

53rd Synod of the Diocese of Sydney

Third Session

Minutes of Proceedings of the Synod for Monday 15 September 2025

1. Assembly

The Synod assembled in the Wesley Theatre at 3.15 pm after a service of Holy Communion at which the address was given by Bishop Richard Condie.

2. Prayers

Archdeacon Kara Hartley led the Synod in prayer.

3. List of members of the Synod

The President tabled a copy of the list of members of the Synod.

4. Document appointing a Commissary

The President tabled a copy of a document appointing a commissary.

5. Procedural motions

5.1 Amendment to the business paper for Monday 15 September 2025

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

‘Synod permits the alteration of today’s business paper in the manner set out on the paper circulated to Synod members headed “Amendments to the business paper for 15 September 2025”, and suspends so many of the Standing Orders as may prevent these arrangements.’

Seconded and carried

5.2 Adoption of proposed Synod Standing Orders

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

‘Synod, noting the Bill for the Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019 Amendment Ordinance 2025 (**the Bill**) proposes to amend the *Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019* (**the Standing Orders**) at this session –

- (a) agrees it is preferable to maintain consistent procedures throughout a session of the Synod, and
- (b) agrees to adopt the amendments to the Standing Orders proposed in the Bill for the entirety of the present session, irrespective of the passage of the Bill, and suspends so many of the Standing Orders as would prevent these arrangements.’

Seconded

The Rev Joseph Wiltshire moved as an amendment to Mrs Bounds’ motion –

‘Insert as a new paragraph (c) –

“(c) agrees to the immediate use of any business rules that are amended during the debate on B1 should any be accepted.”’

Seconded and carried

Mrs Bounds’ procedural motion, as amended, was carried in the following form –

‘Synod, noting the Bill for the Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019 Amendment Ordinance 2025 (**the Bill**) proposes to amend the *Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019 (the Standing Orders)* at this session –

- (a) agrees it is preferable to maintain consistent procedures throughout a session of the Synod,
- (b) agrees to adopt the amendments to the Standing Orders proposed in the Bill for the entirety of the present session, irrespective of the passage of the Bill, and
- (c) agrees to the immediate use of any business rules that are amended during the debate on B1 should any be accepted,

and suspends so many of the Standing Orders as would prevent these arrangements.’

Seconded and carried

6. Calling of motions related to certain elections

The President called the motions related to the elections in the order in which they appeared on the business paper.

6.1 Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

‘Under section 12 of the *Anglican Church of Australia Trust Property Act 1917*, the Synod declares a vacancy in the offices of members of the Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney for the Rev David Ould, Mr Ewen Crouch AM, Mrs Sally Manion, and Mrs Maureen Peatman, who have come to the end of their terms of office, noting that Mr Ould, Mr Crouch, Mrs Manion, and Mrs Peatman have each been nominated in anticipation of these vacancies being declared.’

Seconded and carried

7. Elections

7.1 Minute Reading Committee

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

‘Synod –

- (a) notes that a casual vacancy has arisen in the office of member of the Minute Reading Committee for the 53rd Synod, and
- (b) agrees not to fill the casual vacancy.’

Seconded and carried

8. Uncontested elections

A list of the uncontested elections was tabled, the results of which –

- (a) in the case of the election for the Anglican Church Property Trust, was declared by the President,
- (b) in the case of all other elections, were declared by the President on 26 August 2025, effective from 15 September 2025,

pursuant to rule 4.1(b) of the Second Schedule to the *Synod Elections Ordinance 2000*.

9. Tabling of the minute book of the Standing Committee

The minute book of the Standing Committee was tabled.

10. Petitions

There were no petitions.

11. Questions

A list of questions asked by the following members in accordance with Standing Order 6.3(2)(a) was tabled –

- (1) Ms Polly Seidler
- (2) Ms Polly Seidler
- (3) Mr Jackson Gatenby
- (4) Mr Samuel Doherty
- (5) Mr Samuel Doherty
- (6) Mr Samuel Doherty
- (7) Mr Samuel Doherty
- (8) The Rev Dr Raj Gupta
- (9) The Rev Dr Raj Gupta

12. Notices of Motions

Notices of motions were given by the following members –

- (1) Canon Craig Roberts
- (2) Bishop Michael Stead
- (3) Bishop Michael Stead
- (4) The Rev David Yung
- (5) Mr Sherwin Titus
- (6) Dr Laurie Scandrett
- (7) Dean Sandy Grant
- (8) Dean Sandy Grant
- (9) Mr David Minty
- (10) The Rev Stephen Gibson
- (11) The Rev James Warren
- (12) The Rev Craig Hooper

13. Calling of motions on the business paper

The President called the motions in the order in which they appeared on the business paper, except those motions about a proposed ordinance, those motions to be considered at a time fixed by the Synod, or appearing in an amended form on the business paper.

13.1 Arrangements concerning Daily Papers and amendments

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

'Synod –

- (a) notes that it is proposed to prepare and print Daily Papers (usually including the Business Paper and Schedule of motions with amendments) in a consolidated form and provide them to members in the foyer of the Wesley Theatre from 2.15 pm on each day,
- (b) notes that the Daily Papers will be posted on the Synod website, <https://synod.sydneyanglicans.net/s/article/Synod> as soon as they are finalised,
- (c) in order to facilitate this process, agrees that amendments for inclusion in the Daily Papers for any day of the session must be received by the Synod Secretary (either

on paper or by email sent to synodbusiness@sydney.anglican.asn.au) in a substantially complete form by 10.30 am to be included in the Daily Papers for that day, and

- (d) notes that amendments received by the Synod Secretary after that time or which are not in a substantially complete form may, where feasible, be projected on the overhead screen in the Wesley Theatre (if required to be considered on that day) but will otherwise be included in the Daily Papers for the following day.'

Seconded and carried

13.2 Publication of presentation material

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

'Synod agrees that any video presentation or presentation material may be published by the Secretary of the Synod, with the agreement of the presenter of the material, on the Synod webpage.'

Seconded and carried

13.3 Annual reports submitted under the *Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995* for organisations with a financial year ending 30 June

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

'Synod notes that the following annual reports, submitted under the *Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995* for the Financial Year ending 30 June 2024, have been tabled and receives them –

Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid (The) *

Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid (The), as trustee of the Archbishop of Sydney's Overseas Ministry Fund *

Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid (The), as trustee of the Archbishop of Sydney's Overseas Relief and Aid Fund *

Anglican Community Services**

Seconded and carried

13.4 Other annual reports

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

'Synod notes that the following annual report for the Financial Year ending 31 December 2024 has been tabled and receives it –

Mission to Seafarers (The), Sydney'

Seconded and carried

13.5 Diocesan Governance Policy – implementation

Mr Robert Wicks moved –

'Synod, noting the report "35/24 Diocesan Governance Policy – implementation" –

- (a) affirms its request in Resolution 35/24 that each Diocesan organisation promote amendments to its constituting ordinance by July 2026 to achieve conformity with the Diocesan Governance Policy adopted by the Synod at its session in September 2024,
- (b) notes that the Standing Committee has approved a Model Ordinance and finding list as drafting guides for Level C schools and organisations to comply with the Diocesan Governance Policy, and
- (c) encourages all Diocesan organisations and schools, which have not already done so, to promote amendments to their constituting ordinance by July 2026 to achieve conformity with the Diocesan Governance Policy noting that where appropriate,

provisions of the Diocesan Governance Policy may be included in a charter (or similar document).’

Seconded and carried

13.6 Review of the central organisational structures of the Diocese

Bishop Michael Stead moved –

‘Synod, noting the report “Review of the central organisational structures of the Diocese”, notes the progress made in implementing the restructure of central diocesan organisations.’

Seconded and carried

13.7 Acknowledgement of service – Evangelism and New Churches, Ministry Training and Development, and the Anglican Media Council

Bishop Michael Stead moved –

‘Synod –

- (a) notes that, as a consequence of the election of persons listed in the *Evangelism and Ministry Partnerships (Provisional Restructuring) Ordinance 2025*, a total of 21 persons concluded as members of their respective organisations,
- (b) acknowledges the collective 194 years of service to Evangelism and New Churches, Ministry Training and Development, and the Anglican Media Council represented by the 21 retiring members, and
- (c) gives thanks to God for the contribution of each of the retiring members to the wise stewardship of these organisations over many years.’

Seconded and carried

13.8 Acknowledgement of service – Sydney Anglican (National Redress Scheme) Corporation

Bishop Michael Stead moved –

‘Synod acknowledges the service of the former members of the Sydney Anglican (National Redress Scheme) Corporation, comprising –

- (a) Mr Doug Marr (2018-2021; inaugural Chair),
- (b) Dr Emma Penzo (2018-2024; Chair since 2021),
- (c) the Rev Andrew Schmidt (2018-2024),
- (d) Mr Tony Willis (2021-2022), and
- (e) Dr Tim Channon (2022-2024),

and thanks each of them for the care and diligence which they exercised as members in furthering the purpose of the Corporation in the provision of redress.’

Seconded and carried

Bishop Stead led the Synod in prayer for the former members of Evangelism and New Churches, Ministry Training and Development, the Anglican Media Council, and Sydney Anglican (National Redress Scheme) Corporation.

The Archbishop made a statement on both matters.

13.9 Relational distress in the ministry workplace

Mrs Nicola Fortescue moved –

‘Synod, noting the report “39/22 Relational Distress in the Ministry Workplace” –

- (a) notes that the information sheet attached to the report (*Addressing Relational Difficulties in the Ministry Workplace*) will be circulated to all church workers within

the Diocese in response to the Synod's request in Resolution 39/22 that a suitable form of this report be circulated to such workers,

- (b) notes that the information in this sheet, updated from time to time, will also be made available to church workers online,
- (c) notes that the final stages of pastoral supervision for church workers are being implemented during 2026 and 2027, and encourages all church workers to take advantage of the benefits provided by pastoral supervision including in addressing difficult relationships, and
- (d) requests that the Standing Committee review the current utilisation and effectiveness of the Clergy Assistance Program and consider the feasibility of extending a similar program to authorised lay ministers.'

Seconded and carried

13.10 Implementation of the Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse

Ms Nicola Warwick-Mayo moved –

'Synod, noting the report "6/24 Implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse", requests the Standing Committee to provide a further update to the next session of the Synod in relation to implementation of the actions set out in the table to the report.'

Seconded and carried

13.11 Dinner for Women of Synod

Mrs Emma Argall moved –

'Synod notes that Anglican Deaconess Ministries (**ADM**) will host a dinner for women on Wednesday 17 September 2025 at the ADM Office, Level 1, St Andrew's House, which will include an opportunity to meet other women and to hear from a panel of experienced Synod participants: Dr Karin Sowada, Ms Evelyn Horton, and Mrs Tara Sing. Attendees are encouraged to leave promptly when Synod is adjourned as ADM is an eight minute walk away.'

Seconded and carried

13.12 Supporting victim survivors of domestic abuse

Archdeacon Kara Hartley moved –

'Synod, in response to the ongoing concern of domestic abuse –

- (a) acknowledges that domestic abuse remains a significant social issue, both within the church and in the wider community,
- (b) affirms the ongoing work of many parishes in supporting those experiencing domestic abuse, as well as their efforts in teaching and training around this issue,
- (c) commends the use of the Diocesan Domestic Abuse and Good Practice Guidelines, along with other Safe Ministry resources in equipping church leaders and members to understand, support and care for those experiencing abuse,
- (d) notes that the Anglican Church of Australia designated the first Sunday in May 2025 as Domestic Violence (DV) Sunday,
- (e) recognises that for several years parishes in Sydney have observed the *International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women* held annually in November, and
- (f) encourages local churches to engage with and utilise the resources being developed by the Diocesan Domestic Abuse Monitoring Committee for use in church services on 23 or 30 November this year to ensure this critical issue continues to be addressed in our congregations.'

Seconded and carried

13.13 Emerge Program: ministry to migrants

The Rev Philip Wheeler moved –

'Synod, noting that while 30% of the population is born overseas and Sydney is now home to migrants from hundreds of cultures and backgrounds, integration into Australian society presents significant challenges for many migrants –

- (a) gives thanks for the efforts of churches and Anglican agencies, especially the Emerge Program (a ministry of Evangelism and New Churches), in welcoming migrants by fostering intercultural connections, providing practical support, and creating a sense of belonging, enabling migrants, by God's grace, to find eternal hope and peace through Jesus, and
- (b) encourages churches and Christians personally to –
 - (i) "See the crowds" and the opportunities migration offers for the good news of Jesus to be shared, often in our own street,
 - (ii) pray for the Emerge Program and other organisations assisting the migrants in our city, and
 - (iii) participate in the Emerge Program in order to become equipped with the skills and confidence to assist new migrants with integration and establishing their new life in Australia (<https://encministries.org.au/ministry/emerge/>) and an opportunity to find life that is truly life in Jesus.'

Seconded and carried

14. Procedural motions from members

14.1 Arrangements for the scheduling of business

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

'Synod notes –

- (a) that the Timetable for Synod Business sets out the anticipated order of business, including the following presentations that have been approved by the Standing Committee –
 - (i) on Tuesday 16 September (afternoon sitting, from 5.25 pm) –
 - (A) a presentation from the Parish of Picton and Wilton, including visuals, of up to ten minutes including prayer, and
 - (B) a presentation regarding the Diocese of Bathurst, to be delivered by Bishop Mark Calder, including visuals, of up to ten minutes including prayer,
 - (ii) on Wednesday 17 September (afternoon sitting, from 5.24 pm) –
 - (A) a presentation from Sydney Anglican Property, including visuals, of up to five minutes including prayer,
 - (B) a presentation from Evangelism and New Churches, including visuals, of up to six minutes including prayer, and
 - (C) a presentation from the Parish of Dundas/Telopea, including visuals, of up to ten minutes including prayer,
 - (iii) on Tuesday 23 September (afternoon sitting, from 5.25 pm) –
 - (A) a presentation from Anglicare, to be delivered by Mr Simon Miller and the Hon Dr Rob Stokes, including visuals, of up to ten minutes including prayer, and
 - (B) a presentation from the Parish of Wahroonga, including visuals, of up to ten minutes including prayer, and
- (b) that the Standing Committee has approved the following being presented at a time determined at the discretion of the President –
 - (i) a presentation from the Glebe Administration Board, of up to five minutes including prayer, and

- (ii) a presentation regarding Mother's Union, including visuals, of up to three minutes including prayer, and
- (c) that the Safe Ministry Team Chaplain, the Rev Belinda Burn, and two support persons arranged by the Chaplain, will be available in the foyer of the Wesley Theatre from 7.00pm on Tuesday 16 September for anyone who would like pastoral support regarding the motion at M7 (Use of Non-Disclosure Agreements in the Diocese),
and agrees –
 - (d) to deal with its business in accordance with the Timetable for Synod Business, subject to the ultimate discretion of the President,
 - (e) that the mover and seconder of the motion at M1 (Balmain: Classification as a Parish) may combine for a joint presentation with visuals for up to 15 minutes including prayer, on Monday 15 September (evening sitting, from 7.00 pm),
 - (f) that the mover and seconder of the motion at M2 (Cabramatta: Classification as a Parish) may combine for a joint presentation with visuals for up to 15 minutes including prayer, on Monday 22 September (afternoon sitting, immediately prior to the dinner break),
 - (g) that the mover and seconder of the motion at M13 (Leadership of Indigenous Ministry in the Diocese) may combine for a joint presentation with visuals for up to 15 minutes including prayer, and
 - (h) to reserve the evening of Wednesday 17 September for the conclusion of debate on any matters commenced but not yet concluded earlier in the session,
and suspends so many of the Standing Orders as would prevent these arrangements.'

Seconded and carried

14.2 **Motion on Women in the Diocese of Sydney called by God to be deacons, priests and bishops**

Professor Bernard Stewart AM moved –

'Synod agrees to schedule the motion at M25 (Women in the Diocese of Sydney called by God to be deacons, priests and bishops) for Monday 22 September, immediately following consideration of M21 (Dr Robert Tong AM) at 8.00pm.'

Seconded

After a time for debate the President asked –

'Does the Synod consider that the motion has been sufficiently debated and should now be voted on?'

The majority of members present answered in the affirmative.

Professor Stewart's procedural motion was put and was not carried.

14.3 **Motion on Chaplaincy**

Mr James Flavin moved –

'Synod agrees to schedule the motion at M28 (Chaplaincy) for Monday 22 September at 5.00 pm.'

Seconded

Mr Flavin's procedural motion was not carried.

14.4 **Annual reports submitted under the *Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995* for organisations with a financial year ending 31 December**

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

'Synod notes that the following annual reports, submitted under the *Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995* for the Financial Year ending 31 December 2024, have been tabled and receives them –

- (1) Abbotsleigh (The Council of)
- (2) Anglican Church Growth Corporation
- (3) Anglican Church Growth Corporation as trustee for the Ministry Infrastructure Development Fund
- (4) Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney as trustee for the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney Grants Administration Fund *
- (5) Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney
- (6) Anglican Media Council
- (7) Anglican Schools Corporation
- (8) Anglican Youth and Education Diocese of Sydney (Youthworks) *
- (9) Archbishop of Sydney's Discretionary Trust
- (10) Arden Anglican School Council (The)
- (11) Arundel House Council
- (12) Barker College (The Council of)
- (13) Campbelltown Anglican Schools Council *
- (14) Endowment of the See Corporation as trustee of the Endowment of the See Property Fund
- (15) Evangelism and New Churches (The Board of)
- (16) Glebe Administration Board as trustee of the Diocesan Cash Investment Fund
- (17) Glebe Administration Board as trustee of the Diocesan Endowment
- (18) Glebe Administration Board as trustee for the Long Term Pooling Fund
- (19) Illawarra Grammar School (The Council of The) *
- (20) King's School (The Council of The)
- (21) Living Faith Council
- (22) Macarthur Anglican Church School Council (The)
- (23) Ministry Training and Development (The Council of)
- (24) Moore Theological College Council *
- (25) Northern Regional Council
- (26) St Andrew's Cathedral Chapter
- (27) St Andrew's Cathedral School (The Council of)
- (28) St Andrew's House Corporation as trustee of the St Andrew's House Trust
- (29) St Catherine's School Waverley (The Council of)
- (30) South Sydney Regional Council
- (31) South Western Regional Council
- (32) Sydney Anglican Loans Board
- (33) Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples' Ministry Committee
- (34) Sydney Anglican Services
- (35) Sydney Church of England Grammar School Council (Shore)
- (36) Tara Anglican School for Girls (The Council of)
- (37) Trinity Grammar School (The Council of)
- (38) Western Sydney Regional Council
- (39) William Clarke College Council *
- (40) Wollongong Regional Council

Seconded and carried

14.5 Standing Committee and other special reports

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

'Synod receives the following reports and notes that they have been printed at the direction of the Standing Committee –

- (1) 2025 Report of the Standing Committee
- (2) Synod Funds Amalgamated Annual Financial Report for 2024
- (3) Parish Funds Amalgamated Annual Financial Report for 2024
- (4) Synod – St Andrew's House Fund Annual Financial Report for 2024
- (5) Balmain: Proposal to change the status of the provisional parish to a parish
- (6) Cabramatta: Proposal to change the status of the provisional parish to a parish
- (7) A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth (47/24 | 48/24)
- (8) Declarations regarding disqualifying offences (22/24)
- (9) Diocesan Governance Policy – Implementation (35/24)
- (10) Doctrine Commission Report: Authentic Anglicanism
- (11) Final Report to Synod on the Newmarch House 2020 COVID-19 Outbreak | Newmarch House 2020 COVID-19 Outbreak (3/23)
- (12) Financial support for the Diocese of Bathurst (32/22)
- (13) Implementation of the Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (6/24)
- (14) Leadership of Indigenous Ministry in the Diocese (33/24)
- (15) Ministry Spouse Support Fund Report Annual Report for 2024
- (16) Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017 (9/23) | Complaints Process Review Committee
- (17) Ordinances passed by the Standing Committee (since August 2024)
- (18) Parochial Cost Recoveries for 2026
- (19) Reflections upon the response of the Standing Committee and the Diocesan senior leadership to the COVID-19 Pandemic
- (20) Regional Councils' Annual Reports for 2024
- (21) Relational distress in the ministry workplace (39/22)
- (22) Reporting on the National Redress Scheme (Annual Report) (42/18)
- (23) Review of the central organisational structures of the Diocese (17/24 | 18/24 | 19/24)
- (24) Safe Ministry Board and Office of the Director of Safe Ministry Annual Report 2024-2025
- (25) Stipends, Allowances and Benefits for 2026 (2/05)
- (26) Training, support and development of Ministry Workers (32/23 | 52/23 | 1/24)
- (27) Use of Non-Disclosure Agreements in the Diocese (49/24)
- (28) Work Outside the Diocese
- (29) Explanatory statements and reports on Bills'

Seconded and carried

15. Presentation

Ms Evelyn Horton gave a presentation regarding the work of the Glebe Administration Board.

Bishop Michael Stead led the Synod in prayer for the Glebe Administration Board.

Adjournment

At 4.15 pm, the President adjourned the Synod.

Resumption

The Synod resumed at 4.21 pm.

16. Presentation

A video presentation was given regarding the work of Mothers Union Sydney.

17. Presidential Address

The President delivered his address to the Synod.

Adjournment

At 5:24 pm, Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved –

‘That the Synod adjourn and resume at 7.00 pm tonight.’

Seconded and carried

Resumption

The Synod resumed at 7.01 pm.

18. Motions

18.1 **Balmain: Classification as a Parish**

The Rev Matt Davies gave a presentation, including a video presentation, regarding ministry in Balmain.

Mr Davies moved –

‘Synod assents to the classification of Balmain as a parish with effect from 1 January 2026.’

Seconded and carried by acclamation

Bishop Michael Stead led the Synod in prayer for the parish of Balmain.

18.2 **Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019 Amendment Ordinance 2025**

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

‘That the Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019 Amendment Ordinance 2025 be approved in principle.’

Seconded

Mrs Bounds spoke in support of the proposed ordinance.

The President asked –

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

There were no questions.

The President asked –

'Does any member wish to speak for or against the motion, or move an amendment to it?'

There was no member who wished to speak against the motion or move an amendment to it.

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

The President asked –

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

A member of Synod indicated that they wished to move an amendment to the text of the proposed ordinance.

Mrs Bounds moved –

'That Synod resolve itself into the Synod in Committee to consider the text of the proposed ordinance.'

Seconded and carried

The text of the proposed ordinance was considered by the Synod in Committee. After consideration of the text had been completed, the Chair of Committees reported the proposed ordinance with an amendment.

Mrs Bounds moved –

'That the report of the Chair of Committees be adopted.'

Seconded and carried

Mrs Bounds moved –

'That Synod agree to consider on Tuesday 16 September a motion that the proposed ordinance pass as an ordinance of the Synod.'

Seconded and carried

18.3 **Safe Ministry Training (Standing Committee) Ordinance 2025**

Ms Nicola Warwick-Mayo moved –

'That Synod agree to consider passing the Safe Ministry Training (Standing Committee) Ordinance 2025 formally.'

Seconded and carried

Ms Warwick-Mayo spoke in support of the proposed ordinance.

The President asked –

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

There was a time for questions.

Ms Warwick-Mayo moved –

'That the proposed ordinance pass formally as an ordinance of the Synod.'

Seconded and carried

Archdeacon Anthony Douglas led the Synod in prayer.

18.4 Synod Elections Ordinance 2000 Amendment Ordinance 2025

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

‘That Synod agree to consider passing the Synod Elections Ordinance 2000 Amendment Ordinance 2025 formally.’

Seconded and carried

The President asked –

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

There was a time for questions.

Mrs Bounds moved –

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

Seconded and carried

18.5 A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth

The Rev Peter Stedman moved –

‘Synod, noting the report, “A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth” –

- (a) commits to pursuing a special five-year focus on Attendance, Mission and Youth from the conclusion of this Synod,
- (b) invites all parts of the Diocesan fellowship to join in a special five-year focus to prayerfully seek to grow our attendance in churches by five percent for each of the next five years through conversion of the lost through faith in Jesus,
- (c) noting that 24.1% of the population are children and young people and 78% of Sydney Anglicans became Christians before the age of 18, encourages all parishes to strive to increase their allocation of resources to ministry with children and youth every year during the special five-year focus, and
- (d) requests the Registrar to consider changes to the collection and publication of attendance data as recommended in the report.’

Seconded

The Rev Toby Neal moved as an amendment to Mr Stedman’s motion –

‘Insert as a new paragraph (a), with consequential renumbering –

“(a) gives thanks to God for his kindness in granting two years of consecutive growth in church attendance (2022-2024), and continues to call on him to do an even greater work among us in bringing many thousands each year to salvation through the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.”.’

Seconded

Dean Sandy Grant moved as an amendment to Mr Stedman’s motion –

‘In the first line, following the matter “& Youth”, insert the following matter –

“, in a spirit of humble dependence and pastoral flexibility”.’

Seconded

The Rev Andrew Schmidt moved as an amendment to Mr Stedman’s motion –

‘Omit the text at paragraph (c), and insert instead the matter –

“(c) encourages all parishes to shape their allocation of resources during the special five-year focus with clear regard to the insight that 24.1% of the population are children and young people and 78% of Sydney Anglicans became Christians before the age of 18, and”.’

Seconded

Mr Scott Sanders moved as an amendment to Mr Stedman’s motion –

‘Insert as a new paragraph (e) –

“(e) encourages parish councils to consider allocating resources for supporting the development of senior ministers and ministry team members.”.’

Seconded

The Rev David Morgan moved as a procedural motion –

‘That further consideration of this matter be deferred to the next sitting day.’

Seconded and carried

18.6 **Reflections upon the response of the Standing Committee and the Diocesan senior leadership to the COVID-19 Pandemic**

The Rev Nigel Fortescue moved –

‘Synod, noting the report “Reflections upon the response of the Standing Committee and the Diocesan senior leadership to the COVID-19 Pandemic”, encourages the Standing Committee, Archbishop and the Diocesan senior leadership, Parishes, rectors, church workers, Diocesan organisations and schools, and Moore Theological College to consider the relevant recommendations at paragraph 220 of the report and take appropriate steps in their context.’

Seconded

Mr David Minty moved as an amendment to Mr Fortescue’s motion –

‘Omit the word “paragraph” and insert instead the matter “paragraphs 213 and”.’

Seconded

After a time for debate the President asked –

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

The majority of members present answered in the affirmative.

Mr Minty’s amendment was put and was not carried.

Mr Fortescue’s motion was carried without amendment.

The Archbishop made a statement on this matter.

Adjournment

At 9.29 pm, Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved –

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

Seconded and carried

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

Two Members of the)
Minute Reading Committee)

Signed by the President

16 September 2025

53rd Synod of the Diocese of Sydney

Third Session

Minutes of Proceedings of the Synod for Tuesday 16 September 2025

1. Assembly

The Synod assembled in the Wesley Theatre at 3.15 pm.

2. Prayers

Archdeacon Simon Flinders led the Synod in prayer.

3. Bible study

Bishop Richard Condie led the Bible study.

4. Minutes

The President signed the minutes for Monday 15 September 2025.

5. Answers to Questions

5.1 **Safe ministry training not completed by clergy and licensed ministry persons within the required timeframe**

Ms Polly Seidler asked the following question –

Between 31 August 2024 and 31 August 2025, how many –

- (a) clergy,
- (b) ministry reps,
- (c) archdeacons, and
- (d) bishops

have not completed their safe ministry refresher training within the required 3 years and 30 days (other than those extended by the Archbishop), such that they have to do the full essentials course (as they are too late to do the refresher)?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The data required to answer this question is not readily available, and as a consequence cannot be exhaustively answered in the time provided.

With regard to statistics for clergy (paragraph (a)) and Safe Ministry representatives (paragraph (b)), the ODSM has records of those who have completed their training, but do not record the role they hold. As part of the process to license a person as a member of the clergy or to appoint a person as a Safe Ministry Representative, the Registry confirms only at that point that the person has up to date safe ministry training credentials.

With regard to archdeacons (paragraph (c)) and bishops (paragraph(d)) I am able to advise that for the specified period all of the Archbishop's Senior Staff held current safe ministry training credentials and none were required to undertake the essentials course.

5.2 Non-disclosure agreements involving workers in the diocese

Ms Polly Seidler asked the following question –

Has it been a practice in the last 12 months with any non-disclosure agreement matter involving a worker in the diocese to assess the factual matrix to identify any psycho-social hazards under worker health safety laws of the land?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

To the extent that a parish or diocesan organisation seeks advice from Sydney Anglican Services or SDS Legal, their general approach is to assist them to comply with their legal obligations, including work health and safety laws, and to encourage the worker to make use of the supports available to them in the process, such as the Clergy Assistance Program and the Parish HR Partner.

5.3 Parish status changes between 2014 and 2024

Mr Jackson Gatenby asked the following question –

For each year between 2014-2024, how many instances were there of:

- (a) creation of a new parish or provisional parish?
- (b) a provisional parish changing to a parish?
- (c) a parish changing, or provisionally changing, to a provisional parish?
- (d) a parish or provisional parish being revoked?
- (e) parish amalgamations?

In this question, 'parish' and 'provisional parish' have the same definition as in the *Synod Membership Ordinance 1995*.

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The answer to this question is shown in table form and will be available on the noticeboard in the foyer and on the Synod website.

Year	(a) New parishes and Recognised Churches	(b) Provisional Parish to Parish	(c) Parish to Provisional Parish	(d) Parochial Unit being revoked	(e) Parish amalgamations
2024	0	1	0	0	3
2023	0	1	1	0	0
2022	2	0	0	0	2
2021	1	1	0	0	5
2020	2	6	0	0	4
2019	1	2	1	0	2
2018	2	1	0	0	6
2017	0	2	0	0	0
2016	1	2	0	0	1
2015	0	1	0	0	0
2014	2	2	0	0	0

Note to the table: this answer only includes parishes and provisional parishes constituted under the *Parishes Ordinance 1979* and the *Recognised Churches Ordinance 2000*. It does not include other ministry structures such as Fellowships established under the *Evangelism and New Churches Ordinance 2010*.

5.4 Parishes and churches with fewer than 3 wardens

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

- (a) How many principal churches, if any, administered under schedule 1 of the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008* have –
 - (i) Only 2 wardens?
 - (ii) Only 1 warden?
 - (iii) No wardens?
- (b) How many other churches, if any, administered under schedule 1 of the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008* have –
 - (i) Only 2 wardens?
 - (ii) Only 1 warden?
 - (iii) No wardens?
- (c) Are any of the churches in part a or b (if any) in the same parish as another, and if so how many parishes have –
 - (i) a principal church and 1 or more other churches without 3 wardens?
 - (ii) multiple other churches without 3 wardens?
- (d) How many current permissions (if any) have been given by the Archbishop-in-Council under rule 2.10 of schedule 1 of the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008*?
- (e) How many parishes, if any, administered under schedule 2 of the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008* have –
 - (i) Only 2 wardens?
 - (ii) Only 1 warden?
 - (iii) No wardens?
- (f) How many churches/parishes, if any, mentioned in parts a, b and e, have been without 3 wardens for more than –
 - (i) 1 year?
 - (ii) 2 years?
 - (iii) 3 years?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The answer to this question will be available on the noticeboard in the foyer and on the Synod website.

- (a)
 - (i) 11.
 - (ii) 2.
 - (iii) 0.
- (b)
 - (i) 5
 - (ii) 0.
 - (iii) 0.
- (c)
 - (i) 1.
 - (ii) 1.
- (d) 0 (including permissions given by the Regional Bishop-in-Council under the delegation in rule 9.6(1) of Schedule 1 of the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008*).
- (e)
 - (i) 3.
 - (ii) 0.
 - (iii) 0.

- (f) It was not possible to provide an answer in the timeframe available for questions as the data is not readily available. The Registry database has been set up to keep track of information that is current and has not been designed to be used as an analytical database.

5.5 **Enrolment of girls at SHORE School**

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

Did the Sydney Church of England Grammar School Council have discussions with the Anglican Schools Corporation on a potential agreement, whereby girls completing 2nd grade at Sydney Church of England Grammar School can obtain direct entry to 3rd grade at Roseville College?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

No.

5.6 **Canons Emeritus Ordinance 1944 and Honorary Canons Ordinance 1911 Amendment Ordinance 2025**

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

What were Standing Committee's reasons for passing the *Canons Emeritus Ordinance 1944 and Honorary Canons Ordinance 1911 Amendment Ordinance 2025*?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

Standing Committee does not publish or provide reasons for its decisions. However, an explanation of the ordinance is set out in paragraph 3.4(11) of the 2025 Report of the Standing Committee on page 10 of Book 1, and in the Report of the Ordinance Reviewer accompanying the ordinance which can be found in the Standing Committee minutes tabled on the stage of the Wesley Theatre during the session.

In addition, it may be helpful to say that, from time to time, the Archbishop may wish to appoint someone to be an Honorary Canon, especially when such an appointment will strengthen a person's capacity to exercise ministry in Anglican contexts overseas (such as the CEO of Anglican Aid, CEO of Anglican Youthworks, GAFCON Global Operations Manager). However, the *Honorary Canons Ordinance 1911* only allows for a maximum of twelve Honorary Canons at any one time. An implication of this restriction is that there are times when the Archbishop may wish to appoint a new Honorary Canon but there are no "vacancies".

Currently, this means that the Archbishop needs to either wait for an Honorary Canon position to become vacant (by death, or licence relinquishment), or he needs to contemplate asking an Honorary Canon to resign their office to create a vacancy (which is undesirable).

The changes enacted by the *Canons Emeritus Ordinance 1944 and Honorary Canons Ordinance 1911 Amendment Ordinance 2025* enable the Archbishop to propose that existing Honorary Canons be appointed Canons Emeritus, thus creating vacant Honorary Canon positions that can be filled as needed.

5.7 **Constitution of the Board of Evangelism and New Churches**

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

What were Standing Committee's reasons for reconstituting the members of the Body Corporate of Evangelism and New Churches in the way in which they did in subclause 4(a) of the *Evangelism and Ministry Partnerships (Provisional Restructuring) Ordinance 2025*?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

Standing Committee does not publish or provide reasons for its decisions. However, an explanation of the ordinance is set out in paragraph 3.4(20) of the 2025 Report of the Standing Committee on page 11 of Book 1 and paragraph 38 of the report 'Review of the central organisational structures of the Diocese' on page 327 of Book 2.

In addition, it may be helpful to say that the Standing Committee reconstituted the members of the Body Corporate of Evangelism and New Churches (**ENC**) after a period of further consultation, requested by the Synod in resolution 19/24, with the boards of ENC, Ministry Training and Development (**MTD**), the Anglican Media Council (**AMC**) and other bodies to determine the optimal structure for the Body Corporate to achieve the purposes and priorities for the Diocesan Fellowship. It was considered that the optimal structure for the Body Corporate would require direct and regular accountability to the Standing Committee, and a degree of flexibility, to effectively bring together ENC, MTD and AMC as Evangelism and Ministry Partnerships (**EMP**) under a common board membership. To this end, the membership of the Body Corporate includes 6 persons elected by the Standing Committee. For transitional and continuity purposes, these 6 positions were filled with 2 members from each of the previous ENC, MTD and AMC boards and councils. Given EMP's focus on evangelism and ministry support, the Body Corporate's membership also includes 3 persons appointed by the Archbishop and the Principal of Moore College or his delegate.

5.8 Parish attendance and giving between 2010 and 2024

The Rev Dr Raj Gupta asked the following question –

For each year, 2010-2024, what is:

- Total parish adjusted net operating receipts including JobKeeper receipts?
- Total parish adjusted net operating receipts excluding JobKeeper receipts?
- Total parish offertories (excluding JobKeeper receipts)?
- Total average adult attendance?
- Average offertory per capita (i.e. (c) / (d))?
- Total number of licensed clergy?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The answer to this question is shown in table form and will be available on the noticeboard in the foyer and on the Synod website.

Year	(a) Total parish adjusted net operating receipts including JobKeeper receipts (in millions)	(b) Total parish adjusted net operating receipts excluding JobKeeper receipts (in millions)	(c) Total parish offertories, excluding JobKeeper receipts (in millions)	(d) Total average adult attendance	(e) Average offertory per capita. (i.e. (c) / (d))	(f) Total number of licensed clergy
2024	150.7	150.7	135.9	46,986	2,892	591
2023	138.0	138.0	127.4	44,687	2,851	587
2022	126.6	126.6	115.7	39,987	2,893	610
2021	122.7	118.8	110.5	38,949	2,837	630
2020	136.6	113.0	85.3	45,691	1,867	617
2019	122.8	122.8	111.8	45,408	2,462	624
2018	116.9	116.9	108.1	46,608	2,319	615
2017	112.5	112.5	108.7	47,063	2,310	616
2016	110.0	110.0	103.4	47,593	2,173	610

Year	(a) Total parish adjusted net operating receipts including JobKeeper receipts (in millions)	(b) Total parish adjusted net operating receipts excluding JobKeeper receipts (in millions)	(c) Total parish offertories, excluding JobKeeper receipts (in millions)	(d) Total average adult attendance	(e) Average offertory per capita. (i.e. (c) / (d))	(f) Total number of licensed clergy
2015	104.2	104.2	97.3	48,554	2,004	607
2014	101.2	101.2	93.0	47,868	1,943	610
2013	95.4	95.4	87.6	46,994	1,864	584
2012	92.8	92.8	88.1	47,221	1,866	575
2011	88.8	88.8	80.9	46,983	1,722	567
2010	83.2	83.2	74.7	47,256	1,581	568

Notes to the table:
1. This table is based on raw data submitted by parishes to the Diocesan Registry.
2. The data for 2024 is still being received by the Diocesan Registry from parishes, and may change over time as parish information is received and updated.

5.9 Moore College enrolments

The Rev Dr Raj Gupta asked the following question –

In relation to Moore College enrolments:

- (a) How many students (male, female and total) are enrolled in a Bachelor of Theology or Bachelor of Divinity:
 - (i) first year,
 - (ii) second year,
 - (iii) third year, and
 - (iv) fourth year?
- (b) How many ordination candidates are there in each year of College?
- (c) What is the number of first year students (in a Bachelor of Theology or Bachelor of Divinity degree) in each of the last 5 years?
- (d) Is there any data available to indicate the number and proportion of students that have come from within the Sydney Diocese, as compared to those from outside?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The answer to this question is shown in table form and will be available on the noticeboard in the foyer and on the Synod website.

- (a) Number of students in the BTh/ThM & BD in 2025 (headcount)

Year	Female	Male	Grand Total
1	21	53	74
2	12	56	68
3	14	45	59
4	3	30	33
Grand Total	50	184	234

- (b) Number of ordination candidates in the BTh/ThM & BD in 2025 (headcount)

Year	# Sydney Ordination Candidates (accepted)	# Sydney Ordination Applicants (applied but not accepted yet)
1	0	10
2	8	9

Year	# Sydney Ordination Candidates (accepted)	# Sydney Ordination Applicants (applied but not accepted yet)
3	17	5
4	15	1
Grand Total	40	25

(c) Number of commencing 1st year students in the BTh/ThM & BD (headcount)

Year	# students
2021	66
2022	53
2023	66
2024	64
2025	57

(d) Number of BTh/BD Students from within/outside the Sydney Diocese (headcount)

Year	Sydney Diocese	Outside Sydney Diocese	Total
2025	120	114	234
Note to the table: "Sydney Diocese" was taken to refer to students who were attending a Sydney Anglican church immediately before starting study at Moore Theological College.			

6. Questions

Questions were asked by the following members –

- (1) Mr John Diesendorf
- (2) The Rev David Morgan
- (3) Ms Anna Richardson
- (4) Mrs Gina Grimes
- (5) Mr John Pascoe
- (6) Canon Tom Harricks
- (7) The Rev James Warren
- (8) The Rev James Warren
- (9) Mrs Stacey Chapman
- (10) Canon Mark Smith
- (11) Mr Jeremy Swinn

7. Notices of Motions

Notices of motions were given by the following members –

- (1) Dr Robert Tong AM
- (2) The Rev Christopher Braga
- (3) The Rev David Morgan
- (4) Bishop Michael Stead
- (5) Mr James Flavin
- (6) The Rev Robin Vonk
- (7) Mr Tristan Anlezark
- (8) Archdeacon Anthony Douglas
- (9) The Rev Joseph Wiltshire
- (10) The Rev Dr Rich Wenden
- (11) Canon Alistair Seabrook

8. Calling of motions on the business paper

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

8.1 Archbishop of Adelaide

Mr Samuel Doherty moved –

'Synod –

- (a) notes that the Archbishop of Adelaide, the Most Rev Geoffrey Martyn Smith, will retire on 8 November 2025, and
- (b) prays for the Diocese of Adelaide's Bishop Nomination Committee and the Election Synod on 6 December 2025, that God would give them wisdom and guide them as they nominate and elect a new Archbishop.'

Seconded and carried

Bishop Chris Edwards led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

9. Procedural motion

9.1 Arrangements for consideration of M4 (A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth)

Canon Craig Roberts moved –

'Synod, noting that –

- (i) on Monday 15 September, debate on motion M4 (A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth) was adjourned until the next sitting day,
- (ii) debate on M4 will resume as the first item of business today in accordance with rule 4.13 of the Synod Standing Orders, and
- (iii) the mover of M4 has accepted several of the amendments moved on Monday 15 September and the motion will be moved in an amended form,

agrees to allow the mover of the motion to speak for up to five minutes prior to resuming debate on the matter, and suspends so many of the Standing Orders as would prevent these arrangements.'

Seconded and carried

10. Public gallery

Year 13 students, attending in the public gallery, were welcomed with acclamation by members of the Synod.

11. Motions

11.1 A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth

Debate resumed in accordance with Standing Order 4.13(2).

In accordance with the procedural motion at item 9.1, the Rev Peter Stedman moved –

'Synod, noting the report, "A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth", in a spirit of humble dependence and pastoral flexibility –

- (a) gives thanks to God for his kindness in granting two years of consecutive growth in church attendance (2022-2024), and continues to call on him to do an even greater

work among us in bringing many thousands each year to salvation through the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ,

- (b) commits to pursuing a special five-year focus on Attendance, Mission and Youth from the conclusion of this Synod,
- (c) invites all parts of the Diocesan fellowship to join in a special five-year focus to prayerfully seek to grow our attendance in churches by five percent for each of the next five years through conversion of the lost through faith in Jesus,
- (d) encourages all parishes to shape their allocation of resources during the special five-year focus with clear regard to the insight that 24.1% of the population are children and young people and 78% of Sydney Anglicans became Christians before the age of 18, and
- (e) requests the Registrar to consider changes to the collection and publication of attendance data as recommended in the report.'

Seconded

Mr Chris Hamam moved as an amendment to Mr Stedman's motion –

'Immediately prior to the final full stop, insert the following –

- “(f) requests that cohorts of attendance data be ascertained from Christian Preschools connected to parishes within our dioceses, and
- (g) gives thanks and prays for this work to continue”.'

Seconded

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

'In paragraph (d), following the matter 'age of 18', insert the matter –

“and 31% of the population were born overseas, calling us to equip ministry with children, youth, and their families in culturally responsive and cross-cultural ways”.'

Seconded

The Rev Michael Hastie moved as an amendment to Mr Stedman's motion –

'Insert as a new paragraph (e), with consequential renumbering –

- “(e) encourages rectors to voluntarily be accountable within their mission areas for their evangelistic efforts by regularly sharing initiatives and reporting progress, as we prayerfully pursue this priority together.”'

Seconded

The Rev Matthew Dodd moved as an amendment to Mr Stedman's motion –

'Omit paragraph (b), with consequential renumbering.'

Seconded

After a time for debate the President asked –

'Does the Synod consider that the motion has been sufficiently debated and should now be voted on?'

The majority of members present answered in the affirmative.

Mr Sanders' amendment to Mr Stedman's motion, moved on 15 September, was not carried.

Mr Hamam's amendment to Mr Stedman's motion was not carried.

Mrs Sing's amendment to Mr Stedman's motion was carried.

Mr Hastie's amendment to Mr Stedman's motion was not carried.

Mr Dodd's amendment to Mr Stedman's motion was carried.

Mr Stedman's motion, as amended, was carried with acclamation in the following form –

'Synod, noting the report, "A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth", in a spirit of humble dependence and pastoral flexibility –

- (a) gives thanks to God for his kindness in granting two years of consecutive growth in church attendance (2022-2024), and continues to call on him to do an even greater work among us in bringing many thousands each year to salvation through the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ,
- (b) invites all parts of the Diocesan fellowship to join in a special five-year focus to prayerfully seek to grow our attendance in churches by five percent for each of the next five years through conversion of the lost through faith in Jesus,
- (c) encourages all parishes to shape their allocation of resources during the special five-year focus with clear regard to the insight that 24.1% of the population are children and young people and 78% of Sydney Anglicans became Christians before the age of 18 and 31% of the population were born overseas, calling us to equip ministry with children, youth, and their families in culturally responsive and cross-cultural ways, and
- (d) requests the Registrar to consider changes to the collection and publication of attendance data as recommended in the report.'

The Archbishop made a statement and led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

11.2 Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019 Amendment Ordinance 2025

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

'That the Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019 Amendment Ordinance 2025 pass as an ordinance of the Synod.'

Seconded and carried

11.3 Leadership of Indigenous Ministry in the Diocese

The Rev Michael Duckett made a presentation, including a visual presentation, in accordance with the procedural motion passed on 15 September 2025.

The Rev Michael Duckett moved –

'Synod, noting the report "33/24 Leadership of Indigenous Ministry in the Diocese", notes the progress made in Indigenous Ministry since the commissioning of the Director of Indigenous Ministry on 22 February 2025.'

Seconded and carried with acclamation

The Rev Nigel Fortescue led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

12. Presentations

12.1 Parish of Picton and Wilton presentation

The Rev Ben Boardman gave a presentation regarding the work of the parish of Picton and Wilton.

Bishop Peter Hayward led the Synod in prayer for the parish of Picton and Wilton.

12.2 Diocese of Bathurst presentation

Bishop Mark Calder gave a presentation regarding the work of the Diocese of Bathurst.

Bishop Michael Stead led the Synod in prayer for the Diocese of Bathurst.

Adjournment

At 5.43 pm, Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved as a procedural motion –

‘That the Synod adjourn and resume at 7.00 pm tonight.’

Seconded and carried

Resumption

The Synod resumed at 7:01 pm.

13. Motions

13.1 Use of Non-Disclosure Agreements in the Diocese

Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved –

‘This Synod acknowledges with grief that there have been times in the past when people have been subject to certain confidentiality agreements (NDAs) in our Diocese which we do not now consider to be acceptable. We understand that some have been silenced by such agreements when they should have been free to share their story or to call others to account. We understand that some have felt like those they trusted have protected themselves rather than caring for them in a moment of vulnerability.

Without reservation we apologise to all who have suffered such unjust treatment, and we pray for their healing. We appreciate that some have, with integrity, maintained a silence to which they now regret agreeing, and we thank God for their perseverance. We also reaffirm our commitment to encourage all churches and organisations in our Diocese to pursue a future in which confidentiality agreements are only ever used in principled and godly ways for the good of all and for the honour of Christ.’

Seconded and carried

Mrs Stacey Chapman led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

The Archbishop made a statement on this matter.

13.2 Evangelism in Mission Areas

The Rev Mat Yeo moved –

‘Synod calls on every Mission Area to program time together for each Rector to share their church's evangelism plan and rationale at least every 2 years for feedback, prayer and encouragement from their mission area colleagues.’

Seconded

The Rev David Mears moved as an amendment to Mr Yeo's motion –

‘Omit the word “program” and insert instead the words “consider programming”.’

Seconded

Professor Bernard Stewart AM moved as an amendment to Mr Yeo's motion –

'Omit the word "Rector" and insert instead the word "representative".'

Seconded

After a time for debate the President asked –

'Does the Synod consider that the motion has been sufficiently debated and should now be voted on?'

The majority of members present answered in the affirmative.

Mr Mears' amendment to Mr Yeo's motion was not carried.

Professor Stewart's amendment to Mr Yeo's motion was not carried.

Mr Yeo's motion was carried without amendment.

13.3 Retirement of Ms Lynda Dunstan

Archdeacon Kara Hartley moved –

'Synod gives thanks for Ms Lynda Dunstan, following her retirement on 30 June 2025 after seven years of service as Anglicare's Diocesan Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) advisor, during which time she –

- (a) contributed as a member of the Domestic Violence Task Force and was involved in the development of the first Sydney Anglican Diocesan Policy on DFV, unanimously passed at Synod in 2018,
- (b) was appointed in 2019 as the Diocesan Domestic and Family Violence advisor, a pioneering role in such a critical area,
- (c) co-developed the *KNOW Domestic Abuse* online course with Safe Ministry Training, launched in 2019, and led the creation of *Before It Starts* – a four-week youth program promoting healthy relationships – launched in 2020,
- (d) was instrumental in the development of *Renew: An Australian Guide for Christian Women Survivors of Domestic Abuse* published in 2022,
- (e) contributed to the revision and improvement of the Diocesan policy in 2023,
- (f) coordinated numerous conferences and training sessions for Christian counsellors, churches, colleges, and dioceses across the country,
- (g) presented her research nationally and internationally in the areas of family mediation and faith-based responses to DFV, and
- (h) trained over 250 staff and external partners, championing a child- and survivor-centred approach to DFV work,

and expresses its gratitude to Lynda for her service to our Diocese and wishes her all of God's blessings for her future life and ministry.'

Seconded

Archdeacon Hartley led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

Prior to the motion being put by the President, consideration of the motion was adjourned.

13.4 Women in the Diocese of Sydney called by God to be deacons, priests and bishops

Professor Bernard Stewart AM moved –

'Synod –

- (a) affirms that only those who are called by God are made deacons, priests and bishops,

- (b) gives thanks to God for women called by God to be deacons, priests and bishops in biblically-based churches of GAFCON and likewise, gives thanks to God for women called to be deacons, priests and bishops in Anglican dioceses across Australia, and with reference to the Diocese of Sydney –
- (c) recognises that some women resident in this Diocese are called by God to be deacons, priests and bishops,
- (d) encourages women experiencing this Spirit-led call to be steadfast in their prayerful exploration as that call is tested, and
- (e) acknowledges that those who are recognised to have been called by God as deacons, priests and bishops are rightfully ordained in the Diocese of Sydney or elsewhere.'

Seconded

The Rev Nigel Fortescue moved as an amendment to Professor Stewart's motion –

- 'Omit all the matter following the matter "Synod –", and insert instead the matter –
- "(a) gives thanks for the ministries of women within the Diocese of Sydney and beyond, and
 - (b) refers the question of the calling of women to, and the ordination of women to, the priesthood (and therefore their potential to be consecrated as bishops) to the Doctrine Commission for its advice, in light of the best recent scholarship on the questions."

Seconded

The Rev David Morgan moved as an amendment to Mr Fortescue's amendment –

'Following the word "questions", insert the matter "of calling, ordination, women's ministry, and the Holy Spirit's work in these matters".'

Seconded

After a time for debate the President asked –

'Does the Synod consider that the motion has been sufficiently debated and should now be voted on?'

The majority of members present answered in the affirmative.

Mr Morgan's amendment to Mr Fortescue's amendment was carried.

Mr Fortescue's amendment to Professor Stewart's motion, as amended, was carried.

Professor Stewart's motion, as amended, was carried in the following form –

- 'Synod –
- (a) gives thanks for the ministries of women within the Diocese of Sydney and beyond, and
 - (b) refers the question of the calling of women to, and the ordination of women to, the priesthood (and therefore their potential to be consecrated as bishops) to the Doctrine Commission for its advice, in light of the best recent scholarship on the questions of calling, ordination, women's ministry, and the Holy Spirit's work in these matters.'

13.5 Retirement of Ms Lynda Dunstan

Archdeacon Kara Hartley's motion was put and was carried as follows –

'Synod gives thanks for Ms Lynda Dunstan, following her retirement on 30 June 2025 after seven years of service as Anglicare's Diocesan Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) advisor, during which time she –

- (a) contributed as a member of the Domestic Violence Task Force and was involved in the development of the first Sydney Anglican Diocesan Policy on DFV, unanimously passed at Synod in 2018,
- (b) was appointed in 2019 as the Diocesan Domestic and Family Violence advisor, a pioneering role in such a critical area,
- (c) co-developed the *KNOW Domestic Abuse* online course with Safe Ministry Training, launched in 2019, and led the creation of *Before It Starts* – a four-week youth program promoting healthy relationships – launched in 2020,
- (d) was instrumental in the development of *Renew: An Australian Guide for Christian Women Survivors of Domestic Abuse* published in 2022,
- (e) contributed to the revision and improvement of the Diocesan policy in 2023,
- (f) coordinated numerous conferences and training sessions for Christian counsellors, churches, colleges, and dioceses across the country,
- (g) presented her research nationally and internationally in the areas of family mediation and faith-based responses to DFV, and
- (h) trained over 250 staff and external partners, championing a child- and survivor-centred approach to DFV work,

and expresses its gratitude to Lynda for her service to our Diocese and wishes her all of God's blessings for her future life and ministry.'

13.6 Vocational Bible College

The Rev David Morgan moved –

'Synod notes that Vocational Bible College (**VBC**) celebrated its 10-year anniversary in 2025 and –

- (a) gives thanks to God –
 - (i) for the Ministry of the Rev Andrew Beddoe as Founder and Principal of VBC and for the Board members, trainers and staff who serve with him,
 - (ii) the graduates and current students of VBC, especially the Rev John Delezio, a graduate of VBC, Deacon in our Diocese and planter of the Lake Illawarra Community Church,
 - (iii) many everyday Australians who have been equipped to live as disciples and make and grow disciples of others, through the ministry of VBC, and
 - (iv) for the ways in which VBC partners with our Diocese including through Bishop Peter Lin's patronage of VBC, and in VBC graduates who are members of and ministering in Sydney Anglican churches,
- (b) commends VBC to rectors, and churches in our Diocese as a gift of God for the training of many everyday people, for various ministries of word, evangelism and prayer in Sydney Anglican churches,
- (c) commends the annual Reaching Everyday People one day workshop hosted by VBC as a deeply helpful conference to all Sydney Anglican churches and organisations for reaching people our churches typically struggle to reach, and
- (d) prays that the Lord will call many more people with trade, hospitality, factory, retail, and similar everyday backgrounds into his Kingdom, and equip them for the work of making and growing disciples in the power of his Holy Spirit, and that the Lord will powerfully work through our partnership with VBC to that end.'

Seconded and carried

Bishop Peter Lin led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

Adjournment

At 9.19 pm, Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved –

'That the Synod adjourn and resume at 3.15 pm tomorrow.'

Seconded and carried

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

Two Members of the)
Minute Reading Committee)

Signed by the President

17 September 2025

53rd Synod of the Diocese of Sydney

Third Session

Minutes of Proceedings of the Synod for Wednesday 17 September 2025

1. Assembly

The Synod assembled in the Wesley Theatre at 3.15 pm.

2. Prayers

Archdeacon Kara Hartley led the Synod in prayer.

3. Bible study

Bishop Richard Condie led the Bible study.

4. Minutes

The President signed the minutes for Tuesday 16 September 2025.

5. Procedural motion

5.1 Publication of answers to questions relating to cyber security

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

‘Synod agrees to redact from the minutes and proceedings of this session of the Synod the answers to the two questions relating to cyber security which were asked on 16 September, and suspends so many of the Standing Orders as would prevent these arrangements.’

Seconded and carried

6. Answers to Questions

6.1 Final Report on Newmarch House 2020 COVID-19 Outbreak

Mr John Diesendorf asked the following question –

In relation to the Final Report on Newmarch House 2020 Covid 19 Outbreak –

- (a) Who were the relevant Board Members in 2020, and who are the current Board Members and their relevant qualifications?
- (b) Who are the persons appointed to or acting in the created new roles –
 - (i) Chief Executive Residential Care
 - (ii) Executive General Manager Clinical Governance
 - (iii) Head of Infection Prevention and Control
 - (iv) General Manager - Quality, Safety and Risk

Please provide the statements of relevant responsibilities or accountabilities included in the position descriptions or contracts applicable to these positions.

Please indicate the approach taken to determining the salaries commensurate with the responsibilities and/or accountabilities of these positions.

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The answer to this question will be available on the noticeboard in the foyer and on the Synod website.

(a) Anglican Community Services' Board members in April 2020 comprised –

- Mr Greg Hammond OAM (Chairman - BA Hons, LLB Hons, ThA Hons),
- The Rev Eric Cheung (BE, BD),
- Mr Michael Clancy (B Bus Fin & Ed, CFA),
- Dr Deborah Debono (RN, BA (Psych Hons), PhD),
- Bishop Chris Edwards (resigned March 2020 - BTh),
- Mr Peter Hicks (BTP, M.Econ, FAICD),
- Bishop Gary Koo (MBBS, BD),
- Dr Linda Kurti (FCHSM, PhD, MPhil, B.A),
- Mr Martyn Mitchell (BSc. (Chem Eng), ACA, Dip.Th.),
- The Rev Dr Margaret Powell (MBBS, FRACGP, B.Th, MA (Theol)),
- Mr Ian Steward OAM (B Com, CA, GAICD).

Anglican Community Services' current Board members comprise:

- Ms Evelyn Horton (Chair - BEc, MSocSci (Econs), FAICD),
- Dr Steevie Chan (MBBS (Syd), MHA (UNSW), Grad Dip Bible & Mission (SMBC), FRACMA),
- The Rev Eric Cheung (BE, BD),
- Mr Peter Hicks (BTP, M.Econ, FAICD),
- Bishop Gary Koo (MBBS, BD),
- Prof Jonathan Morris AM (MB ChB, FRANZCOG, MM, DDU, CMFM, PhD, FAHMS),
- The Rev Catherine Wynn Jones (BTh, Dip Min),
- Mr Rod Dring (BEc, FCA, GAICD),
- Mr Cameron Robertson (MEc, FIAA, FAICD)

Professor Jonathan Morris and Dr Steevie Chan both meet the requirements of s.157 of the *Aged Care Act 2024* (Commonwealth) as members of the governing body with experience in clinical care. Bishop Gary Koo trained as a medical doctor and worked for six years before becoming a Christian minister. The Rev Catherine Wynn Jones previously worked as a registered nurse and midwife in Australia, England and Uganda before training for ministry.

(b) In relation to position description (qualifications and requirements) of key roles –

- The Group Executive, Residential Care, currently Daniel Dwyer in an interim role, requires the following qualifications: Tertiary qualifications in health, business, management, or a related field (e.g., Bachelor of Nursing, Health Administration, or Business Management); Postgraduate qualifications (e.g., MBA, Master of Health Administration) are highly regarded.
- The Executive General Manager Clinical Governance, currently Sonali Pinto, role requires the following qualifications: Advanced degree in healthcare management, nursing, medicine, or a related field; additional qualifications in clinical governance or quality improvement are preferred. Ms Pinto is a Registered Nurse.
- The Senior Quality Manager Infection Control, currently Verily Thomas, role requires the following qualifications: Registered Nurse, Certificate in infection, prevention and control. Ms Thomas is a Registered Nurse.
- The General Manager - Quality, Safety and Risk, currently Analou Cariaga, role requires the following qualifications: Relevant Degree in health, safety, and / or quality management. Ms Cariaga is a Registered Nurse.

The above roles are deemed 'Responsible Persons' under the new Aged Care Act, subject to a variety of statutory duties, including due diligence and compliance with the Aged Care Code of Conduct, which are enforceable by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner, including potential civil penalty proceedings.

Target salaries to attract and retain top talent in a tight care employment market are set using external benchmarking, as well as individual performance in role, relativity to the market, and experience. External market data is provided by AON Community, Advocacy and Social Services Remuneration Report (Australia), with over 100 participant organisations in the survey including Bupa, Estia Health, HammondCare and others.

6.2 Lay ministers presiding at/administering the Lord's Supper

The Rev David Morgan asked the following question –

- (a) Have Lay Ministers ever been authorised to preside at or to administer the Lord's Supper in diocesan parishes, provisional parishes, ENC churches, or chapels in Anglican schools or Anglicare villages?
 - (i) Did Synod's expressing of the view (in 2008 and 2010) that the Lord's Supper may be administered by persons other than presbyters make it allowable for lay ministers to administer the Lord's Supper in diocesan parishes, provisional parishes, ENC churches, Anglican school chapels, or Anglicare chapels?
 - (ii) Has the passing of the 2015 Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance made any substantive changes to whether it is ever appropriate for a lay minister to preside at or administer the Lord's Supper in diocesan parishes, provisional parishes, ENC churches, Anglican school chapels, or Anglicare chapels?
 - (iii) Has any other Synod or Standing Committee ordinance or resolution made any substantive changes to whether it is ever appropriate for a lay minister to preside at or administer the Lord's Supper in diocesan parishes, provisional parishes, ENC churches, Anglican school chapels, or Anglicare chapels?
 - (iv) Does the fact that numerous Doctrine Commission reports have looked favourably upon lay administration of the Lord's Supper give grounds for the practice of lay ministers presiding at or administering the Lord's Supper in diocesan parishes, provisional parishes, ENC churches, Anglican school chapels, or Anglicare chapels?
- (b) Is there any circumstance in which it would be appropriate for a lay minister to preside at the Lord's Supper in a diocesan parish, provisional parish, ENC church, Anglican school chapel, or Anglicare chapel?
- (c) Is there any circumstance in which it would be appropriate for a diocesan parish, provisional parish, ENC church, Anglican school chapel, or Anglicare chaplaincy ministry to develop a policy allowing lay ministers to preside at or administer the Lord's Supper in certain situations?
- (d) If a diocesan church, ENC church, or organisation is convinced of the necessity of lay administration in their context, what steps ought they to take?
- (e) Are there church plants in our diocese being led or planted by lay ministers among marginalised communities or minority ethnic groups?
- (f) If the answer to question (e) is "yes", are there any diocesan plans or guidelines for making the sacrament of the Lord's Supper accessible to members of these church plants, especially those church plants where their membership do not have a clear understanding of English and no ordained minister of that congregation's spoken language is available to preside or administer?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

Parts (a) to (d) of the question are out of order under Synod business rule 6.3(4)(g) as they seek a legal opinion.

For part (e), the answer is 'Yes'.

Part (f) is out of order under Synod business rule 6.3(4)(a) as it contains an assertion that the Lord's Supper is not accessible to members of these church plants. Nonetheless, for context, I note Synod resolution 16/10 wherein the Synod –

- (i) affirmed its conviction that lay and diaconal administration of the Lord's Supper is consistent with the teaching of Scripture, and
- (ii) affirmed that the Lord's Supper in this diocese may be administered by persons other than presbyters.

6.3 Diocesan organisations required to amend ordinances

Ms Anna Richardson asked the following question –

Given the Diocesan Governance Policy requires Diocesan organisations to amend constituting ordinances by July 2026 –

- (a) How many organisations in total are required to make such amendments?
- (b) How many have completed this process?
- (c) How many are known to have work in progress towards completion?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

This question is out of order under Synod business rule 6.3(4)(a) as it contains an assertion. Nonetheless, I will make some comments.

The Diocesan Governance Policy does not require Diocesan organisations to amend constituting ordinances. Rather, Resolution 35/24 of this Synod encouraged but did not require organisations to do so.

The answers are –

- (a) 32.
- (b) 7.
- (c) 13 (of which 2 or 3 are expected to have their ordinances considered at the Standing Committee meeting in October).

6.4 Hub and spoke parishes and mission areas

Mrs Gina Grimes asked the following question –

- (a) What is the definition of a hub and spoke parish?
- (b) What are the names of the hub and spoke parishes in the diocese?
- (c) What is the average number of parishes in a mission area across the diocese?
- (d) How many other parishes are in each mission area that contains a hub and spoke parish?
- (e) How is involvement in diocesan/mission area-wide mission initiatives tracked? Are rectors/wardens/parishes held accountable for involvement, or lack of engagement?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) A hub and spoke parish generally describes a setup where a larger, better-resourced parish is connected with one or more smaller parishes with fewer resources. Under this arrangement, the central "hub" church supports leadership, resources, and support across all the churches. The "spoke" churches benefit from shared ministry, preaching, and training. The governance is for the whole, not just the hub church, to ensure the spoke churches do not become 'branch' churches.

In reality, 'hub and spoke' parish setups vary depending on local circumstances. An example is when parishes collaborate in a new governance arrangement to share resources, training, and preaching, but no parish acts as the central hub. Similarly, other parishes have developed their own hub and spoke system as they have planted churches elsewhere, yet still benefit from the resources and governance of the 'hub' church.

- (b) Due to variations in the arrangements of 'hub and spoke' parishes across the Diocese, and there being no formal classification of parishes as a 'hub and spoke' parish, it is not possible to answer this question.
- (c) 9.
- (d) See answer to part (b).
- (e) This is not formally tracked. However, bishops and Mission Area Leaders are in regular discussion with rectors about their engagement in mission initiatives beyond their parish.

6.5 Myfanwy Peters Estate

Mr John Pascoe asked the following question –

- (a) Why was the trusteeship of the Myfanwy Peters Estate transferred from Sydney Anglican Property (SAP) to Anglicare during the year?
- (b) Were potential beneficiaries of funds from the Estate (including parishes in the City of Sydney) notified of the change in trusteeship? If not, why not?
- (c) Going forward how do parishes apply for funds from the Estate to support their programs providing relief to the needy in the City of Sydney?
- (d) What is the current balance of the fund?
- (e) Will Anglicare report to Synod about the ongoing administration of the fund?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) The SAP Board (as former trustee) was of the view that Anglicare's existing ministries and expertise aligned closely with the Estate's purpose and was better positioned to manage its distribution effectively rather than SAP.
- (b) The beneficiaries are the needy of the City of Sydney. A communication to the parishes who had been in receipt of estate funds for such ministries, including the Cathedral Chapter, outlining the revised administration of the estate funds was prepared jointly by Anglicare and SAP. It had been planned for this to be sent prior to Synod. It has now been sent.
- (c) Funds will be distributed following an annual application process, similar in timing to previous years. Anglicare will communicate specific details with known current beneficiaries and other relevant parishes prior to the next application period. Applications will be assessed against the purposes of the sub fund, and after consultation with the Bishop of South Sydney.
- (d) Following the final transfer from SAP, Anglican Foundation Funds holds \$3,432,999 within the Peters sub fund, as at 31/8/2025.
- (e) The same reporting and other obligation upon the Trustees of the Anglican Foundation Funds will be applied to the Myfanwy Peters Estate. Anglicare Foundation Funds audited statements can be found on Anglicare's website.

6.6 Questions concerning the new EMP

Canon Tom Harricks asked the following question –

Governance and Leadership

- (a) Are specific synergies in governance and leadership expected to flow from the establishment of the EMP? If so, what are they?

Functioning of EMP

- (b) In addition to streamlined governance and centralised administration, is the EMP proposal expected to support, strengthen and enhance the functions currently carried out by MTD, ENC and AMC?

New Board Composition

- (c) Has consideration been given to the implications of reducing the numerical breadth of lay and clergy representation previously provided by the separate boards? If so, in what respects?
- (d) Are strategies proposed to retain institutional knowledge and ensure the distinctives of each organisation are preserved under centralised governance? If so, what are they?

Role of EMP Director

- (e) Is there a key-person risk associated with the EMP Director role? If so, what steps, if any, are being taken to mitigate that risk?

Ministry Training and Development (MTD)

- (f) Has consideration been given to subcontracting the MTD training component to Moore College, either through the Department of Ministry or the Centre for Ministry Development?
- (g) Has the EMP board considered which location would be most strategic for the MTD training function, such as St Andrew's House, Moore College, or a central parish?

Measures of Success and Review

- (h) Will the success or otherwise of the EMP restructure be reviewed?
- (i) If so –
 - (i) What measures will be used?
 - (ii) Who will conduct the review?
 - (iii) Will the review be conducted independently from the EMP board and its leadership?
 - (iv) Will Synod have a role in responding to the outcomes of the EMP review, whether the objectives have been successfully met or require adjustment or require radical restructure?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) The goal of the establishment of EMP is both ministry effectiveness and structural efficiency, by increasing collaboration and reducing duplication. EMP seeks to multiply gospel workers, by coordinating and expanding the recruitment, training and appointment of ministry workers. EMP seeks to multiply churches, by bringing together the various church planting and local mission initiatives. A single overarching board and a director of EMP support these goals.
- (b) It is certainly intended that the establishment of EMP will lead to strengthened support for the functions currently carried out by each of the entities. One major intended advantage will be in increased visibility and accountability to the wider Diocese to ensure accountability to the goals of the fellowship as a whole. During the initial design phase each of the organisations is carrying on with normal operations unaffected. However, once the optimal structure is determined and implemented it is anticipated that each organisation's functions will be enhanced through greater alignment and the implementation of a common strategy. As an example, under God, the hope is that there will be a clear Diocesan church planting strategy and pipeline owned by all levels of the Diocese.
- (c) The ordinance changes to inaugurate the EMP board do not reduce the numerical breadth of lay and clergy representation. For example, ENC previously consisted of up to 10 people (6 elected by the Synod, 2 people appointed by the Archbishop and 2 appointed by the Board). The new ENC has up to 10 people: six persons elected by the Standing Committee, three persons appointed by the Archbishop, and the Principal of Moore Theological College Council (ex officio). In both cases, the ordinance requires a minimum of three clergy.
- (d) The make-up of the Provisional EMP Board draws at least two former governors from each of the predecessor boards and this is a key strategy in relation to the preservation of institutional knowledge. The Directors of Ministry Training & Development, Evangelism and New Churches, and Anglican Media are all also regular attending meetings of the Provisional Board. At this stage, organisational distinctives are preserved by virtue of the fact that there have been no substantive changes to "business as usual" operations.

However, if the three key organisations are subsequently consolidated into a single entity it is an open question whether distinctives should be retained.

- (e) Yes. The EMP Provisional Board believes this is a risk. At this stage the Interim Head of EMP has been appointed on a part-time basis for a limited term and a more permanent appointment will be considered during 2026.
- (f) The EMP Provisional Board has not given any consideration to this question. There is no current proposal on the Board's agenda in relation to this matter.
- (g) The EMP Provisional Board has not given any consideration to this question.
- (h) It is the intention of the Central Diocesan Structures Review Committee that a process of review will be established in conjunction with the Standing Committee.
- (i) The formation of EMP is at a preliminary stage, as the optimal structure is in the process of being determined. Once this has been finalised, it is anticipated that metrics for assessing success of the restructure will be considered by the Standing Committee. It is likely that Sydney Anglican Services will have a role in this assessment process. It is also anticipated that reports on the restructure will be provided to Synod.

6.7 New airport area

Canon Tom Harricks asked the following question –

What are the diocesan plans for the new airport city of Bradfield? What Anglican organisations are involved? What local churches are involved? Who is coordinating the diocesan efforts?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The evolving creation of the City of Bradfield provides an important and essential opportunity for Gospel ministries. Ministry-wise, Bradfield is in the Camden Valley Parish. The churches in the northern part of the Macarthur Mission Area have already begun discussions about ministry in Bradfield and the surrounding areas, with a view to have ministry arrangements in place prior to buildings being opened.

The Bradfield City Centre represents an area of land adjacent to the future Western Sydney International Airport. It is expected to deliver more than 17,000 new jobs by 2056. The NSW Government is planning for the Bradfield City Centre to be the core business and commercial district within the broader Western Sydney Aerotropolis. The Aerotropolis includes a collection of employment, commercial and industrial centres surrounding the new airport.

The current plans for the aerotropolis do not propose substantial residential areas. The residential growth will be concentrated in other areas of the broader 'Western Parkland City' where 100,000 new homes are expected in the next 30 years. These residential areas include Rossmore, Bringelly, Luddenham, Catherine Field and Denham Court.

To support local Anglican ministry in this changing area, Sydney Anglican Property (SAP) has –

- Purchased a three hectare site in the suburb of Bradfield in 2017 for future church development.
- Incorporated the evolution of Bradfield City Centre, The Western Sydney Aerotropolis and the Western Parkland City into the Greenfields Strategic Plan 2023-2025.
- Assessed the impact the proposed changes would have on the demand for Anglican buildings and property in the Draft Western Region Property Strategy.
- Purchased a two hectare site at Catherine Field for future church development.
- Progressed plans with The Anglican Schools Corporation to explore opportunities for the co-location of an Anglican Church and School in Rossmore.

In collaboration with Sydney Anglican Property and the surrounding parishes, ENC has identified a number of potential church planters who could be suitable for commencing ministries in these locations. Sydney Anglican Property and ENC continue to work together to ensure that there is a

unified and consistent Diocesan plan to establish and support long term local ministry in this emerging part of the Diocese.

Bishop Peter Lin is the overall coordinator of ministry/evangelism planning for the City of Bradfield. Communication, collaboration and co-ordination between the Bishop, local churches, Macarthur Mission Area, The Anglican Schools Corporation, SAP and ENC are well underway. Ministry plans will be developed at a more specific level when a timetable for the building in Bradfield and other nearby areas is confirmed.

6.8 Resources for the management of parishes

The Rev James Warren asked the following question –

- (a) Is there a centralised resources depository that could assist in the management of Parishes? For example: advisable church furniture; photocopy licenses; church carpet.
- (b) If there isn't, could such a depository, with FAQ provisions, be developed?
- (c) What other ways could assist in pooling resources to assist in the management of parishes?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) The Parish Admin website provides centralised resources, with guidance and tools to assist in the management of parishes and a specific focus upon matters of common administrative concern. However, the questioner appears to be interested in joint volume purchasing agreements, and sharing product and service recommendations.

With regard to joint volume purchasing, opportunities for volume discounts or joint agreements are often investigated by diocesan staff. A significant long-standing example is the joint insurance managed on behalf of all parishes by Sydney Anglican Property (SAP). A more recent example is the heavily discounted Zoom licences administered by Sydney Anglican Services, available to all parishes during COVID. However, the success of initiatives in volume discount relies upon confidence in a genuine majority of parishes taking up the opportunity. Experience has shown that significant staff time may be expended establishing volume-discount opportunities, only to find insufficient parish interest to enact the volume provisions. For example, recently SAP worked to procure discounted electricity for parishes, but did not receive sufficient interest from parishes to meet the required volume for implementation.

With regard to product and service recommendations, the Diocese is served well by social network initiatives, that for example and among other things, connect the ministries in Sydney and the Illawarra at a grassroots level and allow such questions to be asked and answered by others in parishes. Such groups allow a level of organic collective support that could not reasonably be replicated by staff.

- (b) See the answer to part (a).
- (c) Success in pooling resources is often seen in parish partnerships, recognising either opportunities for mutually beneficial sharing of resources, or parishes sharing of their abundance for the sake of mission outside of their parish. At a diocesan level, the staff of the Sydney Anglican offices are always seeking better ways to serve the Diocese and its parishes, but need to pursue only those avenues that will represent the most fruitful return on invested time, having regard to ensuring the best use of parish funds that have been provided through Parish Cost Recoveries.

6.9 Mover objecting to their own motion

The Rev James Warren asked the following question –

Is it best practice or good governance that a mover should be able to stand in objection to their own motion at the call over?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

Rule 4.5(3) of the Synod Standing Orders provides that “When a motion is called, the President is to ask for the motion to be formally moved and seconded unless 8 or more members stand to object to the motion being passed without a mover’s speech...”.

The objection is therefore not to the substance of the motion but to the motion passing without a mover’s speech. This clarification was inserted into the Synod business rules last year. At least 7 other members of the Synod would also need to stand to object to prevent passing on the call over. It is good governance to conduct our business in a manner consistent with our rules.

6.10 Parishes with current permission to use APBA

Mrs Stacey Chapman asked the following question –

- (a) How many parishes have current permission to use A Prayer Book for Australia (APBA)?
- (b) Which parishes are they?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The General Synod passed the *Prayer Book for Australia Canon 1995*, however at the time the Synod of the Diocese of Sydney declined to adopt the Canon to authorise the use of these liturgical resources in the Diocese following a report from the Doctrine Commission that parts of the Holy Communion Second Order in APBA inadequately express the doctrine found in BCP at certain points and are capable of being interpreted at other points in ways that are contrary to the doctrine of the Book of Common Prayer. The Doctrine Commission report on APBA can be accessed on the Sydney Anglicans website.

At the encouragement of the Synod in resolutions 45/95 and 26/96, Archbishop Goodhew gave permission under Section 4 of the 1961 Constitution on application by parishes for use of APBA to the extent it does not contravene any principle of doctrine or worship of the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty Nine Articles. A total of 73 parishes applied for and were granted permission. These permissions were time bound and all have expired. There were also subsequent approvals given for two parishes (Killara and Lakemba) by Archbishop Jensen and one parish (Lavender Bay) by Archbishop Davies.

Episcopal permission is no longer required for the use of services from APBA. Ministers can use services from APBA in reliance on section 5 of the *General Synod - Canon Concerning Services 1992* which allows the use of variations in liturgies that are consistent with the doctrine of our church. Ministers should be guided by the report of the Doctrine Commission in respect to those parts of APBA that are not regarded to be consistent with the doctrine of our church.

6.11 The Well Training Program

Canon Mark Smith asked the following question –

- (a) How many graduates have completed the program, & how many students are currently enrolled?
- (b) Is it envisaged that the Well Training program will be offered indefinitely?
- (c) What consideration has been given to graduates of The Well being ordained to the permanent diaconate?
- (d) Are there any other paths to ordination within our Diocese (beyond Moore College & Youthworks) currently under consideration?

To which the President replied –

- (a) 10 graduates have completed the program. There are currently 20 students enrolled in the full program, and 2 students in the Marginalised Ministry Course (which consists of the coursework on marginalised ministry without the Moore College component).
- (b) The Well Training is now in its third year, with the first cohort of students (called interns) now graduated and actively working in various locations across the diocese.

The Ministry in Marginalised Areas Committee, a permanent sub-committee of the Standing Committee, is responsible for the governance of the Well Training and plans to continue with it. The Committee is well advanced in its preparations to make this happen.

- (c) I have given some consideration to this matter. At the present time my ordination policy remains unchanged. The regular training pathway towards diaconal ordination is through study at Moore College or Youthworks College. Nevertheless, the Archbishop has absolute discretion in relation to ordination and can, in exceptional cases, ordain people who have not followed the regular training pathway if he considers it to be appropriate.
- (d) See answer (c) above.

6.12 **SAS website data breach**

Mr Jeremy Swinn asked the following question –

Noting 4.9 of the 2025 Report of the Standing Committee –

- (a) What domain and subdomains were involved in the breach?
- (b) How was the breach identified?
- (c) What steps were taken to contain the breach?
- (d) Were any external cyber security specialists involved in the incident response, remediation and containment?
- (e) Was a Post-Incident Review (PIR) completed following the breach?
- (f) Is a PIR report available to Synod?
- (g) Does the Diocese have regular (weekly, or more frequent) Vulnerability Management reporting of key systems, websites and applications?
- (h) Does the Diocese perform regular (annual, or more frequent) Penetration Testing of key systems, websites and applications?

The answer to this question was provided to the Synod orally and posted on the noticeboard in the foyer of the Synod venue.

In accordance with the procedural motion at item 5.1, the answer to this question has been redacted from the minutes.

6.13 **Diocesan cybersecurity posture**

Mr Jeremy Swinn asked the following question –

- (a) Does the Diocese have any policy documents relating to its stance on Cyber Security?
- (b) Does the Diocese hold a current Cyber Security Insurance policy?
 - (i) If yes, is this insurance available to parishes within the Diocese?
 - (ii) If yes, have any claims been made?
- (c) Do any Diocesan organisations hold Cyber Security Insurance policies?
 - (i) If yes, have any Diocesan organisations had to make claims under their Cyber Security Insurance policies?
- (d) Does the Diocese run regular (annual, or more frequent) Cyber Security training for key staff and position holders?
- (e) Does the Diocese offer Cyber Security training to churches and ministry staff?
- (f) Do Diocesan organisations, especially those required to maintain Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and other sensitive information, run regular (annual, or more frequent) Cyber Security training for staff and position holders?

The answer to this question was provided to the Synod orally and posted on the noticeboard in the foyer of the Synod venue.

In accordance with the procedural motion at item 5.1, the answer to this question has been redacted from the minutes.

7. Questions

Questions were asked by the following members –

- (1) The Rev Roger Fitzhardinge
- (2) The Rev Dr Raj Gupta
- (3) Mr Samuel Doherty
- (4) Mr Robert McGarn
- (5) Mr Colin Smith
- (6) Ms Karen Calayag
- (7) The Rev Natalie Ray
- (8) Mr Malcolm Purvis
- (9) The Rev Michael Leite
- (10) The Rev Michael Leite
- (11) The Rev Michael Doyle
- (12) The Rev Prashanth Colombage
- (13) The Rev Michael Paget
- (14) The Rev James Warren
- (15) The Rev James Warren
- (16) The Rev Mark Groombridge
- (17) Mr Chris Hamam
- (18) Mr Chris Hamam
- (19) Mr Chris Hamam
- (20) Mr Chris Hamam
- (21) Mr Chris Hamam
- (22) Dr Michael Cox
- (23) Mrs Madeleine Bishop

8. Notices of Motions

Notices of motions were given by the following members –

- (1) The Rev Dr Raj Gupta
- (2) Mrs Nicola Fortescue
- (3) Ms Heather Carr
- (4) Canon Tom Harricks
- (5) Ms Joanna Matthews
- (6) Mr Chris Hamam
- (7) Mr Chris Hamam
- (8) Mr Chris Hamam
- (9) The Rev Hayden Smith

9. Calling of motions on the business paper

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

9.1 Youthworks' Year 13 20th Anniversary

Canon Craig Roberts moved –

'Synod –

- (a) gives thanks to God for the –
 - (i) 20th anniversary of Youthworks' Year 13 discipleship gap year program,
 - (ii) more than 1,200 school leavers who have been disciplined through the Year 13 program since 2005,
 - (iii) partnership between Year 13 and churches which sees disciples supercharged in faith for the cause of the gospel in the local church,
 - (iv) faithful Directors, chaplains and staff of Year 13 over the last 20 years, and

- (v) provision of an intentional, discipleship-based gap year for school leavers in our Diocese,
- (b) commends the work of Year 13 to ministry teams and churches in our Diocese, in order that school leavers in local churches may have a supercharged faith ready to serve Jesus with passion all their life long, and intentionally navigate the transition of life from school to what comes next for them, and
- (c) agrees to pray for the ongoing work of Year 13 in our Diocese and beyond, that Youthworks' Year 13 might be a blessing to many churches, families and lives through church partnerships, gospel hearted discipleship and an ever-deepening love for Jesus, his gospel and his mission in the world.'

Seconded and carried

Archdeacon Simon Flinders led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

9.2 **Congratulations to the new Primate, the Rt Rev Dr Mark Short**

Bishop Michael Stead moved –

'Synod –

- (i) notes with thankfulness that the Right Rev Dr Mark Short has been elected Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia,
- (ii) recalls with delight his study at Moore Theological College, his PhD from Durham University, his parish ministry in Temora, Turvey Park and Tarcutta, his service as the Archdeacon of Wagga Wagga, his leadership with Bush Church Aid, and his consecration as Bishop of Canberra & Goulburn in 2019,
- (iii) further notes that Mark will be the first-ever non-metropolitan bishop to serve as the Australian Primate, and the first evangelical bishop to hold the post since Archbishop Marcus Loane of Sydney retired in 1982 and gives thanks to God for his commitment to the authority of Scripture, and his orthodox stance on major issues,

and therefore –

- (a) congratulates Dr Short on his election as the Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia,
- (b) encourages Dr Short to stand firm on the truths of Scripture as set out in Lambeth I.10 (1998), the Jerusalem Declaration (2008), and the Kigali Commitment (2023), and
- (c) prays that God would grant Mark wisdom, humility and courage, and strengthen him together with his wife Monica in their partnership in the gospel.'

Seconded and carried

Bishop Stead led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

9.3 **Marking the 1700th anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea (AD 325)**

Mr Sherwin Titus moved –

'Synod –

- (a) notes that the Year of our Lord 2025 marks the 1700th anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea held in the months of May and June of AD 325 in the ancient city of Nicaea (modern-day Iznik, Türkiye),
- (b) gives thanks to God for the holy, catholic and apostolic faith, "once for all entrusted to God's holy people" (Jude 1:3), written down in the holy scriptures, and re-affirmed and defended at the First Council of Nicaea,
- (c) gives thanks to God for the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, the first version of which was laid down at the First Council of Nicaea, and for the formalisation of what has now come to be known as 'Nicene' orthodoxy,
- (d) reaffirms its commitment to the proclamation of and partnership in, the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic faith ('Nicene orthodoxy'), reaffirmed at the First Council of Nicaea, and

- (e) prays for the continued spread of the gospel in the Republic of Türkiye and especially for Christian witness in the modern-day municipality of Iznik (the site of the ancient city of Nicaea), in which there is currently no formalised Christian church.'

Seconded and carried

Mr Titus led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

9.4 Visit of Bishop Paul Donison to Australia in November

Dr Laurie Scandrett moved –

'Synod –

- (a) gives thanks to God for the scheduled visit to Australia of the Rt Rev Paul Donison, General Secretary of the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (Gafcon Global) in November,
- (b) notes in particular his visit to Sydney for the "Gafcon Global Vision" presentation on Wednesday 26 November at 7:30pm at Moore Theological College, and that this 90-minute presentation will include updates on the global ministry of Gafcon, contributions from local leaders on the state of Australian Anglicanism, time for questions, and an opportunity to join in prayer that the Bible would remain at the heart of the Anglican Communion,
- (c) gives thanks to God for Bishop Donison's ministry and leadership as the General Secretary of Gafcon Global,
- (d) commends this public event to the members of the Diocese as an occasion to hear, pray and encourage one another in global gospel fellowship, and
- (e) prays that Bishop Donison's visit would strengthen orthodox Anglicans in Australia and deepen ties with the global Gafcon fellowship.'

Seconded and carried

Bishop Malcolm Richards led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

9.5 Social Issues Committee (SIC) Briefings

Dean Sandy Grant moved –

'Synod notes the publication of two recent Briefings from the Social Issues Committee (SIC), which aim to equip Anglicans in the Diocese and others to engage in discussion on social issues in the light of the teaching of Scripture and evangelical theology, namely –

- (a) "May a single woman seek to have a child through IVF?", and
- (b) "Christian Ethics, Ministry and Artificial Intelligence",

and as euthanasia continues as a sad reality in our society, Synod also notes the SIC's 2023 Briefing "VAD Pastoral Guidance and Theological Reflections".'

Seconded and carried

9.6 Safe Ministry Training for all Synod Members

Mr David Minty moved –

'Synod requests the Standing Committee to review the *Synod Membership Ordinance 1995* and any other relevant regulations in order to require that all Synod members have satisfactorily completed accredited training in accordance with Part 5 of the *Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020* prior to their election, or before first attending a session of Synod in the case of appointed or ex-officio members.'

Seconded and carried

9.7 **Thanksgiving for the Life and Ministry of Esther Lukabyo**

The Rev Stephen Gibson moved –

‘Synod –

- (a) notes with deep sadness the news that Ms Esther Lukabyo, Anglicare Hospital Chaplain, passed away unexpectedly at home on Wednesday 3 September,
- (b) gives thanks for her faithful service with Anglicare for over ten years, most recently as Chaplain at St Vincent’s Hospital, and also as a much-loved and committed member of St John’s Ashfield, and
- (c) prays for Esther’s family, her church community at Ashfield, her colleagues at Anglicare and her many friends as they grieve this tragic loss together.’

Seconded and carried

Members of the Synod stood in their places and Mr Gibson led the Synod in prayer of thanksgiving for the life and ministry of Ms Lukabyo.

9.8 **Retirement of the Rev Martin Robinson from The King’s School Council**

The Rev James Warren moved –

‘Synod gives thanks to God for the Rev Martin Robinson, who on the 31 August 2025 retired as a governor of The King School after 39 years of dedicated service, which included 15 years as Chairman.

Synod acknowledges Martin’s extraordinary contribution and steadfast commitment to the School and expresses its deep appreciation for his outstanding leadership and service over many years, exemplifying what it means to make an outstanding contribution for the good of society.’

Seconded and carried

9.9 **The Well Training report and promotional material**

The Rev Craig Hooper moved –

‘Synod –

- (a) gives thanks to God for the establishment of The Well Training in 2023, which is overseen by the Diocesan Ministry in Marginalised Areas Committee. This is a program that seeks to train up leaders from and for marginalised areas so that, by God’s grace, more disciples of Jesus and made in these areas, for God’s glory,
- (b) notes also with thanks to God ‘The Well Training Program Evaluation Report’ (August 2025), produced by Anglicare and The Well Training, and
- (c) encourages Synod members to pick up a copy of this report, plus general information about The Well Training, from the Anglicare table in the foyer on Monday 22 September or Tuesday 23 September.’

Seconded and carried

Mr Hooper led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

10. Procedural motions from members

10.1 **Arrangements for consideration of M28 (Chaplaincy)**

Having been granted leave, Dr Karin Sowada moved –

‘Consideration of motion M28 Chaplaincy be deferred until the next day of sitting.’

Seconded and carried

11. Motions

11.1 Responding to climate change

The Rev Dr Andrew Errington moved –

‘Synod, noting –

- (a) its previous resolutions 17/07, 17/08, 2/09 and 26/10, which amongst other things supported “the need for Christian responses to the potential problems and opportunities that arise from climate change”, including “the development and implementation of an environmental policy within each Parish and Diocesan organisation which expresses principles of good environmental stewardship and care”,
- (b) that the GAB’s Ethical Investment Policy has recognised climate change risk and the need to take steps where possible to reduce the overall carbon intensity of its investments,
- (c) Australia’s endorsement of the 2015 UN Paris Climate Change Agreement (COP21) and in particular the global framework to avoid dangerous climate change caused by emissions of greenhouse gases by limiting global warming, pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C,
- (d) Australia’s pledge to the 2021 UN Glasgow Conference (COP26) to achieve net zero emissions by 2050,
- (e) the recent Australia-Tuvalu Falepili Union treaty, which creates migration pathways for people from Tuvalu threatened by climate change,
- (f) that climate change has been identified as a most pressing security issue for the countries, communities and peoples of the Torres Strait and the Pacific islands, and
- (g) that reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a difficult and complex task, since energy reliability and affordability are also important factors, and that its effectiveness is not guaranteed, and
- (h) the significant depth and breadth of public concern and distress, especially among people under 30 years of age,

requests the Doctrine Commission and the Social Issues Committee to develop a theological statement about the challenges of climate change and what it means for Christian people.’

Seconded

Mr John Diesendorf moved as an amendment to Dr Errington’s motion –

‘Omit paragraph (g), with consequential renumbering.’

Seconded

Mr Matthew Jefferson moved as an amendment to Dr Errington’s motion –

‘Following the words “Christian people”, insert the matter “, in ways that can be understood by our parishioners”.’

Seconded

After a time for debate the President asked –

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

The majority of members present answered in the affirmative.

Mr Jefferson’s amendment to Dr Errington’s motion was carried.

Mr Diesendorf’s amendment to Dr Errington’s motion was not carried.

Dr Errington's motion, as amended, was carried in the following form –

'Synod, noting –

- (a) its previous resolutions 17/07, 17/08, 2/09 and 26/10, which amongst other things supported "the need for Christian responses to the potential problems and opportunities that arise from climate change", including "the development and implementation of an environmental policy within each Parish and Diocesan organisation which expresses principles of good environmental stewardship and care",
- (b) that the GAB's Ethical Investment Policy has recognised climate change risk and the need to take steps where possible to reduce the overall carbon intensity of its investments,
- (c) Australia's endorsement of the 2015 UN Paris Climate Change Agreement (COP21) and in particular the global framework to avoid dangerous climate change caused by emissions of greenhouse gases by limiting global warming, pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C,
- (d) Australia's pledge to the 2021 UN Glasgow Conference (COP26) to achieve net zero emissions by 2050,
- (e) the recent Australia-Tuvalu Falepili Union treaty, which creates migration pathways for people from Tuvalu threatened by climate change,
- (f) that climate change has been identified as a most pressing security issue for the countries, communities and peoples of the Torres Strait and the Pacific islands, and
- (g) that reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a difficult and complex task, since energy reliability and affordability are also important factors, and that its effectiveness is not guaranteed,
- (h) the significant depth and breadth of public concern and distress, especially among people under 30 years of age,

requests the Doctrine Commission and the Social Issues Committee to develop a theological statement about the challenges of climate change and what it means for Christian people, in ways that can be understood by our parishioners.'

12. Presentations

12.1 Sydney Anglican Property presentation

A video presentation was given regarding the work of Sydney Anglican Property.

The Rev Mike Doyle led the Synod in prayer for Sydney Anglican Property.

12.2 Evangelism and New Churches presentation

A video presentation was given regarding the work of Evangelism and New Churches.

The Rev Graeme Howells led the Synod in prayer for Evangelism and New Churches.

12.3 Parish of Dundas/Telopea presentation

Canon Alistair Seabrook gave a presentation, including a video presentation, regarding the work of the parish of Dundas/Telopea.

Parishioners of Dundas/Telopea, attending in the public gallery, were welcomed with acclamation by members of the Synod.

Bishop Gary Koo led the Synod in prayer for the parish of Dundas/Telopea.

Adjournment

At 5.48 pm, Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved as a procedural motion –

‘That the Synod adjourn and resume at 7.05 pm tonight.’

Seconded and carried

Resumption

The Synod resumed at 7.05 pm.

13. Motions

13.1 Parish Administration Ordinance 2008 (and related matters) Amendment Ordinance 2025

Having been granted leave, Mr Greg Hammond OAM moved –

‘That the Parish Administration Ordinance 2008 (and related matters) Amendment Ordinance 2025 be approved in principle, in a form incorporating the amendments printed in the Business Paper.’

Seconded

Mr Hammond spoke in support of the proposed ordinance.

The President asked –

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

There was a time for questions.

The President asked –

‘Does any member wish to speak for or against the motion, or move an amendment to it?’

There was no member who wished to speak against the motion or move an amendment to it.

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

The President asked –

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

A member of Synod indicated that they wished to move an amendment to the text of the proposed ordinance.

Mr Hammond moved –

‘That Synod resolve itself into the Synod in Committee to consider the text of the proposed ordinance.’

Seconded and carried

The text of the proposed ordinance was considered by the Synod in Committee. After consideration of the text had been completed, the Chair of Committees reported the proposed ordinance with an amendment.

Mr Hammond moved –

‘That the report of the Chair of Committees be adopted.’

Seconded and carried

Mr Hammond moved –

‘That Synod agree to consider on the next sitting day a motion that the Parish Administration Ordinance 2008 (and related matters) Amendment Ordinance 2025 pass as an ordinance of the Synod.’

Seconded and carried

14. Procedural motions from members

14.1 Arrangements for consideration of certain motions

Mr Greg Hammond OAM moved –

‘Synod agrees to schedule consideration of the motion at M6 (Parish Governance Policy - implementation) and M49 (Scheduling matters at Synod) immediately following the passing of the Parish Administration Ordinance 2008 (and related matters) Amendment Ordinance 2025.’

Seconded

Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved as an amendment to Mr Hammond’s procedural motion –

‘Amend the motion as follows –

- (a) omit the words “agrees to schedule” and insert instead the words “requests the Order of Business Committee to consider scheduling”, and
- (b) omit the matter “M49 (Scheduling matters at Synod)” and insert instead the matter “M52 (Suggestions for amending the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008*)”.’

Seconded

Archdeacon Flinders’ amendment was carried.

Mr Hammond’s procedural motion, as amended, was carried in the following form –

‘Synod requests the Order of Business Committee to consider scheduling consideration of the motion at M6 (Parish Governance Policy - implementation) and M52 (Suggestions for amending the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008*) immediately following the passing of the Parish Administration Ordinance 2008 (and related matters) Amendment Ordinance 2025.’

15. Personal explanation

With the permission of the President under Standing Order 6.4, Dean Sandy Grant gave a personal explanation.

16. Motions

16.1 Compulsory parental leave for clergy and parish staff

Mr Phillip Seale moved –

‘Synod, noting the Diocese’s keen interest in the importance of family, and our conviction that ordained clergy are office holders rather than employees, requests the Standing Committee to conduct a review of the *Parental Leave Ordinance 2016* to consider whether

it requires updating in the light of our theological convictions, current community standards and practice within other Dioceses of the Anglican Church of Australia.’

Seconded and carried

16.2 Conversion Practices Ban Act 2024

Bishop Michael Stead moved –

‘Synod –

- (i) reaffirms the position of Synod, as previously stated in resolution 31 of 2018, that the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Sydney does not practise, recommend or endorse “gay conversion therapy”, being psychological practices that seek to re-orient sexual attraction to heterosexuality, and that Synod values prayer for same-sex attracted Christians who wish to live celibate lives, noting that prayer is not a form of “gay conversion therapy”,
- (ii) notes that the *Conversion Practices Ban Act 2024 (CPB)* came into effect on 5 April 2025,
- (iii) notes that on 27 February 2023, the Hon Chris Minns promised Christians and other people of faith that “an individual of their own consent seeking guidance through prayer will not be banned”,
- (iv) notes that guidance material prepared by Anti-Discrimination NSW (**ADNSW**) states that prayer “directed to change or suppress the person’s sexuality or gender identity ... is a conversion practice, and will be unlawful even when a person seeks them out for themselves”, and
- (v) notes that ADNSW has advised that it will accept complaints under the CPB Act when someone has prayed with a same-sex attracted person that he or she would only act on their sexual desires consistent with the teaching of the Scriptures of their religion,

and therefore –

- (a) encourages Christians to be unafraid to proclaim the truth of God’s word in matters relating to sexuality, marriage, identity and gender, and to provide prayer for those who seek to live a godly life in obedience to God’s word and aligned with God’s purposes, notwithstanding that they may be subject to a complaint under the CPB Act for doing so,
- (b) commends to parishes and organisations the work of Living Faith, as it seeks to provide biblical teaching, encouragement and support to Christian men and women who experience attraction to the same sex or gender incongruence as they seek to express their sexuality and gender in accordance with the historic Christian faith, and to assist parishes to welcome and love these men and women,
- (c) noting the recent appointment of Canon Emeritus Peter Rodgers as the Executive Director of Living Faith, encourages Sydney Anglicans to pray for him, and
- (d) calls upon the NSW Government to uphold the Premier’s pre-election commitment in relation to the CPB Act, that “an individual of their own consent seeking guidance through prayer will not be banned”.

Seconded

The Rev Dominic Steele moved as an amendment to Bishop Stead’s motion –

‘Insert as a new paragraph (a), with consequential re-lettering –

- “(a) thanks our Archbishop for his commitment to stand by any clergyperson or church worker who finds themselves brought before a tribunal or court because of this poorly conceived law.”

Seconded

Mrs Stacey Chapman moved as an amendment to Mr Steele’s amendment –

'Omit the words "poorly conceived".'

Seconded

Dr Philip Britton moved as an amendment to Bishop Stead's motion –

'In paragraph (d), following the matter "CPB Act, that", insert the matter "faith-based support of".'

Seconded

Dr Britton's amendment to Bishop Stead's motion was not carried.

Mrs Chapman's amendment to Mr Steele's amendment was carried.

Mr Steele's amendment to Bishop Stead's motion, as amended, was carried.

Bishop Stead's motion, as amended, was carried in the following form –

'Synod –

- (i) reaffirms the position of Synod, as previously stated in resolution 31 of 2018, that the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Sydney does not practise, recommend or endorse "gay conversion therapy", being psychological practices that seek to re-orient sexual attraction to heterosexuality, and that Synod values prayer for same-sex attracted Christians who wish to live celibate lives, noting that prayer is not a form of "gay conversion therapy",
- (ii) notes that the *Conversion Practices Ban Act 2024 (CPB)* came into effect on 5 April 2025,
- (iii) notes that on 27 February 2023, the Hon Chris Minns promised Christians and other people of faith that "an individual of their own consent seeking guidance through prayer will not be banned",
- (iv) notes that guidance material prepared by Anti-Discrimination NSW (**ADNSW**) states that prayer "directed to change or suppress the person's sexuality or gender identity ... is a conversion practice, and will be unlawful even when a person seeks them out for themselves", and
- (v) notes that ADNSW has advised that it will accept complaints under the CPB Act when someone has prayed with a same-sex attracted person that he or she would only act on their sexual desires consistent with the teaching of the Scriptures of their religion,

and therefore –

- (a) thanks our Archbishop for his commitment to stand by any clergyperson or church worker who finds themselves brought before a tribunal or court because of this law,
- (b) encourages Christians to be unafraid to proclaim the truth of God's word in matters relating to sexuality, marriage, identity and gender, and to provide prayer for those who seek to live a godly life in obedience to God's word and aligned with God's purposes, notwithstanding that they may be subject to a complaint under the CPB Act for doing so,
- (c) commends to parishes and organisations the work of Living Faith, as it seeks to provide biblical teaching, encouragement and support to Christian men and women who experience attraction to the same sex or gender incongruence as they seek to express their sexuality and gender in accordance with the historic Christian faith, and to assist parishes to welcome and love these men and women,
- (d) noting the recent appointment of Canon Emeritus Peter Rodgers as the Executive Director of Living Faith, encourages Sydney Anglicans to pray for him, and
- (e) calls upon the NSW Government to uphold the Premier's pre-election commitment in relation to the CPB Act, that "an individual of their own consent seeking guidance through prayer will not be banned".

16.3 **Poker Machine reform in NSW**

The Rev David Yung moved –

'Synod –

- (a) thanks the Independent Panel on Gambling Reform, comprising industry, harm minimisation, academic, cyber crime, police, and union representatives, for their comprehensive report on Poker Machine gambling in NSW, which was handed down in December 2024, and includes 30 recommendations to reduce harm to individuals, families, and communities caused by this type of gambling,
- (b) notes that the NSW State Government has not responded to this report, meaning that it has not taken concrete steps to implement meaningful and effective harm reduction measures regarding poker machine gambling,
- (c) notes further that –
 - (i) \$2.3 billion was lost on NSW poker machines in the three months to June 2025, averaging more than \$1 million lost each hour, an increase of 8.8% compared to the same period last year,
 - (ii) analysis by Wesley Mission showed that 141 new poker machines were turned on in NSW since March this year, despite the NSW Government saying it was reducing the number of machines in the State,
 - (iii) the 2025/26 state budget forecasts that tax revenue from poker machines in hotels will rise by 7.2% per annum until the end of the 2028/29 financial year,
 - (iv) there is a disproportionate concentration of poker machines in lower socioeconomic areas of NSW, where they cause more harm,
 - (v) research continues to show that gambling addiction is strongly linked to homelessness, suicide, domestic violence, organised crime, family breakdown, and negative health and social outcomes for Indigenous and other Australians,
- (d) once again calls on the NSW State Government to work diligently towards implementing effective harm minimisation methods for poker machines, such as \$1 bet limits, longer compulsory machine shut downs from midnight to 10am, and a universal cashless gaming card with mandatory limit-setting, in order to reduce the misery caused by gambling harm and to address money-laundering in our state,
- (e) requests the Archbishop to convey the content of this motion to the NSW Premier and Leader of the Opposition, and
- (f) encourages all concerned rectors and church members to write to their local State MPs, urging them to advocate actively for their communities, privately and publicly, and for the implementation of effective harm minimisation methods for gambling harm, especially for poker machines.'

Seconded

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

'Insert as a new paragraph (e), with consequential re-lettering –

- "(e) notes an invitation from the Reverend Stu Cameron, Chief Executive Officer and Superintendent of Wesley Mission, our host at Synod, inviting churches to consider praying for gambling reform in their assemblies on Sunday October 19, the day before GambleAware week commences in NSW,"'

Seconded

Mr John Pascoe moved as an amendment to Mr Yung's motion –

'Omit paragraph (c), with consequential re-lettering.'

Seconded

The Rev Nigel Fortescue moved as a procedural motion –

'Synod defers consideration of this item to the next sitting day.'

Seconded and carried

17. Hymn

Members joined in the singing of the hymn 'It is well with my soul'.

Adjournment

At 9.31 pm, Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved –

'That the Synod adjourn and resume at 3.15 pm on (Monday) 22 September.'

Seconded and carried

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

Two Members of the)
Minute Reading Committee)

Signed by the President

22 September 2025

53rd Synod of the Diocese of Sydney

Third Session

Minutes of Proceedings of the Synod for Monday 22 September 2025

1. Assembly

The Synod assembled in the Wesley Theatre at 3.15 pm.

2. Prayers

Archdeacon Simon Flinders led the Synod in prayer.

3. Bible study

Bishop Richard Condie led the Bible study.

4. Minutes

The President signed the minutes for Wednesday 17 September 2025.

5. Answers to Questions

5.1 **Cost of Youthworks Leaders in Training camps since COVID**

The Rev Roger Fitzhardinge asked the following question –

Since the end of COVID gathering restrictions, what has been the cost of sending a young person to one of Youthworks' Leaders In Training camps?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

Since the end of COVID gathering restrictions, Youthworks was able to recommence its 3 year senior high Christian leadership development pathway camp, Leaders in Training (or LiT) in Summer 2022.

The full ticket price in Summer 2022 for the 5-day fully residential LiT camp was \$480, inclusive of all meals and accommodation. The current ticket price for Spring/Summer 2025/2026 LiT is \$499. This represents a price rise of 4% over 4 years.

Further, Youthworks is able to offer discounted ticket prices for volunteer leaders and (in partnership with Anglicare, South Sydney Regional Council and generous Youthworks donors) scholarships to teenagers in necessitous circumstances.

The cost to the parish of sending a 15-18 year old to LiT includes –

- sourcing an older Christian to intentionally disciple that emerging Christian leader, and
- a commitment to giving that emerging Christian leader opportunities to put into practice the hard and soft Christian leadership skills imparted and practiced at LiT.

5.2 Parish property projects

The Rev Dr Raj Gupta asked the following question –

Can you provide a table showing all Sydney Anglican parish building projects greater than \$2 million completed between 2015 and 2024, including –

- Parish name and project description
- Completion date
- Total project cost
- Breakdown of underlying funding sources (internal fundraising, loans, diocesan grants, property sales, and other sources)
- Parish offertories at the time of project commencement

The intent of the question is to enable a realistic assessment of a parish to complete a significant development.

The format is designed to update the table provided to the 2016 Synod in Appendix A to the 'Funding for Urban renewal' report that listed projects, and ideally the answer would update the previously provided table to provide a complete analysis from 2005-2024. I am asking that parish offertories be added to the table.

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The answer has been provided as a table of numbers. Refer to the attachment to the minutes.

5.3 Draft Northern Region Buildings and Property Strategy

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

When will the draft Buildings and Property Strategy for the Northern Region be released?

To which the President replied –

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be delivered tomorrow.

5.4 Archive space

Mr Robert McGarn asked the following question –

What progress has been made in finding more archive space please?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

To date, little progress has been made. This has been the subject of a recent report reviewed by the Endowment of the See Corporation. The EOS Executive Officer will be working with the Archivist and Sydney Anglican Property in the coming months to explore options.

5.5 2024 Synod motion on PCR/insurance

Mr Colin Smith asked the following question –

In 2024 Synod, a motion was passed referring to the Standing Committee, the issue of increasing insurance costs increasing the cost of PCR to the parish. I would like to inquire on the outcome of this motion.

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The question is out of order under Synod Business Rule 6.3(4)(a) as it contains an assertion. Resolution 41/24 'Variable Parochial Cost Recoveries percentage' did not refer to insurance costs. A report on the progress of work under this resolution is found at paragraph 7.31 of the 2025 Report of the Standing Committee on page 27 of Book 1.

5.6 Gender participation at Synod 2020-2025

Ms Karen Calayag asked the following question –

What is the total number of Synod participants in the years 2020-25? How many are women?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

In the answer to this question, "participants" has been understood to refer to membership of the Synod. The year range in the question covers the membership of the 52nd Synod, and the membership of the 53rd Synod. Membership of the 52nd Synod at the time of its first session was tabled at Synod on 3 May 2021 and can be found on pages 440-473 of the 2020-2021 Year Book. Membership of the 53rd Synod at the time of its first session was tabled at Synod on 11 September 2023 and can be found on pages 477-508 of the 2022-2023 Year Book. A review of this published data (which includes alternate representatives as at those dates) shows that –

- 52nd Synod, first session (3 May 2021) – 834 members of Synod, of which 189 were women (22.7%),
- 53rd Synod, first session (11 September 2023) – 801 members of Synod, of which 196 were women (24.5%).

5.7 Questions regarding psychosocial hazards in the parish

The Rev Natalie Ray asked the following question –

- (a) Has SDS Legal or the Parish HR Partner released any general advice regarding the responsibilities of parish council members and wardens on management of psychosocial hazards in the parish workplace? If so, where can this advice be accessed?
- (b) Have the regional bishops or the Parish HR Partner been made aware of any rectors, assistant ministers or parish staff who may have experienced psychosocial harm? If so, have the bishops or Parish HR Partner advised the rector, assistant minister or staff member to inform their wardens or parish council? Why or why not?
- (c) If issues of psychosocial hazards have been raised in any parish, what steps have the bishops and Parish HR Partner made to ensure the senior minister, wardens and parish council of that parish have the appropriate training, competency and support to ensure a safe workplace?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) No. Currently, there is a project underway involving the Regional Bishops, Parish HR Partner, and other key entities within the Diocese to consider and facilitate in a coordinated manner the management of psychosocial hazards in the parish workplace.
- (b) Some rectors, assistant ministers and staff have made contact and described experiencing burnout or stress but have not used the term 'psychosocial harm'. In these cases, the Regional Bishop and Parish HR Partner will usually engage with the Wardens (and the Rector, if the affected person is not the Rector) to assist in the provision of an appropriate response and will monitor progress.
- (c) The Parish HR Partner has provided various assistance in consultation with the Regional Bishop in such instances. This has included –
 - Undertaking "cultural" reviews aimed at informing the Wardens and Rector of how they can reduce the hazards.

- Training ministry teams on team building, how to have difficult conversations, addressing conflict, building resilience and managing volunteers, among other topics.
- Individual advice on managing workload; allocating responsibilities; recovery; seeking medical information and making reasonable adjustments to assist the worker.

5.8 Questions regarding assistant ministers and staff in the diocese

Mr Malcolm Purvis asked the following question –

- (a) In the 2024 Synod, the Archbishop in an answer to a question stated that “the Parish HR Partner’s role has been repositioned to affirm that the Parish HR Partner is available to provide general advice to all parish staff.”
 - (i) Has this role change been communicated to all assistant ministers and parish staff?
 - (ii) When and how was it communicated?
 - (iii) Has the feedback from assistant ministers and parish staff affirmed that they have felt more supported?
 - (iv) What metrics have been used to measure the improved support?
- (b) Clause 8 of the AMO says that the housing arrangements of assistant ministers must be approved as suitable by the Archbishop.
 - (i) What process does the Archbishop use to determine if housing is available?
 - (ii) In determining if the housing is suitable, does the Archbishop consider if the housing allowance offered by the parish is enough to cover the reasonable cost of renting a suitable residence in the parish?
 - (iii) If an assistant minister believes they have housing arrangements that aren’t suitable, what resources of the diocese are available to help them seek a solution?
 - (iv) Does the Archbishop think it is appropriate for parishes to offer a housing allowance to assistant ministers that is significantly below commercial rental rates in the parish?
- (c) Since the introduction of the AMO –
 - (i) How many times has a notice of intention to terminate been issued?
 - (ii) When a notice of intention to terminate has been given, how many times has it not ended in a termination or resignation?
 - (iii) How many times has the assistant minister applied for a review under clause 3A?
 - (iv) What were the outcomes of the reviews?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a)
 - (i) The Parish HR Partner has always been available to provide general advice to all parish staff, but the initial focus of the role was on assisting rectors and wardens in the expectation that if they are following good HR practice there would be a consequential benefit for all staff. The role was repositioned to widen the focus. Hence, apart from reflecting this in updated information on the Sydney Anglicans website, it was not considered a particular communication was necessary.
 - (ii) See answer to (i).
 - (iii) Yes.
 - (iv) The metrics have not been adjusted – there is no formal way to measure the effect of the repositioning. The feedback has been given directly by those seeking assistance.
- (b) This part of the question is out of order under Synod Business Rule 6.3(4)(a) as it contains an assertion concerning the requirements of the *Assistant Ministers Ordinance 2017* (AMO). It is also out of order under Synod Business Rule 6.3(4)(c) as it offers an argument. The AMO only provides for the Archbishop to approve housing arrangements if an assistant minister is required to “live in a certain location”. Nonetheless the following comments can be made.

An assistant minister who is concerned a residence they are required to live in is unsuitable - who has been unable to resolve their concern with their parish - should contact the Regional Bishop.

With respect to housing allowances: the Standing Committee's Remuneration Guidelines provide that "if any full-time member of the ministry staff is not provided with a residence the parish should provide an accommodation benefit or pay a housing allowance of a reasonable value, as agreed between the ministry staff member and the parish council." In the case of a minister who is required to live in a particular area, I expect that what is reasonable would be determined by reference to the rental cost of a suitable residence in that area but need not necessarily match that rate.

- (c) There is no dataset from which to answer parts (i) and (ii) of the question. The answers to parts (iii) and (iv) are –
- (iii) 0
- (iv) Not applicable.

5.9 Clergy and lay worker numbers in the diocese over the last 10 years

The Rev Michael Leite asked the following question –

In each year from 2014 to 2024 within all diocesan parishes –

- (a) How many full time presbyters in total were licensed in the diocese?
- (b) How many part-time presbyters in total were licensed in the diocese?
- (c) How many full time deacons in total were licensed in the diocese?
- (d) How many part-time deacons in total were licensed in the diocese?
- (e) How many full time authorised lay ministers in total were employed in the diocese?
- (f) How many part-time authorised lay ministers in total were employed in the diocese (excluding theological college students)?
- (g) How many ordained ministers left parish work in the diocese (excluding retirement)?
- (h) How many full time authorised lay ministers left parish work in the diocese (excluding retirement)?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

It is not possible to answer parts (g) and (h) accurately because the reporting needed to extract this information is too complex.

Year	FT Presbyters	PT Presbyters	FT Deacons	PT Deacons	FT Lay	PT Lay
2014	341	45	63	30	136	76
2015	343	43	61	38	149	82
2016	338	44	70	38	141	124
2017	342	42	86	41	144	164
2018	337	42	95	43	143	237
2019	333	38	98	47	159	279
2020	327	39	112	46	163	313
2021	313	42	133	40	166	320
2022	308	46	139	36	175	325

Year	FT Presbyters	PT Presbyters	FT Deacons	PT Deacons	FT Lay	PT Lay
2023	311	41	151	34	182	313
2024	316	40	154	39	188	320

Note: the references to full-time (FT) and part-time (PT) refer to the type of licence or authority issued. It is not possible to be ordained as a presbyter or as a deacon on a part-time basis. However, it is possible for a presbyter or a deacon to be licenced on a part-time basis. The table above reflects this understanding.

5.10 Retirement forecasts over the next 10 years

The Rev Michael Leite asked the following question –

In each year from 2025 to 2035 within all diocesan parishes -

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

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The answer has been provided as a table of numbers. The answer will be available on the notice board in the foyer.

The answer assumes all current ordained and lay ministers will reach the retirement age. It should be noted that lay ministers are employees and are not subject to a retirement age.

Year	Current licensed clergy	Current authorised full time lay ministers
2025	4	0
2026	6	1
2027	9	1
2028	9	2
2029	9	0
2030	7	1
2031	8	1
2032	5	3
2033	12	0
2034	7	1
2035	10	3
Total	86	13

5.11 Questions regarding the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017*

The Rev Michael Doyle asked the following question –

- (a) Since the introduction of the MSO (Ministry Standards Ordinance) –
 - (i) How many times has the MSC, MSB or Diocesan Tribunal recommended the respondent resign from office?
 - (ii) How many times did the respondent voluntarily comply?
 - (iii) How many times has the MSC, MSB or Diocesan Tribunal recommended the respondent be removed from Holy Orders?
 - (iv) How many times did the respondent voluntarily relinquish their Holy Orders?
 - (v) How many times did the respondent have their Holy Orders removed involuntarily?

- (b) Are the decisions and recommendations of the MSC, Diocesan Tribunal or Ministry Standards Board available to the general public? If so - where are they available from?
- (c) How many times has a matter proceeded to a Diocesan Tribunal?
 - (i) What were the outcomes of the tribunals?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a)
 - (i) 6.
 - (ii) 4.
 - (iii) 3. The answer to this question is taken to include recommendations that a respondent voluntarily relinquish their Holy Orders, of which there were 3.
 - (iv) 3.
 - (v) 0.
- (b) No.
- (c) No matters have been referred to the Diocesan Tribunal since the introduction of the MSO. The Diocesan Tribunal has been in existence for a long period of time and there is no dataset available on the number of matters that have gone before the Tribunal since its inception.

5.12 Funding of theological colleges

The Rev Prashanth Colombage asked the following question –

What funding has Synod allocated to –

- (a) Anglican Youthworks College over the past 3 years calculated on a per face-to-face student basis for each year?
- (b) Moore Theological College over the past 3 years calculated on a per face-to-face student basis for each year?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The answer has been provided as a table of numbers. The answer will be available on the notice board in the foyer.

- (a) Youthworks College (YWC)

Year	2025	2024	2023
Synod grant	\$89,713	\$78,000	\$75,000
Number of students	40	31	32
Synod grant per student	\$2,243	\$2,516	\$2,344

Note: From 2025, the separate Synod funding allocations for Youthworks College, Youthworks – Ministry Support Team and SRE Office were combined into one allocation. For the purposes of answering this question, the same proportion of Synod funding as in the previous 2 years (approximately 13%) has been ascribed to Youthworks College for 2025.

(b) Moore Theological College (MTC)

Year	2025	2024	2023
Synod grant	\$1,749,000	\$1,521,000	\$1,463,000
Number of students	297	299	280
Synod grant per student	\$5,889	\$5,087	\$5,225
Note: Students at MTC are face-to-face five days a week, while students at YWC are face-to-face two days a week.			

5.13 Officeholder term limits

The Rev Michael Paget asked the following question –

Are there any governing bodies of diocesan organisations with either –

- (i) members who have served longer than 12 consecutive years, or
- (ii) officeholders who have served in the same office for longer than 9 consecutive years,

irrespective of whether they have yet completed an implementation of the Diocesan Governance Policy, and, if so,

- (a) which organisations are these,
- (b) by how long have the members or officers exceeded the recommendations of the DGP, and
- (c) for what reasons have these members or officers continued to exceed these recommendations?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

In the answer to this question, “diocesan organisations” has been understood to refer to bodies constituted by an ordinance, or a resolution of the Synod. However, the topic of the question is not applicable to all diocesan organisations. The question refers to the Diocesan Governance Policy, adopted by the Synod on 23 September 2024, and alludes to two governance standards which are only applicable to Level C and Level D organisations. Accordingly, only Level C and Level D organisations are included in this answer.

There are nine Level C or Level D organisations who have members who have served continuously since at least 15 September 2013. These organisations, and their members’ tenure of office, are –

- Moore Theological College Council, five members, 17 years, 19 years, 20 years, 27 years, and 44 years.
- The Council of Trinity Grammar School, two members, 17 years and 25 years.
- Macarthur Anglican School Council, two members, both 17 years.
- The Archbishop of Sydney’s Anglican Aid, 2 members, both 13 years.
- The Council of St Andrew’s Cathedral School, one member, 19 years.
- Sydney Anglican Services, one member, 16 years.
- The Anglican Church Property Trust, one member, 14 years.
- The Council of Barker College, one member; 13 years.
- The Council of William Clarke College, one member, re-appointed to a three year term in 2024, passed the 12 year mark in August 2025.

Regarding officeholders, it is not possible to provide a complete answer as there are no centralised diocesan records of office holders of diocesan organisations other than chairs, and records of chairs are not complete with regards to their start dates, especially for those in office longest (and thus most likely to have been chair for more than nine years).

It is not possible to provide an answer to (c).

5.14 **Doctrine Commission**

The Rev James Warren asked the following question –

- (a) What is the work currently before the Doctrine Commission?
- (b) How can we better utilise the work of the Doctrine Commission?
- (c) How can we assist in the work or loading of the Doctrine Commission?

To which the President replied -

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be given tomorrow.

5.15 **Remit of Synod**

The Rev James Warren asked the following question –

What is the remit of Synod, especially in terms of the how much the “centre” should invite rather than impose on the local church operations?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The question is out of order under Synod Business Rule 6.3(4)(g) as it seeks a legal opinion.

Nonetheless, the following comments can be made.

I consider the language of “the centre” to be unhelpful in this context. The Synod is a meeting of representative members of the Anglican Church of Australia in the Diocese of Sydney - it expresses the collective will of the representative members of the churches.

The primary remit of the Synod under the 1902 Constitution is to make ordinances in respect of all matters concerning the order and good government of the Anglican Church of Australia and the regulation of its affairs within the Diocese. The Synod may also make resolutions and rules in respect to its business.

While the ordinances of the Synod are binding on the members of the Church within the Diocese in so far as they concern their respective rights, duties, and liabilities as holders of any office in the Church, resolutions are not so binding.

Resolutions are statements of the mind of the Synod. To the extent they call for action on the part of local church operations they are usually expressed as requests or encouragements or similar. In that sense resolutions are an invitation and not an imposition.

5.16 **Deaconing of 4th year Moore College students (2022-2024)**

The Rev Mark Groombridge asked the following question –

During the period 2022-2024, regarding 4th year Moore College students who had applied for ordination as deacons in our diocese –

- (a) How many 4th year Moore College Students applied for ordination as deacons before the conclusion of their studies?
- (b) What percentage of (deacon) ordination candidates were unsuccessful in their application for the years 2022-2024?
- (c) What criteria did the unsuccessful applicants fail to meet?
- (d) What reasons were given to candidates because they were not successful as ordination candidates?

To which the President replied –

The answer to this question is still being prepared and will be given tomorrow.

5.17 Christian preschools

Mr Chris Hamam asked the following question –

Within our diocese currently –

- (a) How do preschools / day care centres operate on our property and how many are there within each category?
- (b) For each of the categories answered in (a) above, how many have a Christian Director, Constitution and/or Curriculum?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) There are a total of 45 preschools/childcare centres operating on church trust property by way of a lease of a licence agreement to use a church hall or purpose-built facility. 29 are preschools, 18 are long day care and 5 are out of school hours care. These results add up to more than 45 as some categories overlap.
- (b) There is no data available on whether there is a Christian director or constitution. Approximately 64% have a Christian curriculum or parish involvement in Christian teaching to the children in care.

5.18 Christian preschool plans

Mr Chris Hamam asked the following question –

What plans are currently underway to increase the number of Christian Preschools / day care centres within our dioceses?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

There are no current plans. SAP conducted a study in 2025 of childcare facilities, and is preparing draft guidelines for childcare and early learning centres to assist parishes. The draft will be circulated for comment to the parishes with existing childcare facilities to increase the ministry/evangelism effectiveness of these centres across the Diocese.

SAP is also undertaking detailed due diligence on a selection of Christian childcare providers to provide parishes with options for operating childcare facilities on church land. Childcare facilities are also a key social infrastructure land use option for urban renewal projects and space is being provided for such facilities in the design of greenfields churches.

5.19 Teaching resilience

Mr Chris Hamam asked the following question –

What strategies do our schools currently have to teach our school kids resilience?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

It is not possible to answer this question in the time available.

5.20 Standing Committee resignations

Mr Chris Hamam asked the following question –

- (a) What the gender of each person that retired from Standing Committee over the past 15 years?
- (b) Then what was the gender of the person that replaced them?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

In the answer to this question, “retired” has been understood to refer to any occasion when a seat has been vacated, which may be by retirement or election defeat at the end of a Synod triennium, and vacancies caused by resignation, death, or change to category of membership. The data provided distinguishes between elected members and ex-officio members, and takes the Standing Committee of the 49th Synod elected by the 2011 Synod and ex-officio members at that time.

Elected members

- Seat vacated by a male member filled by a male member – 34 occasions.
- Seat vacated by a female member filled by a female member – 8 occasions.
- Seat vacated by a male member filled by a female member – 7 occasions.
- Seat vacated by a female member filled by a male member – 5 occasions.

Ex-officio members

- Seat vacated by a male member filled by a male member – 10 occasions.
- Seat vacated by a female member filled by a female member – 1 occasion.
- Seat vacated by a male member filled by a female member – 1 occasion.

5.21 Standing Committee makeup

Mr Chris Hamam asked the following question –

For Standing Committee currently –

- (a) How many members are male?
- (b) How many of those males are married?
- (c) How many members are female?
- (d) How many of those females are married?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The answers to parts (b) and (d) are unable to be answered as this information is not collected as part of a person’s membership of Standing Committee.

- (a) 44.
- (c) 12.

5.22 NDA Policy and Pledge in the Diocese

Dr Michael Cox asked the following question –

- (a) Has the model pledge and policy been communicated to all diocesan parishes, schools and organisations?
- (b) What steps has the diocese taken to encourage parishes, schools and organisations to take up the model pledge or policy?
- (c) Which of our parishes, schools or organisations has signed up to the model pledge or policy to date?
- (d) Has the Standing Committee adopted the model pledge or policy?
- (e) Has SAS adopted the model pledge or policy?
- (f) Has Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation adopted the model pledge or policy?
- (g) Are the Bishops or HR Rep aware of any NDAs used or given by any parish, school or diocesan organisation in the last 12 months?
- (h) Are the Bishops or HR Rep aware of how many people have requested release from an NDA in the last 12 months? If so, how many have requested release?

- (i) Are the Bishops or HR Rep aware of how many people have been released from NDAs in the last 12 months? If so - how many have been released?
- (j) If people are under an NDA that they would like to be released from, is there anyone in the diocese they can approach to get help in being released?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) Yes.
- (b) The Diocesan Secretary wrote to all diocesan organisations and schools on 7 August 2025. This included a copy of the model policy and pledge and a request that they notify Standing Committee of their response by 2 February 2026. A circular was sent to Parishes by SAS on 19 August 2025. It included the model policy and pledge, and additional guidance for parish councils to assist them in considering this matter.
- (c) To date, one response has been received - from Abbotsleigh School, who have adopted a pledge.
- (d) No. The Standing Committee is not a diocesan organisation and is not a legal person capable of entering into an NDA.
- (e) The matter will be considered at the SAS board meeting in October.
- (f) ASC has indicated that it is on track to meet the Diocesan Secretary's request, with a review of policies underway.
- (g) The question does not specify a type of NDA. It is expected NDAs are in use for the permitted purposes listed in the Synod Report. The Bishops and Parish HR Partner are not aware of any NDAs used for other purposes in the period or used in connection with the termination of any appointment.
- (h) They are not aware of any requests.
- (i) They are not aware of any releases.
- (j) Any such person should approach the parish, organisation or school concerned. If they are a member of any Anglican parish, they may also consider asking their Rector for assistance.

5.23 Gender proportion of staffing at Moore College

Mrs Madeleine Bishop asked the following question –

Regarding Moore College, is the College looking to bring the proportion of female teaching staff into proportion with the number of female students? If not, why not?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

No. Faculty at Moore College are appointed with consideration of a variety of factors, proportional representation is not one of them. Consistent with the commitment of the College to complementarian models of ministry, the College seeks to appoint appropriately qualified women to serve alongside men on the faculty and to teach. For reasons of theological conviction, the College does not appoint women to teach Biblical Studies or Theology. Moore College currently has two women full time on the faculty, 13 women chaplains who contribute to the formal and extra-curricular programs of the College, and a number of women who teach in areas of speciality. Funds permitting the College would like to appoint an additional woman to the faculty in the coming years.

6. Calling of motions on the business paper

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

6.1 Recommendations from the Committee for the Order of Business

Mrs Briony Bounds moved –

'Synod, noting that –

- (i) on Wednesday 17 September, debate on motion M36 (Poker Machine reform in NSW) was adjourned,
 - (ii) debate on M36 is therefore due to resume as the first item of business today in accordance with rule 4.13 of the Synod Standing Orders,
 - (iii) the mover of M36 has accepted several of the amendments moved on Wednesday 17 September and the motion will be moved in an amended form, and
 - (iv) consideration of M3 (Final Report to Synod on the Newmarch House 2020 COVID-19 Outbreak) was scheduled by the Synod as the first item of business following formal matters on Monday 22 September,
- (a) agrees to resume debate on M36 following consideration of M3,
 - (b) agrees to reschedule items of business as shown in the attached Schedule and in marked form on the Timetable for Synod Business, and
 - (c) notes that the following 'closure motions' will be moved on Tuesday 23 September 2025 in accordance with rule 3.4(2) of the Synod Standing Orders –

"Leadership of Bible studies

Synod records its appreciation for the preaching of Bishop Richard Condie at the Synod Service and for his encouraging Bible Studies during this session.

Committees and Officers of the Synod

Synod records its appreciation for –

- (a) the President and his chairmanship,
- (b) the Chair and Deputy Chairs of Committee and their work in the consideration of the text of ordinances,
- (c) the members who helped during the session by giving advice and serving the Synod, especially the Chancellor and Deputy Chancellors, Registrar, Archdeacon to the Archbishop, the Synod Secretary, as well as the Order of Business and Minute Reading Committees, and
- (d) the services given by the staff of SAS and the Archbishop's Office, Anglican Media, the music team, Bible readers, and all those who have helped facilitate this session of Synod."

and suspends so many of the Standing Orders as may prevent these arrangements.'

Seconded and carried

6.2 Online Sports betting reform

Dean Sandy Grant moved –

'Synod, noting that –

- (i) more than two years have passed since the report 'You Win Some, You Lose More', into online sports betting, was handed down by the multi-partisan federal parliamentary committee, chaired by the late Peta Murphy,

- (ii) the federal government has still not responded formally to this report, nor taken concrete steps to implement its 31 recommendations, particularly to ban advertising of online betting products,
- (iii) the Australian Communications and Media Authority regularly issues breach notices to online sports betting companies for failing to protect individuals who have indicated they no longer wish to gamble (<https://www.acma.gov.au/infringement-notices>),
- (iv) in recent years, the NRL, AFL, and A-League have faced significant integrity breach allegations related to online gambling and corruption of match-fixing (NRL - <https://www.theroar.com.au/2025/09/01/will-brandon-smith-saga-open-the-nrls-eyes-to-the-games-gambling-problem/>; AFL - https://www.espn.com.au/afl/story/_/id/46076046/afl-four-men-charged-brownlow-medal-betting-scandal; A-League - <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-06-07/football-australia-faces-integrity-probe/105387476>),
- (v) recent research shows participation in online gambling among Australians is growing rapidly, along with rates of gambling harm, such that about 20 percent of young men (18-34) report some form of gambling harm (“Order for the production of documents No.7 online gambling with Attachment A – MB25-000368 Gambling Reform: Attachment A – summary of evidence and research” by Senator the Hon. Katy Gallagher, on behalf of Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP, Minister for Social Services, Parliament of Australia [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Tabled_Documents/11642]),
- (vi) research also shows that gambling advertising contributes to a desire in children to gamble when they become adults, that 30 percent of 12-17 year-olds have gambled, and that underage gambling is associated with greater harms in adult life (“Order for the production of documents No.7 online gambling with Attachment A – MB25-000368 Gambling Reform: Attachment A – summary of evidence and research” by Senator the Hon. Katy Gallagher, on behalf of Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP, Minister for Social Services, Parliament of Australia),
- (vii) there is disproportionate participation in online sports betting among people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, where impacts can be more harmful (Sections 1.2.3 and 1.3, “A better bet: How Australia should prevent gambling harm”, Grattan Institute Report No. 2024-08, September 2024, by Aruna Sathanapally, Kate Griffiths, and Elizabeth Baldwin [<https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Grattan-Institute-A-better-bet-How-Australia-should-prevent-gambling-harm.pdf>]), and
- (viii) research continues to show that gambling addiction is strongly linked to homelessness, suicide, domestic violence, organised crime, family breakdown, and negative health and social outcomes for Indigenous and other Australians (Sections 1.2.3 and 1.3, “A better bet: How Australia should prevent gambling harm”, Grattan Institute Report No. 2024-08, September 2024, by Aruna Sathanapally, Kate Griffiths, and Elizabeth Baldwin),
- (a) once again calls on the Prime Minister and his Government to put the welfare of youth and other vulnerable people ahead of profits for gaming barons and big sporting codes, by implementing all 31 recommendations of the ‘Murphy report’; in particular, that the Australia Government enforce a rapidly phased in ban on all forms of advertising for sports betting and other online gambling products,
- (b) requests the Archbishop to convey the content of this motion to the Prime Minister and federal Leader of the Opposition, and
- (c) encourages all concerned rectors and church members to write to their local federal MPs, urging them to advocate actively for their communities, privately and publicly, and for the implementation of effective harm minimisation methods for sports betting and other online gambling products.’

Seconded and carried

6.3 The Rev R C (Dick) Lucas

Dr Robert Tong AM moved –

‘Synod –

- (a) sends warm birthday greetings to the Rev Dick Lucas on the occasion of his 100th birthday on 10 September 2025,
- (b) records its profound thanks to God for his faithful ministry of the Word, especially through his long service at St. Helen’s Bishopsgate, London, where he modelled clear, systematic, Christ-centred expository preaching,
- (c) gives thanks for his founding of the Proclamation Trust and the Cornhill Training Course, which have resourced and inspired generations of preachers around the world, including within our own diocese, and
- (d) particularly acknowledges the way his ministry encouraged and sharpened the work of Canon John Chapman, the Rev Phillip Jensen, the Rev Dr John Woodhouse, the Rt Rev Dr Peter Jensen, the Rev Ian Powell, Canon Simon Manchester and Mr Colin Marshall.’

Seconded and carried

The Rev Dr Mark Earngrey led the Synod in prayer for Mr Lucas.

6.4 Doctrinal Alignment and Pressures in Diocesan Organisations

The Rev Chris Braga moved –

‘Synod –

- (i) in light of the valuable work, and weighty responsibility of our Diocesan Organisations, and
- (ii) in order to promote continuing theological alignment of the members of their governing bodies, unity with the wider Diocesan fellowship and to better understand the pressures they face,

encourages the Chairs of all Diocesan Organisations to –

- (a) remind the members of their governing bodies to endeavour to, wherever lawful and practicable, exercise their powers and discharge their duties so that the organisation’s purposes are pursued in a manner which is consistent with the doctrine of the Diocese,
- (b) share and refer regularly to the content of document “The Doctrine of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney” so that the members of their governing bodies can govern in accordance with their declared commitments, including that –
 - (i) “The Bible is the written word of God, the final authority in all matters of Christian thought and behaviour”
 - (ii) “God’s own sovereign love, his continuing commitment to the creatures he has made, and the promises given in the Old Testament, led him to provide the salvation all human beings need from sin and its consequences but cannot achieve for themselves.”
 - (iii) “The gospel is the joyful message of the reign of Jesus and the salvation he has accomplished and the summons to repentance and faith that arises from that message.”
 - (iv) “God created human beings in his own image in the form of two biological sexes - male and female. The Bible never endorses a divergence between biological sex and gender identity or expression”
 - (v) “God’s creative intention is that human beings should multiply and fill the earth. For this purpose he created marriage, a life-long exclusive union between a man and a woman, as the only appropriate context for human sexual activity.”
 - (vi) “Jesus will return physically to liberate the creation from its bondage to decay and bring all things to their fulfilment.”, and
- (c) disclose to Synod, in their triennial reporting to Synod required by clause 14(e) of the *Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995*, any times when they

perceive the organisation has pursued its purpose in a manner inconsistent with the doctrine of the Diocese of Sydney.'

Seconded and carried

6.5 Ms Norma Esler

The Rev David Morgan moved –

'Synod notes with thanks that Ms Norma Esler has represented the parish of Sadleir as lay Synod representative since 1993. As this is likely her last Synod, we thank God for her years of service and look to the Lord to strengthen her as she continues to serve Him in her local church community.'

Seconded and carried with acclamation

Mrs Catherine Rich led the Synod in prayer for Ms Esler.

6.6 Dinner for younger members of Synod

Mr Tristan Anlezark moved –

'Synod notes that there will be a dinner for its younger members on Monday 22 September 2025 for the purposes of encouragement and nourishment.

The dinner group will meet at the Pitt St entrance of the Wesley Theatre at the conclusion of the evening session, with the intention of dining in Centrepoint Westfield food court.

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

Seconded and carried

6.7 Doctrine Commission report on Authentic Anglicanism

The Rev Joseph Wiltshire moved –

'Synod, in relation to the Doctrine Commission report on Authentic Anglicanism –

- (a) gives thanks to God for the Doctrine Commission of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney,
- (b) greatly welcomes the report,
- (c) commends the careful reading of the report by all clergy, ministry workers, and Parish Council members, as well as all heads and board or council members of Diocesan organisations and schools within the Diocese of Sydney, and
- (d) requests the Diocesan Secretary to send the report with a cover letter commending it to other Dioceses of the Anglican Church of Australia.'

Seconded and carried

Canon Phillip Colgan led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

6.8 Anglican National Superannuation Board

The Rev Dr Richard Wenden moved –

'Synod expresses its appreciation and gives thanks to God for the Rev David Clarke's service as Chair of the Anglican National Superannuation Board.'

Seconded and carried

Dr Wenden led the Synod in prayer for Mr Clarke.

7. Procedural motions from members

7.1 Arrangements for consideration of M21 (Dr Robert Tong AM)

Dr Laurie Scandrett moved –

‘Synod agrees to suspend rule 4.1(g) of the Synod Standing Orders for the debate on motion M21 (Dr Robert Tong AM), to allow speeches to be made in the event that there is no member who wishes to speak against the principal motion or move an amendment to it.’

Seconded and carried

7.2 Notice of motion regarding The Rt Rev Dr Ric Thorpe

Bishop Michael Stead moved –

‘Synod agrees to receive notice of the following motion regarding the election of the Rt Rev Dr Ric Thorpe as tenth Archbishop of Melbourne –

“Synod –

- (a) congratulates the Rt Rev Dr Ric Thorpe on his election as the tenth Archbishop of the Diocese of Melbourne on 24 May 2025,
- (b) gives thanks for his long ministry, including service at Holy Trinity Brompton and St Paul’s, Shadwell, where he was involved in planting and revitalising a number of congregations,
- (c) notes that he is currently serving in a special episcopal role as Bishop of Islington in the Diocese of London, where he has led the Church of England’s national work in church planting through the Gregory Centre for Church Multiplication, and
- (d) commits to pray for Bishop Thorpe and his wife Louie as they prepare for his installation at St Paul’s Cathedral, Melbourne, and as they take up this strategic gospel ministry.”,

and suspends so many of the Standing Orders as may prevent these arrangements.’

Seconded and carried

8. Motions

8.1 Final Report to Synod on the Newmarch House 2020 COVID-19 Outbreak

Mr Simon Miller moved –

‘Synod acknowledges the report from Anglican Community Services (**Anglicare Sydney**) entitled *Final Report to Synod on the Newmarch House 2020 COVID-19 Outbreak* and Anglicare Sydney’s Chief Executive Officer’s apology for the tragic loss of life and the distress experienced by residents, their families and friends.’

Seconded and carried

Members of the Synod stood in their places and observed a minute of silence. The Rev Eric Cheung led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

9. Personal explanation

With the permission of the President under Standing Order 6.4, Archdeacon Anthony Douglas gave a personal explanation.

10. Motions

10.1 Poker Machine reform in NSW

Debate resumed in accordance with the procedural motion at item 6.1.

The Rev David Yung moved –

‘Synod –

- (a) thanks the Independent Panel on Gambling Reform, comprising industry, harm minimisation, academic, cyber crime, police, and union representatives, for their comprehensive report on Poker Machine gambling in NSW, which was handed down in December 2024, and includes 30 recommendations to reduce harm to individuals, families, and communities caused by this type of gambling,
- (b) notes that the NSW State Government has not responded to this report, meaning that it has not taken concrete steps to implement meaningful and effective harm reduction measures regarding poker machine gambling,
- (c) notes further that –
 - (i) \$2.3 billion was lost on NSW poker machines in the three months to June 2025, averaging more than \$1 million lost each hour, an increase of 8.8% compared to the same period last year (*Quarter 2 2025 poker machine loss data for NSW*, Wesley Mission factsheet [https://www.wesleymission.org.au/hubfs/Q2_2025_NSW_Poker_Machine_Losses_Report.pdf]),
 - (ii) analysis by Wesley Mission showed that 141 new poker machines were turned on in NSW since March this year, despite the NSW Government saying it was reducing the number of machines in the State (*Quarter 2 2025 poker machine loss data for NSW*, Wesley Mission factsheet),
 - (iii) the 2025/26 state budget forecasts that tax revenue from poker machines in hotels will rise by 7.2% per annum until the end of the 2028/29 financial year (Pages 5-5 and 5-6, chapter 5.3, *NSW Budget 2025-26 Budget Paper No.01: Budget Statement*, [<https://www.budget.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-06/bp1-budget-statement-nsw-budget-2025-26.pdf>]),
 - (iv) there is a disproportionate concentration of poker machines in lower socioeconomic areas of NSW, where they cause more harm (*Quarter 2 2025 poker machine loss data for NSW*, Wesley Mission factsheet)(Sections 1.2.3 and 1.3, *A better bet: How Australia should prevent gambling harm*, Grattan Institute Report No. 2024-08, September 2024, by Aruna Sathanapally, Kate Griffiths, and Elizabeth Baldwin [<https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Grattan-Institute-A-better-bet-How-Australia-should-prevent-gambling-harm.pdf>]),
 - (v) research continues to show that gambling addiction is strongly linked to homelessness, suicide, domestic violence, organised crime, family breakdown, and negative health and social outcomes for Indigenous and other Australians (Sections 1.2.3 and 1.3, *A better bet: How Australia should prevent gambling harm*, Grattan Institute Report No. 2024-08, September 2024, by Aruna Sathanapally, Kate Griffiths, and Elizabeth Baldwin),
- (d) once again calls on the NSW State Government to work diligently towards implementing effective harm minimisation methods for poker machines, such as \$1 bet limits, longer compulsory machine shut downs from midnight to 10am, and a universal cashless gaming card with mandatory limit-setting, in order to reduce the misery caused by gambling harm and to address money-laundering in our state,
- (e) notes an invitation from the Reverend Stu Cameron, Chief Executive Officer and Superintendent of Wesley Mission, our host at Synod, inviting churches to consider praying for gambling reform in their assemblies on Sunday October 19, the day before GambleAware week commences in NSW,
- (f) requests the Archbishop to convey the content of this motion to the NSW Premier and Leader of the Opposition,
- (g) encourages all concerned rectors and church members to write to their local State MPs, urging them to advocate actively for their communities, privately and publicly,

and for the implementation of effective harm minimisation methods for gambling harm, especially for poker machines, and

- (h) gives thanks to God for the unity of this Synod in grieving the harm caused by the cost of the gambling crisis in NSW, and earnestly prays that God will sovereignly work to reduce this harm.'

Seconded and carried

The Rev David Yung led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

10.2 **Parish Administration Ordinance 2008 (and related matters) Amendment Ordinance 2025**

Mr Greg Hammond OAM moved –

'That the Parish Administration Ordinance 2008 (and related matters) Amendment Ordinance 2025 pass as an ordinance of the Synod.'

Seconded and carried

10.3 **Parish Governance Policy – implementation**

Mr Greg Hammond OAM moved –

'Synod –

- (a) requests the Diocesan Secretary to advise all parishes of the amendments to the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008*, particularly noting the changes which will impact general meetings to be held in 2026, and
- (b) requests Sydney Anglican Services to provide guidance regarding the impacts on parish governance and administration as a result of the amendments to the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008*.'

Seconded and carried

10.4 **Suggestions for amending the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008***

Archdeacon Anthony Douglas moved –

'Synod –

- (a) invites members to offer suggestions for improvements to the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008* by email to the Diocesan Secretary by 30 November 2025,
- (b) requests the Standing Committee to investigate the suggestions received, and to implement and/or to recommend changes as appropriate, and
- (c) requests the Standing Committee to report back on the matter to a future session of Synod.'

Seconded and carried

10.5 **Chaplaincy**

Chaplains attending in the public gallery were welcomed with acclamation by members of the Synod.

Having been granted leave, Mr James Flavin moved –

'Synod encourages all parishes to seriously consider Chaplaincy to different language, cultural, socio-economic, sporting and special interest groups in their communities with similar prayerfulness and intentionality as they do towards Special Religious Education in Public Schools.'

Seconded and carried

10.6 Religious Discrimination

Bishop Michael Stead moved –

'Synod, noting that –

- (i) there continues to be no protection from discrimination on the basis of religious belief or activity under NSW or Federal anti-discrimination law,
- (ii) the Federal government has promised to implement a Religious Discrimination Bill if there is bi-partisan support,
- (iii) the NSW Law Reform Commission (LRC) is currently conducting a review into the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW) which considers introducing protections against religious discrimination, but that the Consultation Paper also contemplates sweeping reforms that would adversely impact people of faith and religious bodies, and
- (iv) without Federal or State protection, laws imposing civil and criminal liability for religious practices introduced in other jurisdictions in Australia, become precedents for adverse reforms of NSW law,

therefore calls on –

- (a) Synod members to inform themselves and their parishes regarding these issues by reading the Diocesan Submission to the LRC Review, which can be found at this link:
<https://docs.sydneyanglicans.net/s/sfsites/c/sfc/servlet.shepherd/document/download/069OI00000UGKO5IAP>,
- (b) Synod members and their parishes to write to and meet with their local State and Federal members to impress upon them the importance of protecting people against religious discrimination and maintaining the ability of religious bodies to operate according to their doctrines, tenets and beliefs,
- (c) the Federal government to recommence discussions with the Federal opposition to find bi-partisan agreement on a Religious Discrimination Bill.'

Seconded

The Rev Chris Braga moved as an amendment to Bishop Stead's motion –

'In paragraph (b), omit the words "their parishes to write to and meet with their", and insert instead the matter "all parishioners to write to, and where appropriate, meet with, their".'

Seconded and carried

Bishop Stead's motion, as amended, was carried with acclamation in the following form –

'Synod, noting that –

- (i) there continues to be no protection from discrimination on the basis of religious belief or activity under NSW or Federal anti-discrimination law,
- (ii) the Federal government has promised to implement a Religious Discrimination Bill if there is bi-partisan support,
- (iii) the NSW Law Reform Commission (LRC) is currently conducting a review into the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW) which considers introducing protections against religious discrimination, but that the Consultation Paper also contemplates sweeping reforms that would adversely impact people of faith and religious bodies, and
- (iv) without Federal or State protection, laws imposing civil and criminal liability for religious practices introduced in other jurisdictions in Australia, become precedents for adverse reforms of NSW law,

therefore calls on –

- (a) Synod members to inform themselves and their parishes regarding these issues by reading the Diocesan Submission to the LRC Review, which can be found at this link:
<https://docs.sydneyanglicans.net/s/sfsites/c/sfc/servlet.shepherd/document/download/069OI00000UGKO5IAP>,

- (b) Synod members and all parishioners to write to, and where appropriate, meet with, their local State and Federal members to impress upon them the importance of protecting people against religious discrimination and maintaining the ability of religious bodies to operate according to their doctrines, tenets and beliefs,
- (c) the Federal government to recommence discussions with the Federal opposition to find bi-partisan agreement on a Religious Discrimination Bill.'

The Archbishop made a statement on this matter.

10.7 **Thanksgiving for the Diocese's Covid Response**

Having been granted leave, Canon Alistair Seabrook withdrew a motion of which he had previously given notice.

10.8 **Scheduling matters at Synod**

Mr James Flavin moved –

'Synod instructs any committee or group charged with the ordering of business at Synod to formally dialogue with the mover and seconder of any Scheduling Motion received by the Secretary of Synod at least 14 calendar days before the relevant Session of Synod.'

Seconded

Having been granted leave, Archdeacon Anthony Douglas moved as an amendment to Mr Flavin's motion –

'Omit all the matter following the first instance of 'Synod' and insert instead the matter –

"instructs the Standing Committee to consider the question of how best to handle procedural motions submitted prior to the issuing of a business paper in advance of a session of Synod, and undertake any relevant actions in response."

Seconded

Prior to putting the amendment, the President asked –

'Does the Synod support the principal motion if it were put in the proposed amended form?'

A majority of members indicated that they would not support the principal motion as proposed to be amended.

Having been granted leave, Mr Flavin withdrew the motion.

10.9 **The appointment of the Rt Rev Cherry Vann as Archbishop of Wales**

The Rev Robin Vonk moved –

'Synod –

- (a) affirms that all people are made in the image of God, yet have sinned against the God whose image we bear, and recognises Christ's call for all to repent and to love our neighbour,
- (b) reaffirms Lambeth Resolution 1.10, which upholds loving pastoral care for same-sex attracted people, while rejecting the blessing of same-sex unions and the ordination of those in such unions,
- (c) therefore notes with great concern the election of the Rt Rev Cherry Vann, a person in a same-sex civil partnership, as Archbishop of Wales,
- (d) grieves that this appointment rejects the teaching of Scripture and the words of Jesus, is inconsistent with the Anglican formularies on marriage, and undermines Lambeth 1.10,

- (e) further notes that this appointment, alongside developments in the Church of England, has deepened divisions within the Anglican Communion,
- (f) expresses grief and dismay at this development, while giving thanks for faithful Anglicans in Wales, and
- (g) commends to its prayers both those aligned with the Gafcon-established Anglican Network in Europe under Bishop Andy Lines, as well as all same-sex attracted Christians seeking to live faithfully to Christ according to the Bible's teaching on marriage and sexuality.'

Seconded

11. Procedural motions from members

Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved as a procedural motion –

'That the Synod agree to adjourn debate on M50 (The appointment of the Rt Rev Cherry Vann as Archbishop of Wales) until immediately following consideration of M21 (Dr Robert Tong AM).'

Seconded and carried

12. Motions

12.1 Cabramatta: Classification as a Parish

The Rev Joseph Thiem gave a presentation, including a video presentation, regarding the work of the parish of Cabramatta.

Parishioners of Cabramatta, attending in the public gallery, were welcomed with acclamation by members of the Synod.

Mr Thiem moved –

'Synod assents to the classification of Cabramatta as a parish with effect from 1 January 2026.'

Seconded and carried by acclamation

Bishop Peter Lin led the Synod in prayer for the parish of Cabramatta.

Adjournment

At 5.44 pm, Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved as a procedural motion –

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

Seconded and carried

Resumption

The Synod resumed at 7.02 pm.

13. Mission Hour

Bishop Malcolm Richards led Mission Hour.

The presentation included the following –

- video Interview of Archbishop Enrique Lago, Anglican Church of Chile,
- interview with Bishop Alfred Olwa, Bishop of Lango Diocese, Church of Uganda and Chair Uganda Christian University,
- presentation on Diocese of Victoria Nyanza and Nyakato Bible School, Tanzania,
- interview with the Rev Mark Senada, Academic Dean, Alexandria School of Theology, Anglican Province of Alexandria,
- presentation on ministry in Burundi, and
- interview with the Rev Berthier Lainirina, Principal of St Patricks Theological College, Toliara, Madagascar and Provincial Secretary Anglican Church of the Indian Ocean.

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

14. Public gallery

Bishop Peter Jensen and Bishop Glenn Davies, attending in the public gallery, were welcomed with acclamation by members of the Synod.

15. Motions

15.1 **Dr Robert Tong AM**

Dr Laurie Scandrett moved –

'Synod, noting that this is likely to be the last session of Sydney Synod he will attend as a member, gives great thanks to God and records its deep appreciation for the outstanding service of Dr Robert Tong AM to the Diocese of Sydney, the Anglican Church of Australia, and the wider Anglican Communion.

Synod acknowledges Robert's deep personal commitment to Christ, his tireless commitment to the ministry and mission of Christ's Church, his dedication to fostering unity and understanding, and his leadership in church governance. Robert has always brought a gospel priority to the issues before him and has encouraged us all to keep Christ front and centre. His knowledge and love of God's word have enabled him to give sage advice and make wise judgments when the way forward has not always been as clear to those around him.

Synod particularly gives thanks for Robert's strategic mind, theological wisdom, an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of church law, and the personal example of faith and integrity he has provided throughout his years of service. As a layperson he has devotedly and purposefully served in the Parishes of Bellevue Hill, Centennial Park and St Ives. For nearly six decades Robert has served this Synod and variously its Standing Committee, Moore Theological College, the Anglican Church Property Trust, and the Provincial and General Synods, including their Standing Committees. He has also served as the Sydney Synod's Chair of Committees and this Diocese's Deputy Chancellor, as well as at different times been the Chancellor of the Dioceses of Newcastle and The Murray. Robert's "The Synod Survival Guide" is in its sixth edition and has been the handbook most members of the Synod have used to understand the processes and how to participate in what we do.

In all this Robert has been supported by his loving wife, Winsome, and their children Andrew, Peter, James, Michael, Stephen and Sylvia and their families. Together Robert and Winsome remain committed members of the Parish of St Ives. Synod offers its prayers

and best wishes to Robert in his retirement, trusting that his example of lay ministry and his influence will continue to inspire others in the years to come.'

Seconded and carried with acclamation, members of Synod standing in their places

Mrs Winsome Tong, and other members of the Tong family, attending in the public gallery, were welcomed with acclamation by members of the Synod.

A presentation was made to Mrs Tong.

Canon Phillip Colgan led the Synod in prayer for Dr Tong.

15.2 The appointment of the Rt Rev Cherry Vann as Archbishop of Wales

Debate resumed on the motion moved by the Rev Robin Vonk.

Professor Bernard Stewart AM moved as an amendment to Mr Vonk's motion –

'Omit paragraphs (b) to (g), and insert instead the following matter –

- “(b) notes that the appointment of the Rt Rev Cherry Vann, alongside developments in the Church of England, has deepened divisions within the Anglican Communion,
- (c) acknowledges that the Christian church, and Anglicans in particular, struggle for a spirit-led understanding of same-sex attracted people even as earlier understanding of a conscious commitment to sinful behaviour is set aside, and awareness is increased that being attracted to members of the same sex simply describes peoples as they are, and
- (d) encourages prayer and consultation between faithful Anglicans as they seek a correct understanding of relevant scripture through the Holy Spirit.”.

Seconded

The Rev Dr Mark Thompson moved as an amendment to Mr Vonk's motion –

'Insert the following matter as a new paragraph (e), with consequential re-lettering –

- “(e) gives thanks for the humble, faithful and courageous leadership of the Most Rev Dr Laurent Mbanda and his communique of 2 August 2025 in protest at Archbishop Vann's appointment.”.

Seconded

Bishop Michael Stead moved as an amendment to Mr Vonk's motion –

'Omit the text at paragraph (g) and insert instead the matter –

- “(g) commends prayer for those aligned with the Gafcon-established Anglican Network in Europe under Bishop Andy Lines, for faithful Anglicans who remain in the Church in Wales and for all same-sex attracted Christians seeking to live faithfully Christ according to the Bible's teaching on marriage and sexuality.”.

Seconded

After a time for debate the President asked –

'Does the Synod consider that the motion has been sufficiently debated and should now be voted on?'

The majority of members present answered in the affirmative.

Professor Stewart's amendment to Mr Vonk's motion was not carried.

Dr Thompson's amendment to Mr Vonk's motion was carried.

Bishop Stead's amendment to Mr Vonk's motion was carried.

Mr Vonk's motion, as amended, was carried in the following form –

'Synod –

- (a) affirms that all people are made in the image of God, yet have sinned against the God whose image we bear, and recognises Christ's call for all to repent and to love our neighbour,
- (b) reaffirms Lambeth Resolution 1.10, which upholds loving pastoral care for same-sex attracted people, while rejecting the blessing of same-sex unions and the ordination of those in such unions,
- (c) therefore notes with great concern the election of the Rt Rev Cherry Vann, a person in a same-sex civil partnership, as Archbishop of Wales,
- (d) grieves that this appointment rejects the teaching of Scripture and the words of Jesus, is inconsistent with the Anglican formularies on marriage, and undermines Lambeth 1.10,
- (e) gives thanks for the humble, faithful and courageous leadership of the Most Rev Dr Laurent Mbanda and his communique of 2 August 2025 in protest at Archbishop Vann's appointment,
- (f) further notes that this appointment, alongside developments in the Church of England, has deepened divisions within the Anglican Communion,
- (g) expresses grief and dismay at this development, while giving thanks for faithful Anglicans in Wales, and
- (h) commends prayer for those aligned with the Gafcon-established Anglican Network in Europe under Bishop Andy Lines, for faithful Anglicans who remain in the Church in Wales and for all same-sex attracted Christians seeking to live faithfully Christ according to the Bible's teaching on marriage and sexuality.'

The Archbishop made a statement on this matter.

Mr Vonk led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

Adjournment

At 9.18 pm, Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved –

'That the Synod adjourn and resume at 3.15 pm tomorrow.'

Seconded and carried

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

Two Members of the)
Minute Reading Committee)

Signed by the President

23 September 2025

Question 5.2 Parish property projects

Parish	Project	Completion Date		Project Total (\$AUD)	Funding of Project					Parish Net Operating Receipts at commencement of project	Parish offertories at commencement of project	Year
		Year	Month		Internal Fund-raising (\$)	Loan (\$)	Diocesan Grant (\$)	Property sale (\$)	Other (\$)			
Bowral	New ministry centre	2015	May	3,800,000	1,800,000	200,000		1,800,000		469,617	435,239	2013
Chatswood	Hall alterations & additions	2015	Mar	2,210,000	1,050,000	460,000		700,000		868,254	716,323	2015
Ashfield, Haberfield, Five Dock	New church building	2017	Mar	2,266,911	326,911	1,940,000				865,366	799,211	2015
Carlingford	New church building	2018	Dec	4,400,000	2,663,000	1,737,000				1,533,957	3,859,639	2017
Naremburn / Cammeray	Extensions to church building	2018	Jul	3,215,716	2,885,716	330,000				977,442	1,314,852	2017
Glenhaven	Alterations and new church	2018	Mar	2,121,300	1,614,600	506,700				468,225	855,399	2016
Balgowlah	Alterations and additions to church	2019	Mar	1,500,000	1,120,000	380,000				342,894	272,142	2018
West Wollongong	Alterations and additions to church	2020	Feb	1,523,661	763,661	760,000				503,359	692,241	2018
Manly	New ministry Centre and other	2021	July	15,570,000		10,000,000			5,570,000	1,526,212	1,456,466	2019

Parish	Project	Completion Date		Project Total (\$AUD)	Funding of Project					Parish Net Operating Receipts at commencement of project	Parish offertories at commencement of project	Year
		Year	Month		Internal Fund-raising (\$)	Loan (\$)	Diocesan Grant (\$)	Property sale (\$)	Other (\$)			
Jannali	Alterations and additions to church	2021	Mar	1,586,820	836,820	750,000				813,868	1,055,591	2019
Surry Hills	Alterations and additions to church and hall	2022	Aug	2,977,698	1,477,698	1,500,000				850,500	1,019,643	2020
Narellan	New auditorium and ministry centre	2023	Mar	5,454,545	495,000	400,000	1,048,143	3,511,402		608,877	898,092	2020
Clovelly	Additions to church building	2025	Sep	3,600,000	3,250,000	350,000				639,510	1,639,738	2024
Dundas Teloepa	Refurbishment to create new ministry centre	2025	Sep	3,498,000	550,000	2,153,000	210,000		585,000	390,150	298,948	2023
Kirribilli and Neutral Bay	Alterations and additions to church	2025	May	2,640,000	1,100,000	1,540,000				3,391,229	3,424,930	2024

Note: It is helpful to point out that "major projects" are projects with a project value above \$1.5M. This table has therefore been prepared on this basis, even though the question only requested projects greater than \$2M. SAP chose to include information for project values over \$1.5M for consistency with the table provided to the Synod in 2016, per the questioner's request for a complete dataset for the period 2005-2024.

53rd Synod of the Diocese of Sydney

Third Session

Minutes of Proceedings of the Synod for Tuesday 23 September 2025

1. Assembly

The Synod assembled in the Wesley Theatre at 3.15 pm.

2. Prayers

Archdeacon Kara Hartley led the Synod in prayer.

3. Bible study

Bishop Richard Condie led the Bible study.

4. Motions

4.1 Leadership of Bible studies

Bishop Chris Edwards moved –

‘Synod records its appreciation for the preaching of Bishop Richard Condie at the Synod Service and for his encouraging Bible Studies during this session.’

Seconded and carried by acclamation

5. Minutes

The President signed the minutes for Monday 22 September 2025.

6. Answers to questions asked on 17 September 2025

6.1 Parish property projects

The Rev Dr Raj Gupta asked the following question –

Can you provide a table showing all Sydney Anglican parish building projects greater than \$2 million completed between 2015 and 2024, including –

- Parish name and project description
- Completion date
- Total project cost
- Breakdown of underlying funding sources (internal fundraising, loans, diocesan grants, property sales, and other sources)
- Parish offertories at the time of project commencement

The intent of the question is to enable a realistic assessment of a parish to complete a significant development.

The format is designed to update the table provided to the 2016 Synod in Appendix A to the ‘Funding for Urban renewal’ report that listed projects, and ideally the answer would update the

previously provided table to provide a complete analysis from 2005-2024. I am asking that parish offertories be added to the table.

To which the President replied –

In the entry to the table that was provided yesterday, for the parish of Bowral, the date of project completion has been corrected from '2025' to '2015'. The note to the table has also been updated for clarity.

6.2 Draft Northern Region Buildings and Property Strategy

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

When will the draft Buildings and Property Strategy for the Northern Region be released?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The Draft Northern Region Buildings and Property Strategy is expected to be released for public exhibition in the 2nd quarter 2026.

However, for context, it should be noted that the consultation process has already commenced. The Draft Strategy has been provided to the Bishop and the Mission Area Leaders in the Northern Region –

- for early comment to enhance the ministry/mission focus on the first draft, and
- to allow Mission Area Leaders in the Northern Region to work with SAP on the ongoing development of the strategy.

It is proposed that the process will initially involve the Bishop, Mission Area Leaders and SAP in –

- (a) Meetings/workshops chaired by the Bishop with each of the Mission Areas (commencing 4th quarter 2025 – end of 1st quarter 2026).
- (b) Wider distribution of the draft Strategy inviting submissions from parishioners in the Northern Region (2nd quarter 2026).
- (c) Preparation of a 'Response to Submissions Report'. This report will detail the matters raised in the submissions, SAP's responses to any submissions, and any amendments considered necessary in light of the matters raised.
- (d) A further round of meetings with the Bishop and the Mission Area Leaders to finalise the draft strategy (the target for this is June 2026).
- (e) Review/approval by the SAP Board.
- (f) Review/approval by the Standing Committee.

6.3 Doctrine Commission

The Rev James Warren asked the following question –

- (a) What is the work currently before the Doctrine Commission?
- (b) How can we better utilise the work of the Doctrine Commission?
- (c) How can we assist in the work or loading of the Doctrine Commission?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) At present, the Doctrine Commission has three matters on its work plan. The first is a report requested by the Archbishop concerning the nature of authority within the churches, with particular reference to Sydney Anglican churches. The Commission anticipates completing this report within the current year. Two other matters have been referred to it this Synod - M25 (on the topic of women's ordination and ministry) and M27 (on the topic of climate change, in conjunction with the Social Issues Committee).
- (b) Doctrine Commission reports are made publicly available on the Sydney Anglicans website at: <https://docs.sydneyanglicans.net/s/DocComm-reports>. Parishes and diocesan

organisations are encouraged to familiarise themselves with these reports and make use of them as appropriate.

- (c) Historically, doctrinal research on the matter of women's ordination to the priesthood within the Diocese was a major undertaking, spanning four sessions of Synod and involving multiple committees (see Synod resolutions 18/82, 7/83, 9/84, 5/85). The Doctrine Commission anticipates that this new request (alongside developing a theological statement about the challenges of climate change and what it means for Christian people in conjunction with the Social Issues Committee) will require its dedicated time and energy for at least the next 18 months. Accordingly, Synod and Standing Committee may wish to bear this in mind when considering the referral of any further work to the Doctrine Commission during early sessions of the 54th Synod.

6.4 4th year Moore College student applicants for ordination (2022-2024)

The Rev Mark Groombridge asked the following question –

During the period 2022-2024, regarding 4th year Moore College students who had applied for ordination as deacons in our diocese –

- (a) How many 4th year Moore College Students applied for ordination as deacons before the conclusion of their studies?
- (b) What percentage of (deacon) ordination candidates were unsuccessful in their application for the years 2022-2024?
- (c) What criteria did the unsuccessful applicants fail to meet?
- (d) What reasons were given to candidates because they were not successful as ordination candidates?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

Ministry Training and Development (**MT&D**) works closely with anyone who begins an enquiry regarding ordination. The purpose of the ordination candidacy process is to assist the candidate to discern if ordained Anglican ministry in the Sydney diocese is the right pathway for their kingdom service. It is of course the nature of the process that some discern, either on their own, or with the assistance of MT&D that this is not the case. Where the question asks about applicants who were “unsuccessful”, the answer has been given with respect to applicants who did not proceed to ordination in this diocese for any reason.

- (a) 2022: 13.
2023: 18.
2024: 20.
- (b) 37% (19 of 51 applicants who applied at some stage during college in the graduating years of 2022-2024 did not continue through to ordination in the Sydney diocese).
- (c) Those applicants or candidates that did not proceed to ordination, did not proceed because of one or more of the following criteria outlined in the Archbishop's Ordination Policy –
 - they did not wish to commit to a lifelong vocation,
 - during the period of observation and discernment as a candidate their character, or convictions, or competencies were not aligned with the requirements for ordained Anglican ministry within the Diocese,
 - they did not wish to pursue, or were not able to secure, a full time or substantially full-time appointment to a pastoral ministry position within the Diocese, including for example, they chose to pursue ministry in a different diocese or context,
 - they were divorced or married to a person who was divorced.
- (d) The particular reasons are discussed together with each candidate or applicant.

7. Calling of motions on the business paper

The President called the motions in the order in which they appeared on the business paper.

7.1 ACNC Focus on Record Keeping 2025-2026

Ms Heather Carr moved –

‘Synod, noting that the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (**ACNC**) has “effective record-keeping” as their 2025-2026 regulatory focus –

- (a) gives thanks for all those who faithfully and diligently complete record-keeping duties in our parishes and diocesan organisations, and
- (b) requests Standing Committee to consider providing parishes with a simple resource to help them check their record-keeping and address any gaps.’

Seconded and carried

7.2 National Archdeacon to Veterans

The Rev Hayden Smith moved –

‘Synod –

- (a) notes with thankfulness the Venerable Andrew Nixon’s collation as the inaugural Archdeacon to Veterans at St Andrew’s Cathedral on 28 July 2025,
- (b) prays that God will grant to Andrew wisdom, energy, gospel confidence and prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit as he ministers to those who have served in the Australian Defence Force, and
- (c) prays for God’s blessing upon all those who have served in the Australian Defence Force; that God may –
 - (i) grant healing and protection to those who have suffered physical, psychological, moral or spiritual wounds from their service,
 - (ii) strengthen and support the families of ADF personnel who have not returned, or returned much changed, as they process their experiences and loss, and seek to “live forward” with courage and hope, and
 - (iii) call many veterans and families to know and experience the healing, forgiveness and peace that can only be found in the person and work of Jesus Christ.’

Seconded and carried

Bishop Michael Stead led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

7.3 The Rt Rev Dr Ric Thorpe

Bishop Michael Stead moved –

‘Synod –

- (a) congratulates the Rt Rev Dr Ric Thorpe on his election as the tenth Archbishop of the Diocese of Melbourne on 24 May 2025,
- (b) gives thanks for his long ministry, including service at Holy Trinity Brompton and St Paul’s, Shadwell, where he was involved in planting and revitalising a number of congregations,
- (c) notes that he is currently serving in a special episcopal role as Bishop of Islington in the Diocese of London, where he has led the Church of England’s national work in church planting through the Gregory Centre for Church Multiplication, and
- (d) commits to pray for Bishop Thorpe and his wife Louie as they prepare for his installation at St Paul’s Cathedral, Melbourne, and as they take up this strategic gospel ministry.’

Seconded and carried

Mr Matthew Robson led the Synod in prayer for this matter.

8. Motions

8.1 Retirement of the Rev Jeff Parker

Mr Peter Seymour moved –

‘Synod, noting that the Rev Jeff Parker will retire from full time ministry on 23 November 2025, gives thanks to God for the faithful ministry of Jeff and his wife Michelle over the past 32 years. Jeff served in the Diocese of Newcastle from 1993 to 2009 (where he was rector of Beresfield and of Forster/Tuncurry), then served in the Diocese of Melbourne at St James' Dandenong from 2009 to 2019. Jeff has served in our diocese since 2019 as the rector of Enmore/Stanmore, where Jeff and Michelle have devoted themselves to loving and caring for Christ's flock there. They are much loved, and will be greatly missed.

Synod prays for God's continued blessing on Jeff and Michelle in their life and ministry together.’

Seconded and carried with acclamation

Bishop Michael Stead led the Synod in prayer for the Rev Jeff and Mrs Michelle Parker.

8.2 Retirement of the Rev Chris Jones

The Rev Rick Hall moved –

‘Synod gives thanks to God for the ministry of the Rev Chris Jones, for his 36 years of ordained ministry. Having served at Windsor for the past 10 years, and previously at Chatswood, Norwest, Glenquarie and in the Diocese of Armidale, Chris has brought a consistent, sensitive and very other-person focus to his ministry. His pastoral care of the people in his parish has been a highlight and has endeared him to the people under his care.

Our prayer is that God would continue to glorify his name through his servants Chris and Kerry in their retirement.’

Seconded and carried with acclamation

The Rev David Keun led the Synod in prayer for the Rev Chris and Mrs Kerry Jones.

8.3 Retirement of the Rev Geoff Bates

The Rev Mark Collins moved –

‘Synod gives thanks to God for the ministry of the Rev Geoff Bates, due to retire in October this year, for his 35 years of ordained ministry. His commitment to the people of Sydney's north west has seen him serve at Richmond, Wilberforce and Quakers Hill, as well as serving as Mission Area leader for the Hills. Under his leadership at Quakers Hill since 2007, Geoff has overseen his church play a significant role in the spread of the gospel across Sydney's north-west, including the establishment of Stanhope Anglican, the planting of Marsden Park, the replanting of Riverstone, and involvement in many other regional initiatives.

Synod give thanks that Geoff has witnessed his love for Jesus and for the lost where he has served. His innovative style of taking the timeless gospel truth to people from many different backgrounds in the Western Region has made an impact on many people and on God's kingdom in this growing area of the Diocese.

As Geoff and Kim retire, Synod prays that the Lord would continue to use them to his honour and glory.’

Seconded and carried with acclamation

The Rev Dominic Steele led the Synod in prayer for the Rev Geoff and Mrs Kim Bates.

8.4 Retirement of the Rev Owen Goddard

Canon Bruce Morrison moved –

'Synod gives thanks to God for the ministry of the Rev Owen Goddard, for his 37 years of ordained ministry. Owen served at Merrylands West, Shellharbour and Lugarno before taking up his role at North Parramatta with Harris Park in 2005. His people have appreciated his steadfastness, his gentleness, his calmness, his concern and care for them, along with his heart for all the different types of people in their community. As Owen and Christine retire, Synod prays for the Lord's blessing upon them and for his name to continue to be glorified through their lives.'

Seconded and carried with acclamation

Canon Morrison led the Synod in prayer for the Rev Owen and Mrs Christine Goddard.

8.5 Retirement of the Rev Gary O'Brien

Bishop Chris Edwards moved –

'Synod gives thanks to God for the Rev Gary O'Brien's 39 years of ordained ministry. Gary has had fruitful parish ministries at St Ives, Kiama and West Pymble and he encouraged many parishes of the Northern Region as the Area Dean of Gordon.

Since 2015, Gary has served as the Director of Ministry Training and Development (**MT&D**). During his time as Director of MT&D Gary has been involved in presenting 475 ordinands –

- (a) 314 as deacons, and
- (b) 161 as presbyters (85 of whom are currently members of this Synod).

In addition, Gary devised and introduced the Lifelong Ministry Development tool to support ministers in maintaining their zeal, effectiveness, and spiritual health throughout their ministry journey. Close to a thousand have signed up for this tool. More recently, Gary was active in supporting the introduction of Pastoral Supervision and has led the implementation of that service for our church workers.

Gary has served on various Diocesan committees and boards, at Synod and General Synod, travelled to other Dioceses to train clergy and church workers in their formation programs, and has been involved in clergy retreats.

Synod wishes Gary and Carol every blessing in their retirement.'

Seconded and carried with acclamation

Archdeacon Kara Hartley led the Synod in prayer for the Rev Gary and Mrs Carol O'Brien.

8.6 Mr Robert Wicks

Mr John Pascoe moved –

'Synod gives thanks to God for the dynamic, faithful and strategic service of Mr Robert Wicks as the Chief Executive Officer of Sydney Anglican Services (previously Sydney Diocesan Services) from 2017 to 2025. Synod also acknowledges with thanks that prior to this Robert was the acting CEO from 2016 to 2017, the Diocesan Secretary from 2004 to 2017 and the Diocesan Legal Officer from 1999 to 2004. Synod records its deep appreciation for Robert's distinguished and devoted service to this Diocese over some 27 years. Synod acknowledges Robert's faithful leadership, wise counsel and steadfast commitment – to God, to the Gospel, and to the people and parishes he has served through numerous roles, culminating in his eight-year tenure as the CEO.

Robert's enduring legacy as SAS's CEO will be the transformation of SAS, and the people within it, into a dynamic team that has become an active supporter of both Parish and organisational ministry. In all he has done Robert has sought to honour God and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in and beyond this Diocese.

In all this Robert was, and is still, supported by his loving wife, Fran, and they remain stalwart members of the Parish of West Pymble with West Lindfield. Synod thanks God for Robert's fellowship in the Gospel and prays that God's blessing might rest on Robert and Fran as they continue to serve Him in many varied ministries.'

Seconded and carried with acclamation, members of Synod standing in their places

Dr Laurie Scandrett led the Synod in prayer for Mr Robert and Mrs Fran Wicks.

The Archbishop made a statement regarding this matter.

8.7 Moore College enrolment and ordination recruitment

The Rev Dr Raj Gupta moved –

'Synod –

- (i) gives thanks to God for the 234 students currently enrolled at Moore Theological College and for the College's continued role in training gospel workers,
- (ii) notes that of current Bachelor of Theology and Bachelor of Divinity students, approximately 51% come from within the Sydney Diocese and 49% from outside the Diocese,
- (iii) notes that there are currently 40 accepted Sydney ordination candidates across all years of study, with a further 25 applicants awaiting acceptance, and
- (iv) recognises the vital importance of raising up gospel workers from within our own Diocese to serve our parishes and local mission fields,

and encourages –

- (a) parishes to actively identify, encourage and support potential candidates for theological training and ordination from within their congregations,
- (b) Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES) groups, Ministry Training Strategy (MTS) and other para-church ministries to collaborate even more intentionally with parishes in identifying and nurturing potential vocational ministers.'

Seconded and carried

8.8 Results of a vote by Houses

Mrs Nicola Fortescue moved –

'Synod –

- (a) notes that clause 4.12 (4) of the *Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019* does not require the House of Clergy to vote on a motion undertaken by houses, if the House of Laity has not voted in favour of the motion,
- (b) considers that it would be beneficial for the Synod to know the result of the vote from both houses when a vote is undertaken by houses, and
- (c) requests the Standing Committee to bring a bill amending the *Synod Standing Orders Ordinance 2019* to the next session of Synod that brings effect to this matter.'

Seconded

Mr Samuel Doherty moved as an amendment to Mrs Fortescue's motion –

'Amend paragraph (b) to omit the word "vote", wherever appearing, and insert instead the word "ballot".'

Seconded

After a time for debate the President asked –

'Does the Synod consider that the motion has been sufficiently debated and should now be voted on?'

The majority of members present answered in the affirmative.

Mr Doherty's amendment to Mrs Fortescue's motion was not carried.

Mrs Fortescue's motion was not carried.

8.9 Evangelism and Ministry Partnerships

Canon Tom Harricks moved –

'Synod requests the Standing Committee to report to the next session of Synod a summary of their independent review into the newly formed Evangelism and Ministry Partnerships (EMP) - including the purpose, measures of success of EMP (and its ministries) and on how the success of EMP will be reviewed over time. Synod commits to pray for the success of EMP, and especially for the Interim Head and the Provisional Board.'

Seconded

The Rev Philip Wheeler moved as an amendment to Canon Harricks' motion –

'Amend the motion as follows –

- (a) omit the words "report to the next session of Synod a summary of their independent review into" and insert instead the words "provide a progress report on", and
- (b) immediately prior to the words "Synod commits to prayer", insert the matter –
 - "This report is to outline –
 - (a) progress to date against the proposal Synod agreed to in 2024,
 - (b) where synergies and greater effectiveness have been identified,
 - (c) what issues/problems have been encountered and any disruptions experienced by the member agencies forming EMP,
 - (d) the work plans/next steps for the EMP Board going forward to progress the optimal structure for EMP, and
 - (e) a financial report showing cost to date and income and cost projections for the coming triennium for the new entity.".'

Seconded

Mr Wheeler's amendment to Canon Harricks' motion was carried.

Canon Harricks' motion, as amended, was carried in the following form –

'Synod requests the Standing Committee to provide a progress report on the newly formed Evangelism and Ministry Partnerships (EMP) - including the purpose, measures of success of EMP (and its ministries) and on how the success of EMP will be reviewed over time.

This report is to outline –

- (a) progress to date against the proposal Synod agreed to in 2024,
- (b) where synergies and greater effectiveness have been identified,
- (c) what issues/problems have been encountered and any disruptions experienced by the member agencies forming EMP,
- (d) the work plans/next steps for the EMP Board going forward to progress the optimal structure for EMP, and
- (e) a financial report showing cost to date and income and cost projections for the coming triennium for the new entity.

Synod commits to pray for the success of EMP, and especially for the Interim Head and the Provisional Board.'

8.10 Regional Funding for Youth and Children's Ministry

Having been granted leave, Miss Joanna Matthews moved –

'Synod –

- (i) noting the five-year focus on attendance, mission and youth, and
- (ii) recognising the unique challenges faced by parishes in high-growth greenfields areas and across the Diocese, where there is often only a part-time children's and/or youth minister, or one minister required to carry both roles, or in some cases no appointment at all,

requests the Standing Committee to –

- (a) investigate funding pathways and other initiatives to support this important focus, including but not limited to options under the *Regions Ordinance 1995*, and
- (b) report to Synod in 2026 with recommendations to strengthen sustainable children's and youth ministry in high-growth areas and areas across the Diocese facing similar difficulties.'

Seconded and carried

9. Presentations

9.1 Anglicare presentation

In accordance with the procedural motion passed on Monday 15 September 2025, Mr Simon Miller and the Hon Dr Rob Stokes gave a presentation, including a video presentation, regarding the work of Anglicare.

The Rev Mike Smith led the Synod in prayer for Anglicare.

10. Procedural motions from members

10.1 Consideration of motions on the Business Paper

Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved as a procedural motion –

'That Synod agrees not to adjourn for a Dinner Break, as scheduled in the Timetable for Synod Business, until consideration of all motions on the Business Paper is completed.'

Seconded and carried.

11. Presentations

11.1 Parish of Wahroonga presentation

The Rev Andrew Rees gave a presentation regarding the work of the parish of Wahroonga.

Bishop Chris Edwards led the Synod in prayer for the parish of Wahroonga.

12. Motions

12.1 Free evangelism training

Mr Chris Hamam moved –

'Synod encourages church members to avail themselves of the free evangelism training available at: www.godrevolution.com.au.'

Seconded

13. Procedural motions from members

13.1 Consideration of motions M61 and M62

Mr Chris Hamam moved as a procedural motion –

‘Synod agrees to consider the following motions together, and suspends so many of the Standing Orders as would prevent this arrangement –

“M61 Free evangelism training

Synod encourages church members to avail themselves of the free evangelism training available at: www.godrevolution.com.au.

M62 Australians for Jesus

Synod gives thanks for the work of Tony McLennan and the team at www.australiaforjesus.org.au raising 10,000 soul winners and prays for this work to continue.”’

Seconded and carried

Dean Sandy Grant moved as a procedural motion –

‘That motions M61 and M62 not be voted on.’

Seconded

Having been granted leave, Mr Hamam withdrew motions M61 and M62.

As a consequence, Dean Grant’s procedural motion lapsed.

14. Closure

14.1 Committees and Officers of the Synod

Bishop Peter Lin moved –

‘Synod records its appreciation for –

- (a) the President and his chairmanship,
- (b) the Chair and Deputy Chairs of Committee and their work in the consideration of the text of ordinances and policies,
- (c) the members who helped during the session by giving advice and serving the Synod, especially the Chancellor and Deputy Chancellors, Registrar, Archdeacon to the Archbishop, Chair of Committee, the Synod Secretary, as well as the Order of Business and Minute Reading Committees, and
- (d) the services given by the staff of SAS and the Archbishop’s Office, Anglican Media, the music team, Bible readers, Wesley staff, and all those who have helped facilitate this session of Synod.’

Seconded and carried by acclamation

15. Procedural motions from members

15.1 Suspension of standing orders

Mr Samuel Doherty moved as a procedural motion –

‘That Synod agrees to consider a request to the Archbishop to pray for the deliberations of the Canterbury Crown Nominations Commission, and suspends so many of the Standing Orders as would prevent this arrangement.’

A majority of Synod members objected to the suspension of business rules without notice.

Mr Doherty's procedural motion therefore lapsed.

16. Hymn

Members joined in the singing of the hymn 'Crown Him with Many Crowns'.

Adjournment

At 6.14 pm, Archdeacon Simon Flinders moved –

'Synod adjourns without appointing another day of meeting.'

Seconded and carried by acclamation

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

Two Members of the)
Minute Reading Committee)

Signed by the President

20 October 2025