direct revelation from God was available about a wide range of decisions, including day to day ones, and also about one's current spiritual state. The form of fellowship within this movement was often emotionally intense. At some stages the movement had tendencies towards legalism and teachings concerning the defilement of members by contact with those who were seen to be 'unclean'.

Over time this situation produced:

- a complex pattern of intermarriage which meant that relationship tensions were quickly exacerbated;
- a setting in which leaders with strong personalities could have an overwhelming influence over members;

- a pattern of withdrawing from close relationships with those outside of the movement and/or Trinity Camberwell and sometimes even avoiding contact with people;
- a group which became increasingly isolated from wider Christian circles, and hence one in which relationships became increasingly intense.

This pattern produced a reaction of suspicion and fear from some of the family members and fellow church members of those involved in 'the Fellowship'. This reaction reinforced some of the elements of the pattern.

In 1996 the regular meetings of 'the Fellowship' came to an end, at least in their previous format. At about the same time many who had been involved moved their church membership to three Presbyterian churches, Mt Evelyn, Clayton and Trinity Camberwell. Trinity Camberwell was already the church of several families involved in 'the Fellowship'. Hence it comes to have a 'Fellowship' heritage.

In 'the Fellowship' prior to 1996 and in Trinity Camberwell after 1996 the situation outlined led to two damaging results (often related to each other).

- (a) People sustained psychological harm, and
- (b) family relationships and friendships were interrupted.

Many people still live with these effects, struggling with psychological damage and strained family relationships.

Perhaps the most distressing aspect of this whole business is seeing a stream of families where adult children have strained relationships with their parents, where grandparents are stopped from having a normal relationship with the grandchildren, where adult siblings have no contact with one another, and other similar relational breakdowns. Members of churches from which 'Fellowship' members departed, summarily to join Trinity Camberwell, have also been affected.

Many members within Trinity Camberwell also grieve over strained family relationships. They suffer from the relational and psychological effects of having their names and details published in church documents and in the press in ways which they consider badly misrepresented them.

It has to be recognised too that many non-Fellowship members have been affected, especially in the churches from which Fellowship members departed summarily to join Trinity Camberwell.

### **C. CONTEXT**

In its approach to the task before it, the Committee came to recognise the following features that have an important bearing on the way in which the situation should be handled.

1. It is important to recognise that the monthly Fellowship meetings and the annual 'weekends away' are no longer held.
2. Many of the allegations of problematic behaviour and abuse come from a period around 1995 to 2002. The ongoing problems are not to be minimised but the rumours *continue* to be stoked as though some behaviours that were seriously problematic ten years ago are still current today. Our evidence suggests that the ongoing and serious *effects* of those behaviours remain but that the patterns of behaviour themselves have been moderated. We believe that in the past 2 years there has been reconciliation between previously alienated family members in some cases, and in other cases the beginning of reconciliation between individuals and among families.
3. We have had testimonies of pain and suffering not only from individuals and families who have been affected by the 'Fellowship' or its heritage, but also from some who have been identified with the 'Fellowship' simply because they are associated with Trinity Camberwell. Distancing of relationships has not been a 'one way street'.
4. There is a wider context to the situation. The sources of the rumours are not only from among those involved directly with the 'Fellowship' and its heritage but from within the wider Presbyterian Church of Victoria and beyond this. To the degree that such rumours are well founded, then obviously the situations to which they refer must be dealt with. The continued circulation of rumours which are not well founded is of no help in the situation.

Trinity Camberwell and its session perceive that they have been deliberately excluded, treated unfairly, denounced in the media and have been the subject of rumours which they could

not rebut. The Commission of the Assembly has met numerous times since July 2007 and has placed a number of requirements on the Minister and Session of Trinity Camberwell. The Committee has monitored and followed up on those instructions. The Committee has also met with the Presbytery of Melbourne East to endeavour to persuade its members to change their approach to Trinity Camberwell. The aim of these approaches has been to see the closer integration of Trinity within the denomination. This cannot be achieved by a resolution of the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria nor by resolution of presbyteries. Rather it requires the individual members of those bodies to act with Christian grace and to be willing for reconciliation.

#### **D. RESPONSE**

The commission of the General Assembly was empowered to 'explore and resolve' the rumour of abusive behaviour within the Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell. The church must be concerned about the content of those rumours and the effects such behaviour and the rumours have had on people. It is not possible for any church Assembly to ameliorate psychological harm or to restore family relationships and friendships. However it is possible for the Presbyterian Church of Australia to take some steps which may help to resolve the situation in the medium to long term.

The persons and families involved on both sides of the 'Fellowship' divide have been given every encouragement and assistance to be reconciled, and the Commission has made arrangements for professional counsellors from outside our denomination to be available to facilitate family reconciliations, and for the GAA to pay the associated costs. Such reconciliation is only possible if both parties are willing, and reconciliation has not been forced on people who have been hurt by abuse.

Once a person or group offers an apology for past behaviour, that person or group must recognise that those to whom they have apologised will need to seek reconciliation. That is, reconciliation cannot be forced on those who have been hurt. Apology will have to include explanation of and expression of regret and/or remorse for years of separation. A general apology is not sufficient. Where people have been deeply hurt they rightly expect that an apology includes some kind of explanation. It is not possible for reconciliation to proceed on the basis of simply 'putting it all behind us'.

#### **E. DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

##### **(i) Actions**

The committee did not discover any actions of individual office-bearers of Trinity Camberwell or of the session as a whole which could be reasonably dealt with under the code of discipline, except in the case of one office-bearer. The Commission of the GAA instigated disciplinary action against that office-bearer. The result of that process was that the Commission declared that the charges against the office-bearer had "not been proven" and the case was discharged.

The Committee does recognise the damaging effects of involvement in 'the Fellowship' and its heritage in Trinity Camberwell, and is aware that there are accusations of actions that could be liable for proceedings under the Code of Discipline.

However the committee found that:

- often the damaging results were the result of complex patterns of behaviour which involved large numbers of people, several of whom were not and never were members of Trinity Presbyterian Church;
- these actions were taken several years ago;
- as a consequence of such behaviour, many people remain hurt and grieved;
- the nature of the evidence was the report of one person which when put to the alleged offender would be denied or explained in a very different manner, so that there was no prospect of someone being found guilty of an accusation.

##### **(ii) Teaching**

The committee did not find direct evidence of any office-bearer of Trinity Camberwell expressing doctrinal views that justified disciplinary action. The committee did find evidence of views which are unbalanced and less than helpful.

In particular the following are unhelpful:

- a readiness to accept feelings as extra-biblical 'revelation' which gave detailed guidance in many matters, and to grant that 'revelation' considerable authority rather

than allowing one another freedom in matters which are not dictated by Scripture (Westminster Confession of Faith 20:2);

- a view that contact with those who are not in fellowship would lead to defilement;
- the teaching that the church (or the 'Fellowship') is above family. This is a denial of the divinely-ordained marriage and family relationship. Linked with this is a misuse of the words of Jesus regarding leaving father and mother for the Gospel's sake;
- a belief in generational curses and the influence of evil spirits in the life of Christians so that someone who has the Holy Spirit can still be considered to be 'under' an evil spirit. The view that there are generational curses is based on a wrong use of the Second Commandment ('visiting iniquity to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me');
- a view that forgiveness by God depends on detailed confession of sins and close personal fellowship with elders;
- a tendency to co-ordinate justification and sanctification in a way contrary to Scripture and the Westminster Confession of Faith. According to the Westminster Confession of Faith, justification is on the basis of the obedience of Christ and faith is the instrumental cause. It states that 'God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified' (11:5). There has been a teaching among those with a 'Fellowship' heritage that ongoing forgiveness depends on ongoing and detailed repentance and continued sanctification. It should be stressed that no office-bearer expressed this view and that several stated their commitment to the doctrine of justification by faith.

#### **F. SMALL GROUP AND CELL GROUP MINISTRY AT TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

The 'Fellowship heritage' of Trinity Camberwell includes the use of closed groups; that is, groups in which membership is limited and which are not open to the regular scrutiny of the session as a whole. The testimony of several people who have left Trinity Camberwell is that these groups were sources of psychological harm. Such groups constitute a risk and should not be part of the ministry of Presbyterian churches.

The Committee recommended the following Policy Guidelines to the Commission.

There is a place both for *confidentiality* on the one hand, and *transparency* and *guilelessness* on the other, in the life of any congregation.

##### **With Respect to Confidentiality:**

- (1) Confidentiality is to be endorsed and encouraged where *individual* relationships, or matters of pastoral concern with *individuals or couples* are involved.
- (2) Apart from the Session, there should be no such thing as 'group confidentiality' in any ministry of the congregation.

##### **With Respect to Transparency and Guilelessness:**

- (3) Where group ministries are concerned, whether Bible Study groups, 'cell' groups, youth and young adult groups, women's or men's groups, prayer groups or any other group functioning within the life of the congregation, the hallmarks of such groups should be open accountability and transparency. An ongoing willingness to welcome new members should be a characteristic of such groups, whether this is as a result of public announcement through the weekly bulletin or by personal invitation by existing members.
- (4) Any matters that are of a confidential nature should not be raised within the group but should be discussed privately between the person concerned and either the leader of the group or the pastor or an elder of that person's choice, someone whom the person trusts.
- (5) There should be no autonomous or semi-autonomous ministries led by elders or members in the life of the congregation. Rather, all ministries should come under the oversight of, and be transparently accountable to, the Session.

##### **With Respect to Oversight of the Congregation:**

- (6) The pastor must have free access to attend any meetings of any group in the life of the congregation.
- (7) The Session should be able to exercise open and transparent oversight, and expect open and accountable leadership, with respect to all group ministries in the life of the congregation.

- (8) While members may be assigned to the oversight of a particular elder, they should be free, and feel free, to talk with the pastor or any elder in whom they have trust, about any matters concerning which they would like counsel or welcome discussion.

### **G. THE RELATIONSHIP OF TRINITY CAMBERWELL WITH THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA, AND ESPECIALLY THE PRESBYTERY OF MELBOURNE EAST**

The Committee found that relationships had broken down between Trinity Camberwell and the Presbytery of Melbourne East. To some extent, relationships had broken down between Trinity Camberwell and large sections of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

A desire was expressed by both the Minister of Trinity and the Presbytery that it would be very helpful if jurisdiction could be transferred. The request was that the congregation of Trinity Camberwell be placed under the jurisdiction of a NSW presbytery. However, the Commission requested the Victorian Assembly to transfer the jurisdiction of Trinity to the Presbytery of Melbourne West. The aim of this request was that Trinity be reintegrated into the life of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. In order for this to occur, the Committee considered that certain things must happen (see below). The Minister and Session of Trinity subsequently withdrew their original request for a change of Presbytery. The Assembly of the PCV did not change the jurisdiction.

- (1) All parties need to pull back from a 'them and us' mentality, and genuine efforts be made by all to heal the breaches in Christian fellowship that have occurred.
- (2) As a start in this process, the Committee counsels that the Presbytery needs to express regret for the way it tackled the problems which it faced, while the session of Trinity needs to express regret for the way in which teaching propagated from its pulpit in the 1990s and the culture of the church divided so many families and left such a legacy of broken relationships.
- (3) On both sides, shunning of brothers and sisters in Christ should be stopped, as should the continual regurgitating of complaints which have been expressed many times.
- (4) People should henceforth refrain from bringing up matters that were canvassed in the publication *Fractured Fellowship*, as the accusations there are at least 10 years old and many of the claims have not been tested and are contested.
- (5) In this regard the Commission requested the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to decide that no further distribution of *Fractured Fellowship* occur. The Assembly of the PCV did not accede to this request, but dismissed it.
- (6) Office-bearers and members of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria should refrain from warning people not to have anything to do with Trinity Camberwell, its members or members of other churches that might be considered to be 'supporters' of Trinity.

### **H. CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The Committee or representatives of the Committee have made seven trips to Melbourne. One of those meetings was to convey various decisions of the Commission of the GAA to a meeting of those people who requested an interview with the Committee to complain of something during the initial phase of the Committee's investigations. The Convener made an additional trip at the request of Trinity Session to be present during a meeting between a Committee of the PCV and Trinity Session. At the time of the writing of this report, the Committee or representatives of the Committee have met with the Minister of Trinity Camberwell on 4 occasions. The Minister of Trinity Camberwell has made 8 written reports to the Committee and the Session 4 written reports.

The Committee has met with the Session as a whole on 2 occasions and each elder individually once, although one of those elders was not available for the original meeting but was later interviewed for a narrower purpose. Members of the Committee have attended a meeting of the Session and a congregational meeting to present the decisions of the Commission, and have also joined with the people of Trinity for public worship on a number of occasions.

The Committee is of the opinion that both the Minister and Session of Trinity Camberwell are trying hard to correct the effects on various people of actions and teachings by some office-bearers and members of Trinity in the past, especially in the period around 1995 to 2002. The Committee has seen no evidence that those actions and teachings from that period which the Commission has objected to are still present.

Over a period of two and a half years, the Committee has observed a reduction in tension between the congregation and office-bearers of Trinity on one hand and other members and courts of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria on the other. This is very welcome. However, more effort is still needed by each and every member of the PCV, both within Trinity and without, to achieve genuine Christian love and harmony with every other Christian in the denomination.

However, in the opinion of the Committee, this easing of tension was put back by about 12 months following an article in the secular press in September 2008 in which Trinity Camberwell was named and a photograph of the Trinity church building was inserted. The worst part of this incident was that the public statement which the Commission required to be read in every congregation in Australia made no mention of Trinity Camberwell. The Committee urges the Assembly to earnestly entreat all Communicant Members and Adherents not to resort to the secular press in an attempt to achieve something in the church, but to allow the church courts to seek to address perceived wrongs.

The Committee is of the opinion that there is still need for reconciliation between members of various families, and also between various members of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The Committee was very pleased to hear that in September 2009, Emmanuel Kopwe, Pan African Director for Reconciliation with *African Enterprise*, working in Rwanda, Burundi, DRC, and Liberia for reconciliation and peace building, visited Melbourne, and, at the invitation of the Session of Trinity, conducted a significant ministry to the people of Trinity, both at a public meeting and privately with a number of people who were experiencing relational difficulties for which they sought help. However, this obviously did not reach people outside of Trinity Camberwell.

In order that people outside of Trinity Camberwell might be able to access a similar ministry, the Committee recommends that the GAA encourage the PCV Assembly to publicise the fact that the GAA is willing to pay for "professional Christian counsellors from outside our denomination" "to be available to facilitate family reconciliations." (Commission Min. 17(18).

C.D. BALZER, Convener.

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

**Introduction:** In reviewing the Committee's work over the past three years we are thankful to God for the many opportunities to serve His Church.

**Shorter Catechism:** At the last Assembly the committee was requested to investigate the publishing of the shorter catechism in modern English and to look at ways of promoting its use. Greg Goswell and Bob Thomas are in the process of writing a modern English version and hope to have a draft completed in early 2011. The committee will continue to examine ways it can be promoted once this publication is complete.

**Teach us to pray:** The Committee is working on a book on the Lord's Prayer, with chapters being written by different people. It is hoped to have a draft ready to present to the committee at its meeting in 2011. **State Visits:** Since the last Assembly visits have been conducted in South Australia and Tasmania.

It is planned for a visit to Western Australia in the later part of 2010.

These visits to the smaller states have been well received. Such visits are proving to be a source of encouragement and are fostering good relationships between the states.

**Finance:** The Committee will not be seeking a grant from the Finance Committee for the period 2011-2013. The Committee is confident of being self-funded from the sale of resources.

**Membership:** After 11 years as Convener Ian Schoonwater has resigned from the Committee. The Committee nominates the Rev. Greg Goswell in his place and nominates the following as members of the committee.

<b>NSW</b>	The Very Rev. Bruce Christian, Rev. Andrew Unwin, Mr Mick Quirk (2 vacancies)
<b>Vic</b>	The Very Rev. Bob Thomas, Rev. Greg Goswell
<b>Qld</b>	Rev. Peter Barson (1 vacancy)
<b>Tas</b>	Mr Graeme Roberts
<b>SA</b>	Mr Alan Clarkson
<b>WA</b>	Mr Bill McCrae

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ADDENDUM

Although not directly an activity of the committee, we wish to commend the Timothy Partnership to congregations. The Timothy Partnership is a collaboration between Presbyterian Youth and Anglican Youthworks College. Presbyterian Youth is partnering with the Presbyterian Theological Centre in Sydney as our accrediting body in the provision of the material.

The Timothy Partnership is committed to equipping every Christian, everywhere. We believe that every Christian should be equipped to serve God in their church or community context. Practical and theological training shouldn't be limited only to those able to study full-time or on campus. Our dream is to see every believer in some form of ministry, confident in bringing others closer to Christ.

The Timothy Partnership provides a Diploma of Theology online. This enables people to remain in their home churches and communities while being better equipped for effective gospel ministry: still in the same job, leaving their kids at the local school, continuing to teach Sunday School at church or Scripture and being vital members of the local church.

Semester One had 29 students enrolled full or part time to be better equipped for the various ministries they are doing. One student from regional NSW wrote, "*My wife and I have often wrestled with going to Bible college and now it is becoming a reality through the Timothy partnership. Yay!*"

We have also just begun a pilot with MTS to provide distance theological training to people who are considering some form of MTS ministry and would like to "test drive" the concept. At a recent conference, we had almost 150 people take packs as an expression of interest in studying through the Timothy Partnership.

This course is nationally recognised through the Australian College of Theology, and is Austudy and FEE-HELP approved. Although it has been developed by NSW organizations, because of the online nature of the learning, it can be used by anyone with internet access across Australia (or beyond).

I. SCHOONWATER, Convener.

## CHURCH AND NATION

**Meetings:** Since the last Assembly, the Committee met, face-to-face on three occasions and by telephone conference on thirteen occasions.

**Personnel:** Since the last Assembly, the Western Australian Assembly has formed a State Church and Nation Committee and appointed a representative to the Federal Committee, Rev. Ross Fraser.

In addition, your Committee resolved to co-opt Dr Nicholas Aroney, professor of law at the T.C. Beirne School of Law within the University of Queensland, as an advisory member to help it with several technical legal and complex pieces of legislation, most notably, those touching on freedom of conscience, thought and religion. Dr Aroney's contribution to these and other major issues has been of such great value that the Committee will quite likely co-opt him again to assist it in its work.

**Submissions Lodged:** Due to the election of a new Federal government with a 'reformist' agenda, commencing early in 2008, there have been a number of enquiries commissioned by various branches of the Federal Government and Parliament with moral and spiritual implications for both the church and nation. The Committee has contributed submissions to these enquiries and/or legislative proposals, as listed in Appendix 1.

**Co-operative Work with Moderator General:** The Committee wishes to record its heartfelt thanks to God for the leadership and co-operation of Robert Benn in promoting the voice of the Church in the public square during his term of office.

The press-releases he issued on the Church's behalf, dealing with issues within the Committee's sphere of responsibility are displayed on the New South Wales Church's website at <http://www.pcns.org.au/index.php/news-a-information/media-releases>



Our thanks are also due to the New South Wales Church's Press Officer, Ms Karen Forman for assistance in preparing and disseminating some of these to the media and to the Rev. Michael Wharton and Pres E-News for being the vehicle for so much useful e-communication of intra-denominational news.

**Statements:** Why the continued emphasis on statements from this Committee?

There are at least three compelling reasons.

*The philosophical reason:* to articulate the denomination's thinking on important social issues so as to be able to interact and co-operate with other Christians and sometimes others of like mind in pursuit of an improved nation. As our regulations show, this is at the heart of our mandate and is to be done in consultation with the State Church & Nation Committees to promote unity of expression.

*The Apologetic Reason:* to teach the church, but also the nation, the wholesome position our denomination holds on important social issues on which there exists consensus within our denomination.

Whilst we refrain from speaking on every issue, we aim to speak on issues of majority consensus, always seeking to be careful not to offend or alienate our own people by ill-chosen commentary or pronouncements in their name.

*The practical reason:* it helps our leaders and informed members to express the church's officially-agreed consensus position in all manner of pastoral/social situations in the public domain with authority, unity and clarity when called upon to do so by the media, politicians, members of the public, etc.

At this Assembly, we submit proposed statements on the responsible use of alcohol and the vigorous promotion of the institution of marriage for the Assembly's adoption and dissemination.

**Colloquium:** The whole Church owes a great debt to the Victorian Church and Nation Committee for organising and hosting the inaugural *Religion in the Public Square* colloquium, in Melbourne, in July 2010

By addressing the following topics:

- business ethics and the future of capitalism
- securing freedom of religion in a hostile environment
- the case for religion in the public square
- understanding vocation
- affirming and promoting prolife policies
- sex: the worst and the best

the Victorian Committee has done invaluable service towards lifting the profile of the confessing church, in general, and our branch of it, in particular.

We propose that the Assembly commend the organisers and encourage that further such colloquia be arranged, whenever possible.

**Freedom of Religion:** Commissioners will be aware of the significant attention given to the issue of how to promote freedom of religion in recent years. Some see this as a strategy to promote their ideal of *freedom from* the influence of religion in a secular society and others see it as a vehicle to promote *freedom for* various minority religions to exercise undue influence in a multicultural society, thereby dethroning the status quo which is affirmed (or absconded) by the majority.

This Committee understands the phrase *freedom of religion* to mean a genuine freedom for people of various faiths to practise their faith and contribute to society in a dignified and respectful way, with due recognition being given to Australia's overwhelmingly Christian heritage and consequent right being recognised for Christians, along with others, to fully participate in all aspects of society.

The Committee made submissions to both the *Freedom of Religion and Belief in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* project being run by the Australian Human Rights Commission with the Commission due to report mid-year 2010 and the National Human Rights Consultation chaired by Fr Frank Brennan to which the Federal Attorney General responded on the 21<sup>st</sup> April 2010. Links to our submissions to these two enquiries, which we ask the Assembly to note, are found in Appendices 2 and 3.

As part of the preparation for responding to both the *Freedom of Religion and Belief in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* project and the Brennan enquiry, a steering committee was set up by Mr Jim Wallace AM of Australian Christian Lobby consisting of a broadly based group of churchmen and lawyers to develop lines of argument in response that could be used by denominational and other bodies in

making their individual submissions. Both Professor Nicholas Aroney and the Rev. David Palmer were a part of this steering group. Also associated with this group was Professor Patrick Parkinson of Sydney University Law School who has written a paper, *A National Agenda for Religious Freedom*. The intention is that following the next Federal election, with the endorsement of denominational church bodies and leaders for this document, the major political parties will be approached and asked to incorporate religious freedom as set out in *A National Agenda for Religious Freedom* in their party policy statements.

We therefore attach *A National Agenda for Religious Freedom* as Appendix 4 for the Assembly's endorsement.

In summary, *A National Agenda for Religious Freedom* argues there are five basic freedoms that must be safeguarded for genuine religious freedom:

- Freedom to manifest a religion through religious observance and practice
- Freedom to appoint people of faith to organizations run by faith communities
- Freedom to teach and uphold moral standards within faith communities
- Freedom of conscience to discriminate between right and wrong
- Freedom to teach and persuade others."

At the time of the preparation of this report there has been no indication from the Australian Human Rights Commission as to its conclusions and recommendations regarding the *Freedom of Religion and Belief in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* project

In relation to the Brennan enquiry into the possibility for a national Human Rights Charter, the Attorney General, Senator Robert McClelland announced on the 21<sup>st</sup> April 2010 that there would be no national Human Rights Charter, but left open the possibility that the matter could be revisited in 2014.

**Australian Christian Lobby:** The Committee has always advocated for informed, constructive, and vigorous lobbying by Christians commending the cause of Christ in the nation's affairs. To that purpose, it interacts with various ministries.

For the past several years, the cause of Christ in Canberra, especially; and amongst our political leaders, generally; has been greatly strengthened by the establishment of the Australian Christian Lobby (ACL). Your Committee is honoured to play a part in ACL's advocacy/apologetic work and acknowledges the particular role that Rev. David Palmer and Dr Nicholas Aroney have played on our denomination's part as they have liaised with ACL.

The Committee invites the Assembly to commend ACL on its work.

The Committee is delighted to have ACL's Managing Director, Jim Wallace OAM, to address this Assembly and thanks both him for agreeing to do so and the Business Committee for facilitating this.

#### **Appendix 1 Submissions Lodged 2008-2010**

1. *The alcohol toll reduction bill 2007* – March 2008;
2. *Rights of the terminally ill (euthanasia laws) repeal Bill 2008* – April 2008;
3. Senate Enquiry into the adequacy of current radio and TV standards implementation – May 2008;
4. *Same-Sex Relationships (Equal Treatment in Commonwealth Laws – Superannuation) Bill 2008* – July 2008;
5. *Family Law Amendment (De Facto Financial Matters and Other Measures) Bill* – July 2008;
6. *Evidence Amendment Bill* – July 2008;
7. *Freedom of Religion and Belief in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* Project undertaken by the Australian Human Rights Commission – February 2009;
8. National Human Rights Consultation – June 2009, concerning, among other things, a proposed "Charter of Rights";
9. *Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2009* – August 2009;
10. R18+ proposed DVD classification – February 2010.

#### **Appendix 2 Submission to the *Freedom of Religion and Belief in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* Project**

The Committee's submission may be viewed at

<http://www.canfederal.presbyterian.org.au/GAA%20PCA%20Submission%20Final.pdf>.

#### **Appendix 3 Submission to the National Human Rights Consultation**

The Committee's submission may be viewed at

<http://www.canfederal.presbyterian.org.au/90611%20Human%20Rights%20Consultation%20Submission1.pdf>.

#### **Appendix 4 A National Agenda for Religious Freedom**

The National Agenda for which signatures are currently being sought from church leaders immediately follows. On the recommendation of the Church and Nation Committee, the Moderator General, the Rt Rev. Robert Benn signed the document on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

#### **A NATIONAL AGENDA FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

##### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

People of faith have numerous concerns about threats to religious freedom in Australia, both at state and federal levels, deriving from an attitude of hostility towards religious belief, morals and practice among some in the Australian population. Freedom of religion is a fundamental human right. It is guaranteed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other international instruments in the clearest and strongest terms.

Religious freedom consists, at a minimum, of the following five basic freedoms:-

- Freedom to manifest a religion through religious observance and practice
- Freedom to appoint people of faith to organizations run by faith communities
- Freedom to teach and uphold moral standards within faith communities
- Freedom of conscience to discriminate between right and wrong
- Freedom to teach and propagate religion.

These basic liberties have long been recognised by the common law and are inherent in the concept of religious freedom in international law.

Australia should affirm its long-standing common law tradition of religious freedom and give effect to the specific protections contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights for religious belief, worship, observance, practice and teaching. To do so is necessary in order to recognize and respect the importance of religion in the lives of so many Australians. It is also critical to having a successful and harmonious multicultural society.

**Introduction:** Australia is now a multicultural society with people of numerous different faiths, as well as many people who do not hold religious beliefs. While a significant proportion of the population still identify with a religious faith, only a minority of people are actively involved in religious worship on a regular basis.

The changes in the nature of Australian society necessitate a new examination of how the country should fulfil its international obligation to protect religious freedom in the context of a multicultural society. Religious freedom has long been an integral part of Australian life, recognised by the common law. However, freedoms that were once taken for granted in Australia can be taken for granted no longer. There are also issues about potential conflicts between freedom of religion and other valid principles of modern society such as freedom from improper discrimination.

The purpose of this paper is to propose some principles that ought to inform the Government's approach to issues of religious freedom. These principles have long been recognised by the common law and are acknowledged in internationally recognized standards of human rights. The paper suggests how different rights should be integrated in a society that takes seriously the principle of religious freedom. It examines five particular freedoms that are integral to freedom of religion and which ought to be protected in Australia. All religions in Australia would benefit from the protection of religious freedom in this way.

**The common law:** The common law recognises the freedom of individuals and groups to form and hold religious beliefs and to manifest those beliefs in worship, observance, practice, teaching and dissemination, subject only to the generally applicable constraints of the law. This freedom derives from the fundamental principle of the common law, recognised in cases such as *Entick v Carrington* (1765), that the government has authority to interfere with a person's property and liberties only to the extent that such interferences are specifically authorised by law. Apart from this, the assumption of the common law is that each person enjoys complete freedom of religion, not just in his or her private beliefs and ritual observances, but in public practices, teaching and dissemination. As Mason ACJ and Brennan J put it in *The Church of the New Faith v The Commissioner of Pay-roll Tax (Victoria)* (1983) 154 CLR 120 at 130, "freedom of religion, the paradigm freedom of conscience, is of the essence of a free society" and extends to the freedom of the individual "to believe and act in accordance with his [or her] belief without legal restraint".

## **Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**

Consistent with this general assumption of the common law, Article 18 of the ICCPR provides:

“1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.

2. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.

3. Freedom to manifest one’s religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

4. The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.”

Whilst referring also to freedom of conscience and thought, the focus of Article 18 is on protecting the human rights of people who hold religious beliefs. This recognises the importance of religious belief to adherents, the close linkage between religion and identity, and the importance of religion in the life of societies. Freedom of religion is one of the very few non-derogable human rights in international law. Article 4(2) of the ICCPR provides that governments may not dispense with it even in a time of national emergency which threatens the very life of the nation. The meaning and operation of Article 18 is further explained in the Human Rights Committee’s General Comment 22, and in the Siracusa Principles on the Limitation and Derogation of Provisions in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

**Religious belief and practice:** Article 18 goes far beyond freedom of belief and worship. The rights protected by that article also include the right of a person to manifest his or her religion or belief in “observance, practice and teaching”. This is because religion does not only involve belief in the supernatural. As the High Court of Australia noted in *The Church of the New Faith v The Commissioner of Pay-roll Tax (Victoria)* (1983) 154 CLR 120, religion also impacts upon, and makes demands upon, the way we should live in the world.

There are many areas in which the major religions are united when it comes to those codes of conduct. Perhaps the greatest common ground is in relation to marriage and the family. The major monotheistic religions also share similar beliefs about the wrongfulness of sex before or outside marriage, and, for the most part, in relation to homosexual practice.

Religious belief is usually expressed communally; so part of religious freedom is the right and ability to congregate in groups in places such as churches, synagogues, mosques and temples in order to worship, to pray and to learn together. The communal expression of religious faith is protected not only by Article 18 but by Article 27:-

“In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.”

A law which protects religious freedom must therefore protect the rights of religious people to congregate and to organise as a group. Beliefs and other faith-based criteria inevitably define the group by categories of inclusion and exclusion. The right to congregate, to organise as a group and to put group values into practice is not only protected by Article 18 but also by Article 19 (freedom of expression) and Article 22 (freedom of association).

**Restrictions on religious freedom:** The test that the ICCPR places on restrictions on religious freedom is a very strict one. It requires that restrictions may only be imposed on outward manifestation of religion or belief and that any such restriction be *necessary*. Being ‘necessary’ is something quite different from being merely ‘desirable’ or ‘a good idea’. It ought to be demonstrated (and by real evidence, not mere assertion) that without this restraint on religious freedom, damage would be caused to public safety, order, health, or morals or there would be a violation of the *fundamental* rights and freedoms of others. No other limitation provision in the ICCPR is qualified with the term ‘fundamental’. While those ‘rights and freedoms of others’ may *limit* the manifestation of religion, that does not mean that in any conflict between the non-derogable right of religious freedom and the rights of others, that others’ rights should be given

precedence. Those rights may themselves be limited by the requirement to protect religious freedom. Limitations are a two-way street.

Article 18 of the ICCPR therefore requires the Federal Government to ensure that there is an appropriately generous zone of protection associated with religious belief, worship, observance, practice and teaching, even though it is recognised that there is no hierarchy in the importance of rights. This recognizes the very important part that religious belief should be allowed to play in the lives of a large number of Australians, and the nature of freedom of religion as one of the most fundamental human rights.

Laws that have the intention or effect of restricting religious freedom must not only have that legitimate aim but should also be carefully drafted so as to go no further than 'necessary' to achieve the protective purpose, and should adopt the least restrictive means for achieving that purpose. Also, accommodation should be made in generally applicable laws (such as those concerning discrimination) to provide support to the constituent rights and freedoms of Article 18.

**Five fundamental freedoms:** Freedom of religion and conscience, as for a long time recognised by the common law and upheld in the ICCPR and other international instruments, consists, at a minimum, of the following five basic freedoms. All of these freedoms (and more could be included) have been respected in Australia until recently, but they are under challenge from an extreme and dogmatic secularism which demonstrates little respect for religious faith and which sometimes actively opposes it. These freedoms are:-

- Freedom to manifest a religion through religious observance and practice
- Freedom to appoint people of faith to organizations run by faith communities
- Freedom to teach and uphold moral standards within faith communities
- Freedom of conscience to discriminate between right and wrong
- Freedom to teach and propagate religion.

*Freedom to manifest a religion through religious observance and practice*

Article 18 guarantees the freedom to have or adopt a religion or belief of a person's choice and to manifest that religion. Manifesting a religion means more than practising it in private. Even in public it goes far beyond meeting for worship. For some faiths, it also involves forms of dress or symbols that are significant to an adherent for religious reasons. Manifesting a religion may also involve observing certain days as holy, when no work should be done. For the Orthodox Jew or the Seventh-day Adventist, Saturday is a special day of that kind. In other faiths, other days are special.

Respecting freedom of religion means accommodating these faith-based observances, as far as possible. That may not be easy to do in relation to school uniforms, workplace uniforms or business attire; but usually, reasonable accommodations can be found with little effort, just as employers and others are often required to accommodate working mothers or people with disabilities. Similar accommodations can and should be made, for example, in terms of rostering, for those who have religious objections to working on certain days.

*Freedom to appoint people of faith to organizations run by faith communities*

Religious freedom includes the right to form religious organisations and to operate these according to religious values. The right to do so is protected by Article 18. Many such organisations already exist. Faith communities run schools, hospitals and welfare organisations, as well as places of worship. However, the operation of anti-discrimination laws in some jurisdictions may interfere with that freedom. Religious communities do not need general exemption from anti-discrimination laws. They do, however, need the freedom of positive selection – that is, the right to advertise for and select staff (whether professional staff or otherwise) who will honour the beliefs, values and codes of conduct of the faith-based community. They also need to be able to make adherence to certain beliefs and codes of conduct a condition for continuing employment. This is consistent with the ICCPR's concept of discrimination – that not every differentiation of treatment constitutes discrimination if the criteria for such differentiation are reasonable and objective, and if the aim is to achieve a purpose which is legitimate under the ICCPR.

The right of positive selection is an issue for many faith-based organisations. It should not be misunderstood or misconstrued as a 'right to discriminate'. For example, the right of positive selection of Christian teachers to Christian schools or Muslim teachers to Muslim schools is a right to choose people with a particular characteristic when that characteristic is important to the purpose of the school and is thus, from the school's point of view, a genuine occupational

requirement. Characteristics that may be inherent requirements for positions in faith-based organisations include adherence to a code of conduct expected of those who profess the faith as it is understood by the organisation that runs that school.

Faith-based schools provide a particularly clear example of the need to be able to select staff on the basis of adherence to that faith. Such schools have long been a part of religious expression. Indeed, across the western world, many of the oldest and most esteemed schools and universities have had a religious foundation. Many private schools in Australia continue to emphasise the importance of that religious foundation as part of the *raison d'être* of the school.

In Australia, there are not only schools established on the basis of the Christian faith but also Jewish and Moslem schools and schools associated with other faiths. Article 18(4) of the ICCPR specifically protects the right of parents “to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.” In similar vein, Article 5(2) of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion and Belief (1981) provides that: “Every child shall enjoy the right to have access to education in the matter of religion or belief in accordance with the wishes of his parents”. Accepting the freedom to teach the tenets of the faith through educational institutions run by faith-based communities is one way of giving effect to Article 18(4). It is a surprising feature of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic) and the Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT) that neither gives any acknowledgment to Article 18(4).

The freedom recognised by Article 18(4) goes beyond religious education. It extends to moral education. This involves more than just instruction in classes on religious or social studies. The moral example of all of the adults with whom a child interacts is an essential aspect, if not the living core, of the moral education of children. This is why it is important to many parents that in religious schools, staff should adhere to the moral values of the faith and not just offer a particular form of religious studies.

Faith-based schools vary in the extent to which they give importance to their religious foundations. Some of them do not insist upon adherence to the religious faith of the school as a condition for a teaching appointment. However, there are other schools which have been established to provide an explicitly religious environment for children and young people. Central to the notion of such a faith-based school is that there is much more to a religious education than merely having lessons on the beliefs and doctrines of the faith – that is available in public schools as well. The faith-based school is a religious community and the faith provides a context and a focal point for the children’s education, including their moral education. In a religious school, through the teaching and example of staff members who adhere to the religion, the codes of conduct that follow from the religious beliefs are taught and practised. The pastoral care provided by the school is also an expression of the faith and moral values of the staff.

Similar issues arise for many faith-based charitable and humanitarian organizations, including hospitals and social welfare organizations. Many of these organizations are not only faith-based, but faith-motivated. Around the world, they do an enormous amount in practical terms to promote the human rights, dignity and well-being of the world’s poor and disadvantaged. Their staff members dedicate their lives to the practical advancement of the poor and needy. Destroying the faith-based character of these organizations so that they no longer have a reason for existence may well diminish the human rights of those they serve.

For these reasons, all religious organizations, or organizations that have a faith-based mission or purpose, should retain the right of positive selection in the employment of staff and the right to make adherence to the beliefs, values and codes of conduct of the faith-based community a condition for continuing employment.

#### *Freedom to teach and uphold moral standards within faith communities*

In the great monotheistic religions at least, believers are not only instructed in how to worship but also in moral and ethical norms. These moral standards have long been the basis for shared community values in Australia; but in recent decades, there has been a growing divergence between prevailing standards and the moral teaching of most religions. This is particularly so in the areas of abortion, euthanasia, human sexuality and family life.

There is a great focus in western countries at the moment on issues about homosexual practice. There are differences between religious groups on this issue. Promoting human rights involves, for example, not only advancing the rights of people of homosexual orientation (especially to be free from discrimination), but also respecting the rights of those who adopt moral positions on

sexual practices (both homosexual and heterosexual), based on the teachings of their faith. While the issue of homosexual practice has been in the forefront of public consciousness in recent years, it should not be forgotten that people of faith teach a disciplined sexual ethic in relation to heterosexual behaviour as well.

There is a need to respect the different rights and positions taken on all sides of the issue on human sexuality. There is room for more than one set of moral values in the Australian community. Being a tolerant society means being tolerant of different moral values and beliefs about right and wrong. That is inherent also in what it means to be a multicultural society in which people can agree to differ on moral and social issues.

Whatever the values in the broader community, religious freedom requires that people of faith be able to uphold their values within their own faith communities, including religious schools, without this constituting unlawful discrimination. Respecting the right of faith-based organisations to adhere to their moral codes within communities that have been established specifically with a religious motivation and purpose, while requiring a different moral code to apply in relation to the mainstream of trade, commerce and the provision of goods and services, represents an appropriate balance between the different rights and interests in stake when moral codes and beliefs conflict. It also shows appropriate respect for the autonomy of religious organisations – an autonomy that has long been taken for granted as inherent in the very nature of religious freedom, all over the western world.

One application of the right to uphold moral standards within faith-based communities is that it has to be within the power of the leadership of such communities to place boundaries around acceptance of people to share in the membership and privileges of that religious group. For example, a Church needs the freedom to refuse to baptise a person, or the infant child of someone, who does not adhere to the teachings of the faith, since baptism is a marker of acceptance into membership of the Church. Similarly, a Church needs to be able to refuse communion to someone who does not accept the teachings of the Church concerned. There are no doubt similar parallels in other faiths where religious leaders need to say who is, and is not, entitled to share in the membership and privileges of the religious community.

#### *Freedom of conscience to discriminate between right and wrong*

Freedom of conscience, in distinguishing between right and wrong according to religiously based moral codes, is also critical to freedom of religion. It goes to the heart of the freedom to choose in favour of a particular belief system and be free from coercion in such matters. There are not many issues on which freedom of conscience is essential, but there are a few, and a society which respects human rights must honour and protect the freedom of conscience of dissenters from the mainstream on moral and ethical issues. Most civilized nations have, for example, accommodated conscientious objection to military service.

One application of this is that governments should not legislate to coerce people to violate their conscience by threat of punishment. A person should not be compelled to provide a service, to facilitate access to it, or to perform other work that reasonably violates his or her conscience, or is inconsistent with his or her religious beliefs.

Freedom of conscience extends to religious organizations, including those receiving government funding. This means that generally such organisations ought to be able to refuse to provide a service on the basis of conscience, unless the service is not reasonably available through other providers for whom there are no inhibitions of conscience. If religious organisations were to be unreasonably exposed to legal action for exercising their freedom of conscience, this would increase the likelihood that such organisations, which are major providers of social services in Australia, would withdraw from the provision of certain social services.

#### *Freedom to teach and propagate religion*

Freedom to teach is guaranteed by Article 18 of the ICCPR. Accommodating religious schools established by faith-based communities and allowing scripture classes in state schools are ways in which governments give positive support to this right in relation to children.

Freedom to teach in faith-based schools requires a degree of freedom in relation to curriculum. As Wilson and Deane JJ said in *The Church of the New Faith v The Commissioner of Pay-roll Tax (Victoria)* (1983) 154 CLR 120 at 174, one of the indicia of religion is that “the ideas relate to man’s nature and place in the universe and his relation to things supernatural”. Faith-based schools should not be constrained from teaching children about these issues as long as they also teach all that is required by the State or Territory curriculum.

The right to manifest one's "religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching" extends beyond the teaching of children. It includes the freedom to make truth claims in the free market of ideas. Because many religions of the world make claims to know and teach absolute truth about man's nature and place in the universe, believing in the truth of one's religion necessarily means that on some matters, one believes others to be mistaken to the extent that their beliefs are inconsistent. There are differences of view within religions and between them. While different religions have much in common, and much that unites them, teaching about the faith may involve pointing out areas of difference with other groups or religions and declaring them to be wrong in relation to those matters.

That does not mean at all that religions are intolerant. One can say that another is mistaken while defending to the utmost his or her right to believe, practise and profess those beliefs. One can also respect the integrity of those who hold to beliefs with which one disagrees. Disagreement, even vigorous debate, is a normal part of life in a free society and is one of the markers of its vitality and capacity for growth and change. People disagree about politics, sport, the arts, the economy, the environment and a myriad of other things. Sometimes people are offended by the views of others. Mere disagreement is not of itself a problem for a society, and disagreement on religious matters is no exception to this. Disagreements only become a problem for a community when they threaten public safety or order. This is a very rare circumstance in Australia, and laws should not inhibit religious freedom because of the merest possibility that there could be some risk to public safety or order from a person's vigorous reactions to the expression of an opposing viewpoint. Restrictions on religious freedom have to be 'necessary', according to the ICCPR. The liberty to make rival truth claims in the free market of ideas is what makes for a free society.

Laws that prohibit vilification or incitement to hatred can justifiably be imposed in tightly defined circumstances; however, they should be very carefully drafted to ensure that they do not have a chilling effect on freedom of speech in religious or moral matters even where the exercise of that freedom causes offence to others who have conflicting beliefs or moral values. Anti-vilification laws should not go beyond Article 20(2) of the ICCPR and should at the very least require an advocacy of hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence before speech is regarded as unlawful, consistent with the ICCPR. Further, it should not be possible to litigate such claims privately (since this only fuels intolerance); such prohibitions, if enacted, should take the form of criminal public order offences requiring proof of intent to incite, possibly requiring the Attorney-General's consent for prosecution. Freedom of speech of people of faith should not be singled out for special restriction by legislatures.

Freedom of religion involves freedom to seek to persuade others about religious truth. Religious expression, for many faiths, involves communicating about the faith both to fellow believers and to those who do not already share that faith. Religious conviction is not fixed and immutable. Many people who grow up without an active faith come to a strong religious conviction in their adult years. Others who grow up with a strong faith lose it. Others still convert to a religion in which they have not been brought up at all. Freedom of speech on religious matters ought to be protected to a very high degree. This is required by Article 18 of the ICCPR as well as by Article 19 (freedom of expression).

**Conclusion:** The five freedoms outlined in this document are freedoms that Australians have long taken for granted. They are demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society that acknowledges the importance of diversity, and respects the right of people to hold to their particular beliefs and moral standards. They are fundamental freedoms.

While there is a need to respect the rights of others who hold different beliefs, or no belief, there is a compelling case for recognising the rights of different groups and communities to organise themselves by reference to their particular beliefs and values, and to educate their children accordingly. This is an aspect not only of freedom of religion but also of freedom of association. Respect for these freedoms is absolutely essential to a successful and harmonious multicultural society.

The Commonwealth Government has never had a national policy on religious freedom before, perhaps because it has never needed one. However, given the recent tensions on these issues in different parts of Australia there is now a need for national leadership in order to prevent perceived threats to religious freedom causing unnecessary anxiety among law-abiding citizens. Failure to act now could lead to significant disharmony and discontent with governments,



damaging the social fabric of the nation.

A formal statement of policy has the benefit of acting as a guide to government departments and can be used as one benchmark against which to evaluate the benefits and detriments associated with particular legislation or governmental initiatives. A model for this was the way in which the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia, promulgated in 1989, guided federal Government policy in the Hawke-Keating governments.

There are various practical ways in which a national agenda on religious freedom could be implemented. At both Commonwealth and State levels, it could, for example, be implemented through specific legislation such as clarifying the effect of employment laws in relation to appointment of staff to faith-based organisations. It could also inform conditions for government funding of faith-based organisations in circumstances where the organisation is not being funded to deliver a service on behalf of the government exclusively.

The ICCPR requires that religion should, in some respects at least, be given a privileged and protected status in the law. This is consistent with the long-standing freedoms that have been taken for granted as part of the law in Australia. Australian law should give effect to the specific protections contained in the ICCPR for religious belief, worship, observance, practice and teaching. That involves giving full recognition to Article 18, supported by other ICCPR obligations such as Article 2(1) and Article 27. To do so is to recognize and respect the importance of religion in the lives of many Australians.

**Prof. Patrick Parkinson AM, Professor of Law, University of Sydney, 2010**

S.A. SLUCKI, Convener.

## CODE

**National Church:** The 2007 Assembly requested the Code Committee to prepare and distribute a comprehensive discussion paper on the advantages and disadvantages of a National Church, including consideration of the practical implications of such a change, with report to be made to the 2010 Assembly after distribution of the paper to presbyteries and state assemblies and consideration of any comments that might be made in response to that paper.

The Committee has resolved to advise the Assembly that:-

- (1) The matter is extremely complex;
- (2) Despite persistent effort over several meetings the Committee has not been able to prepare, in the time available, the paper requested by the Assembly;
- (3) In a real sense, the Church as it is now structured, does comprise a national church, albeit the State Assemblies retain sovereignty in matters governmental;
- (4) An opinion prepared by the Procurator is germane to this topic and will be presented to this Assembly; and
- (5) In the absence of any further directive, the Committee will take no further action in this matter.

**Draft chapter on appeals and complaints for Constitution, Procedure and Practice:**

The 2010 Assembly requested the Committee to finalise a chapter on appeals and complaints for *Constitution, Procedure and Practice*. An overture has been prepared for this and will be presented to the Assembly.

**Petitions involving disputes:** Following the presentation of a petition to the 2007 Assembly as to hearing petitions which might involve disputes between members of the church, the committee was asked to consider the matter of such petitions. It is not competent for a person to lodge a petition when they could have dissented and complained or appealed to the Assembly and any petition made to the Assembly must be for something which it is in the power of the Assembly to grant although Rule 3.03 does provide for a petition where a person has been obstructed in his or her right of appeal or complaint. There is a danger in trying to legislate for every case because in the majority of times these cases are difficult not because the rules make them difficult but because of the nature of the case. After consideration of a rule in the Queensland Code and advice from the Law Agent it was resolved not to take any further action in the matter as the existing rules were considered to be adequate to cover the situation.

**The Code of Discipline and Administrative Procedures:** Following the special meeting of the General Assembly of Australia in July, 2007 and subsequent discussion concerning

administrative procedures and the Code of Discipline a new rule 1.12 is proposed for the Code of Discipline which takes into account matters raised by those proceedings. An overture regarding this new rule will be presented to the Assembly.

**Decision making apart from formal meetings:-**

Because of the changes in communication through technology the Committee has taken up the matter of making decisions by committees without having face-to-face meetings throughout the year and the expenses such meetings incur. A clause in the deliverance addresses this issue.

**Code of Discipline 4.09:** A matter has arisen in a presbytery concerning the documents in a case to be made available to an alleged offender. Advice is being sought from the Law Officers on the matter and an overture will be presented to the Assembly for any proposed amendment to that clause in the Code of Discipline.

**Nominations for the Committee:** The following people are nominated to the Assembly as members of the Committee:-

<b>NSW</b>	Mr M.C. Beveridge, Rev. B.M. Gorton, J.R. Irvin
<b>Queensland</b>	Rev. A. Clarke, R. Clark, L.J. Hall
<b>SA</b>	Rev. G.J. Ware
<b>Tasmania</b>	Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell
<b>Victoria</b>	Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman, Rev. P.W. Phillips, Rev. J.P. Wilson
<b>WA</b>	Rev. K.W. Morris

PAUL LOGAN, Convener.

**COLLEGE**

The College Committee oversees on behalf of the General Assembly the work of theological education within the Church and is always looking for ways this can be enhanced. We want, as we are confident the Assembly wants, a well-qualified effective ministry serving our denomination and the wider Christian community.

**Meetings and Administration:** The Committee has continued its pattern of meeting annually in February, with good attendance of conveners and full-time faculty members. The Committee welcomed four new conveners, Rev. Phil Strong (Queensland), Rev. Neil Chambers (Victoria), Mr Kevin Stow (South Australia) and Mr W. MacRae (Western Australia), and one new Principal, Dr Ian Smith (New South Wales). Dr Greg Goswell continues to serve as secretary to the Committee. Some of the work through the year is done by the Grading Subcommittee.

**Candidates:** Since the last General Assembly 41 candidates for the ministry and 2 deaconess candidates have completed their courses of study. Details of ministry candidates exiting over the past triennium are as follows:-

	<b>Vic</b>	<b>NSW</b>	<b>Qld</b>	<b>SA</b>
2007	7	7	1	
2008	2	8	3	1
2009	3	5	4	

Two deaconess candidates (NSW, 2007, 2009) graduated. There are currently (February 2010) 53 ministry candidates and 1 deaconess candidate in training.

**Course of Training:** One of the Committee's main functions is to ensure that the intentions of the Assembly with regard to the content and standard of ministerial education and formation are fulfilled. It does this through determining some broad course parameters, monitoring standards, facilitating conferences (see below), dealing with individual students on a case-by-case basis and a centralised or collegiate examination of the exit thesis which represents the culmination of a candidate's formal course. While the Committee retains the power to admit students to the course, it has withdrawn the requirement for a standard entrance examination.

**Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis:** In the light of the debate and issues raised at the previous General Assembly, the College Committee resolved that 'Hebrew and Old Testament exegesis' in its regulations shall mean 'one year of introductory Hebrew, then two years of Old Testament exegesis, of which at least one year must be in the Hebrew language, and one year in either Hebrew or English at the student's discretion.' It was further resolved that the Committee counsel its Grading Sub-Committee, acting as its Executive under Clause 10 of the College Committee Regulations, that the Committee considers that reduction in the requirements of the

course of training ought to be made under Clause 10 where a student is aged 45 or older, so that the requirement to study introductory Hebrew should be waived, and the student may study Old Testament exegesis in the English language.

**Alternative Course of Training:** At the February 2010 meeting of the College Committee it was resolved:-

1. That the College Committee counsel its Grading Sub-Committee, acting as its Executive under Clause 10 of the College Committee regulations, that the Committee considers that reduction in the requirements of the course of training ought to be made under Clause 10 where:

- (1) a student is aged 45 or older and has 10 years of ministry experience in a pastoral or congregational leadership and teaching ministry, as an assistant, home missionary or equivalent in the Presbyterian Church of Australia or in a mission agency with a connection to Mission Partners, or in a capacity the relevant state Faculty deems to be an equivalent to this, and
- (2) the sub-committee has received a report from the relevant state Faculty of an assessment made along the lines of the principles in the next minute (which shall be known as an 'Assessment for an Alternative Course of Training')

and noting that the sub-committee may give any advice it considers appropriate to a state Faculty before, during or after such an assessment, and shall determine the reduced course of training having regard to the Faculty's assessment, but nevertheless retaining the discretion to determine the course of training as the Sub-Committee deems fit.

2. That the College Committee considers that a Faculty's Assessment for an Alternative Course of Training under the previous minute should observe the following principles:

(a) The process will involve an assessment panel. The assessment panel should be made up of:-

- two Faculty members, plus
- one member of the candidate's presbytery nominated by that presbytery, plus
- between one and three other persons nominated by the faculty. The nominee or nominees of Faculty could include a person from the Presbyterian Church of Australia beyond the Faculty's State to add to the objectivity of the process and/or a representative of the relevant State's Home Missions Committee.

(b) A candidate should first receive any possible cross credits to the course of training from previous study. Either advice or a ruling may be sought from the Grading Sub-Committee of the College Committee about these cross credits if the Candidate desires.

(c) The candidate would then be examined in any of the following areas in which he had not received full cross credits:-

- exposition of scripture;
- preaching;
- pastoral practice and leadership;
- theological discussion and reflection;
- ethical discussion and reflection;
- awareness of church history including the ancient church, reformation, evangelicalism and Australian Presbyterian history;
- implementing ministry strategies;
- awareness of the Reformed theology and practice and the confessional position of the Presbyterian Church of Australia;
- Presbyterian polity.

(d) These areas of assessment do not include a requirement for original language exegesis. The demonstration of competency in exposition of scripture and theological discussion would, in these cases, be considered to remove the need for study of original languages.

(e) A candidate would be made aware of the areas of assessment and would be able to prepare in general. He would also be invited to indicate areas in which he did and

- did not consider himself competent.
- (f) The candidate would be required to provide some measurable evidence of ministry experience and the Faculty would establish criteria for these (such as evidence of regular preaching, the conduct of funerals, evangelistic and pastoral ministry and continued reading and ministry development).
  - (g) A report from the candidate's Presbytery regarding strengths and weaknesses may be part of the competency assessment.
  - (h) Each State Panel would be free to develop its own processes of assessment but as an example it might:-
    - ask a candidate to prepare an exegetical paper on a set passage and to preach a sample sermon on that passage and to then discuss the paper and sermon.
    - ask a candidate to role play a pastoral situation or give a verbatim of a pastoral discussion.
    - ask a candidate to prepare a discussion paper on a theological or ethical issue.
    - set an examination in areas such as knowledge of Old and New Testaments, Theology, Westminster Confession of Faith and Church History.
  - (i) Since successful demonstration of competency is likely to reduce the time for study in an area for which the candidate seeks exemption, the assessment process shall be rigorous and extensive and should include a written examination in all relevant areas.
  - (j) The panel reports to the Faculty that a candidate is competent or below competent in the various areas. The Faculty then proposes a course of training to the Grading Sub-Committee.
  - (k) On receipt of Faculty's advice, and following any ensuing discussion or communications as the Grading Sub-Committee deems appropriate, the Grading Sub-Committee shall determine the candidate's course of training.

**Queensland Theological College:** Since the last Assembly the consortium involving the college of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in Queensland and the college of the Westminster Presbyterian Church has been dissolved. The name Queensland Theological College has been retained by the PCQ as the name of its college under the principalship of Dr Bruce Winter. The Committee rejoices that the Queensland Theological College is growing and is of sufficient strength to conduct a theological education program in conformity with the standards of the General Assembly in its own right.

**Western Australia:** The General Assembly has granted approval for candidates from Western Australia to undertake studies at Trinity Theological College, Perth, subject to the continued approval of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Western Australia and the annual approval of a full curriculum by the College Committee. This training is under the oversight of the Faculty of the Presbyterian Theological College of Victoria. These conditions continue to be met, and the Committee recommends a further approval.

Since the last meeting of the General Assembly, the College Committee, through the Faculty of the Presbyterian Theological College, Melbourne, has sponsored visits to Western Australia as a means of encouragement and support to one of our struggling states.

**College Visitation:** A regular visitation was conducted to the Presbyterian Theological College, Melbourne.

**Theology Conference:** As mooted at the last meeting of the Assembly the Committee sponsored in 2009 a theology conference held in Sydney, with a focus on John Calvin (whose 500<sup>th</sup> birthday we celebrated last year). This proved to be a good opportunity for fellowship and interaction with some stimulating theological reflection, the development of a culture of scholarship and fostering a sense of denominational cohesion. The quality of the papers presented by staff, graduates and senior students was excellent. The next conference is scheduled for 2013.

J.A. DAVIES, Convener.

## DEFENCE FORCE CHAPLAINCY

The Australian Defence Force is a major organisation, and the role of chaplains within it has never been more necessary. Military life is stressful for a wide variety of reasons, and troops and their families are often in need of chaplaincy services. Even those without a religious connection often realise how significant the role of chaplains is and turn to the chaplains for support. We should rejoice that as a denomination we continue to have the opportunity to participate in Defence Force chaplaincy and also for the fact that Defence meets the cost of this provision. Our chaplains have the opportunity to minister in the name of the Lord Jesus in a unique environment, and to go with our troops on overseas deployment. Those months in dangerous situations are very demanding on chaplains and their families at home.

As a denomination the PCA now has nine full-time chaplains in the Defence Force, five in the army, two in the navy, and two in the airforce. This is probably the maximum we can expect to have, both from the point of view of the chaplaincy branches themselves and from our ability as a denomination to release more men from parish ministry. The need continues, though, for more Presbyterian ministers to offer, as vacancies will occur in the future that we will need to fill. There is a special need for more to offer for reserve chaplaincy. It is only in the Melbourne and Brisbane areas that we have several reserve chaplains.

During this triennium just finishing Chaplains David Niven (Army) and Ian McKendrick (Navy) reached age retirement. After many years of service in the RAAF Special Reserve (at Williamstown, Edinburgh, and RAAF Williams) Chap. Bruce Riding retired at the end of 2010. Chaplains Ross Tucker, Roger Marsh and Andrew Robinson all transferred from the reserve to the regular army, and are well settled into their new roles. Rev. Murray Fraser first joined the RAAF Special Reserve but then transferred to the Permanent Air Force, and is presently based at RAAF Williamstown.

The Convener, Dr Allan Harman, serves on the Religious Advisory Committee to the Services, and was the chairman for the two years 2007-2008. Good co-operation exists between himself and the representative of the Uniting Church, Rev. Gale Hall, and the representative of the Federal Chaplaincy Board (Baptist, Lutheran, Churches of Christ, and Salvation Army), Rev. Robert Smith. While the Protestant group as a whole should have one-third of the chaplaincy positions, largely because of the inability of the Catholic Church to provide priests, it is called on to take up many more chaplaincy posts than it would in other circumstances. The Catholic Bishop to the Forces has had to bring in pastoral associates to fill vacancies.

Several years ago the Defence Force established in-service training for chaplains. The PCA now has its first chaplain who came through this process. Chaplain Max Walker was posted to HMAS Penguin in Sydney in January 2010 after completing his theological course in Sydney and spending two fruitful years in pastoral ministry in Eltham (Presbytery of Melbourne North). Daniel Cassidy, an army officer, is completing his theological course in Brisbane at the end of 2010, and will be linked to the Willows Presbyterian Church, Townsville (Presbytery of North Queensland) for his two years of pastoral experience. Direct entry training of chaplains has been under discussion, but Defence itself has raised questions that have delayed any implementation of such a scheme.

Attention is drawn again to the fact that chaplaincy in the Defence Force can be lonely work, as chaplains are often remote from the closeness of fellowship in a local congregation. It is also true that many of our members know little of all that is involved in their work, and are unaware of how multifaceted it is. Congregations and presbyteries can help in supporting the chaplains in their role. The chaplains and their families need encouragement and should be aware that they are being upheld before God's throne by our people, and given specific encouragement from our congregations.

Finally, the current members of the committee are willing to accept reappointment and to continue in this way to assist our defence chaplaincy ministry. The committee has asked Rev. Peter Phillips, secretary of the committee and currently a chaplain in the RAAF Special Reserve, to give help to the convener and to serve as his understudy.

A.M. HARMAN, Convener.

## FINANCE

**Balance Sheets and Statements of Income and Expenditure:** In accordance with arrangements previously approved by the Finance Committee and reported to the General Assembly, financial statements for the years ended 31 December 2007, 2008 and 2009 duly audited have been included in the White Book.

The Finance Committee recommends that the General Assembly:-

- (a) Receive the Financial Statements for the years ended 31 December 2007, 2008 and 2009.
- (b) Receive the Audit Reports from:-
  - (i) Ernst & Young, on the accounts of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.
  - (ii) Robert J Nixon & Associates, on the accounts of the Presbyterian Inland Mission.
  - (iii) Robert J Nixon & Associates, on the accounts of the National Journal Committee.
- (c) Appoint the Official Auditor of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales to audit the accounts of the Presbyterian Church of Australia from 1 January 2011 until 31 December 2013.
- (d) Appoint Robert J Nixon & Associates to audit the accounts of the Presbyterian Inland Mission Committee and the National Journal Committee from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2013.

**Cost of the General Assembly:** The Forty-Sixth Session of the General Assembly held in Sydney in September 2007 cost \$106,424 (2004: \$71,720; 2001: \$41,939) comprising the following items:-

	2007	2004	2001
Travelling / Accommodation / Meals	93,150	60,231	30,629
Honoraria to Assembly Officers	10,100	3,850	2,550
White Book / Blue Book / Other	3,174	7,639	8,760
	\$106,424	\$71,720	\$41,939

The basis for reimbursement of expenses of Commissioners was approved by the Forty-Sixth General Assembly in September 2007 (Minute 59).

The Finance Committee recommends that the General Assembly:-

- (a) Authorise the Finance Committee to pay the accommodation costs of Commissioners not resident in the city in which the General Assembly is held.
- (b) Request the Secretary of the Finance Committee and the Clerk of the Assembly to secure advantageous accommodation rates for lodging Commissioners during the General Assembly.
- (c) Authorise the Finance Committee to pay the accommodation costs of the Moderator, Clerks and Business Convener during the course of the General Assembly.
- (d) Approve the reimbursement of the actual expenses incurred for Commissioners travelling to the General Assembly (excluding the Presbyteries of The Hawkesbury, Illawarra, Sydney, Sydney North and Sydney South) on the following basis:-
  - Commissioners who travel more than 750 km - return airfares at a rate authorised by the Clerk.
  - Commissioners who travel 750 km or less - return fares by train (or coach, where a train does not run).
  - Commissioners using their own car - a payment of 30 cents/km (maximum 1,500 km).
- (e) Remind all Commissioners travelling by air that they should make their bookings in advance to achieve the cheapest flight possible.

**Moderators Expenses and Honoraria to Officers of the General Assembly:** When the Moderator's allowance was set for the triennium in 2007 the General Assembly did not take into account that the Moderator would be a Minister-Emeritus and not have the support of a parish or a regular stipend & allowances. Accordingly the Finance Committee in February 2009 increased the Moderator's allowance by \$10,500 (to \$47,100) for the 2007-2010 triennium.

The Finance Committee recommends that the General Assembly:-

- (a) Approve payment of the following Honoraria until such time as the General Assembly determines otherwise –
- |                      |                                                                      |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Clerk of Assembly    | \$2,000 for each year while serving as Clerk of the General Assembly |
| Deputy Clerk         | \$ 600 for each General Assembly                                     |
| Assistance to Clerks | \$ 400 for each General Assembly                                     |
| Business Convener    | \$ 850 for each General Assembly                                     |
- and authorise the Finance Committee to pay appropriate Honoraria to one or more persons acting in the positions listed above.
- (b) Approve the following provisions for the Moderator assuming office in September 2010 and for succeeding Moderators until such time as the General Assembly determines otherwise –
- (i) An allowance of up to \$42,000 to cover costs of travel, accommodation, telephone, postage, stationery;
  - (ii) An allowance sufficient to cover the cost of moderatorial dress;
  - (iii) Costs of pulpit supply during Moderator's absence on moderatorial duty;
  - (iv) An honorarium of \$2,000 per annum.
- (c) Authorise the Finance Committee to approve any necessary additional expenditure in respect of the Moderator.
- (d) Agree to increase the Moderator's allowance by CPI adjustments as at 30 September each year.

**Website Maintenance:** The Finance Committee recommends that the General Assembly reappoint the Rev. Mike Wharton as Webmaster for the Presbyterian Church of Australia for another three (3) years from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2013.

**Expenditure by GAA:** The Forty-Sixth General Assembly approved the following expenditure for the 2008-2010 triennium:

	2008	2009	2010	Triennium Total
National Journal	31,103	31,103	31,104	93,310
The Code	1,666	1,666	1,668	5,000
Reception of Ministers	2,747	2,747	2,746	8,240
Relations with Other Churches	6,666	6,666	6,668	20,000
College	5,333	5,333	5,334	16,000
Church and Nation	1,666	1,666	1,668	5,000
Defence Force Chaplaincy	1,033	1,033	1,034	3,100
NSW Historical Records & Library	4,000	4,000	4,000	12,000
Committee to Investigate "Fellowship"	3,333	3,333	3,334	10,000
<b>Total Expenses Committees</b>	<b>\$57,547</b>	<b>\$57,547</b>	<b>\$57,556</b>	<b>\$172,650</b>
General costs	13,390	13,390	13,390	40,170
Assembly costs	87,522	-	-	87,522
Moderatorial Expenses	12,200	12,200	12,200	36,600
Procurator's Retainer	1,100	1,100	1,100	3,300
Website Maintenance	12,360	12,360	12,360	37,080
<b>Total Expenses General Assembly</b>	<b>\$126,572</b>	<b>\$39,050</b>	<b>\$39,050</b>	<b>\$204,672</b>
<b>Total GAA Expenditure</b>	<b>\$184,119</b>	<b>\$96,597</b>	<b>\$96,606</b>	<b>\$377,322</b>

The Forty-Sixth General Assembly also approved the reimbursement of travelling expenses by members of Committees to attend Committee meetings at the rate determined for meetings of the GAA with incidental expenses as determined by each Committee.

The Finance Committee recommends that the General Assembly:

- (a) Approve the following expenditure for the 2011-2013 triennium:-

	2011	2012	2013	Triennium Total
APWM Committee	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Christian Education Committee	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Presbyterian Inland Mission	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Public Worship & Aids to Devotion Committee	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Code Committee	1,550	1,550	1,550	4,650

Defence Force Chaplaincy	1,600	1,600	1,600	4,800
Reception of Ministers	3,000	3,000	3,000	9,000
Biblical Women's Ministries	2,500	5,000	2,500	10,000
Church & Nation Committee	3,900	4,270	4,700	12,870
College Committee	2,960	10,870	3,280	17,110
Relations with other Churches Committee	5,500	20,500	5,500	31,500
National Journal Committee	65,000	70,000	70,000	205,000
National Journal additional funding	25,000	0	0	25,000
<b>Total Expenses Committees</b>	<b>111,010</b>	<b>116,790</b>	<b>92,130</b>	<b>319,930</b>
NSW Historical Records & Library (GAA Archives)	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
Website Maintenance	12,000	12,000	12,000	36,000
Procurator's Retainer	550	550	550	1,650
Moderator's Expenses	14,000	14,000	14,000	42,000
General Expenses	31,000	31,000	31,000	93,000
Assembly Costs	0	0	86,598	86,598
Honorariums	4,000	4,000	6,650	14,650
<b>Total Expenses Other</b>	<b>66,550</b>	<b>66,550</b>	<b>155,798</b>	<b>288,898</b>
<b>TOTAL GAA EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>177,560</b>	<b>183,340</b>	<b>247,928</b>	<b>608,828</b>

*The amounts recommended as allocations to the various Committees are regarded as 'maximum allocations' and are not to be regarded as grants.*

- (b) Approve the reimbursement of travelling expenses incurred by members of Committees attending Committee meetings on the same basis as determined for meetings of the General Assembly of Australia with incidental expenses as determined by each Committee.
- (c) Authorise the Finance Committee to approve payment of audit fees, office service charges and other necessary administrative expenses and include such costs with Committee expenses to be recovered from State Assemblies.
- (d) Request the State Assemblies, when called upon to do so, to reimburse the Finance Committee without delay expenditure in connection with the holding of the 2010 General Assembly of Australia, the expenses of Committees of the General Assembly of Australia and expenditure of the Moderator, in the proportion set out in the Finance Committee regulations.
- (e) Request the NSW Trustees to finance expenditure authorised by the Finance Committee pending reimbursement by State Finance (or equivalent) Committees.

**Requests for Funding:** The National Journal Committee has requested additional funding of \$25,000 to cover its obligations in 2010 and a substantial increase in the 2011-2013 triennium to ensure the continuation of the *Australian Presbyterian* magazine. The budget for the Relations with Other Churches Committee includes an allocation of \$15,000 to host a meeting of the Executive of the World Reform Fellowship in 2012. A request by Presbyterian Inland Mission Committee for financial assistance was not approved. The Australian Presbyterian World Mission Committee, Christian Education Committee and Public Worship & Aids to Devotion Committee did not request financial assistance from the GAA for the 2011-2013 triennium.

**Year Book and Church Directory:** Appreciation is extended to the National Journal Committee for the regular production of the Year Book and Church Directory.

**Committee Membership:** Since the last Session of the General Assembly the following changes have occurred to the membership of the Finance Committee:-

- The Rev. S.M. Bonnington was appointed Convener of the Western Australian General Assembly Finance Committee and is that Assembly's representative in place of the Rev. R. Fraser.
- The Rev. D.A. Slater was appointed by the General Assembly of Victoria in place of the Very Rev. Dr A.M. Harman.
- The Rev. C.E. ten Broeke was appointed Convener of the South Australian General Assembly Finance & Administration Committee and is that Assembly's representative in place of Mr B.D. Redpath AM.

The current membership of the Finance Committee is as follows:-

**New South Wales:** Rev. Peter R. Dunstan, Paul F. Cooper, Mr Ray P. Dunlop



**Queensland:** Messrs. Keith C. Booker and Gregory F. Rodgers  
**South Australia:** Rev. Christopher E. ten Broeke  
**Tasmania:** Mr Graeme K. Roberts  
**Victoria:** Rev. D. Andrew Slater, Rev John P. Wilson  
**Western Australia:** Rev. Stuart M. Bonnington  
**Elected by the General Assembly:** Rev. Lesleigh J. Hall, Rev. John R. Irvin; Messrs John M. Rolland and Wayne D. Richards  
**Convener:** Mr Jeffrey R. Falls

New regulations for the Finance Committee were approved by the Forty-Sixth General Assembly requiring three members to be elected by the General Assembly without reference to the State to which they belong (regulation 10.9(1.3)).

Accordingly the Committee nominates to the General Assembly Mr J.M. Rolland, Mr W.R. Richards and the Rev. J.R. Irvin for re-election to the Finance Committee for the 2011-2013 triennium.

J R FALLS, Convener.

### MODERATOR'S NOMINATING

The following nominations were received from state assemblies for Moderator-General of the 2010 General Assembly of Australia:-

Rev. K.R. Bell, Victoria  
 Rev. D.N. Jones, Tasmania  
 Rev. J.W. Langbridge, Queensland

The results of the first round of voting were as follows:-

Rev. K.R. Bell ..... 12 votes  
 Rev. D.N. Jones ..... 16 votes  
 Rev. J.W. Langbridge ..... 10 votes

As no one candidate received an absolute majority of votes on the first round the names of the Rev. K.R. Bell and the Rev. D.N. Jones were listed on a second ballot paper. As a result of this second round of voting a majority of votes was cast for the Rev. D.N. Jones, Minister at Cornerstone in Hobart, Tasmania. The Rev. D.N. Jones is therefore Moderator-General Nominated of the 2010 General Assembly of Australia.

PAUL LOGAN, Clerk of Assembly.

### MODERATOR'S STATEMENT

**Introduction:** To the commissioners of the General Assembly of Australia I wish to say a very sincere thank you for the privilege of serving the GAA, and indeed the whole of the Presbyterian Church of Australia as Moderator General for the period September 2007 to September 2010. It is true that some parts of the ministry entrusted to me, I would not have naturally chosen, and they have proved to be very steep learning curves. Most however, I have welcomed with open arms, and praise God for His enabling.

Some of this ministry has called for close working team effort from Assembly officers, Assembly Standing Committee personnel, and many others who belong to the Body of Christ. I have learned a new appreciation of our system which affords such fraternity in serving the Lord.

My predecessor has been a tower of strength both in preparing me for the job, and in his ongoing support throughout the three years.

And naturally, in all these ministries, Laurel has stood close to me, and for her special care and support I will ever be thankful to God.

Rev. Dr Bob Thomas had chosen the theme "Declare His glory" for the 2004 to 2007 triennium. I warmed to that theme. So, rather than choose an entirely new theme for ministry during the triennium 2007 to 2010, I simply extended his by the addition of the words, ". . . by shining like stars". Of course, this sentence is taken from the Holy Scriptures in Philippians 2, "Shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life to a crooked and perverse generation."

**Assemblies, Presbyteries, Pastoral Charges and Theological Colleges:** It has been my privilege and pleasure to attempt to encourage us all to “declare His glory by shining like stars” around our assemblies, presbyteries, camping weekends, congregations, mission meetings and small groups within the congregations, and of course in relating to non-Christian friends who have not yet seen the Light of the world, as presented by his ‘shining stars’ in the power of his Spirit.

During the past 33 months I (mostly we) have been able to visit assemblies in every state, and in some states to present the assembly Bible expositions. Each year, when I have not been visiting state assemblies, greetings and words of encouragement have been sent and read.

Indeed during this time, we have been able to visit (practically all by invitation) about 100 of our congregations. Many of these visits to congregations and presbyteries have been to celebrate 100 or 75 or 120 years of witness to the declaration of the great grace of God to the generations who have come and gone; to open a new extension to a building or a new church; or to celebrate a milestone in the ministry of a presbytery.

While in Tasmania and South Australia in May 2009, it was particularly special for us to visit a congregation or two (or representatives of these congregations) each day. Many of these congregations feel very distant from the rest of the denomination, and to meet with them, talk to them about the happenings of their denominational family, to encourage them from the Scriptures was most heartening for them and a special privilege for us. On many occasions we were also able to visit or stay with manse families with all the fellowship, discussion and ministry that that affords.

We were honoured to share with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and enjoy the ministry of Dr Ligon Duncan from the Presbyterian Church in America at that time.

Participation with the staff and students of the PTC Melbourne in the opening of their new student accommodation; preaching at the setting-apart of the principal of the PTC Sydney, Dr Ian Smith; and being invited to be graduation speaker at both the PTC Melbourne and the Reformed College in Geelong proved to be times of great privilege and responsibility for which I praise God and thank his servants.

**The Moderator General’s Appeal regarding Church Planting in Western Australia:** The 2007 GAA authorised the Moderator General to launch an appeal “over the next three years to raise enough funds from across the Presbyterian Church of Australia to provide for opening, staffing and development of a new church planting congregation in metropolitan Perth to be initiated (DV) from the start of 2010 as part of the celebrations marking the 450th anniversary of the Scottish Reformation” (Minute 20).

Thanks are extended to those who contributed to this appeal through which approximately \$26,000 was contributed (as at May 2010).

**The Commission of the GAA:** Thus far in the triennium the Commission of the GAA has met on eight occasions to address some difficult issues that have arisen, issues which have been subjects of appeal from another state assembly. This has been an onerous task, and we thank God for his presence and grace in helping us through these times, and for the tremendous cooperation of brothers and sisters who were part of the team. Special thanks are due to assembly officers, law agent and procurator.

**Overseas Assemblies and Parishes:** As well as visiting our own six assemblies, we have been able to represent you at the assemblies of the Church of Scotland, the Free Church of Scotland (continuing), the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, the Grace Presbyterian Church in NZ, and engage with members of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of England and Wales in Durham. While in the UK and NZ I had opportunity of ministry in nine local congregations.

Rev. Stuart Bonnington was our representative at the Church of Scotland, the Free Church (continuing), and the Presbyterian Church of Ireland in 2009, and Rev. Adriaan van Ash in 2010 at the Church of Scotland assembly.

Rev. Bill Lutton represented me at the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu in 2008, Rev. Philip Burns in August 2009, and as I write we are attempting to confirm a PCA representative to the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu Assembly in 2010. We consider representation at the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu Assembly very important in the light of our long term ministry and partnership with that church. On the occasion of the funeral of the late Rev. Dr Graham Miller in September 2008 in Wangaratta, both the PCA Moderator General and Pastor Kalsakau Urtalo participated. The Prime Minister of Vanuatu called for a day of national mourning when hearing of

Dr Miller's death.

**Representing APWM Mission Partners (APWM – MP):** In mid-2008 there was a Macedonian call from East Timor asking for help. Therefore on behalf of the APWM-MP, together with Rev. Rob Duncanson (NT) and Rev. Gary Ware (SA) a visit was made to this newly formed Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Timor Leste in April 2009. This church has about 4,500 members, 9 ministers, 5 home missionaries and about 15 congregations in the western segment of Timor Leste (we were able to visit and participate in ministry to 13 of these congregations). As a result of this, serious commitment is being made to them to grow our two churches closer together in the service of the Kingdom. As part of the ongoing development of fraternal relationships (with a view to formal “partnership” in the future) a further visit was made to teach the confessional basis of Presbyterianism (together we chose WCF rather than Heidelberg which was more the confessional base of most of the daughter churches of the several ‘reformed churches’ of Holland), and Rev. David Burke (of Orchard Road PC Singapore) was the key teacher. This visit was highly successful, and not only resulted in a study and preliminary acceptance of the confessional position of a wide sector of Presbyterianism, but also in adopting a draft constitution for the church which was based more on the constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Brazil than that of our own. This will be translated into the local language before formal and official adoption as the constitution of the EPCTL. It is anticipated that there will be another “work party” visit in June, and plans are presently being made for a visit in early in 2011 to firm up relationships, teach the Bible, and continue to build relationships as a three-some: the EPCTL, the PCA, and the Presbyterian Church of Brazil which now has two resident missionary families working with the EPCTL.

I praise God too for the grand opportunity of ministry afforded me by Mission Partners in the setting apart of missionary families from time to time during the triennium.

**Representing Western Australia and Victoria:** In August 2009, on behalf of the WA assembly I visited the Reformed Church of South Africa to forward the growing association between the PCWA and the RCSA due to the increase of ministry, particularly in Western Australia to the emigrants from the southern countries of Africa (of course there are folk from other states as well).

Then, on behalf of the Victorian APWM committee I visited the Central Church of Africa Presbyterian, Malawi synod (as official guest), and had the opportunity of preaching many times, and visiting seven congregations, three Mission Stations, the Zomba Theological College, and preaching at the ordination of 18 new ministers.

In Zambia, as guest of the CCAP Zambia synod, I had the wonderful opportunity of leading a 12 segment, three day seminar on Leadership within the Church of our Lord Jesus, after which there was the opportunity of visiting several congregations and ministry on the Lord's Day, and of course the mandatory visit to Victoria Falls.

What inspiration was mine, both in Malawi and Zambia, in following around the footsteps of the Pathfinder, Dr David Livingstone, the one who under the powerful hand of the Spirit of God flung open the doors and windows of the south of Africa to the inflow of the gospel of grace. Following his death in 1874 and burial in Westminster Abby, God stirred the hearts of the Christians of Scotland and Holland to take up the challenge of the great commission of Jesus to make disciples of all nations. In 1875 they started to arrive, and the transformation of Africa continued.

**Communication around the Church:** Communications and writing of articles have taken a significant amount of time during these months. I have attempted to provide articles on many subjects for The Pulse, New Directions (Qld), Fellow Workers (Vic) and other publications in other states.

PresENews has proved to be a fine instrument for keeping the church aware of communications to government ministers and departments in respect to issues that are being debated, to increase the measure to which the voice of the church is being heard (see Church and Nation report for the specifics).

The process of issuing these communications (some of which have been sent off to news outlets through communications officers) is to confer with the Church and Nation committee of the GAA and the clerk of GAA. Once we have concurrence all round, only then does the communication go to relevant bodies over the signature of the Moderator General and (sometimes) the convener of the Church and Nation committee, and on some occasions with signatures of other state moderators (this is in accord with GAA decisions in 2007).

The submission concerning the proposed Charter of Rights has been a mammoth task, and we have sought your support in this. The Australian Christian Lobby has organised 'top level' conferences in some state and territory capital cities, with a view to fostering stronger support from concerned citizens against the Charter of Rights, which for Christians, so often becomes a Charter of non-Rights!

**Engaging Politically:** Apart from written communications to government ministers, government departments, and media, when Dr Brendon Nelson was leader of the Opposition General Manager Wayne Richards and Rev. Dr Paul Logan and Rev Bruce Meller and I had opportunity to spend time over lunch with him and two of his advisors, during which we were able to talk very frankly with him about issues of concern to our church. I also had the opportunity to engage in worthwhile conversation with Malcolm Turnbull on a couple of occasions.

The Church and Nation Committee has been engaging with key government officials and the Attorney General Robert McClelland in regard to many issues, but particularly the proposed Charter of Rights.

In June 2010 (as we move closer to federal elections), together with the ACL and other church leaders, opportunity was given in Canberra at the "Make It Count" to discuss government policy matters with Mr Rudd and Mr Abbott. This event was webcast live to churches throughout the nation from Old Parliament House in Canberra.

**Other National Events:** Rev. Dr Paul Logan represented the Moderator-General at the swearing in of the Governor General – Her Excellency Quentin Bryce in September 2008.

I was able to be present at the national conferences in Canberra in November 2008 – the conference of the Australian Christian Lobby; the meeting of the National Alliance of Christian Churches; and the National Prayer Breakfast.

I regularly attended the National Heads of Churches meetings in Sydney.

We celebrated 200 years of Presbyterian witness at Ebenezer on the Hawkesbury on 20<sup>th</sup> June, where many thousands of folk gathered particularly from the Presbyterian and Uniting churches.

The GAA clerk and I have also been working with PIM and Frontier Ministries (UCA) in attempting to determine in what ways there might be joint-celebrations in 2012 relating to the ministry of Dr John Flynn.

**Radio Opportunity:** We have had the opportunity of radio broadcast on the subjects of "What is God saying to us through the global economic crisis" (Robert Benn), and "Our church's perspectives on euthanasia" (Stefan Slucki – convener of Church and Nation Committee of the GAA).

**World Reformed Fellowship Assembly** (the only Ecumenical body to which the PCA belongs) **and engaging with Other Churches:** The 2007 GAA authorised "the Moderator-General to attend as a voting member/delegate at the World Reformed Fellowship Assembly in 2010, the cost to be met from the committee's funds."

The World Reformed Fellowship Assembly met within the grounds of the University of Edinburgh in April 2010. Our official representatives were the convener of the Relations with Other Churches committee, Dr Allan Harman, and the Moderator General. Forty-nine denominations have become members of the WRF since its humble but strong beginnings in 1994 (plus many local congregations, theological colleges and seminaries, other institutions both church and para-church, as well as individuals). The WRF proved to be a very valuable meeting, during which many discussion papers were presented on issues all the membership faced in one form or another. A draft Statement of Faith (akin to the classical Confessions of Faith [WCF, Savoy, Heidelberg, etc]), prepared by the WRF Theology Commission was presented, and is available for comment by members and others, with a view to its adoption in due time. One wonders whether this Statement of Faith might find its place amongst the great Confessions of the past, but this time set against the backdrop of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, rather than the 16<sup>th</sup> or the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

In the light of the struggles in the Church of Scotland, it was a privilege to talk at length to Rev. David Court, the chairman of the Fellowship of Confessing Congregations and to be ministered to at the final WRF service of worship by Rev. Martin Allan, chairman of the Crief Fellowship. You will remember that prior to the 2008 Assembly of the Church of Scotland many of our ministers, elders, and some courts of our church stood with the Forward Together in their concern over the induction of a 'gay' minister in Aberdeen.

While en route to this visit to the UK to attend the WRF Assembly, I took the opportunity to

continue to firm up relationships with the Presbyterian Church of Ireland by visiting colleagues with whom we had met at the overseas church assemblies already attended, and spent a good time with the Moderator of the PCI, Rev. Dr Stafford Carson. I note that our last term's Moderator General was encouraging the development of closer links with the PCI. I stand with him in this.

While in Scotland I spent time with the convener of Ecumenical Relationships of the Church of Scotland specifically to talk through what the Church of Scotland was preparing to do to commemorate the Scottish Reformation, the life and ministry of John Knox, and the resulting national legislation. The Church of Scotland is focusing more on the acts of parliament than the Reformation, but when visiting the Scottish parliament, the question was debated and the decision taken reads thus: "that the Parliament welcomes the World Reformed Fellowship conference in Edinburgh; notes that 2010 marks the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reformation in Scotland; considers that the reformers' passion for opening up the scriptures to all Scots led to a drive towards improved literacy and that within one hundred years schools were established in parishes across Scotland; further considers that the reformers' emphasis on free thinking and an individual's relationship with God arguably helped pave the way for the enquiry, investigation and freedom of conscience associated with the Scottish enlightenment, and therefore pays tribute to the men and women of the reformation for their contribution in laying the foundations of modern Scottish society."

**Calls to Prayer:** As well as articles and communications around the church, from time to time there have been calls to prayer, particularly when our partner churches are walking through harrowing times. Thanks are due to so many who took up the challenge to pray and support in other ways in respect to India and the desperate plight of some Christians; Myanmar, and the terribly destructive cyclone and then the mice plague; and Vanuatu, following the cyclone.

And closer to home Laurel and I had the opportunity within a few weeks of the Black Saturday fires in Victoria to visit the Whittlesea congregation (which had almost become a refugee centre) and minister from Psalm 22 to a grieving congregation, many of whom had lost so much including family members. You participated in the appeal from Victoria following the fires, and took part in a contribution of \$320,000 which was donated to the victims of that disaster. The GAA clerk and I had the opportunity of cooperating with the moderator and clerk of the Victorian assembly, together with the minister of Whittlesea in the distribution of funds, the pastoral care of local folk, and the careful accounting of monies distributed. Thank you so much for your generosity in that regard.

**A Note of Thanks:** As we have travelled around the church in all states, we have received great hospitality and opportunities for ministry. I want to pay tribute to the faithful members of our church for their settled commitment through all the ups and downs of church life. Many have faced great struggles due to natural happenings of drought, flood, fire and deprivation. But in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit they have battled on, and grown in grace. Many young people have moved away from the general flow of secular society to take their place "in Christ" and in his church. Many older folk have proved their commitment to Christ along a long road of steady obedience, and have become something of a backbone and secure base for our churches to continue and grow. We want you to know that we have great appreciation for you and your ministry.

Thank you too ministers, elders and others in leadership in our church for all you have done and continue to do in the name of Christ.

**A More Personal Note:** During the triennium we have seen our youngest daughter Andrea conclude her ministry with African Enterprise as she and Anthony grow their little family; son Murray and his family have now settled in Mongolia for their ministry with Pioneers; and our eldest daughter Cathy and her family have now concluded their crash course in Swahili in Tanzania and are ministering with CMS in Kenya. While I have been involved for decades in cross-cultural ministry interest and activity, it is a slightly more complicated time waving good-bye to our adult children and the majority of our grandchildren as they have departed our shores. A grandfather's heart kicks in beside the great commission heart! But the end result is to praise God, and wonder when we'll get to visit them.

**Conclusion:** The place you have given me in our denomination for these three years is indeed a very special privilege. I have been able to observe congregations with numbers reaching many hundreds through to congregations of 25 faithful people. Some would classify themselves 'contemporary' and others 'traditional', with all that comes with those kinds of packagings.

One thing that has become very clear to me is that in respect to those two categories, to lean one way or the other is not at the heart of the issue. Rather within either of those packages, or packages in between, what is at the heart of the issue is, to what degree do we respond in worship to a majestic, transcendent, creator, redeemer LORD God of grace and mercy? And, how serious are we in responding in loving obedience at his throne of grace.

O that all of us will “learn of him whom to know is eternal life”; to say with Moses “Do not send us if your Presence does not go with us”; to cry with Paul “O that I might know Christ, the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of sharing in his suffering, becoming like him in his death!”

O that folk entering our fellowship where hearts and minds are focused on worshipping the King of kings and Lord of lords will be convinced by all that they are sinners, that the hand of grace is extended, and that they in the power of the Spirit will exclaim, “God is really among you!”

We face days of great challenge as many within our society, and indeed within the global community are increasingly voicing their opinions which fly in the face of Biblical Christianity. Voices are being raised in the public square that are atheistic, anti the message of the church, and actively promoting a religion that fits all within the global community, fondly believing that this will cure the world’s ills. Within this global framework our responsibility is to “Declare His glory by shining like stars as you hold out the Word of Life to a crooked and perverse generation.”

May our God grant that grace.

Rt Rev. R.P.F. BENN, Moderator.

## NATIONAL JOURNAL

**Introduction:** Since the 2007 GAA, the team at Australian Presbyterian has continued to produce an internationally recognised magazine which is marked by high quality content, attractive presentation and on-schedule delivery. The magazine is produced by a team of dedicated staff (many of whom are volunteers), who are committed to advancing the cause of the Gospel through the printed word.

Throughout the last three years, the Editor has travelled throughout Australia as well as visiting the USA, the UK and Europe to secure interviews with numbers of major contributors. During this period, the magazine has maintained its influence as the flagship of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Since the last meeting of the General Assembly in Sydney, in 2007, the National Journal Committee has produced the following titles:

**2007:**

Law and Gospel – Dr Phillip Ryken  
True Confession – Dr Carl Trueman  
New Birth – Dr Andrew McGowan  
Reflecting the Cross – Jerry Bridges  
Lessons from History – Rev. Iain Murray  
God’s World – Dr Peter Lillback  
Christ and Culture – Dr Michael Horton

**2008:**

Acts to the Ends of the Earth – Rev. David Cook  
Evangelism – Rev. John Chapman  
Bioethics – Dr Douglas Milne  
Proof of Life: 1 John – Dr Peter Barnes  
Is Rome Right? – Rev. Ray Galea  
Guidance and the Word of God – Rev. Peter Bloomfield  
Transforming our Minds – Dr Nicholas Aroney  
Church and Culture – Dr Bruce Winter  
Our Christian Heritage – Dr Nicholas Aroney  
The Divine Rescue: Paul to the Galatians – Dr Peter Barnes  
The Meaning of Christmas – Dr Ian Smith

**2009:**

Scripture Our Sure Foundation – Dr Noel Weeks  
The Future Life – Dr Ian Smith

Engaging Islam – Dr Patrick Sookhdeo  
Calvin: Man of the Year – Dr Ligon Duncan  
Ethics – Dr Scott Rae  
J Gresham Machen: Contending for the Faith – Dr Carl Trueman  
Reforming the Church – Dr Mark Dever  
Christless Christianity – Dr Michael Horton  
Sexual Revolution – Dr Peter Jones  
Boy Meets Girl – Rev. Richard Phillips  
The Lord's Prayer – Dr Gerald Bray

## **2010**

Life Ahead – Dr Paul Helm  
Pornified World: The Sexualisation of Women – Melinda Tankard Reist  
The Glory of the Atonement – Dr Bruce Winter  
Speaking Truth to Troubled Souls – Dr David Powlison  
Where Theology and Practice Meet: 1 Timothy – Dr Phillip Ryken  
The Onward March of Islam – Dr Mark Durie  
Christians as Citizens – Dr Bruce Winter

**Format:** Throughout the last triennium, we have maintained the format of earlier years, which consists of an interview and two major articles which form the bulk of the first half of the magazine. We have continued our policy of seeking authoritative opinion leaders as our interviewees, regardless of where they live in the world. Our editorial board is of the view that it remains important that our national magazine has links with a broader spectrum of reformed evangelical thought.

Every issue of *Australian Presbyterian* is devoted to a particular theme. Readers have expressed a definite preference for each magazine to carry a distinct topic. Each of the issues features a major interview with an internationally renowned author, and the interview is designed to cover the basic content of the interviewee's most well-known book/s. This means that readers of *AP* get an insight into a major Christian book in the space of five pages in a relatively easy question-and-answer, oral style. Many of our readers have expressed appreciation for this format because it enables them to gain a quick understanding of important topics in a readable and oral style.

**Re-launch and New Style:** Following a six month review of the magazine's format, the editorial team decided on a re-launch in August of 2009. Changes were made to the layout of the magazine, the font and more colour was introduced throughout. These initiatives were achieved at minimal cost and have been welcomed by our readership. They have certainly improved the appearance of the magazine and given it a more professional look.

**Function Within the Church:** *Australian Presbyterian* plays a vital function in the life of the church. It is the one constant in Australian Presbyterian life that keeps leaders and members of our denomination in constant communication with one another. That communication must necessarily consist of world, national and local news, readers' letters, devotional resources, apologetic resources, culture watch, book reviews, Bible study resources, teaching and opinion pieces. It has a vital role in allowing Christian businesses and ministries to advertise their services. The magazine also serves as the main advertising conduit for Presbyterian Inland Mission, Australian Presbyterian World Mission News, Reformers Bookshop (partly owned by the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales), all of which are published quarterly. These publications are circulated through the National Journal Committee as are the PCA Yearbook and Church Directory. In this sense, the National Journal Committee provides news, views, vital resources as well as being a vehicle for our denomination and other major Presbyterian agencies.

*Australian Presbyterian*, as part of the service that it provides the General Assembly in return for the Communication Service Fee, provided almost 18 months of free advertising for the purpose of the Moderator-General's fund for church planting. This appeal commenced in 2008 and by the end of 2009 had raised \$30,000. In other words the magazine represents an important avenue for fundraising within the wider church. If it was discontinued for any reason, such levels of fundraising would become extremely difficult within the National Church.

Some of the issues that we have handled have been appreciated by our readership. We have received very positive responses to the issues on Reflecting the Cross by Jerry Bridges, Christ and Culture by Dr Michael Horton, Is Rome Right? by Ray Galea, Church and Culture by Dr

Bruce Winter, Engaging Islam by Dr Patrick Sookhdeo, Christless Christianity by Dr Michael Horton, the Sexual Revolution by Dr Peter Jones, Boy Meets Girl by Richard Phillips, Pornified World by Melinda Tankard Reist and the Atonement by Dr Bruce Winter – to mention just a few. We regularly receive requests for re-prints of our articles from other denominational journals, as far afield as the UK, the USA, Canada and New Zealand.

While the magazine maintains the distinctives of the Presbyterian Church, it also maintains a far wider appeal by dealing with issues of broad interest within the Christian community. For instance, the editorial committee has a policy of dealing with issues such as apologetics, personal and social ethics, theological issues of interest to all Christians and individual books of the Bible. The magazine is also available as an E-subscription and back-copies are presently available on CD-ROM and include an index.

These vital functions are conducted on an absolute shoe-string budget. If the Church had to pay the full cost of producing the magazine, it would probably run to more than \$100,000 over its current annual expenditure of \$185,268. The magazine does not pay the editor, Peter Hastie, and Barney Swartz (production editor) works for a fraction of his real cost. Mr Mike Timmins, the business manager, works a 17.5 hour week for \$26,625 per annum. Peter Hastie and Barney Swartz put the magazine together as something which is in addition to their normal working week. Further, the editor meets a part of the cost of obtaining the interviews from our overseas contributors himself.

**Content:** The Editorial Committee has given a great deal of thought to the present layout and proportion of news, views and resources within each issue.

It is appropriate for the editorial team to explain its approach to the many issues which it addresses. The members of the team take seriously their obligation to uphold the confessional position of the church. When we occasionally receive criticism about the theology of the magazine, our response is that we have an obligation to faithfully represent the Westminster standards of our church. We are responsive to reader requests and occasionally produce a magazine when a reader is able to make a good case for us to deal with the issue. This happened recently with the issue on Counselling. While the editor was visiting the USA and UK in 2009, he travelled to Philadelphia to interview Dr David Powlison, one of the recognised leaders in the world of the Biblical counseling movement, at the request of a minister in the church.

We have raised the level of news content over recent years to five pages, which covers state, national and world news. We also now include a section 'On the Agenda', which consists of news reviews and opinions on the news. We run regular advertisements, inviting news contributions from local churches. Our slender resources make it impossible for us to systematically collect information from individual congregations and presbyteries. This news can only be printed when it is provided on the initiative of the congregations, presbyteries or assemblies.

None of our contributors are paid, which represents a considerable saving. The committee should bear in mind that tabloid newspapers such as *Southern Cross* have had an editorial team behind them of up to five or six full-time staff who are trained in journalism, theology and ethics. The Anglican Church, up until recently at least, has had massive resources to devote to these productions. The same is true of the Uniting Church magazine. *The Briefing* is also funded by St. Matthias Press. Again, it has several full-time workers. *Australian Presbyterian* works at a fraction of this cost and if the current team at AP were to dissolve, the denomination would be faced with a very substantial rise in cost to produce the same quality journal.

**International Recognition:** The Assembly will be pleased to know that the value of *Australian Presbyterian* is appreciated in a wider sphere beyond Australia. It is hosted on The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals's website in the US, where it is possible to gain past copies of the magazine back to 2004. The Alliance is presently in negotiations with *Australian Presbyterian* to use our material to publish a number of booklets on topics of general importance to the church and P & R Books are also in discussion with us about the possibility of producing a book comprised of editorials and articles that have appeared in *Australian Presbyterian* over the last decade.

It may be of interest to the Assembly that copies of the magazine find their way into the most unlikely places. For instance, a man who is serving a life sentence for murder in a Zambian jail receives a subscription at his special request. He has written to the editorial team expressing his gratitude for the content of the magazine and the way that it meets his spiritual needs.



**The Yearbook:** The denomination should congratulate the Rev Michael Wharton for his outstanding contribution as Yearbook Editor and Webmaster. This has been a huge undertaking. It requires a high degree of technical knowledge, administrative competence, organizational flair and professionalism. Mike has brought all these qualities to his work and the church is blessed to have him engaged in this way. He has done a first-rate job. Mike Wharton resigned from his position as Yearbook editor during 2008 and his position has been taken over by Mr Walter Bruining, the former business manager of the magazine. In 2010, the Yearbook was published with the least number of corrections in recent years.

**Staff:** We at Australian Presbyterian have been absolutely reliant on the dedicated services of a small team of writers who have provided reliable and professional service to the magazine. Barney Zwartz has done a superb job as production editor. Barney juggles his responsibilities as a senior editor at *The Age* with the intense monthly demands of *Australian Presbyterian*. The appearance of the magazine and its overall journalistic quality is a tribute to his skill and professionalism. Stuart Bonnington and Barney Zwartz have been responsible for international, state and local news. Their contribution in this area has been important in keeping Presbyterians throughout Australia informed of significant news in each of the states. Bruce Christian does a first-rate job every month providing a devotional section. We regularly receive letters of praise in connection with this section. John Campbell continues to provide the monthly prayer points. Peter Barnes is a major contributor of substantial articles. We are indebted to him for his wide-ranging and informative pieces. He also coordinates the book reviews. Along with him, Stuart Bonnington is a major contributor to this section.

The appearance and layout of our journal are often the subject of favourable comment, particularly from overseas. We owe A & J Moody Design our thanks for their professionalism in this area. Sandra Joynt, in particular, plays a special role in making the magazine look so appealing.

Finally, it is hard to express our debt of appreciation to Messrs Mike Timmins and Walter Bruining. Mike and Walter have been the glue that holds the whole operation together in an administrative sense. They work enthusiastically to this end.

**Future Funding:** It is my firm conviction that the General Assembly needs to underwrite the ministry of *Australian Presbyterian* in a more substantial sense to relieve the pressure on those involved and to further lift the quality of the magazine. If this does happen, it will enable the journal to better represent the church and to make sure that it conveys news and views which will strengthen believers throughout the nation.

Members of the Assembly may be wondering why the National Journal is applying for an increased level of support from the General Assembly. The answer is relatively simple. The simple fact is that we would have required a level of additional funding around 2006 had it not been for a number of factors that have enabled Australian Presbyterian to operate with a surplus:

1. From about 2004 onwards, the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trust Foundation underwrote our operation to the tune of \$13,000 per annum for three years, an amount totaling almost \$40,000 throughout the following triennium.

2. From around 2006-2007, one particular individual donated approximately \$20,000 in free subscriptions of the magazines to Presbyterian ministers and elders around Australia. The total take-up rate of this exercise was only 20%. From November 2008 to June 2010, another sponsor has offered to partially subsidise all new subscriptions. Without these contributions, the magazine would not have continued past 2006.

Since 2005, we have been affected by the following:

1. A marginal drop-off in the level of subscribers.
2. We have had four substantial rises in postal costs.
3. We have had two rises in printing costs.
4. Our layout and graphic designers, while they held prices for five years, were forced to raise them significantly in 2007.

To put the problem as simply as possible:

1. The magazine's funding from the Church of Victoria has ceased.
2. The one off cash donation to boost subscriptions in 2006-2007 has also ceased.
3. A one-off cash donation of \$10,000 from a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to provide ministers and elders of the Grace Presbyterian Church in New Zealand with an annual subscription.

4. The subsidy for new subscriptions has not been able to breach the gap that we have suffered as a result of the shortfall.

So we are faced with the question – what options does the National Journal Committee have? Before we consider that issue, we need to realise several important factors:

First, we need to understand that the Assembly is not really paying in any significant way for the manpower that is required to produce the magazine. The current team that has been producing the magazine over 13 years operates at a fraction of its commercial cost. For instance, the magazine does not pay for Peter Hastie as the editor. It pays \$15,000 per annum for Barney Zwartz, who is one of the Senior Editors for *The Age*. The payments to A&J Moody Design and Mike Timmins are at the lower end of the scale of what we could be expected to pay for their services. During the last triennium, we have invited other interested parties to tender for the design and production of the magazine, and in our judgment, they could not guarantee us the same quality and price that we have with our current arrangements.

It is the view of the National Journal Committee that the Assembly needs to consider additional funding for *Australian Presbyterian* if it wants it to continue in its present form.

Second, we need to examine the question of the need for the Journal within the Presbyterian Church of Australia. To arrive at a meaningful answer to that question, we need to address the following issues. Assume the National Journal goes out of existence:

1. What will be the communication vehicle for the Federal Church? Many agencies rely on AP to save them significant costs, e.g. PIM, APWM, schools, church directory and advertisers. What will happen if AP ceases operation? How will the Presbyterian Church of Australia relate to other churches?

2. What means will the Federal Church have to keep each of the states in touch with news and views in each part of Australia? Australian Presbyterian provides the major link at the moment apart from the formal governmental structures that we have as a Presbyterian Church that enable our leaders to meet together. However, such a link does not exist at the grassroots level.

3. What face will we present to the wider international church? Members of the assembly need to realise that many of the contacts that we now enjoy are with the church in America and the UK have come about as a result of the magazine's ministry (e.g. the recent visit of Professor Scott Rae to the Colloquium in Melbourne, the visits of Professor Carl Trueman and Dr Ligon Duncan etc.).

4. What will be the effect on the Presbyterian Church of Australia? Without a magazine that provides a forum that explains to our national membership its theology and distinctives, our denominational identity will become less clear. Many smaller Christian journals have closed in recent years as denominations and church agencies have decided to abandon publishing because they are unprepared to meet the cost. If the church believes that the truth is important (2 Corinthians 13:8) and our distinctives as Presbyterians deserve to be maintained, then we need to face the reality of the cost. If we abandon the national magazine, then it is likely that our readers will look to other journals to provide themselves with news and views. These news and views may not necessarily be consistent with our doctrinal position. If this happens at the level of the leadership of the church, then it makes the future of a separate denominational existence problematic.

The staff at the National Journal remains convinced that we need additional Assembly support to continue with the magazine and to further lift the quality of the magazine. A failure to do so will threaten the quality of what is for thousands of people within Australia, both city and country, as well as for overseas readers, the front window into the life and views of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. The magazine plays a critical role in the church. Interestingly, while substantial amounts are used by state assemblies to provide state-based publications which are free to parishioners, *Australian Presbyterian* has to provide its own significant subsidy. The Victorian Church in May offered to support the magazine until December 2010. However, if additional support beyond that period cannot be guaranteed, the magazine will have serious problems remaining solvent. If the National Journal is discontinued, the Australian Presbyterian Church will become increasingly fragmented and will lose a sense of national identity. This will have serious consequences for the denomination.

We believe the question to be considered is not, "Can the Presbyterian Church of Australia afford a magazine that requires a subsidy?" but rather, "To what extent should the Presbyterian Church of Australia support its National Journal Committee to continue its mandate to 'inform,

encourage and equip the denomination to serve Christ in the world today?”

Finally, I wish to thank the General Assembly for the privilege and joy of being able to serve as the editor. It is a responsibility that I take very seriously and one that I have tried, by the grace of God, to discharge to the very best of my ability.

P.W. HASTIE, Convener.

## **ON WORK AND WELFARE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA UNDER ARTICLE 9.1.**

### **Report on Work and Welfare of the Presbyterian Church of South Australia to the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia**

The Presbyterian Church of South Australia is comprised of four sanctioned charges, five appointment charges and three home mission stations. These are divided into two presbyteries: the Presbytery of Torrens, which covers the greater Adelaide region and the Eyre Peninsula, has one sanctioned charge, three appointment charges and three home mission stations; the Presbytery of Penola, which represents the area in the lower south-east of the State, is comprised of three sanctioned charges, which have nine congregations of varying sizes.

Presently there are vacancies in the Torrens presbytery in one appointment parish and one home mission station. It is anticipated that another appointment parish will be vacant in the near future. The Penola presbytery has two vacancies.

Historical challenges in South Australia have included the significant distances between population bases and the disparity between the population of Adelaide (about 1.6 million) and the other towns in the State (Mount Gambier, the state's second largest town, has a population of 25,000). Though never numerically strong or denominationally robust, in 1977 the Presbyterian Church of South Australia was reduced from 25 charges/57 congregations to 15 congregations (10 of which were in the south-east region, and some of which were very small).

Since that time, the realisation of seeing sanctioned charges functioning in the Adelaide region has proved frustratingly elusive. This has been due to a variety of factors, among them the lack of capacity to support settled ministry for extended periods of time, and confusion about what the distinctives of a Presbyterian congregation and its work and witness should be.

The appended table provides some insight into the present situation of our congregations. (Appendices 1 and 2).

#### **Present and future needs.**

Denominations are comprised of local congregations and the local congregations of the PCSA would benefit from considerable targeted support.

Presently our pastors in North Adelaide and Seacliff work on part-time appointments. Finance to increase their appointments to full-time would be beneficial in stabilising and growing those works. Financial support toward the employment of support/outreach workers in any of our parishes would also be extremely beneficial. Many urban parishes in the eastern capitals have benefited from the appointment of students during their ministerial training. The ability to appoint some form of interns/assistants would be invaluable.

Experienced ministers have not proved willing to make themselves available for vacancies or appointments in South Australia. Consideration of serving in South Australia would be helpful.

Due to the age of some of our congregational buildings and financial shortfalls over long periods of time, some of our congregations would benefit from financial grants of various sizes in order to modernise aspects of their facilities.

The Assembly committees and Colleges of the church in Eastern Australia have made some efforts to include the South Australian church in various activities that they provide for their own constituencies. Increase of such considerations would be helpful.

The three-yearly visitations of members of the GAA Christian Education Committee have been welcomed, and of great use. Frequent contact with the Director of the Australian Presbyterian World Mission has been instrumental in greater support for cross cultural work. Any increase in the frequency of such interactions would be beneficial. If other GAA Committees could implement similar models it would be appreciated.

It is conceivable that Congregations could be planted in regional areas such as Victor

Harbour or Port Lincoln; but if scarce resources were going to be directed to such a task it would seem that they would be best placed in planting a work in a growth area such as the north eastern region of Adelaide. It should be observed that the existing Adelaide congregations would not have the personnel to offer a substantial group of people to form the core of a church plant.

If pastoral remuneration arrangements could be standardised throughout the national church, this would be of assistance in South Australian Churches moving towards offering stipends comparable with the other States.

Denominations much larger than ours have incorporated the administrative structure of smaller states alongside larger ones on a regional basis. Australian State Assemblies have worked in Union when our denomination was much larger and when communication and travel were far more difficult. There is no compelling reason for the PCSA to maintain its own administrative structure and Assembly. The energy and resources involved in doing so draining resources which could be put toward fostering local work.

### Appendix 1

Roll of Assembly for 2010 as follows:-

#### Presbytery of Penola

Charge	Minister	Year of Ordination	Elder
Mount Gambier	Gary Ware	1997	Roger Bannister
Naracoorte	(Vacant)		Stuart McLean
Wattle Range	(Vacant)		Malcolm Lambert
Appointment:			
Assistant, Mt Gambier	Ian Touzel	1986	
Emeritus	Alan Clarkson	1995	

#### Presbytery of Torrens

Elizabeth	(Appointment Parish)		R (Bob) Arstall
Largs North	(Home Mission Station)		Raymond Brewer
Mount Barker	(Appointment Parish)		John Dawson
North Adelaide	(Appointment Parish)		Margaret Minney
Norwood	(Appointment Parish)		Tom Morgan
Para Hills	Damien Carson	2009	Craig Johansen
Port Augusta	(Home Mission Station)		Barry Rossiter
Seacliff	(Appointment Parish)		Ian Robbie
Whyalla	(Home Mission Station)		Helen Mashford

#### **Appointments:**

North Adelaide AP	Chris ten Broeke	1986
Seacliff AP	Stefan Slucki	1998
Defence Force Chaplain	Ross Tucker	1990
Emeritus	Val Silva	

#### **Members due to position held:**

Chairman, Trusts Corporation	Brian Redpath
Clerk of Assembly:	Brian Johnson
Convener, Ballot Committee:	Mary McGregor
Convener, Christian Education Committee:	Kevin Stow

### Appendix 2

Church	Communicant Members		Adherent Members		Elders		Youth Group		Sunday School		Ave Weekly Attendance	
	08	09	08	09	08	09	08	09	08	09	08	09
Elizabeth	20	nr	8	nr	4	5	-	-	-	-	25	25
Largs North	9	7	12	5	2	2	6	6	-	-	14	25
Mount Barker	37	27	14	5	nr	nr	nr	nr	13	nr	38	32
Allendale	12	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10/fn	10/fn

<b>Mount Gambier</b>	104	96	38	26	8	7	11	15	31	30	81/14	106/14
Nelson	1	1	5	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	9/fn	9/fn
<b>Millicent</b>	49	45	0	5	5	7	-	-	-	-	20	25
Rendelsham		4		3		-		-		8/fn	8/fn	
<b>Naracoorte</b>	52	57	31	31	4	4	-	-	8	8	45	45
<b>North Adelaide</b>	nr	72	nr	35	nr	6	nr	-	6	8	47	68
<b>Norwood</b>	14	13	-	nr	2	nr	N/PH		4	4	37/4	33
<b>Para Hills</b>	52	54	5	5	6	6	16	15	14	12	50/14	75
Dergholm	68	2	3	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	6/fn	5/fn
Kalangadoo		3		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	5/m	5/fn
Penola		59		6	5	5	-	-	-	-	25/2	30
<b>Port Augusta</b>	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr	27/5	nr
<b>Seacliff</b>	nr	20	nr	nr	nr	1	nr	nr	6	4	24	20
<b>Whyalla</b>	35	34	7	4	3	3	nr	nr	nr	nr	24	23
<b>Totals</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>475/39</b>	<b>549/14</b>

### OVERSEAS AID COMMITTEE (PRESAID)

The Overseas Aid Committee (PresAID) gives thanks to God for the way in which he has moved his people in the Presbyterian Church of Australia to great generosity in seeking to assist our partner churches overseas to minister Christ in word and deed in the context of their endeavours to meet overwhelming need with strictly limited resources. To date some \$466,309 has been raised (including some 'trial runs' prior to the official setting up of PresAID by the 46<sup>th</sup> GAA). We anticipate that the forthcoming Christmas Day Appeal will bring us over the \$500,000 mark. A complete list of 'the story so far' is appended to this report.

All of this has been done without any cost to the General Assembly, expenses having been borne by the congregation of St Kilda and collection and disbursement of funds having been handled by the Office of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, again at no charge. Committee members have been active in making suggestions, and we are especially grateful to Miss Geraldine Goswell for her work as secretary and the Rev. John Wilson for overseeing the collection and disbursement of funds. We have worked in close co-operation with Rev. Bill Lutton, National Director of Mission Partners, whose input to the committee has been most valuable in choosing the beneficiaries of each appeal. We are most grateful for the wholehearted support and encouragement given to the committee by the Rt Rev. Robert Benn, Moderator General.

We have received numerous expressions of thanks from recipients of funds and are well satisfied that the funds raised have been used for the designated purposes.

In response to a number of requests the committee has investigated tax deductibility for donations to PresAID. Fortunately and unfortunately this has not proved fruitful – fortunately because strict criteria would have had to be met to qualify for tax deductibility, differentiation would have had to be made between projects which were straight-out development projects and those which had an element of Christian ethos bound into them, complicated accounting procedures would have needed to be implemented, and our choice of projects would have been severely limited; unfortunate because tax deductibility might have engendered greater generosity from our donors.

The committee is always on the lookout for projects to assist, and appreciates receiving

suggestions. We would particularly appreciate receiving suggestions for projects which would assist PCA mission partners in their respective work locations.

**PresAID...**

**Record of Gifts**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Appeal</b>	<b>Received by...</b>	<b>Amount (\$)</b>
Christmas 2005	Malawi Famine Relief	<b>Malawi</b> – CCAP synod grain for starving families	<b>95,309</b>
	Pakistan Earthquake Relief	<b>Pakistan</b> – PC Pakistan	
Christmas 2006	Moderator's Mercy Appeal for Africa	<b>Sudan</b> – candidates for Presbyterian ministry – Nile Theological College, PCOS	<b>21,555</b>
		<b>Malawi</b> – CCAP Blantyre Synod, orphan care	<b>13,481</b>
		<b>Zambia</b> – roofing churches for southern presbytery, CCAP Synod of Zambia	<b>29,776</b>
		<b>Zimbabwe</b> – housing for displaced Presbyterian families	<b>9,778</b>
Easter 2007	Dehra Dun INDIA – orphanages	<b>India</b> – Bhogpur Children's Home	<b>3,917</b>
		<b>India</b> – Hope for Children Society	<b>3,917</b>
Christmas 2007	Mercy Appeal	<b>Myanmar</b> – Evangelical Reformed Church ministry	<b>25,671</b>
		<b>Bangladesh</b> – Grace Presbyterian Church ministry	<b>25,671</b>
		<b>Malawi</b> – CCAP Mulanje Mission Hospital	<b>25,705</b>
Easter 2008	Mercy Appeal	<b>Vanuatu</b> – building projects on Tanna PCV	<b>14,874</b>
		<b>Indonesia</b> – Elim Hospital, CRC	<b>13,819</b>
Christmas 2008	Mercy Appeal	<b>Zambia</b> – Chasefu Theological College, CCAP Synod of Zambia	40,000
		<b>Vanuatu</b> – water reticulation project, PCV	<b>21,000</b>
Easter 2009	Mercy Appeal	<b>Evangelical Pres'n Church</b> – East Timor – Christian	<b>8,800</b>
		<b>Evangelical Bible Church, Namibia</b> – HIV/AIDS ministry	<b>8,800</b>
		<b>Orbus Ministries, Malawi</b> – orphan and vulnerable children care	<b>8,800</b>
Christmas 2009	Mercy Appeal	<b>Myanmar</b> – famine relief	<b>22,302</b>
		<b>Zambia</b> – theological education, construction of principal's house	<b>22,302</b>
		<b>IRFA, India</b> - guest house	<b>22,302</b>
Easter 2010	Mercy Appeal	<b>SEWAH, India</b> – provision of vehicle	<b>9,510</b>
		<b>Bangladesh</b> – correspondence courses, PCB	<b>9,510</b>
		<b>Vanuatu</b> – Bible College of Southern Presbytery, PCV	<b>9,510</b>

(Very Rev) C.R. THOMAS, Convener.

**PRESBYTERIAN INLAND MISSION**

**'...Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. ...' (John 4:35)**

Jesus' words to His disciples are a call to action in the wonderful work of the Gospel. The work of the Presbyterian Inland Mission is just one of the many ways that the Presbyterian Church of Australia seeks to show its awareness of the harvest field within our Commonwealth and beyond.

At the centre of all the ministries of the Presbyterian Inland Mission, lies the desire to see

people brought into the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to live consistently and faithfully for him.

It is only through the partnership we share throughout the Presbyterian Church of Australia that the Presbyterian Inland Mission is able to conduct its many ministries of word and deed for the glory of the Lord Jesus. We therefore rejoice that during the period under review, the Presbyterian Inland Mission has, by the grace of God, born witness to more and more people about the One who is the Way, the Truth and the Life and through whom alone we can come to the Father.

### **HIGHPOINTS**

We are thankful to Almighty God for the ability to report the following highpoints of the work of the PIM:

1. At the core of the work are the pastoral interactions that the Padres and their wives have with the people who live in their patrol areas. Again and again the good news of Jesus has been spoken and demonstrated by the Padres across the vast Outback;
2. The Lord has continued to give the PIM very dedicated and gifted Padres who have built on and extended the work of those who have gone before them;
3. New patrols have been declared and are being progressively staffed so as to cover the whole of the Outback with PIM ministry;
4. There is now PIM work conducted in all States and the Northern Territory;
5. The work at the PIM Mission Church in Darwin has continued to consolidate and the PIM Mission Church at Albany was transferred to the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of WA in May 2010;
6. The PIM continues to enjoy committed support from right across the Presbyterian Church of Australia and friends elsewhere;
7. Deputations and fund raising functions have been hosted and held in all States;
8. The PIM advocates in the presbyteries have continued to give vital assistance in publicising the PIM;
9. Despite the impact of the Global Financial Crisis, the finances of the PIM have held up well and are gradually recovering;
10. Some very generous bequests have been received which have done much to further the work;

This is the LORD'S doing and it is marvelous in our eyes!

### **COMMITTEE**

Over the last Triennium we have received resignations from the committee from Mr Keith Booker, Mr Rupert Hanna, Rev Glenn Samuel, Rev Rudi Schwartz and Rev Andrew Robinson. We are deeply grateful to the Lord for the excellent ministry of each of these men within this organisation.

The following members of the PIM Committee have indicated their willingness to serve a further term, and will be nominated to the GAA accordingly. Please note this will not preclude further nominations being made by GAA Commissioners in the usual manner.

NEW SOUTH WALES - Mrs E. Mill, Rev. D Bullen, L.G. Fowler

QUEENSLAND - Mrs H. Ross, Rev. P Barber, Mr B. Clarke

VICTORIA - Rev. R.S. Duncanson, M. de Pyle, M. Smith

SOUTH AUSTRALIA – Rev. A. Clarkson

WESTERN AUSTRALIA - Rev. R. Fraser

TASMANIA - Mr D. Turner

NORTHERN TERRITORY - Dr L. Greenwood

CONVENER - Rev. R.S. Duncanson

### **SUPERINTENDENT**

Rev. Stuart Bonnington has served as PIM Superintendent since 1 April 2005 so at the time of the meeting of the GAA he has almost completed his term of service. He has indicated that he is available for re-appointment as Superintendent and the Committee will deal with this issue in due course as per its Regulations.

The Superintendent is in weekly contact with the Padres and submits a weekly report to the Executive (by e-mail) concerning their work and activities. He has visited the Padres and patrols regularly and has conducted PIM ministry focus times where and when he has been invited. In 2009 he was able to share something of the work of the PIM with members of the General

Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church of Ireland and the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). Rev. Stuart Bonnington has also had the privilege of dedicating more planes for the Royal Flying Doctor Service since the last GAA.

#### **ADMINISTRATION**

Mr Michael Timmins has continued to work in the PIM office as Office Manager. Mr Timmins role has also been very significant as a point of contact for the Patrol Teams and also for the wider church.

For some time the Committee has been concerned about the administrative workload that has increased so dramatically as the size of the ministry has increased. At the beginning of 2010, the committee resolved to increase the number of hours that Mr Timmins works, with the aim of reducing some of the administrative pressure upon the Executive and especially the Superintendent, Secretary and Convener.

#### **SUPPORT FROM THE CHURCH**

The work of the PIM could not continue to expand and develop, if it were not for the expanding and developing support base given the PIM by the Presbyterian Church of Australia. The Committee records its sincere thanks to all who have supported the Padres and their work – all worshippers in congregations and fellowships, elders and ministers. The interest of the women of the Church has been especially generous and is sincerely appreciated. The gifts of toiletries and other goods have been passed on by the Padres in many places and have often brought encouragement far beyond their monetary value.

A number of generous bequests have been received and the Superintendent has been very pleased to talk with a number of friends of the PIM who have expressed a desire to leave bequests to advance the work of the PIM in coming years. The more financial support that is forthcoming the more work can be started and sustained. If people would like to remember the work of PIM in their wills, we would of course be very happy to provide them with any required advice. Please contact the Superintendent or PIM office for such enquiries.

We are also thankful for those who pray regularly for the work. Prayer points are always available. Please contact the Superintendent in the first instance.

#### **LEGAL MATTERS**

Your Committee continues to be grateful to the Law Officers of the GAA, Mr Gregory Burton BCL, BA, LLB and Mr Simon Fraser BA, LLM for their ongoing interest in the PIM.

#### **FINANCE**

The PIM office circulates the monthly balance sheets to the committee. These are presented and adopted at the monthly Executive meetings. The accounts are checked and audited by Robert J Nixon & Associates.

From 2007 to 2009 donations decreased by 5.5%. There have been a number of bequests over the same period. Taking these into account, our overall income from donations and bequests together has increased by about 5.7%. At the same time our investment capital decreased due to the Global Financial Crisis, and also vehicle and property purchases.

The wisdom of the Trustees is gladly acknowledged for their efforts in minimizing the losses from the PIM investments over the 2008/2009 period. Your committee thanks Mr Wayne Richards, Secretary of the GAA and NSW Trustees; Mr Peter Graham, Trusts & Property Manager (NSW) and Mr Andrew Sillar, Executive Manager – Corporate Services for their substantial help, given behind the scenes.

The PIM is particularly grateful to the Victorian Assembly which has given significant annual financial support to the South Western (now Far Western) NSW Patrol.

We are grateful that over the last triennium, the GAA provided a total of \$10,000 for administrative support for PIM. This is indicative of our partnership in ministry.

#### **PUBLICITY**

Since the last GAA, the Executive has worked hard behind the scenes to raise the profile of the PIM. Some publicity and promotional work was continued, some discontinued whilst other areas were begun. The increased support for the PIM can be traced oftentimes to the increase in promotional activity.

**Christmas Cards** have continued in production, though more for exposure of the PIM than as a money raising venture.

**Calendars.** A PIM supporter, Mr Jerry Tharapos, produced some beautiful calendars with scenes from the Northern Territory. They promote the work of the PIM and ask people to pray for



specific Patrol Teams each month.

**DVD and Video production** was well received and utilised widely by a variety of groups, patrol teams and ministry areas. The last DVD produced was in 2008. A new edition will be produced in 2010.

**Presbytery Representatives** act for PIM in nearly every Presbytery throughout Australia. They have worked well to disseminate information, prayer points and ON TRACK for the PIM in a cost effective manner. Support for the PIM through our Presbytery representatives has been a praise point. The Committee thanks all who have made a vital contribution to the work by serving in this way.

**Deputation** has continued to many organisations, churches and community groups. Most has been conducted by our padres, the remainder through committee members and willing volunteers who have a passion to see our work in the inland continue to grow. While we are pleased to see the great interest of local congregations in the work of PIM, if we were to accede to every request for deputation our patrol teams would get very little patrol work done at all!

**'Dollars for Diesel'**. The dramatic increase in fuel prices over recent years has been a significant cost to PIM. The Dollars for Diesel promotion has helped to allay some of this expense, and we are thankful for the ongoing income stream it has produced.

**Other.** There is always other promotional material available by request through the PIM office, for the use of those who may be hosting some event which highlights this ministry.

**Rally.** Each year we hold a Rally in Sydney at the time of the GAA Committee meetings in late January/early February. Over the last Triennium these have been held at Rose Bay and Manly Presbyterian Churches and at the Presbyterian Theological Centre. We thank our hosts for these occasions.

#### **THE FIELD**

The Padres are the PIM. They are the ones who carry out the ministry, and it is the role of the Committee to manage its resources so that this work continues and develops. The Committee is extremely thankful to God for the outstanding team of highly zealous and dedicated patrol workers the PIM has been given.

The work of the Patrol Teams can be very difficult. They travel vast distances, often with a lack of spiritual fellowship, through harsh extremes of climate with very primitive personal facilities. They can face great loneliness and constant uncertainty as they never know what will meet them at the Homestead door – it could be deserted, there could be an emergency or loneliness or financial hardship, a welcome or coldness, or just about anything else – they simply have to trust that God will have them in the right place at the right time and that he will give them whatever they need to live for him in that circumstance.

Nevertheless to speak to any of the Patrol teams is not to come away with an impression of suffering, but with a sense of their eagerness to bring rivers of spiritual refreshing into the desert of so many people's lives.

There have been a number of resignations since our last report. PIM lost the valued services of Mr Dennis and Mrs. Janelle Howard, Mr Cameron and Mrs. Carmel Mackenzie, Mr Andrew and Mrs. Kerri Purcell, Mr David Rodgers, Rev. Terry and Mrs Judy Sadler (retired after many years of service), Mr Henk and Mrs Henny Tiemens, Mr Dennis and Mrs Glenys Tranter and Rev. Mike and Mrs Yvonne Willsmore.

Immediately before the meeting of the 2007 GAA the PIM family gathered at Terrigal to prepare for the GAA, be involved in further training, conduct a PIM Open Day and share ministry around the Central Coast Presbytery. We are thankful to the Terrigal Pastor, Rev. Glenn Samuels and his congregation for their hospitality and hard work in organising this retreat.

The following patrols and associated ministries are currently being conducted or awaiting appointments by the PIM:

#### **WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Far South East Patrol WA (full-time) - Mr Chris and Mrs Sandra Woonings

Mid-West Patrol WA (full-time) - Mr Bert and Mrs Penny Pierce

North-West WA Patrol (Full-time) - Vacant

Kimberley/ West NT Patrol WA (50% part-time) - Vacant

South West Country Ministries (part-time) - Rev. Jim Nocher

#### **SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

John Flynn SA Patrol (full-time) - Vacant

## TASMANIA

Mackersey Regional Ministry (25% part-time) - Mr Ian and Mrs Michelene Tyson

## NEW SOUTH WALES

Far West NSW Patrol (full time) - Vacant

Darling Patrol (full-time) - Mr Stephen and Mrs Rosalie Goldsmith

## QUEENSLAND

North QLD Patrol (full-time) - Mr Roger and Mrs Margaret Crane

Central Queensland Patrol (full-time) - Vacant

South West QLD Patrol (full-time) - Mr Derek and Mrs Joan Douglas

Leichhardt Patrol (part-time) - Rev. Laurie and Mrs Gwen Peake

## VICTORIA

Mallee Patrol (25% part-time) - Rev. Rudi and Mrs Heila Schwartz

## NORTHERN TERRITORY

Central NT (75% part-time) - Vacant

NT Tablelands Patrol - (part-time) - Vacant

Darwin PIM Mission Church - Rev. Rob and Mrs Jeanette Duncanson

## FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

As we have observed the harvest field before us in the great un-churched inland of our country, we have also seen that the Lord has not only supplied workers, but also the provisions to support them. This has been remarkable considering the economic roller-coaster of the last triennium. It also gives us great confidence to continue to "Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." (Luke 10:2).

Our resources may be stretched to the limit, but our observation is that when God thrusts out the workers into his field, somehow, from somewhere he provides the resources to support that work.

As we consider the nature of the harvest field, we see that there continue to be great challenges to the people of the inland. Many places continue to suffer from severe climate conditions. Some continue to suffer from drought, or flood or fire or depressed prices for produce, and sometimes combinations of all of the above. As a generalisation, much of our inland continues in decline, and there are always stories heard of small and isolated congregations who have finally had to shut down. All these factors combine to emphasise the fact that the work of PIM is needed as much now as it has ever been.

Plans are well under way for the celebration of the Centenary of the Australian Inland Mission in 2012.

## PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE PIM PATROLS:

We are delighted with the excellent work being done by our existing patrol teams, but we are also constantly aware that if every patrol was filled, there would still be room for double the number of workers, and then they would still be spread very thinly across the inland.

We are always on the lookout for people who have a practical grasp of the Scriptures and are able to help others to know the Saviour and apply the truths of his Word with a heart of compassion firstly for their spiritual needs, but also for physical needs.

We pray that the Lord of the harvest will continue to send out workers.

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF PIM MISSION CHURCHES:** As a true successor to the Australian Inland Mission, the Committee has sought to develop ministries which will effectively and Biblically "exercise ministry to isolated and remote communities." (GAA Articles of Agreement 5(c))

## DARWIN

The Darwin congregation was re-commenced at the beginning of 2007 with the assistance of the Melton Presbyterian Church.

As the Darwin congregation has become more established the committee has considered how it can move from being a Mission Church directly under the PIM towards a more normal Presbyterian structure with supervision by a Presbytery and State Assembly.

In October 2009, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria resolved:

That the Assembly:

1. *View with favour the Gospel privilege of having pastoral oversight of the work at Darwin.*
2. *Note that the Presbytery of Melbourne West has already indicated it would be prepared to have Darwin under its supervision.*

3. *Request the Presbyterian Inland Mission Committee to :*
  - a. *Consult with the Presbytery of Melbourne West; and*
  - b. *Recommend to the 2010 General Assembly of Australia the necessary steps to place the jurisdiction of the Darwin congregation under the Presbytery of Melbourne West.*

If the proposals of our deliverance are approved, the relationship between the Presbytery of Melbourne West, PIM and the Darwin congregation would be like that which occurs in most of our State Churches except that PIM would fulfil the role taken by the State Home Missions Committee.

The PIM has had a significant outlay of \$620,000 to purchase a manse in Darwin and are grateful for donations given so far. There is still \$380,000 owing, and any further donations for this would be very gratefully received.

#### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

In the last three years we have also bought a church property at Mt Magnet (WA) from the Anglican Church of Australia. We bought this at very favourable terms as they were keen to see some gospel witness continue in what would otherwise be an area nearly the size of Victoria virtually without ministry. They also gave us a bonus property at Meekatharra in the deal. We currently have small meetings at Mt Magnet, led by Mr Bert Pierce and are looking at further ways to use these properties effectively.

In late 2009, under the leadership of Mr Chris Woonings, we also began a congregation in Albany (WA) in conjunction with the Presbytery of WA. Though very new, this congregation has had a very encouraging start. It has been adopted as a congregation of the Presbytery of Western Australia.

#### OTHER

There are still many areas which are far from any Presbyterian congregation and where there is little evangelical witness, let alone anything which could be described as Reformed or Presbyterian. In recent times there have been great influxes of people into some of the Northern areas due to the increase in mining activity. This has generally not been matched by any missionary outreach by any of the major denominations.

Places such as Kalgoorlie, Alice Springs, Broome and Derby come to mind as possible areas for future PIM churches. The Executive is currently exploring the possibility of establishing a church in Alice Springs within the next triennium.

Also, there may be other existing Presbyterian congregations in remote and isolated areas which struggle for a variety of reasons and may present opportunities for the placement of part-time home missionary appointments that could be combined with PIM ministries. We should be open to this possibility.

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF PIM VISION 21:** The Committee has resolved to work in a wide range of ancillary ministries to complement the work of the patrols. We continue to work toward the fulfilment of as many of these as possible.

Let us pray, give, go, work together and sacrifice that the gospel of grace will go forth further in the Outback in the future, than in the past.

Sincere thanks go to the church for its support by prayer and giving. We are very encouraged as we view the prospects for the continued growth and development of this unique ministry.

R.D. DUNCANSON, Convener.  
S.M. BONNINGTON, Superintendent.

### PRESBYTERIAN INLAND MISSION ADDENDUM

#### **Centenary Celebrations 2012:**

The Australian Inland Mission (AIM) was an initiative of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, held 26 September 1912, with the Rev. John Flynn taking a key role in its implementation as Superintendent. Since 1977, the work of the AIM has been carried forward by Frontier Services (through the Uniting Church) and the Presbyterian Inland Mission (through the Presbyterian Church).

The Centenary of the AIM will occur on 26 September 2012.

Both Frontier Services (successor to the Australian Inland Mission within the Uniting

Church of Australia) and the Presbyterian Inland Mission (successor to the Australian Inland Mission within the Presbyterian Church of Australia), will commemorate this centenary in many ways, and we have agreed to have one joint celebration in Melbourne on the 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2012 to mark the inauguration date.

We hope that this event will have a wide public interest and impact. The evening will have presentations on the history, present work and future directions of the AIM and its successor organizations.

There are very few places with a large enough capacity for our celebration in the heart of Melbourne. At this stage the Dallas Brookes Centre (capacity 2000) seems to be the only venue which meets the criteria.

Many other events are also planned for 2012. These will include a high quality pictorial/historical book, Bus Tours to different Inland historical sites, commemorative stamps and coins and we encourage local celebrations.

During these special celebrations, the greatest commemoration would be sending out of new patrol teams into the harvest field so that the work of the Lord's Kingdom would advance beyond what we have ever seen in this part of His world.

R.S. DUNCANSON, Convener.

### **PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION**

It gives us great pleasure to present this Report of the Presbyterian Women's Association of Australia. In doing so, we give all honour and glory to God, our Heavenly Father for leading and guiding us throughout our term in office

At the PWA of Australia Federal Conference held in Scots Church Sydney on 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2007 Queensland members of the PWA were installed as the Federal Executive for the next three years.

The Officers duly elected were:-

President	Mrs Heather Ross	Senior Vice President	Mrs Ailsa Kelly
Secretary	Mrs Betty Gadsby	Treasurer	Miss Beth Knowles

The Federal Executive met regularly bi-monthly till 2010 and from then on monthly. Our thanks to Mrs Heather Ross, who has diligently led our meetings and been a great support to the Office Bearers. Mrs Ross opened each meeting with a short devotional, each of which was very thought provoking and these were printed in full in our Minutes. Our text for the three years was "*put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity*" *Colossians 3.14*.

It had been decided at the Federal Conference 2007 that the PWA goods would remain in New South Wales. Mrs Jennifer Blake was installed into the position of PWA of Australia Badge Secretary at that Conference and has worked diligently. She has kept in close touch with the Executive. Thank you Jennifer!

Our thanks to all State Secretaries who have been faithful in sending their Minutes and Newsletters to the Federal Executive. Members of the Executive reported on them at our meetings, and their reports were then printed in the minutes.

It has been interesting to read of the ways the ladies of the different states work to serve their Lord. We commend each state unit for the work they are doing in their part of God's vineyard, to bring the gospel to others and to support each other with love and friendship. We encourage all PWA ladies throughout the states to continue serving God through their local branches and to pray for the PWA of Australia Federal Executive as they unite all the state units together.

The membership of local PWA Branches is decreasing and quite a few Branches have closed down. This matter has been discussed in all States.

Our President Mrs Ross has had the opportunity during her three years, as President to visit all the States, excepting Victoria, which, we are sad to say has not affiliated with the PWA of Australia. She has been touched by the hospitality love and fellowship offered to her. Thank you to all the State Units for this.

We would like to thank our Secretary Mrs Betty Gadsby for her work and our Treasurer Miss Beth Knowles who has been very diligent in keeping our books balanced. To all the other ladies of the Executive, we say "thank-you" for their attendance and thoughts and help during the three years.

We thank God that the ladies of Western Australia agreed to be the next Federal Executive and assure them of our prayers as they continue the work of the Presbyterian Women's Association of Australia. We also remember all past Executive members.

May God's blessing be on all the members of the PWA of Australia and may we continue to work for the furtherance of the Lord's Kingdom. We'd like to close with these words from Joshua 1 verse 9:

*"Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go".*

**PWA OF A IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA:** The WA Unit is a small but active group of women supporting the wider ministry of the PCWA. At this stage its five branches are located only in metropolitan congregations but it is hoped that as the ministry of the PIM has led to a new congregation in Albany this will also open up opportunities to extend the work of the PWA. Our focus is on providing opportunities for training and for good Bible teaching and fellowship for the women of our churches whether PWA members or not. The Time of Encouragement for Women (May 2009), an International Day (May 2010), combined with speakers at our regular General Meetings and the Branch At Homes have been very encouraging. The WA State Unit will take on the Federal Executive responsibilities in September for only the 2<sup>nd</sup> time since 1977.

**PWA OF A IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA:** PWA in South Australia, with its two presbyteries has nine, active branches. Annual Conferences, Thanksgiving Days and Mission Rallies are well attended. The outreach through Care and Concern, Christian Education and PWMU Standing Committees has provided effective support for young and old, at home and abroad. A regular newsletter has been compiled and distributed to share news and ideas between members. Although small in number, the branches have ensured the PWA network continues to function.

**PWA OF A IN TASMANIA:** Our State Executive meetings are held at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Launceston four times a year. There are three major state gatherings a year – State Conference. Missionary Rally and State Camp: We varied our venues for our Conferences between Montrose, Hobart and Launceston. The State Camp in 2007 was the last one held at "CIARA" before its sale. The latest one (2009) was held at Ulverstone and was very successful and the site is booked again for 2010.

**PWA OF A IN NEW SOUTH WALES:** The PWA in New South Wales has been blessed with the leadership of two dedicated State Presidents – Mrs Evelyn Mill who completed a second term as President in July 2009 and Mrs Roslyn Abbey the State President since July 2009. In 2009 SPAN publication was modernised, and the new format was appreciated by subscribers. Membership of the PWA is a concern and at the end of 2009 the numbers had been reduced to 2091 in 146 Branches compared to 2260 and 154 branches at the end on 2007 – a reduction of 169 members. At the 2009 Annual Conference a Notice of Motion was received from the Macquarie Chapel PWA Branch for a review of the PWA throughout the State. A Committee of 10 members was appointed with the State President, Secretary and Treasurer as Ex-Officio Members. A report and recommendations from the Review Committee will be presented at the State Conference to be held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2010.

**PWA OF A IN QUEENSLAND:** The President and members of the State Council of PWA of A (Qld Unit) give thanks to God for his mercies over the past three years. The Federal Executive of the PWA of A has been domiciled in Queensland for those three years. Each year the Annual Communion and Dedication Service is held in February and the Annual Meeting and Conference in June. The branches throughout the State continue to give generously to the Burning Bush Appeal, which goes to a different aspect of the Church each year. The PWMU, which is a Standing Committee of PWA continues to maintain contact with our missionaries at home and abroad and keeps the branches informed about them. The Far Northern PWA holds a camp at Tinaroo each year. A Luncheon is held every second year for the students studying for the Ministry and a gift voucher is given to a selected student.

BETTY GADSBY, Federal Secretary.

## **PUBLIC WORSHIP AND AIDS TO DEVOTION**

The work of the Public Worship and Aids to Devotion Committee has continued steadily since the last meeting of the General Assembly. With the growing availability of the Internet, as

well as the ease of access to aids and resources that it provides, we have continued to publish our resource materials online. This continues to make materials available to a wide range of people within our church. We also believe that documents in electronic format make it easy for those who use them to re-format them into their own preferred style, most suitable to their congregation. Hard copies of documents continue to be available for those who do not have internet access or who prefer them in book form.

Mike Wharton maintains the Committee's website, <http://www.pwad.presbyterian.org.au/>. The website has been completely rebuilt since the last meeting of the General Assembly and continues to be developed. We are seeking to make this website a main point of contact where the Committee can place its own material as well as provide users with links to other useful resources that can be used to aid the leader.

**Worship!** and **Pray!** are still available online. These publications can be viewed online and can be downloaded by registered users of the PWAD website. Registration to the PWAD website is free, and can be requested from the website administrator. On approval, registered users can access a range of resources, and are also given access to a discussion forum where various aspects of ministry can be discussed. This Forum is not made public to avoid abuse.

**Rejoice! Melody Line** and **Rejoice! Words Only** remain the main books selling at the moment.

Although the Committee made the decision to update and re-publish the **Rejoice! HymnBase Computer program**, this has not been possible to date due to issues regarding copyright. To provide a system that is more widely accessible (to Mac users as well as Windows users) the Committee has now decided to develop the tools that former **Rejoice! HymnBase** offered, as a web-based system. This will make the tools available independent of computer platform. This site will be subscription-based. It is hoped that by the time we meet for General Assembly in September 2010 this site will be ready to launch.

The Committee continues to recommend the use of backing music CDs for many of the Rejoice! Hymns. The hymn backing tracks have been professionally produced under the name of **Psalm Tree Music**. Our website provides a link to this resource - <http://www.mackaypc.org.au/pages/psalm-tree.php>

The Committee would also like to provide the resource of tried and tested new tunes for some of the Rejoice! hymns where the set tune is difficult to sing. We believe that a new lease of life can be injected into some of the fine old hymns no longer sung, with a new or more contemporary tune. This will be achieved by adding a page to our website listing good new tunes, or other good hymns and songs which congregations have found helpful, and invite ministers and people within our church to add material (including the source) to the list through the webmaster.

Mark Beavan and his wife Fiona continue to provide a service to the Committee as Hymnbook distributor and are very capably filling this role for us.

The Committee, through the services of one of its members, Rev. Stuart Andrews, is now providing a **Bible Reading Resource** to complement its other resources. Stuart prepared this resource for his own congregation and has now made it available to the wider church. It takes the form of Bible reading notes, plus a Bible reading calendar and includes tips for reading the Bible for yourself over a nominated period of time. It is called 'Bible Reading Calendar - Read the Bible Through In One, Two or Three Years'. This is available via a link from the PWAD Website.

At our February 2009 meeting we accepted Rev. Russell van Delden's resignation with regret and thank him for his years of service on the Committee. Ministry commitments led to this decision. Rev. Mike Wharton was elected as Acting Convener at this meeting.

The Committee nominates the following to serve on the Committee:-

<b>NSW</b>	Stuart Andrews, Andrew Unwin, Trevor Cheetham, Johnnie Li, David Stone
<b>VIC</b>	Philip Mercer, John Woodward
<b>QLD</b>	Judith Brown, John Langbridge
<b>WA</b>	Keith Morris
<b>SA</b>	Stefan Slucki
<b>TAS</b>	Greg Munro
<b>Convener</b>	Rev. Mike Wharton

M.A. WHARTON, Convener.

## RECEPTION OF MINISTERS

As an Assembly Committee, we meet annually, together with all Standing Committees, in the first week of February. The Committee continues to deal with numbers of applicants, as the Report below indicates. The members of the Committee are committed to the task which the Assembly has entrusted to them, and as the Convener, I am very grateful for their support and willingness to process the applications.

### A. FAREWELLS AND WELCOMES:

Since the last meeting of the General Assembly, we have said farewell and thanked the following Committee member -

\* Rev. Dr John Davis (Former Principal of the Presbyterian Theological Centre, New South Wales)

\* Rev. Rodney Waterhouse (Tasmania)

\* Rev. Bob Thomas (Former Moderator General)

We certainly valued their contributions and members of the Committee thank them for serving the Lord through this Committee.

We welcomed:

Rev. Robert Benn (Moderator General)

Rev. Dr Bruce Winter (Principal of the Queensland Theological Hall)

Rev. Bruce Gorton (New South Wales)

Rev. Dr Ian Smith (Principal of the Presbyterian Theological Centre, New South Wales)

Elder Jim Park

As is the task of this Committee, we have dealt with many applications. There have also been a number of inquiries, and a lot of these do not proceed with a formal application.

**1. Applicants who have signed the Formula.** The following ministers whose applications were before the 2007 (or earlier) meeting of the General Assembly of Australia have completed all requirements and have signed the Formula:

- Rev. Suk Won Kim (Presbytery of Sydney, 28/02/2010)
- Rev. Dr Felix Chung (Presbytery of Melbourne East, 16/04/2008)
- Rev. Brian Harvey (Presbytery of Maroonah, 02/03/2010)
- Rev. Alan Radloff (Presbytery of Mowbray, 04/12/2007)
- Rev. Dr Beno Zuiddam (Presbytery of Bass, 06/11/2007)
- Rev. Michael Deal (Presbytery of Hastings, (13/12/2007)
- Rev. Richard Wilson (Presbytery of Mowbray, (05/02'2008)
- Rev. Ted Yoon (Presbytery of Mowbray, 11/04/2008)
- Rev. Dr Bruce Winter (Presbytery of Brisbane 25/01/2008)

**2. Applications withdrawn or lapsed** The following applications which were before the 2007 Assembly, have been withdrawn, or have lapsed:

- Rev. Richard Jock - has not responded to correspondence. The Committee considers the application as having lapsed.
- Rev. Tut Wan Yoa - has not responded to correspondence. The Committee considers the application as having lapsed.
- Rev. Philip Suh - no longer working within the PCA. The Committee considers his application as having lapsed.
- Rev. Seong Mo Byun - withdrew his application.

**3. Applicant requesting more time.** Rev. George Bitar from Lebanon had to escape to the United States with his family, because of death threats to his life. He is currently a minister to an Arabic Congregation there, and requests more time to prayerfully consider his position and future. It is recommended that the Assembly approve an extension of time to the end of 2011.

**4. Applicants Received** Applications by the following ministers have been approved under Clause 12 of the Regulations (minister under call):-

- Rev. YanhHa (Teddy) Woo (Presbytery of Brisbane, signed Formula 02/02/2010)

**5. Studies completed (or not required) but Formula not signed:** The following minister whose application was before the 2007 meeting of the General Assembly of Australia has

completed all requirements, but has not as yet signed the Formula:

- Rev. Choul Yat

**6. Studies completed (or not required) but Formula not signed and recommended to be received** - (see confidential white paper):

- Rev. Wilson Fernandes
- Rev. Sung Tae Kim
- Rev. Whan Gi Jung
- Rev. Ashraf Mehani
- Rev. Campbell Markham

**7. Studies not completed therefore the Formula not signed and recommended to be received** - (see confidential white paper):

- Rev. Renier van der Klashorst
- Rev. Joung Yeol Kim
- Rev. Gerhard Kock
- Rev. Martin Spadaro

**8. Negative Recommendations:** Committee policy is as follows: if the Committee makes a negative recommendation about a particular applicant then he will be advised of his right to petition. The Committee has not approved the applications of the following -

- i) Rev. Peter Cass (Presbytery of Darling Downs - Application has never come before this Assembly)
- ii) Rev. Robert Finster re-applied after not being recommended previously (as reported at the 2007 Assembly). However the Committee resolved not to re-consider the application.

**9. The help of Presbyteries sought:** To avoid unnecessary delays in the processing of applications and to ensure that Presbyteries fulfill their rightful responsibilities, the Committee again requests Presbyteries to:-

- a. obtain a recent Certificate of Status and Academic Transcripts of tertiary study completed by applicants, attaching them to the Application Form, and then forwarding these on to the Committee.
- b. consider carefully such Certificates of Status (or the absence of them) when they process applications, and to contact referees.
- c. ensure that the Applicant signs and returns the Duty of Care Statement, and also obtains an Australian Federal Police clearance check.
- d. assist Applicants from overseas in obtaining Permanent Residency.
- e. fulfill their rightful duty in assessing the theological, spiritual, practical and moral suitability of applicants for the ministry within the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

**10. The Committee does all to fulfill its Duty of Care:** Members of the Assembly can be assured that the Committee takes its Duty of Care very seriously, and in line with the 2007 Assembly decision, the following are required from all applicants:-

- a. An Australian Federal Police clearance
- b. The signing of the Duty of Care Statement

**11. Seek approval for an additional Clause in the Regulations:** The Committee has found that it needs personnel with certain expertise, often not able to be determined or provided by the method the GAA uses for the election of Committee members. At the 2010 Standing Committee Meeting, it was agreed that the Committee seek approval from the 2010 General Assembly of Australia for an additional Clause (d) to be added to Regulation 10.14.2:-

- (d) The Committee may appoint up to two further members as needed. These members can be ministers, elders or communicant members of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

**12. Nominations for the Committee.** The Committee, following the schema set down in the regulations, nominates to the Assembly the following, bearing in mind that the Assembly officers, the Principals of the three recognized Theological Halls and the Convener of the College Committee are ex-officio members:-

- |      |                      |
|------|----------------------|
| W.A. | Rev. Paul Bloomfield |
| S.A. | Rev. Allan Clarkson  |
| Tas  | Mr A. David Turner   |
| Qld  | Rev. Guido Kettniss  |



Vic.           Rev. Dr Greg Goswell  
NSW           Rev. Bruce Gorton  
                Mr Ji Won Park  
                Mr Neville Taylor

G. KETTNISS, Convener.

## **RELATIONS WITH OTHER CHURCHES**

During this triennium fruitful contacts have been made with other churches overseas, and especially with those in the orbit of the World Reformed Fellowship (WRF). It has continued to grow and now over forty-nine denominations are connected with it, together with institutions and individual members. Useful contacts, often at a local level, have been made with Christian Reformed churches and the other smaller Presbyterian churches in Australia.

The fourth General Assembly of the WRF was held in Edinburgh, Scotland, in April of 2010, and that meeting resulted in further consolidation of its activities. The PCA was represented by the Moderator General, Rev. Robert Benn, Drs Allan and Mairi Harman, Dr Bob Thomas and Mrs Alison Thomas were also present. The convener, Dr Allan Harman, having served on the executive board since 2006, has been re-elected for another four-year term. He also continues to serve as the secretary of the Theological Commission of the WRF. During the last four years this Commission has worked hard to formulate a statement of Reformed teaching for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The statement was presented to the Assembly, which decided to call for comments or suggestions on it, these to be in by the end of October this year. After that the Commission will meet to finalise the statement that can be found on the WRF web site ([www.wrf.org](http://www.wrf.org)).

The WRF differs from some of the other inter-church bodies (including the International Council of Reformed Churches) in that it accepts into membership not only denominations but local congregations, institutions, and individuals. Also, Anglicans committed to the Thirty Nine Articles, or Congregationalists holding to the Savoy Declaration, Reformed Baptists adhering to the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, are also able to join. At the General Assembly Archbishop Henry Orombi of Nigeria spoke excellently and was elected to the executive board. This creates a clear link with the conservative Anglicans involved with the Global Anglican Conference (GAFCON).

It is very probable that the executive of the WRF could meet in Australia in 2012. Over the past few years it has met in Sao Paulo, Seoul, Jakarta, and Edinburgh. The cost of travel to Australia will be considerable, and so the committee is asking for a grant from the GAA towards the cost of accommodation and meals of \$AUD15,000. As many of the executive members are prominent preachers and lecturers, the opportunity will be taken to utilise their gifts in appropriate ways while here in Australia, especially in connection with our theological colleges.

The committee recommends that we continue to support the work of the WRF by contributing \$AUD3,000 annually. The recommendation is also made that the cost of the convener's attendance at the annual meeting of the WRF executive continues to be paid.

Discussions have taken place with the APWM Committee over the respective regulations of the two committees. Some ambiguity existed and it was suggested that the APWM Committee 'establish and maintain partner relationships with overseas churches with the approval of the Committee on Relations with Other Churches' and that where this happens liaison with the overseas church will be the responsibility of the APWM Committee. Agreement is sought for the alteration to the committee's regulations.

The committee was asked by the last GAA to establish contact with the Synod of the Reformed Church in South Africa (GKSA), especially because members of this church are migrating to Australia in considerable numbers. Dr Allan Harman and Rev. Robert Benn have both had discussions, and the convener of the GKSA's Committee on Ecumenical Affairs, Dr Henk Stoker, will, DV, be attending the GAA in September.

Communications have been received from the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, and the newly created Presbyterian Church of Tanzania. Further contact will be initiated with these churches, which has the prospect of strengthening our links with Presbyterian churches in Africa.

Another matter that the committee discussed concerns invitations to the meetings of the General Assembly. Often different committees will suggest the names of visitors whom they have invited, but no coordination of these invitations takes place. This committee will be happy to

assume the coordination role and seeks authorisation for this to happen.

A.M. HARMAN, Convener.

## RETURNS TO REMITS

1. **Overture (ii) from the Presbytery of Sydney South to amend Article 2.1 of the Articles of Agreement concerning the qualifications for the eldership.**  
**2 State Assemblies approved:** Tasmania, Western Australia.  
**3 State Assemblies disapproved:** New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria  
**12 presbyteries approved:** Bass, Darling Downs, Derwent, Flinders, Gippsland, Illawarra, Kilnoorat, Maroondah, Melbourne North, Moree, Penola, Sydney South.  
**15 presbyteries disapproved:** Ballarat, Brisbane, Canberra, Central Coast, Central Tablelands (Bathurst), Central West (Dubbo), Central Queensland, Hunter, Melbourne West, Mid North Coast (Hastings), New England, Riverina (Murrumbidgee), Sydney North, Torrens, Wagga Wagga.  
**1 presbytery made a non-committal response:** Sydney.
2. **Overture (v) from the College Committee concerning the administration of the Sacraments by elders and home missionaries.**  
**4 State Assemblies approved:** New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania, Western Australia.  
**1 State Assembly disapproved:** Victoria.  
**21 presbyteries approved:** Bass, Canberra, Brisbane, Central Tablelands (Bathurst), Central West (Dubbo), Darling Downs, Flinders, Gippsland, Hunter, Kilnoorat, Melbourne North, Mid North Coast (Hastings), Moree, Mowbray, Penola, Riverina (Murrumbidgee), Sydney, Sydney North, Sydney South, Torrens, Wagga Wagga.  
**3 presbyteries disapproved:** Ballarat, Derwent, Melbourne West.

PAUL LOGAN, Clerk of Assembly.

## TRUSTEES

In accordance with the Trust Deed of The Presbyterian Church of Australia dated September 1985 "The Trustees shall consist of persons who for the time being hold office as the Trustees of The Presbyterian Church (New South Wales) Property Trust being a body corporate of that name established by The Presbyterian Church (New South Wales) Property Trust Act 1936 of the State of New South Wales".

The Trustees currently comprise Messrs. J.R. Falls, R.P. Dunlop, R.D. Parker, J.M. Rolland, I.L. Wallace and Miss P.M. Watts, Rev. K.R. Boulden, B.M. Meller, M.S. Oates, Rev. Dr P.B. Paul, Rev. D.M. Seaman and J.E.D. Seaton. Mr J.R. Falls is Chairman of Trustees. Mr W.D. Richards (General Manager of The Presbyterian Church in the State of New South Wales) is Secretary to the Trustees.

The Trustees report that they have met on thirteen occasions since the last Session of the General Assembly of Australia, namely; during 2007 on 27 August; during 2008 on 28 April, 26 May, 23 June, 28 July, 27 October, and 1 December; during 2009 on 23 March, 25 May, 28 September, and 7 December; and during 2010 on 19 April and 24 May. Meetings are held, as business requires, at the Presbyterian Church New South Wales offices, Level 1, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills. Business dealt with by the Trustees during the period includes:-

- (a) Purchase of a church property at Mt Magnet WA for Presbyterian Inland Mission;
- (b) Lease of church property at Meekathara WA for Presbyterian Inland Mission;
- (c) Monitoring of governance and financial controls for the funding of mission work in Bangladesh by APWM – Mission partners;
- (d) Bequests notified:
  - (i) Laura Patricia Brackenbury for Presbyterian Inland Mission;
  - (ii) Raymond Ernest Dixon for APWM – Mission Partners;
  - (iii) Alice Jean Keir for Presbyterian Inland Mission;
  - (iv) Elizabeth Margaret Lewis for the Presbyterian Church of Australia

(v) Dulcie Gertrude Wagner for Presbyterian Inland Mission.

The NSW Church Office in Sydney arranges, on behalf of the Trustees for the Presbyterian Church of Australia, appropriate insurance cover to protect the insurable assets and liabilities of the federal body within the insurance programme for The Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales.

J.R. FALLS, Chairman.

## **WESTERN AUSTRALIAN REPORT TO ASSEMBLY UNDER ARTICLE 9.1**

For some years now, Western Australia has been experiencing massive population growth, fuelled largely by the mining boom in the North West. While the population of the rural mining areas has grown, the growth has also been reflected in the Perth metropolitan area, as many of the mining operations are fly-in, fly out.

The mining boom has brought prosperity, but also great need. Housing and general living prices in Perth have soared, families have experienced separation because of fly-in, fly-out schedules, and with the growth in wealth has come a lowering of moral values in many areas.

The PCWA is small in numbers, but is endeavouring to provide for the spiritual needs of this rapidly increasing population, as well as its traditional members.

A new congregation has been established at Albany, in the south-west. This followed the establishment of a PIM patrol in that area. (A separate PIM report has full details). The congregation is growing, and is now in the position to support a home missionary. Rev. Leon Kruger (from the GKSA “- Reformed Church of South Africa) will join the congregation later this year. The congregation is also investigating the possibility of purchasing the vacant Church of Christ for worship services – which are currently being held in a school hall.

An outreach congregation has been established at Southern River – a newly established Perth suburb.

Following the launch of the Moderator-General’s appeal for a church plant, work is moving forward with a view to establishing a congregation in the Rockingham area, in Perth’s developing south. There are a number of present and potential worshippers living in this area.

A congregation was established at Mandurah several years ago, following a petition to Presbytery, and a congregation in Perth’s north has petitioned the Presbytery to also join the PCWA.

Sadly, the Living Hope congregation was disbanded last year.

Twice each year, the General Assembly has been holding Planning days, where major issues have been discussed, and proposals put forward for planning initiatives. Clearly, the major issue facing the PCWA was a severe shortage of leaders. As a result, a programme of promoting elder and deacon awareness, training and development has been initiated. The Presbytery has also been active in broadening its meetings by providing more opportunities for fellowship and development.

The generosity of the College Committee, and the Christian Education and Nurture Committees in providing experienced people to come to Perth and assist in leadership development is greatly appreciated. As well, training assistance has been available for selected Youth leaders, and this has enabled us to start to increase our Youth Training opportunities. The Whitfords congregation in particular is developing its youth activities, and there is currently a great need to advance this work to other congregations.

A School of Theology, initially based on the South Australian PREZRA concept, has been established by the TEC, and is now attracting solid attendance, and achieving excellent results. We continue to work with Trinity College, Perth, for higher learning.

We are looking at the feasibility of being involved in Christian Education for children. Although the establishment of a Christian School may be beyond our means, we are also looking at any opportunities which may be available to partner with existing schools.

Braemar Presbyterian Care continues to provide high standards of care for the aged, and recently was awarded the “Organisation” and “Employee” awards at the ACSWA “Excellence in Care” annual awards. Braemar is planning to extend services into Community Care in the future. The Board has just authorized purchase of land for future development.

It needs to be said that for some time now the workload for ministers and elders is

extremely high, leave coverage for ministers is often difficult to schedule, and realistically the workloads should not continue at present levels. For this reason, any assistance in this area, whether for very short, or longer terms, is always greatly appreciated.

We believe there is a great need in Western Australia and particularly in the Perth metropolitan area for the advancement of the gospel message. There are indications that increasing numbers of people are seeking to hear the Bible preached clearly and unapologetically. As you will see in the attached table, we are very small, and that presents a major dilemma. Clearly there is a need to expand and grow; but there is also a need to consolidate our existing congregations. We have neither the human or financial resources at this time to do both.

Financially the PCWA is sound, although we are greatly restricted in development. We do not have large investment portfolios to fund works, and are reliant on the generosity of the larger states to move forward.

The attached table shows our current situation in terms of ministers, elders and congregations. In order to both consolidate, and to take advantage of the great opportunities to move forward, our greatest needs are in the areas of:-

- continued assistance in training and development of leaders at all levels;
- a wider awareness of the unique situation in Western Australia; and
- targeted financial support in areas which would produce the most effective results.

<b>Congregation</b>	<b>Communicants</b>	<b>Adherents</b>	<b>Child/Yth</b>	<b>Minister</b>	<b>No. Elders (ex Assessors)</b>
<b>Bicton</b>	44	31	5	Vacant	2
<b>Fremantle</b>	70	20	25	F/T	6
<b>Peppermint Grove</b>	52	20	11	F/T	2
<b>Whitfords</b>	129	34	40	HM	5
<b>Bassendean</b>	22	37	7	F/T	2
<b>Leederville</b>	26	31	12	HM	1
<b>Korean</b>	93	22	28	HM	1
<b>Peel</b>	15	10	6	Voluntary	-
<b>Albany</b>	10	30	13	HM	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>3 full time 4 HM (F/T) 2 vacant 2 retired 1 Chaplain</b>	<b>19</b>

The Western Australian church is small but we are thankful for the blessings and growth that have been forthcoming. The workers in WA are very few, most of whom have faithfully served in multiple capacities for many years. Some of our congregations are quickly ageing but we are thankful for the growth in young people and young adults in some congregations. We need new ministers, elders and financial support to continue the work. We strongly believe that any investment in the PCWA will have sound and clearly demonstrable results.

Yours in Christ,  
WA (Bill) MacRae, **Moderator**

# COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY MINUTES

## 1. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

### Minutes of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held on Thursday 31 January 2008

1. **Constitute:** At Surry Hills and within Committee Room No. 5, Presbyterian Church Offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills, N.S.W., on Thursday 31 January, 2008 at 2.00 p.m. the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia met and was constituted with the reading of scripture and prayer by the Moderator-General, the Rt Rev. R.P.F. Benn.

2. **Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received from the Very Rev. M.J.K. Ramage, the Rev. K.D. Allen, Messrs G. Bell and I. Downes.

3. **Minutes authorizing the Commission to deal with certain matters relating to Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell:** The Clerk tabled Min. (26)(7), (50) and (53) of the 24 July, 2007 special meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia authorizing the Commission of Assembly to receive de novo a petition from Mr Kingsley Davidson and to receive a report of a special committee appointed to investigate matters at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, Victoria.

4. **Business Committee:** The Rev. P.J. Barson presented the report of the Business Committee on the business of the Commission.

The report was received.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) Declare speeches to be limited as follows:
  - Convener of Committee speaking to report..... 15 minutes
  - All other speakers..... 5 minutes
  - Petitioners ..... 15 minutes
- (2) Declare that the total time allowed for questions during the presentation of the report and the petition be limited to 30 minutes, such time to be subject to extension by resolution of the Commission.
- (3) Declare that video and/or audio recording of Commission business shall not be permitted for the purposes of reproduction or broadcasting without the express permission of the Commission.
- (4) Approve the order of business as follows:
  - Constitute
  - Apologies
  - Minutes of July 2007 special meeting of the GAA authorizing the Commission
  - Report of Business Committee
  - Communication (i) from the session at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, Victoria
  - Communication (ii) from the Presbytery of Melbourne East, Victoria
  - Petition from Mr Kingsley Davidson
  - Report of Camberwell Committee
  - Resumed debate on the petition of Mr Kingsley Davidson
  - Close

5. **Time to read papers:** It was moved, seconded and agreed that members of the Commission be allowed 30 minutes to read the business papers.

6. **Suspension of Standing Orders:** It was moved, seconded and agreed that sufficient of standing orders be suspended to allow motions and amendments to be dealt with by

the Commission without notice.

**7. Private Sitting:** It was moved, seconded and agreed that the Commission of Assembly sit in private.

**8. Advisers and others present during the hearing of the Petition:** It was moved, seconded and agreed that the Rev. N. Chambers, adviser to Mr Kingsley Davidson, and Mrs. M. Davidson be allowed to remain in the meeting of the Commission during the hearing of the petition of Mr Kingsley Davidson.

**9. Communication (i):** A communication was received from the Session Clerk of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, Victoria, acknowledging the receipt of a copy of the petition of Mr Kingsley Davidson lodged with the Commission of Assembly of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, stating that the session continues to stand by its 'Detailed Statement' issued to the Presbytery of Melbourne East in early 2006 in response to Mr Davidson's first petition, being a narrative of the handling by the session of the original complaint brought by Mr Davidson against Mr Chris Venn.

**10. Communication (ii):** A communication was received from the Clerk of the Presbytery of Melbourne East, Victoria, enclosing a copy of the original petition of Mr K. Davidson together with accompanying documents.

**11. Petition:** A petition was received from Mr K. Davidson concerning an elder and the session at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, Victoria. Mr Kingsley Davidson appeared as the petitioner. Questions were asked of the petitioner. The debate was adjourned (Min. 18).

**12. Camberwell Committee:** The Rev. C.D. Balzer presented the report of the Committee appointed to investigate the public rumour involving Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, Victoria.

**13. Others present during hearing of the Report:** It was moved, seconded and agreed that the Commission of Assembly allow the Rev. J. McClean, a member of the Camberwell Committee, to remain in the Commission meeting during the presentation of and discussion on the report of the Camberwell Committee.

**14. Camberwell Committee:** The report of the Camberwell Committee was received. Questions were asked of the Convener of the Committee. The Moderator was asked whether the responses of Elder Chris Venn to the questions asked by the Committee could be provided to the Commission of Assembly. The Moderator ruled that the responses of Elder Chris Venn to the questions asked by the Camberwell Committee should not be provided to the Commission of Assembly. Clause (1) was approved. The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved: That the Commission of Assembly: Counsel the Session and members of Trinity Camberwell to avoid criticizing people who have left Trinity Camberwell or declare themselves to be disaffected from the 'Fellowship', and especially to avoid such criticisms expressed to the family members or friends of such people. The motion was seconded. The Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas moved as an amendment: That the Commission of Assembly: Delete the word 'counsel' and insert the word 'instruct'. The amendment was seconded and approved. The Rev. B.M. Meller moved as an amendment: That the Commission of Assembly: Insert the following biblical references at the end of the clause (Gal. 5:15; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8).

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved:

- (2) Instruct the Session and members of Trinity Camberwell to avoid criticizing people who have left Trinity Camberwell or declare themselves to be disaffected from the 'Fellowship', and especially to avoid such criticism expressed to the family members or friends of such people (Gal. 5:15; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8).

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Declare to the Session and congregation of Trinity Camberwell that the following practices are inappropriate and to be avoided:

- (a) heavy shepherding with elders exercising too dominant a role in the personal lives of individuals and families;
- (b) intrusive questioning about personal matters by all people exercising a leadership function in the congregation;
- (c) insisting that people should be in unity with their elder in all matters;
- (d) shunning or intentionally avoiding contact with people through a fear of defilement or with people who are deemed to have broken unity;
- (e) insisting on constant confession of sins as a source of assurance of salvation;
- (f) insisting on public confession of personal sins in groups or to an elder or other leader;
- (g) saying or suggesting that people are under a rebellious spirit, a spirit of witchcraft, or the generational curses brought about by Freemasonry.

The motion was seconded.

Mr N. Hughes moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Replace the word 'Declare' with the word 'Instruct'.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Delete the words 'inappropriate and to be avoided' and insert the following 'unscriptural, unacceptable and therefore not to be practised'.

The amendment was seconded.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved as an amendment to the amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Delete the word 'unscriptural'.

The amendment to the amendment was approved.

The Rev. B.M. Meller moved as an amendment to the amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Insert the word 'inappropriate' before the word 'unacceptable' so that it would read 'inappropriate, unacceptable and therefore not to be practised'.

The amendment to the amendment was seconded and approved.

The Rev. B.M. Meller moved as an amendment to the amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Delete the words 'all people' and insert the following 'any person or persons'.

The amendment to the amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved as follows:

- (3) Instruct the Session and congregation of Trinity Camberwell that the following practices are inappropriate, unacceptable and therefore not to be practised:
  - (a) heavy shepherding with elders exercising too dominant a role in the personal lives of individuals and families;
  - (b) intrusive questioning about personal matters by any person or persons exercising a leadership function in the congregation;
  - (c) insisting that people should be in unity with their elder in all matters;
  - (d) shunning or intentionally avoiding contact with people through a fear of defilement or with people who are deemed to have broken unity;
  - (e) insisting on constant confession of sins as a source of assurance of salvation;
  - (f) insisting on public confession of personal sins in groups or to an elder or other leader;

- (g) saying or suggesting that people are under a rebellious spirit, a spirit of witchcraft, or the generational curses brought about by Freemasonry.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Urge the Session of Trinity Camberwell that any accusations of abusive behaviour against anyone in leadership in Trinity Camberwell should be dealt with carefully, fully and promptly.

The motion was seconded.

The Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Delete the word 'urge' and insert the word 'instruct', insert the words 'to ensure' after Camberwell where first appearing and delete the word 'should' and insert the word 'shall'.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment that the Commission of Assembly:

Add the following words after the word 'promptly': 'according to Rule 8:2.08 of the Code of Discipline in *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

The amendment was approved.

The motion as amended was approved as follows:

- (4) Instruct the Session of Trinity Camberwell to ensure that any accusation of abusive behaviour against anyone in leadership in Trinity Camberwell shall be dealt with carefully, fully and promptly according to Rule 8:2.08 of the Code of Discipline in *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Clause (5) was approved.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Counsel the Session of Trinity Camberwell that the conduct of groups, especially 'cell groups', should be very carefully reviewed, and that group leaders must not conduct meetings in which they confront individual members or the group as a whole with sins.

The motion was seconded.

Mr N. Hughes moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Delete the word 'counsel' and insert the word 'instruct'.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved as follows:

- (6) Instruct the Session of Trinity Camberwell that the conduct of groups, especially 'cell groups', should be very carefully reviewed, and that group leaders must not conduct meetings in which they confront individual members or the group as a whole with sins.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Instruct the Session of Trinity Camberwell (and also the congregation) that there should be no 'closed' groups meeting which in any way are associated with Trinity Presbyterian Church, that is all groups should be advertised and open for anyone to attend.

The motion was seconded.

Mr S.H. Fraser moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Add the following words after 'meeting' – 'other than in accordance with the Code of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria' and delete the words at the end of the clause 'for everyone to attend'.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved as follows:

- (7) Instruct the Session of Trinity Camberwell (and also the congregation) that there should be no 'closed' groups meeting, other than in accordance with the Code of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, which in any way are associated with Trinity Presbyterian Church, that is all groups should be advertised and open.

Clause (8) was approved.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Encourage the Minister and Session of Trinity Camberwell to promote involvement of members in



wider Christian circles such as Presbyterian Youth Victoria, the Belgrave Heights Convention, the Bible Society, Scripture Union and other inter-denominational societies.

The motion was seconded.

The Very Rev. B.H. Christian moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Insert the word 'appropriate' between 'other' and 'inter-denominational'.

The amendment was seconded and disapproved.

The motion was disapproved.

Clause (9) was approved.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

(10) Commend the Rev. Philip Mercer on the positive changes that have come about in Trinity Camberwell during his ministry there, on his faithful preaching of the Word, and encourage him to make every effort to ensure that pastoral abuses do not occur in Trinity Camberwell.

The motion was seconded.

The Rt Rev. G. Ware moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Insert the words 'continue to' between the words 'to' and 'make'.

The amendment was seconded and disapproved.

The motion was approved.

Clauses (11) and (12) were approved.

The Rev. K.D. Murray moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

(13) Require the Rev. Philip Mercer to lead the members of the Trinity Camberwell Session through a detailed course of instruction from the Bible outlining the Reformed understanding of the doctrine of justification by faith alone and the relationship between the doctrines of justification and sanctification and report to the Committee appointed under Min. 53 of the special meeting of the General Assembly of Australia held on 24 July 2007 when this has been completed.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Recommend to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria that Trinity Camberwell congregation be transferred to the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Melbourne West.

The motion was seconded.

The Rev. J.R. Irvin moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Insert the following words after 'West' – 'after appropriate consultation, for an initial period of five years'.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved as follows:

(14) Recommend to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria that Trinity Camberwell congregation be transferred to the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Melbourne West after appropriate consultation, for an initial period of five years.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Recommend to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria that there be no further distribution of the booklet *Fractured Fellowship*.

The motion was seconded.

The Rt Rev. G. Ware moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Add the following words between 'Victoria' and 'that' – 'in the interests of reconciliation'.

The amendment was seconded and disapproved.

The Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Delete the word 'distribution' and insert the word 'publication'.

The amendment was seconded and disapproved.

The Rev. J.R. Irvin moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Insert the words '(in print or electronically)' after the word 'distribution'.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved as follows:

- (15) Recommend to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria that there be no further distribution (in print or electronically) of the booklet *Fractured Fellowship*.

**15. Dissent recorded:** The Rev. J.P. Wilson recorded his dissent to clause (15) on the grounds that allegations made against the veracity of the book *Fractured Fellowship* are unsubstantiated and unfair on the reputation of the authors of that book who wrote with careful research and integrity.

The Rev. G.D. Lawry recorded his dissent to clause (15) on the grounds that:

1. There is no credible evidence against the veracity of the book *Fractured Fellowship*.
2. The booklet is an important historical statement of, and gives voice to, the concerns of the victims of the Fellowship.
3. The passing of the resolution will not promote but rather hinder reconciliation within the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

The Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas and the Rt Rev. G. Ware also recorded their dissent against clause (15).

**16. Camberwell Committee Continued:** The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (16) Urge all members of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to seek to restore broken relationships with one another, and especially urge the members of the Presbytery of Melbourne East and the members of the Session of Trinity Camberwell to heed recommendations (1) to (3) and (6) contained in Section H of the report of the Camberwell Committee relating to the relationship of Trinity Camberwell, and especially the Presbytery of Melbourne East.

The motion was seconded.

The Previous Question was moved, seconded and disapproved.

The Very Rev. B.H. Christian moved as amendment that the words 'On both sides' be deleted from recommendation (c) in Section H of the report.

The amendment was seconded and on the casting vote of the Moderator was disapproved.

The motion of the Rev. C.D. Balzer was approved.

Clause (17) was approved.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Engage professional counselors from outside our denomination, paid for by the General Assembly of Australia, to be available to facilitate family reconciliations.

Mr R. Hanna moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly insert the word 'Christian' between the words 'professional' and 'counsellors'.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved as follows:

- (18) Engage professional Christian counsellors from outside our denomination, paid for by the General Assembly of Australia, to be available to facilitate family reconciliations.

Mr P.J. Graham moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (19) Request the Finance Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia to ask the states to reimburse the GAA Finance Committee expenditure in relation to the provision of such counselling services for family reconciliations.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clause (20) was approved.

The Rev. P.J. Barson moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (21) Declare that the decision of this Commission of Assembly on the booklet *Fractured*

*Fellowship* is not a judgement on the matters contained in the booklet.

The motion was seconded.

The competency of the motion was challenged.

The Moderator ruled the motion competent.

The motion was approved.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Appoint the Rev. C.D. Balzer, M. Cropper and J. McClean to deliver the report of the committee appointed under Min. 53 of the special meeting of the General Assembly of Australia 24 July, 2007, to the Session of Trinity Camberwell and seek to explain it to the Session, and to assist the Session in any way possible to implement the resolutions of the Commission of Assembly.

The motion was seconded.

It was moved as an amendment that the Moderator-General be added to the names of the people appointed to deliver the report to the Session of Trinity Church Camberwell.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly:

(22) Appoint the Rev. C.D. Balzer, M. Cropper, J. McClean and the Moderator-General to deliver the report of the committee appointed under Min. 53 of the special meeting of the General Assembly of Australia 24 July, 2007 to the Session of Trinity Camberwell and seek to explain it to the Session, and to assist the Session in any way possible to implement the resolutions of the Commission of Assembly.

The Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

(23) Appoint the Rev. C.D. Balzer, M. Cropper, J. McClean and the Moderator-General to deliver to the congregation of Trinity Church Camberwell appropriate extracts of the report of the Camberwell Committee and relevant resolutions of the Commission of Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clauses (24) and (25) were approved.

The Very Rev. B.H. Christian moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

(26) Encourage constant and earnest prayer that by God's grace and in the power of the Holy Spirit there will be full and genuine reconciliation among all concerned in this matter.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Request the Law Agent and the Procurator to prepare guidelines for the courts and committees of the Church regarding the proper and needful exercise of their duty of care.

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

**17. Camberwell Committee deliverance as a whole:** The deliverance as a whole for the Camberwell Committee was approved as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly:

*(in regard to the Session and congregation of Trinity Camberwell)*

- (1) Declare that members of the Session and congregation of Trinity Camberwell (and others in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria) who were part of the 'Fellowship' heritage should not be required to disavow this heritage nor to renounce any spiritual benefit derived from the 'Fellowship', but however, those who have a 'Fellowship' heritage should:
  - (a) recognize and acknowledge the grievous effects which this 'Fellowship' heritage has had on some people, families, and within the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and wider community, and therefore;
  - (b) apologise for such effects (Matt. 5:23);
  - (c) be willing to be reconciled when reconciliation is sought by those who have been harmed (Rom. 15:7; 2 Cor. 13:11);
  - (d) determine to avoid such effects in the future.
- (2) Instruct the Session and members of Trinity Camberwell to avoid criticizing people who have left Trinity Camberwell or declare themselves to be disaffected from the 'Fellowship',

and especially to avoid such criticism expressed to the family members or friends of such people (Gal. 5:15; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8).

- (3) Instruct the Session and congregation of Trinity Camberwell that the following practices are inappropriate, unacceptable and therefore not to be practiced:
  - (a) heavy shepherding with elders exercising too dominant a role in the personal lives of individuals and families;
  - (b) intrusive questioning about personal matters by any person or persons exercising a leadership function in the congregation;
  - (c) insisting that people should be in unity with their elder in all matters;
  - (d) shunning or intentionally avoiding contact with people through a fear of defilement or with people who are deemed to have broken unity;
  - (e) insisting on constant confession of sins as a source of assurance of salvation;
  - (f) insisting on public confession of personal sins in groups or to an elder or other leader;
  - (g) saying or suggesting that people are under a rebellious spirit, a spirit of witchcraft, or the generational curses brought about by Freemasonry.
- (4) Instruct the Session of Trinity Camberwell to ensure that any accusation of abusive behaviour against anyone in leadership in Trinity Camberwell shall be dealt with carefully, fully and promptly according to Rule 8:2.08 of the Code of Discipline in *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.
- (5) Recommend to the Session of Trinity Camberwell that, if any such allegation is received by the Session, it should seek one or more independent advisors, appointed by the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, to assist in the process so that it is transparent and fair and to reassure the wider church that this is so.
- (6) Instruct the Session of Trinity Camberwell that the conduct of groups, especially 'cell groups', should be very carefully reviewed, and that group leaders must not conduct meetings in which they confront individual members or the group as a whole with sins.
- (7) Instruct the Session of Trinity Camberwell (and also the congregation) that there should be no 'closed' groups meeting, other than in accordance with the Code of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, which in any way are associated with Trinity Presbyterian Church, that is all groups should be advertised and open.
- (8) Encourage the elders of Trinity Camberwell in their pastoral work to do all that they can to encourage people under their care to mature sufficiently so they can make decisions independently of their elder.
- (9) Encourage the Minister and session of Trinity Camberwell to continue their policy of inviting people from wider Christian circles to minister among them.

*(in regard to the Minister of Trinity Camberwell)*

- (10) Commend the Rev. Philip Mercer on the positive changes that have come about in Trinity Camberwell during his ministry there, on his faithful preaching of the Word, and encourage him to make every effort to ensure that pastoral abuses do not occur in Trinity Camberwell.
- (11) Encourage the Rev. Philip Mercer to visit all groups at Trinity Camberwell, including cell groups, on a regular basis.
- (12) Require the Moderator of Trinity Camberwell to give quarterly reports to the GAA Committee appointed under Min. 53 of the special meeting of the General Assembly of Australia of 24 July, 2007, until the next meeting of the General Assembly of Australia, monitoring and affirming, or otherwise, the extent to which the expectations in the report above entitled *Small group and Cell Group Ministry at Trinity Camberwell* are being observed, and meet representatives of the Committee six monthly.
- (13) Require the Rev. Philip Mercer to lead the members of the Trinity Camberwell Session through a detailed course of instruction from the Bible outlining the Reformed understanding of the doctrine of justification by faith alone and the relationship between the doctrines of justification and sanctification and report to the Committee appointed under Min. 53 of the special meeting of the General Assembly of Australia held on 24 July 2007 when this has been completed.

*(in regard to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria)*

- (14) Recommend to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria that Trinity Camberwell congregation be transferred to the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Melbourne

West after appropriate consultation, for an initial period of five years.

- (15) Recommend to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria that there be no further distribution (in print or electronically) of the booklet *Fractured Fellowship*.

(in regard to all members of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria)

- (16) Urge all members of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to seek to restore broken relationships with one another, and especially urge the members of the Presbytery of Melbourne East and the members of the Session of Trinity Camberwell to heed recommendations (1) to (3) and (6) contained in Section H of the report of the Camberwell Committee relating to the relationship of Trinity Camberwell, and especially the Presbytery of Melbourne East.

(in regard to the Camberwell Committee)

- (17) Instruct the Committee appointed under Min. 53 of the special meeting of the General Assembly of Australia on 24 July 2007 to revisit Melbourne approximately twelve months after this report is dealt with by the Commission of Assembly to ascertain progress or otherwise in the matters mentioned above, and report to the Commission of Assembly or to the General Assembly of Australia with any relevant recommendations.

(in regard to the Commission of Assembly of the General Assembly of Australia)

- (18) Engage professional Christian counsellors from outside our denomination, paid for by the General Assembly of Australia, to be available to facilitate family reconciliations.
- (19) Request the Finance Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia to ask the states to reimburse the GAA Finance Committee expenditure in relation to the provision of such counselling services for family reconciliations.
- (20) Investigate under the Code of Discipline the allegation of abusive and inappropriate behaviour against Elder Chris Venn.
- (21) Declare that the decision of this Commission of Assembly on the booklet *Fractured Fellowship* is not a judgement on the matters contained in the booklet.
- (22) Appoint the Rev. C.D. Balzer, M. Cropper, J. McClean and the Moderator-General to deliver the report of the committee appointed under Min. 53 of the special meeting of the General Assembly of Australia 24 July, 2007 to the Session of Trinity Camberwell and seek to explain it to the Session, and to assist the Session in any way possible to implement the resolutions of the Commission of Assembly.
- (23) Appoint the Rev. C.D. Balzer, M. Cropper, J. McClean and the Moderator-General to deliver to the congregation of Trinity Church Camberwell appropriate extracts of the report of the Camberwell Committee and relevant resolutions of the Commission of Assembly.
- (24) Send a copy of the report and the resolutions of the Commission of Assembly to the Presbytery of Melbourne East and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria as a private document.
- (25) Continue the appointment of the committee to explore allegations of doctrinal or behavioural deviance at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell (Special meeting of the General Assembly of Australia 24 July 2007 (Min. 53(5)) until the next session of the General Assembly of Australia in 2010.
- (26) Encourage constant and earnest prayer that by God's grace and in the power of the Holy Spirit there will be full and genuine reconciliation among all concerned in this matter.

**18. Petition:** Debate was resumed on the petition of Mr K. Davidson (Min. 11).

It was moved, seconded and agreed that Mr K. Davidson not be permitted to hear the deliberations on his petition.

It was moved and seconded:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was approved.

It was moved and seconded:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Appoint a committee consisting of the Rev. C.D. Balzer (Convener), M. Cropper, J. McClean and the Moderator-General to confer privately and in a loving way with Mr C. Venn pursuant to Chapter 8 (The Code of Discipline) in *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* of the Presbyterian Church of Australia Rule 3.01, and report to the Commission of Assembly.

The motion was approved.

The petitioner was recalled to the bar and informed of the decision of the Commission of Assembly.

**19. Next Meeting of the Commission of Assembly:** It was moved and seconded: That the Commission of Assembly: Authorise the Moderator-General to convene another meeting of the Commission of Assembly at an appropriate time.  
The motion was seconded and approved.

**20. Open Court:** The Commission of assembly resumed in open court.

**21. Close:** The meeting was closed with prayer.

ROBERT P.F. BENN, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

## 2. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

### Minutes of the meeting of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on Thursday 24 July, 2008

(The numbering of the minutes follows on consecutively from the numbers in the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held on 31 January, 2008)

**22. Constitute:** At Surry Hills and within Committee Room No. 5, Presbyterian Church Offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills, N.S.W., on Thursday 24 July, 2008 at 10.00a.m. the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia met and constituted with the reading of scripture and prayer by the Moderator-General, the Rt Rev. R.P.F. Benn.

**23. Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from the Rev. K.D. Allen, I.R. Schoonwater, the Very Rev. M.J.K. Ramage, Messrs R. Holvast, G. Muskett, J.H. Searle, the Law Agent (Mr S.H. Fraser) and the Procurator (Mr G.K. Burton).

**24. Confirmation of Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held in Sydney on 31 January, 2008 were confirmed.

**25. Private Sitting:** It was resolved that the Commission of Assembly sit in private.

**26. Others Present:** It was resolved to permit the Rev. C.D. Balzer, J. McClean and M.V. Cropper, appointed by the Commission of Assembly to meet with Mr C. Venn, to remain during the private sitting.

**27. Communication (i):** A communication was received from the Clerk of Assembly of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria conveying resolutions of a meeting of the Commission of Assembly of that Assembly on 6 May, 2008.

Clauses (1) to (3)(b) were approved.

The Rev. G.J. Ware moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

(c) Declare that those who initiated or participated in the actions described in Min. 17(2) and (3) of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on 31 January, 2008, should repent of those actions and seek reconciliation with those affected by them.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Rev. G.K. Kettmiss moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

(d) Declare that persons in authority within Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, who were aware of the actions described in Min. 17(2) and (3) of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on 31 January, 2008, and who did not act to prevent them, should repent of their inaction and seek reconciliation with those affected.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

(e) Advise the GAV, the Presbytery of Melbourne East and the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell of the foregoing resolutions.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clauses (3)(f) to (3)(g) were approved.

The full resolution was approved as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly:

(1) Note that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (GAV) had not accepted the recommendation contained in Min. 17(14) of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on 31 January, 2008 but had, instead, appointed a committee to investigate the matter and report to the GAV in October,

2008.

- (2) Note that the GAV had not accepted the recommendation contained in Min. 17(15) of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on 31 January, 2008 but had, instead, dismissed it.
- (3) Note that the GAV had requested information from the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in relation to the report received by that Commission and respond as follows:
  - (a) In relation to the request for “a list of claims contesting the veracity of *Fractured Fellowship*, advise the GAV that, in terms of GAA Commission of Assembly Min. 17(21) of 31 January, 2008, the Commission of Assembly’s decision on the booklet *Fractured Fellowship* is not a judgement on the matters contained in the booklet.
  - (b) In relation to the request for an explanation of why the Commission of Assembly “does not believe that public repentance and public disavowal of past beliefs and behaviour ... is necessary”, advise the GAV that the Commission of Assembly has not expressed such a belief except to the degree conveyed by the GAA Commission of Assembly Min. 17(1) of 31 January, 2008 and amplified in the second paragraph of section D of the report received on 31 January, 2008 as follows:

The persons and families involved on both sides of the ‘Fellowship’ divide must be given every encouragement and assistance to be reconciled, and some process should be put in place to facilitate this. Such reconciliation is only possible if both parties are willing, and reconciliation should not be forced on people who have been hurt by abuse. Once a person or group offer an apology for past behaviour, that person or group must recognize that those to whom they have apologized will need to seek reconciliation. Apology will have to include explanation of and expression of regret for years of separation. A general apology is not sufficient. Where people have been deeply hurt they rightly expect that an apology includes some kind of explanation. It is not possible for reconciliation to proceed on the basis of simply ‘putting it all behind us’.
  - (c) Declare that those who initiated or participated in the actions described in Min. 17(2) and (3) of the meeting of the GAA Commission of Assembly held on 31 January, 2008 should repent of those actions and seek reconciliation with those affected.
  - (d) Declare that persons in authority within Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, who were aware of the actions described in Min. 17(2) and (3) of the meeting of the GAA Commission of Assembly held on 31 January, 2008 and who did not act to prevent them, should repent of their inaction and seek reconciliation with those affected.
  - (e) Advise the GAV, the Presbytery of Melbourne East and the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell of the foregoing resolutions.
  - (f) In relation to the request for an explanation of the Commission of Assembly’s intention to convey comfort to certain persons, advise the GAV that the Assembly is mindful, and appreciative, of the extensive avenues of support provided to such persons by the GAV and, further to this support, the GAA Commission of Assembly has, in terms of Min. 17(18) of its meeting on 31 January, 2008, agreed to engage professional Christian counsellors to facilitate family reconciliations.
  - (g) In relation to the request for an explanation of the Commission of Assembly’s anticipated mechanisms of determining “whether the elders of Trinity have clearly put their Fellowship heritage in the past in both word and deed” advise the GAV that the Committee established at Min. 53(5) of the special General Assembly of Australia meeting held on 24 July, 2007, has not yet been discharged, that the Commission of Assembly has not yet concluded its involvement in matters pertaining to the Trinity congregation and its leadership, and that the Commission of Assembly retains several avenues for monitoring the behaviour of elders of the Trinity congregation including, among others, the following: one or more return visits to the Trinity congregation by the Committee and public declaration by the GAA Commission of Assembly of the standards of acceptable behaviour with the expectation that persons concerned about the behaviour of elders would bring their



concerns to the attention of the officers of the Presbytery of Melbourne East, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and/or the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

**28. Communication (ii):** A communication was received from Mrs S. Barker requesting a meeting with those who gave evidence to the Committee appointed under Min. 53 of the special meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on 24 July, 2007.

Debate on the communication was adjourned (Min. 33).

**29. Communication (iii):** A communication was received from Mrs D. Davidson concerning any future disciplinary action following the petition of her son, Mr Kingsley Davidson. Debate on the communication was adjourned (Min. 36).

**30. Communication (iv):** A communication was received from Mrs M. Zwartz concerning the report of the Committee appointed under Min. 53 of the special meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on 24 July, 2008. Debate on the communication was adjourned (Min. 37).

**31. Critique by Dr D. Hare of the booklet *Fractured Fellowship*:** The Rev. C.D. Balzer laid on the table a critique by Dr D. Hare of the booklet *Fractured Fellowship* together with an email from Dr D. Hare making copies of the critique available only to the Moderator-General, the Clerk and the Procurator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. The competency of the Commission of Assembly to receive the documents was challenged. The Moderator ruled that it was not competent for the Commission of Assembly to receive the documents.

It was resolved that the Commission of Assembly receive a report on the critique by Dr Hare and the email limiting distribution of the critique.

The report was received.

The debate was adjourned (Min. 35)

**32. Committee appointed to meet with Mr C. Venn:** The Rev. C.D. Balzer presented the report of the Committee appointed to meet with Mr C. Venn (Min. 18 of the GAA Commission of Assembly held on 31 January, 2008) together with an appendix to the report.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly receive the report and the appendix to the report.

The motion was seconded.

It was moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Add words after "report" where second appearing as follows: "with the exception of sections 4 and 5 of the appendix to the report dealing with the Presbytery of Melbourne East and the GAV down to and including the words "GAV toward Trinity, the GAA and the GAA Committee".

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved.

The Rev. K.D. Murray moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Express its appreciation to the Committee appointed under Min. 18 of the GAA Commission of Assembly held on 31 January, 2008 for its hard work in preparing and presenting the report.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The debate was adjourned (Min. 34)

**33. Communication (ii):** Debate was resumed on Communication (ii) (Min. 28).

The Rev. B.M. Meller moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

(1) Note that, while members and the session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, had an opportunity to hear the decisions of the meeting of the GAA Commission of Assembly held on 31 January, 2008, there was no such opportunity for those who met with the

- committee in November 2007 with complaints and concerns about the Fellowship and Trinity Presbyterian Church and that this was a shortcoming in the process.
- (2) Request the Clerk to write, where an address can be obtained, to all who met, or communicated with the committee in or around November 2007 with complaints and concerns about the Fellowship and Trinity Presbyterian Church to thank them for their participation, acknowledge and apologise for the oversight in failing to provide an opportunity to hear about the outcome, and invite them to a meeting with the committee for that purpose and distribute to those people the abbreviated report handed to members of the congregation of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell in February, 2008.
  - (3) Appoint the Rev. C.D. Balzer, J. McClean, M.V. Cropper and the Moderator-General to attend the meeting referred to in clause (2) for the purpose of informing relevant persons about the ongoing activity of the General Assembly of Australia in addressing matters concerning Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell.
  - (4) Inform Mrs. S. Barker that such a meeting will take place.
- The motion was seconded and approved.

**34. Committee appointed to meet with Mr C. Venn:** Debate was resumed on the report of the Committee appointed to meet with Mr C. Venn (Min. 32).  
Clauses (1) to (3) were approved.

The Rev. J. McClean and M.V. Cropper made a statement to the Commission of Assembly concerning Mr C. Venn in terms of the Code of Discipline Chapter 8, Rule 3.04(a) of *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

The Rev. B.M. Meller moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (4) Note that the Rev. J. McClean and M.V. Cropper, being reliable persons in terms of Chapter 8, Rule 3.04(a) of *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, orally and in the presence of the members of the GAA Commission of Assembly, complained about the behaviour of Mr C. Venn and undertook to prove their complaint.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell recorded his dissent.

The Rev. B.M. Meller moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (5) Request the Rev. J. McClean and M.V. Cropper to proceed in accordance with the Code of Discipline Chapter 8, Rule 3.05 of *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) Require the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell to report on a quarterly basis until the next meeting of the GAA to the Committee appointed at Min. 53(5) of the special meeting of the GAA held on 24 July, 2007, concerning its response to, and implementation of, all of the instructions, advice and counsel provided to it or pertaining to the congregation in Min. 1 to 9 of the meeting of the GAA Commission of Assembly held on 31 January, 2008.
- (2) Require the Rev. P. Mercer, in addition to the obligations imposed on him by Min. 12 and 13 of the meeting of the GAA Commission of Assembly held on 31 January, 2008, also to report on a quarterly basis to the Committee appointed at Min. 53(5) of the special GAA meeting held on 24 July, 2007 as well as the implementation of resolutions (1) to (9) of the meeting of the GAA Commission of Assembly held on 31 January, 2008, in all cases substantiating his statements with evidence.
- (3) Determine that the report adequately evidences the conduct of a private conference with Mr C. Venn as required by the Code of Discipline, Chapter 8, Rule 3.01 of the *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.
- (4) Note that the Rev. J. McClean and M.V. Cropper, being reliable persons in terms of Chapter 8, Rule 3.04(a) of *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, orally and in the presence of the members of the GAA Commission of

Assembly, complained about the behaviour of Mr C. Venn and undertook to prove their complaint.

- (5) Request the Rev. J. McClean and M.V. Cropper to proceed in accordance with the Code of Discipline Chapter 8, Rule 3.05 of *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* of the Presbyterian Church of Australia

**35. Booklet *Fractured Fellowship*:** Debate was resumed on the report of the Committee on the critique by Dr D. Hare of the booklet *Fractured Fellowship* and his email limiting distribution of the critique (Min. 31).

The Rev. B.M. Meller moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Note that Dr D. Hare, while submitting a 12 page statement of alleged errors or inaccuracies in *Fractured Fellowship* on the condition that (beyond the membership of the Committee) it may be disclosed only to the Moderator-General, the Clerk and the Procurator, has not allowed the GAA Commission of Assembly to make that statement available to its members and thus has deprived the GAA Commission of Assembly of any opportunity to receive, consider or respond to the said statement and therefore return it to Dr D. Hare without further comment.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**36. Communication (iii):** Debate was resumed on Communication (iii) (Min. 29).

The Rev. J.P. Wilson moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Thank Mrs D. Davidson for her communication.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**37. Communication (iv):** Debate was resumed on Communication (iv) (Min. 30).

The Rev. G.K. Kettmiss moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Thank Mrs M. Swartz for her communication and note the contents.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**38. Quarterly reports from Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell:** The Rev.

G.K. Kettmiss moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Require the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, and the Rev. P.D. Mercer to include in their quarterly reports their responses to, and implementation of, the process of repentance and reconciliation called for in Min. 27(3)(c) and (d).

The motion was seconded and approved.

**39. Report to people who had given evidence to the Camberwell Committee:** The

Rev. G.K. Kettmiss moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Request the Committee appointed to meet with those who had given evidence to the Camberwell Committee to draw their attention to Min. 27(3)(c), (d) and (g).

The motion was seconded and approved.

**40. Extract minutes to the General Assembly of Victoria and the Presbytery of Melbourne East:** The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Authorise the Clerk of Assembly to make available to the GAV, the Presbytery of Melbourne East and the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, relevant extract minutes of this meeting of the GAA Commission of Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**41. Advice to Mrs S. Barker and Mrs M. Zwartz:** The Rev. G.J. Ware moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Advise Mrs S. Barker and Mrs M. Zwartz of the intention to hold a meeting with those who made

submissions to the Camberwell Committee when it visited Melbourne.  
The motion was seconded and approved.

**42. Public documents:** The Rev. G.J. Ware moved:  
That the Commission of Assembly:  
Declare public documents the Commission of Assembly's response to Communication (i) (Min. 27(1) to (3)).  
The motion was seconded and approved.

**43. Open Court:** The Commission of Assembly resumed in open court.

**44. Next meeting of the Commission:** The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:  
That the Commission of Assembly:  
Meet in Sydney and within the Presbyterian Church Offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills,  
on Thursday 7 August, 2008, at 11.30a.m.  
The motion was seconded and approved.

**45. Close:** The meeting of the Commission was closed with prayer.

ROBERT P.F. BENN, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

### 3. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

#### Minutes of the meeting of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on Thursday 7 August, 2008

(The numbering of the minutes follows on consecutively from the numbers in the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held on 24 July, 2008)

**46. Constitute:** At Surry Hills and within Committee Room No. 5, Presbyterian Church Offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills, N.S.W., on Thursday 7 August, 2008 at 12 noon the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia met and was constituted with the reading of scripture and prayer by the Moderator-General, the Rt Rev. R.P.F. Benn.

**47. Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from the Rev. K.D. Allen, L.J. Hall, the Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman, the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell, the Rev. K.D. Murray, D.B. Thatcher, Messrs G. Muskett, J.H. Searle, and the Procurator (Mr G.K. Burton).

**48. Confirmation of Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held in Sydney on 24 July, 2008 were confirmed.

**49. New Victorian Member of the GAA Commission of Assembly:** A communication was received from the Convener of the Selection Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria advising that the Rev. K.D. Allen had resigned as a Victorian Assembly appointed commissioner to the GAA Commission of Assembly and that the Rev. I. Barker had been appointed in his stead.

**50. Private Sitting:** It was resolved that the Commission of Assembly sit in private.

**51. Others Present:** It was resolved to permit the Rev. J. McClean and M.V. Cropper to remain during the private sitting.

**52. Letter to Mr C. Venn:** The Clerk reported he had received by email from the Rev. J. McClean a copy of a letter forwarded to Mr C. Venn with notice of the accusations to be made against Mr Venn at the next meeting of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia together with email confirmation from the Rev. J. McClean that Australia Post had advised him the letter was delivered to Mr Venn on 31 July 2008.

The Commission of Assembly noted that the accusations contained in the letter of the Rev. J. McClean were that Mr C. Venn:

- (a) Demanded total submission to himself and that this (i) created relationships in which members were vulnerable to abuse of authority and (ii) resulted in abuse of authority.
- (b) Influenced a person under his care to dishonour his parents.

**53. Letter from Mr C. Venn:** A letter was received from Mr C. Venn in response to the letter of the Rev. J. McClean to him, stating his understanding of the procedures involved, denying the first charge and making the following admissions *without prejudice*: that he has already acknowledged that he made an error of judgement in criticizing both Mr Rodney and Mrs Denise Davidson to Kingsley Davidson, that he has been willing to meet with Kingsley Davidson to discuss the matter, and denying that this was a regular and ongoing criticism as implied by the words, "during the years of his membership at Trinity (1998-2002)".

**54. Disciplinary Proceedings:** The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:  
That the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) Declare that the accusations against Mr C. Venn contained in the letter of the Rev. J. McClean are complaints that are not ill founded and are therefore matters that should be more fully inquired into under the Code of Discipline Chapter 8 Rule 3.09 of *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

- (2) Appoint a preliminary enquiry under Rule 4.01 of the Code of Discipline to be conducted by a committee of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, the committee to consist of the Rev. K.D. Murray (Convener), P.J. Barson, D.B. Stone and Mr N. Hughes.
- (3) Resolve that the formal statement of the matter to be investigated be as follows: that Mr C. Venn while an elder of the session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, Victoria:
  - (a) Demanded inappropriate submission to himself and that this (i) created relationships in which members were vulnerable to abuse of authority and (ii) resulted in abuse of authority.
  - (b) Influenced a person under his care to dishonour his parents.
- (4) Instruct the committee appointed to conduct the preliminary enquiry to proceed under Part 4 of the Code of Discipline.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**55. Open Court:** The Commission of Assembly resumed in open court.

**56. Next Meeting of the Commission:** The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:  
That the Commission of Assembly:  
Authorise the Moderator to call a meeting of the Commission at an appropriate time when the report of the committee appointed to conduct the preliminary enquiry is available.  
The motion was seconded and approved.

**57. Close:** The meeting of the Commission was closed with prayer.

ROBERT P.F. BENN, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

#### 4. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

##### **Minutes of the meeting of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on Thursday 18 September, 2008**

**(The numbering of the minutes follows on consecutively from the numbers in the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held on 7 August, 2008)**

**58. Constitute:** At Surry Hills and within Committee Room No. 5, Presbyterian Church offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills, N.S.W., on Thursday 18 September, 2008 at 11.30 a.m. the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia met and was constituted with the reading of scripture and prayer by the Moderator-General, the Rt. Rev. R.P.F. Benn.

**59. Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from the Rev. G. Lawry, I.H. Barker, D.B. Thatcher, Mr G. Muskett and the Law Agent (Mr S.H. Fraser).

**60. Confirmation of Minutes:** The Minutes of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held in Sydney on 7 August, 2008, were confirmed.

**61. Private sitting:** It was resolved that the Commission of Assembly sit in private.

**62. Others Present:** It was resolved to permit the Rev. J. McClean, appointed by the Commission of Assembly to meet with those who had made submissions against the Fellowship, to remain during the private sitting in those matters and the presentation and discussion of the petition presented by Mrs M. Zwartz and the Rev. D. Robertson.

**63. Communication (i):** A communication was received from Mr C. Venn acknowledging receipt of a letter from the Clerk of Assembly of the General Assembly of Australia conveying resolutions of the Commission of Assembly meeting on 7 August, 2008, notifying him of allegations against him and of the institution of a Preliminary Inquiry.

**64. Communication (ii):** A communication was received from the Rev. C.D. Balzer enclosing letters from a meeting of representatives of the GAA Commission of Assembly and those who had made submissions to the Camberwell Committee against the Fellowship, held in Melbourne on 27 August, 2008; such letters requested the Commission of Assembly to publicly acknowledge the hurt and damage caused by the Fellowship to people and their families, that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia publicly acknowledge its failure to deal with this matter speedily, requesting certain resolutions of the Commission of Assembly be made public, and enclosing a list of questions of the Commission prepared by the Rev. A. Venn. The debate was adjourned (Min. 74, 75)

**65. Communication (iii):** A communication was received from Ms Moire Daniel seeking action against the Fellowship by the Presbyterian Church of Australia. The debate was adjourned (Min. 73).

**66. Communication (iv):** A communication was received from the Rev. P.D. Mercer seeking clarification of Min. 34(2) of the GAA Commission of Assembly held on 24 July, 2008. It was moved, seconded and agreed:  
That the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) Reaffirm Min. 17(3) of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held on 31 January, 2008.
- (2) Declare that anyone who has engaged in such actions, or who were aware of such actions and did nothing about it, should repent of such activity or inaction.
- (3) Whereas the intent of Min. 17(2) and (3) is prospective and declares certain activities to be unacceptable in the future, the occurrence of such actions, should they have

occurred in the past, would remain equally unacceptable and should be the subject of repentance by any person so engaged.

- (4) Declare that if an accusation of having engaged in such actions is made against any office bearer of the Presbyterian Church of Australia the relevant court should consider it a matter to be dealt with under the Code of Discipline of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

**67. Communication (v):** A communication was received from Mr & Mrs R. Donaghey expressing concerns about The Fellowship and the way in which the Church has dealt with the matter.

The debate was adjourned (Min. 73)

**68. Communication (vi):** A communication was received from Mrs S. Koole expressing concerns about The Fellowship and the way in which the Church has dealt with the matter.

The debate was adjourned (Min. 73)

**69. Report of the Camberwell Committee:** The report of the Committee appointed to meet with those who had made submissions against the Fellowship together with an appendix to the Committee's report, being a report requested of the Rev. P.D. Mercer, was laid on the table and received.

**70. Report of Preliminary Inquiry:** The report of the Committee appointed to conduct a Preliminary Inquiry into accusations against Mr C. Venn was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. K.D. Murray submitted the deliverance.

Clauses (1) to (5) were approved.

The debate was adjourned (Min. 72)..

**71. Petition (ii):** A petition was received from 104 people requesting the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia to state if the Presbyterian Church of Australia endorses or does not endorse, the evidence produced by the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, The Age, the ABC and author Morag Zwartz that Fellowship teaching is or has been heretical, deviant, or inimical to the Church's doctrine.

Mrs M. Zwartz and the Rev. D. Robertson appeared for the petitioners.

Questions were asked of the petitioners.

It was moved and seconded:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Permit the petitioners to remain in the Commission meeting during debate on the petition.

The motion was disapproved.

The petitioners were removed from the bar.

It was moved, seconded and agreed that the Commission of Assembly grant the prayer of the petition.

Clause (1) was approved.

Clause (2) was moved and seconded.

The Rev. Dr D. Mitchell moved as an amendment that the word "of" be deleted in the first line and the word "within" substituted.

The amendment was seconded and disapproved.

Clause (2) was approved.

Clauses (3) to (5) were approved.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) Following examination of the teachings of the group commonly known as The Fellowship, declare that the following shall not be taught in any congregation or by any office bearer in the Presbyterian Church of Australia:
- (a) acceptance of feelings as extra-biblical revelation which provide detailed guidance in matters of life, and/or ascribing authority to such revelation rather than allowing freedom in matters which are not dictated by scripture;



- (b) that contact with those who are not in The Fellowship leads to defilement;
  - (c) that The Fellowship can claim a higher loyalty than a person's family;
  - (d) that a person who has faith in Christ may yet be subject to the enduring and controlling influence of generational curses or evil spirits;
  - (e) that forgiveness by God depends on detailed confession of sins to others and close personal fellowship with elders;
  - (f) that forgiveness by God depends on ongoing personal holiness.
- (2) Declare that those teachings of the group commonly known as The Fellowship, as summarized in the foregoing resolution, are contrary to the Bible, the Westminster Confession of Faith (read in the light of the Declaratory Statement) and the belief of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.
- (3) Direct that the above declarations be read to every congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Australia at public worship by 31 October, 2008.
- (4) Place an embargo on the publication of the above declarations until 28 September, 2008.
- (5) Affirm the work of the Camberwell Committee and the Committee that conducted the Preliminary Enquiry and thank them for their diligence and care in their labours.

The petitioners were recalled to the bar and informed of the decision of the Commission of Assembly.

**72. Report of Preliminary Inquiry:** Debate was resumed on the report of the Committee appointed to conduct the Preliminary Inquiry into accusations against Mr C. Venn (Min. 70).

The Rev. P.J. Barson moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (6) Appoint the Rev. J.R. Irvin and K.D. Murray as prosecutors in the judicial process against Mr C. Venn.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) Find that the Committee of Inquiry has not reported that the alleged offender is prepared to confess and express contrition for the alleged offences or major portions thereof.
- (2) Find that the alleged offences, if proven, call for more than admonition or rebuke.
- (3) Approve the report.
- (4) Consider the accusations made against Mr C. Venn to be apparently well substantiated.
- (5) Proceed by judicial process to determine the accusations made against Mr C. Venn.
- (6) Appoint the Rev. J.R. Irvin and K.D. Murray as prosecutors in the judicial process against Mr C. Venn.

**73. Communications from Ms. Daniel, Mr and Mrs R. Donaghey and Mrs S. Koole:** Debate was resumed on communications from M. Daniel, R. Donaghey and S. Koole (Min. 65, 67, 68).

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Forward to Ms M. Daniel, Mr and Mrs R. Donaghey and Mrs S. Koole a copy of the resolutions of the Commission following discussion of Petition (ii).

**74. Questions asked by the Rev. A. Venn:** Debate was resumed on the questions asked by the Rev. A. Venn (Min. 64).

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Instruct the Clerk and the Rev. J. McClean to draft a response to the questions asked by the Rev. A. Venn and present this draft to the next meeting of the Commission of Assembly for approval.

**75. Public Acknowledgement of hurt caused by the Fellowship:** Debate was resumed on the matter of the request to the Commission of Assembly to publicly acknowledge the hurt caused by The Fellowship (Min. 64).

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Assure the signatories to the request that the matter is progressing and that at an appropriate time they will be informed of the decisions of the Commission of Assembly.

The Rev. J.P. Wilson moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Forward a copy of the resolutions from Petition (ii) to the signatories to the request after the embargo date.

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

**76. Open Court:** The Commission of Assembly resumed in open court.

**77. Next Meeting of the Commission:** The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Authorise the Moderator to call a meeting of the Commission at an appropriate time.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**78. Close:** The meeting of the Commission was closed with prayer.

ROBERT P.F. BENN, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

## 5. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

### Minutes of the meeting of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on Thursday 6 November, 2008

(The numbering of the minutes follows on consecutively from the numbers in the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held on 18 September, 2008)

**79. Constitute:** At Surry Hills and within Committee Room No. 5, Presbyterian Church offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills, N.S.W., on Thursday 6 November, 2008 at 11 a.m. the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia met and was constituted with the reading of scripture and prayer by the Moderator-General, the Rt Rev. R.P.F. Benn.

**80. Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from the Rt. Rev. C.R. Thomas, Rev. I.H. Barker, G.K. Kettniss, Messrs A.W. Byleveld, B. Stasse, the Procurator (Mr G. Burton) and the Law Agent (Mr S.H. Fraser).

**81. Attendance:** There were present – the Rt Rev. R.P.F. Benn (Moderator-General), Very Rev. J.J. Knapp, Dr A.M. Harman, Rev. Dr Paul Logan (Clerk), Rev. B.M. Meller, G. Lawry, J.P. Wilson, D.B. Stone, P.J. Barson, K.D. Murray, J.R. Irvin, L.J. Hall, D.B. Thatcher, Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell, Rev. G.J. Ware, I.R. Schoonwater, Messrs G. Roberts, N. Hughes, J. Tucker, G. Muskett and P.J. Graham.

**82. Confirmation of Minutes:** The Minutes of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held in Sydney on 18 September, 2008, were confirmed.

**83. Agenda:** It was resolved that the agenda with some additional items of business be approved.

**84. Private sitting:** It was resolved that the Commission of Assembly sit in private.

**85. Communication (vii):** An email was received from the Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria advising that the representatives of that Assembly to the GAA Commission of Assembly are now Rev. G. Lawry, I. Barker, J. Wilson, Messrs R.S. Bellcher, P. Betts and B. Stasse.

**86. Communication (viii):** An email was received from the Rev. P.D. Mercer concerning the petition presented to the last meeting of the GAA Commission of Assembly by Mrs M. Swartz and the Rev. D. Robertson together with the Clerk's response to that email advising that the petition did not directly concern the affairs of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, and that unless instructed by the Commission there was no need for a copy of the petition to be forwarded to Trinity; and the reply of the Rev. P.D. Mercer advising that the statement about The Fellowship had been read to the congregation at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell. It was resolved the Commission approve the Clerk's response to the Rev. P.D. Mercer.

**87. Communication (ix):** A communication was received from the Clerk of the Presbytery of Sydney North commending the work of the Commission of the General Assembly of Australia on The Fellowship.

**88. Communication (x):** An email was received from Mrs Morag Zwartz expressing gratitude for considering and adjudicating on the matter of The Fellowship in response to the petition presented to the GAA Commission of Assembly by herself and the Rev. D. Robertson on 18 September, 2008 seeking action against the Fellowship by the Presbyterian Church of Australia, and for a ruling that was unambiguous and unequivocal.

**89. Communication (xi):** A communication was received from the Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria advising that the 2008 Victorian General Assembly had resolved to decline to transfer jurisdiction of Trinity Camberwell to the Presbytery of Melbourne West, or to any other presbytery.

**90. Communication (xii):** An email was received from Mr K. Davidson containing complaints against an elder of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, from both himself and Mrs. M. Davidson.

It was moved and seconded that the Commission advise Mr and Mrs K. Davidson that the matters complained of in their email represent new accusations against “a minister or elder of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell” and that the power given to the Commission of Assembly by the special meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on 24 July, 2007 (Min. 26(2) and (3) to take control of process of such new complaints expired in January, 2008 so that these complaints should be addressed to the Camberwell Session by them. The motion was approved.

**91. Communication (xiii):** A communication was received from the Rev. P.D. Mercer, together with a copy of a letter to the Rev. K.D. Murray, asking certain questions relating to the proposed charge against Mr C. Venn and the judicial process.

It was moved and seconded that the Commission request the Clerk to reply to the letter in appropriate terms.

The motion was approved.

**92. Communication (xiv):** A communication was received from the Rev. J.R. Irvin and K.D. Murray intimating the charge to be brought against Mr C. Venn.

**93. Communication (xv):** An email was received from Mr G. Burton, Procurator of the Presbyterian Church of Australia settling the Charge against Mr C. Venn.

**94. Report by Prosecutors - First Part:** The Rev. J.R. Irvin presented the first part of the report on behalf of himself and the Rev. K.D. Murray, Prosecutors appointed by the Commission of Assembly in the case against Mr C. Venn.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved that the Commission of Assembly receive the first part of the report.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved that the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) Request each member of the Commission of Assembly to examine their hearts and motives in the light of God’s purpose for church discipline and the principle of procedural fairness, and consider whether they should recuse themselves from any further involvement in these judicial proceedings.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved that the Commission of Assembly:

- (2) Request all members of the Commission of Assembly who consider it appropriate to recuse themselves from further involvement in these judicial proceedings to advise the Clerk in writing of their decision and that the Clerk report to the Commission those members who have recused themselves from further involvement in these judicial proceedings.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved that the Commission of Assembly:

- (3) Inform those members of the Commission of Assembly not present at this meeting of these motions and request them to inform the Clerk if they wish to recuse themselves.
- (4) A record be made in the minutes of all those attending the meetings of the Commission of Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**95. Report by Prosecutors - Second Part:** The Rev. J.R. Irvin presented the second part of the report on behalf of himself and the Rev. K.D. Murray, Prosecutors appointed by the Commission of Assembly in the case against Mr C. Venn.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved that the Commission of Assembly receive the second part of the report.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved that the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) Approve the Charge against Mr C. Venn as settled by the Procurator.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved that the Commission of Assembly:

Request the Prosecutors to cite as witnesses those Commission members who have previously participated in or advised on deliberations made in the Presbytery of Melbourne East or in the General Assembly of Victoria concerning Mr K. Davidson and Mr C. Venn or broader 'Fellowship issues' and who have elected not to recuse themselves from further involvement in this judicial process, recognizing that if cited as witnesses Rules 7.04, 7.09 and 7.16 shall apply.

The motion was seconded.

The Rev. B.M. Meller moved as an amendment that the following words be deleted 'or advised on' so that the clause will read:

- (2) Request the Prosecutors to cite as witnesses those Commission members who have previously participated in deliberations made in the Presbytery of Melbourne East or in the General Assembly of Victoria concerning Mr K. Davidson and Mr C. Venn or broader 'Fellowship issues' and who have elected not to recuse themselves from further involvement in this judicial process, recognizing that if cited as witnesses Rules 7.04, 7.09 and 7.16 shall apply.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved that the Commission of Assembly:

In accordance with Rule 5.16 of the Code of Discipline authorize the Prosecutors to personally deliver an attested copy of the Charge to the accused, Mr C. Venn, acknowledging that the Prosecutors will seek an admission and confession from Mr C. Venn.

The motion was seconded.

The Rev. B.M. Meller moved as an amendment that the Commission of Assembly:

Add the following words to the motion "but will not make any representations, undertakings or concessions on behalf of the Commission of Assembly and will advise Mr Venn in writing of this fact prior to their meeting with him" so that it would read:

- (3) In accordance with Rule 5.16 of the Code of Discipline authorize the prosecutors to personally deliver an attested copy of the Charge to the accused, Mr C. Venn, acknowledging that the Prosecutors will seek an admission and confession from Mr C. Venn but will not make any representations, undertakings or concessions on behalf of the Commission of Assembly and will advise Mr Venn in writing of this fact prior to their meeting with him.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved that the Commission of Assembly:

- (4) Draw the attention of Mr C. Venn to Rule 5.04 of the Code of Discipline and request him to submit the name of his adviser to the Commission of Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Very Rev. Dr A.M. Harman, the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell, the Rev. J.P. Wilson and G. Lawry abstained from voting on all motions in this minute.

**96. Costs of those appearing:** The Rev. G.J. Ware moved that the Commission of Assembly pay the costs of those cited to appear before the Commission of Assembly in the case of Mr C. Venn at the rates approved for travel and accommodation by the 2007 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, together with the costs of a telephone conference or video conference from London.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved that the Commission of Assembly:

Pay the costs of recording the hearing of the case against Mr C. Venn and the tapes and the subsequent transcribing of the tapes.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**97. Letter of Rev. P.D. Mercer (Min. 91):** It was resolved to include in the Clerk's reply to the Rev. P.D. Mercer the minutes relating to the request of members of the Commission of Assembly to recuse themselves from further involvement in these judicial proceedings (Min. 94).

**98. Response to questions asked by the Rev. A. Venn:** The Commission of Assembly took up Min. 74 of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held on 18 September, 2008 concerning a response to questions asked by the Rev. A. Venn. The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved that the Commission of Assembly: Forward to the Rev. A. Venn the response to his questions prepared by the Rev. J. McClean as amended by this meeting of the Commission of Assembly. The motion was seconded and approved.

**99. Open Court:** The Commission of Assembly resumed in open court.

**100. Next Meeting of the Commission:** The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved that the Commission of Assembly:

(1) Meet in Presbyterian Church Offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills, on Thursday 27 November, 2008, at 11a.m. to hear any statement Mr C. Venn may wish to make and to consider the relevancy of the charge against him.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved that the Commission of Assembly:

(2) If the relevancy is sustained and the case proceeds to trial meet in Presbyterian Church Offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills, on Tuesday 16 December, 2008, at 11a.m. for the hearing.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**101. Close:** The meeting of the Commission was closed with prayer.

ROBERT P.F. BENN, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

## 6. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

### **Minutes of the meeting of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on Thursday 27 November, 2008**

**(The numbering of the minutes follows on consecutively from the numbers in the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held on 6 November, 2008)**

**102. Constitute:** At Surry Hills and within Committee Room No. 5, Presbyterian Church Offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills, N.S.W., on Thursday 27 November, 2008 at 11 a.m. the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia met and was constituted with the reading of scripture and prayer by the Moderator-General, the Rt Rev. R.P.F. Benn, and a devotional address by the Rev. J.N. Read.

**103. Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Messrs. P.J. Graham, P. Betts, and the Procurator (Mr G.K. Burton).

**104. Present:** There were present the Rt. Rev. R.P.F. Benn (Moderator-General), Rev. Dr Paul Logan (Clerk of Assembly), Rt. Rev. B.M. Meller (Deputy Clerk of Assembly), Rev. P.J. Barson (Assembly Business Convener), Very Rev. J.J. Knapp, Rev. D.B. Stone, I.R. Schoonwater, J.R. Irvin, K.D. Murray, L.J. Hall, D.B. Thatcher, G.K. Kettmiss, Mr S.H. Fraser (Law Agent), Messrs R. Holvast, B. Johnson, F. Belcher, G.K. Roberts, N. Hughes, G. Muskett, A.W. Byleveld and J. Tucker.

**105. Confirmation of Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held in Sydney on 6 November, 2008 were confirmed.

**106. Change to South Australian Member of the GAA Commission of Assembly:** A communication was received from the Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Australia advising that Mr R. Hanna had resigned as a South Australian appointed commissioner to the GAA Commission of Assembly and that Mr B. Johnson had been appointed in his stead.

**107. Notification of those who have recused:** The Clerk reported that the following people had recused themselves from the Commission of Assembly when dealing with allegations against Mr C. Venn – Very Rev. Dr A.M. Harman, Very Rev. C.R. Thomas, Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell, Rev. J.P. Wilson, G. Lawry, Messrs B. Stasse and P. Betts.

**108. Private Sitting:** It was resolved that the Commission of Assembly sit in private.

**109. Personal Explanation:** Mr F. Belcher, a commissioner from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to the GAA Commission of Assembly, made a personal explanation stating that he had not been a member of the Presbytery of Melbourne East during proceedings concerning Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, but had been a member of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria when such matters were before that Assembly.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Advise Mr Belcher that in terms of Min. 95(2) of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held on 6 November, 2008. he was likely to be cited to appear as a witness and should not be present at nor participate in the relevancy hearing.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Mr Belcher left the meeting.

**110. Serving of the Charge:** Notification was received from the prosecutors that the charge had been served on Mr C. Venn, providing proof of receipt of the charge through registered

post.

**111. Appointment of Adviser:** A letter was received from Mr C. Venn requesting approval of the Commission of Assembly to the appointment of the Rev. G.J. Nicholson as his adviser.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Approve the appointment of the Rev. G.J. Nicholson, Minister at Hawthorn Presbyterian Church, Victoria, as adviser to Mr C. Venn.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**112. Statement by Mr C. Venn:** In terms of the Code of Discipline Rule 5.18 the Moderator called Mr C. Venn to make a statement.

Mr C. Venn made his statement.

The Rev. G.J. Nicholson also made a statement to the Commission of Assembly.

**113. Statement by Prosecutors:** In terms of the Code of Discipline Rule 5.18 the Rev. J.R. Irvin and K.D. Murray, prosecutors in the matter against Mr C. Venn, made a statement.

**114. Statement by Adviser:** The Rev. G.J. Nicholson responded to the statement made by the prosecutors.

**115. Amendment to the Charge:** By leave of the Commission approval was given to amend the Charge by the insertion of the words '...at least some of ...' between 'over' and 'those' in three places where appearing.

**116. Hearing of Relevancy:** The Commission proceeded to discuss the relevancy of the charge against Mr C. Venn.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Approve the relevancy of the charge against Mr C. Venn because:

- (a) The charge reveals that the offence alleged is truly punishable according to the Word of God and the laws of the Church; and
- (b) The allegations if proved or admitted, would be sufficient to convict the accused of the offence and render the accused liable to punishment.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Proceed to hear the case against Mr C. Venn.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**117. Advice given to Mr C. Venn and the prosecutors:** Mr C. Venn, the Rev. G.J. Nicholson and the prosecutors were recalled to the meeting and the Moderator advised them that the Commission of Assembly had found the charge, as amended in Min. 115, relevant.

**118. Statement by Mr C. Venn:** In terms of the Code of Discipline Rule 5.34 Mr C. Venn did not acknowledge the truth of the charge.

**119. Meeting to hear the case:** The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Meet in Presbyterian Church Offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills, at 11 a.m. on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2009, until finished, to hear the case against Mr C. Venn.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**120. Prayer:** The Moderator led the Commission in prayer for all concerned in this matter.



**121. Open Court:** The Commission of Assembly resumed in open court.

**122. Next Meeting of the Commission:** The Commission of Assembly adjourned to meet in Sydney on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2009, at 11a.m. for the hearing of the case against Mr C. Venn.

**123. Close:** The meeting of the Commission was closed with prayer.

ROBERT P.F. BENN, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

## 7. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

**Minutes of the meeting of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on Tuesday 17 February, 2009.**

**(The numbering of the minutes follows on consecutively from the numbers in the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held on 27 November, 2008)**

**124. Constitute:** At Surry Hills and within Committee Room No. 5, Presbyterian Church Offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills, N.S.W., on Tuesday 17 February, 2009 at 11 a.m. the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia met and was constituted with the reading of scripture and prayer by the Moderator-General, the Rt. Rev. R.P.F. Benn.

**125. Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from the Rev. G. Kettmiss, I.R. Schoonwater, Mr G. Muskett, the Law Agent (Mr S.H. Fraser) and the Procurator (Mr G.K. Burton).

**126. Available for Advice:** The Clerk advised the Commission that the Law Agent and the Procurator would be available for advice throughout the sitting of the Commission if needed.

**127. Present:** There were present the Rt Rev. R.P.F. Benn (Moderator-General), Rev. Dr Paul Logan (Clerk of Assembly), Rt Rev. B.M. Meller (Deputy Clerk of Assembly), Rev. P.J. Barson (Assembly Business Convener), Very Rev. J.J. Knapp, Rev. D.B. Stone, G.J. Ware, L.J. Hall, D.B. Thatcher, J.R. Irvin, K.D. Murray, Messrs R. Holvast, B. Johnson, G.K. Roberts, A.W. Byleveld, N. Hughes, P.J. Graham and J. Tucker.

**128. Confirmation of Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held in Sydney on 27 November, 2008 were confirmed.

**129. Leave to Meet:** Leave was granted for the Presbytery of Sydney North to meet for ordinary business on Tuesday 17 February, 2009 at 7.30 p.m.

**130. Private Sitting:** It was resolved that the Commission of Assembly sit in private.

**131. Permission to remain in private sitting:** It was moved, seconded and agreed that Mr D. Jamieson be allowed to remain in the meeting of the Commission during the private sitting for the purposes of recording the proceedings.

**132. Procedure:** The Moderator drew the attention of members of the Commission to Rule 5.25 of the Code of Discipline of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia as the procedure to be followed in these proceedings.

**133. Voting:** The Clerk drew the attention of members of the Commission to Rule 7.16 of the Code of Discipline which states that no member of a Court may vote as a judge in a case unless the member has heard or read all the evidence and the pleadings of the parties.

**134. Challenge to the Rev. G.J. Ware:** The Rev. G.J. Nicholson, adviser to Mr C. Venn, raised the question of the presence of the Rev. G.J. Ware as a member of the Commission to sit in this matter.

The Moderator advised that members of the Commission had been given the opportunity to recuse themselves from the proceedings and that as Mr Ware had not done so he was therefore entitled to sit as a member of the Commission.

**135. The Charge:** The Clerk read the charge made by the Rev. J.R. Irvin and K.D. Murray against Mr C. Venn and it was resolved to enter in its records the fact that the accused has been cited to appear and is present in the court.

**136. Parties called:** The parties were called to the bar of the Commission.

**137. Prosecutor's opening statement:** The Rev. J.R. Irvin made an opening statement on behalf of the prosecutors appointed by the Commission in the case against Mr C. Venn.

**138. Objection:** The Rev. G.J. Nicholson raised the question of a plurality of witnesses given that Ms C. Pedic had withdrawn as a witness for the prosecution. The Moderator ruled that the process should continue as other witnesses were to be called.

**139. Mr K. Davidson as a witness:** Mr K. Davidson made the solemn affirmation and gave his evidence. Questions were asked of Mr Davidson by the prosecutors, by the adviser to Mr C. Venn and by members of the Commission.

**140. Documents Allowed:** It was moved, seconded and agreed that certain documents referred to by Mr K. Davidson be made available to members of the Commission.

**141. Rev. P.D. Mercer as a witness:** The Rev. P.D. Mercer made the solemn affirmation and gave his evidence. Questions were asked of the Rev. P.D. Mercer by the prosecutors, the adviser to Mr C. Venn and members of the Commission.

**142. Rev. N. Chambers as a witness:** The Rev. N. Chambers made the solemn affirmation and gave his evidence. Questions were asked of the Rev. N. Chambers by the prosecutors, the adviser to Mr C. Venn and members of the Commission.

**143. Defence opening statement:** The Rev. G.J. Nicholson, adviser to Mr C. Venn, made an opening statement for the defence.

**144. Adjournment:** The Commission adjourned to meet tomorrow, Wednesday 18 February, 2009, in Presbyterian Church Offices, Sydney, at 9a.m. for the continuation of the hearing of the case against Mr C. Venn.

**145. Close:** This sederunt of the Commission was closed in prayer.

**146. Commission constituted:** At Surry Hills and within Committee Room No. 5, Presbyterian Church Offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills, N.S.W., on Wednesday 18 February, 2009 at 9 a.m. the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia met and was constituted with the reading of scripture and prayer by the Moderator-General, the Rt Rev. R.P.F. Benn.

**147. Mr C. Venn as a witness:** Mr C. Venn made the solemn affirmation and gave his evidence. Questions were asked of Mr C. Venn by his adviser, by the prosecutors and by members of the Commission.

**148. Professor D. Hare as a witness:** Professor D. Hare made the solemn affirmation and gave his evidence. Questions were asked of Professor D. Hare by the adviser to Mr C. Venn.

**149. Mr A. Hercus as a witness:** Mr A. Hercus made the solemn affirmation and gave his evidence in the form of a statement.

**150. Mr K. Davidson recalled as a witness:** Mr K. Davidson was recalled as a witness to answer questions from the prosecutors, the adviser to Mr C. Venn and members of the

Commission.

**151. Mr C. Venn recalled as a witness:** Mr C. Venn was recalled as a witness to answer questions from the prosecutors, his adviser and members of the Commission.

**152. Record closed:** In terms of Rule 5.25(j) of the Code of Discipline the record was closed.

**153. Prosecutor's closing address:** The Rev. J.R. Irvin gave the prosecutor's closing address.

**154. Defence closing address:** The Rev. G.J. Nicholson gave the closing address for the defence.

**155. Parties removed from bar:** The parties were removed from the bar of the Commission and from its deliberations.

**156. Rev. G.J. Ware:** The Rev. G.J. Ware intimated that he would not participate in the debate in the Commission or vote on the decision of the Commission in the matter against Mr C. Venn.

**157. Others not voting:** Messrs R. Holvast and S.H. Fraser intimated that they would not vote in the decision of the court as they had not heard all the evidence.

**158. Decision of the court:** The Rev. B.M. Meller moved:  
That the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) In relation to the charge that Mr Chris Venn demanded inappropriate submission to himself as an elder, find that the charge has not been proven.
  - (2) In relation to the charge that Mr Chris Venn influenced a person, namely Mr Kingsley Davidson, under Mr Venn's pastoral care, to dishonour his parents, find that the charge has not been proven.
  - (3) Discharge the case.
- The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

**159. Advice to parties:** It was moved, seconded and agreed that the Commission of Assembly request the Moderator, the Very Rev. J.J. Knapp, Rev. L.J. Hall and D.B. Stone to prepare a statement of advice to the parties concerned in terms of Rule 5.26 of the Code of Discipline.

**160. Report of advice to parties:** The Rev. L.J. Hall presented the report of the committee appointed in Min. 159 to draft a statement of advice to the parties.

Clauses (1) and (2) were approved.

The Rev. L.J. Hall moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Request the Moderator, in consultation with the Assembly officers, to prepare a statement indicating the outcome of the proceedings.

The motion was seconded.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment that the words 'available upon request to the Clerk of Assembly' be inserted after the word 'statement' so that it would read:

- (3) Request the Moderator, in consultation with the Assembly officers, to prepare a statement, available upon request to the Clerk of Assembly, indicating the outcome of the proceedings.

The amendment was approved.

The motion as amended was approved.

Clause (4) was approved.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) Not provide an expression of opinion or advice under Rule 5.26 of the Code of Discipline.

- (2) Request the Moderator to inform Mr Kingsley Davidson of the outcome of the proceedings.
- (3) Request the Moderator, in consultation with the Assembly officers, to prepare a statement, available upon request to the Clerk of Assembly, indicating the outcome of the proceedings.
- (4) Request the Moderator to conclude this meeting of the Commission of Assembly with pastoral comments.

**161. Parties recalled to the bar:** The parties were recalled to the bar and informed of the decision of the court and that the decision of the Commission of Assembly is final as there is no higher court to which an appeal can be made.

**162. Pastoral Comments:** After intimating the decision of the court the Moderator made some pastoral comments.

**163. Parties advised:** The Clerk moved:  
That the Commission of Assembly:  
Advise the Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the Clerk of the Presbytery of Melbourne East and the Clerk of the session at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, Victoria, of the decisions of the Commission of Assembly in respect to the charges against Mr C. Venn.  
The motion was seconded and approved.

**164. Prosecutors discharged:** The Clerk moved:  
That the Commission of Assembly:  
Discharge the Rev. J.R. Irvin and K.D. Murray from their position as prosecutors appointed by this Commission of Assembly in the matter of the charges against Mr C. Venn.  
The motion was seconded and approved.

**165. Adviser to Mr C. Venn:** The Clerk moved:  
That the Commission of Assembly:  
Thank the Rev. G.J. Nicholson for his role as adviser to Mr C. Venn.  
The motion was seconded and approved.

**166. Thanks for sound recording:** The Clerk moved:  
That the Commission of Assembly:  
Extend its thanks to Mr D. Jamieson for recording the proceedings of the meeting of the Commission in the matter against Mr C. Venn.  
The motion was seconded and approved.

**167. Parties removed from the bar:** The parties were removed from the bar.

**168. Open Court:** The Commission of Assembly resumed in open court.

**169. Next Meeting of the Commission:** The Commission of Assembly adjourned to meet in Sydney on a date to be determined by the Moderator and Clerk to receive a further report from the Camberwell Committee.

**170. Close:** The meeting of the Commission was closed with prayer.

ROBERT P.F. BENN, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

## 8. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

### Minutes of the meeting of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on Tuesday 14 April, 2009.

(The numbering of the minutes follows on consecutively from the numbers in the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held on 17 February, 2009 and 18 February, 2009)

**171. Constitute:** At Surry Hills and within Committee Room No. 5, Presbyterian Church Offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills, N.S.W., on Tuesday 14 April, 2009 at 11 a.m. the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia met and was constituted with the reading of scripture and prayer by the Moderator-General, the Rt Rev. R.P.F. Benn.

**172. Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell, Rev. D.B. Thatcher, Messrs G. Muskett, R. Holvast, G.K. Burton (Procurator), S.H. Fraser (Law Agent).

**173. Present:** There were present the Rt Rev. R.P.F. Benn (Moderator-General), Rev. Dr Paul Logan (Clerk of Assembly), Rt Rev. B.M. Meller (Deputy Clerk of Assembly), Rev. P.J. Barson (Assembly Business Convener), Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas, Very Rev. J.J. Knapp, Rev. D.B. Stone, J.P. Wilson, L.J. Hall, J.R. Irvin, K.D. Murray, G. Lawry, G.J. Ware, G.K. Kettniss, C.D. Balzer, Messrs B. Johnson, G.K. Roberts, A.W. Byleveld, N. Hughes, P.J. Graham, P. Betts, B. Stasse, R.S. Belcher and J. Tucker.

**174. Confirmation of Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held in Sydney on 17 February, 2009 and 18 February, 2009 were confirmed.

**175. Private Sitting:** It was resolved that the Commission of Assembly sit in private.

**176. Report of Camberwell Committee:** The Rev. C.D. Balzer presented the report of the Committee appointed under Min. 53(5) of the special meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held in Sydney on 24 July, 2007.

The report was received.

Clause (1) was moved and seconded as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) Commend the Rev. Philip Mercer on his compliance with the instructions of the Commission, his efforts to bring normality back to the life of the congregation of Trinity Camberwell and to seek a good working relationship with all members of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and especially with all members of the Presbytery of Melbourne East.

The Rev. G.J. Ware moved as an amendment that the Commission of Assembly:

Delete the words 'Commend the Rev. Philip Mercer on his compliance with ...' and insert the following words 'Note with appreciation the Committee's satisfaction with the Rev. Philip Mercer's compliance'.

The amendment was seconded and disapproved.

The motion was approved.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Provide answers to the questions asked by the Rev. Philip Mercer in his document entitled: *Questions to the GAA Committee re the six point statement of the GAA Commission 31.01.2009.*

The motion was seconded.

The Rev. B.M. Meller moved as an amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Amend the clause by inserting the words 'in the following form' after the words 'Provide answers' and, after the title of the relevant document add the words of the letter proposed by the Clerk.

The amendment was seconded.

**177. Committee of the Whole:** It was resolved the Commission sit as a committee of the whole to discuss the contents of the Clerk's proposed letter, with the Moderator as Chairman and the Clerk as Secretary.

The Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas moved that the Commission of Assembly:

Delete all words in the last paragraph of the proposed letter of the Clerk from 'while' to 'what is' and replace with the words 'Regarding the article'; delete the words 'I would mention however that'; so that the paragraph would read: 'Regarding the article published in 'The Age', the embargo was not broken as the article was published after the embargo date.'

The amendment was seconded and disapproved.

The Rev. G.K. Kettniss moved that the Commission of Assembly

Insert the following words in the proposed letter of the Clerk 'This statement was issued in response to' and the following inserted 'The statement was made following the inquiry into the activities of the Fellowship, the evidence as given by persons who were affected by these activities, and represent the main issues which have come to light as a result'.

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

The Rev. G.K. Kettniss moved that the Commission of Assembly:

Insert the following as the reasons for issuing the statement in the proposed letter of the Clerk: 'The Commission issued the statement for the following reasons: (a) to give assurance to those who believed that these were some of the underlying teachings emanating from the Fellowship, and experienced the results of these teachings in their own lives and in the lives of their families- the comfort and understanding that these are not the teachings of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, and are contrary to the Bible and the Westminster Confession of Faith, as read in the light of the Declaratory Statement; (b) to help in the 'healing' process of those affected by the teachings and actions of the Fellowship'.

The motion was seconded.

The Rev. B.M. Meller moved as an amendment that the Commission of Assembly delete (a) and (b) of the motion of the Rev. G.K. Kettniss and insert the following in their place: 'To counter false teaching in the Presbyterian Church as a whole, that these teachings and actions of the Fellowship, and also evident in other quarters of the Christian Church, are not the teachings of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, and are contrary to the Bible and the Westminster Confession of Faith, as read in the light of the Declaratory Statement'.

The amendment was seconded and disapproved.

The motion was disapproved.

The Committee as a whole resolved to report back to the Commission.

**178. Report of Committee of the Whole:** The Clerk presented the report of the committee of the whole.

The report was received.

**179. Report of Camberwell Committee:** Debate was resumed on the report of the Camberwell Committee (Min. 176).

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved clause (2) in the following amended form:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (2) Provide answers in the following form to the questions asked by the Rev. Philip Mercer in his document entitled: *Questions to the GAA Committee re the six point statement of the GAA Commission 31.01.2009*:

I write with reference to your questions to the GAA Committee concerning the six point statement of the GAA Commission of Assembly meeting on 31 January, 2009 issued to congregations of the Presbyterian Church of Australia on the Fellowship. Members of the Commission understand the concerns of the session at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, that the article appeared in *The Age* before the statement was received by them.

This statement was issued in response to a petition presented to the Commission of the General Assembly of Australia by Mrs. Morag Zwartz and the Rev. Douglas Robertson. The petition was signed by 104 people and referred to the documents mentioned in Min. 53(3) GAA BB Special Assembly 24 July, 2007, but only referred to those documents and not specifically to Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell. In the opinion of the

Commission there was no need to inform the session of Trinity or the congregation of Trinity of the contents of this petition beforehand because of the generality of its terms and requests.

Similarly the statement issued by the Commission of Assembly was directed in general terms to counter false teaching which may exist in the church but was not directed at any congregation or individual. Copies of the statement were sent out to each charge of the Presbyterian Church of Australia through presbytery clerks at the same time so that no one congregation would be advantaged or disadvantaged by its being issued. The Commission is of the opinion that for the distribution of the statement to happen before the embargo date would have ensured the material escaping into the public domain before the embargo date.

While the Commission of Assembly deeply regrets the prejudicial reporting of the issue in 'The Age', it has no control over what is published in 'The Age'. The Commission notes, however, that it has no knowledge the embargo was broken as the article was published after the embargo date.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clause (3) was approved.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Encourage members of the Session of Trinity Camberwell to continue and expand their efforts to achieve reconciliation with family members and others with whom relationships are broken, and to encourage the members of Trinity to do the same.

The Rev. B.M. Meller moved as an amendment that the Commission of Assembly:

Add the following words at the beginning of the clause 'Express to the Session of Trinity Camberwell, appreciation for its compliance with the instructions of the Commission and ...' so that the clause would read:

- (4) Express to the Session of Trinity Camberwell, appreciation for its compliance with the instructions of the Commission and encourage members of the Session of Trinity Camberwell to continue and expand their efforts to achieve reconciliation with family members and others with whom relationships are broken, and to encourage the members of Trinity to do the same.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Remind the Presbytery of Melbourne East that it should not entertain complaints about members or elders at Trinity, but should refer the matter immediately to the Session.

The motion was seconded.

The Rev. B.M. Meller moved that the Commission of Assembly delete certain words and add words to the motion so that it would read in an amended form:

- (5) Remind the Presbytery of Melbourne East that it should not consider accusations against elders and members subject to the jurisdiction of a session, which accusations have not been previously considered in the relevant session and duly submitted to the Presbytery by way of petition, appeal or complaint.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved.

Clause (6) was approved.

The Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas recorded his dissent to clause (6).

Clause (7) was approved.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Instruct its officers to ensure that, when a petition is received, the provision in the *GAA Constitution, Procedure and Practice* Chapter 3 Section 3.07 requiring those affected by a petition to receive a copy of it before hearing the petition, be followed.

The motion was seconded.

The Previous Question was moved, seconded and approved.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer moved:



That the Commission of Assembly:

Instruct the Clerk to send a copy of the report and the decisions of the Commission to the Rev. Philip Mercer, the Session of Trinity, Camberwell and the Presbytery of Melbourne East.

The motion was seconded.

The Clerk moved as an amendment that the Commission of Assembly:

Add the words 'without the appendices' after the word 'report', delete the words 'the decisions' and insert the words 'and clauses (1) to (6) of this meeting of the' so that the clause would read:

- (8) Instruct the Clerk of send a copy of the report, without the appendices, and clauses (1) to (6) of the deliverance of this meeting of the Commission to the Rev. Philip Mercer, the Session of Trinity Camberwell and the Presbytery of Melbourne East.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) Commend the Rev. Philip Mercer on his compliance with the instructions of the Commission, his efforts to bring normality back to the life of the congregation of Trinity Camberwell and to seek a good working relationship with all members of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and especially with all members of the Presbytery of Melbourne East.
- (2) Provide answers in the following form to the questions asked by the Rev. Philip Mercer in his document entitled: *Questions to the GAA Committee re the six point statement of the GAA Commission 31.01.2009*:

I write with reference to your questions to the GAA Committee concerning the six point statement of the GAA Commission of Assembly meeting on 31 January, 2009 issued to congregations of the Presbyterian Church of Australia on the Fellowship. Members of the Commission understand the concerns of the session at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, that the article appeared in *The Age* before the statement was received by them.

This statement was issued in response to a petition presented to the Commission of the General Assembly of Australia by Mrs Morag Zwartz and the Rev. Douglas Robertson. The petition was signed by 104 people and referred to the documents mentioned in Min. 53(3) GAA BB Special Assembly 24 July, 2007, but only referred to those documents and not specifically to Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell. In the opinion of the Commission there was no need to inform the session of Trinity or the congregation of Trinity of the contents of this petition beforehand because of the generality of its terms and requests.

Similarly the statement issued by the Commission of Assembly was directed in general terms to counter false teaching which may exist in the church but was not directed at any congregation or individual. Copies of the statement were sent out to each charge of the Presbyterian Church of Australia through presbytery clerks at the same time so that no one congregation would be advantaged or disadvantaged by its being issued. The Commission is of the opinion that for the distribution of the statement to happen before the embargo date would have ensured the material escaping into the public domain before the embargo date.

While the Commission of Assembly deeply regrets the prejudicial reporting of the issue in 'The Age', it has no control over what is published in 'The Age'. The Commission notes, however, that it has no knowledge the embargo was broken as the article was published after the embargo date.

- (3) Encourage members of the Presbytery of Melbourne East to seek to do all in their power to restore a positive and brotherly tone to relationships with Mr Mercer and Trinity Camberwell.
- (4) Express to the Session of Trinity Camberwell, appreciation for its compliance with the instructions of the Commission and encourage members of the Session of Trinity Camberwell to continue and expand their efforts to achieve reconciliation with family members and others with whom relationships are broken, and to encourage the members of Trinity to do the same.
- (5) Remind the Presbytery of Melbourne East that it should not consider accusations against elders and members subject to the jurisdiction of a session, which accusations have not been previously considered in the relevant session and duly submitted to the Presbytery by

- way of petition, appeal or complaint.
- (6) Commend the Church and Nation Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria for mentioning on its website the age of the booklet *Fractured Fellowship* and request the Victorian General Assembly to delete the reference to its availability from its website.
  - (7) Take all possible steps in future to keep matters to do with 'The Fellowship' and Trinity Camberwell out of the press.
  - (8) Instruct the Clerk to send a copy of the report, without the appendices, and clauses (1) to (6) of the deliverance of this meeting of the Commission to the Rev. Philip Mercer, the Session of Trinity Camberwell and the Presbytery of Melbourne East.

**180. Open Court:** The Commission of Assembly resumed in open court.

**181. Next Meeting of the Commission:** The Commission of Assembly adjourned to meet in Sydney on a date to be determined by the Moderator and Clerk to receive a further report from the Camberwell Committee.

**182. Close:** The meeting of the Commission was closed with prayer.

ROBERT P.F. BENN, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

## 9. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

### Minutes of the meeting of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held on Thursday 3 June, 2010

(The numbering of the minutes follows on consecutively from the numbers in the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held on 14 April, 2009)

**183. Constitute:** At Surry Hills and within Committee Room No. 5, Presbyterian Church Offices, 168-180 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills, N.S.W., on Thursday 3 June, 2010 at 10.30a.m. the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia met and was constituted with the reading of scripture and prayer by the Moderator-General, the Rt Rev. R.P.F. Benn.

**184. Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from the Rev. G. Lawry, I. Barker, Messrs G. Muskett, B. Stasse and S.H. Fraser (Law Agent).

**185. Present:** There were present the Rt Rev. R.P.F. Benn (Moderator-General), Rev. Dr Paul Logan (Clerk of Assembly), Rev. B.M. Meller (Deputy Clerk of Assembly), P.J. Barson (Business Convener), Rt Rev. C.D. Balzer (Camberwell Committee Convener), Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman, Rev. Dr J.P. Wilson, Rev. K.D. Murray, L.J. Hall, Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell, Rev. D.B. Thatcher, I.R. Schoonwater, D.B. Stone, G.J. Ware, J.R. Irvin, Messrs B. Johnson, J. Tucker, A.W. Byleveld, N. Hughes and G.K. Roberts.

**186. Confirmation of Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting of the Commission of Assembly held in Sydney on 14 April, 2009 were confirmed.

**187. Communication from Victorian Assembly:** A communication was received from the Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria following receipt of advice of the Commission's recommendations to that Assembly stating that the 2009 Victorian Assembly had resolved to thank the General Assembly of Australia for its diligent attention in the matter of the charge against Mr Chris Venn and for bringing it to a conclusion; and that the Assembly had disapproved a motion to agree with the request of the GAA Commission to remove all references to the availability of Fractured Fellowship from the websites of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and its committees.

**188. Private Sitting:** It was resolved that the Commission of Assembly sit in private.

**189. Report of Camberwell Committee:** The report of the Committee appointed under Min. 53(5) of the special meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held in Sydney on 24 July, 2007 was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer presented the deliverance.

Clause (1) was moved and seconded.

The Rev. K.D. Murray moved as amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Delete the words "in an attempt to achieve something" and insert the words "to address a perceived wrong" and delete the words "seek to address perceived wrongs" at the end of the clause and insert the following in their place "fulfil their proper purpose" so that the clause would read:

(1) Earnestly entreat all communicant members and adherents not to resort to the secular press to address a perceived wrong in the church but to allow the church courts to fulfil their proper purpose.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved.

Clause (2) was moved and seconded.

The Rev. Dr J.P. Wilson moved as amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Amend Clause (2) by deleting sub-clause (iii).  
The amendment was seconded and approved.  
The motion as amended was approved.  
Clauses (3) to (5) were approved.  
The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:  
That the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) Earnestly entreat all communicant members and adherents not to resort to the secular press to address a perceived wrong in the church but to allow the church courts to fulfil their proper purpose.
- (2) Earnestly entreat all parties involved in the matter that has been before the Committee to exert every effort towards:
  - (i) doing all that is appropriate to reconcile relationships that have been, and still are, damaged;
  - (ii) taking personal responsibility for their own behaviour.
- (3) Encourage the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to publicise the fact that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia is willing to pay for “professional Christian counsellors from outside our denomination ... to be available to facilitate family reconciliations” (GAA Commission of Assembly Min. 17(18)).
- (4) Make this report available to the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, the Presbytery of Melbourne East and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.
- (5) Transmit the report to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia together with an extract minute conveying the foregoing associated resolutions and recommend that the Committee be thanked and discharged.

The Moderator conveyed to the Rev. C.D. Balzer the thanks of the Commission for his work as Convener of the Committee and for the work of the Committee as a whole.

**190. Rev. P.D. Mercer:** The Rev. K.D. Murray moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Request the Moderator-General to convey to the Rev. P.D. Mercer the thanks of the Commission of Assembly for his positive ministry at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**191. Open Court:** The Commission of Assembly resumed in open court.

**192. Minutes:** The minutes of this meeting of the Commission were read and confirmed.

**193. Close:** The meeting of the Commission was closed with prayer.

ROBERT P.F. BENN, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

# APPEAL

- (i) **From the Rev. I.F. Ransom against a decision of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in NSW held on 25 November, 2009.**

## Ransom Appeal

The Rev. Ivan Frederick Ransom hereby appeals to the General Assembly against the decision made by the Commission of the State Assembly of New South Wales upholding the decision of the Presbytery of Sydney on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008, whereby the Presbytery of Sydney did purport to effectively act to discipline without due process by removing me from the benefice of St. Paul's, Rozelle.

I hereby appeal against the decision taken at the Commission of the NSW General Assembly on Thursday last (25 November, 2009 Min. 4), upholding the decision of the Presbytery of Sydney and determining to act notwithstanding. The grounds for appeal to the superior court are receipt of irrelevant evidence and judgement against the evidence.

My appeal against the Presbytery of Sydney concerned breach of the Discipline Code of the General Assembly of Australia.

The Presbytery of Sydney inducted me into the Balmain-Rozelle Pastoral Charge. While the Balmain and Rozelle Pastoral Charges had been amalgamated, the properties at Balmain and Rozelle had never had their trusts varied to be held in trust for the Balmain-Rozelle Pastoral Charge. The property at Rozelle was brought under the direct control of the Trustees after a dispute, between the Balmain-Rozelle Management and a tenant, without prior reference to the congregation. The Presbytery of Sydney determined that as the property was held for "... the purposes of the Presbyterian Church ... at Rozelle ..." a new Rozelle congregation should be instituted with the Minister of Drummoyne as Interim Moderator and his Session as the Interim Session.

Now, If I have been legitimately inducted into the Balmain congregation by the Presbytery of Sydney, I have at the same time been inducted into the Rozelle congregation, which, I would estimate, comprises at least half of the present Balmain-Rozelle congregation, including the Session Clerk. Assuming that these are, in fact, separate trusts (a point of contention not to be argued here) I am as much the minister of the Rozelle congregation as I am the Minister of Balmain. My terms of call testify to this. The properties accessed by the Trustees to Rozelle Charge appear on my terms of call.

In setting aside my induction without due procedure or legitimate cause, the Presbytery of Sydney has effectively acted to discipline, deposing me as Minister of Rozelle, with the attendant rights to the use of the property attached thereto.

In my appeal to the General Assembly of New South Wales:

- (1) The appeal was held before a commission of assembly, depriving me of a hearing before the majority of country commissioners and ministers. The procedure was rushed and there was no debate on the motion to reject the appeal. The Moderator entered into the debate and displayed evident bias.
- (2) While my appeal was on the matter of the Presbytery of Sydney "acting to discipline without due process", this was substantially ignored by the defence of the Presbytery of Sydney and in questioning by members of the commission. I was at pains to point out that the issue of trusts could not be determined by a "democratic vote" at an in-house tribunal, and that the financial state of the Balmain-Rozelle charge was not properly before the court, nor was the future use of St. Paul's Church, Rozelle, in the light of the construction of the Sydney Metro railway.

My appeal to the General Assembly of Australia is against the decision of the General Assembly of New South Wales in upholding the decision of the Presbytery of Sydney, which presbytery, I submit, has acted to discipline without due process in defiance of the Discipline Code of the General Assembly of Australia.

Documents tendered:

1. The substance of my appeal to the General Assembly of New South Wales.
2. Terms of call to Balmain-Rozelle charge.

3. Relevant minutes of the General Assembly of New South Wales.

Rev. Ivan F. Ransom

3 December, 2010

**The Rev. B.M. Meller and D.J. Thurston were appointed respondents on behalf of the Commission of the NSW General Assembly.**

# COMMUNICATIONS

**(i) From the Ferguson Memorial Library a report on the Archives of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.**

Since the last Assembly there have been significant changes in the management and oversight of the Archives. At the 2008 NSW General Assembly the Historical Records and Library Committee was thanked and discharged. The Archives are now under the control of the NSW Business Committee, with Rev. Dr Paul Logan being the nominated member having oversight over the day to day running of the Archives.

Mrs Sue Pacey continues as Archivist/Librarian with Mr Daryl Lightfoot as Research Officer, assisted by a team of 16 dedicated volunteers. The Archives collect, preserve and maintain the records of the General Assembly of Australia as well as dealing with research inquiries from both within and outside the Church.

During the three years since the last Assembly the work undertaken as the GAA Archive has included:-

- Accessioning of GAA Minutes, Minutes of the Commission of Assembly and other publications as received.
- Accessioning Church and Nation Committee records as received.
- Accessioning of Finance Committee records as received.
- Accessioning of Reception of Ministers Committee records as received.
- Accessioning of Relations with other Presbyterian Churches Committee records as received.
- Accessioning of APWM/Mission Partners records as received.
- Transfer of Presbyterian Inland Mission material from the Presbyterian Church of Queensland.
- Continuing the index of the GAA Blue Books from 1901.
- Continuing the national ministers' database from 1823 to the present.
- Developing the Ferguson Library with the donation and/or purchase of books relating to the work of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.
- Provided advice and research assistance to the Clerk of the Assembly and to Clerks, ministers and Archivists of other states as requested.
- Provided advice and research material to the Deputy Clerk of Assembly re. the implications of the Frackelton case. We are indebted to the Archives of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland for transferring (on long term loan) documents relating to this case.
- Commenced a research project on WW1 PCA chaplains and the recording of WW1 Honour Boards in Presbyterian Churches (and former Presbyterian Churches) in all states.

We remind all Committees that non-current records (minutes and correspondence) more than five years old should be transferred to the Archives. We also remind Committees that two copies of any publications produced by Committees should be deposited in the Archives.

Susan Pacey, Archivist/Librarian.

**(ii) From the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia concerning recommendations on the report of the Camberwell Committee.**

The Clerk of Assembly  
Presbyterian Church of Australia  
PO Box 2196  
STRAWBERRY HILLS N.S.W.

28 July, 2010

Dear Sir,

The following is an extract minute from the Commission of the General Assembly of the

Presbyterian Church of Australia.

At Sydney and within Presbyterian Church Offices on Thursday 3 June, 2010 at 10.30 a.m. the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia met pursuant to adjournment and was constituted with prayer.

Among other things:

**188. Private Sitting:** It was resolved that the Commission of Assembly sit in private.

**189. Report of Camberwell Committee:** The report of the Committee appointed under Min. 53(5) of the special meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia held in Sydney on 24 July, 2007 was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. C.D. Balzer presented the deliverance.

Clause (1) was moved and seconded.

The Rev. K.D. Murray moved as amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Delete the words "in an attempt to achieve something" and insert the words "to address a perceived wrong" and delete the words "seek to address perceived wrongs" at the end of the clause and insert the following in their place "fulfil their proper purpose" so that the clause would read:

- (1) Earnestly entreat all communicant members and adherents not to resort to the secular press to address a perceived wrong in the church but to allow the church courts to fulfil their proper purpose.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved.

Clause (2) was moved and seconded.

The Rev. Dr J.P. Wilson moved as amendment:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Amend Clause (2) by deleting sub-clause (iii).

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved.

Clauses (3) to (5) were approved.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- (1) Earnestly entreat all communicant members and adherents not to resort to the secular press to address a perceived wrong in the church but to allow the church courts to fulfil their proper purpose.
- (2) Earnestly entreat all parties involved in the matter that has been before the Committee to exert every effort towards:
  - (i) doing all that is appropriate to reconcile relationships that have been, and still are, damaged;
  - (ii) taking personal responsibility for their own behaviour.
- (3) Encourage the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to publicise the fact that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia is willing to pay for "professional Christian counsellors from outside our denomination ... to be available to facilitate family reconciliations" (GAA Commission of Assembly Min. 17(18)).
- (4) Make this report available to the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, the Presbytery of Melbourne East and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.
- (5) Transmit the report to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia together with an extract minute conveying the foregoing associated resolutions and recommend that the Committee be thanked and discharged.

The Moderator conveyed to the Rev. C.D. Balzer the thanks of the Commission for his work as Convener of the Committee and for the work of the Committee as a whole.



**191. Open Court:** The Commission of Assembly resumed in open court. Extracted from the records of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia by me.

Paul Logan, Clerk of Assembly.

In terms of Min. 189(5) of the Commission I forward the recommendation to the 2010 General Assembly of Australia.

Yours sincerely,  
(Rev. Dr) Paul Logan,  
**Clerk of Assembly**

**(iii) From the National Missions Director concerning Bible Story Telling Ministry.**

**Bible Storytelling - a Valuable Skill for Preachers**

a presentation to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia  
by Dr Keith Benn, Wycliffe Australia Bible Storytelling Coordinator

**“Bible storytelling is a non-threatening way to share the Good News with non-Christians.”**

Jesus constantly told stories, and to all sorts of people: illiterate country folk and also highly educated Pharisees and Sadducees. Why? Because stories can do what a normal sermon cannot.

**Jesus used stories to**

- a) teach Bible truths
- b) rebuke religious leaders
- c) stimulate faith
- d) encourage commitment
- e) evangelize
- f) train disciple makers

But why did Jesus use storytelling as his major hermeneutical method? Why not use expository preaching?

**The genius of stories:** “Stories are somehow able to bypass our mental filters. They allow us to imagine things that don’t apply in real life. When we hear a story, the normal rules are suspended, and our imagination takes over.” Jesus got people’s attention using stories. He sent them home with a message wrapped in a story they enjoyed – a story that was simple enough to tell the family over the evening meal. And that’s where his stories made the greatest impact.

**Rev. Greg Munro, Presbyterian Church, Scottsdale:** “We are keen to run further Bible storytelling seminars in Tasmania as we can see the worth of this excellent tool for communicating the love of God in Christ, and I would have no hesitation to recommend it to others.”

Stories do what sermons rarely achieve. A good story can enter a person’s inner being and make its home there. Then as the person meditates on that story, the values and beliefs that form the fabric of the story begin to seep out to transform the individual. And as he discusses this story with his family and village, the story can transform the society, bit by bit. “Stories are the main way a society passes along its values. If you change the stories you change the society’s values.” A Jewish Rabbi once said: “God made man to tell stories.”

**Oral learners formulate their values and beliefs by hearing about true events.**

**Oral vs Literate Learning Styles:** Approximately 50% of Australians are oral learners. This doesn’t mean they’re illiterate. It means that they learn more by hearing what actually happened - real life events - than they do from hearing explanations about what happened. This is not a matter of intelligence or even education. It is all about learning styles. Oral learners gain knowledge, and formulate their values and beliefs by hearing about true events. The Bible is full of it!

In a **Bible storytelling seminar** we teach five basic skills:

**#1: crafting:** how to take a Bible passage and craft a Bible story

**#2: revision:** how to revise the Bible story to be simple, accurate and memorable

**#3: telling:** how to tell a story so that the teller's body language tells the same story as his words

**#4: teaching:** how to teach a Bible story so that the hearers can repeat it back accurately

**#5: leading:** how to lead an interactive Bible study based on a Bible story

**Rev. Dean, South Australia:** I've done a lot of theological study in my time.

In my preaching I tell a lot of stories. But in this seminar I have been given a structure for preparing Bible stories that will help me be more effective in the way I teach. Along with the Bible study method, I feel that I'm now better equipped for ministry.

**Conclusion:** Bible storytelling is a very powerful, non-threatening way to present the Good News brought by Jesus. To ignore the storytelling methodology that Jesus modeled so well is to choose to ignore the learning style of up to 50% of the normal Australian population.

**Rev. Ian Partridge, Kayena Presbyterian Church, Tasmania:** Bible Storytelling is an important tool for sharing the gospel, in working alongside the exposition of the Word. It has empowered my ministry; it has empowered our congregation's ministry and it can empower yours!

**Upcoming Bible Storytelling Seminars:**

**Auburn, Sydney - Oct 1-4. Contact:** Robyn Lanham  
robyn.lanham@wec.com.au

ph: 02 8004 9293 mobile: 0408 614 598

**Yackandandah, Vic – Oct 7-10. Contact:** Linda McIntosh  
mcilinda@gmail.com

ph: 02 6027 1154 mobile: 0435 152 970

**Maleny, Qld – Nov 25-28. Contact:** Peter O'Loghlin  
probe\_qld@wycliffe.org  
ph: 07 3411 2356

## DISSENT AND COMPLAINT

(i) **From the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell against a decision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Tasmania.**

I, David Charles Mitchell, dissent and complain to the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia against the decision of the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Tasmania on the 13 day of May 2008 concerning the order of business for the first sitting of the annual session of the Assembly for that year. A point of order was raised that the order of business proposed in the White Book was different from the order of business prescribed in Code 6.14. The Moderator ruled that the proposed order of business was not different from the Code. I moved dissent from the Moderator's ruling. The moderator's ruling was upheld. Mr David Turner and I dissented and protested for leave to complain, The Moderator ruled that leave was granted. The Assembly did not exercise any of the rights reserved to it by Code 7.31 but proceeded as if the dissents and complaints had not been made.

I dissent and complain on the following grounds:

- A I adopt the grounds submitted by Mr David Turner for his dissent and complaint:
1. Although the assembly is master of its own business, it must observe its own rules.
  2. The procedure proposed by the Business Committee contravenes:
    - (a) Rule 6.14 which clearly states the order of business of the first sitting of the annual session of the Assembly; and
    - (b) Standing Orders 8.1.4 and 8.1.5.
  3. The Assembly acted beyond its powers in following the procedure proposed in the White Book by the Business Committee when it differed from the procedure provided by the Code. The Assembly was not justified in following a wrong procedure even if such unauthorised procedure had been followed at previous Assemblies particularly when the irregularity had been drawn to the attention of previous Assemblies.
  4. A course of action which contravenes certain sections of the Code and is followed over three consecutive meetings of the Assembly does not constitute a precedent for making valid any conduct of a similar nature in a future Assembly.
- B I adopt Mr Turner's four grounds and add:
5. It is contumacious for a Court of the Church and for any of the members of such a Court wilfully to disobey the established rules of the Church.
  6. It is part of the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church that its members and the Courts of the Church are required to obey the Church's own laws, regulations and procedures
  7. It is part of the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church for the Courts of the Church to comply with the laws of the land, in so far as those laws are not contrary to the laws of God.
  8. After the granting of leave to complain, the Assembly failed to sist the order of business as proposed in the White Book but continued irregularly and improperly to disregard the Code and the Complaints.

Signed, David Mitchell

## OVERTURES

### (i) From the Code Committee concerning a new Rule 1.12 in the Code of Discipline.

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia  
WHEREAS

- A. Each of the state churches has made or may make provisions within its Rules for the application of administrative procedures relating to the dissolution of the pastoral tie, removal of an elder from office and removal of names from the rolls of communicants and adherents;
- B. Doubts have arisen as to whether such rules may be in conflict with the Rules of the Code of Discipline of the Presbyterian Church of Australia which are contained within the Code of Discipline.
- C. For the good order and governance of the Church it is desirable to clarify the position.
- D. The Code Committee of the General Assembly of Australia recommends that the most expedient way to resolve the doubt is to provide within the Code of Discipline a provision which permits State Churches to include in their Rules suitable administrative provisions which do not constitute, if exercised, the application of discipline within the Church.

Now therefore the Code Committee overtures the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and to insert a new clause 1.12 in the Code of Discipline as follows:

**Administrative Procedures 1.12** Nothing in these rules is intended to apply to administrative processes provided for in the rules and regulations of the State churches which do not involve any alleged conduct in respect of a member of the church of the kind referred to in Rule 1.03. Unless alleged conduct of the kind referred to in Rule 1.03 is a materially contributing reason giving rise to the exercise of power, the State churches may establish (by way of example) rules:

- (a) requiring the roll of communicant members to be revised, including authorising sessions to remove from a communicant roll persons who, by their habitual absence from attendance at communion and/or other worship in the congregation, should not continue to be included as communicant members of the Church,
- (b) relating to the termination of office of an elder where the member's usefulness as an elder has been seriously impaired such as due to persistent absence from meetings not satisfactorily explained, or incapacity whether physical or mental,
- (c) permitting a presbytery to deal with the incapacity of a minister whether physical or mental by dissolving the pastoral tie,
- (d) permitting a presbytery to deal with a congregation in an unsatisfactory state by:
  - (i) dissolving the pastoral tie, and/or
  - (ii) dissolving the session and/or the committee of management.

Or to do otherwise as the Assembly in its wisdom may deem fit.

**Mr Simon H. Fraser and the Rev. Dr Paul Logan were appointed to state the overture.**

### (ii) From the Code Committee an amendment to Chapter 3 of Constitution, Procedure and Practice by the addition of rules regarding Complaints.

To the Venerable, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia,  
Whereas:

- A. At Min. 105(2) the 2004 General Assembly of Australia resolved "That the Assembly:  
Request the Code Committee to report at the next meeting of the Assembly on the matter of appeals, complaints and petitions involving disputes, including the appropriate grounds for such matters, the process of bringing them before the

- Assembly and the procedure by which they are heard by the Assembly, together with the concept of “the bar”.
- B. In chapter 3 of the GAA Constitution, Procedure and Practice, general rules are set out for Overture, Petitions and References.
  - C. There are no general rules regarding Appeals and Complaints. Procedure for Appeals and Complaints are located within Standing Orders 91-100.
  - D. Various State Churches have adopted a practice requiring parties in disputes that have appealed or complained to the State Assembly to appear before a ‘conciliation’ body to attempt to resolve the dispute through negotiation, prior to the hearing of those matters by the Assembly. On a number of occasions this has proven an effective mechanism with resultant benefits to the business of the Assembly.
  - E. The General Assembly of Australia in 2004 (Min. 105(1)) made the request to State Assemblies that when a dispute is to come before the General Assembly of Australia that a similar process be adopted inviting either a conciliation committee of another state or members of the assessor panel (Article 13) to negotiate with the parties.
  - F. The General Assembly of Australia would benefit by establishing a mechanism for seeking a negotiated resolution of disputes prior to the hearing of those matters by the Assembly.

Now, therefore, the Code Committee overtures the General Assembly to take the above premises into consideration and to amend Chapter 3 of Constitution, Procedure and Practice by the addition of a new section 5 containing rules regarding Complaints as follows:

## **5. APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS**

### **5.01 Appeal**

An appeal is a signed document given in by a person who is or was a party at the bar in a case before the court. It contains the reasons which are the grounds of the appeal against a decision of the court and is designed to bring that decision under the review of a superior court. The appeal must also state the grounds upon which the appellant alleges that GAA has jurisdiction. The party appealing must either give in the appeal at the time the decision is announced to him or else at that time protest for leave to appeal and an inferior court must inform any parties at its bar of this requirement when judgment is given.

### **5.02 Complaint**

A dissent and complaint, referred to herein as a complaint, is a signed document given in by a member of a court who neither is nor was at its bar in a case before the court. It contains his reasons for complaining against a decision of the court on which the complainant has voted in the minority and is designed to bring that decision under review by a superior court. The complaint must also state the grounds upon which the complainant alleges that GAA has jurisdiction. Separate reasons for dissent are not given in. The member says: "I dissent and protest for leave to complain" and the complaint is either given in at the time or within the period hereinafter provided.

### **5.03 Reasons of appeal or complaint**

Reasons of appeal or complaint shall include any of the following: Irregularity in the proceedings of the court, refusal of reasonable indulgence to a party in the conduct of the case, reception of irrelevant evidence, refusal to receive relevant evidence, mistake or injustice in the judgment, undue haste in proceeding to judgment, judgment against evidence or the weight of evidence or denial of natural justice.

### **5.04 Resolution of Disputes**

When an appeal, a complaint, or a petition to resolve a dispute is to come before the

Assembly, the Clerk may appoint a minimum of five Assessors (appointed under Article 13) and shall advise the parties to enter into negotiations with these Assessors for the purpose of seeking to resolve the dispute. The content of such negotiations shall be confidential to the parties. The Clerk shall report to the Assembly whether negotiations were held or not held in cases of unresolved disputes.

**5.05 Respondents and appellants**

No more than two appellants or complainants and no more than two respondents have a right to present the case.

**5.06 Answers**

Written answers to reasons of appeal or complaint are not required. If answers are prepared the inferior court may adjust and adopt them or it may authorise the respondents to give the answers they prepare as the answers of the court.

**5.07 Documents**

A court transmits without delay to its superior court any appeal or complaint which it has received against one of its own decisions together with all records and documents connected therewith. The responsibility rests with an appellant or complainant to be satisfied that all documents necessary have been forwarded to the superior court.

**5.08 Failure to appear**

If an appellant or complainant fails to appear at the bar at the time appointed the appeal or complaint is held to have been fallen from unless the court for due cause shown otherwise order. Where sickness is relied upon as the reason for failure to appear a medical certificate must be produced.

**5.09 Appeal or complaint fallen from**

When an appeal or a complaint is not proceeded with a member of the court whose decision was appealed or complained against should take protestation in the superior court that the appeal or complaint has been fallen from and that the decision of the inferior court has become final and should request extracts. This protestation after being recorded in the minutes is supplied by the Clerk as an extract minute.

**5.10 Death of appellant**

In the event of the death of an appellant the appellate court may allow the representatives of the appellant or a member of the court authorised in that behalf to appear in the interests of the good name or the estate of the appellant should such matters be involved in the appeal.

**5.11 Parties at the bar**

An appeal or complaint places at the bar of the superior court and prevents them from voting in the case the following persons:

- (a) The appellant(s) or complainant(s).
- (b) The respondent(s).
- (c) Those who were members of the inferior court at the time when the decision appealed or complained against was arrived at though they may in the interim have become members of another inferior court.
- (d) Those who were associated with the inferior court while the matter appealed or complained against was before the inferior court.
- (e) Those who have been admitted into the inferior court subsequent to its decision and before the appeal or complaint has been dealt with.

### **5.12 Arguments**

Parties in an appeal or complaint should confine their arguments to the points to which the appeal or complaint refers as set forth in the record.

### **5.13 Procedure**

In appeals or complaints the procedure is:

- (a) Parties are called to the bar.
- (b) The minutes of the inferior court and relative documents are read, or if they are printed, may be taken as read.
- (c) The court considers the issue of jurisdiction relating to the appeal/complaint, and proceeds to resolve to accept or reject jurisdiction.
- (c) Previous to hearing parties in an appeal or complaint the Clerk shall read the following announcement: "As the decision of the court is determined not only by the documents in the case but also by the pleadings at the bar, the members are reminded that justice requires the pleadings at the bar to be heard by all those who vote in the case and that, in particular, no member ought to vote against either party who has not heard the pleadings on that side".
- (d) The appellants or complainants are heard.
- (e) The respondents are heard.
- (f) The appellants or complainants are heard in reply.
- (e) Questions may be put through the moderator to the parties by members of the court. If the court see cause, any question and answer may be recorded in the minutes.
- (f) The parties are removed from the bar. When parties are removed from the bar, it is at the discretion of the court, whether they be permitted to hear the discussion of the case.
- (g) The court considers the case and proceeds to judgment.
- (h) Parties are recalled and the finding is intimated to them.

### **5.14 How dealt with**

An appeal or complaint is usually sustained or dismissed in whole or in part and in either case the judgment of the inferior court may be modified or altered as the superior court may think fit.

### **5.15 Sustained**

An appeal or complaint is sustained because the decision of the inferior court is disapproved or because of irregularities or informalities in the procedure of the inferior court. The sustaining of an appeal or complaint on the ground of irregularities or informalities does not necessarily imply the reversal of the decision appealed against unless it is considered that the substantial injustice has been done to the appellant or complainant through such irregularities. The superior court without entering on the merit of the decision appealed or complained against or without pronouncing any judgment in regard to it may send back the case to the inferior court with particular instruction or with instructions to have it taken up anew and disposed of in accordance with the laws of the Church.

### **5.16 Dismissed**

The dismissing of an appeal or complaint implies approval of the procedure and confirmation of the decision of the inferior court.

### **5.17 Protestation**

When a complaint or an appeal fallen from, the respondent shall make protestation to the effect and shall be entitled to receive an extract minute of the same. or do otherwise as the Assembly in its wisdom may deem fit.

**The Rev. J.R. Irvin and L. Hall were appointed to state the overture.**

**(iii) From the Code Committee to amend Rules 3.01 and 3.02 of the Code of Discipline.**

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

WHEREAS

- A. In the course of administering the Code of Discipline in Chapter 8 of Constitution, Procedure and Practice of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, various courts of the Church have reported confusion over some of the provisions of that Code in relation to the sequence and substance of Rules 3.01, 3.02 and 5.12.
- B. In the course of administering the Code of Discipline in Chapter 8 of Constitution, Procedure and Practice of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in interaction with processes adopted by State Assemblies to protect people against abuse of authority it is necessary to act in a manner consistent with Scripture whilst also acknowledging what is observed by experience: that further forced interaction between an aggrieved person and an alleged offender can be traumatic (both immediately and with enduring effect) for both parties and must be carefully managed.
- C. It would be inconsistent with Scripture that activity seen to be commanded by it should create or heighten the risk of further trauma or suffering to an individual, yet this may appear to be required by the Church according to the current wording of Chapter 8 Rules 3.02(a) and 5.12 inasmuch as they mandate a private conversation between the accuser and the alleged offender, with or without others present who are appointed by the Court under Rule 3.02(b).
- D. In cases of alleged abuse of authority including child abuse, the occurrence, timing and manner of any private conversation in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17 (see also Proverbs 25:9-12; Luke 6:31-37) ought to be determined by the Court to whom the complaint has been brought and that Court should act so as not to create or heighten the risk of further trauma or suffering to the parties from such private conversation.
- E. The Code Committee considers that this issue ought to be to be faithfully debated and determined by the Assembly and, in order to catalyse such a debate, has prepared a revision of Rules 3.01, 3.02 and 5.12.

NOW THEREFORE the Code Committee overtures the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and amend the Code of Discipline in Chapter 8 of Constitution, Procedure and Practice of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in the following manner:

1. Delete rules 3.01 and 3.02, replace them with the proposed revised rules and renumber subsequent rules as necessary:
  - Private wrong      3.01    In a case of alleged private wrong, the accuser should first follow the course of private conversation with the alleged offender prescribed by our Lord in Matthew Chapter 18 verses 15-17 except where the allegation relates to abuse including abuse of authority. Where a private conversation has not been held, the court holding jurisdiction over the alleged offender may, upon being approached by the complainant, appoint one or more persons to facilitate that conversation if possible.
  - Abuse of authority    3.02    However, it would be inconsistent with Scripture that activity seen to be required by it should create or heighten the risk of further trauma or suffering to one or more individuals. Therefore, in cases of alleged abuse including abuse of authority, the occurrence, timing and manner of any private conversation in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17 (see also Proverbs 25:9-12 and Luke 6:31-37) shall be determined by the court to whom the complaint has been brought and that court shall act so as not to



Christian Mediation 3.03 create or unreasonably heighten the risk of further trauma or suffering to the parties from such private conversation. A court may appoint one or more of its members to confer in private with both parties with a view to disposing of the case through Christian mediation. Equally, a court may engage competent Christian mediators beyond its own membership to effect such mediation.

Private dealing 3.04 Ordinarily a matter appearing to call for the exercise of discipline shall not be proceeded with formally until the court, or a committee appointed by the court, has in private conferred in a loving way with the alleged offender with a view to avoiding the necessity of formal process if possible. The result of this conference shall be reported to the court in general terms bearing in mind the nature and purpose of the conference and that report shall be confidential to the court and be kept in a record apart.

2. Add the following words at the end of Rule 5.12: "except where the allegation relates to abuse including abuse of authority, in which situation the occurrence, timing and manner of any private conversation shall be determined by the Court."

Or to do otherwise in its wisdom as the Assembly may deem fit.

**The Rev. Bruce Meller and Mr Simon Fraser were appointed to state the overture.**

**(iv) From the Code Committee amendments to Parts 3, 4, 5 and 7 of the Code of Discipline.**

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia

WHEREAS:

- A. In the course of administering the Code of Discipline in Chapter 8 of *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia several issues have arisen.
- B. The rules concerning documents and evidence need to be framed differently for the preliminary inquiry and for any judicial process, since the obligations of procedural fairness are likely to apply differently in them because of the different nature of what is being undertaken and the different effect on people's rights.
- C. In the judicial process stage it needs to be clarified that documents and evidence which a court of law would say were privileged or immune, or which would be restricted in access because of their confidential nature, will be similarly treated by the church court.
- D. In the judicial process stage it needs to be clarified that any person with a legitimate interest in a privilege, immunity or document should be able to apply to protect that privilege, immunity or document, not just the parties to the hearing.
- E. Issues have emerged in the context of the interaction between the Code of Discipline and policies and processes adopted by State Assemblies to protect people against abuse of authority (such as *Breaking the Silence*). These issues have more general application.
- F. The director or chief executive, or the authorised representative of such a person, who administers a child protection unit or a church organisation which deals with complaints about abuse of authority has an obvious legitimate interest in privilege, immunity or confidentiality in judicial process which involves complaints in those fields but will not be a party directly to that hearing.
- G. In reviewing the Code of Discipline it appears beneficial to clarify the meaning of certain rules about initial investigation to determine if a preliminary enquiry should occur.
- H. The Code of Discipline would be improved by minor adjustments for clarity and consistency.

NOW THEREFORE the Code Committee overtures the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia to take these premises into consideration and to amend the Code of Discipline

as follows:

1. Amend Part 3 as follows:
  - Rule 3.03 - replace “enter on a judicial process” with “*undertake a preliminary inquiry or enter upon a judicial process*” so that the clause will read:  
“A Court cannot undertake a preliminary inquiry or enter upon a judicial process against an alleged offender unless:
    - (a) some person or persons undertake to make and maintain the charge, or
    - (b) the Court itself find it necessary for the ends of discipline to investigate the alleged offence.
  - Rule 3.07 - after “Court” add “*by itself or a committee appointed by the Court*” and  
- add at the end “*with such conference and the report thereof being confidential to the Court and being kept in a record apart*”  
so that the whole clause will read:  
On the basis of a public rumour of an offence a Court by itself or a committee appointed by the Court may proceed to confer privately with the alleged offender and inquire into the nature of the alleged offence and the evidence available with such conference and the report thereof being confidential to the Court and being kept in a record apart.
  - Rule 3.08 - replace “report” in part (a) with “*complaint, accusation or public rumour*”; and  
- replace “the alleged offence” in part (b) with “*the offence alleged in any complaint, accusation or public rumour*”  
so that the clause will read:  
If:
    - (a) the complaint, accusation or public rumour appears to be ill-founded, or
    - (b) the offence alleged in any complaint, accusation or public rumour is not flagrant and the accused acknowledges the error and submits to such admonition as the Court may deem needfulno further proceedings are taken.
  - Rule 3.09 - after “matter complained of” add “*(whether under Rule 3.04 (a) or 3.04 (b))*”  
- add at the end “*Proceedings of the Court and the decision made by it shall be confidential to the Court and be kept in a record apart*”  
so that the clause will read:  
If the Court decides that the matter complained of (whether under Rule 3.04 (a) or 3.04 (b)) ought to be more fully inquired into it shall institute a preliminary inquiry and thereafter determine whether a formal process should be entered upon or permitted. If, after such preliminary inquiry, it decides for a formal process the case should be proceeded with as speedily as practicable. Proceedings of the Court and the decision made by it shall be confidential to the Court and be kept in a record apart.
2. Replace Rule 4.09 with the following new Rule:  
“4.09 *In the preliminary inquiry, subject to Rules 4.04, 4.10 and 4.11:*
  - (a) *the Court and any committee may inform itself of the matter being inquired into in such ways as it thinks fit and may inspect such documents as it thinks fit,*
  - (b) *the alleged offender does not have a right to be told what documents or information the Court or committee has gathered or has been given or has heard or has inspected, and*
  - (c) *the alleged offender has no right to seek access to such information or documents.”*
- 2A. Amend the heading for rule 5.04 so that it will read “*Church adviser*”.
- 2B. Amend rule 5.04 by adding at the end, “*(Such a person, if appointed, will be known as a ‘church adviser’.)*”
- 2C. Amend rules 5.05-5.08 by inserting “*church*” before “*adviser*” and changing “*an*” to “*a*” where necessary.
3. Rename Part 7 as *Rules Concerning Evidence, Documents and Other Procedures in Judicial Process*.
4. In Rule 7.01 replace the words ‘of evidence’ with the words ‘*in Part 7*’.

5. Amend Rule 7.10 by adding at the end of the Rule the following additional words: *“but is to be noted and shall be included as part of any complaint or appeal.”* so that the clause will read:  
Any member of the Court or party concerned may object, for reasons stated, to:
  - (a) any person brought forward for examination,
  - (b) any question that may be put, or
  - (c) any document or other productions that may be proposed to be used.
 Such objections shall be disposed of by the Court. A complaint or an appeal against the decision of the Court disposing of such objections does not stay procedure but is to be noted and shall be included as part of any complaint or appeal.
6. Amend 7.11 and 7.14 by replacing the word *“tape”* with *“electronic”*.
7. Amend Rule 7.20 by replacing the words *“separate record”* with the words *“record apart”* where appearing.
8. Replace Rule 7.21 with the following new Rule:
 

*“7.21 (a) Subject to Rules 7.10 and 7.21(d) to (f), the prosecutors on the one hand and an accused and his or her professional advisers on the other hand have the right, at all reasonable times prior to and during hearings, to inspect statements and documents which are to be tendered or relied upon by the other party as evidence in the hearing.*

  - (b) Either the prosecutors or the accused may seek an adjournment of a hearing on the grounds that the party is prejudiced by having insufficient time to review and answer evidence (oral or documentary) which has been provided to that party. The Court will, after hearing the parties on that application, determine it immediately. Any objection or appeal against such determination shall not stay procedure but is to be noted and shall be included as part of any appeal.*
  - (c) This Rule is in addition to Rules 5.01(c) and (d) and 7.10.*
  - (d) In relation to any documents produced under citation or request (see Rule 7.17 and Part 8 generally), and in relation to any evidence, the Court will uphold any objection taken on grounds which would support a successful claim of privilege or immunity in a court of law, including client legal privilege and privilege against self-incrimination. Such objection may be taken by the prosecutors, the accused or any other person with a legitimate interest in upholding the privilege or immunity. For the purpose of determining the objection the Court may, in the absence of the prosecutors and the accused as appropriate, by itself or by a committee appointed by the Court inspect the documents and hear the evidence. If the objection is upheld by the Court or its committee, the Court shall disregard that document or evidence in its consideration and determination of the matter.*
  - (e) In relation to any documents produced under citation or request (see Rules 7.17 and Part 8 generally), and in relation to any evidence, the Court on application by the prosecutors, the accused or any other person with a legitimate interest in the confidentiality of the documents or evidence may determine that the documents or evidence is or are confidential and take such action as it considers just in order to protect such confidentiality, balancing the confidentiality of the documents or evidence against the interests of the parties in fairly presenting the case. Such action may include restricting access to the documents or evidence to the members of the Court and to professional advisers who are experts in the field to which the documents or evidence relate and/or seeking a signed non-disclosure and confidentiality undertaking from persons to whom the documents or evidence are disclosed prior to such disclosure. For the purpose of determining the confidentiality claim the Court by itself or by a committee appointed by the Court may, in the absence of prosecutors and the accused as appropriate, inspect the documents and hear the evidence.*
  - (f) For the purposes of Rule 7.21(d) and (e), a person with a legitimate interest includes the director or other chief executive of a child protection unit of a church organisation and a director or other chief executive of a church*

*organisation which deals with complaints of abuse of authority by church members or similar matters (whatever the age of the person allegedly abused), or in either case a person authorised by that director or chief executive to make such an application or applications of that type.”*

Or to do otherwise as the Assembly in its wisdom may deem fit.

The Rev. Bruce Meller and Mr Simon Fraser were appointed to state the Overture.

Or to do otherwise as the Assembly in its wisdom may deem fit.

**The Rev. Bruce Meller and Mr Simon Fraser were appointed to state the Overture.**

# PROCURATOR'S OPINIONS

## (i) Eldership Overture remitted from General Assembly of Australia, 2007

### Opinion

#### Introduction

- i. GAA2007 received an overture (Overture (ii)) from the Presbytery of Sydney South, transmitted without comment through GANSW2007, seeking the following (omitting the preamble):
  - Add to Article 2.1 a new "(h) the admission of persons to the eldership" and re-number the balance of paragraphs in 2.1;
  - Add a new Article 18: "Regarding eldership in the Presbyterian Church of Australia:
    - (a) each congregation shall have elders elected by the communicants of the congregation through an election conducted by the session.
    - (b) each State shall encourage suitable training for and teaching about the eldership prior to the election of elders into the eldership. Such training should include, among other things, appropriate training in the doctrine of the Church.
    - (c) the eldership shall be only open to suitably qualified men (1 Tim 2:13-15; 3:1-7) having attained the age of 21 years and having already played an active part in the life of the Church as communicants.
    - (d) this Article does not affect the status of any woman elder ordained to the eldership in the Presbyterian Church of Australia at the date of enactment of this Article."
- ii. The motion to sustain the overture was approved, as was the motion to send the overture to State Assemblies and presbyteries under barrier act procedure with replies to be in the hands of the Clerk of Assembly by 31 December 2009: BB2007 min 74, 82.
- iii. A motion was approved that the overture be referred to the Code Committee of GAA for consideration and report to GAA2010, in particular asking that Committee to report on how making such proposed changes to the Articles of Agreement might affect the balance of responsibilities and powers between the individual State and General Assemblies and the impact of such changes on the Basis of Union 1901: BB2007 min 82.
- iv. A further motion was approved requesting me as Procurator to give a written opinion to GAA2010 on the impact (if any) of proposals contained in the overture on the Basis of Union: BB2007 min 82.
- v. On consideration of the overture at GANSW2008, the following motion was approved (BB2008 min 23(2)):

"Request the Procurator to present to the 2009 General Assembly a formal opinion on the legality and potential impact of the proposed changes on the NSW General Assembly and to the Basis of Union, with specific consideration of whether the change would be binding on the NSW Assembly and if the change is sustained at the 2010 General Assembly of Australia, whether the NSW General Assembly, individual presbyteries or congregations could invoke minority rights and withdraw from the Presbyterian Church of Australia with full property rights or such other action that could be taken."

The context for this motion is informed by a motion put and ruled incompetent at GANSW2007 to the following effect at the time of the debate on communication of the overture to GAA (BB2007 min 108):

"Request its Law Officers' opinions on the competence of the overture contained in communication (iii) and that they be asked to take the following matters into consideration in providing their opinions:

  1. Can the GAA competently entertain any overture which seeks to control the

State churches in those areas where the State churches are supreme?

2. Article 10 does not allow the GAA to further interfere with the rights of the States and this overture seeks to do just that. Is this not asking the GAA to do what it cannot do as a matter of constitution to confer supreme powers onto itself?
3. Given the long precedence of treating eldership in the Presbyterian tradition as a matter of government, a view that has been repeatedly affirmed by past assemblies, can it be simply redefined by overture as a matter of doctrine?
4. Can the proposed procedures for this overture force a dissenting State to resign any of its constitutional power over matters of government?
5. What rights are retained by State Assemblies which disapprove of any action arising from resolutions that may be undertaken by the GAA to assert jurisdiction over issues considered to be matters of government.”

(A motion to include comment on the absence of a paper on the doctrine of eldership and on a new scheme of union to accompany the overture was disapproved at the same time.)

A motion with some similarities had been earlier put and ruled incompetent at the Commission of Assembly held on 23 April 2008 (BB2008 page 132 min 31):

“That the Commission of Assembly: Instruct the New South Wales Procurator to prepare a written opinion on the impact, if any, of the proposals contained in the remit on Overture (ii), GAA BB 2007 min 82), for publication in the Assembly papers of the NSW GA to be held in July 2008, with special, but not exclusive, reference to whether:

- (a) the GAA has the power to assume supreme jurisdiction over the eldership in New South Wales without the consent of GA NSW;
- (b) enactment of the proposed rules would set precedents for the subversion of the Scheme of Union;
- (c) the proposed rules impinge on the rights of sessions to ordain the elders of their respective congregations;
- (d) congregations and sessions would be bound by the proposed rules in the light of our church’s federal structure, in which sessions and presbyteries are subordinate courts of the NSW church and not of the PCA;
- (e) ministers and elders who do not agree with the proposed rules will be obliged to assert, maintain and defend them under their ordination commitments; and
- (f) the Trustees are obliged to make proper provision for such congregations in New South Wales who do not concur with the proposed rules.”

vi. GANSW2008 also approved a motion (BB 2008 min 23(1)) to defer all further consideration of the remit of the overture until the GANSW2009, but disapproved motions to authorise the Clerk of Assembly to circulate the requested opinion I mentioned in v. above upon receipt to all presbyteries within New South Wales and also disapproved a motion requesting presbyteries to defer consideration of the remit until after GANSW2009 (BB 2008 min 23(2)).

vii. This opinion is given separately, in substantively identical counterparts, to each of GAA and GANSW in my separate capacities as Procurator of GAA and GANSW. Although the request for my opinion by each of GAA and GANSW is differently framed, in my view each requires the same reasons to be canvassed on the same range of topics in reaching the conclusions summarised below and there is no difference in conclusion.

viii. There was no prior opinion sought by the GAA or the overturists or anyone connected with the federal aspect of proceedings from me or (to my knowledge) the Law Agent in relation to the overture prior to its presentation to GANSW2007 for communication to GAA2007 and in respect of the issues now to be addressed, including the competency and validity of the overture as to form or substance. As mentioned above, competence was raised in debate at GAA2007 when the proposal to send the overture to sessions, presbyteries and State Assemblies for consideration and report was discussed and had been raised in GANSW2007 when

the overture was communicated. In GANSW2007 the notice of motion was ruled incompetent on the basis (if I recall correctly) that GANSW2007 was obliged to communicate the overture to GAA under federal rule 2.06 and its identical counterpart rule 3.69 in the New South Wales Code and that, if there had not been an intervening State Assembly, the overture would have been communicated direct by the presbytery to GAA2007.

- ix. The opinion sought from me is not about the merits or scriptural or theological arguments in respect of either of the proposed amendments in the overture. Indeed, as said below, that would be beyond my expertise or role. Rather, the opinion sought is about constitutional powers and protections, to which my personal view on the merits and arguments in respect of the overture is not relevant.
- x. Some of the conclusions to which I have come indicate that I may have held a different view to those opinions which must have been held earlier when changes on gender-based eligibility requirements in ministry and eldership were enacted and later repealed. What was then done was done and it is not fruitful to recanvass history because it does not constitute a precedent binding on future assemblies of the church or on me in giving my opinion.. Rather, the present situation should be the focus.

### **Summary of opinion**

- A. The overture is incompetent and invalid and was invalidly sustained and remitted by GAA2007.
- B. The overture impermissibly addresses both a grant of fresh power to the federal church and the exercise of that power in a specific manner. These distinct subject matters should be the subject of separate overtures. This is irrespective of the wisdom or otherwise of placing the exercise of power containing eligibility requirements founded in part on doctrinal matters such as the second proposed amendment (and existing Article 7.9) in the Articles of Agreement which define a governance and operating structure for the federal church.
- C. My preliminary view is that the grant of power and exercise of power should not only be the subject of separate overtures in themselves, but also should be the subject of separate overtures for the teaching eldership (to the extent that any further grant of power is required, on which further advice would be required) and the ruling eldership.
- D. As a distinct cumulative ground for incompetence and invalidity, the overture - which was presented, debated, sustained and remitted as an undivided whole - as to part affects the Basis of Union and attracts Section III of the Basis of Union. On the present structure of the overture that infects the entire overture as presented, debated, sustained and remitted.
- E. The overture does not draw attention to the matters in D and was not debated, voted on or remitted with knowledge of that impact.
- F. Substantive as well as formal incompetence and invalidity of the above kind in my view invalidates the proceedings to date in respect of the overture. It is necessary to start again if the overturists wish to do so.
- G. Even if that was not the case, a majority on remission as provided under Article 15.1 would not have been obtained on a proper basis and a special majority would also be required pursuant to Section III of the Basis of Union.
- H. Even if a special majority as required by Section III was in fact coincidentally obtained on the current remission or was obtained on a future serial remission, it would not be obtained on a proper basis because the basis of the remission in relation to Article 15.1, and any vote taken on it, was not undertaken with the requisite knowledge. In other words, the remission must make it clear at the outset that the procedure (together or serially), and different special majorities, under Section III of the Basis of Union and Article 15.1 are both involved and explain what that means and why both are involved.
- I. I have not considered on a final basis, as hypothetical and dependent on the wording, whether or not overtures which dealt separately with grant of power and exercise of power in a specific manner and which were restricted to the ruling

eldership (as historically understood) would affect the Basis of Union and attract Sections III and IV of the Basis of Union. My preliminary view is that such is clearly arguable and that the preamble to the current overture illustrates that, at least in relation to gender eligibility requirements based on interpretation of scripture, it is likely that issues of doctrine which affect the Basis of Union and attract Sections III and IV would arise.

- J. If a special majority is obtained under Section III on a competent and valid overture, then further advice should be obtained on the operation of Section IV of the Basis of Union prior to and in respect of any proposed exercise of power thereunder. In particular, the constraints imposed on the exercise of power by GAA, as to choice between the alternatives in Section IV and as to the exercise of power under the second alternative, in light of the words “just and equitable” in Section IV needs to be carefully considered.

### Reasons for opinion

#### *Constitutional structure*

1. The Presbyterian Church of Australia is one united national federal church formed by the consensual union on 24 July 2001 of the then independent Presbyterian Churches of each State.
  - (1) The constituent documents show that what was formed was one Church which is a federation, not a confederation or alliance of continuing distinct and independent State churches with a limited cession of power. There is no preservation of the State churches as distinct independent entities which kept all powers not ceded to the federal church and its General Assembly. Such an interpretation would have the effect that Article 15.1, and Section III of the Basis of Union for that matter, could operate only on altering existing heads of power within the federal purview in 1901 and any other transfer of power would require unanimous reference by the separate State churches.
  - (2) Such a preservation would be contrary to the plain language of Article 15.1 and Section III. More importantly, it would contradict the opening words which record the consensual compact establishing the “Scheme of Union” signed by each State Church on 24 July 1901. In that compact, which preceded and anticipated the words of the Basis of Union and the original form of the Articles of Agreement in the same document, it is expressly said that the subscribing State Churches “agree to *unite*” (my emphasis) “on the following basis and subject to the following articles”, “believing that it would be for the glory of God and the advancement of His Kingdom *that they should form one Presbyterian Church, as hereinafter provided, to be called the Presbyterian Church of Australia*” (my emphasis).
  - (3) Sections I and II of the Basis of Union refer to Supreme Standard and Subordinate Standard of “the *united* church” (my emphasis). Article 1 establishes the GAA as the “Supreme Court of the Church”. Article 17.1 defines “Church” to mean “the Presbyterian Church of Australia being a *federal union of the State Churches*” (my emphasis).
  - (4) Each State church was operating as an unincorporated voluntary association under secular law prior to union. Such associations by their authorised representatives can, and could, agree to unite into a national unincorporated voluntary association with a federal structure without legislative intervention. Nonetheless, there was legislation, uniform in its effect, in each colonial or State parliament between 1899 and 1901 (in New South Wales in 1900) by way of private Act (not public general Act) which recited the opening words of the compact of union, set out the constitutional documents in a schedule and gave them full legal force and effect. The main effect of the private Acts was to provide that none of the State churches had property held in trust divested from them by reason of union (if, for instance, the basis of union contained any differences from the religious purposes of the existing charitable trusts on which that property was held prior to union). This is not inconsistent with the united federal national structure; rather, it recognised



the continuance within that structure of the State churches as distinct and within their spheres self-governing voluntary unincorporated associations, with their property continuing to be held in trust for them rather than for the federal church which in due course had its own trust deed for any property it held or might hold (see GAA1985 min 21(2)). A possible further effect of the private Acts giving the force of law to the union was to reinforce the conclusion in secular law that a national federation did not give rights of secession to the formerly independent constituting entities uniting into the federation except as expressly provided for in the compact of union.

- (5) None of this is surprising, given the co-incidence of date with the creation of a substantially similar united national federation for the country of Australia.
  - (6) Brownie J held in *Bartholomew v Ramage (Women's Ordination Case)* (unreported, NSWSC No 6148 of 1991, 4 Sept 92, BC9201628) that the Basis of Union and Articles of Agreement have full force and effect under the substantive secular statute and general law only in relation to questions of property rather than matters of conscience. To that should be added the ability to obtain relief for procedural fairness from the secular law in relation to the conduct of a voluntary unincorporated association provided that the complainant has a legitimate interest recognised by the secular law as giving standing to complain in the secular courts.
2. The basic constitutional documents within the Scheme of Union are the Basis of Union and the Articles of Agreement (with the latest complete revision and wholesale adoption of the latter being at GAA2001). Like the Commonwealth Constitution, those documents provide for their own mechanism of amendment without the need for or right of intervention or veto by an external source of authority. In drawing the analogy with the Commonwealth Constitution, I leave aside the vexed question of altering constitutional fundamentals such as the tripartite structure of Crown, Parliament and judiciary and other matters in the Imperial enabling Act to which the Constitution was a schedule, in the light of the Australia Acts, a complication which does not arise in the church context. As I have said, although the federal union was given force of law by uniform private Acts of the colonial or State parliaments for specific purposes relating to trust property, there was no need for such a statute to enable the constituting colonial then State churches to sign the compact of union, because those churches were voluntary unincorporated associations uniting into a new national federal voluntary unincorporated association and preserving within that union themselves as continuing unincorporated associations with spheres of self-government.
  3. Sections III and IV of the Basis of Union provide:

“III. Any proposed revision or abridgement of the subordinate standard of the church, or restatement of its doctrine, or change of the formula, shall, before being adopted, be remitted to the local assemblies, and through them to the presbyteries, and no change shall be made without the consent of a majority of the local assemblies, three-fifths of the presbyteries of the whole Church, and a majority of three-fifths of the members present when the final vote of the General Assembly is taken.

“IV. On any change being made in the Basis of Union in accordance with Section III, if any congregation thereupon refuses to acquiesce in the change and determines to adhere to the original basis of union, the General Assembly is empowered - (1) to allow such congregation to retain all its congregational property; or (2) to deal in such other way with the said property as to the assembly may seem just and equitable.”
  4. Section V of the Basis of Union is a partial entrenching clause which requires any amendment to Sections III and IV to be made only under the same regime. That entrenching regime is not expressed in terms to apply to Section V itself.
  5. Article 15 of the Articles of Agreement provides:

“15.1 The General Assembly by resolution expressed to be pursuant to this Article may repeal, amend or add to these Articles of Agreement from time to time,

but not without the prior consent of the majority of the Presbyteries of the Church and a majority of the State Assemblies.

“15.2 If the General Assembly resolves to remit to State Assemblies and Presbyteries a proposed alteration to these Articles, a record shall be taken and recorded in the minutes of the General Assembly of the number voting for and against, and of those present but not voting, in respect of such resolution.

“15.3 For the purposes of Article 15.1, the failure by a Presbytery or a State Assembly to respond to a remit shall be deemed to be disapproval of that remit.”

The deeming provision in Article 15.3 is the opposite to the deeming provision for Rules in Article 2.3, where failure to respond is deemed to be approval of the remitted proposed Rule.

6. Article 2.1 says that the GAA “shall have powers legislative, administrative and judicial, which powers shall be supreme with respect to” a number of specified matters. The specified matters are mostly within three of the four historic categories into which the laws of the Presbyterian Church have been classified, being doctrine, worship and discipline; on the historic division see the authorities cited in the Law Agent’s speech to GAA1997 min 59. Two, being Article 2.1(k) the publication of a national journal and (l) Christian education, appear to overlap those categories with the other historic category of government.
7. Unlike the grant of legislative power in the Commonwealth Constitution, it is not made express in Article 2.1 or elsewhere in the constitutional documents that the specified matters in Article 2.1 are the only matters with respect to which the GAA can exercise its legislative, administrative and judicial powers. The establishment of the GAA under Article 2.1 as the Supreme Court of a united federal national church would suggest that the GAA might have broader powers than those in which it is specified as “supreme”, as does the fact that it was necessary to specify in which powers it was “supreme”.
8. As a practical matter, a broader exercise of power beyond “supreme” powers by the GAA would be concurrent with any exercise of power by State Assemblies or other qualified courts of the church and, as mentioned below, there is no necessary override of the other exercise of power by reason of the federal exercise of power. The use of the words “Supreme Court” would not necessarily infer such an override given that the areas of “supreme” exercise of power are specified.
9. Thus, if the Articles contain an exercise of power which falls outside a specified grant of “supreme” power in Article 2.1, it is likely that other courts or officers or members of the Church are not bound to observe that exercise of power at least if there is an inconsistent exercise of power by another qualified court of the Church on the same subject matter.
10. The Law Agent in his speech to GAA1997 min 59 referred to this by using the 1991 inclusion of Article 7.9 which prescribed gender requirements for “admission to the ministry of Word and Sacraments”. The Law Agent referred to that exercise of power as “supreme” because he said it came within Article 2.1(e) being an exercise of legislative power by the GAA with respect to “the admission of candidates to the ministry”. The Law Agent contrasted, by way of example, a similar prescription of gender requirements for the eldership generally which was not supported by any grant of supreme power in Article 2.1.
11. The effect of a grant of “supreme” power in specified matters is not defined in the constitutional documents. One depends on the meaning of the word “supreme”. This does not of itself mean “exclusive” and does not of itself preclude or exclude concurrent exercise of power, but it is likely to infer an overriding of other exercise of concurrent power to the extent of any inconsistency. Whether or not that override would operate only on direct inconsistency, or direct contradiction (one permits, the other forbids), or would have some wider operation (if, for instance, the federal exercise of power was intended to “cover the field”), is unknown. There is no equivalent in the constitutional documents to section 109 of the Commonwealth Constitution which operates on concurrent exercise of power and has each of the meanings just given.

12. The only guide in the constitutional documents is Article 10.1, which provides:  
 “The autonomy of the State Assemblies shall not be further interfered with than is necessary to give effect to the Basis of Union and the Articles of Agreement.”
13. Article 10.1 appears intended to achieve the same type of effect given to secular commonwealth constitutional arrangements by case law, namely, that one reads the plenitude of grants of concurrent commonwealth power on ordinary principles to see if a particular exercise of power is valid, without reference to any doctrine of “reserved State powers” limiting that reading, but that it is a principle of intergovernmental relations in the federal compact that the exercise of power will not interfere with core government functions of another government and thereby destroy or prejudice the federal compact.

*Nature and scope of the overture*

14. The overture propounds two amendments to the Articles of Agreement: to add to the supreme powers of the GAA the power with respect to admission to the eldership of the Church; and to prescribe, among other matters, that elders can only be male and over 21 (with preservation of rights for existing female elders ordained before the enactment of the amendment).
15. The proposed amendments were not the subject of separate overtures or of any separate vote in GAA2007 with respect to sustaining or remitting the parts of the overture.
16. Clearly the two proposed amendments deal with different subject matter and could have been the subject of separate overtures. In my view that would have been a preferable course. One of the matters arising to be considered is whether that was more than preferable but, rather, a required course. I deal with that matter below after analysing how the proposed amendments clearly deal with distinct and different subject matter.
17. The overture refers to admission to the eldership, and eligibility for such admission, in general terms, that is, *all* elders. It does not distinguish, as does historic Presbyterian thought, between those called “teaching elders” (which could be co-extensive with “ministers” although that is controversial and unclear) and those called “ruling elders”, with regulation of the former being seen to be a matter of doctrine and regulation of the latter a matter of government: see, for example, the Law Agent’s speech to GAA1997 min 59 and authorities there referred to.

*Relationship of overture to existing constitutional structure*

18. If it is correct, as the preamble to the overture infers, to say that the distinction in the preceding paragraph was never complete and/or is no longer valid (among other reasons, because of the changes to the Book of Common Order in 2003 to specify that an elder’s duty includes teaching from God’s Word), and that in effect all elders perform at least some of the functions of teaching elders or could be called “teaching elders”, that would reinforce the conclusion to which I have come below that the overture taken as a whole impacts on doctrine so as to affect the Basis of Union and attract Section III of the Basis of Union. The same reinforcement would occur if, for instance, the correct position was that a “teaching elder’s” focus is on teaching (that is, the “Ministry of Word” to use the language in Article 7.9), and all elders equally can carry out all other functions including “ministry of Sacraments” (to use the language in Article 7.9).
19. GAA1991 amended the Articles of Agreement to add what in its current form is Article 7.9. That article has impact on teaching elders because it reserves exclusively to males (with preservation of existing rights) eligibility “for admission to the ministry of Word and Sacraments in the Church” and a “teaching elder” includes those who engage in “ministry of Word” even on the narrowest meaning of that term. However, the fact that one existing article regulates eligibility of the same person (a teaching elder) in the same way as a proposed new article (the proposed second amendment to add new Article 18), does not of itself prevent both articles applying to the person, all the more so when that person is a subset of a broader group (all elders) regulated by the proposed new article (assuming the distinction

- between teaching and ruling elders continues to have any substance). Also, there is no age prescription in Article 7.9 unlike the age prescription in the proposed new article, so the proposed new article goes beyond the existing eligibility requirements in Article 7.9 even for teaching elders (whatever that term means).
20. Further, the prescription (which includes proscription) of eligibility in Article 7.9 applies to a phrase which does not otherwise expressly appear in the Articles, namely, "admission to the ministry of Word and Sacraments,". That phrase does not appear in terms in the list of supreme GAA powers in Article 2.1. Unless that phrase is interpreted (as the Law Agent in 1997 did) as coming within the grant of power in Article 2.1(b), (e) or otherwise within a grant of power in Article 2.1, Article 7.9 is still valid because it was added (I assume) by a proper exercise of the power to amend the Articles, but it would not be an exercise of supreme power by GAA which necessarily overrode a concurrent exercise of power on the same subject matter by a State Assembly. I have already discussed the difficulties with concurrency. My statement on Article 7.9 applies irrespective of the wisdom or otherwise of placing the exercise of power containing eligibility requirements founded in part on doctrinal matters such as the second proposed amendment (and existing Article 7.9) in the Articles of Agreement which define a governance and operating structure for the federal church.
  21. What is illustrated in the preceding paragraph is that the first of the proposed amendments brings certainty to there being a grant of power to support the supremacy of the eligibility requirements in both existing Article 7.9 and the proposed new Article 18 which is the second proposed amendment in the overture.
  22. The purpose of the preceding analysis is threefold. First, it confirms that there are clearly two distinct subject matters within the proposed overture. One deals with a grant of supreme power to GAA with respect to the eldership (in all its forms, however they are now defined and maybe ought always to have been defined). The other exercises that power by inserting gender and age prescriptions (and, in the case of gender, proscription) in respect of the eldership (in all its forms). If there was only the latter proposed amendment but not the former proposed amendment, then the difficulties with concurrence discussed above would arise, particularly in relation to ruling elders (whatever that term means now or has always meant) which has historically been a matter of government and not doctrine or worship and where there was clearly no grant of supreme power in Article 2.1.
  23. Secondly, if teaching elder is defined so that the person must be licensed and ordained to preach and teach the scriptures (see, eg, Q.158 Larger Catechism), whatever else the role entails some of which may overlap in part between ministry and ruling elders (such as administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper and leading other aspects of worship such as singing, prayer, reading of scripture and ministration of other observances such as marriage and funerals, spiritual oversight and leadership and associated visitation, exhortation and discipline), then the proposed second amendment still goes further than does Article 7.9 even in relation to teaching elders because it imposes an age as well as gender requirement.
  24. Thirdly, and most importantly, the analysis confirms that both proposed amendments impact on each form of the eldership as it has historically been categorised in Presbyterian thought. In other words, the proposed amendments go beyond the existing federal regulation of aspects of the teaching eldership and it cannot be said, by looking at the existing regulation of teaching elders, that it is so comprehensive that impliedly the proposed amendments apply only to ruling elders. Indeed, the preamble seems expressly to accept that position by inferring that the historic categories are collapsing into a broader conception of eldership which includes teaching by all elders.
  25. If the proposed amendments had been limited only to ruling elders, then potentially different questions would arise which I do not propose to address in other than a preliminary fashion in this opinion, because they are hypothetical and the answer to them may depend on the wording of the proposed amendments if and when they

- are propounded.
26. However, my preliminary view is that the fact that historic Presbyterian thought has seen the ruling eldership as a matter of government, not doctrine, would not of itself preclude the GAA taking to itself, by proper constitutional process, a fresh grant of supreme power with respect to the ruling eldership by amendment to Article 2.1 and then prescribing eligibility requirements for the ruling eldership (whether those are by way of further Article or, preferably, by Rule). As stated above in the description of constitutional structure, there is nothing in the Basis of Union or Articles of Agreement which per se and generally reserves matters of government such as the ruling eldership to the preserve of State Assemblies or to concurrent power with State Assemblies. The regulation of admission to the ruling eldership is unlikely in my view to be seen as a core function of State Assemblies in the sense required to come within Article 10.1 (see the description in constitutional structure, above), although final opinion on that matter needs to be reserved until the occasion to deal fully with the issue arises and my opinion on that issue may well change after full consideration.
  27. Whether or not the historic division in Presbyterian thought between matters of doctrine and matters of government is correct (should all eldership matters be a matter of doctrine), whether or not a change in who exercises the power in relation to ruling elders, or the prescription of eligibility requirements for ruling elders, or both, affects the Basis of Union, and how, is another matter reserved for final opinion when and if it arises.
  29. My preliminary view, and I emphasise that it is preliminary, is that who exercises the power in relation to ruling eldership (in its historic meaning in Presbyterian thought) is not a matter which affects the Basis of Union but that the prescription of eligibility requirements, depending on what they are, may well affect the Basis of Union in a sense which invokes Sections III and IV, with particular reference to paragraph 5 of the declaratory statement in Section II and the references to Presbyterian government and to government in the formula in Section VI and, if the eligibility requirements are based on one interpretation of scripture, on the words in Section III which deal with revision of the subordinate standard or restatement of doctrine. That is clearly arguable, since it raises issues akin to those dealt with below.
- The overture as remitted and the Basis of Union*
30. Turning now to the proposed amendments to the Articles as propounded in the overture, the fact that these deal with all aspects of the eldership necessarily includes their dealing with the teaching eldership in the manner described above, whatever teaching eldership means.
  31. In historic Presbyterian thought, regulation of the teaching eldership has been bound up with matters of doctrine. Supreme power with respect to doctrine has been granted to the GAA under Article 2.1(a). In my view there is no real question that who exercises power in relation to teaching elders can be the subject of supreme grant to the federal church assembly and, indeed, already has been and does not affect the Basis of Union.
  32. To that extent, the first proposed amendment is unnecessary but valid. However, the first proposed amendment in its effect on teaching elders is integrated with the entire first proposed amendment (admission to the eldership in all its forms) and with the second proposed amendment and cannot be considered separately when the relation of the overture to the Basis of Union is being considered. The revision of the meaning of “teaching elder” canvassed in the preamble to the overture emphasises that conclusion.
  33. In my opinion, the second proposed amendment does affect the Basis of Union and in a way which relevantly invokes Sections III and IV. It prescribes eligibility requirements for the teaching as well as the ruling eldership. In relation to the teaching eldership that historically is a matter of doctrine. The second proposed amendment seeks to alter the existing eligibility requirements for the teaching eldership beyond those in the existing Article 7.9, as illustrated above. To that extent it is a “restatement of doctrine” and comes within Section III of the Basis of

- Union.
34. Further, the proposed eligibility requirements in the second proposed amendment in their application to all elders are based, as the preamble to the overture propounding them states and as the text of the second proposed amendment (by its incorporation of Biblical references) recognises, on a particular interpretation of scripture. I emphasise that the merits of that interpretation and alternatives to it is NOT the issue here, nor the subject of this opinion. Indeed, such a matter would be beyond the legitimate scope of this opinion, of my role as Procurator, and of my specialist expertise which informs this opinion.
  35. It is clear that there are differing views within historic Presbyterian and Reformed theology on the eligibility for the teaching and ruling eldership, including within those who consider themselves otherwise within the same tradition on evangelical interpretation of scripture. Again, the nature and merits of the differing views is not the subject of this opinion, just the fact of the existence of such differing views.
  36. The proposed eligibility requirement prescribes (and in some ways proscribes) one side of the differing views and one particular interpretation of the scriptures. This is a restatement of “its” doctrine, being the doctrine of the church. Arguably it is a change to the meaning of the words in the formula and, if a substantive interpretation is adopted, a change of the formula in its references to “Presbyterian government” and to “doctrine” and “government” of the Church.
  37. To the extent that the teaching (and ruling) eldership is based on scriptural standards in the subordinate standard (the Westminster Confession of Faith read in the light of and with the explanations given in the Declaratory Statement), prescription of one interpretation of that standard in the proposed amendment, or prescription or proscription where in the subordinate standard the matter was left open, in a substantive sense is a revision of the subordinate standard and for that reason in itself comes within Section III of the Basis of Union. I note, for instance, that Chapter XXXI.II of the WCF does not prescribe gender or age limitation on who may sit in councils or synods. It simply says that, if the magistrate is an open enemy of the church then “the ministers of Christ, of themselves, by virtue of their office, or they with other fit persons upon delegation from their churches, may meet together in such assemblies.” The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government and of Ordination of Ministers similarly does not contain specific or separate gender limitations and in relation to para 1 of the Directory for Ordination of Ministers specifies a minimum age of 24, not 21, years. The use in such documents of the pronoun “he” and noun “man” appear in context to be generic rather than specific to or prescriptive of the male gender, since they are used in the same context as a reference to “person”; compare the discussion by Hon Justice McPherson in an opinion in January 1988 at paras 39 and 40.
  38. Further, such prescription infringes on liberty of opinion on matters in the subordinate standard protected by para 5 of the Declaratory Statement. Given the absence of specific reference, let alone prescription or proscription, in the WCF, it could not be said that eligibility for the teaching (or the ruling) eldership was a matter essential to the doctrine in the WCF or that differing thought expressed in practice on this matter was an abuse to be guarded against because it injured the unity and peace of the Church. Indeed, prescription of one alternative and proscription of another could be seen to be injurious to unity and peace on a matter non-essential to doctrines of grace, justification and salvation in reformed theology.
  39. In a substantive sense, such infringement on liberty of opinion is a revision or abridgement of the subordinate standard in respect of its preserving liberty of opinion in para 5 and for that reason in itself comes within Section III of the Basis of Union.

*Interpretation of the Basis of Union*

40. The preceding paragraphs form a distinct reason that Section III is attracted by the proposed amendment even if “its” in relation to “doctrine” in Section III was read narrowly to refer only to the doctrine of the subordinate standard. However, I am strongly of the view that such a narrow interpretation would not be appropriate on

the semantics, structure or underlying principle of Section III. The narrow interpretation would mean that the doctrine expounded in the subordinate standard would attract the special protective regime against amendment in Section III but not broader doctrine of the Church. This does not make logical sense. It also appears to offend against the underlying principle of Sections III and IV which is to protect against change by a simple majority, and without rights of dissenters being protected, to the fundamentals of normative belief as expressed in the Church. At a semantic level, if it is read narrowly the phrase “or restatement of its doctrine” provides no further protection than the preceding phrase and must be there for a purpose.

41. In my view it is appropriate to read references to “revision or abridgement” and to particular phrases in the formula in Section VI in the substantive manner I have done. The alternative would be to embrace the proposition that, so long as the actual words of the subordinate standard including the Declaratory Statement and of the formula did not alter, their content could be altered. This would appear to circumvent the underlying principle of Sections III and IV.
42. Accordingly, in my view the overture affects the Basis of Union and does so in a way which attracts the operation of Sections III and IV.

*Distinct and different subject matter not permitted in one overture*

43. Even if I was wrong on the foregoing, the overture would fail the test of competence and validity in any event. In my view it is not permissible to deal with the grant of power and the exercise of that power in a particular manner in the one overture. People who are voting may well differ in their support or opposition to each subject matter and for differing reasons such as their views on the balance of power in a federal structure and the merits of the proposal. They should not be required to vote on the two subjects en bloc. This potential oppression of members of various church assemblies makes it at least inappropriate to roll up distinct subject matters. In so far as it infringes on the privileges of those members for that reason, and I think it does, then it goes beyond inappropriateness to being impermissible.
44. My conclusion is reinforced by the words of Sections III and IV of the Basis of Union and Article 15.1 and by the underlying principle. The explicit provision for special majorities and protections for dissenters consequent on them, and the rationale expounded above, infers that a change should deal with one subject matter.
45. I reserve final opinion on whether proposed amendments should deal separately with the teaching and the ruling eldership, but incline to the view that the distinct functions of each type (if that distinction survives) means that it is at least appropriate, and probably required, to make them the subject of separate consideration in separate proposed amendments in separate overtures.

*Non-compliance with Section III by current remission*

46. It could not be said that Section III of the Basis of Union has been complied with by the coincidental fact that the overture has been remitted by GAA resolution pursuant to Article 15, even if it happens that the special majority prescribed by Section III is achieved. The relationship of the proposed amendments to the Basis of Union has not been opened in the preamble to the overture and has not been the subject of debate leading to the first vote to sustain and remit. Presbyteries and State Assemblies have not been informed that their vote would count for two purposes and the different matters which inform each debate and vote. In short, the whole debate, decision and remission has been on one basis alone, not two bases as in my view is required. I see no bar to those two bases being dealt with together but they must be expressly expounded as both being dealt with.
47. I do see a bar to the proposed amendment to the Articles being dealt with serially with the procedure in Section III of the Basis of Union IF there is no reference in the first stage to the necessity for the second stage, as is the case here.

*Summary*

48. For the reasons given, in my opinion the overture is incompetent and invalid and was invalidly sustained and remitted by GAA2007. In summary:
- (1) The overture impermissibly addresses both a grant of fresh power to the

federal church and the exercise of that power in a specific manner. These distinct subject matters should be the subject of separate overtures. This is irrespective of the wisdom or otherwise of placing the exercise of power containing eligibility requirements founded in part on doctrinal matters such as the second proposed amendment (and existing Article 7.9) in the Articles of Agreement which define a governance and operating structure for the federal church.

- (2) My preliminary view is that the grant of power and exercise of power should not only be the subject of separate overtures in themselves, but also should be the subject of separate overtures for the teaching eldership (to the extent that any further grant of power is required, on which further advice would be required) and the ruling eldership.
- (3) As a distinct cumulative ground for incompetence and invalidity, the overture - which was presented, debated, sustained and remitted as an undivided whole - as to part affects the Basis of Union and attracts Section III of the Basis of Union. On the present structure of the overture that infects the entire overture as presented, debated, sustained and remitted.
- (4) The overture does not draw attention to the matters in (3) and was not debated, voted on or remitted with knowledge of that impact.
- (5) Substantive as well as formal incompetence and invalidity of the above kind in my view invalidates the proceedings to date in respect of the overture. It is necessary to start again if the overtureists wish to do so.
- (6) Even if that was not the case, a majority on remission as provided under Article 15.1 would not have been obtained on a proper basis and a special majority would also be required pursuant to Section III of the Basis of Union.
- (7) Even if a special majority as required by Section III was in fact coincidentally obtained on the current remission or was obtained on a future serial remission, it would not be obtained on a proper basis because the basis of the remission in relation to Article 15.1, and any vote taken on it, was not undertaken with the requisite knowledge. In other words, the remission must make it clear at the outset that the procedure (together or serially), and different special majorities, under Section III of the Basis of Union and Article 15.1 are both involved and explain what that means and why both are involved.
- (8) I have not considered on a final basis, as hypothetical and dependent on the wording, whether or not overtures which dealt separately with grant of power and exercise of power in a specific manner and which were restricted to the ruling eldership (as historically understood) would affect the Basis of Union and attract Sections III and IV of the Basis of Union. My preliminary view is that such is clearly arguable and that the preamble to the current overture illustrates that, at least in relation to gender eligibility requirements based on interpretation of scripture, it is likely that issues of doctrine which affect the Basis of Union and attract Sections III and IV would arise.

*Further advice on Section IV Basis of Union - what is "just and equitable"*

49. If a special majority is obtained under Section III on a competent and valid overture, then further advice should be obtained on the operation of Section IV of the Basis of Union prior to and in respect of any proposed exercise of power thereunder. In particular, the constraints imposed on the exercise of power by GAA, as to choice between the alternatives in Section IV and as to the exercise of power under the second alternative, in light of the words "just and equitable" in Section IV needs to be carefully considered.

Wentworth Chambers  
29 June 2009

Gregory Burton, SC  
Procurator, PCA, PCNSW

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**(ii) A National Church.**

**Opinion**

**Background to this opinion**

1. The national church process was commenced by an instruction from GAA 2004 to the GAA Code Committee to report to GAA 2007 on the necessary steps to be taken to become a national church by 2010 (GAA BB2004 min 103).
2. Apparently at GAA Code Committee 4 February 2005 (I tendered my apologies since I was in Court), Rev. Dr David Mitchell volunteered to write a first draft of a position paper on the topic for consideration by a sub-committee comprising the Law Agent, the Clerk, the Procurator, Dr Mitchell and Rev. Ron Clark.
3. Dr Mitchell's draft had not been prepared in time for GAA Code Committee 3 February 2006 so the matter was deferred until GAA Code Committee 9 February 2007, according to the minutes. The minutes of GAA Code Committee 9 Feb 07, at which I was not present (with apologies, being in Court) recorded:

"5.4 National Church (Ref. Min. 06/5.4)

The Committee received, from the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell, a report on constitutional issues involved in the formation of a national church. The paper proposed an amendment to Article 2.1 to have the state churches cede to the GAA sovereignty in all matters; and the development of a standard Code for use in all state churches.

The Committee resolved to: (1) Report to the GAA that the Committee has had preliminary discussion on the steps that would need to be taken in order to enable the formation of a National Church; and (2) Include in its deliverance, that the Assembly request the Code Committee to prepare and distribute a comprehensive discussion paper on the advantages and disadvantages of a National Church, including consideration of the practical implications of such a change, with report to be made to the 2010 Assembly after distribution of the paper to presbyteries and State Assemblies and consideration of any comments that might be made in response."

That was part of the deliverance approved by GAA 2007 (GAA BB 2007 Min. 19).
4. GAA Code Committee minute 08/5.2 1 Feb 08, after recording that a motion at the Committee not to pursue a national church had been disapproved, approved that Dr Mitchell be requested to "develop the paper presented to the 2007 meeting to cover the resolution of the Assembly and formulate a model on which a national church could be formed, submitting that developed paper to the Law Officers for review and amendment prior to its consideration at the next meeting of the Committee." It was also approved to appoint a sub-committee comprising the Clerk (as Convenor), Rev. Dr Alan Harman, Rev Dr. Mitchell and Rev Ron Clark to "prepare a discussion paper outlining the advantages and disadvantages of a national church."
5. GAA Code Cttee minute 09/5.2 6 Feb 09 recorded that the Code Committee received from Dr Mitchell a revision of his paper presented to the 2008 meeting, together with (from the Clerk) a 1958 document from Mr Bradshaw (then Procurator) "Proposed amendment of constitution of the PCA". The Committee resolved to: (1) re-appoint the discussion paper sub-committee; (2) request the Law Agent to prepare a brief, for consideration by the Procurator, setting forth in the brief the legal questions that arise in any consideration of the technical feasibility of forming a national church either by amending the Articles of Agreement or seeking amendment to various pieces of state legislation and report thereon to the sub-committee for further report to the Code Committee; and (3) request the Mitchell and Bradshaw papers to be included in the brief.
6. I received a brief on 27 March 2009, responded in the first part of my Opinion dated 29 June 2009 on the eldership overture, and further responded in an email dated 9

January 2010 to the Clerk and the Law Agent and circulated to members of the GAA Code Committee. At its meeting on 5 February 2010, the Code Committee resolved that my email should be formalised as an Opinion to be communicated to GAA 2010 together with my Opinion dated 29 June 2009 on the eldership overture. I have not changed the substance of this Opinion from the email to the Code Committee, except to add in 10(4) below some details of other relevant State legislation.

**A national church already - implications for source of power and change of structure**

7. I gave my opinion on how the existing constitutional structure of the PCA should be characterised in paras 1-13 of my Opinion dated 29 June 2009 on the eldership overture, which has been provided to the Code Committee, is being communicated to GAA 2010 together with this Opinion and, I understand, has been circulated at least to State Assemblies and to at least New South Wales presbyteries. The fundamental characterisation is in para 1 of that opinion of 29 June 2009 and I do not repeat the detail of the material contained therein.
8. Summarising my previously expressed opinion, the Presbyterian Church of Australia is already a national church in the sense that the consensual union on 24 July 2001 formed one united national federal church, not a confederation or alliance of continuing distinct and independent State churches with a limited cession of power and the need to agree (outside the amendment procedures provided for in the constituting documents) on further cession of power or other accretions to the central body.
9. To the extent that the Mitchell or Bradshaw papers disagree with that characterisation, I respectfully have reached a different view.
10. To the reasons I gave in my Opinion of 29 June 2009, I add:
  - (1) The long title to the *Presbyterian Church of Australia Act 1900 (NSW)* refers to enabling certain arrangements entered into between the colonial presbyterian churches "for constituting one Presbyterian Church of Australia". Identical words appear in the long title to the *Presbyterian Church of Australia Act 1900 (Qld)* and the *Presbyterian Church of Australia Act 1901 (WA)*.
  - (2) The preamble to the NSW 1900 Act recited the resolution of the colonial presbyterian churches "to unite and form one Presbyterian Church, to be called the Presbyterian Church of Australia, and the terms of such union comprising the basis of union and the articles of agreement are set forth in the Schedule to this Act". Substantively identical words appear in the preamble to the Qld 1900 Act and the WA 1901 Act.
  - (3) The *Presbyterian Church of Australia Act 1970 (WA)*, unlike the NSW 1971 Act and Qld 1971 Act, contained in its long title that it was an Act to enable arrangements for "better defining the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Australia". Again unlike the NSW 1971 Act, but substantively identical to the Qld 1971 Act, the preamble to the WA 1970 Act in para (a) expressly recognised the continued existence, within the Presbyterian Church of Australia formed by the 1901 Scheme of Union, of the State churches "as part of a federal ecclesiastical structure", and in para (e) recited that it was expedient that the "Federal Union of the Presbyterian Churches as now constituted be enlarged so that those churches be completely united within the Presbyterian Church of Australia and that the General Assembly of that Church should have all the powers and authorities usually vested in the supreme court of an ecclesiastical body holding the Presbyterian system of church government".
  - (4) At the time of my email of 9 January 2010 I had not had the opportunity to check each other relevant Act on the foregoing. Having now done so, I record the following:
    - (A) The *Presbyterian Church of Australia Act 1900 (Vic)* long title referred to arrangements between the state churches "for constituting

- one Presbyterian Church of Australia". The preamble was substantively identical to the other preambles canvassed above for 1900-1901 Acts. The *Presbyterian Church of Australia Act 1971 (Vic)* is not similar to the WA 1970 Act but the preamble is substantively identical to the WA 1970 Act and the Qld 1971 Act.
- (B) The *Presbyterian Church of Australia Act 1901 (Tas)* long title referred to arrangements between the state churches "for constituting one Presbyterian Church of Australia". The preamble was substantively identical to the other preambles canvassed above for 1900-1901 Acts. The *Presbyterian Church of Australia Act 1971 (Tas)* is not similar to the WA 1970 Act but the preamble is substantively identical to the WA 1970 Act and the Qld 1971 Act.
- (C) My database listed no current or repealed legislation in South Australia resembling the 1900-1901 and 1970-1972 Acts in other States. I find this curious, given the controversy over the 1971 legislation in South Australia. In September 2004 immediately after GAA, the Law Agent had asked the Clerk to collect all State Codes and legislation regarding formation of each State Church including each version of the 1971 "union" enactments. I have no confirmation that all such material was received. It would be useful if the Law Agent's request was pursued and any updating material on codes and legislation was provided to the Clerk on a regular basis.
- (D) The Australian Capital Territory was part of New South Wales in 1900-1901. The *Presbyterian Church (Proposals for Union with other Churches) Act 1972 (ACT)* does not contain a long title or preamble and in any event addresses only the "union with other churches" aspect of the 1970-1972 legislation.
- (E) The Northern Territory had South Australia's jurisdictional oversight in 1900-1901. My database listed no current or repealed legislation in the Northern Territory resembling the 1970-1972 Acts in other States.
11. If my characterisation is correct, then the following applies in my view:
- (1) The real debate is over the source of exercise of power within the national structure of a series of unincorporated associations - should it be unitary at the ultimate level, with potential delegation to a subsidiary state-level organ (whether called an assembly, a synod or some other term), or continue to be federal?
  - (2) If there is to be change in the source of exercise of power, then that could be achieved by conferring supreme legislative, administrative and judicial power in all areas (doctrine, worship, discipline, government, to use the traditional categorisation) on the GAA through alterations to the existing constituent documents being the Basis of Union and Articles of Agreement *WITHIN the EXISTING AMENDMENT provisions in those documents.*
12. By contrast to 11(2) above, the 1971 scheme to create a unitary source of power (leaving aside the aspect of union with other Christian denominations before or after) sought to achieve that object *OUTSIDE the existing amendment provisions in the existing constituent documents.* There was a new Basis of Union in two parts for the unitary objective. (The same had to occur, of course, in 1901 itself.) There were approvals, as I understand, in each State Assembly, but the method (and, I expect, the majorities said to be required) did not follow existing amendment provisions in the 1901 Basis of Union and 1901 Articles of Agreement. Hence the necessity, as expressed in the preamble to some of the legislation, for enabling legislation for the same reason (potential variation of trust) as in 1901 (see para 1(4) of my 25 June 09 opinion on the eldership overture).
13. The correctness of the foregoing is supported by the use of the existing amendment provisions (with the majorities there specified) rather than legislation to substitute the new Articles of Agreement in recent times. There is also an (imperfect) analogy

with any proposal under the existing Commonwealth Constitution referendum provision (section 128) to give all powers to the Federal Government and enable the Commonwealth Parliament to determine what powers were to be delegated to State Parliaments.

14. In principle, such must be correct because amendments were contemplated (if properly carried out) at time of original constitution, so any variation (however significant) which follows those procedures would not constitute a variation of the trusts on which the property was held.

**Implications for existing trusts of church property**

15. The (substantial) caveat to the foregoing is any proposed change to the legal ownership of property held on charitable trust for the advancement of religion in the presbyterian cause, or related effects of changes in the source of exercise of power on the administration of property.
16. That property is now held by a trustee or trustees for each State presbyterian church or for the Presbyterian Church of Australia. With the exception of the PCA, such trust is given legal effect and regulated by specific legislation (the PCA has a trust deed under the general law).
17. So long as there continued, by constitutional amendment as envisaged above, a State presbyterian church in each jurisdiction (even if organised differently in source of ultimate power and exercise of power), there should be no effect on trust purpose requiring legislative enablement.
18. If, however, there was to be a vesting of all presbyterian church property ultimately in a unitary trustee for PCA, that would require enabling legislation in each State and Territory and federally.
19. Further, if the constitutional amendments changed names or governing structure of state-level organs or other church organisations in a manner inconsistent with the way such names or structure were labelled or dealt with in trustee legislation, consequential legislative amendment to recognise those names or changes would be required. For instance: if state assemblies were to become synods, state property trust Acts would need to change the labelling; if state assemblies were no longer to have power to make regulations concerning trustees or give directions concerning trustees, then that cession to the GAA would need to be recognised in changes in terminology in state property trust Acts.

**A uniform Code can be achieved on the present structure**

20. A uniform or "template" code is a distinct question. There is nothing to prevent such occurring at present, under the existing structure. The mechanics of so doing could be achieved by different means, on which I could give specific advice if required.

Wentworth Chambers  
29 June 2009

Gregory Burton, SC  
Procurator, PCA, PCNSW

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# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



## Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales

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### OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF TRUSTEES

#### PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (NEW SOUTH WALES) PROPERTY TRUST

#### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2009

The financial statements for the three years ended 31 December 2009 reflect exclusively the assets and liabilities of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

In the opinion of the Trustees, the accompanying balance sheets disclose the funds and investments for which the Trustees are responsible and the income statements are properly drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs at 31 December 2009 and the results for the year ended on that date.

The following pages are extracts and supplementary schedules from the audited accounts of the Presbyterian Church (New South Wales) Property Trust, Presbyterian Inland Mission and Australian Presbyterian.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey R Falls'.

Jeffrey R Falls  
**Chairman of Trustees**

Signed at Sydney, 28 June, 2010



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#### **Independent Auditor's Report to the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church of Australia**

We have audited the extraction of the attached balance sheet and statement of comprehensive income of The Presbyterian Church (New South Wales) Property Trust - Funds held on behalf of the General Assembly of Australia ("Assembly Fund Statements") for the three years ended 31 December 2009.

The Assembly Fund balance sheet and statement of comprehensive income has been extracted from the audited financial statements of The Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales ("The Church's Statements") and underlying financial records. We have conducted audits on The Church's Statements for each of the three years now reported. Our unqualified audit opinions on The Church's Statements were dated 31 March 2008, 23 March 2009 and 22 March 2010.

### **1.1.1 The Responsibility of Trustees for the Statements**

The general manager is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the Assembly Fund Statements in accordance with the accounting policies which are appropriate to meet the requirements and the needs of the General Assembly. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation and presentation of the Assembly Fund Statements that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### **1.1.2 Auditor's Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the Assembly Fund Statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the Statements are free from material misstatement.

Our procedures included agreement, on a test basis, of items included in the Assembly Fund Statements to The Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales ("The Church") financial records. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the Assembly Fund Statements have been properly extracted from the financial records of the Church in accordance with the requirements of the Trustees of the Church.

Our audit has been limited to the extraction of the Assembly Fund Statements from the financial records of the Church. Because we have not performed an audit of the Assembly Fund Statements, we are not in a position to and do not express an opinion as to whether the Assembly Fund Statements present fairly for the three years ended 31 December 2009.

The Assembly Fund Statements have been prepared for the purpose of reporting to the General Assembly for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of the Trustees of the Church. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the Assembly Fund Statements to which it relates to any person other than the Trustees or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

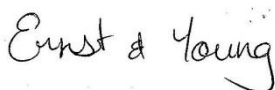
We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### **1.1.3 Independence**

In conducting our audit we have met the independence requirements of the Australian professional accounting bodies.

### **1.1.4 Auditor's Opinion**

In our opinion The Assembly Fund Statements comprising the balance sheet and statement of comprehensive income of The Presbyterian Church (New South Wales) Property Trust - Funds held on behalf of the General Assembly of Australia for the three years ended 31 December 2009 are properly extracted, in all material respects, from the financial records of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales in accordance with the requirements of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.



Ernst & Young

Sydney  
28 June 2010

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**

**Extracted from Presbyterian Church (New South Wales) Property Trust audited accounts**

**Balance sheet as at 31 December 2009**

	2009	2008	2007	2006
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Assets</b>				
Cash or cash equivalents	2,503	7,503	7,503	8,003
Funds with Trustee Investment Fund	562,650	521,241	451,628	529,189
Interest free loans	0	0	0	1,000
Loans to Foundation	0	0	0	12,000
Trade and other receivables	19,961	19,813	88,279	6,763
Property, plant and equipment	512,304	521,622	529,177	535,903
	<u>1,097,418</u>	<u>1,070,179</u>	<u>1,076,587</u>	<u>1,092,858</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Interest Free Loan - Ministry & Mission	33,000	51,000	69,000	87,000
Loan Foundation	6,833	8,228	9,528	22,307
Trade and other payables	65,809	59,003	5,158	53,843
Other provisions	15,000	12,000	9,000	6,000
	<u>120,642</u>	<u>130,231</u>	<u>92,686</u>	<u>169,150</u>
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>976,776</u>	<u>939,948</u>	<u>983,901</u>	<u>923,708</u>
Balance at 1 January	939,948	983,901	923,708	856,865
Transfer to Trustees Specific Funds	0	0	0	(56,576)
Transfer to Swinney Trust	0	0	0	(2,250)
Surplus/(deficit) for the year:				
Finance Committee	0	(250)	16	99
Christian Education Committee	(143)	1,312	849	247
World Missions Committee	38,313	(49,960)	51,261	113,256
National Journal Committee (part)*	(854)	(1,726)	(731)	6,636
Hymn Book Committee	(1,786)	4,635	6,938	3,888
Special Committee	929	1,457	1,331	1,104
Contemporary Committee	369	579	529	439
<b>Total capital and reserves</b>	<u>976,776</u>	<u>939,948</u>	<u>983,901</u>	<u>923,708</u>

\*Included in Finance Committee costs from 2007

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**

**Extracted from Presbyterian Church (New South Wales) Property Trust audited accounts**

**Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year:**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Finance Committee</b>				
<b>Income</b>				
Interest - Trustee Investment Fund - at call	11,783	18,872	15,427	17,192
Other income	18,186	531	2,844	1,391
	<u>29,969</u>	<u>19,403</u>	<u>18,271</u>	<u>18,583</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Audit and accountancy	3,090	2,000	1,450	2,750
Christian TV subscription	0	0	42,613	0
Computer expenses	12,000	12,000	13,000	12,000
Honoraria	667	3,267	16,700	0
National Journal funding	31,031	31,031	21,308	20,688
Office services	9,597	9,597	9,597	9,597
Sundry expenses	57,594	25,425	17,179	13,778
Travel and accommodation	47,853	53,478	130,818	28,870
	<u>161,832</u>	<u>136,798</u>	<u>252,665</u>	<u>87,683</u>
Deficit for the year	<u>(131,863)</u>	<u>(117,395)</u>	<u>(234,394)</u>	<u>(69,100)</u>
State funding	<u>131,863</u>	<u>117,145</u>	<u>234,410</u>	<u>69,199</u>
<b>Net surplus/(deficit)</b>	<u><u>0</u></u>	<u><u>(250)</u></u>	<u><u>16</u></u>	<u><u>99</u></u>
<b>Christian Education Committee</b>				
Income	5,843	6,541	5,443	5,312
Expense	<u>(5,986)</u>	<u>(5,229)</u>	<u>(4,594)</u>	<u>(5,065)</u>
Net (deficit)/surplus	<u><u>(143)</u></u>	<u><u>1,312</u></u>	<u><u>849</u></u>	<u><u>247</u></u>
<b>World Missions Committee</b>				
Income	897,703	785,219	713,000	635,415
Expense	<u>(859,390)</u>	<u>(835,179)</u>	<u>(661,739)</u>	<u>(522,159)</u>
Net surplus/(deficit)	<u><u>38,313</u></u>	<u><u>(49,960)</u></u>	<u><u>51,261</u></u>	<u><u>113,256</u></u>
<b>National Journal Committee (part)</b>				
Income	0	0	0	6,636
Expense	<u>(854)</u>	<u>(1,726)</u>	<u>(731)</u>	<u>0</u>
Net (deficit)	<u><u>(854)</u></u>	<u><u>(1,726)</u></u>	<u><u>(731)</u></u>	<u><u>6,636</u></u>
<b>Hymn Book Committee</b>				
Income	8,874	11,498	13,722	12,025
Expense	<u>(10,660)</u>	<u>(6,863)</u>	<u>(6,784)</u>	<u>(8,137)</u>
Net (deficit)/surplus	<u><u>(1,786)</u></u>	<u><u>4,635</u></u>	<u><u>6,938</u></u>	<u><u>3,888</u></u>
<b>Special Committee</b>				
Income	929	1,457	1,331	1,104
Expense	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Net surplus	<u><u>929</u></u>	<u><u>1,457</u></u>	<u><u>1,331</u></u>	<u><u>1,104</u></u>
<b>Contemporary Committee</b>				
Income	369	579	529	439
Expense	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Net surplus	<u><u>369</u></u>	<u><u>579</u></u>	<u><u>529</u></u>	<u><u>439</u></u>



**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**  
**Trustees (Federal Finance Committee)**  
**Balance sheet as at 31 December 2009**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Capital and Reserves</b>				
Opening balance	255,523	257,499	258,308	258,209
Capital funds received	0	0	(94)	0
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(854)	(1,976)	(715)	99
<b>Total capital and reserves</b>	<b><u>254,669</u></b>	<b><u>255,523</u></b>	<b><u>257,499</u></b>	<b><u>258,308</u></b>
<b>Represented by:</b>				
<b>Assets</b>				
Debtors	11,992	24,813	93,164	6,763
Deposit (Presbyterian Church NSW)	<u>268,209</u>	<u>249,688</u>	<u>164,335</u>	<u>253,712</u>
<b>Total ordinary assets</b>	<b><u>280,201</u></b>	<b><u>274,501</u></b>	<b><u>257,499</u></b>	<b><u>260,475</u></b>
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Sundry creditors	<u>25,532</u>	<u>18,978</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,167</u>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b><u>25,532</u></b>	<b><u>18,978</u></b>	<b><u>0</u></b>	<b><u>2,167</u></b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b><u>254,669</u></b>	<b><u>255,523</u></b>	<b><u>257,499</u></b>	<b><u>258,308</u></b>

Note: Supplementary schedule to extract from audited accounts

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**

**Trustees (Federal Finance Committee)**

**Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December:**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Income</b>				
Sales Journal Publications	214	132	425	1,390
Trustee Interest	11,576	18,309	14,967	17,192
Sundry income	17,902	400	2,421	0
Contributions received or receivable from the States:				
New South Wales	67,257	59,751	121,197	35,781
Queensland	27,189	24,155	44,522	13,144
South Australia	1,978	1,757	3,516	1,038
Tasmania	1,978	1,757	3,516	1,038
Victoria	31,482	27,968	58,125	17,160
Western Australia	1,978	1,757	3,534	1,038
<b>Total income</b>	<b>161,554</b>	<b>135,986</b>	<b>252,223</b>	<b>87,781</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
<b>General Assembly</b>				
Honoraria	0	0	10,100	0
Travelling including accommodation & dinners	0	0	93,150	0
Other	0	0	3,174	0
<b>Total General Assembly</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>106,424</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Moderatorial</b>				
Honorarium	0	0	6,000	0
Travel and Accommodation	12,507	12,763	10,442	10,290
Other	3,754	4,198	1,413	713
<b>Total Moderatorial</b>	<b>16,261</b>	<b>16,961</b>	<b>17,855</b>	<b>11,003</b>
<b>Committees</b>				
Church & Nation	2,523	2,267	807	1,145
Code	1,844	1,219	1,312	7,451
College	11,309	2,276	3,076	2,173
Defence Forces	889	556	919	969
Reception of Ministers	753	1,130	923	1,060
Relations with other Churches	3,226	5,499	6,224	5,926
Contributions to REC	0	0	0	1,411
<b>Total Committees</b>	<b>20,544</b>	<b>12,947</b>	<b>13,261</b>	<b>20,135</b>
<b>Other</b>				
Office Services	9,870	9,870	9,870	9,597
Communication fee NJC	41,103	31,103	21,308	20,688
Donation to archives	4,000	4,000	2,000	2,000
Presbyterian Inland Mission	3,334	3,334	0	0
Campberwell costs	5,533	13,327	8,166	
Website maintenance	12,000	12,000	13,000	12,000
Christian Television Australian Affiliation Fees	0	0	42,613	0
Other	49,764	34,420	18,441	12,260
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>125,604</b>	<b>108,054</b>	<b>115,398</b>	<b>56,545</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>162,409</b>	<b>137,962</b>	<b>252,938</b>	<b>87,683</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>	<b>(854)</b>	<b>(1,976)</b>	<b>(715)</b>	<b>99</b>

Note: Supplementary schedule to extract from audited accounts

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**  
**Christian Education Committee**  
**Balance sheet as at 31 December 2009**

	2009 \$	2008 \$	2007 \$	2006 \$
<b>Capital and reserves</b>				
Opening balance	60,029	58,717	57,866	57,618
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(143)	1,312	851	248
<b>Total capital and reserves</b>	<u><u>59,886</u></u>	<u><u>60,029</u></u>	<u><u>58,717</u></u>	<u><u>57,866</u></u>

Represented by:

**Assets**

Petty Cash and Impress Account	0	0	0	500
Deposits) Presbyterian Church NSW	60,044	60,089	58,729	57,364
Sundry debtors	(158)	(60)	(12)	2
<b>Net assets</b>	<u><u>59,886</u></u>	<u><u>60,029</u></u>	<u><u>58,717</u></u>	<u><u>57,866</u></u>

**Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December:**

	2009 \$	2008 \$	2007 \$	2006 \$
<b>Income</b>				
Interest	2,817	4,722	4,596	4,071
Publication Income	3,027	1,819	847	1,242
<b>Total Income</b>	<u><u>5,844</u></u>	<u><u>6,541</u></u>	<u><u>5,443</u></u>	<u><u>5,313</u></u>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Advertising and Publicity	0	540	540	1,100
Course Expenses	0	0	0	280
Office Services	273	273	273	273
Other	0	0	500	33
Publication Expenses	3,773	2,920	0	0
Travelling Expenses	1,941	1,496	3,279	3,380
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<u><u>5,987</u></u>	<u><u>5,229</u></u>	<u><u>4,592</u></u>	<u><u>5,066</u></u>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>	<u><u>(143)</u></u>	<u><u>1,312</u></u>	<u><u>851</u></u>	<u><u>247</u></u>

Note: Supplementary schedule to extract from audited accounts

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**  
**Australian Presbyterian World Mission**  
**Balance sheet as at 31 December 2009**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Capital and reserves</b>				
Opening balance	536,033	585,993	534,731	421,474
Surplus for the year	38,313	(49,960)	51,262	113,257
<b>Total Capital</b>	<u>574,346</u>	<u>536,033</u>	<u>585,993</u>	<u>534,731</u>
<u>Represented by:</u>				
<b>Assets</b>				
Cash	2,503	2,503	2,503	2,503
Fixed Assets	512,304	521,622	529,177	535,903
Investments	0	0	0	13,000
Deposit (Presbyterian Church NSW)	146,536	123,184	146,703	150,270
Debtors	7,969	0	4,579	0
<b>Total assets</b>	<u>669,312</u>	<u>647,309</u>	<u>682,962</u>	<u>701,676</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Provisions	15,000	12,000	9,000	6,000
Loans	39,833	59,228	78,528	109,307
Creditors	40,136	40,048	9,441	51,638
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<u>94,969</u>	<u>111,276</u>	<u>96,969</u>	<u>166,945</u>
<b>Total ordinary net assets</b>	<u>574,343</u>	<u>536,033</u>	<u>585,993</u>	<u>534,731</u>

**Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December:**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Income</b>				
Interest	4,366	6,664	10,426	5,473
Donations	610,091	475,493	521,721	399,745
Mission Challenge	138,378	177,311	91,293	89,473
State Contributions	140,936	125,750	89,500	140,500
Other income	3,932	1,345	1,711	962
	<u>897,703</u>	<u>786,563</u>	<u>714,652</u>	<u>636,153</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Salaries and wages	403,224	394,168	359,501	279,976
Mission Challenge transfers	268,304	262,805	151,718	119,808
Advertising and publicity	1,898	865	2,369	6,779
Property costs	31,264	27,499	22,994	17,714
Interest expense	526	620	1,394	1,548
Insurance	8,751	19,670	8,996	9,409
Office services	1,365	1,365	1,365	1,365
Postage	5,275	7,128	7,579	6,144
Printing and stationery	25,678	14,056	13,754	8,805
Sundry expenses	62,446	61,835	50,813	29,609
Telephones	7,611	8,210	4,723	3,900
Travel expenses	43,048	38,302	38,185	37,840
<b>Total expenses</b>	<u>859,390</u>	<u>836,523</u>	<u>663,391</u>	<u>522,897</u>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>	<u>38,313</u>	<u>(49,960)</u>	<u>51,262</u>	<u>113,256</u>

Note: Supplementary schedule to extract from audited accounts

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**  
**Public Worship and Aids to Devotion Committee**  
**Hymn Book**

**Balance sheet as at 31 December 2009**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Capital and reserves</b>				
Opening balance	62,055	57,420	50,482	46,594
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(1,786)	4,635	6,938	3,888
<b>Total capital and reserves</b>	<u><u>60,269</u></u>	<u><u>62,055</u></u>	<u><u>57,420</u></u>	<u><u>50,482</u></u>
<b>Represented by:</b>				
<b>Assets</b>				
Deposits (Presbyterian Church NSW)	60,254	61,969	57,586	50,520
<b>Total assets</b>	<u>60,254</u>	<u>61,969</u>	<u>57,586</u>	<u>50,520</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Sundry creditors	(15)	(86)	166	38
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<u>(15)</u>	<u>(86)</u>	<u>166</u>	<u>38</u>
<b>Net assets</b>	<u><u>60,269</u></u>	<u><u>62,055</u></u>	<u><u>57,420</u></u>	<u><u>50,482</u></u>

**Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December:**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Income</b>				
Interest	2,939	4,760	4,117	3,529
Publication Income	5,936	6,738	9,605	8,496
<b>Total income</b>	<u>8,875</u>	<u>11,498</u>	<u>13,722</u>	<u>12,025</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Publicity	2,488	1,998	2,063	2,038
Storage	2,250	1,000	980	1,937
Secretarial	2,250	1,710	960	2,160
Travel and Accommodation	1,597	877	1,372	1,273
Other	2,076	1,278	1,409	729
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<u>10,661</u>	<u>6,863</u>	<u>6,784</u>	<u>8,137</u>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>	<u><u>(1,786)</u></u>	<u><u>4,635</u></u>	<u><u>6,938</u></u>	<u><u>3,888</u></u>

Note: Supplementary schedule to extract from audited accounts

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**  
**Public Worship and Aids to Devotion Committee**  
**Special Publications - Worship**

**Balance sheet as at 31 December 2009**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Capital and reserves</b>				
Opening balance	18,829	17,372	16,041	14,937
Surplus for the year	<u>929</u>	<u>1,457</u>	<u>1,331</u>	<u>1,104</u>
<b>Total capital and reserves</b>	<b><u>19,758</u></b>	<b><u>18,829</u></b>	<b><u>17,372</u></b>	<b><u>16,041</u></b>
<b>Assets</b>				
Deposits (Presbyterian Church NSW)	19,758	18,829	17,372	16,041
<b>Total assets</b>	<b><u>19,758</u></b>	<b><u>18,829</u></b>	<b><u>17,372</u></b>	<b><u>16,041</u></b>

**Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December:**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Income</b>				
Interest	<u>929</u>	<u>1,457</u>	<u>1,331</u>	<u>1,104</u>
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b><u>929</u></b>	<b><u>1,457</u></b>	<b><u>1,331</u></b>	<b><u>1,104</u></b>

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**  
**Public Worship and Aids to Devotion Committee**  
**Special Publications - Contemporary Worship**

**Balance sheet as at 31 December 2009**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Capital and reserves</b>				
Opening balance	7,482	6,903	6,374	5,935
Surplus for the year	<u>369</u>	<u>579</u>	<u>529</u>	<u>439</u>
<b>Total capital and reserves</b>	<b><u>7,851</u></b>	<b><u>7,482</u></b>	<b><u>6,903</u></b>	<b><u>6,374</u></b>
<b>Assets</b>				
Deposits (Presbyterian Church NSW)	<u>7,851</u>	<u>7,482</u>	<u>6,903</u>	<u>6,374</u>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b><u>7,851</u></b>	<b><u>7,482</u></b>	<b><u>6,903</u></b>	<b><u>6,374</u></b>

**Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December:**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>INCOME</b>				
Interest	<u>369</u>	<u>579</u>	<u>529</u>	<u>439</u>
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b><u>369</u></b>	<b><u>579</u></b>	<b><u>529</u></b>	<b><u>439</u></b>

Note: Supplementary schedule to audited accounts

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**

**Extract from Presbyterian Inland Mission audited accounts**

**Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December:**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Income</b>				
Investments income	99,385	232,551	334,871	315,201
Donations & bequests received	298,398	408,647	339,763	314,301
Sales - Christmas Cards	10,562	7,240	8,142	10,323
Sales - Beyond the Furthest Fences	0	7	0	80
Sales - The Man from Oodnadatta	0	42	0	590
Sales - Calendar	8,090	0	0	0
Profit on sale of assets	295,145	(199,531)	(7,707)	0
Other income	72,453	25,951	16,679	2,225
	<u>784,033</u>	<u>474,907</u>	<u>691,748</u>	<u>642,720</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Administration costs	133,897	166,495	160,690	176,301
Costs - Christmas cards	4,975	4,532	3,424	4,790
Costs - The Man from Oodnadatta	4,621	0	0	1,072
Costs - Calendar	8,908	0	0	0
Donations	43,541	0	0	0
Padres retreats etc	0	5,760	22,995	0
Relief Payments	22,987	23,506	10,995	0
Patrols	484,255	424,777	463,349	410,959
	<u>703,184</u>	<u>625,070</u>	<u>661,453</u>	<u>593,122</u>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>	<u>80,849</u>	<u>(150,163)</u>	<u>30,295</u>	<u>49,598</u>

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**

**Extract from Presbyterian Inland Mission audited accounts**

**Balance Sheet as at:**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Capital and reserves</b>				
Opening balance	3,012,561	3,162,724	3,132,429	3,082,831
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	80,849	(150,163)	30,295	49,598
<b>Total capital and reserves</b>	<u>3,093,410</u>	<u>3,012,561</u>	<u>3,162,724</u>	<u>3,132,429</u>
<b>Represented by:</b>				
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Cash at bank	79,364	195,019	156,863	87,033
Investments	2,027,457	2,035,332	2,749,119	2,694,903
Sundry debtors	561,208	559,214	4,343	19,867
Total current assets	<u>2,668,029</u>	<u>2,789,565</u>	<u>2,910,325</u>	<u>2,801,803</u>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>				
Property, plant, and equipment	425,381	222,996	252,399	330,626
Total non-current assets	<u>425,381</u>	<u>222,996</u>	<u>252,399</u>	<u>330,626</u>
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>3,093,410</u>	<u>3,012,561</u>	<u>3,162,724</u>	<u>3,132,429</u>

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**

**Extract from Australian Presbyterian audited accounts**

**Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December:**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Income</b>				
Sales - Journal Publications	60,090	63,787	52,430	64,635
Sales - Journal Advertising	31,125	42,507	30,467	40,474
Year Book Sales	11,016	7,593	7,762	8,713
Overseas Subscriptions	1,661	2,245	2,263	0
Year Book Advertising	4,658	6,139	4,050	4,185
Directory Advertising	10,046	9,805	8,789	9,913
Communication service fee	41,103	50,103	21,308	31,458
Sundry Income	588	1,796	261	1,851
Donations Received	1,417	631	6,628	6,760
<b>Total income</b>	<b>161,704</b>	<b>184,606</b>	<b>133,958</b>	<b>167,989</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Audit and Accountancy	1,395	1,395	1,250	1,250
Bad debts	0	0	3,237	0
Bank Fees	1,214	1,293	1,316	1,809
Contract payments	13,325	17,626	0	0
Depreciation	75	91	113	145
Electricity and Gas	352	340	221	261
General Expenses	10,610	4,386	2,001	9,126
Postage	1,715	1,934	1,702	2,074
Printing and Stationery	294	202	698	247
Publication expenses	115,358	109,795	93,177	108,458
Rent	4,376	4,176	3,806	3,681
Repairs and maintenance	15	31	35	505
Salaries, Stipends and staff costs	32,564	16,513	23,491	50,429
Subscriptions	52	0	0	0
Telephones	709	412	554	1,702
Travelling Expenses	0	710	72	879
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>182,054</b>	<b>158,904</b>	<b>131,673</b>	<b>180,566</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>	<b>(20,350)</b>	<b>25,702</b>	<b>2,285</b>	<b>(12,577)</b>



**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA**  
**Extract from Australian Presbyterian audited accounts**  
**Balance Sheet as at:**

	2009 \$	2008 \$	2007 \$	2006 \$
<b>Capital and reserves</b>				
<b>Ordinary</b>				
Opening balance	34,063	8,361	6,076	18,653
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(20,350)	25,702	2,285	(12,577)
<b>Total capital and reserves</b>	<u><u>13,713</u></u>	<u><u>34,063</u></u>	<u><u>8,361</u></u>	<u><u>6,076</u></u>
<b>Assets</b>				
Fixed Assets	523	598	689	802
Cash and cash equivalents	12,326	33,553	20,291	17,798
Debtors	864	(88)	0	595
<b>Total assets</b>	<u><u>13,713</u></u>	<u><u>34,063</u></u>	<u><u>20,980</u></u>	<u><u>19,195</u></u>
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Presbyterian Church (NSW)	0	0	(331)	(330)
Creditors	0	0	215	714
Provisions	0	0	12,735	12,735
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<u><u>0</u></u>	<u><u>0</u></u>	<u><u>12,619</u></u>	<u><u>13,119</u></u>
<b>Net assets</b>	<u><u>13,713</u></u>	<u><u>34,063</u></u>	<u><u>8,361</u></u>	<u><u>6,076</u></u>

## PETITIONS

- (i) **From The Presbytery of New England to authorise The College Committee to prepare a Response Paper regarding The Theological Movement known as The New Perspective.**

To the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia:

This petition humbly shows that:

because of the rise of the New Perspective teaching on grace as exemplified in the writings of N.T. Wright in many publications like *What St Paul Really Said, New Perspective on Paul, Paul: Fresh Perspectives, Justification: God's Plan And Paul's Vision*; E.P. Sanders in *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*; and James Dunn's *The New Perspective on Paul in Jesus, Paul and the Law*;

because of the influence of this New Perspective and its outworking within modern theological thought, it would be timely for the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia to give guidance regarding this New Perspective to the Ministers, candidates for the ministry, elders and members of the Church;

because any confusion between the doctrines of justification and sanctification, as exemplified in the writing of Norman Shepherd in *Call Of Grace*, has led the Christian Church in the past towards a position of salvation by works and other errors, and will do so for us too in the future without further clarification;

because the reformed theological understanding of grace and justification within our denomination appears to stand contrary to the New Perspective understanding on these doctrines;

because since candidates for the ministry need to engage with modern schools of biblical theology and thought, and be able to evaluate them critically, it is necessary that they be able to do this and still retain a reformed and Biblical understanding of grace and justification as it is worked out in the theology and practice of ministry within the Presbyterian Church of Australia;

because while every theological school of thought holds a breadth of opinion, it is the role of the Church to give clear direction and guidance as to the boundaries of theological thought and to the clarification of theological terminology that can be rightly encompassed by our biblical and confessional standards as given in the Westminster Confession of Faith read in the light of the Declaratory Statement of our Church;

Now therefore the Presbytery of the New England prays the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia to take these premises into consideration and to request the College Committee of the General Assembly of Australia to prepare a paper outlining a response to this New Perspective for consideration at the 2013 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, with the response paper to be made available or published no later than 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011 through the General Assembly of Australia College Committee website in the first instance, or do otherwise as the General Assembly in its wisdom may deem fit.

The meeting was closed with prayer.

Extracted from the records of the Presbytery of New England this 12<sup>th</sup> day of August 2010 by me.

**Lance Jackson,**  
Presbytery Clerk.

**The Rev. Stuart Andrews and David Seaman were appointed to state the Petition.**

- (ii) **From Mr Robert Finster to be readmitted as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.**

(Ordered not to be printed in Blue Book (GAA BB 2010 Min. 93)).

# ASSEMBLY MINUTES

## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

### OF THE

#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

#### THE FORTY SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

#### FIRST SEDERUNT

**1. Assembly Constituted:** At Sydney and within the Chinese Presbyterian Church, corner Crown and Albion Streets, Surry Hills, at 7.00 p.m. on Monday 13 September, 2010, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia convened. Public worship was conducted by the Right Reverend R.P.F. Benn, Moderator. Thereafter the Assembly was constituted with prayer.

**2. Roll of Assembly:** The Clerk laid on the table the list of commissioners appointed to this Assembly by the State assemblies and presbyteries of the Church. It was resolved that the list of commissioners as made up be the Roll of this Assembly.

**3. Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received from Messrs R. Herweynen and J. Roomans.

**4. Associates:** The Rev. A. Marcal, Moderator of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of East Timor; the Rev. Dr S. Ferguson, a minister of the Associated Presbyterian Church of the USA; the Rev. D. Bayne, a minister of Grace Presbyterian Church, New Zealand; the Rev. Dr K. Gerber, the Rev. A. Kuyper, the Rev. Dr D. Breed and the Rev. Dr H. Stoker, representing the Reformed Churches of South Africa, were associated and welcomed by the Moderator.

**5. Election of Moderator:** The Clerk laid on the table the report of the Moderator's Nominating Committee. The report was received. It was resolved that the Assembly accept the nomination of the Moderator's Nominating Committee and elect the Rev. D.N. Jones, Minister of Mount Stuart Presbyterian Church, Tasmania, as Moderator of the Assembly. The Rev. D.N. Jones was welcomed and inducted into office with prayer by the Moderator, took the chair and delivered an address.

**6. Motion of Loyalty:** The following Motion of Loyalty, submitted by the Business Convener, was approved.

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty:

May it please Your Majesty, your faithful subjects, Ministers and Elders of the Presbyterian Church of Australia convened in General Assembly at Sydney on the thirteenth day of September, Two Thousand and Ten, take leave to assure Your Majesty of our loyalty and devotion to Your person and to the Throne.

We pray that the Lord Jesus Christ, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, and the only Saviour of mankind, may, by His grace, sustain and uphold Your Majesty in His providential care, and that He may grant to Your Majesty personally all the gifts needful for the discharge of the exacting duties of Your Majesty's high office.

We also pray that Christ, through His unchanging Word and by the guidance of His Spirit, will grant to Your Majesty, in your demanding position of leadership in church and nation, wisdom, integrity, courage, and faithfulness to Him.

We have the honour to be Your Majesty's faithful servants, Ministers and Elders of The Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Signed in our name and at our appointing.  
David N. Jones, Moderator.

**7. Prayers for the Australian Parliament:** Pursuant to notice the Clerk moved:  
That the Assembly:  
Forward to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate of the Australian Parliament assurances of the regular prayers of the people of the Presbyterian Church of Australia for the nation's elected representatives in the exercise of their responsibilities.  
The motion was seconded and approved.

**8. Representatives of other Churches:** The following representatives of other churches, being present, were welcomed by the Moderator: the Rev. T. Corkin, representing the President of the Uniting Church in Australia; the Rev. R. Bartholemai representing the Lutheran Church of Australia and the Rev. T. Leggott representing the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia.

**9. Business Committee:** The report of the Business Committee was laid on the table and received.  
The Rev. P.J. Barson submitted the deliverance.  
Clauses (1) to (13) were approved.  
The debate was adjourned (Min. 97)

**10. Notices of Motion:** Notices of Motion 1 to 18 were laid on the table.

**11. Adjournment:** Thereafter the Assembly adjourned to meet tomorrow, Tuesday 14 September, 2010, at 9.30 a.m. in the Chinese Presbyterian Church for the celebration of Holy Communion and thereafter for the transaction of business whereof public intimation having been given the sederunt was closed with prayer.

DAVID N. JONES, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

## SECOND SEDERUNT

**12. Holy Communion:** At Sydney and within the Chinese Presbyterian Church corner Crown and Albion Streets, Surry Hills on Tuesday 14 September, 2010 at 9.30 a.m. the Assembly met for the celebration of Holy Communion. The Solemn Service was conducted by the Moderator assisted by the Rev. K.R. Patston, K.D. Murray, S.M. Bonnington, Messrs G.K. Roberts, J.A. Goodman, W.A. MacRae, B.D. Bayston, C.M. Langford, B. Johnson, K. Booker and J. Tucker.

**13. Assembly Constituted:** At the conclusion of the Solemn Service the Assembly was constituted with prayer, the Moderator presiding.

**14. Report of the Retiring Moderator:** The report of the retiring Moderator was laid on the table and received.

The Very Rev. R.P.F. Benn addressed the House.

Pursuant to notice the Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Record its thanks and appreciation to the Very Rev. Robert Benn for his ministry as Moderator of this General Assembly for the past three years; give thanks to God for the devoted ministry of both Mr and Mrs Benn and pray God's continued blessings upon them in their retirement.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Moderator conveyed the thanks of the Assembly to Mr Benn.

**15. Very Rev. E.R. Pearsons, OAM:** Pursuant to notice the Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Give thanks to God for the life, work and ministry of the Very Rev. Edward Ross Pearsons, OAM, ordained to the ministry 1966, died 2.5.2008, Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia (1974-1985), Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia (1985-1988).

The motion was seconded and approved.

**16. Procurator's Opinion on the Overture on the Eldership:** The Procurator's Opinion on the Eldership Overture remitted from the General Assembly of Australia, 2007, was laid on the table and received.

**17. Procurator's Opinion on a National Church:** The Procurator's Opinion on a National Church was laid on the table and received.

**18. Returns to Remits:** The report on Returns to Remits was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan submitted the deliverance.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

(1) In accordance with the returns to remits on Overture (ii) (BB 2007 Min. 74, 82) from the Presbytery of Sydney South concerning an amendment to Article 2.1 of the Articles of Agreement on the qualifications for the eldership, dismiss the overture.

(2) In accordance with the returns to remits on Overture (v) (BB 2007 Min. 94) from the College Committee concerning the administration of the Sacraments by elders and home missionaries, amend *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* by:

(i) Changing the title of 4.2 to 'Administration of the Sacraments – Special Provision'.

(ii) Deleting section 4.2 sub-section 2 and replacing it with the following:-

**2. Administration of the Sacraments by Home Missionaries and Elders.**

Home missionaries appointed by the relevant state home mission committee, and elders set apart by a presbytery to perform special pastoral work in either a home mission station, vacant charge, or an area requiring missionary activity to commence and develop a church, may be authorised by the ordained minister or interim moderator of the bounds to celebrate the sacraments.

The minister or interim moderator of the bounds shall be responsible to presbytery

for the manner in which the sacraments are celebrated and all such cases are to be duly reported to the presbytery.

Presbyteries when authorising elders, and home mission committees when authorising home missionaries, are counselled to exercise care so that only elders or home missionaries who have an adequate understanding of the theology of the sacraments and who have proven themselves by service to be suitable to take special responsibilities are appointed and given the right to celebrate the sacraments.

In administering the sacraments elders and home missionaries shall consult and use the forms in the most recently approved book of common order of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Elders and home missionaries authorised to administer the sacraments under this provision shall not do so except in their sphere of work and on occasions fixed by the Kirk Session.

- (iii) Deleting sub-section 4.4.

**19. Code:** The report of the Code Committee was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan submitted the deliverance.

Clauses (1) to (2) were approved.

Pursuant to notice the Very Rev. Dr A.M. Harman moved:

That the Assembly:

- (3) Request the Code Committee to review the committee regulations concerning the nomination and election of committee members and conveners, and report with any recommendations to the next meeting of the General Assembly of Australia.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Take no further action on the development of a plan for a national church.  
(2) Amend Chapter 9 of Constitution, Procedure and Practice by adding the following clauses to the regulations on the Election of Standing Committees:-

**14. Minutes:** All committees shall keep proper minutes and records of the proceedings of the committee.

**15. Meetings:** A committee is permitted to hold a meeting by means of a telephone or internet audio or video conference whereby all members participating in the meeting are able to hear and be heard by all other participants.

**16. Email resolutions:** A committee may without meeting make a resolution by email provided that the proposed resolution is notified by email to each committee member in time for each member to make a considered decision and email response on the proposed resolution. The convener shall table all email responses in respect of any proposed resolution by email at the next meeting of the committee. Any member of the committee has the right of veto over this procedure in respect of a specific resolution and may request that it be considered at the next usual meeting of the committee, including a meeting held pursuant to Regulation 15.

**17. Recording:** The convener of a committee is responsible for ensuring that meetings held and/or resolutions adopted pursuant to Regulations 15 and 16 are fully and correctly minuted.

- (3) Request the Code Committee to review the committee regulations concerning the nomination and election of committee members and conveners, and report with any recommendations to the next meeting of the General Assembly of Australia.

**20. Overture (iii):** An overture from the Code Committee to amend Rules 3.01 and 3.02 in the Code of Discipline was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. B.M. Meller and Mr Simon Fraser presented the overture.

Questions were asked of the overturists.

Pursuant to notice the Rev. B.M. Meller moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Pursuant to notice the Rev. B.M. Meller moved:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Send the overture to state assemblies and presbyteries under Barrier Act procedure with replies to be in the hands of the Clerk of Assembly by 31 December, 2012.

The motion was seconded and approved

Pursuant to notice the Rev. B.M. Meller moved:

That the Assembly:

- (2) Grant the overture interim authority.

The motion was seconded and approved with no negative vote.

**21. Overture (iv):** An overture from the Code Committee to amend Parts 3, 4, 5 and 7 of the Code of Discipline was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. B.M. Meller and Mr Simon Fraser presented the overture.

Questions were asked of the overturists.

Dr L. Thorpe moved:

That the Assembly:

Print and place in the hands of Commissioners the overture with its proposed additional amendments before further discussion takes place.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The debate was adjourned (Min. 46).

**22. Notices of Motion:** Notices of Motion 19 to 23 were laid on the table.

**23. Adjournment:** Thereafter the Assembly adjourned to meet at 2.00 p.m. whereof public intimation having been given the sederunt was closed with prayer.

DAVID N. JONES, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

### THIRD SEDERUNT

**24. Assembly Constituted:** At Sydney and within the Chinese Presbyterian Church, Corner Crown and Albion Streets, Surry Hills, on Tuesday 14 September, 2010 at 2.00 p.m. the Assembly met, pursuant to adjournment, and was constituted with praise, the reading of Scripture and prayer, the Moderator presiding.

**25. Presbyterian Women's Association:** The report of the Presbyterian Women's Association of Australia was laid on the table and received.

Mrs. H. Ross, retiring President; Mrs B. Gadsby, retiring Secretary; Miss B. Knowles, retiring Treasurer; Mrs. M. Thatcher, President; Mrs D. Griffith, Vice President, Mrs J. Parnell, Secretary; and Mrs D. Smith, Treasurer were presented to the Moderator and at his invitation Mrs H. Ross addressed the House.

Pursuant to notice the Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Thank God for the ministry, work and witness of the Presbyterian Women's Association of Australia throughout the Church; express its thanks to the Western Australian branch for its willingness to take on the executive role for the next three years and pray for God's continued blessing on the work of the PWA.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Moderator conveyed the thanks of the Assembly to the PWA.

**26. Bible Exposition:** The Rev. Dr Sinclair Ferguson gave an exposition of Matthew 16:13-25 on the Lord Jesus' Vision for the Church.

**27. National Journal:** The report of the National Journal Committee was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. P.W. Hastie submitted the deliverance.

Clauses (1) to (13) were approved.

**28. Privilege:** The Rev. B.M. Meller raised a question of privilege concerning the approval of all the deliverances of the National Journal Committee.

The Moderator ruled that there had been a breach of privilege and that clause (12) should be recommitted.

Dissent was moved from the Moderator's ruling.

The Moderator's ruling was upheld.

**29. National Journal:** The debate on the report of the National Journal Committee was adjourned (Min. 31).

**30. Finance:** The report of the Finance Committee was laid on the table and received.

Mr J.R. Falls submitted the deliverance.

Clauses (1) to (9) were approved.

Pursuant to notice Mr J.R. Falls moved:

That the Assembly:

(10) Request the General Assembly of Australia Finance Committee, over the ensuing triennium, to:

(a) Review the adequacy and rigour of the G.A.A. budgeting process.

(b) Review the effectiveness of the National Journal in consultation with the National Journal Committee.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Pursuant to notice Mr J.R. Falls moved:

That the Assembly:

(c) Consider the National Journal funding for 2012-2013 to be provisional only and subject to determination by the G.A.A. Commission subsequent to the review in (10)(b).

The motion was seconded.



The Rev. G.K. Kettmiss challenged the competency of the motion.

The Moderator ruled the motion incompetent.

Dissent was moved from the Moderator's ruling.

The Moderator's ruling was disagreed with.

The motion of Mr J.R. Falls was approved.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

- (e) Receive the Financial Statements for the years ended 31 December 2007, 2008 and 2009.
- (f) Receive the Audit Reports from:
  - (a) Ernst & Young, on the accounts of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.
  - (b) Robert J Nixon & Associates, on the accounts of the Presbyterian Inland Mission.
  - (c) Robert J Nixon & Associates, on the accounts of the National Journal Committee.
- (g) Appoint the Official Auditor of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales to audit the accounts of the Presbyterian Church of Australia from 1 January 2011 until 31 December 2013.
- (h) Appoint Robert J Nixon & Associates to audit the accounts of the Presbyterian Inland Mission Committee and the National Journal Committee from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2013.
- (i)
  - (a) Authorise the Finance Committee to pay the accommodation costs of Commissioners not resident in the city in which the General Assembly is held.
  - (b) Request the Secretary of the Finance Committee and the Clerk of the Assembly to secure advantageous accommodation rates for lodging Commissioners during the General Assembly.
  - (c) Authorise the Finance Committee to pay the accommodation costs of the Moderator, Clerks and Business Convener during the course of the General Assembly.
  - (d) Approve the reimbursement of the actual expenses incurred for Commissioners travelling to the General Assembly (excluding the Presbyteries of The Hawkesbury, Illawarra, Sydney, Sydney North and Sydney South) on the following basis:-
    - (v) Commissioners who travel more than 750km - return airfares at a rate authorised by the Clerk.
    - (vi) Commissioners who travel 750km or less - return fares by train (or coach, where a train does not run).
    - (vii) Commissioners using their own car - a payment of 30 cents/km (maximum 1500 km).
  - (e) Remind all Commissioners travelling by air that they should make their bookings in advance to achieve the cheapest flight possible.
- (j)
  - (a) Approve payment of the following Honoraria until such time as the General Assembly determines otherwise:-

Clerk of Assembly	\$2,000	for each year while serving as Clerk of the General Assembly
Deputy Clerk	\$ 600	for each General Assembly
Assistance to Clerks	\$ 400	for each General Assembly
Business Convener	\$ 850	for each General Assembly
  - (b) Authorise the Finance Committee to pay appropriate Honoraria to one or more persons acting in the positions listed above.
- (k)
  - (a) Approve the following provisions for the Moderator assuming office in September 2010 and for succeeding Moderators until such time as the General Assembly determines otherwise:-
    - (i) An allowance of up to \$42,000 to cover costs of travel, accommodation, telephone, postage, stationery;
    - (ii) An allowance sufficient to cover the cost of moderatorial dress;
    - (iii) Costs of pulpit supply during Moderator's absence on moderatorial duty;
    - (iv) An honorarium of \$2,000 per annum.
  - (c) Authorise the Finance Committee to approve any necessary additional expenditure in respect of the Moderator.
  - (d) Agree to increase the Moderator's allowance by CPI adjustments as at 30

September each year.

- (l) Reappoint the Rev. Mike Wharton as Webmaster for the Presbyterian Church of Australia for another three (3) years from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2013.
- (m) (a) Approve the following expenditure for the 2011-2013 triennium:-

	2011	2012	2013	Triennium Total
APWM Committee	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Christian Education Committee	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Presbyterian Inland Mission	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Public Worship & Aids to Devotion Committee	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Code Committee	1,550	1,550	1,550	4,650
Defence Force Chaplaincy	1,600	1,600	1,600	4,800
Reception of Ministers	3,000	3,000	3,000	9,000
Biblical Women's Ministries	2,500	5,000	2,500	10,000
Church & Nation Committee	3,900	4,270	4,700	12,870
College Committee	3,427	3,537	13,546	20,510
Relations with other Churches Committee	5,500	20,500	5,500	31,500
National Journal Committee	65,000	70,000	70,000	205,000
<b>Total Expenses Committees</b>	<b>86,477</b>	<b>109,457</b>	<b>102,396</b>	<b>298,330</b>
NSW Historical Records & Library (GAA Archives)	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
Website Maintenance	12,000	12,000	12,000	36,000
Procurator's Retainer	550	550	550	1,650
Moderator's Expenses	14,000	14,000	14,000	42,000
General Expenses	31,000	31,000	31,000	93,000
Assembly Costs	0	0	86,598	86,598
Honoraria	4,000	4,000	6,650	14,650
<b>Total Expenses Other</b>	<b>66,550</b>	<b>66,550</b>	<b>155,798</b>	<b>288,898</b>
<b>TOTAL GAA EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>153,027</b>	<b>176,007</b>	<b>258,194</b>	<b>587,228</b>

*The amount allocated to a Committee is regarded as a 'maximum allocation' and is not to be regarded as a grant.*

- (b) Approve the reimbursement of travelling expenses incurred by members of Committees attending Committee meetings on the same basis as determined for meetings of the General Assembly of Australia with incidental expenses as determined by each Committee.
- (c) Authorise the Finance Committee to approve payment of audit fees, office service charges and other necessary administrative expenses and include such costs with Committee expenses to be recovered from State Assemblies.
- (d) Request the State Assemblies, when called upon to do so, to reimburse the Finance Committee without delay expenditure in connection with the holding of the 2010 General Assembly of Australia, the expenses of Committees of the General Assembly of Australia and expenditure of the Moderator, in the proportion set out in the Finance Committee regulations.
- (e) Request the NSW Trustees to finance expenditure authorised by the Finance Committee pending reimbursement by State Finance (or equivalent) Committees.
- (10) Request the General Assembly of Australia Finance Committee, over the ensuing triennium, to-
- (1) Review the adequacy and rigour of the G.A.A. budgeting process.
  - (2) Review the effectiveness of the National Journal in consultation with the National Journal Committee.
  - (3) Consider the National Journal funding for 2012-2013 to be provisional only and subject to determination by the G.A.A. Commission subsequent to the review in 10(2) above.

**31. National Journal:** Debate was resumed on the report of the National Journal Committee (Min. 29).

The Rev. P.W. Hastie moved:

That the Assembly:

- (12) Endorse in faith and in general terms the proposed continuance of the National Journal “the *Australian Presbyterian*” as outlined in the Future Developments section of the National Journal Committee Report and approve the increase in funding as outlined and endorsed by the Finance Committee.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Note that the *Australian Presbyterian* magazine has been produced on-time and within budget for the last thirty three issues since the 2007 General Assembly of Australia.
- (2) Note that the *Australian Presbyterian* magazine has consistently supported the confessional position of the Presbyterian Church of Australia on matters of life, ministry and doctrine.
- (3) Commend the Rev. Mike Wharton for his faithful oversight, production and delivery of the Yearbook and Church Directory during the period 2007-2008.
- (4) Commend Mr Walter Bruining for his reliability in maintaining the Yearbook since 2008 and for providing secretarial service to the National Journal Committee from 2007-2010.
- (5) Commend Mr Mike Timmins, the present Business Manager of the National Journal, for his loyal and efficient service to the wider church through the production of *Australian Presbyterian*, and for ensuring its continued financial viability.
- (6) Commend and give thanks for the Presbyterian Trust Corporation of Victoria, and an anonymous donor in Sydney, NSW, for their generous support of *Australian Presbyterian* so that hundreds of subscribers, within and beyond Australia, are able to receive the magazine at a substantial discount or for free.
- (7) Congratulate the editorial and production team of *Australian Presbyterian*, as well as the regular contributors, for the high-quality work that they produce for the Presbyterian Church of Australia – particularly Barney Zwartz (production editor), Sandra Joynt (art-work and layout), Rev. Guido & Mrs Virginia Kettmiss (proof-reading), Rev. Peter Barnes, Stuart Bonnington and John Campbell.
- (8) Congratulate Rev. Bruce Christian for his production of the Bible Study component of *Australian Presbyterian* which is regularly commended by numbers of readers for its usefulness and spiritual insight.
- (9) Note that the *Australian Presbyterian* has become the vehicle for the regular distribution of news, views and promotional material for several Assembly Committees such as PIM and APWM and, as such, is a vital conduit of communication for the national church and a major fundraising vehicle.
- (10) Note that the magazine and Yearbook retains the confidence of a large number of regular and loyal advertisers.
- (11) Note that *Australian Presbyterian* receives strong international endorsement in conservative evangelical circles and is the only denominational magazine hosted on the website of the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals in the USA.
- (12) Endorse in faith and in general terms the proposed continuance of the National Journal “the *Australian Presbyterian*” as outlined in the Future Developments section of the National Journal Committee Report and approve the increase in funding as outlined and endorsed by the Finance Committee.
- (13) Urge ministers, elders, Committees of Management and congregational members to subscribe to *Australian Presbyterian*, and also urge congregations to seek the publication of their details in the magazine’s quarterly church directory.

**32. Trustees:** The report of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church of Australia was laid on the table and received.

**33. Variation of the Order of the Day:** The Business Convener moved:

That the Assembly:

Vary the orders of the day in order to take the report of the Presbyterian Inland Mission at this point.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**34. Presbyterian Inland Mission:** The report of the Presbyterian Inland Mission Committee was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. R.S. Duncanson submitted the deliverance.

Mr and Mrs C. Woonings, Mr and Mrs. B Pierce and the Rev. R. Schwartz, patrol padres were presented to the Moderator.

The Rev. R. Schwartz addressed the Assembly.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Praise God for the ministry of the patrol teams, field, pastoral and administrative workers as listed in the report and commend them to the on-going prayers of the Church.
- (2) Acknowledge with gratitude the dedicated and faithful service of former PIM workers: Mr Dennis and Mrs Janelle Howard, Mr Andrew and Mrs Kerri Purcell, Mr David Rodgers, Rev. Terry and Mrs Judy Sadler, Mr Henk and Mrs Henny Tiemens, Mr Dennis and Mrs Glenys Tranter, Rev. Mike and Mrs Yvonne Willsmore.
- (3) Express appreciation to Mr Keith Booker, Mr Rupert Hanna, Rev. Glenn Samuel, Rev. Rudi Schwartz and Rev. Andrew Robinson for dedicated service on the PIM Committee and the Executive over many years.
- (4) Sincerely thank all members, congregations and other organisations (especially the PWA/PWMU) within the Church who have so generously supported the PIM in the past three years and encourage further support as part of their commitment to the work of the Church to outback and inland Australia through the PIM.
- (5) Darwin:-
  - (a) Commend the PIM for its initiative in re-establishing the witness of the Presbyterian Church in Darwin.
  - (b) Declare that Presbyterian Church activity and interests in Darwin be under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria forthwith.
  - (c) Request the Presbytery of Melbourne West to exercise Presbyterial function and authority over Darwin in relation to and consistent with the work of the Presbyterian Inland Mission, at and from the date of the Presbytery's next meeting.
  - (d) Acknowledge that the work of the Presbyterian Church in Darwin is under the authority and management of the PIM Committee but such to be consistent with the Practice and Procedure of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and the Presbyterian Church of Australia.
  - (e) Request the PIM Committee to provide the Presbytery of Melbourne West and the General Assembly of Victoria with reports from time to time in respect to its work in Darwin.
- (6) Note with great joy the commencement of the new congregation in the isolated city of Albany, WA, which is now under the Presbytery of WA, and commend this congregation to the prayers of the whole church.
- (7) Sincerely thank the Trustees of the PIM and the GAA for their very prudent administration and oversight of the PIM Assets which have maximised financial resources available for PIM ministry.
- (8) Note the annual PIM Rally in Sydney at the time of the annual meetings of the GAA Committees and encourage supporters in Sydney and NSW to attend this gathering.
- (9) By the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, call the Church to pray, go, work together and sacrifice so that the gospel of the Crucified and Risen One will go forth in word and deed through the PIM in outback and inland Australia further in the future than it has in the past!
- (10)
  - (a) Support the commemoration of the centenary of the Australian Inland Mission, including the major celebration to be held in conjunction with Frontier Services at the Dallas Brookes Centre in Melbourne on 26 September 2012.
  - (b) Encourage ministers, elders and congregations to consider ways in which they may be able to mark this unique ministry within Australia.

**35. Minutes:** The minutes of the first sederunt were laid on the table and confirmed.

**36. Reformation Rally:** Following the adjournment of the Assembly an evening of celebration commencing at 7.30 p.m. was held in the Scots Church, 44 Margaret Street, Sydney, to commemorate the 450<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation in Scotland.

**37. Notices of Motion:** Notices of Motion 24 to 26 were laid on the table.

**38. Adjournment:** Thereafter the Assembly adjourned to meet tomorrow, Wednesday 15 September, 2010 at 9.30 a.m. whereof public intimation having been given the sederunt was closed with prayer.

DAVID N. JONES, Moderator.  
PAUL G LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

## FOURTH SEDERUNT

**39. Assembly Constituted:** At Sydney and within the Chinese Presbyterian Church, corner Crown and Albion Streets, Surry Hills, on Wednesday 15 September, 2010 at 9.30 a.m. the Assembly met, pursuant to adjournment, and was constituted with praise, the reading of Scripture and prayer, the Moderator presiding.

**40. Rev. A. Marcal:** At the invitation of the Moderator, the Rev. A. Marcal, Moderator of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of East Timor, addressed the Assembly.

**41. Christian Education:** The report of the Christian Education Committee was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. Dr G.R. Goswell presented the deliverance.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Encourage the committee in its practice of providing training to the smaller States.
- (2) Commend the Timothy Partnership to the wider church.
- (3) Thank Rev. Ian Schoonwater for his 11 years of service to the GAA as Convener of the Christian Education Committee

**42. Public Worship and Aids to Devotion:** The report of the Committee on Public Worship and Aids to Devotion was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. M.A. Wharton submitted the deliverance.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Note the various publications of the Committee and recommend them as useful tools to ministers, home missionaries, lay preachers, and elders in their conduct of public worship, and as an aid to the church in general for private and family devotions.
- (2) Continue to recommend the Rejoice! backing music CDs (under the name of Psalm Tree Music), as a practical resource for churches that are without organists or other musicians, to assist them with their hymn singing.
- (3) Thank Russell van Delden for his service to the Public Worship and Aids to Devotion Committee.

**43. PresAID:** The report of the PresAID Committee was laid on the table and received.

The Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas submitted the deliverance.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Give thanks to God for the generosity of his people in supporting the Good Friday and Christmas Day PresAID Appeals, and for the privilege of assisting our mission partners and sister churches in their endeavours to extend the Kingdom of God.
- (2) Request all Sessions and Boards or Committees of Management to give sympathetic consideration to supporting future Good Friday and Christmas Day PresAID Appeals.

**44. Parties at the bar:** Commissioners to this Assembly from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Tasmania and presbyteries within its bounds were placed at the bar in the matter of the dissent and complaint by the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell against a decision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Tasmania.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Approve Mr G.K. Roberts and the Rev. G. Munro as respondents on behalf of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Tasmania in the matter of the dissent and complaint of the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**45. Dissent and Complaint:** A dissent and complaint from the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell against a decision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Tasmania held on 13

May, 2008 was laid on the table and received.  
The Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell appeared as the complainant.  
Mr G.K. Roberts and the Rev. G. Munro appeared as respondents for the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Tasmania.  
The complainant was heard in reply.  
Questions were asked of the complainant and the respondents.  
The Rev. B.M. Meller challenged the competency of the dissent and complaint.  
The Moderator ruled the dissent and complaint incompetent.  
The Moderator's ruling was challenged.  
The Moderator's ruling was upheld.  
The parties were removed from the bar.

**46. Overture (iv):** Debate was resumed on Overture (iv) (Min. 21).

The overture in its amended form was received.

Pursuant to notice the Rev. B.M. Meller moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the Overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Pursuant to notice the Rev. B.M. Meller moved:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Send the overture to state assemblies and presbyteries under the Barrier Act procedure with replies to be in the hands of the Clerk of Assembly by 31 December, 2012.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Pursuant to notice the Rev. B.M. Meller moved:

That the Assembly:

- (2) Grant the overture interim authority.

The motion was seconded and approved by the required two thirds majority.

**47. Report from South Australia:** The report on the life and work of the Presbyterian Church of South Australia under Article 9.1 was laid on the table and received.

**48. Bible Expositions:** The Rev. Dr Sinclair Ferguson gave an exposition on Acts 2:42-47 in relation to the Character of the Church.

**49. Notices of Motion:** Notices of Motion 27 to 31 were laid on the table.

**50. Adjournment:** Thereafter the Assembly adjourned to meet at 2.00 p.m. whereof public intimation having been given the sederunt was closed with prayer.

DAVID N. JONES, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

## FIFTH SEDERUNT

**51. Assembly Constituted:** At Sydney and within the Chinese Presbyterian Church, corner Crown and Albion Streets, Surry Hills, on Wednesday 15 September, 2010 at 2.00 p.m. the Assembly met, pursuant to adjournment, and was constituted with praise, the reading of Scripture and prayer, the Moderator presiding.

**52. Reformed Churches of South Africa:** At the invitation of the Moderator the Rev. Dr H. Stoker, Rev. Dr K. Gerber, Rev. A. Kuyper and Rev. Dr D. Breed, representing the Reformed Churches of South Africa, addressed the Assembly.

**53. College:** The report of the College Committee was laid on the table and received. The Rev. J. McClean submitted the deliverance.

Clause (1) to (4) were approved.

Pursuant to notice Dr M. Whitelaw moved:

That the Assembly:

- (a) Remind the College Committee that clause 7.3 of the Articles of Agreement deals with syllabi and clause 7.4 deals with curricula.
- (b) Request the College Committee to determine what changes are necessary to the Committee regulations to effect this and to bring these changes to the next Assembly.

The motion was seconded.

The Previous Question was moved, seconded and approved.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Note the cessation of the Consortium of Reformed Colleges in Queensland and that the Reformed College of Ministries is now known as the Queensland Theological College (QTC).
- (2) Continue to grant approval for candidates from Western Australia to undertake studies at Trinity Theological College, Perth, subject to the continued approval of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Church of Western Australia and the annual approval of a full curriculum by the College Committee, such training to be under the oversight of the Faculty of the Presbyterian Theological College of Victoria.
- (3) Note the arrangement regarding the alternative course of training.
- (4) Amend the regulations of the College Committee by the addition of a new clause 2 after the existing clause 1 as follows: "The convener shall be elected by the committee from among its members." and renumber subsequent clauses accordingly.

**54. Defence Force Chaplaincy:** The report of the Committee on Defence Force Chaplaincy was laid on the table and received.

The Very Rev. Dr A.M. Harman submitted the deliverance.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Commend our serving chaplains to the wider church, asking our congregations and presbyteries to keep in close touch with them, supporting them and their families as they carry out this specialised ministry, and especially by praying regularly for them.
- (2) Thank Chaplains D. Niven, I.K. McKendrick and C.B. Riding for their dedicated service in Defence Force ministry over extended periods of service.
- (3) Encourage ministers to consider service in the armed forces either as reserve or full-time chaplains.

**55. Relations With Other Churches:** The report of the Committee on Relations With Other Churches was laid on the table and received.

The Very Rev. Dr A.M. Harman submitted the deliverance.

Clauses (1) to (4) were approved.

By leave of the House Miss F. Perry moved:

That the Assembly:

- (5) Thank the Very Rev. Dr A.M. Harman for his service on the Committee on Relations with



other Churches, particularly as Convener, and Mrs. Mairi Harman for her support of him in that role.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows

That the Assembly:

- (1) Alter the regulations of the Committee on Relations with Other Churches by deleting the words 'in the area of mission' in 4 (b) so that the clause reads: 'Where the Australian Presbyterian Mission Committee has entered into a reciprocal arrangement with a Church overseas, liaison with that Church shall be the responsibility of that Committee'.
- (2) Direct committees wishing to invite representatives of other churches to attend meetings of the General Assembly of Australia to process those invitations through the Committee on Relations with Other Churches.
- (3) Make an annual contribution during the triennium 2010-13 to the World Reformed Fellowship of \$AUD3,000 per year, and provide \$AUD15,000 towards the accommodation and meals for a meeting of its executive in Australia in 2012.
- (4) Approve the payment of travel expenses for the convener to attend one meeting per annum of the WRF Executive during the triennium.
- (5) Thank the Very Rev. Dr A.M. Harman for his service on the Committee on Relations with Other Churches, particularly as Convener, and Mrs. Mairi Harman for her support of him in that role.

**56. Acting Clerk of Assembly:** The Rev. Dr J.P. Wilson and Rev. P.W. Phillips were appointed Acting Clerk and Deputy Clerk of Assembly respectively for the appeal of the Rev. I.F. Ransom against a decision of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales.

The Rev. Dr J.P. Wilson and Rev. P.W. Phillips made the declaration to faithfully discharge the duties of their office.

**57. Parties at the bar:** Commissioners to this Assembly from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in NSW and presbyteries within its bounds were placed at the bar in the matter of the appeal by the Rev. I.F. Ransom against a decision of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in NSW.

**58. Appeal:** An appeal from the Rev. I.F. Ransom against a decision of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in NSW held on 25 November, 2009 was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. J.R. Irvin challenged the competency of the Appeal.

The Moderator ruled the Appeal incompetent as it was outside the jurisdiction of the General Assembly of Australia.

The Rev. D. Robertson moved dissent from the Moderator's ruling.

The Moderator's ruling was upheld.

The parties were removed from the bar.

**59. Overture (i):** An overture from the Code Committee concerning a new Rule 1.12 in the Code of Discipline was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan and Mr Simon Fraser presented the overture.

Questions were asked of the overtureists.

Pursuant to notice the Mr S.H. Fraser moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

Pursuant to notice Mr P. Barton moved as an amendment:

That the Assembly:

Amend Overture (i) by deleting clause 1.12(d).

The amendment was seconded and disapproved.

The motion to sustain the Overture was approved.

Pursuant to notice Mr S.H. Fraser moved:

That the Assembly:

(1) Send the overture to state assemblies and presbyteries under Barrier Act procedure with replies to be in the hands of the Clerk of Assembly by 31 December, 2012.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Pursuant to notice Mr S.H. Fraser moved;

That the Assembly:

(2) Grant the overture interim authority.

The motion was seconded and approved by the required two thirds majority.

**60. Overture (ii):** An overture from the Code Committee concerning an amendment to Chapter 3 of *Constitution, Procedure and Practice* by the addition of rules regarding appeals and complaints was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. J.R. Irvin and L.J. Hall presented the overture.

Questions were asked of the overtureists.

Pursuant to notice the Rev. L.J. Hall moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the Overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Pursuant to notice the Rev. L.J. Hall moved:

That the Assembly:

Send the overture to state assemblies and presbyteries under Barrier Act procedure with replies to be in the hands of the Clerk of Assembly by 31 December 2012.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**61. Petition (i):** A petition from the Presbytery of New England requesting the Assembly to authorise the College Committee to prepare a response paper regarding the theological movement known as the New Perspective was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. S.A. Andrews and D.M. Seaman appeared for the petitioner.

Questions were asked of the petitioners.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded.

The Previous Question was moved, seconded and approved.

The Petition was dismissed.

**62. Order of Business:** The Rev. B.M. Meller moved as a motion of procedure:

That the Assembly:

Add to the business for the Sixth Sederunt the report of the Camberwell Committee and the Church and Nation Committee.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**63. Notices of Motion:** Notice of Motion 32 was laid on the table.

**64. Adjournment:** Thereafter the Assembly adjourned to meet at 7.00 p.m. whereof public intimation having been given the sederunt was closed with prayer.

DAVID N. JONES, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

## SIXTH SEDERUNT

**65. Assembly constituted:** At Sydney and within the Chinese Presbyterian Church, corner Crown and Albion Streets, Surry Hills, on Wednesday 15 September, 2010 at 7.00 p.m. the Assembly met, pursuant to adjournment, and was constituted with praise, the reading of Scripture and prayer, the Moderator presiding.

**66. Greetings from the Grace Presbyterian Church, New Zealand:** At the invitation of the Moderator, the Rev. D. Bayne of the Grace Presbyterian Church, New Zealand, addressed the Assembly.

**67. Ballot:** A ballot was held for the following committees: APWM, Convener; APWM Committee Members; Code Committee, Tasmanian representative; Presbyterian Inland Mission Committee, Tasmanian member; and Public Worship and Aids to Devotion Committee, 3 Victorian members.

**68. Matter of Privilege:** The Rev. L.J. Percy raised a matter of privilege in that commissioners were required to vote in the ballot for people about whom they did not know. The Moderator ruled there was no breach of privilege as the regulations of the Ballot Committee had been fulfilled.

**69. Australian Presbyterian World Mission:** The report of the Australian Presbyterian World Mission Committee was laid on the table and received.

Mr A. Shaw submitted the deliverance.

Clauses (1) to (18) were approved.

Pursuant to notice the Rev. R. Duncanson moved:

That the Assembly:

- (19) (a) Encourage Mission Partners to find ways to expedite the translation, printing and distribution of the full Bible into Tetun.
- (b) Commend this project to the support of congregations throughout Australia.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Express thanks to God for his continuing blessing on the mission in the provision of candidates and finances.
- (2) Praise God for the deepening and extending involvement in global mission that is occurring in many of our churches.
- (3) Express appreciation to the outgoing Director, Rev. Bill Lutton and Mrs Jenny Lutton (2001 – 2010), and the former Associate Director, Rev. Phil Simmonds and Mrs Glenda Simmonds (2003 – 2009), for their faithful and dedicated service in their respective tasks.
- (4) Commend *Partnership in Mission* (Mark 3) in print and electronic versions to ministers, sessions, mission committees and church members as the definitive compendium of global missions under the direction of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.
- (5) Commend the 2010 edition of the Mission Directory to ministers, sessions, mission committees and church members as a valuable resource for prayer and information concerning our Partner Churches and Partner Agencies and our Presbyterian missionaries working with them.
- (6) Urge ministers, sessions, mission committees and church members to make full use of MISSIONChallenge, the major annual promotion of Partner Churches and Partner Church missionaries.
- (7) Urge ministers, sessions, mission committees and church members to make full use of, and to distribute appropriately within the church, the information contained in Mission Partners' regular publications, the quarterly Mini Magazine and the Email Update.
- (8) Urge ministers, sessions, mission committees and church members to make full use of the print, electronic and personal speaking ministry resources of Mission Partners, in developing their local mission ministry.
- (9) Urge ministers, sessions, mission committees and church members to encourage the

young people of their churches to consider short term ministry experience, particularly Youthpartners, a ministry of Mission Partners; and to encourage members of all ages to use their practical skills in Mission Partners' Tradespartners program.

- (10) Urge ministers, sessions, mission committees and church members to endeavour to make specific prayer for global missions a regular part of the church program and worship services.
- (11) Acknowledge with gratitude the faithful service of our many Partner Agency missionaries and of our Partner Church missionaries, namely:-
  - Glen and Rachael Connor, Andrew and Rosemary Williamson (Vanuatu)
  - Nerida and Yas Shimitzu (Japan)
  - Motor Isaac Yat (Sudan)
  - Martin Eagle (Myanmar after October 2010)
  - Ricky and Kayleen Manton, Ron and Jean Lyons (Indigenous Australians)
  - Bill and Jenny Lutton (National Office Sydney)
- (12) Express appreciation to members of Federal and State Committees for their willing voluntary service.
- (13) Recognise the many years of faithful service rendered by Dr David Pilgrim as Convener of the Federal Committee of Australian Presbyterian World Mission, and express its thankfulness to God for the dedication of Dr Pilgrim to this task.
- (14) Amend regulation 10.1.2 of the Australian Presbyterian World Mission Committee by adding (i) three members, resident in New South Wales.
- (15) Approve the following Terms of Appointment for the National Director of Mission Partners;
  - (a) The appointment of the APWM National Director shall be made by the General Assembly of Australia until the next General Assembly of Australia. This appointment is renewable. The appointment may be terminated by three months notice in writing by either party.
  - (b) The APWM National Director shall be regarded as a Partner Church Missionary of APWM, and as such will develop a team to support him in prayer.
  - (c) The APWM National Director shall be responsible to APWM for administrative and promotional purposes.
  - (d) If ordained, the APWM National Director shall be a member of the relevant presbytery.
  - (e) The remuneration package for the APWM National Director shall be:
    - ◆ Considerations determined by the NSW General Assembly from time to time, being:
      - Salary equivalent to the Basic Stipend plus 20%, with 30% being sacrificed in favour of fringe benefits of equivalent value
      - Fringe benefits in lieu of, and equivalent in value to:
        - i. the City travelling allowance plus
        - ii. the NSW General Assembly cents per kilometre rate for car travel beyond the boundaries of the presbyteries of Sydney, Sydney South, Sydney North and The Hawkesbury plus
        - iii. reimbursement of all other APWM travel expenses as approved by the Convener
      - Suitable accommodation provided, or in lieu of accommodation at the request of the APWM National Director and with the approval of the APWM Committee fringe benefits will be provided with a value equivalent to that of the 'manse allowance' that would be determined by application of the NSW General Assembly approved formula
      - In lieu of computer resources, fringe benefits will be provided equivalent in value to the NSW General Assembly 'technology allowance'
      - Superannuation contribution to an approved fund at a rate of 15% of salary
      - Long Service Leave assessment
      - Personal sickness and accident insurance
      - One week's study leave per annum, cumulative to a maximum of four weeks. At the end of the appointment, any unused study leave will be

held forfeit and will not entitle the APWM National Director to be paid in lieu of such leave

- Four weeks' annual leave
- Removal expenses
- Payment of all professional expenses for the conduct of APWM business including postage, stationery, telephone rental, calls and hospitality

- (16) Appoint Rev. Kevin Murray to the position of National Director of Mission Partners the Australian Presbyterian World Mission from 24 January 2011;
- (17) Instruct the Presbytery of Sydney South to set apart the Rev. K.D. Murray to his position as National Director of Mission Partners.
- (18) Amend the Regulations of the Australian Presbyterian World Mission Committee:
  - (a) Amend Regulation 10.1 paragraph 2 by deleting all words in clause (c) and renumbering subsequent clauses as (c) to (g).
  - (b) Amend Regulation 10.1 paragraph 2 clause (f) [new clause (e)] by the substitution of the word 'ten' for the word 'seven'.
  - (c) Amend Regulation 10.1 paragraph 2 clause (g) [new clause (f)] by the substitution of the word 'ten' for the word 'seven' and the substitution of the letter (d) for the letter (e).
  - (d) Amend Regulation 10.1 paragraph 3 by deleting all words in clause (c) and renumbering subsequent clauses as (c) and (d).
  - (e) Amend Regulation 10.1 paragraph 3 clause (e) [new clause (d)] by the substitution of the word 'ten' for the word 'seven' in lines 1 and 5.
- (19)
  - (a) Encourage Mission Partners to find ways to expedite the translation, printing and distribution of the full Bible into Tetun.
  - (b) Commend this project to the support of congregations throughout Australia.

**70. Communication (iii):** A communication from APWM concerning Bible Story Telling Ministry was laid on the table and received.

Mr K. Benn addressed the Assembly on the work of the Bible Story Telling Ministry.

**71. Private Sitting:** The Assembly sat in private.

**72. Reception of Ministers:** The report of the Reception of Ministers Committee was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. G.K. Kettmiss submitted the deliverance.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Note that the following person has been received as a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia under Clause 12 of the Regulations:

Rev. Yanh Ha (Teddy) Woo (Presbytery of Brisbane, signed Formula 02/02/2010)
- (2) Approve an extension of time to the end of 2011 for the Rev. George Bitar to prayerfully consider his position and future, and to complete the studies set.
- (3) Receive the Rev. Wilson Fernandes (Jnr) as a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, satisfied that the Rev. Wilson Fernandes (Jnr) has completed a course of theological training equivalent to the standard set by the College Committee, the decision to take effect when he signs the formula.
- (4) Receive the Rev. Sung Tae Kim as a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, satisfied that the Rev. Sung Tae Kim has completed a course of theological training equivalent to the standard set by the College Committee, the decision to take effect after a satisfactory Exit Interview and when he signs the formula.
- (5) Receive the Rev. Whan Gi Jung as a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, satisfied that the Rev. Whan Gi Jung has completed a course of theological training equivalent to the standard set by the College Committee, the decision to take effect when he signs the formula.
- (6) Receive the Rev. Ashraf Mehanni as a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, satisfied that the Rev. Ashraf Mehanni has completed a course of theological training equivalent to the standard set by the College Committee, the decision to take effect when

- he signs the formula.
- (7) Receive the Rev. Campbell Markham as a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, satisfied that the Rev. Campbell Markham has completed a course of theological training equivalent to the standard set by the College Committee, the decision to take effect when he signs the formula.
  - (8) Receive the Rev. Martin Spadaro as a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, satisfied that the Rev. Martin Spadaro has completed a course of theological training equivalent to the standard set by the College Committee, the decision to take effect when he signs the formula.
  - (9) Receive the Rev. Renier van der Klashorst as a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, the decision to take effect - (i) when he has completed the study set by the College Committee; (ii) after a satisfactory Exit Interview; (iii) subject to all the Duty of Care requirements being met; (iv) when he receives and accepts either a call to a congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, or an appointment made to a congregation or an institution of the Church, or by the General Assembly, a State Assembly or a Committee or board thereof; and (v) subsequently signs the formula.
  - (10) Receive the Rev. Joung Yeol Kim as a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, the decision to take effect - (i) when he has completed the study set by the College Committee; (ii) after a satisfactory Exit Interview; (iii) subject to all the Duty of Care requirements being met; (iv) when he receives and accepts either a call to a congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, or an appointment is made to a congregation or an institution of the Church, or by the General Assembly, a State Assembly or a Committee or board thereof; and (v) subsequently signs the formula.
  - (11) Receive the Rev. Gerhard Kock as a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, the decision to take effect - (i) when he has completed the study set by the College Committee; (ii) after a satisfactory Exit Interview; (iii) subject to all the Duty of Care requirements being met; (iv) when he receives and accepts either a call to a congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, or an appointment is made to a congregation or an institution of the Church or by the General Assembly, a State Assembly or a Committee or board thereof; and (v) subsequently signs the formula.
  - (12) Alter the Regulations of the Reception of Ministers Committee by the addition of a new Clause (d) to Regulation 10.14.2:-
    - (d) The Committee may appoint up to two further members as needed. These members may be ministers, elders or communicant members of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.
  - (13) To avoid unnecessary delays in the processing of applications and to ensure that presbyteries fulfil their rightful responsibilities, again request presbyteries to:-
    - (a) obtain a recent Certificate of Status and Academic Transcripts of tertiary study completed by applicants, attaching them to the Application Form, and then forward these on to the Committee.
    - (b) consider carefully such Certificates of Status (or the absence of them) when they process applications, and to contact referees.
    - (c) ensure that the Applicant signs and returns the Duty of Care Statement, and also obtains an Australian Federal Police clearance check.
    - (d) ensure that applicants from overseas secure either Australian citizenship or permanent resident status.
    - (e) fulfil their rightful duty in assessing the theological, spiritual, practical and moral suitability of applicants for the ministry within the Presbyterian Church of Australia.
  - (14) Thank the following for serving the Lord through this Committee: Rev. Dr John Davies, Rev. Rodney Waterhouse and Very Rev. Bob Thomas.

**73. Open Court:** The Assembly resumed in open court.

**74. Report from Western Australia:** The report on the life and work of the Presbyterian Church in Western Australia under Article 9.1 was laid on the table and received.

**75. Western Australia Church Planting Appeal:** Pursuant to notice Mr W. MacRae

moved:

That the Assembly:

Continue the Moderator-General's appeal for Church Planting in Western Australia until the meeting of the GAA in 2013, with access to be available to the funds during the interim period, as required, for the establishment of a new congregation at Rockingham.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**76. Minutes:** The minutes of the second and third sederunts were laid on the table and confirmed.

**77. Adjournment:** Thereafter the Assembly adjourned to meet tomorrow, Thursday 16 September, 2010 at 9.30 a.m. whereof public intimation having been given the sederunt was closed with prayer.

DAVID N. JONES, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

## SEVENTH SEDERUNT

**78. Assembly constituted:** At Sydney and within the Chinese Presbyterian Church, corner Crown and Albion Streets, Surry Hills, on Thursday 16 September, 2010 at 9.30 a.m. the Assembly met, pursuant to adjournment, and was constituted with praise, the reading of Scripture and prayer, the Moderator presiding.

**79. Bible Exposition:** The Rev. Dr Sinclair Ferguson gave an exposition of Hebrews 2:5-18 on the worship of the Church in Christ's presence. The Moderator conveyed the thanks of the Assembly to the Rev. Dr S. Ferguson for his expositions.

**80. ad hoc Committee on Biblical Ministries for Women:** The report of the ad hoc Committee on Biblical Ministries for Women was laid on the table and received. The Rev. J. McClean submitted the deliverance. Clause (1) was approved. Clause (2) was moved and seconded. Pursuant to notice the Rev. S.M. Bonnington moved as an amendment: That the Assembly:  
(2) Add the name of Mrs Margaret Thatcher to the committee. The amendment was seconded and approved. The motion as amended was approved. The debate was adjourned (Min. 82).

**81. Australian Christian Lobby:** At the invitation of the Moderator Mr J. Wallace, Managing Director of the Australian Christian Lobby, addressed the Assembly.

**82. ad hoc Committee on Biblical Ministries for Women:** Debate was resumed on the report of the ad hoc Committee on Biblical Ministries for Women (Min. 80). The Rev. J. McClean moved: That the Assembly:  
(3) Instruct WMPCA to promote a complementarian view of women's ministry in the Church while allowing for a variety of views of how that may be applied. The motion was seconded. The Rev. L.J. Percy challenged the competency of the motion. The Moderator ruled the motion competent. Dissent was moved from the Moderator's ruling. The Moderator's ruling was upheld. The Previous Question was moved, seconded and disapproved. The motion of the Rev. J. McClean was approved. The following recorded their dissent to the passing of clause (3) Misses S. Maddrell, J. Kelett, F. Perry, Mesdames Y. Forsyth, J. Thuaux, Messrs M. Beveridge, B. McDowell, D. M. Crawford, G. McGeorge, Dr L. Thorpe and M. Whitelaw. The Rev. J.F. Bartholomew recorded her dissent for the following reasons – That the Assembly by instructing the ad hoc Committee on Women's Ministry "to promote a complementarian view of women's ministry in the church" has implied the acceptance by the Assembly of a doctrinal position that has not been adopted by the church under Barrier Act procedure. Clauses (4) to (10) were approved. The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows: That the Assembly:  
(1) Thank Mrs. Ngaire Moore for her valuable contribution to the ad hoc Committee on Women's Ministries and previous committees concerned with women's ministry and specially for her hard work in helping run *Flourish* in 2009.  
(2) Appoint a committee named "Women's Ministries - Presbyterian Church of Australia" (WMPCA) consisting of Mesdames Margaret Thatcher, Cecilia Orford, Andrea Pryde, Mairi Girgis, and Rev. John McClean (convener) to report to the GAA in 2013.



- (3) Instruct WMPCA to promote a complementarian view of women's ministry in the church while allowing for a variety of views of how that may be applied.
- (4) Encourage WMPCA to contact women's ministry organizations, associations and other relevant bodies in the state Presbyterian churches in order to facilitate communication between them.
- (5) Encourage WMPCA to hold a national consultation in 2011 at which representatives of bodies in the Presbyterian Church of Australia with an interest in women's ministry can consider issues relevant to women's ministry and help identify goals for a national conference in 2012.
- (6) Encourage WMPCA to hold a national conference for men and women on women's ministry in 2012.
- (7) Encourage WMPCA to establish a resources website for sharing resources on women's ministry.
- (8) Note the growing interest in churches to employ women in the pastoral staff and commend this to churches where it is feasible.
- (9) Commend to ministers and sessions the talks by Rev. Craig Tucker given at the *Flourish* conference and available from [www.gaawomensministry.com](http://www.gaawomensministry.com) as a resource for thinking about women's ministry.
- (10) Request each committee of the GAA to consider how it may encourage women's ministry as outlined in this report and in doing so to consult with WMPCA.

**83. Communication (ii):** A communication from the Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia conveying decisions of the Commission of the General Assembly of Australia concerning recommendations on the report of the Camberwell Committee appointed under Min. 53 of the special meeting of the General Assembly of Australia held on 24 July, 2007 was received.

**84. Camberwell Committee:** The report of the Camberwell Committee appointed under Min. 53 of the Special meeting of the General Assembly of Australia held on 24 July, 2007 was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:

That the Assembly:

Thank and discharge the committee appointed under Min. 53 of the special meeting of the General Assembly held on 24 July, 2007 concerning Camberwell.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**85. Ballot:** The report of the Ballot Committee was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. B.M. Gorton submitted the deliverance.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Confirm the following elections:

**Australian Presbyterian World Mission**

Convener: Mr A. Shaw

Members: Mr I. Campbell, Rev. T. Cheetham, Rev. C.J. Letcher, Rev. Dr J. Leung, Miss C. Moar, Rev. W. Morrow and Mr A. Shaw

**Christian Education**

Convener: Rev. Dr G. Goswell

NSW: Very Rev. B.H. Christian, Mr M. Norman, Mr M.J. Quirk and Rev. A. Unwin

QLD: Rev. P. Barson and Rev. L.J. Hall

SA: Rev. A.S. Clarkson

TAS: Mr G.K. Roberts

VIC: Rev. Dr G. Goswell and Very Rev. C.R. Thomas

WA: Mr W.S. McCrae

**Code**

Convener: Clerk of Assembly

NSW: Mr M.C. Beveridge, Rev. B.M. Gorton and Rev. J.R. Irvin

QLD: Rev. R.C. Clark, Rev. A.M. Clarke and Rev. L.J. Hall

SA: Rev. G.J. Ware  
TAS: Rev. T.A. Bain  
VIC: Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman, Rev. P.W. Phillips and Rev. J.P. Wilson  
WA: Rev. K.W. Morris

#### **Defence Force Chaplaincy**

Convener: Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman  
Members: Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman, Rev. P. Harris, Rev. G.J. Hooper, Mr N. Hughes, Rev. J.R. Irvin, Rev. J. Nicol, Rev. P.W. Phillips, Dr L. Thorpe, Rev. A. Unwin and 3 Vacancies

#### **Finance**

Assembly: Rev. J.R. Irvin, Messrs W.D. Richards, J. Rolland  
Convener: Chairman of the Presbyterian Church (NSW) Property Trust  
NSW: Rev. P.R. Dunstan, Rev. L.G. Fowler, Rev. J.R. Irvin  
QLD: Rev. L.J.F. Hall, Mr K.C. Booker  
TAS: Mr G.K. Roberts  
VIC: Clerk of Assembly, Chairman of the Victorian Trust Corporation  
WA: Rev. R. Fraser

#### **National Journal**

Convener: Rev. P.W. Hastie  
Members: Rev. S. Bonnington, Mr W. Bruining, Rev. A. Clarke, Rev. P. Hastie, Mr R. Holvast, Rev. G. Kettmiss, Rev. J. McClean, Rev. M. Powell and Mr B. Zwartz

#### **Overseas Aid and Development Committee**

Convener: Very Rev. C.R. Thomas  
QLD: Rev. G.K. Kettmiss  
NSW: Rev. Dr E.F. Brown and Mr W.H. Thompson  
VIC: Mr K. Childs, Rev. Dr G. Goswell, Very Rev. C.R. Thomas and Rev. Dr J.P. Wilson

#### **Presbyterian Inland Mission**

Convener: Rev. R.S. Duncanson  
NSW: Rev. D.J. Bullen, Rev. L.G. Fowler and Mrs E. Mill  
NT: Dr L. Greenwood  
QLD: Rev. P. Barber, Mr B. Clarke and Mrs H. Ross  
SA: Rev. A. Clarkson  
TAS: Rev. C. Kennedy  
VIC: Rev. M. De Pyle, Rev. R.S. Duncanson and Rev. M. Smith  
WA: Rev. R.C. Fraser

#### **Public Worship and Aids to Devotion**

Convener: Rev. M. Wharton  
NSW: Rev. S.A. Andrews, Rev. J. Bartholomew, Rev. D. Seaman, Rev. A. Unwin and Dr M. Whitelaw  
QLD: Mrs. M. Brown, Rev. J. Langbridge and 1 Vacancy.  
SA: Rev. S. Slucki  
TAS: Rev. G. Munro  
VIC: Rev. S. Kroeger, Rev. M. Wharton and Rev. Dr J.S. Woodward  
WA: Rev. K.W. Morris

#### **Relations with Other Churches**

Convener: Rev. Dr J. Wilson  
NSW: Very Rev. R.P.F. Benn and Very Rev. B.H. Christian  
QLD: Rev. A. Clarke and 1 Vacancy  
SA: Rev. G. Ware  
TAS: Rev. R.W. White  
VIC: Very Rev. Dr C.R. Thomas and Rev. Dr J. Wilson  
WA: Rev. K.W. Morris

#### **Reception of Ministers**

Convener: Rev. G. Kettmiss  
Elders: Mr N. Taylor, Mr Hui Won Park and 2 Vacancies.  
NSW: Rev. B.M. Gorton

QLD: Rev. G. Kettniss  
SA: Rev. A. Clarkson  
TAS: Mr A. Turner  
VIC: Rev. Dr G. Goswell  
WA: Rev. P. Bloomfield

- (2) Authorise the Clerk of Assembly to destroy the ballot papers.
- (3) Thank the Very Rev. B.H. Christian for his many years of dedication and guidance to the Ballot Committee.
- (4) Thank and discharge the Committee.

**86. Former Moderators-General:** The Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:

That the Assembly:

Convey its greetings to the Very Rev. Dr K.J. Gardner, the Very Rev. J. Mullan and the Very Rev. M.J.K. Ramage with its prayers for them in their time of ill-health.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**87. Adjournment:** Thereafter the Assembly adjourned to meet at 2.00 p.m. whereof public intimation having been given the sederunt was closed with prayer.

DAVID N. JONES, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

## EIGHTH SEDERUNT

**88. Assembly constituted:** At Sydney and within the Chinese Presbyterian Church, corner Crown and Albion Streets, Surry Hills, on Thursday 16 September, 2010 at 2.00 p.m. the Assembly met, pursuant to adjournment, and was constituted with praise, the reading of Scripture and prayer, the Moderator presiding.

**89. Private Sitting:** The Assembly sat in private.

**90. Persons present in private sitting:** The Rev. S.B. Donnellan moved:  
That the Assembly:  
Permit the Rev. S.D. Slucki, as an adviser to Mr R. Finster, and Mr B. Rossiter, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Australia, to remain in the Assembly during the private sitting.  
The motion was seconded.  
The Rev. B.M. Meller raised the question of the necessity of suspending standing orders to allow such a motion to be approved.  
The Moderator ruled that such a motion would require the suspension of standing orders.  
The Rev. L.J. Percy moved:  
That the Assembly:  
Suspend sufficient of standing orders as are necessary to allow persons determined by the court and who are not members of the court to remain while the court sits in private.  
The motion to suspend standing orders was seconded and disapproved.

**91. Petitioner not to remain during discussion:** The Rev. A.C. MacMillan moved:  
That the Assembly:  
Not permit Mr R. Finster to remain in the House during discussion of his petition.  
The motion was seconded and approved.

**92. Petition (ii):** A petition from Mr Robert Finster to be readmitted as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia was laid on the table and received.  
Mr Robert Finster appeared as the petitioner.  
Questions were asked of the petitioner.  
The petitioner left the Assembly.  
It was moved:  
That the Assembly:  
Determine that all votes that will determine the outcome of this petition be taken by ballot.  
The motion was seconded and approved.  
It was moved:  
That the Assembly:  
(1) Not grant the prayer of the petition.  
The motion was seconded and approved.  
It was moved:  
That the Assembly:  
(2) Remove Mr Finster from the bar and request the Moderator and the Rev. K.D. Murray to convey the decision of the Assembly immediately to Mr Finster.  
The motion was seconded and approved.  
It was moved:  
That the Assembly:  
(3) Request the Moderator to communicate pastorally with Mr Finster subsequent to the Assembly.  
The motion was seconded and approved.  
It was moved:  
That the Assembly:  
(4) Destroy the ballot papers.  
The motion was seconded and approved.

**93. Petition not to be printed:** The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Retain a copy of the petition of Mr Robert Finster in the records of the Assembly without it being printed in the 2010 Blue Book.

The motion was seconded and approved.

It was moved:

That the Assembly:

Not record the name of the person moving the motions in the minutes relating to the petition of Mr Robert Finster.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**94. Open Court:** The Assembly resumed in open court.

**95. Communication (i):** A communication from the Ferguson Memorial Library as a report on the Archives of the Presbyterian Church of Australia was laid on the table and received.

**96. Church and Nation:** The report of the Church and Nation Committee was laid on the table and received.

The Rev. S. Slucki submitted the deliverance.

Clauses (1) to (3) were approved.

The Rev. S. Slucki moved:

That the Assembly:

- (4) Receives and adopts the statement on the responsible use of alcohol which reads:-
  - (a) Despite its abuse by many, the Assembly affirms alcohol as God's gift when used in moderation (1 Tim. 4:4, 5:23, John 2:1-11).
  - (b) Respect the position of total abstinence, taken by many Christians, on theological, ethical, practical and health grounds and does not wish to offend their consciences by this declaration in accordance with the principles of Romans 14.
  - (c) Warn, with all seriousness, of the perils of drunkenness for both the body (Prov. 23:20-35) and the soul (1 Tim. 6:10).
  - (d) Urge those addicted to alcohol to seek the help of organizations that specialise in the treatment of such addictions, recognizing that Christ's Power is able to break any sinful pattern through his Spirit.
  - (e) Urge Sessions, Deacons Courts, Committees and Boards of Management to make their facilities available to such organizations that specialize in the treatment of such addictions.
  - (f) Urge Christians to develop a definite attitude to alcohol by,
    - educating themselves and their families on the effects of alcohol and the consequences of alcohol abuse,
    - noting that self-control is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5.22-23);
    - adopting either temperance or total abstinence in their personal and family intake of alcohol;
    - being constantly aware of how their attitude to alcohol affects their witness to others.
  - (g) Urge Christians, privately and in public, to be models of responsibility and sobriety where they choose to be consumers of alcoholic beverages (Titus 2.11-14).
  - (h) Deplore the fact that alcohol is being consistently abused within the community with devastating results such as death and injury on the roads and in the workplace, addiction, violence, domestic disruption and misery, poverty, problems in pregnancy and damage to personal health.
  - (i) Urge concerted action by state and federal governments, in consultative partnership with insurance companies, aimed at curbing the abuse of alcohol in the community by:
    - restricting advertising of alcoholic beverages in the media;
    - facilitating sources of sports sponsorship and associated advertising funding, alternative to marketers of alcoholic beverages at sporting events;

- placing clear health warnings on alcoholic beverages;
- imposing equitable taxes on the sale of alcoholic beverages that adequately cover the financial cost to the community of alcohol abuse;
- applying taxation proportionately higher according to the percentage of alcohol content of the beverage;
- regulating tightly the institutions that sell alcoholic beverages, including the hours in which they operate;
- encouraging or offering insurance policies with conditions that promote abstinence or temperance in the consumption of alcoholic beverages.

The motion was seconded.

Pursuant to notice the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell moved as an amendment:

That the Assembly:

Delete from sub-paragraph (a) the words and numbers "1 Tim. 4:43, 5.23, John 2:1-11".

The amendment was seconded and disapproved.

Pursuant to notice the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell moved as an amendment:

That the Assembly:

Insert before the full stop in sub-paragraph (a) the words "and commends reference to and study of the booklet called "Alcohol and the Scriptures" issued by the temperance committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria".

The amendment was seconded.

The Rev. B.M. Meller moved as a motion of procedure:

That the Assembly:

Take the amendment of the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell as a separate clause.

The motion of procedure was seconded and approved.

The Previous Question on the motion of the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell was moved seconded and approved.

Pursuant to notice the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell moved as an amendment:

That the Assembly:

Delete from sub-paragraph (b) all words after "grounds".

The amendment was seconded.

The Previous Question was moved, seconded and approved.

Clause (4) was approved.

Pursuant to notice the Rev. Dr D.C. Mitchell moved:

That the Assembly:

Request the Church and Nation Committee to republish the booklet "Alcohol and the Scriptures" before the next General Assembly of Australia.

The motion was seconded.

The Previous Question was moved seconded and approved.

Clauses (5) to (6) were approved.

Pursuant to notice Mr D.M. Crawford moved:

That the Assembly

- (7) Write to the Prime Minister and the Federal Leader of the Opposition asking them to reaffirm the commitment of their respective parties to the definition of marriage as defined in 6(b).

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clauses (8) to (15) were approved.

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Thank the immediate past Moderator-General, the Very Rev. Robert Benn, for his championing of the issues of the Church and Nation Committee during his term of office, as evidenced by his issuing of statements, media releases as well as general support to the Committee.
- (2) Thank Ms Karen Forman, NSW Media and Communications Manager, for her help in preparing, disseminating and publicizing the work of the Committee via statements, media releases and letters in consultation with the Moderator-General.
- (3) Thank the Rev. Michael Wharton both for technically maintaining the Committee's website and publicising its work via Pres E-News.

- (4) Receive and adopt the statement on the responsible use of alcohol which reads:-
- (a) Despite its abuse by many, the Assembly affirms alcohol as God's Gift when used in moderation (1 Tim. 4:4, 5:23, John 2:1-11).
  - (b) Respect the position of total abstinence, taken by many Christians, on theological, ethical, practical and health grounds and does not wish to offend their consciences by this declaration in accordance with the principles of Romans 14.
  - (c) Warn, with all seriousness, of the perils of drunkenness for both the body (Prov. 23:20-35) and the soul (1 Tim. 6:10).
  - (d) Urge those addicted to alcohol to seek the help of organizations that specialise in the treatment of such addictions, recognizing that Christ's Power is able to break any sinful pattern through his Spirit.
  - (e) Urge Sessions, Deacons Courts, Committees and Boards of Management to make their facilities available to such organizations that specialise in the treatment of such addictions.
  - (f) Urge Christians to develop a definite attitude to alcohol by,
    - educating themselves and their families on the effects of alcohol and the consequences of alcohol abuse;
    - noting that self-control is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5.22-23);
    - adopting either temperance or total abstinence in their personal and family intake of alcohol;
    - being constantly aware of how their attitude to alcohol affects their witness to others.
  - (g) Urge Christians, privately and in public, to be models of responsibility and sobriety where they choose to be consumers of alcoholic beverages (Titus 2.11-14).
  - (h) Deplore the fact that alcohol is being consistently abused within the community with devastating results such as death and injury on the roads and in the workplace, addiction, violence, domestic disruption and misery, poverty, problems in pregnancy and damage to personal health.
  - (i) Urge concerted action by state and federal governments, in consultative partnership with insurance companies, aimed at curbing the abuse of alcohol in the community by:
    - restricting advertising of alcoholic beverages in the media;
    - facilitating sources of sports sponsorship and associated advertising funding, alternative to marketers of alcoholic beverages at sporting events;
    - placing clear health warnings on alcoholic beverages;
    - imposing equitable taxes on the sale of alcoholic beverages that adequately cover the financial cost to the community of alcohol abuse;
    - applying taxation proportionately higher according to the percentage of alcohol content of the beverage;
    - regulating tightly the institutions that sell alcoholic beverages, including the hours in which they operate;
    - encouraging or offering insurance policies with conditions that promote abstinence or temperance in the consumption of alcoholic beverages.
- (5) Instruct the Committee to:-
- (a) upload the statement on the responsible use of alcohol onto its website; and
  - (b) forward the statement to the church via Pres E-News.
- (6) Receive and adopt the proposed statement on marriage which reads:-  
That the Assembly:
- (a) Declare that marriage is a divine creation ordinance relevant for all mankind (Gen. 2:23-24).
  - (b) Declare that marriage, rightly defined, is a public commitment between one man and one woman, to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life.
  - (c) Affirm its understanding that the purposes of marriage are to promote lifelong love and companionship between the spouses, to provide the most favourable and stable environment in which to conceive, give birth to and nurture children and to

- promote the health and stability of society.
- (d) Reaffirm its long-held opposition to the redefining of marriage so as to include partners of the same sex.
  - (e) Encourage teaching and ruling elders and other pastoral leaders to teach the distinctive, Christian, covenantal view in preparing couples for marriage.
  - (f) Call on all involved in de facto heterosexual, domestic relationships to solemnise those commitments by means of marriage (Hebrews 13:4) and appeals to all pastoral leaders to persist in calling on them to do so.
  - (g) Recognise the value to both the church and the world of the celibate, single adult life (1 Corinthians 7).
  - (h) Commend chapter 5 of General Assembly of Australia's Constitution, Procedure and Practice 2006 Edition, "Determinations on Marriage and Divorce", to the consideration and study of all ministers, elders, pastoral leaders and members of the church. (<http://www.presbyterian.org.au/PDF/GAACode%20Book2006.pdf>)
  - (i) Urge church members to show understanding and compassion for people whose lives have been affected by marriage and/or relationship breakdown, including divorce.
  - (j) Commend the Federal Parliament on its continued affirmation of the legal definition of marriage as being between one man and one woman, to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life.
- (7) Write to the Prime Minister and Federal Leader of the Opposition asking them to reaffirm the commitment of their respective parties to the definition of marriage as defined in 6(b).
  - (8) Instruct the Committee to:
    - (a) upload the statement on marriage to its website; and
    - (b) forward the statement to the church via Pres E-News.
  - (9) Commend the Victorian Church and Nation Committee for conceiving, organising and hosting the inaugural colloquium and encourages the arranging of further such colloquia.
  - (10) Note the Committee's submission to the *Freedom of Religion and Belief in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* Project and the National Human Rights Consultation.
  - (11) Endorse the paper "A National Agenda for Religious Freedom" prepared by Professor Patrick Parkinson of the Sydney University Law School and strongly urges all political parties to commit themselves to guaranteeing the basic five freedoms noted in that paper.
  - (12) Commend the work of the Australian Christian Lobby (ACL) as it seeks to firmly, faithfully and constructively engage with our nation's political and other leaders: commending Christian values in the public square.
  - (13) In relation to the National Curriculum:
    - (a) Views the development of a national curriculum for schools as a difficult and complex undertaking and reserves its right to make submissions to the process through its Church and Nation Committee.
    - (b) Considers that curriculum be only one of the components of education and sound teaching, other elements including social interaction and development, critical thinking and recreational and aesthetic development.
    - (c) Instructs the Church and Nation Committee to monitor the development of the national curriculum and to report to the 2013 General Assembly.
    - (d) Authorises the Church and Nation Committee to take up matters directly with education authorities relating to the importance of recognising Australia's Christian heritage and the religious and moral components within the proposed national curriculum.
  - (14) In relation to the Freedom from Slavery Day.  
Commends the participation of congregations in the Freedom From Slavery national day of prayer on March 13, 2011 which is part of the NOT-FOR-SALE CAMPAIGN.
  - (15) In relation to the Canberra Declaration.  
Invites members of the Church to give consideration to individually signing the Canberra Declaration:

**The Canberra Declaration**

The Preamble to the Australian Constitution contains the words, "Humbly relying on the blessing of Almighty God". As Australian citizens we continue to declare that we too put



our trust in Almighty God.

For centuries, to speak of Western civilisation was to speak of Christian civilisation. The two were in many ways synonymous. The values that we have cherished and sought to strengthen are in large measure founded on the Judeo-Christian belief system. The many freedoms, advantages, opportunities, values and liberties which characterise the West owe much to the growth of Christianity with its inherent belief in the dignity of the human person as created in the image of God and the code of behaviour that flows from this belief.

The Canberra Declaration follows on from the 2009 Manhattan Declaration and the 2010 Westminster Declaration. It declares that when Christian values are respected and allowed freedom of expression, not just confined to so-called sacred spaces but in the public arena as well, society is richer and healthier.

We wish to emphasise three areas that demand particular attention in our contemporary Australian society, namely religious freedom, marriage and the family, and the sanctity of human life. Were we to undermine any one of these values, the social fabric of our nation would be seriously weakened, to our personal and collective detriment.

### **Religious Freedom**

Religious freedom includes freedom of conscience and freedom of speech. The importance of these freedoms is shown in countries where they are threatened or absent. Police states and totalitarian nations inevitably begin with the curtailment of basic liberties, including religious freedom and the right to speak one's mind and conscience. This includes the right to change one's religious beliefs.

We affirm the basic necessity of freedom of conscience, having the liberty to speak publicly about one's faith and beliefs, and having the right to practise the religion of one's choice. If these freedoms are removed – even in the name of supposed benefits – the prized values of democracy and liberty are seriously undermined.

In Australia today these freedoms are being restricted by laws which, although appearing positive on first reading, have the potential to lead to unintended and unacceptable consequences. These laws include anti-discrimination legislation, hate crime laws and legislation on religious and sexual vilification – each of which may be interpreted in a way that effectively works as a barrier to religious freedom and freedom of speech.

Thus the signers of this declaration affirm the fundamental right of Australians to religious freedom and freedom of speech, and we oppose legislation which denies such freedoms. We likewise oppose laws subjugating our nation to foreign powers and instrumentalities which restrict these freedoms.

### **Marriage and Family**

Another vital package of values and social benefits is the long-standing institution of the natural family resulting from marriage between a man and a woman – as affirmed by the definition of marriage in the Marriage Act: "...the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life".

No other social institution has done so much good for people and for nations, yet marriage is being undermined, to the detriment of children, individuals, and society itself.

Lifelong marriage between a man and a woman guarantees children their biological birthright to a mother and a father and has a proven track record of providing them with protection, education, welfare, support and nurture. No other arrangement has improved upon the benefits of marriage.

In the face of competing alternatives and moves to redefine marriage, we affirm the importance and social utility of marriage between a man and a woman and the families formed thereby.

### **Human Life**

The third important set of values revolves around the sanctity of human life which is being undermined in much of the Western world, through abortion, euthanasia, and some of the new reproductive technologies.

We believe that all human life, being made in the image of God, has intrinsic and equal value from conception to life's natural end.

The very heart of a humane and civilised society is based on the way it treats its most vulnerable and innocent members including the unborn and the disabled. We

therefore insist on the right of all persons, including those who are vulnerable or dependent, to protection from conception to natural death. We will support, protect, and be advocates for such people, since to do anything less is to weaken our humanity and despise our personhood.

We will not comply with any directive that compels us to participate in or facilitate abortion, embryo-destructive research, assisted suicide, euthanasia, or any other act that involves the intentional taking of innocent human life.

### **Conclusion**

Religious freedom, marriage and family, and the sacredness of human life have provided the foundations enabling Western democratic societies to flourish. We erode these foundations at our peril.

The faith which is at the heart of many of the values and strengths underpinning the Australian nation now compels us to speak up in their defence.

For the future of this nation, and for our children's future, calls upon all like-minded citizens to support and sign this declaration.

**97. Business:** Debate was resumed on the report of the Business Committee (Min. 9).

The deliverance as a whole was approved as follows:

- (1) (a) Determine the hours of meeting to be:-
 

Morning Sederunt	9.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.
Lunch Interval	1.00 p.m. to 2.00 p.m.
Afternoon Sederunt	2.00 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.
Tea Interval	5.30 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.
Evening Sederunt	7.00 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.
- (b) Determine that morning and afternoon tea breaks may be taken for up to 20 minutes, the taking of each recess to be at the discretion of the Moderator.
- (2) Declare speeches to be limited as follows:-
 

Convener of Committee speaking to report	15 mins.
All other speakers	5 mins.
Overturists and Petitioners	10 mins.
Appellants, Complainants, and Respondents - per party	15 mins.
- (3) Declare that the total time allowed for questions during the presentation of each report, overture, petition, appeal, or complaint be limited to 30 minutes, such time to be subject to extension by resolution of the house.
- (4) Appoint the Ballot Committee as follows: Rev. B.M. Gorton (Convener), Mr J.A. Goodman, Rev. J. Langbridge, Mr G.K. Roberts, Mr P. Betts with power to co-opt.
- (5) Appoint the members of the Ballot Committee as Tellers of the Assembly.
- (6) Appoint the Committee to scrutinise the minutes as follows: Rev. L.J. Hall (Convener), J.R. Irvin, J.P. Wilson, Messrs. J. Tucker and B. Johnson with power to co-opt.
- (7) Declare that notices of motion must be in triplicate.
- (8) Appoint Mr P.J. Graham, OAM as Assembly Officer.
- (9) Declare that video and/or audio recording of Assembly business (except for the opening service and the communion service) shall not be permitted for the purposes of reproduction or broadcasting without the express permission of the Assembly.
- (10) Approve the Order of Business as follows for Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2010:-

### **SECOND SEDERUNT**

9.30 a.m.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Business as from 11.00 a.m.

Statement - RETIRING MODERATOR

PRESBYTERIAN INLAND MISSION

Procurator's Opinion – 2007 ELDERSHIP OVERTURE

Procurator's Opinion – A NATIONAL CHURCH

RETURNS TO REMITS

CODE COMMITTEE

Unfinished Business

Notices of Motion

### **THIRD SEDERUNT**

2.00 p.m.

OD. 2.10 p.m. – PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN’S ASSOCIATION

OD. 2.20 p.m. – BIBLICAL EXPOSITION

FINANCE COMMITTEE

THE TRUSTEES

NATIONAL JOURNAL COMMITTEE

DISSENT AND COMPLAINT (i)

RELATIONS WITH OTHER CHURCHES

Unfinished Business

Notices of Motion

(11) Approve generally the order of business as follows:-

### **FOURTH SEDERUNT**

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2010**

9.30 a.m.

OD. 9.35 a.m. - CLOSE OF NOMINATIONS FOR THE BALLOT

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION PUBLIC WORSHIP AND AIDS TO DEVOTION  
COMMITTEE

PRESAID

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA - ARTICLE 9.1

OD. 12.20 p.m. – BIBLICAL EXPOSITION

Unfinished Business

Notices of Motion

### **FIFTH SEDERUNT**

2.00 p.m.

COLLEGE COMMITTEE

DEFENCE FORCE CHAPLAINCY

OVERTURE (i)

OVERTURE (ii)

OVERTURE (iii)

OVERTURE (iv)

PETITION (i)

OD. 4.00 p.m. – APPEAL – Rev. I.F. Ransom

Unfinished Business

Notices of Motion

### **SIXTH SEDERUNT**

7.00 p.m.

OD. 7.05 p.m. – BALLOT

AUSTRALIAN PRESBYTERIAN WORLD MISSION

RECEPTION OF MINISTERS

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA – ARTICLE 9.1

Unfinished Business

Notices of Motion

### **SEVENTH SEDERUNT**

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2010**

9.30 a.m.

OD. 9.35 a.m. - BIBLICAL EXPOSITION

AD HOC - POSITIVE APPROACH TO MINISTRY OF WOMEN

AD HOC - WOMEN’S MINISTRIES

Minutes - COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY - CAMBERWELL

CAMBERWELL COMMITTEE

Communication (ii) - COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY - CAMBERWELL

Communication (i) - FERGUSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

CHURCH AND NATION

OD. 11.00 a.m. - JIM WALLACE (Chairman - Australian Christian Lobby)

BALLOT COMMITTEE

Unfinished Business

Notices of Motion  
**EIGHTH SEDERUNT**

2.00 p.m.

PETITION (ii)

NM.8 (Appointment of Assessors)

Appointment of next Assembly – N/M 1

Close

- (12) Declare that the Assembly should not receive, as a communication, a document which could be submitted in another form but may receive as a communication,
- (a) the resignation of an Assembly Officer;
  - (b) any other communication which has been approved by the Business Committee.
- (13) Appoint the Moderator-General or his representative as the Assembly's representative to the Assemblies of overseas churches without any commitment to costs.

**98. Panel of Assessors:** Pursuant to notice the Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:

That the Assembly:

In terms of Article 13 of the Articles of Agreement appoint the following panel of assessors: Very Rev. Prof. A.M. Harman, Rev. J.R. Irvin, S.M. Bonnington, P.F. Cooper, D. Mihailovic, J.W. Langbridge, D.B. Thatcher, P.P. Thorneycroft, Messrs. B. Johnson, K. Booker, W. Thompson, M.C. Beveridge, P. Betts, K. Childs, C.M. Langford and G.K. Roberts.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**99. Minutes Commission:** Pursuant to notice the Rev. Dr Paul Logan moved:

That the Assembly:

Appoint the Moderator, Clerks, Business Convener, the Rev. L.J. Hall, K.D. Murray, J.R. Irvin and Mr B. Johnson a Commission with the Clerk of Assembly as Convener to examine, correct and confirm the minutes of the fourth to the eighth sederunts.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**100. Appointment Next Assembly:** Pursuant to notice the Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

- (1) Resolve to meet in Sydney and within the Chinese Presbyterian Church, corner Crown and Albion Streets, Surry Hills, on Monday 9 September, 2013 at 7.00 p.m.
- (2) Appoint the Business Committee a commission, of whom four members representing at least three states shall be a quorum, to appoint another time, place or date of meeting should it become impracticable for the Assembly to discharge its functions at the time, place or date appointed.

The motion was seconded and approved.

**101. Thanks:** It was resolved that the Assembly record its thanks to the Rev. D. Tsai, Mrs. S. Lim and Mr L. Wong of the Chinese Church for their assistance at all times; to the members of the Chinese Presbyterian Church for the use of their premises; Mr W.D. Richards and the staff of Church Offices in Sydney for their work in preparing for the Assembly and in particular to Miss S.H. Jensen in all her work of preparing documentation and other tasks associated with the Assembly; Mr P.J. Graham, Assembly Officer; Mr M. Quirk and the staff of Presbyterian Youth for their assistance in the logistics of the Assembly; the Rev. J.R. Irvin for his assistance to the Clerks; Ms C. Chu and Mr and Mrs H. Kuo for playing the organ on the opening night and for the Communion Service; the elders who served Communion; those who organized the celebration for the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Scottish Reformation; the management and staff of the Sebel Hotel for arranging accommodation for commissioners; and all who assisted in the operation of the Assembly.

**102. Moderator's Address:** The business of the Assembly having been completed, the Moderator addressed the House.

**103. Close:** After prayer, the Assembly joined in singing Psalm 100. The Moderator then intimated in pursuance of the General Assembly's appointment that the next session of the

General Assembly will be held at 7.00 p.m. on Monday 9 September, 2013, in the Chinese Presbyterian Church, corner Crown and Albion Streets, Sydney or at such other date, time and place as may be decided (Min. 100).

Thereafter the Moderator in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only king and head of the Church, declared this session of the General Assembly closed and pronounced the benediction.

DAVID N. JONES, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

The minutes of the fourth to eighth sederunts, having been carefully corrected are confirmed as authorised in terms of Min. 99. thereof.

DAVID N. JONES, Moderator.  
PAUL G. LOGAN, Clerk.  
BRUCE M. MELLER, Deputy Clerk.

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