

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA



**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
MARCH 2021**

**AND OF THE
COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY
MAY 2021**

**AND OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OCTOBER 2021**

ASSEMBLY OFFICERS

2020-21

Moderator:	Rev Philip D Mercer, BA, BTh Email: moderator@pcv.org.au
Chaplains:	Rev Graham J Nicholson Rev John Huynh
Clerk of Assembly:	Rev John P Wilson, BSc, DipEd, BTh, DMin Email: clerk@pcv.org.au
Deputy Clerk:	Rev Peter W Phillips, BA, BTh
Assistant to the Clerks:	Rev Dean A Carroll, BNursing, BMin, DipTh
Business Convener:	Rev Dr Jared C Hood, DipTh, BTh(Hons), GradCertTh, GradDipIS, MA(Th), MTh, ThM(1st hons), PhD
Law Agent:	Mr Geoff Cox, BA, LLB McCracken and McCracken Level 9 – 501 La Trobe Street MELBOURNE VIC 3000

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
MARCH 2021

**PROCEEDINGS
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
of the
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
1st Sitting: Tuesday 16 March am**

By Zoom, an electronic means of meeting, on Tuesday 16 March 2021 at 9:00am.

1. Constitution

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria met by appointment of the October 2020 General Assembly (BB 2020 min 91(1)). Immediate Past Moderator Elder Colin Morrow constituted the Assembly with prayer.

2. Roll

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Declare that the names recorded in the draft Roll of Assembly, compiled from the certified rolls of presbyteries, together with those nominated for parity, be the Roll of the March 2021 General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

3. Associations

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Associate Rev Jordan Born, member of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, with all sittings of this Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

4. Apologies

The Clerk noted the following apologies:

Ministers: Keith Allen, Keith Bell, Andrew Bray, Felix Chung, Trevor Cox, Kyung Ee, Alan Every, Neil Harvey, Karl Hood, Grant Lawry, Greg Matthews, Ben Nelson, Peter Orchard, Bruce Riding, John Stasse, John Sutherland, Bob Thomas, Ian Touzel, Graeme Weber.

Elders: Phil Betts, Malcolm Browning, Ian Courts, Geoff Cross, Bob Farquharson, Keith Ferres, Graeme Hayes, Rob Herweynen, Stephen Moody, Endre Papajcsik, Peter U'Ren, Vasil Vasiliades.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the apologies.

The motion was seconded and approved.

5. Appointment of Moderator

The Clerk intimated that Rev Philip Donald Mercer, Minister of Trinity Camberwell, had been appointed as Moderator Designate of this General Assembly by the October 2020 General Assembly (min. 91(2)).

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Appoint Rev Philip Donald Mercer BA, BTh, Minister of Trinity Camberwell, Moderator of the March 2021 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

The motion was seconded and approved.

6. Induction of Moderator

Immediate Past Moderator Elder Colin Morrow put the moderatorial questions to Mr Mercer, inducted him into his office with prayer and declared him duly inducted into the office of Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

7. Business Committee

The report of the Business Committee was received.

The Business Convener, Rev Jared Hood, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Determine that the hours of meeting be:
 - First Sitting, Tuesday 16 March 2021, 9:00am–12:30pm
 - Second Sitting, Tuesday 16 March 2021, 1:30pm – close of business.
2. Determine that lunch be taken daily 12:30pm–1:30pm, and that refreshments be taken daily 10:30am–10:50am and 3:00pm–3:20pm, as necessary.
3. Determine the time for speakers to be as follows:
 - 15 minutes in total for:
 - Conveners and seconders moving deliverances (as a whole and total of clause-by-clause)
 - Petitioners stating the petition
 - Appellants stating the appeal
 - Respondents to appeals
 - Question time (including 15 mins for total deliverance questions)
 - 10 minutes in total for:
 - Overturists stating the overture
 - 5 minutes for:
 - Appellants in reply
 - Movers of substantive motions and amendments
 - Seconders of substantive motions and amendments
 - All other speakers.
4. Appoint a Ballot Committee for the Assembly consisting of:
 - Rev Adam Humphries (Convener), Luke Brownley, Brett Cummins, Stephen McDonald,and determine that this committee be held to be thanked and discharged at the dissolution of this Assembly.
5. Appoint the Zoom meeting hosts as follows:
 - Rev Dean Carroll, Luke Brownley, Brett Cummins, Adam Humphries, Stephen McDonald,and thank them for their service.
6. Permit committee conveners and chairpersons who are not members of the Assembly to address the Assembly when their respective committee's report and deliverance is before the Assembly.
7. Permit the General Manager to be present in the Assembly including when meeting in private, and to answer any financial management questions.
8. Permit the Privacy Officer to be present in the Assembly including when meeting in private, and to give advice as requested or required during any privacy-related matters.
9. Permit the Safe Church Facilitator to be present in the Assembly including when meeting in private, and to give advice as requested or required during any Safe Church related matters.
10. Permit the Law Agent to be present in the Assembly including when meeting in private, to give advice as requested or required during all matters, and to ask questions of petitioners, appellants, and respondents.

11. Suspend sufficient of standing orders to enable the Assembly to meet by Zoom in accordance with the meeting procedures in the 2021 Assembly Zoom Meeting Guide.
12. Authorise the live-streaming of the public sessions of this Assembly on YouTube.
13. Appoint the Moderator and the Clerks of Assembly a Special Commission to scrutinise the minutes of this Assembly with the power to make any necessary corrections and to confirm them, and that a copy thereof be sent to all members, unless a later determination be made by this Assembly.
14. Approve generally the outline of business as given in the report.
15. Approve the Order of Business for the first sitting, Tuesday 16 March 2021.

The motion was seconded and approved.

8. New Members

The Moderator invited the new members to the Assembly to identify themselves.

New members of the Assembly introduced themselves to the Assembly.

The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer.

9. Past Moderator's report

The report of the Immediate Past Moderator Elder Colin Morrow was received.

Mr Morrow spoke to his report.

The Moderator expressed gratitude on behalf of the church for Mr Morrow's distinguished service as Moderator and wished him well for his continued ministry.

10. Ad hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd Committee

The report of the ad hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd Committee was received.

The Convener, Mr Duncan McGregor, spoke of the work of the Committee and to the proposed deliverance.

The Clerk moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

Continue to pray for:

1. The wellbeing of Kirkbrae residents, staff, and management, and the members of AHEC.
2. The provision of an appropriately experienced health professional to join the committee/board.
3. The recruitment of a permanent CEO and other key senior management.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Moderator declared the vote unanimous.

Rev John Huynh, Moderator's Chaplain, led the Assembly in prayer.

11. Board of Investment and Finance

The report of the Board of Investment and Finance was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clause 1 was approved.

Clause 2 was approved.

Clause 3 was approved.

Clause 4 was disapproved.

Rev David Brown moved a motion.

The motion was seconded.

The Moderator was asked to rule on the competency of the motion.

The Moderator ruled that the motion was not competent.

It was agreed to adjourn the debate. (min 18)

12. Church and Nation Committee

The report of the Church and Nation Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-4 were approved.

Clauses 5-6 were moved and seconded.

(1) Rev Neil Chambers moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend the proposed deliverance by deleting all words in clauses 5–6 and replacing them with the following:

5. Appoint a committee consisting of the Moderator, Clerk, Law Agent, a member of the Board of Investment and Finance appointed by it, and Rev Chris Duke (or alternate appointed by the Church and Nation Committee) to consider the denomination's response to the passing of the suppression legislation, that consideration to include:
 - a. Obtaining legal advice about the ramifications of the bill in relation to possible liabilities and risk arising from current PCV biblical pastoral practices and teaching and the potential for allegations to be made that these may infringe the provisions of the legislation;
 - b. Determining the extent of professional indemnity cover for PCV ministers, elders, chaplains and members who conduct counselling under our existing public liability cover and whether that cover needs to be revised;
 - c. Considering the process ministers and members should follow if made the subject of an HREEC complaint and the provision of assistance by the denomination in such circumstances;
 - d. Considering how the PCV might engage other denominations and the public in resisting any restriction on the proclamation of the gospel and the teaching of Scripture;

the committee to report to the October 2021 General Assembly.

The motion was seconded.

Rev Dean Carroll sought leave to move a motion arising out of the debate.

Leave was granted.

(2) Rev Dean Carroll moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend the proposed amendment to clauses 5 and 6 of the proposed deliverance by adding the name of Rev Neil Chambers to the membership of the committee.

The motion to amend the amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion to amend clauses 5 and 6 as amended was approved.

Clause 5 as amended was approved.

The Moderator declared the vote unanimous.

(3) The Convener, Rev Christopher Duke, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Assembly:

1. Give thanks to God for the pastoral advice given by the Moderator General Rev Dr Peter Barnes in response to the passing of the *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Bill 2020*.
2. Give thanks to God for the engagement of the GAV Moderator and members of the Church and Nation Committee in presenting the church's response to the *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Bill 2020*.
3. Encourage members of the Assembly and congregants to continue to pray and to take action by communicating their views on the recent *Change Suppression (Conversion) Prohibition Bill* to members of Parliament, seeking that the Bill will

either be abolished or amended to remove restrictions on the freedoms of religion, freedom of conscience, freedom of choice, and parents' rights.

4. Urge members of the Assembly and congregants to continue to pray for the work of the committee, in particular, that the committee would have godly wisdom in all its undertakings.
5. Appoint a committee consisting of the Moderator, Clerk, Law Agent, a member of the Board of Investment and Finance appointed by it and Rev Chris Duke (or alternate appointed by the Church and Nation Committee) and Rev Neil Chambers, to consider the denomination's response to the passing of the suppression legislation, that consideration to include:
 - a. Obtaining legal advice about the ramifications of the bill in relation to possible liabilities and risk arising from current PCV biblical pastoral practices and teaching and the potential for allegations to be made that these may infringe the provisions of the legislation;
 - b. Determining the extent of professional indemnity cover for PCV ministers, elders, chaplains and members who conduct counselling under our existing public liability cover and whether that cover needs to be revised;
 - c. Considering the process ministers and members should follow if made the subject of an HREEC complaint and the provision of assistance by the denomination in such circumstances;
 - d. Considering how the PCV might engage other denominations and the public in resisting any restriction on the proclamation of the gospel and the teaching of Scripture;

the committee to report to the October 2021 General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Rev Graham Nicholson, Moderator's Chaplain, led the Assembly in prayer.

13. Church Planting Committee

The report of the Church Planting Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Cameron Garrett, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

Pray for the Donnybrook Church Plant as it begins reaching the growth area of Donnybrook.

The motion was seconded and approved.

14. Adjournment

The Assembly adjourned to meet at 1:30pm on Tuesday 16 March 2021 by Zoom, which, having been duly intimated, the Moderator closed the sitting with the benediction.

CLERKS
J P Wilson
P W Phillips
D A Carroll

**PROCEEDINGS
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
of the
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
2nd Sitting: Tuesday 16 March pm**

By Zoom, an electronic means of meeting, on Tuesday 16 March 2021 at 1:30pm.

15. Constitution

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria met pursuant to adjournment. The Moderator, Rev Philip Mercer, constituted the Assembly with a reflection based upon the reading of Acts 4:23-31 and prayer.

16. Apologies

The Deputy Clerk reported that there were no additional apologies.

17. Business Committee

The report of the Business Committee was received.

The Business Convener, Rev Jared Hood, moved:

That the Assembly:

Approve the proposed agenda.

The motion was seconded and approved.

18. Board of Investment and Finance (min 11)

Debate was resumed.

Rev David Brown moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend the deliverance by adding to it the following new clause 4:

4. Request the Board of Investment and Finance to formulate plans to fund from within the church, by way of a levy or other means, any unforeseen employment liabilities that a congregation may become unable to meet due to unforeseen or extreme circumstances.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Chairman, Rev Barry Oakes, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Assembly:

1. Note that the Board of Investment and Finance has adopted the Gift and Hospitality Policy and instruct the Code and General Administration Committee to bring an adaption of it, for all office bearers and committees within the church, to the next General Assembly for approval.
2. Note the responsibility that presbytery has under the PCV Code in relation to filling vacancies in a pastoral charge, making ministry appointments and approving other employment by the congregation and/or its officers; as well as the 'general responsibility and duty for the well-being of the church and its work, and of the congregations, and all congregational property, organisations and activities, within its jurisdiction'.
3. Instruct each presbytery to inquire into the employment arrangements which exist within its presbytery so that the extent of potential financial exposure of the church can be quantified.
4. Request the Board of Investment and Finance to formulate plans to fund from within the church, by way of a levy or other means, any unforeseen employment

liabilities that a congregation may become unable to meet due to unforeseen or extreme circumstances.

The motion was seconded and approved.

19. METRO Committee

The report of the METRO Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Toby McIntosh, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

Approve the following description for the role of Administrative Assistant to the METRO Committee.

Role Description – Administrative Assistant to the METRO Committee

1. Committee

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the committee, an administrative assistant is required to undertake the following tasks to support the METRO committee – in particular the secretary and convener.

2. Remuneration and time

It is expected that the role requires 3 hours per week (seasonally, with more work undertaken in the second half of the year than the first). Remuneration will be according to the process established under the regulations of the Board of Investment and Finance.

3. Tasks

a) Preparation of Agenda for meetings:

This agenda should be developed in consultation with the secretary and convener and sent (via email) to committee members at least a week before the meeting. This may also require prompting others on the committee to submit items for the agenda.

b) Attending Committee meetings (approx. 5 times per year) and preparation of minutes:

Minutes of the meetings should be distributed to members (via email or Dropbox) within a week of the meeting. A hard copy of the minutes must be signed by the convener once those minutes are approved at the next meeting. These signed copies are to be stored in a file and printed and pasted into a minute book.

c) Maintaining Website:

Checking information on the METRO website in a timely manner which includes communicating with members of the committee to make sure mailing addresses, dates, videos and photos are up to date.

d) Communication with applicants:

When an application form has been processed, the administrative assistant will write letters to the trainee, their trainer, and the church advising them of the result of their application.

- e) Communication with the PCV:
Including the PCV Network, church office, or other committees on behalf of the committee and convener as required from time to time.
- f) Sending timely reminders via email to trainees and trainers regarding key event dates:
Engage Leaders Conference, METRO Graduation/Orientation Day, MTS Conferences, METRO Trainees half-yearly surveys.
- g) Safe Church Unit liaison and compliance:
Quarterly communication with the Safe Church Unit to ensure that all METRO activities are in compliance with the requirements of Safe Church.
- h)
 - i) Compiling manuals, books and resources and employment packs.
 - ii) Organising the printing, copying, binding and distribution of manuals for trainees.
 - iii) Purchase and distribution of books to trainees.
 - iv) Correspondence with PCV office and MTS to ensure that employment packs are up to date.

4. Desirable in the applicant

- a) Knowledge of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria
The applicant is familiar with the processes and practices of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria including the different courts and committees of the church.
- b) Design and Video experience
The applicant has some basic or intermediate ability in graphic design and videography.

The motion was seconded and approved.

20. Code and General Administration Committee

The report of the Code and General Administration Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev John Wilson, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. With regard to the setting of the General Assembly Rate:
 - a. declare that the setting of the Assembly Rate is better placed as part of the regular budget process expected by the Board of Investment and Finance that is brought to the Assembly at the Commission;
 - b. insert the words 'Commission of' prior to 'Assembly' in the first line of BIF regulation 10, so as the regulation shall read:

10. General Assembly Rate

The BIF shall present to each Commission of Assembly a proposal to fix an Assembly Rate payable by congregations to assist in defraying the costs of the Assembly.

2. With regard to the General Assembly committee structure:
 - a. acknowledge that the current Assembly committee system is not needing major overhaul at this time;
 - b. alter regulation 2 of Christian Education and Nurture Committee regulations so that 'eleven' becomes 'seven', and 'six' becomes 'four';
 - c. alter regulation 2 of Maintenance of the Ministry Committee regulations so that 'six' becomes 'four';
 - d. alter regulation 2 of the Social Services Committee regulations so that 'ten' becomes 'seven';
 - e. alter regulation 3 of the Social Services Committee regulations so that clause (b) is deleted and the remainder of the regulations are renumbered accordingly;
 - f. replace regulation 3 of Selection Committee regulations with the following:

3. Duties

The committee shall:

- a) unless otherwise expressly provided for in the rules or regulations of the General Assembly, nominate to the General Assembly the members and conveners of all General Assembly committees (which term herein includes boards and councils) and publish these nominations in the White Book;
- b) receive other such nominations made by members of the General Assembly, provided that notice of these nominations has been given in writing to the convener not later than noon on Tuesday of the General Assembly and submit any such nominations for determination and appointment by ballot at 12:15pm on the Wednesday of the General Assembly;
- c) as far as possible, consult with the committees concerned prior to nominating members and or conveners;
- d) obtain, in the case of nominations of new members of any committee, if possible, the consent of nominees;
- e) after consultation with the committee concerned, fill any casual vacancy on the committee or the convenership thereof up to the next meeting of the General Assembly;
- f) ensure, whether nominations are made by the committee itself or by members of the General Assembly during the week the General Assembly meets, that except for those holding office 'ex officio':
 - i) no minister shall be a member of more than four committees other than ad hoc committees;
 - ii) for committees of eight or more members, there shall be a maximum of three members from a single congregation;
 - iii) for committees of seven or less members, there shall be a maximum of two members from a single congregation;
- g) where a ballot becomes necessary, mark the names of the retiring members of the committee concerned with an asterisk; and circulate to members of the Assembly a brief statement of the qualifications of all the nominees and their church affiliation prepared by the Assembly Clerk;

- h) where directed by the General Assembly, nominate special committees, ad hoc committees and commissions;
- i) when nominations are required for the position of Moderator-General:
 - i) call on presbyteries to make nominations for the position with replies to be in the hands of the convener by 31 July of that year; and
 - ii) submit names of nominees to the General Assembly for determination by ballot;
- j) bring General Assembly of Australia committee or commission nominations to the General Assembly of Victoria for approval, or if necessary by reason of timing, make nominations on behalf of the Assembly;
- k) revise nominations to meetings of the General Assembly of Australia in the following circumstances:
 - i) the Moderator is nominated for a second term (i.e. is also Moderator Designate);
 - ii) the Moderator Designate is an elder;
 - iii) the number of 'Sanctioned Charges' in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria changes resulting in a differing number of commissioners being eligible under GAA 'Code' 1.4;
- l) fill any vacancies or casual vacancies that may arise before any meeting of the General Assembly of Australia.

3. Add the following note to rule 3.11

Note: rule 9.19 of the Code of Discipline provides that a minister or other officer of the church deposed from office or suspended indefinitely is not eligible for election to the office of elder.

4. Enact the following regulations for the Commission for Church Institutions:

Appendix 5

Commission for Church Institutions

1. Title

Under the powers conferred in Rule 5.35.1, there shall be a special commission of the General Assembly called the Commission for Church Institutions ('the Commission').

2. Definition

For the purposes of these regulations, a Church Institution is any separately incorporated body which, by its rules, constitution or memorandum of association is connected to the church.

3. Membership

The membership of the Commission, appointed annually by the General Assembly, shall be the Moderator (chairman), Clerks of Assembly and thirteen members of the Assembly.

4. Secretary

The Clerks of the General Assembly shall act as clerks of the Commission.

5. Duties

The Commission shall exercise any of the powers of the General Assembly conferred upon it by constitutional documents of any Church Institution.

6. Quorum

A quorum of the Commission is seven members.

7. Constitution

The Commission shall be constituted by the Moderator after notification from the Assembly Clerk.

8. Procedure

The Commission shall meet as necessary to discharge its duties in respect of any Church Institution and subject to the time constraints and any other requirements imposed by the rules or constitution of that Institution. Subject always to any such requirements in respect of the appointment of persons to the governing council or board of a Church Institution and before making any such appointment, the Commission, by interviewing the nominee or by any other means it chooses to adopt, must satisfy itself of his or her suitability for appointment as proposed in terms of both character and qualifications. In particular, the Commission must be satisfied of the nominee's:

- a) commitment to the rules or constitution of the applicable Church Institution and the trusts on which that Institution is held;
- b) understanding of role of the board or council in the governance of that Institution; and
- c) where appropriate, Christian character and convictions.

9. Commission Decisions – final

A judgment or decision of the Commission within power and after regular procedure is treated by the next General Assembly as final.

- 5. Remove the words 'The maximum Sustentation Grant paid to a charge shall be 15% of the annually approved minimum remuneration for ministers', from regulation 14 of Maintenance of Ministry Committee regulations.
- 6. Amend the METRO Committee regulations by adding an extra clause, namely:

5. Employees

The committee may appoint, under the provision of Rule 5.32, an administrative assistant.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Moderator declared the vote unanimous.

21. Commission for Church Institutions

The report of the Commission for Church Institutions was received.

The Clerk moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

Instruct the Commission for Church Institutions to consider and respond to, if thought necessary, any proposed draft revision of the PLC constitution on behalf of the church.

The motion was seconded and approved.

22. Communication 1 – from: Safe Church Committee, re: Staff remuneration

Communication 1 was received.

Mrs Fiona Bligh, PCV Safe Church Facilitator and Privacy Officer, left the meeting.

Rev Brian Harvey moved:

That the Assembly:

Request the Board of Investment and Finance, in consultation with the Safe Church Committee, to bring a proposal for an appropriate increase in the SCU workers' remuneration to the May 2021 Commission of Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Moderator declared the vote unanimous.

23. Communication 2 – from: the Session, Trinity Presbyterian Church Camberwell, re: invitation to the Assembly to hold the 2021 Commission of Assembly at Camberwell

Immediate Past Moderator Elder Colin Morrow took the chair.

Communication 2 was received.

The Clerk sought leave to move a motion.

Leave was not granted.

The Moderator resumed the chair.

24. Appointment of May 2021 Commission of Assembly

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Appoint a Commission of the General Assembly consisting of the members of this General Assembly, less those who no longer qualify, with a quorum of 16 (eight of whom must be ministers), representing at least four presbyteries.
2. Empower this Commission of Assembly to consider and determine every matter referred to it by any decision or order of the General Assembly, and instruct the Commission to be careful to follow all instructions given to it by the General Assembly. With the exception of urgent matters, as permitted in clause 3 below, the Commission must not take up any matter that has not been referred to it.
3. Empower this Commission of Assembly to consider and determine all matters that have emerged since the last meeting of the General Assembly that are considered urgent and in need of executive or judicial action. In taking up these emergent matters the Commission must consider the best interests of the church on every occasion.
4. Charge this Commission of Assembly in all its actions and decisions to proceed according to the rules and constitution of this church. For all its actions and decisions, this Commission is accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly.
5. Charge this Commission of Assembly that it must not enact, amend or repeal any rules or regulations of the General Assembly nor enter into the consideration of any overture or motion proposing legislation.

6. Direct this Commission of Assembly to submit its minutes duly confirmed, and relevant papers, to the next General Assembly through the Clerk.
7. Instruct this Commission of Assembly to meet and convene at 10.30am Tuesday 4 May 2021 within Trinity Presbyterian Church Camberwell, or at other times and places as the Moderator shall determine.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Authorise the Moderator, after consultation with the Clerks and Business Convener, to alter the mode of meeting of the May 2021 Commission of Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

25. Appointment of next General Assembly

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Appoint the next General Assembly to convene within The Scots' Church, Melbourne, at 7:30pm Monday 4 October 2021 for the opening sitting, and at 9.30am Tuesday 5 October 2021 for a Communion Service, and thereafter for business in Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall.
2. Authorise the Moderator, after consultation with the Clerks, Business Convener and Moderator Designate, to alter any of the time, place, or mode of meeting of the October 2021 General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

26. Dissolution

The business of the Assembly now being concluded, the Moderator intimated that the next General Assembly would convene on Monday 4 October 2021, at 7:30pm for the opening sitting within The Scots' Church, Melbourne, and on Tuesday 5 October 2021, at 9.30am for a communion service within The Scots' Church, Melbourne and thereafter for business in Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall.

The Moderator dissolved the Assembly with encouragement and the benediction.

CLERKS:
J P Wilson
P W Phillips
D A Carroll

I certify that the minutes of 16 March 2021, having been carefully scrutinised, are hereby confirmed in terms of minute 7(13) thereof.



Rev Philip Mercer
Moderator

BUSINESS COMMITTEE (Min 7)

*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
for brothers to dwell together in unity. (Ps 133:1)*

The Business Committee has received all papers of a non-judicial nature currently proposed to be submitted to the Assembly. It has resolved to transmit to the Assembly in the form of this White Book those papers which seem competent and respectful.

Online Assembly

The committee proposes that the Assembly follow what has become an established precedent of commencing at 9:00am and finishing by 5:00pm, with no evening sittings and regular breaks to overcome videoconferencing fatigue. Two sittings are proposed, one for the morning of Tuesday, 16 March, and then the afternoon of Tuesday to the close of business (which could include Wednesday, 17 March, if necessary).

Again, following precedent, the papers for this video-conferenced Assembly are being distributed electronically. Any papers released on the Monday before Assembly will be on the password-protected repository on the PCV website, rather than being circulated by email. Assembly members are advised to ensure that they note the password when that is circulated (by email) and to check the website at appropriate junctures.

Expositions, communion, guest speakers, lunches, etc

As per recent Assembly meetings, Assembly expositions are being replaced by short devotions. Other regular highlights of a face-to-face Assembly are still in abeyance.

Using the technology

A guide has been distributed as to how to use the video conferencing technology for the Commission (*2021 Assembly Zoom Meeting Guide*). To emphasise some points in the *Guide*:

- Members should keep their microphones muted during the meeting except when permitted to speak. This cuts down on background noise (including the sound of typing).
- The Zoom hosts will actively mute the microphones of those not speaking, so members will need to remember to unmute their microphones when they wish to speak. Pressing and holding the space bar to speak usually works.
- Members may use the 'raise hands' function in Zoom when they want to ask a question and speak to a motion. This creates a queue (ordered according to when members click the button) from which the Moderator can call speakers. Some members may not be able to find this function, and so should unmute their microphones and inform the Moderator of their desire to speak.
- For points of order and similar, requesting a show of hands and similar, moving amendments without notice, and asking for an extension of time, members should unmute their microphones, switch on their cameras, and speak.
- Video can remain on or off at a member's discretion when not speaking in the Assembly, but needs to be on when addressing the Assembly. The preference is to leave video on for the entire Assembly.
- The chat function should be used only for entering dissent, or in the other ways specified in the *Guide*.
- Some general video-conference courtesies applicable to a business meeting should be followed. For example, Zoom functions should not be used to experiment or in a way that distracts other participants.

Thanks

The Business Committee takes this opportunity to thank:

- the Assembly Office staff members for their work in assisting in the smooth running of the Assembly;
- Brett Cummins for data 'projection' (screen sharing the Powerpoint presentation that helps to guide the Assembly);
- the Zoom hosts.

Commission and next Assembly

Being cognisant of some limitations for physical distancing associated with the Assembly Hall setting, the Business Committee recommends that:

- the ordinary Commission of Assembly meet on Tuesday, 4 May 2021, either at 9.00am via Zoom, or at a time and place as determined by the Moderator, after consultation with the clerks and the business convener; and
- the next 2021 General Assembly convene in the Scots' Church, Melbourne, at 7:30pm on Monday, 4 October, for worship and the induction of the Moderator, then at 9.30am on Tuesday, 5 October, for a Communion Service, and thereafter in Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall for business, or at a time and place as determined by the Moderator, after consultation with the clerks and the business convener.

The Clerk will move motions to appoint the next General Assembly at the close of this Assembly.

Outline of business

The Business Committee is required to present an agenda at the start of each sitting. As a guide, the Committee will seek to arrange business according to the following outline.

FIRST SITTING

Tuesday 16 March 2021, 9:00am–12:30pm

Constitution

Roll

Associations

Apologies

Welcomes

Business Committee

New members

Past Moderator

Ad Hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd Committee

Board of Investment and Finance

Church and Nation Committee

[10:30am–10:50am Refreshments]

Church Planting Committee

METRO Committee

Code and General Administration Committee

Commission for Church Institutions

Communication 1: Safe Church Committee—remuneration

Business Committee

[12:30pm–1:30pm Lunch]

SECOND SITTING

Tuesday 16 March 2021, 1:30pm – close of business

Constitution

Apologies

Business Committee

Minutes of previous sitting

Unfinished business from the previous sitting

[3:00pm–3:20pm Refreshments]

Closing formalities

Appointment of Commission of Assembly

Appointment of next Assembly

Dissolution

Jared C Hood
CONVENER

AD HOC ENACTMENT OF PRESBYTERIAN CARE VICTORIA LTD COMMITTEE (Min 10)

On 24 November 2020, the General Assembly approved the transfer of operational control over Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes from the Social Services Committee (SSC) to the Ad Hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd Committee (AHEC). This report is to update the General Assembly on matters since that date.

Notice to Agree

This notice was issued to Kirkbrae by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) during the COVID outbreak, as Kirkbrae was considered to be in breach of several clinical governance standards. It required Kirkbrae to, *inter alia*, employ certain persons nominated by the Commonwealth Government to assist Kirkbrae in managing the crisis. These persons were a CEO and a Facility Manager. A further impact was that Kirkbrae could not admit new residents until the notice had been withdrawn or it was otherwise informed in writing (since received). Since then, the ACQSC has made two visits to Kirkbrae to assess compliance with the relevant standards. After the first visit in late November 2020, Kirkbrae was adjudged as still non-compliant, but a second visit in early February 2021 yielded a favourable outcome. Kirkbrae now awaits the formal communication from the Department confirming the lifting of the notice.

Worksafe Investigation

Worksafe has opened a file with regard to Kirkbrae's COVID experience, which is of concern. They have asked questions to which responses have been provided. Kirkbrae has not heard further from them, but nothing can be read into that.

Taking Action to Restore Sustainable Operations

Kirkbrae has been incurring significant financial losses year on year for at least three years. The situation was unsustainable and indeed untenable. In early 2020, the General Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee - Future Directions for Presbyterian Church of Victoria Social Services (FDC) engaged a consultant who made recommendations to reduce Kirkbrae's costs and revise the staff rosters (employee costs being the biggest cost). These recommendations were shared with the SSC and work was being undertaken to review the proposed savings just prior to the COVID outbreak. In addition, just prior to AHEC being given responsibility for Kirkbrae, ANSVAR provided SSC its report into Kirkbrae, and this work was mentioned in the committee's report to the General Assembly in November 2020. Notable in the ANSVAR presentation was a recommendation to restructure senior management at Kirkbrae, specifically by merging the role of CEO with another function. However, by June, when AHEC was constituted, no material cost-saving measures had been implemented and responding to the COVID crisis served further to suspend any action in this regard.

When the crisis stabilised, Kirkbrae was in the very sad position of having lost 21 of its residents. Given that it was prohibited from taking in new residents, its revenue line was constrained, but still, no action had been taken to reduce costs.

When AHEC took control, it instructed the Acting CEO Mr John Fogarty (appointed by the Government, but now a Kirkbrae Contracted Employee) to:

- a. formulate a plan to identify and realise opportunities for immediate cost savings; and
- b. rationalise the staffing structure to reflect the significantly reduced numbers of residents.

AHEC approved a proposal to restructure operations and rationalise staff at its January 2021 meeting. A key feature was the consolidation of the remaining 51 residents into two buildings, allowing for a significant reduction in FTE staff, reductions in associated expenditures and simplification of management. (Kirkbrae still has the capacity to take in approximately ten new residents, but at present, enquiries are very slow.) It is very important to note that this restructure will also deliver an improved quality of care, as the number of Registered Nurses has been increased to now provide coverage 24/7, which pre-empts an expected recommendation from the Royal Commission.

Staff were advised of the restructure in scheduled meetings and given the opportunity to nominate for redundancy (which was not a guaranteed outcome). The news was received as well as can be expected, helped by the fact that the staff recognised the structure was bloated (given the current number of residents), and they were aware of the difficult financial situation. Residents and their families were also invited to meetings to advise them of the impending restructure with no issues being raised.

The restructure will be fully implemented by the end of February.

Former CEO Redundancy

Our CEO, Mr Mark Sketcher, experienced poor health in the middle of 2020. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The committee has provided such pastoral and other practical support as it could and continues to pray for his recovery. [REDACTED]

Given the decision of AHEC to proceed with the restructure of Kirkbrae, and, in particular, adopt the ANSVAR recommendation to merge the CEO role with either the CFO or Facility Manager, the position of CEO, as then defined, became redundant. (It should be noted that this recommendation is consistent with one made by the FDC's consultant, which predated the COVID crisis, to merge the CEO and CFO positions). Mr Sketcher was offered terms slightly above statutory requirements. He opted to take legal advice and, after a modest improvement, has indicated agreement. This matter has been documented by Kirkbrae's lawyers, and the committee has consulted the Trusts Corporation. Execution and settlement are expected in the immediate future.

Strategy

The committee and Acting CEO met on Saturday, 30 January, to determine the strategy for Kirkbrae. Apart from being good governance, the production of a strategy plan is a requirement for registration with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). The session was expertly facilitated by committee member Mr James Bligh, and the committee was greatly encouraged by the progress that was made. The committee expects to be able to finalise and approve the strategy plan by its April meeting. Kirkbrae will publish the document on its website (<https://www.kirkbrae.org.au/>) at that time.

Corporate Matters

PCVL has been registered with ASIC, but that is a very small step on the path to fulfilling the AHEC mandate. The major issues now being progressed are registration by the ACNC and achieving Public Benevolent Institution status. The Chairman of the Finance and Audit Committee, Elder Iain Bramley, has the carriage of this matter.

Financial reporting has emerged as a significant issue. The chart of accounts appears not to have been regularly revised, and allocations of shared costs and overheads between Aged Care and Retirement Living are not accurate. Understanding the profitability of each business, therefore, requires a great deal of time-consuming, manual manipulation of the numbers. The AIM system has several material inadequacies, and the decision has therefore been taken to outsource our finance function, which will address these issues, and at a lower cost.

AHEC took over in November. At that time, losses were running well above the approved budget. That continued in December and January, but in February, the committee is beginning to see some green shoots of hope in the operating performance as the 'quick wins' are reducing costs. The implementation of the restructure should start showing in the March results, which will, of course, be impacted by costs associated with redundancies. April will be the first relatively 'clean' month.

The committee confirms that it has made applications to the relevant government departments for all possible grants and financial assistance for which Kirkbrae qualifies, with satisfactory results.

January results reflect an unrealised investment gain of just over \$1million. The committee is grateful to God for such a windfall but note that a) it is unrealised and b) the committee is at present almost exclusively focussed on operational performance and cash.

Clinical Governance Committee

The committee wishes to record its deep gratitude to three members of our Clinical Governance Committee who have agreed to continue serving post their service on the SSC: Dr Elizabeth Lewis (Chair), Mrs Jenny Pilgrim, and Mrs Jenny Barnett. This committee is pivotal in the life and operations of Kirkbrae. It labours in governance to satisfy the many demanding standards imposed by the Government, and it is fundamental to keeping Kirkbrae's residents as healthy and comfortable as possible in their twilight years.

As mentioned in November, the committee is still in great need of an appropriately qualified Health Professional on its committee/board.

Senior Management

The committee has been fortunate that the Acting CEO, Mr John Fogarty, has turned out to be a very experienced and capable professional. He has been on short term contracts, and his present extension is until 30 June 2021. Mr Fogarty seems to be enjoying the challenge of the turn-around, but his previous roles running large hospitals makes him over-qualified. Even if he did wish to stay on, he is not a member of a Protestant Church as required under the PCVL Constitution. The committee is now scoping the CEO role as it will be in the new structure and will soon commence the search for a full-time replacement.

The Facilities Manager, Ms Angelika Oyarzun, is a very capable person, and her contract is presently being renegotiated. She enjoys the confidence of the Clinical Governance Committee. The committee is interested in securing her as a full-time employee.

Independent Living Units

The Retirement Living Manager, Mrs Sandy Ward, is very competent, and this aspect of the business is largely trouble-free. It is not gaining much attention at present, given the focus on Residential Aged Care.

There are a fair number of the original units standing vacant. The intention was to redevelop them. This is on hold, although a handful of these units are being rented out on a short-term basis to people who would otherwise be homeless. Aside from the charitable aspect of doing so, it does provide a little extra cash.

Chaplaincy

The chaplaincy and pastoral care work continues smoothly. The committee plans to engage with the team and the Acting CEO to see what can be done to make more overt the fact that Kirkbrae is a Christian organisation.

Cooperation with Other Providers

The committee wishes to acknowledge with thanks the offer of assistance from Presbyterian Aged Care New South Wales. Thus far, they have given the committee access to their suite of policies, which will be very helpful as it establishes its governance model.

The committee is also grateful to the CEO of Donwood Community Care, Mrs Natasha Wilkinson, for spending some time reviewing, free of charge, the non-compliant aspects of Kirkbrae's Clinical Governance standards.

In the medium term, the committee is interested in joining an appropriate group of smaller aged care providers for the purposes of information exchange and collaboration in a highly complex and regulated environment.

Conclusion

Kirkbrae is a wonderful place. It has been through significant trials, and the facilities need improvement, but the residents and their families seem content and even happy. For that, we thank our loving heavenly Father.

While Kirkbrae is still in a difficult situation on several fronts and will still show a loss for the financial year ending 30 June 2021, the committee is quietly confident that the decisions taken and which are being implemented will see a return to month-to-month profitability by the end of the 2022 financial year.

The committee is grateful to our sovereign God for his grace towards it, and it is the committee's prayer that he will guide the committee's every decision for his greater glory and the salvation of many.

W Duncan McGregor
CONVENER

BOARD OF INVESTMENT AND FINANCE (Min 18)

Additional Expenditure

Since the last reporting to the General Assembly, the Board of Investment and Finance (BIF) has approved the following amendment to committee budgets in accordance with BIF regulation 9(b)(ii)(1):

Committee	Amount \$	Purpose
Safe Church	\$1,000	Training

Property matters

Approval was given by the board under BIF reg 16 (a) for the following urgent property transaction

- lease of the manse at 12 Clarke Street Ararat (Vol 8091 Fol 837) for up to two years at a rental not less than \$1,300 per month (BIF 305/20)
- lease of the church property at 945 Yan Yean Road Doreen (Vol 08306 Fol 721) for up to two years at a rental of no less than \$550 per week from the beginning of 2021 (BIF 379/20)
- lease of the Benalla kindergarten hall, part 3 Church Street Benalla for up to 13 months at a rental of no less than \$650 per month (BIF 382/20)
- lease of the Broadford manse at 28 Hamilton Street Broadford for 12 months at a rental of no less than \$1250 per month (BIF 382/20).

Hospitality and Gift Policy

In light of modern governance standards, the board has adopted a policy for hospitality and gifts. The board recommends that the policy be adopted by the General Assembly for all office bearers and committees within the church, but first through consultation with and processing by the Code and General Administration Committee.

Unfunded Employment Risks

The May 2018 Commission of Assembly resolved to (min 6.8):

8. Request the BIF, in consultation with the Code Committee and the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee, to bring to the next Assembly advice about how such circumstances may be avoided in the future and such needs, should they arise, be funded in the future.

This issue arose in the context of the Presbytery of Benalla seeking funds from the Commission to meet its employment obligations in the order of \$36,000, arising from the termination of a minister.

As requested, the board has consulted both the Code Committee and the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee in framing this response. This report and recommendation are confined to the risks associated with employment under which this issue arose.

Under the PCV rules, various bodies are authorised to employ persons within the church. The following table summarises those rules:

Position	Employer	Rule
Pastoral support	Presbytery	4.70
Resident supply	Presbytery	4.70
Part-time ministry	Presbytery	4.71
Appointments to Appointment charge	Presbytery	4.72
Appointments to Home Mission charge	Presbytery	4.73
Church Plant charge	Presbytery or CPC	4.74
Assistants to the minister	Minister	4.75
Diaconal Care	Board	3.40
Congregational officers	Board	3.45.1
Assembly Officers	Assembly	5.19
Committee appointments	Assembly Committee	5.32

The board has been engaging in discussion with the Code Committee on employment issues for a number of years. While a number of questions remain to be resolved, the general principles seem to be sufficiently well defined to address the question at hand.

The board has also received legal advice in the context of its responsibility to provide draft employment contracts in various situations, e.g. rules 3.45.1, 4.72.3, and so on. The legal advice confirms that the appropriate employer in each case is the persons or body listed in the second column of the above table. This advice is consistent with the expectations which the PCV Code places on the church.

The legal advice also confirmed that inducted ministers are not employed under common law and so not eligible to be included under any WorkCover insurance. The church does not use employment contracts for inducted ministers, which reflects the nature of the engagement. However, in relation to this issue, the same principles apply for inducted ministers.

The fact that none of the ‘employers’ listed in the table above has legal personality except the minister (rule 4.75) raises various legal and procedural issues. That is not the subject of this report and will be addressed at another time. Suffice to say that it is the PCV rules which give rise to the legal and procedural complications, and that is where those matters will need to be addressed, probably in concert with some more fundamental structural change.

Despite those complications, the PCV Code has not generally been prevented from meeting its financial employment obligations. It is well understood that the congregation is expected to meet the financial obligations associated with the employment of any persons serving the congregation. This is well supported in the Code, including rule 24.8.1 ‘The remuneration of any minister is the first charge on the ordinary revenue of the congregation.’

This may be facilitated by various financial assistance provided by committees of the Assembly. While this holds true in normal circumstances, the issue in question is how to respond in the unusual circumstance where there is a sudden disruption to the finances of the congregation.

While congregations have the primary responsibility for funding employment, they do not have total autonomy in appointing workers under the PCV rules. Presbytery has a significant role to play in the appointment of ministry workers, including the induction of ministers to pastoral charges. Rules 4.70 to 4.75 state that the presbytery is responsible for appointing ministry workers in the various circumstances mentioned there. While there is some ambiguity and lack of clarity in the PCV code about various employment arrangements and particularly how persons are employed by a congregation, in general, presbytery would have some oversight of this process. Certainly, the Assembly does not get involved in the appointment of any workers at a congregational level.

Given the responsibility of presbytery in the appointment of workers along with the responsibility of presbytery for the general oversight of congregations within their bounds, the BIF believes that presbytery is best placed to ascertain the financial risk associated with the employment arrangements within their presbytery and to provide a mechanism for funding that. The instance which gave rise to this matter is considered to be a highly unusual situation. This raises the prospect of whether a fund needs to be established in advance or whether such a situation could be funded through presbytery when the need becomes evident. As long as there is a clear understanding of the mechanism and responsibilities associated with that process, it should work.

In the case of inducted ministers, where there is no employment contract, the risk of having an unfunded liability is significantly reduced because ministers are only ever inducted to a pastoral charge which has a higher level of financial security than other types of charges. However, in an extreme situation, the above proposal could equally apply.

Each presbytery could assess the employment risk within their presbytery and formulate its own plan for funding that risk. For example, a presbytery levy may be assessed relative to each employment position to provide funds. Alternatively, presbytery may consider that funds need not be set aside in advance but could instead put a mechanism in place that can be implemented in the event that funds are needed. The ongoing oversight by the presbytery of congregations should, in most circumstances, provide adequate opportunity for the presbytery to take early action to avoid a crisis.

The recommendation of the board is that the Assembly:

1. Note the responsibility that presbytery has under the PCV Code in relation to filling vacancies in a pastoral charge, making ministry appointments and approving other employment by the congregation or its officers; as well as the 'general responsibility and duty for the well-being of the church and its work, and of the congregations, and all congregational property, organisations and activities, within its jurisdiction.'
2. Instruct each presbytery to inquire into the employment arrangements which exist within its presbytery so that the extent of potential financial exposure of the church can be quantified.
3. Instruct each presbytery to formulate plans to fund from within the presbytery, by way of a levy or other means, any unforeseen employment liabilities which a congregation may become unable to meet due to unforeseen or extreme circumstances.

Governance and Legal Structure

The October 2019 General Assembly approved the following:

6. Request that the Board of Investment and Finance consider the present financial, governance and legal identity structure of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, suggesting areas which need revision to promote efficiency and responsiveness to present and future changes in state and federal law; and report to the 2020 Commission of Assembly, along with recommendations regarding the best way that such a review can be effected.

The board has drafted a report in response to this matter which it has shared with the Code Committee for feedback and input. The report raises a number of complex and challenging issues which will require further consultation and consideration before they are sufficiently developed for presentation to the Assembly. The board is intending to report on this matter to the October 2021 Assembly.

Barry Oakes
CHAIRMAN

CHURCH AND NATION COMMITTEE (Min 12)

1. The Change Suppression (Conversion) Prohibition Bill

On 4 February 2021, the *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Bill 2020* was passed by the Victorian Parliament. The Bill will come into effect in February 2022, 12 months from the day after Royal Assent, or earlier if 'proclaimed' by the Governor of Victoria.

Our Moderator General Rev Dr Peter Barnes has communicated to the General Assembly of Australia the following words:

What is the Church to do? Two things come immediately to mind:

a. The apostle considered himself innocent of the blood of all because he proclaimed the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:26–27). We are obliged before God to preach all that He has revealed to us, whether law or gospel, and to do so in a spirit of love and truth.

b. There is nothing unique in such legislation. When King Darius exceeded his God-given authority, Daniel did 'as he had done previously' (Dan 6:10).

The Church and Nation Committee echoes the statements of our Moderator General. However, there is still much to learn concerning the consequences for us as a denomination as we continue to live faithfully and teach and preach biblically the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In November 2019, the Victorian Church and Nation Committee brought the GAV's attention to the then-upcoming Victorian 'Conversion Therapy Ban'. On the Church's behalf, the committee prepared and submitted several consultation papers to educate the Government about the committee's support for reasonable measures whilst also outlining the committee's strong opposition to any infringements upon the ability of Christians, churches, and Christian organisations to practice their faith (as well as general freedoms of speech and association for all Victorians).

However, when the final wording of the Bill was eventually tabled, the committee realised that its efforts had fallen upon deaf ears. Whilst the committee expected the legislation to come to the Victorian Parliament sooner, ultimately, the timing could not have been worse (introduced in the Lower House in late December 2020 and the Upper House in early February). This meant that the committee's final campaigning against the excesses of the Bill occurred when many members of Parliament and the public were away.

The Government argued that it took a consultative approach when creating the Bill. However, as the committee and the PCV was one of the first denominations or groups consulted, the committee can testify to the fact that its 'consultation' and input was not considered.

After December 2019 (and even after the final, radical wording of the Bill was released), the Government did not conduct any further official consultations with the committee, nor to the committee's knowledge, with any other faith group where strong opposition was likely to have been voiced. Instead, the Government focused its consultation efforts on groups that supported the legislation.

As a new member and GAV representative of the Multi Faith Advisory Group (MAG), the committee through that group was simply 'advised' that the legislation was coming and given very brief and general information. Even this scant level of information was new to many members of the MAG, especially those of non-Christian faith communities. The committee was asked in that group by the government representatives not to talk about the legislation, but the convener quickly alerted the committee, the ACL and CAUSE (www.freetochange.org and www.stopsafeschools.org).

The committee began rallying church members to start a phone, email, and letter-writing campaign before the legislation was tabled and urged the campaign onwards after the Bill was released and throughout the debates in the Lower and Upper Houses. The committee also collaborated with CAUSE to create an informative video featuring the committee's researcher Moira Deeming and Leah Gray, who is a brave Christian and has been wonderfully saved and especially saved from unwanted homosexuality and gender confusion. She, along with others, are living proof that faith in Christ and loving biblical counselling can transform hearts and lives, a fact that this Bill outright denies.

Providentially, in a very short time, the committee was able to find, encourage, and be encouraged by many other like-minded groups and worked together to coordinate the amendment campaigns. The committee worked with representatives from the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, the Anglican Church, the Churches of Christ, the Orthodox Church, the Australian Christian Churches, along with the ACL. In addition, the committee was also meeting with other faith leaders from the Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh faith groups, atheist Libertarians, and atheist feminists.

How did we get to this legislation?

Victoria has undergone a swift ideological change at the legislative level in a very short time. In 2014, the Victorian Labor party was elected with a clear majority in the Lower House, and in 2018, it increased its numbers again, with the addition of a Labor-Reason-Animal Justice 'alliance' majority in the Upper House. The Government has consistently prioritised 'pro-LGBTQI+' legislative agenda (Tomazin, 2016), including:

- Adopting a 'whole of government LGBTQI+ strategy' to ensure that every level and every policy of Government serves the interests of the LGBTQI+ community (towards which goal approximately \$30 million is allocated annually). (Foley, 2018) This included a brief public consultation process (to which the Victorian Church and Nation Committee made a submission).
- Establishing Australia's first 'Equality portfolio', with a Minister for Equality and a Commissioner for Gender and Sexuality (now the Commissioner for LGBTQI+ Communities).
- Making 'Safe Schools' curriculums (which promote transgenderism and early sexualisation of children) mandatory in all State Secondary Schools.
- Repealing the offence of intentionally infecting someone with HIV. (Foley, 2018)
- Amending the Adoption Act (1984) to allow same-sex couples to adopt. A clause that would have forced faith-based organisations to facilitate adoptions from same-sex couples failed to pass.
- Amending the law to allow anybody to list their legal sex descriptor as male, female, or any other gender diverse or non-binary descriptor of their choice

on their birth certificates, annually, without having had 'sex reassignment surgery.

- \$15 million funding for construction of the Victorian Pride Centre (which houses and subsidises LGBTQI+ lobby groups), and the development, promotion, and implementation of pro- LGBTQI+ policy changes within private industries across Victoria.
- Overhauling the Victorian public sector policies, guidelines, uniforms, screen savers, lanyards, hiring practices, and calendars (Gidley, 2018) to 'encourage' celebration of LGBTQI+ 'identities'.
- The creation of a 'Health Complaints Commissioner' with increased powers to take action against groups practicing 'gay conversion therapies', which could issue public warnings, ban practitioners from operating in Victoria, and recommend financial punishments and criminal prosecution. This was considered too weak and on the basis of a recommendation from the Health Complaints Commissioner, the Government promised to devise a stronger 'conversion therapy ban'.
- The *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Bill 2020*. (Victorian Government, 2021), (Equaldex, 2021), (Wikipedia, 2021)

Note: A 'future directions paper' is planned for release in 2021, expected to include plans to reintroduce their previous failed 'inherent requirements test' to remove the rights of religious organisations, such as schools, to only hire employees who share their religious ethos. (Victorian Government, 2021). The battle is not over.

The wording of the *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Prohibition Bill* is extreme. This legislation has removed all legal differentiation between harmful 'change or suppression practices' such as torture and coercive aversion therapy, and helpful 'change or suppression practices', such as consensual prayer and the 'watch and wait approach' to gender dysphoria in minors.

This legislation assumes that any and all activities which seek to persuade or support another person to resist or outgrow homosexual or transgender feelings are harmful and, therefore, categorises them as criminal, even if consent is given.

This legislation renders expert clinician judgments, civil disagreements, biblical evangelism, prayer ministry, and reasonable parental interventions that contravene the Government mandated views on sexuality and gender, subject to a variety of punishments, including compulsory re-education, deregistration, fines, jail, and even loss of child custody.

According to research conducted by the Institute for Civil Society, the Victorian 'conversion therapy ban' is the broadest and harshest legislation of its kind. It has the fewest limitations and the harshest criminal penalties of any similar legislation in the entire world. For example:

- 'Conversion bans' in most other jurisdictions allow only up to 1 years' imprisonment for 'psychological harm', the Victorian Bill allows up to 5 years' imprisonment or a \$100,000 fine, and for 'serious psychological harm', ten years imprisonment or a \$200,000 fine.
- Advertising a change or suppression practice attracts a fine of almost \$10,000 for an individual or \$50,000 for a 'body corporate'. (Parliament of Victoria, 2020)

- Every other ‘conversion therapy ban’ in the world includes at least some limitations to protect guidance and discussion in the context of parental or personal relationships, religious teaching, and age of (and ability to) consent. This is not so under the Victorian Bill, which makes it illegal for ‘any person’, including clinicians, parents, teachers, and religious ministers (outside of sermons) to gently and lovingly steer a person with sexual or gender confusion towards a biblical (or scientific) perspective—even if that person (or their parents) consent.
- The Victorian Bill also gives unprecedented special powers to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) which can only be applied in ‘change or suppression practice’ cases. The Commission has been granted the power to conduct investigations *without formal prompting from an actual victim or complainant*, as well as on the basis of *anonymous unaffected third-party* complainants, the power to compel accused parties to produce evidence and to issue its own compliance notices (which can then be enforced through VCAT). Thus, the Commission has the power to act as instigator, investigator, and judge in cases of alleged ‘change or suppression’ practices. (Sneddon, 2021)

The vote

In the Lower House, the Liberal Opposition raised some concerns about women’s rights and the medical transitioning of gender dysphoric minors, but ultimately, they abstained, and the Bill passed to the Upper House. In the Upper House, the vote was 27 for (including 8 Liberals who previously intimated that they would abstain) and nine against. Only two Liberals actually voted against the Bill (Bernie Finn and Beverly McArthur). Crossbenchers David Limbrick and Tim Quilty (Liberal Democrats), Jeff Bourman (Shooters, Fishers and Farmers), Tania Maxwell and Stuart Grimley (Justice Party), Independent Catherine Cummings, and Clifford Hayes (Sustainable Australia) also voted against the Bill. Amendments were proposed by the Liberals and Crossbenchers, but every one of them failed.

Some members of the Liberal Party then proceeded to give private assurances that should they be elected to Government at the next state election, they would surely amend the Bill as requested. Time will tell if they have the heart and will to do this in two or six years.

Issues to be considered:

1. The PCV needs to carefully assess the legal ramifications of the Bill for the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, Christian parents, Christian professionals, and various kinds of lay ministry.
2. The PCV will need to seek advice on its organisational indemnity and professional indemnity cover regarding counselling for ministers. There may be changes made by insurers who will seek to minimise claims.

2. Church Closures and Restrictions

Following the October 2020 GAV, the Moderator wrote letters to the Premier and Opposition leader voicing the Assembly’s concerns. No response was received from the Premier’s Office, but some response was received from the Opposition leader. With State of Emergency legislation, there was little anyone could do to persuade any relaxation of regulations for churches.

3. Chaplaincy Private Member Bill

Fiona Pattern of the Reason Party (formerly the Sex Party) introduced in October a private members' Bill into Parliament calling for the abolition of Christian chaplains from Victorian State Schools. The Church and Nation Committee undertook a campaign in October and received many responses to its letters from Liberal Legislative Council Members along with many crossbenchers supporting the committee's request that the *status quo* continue. On this occasion, Mr James Merlino, Deputy Premier and State Minister for Education, responded and indicated that the Government did not support private members bills. He did not indicate whether the Government had sympathy with the proposed Bill.

4. Multi Faith Advisory Group

From late October, Rev Chris Duke has been the PCV representative, replacing Rev Graham Bradbeer, who served in this role for many years. The committee thanks Graham for his many years of service. In many ways, it is challenging to sit through some of the discussions of this group, however bridges of communication are being built. However, the first meeting attended was at the invitation from the Deputy Premier Mr James Merlino, with the Minister for Health, Mr. Martin Foley, and the deputy Chief Health Officer Dr Cheng. On that particular Zoom meeting, the Church and Nation committee convener was able to present an argument concerning the discrimination against ministers and pastors and other faith leaders not being able to conduct pastoral visits in the homes of faith community members. Considering that people were allowed to seek psychological and psychiatric counselling, there was a great imbalance and disservice that ministers were unable to undertake pastoral visits in people's homes. Two days later, this restriction was lifted.

The current Government seems to use this group only to communicate their preconceived policies that affect faith groups. In the past two months, each member was invited to participate in a video production. We were given about 20–30 seconds to communicate something about love or harmony or a scripture. You can check this out to see the diversity of beliefs. The convener's participation (5.45 minutes in) is the shortest gospel message he has ever given.

https://www.dropbox.com/s/upuczaaqzulgtj1/VMC_Scriptures_Subbed.mp4?dl=0

Christopher Duke
CONVENER

CHURCH PLANTING COMMITTEE (Min 13)

'Will the Presbyterian church give us a grant for the building project'? It is a question the committee would love to answer yes to, but the answer has to be no. The reason the answer has to be no is because Donnybrook Presbyterian Church has no land, let alone a building. Darebin Presbyterian Church has no property either, nor does Point Cook, Warragul, or Croydon. Neither do any of the Presbyterian Churches that the committee is praying will be planted across the state of Victoria in the coming years.

The denomination can rarely afford to buy land for future churches. It does not have the resources to pay for the erection of buildings as well. It has finite resources (the Property Development Fund currently has less than \$600,000) and so must be strategic and focused. This is a cultural change that the denomination needs to embrace for the sake of gospel growth.

The Donnybrook land bank

Please rejoice with the committee that the Donnybrook Presbyterian Church launched in January this year under the leadership of Rev Ben Kelada. The committee has been seeking to find land that it can invest in for a building. It recently became aware of an 80 acre (32 hectare) block of land for sale in Donnybrook. It is currently zoned rural but likely to be rezoned in the next few years. They were asking for \$5 million, but it sold within a week for \$4.3 million. It would have been an outstanding investment for the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

Unfortunately, even though this land was sold for the amazing price of \$4.3 million and was an outstanding opportunity with a great location (corner of main roads), there was no way the Property Development Fund, with its balance of \$0.6 million, would have been able to secure the property for the wider work of the PCV.



Since Union, the denomination has seen the property footprint of the church shrink. As properties have been sold in various locations, the denomination has seen little

reinvested in properties for future congregations. The church has a tendency to use such monies as an income stream generator (e.g. Sites Reserve) or to do urgent or much-needed works on existing congregational buildings (e.g. significant repairs or moving the toilets indoors). As such, the denomination has less property than it did 44 years ago.

This default practice helps churches whose financial independence is precarious, and the latter enhances the usefulness of existing property. It is often said that when one says *yes* to one thing, one is also saying *no* to something else. In this case, the church has often said no to the future property needs of the wider church.

Not only has the church been saying no to wider church extension, but it has also done so within the context of the greatest population growth in Australia—the increasingly difficult cultural environment where schools and public facilities are increasingly saying no to church use, and state and local planning authorities no longer allowing churches to buy land in residential areas in order to build a church.

Even if the PCV did have the money, the only way to establish a church in a new suburb is to buy the land before the development plans are put in place. In brown-fields purchasing, an existing unused church (often problematic e.g. heating, heritage, insurance premiums, and parking) or using land zoned for industrial use seem to be the only options to secure facilities for new congregations.

A fresh look at the Sites Reserve Funds

The collective Sites Reserve Funds currently have more than \$15 million. While these monies are reserved, it remains the only money sufficient to secure properties in the current market.

It may be possible for the Property Development Fund to borrow money from congregations willing to partner with the CPC to purchase land banks in Victoria and to use the meagre resources of the Property Development Fund to pay some token amount of interest while the congregation awaits a future partial sale of the property allowing the lending congregation to be paid back in full. This would provide the Property Development Fund with the resources on the scale needed to secure property and while also allowing the lending church to contribute to the growth of the denomination as a whole and advancing the cause of church planting. Of course, such a scheme would require input from the BIF and Code Committees as well as willing congregations.

In this way, property such as the one recently identified at Donnybrook, which would have been impossible to purchase with the current PDF balance, could be secured.

Thinking Big

If thinking creatively about liberating resources for gospel investment is seen as radical, then the endeavour to see the *status quo* change is even more ambitious. To see the culture of the PCV shift in such a way as to prioritise strategic future investment will mean it must start having honest conversations that will be challenging and difficult. Because this conversation is hard and change is often difficult and costly, it is easy to avoid, but the longer the conversation is put off, the more difficult it will become.

Cameron Garrett
CONVENER

CODE AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (Min 20)

1. Setting the Assembly Rate

The 2019 General Assembly (min 25.5) instructed this committee to evaluate the current practice of approving an Assembly Rate after budgets for the year have already been approved by the Commission of Assembly prior to the budgetary year commencing. The committee agrees that it more logically belongs at the Commission of Assembly and notes that the Board of Investment and Finance has no objections to the move. As a result of this evaluation, the committee brings forward a proposal that will move the setting of the Assembly Rate from October to May alongside the budget-setting process. Clause 1 of the proposed deliverance advances this proposal to the Assembly, which will necessarily mean a minor adjustment to BIF regulation 10.

2. Review of committee membership generally and revision of Selection Committee regulations

This is the instruction from the Assembly (GAV 2019, min 76.5):

Request the Code and General Administration Committee to:

- a) *Consider the memberships of all committees and after any necessary consultation, bring any recommended changes to the 2020 General Assembly.*
- b) *Bring revised regulations for the Selection Committee to allow it to:*
 - i. *bring General Assembly of Australia committee nominations to the General Assembly of Victoria for approval, or if necessary, make nominations, noting BB 1979, Commission, min 9.*
 - ii. *adjust General Assembly of Australia nominations between assemblies as necessary noting BB 2018, min 78.7*

The committee has consulted with Assembly committees as requested. In particular, the committee asked regarding size and membership, asking whether the size of the committee is sufficient to achieve their stated purpose. Some helpful responses were returned, with most committees indicating satisfaction with how things are at present.

However, there is a desire for change from three committees:

- a) for Christian Education and Nurture Committee to reduce their membership from 11 to 7, and also to consider a change of name to Christian Education and Youth Committee, better reflecting that supervision of PYV lies within their regulations, though this last proposal (name change) awaits further consideration;
- b) for Maintenance of the Ministry Committee to reduce their membership from 6 to 4, with no anticipated reduction of effectiveness;
- c) for Social Services Committee, in the light of the formation of the new ad hoc governance committee taking full responsibility for Kirkbrae, to reduce their membership from ten to seven;
- d) the Social Services Committee also asked for the removal of the requirement to meet monthly (see their regulation 3(b)).

On the assumption that these changes will be approved, the committee conducted an analysis of the overall composition of the committees to assess whether or not the overall structure is unwieldy or dysfunctional or whether there is too much strain on individual ministers as is sometimes claimed. To do this the committee excluded Assessors, Ballot, Exit and Overseas Visitors Fund committees which are each

specially constituted and solely for targeted reasons, AND also not counting ex-officio positions where office bearers of the Assembly must attend.

There are 20 Assembly committees with 128 members and 14 vacancies (that is 11% vacant). This gives a representative voice to 128 members of the church in running the Assembly's mission. The committee believes that this is superior to the top-heavy, executive style of decision-making that comes by amalgamating committees into mega portfolios. The current system gives each committee a specific focus to work on and does not overwhelm meetings with too wide a range of oversight.

Ministers sitting on how many committees (excluding retired ministers)

Ministers	Sit on how many committees?	%
41	none	42
32	one	33
10	two	10
6	three	6
6	four	6
2	five	2

75% of ministers are either on no committee or just one.

Of course, there are just a few members who are overloaded with committee work, and there are some very notable generous retirees.

The committee believes that it is incorrect to say that 'ministers are overloaded with committee work and therefore distracted from their gospel work', noting that a significant number of ministers are not on any committee. The committee believes, in fact, that the number of committees the Assembly has, and the narrow field of service for each, is a protection against overload and distraction.

The committee believes it has attended to the request regarding Selection Committee regulations to allow for prompt attention to General Assembly of Australia nominations when required. The committee has arrived at the necessary regulation change.

Clause 2 of the proposed deliverance will advance the requested changes to committee regulations.

3. Eligibility for election as elders – adding a note to rule 3.11

This is a very simple matter to address. It was brought to the committee's attention that if one read *only* the Victorian rules in chapter 3, and was not cognisant of the effect of a church censure under the Code of Discipline, it may not be clear that a suspended or deposed minister, or other officer of the church, forfeits his eligibility to stand for election as an elder. The committee thought that the best remedy for this is to add a note after rule 3.11 to draw attention to this fact. Clause 3 of the proposed deliverance advances this note.

4. Commission for Church Institutions regulations

It came to our attention that the Commission for Church Institutions is appointed annually and operates with the briefest of instructions but with no regulations. To the committee's knowledge, there has not been any problem raised or difficulty faced in operating in this way for all these years; nevertheless, considering the weighty matters

that the Commission deals with, it was thought it is the way of wisdom to provide regulations and instruct the Commission to work from them from now on. Clause 4 of the proposed deliverance advances this to the Assembly.

5. MMC regulations

The Maintenance of the Ministry Committee seeks to remove the sentence in regulation 14 of its regulations that was added at the October 2020 Assembly. In hindsight, the MMC believes that the addition of words last year creates an unintended and unforeseen restriction to the committee's capacity regarding the granting of Sustentation Grants when flexibility is sometimes required. Removing the whole sentence, that is, reverting to the original version of regulation 14 (pre-Oct 2020), will enable the committee to have the type of flexibility which is sometimes needed with sustentation grants. Clause 5 of the deliverance advances this change. Questions should be directed to the MMC convener.

6. METRO regulations

METRO Committee has explained to this committee their need for an administrative assistant to attend to the increasing level of compliance and processing demands. Clause 6 of the proposed deliverance seeks to make the appropriate alteration to regulations to permit the committee to employ such a person.

John P Wilson
CONVENER

COMMISSION FOR CHURCH INSTITUTIONS (Min 21)

The council of Presbyterian Ladies College has informed the Commission, as a matter of courtesy, that it intends to re-write the PLC constitution in order to modernise the language and bring the document into line with that expected of a modern company operating under the Corporations Act. The council assures the church that nothing in the proposed revision threatens the vital connection between church and school or diminishes the Christian basis or Presbyterian underpinnings of the school. The Commission seeks an instruction from the General Assembly to review and respond to (if necessary) in a timely manner any proposed revision that might be forwarded to it.

John P Wilson
CLERK OF ASSEMBLY

METRO COMMITTEE (Min 19)

The METRO Committee undertakes a huge amount of administration to achieve its mission of helping local congregations raise and make gospel workers for the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The role of the secretary is particularly large and in recent years very committed pastors have had to resign from this position and the committee due to the workload required as they found they were unable to maintain this and their duties as pastor of their local congregation. Given this problem, the METRO committee seeks the General Assembly's approval to slightly alter the METRO committee's regulations and approve the request to have an administrative assistant for the committee.

This request is urgent, and the METRO committee members are not able to fulfill this role in their volunteer capacity. Without an administrative assistant the METRO committee will be unable to achieve its mission which will severely hinder the prospect of raising future PCV full time gospel workers.

The METRO committee budget was approved at the 2020 Commission of Assembly with the inclusion of \$6,000pa wages for an administration assistant. In order to make this appointment, the METRO committee needs the GAV approval to:

- a. amend the committee's regulations with the inclusion of an extra clause;
and
- b. approve the role description of the administrative assistant.

The role description is presented in the proposed deliverance of this committee. This motion to change the regulations is required to be presented in the proposed deliverance of the Code and General Administration Committee.

The METRO committee is requesting (through the deliverance of the Code Committee) that the following clause be added to the METRO regulations:

5. Employees

The committee may appoint, under the provision of Rule 5.32, an administrative assistant.

The proposed role description is as follows.

Role Description – Administrative Assistant to the METRO Committee

Committee

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the committee, an administrative assistant is required to undertake the following tasks to support the METRO committee—in particular the secretary and convener.

Remuneration and time

It is expected that the role requires 3 hours per week (seasonally, with more work undertaken in the second half of the year than the first). Remuneration will be according to the process established under the regulations of the Board of Investment and Finance.

Tasks:**a) Preparation of Agenda for meetings**

This agenda should be developed in consultation with the secretary and convener and sent (via email) to committee members at least a week before the meeting. This may also require prompting others on the committee to submit items for the agenda.

b) Attending Committee meetings (approx. 5 times per year) and preparation of minutes

Minutes of the meetings should be distributed to members (via email or Dropbox) within a week of the meeting. A hard copy of the minutes must be signed by the convener once those minutes are approved at the next meeting. These signed copies are to be stored in a file and printed and pasted into a minute book.

c) Maintaining Website

Checking information on the METRO website in a timely manner which includes communicating with members of the committee to make sure mailing addresses, dates, videos and photos are up to date.

d) Communication with applicants

When an application form has been processed, the administrative assistant will write letters to the trainee, their trainer, and the church advising them of the result of their application.

e) Communication with the PCV

Including the PCV Network, church office, or other committees on behalf of the committee and convener as required from time to time.

f) Sending timely reminders via email to trainees and trainers regarding key event dates

Engage Leaders Conference, METRO Graduation/Orientation Day, MTS Conferences, METRO Trainees half-yearly surveys.

g) Safe Church Unit liaison and compliance

Quarterly communication with the Safe Church Unit to ensure that all METRO activities are in compliance with the requirements of Safe Church.

h) Compiling manuals, books and resources and employment packs

Organising the printing, copying, binding and distribution of manuals for trainees. Purchase and distribution of books to trainees. Correspondence with PCV office and MTS to ensure that employment packs are up to date.

Desirable in the applicant:**a) Knowledge of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria**

The applicant is familiar with the processes and practices of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria including the different courts and committees of the church.

b) Design and Video experience

The applicant has some basic or intermediate ability in graphic design and videography.

The METRO committee is very thankful for the Church and Nation Committee which provided their contract for their researcher.

The committee thanks the Clerk John Wilson and the General Manger Michael Ellison for their help in preparing this report.

Toby McIntosh
CONVENER

PAST MODERATOR'S REPORT (Min 9)

The privilege afforded me by the Assembly to act as Moderator was perhaps the greatest honour I have received in this life. As both an elder of the church and as one of the worst of sinners, I acknowledge that I am one who has been saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and yet also He has given me the opportunity in His providence to serve you. I thank both God and the Assembly for giving me the opportunity to serve the church in the role of Moderator of the Assembly during the period October 2019–October 2020.

During my time as Moderator, as I sought to be a servant leader, my desire was to encourage the church and to be a builder's labourer as I wanted to see the church grow on the foundation which is Christ Jesus. Even in the beginnings of the COVID pandemic, I sought to represent the church in the press and in dealings with government as well as carrying out other normal moderatorial duties as the Assembly would have expected me to, given limitations on travel and the like.

This report is perhaps the final privilege afforded me and so I have written this with the objective of identifying issues I have observed in the hope that if you assess them as valid that the whole church will take them on board.

There are four things I would like to comment on:

1. My perception of a creeping episcopalian view and the consequential lack of realising the opportunity given to the church, post union, to become truly Presbyterian in nature.
2. The lack of unity across our committees, and, indeed, between some of our ministerial colleagues. Is the love we have one for another so evident that people looking in from the sidelines of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria would know that we are disciples of Christ because of the love we have one for another?
3. Willingness to serve. Are we truly Presbyterian in that we are willing to serve the wider church in whatever capacity we are able for a time, or do we limit our real service just to our local charge?
4. Our college.

My first point: my perception of a creeping episcopalian view and the consequential lack of realising the opportunity given to the church post union to become truly Presbyterian in nature. Are we now truly Presbyterian in nature? Have we lost the opportunity afforded at union, with the removal of many in ministry with liberal views, to grow the truly reformed, evangelical, covenantal nature of who we are as Presbyterians?

Are we really challenging our elders, whether those called ministers or ruling, to step up to the mark in leadership? Ministers, I ask you, how many of you have Sessions which basically act as rubber stamps to your decisions? How many of you would be happy to have members of the Session who come up with ideas you may not have?

The leadership team, under Christ, in Presbyterian charges, is meant to be the Session. Is that a reality, or are many of our ruling elders simply deferring to ministers and waiting on them for bright ideas? If that is the case, why?

When considering those suitable for eldership, is near enough good enough, or should an existing Session be identifying men as potential leaders because of their courage in leadership and initiative, as well as their evident maturity in the faith and sound doctrinal understanding? I know it is difficult sometimes to find people with that leadership trait but remember, leaders can be trained to be leaders!

My second point: lack of unity and what I will call sniping behind people's backs. Are we really, as leaders of the church, so loving of one another that people, unbelievers, looking in from the outside, would recognise that we are Christ's disciples?

Differing opinions are acceptable as we seek to do God's will, but is there a factionalism creeping in or indeed, present, say between older and younger or country versus city or church revitalisers versus church planters or money managers versus those who just want to give it away? Do we differ and yet still love? I admit on occasion I have felt that love was not present. Back-biting and gossiping, which I am as guilty of as others, were and are sometimes the behaviours that I have seen. We should be united in a common bond of loving both our Lord and God and one another. We should pray for unity.

My third point: willingness to serve. The cost in my personal life in my year of service as your Moderator was high, yet with my wife Alison with me, I persisted and actually enjoyed so many of the opportunities I had. As I look to the relative dearth of people prepared to serve as Moderator, I want to challenge you by asking not why but rather why not serve. In our Presbyterian form of government, ministers are called on to act as Moderators or Interim Moderators of charges, but both ruling elders and ministers are able to serve as Moderator's of Presbytery, the General Assembly of Victoria, and Australia. Will you step up to the mark, or are you just too busy, like I was?

My fourth point: our college. As a denomination, we are privileged to have our own theological college, which can and does run courses from certificate level through diploma, undergraduate, and postgraduate through to doctoral studies.

Support our college. Attend our college. Treasure our college and the academic and administrative team there. Support our students—not just those who are candidates for the ministry, but anyone who comes to study to grow in their love and knowledge our Lord and God, whether it be by online studies or on-campus studies.

Colin Morrow
PAST MODERATOR

COMMUNICATION 1 (Min 22)

Feb 23 2021

Rev John Wilson
156 Collins St
Melbourne 3000

Dear John,

RE: Communication to GAV regarding remuneration for SCU workers

The Safe Church Committee wish to inform the GAV that we believe there needs to be an increase in the remuneration of our Safe Church Unit workers. There are two reasons for this –

1. A worker deserves their wages

The Committee have become aware that in comparison with other denominations, our workers, particularly the Safe Church Facilitator, are underpaid. We would contend that the role of the SCF has outgrown the original award the position was created under and should be reviewed. We have seen an increase in responsibility for these positions both inside and outside the church that wasn't foreseen when the roles were created.

If we were to keep up with other denominations, we would be looking to double the remuneration for the SCF, and also increase the remuneration for the SCCAO.

2. Risk Management

With our current employees, Fiona and Ian, we have two people who have built the Safe Church Unit to be a place where members of the PCV can receive advice, training and support. We have people who are so well equipped that it would be a backwards move to seek anyone with less experience. The current remuneration package is so far below what others are offering it would be difficult to find someone with the required level of experience and/or training willing to take on this role.

(Neither Fiona nor Ian have indicated any plans to leave, but the risk remains.)

This has been raised with the BIF/TC and is being reviewed by the Audit Committee. But as this position is an Assembly appointment, it seems appropriate to bring this concern to the Assembly for their information before we get to the Commission of Assembly in May.

Thanks for your help in this.

Yours in Christ,



Rev Brian Harvey
Convener
revbharvey@gmail.com



Safe Church PCV – Committee
268 Canterbury Road, Heathmont, 3135
Convener – Rev Brian Harvey
www.safechurchpcv.org.au





TRINITY
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

Rev Philip Mercer

MINISTER, BA BTh

P: 03 98828102

M: 0409 384 677

E: philmercer@bigpond.com

The Clerk,
Presbyterian Church of Victoria,
156 Collins St.,
3001

Melbourne, VIC,

04.03.'21

At our regular meeting on 02.03.21, Trinity Session resolved to offer our church building and facilities as an alternate venue for holding a face-to-face meeting of the Commission of Assembly in May, should government restrictions permit, and the Assembly deem that desirable.

The church auditorium has a maximum seating capacity of 280 under the 2sqm rule. There is ease of access by public transport, with both train services along the Belgrave, Lilydale and Alamein lines from the city to Camberwell Station followed by a 10 minute walk to the church, and the 70 and 75 tram services from the city to Camberwell Junction. For those driving, there is on-site parking for @50 cars, and there is both limited parking in the surrounds to Waterloo Street and unlimited parking nearby.

Camberwell Junction provides multiple options for lunch and refreshments, and there are tea and coffee making facilities on-site in the hall. The facilities regularly cater to a congregation in excess of 300 and so a gathering the size of the Assembly should be comfortably provided for.

Kind Regards,

Phil Mercer (on behalf of Session)

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
MAY 2021

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMISSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA**

At Melbourne, and within Trinity Presbyterian Church, 581 Riversdale Road, Camberwell Victoria, on Tuesday 4 May 2021 at 10:30am.

1. Constitution

The Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria met by appointment of the March 2021 General Assembly (BB 2021 min 24). The Moderator, Rev Philip Mercer, constituted the Commission of Assembly with a devotion based upon 1 Peter 2:9-10, the singing of a hymn and prayer.

2. Roll

The Clerk intimated that the Roll of the Commission of Assembly consisted of those members whose names are on the Roll of the General Assembly, March 2021 and who remain qualified to be members of the Assembly.

3. Associations

The Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Associate Rev Jordan Born, member of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, with all sittings of this Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

4. Apologies

The Clerk intimated that the following apologies for non-attendance had been received:

Ministers: Keith Allen, Keith Bell, Robert Boan, Botros Botrosdief, Andy Buchan, Neil Chambers, Trevor Cox, Mark Crabb, Martin de Pyle, Theo Fishwick, Neil Harvey, Peter Hastie, Ian Hutton, Ian Leach, David Martin, Greg Matthews, Darren Middleton, Douglas Milne, Kainano Opeteia, Richard O'Brien, Peter Owen, Len Pearce, Andrew Slater, John Stasse, Gary Stephens, John Sutherland, Bob Thomas, Ian Touzel, Andrew Venn, Graeme Weber, Gary Wentworth, Walter Zurrer.

Elders: Jack Adlawan, John Angelico, Ross Barnett, Malcolm Browning, Daniel In Paek Chung, Craig Coates, Elizabeth Cutler, Andre Dahmen, Andrew Deeming, Bob Farquharson, James Finster, Tom Guilford, Graham Hammond, Graeme Hayes, Rob Herweynen, Ralph Kop, Paul Lee, Brett McArdle, Roger McIvor, Stephen Moody, Jeremy Peet, Robert Prout, David Selman, Bert Stasse, David Thomson, Bruce Timmins, Peter U'Ren, Anton Zirngast.

The Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Sustain the apologies.

The motion was seconded and approved.

5. Business Committee

The report of the Business Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Jared Hood, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Determine the hours of meeting to be 10:30am to the finish of business, with lunch 12:30pm–1:30pm, refreshments 3:40pm–4:00pm, dinner 5:30pm–6:30pm, as necessary.

2. Determine the time for speakers to be as follows:
 - 20 minutes in total for:
 - Conveners and seconders moving deliverances (as a whole and total of clause-by-clause)
 - Petitioners stating the petition
 - Appellants stating the appeal
 - Respondents to appeals
 - Question time (including 20 mins for total deliverance questions)
 - 15 minutes in total for:
 - Overturists stating the overture
 - 5 minutes for:
 - Appellants in reply
 - Movers of substantive motions and amendments
 - All other speakers.
 3. Appoint a Ballot Committee for the Commission of Assembly consisting of:
 - Rev Adam Humphries (Convener), Luke Brownley, Heath Easton
 - Elders Bert Stasse, Doug Fraser
 and determine that this committee be held to be thanked and discharged at the dissolution of this Assembly.
 4. Permit Committee Conveners and Chairpersons who are not members of the Commission of Assembly to address the Commission when their respective committee's report and deliverance is before the Commission.
 5. Permit the General Manager to be present in the Commission of Assembly including when meeting in private, and to answer any financial management questions.
 6. Permit the Privacy Officer to be present in the Commission of Assembly including when meeting in private, and to give advice as requested or required during any privacy-related matters.
 7. Permit the Safe Church Facilitator to be present in the Commission of Assembly, including when meeting in private, and to give advice as requested or required during any Safe Church related matters.
 8. Permit the Law Agent to be present in the Commission of Assembly including when meeting in private, and to give advice and to ask questions so as to formulate advice as requested or required during all matters.
 9. Authorise the Moderator and the Clerks of Assembly to scrutinise the minutes of this Commission, to make any necessary corrections, to confirm them, but only after circulating the corrected minutes among the members of the Commission for comment or further correction, and to send or make available a copy of the confirmed minutes to the members of the Commission, unless a later determination be made by this Commission.
 10. Approve the Order of Business.
- The motion was seconded and approved.

6. Election of Moderator-Designate

Immediate Past Moderator Elder Colin Morrow took the chair.

The Clerk's report was received.

The Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Receive the nominations of Rev Philip Donald Mercer (minister, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell) and Rev Peter William Phillips (retired minister).

2. Proceed to election as per regulation 4 of the nomination procedure for Moderator-Designate.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Ballot Committee supervised the conduct of the ballot. (min 8)

7. Board of Investment and Finance

The Moderator resumed the chair.

The Clerk sought leave to move a motion.

Leave was granted.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Redact the BIF's report by the omission of the words 'and the support of the PYV Council' from the last sentence of the second paragraph under the heading *Christian Education Committee / Presbyterian Youth Victoria* so that the sentence would read 'The CENC, through the agency of its Convener, has, in consultation, gained the agreement of the Youth Worker to this change'.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Rev Brian Harvey sought leave to move a motion.

Leave was not granted.

The report of the Board of Investment and Finance as amended was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-5 were approved.

(2) Rev Stephen Deroon moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Amend the deliverance by adding the following new clause 6, with the following clauses renumbered accordingly:

6. Direct the BIF to alter the committee budgets for 2021–2022 as presented, by increasing the Balfour Memorial Trust: Payments: 2790 Rent Paid Ministers' Holiday Home budget figure from \$70,000 to \$90,000, and tripling participating ministers' contributions to the Ministers Holiday Homes program so as to enable the Balfour Memorial Trust: Income: Rentals Received Ministers Holiday Homes budget figure to increase from \$10,000 to \$30,000.

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

Clause 6 was approved.

Clause 7 was moved and seconded.

(3) Rev Andrew Vines moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Amend clause 7 of the proposed deliverance 7 by adding the words 'except the CENC and PYV budgets' at the end of the clause.
2. Amend the proposed deliverance by adding a new clause 8 (with the following clauses renumbered accordingly) as follows:
 8. a. Permit the PYV to commence fundraising within the PCV for the purposes of securing the ongoing, full-time employment of the Youth Ministry Director.
 - b. Note that the PYV has more than \$230,000 in general funds.
 - c. Direct the BIF to prepare CENC and PYV budgets that continue to offer full-time employment to the Youth Ministry Director (as decided by the General Assembly on 17 December 2019, Min 7.2, 3) until at least the end of his current appointment (i.e. 6 January 2023), and give such budgets interim approval.
 - d. Direct the CENC to bring to the next Assembly a long-term plan for the ministry of the YMD.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Moderator declared the motion approved unanimously.

Clause 7 as amended was approved.

The Clerk sought leave to move an amendment to clause 9.

Leave was not granted.

Rev Graham Nicholson asked the Moderator to rule that the proposed amendment had arisen in the course of debate.

The Moderator ruled that the proposed amendment had arisen in the course of debate.

(4) The Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Amend Clause 9 by the insertion of the words 'reported to the Ministry Development Committee as at 31 December 2020 or where this is unavailable', so that the clause would read

9. Set the General Assembly Rate at \$100,000 in total to be allocated to each congregation in proportion to the number of communicants and adherents reported to the Ministry Development Committee as at 31 December 2020 or where this is unavailable, at 31 December 2019 as collated by the Ministry Development Committee and reported in a summarised form to the Assembly (BB 2020 p 349 – column E+F).

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clause 9 as amended was approved.

Clause 10 was approved.

Clause 11 was approved.

(5) The Chairman, Rev Barry Oakes, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Approve that the Safe Church Committee be funded as part of the General Mission Program and discontinue the Safe Church Levy and equalisation method.
2. Approve the General Mission Program for the financial year 2021–2022 as follows:

	2021–2022 \$
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES:	
Australian Presbyterian World Mission (Vic.)	58,150
Safe Church Committee	95,000
State News Committee	14,200
Theological Education – Bursary Fund	54,684
Women's Ministries Victoria	10,000
Total General Mission Program	232,034

3. Resolve that the formula for the allocation of the GMP to presbyteries as approved at the Commission of Assembly in May 2012 should continue for the year 2021–2022.
4. Approve the allocation of the total GMP for the financial year 2021–2022 as follows:

PRESBYTERY	Percentage of total	2021–2022 \$
Ballarat	3.41%	7,901
Flinders	12.25%	28,432
Geelong	2.41%	5,600
Gippsland	4.06%	9,419
Maroondah	9.13%	21,195
Melbourne East	21.12%	48,995
Melbourne North	18.66%	43,300
Melbourne West	16.72%	38,792
North East Victoria	4.17%	9,680
North Western Victoria	2.68%	6,216
South West Victoria	5.39%	12,504
TOTAL	100.00%	232,034

5. Request presbyteries to allocate the GMP to their several charges, and instruct them to advise charges in writing of their respective allocated amounts, and further, to advise the Church Office of such allocations.
6. Request presbyteries to ask charges to pay their General Mission Program allocations in full early in the financial year 2021–2022, or where this is not possible, to pay the amounts by monthly or quarterly instalments.
7. Approve all committee budgets for 2021–2022 as presented except the CENC and PYV budgets.
8.
 - a. Permit the PYV to commence fundraising within the PCV for the purposes of securing the ongoing, full-time employment of the Youth Ministry Director.
 - b. Note that the PYV has more than \$230,000 in general funds.
 - c. Direct the BIF to prepare CENC and PYV budgets that continue to offer full-time employment to the Youth Ministry Director (as decided by the General Assembly on 17 December 2019, Min 7.3) until at least the end of his current appointment (i.e. 6 January 2023), and give such budgets interim approval.
 - d. Direct the CENC to bring to the next Assembly a long-term plan for the ministry of the YMD.
9. Set the General Assembly Rate at \$100,000 in total to be allocated to each congregation in proportion to the number of communicants and adherents reported to the Ministry Development Committee as at 31 December 2020 or where this is unavailable, at 31 December 2019 as collated by the Ministry Development Committee and reported in a summarised form to the Assembly (BB 2020 p 349 – column E+F).
10. Remind committees to adhere to the policies and procedures for authorising the expenditure of committee funds.
11. Allocate the Mickle bequest funds (\$60,000) to the Safe Church Committee as General Funds.

The motion was seconded and approved.

8. Election of Moderator Designate – Result of the Ballot (min 6)

Immediate Past Moderator Elder Colin Morrow took the chair.

The Acting Moderator announced that, as the result of the ballot, the Moderator-Designate of the 2021 General Assembly is Rev Peter William Phillips.

The Acting Moderator congratulated Mr Phillips on his appointment and invited Mr Phillips to address the Commission of Assembly.

Mr Phillips addressed the Commission of Assembly.

The Acting Moderator led the Commission of Assembly in prayer.

9. Clerk's report – PCV Archivist

The Moderator resumed the chair.

The Clerk's report was received.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Thank Mrs Christine Palmer for her service to the church for 25 years as PCV Archivist, acknowledging that she has taken the church's collection of the 1980s and turned it into a well-ordered Archive by her meticulous and thorough research and her ability to collate and organise.

The Moderator spoke in support of the motion, congratulating Mrs Palmer on her diligent service to the church in its archive.

The motion was approved with acclamation.

Mrs Palmer addressed the Commission of Assembly.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Approve the job description, as follows:

PCV Archivist

The archivist, under the supervision of and reporting to the Clerk of Assembly, shall be the principal person to care for the PCV Archive, and in particular, will:

1. take every reasonable step to preserve the church's historical collection from loss or deterioration;
 2. take every reasonable step to satisfy church-based inquiries, and secondarily, if time permits, outside inquiries;
 3. in appropriate ways and when appropriate, remind the church courts, committees and organisations of the importance of preserving historical records;
 4. from time to time, arrange for special displays of any archival material that might be of interest to the church on suitable public occasions;
 5. supervise the depositing of fresh material to the Archive;
 6. give advice, when required, as to what material is to be sent to the Archive under Rules 4.96.6 and 5.49.2;
 7. as required, provide personal assistance to any PCV congregation or organisation preparing to celebrate significant anniversaries or milestones;
 8. be responsible for the selection and supervision of volunteers;
 9. report annually to the General Assembly on the state and use of the Archive, together with any suggestions for improvement.
2. Appoint the clerks as an ad hoc committee, called the ad hoc Archivist Search Committee, to advertise (initially within the church), interview applicants and then bring to the next General Assembly the name of a nominee for appointing, in accord with Rule 5.19.
 3. Permit the ad hoc Archivist Search Committee to seek advice from the NSW General Assembly Archivist, Sue Pacey, before coming to its final choice.
 4. Request the Board of Investment and Finance to continue to provide in the budget the same level of funding for the PCV Archive as at present, including provision for a two-day per week employee.

The motion was seconded and approved.

10. Maintenance of the Ministry Committee

The report of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-3 were approved.

The Convener sought leave to move sub-clause 4(d) in an amended form, with the deletion of the words 'and the maximum Sustentation Grant available to a charge be \$8,604.00', so that the sub-clause would read 'The Sustentation Qualifying Stipend be \$28,932.00 per annum.'

Leave was granted.

Clause 4 as amended was approved.

The Convener sought leave to move Clause 5 in an amended form, with the deletion of all words and the following words inserted in their place:

5. Set the Long Service Leave Levy for 2021–2022 at \$410 to be paid by every responsible body for every person for whom it is obliged to provide long service leave as at 1 July 2021.

Leave was granted.

Clause 5 as amended was approved.

Clause 6 was approved.

Clause 7 was approved.

The Convener, Elder Dennis Wright, moved the deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Remind presbyteries to actively follow up the submission of Annual Charge Reports by each charge within its bounds by the due date so that the committee can do the work the Assembly expects.
2. Remind presbyteries seriously to take note of the need to review and process all grant and subsidy applications prior to forwarding the same to this committee.
3. Strongly urge presbyteries to:
 - a. give more consideration to ministers' long service leave entitlements and the proper taking of that leave;
 - b. keep the record of ministers' long service leave up to date; and
 - c. inform this committee as early as is practicable of any applications by ministers to take long service leave.
4. Declare that from 1 July 2021:
 - a. The minimum remuneration increase to \$57,360.00;
 - b. The minimum stipend component of minimum remuneration be \$37,536.00;
 - c. The maximum non-cash benefit component of minimum remuneration be \$19,824.00;
 - d. The Sustentation Qualifying Stipend be \$28,932.00 per annum;
 - e. The additional amount for travel over 6,000kms of the distance agreed between the minister and his charge as his annual distance of travel on church-related matters be 50 cents per kilometre;
 - f. The rate of charge contribution to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Superannuation Fund be maintained at 15% of actual remuneration for the year commencing 1 July 2021;
 - g. Supply preaching fees for the year commencing 1 July 2021 increase to:
\$148 for one service;
\$171 for two services;
\$204 for three services, using the same sermon on the same day;
\$268 for two services or more, with separate sermons;
and the travel reimbursement for supply preachers be 50 cents per kilometre.

5. Set the Long Service Leave Levy for 2021–2022 at \$410 to be paid by every responsible body for every person for whom it is obliged to provide long service leave as at 1 July 2021.
6. Remind charges to adhere to the guidelines set down by the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission, and in particular to ensure that they have completed and lodged the required Annual Information Statement to the ACNC, to preserve the tax exemption status of the minister's non-cash benefits.

The motion was seconded and approved.

11. Church and Nation Committee

The report of the Church and Nation Committee was received.

The Convener sought leave to move the proposed deliverance in the following form:

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Affirm that the issue of COVID-19 vaccines is a matter of liberty of conscience in accordance with some of the principles found in passages such as Romans 14, and Westminster Confession of Faith chapter 20, and:
 - a. Encourage those in the PCV to consider the debates surrounding these vaccines with prayer and all wisdom.
 - b. Assure believers that this matter is a question of wisdom, not righteousness, meaning believers can come to differing views.
 - c. Urge believers to maintain love and affection for fellow believers who disagree with the stance they have taken (Ephesians 4:2-3, 'Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.')

Leave was granted.

The Commission of Assembly adjourned for lunch.

The Commission of Assembly resumed after lunch with a reading from Philippians 4 and the singing of a hymn.

The business was adjourned to take up the FOD. (min 13)

12. Women's Ministries Victoria Committee

The report of the Women's Ministries Victoria Committee was received.

The Convener sought leave to move the deliverance in an amended form by replacing the words 'for 24 hours (TBC)' in sub-clause 1(b) with 'up to 24 hours', so that the relevant sentence would read, 'The Women's Ministries Facilitator will be employed on a part-time basis for up to 24 hours per week (0.6FTE).'

Leave was granted.

(1) The Convener, Rev Ben Johnson, moved the proposed deliverance as amended.

By the invitation of the Moderator, Mrs Amy Isham addressed the Commission of Assembly.

Rev Dean Carroll sought to move an amendment to the deliverance arising out of the debate.

The Moderator ruled that the proposed motion arose out of the debate.

(2) Rev Dean Carroll moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Amend the proposed deliverance by adding a new sub-clause 5 (a)(xiii) as follows: 'Relevant Safe Church training'.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The motion to approve the deliverance as a whole as amended was put as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Approve the job description for the Women's Ministries Facilitator, as follows:

Position Description: Women's Ministries Facilitator

The successful applicant will have experience working in ministry. She will have a heart for seeing women grow in Christian maturity and their ministry to others. The facilitator will have the opportunity to meet women in metropolitan and rural Presbyterian churches and related organisations across the state. She will also be involved in further developing this vital ministry within our denomination.

1. Position Summary

a) Objectives

This position exists to facilitate, develop and encourage women's ministries within the PCV. In particular, to:

- i) Promote and encourage women's ministries within the PCV
- ii) Facilitate the organisation of women's ministry events
- iii) Develop resources for the training and support of women within the PCV
- iv) Advocate for greater representation of women within formal PCV bodies
- v) Enhance networks relevant to women within the PCV
- vi) Equip local churches for supporting women

b) Terms and Conditions

The Women's Ministries Facilitator will be employed on a part-time basis for up to 24 hours per week (0.6FTE). Remuneration will be tied to the salary determined annually for a committee appointment. Agreed travel expenses will be included in the remuneration package. The employee will be required to work from home, with agreed office expenses included.

2. Organisational Environment

a) Employment

The Women's Ministries Facilitator will be employed by the WMV Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Victoria.

3. Reporting Relationships

a) Accountability and Reporting

The Women's Ministries Facilitator will work under the Women's Ministries committee and report directly to the committee.

b) Personal support

The Women's Ministries Facilitator will undergo a performance review annually, conducted by a subcommittee of the WMV, which shall include the Convener and at least one other member. The committee shall also provide pastoral support to the coordinator, and professional support may also be obtained as needed.

4. Key Duties and Responsibilities

- a) Strengthening existing church and other networks. This involves but is not limited to:
 - i) maintaining church and individual databases
 - ii) liaising with PTC, Metro, PWMU, PYV and other PCV committees
 - iii) energising an active website and social media presence
- b) Event management. This involves but is not limited to coordinating:
 - i) “On the Road” events
 - ii) State Conferences
 - iii) training opportunities
- c) Resourcing. This involves but is not limited to sourcing and/or developing:
 - i) training and bible study materials
 - ii) WMV blog posts and articles for denominational publications
 - iii) complementarian perspectives for the benefit of the PCV
- d) Advocating for women within a complementarian model. This involves but is not limited to:
 - i) representing women to State Assembly as required
 - ii) visiting Presbyteries as required
 - iii) actively engaging in developing mutually beneficial partnerships
- e) Additional responsibilities as negotiated with the WMV Committee.

5. Selection Criteria

- a) General competencies and skills
 - i) Proven experience in Christian ministry and pastoral care, able to teach the bible and train in ministry skills
 - ii) Availability to travel as required to regional Victoria (or interstate as required)
 - iii) Communicant member or willing to become a communicant member of a Presbyterian church
 - iv) High level of demonstrated relationship skills
 - v) Management and team leadership skills
 - vi) Communication skills – verbal, written, social media
 - vii) Familiarity with Google suite
 - viii) Highly organised with an ability to multi-task
 - ix) Strong passion for ministry to women and for women
 - x) Strong reformed, gospel centred, complementarian theology and a commitment to Presbyterian polity
 - xi) Driver’s licence
 - xii) Current Working with Children Check
 - xiii) Relevant Safe Church training
- b) Preferable but not essential skills

- i) Theological training
- ii) Tertiary education
- iii) Strong relationships within the PCV
- iv) Understanding of the history of the PCV

The motion was seconded and approved.

13. Church and Nation Committee (min 11)

The business was resumed.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clause 1(a) was moved and seconded.

(1) Rev Philip Court moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Amend clause 1(a) of the deliverance by replacing the words 'to consider the debates surrounding these vaccines with prayer and all wisdom' with 'to, out of love of neighbour, have themselves vaccinated at the earliest opportunity', so that the clause would read:

- a. Encourage those in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to, out of love of neighbour, have themselves vaccinated at the earliest opportunity.

The motion was seconded.

Elder Philip Barton attempted to move the previous question in relation to the whole matter.

The Moderator ruled that he could only move it against the amendment.

(2) Elder Philip Barton moved the previous question in relation to the amendment.

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

Rev Peter Phillips sought leave to move an amendment to the proposed amendment without notice arising from debate.

Leave was granted.

(3) Rev Peter Phillips moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Amend the proposed amendment by deleting the words 'out of love for neighbour', so that it would read:

- a. Encourage those in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to have themselves vaccinated at the earliest opportunity.

The amendment was seconded.

Rev David Brown sought leave to move an amendment to the amendment to the amendment without notice arising from debate.

Leave was granted.

(4) Rev David Brown moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Amend the proposed amendment to the amendment so that it would read:

- a. Encourage those in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to seriously consider having the vaccine.

The motion was seconded.

The Moderator was asked to rule on the competency of the proposed amendment to the amendment.

The Moderator ruled that the proposed amendment to the amendment was competent.

The motion to amend the amendment to the amendment was put and disapproved.

The motion to amend the amendment was put and approved.

The amendment as amended was put and approved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- a. Encourage those in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to have themselves vaccinated at the earliest opportunity.

(5) Rev Jesse Walz moved the previous question in relation to the whole matter.

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

(6) The Convener, Rev Chris Duke, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

1. Affirm that the issue of COVID-19 vaccines is a matter of liberty of conscience in accordance with some of the principles found in passages such as Romans 14, and Westminster Confession of Faith chapter 20, and:
 - a. Encourage those in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to have themselves vaccinated at the earliest opportunity.
 - b. Assure believers that this matter is a question of wisdom, not righteousness, meaning believers can come to differing views.
 - c. Urge believers to maintain love and affection for fellow believers who disagree with the stance they have taken (Ephesians 4:2-3, 'Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.').

The motion was seconded and approved.

Dissent:

Rev Tony Archer

Reasons for dissent: It is compelled speech.

Rev Chris Duke

Rev Jared Hood

Rev Stephen McDonald

Rev David Schulz

Rev Jesse Walz

14. Camberwell thanks

The Assistant to the Clerks moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Thank the Session and Board of Trinity Presbyterian Church Camberwell for making their facilities available to the General Assembly.
2. Thank the congregation of Trinity Presbyterian Church Camberwell for providing, and Mrs Lavena Mercer for organising, billets for all who required them.
3. Thank the congregation of Trinity Presbyterian Church Camberwell for providing lunch and other refreshments to the members of Assembly, wives of Assembly members and guests of the Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved by acclamation.

15. Dissolution

The business of the Commission of Assembly now being concluded, the Moderator closed the meeting with a reflection upon Luke 17:1-2 and prayer.

CLERKS
J P Wilson
P W Phillips
D A Carroll

Certificate

I certify that the minutes of this Commission, having been carefully scrutinised, are hereby confirmed in terms of minute 5(9) thereof.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Mercer', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rev Philip Mercer
Moderator

BUSINESS COMMITTEE (Min 5)

The Business Committee has received all papers of a non-judicial nature currently proposed to be submitted to the Commission of Assembly. It has resolved to transmit to the Commission those papers that seem competent and respectful.

Trinity Camberwell venue

The committee is thankful that Trinity Presbyterian Church Camberwell has offered to host the Commission. As was discussed at the March Assembly, the change of venue from the Assembly Hall more readily allows for physical or social distancing requirements. The Camberwell Session, Board, and congregation have been gracious in hospitality, and commissioners should not be going hungry on the day. Please see emailed information about parking and billeting.

Outline of business

The committee will present a proposed agenda at the start of the Commission. As a guide, the committee will seek to arrange business according to the following outline.

1. Devotions and Constitution
2. Roll
3. Apologies
4. Associations
5. Business Committee, p7 (del p7, 9 clauses)
6. Nominations for Moderator-Designate, p62, NOM A1
7. Board of Investment and Finance, p9 (del p12, 10 clauses)
8. Maintenance of the Ministry Committee, p59 (del p60, 6 clauses)
9. Clerk's report 2: PCV Archive, p57, NOM A2
10. Women's Ministries Victoria Committee, p63 (del p65, 1 clause)
11. Clerk's report 1: Hinneberg vs PCV, p56
12. Dissolution

Jared C Hood
CONVENER

BOARD OF INVESTMENT AND FINANCE (Min 7)

General Mission Program

The Board of Investment and Finance (BIF) has formulated the General Mission Program (GMP) for 2021–2022 with reference to its regulation 12 and in the light of min 19 of the October 2020 General Assembly (BB 2020 p170).

The passing of that minute by the Assembly has prompted the Board to reconsider the manner in which the Safe Church Committee is funded. The Safe Church Unit was established by the General Assembly in October 2013 (BB 2013 min 64 p107). At the time of that Assembly, the General Mission Program for the year had already been determined by the previous Commission, so it was not possible to provide funding through GMP. Instead, the Assembly resolved to fund the operating costs of the Safe Church Unit by an annual levy on parishes.

Since that time, the responsibilities of the Safe Church Unit have continued to expand in response to further legislation and other demands. The October 2017 General Assembly formed the Safe Church Committee to oversee the Safe Church Unit (BB 2017 min 96.9 p196).

A cost recovery model has its limitations in funding the work of a committee. The BIF considers it is more appropriate to fund the work of the Safe Church Committee through GMP in the same way as any other committee. This also reflects the resolution in GAV 2020 Minute 19. In addition to GMP funding, the Assembly should look to providing the committee with a capital base to reduce the dependence on GMP over time. To that end, the Board makes a further recommendation below in respect of bequest funds.

As a consequence of BB 2020 min 19, the responsibility for allocation of GMP to organisations outside the church has been assigned to various committees and is now removed from GMP, or in the case of APWM, included in the allocation to the committee.

The October 2020 General Assembly authorised the Women's Ministries Victoria committee to seek GMP funding (BB 2020 min 28.4 p172) and also authorised the State News committee to seek increased GMP funding to support the relaunch of Fellow Workers magazine (BB 2020 min 55.4 p180).

Women's Ministries Victoria is a new committee to be funded by donations and GMP and does not have a budget or a capital base to fund its activities, especially in this commencement phase. The BIF has sought to address the interim needs by providing an additional \$5,000 from GMP as a buffer to enable the work of the committee to commence without the additional burden of managing its meagre resources and checking to see if funds are available from one month to the next.

The resulting net total of the GMP for 2021–2022 is \$232,034. This represents an increase of approximately 3% over the approved GMP and SCU levy for the prior year.

At the June 2020 Commission of Assembly, the amount of \$129,960 was the total GMP allocated to presbyteries for the financial year 2020–2021. To the end of March 2021, 89% of the total has been received compared to 84% at the same time for the previous year. A number of presbyteries have already met their allocations in full and

are to be commended for doing so. The Commission also approved the SCU levy of \$97,872 for the 2020–2021 financial year.

The proposed GMP funding for 2021–2022 is shown below with the 2020–2021 amounts, including the SCU levy shown for comparison:

	Approved 2020/2021	Proposed 2021/2022
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES	\$	\$
APWM (Vic)	35,000	40,000
Presbyterian Inland Mission	7,000	7,000
Ellis chair in theological studies, PTS Dehra Dun	11,150	11,150
APWM Total		58,150
Safe Church Committee	97,872	95,000
State News	0	14,200
Theological Education (Bursary)	65,520	54,684
Women's Ministries Victoria	0	10,000
TOTAL GMP (and SCU levy)	216,542	232,034
Allocations of GMP Outside PCV (excluding PIM and Ellis Chair)	8,290	0
Total GMP and SCU Levy	224,832	232,034

The 2012 Commission of Assembly approved the formula for the allocation to presbyteries of the total GMP until a further recommendation is brought from the BIF as follows:

The total GMP to be apportioned according to the number of communicant and adherent members in the respective presbyteries as published in the most recent report to the General Assembly after applying an equalisation factor of 0.6 for presbyteries in country areas to take account of the different situation faced in those areas. (BB 2012 min 10.2 p8)

The BIF does not see any need to vary the formula.

Based on the approved formula, the recommended allocations to presbyteries for 2021–2022 are as follows:

PRESBYTERY	Percentage of LY total	Percentage of total	2021– 2022 \$
Ballarat	3.52%	3.41%	7,901
Flinders	12.34%	12.25%	28,432
Geelong	2.28%	2.41%	5,600
Gippsland	3.97%	4.06%	9,419
Maroondah	9.04%	9.13%	21,195
Melbourne East	20.75%	21.12%	48,995
Melbourne North	18.19%	18.66%	43,300
Melbourne West	17.11%	16.72%	38,792
North East Victoria	4.20%	4.17%	9,680
North Western Victoria	2.88%	2.68%	6,216
South West Victoria	5.71%	5.39%	12,504
TOTAL	100.00%	100.00%	232,034

The percentage allocations for 2020–2021 are shown for comparison purposes. The differences are the result of the relative changes to membership numbers (communicants and adherents) within presbyteries adjusted for the equalisation factor for country presbyteries.

Committee Budgets

In accordance with BIF regulation 9, the BIF presents the Committee Budgets for approval by the Commission. The BIF has reviewed the budgets and sought further explanations or details from committees when appropriate.

General Assembly

As reported to the Commission last year, the General Assembly is no longer in the position of having unallocated funds to meet the various needs of the church. With a reduction in investment returns and interest rates, the General Assembly budget is projected to be in deficit not just for 2021–2022 but beyond. Had it not been for the COVID-19 crisis, the Board would have recommended a General Assembly Rate last year.

In accordance with BIF regulation 10, the Board is now recommending to the Commission a General Assembly Rate of \$100,000 in total to be allocated to each congregation in proportion to the number of communicants and adherents at 31 December as collated by the Ministry Development Committee and reported in a summarised form to the Assembly (BB 2020 p349, column E+F).

Christian Education Committee / Presbyterian Youth Victoria

The Christian Education and Nurture Committee (CENC) budget has been under significant financial pressure for some time. The deficits have been increasing from year to year. With falling interest rates and investment returns, the matter has become critical. The major expense within the CENC budget is the financial support provided to PYV by way of subsidies to fund the Youth Worker and other expenses.

CENC has taken steps to address the funding shortfall by reducing the Youth Worker position from full-time to 0.5 effective from February 2022. While this is a difficult decision to take, the committee could see no other way to manage the situation into the future. The CENC, through the agency of its Convener, has, in consultation, gained the agreement of the Youth Worker and the support of the PYV Council to this change.

Kirkbrae

The Ad Hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited Committee has submitted a budget for Kirkbrae which projects a balanced budget with expenses matching income. This is quite a stunning turnaround from the \$2 million budget deficit for the current year.

The turnaround has been achieved largely through:

- Reorganisation of staffing levels
- Improvement in ACFI (government funding)
- Cost savings in key expenditure areas.

The BIF is pleased to be able to support the proposed budget.

Bequests

The following bequests have been received by The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation.

Estate of Ian Malcolm Warner: \$10,000 with the income to the Batesford Presbyterian Church or otherwise at the discretion of the Trusts Corporation.

Estate of David Walter Mickle: \$60,000 to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

The Trusts Corporation has resolved that the income from the Warner bequest be applied to support the Bannockburn congregation for the foreseeable future.

In accordance with s14 of the *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1980*, the General Assembly may apply the Mickle bequest for any charitable purpose within the church. The recommendation of the BIF is that the funds from the Mickle bequest (\$60,000) be allocated to the Safe Church Committee as General Funds.

Property matters

Since last reporting to the General Assembly, the Board has not given approval under BIF reg 16 (a) for any further urgent property transactions

Additional Expenditure

Since last reporting to the General Assembly, the Board has not given any further approval for amendments to committee budgets in accordance with BIF reg 9(b)(ii)(1).

Committee Budgets

Following the submission of the board's report, the Board of Investment and Finance received a report from the Ad Hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd Committee (AHEC) with further explanation and detail relating to the financial position of Kirkbrae and the framing of the budget for 2020–2021. The information contained in the report provides reassurance to the BIF that the financial challenges which Kirkbrae has been facing for several years can be resolved and that significant steps have already been taken to that end. More particularly, the report supports the proposed budget for Kirkbrae, which has already been recommended to the Commission for approval in the earlier report of the board. For the benefit of Commissioners, the extracted financial report as drafted by the AHEC is included here.

AD HOC ENACTMENT OF PRESBYTERIAN CARE VICTORIA LTD COMMITTEE

This report provides background and a fair amount of detail to explain to Commissioners the changes that have been made at Kirkbrae since November 2020 to improve the financial position and to serve as a record thereof. It also supports the 2021–2022 Budget for the Ad Hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd Committee presented for approval to the board.

2020–2021 Projected Outcome

The 2020–2021 Budget that was approved for Kirkbrae by the 2020 Commission of Assembly was presented as the budget for the Social Services Committee (SSC). While there are some differences in coverage between the budget then approved for the SSC and the budget presented for the AHEC, these are not considered significant enough to result in a re-working of the approved 2020–2021 Budget. As such, *Table 1 – 2020–2021 Budget and projected outcome* below shows the projected result for 2020–2021 alongside the 2019-20 actual results and the approved 2020–2021 budget estimates.

Table 1 – 2020–2021 Budget and projected outcome

Description	2019/2020 Actual	2020/2021 Budget	2020/2021 Projected
Income			
Commonwealth Funding	5,827,158	6,167,095	3,569,164
Resident Fees	2,147,386	2,162,942	1,335,505
Accommodation Charge	583,598	598,380	362,325
Retentions on Bonds	1,087,509	484,960	439,414
Catering Income	4,779	2,800	923
Other Operating Income	118,721	65,492	97,250
Total Operating Income	9,769,151	9,481,669	5,804,580
Expenditure			
Administration Expenses	302,296	343,883	247,953
Catering Costs	406,797	427,700	236,637
Chemist & Medical	52,679	76,400	50,804
Cleaning, Laundry, House & Infection Control	421,391	412,771	514,369
Consultants Fees	163,469	131,840	196,355
Contenance Costs	79,694	85,000	37,383
Contract Therapy	473,282	473,600	313,635
Depreciation	948,621	999,018	979,248
Insurance	112,270	113,405	81,888
Maintenance - Hand Tools & Equipment	141	2,000	949
Maintenance Costs	378,532	382,050	695,511
Motor Vehicle & Transport Expenses	6,764	12,300	11,783
Occupational Health & Safety	329	1,000	2,618
Rates, Taxes & Utilities	351,289	354,950	288,281
Staff Costs	8,077,765	8,113,398	7,307,818

Description	2019/2020 Actual	2020/2021 Budget	2020/2021 Projected
Security Costs	21,944	19,157	20,320
Other expenses	-	-	-
Total Operating Expenses	11,797,263	11,948,472	10,985,552
Commonwealth Subsidy - Capital	148,150	12,000	3,225,639 ¹
Interest Received	483	1,200	134
Interest Received on Investments	(958,475)	245,000	-
Dividends & Franking Credits - Buybacks	-	-	-
Other Income	62,547	50,000	-
Net Gain/(Loss) on sale of Investments	-	-	-
Net Unrealised Gain on Investments	-	-	1,143,719
Total Non-Operating Income	(747,295)	308,200	4,369,492
Committee Expenses	719	10,250	5,500
Redundancies	-	-	560,000 ²
Other Expenses	-	-	58,498
Total Non-Operating Expenses	719	10,250	623,998
Total Operating Result	(2,028,112)	(2,466,803)	(5,180,972)
Total Non-Operating Result	(748,014)	297,950	3,745,494
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations	(2,776,126)	(2,168,853)	(1,435,477)
Capital Items			
Total Capital Expenditure	-	617,254	-
Total Capital Expenditure	-	617,254	-

A glance at the results provided in Table 1 could lead the reader to believe that there has been a significant improvement since the 2020–2021 Budget was approved. The original budget projected an overall deficit of \$2,168,853, whereas the projected outcome shows an overall deficit of \$1,435,477, an improvement of \$733,376. However, the 2020–2021 projected result is severely impacted by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Table 1 shows that projected operating revenue is predicted to differ from the budget by \$3,677,089, while projected operating expenses are only projected to fall by \$962,920 by 30 June 2021 when compared to the budget.

The principal reason for the projected improvement in the bottom line is the receipt of Government funding, which at the time of submission to the board was expected to be \$3,225,639 together with the \$1,143,719 estimated net unrealised gain on investments. If these two items are excluded, the overall projected loss on operations would be approximately \$5,800,000, which would, if realised, have had a significant impact on the viability of Kirkbrae.

The \$3,22,639 Government funding that is shown in the projected outcome is made up of three grant items:

- JobKeeper payments worth \$1,777,415 to Kirkbrae during 2020–2021;
- a \$698,224 COVID Aged Care Support Programme grant to help offset the costs incurred by the COVID-19 outbreak at Kirkbrae; and
- a potential \$750,000 Business Improvement Fund grant to help cover several of the costs associated with the business improvements partially implemented in

¹ Revised since the budget was submitted to the BIF for approval following advice from the Commonwealth Government that a lower grant under the COVID Aged Care Programme will now be received.

² Revised and updated since submission of draft budget to BIF.

2020–2021 and fully implemented by the start of the 2021–2022 financial year.

At the time of submitting the draft budget to the board, Kirkbrae had applied for a grant totalling \$970,000 from the COVID Aged Care Support Programme. However, Kirkbrae has now been informed by the Commonwealth Government that it had reduced our application for the COVID Aged Care Support Programme grant following a determination that any costs incurred in the period after the declaration of enhanced surveillance (6 September 2020) would not be considered as related to the COVID outbreak. The original claim included costs up to 20 September 2020, which was considered the end of the outbreak. In addition, \$39,806 of the claim was determined as ineligible under the grant guidelines. The impact of these changes reduced the amount to be paid to Kirkbrae by \$272,276, and so that now only \$698,224 is to be paid.

Non-operating expenses are estimated to total \$661,283, significantly higher than the budgeted amount of \$10,250. The largest component of these expenses is redundancy expenditure which is estimated to total \$597,285. Redundancy costs have been incurred to align the workforce numbers to the reduced size of the operation Kirkbrae operation following COVID-19 and because of the implementation of necessary cost and operational restructuring initiatives. The details of the redundancies are covered later in the discussion of the 2021–2022 budget. The total impact of these changes means that the overall deficit on operations is now projected to be \$1,435,477 for 2020–2021.

2021–2022 Budget

Since the General Assembly approved the transfer of operational control over Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes from the SSC to the AHEC on 24 November 2020, the committee has been focused on two actions. First, it has been focused on ensuring that the notice of non-compliance under section 63S of the *Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act 2018* was lifted (which formally occurred on 5 March 2021) and, secondly, on ensuring that Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes is financially viable in the short and longer-term. Both actions have taken considerable effort, and the AHEC now believes it can look forward with more confidence.

While the 2020–2021 projected result is still expected to be in deficit, the overall result for the 2021–2022 financial year is estimated to be a small surplus of \$129,698. The budget leading to this result is shown in *Table 2 – 2021–2022 Budget for approval*.

Table 2 – 2021–2022 Budget for approval

Description	2020/2021 Budget	2020/2021 Projected	2021/2022 Budget
Income			
Commonwealth Funding	6,167,095	3,569,164	4,031,772
Resident Fees	2,162,942	1,335,505	1,625,378
Accommodation Charge	598,380	362,325	396,828
Retentions on Bonds	484,960	439,414	501,581
Catering Income	2,800	923	1,645
Other Operating Income	65,492	97,250	409,775
Total Operating Income	9,481,669	5,804,580	6,966,979
Expenditure			
Administration Expenses	343,883	247,953	350,584
Catering Costs	427,700	236,637	363,426
Chemist & Medical	76,400	50,804	43,200

Description	2020/2021 Budget	2020/2021 Projected	2021/2022 Budget
Cleaning, Laundry, House & Infection Control	412,771	514,369	290,000
Consultants Fees	131,840	196,355	73,000
Contingence Costs	85,000	37,383	39,683
Contract Therapy	473,600	313,635	308,644
Depreciation	999,018	979,248	875,892
Insurance	113,405	81,888	81,888
Maintenance - Hand Tools & Equipment	2,000	949	-
Maintenance Costs	382,050	695,511	318,414
Marketing and promotion	-	-	14,800
Motor Vehicle & Transport Expenses	12,300	11,783	1,200
Occupational Health & Safety	1,000	2,618	3,000
Rates, Taxes & Utilities	354,950	288,281	267,900
Staff Costs	8,113,398	7,307,818	3,914,550
Security Costs	19,157	20,320	17,700
Waste Disposal	-	-	21,240
Other expenses	-	-	2,400
Total Operating Expenses	11,948,472	10,985,552	6,987,521
Commonwealth Subsidy - Capital	12,000	3,225,639	150,000
Interest Received	1,200	134	240
Interest Received on Investments	245,000	-	-
Dividends & Franking Credits - Buybacks	-	-	-
Other Income	50,000	-	-
Net Unrealised Gain on Investments	-	1,143,719	-
Total Non-Operating Income	308,200	4,369,492	150,240
Committee Expenses	10,250	5,500	-
Redundancies	-	560,000	-
Other Expenses	-	58,498	-
Total Non-Operating Expenses	10,250	623,998	-
Total Operating Result	(2,466,803)	(5,180,972)	(20,541)
Total Non-Operating Result	297,950	3,745,494	150,240
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations	(2,168,853)	(1,435,477)	129,698
Capital Items			
Total Capital Expenditure	617,254	-	-
Total Capital Expenditure	617,254	-	-

The large turnaround in the budget for Kirkbrae has been made possible through significant decisions being made by the AHEC in conjunction with the Kirkbrae interim CEO John Fogarty and Facility Manager Angelica Oyarzun.

To address the deteriorating financial position, a few 'quick wins' were identified by Senior Management and approved by the AHEC for implementation, and they are summarised in Table 3. The quick wins impact on both revenue and expenditure and, while mainly focused on the residential aged care facility, do have some impact on the independent living units (the retirement village). The impact on the retirement village has been to date minor as this side of the business has not been suffering any financial stress.

Table 3 – ‘Quick wins’ implemented at Kirkbrae^{3,4}

	2020–2021 Impact								2021–2022 Impact
	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total	
	\$'000s								
<i>Residential Aged Care Facility</i>									
<i>Revenue:</i>									
ACFI reviews completed	-	7.1	10.1	11.1	12.1	12.5	12.1	65.0	145.2
Significant Refurbishment Funding	-	6.5	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	71.5	155.0
<i>Expenditure:</i>									
Catering cost reduction	-	-	20.1	(8.5)	29.5	29.5	29.5	100.0	353.7
Cleaning contract								-	-
Laundry outsource	-	-	8.0	10.9	10.9	10.9	10.9	51.6	130.9
Maintenance contract	-	19.5	19.5	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	99.0	-
Payroll/Finance outsource	-	-	-	-	-	23.0	23.0	46.0	255.0
Staffing restructures									
Restructure reception	-	12.8	12.8	12.8	12.8	12.8	12.8	76.8	153.6
Quality manager redundancy	-	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6	51.6	103.2
ACFI coordinator redundancy	-	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	25.8	51.6
Temporary closure of Waratah House and change clinical model	-	-	-	-	129.0	129.0	129.0	387.0	1,548.0
Relocation costs	-	(15.0)	(15.0)	-	-	-	-	(30.0)	-
Redundancy costs	(144.8)	-		(271.0)	(144.2)	-	-	(560.0)	-
<i>Independent living units</i>									
Rental of some units	-	-	-	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	14.4	59.3
Total impact of changes already implemented or approved	(144.8)	43.8	81.4	(200.2)	94.6	262.2	261.8	398.8	2,955.5

³ Excludes the impact of Government grants and only focusses on those items under Kirkbrae's direct control.

⁴ Please note that a positive number means it improves the financial position, whereas a negative number worsens the financial position.

Revenue improvements

The work on the revenue side has focused on increasing the level of the Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI) received for each resident by more accurately assessing the level of care they are receiving. This has a significant impact on the level of Commonwealth Government revenue received by Kirkbrae, and for 2021–2022 for each resident, an average ACFI of \$182 a day has been used. This amount is consistent with the industry average. Further, the work undertaken to date has already shown increases in the rate of ACFI received following each of the resident reviews undertaken.

In addition to ACFI, there is additional funding that Kirkbrae is now receiving from the Commonwealth for what is termed significant refurbishment funding. These funds are paid based on the changes and refurbishment that has occurred at Kirkbrae over the years that had not been previously claimed.

Lastly, the AHEC has approved the rental of a small number of the village units to people on low income or who would have been homeless to assist with this social issue and to provide some rental income that would otherwise not been received.

Expenditure improvements

Most of the work has been on reducing the costs associated with the residential aged care facility without compromising the level of care provided to the residents. As such, there have been changes made to several of the contracted services provided to Kirkbrae. These include:

- (a) *Catering* – the costs associated with the existing contract were above the industry average, and the quality of the meals was not consistent with the cost of the service. As a result of a review, a new catering manager has been appointed, the meals served have been improved and the costs reduced.
- (b) *Laundry service* – There has been a change to the laundry arrangements with personal items still laundered onsite but with sheets, towels, etc., done under contract. This has improved the service and lowered the cost of delivery.
- (c) *Maintenance* – the current contract has significant overheads and is not cost-effective for an organisation the size of Kirkbrae. As such, termination of the existing contract is being pursued with the expectation that an onsite ‘handyman’ employee, who can engage with specialists as needed, will result in savings in this area with no loss to the level of service or the maintenance needs.
- (d) *Payroll/finance outsource* – Kirkbrae has been operating without a Chief Finance Officer for quite some time, and the current accounting package being used is inflexible, and the version in use is out of date, and as a package, it is no longer appropriate for Kirkbrae. The financial reporting being provided to AHEC was also not fit for purpose. Therefore, after a competitive process, AHEC has engaged Talgara Management Services (TMS) to provide the payroll and finance function to Kirkbrae. TMS has had over 25 years’ experience in providing payroll and management services to the Aged Care Sector and, moving forward, will provide the necessary expertise to Kirkbrae and the AHEC at the standard expected and at a lower cost than previously. This change has also, regrettably, resulted in

redundancies for our payroll and finance employees.

- (e) *Staffing restructures* – A review of the current staffing levels has resulted in some rationalisation and reduction of staff required. Some of the reductions have been forced by the reduction in the number of residents in the aged care facility, and some are a result of other changes. Currently, Kirkbrae has approximately 53 aged care residents, which is estimated to rise to 65 by 30 June 2022. On this basis, the AHEC has taken the decision to temporarily close Waratah House with all existing residents housed in Jacaranda and Acacia Houses. This required negotiation with both residents and their families and some relocation costs to be incurred as residents were moved from Waratah House to either Jacaranda or Acacia House. However, these moves were agreed and carried out smoothly.

Further, Kirkbrae's model of care relied on a mix of Registered Nurses (RNs) and Enrolled Nurses (ENs), supported by Personal Care Assistants (PCAs), to provide the clinical care to residents. While the ENs were able to manage the distribution of medications to residents, beyond that, the scope of their role was limited and did not allow them to undertake many of the functions that an RN can. As a result, the link between the care plan for each resident and the funding that Kirkbrae received for each resident was limited by the EN's inability to provide the full level of assessment that an RN can. This can limit the ability for the resident to be fully involved in the planning of their care so that they can have the best quality of life while in Kirkbrae's care.

There are additional activities that an RN can undertake, such as delivering a Pain Management Program for our residents that an EN cannot do and is therefore currently outsourced to the physiotherapy provider. Therefore, it was agreed to remove the EN classification from the rosters and invest in additional RN hours. This change means that Kirkbrae now always has 24-hour RN cover within the facility. It also means that Kirkbrae can provide the highest quality of care and ensures that it meets, ahead of time, one of the expected outcomes from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Further changes saw the removal of the Quality Manager position and ACFI coordinator, with these roles being covered by our Facility Manager and the Care Managers. In addition, there was a rationalisation to the admin/reception staff with Kirkbrae's Reception. The admin/reception has now moved from the Administration Building to Banksia House, which has become the main entrance to the aged care facility for all staff and visitors.

- (f) *Redundancy costs* – Some of the changes have resulted in redundancy costs, and these have been estimated at approximately \$560,000 in 2020–2021. These costs include the redundancy payments to Kirkbrae's former CEO following restructuring that position to a CEO/Facility Manager position and the introduction of business/commercial manager role. While it is disappointing to have to see some long-serving staff leave their employment at Kirkbrae, AHEC has had to make these difficult decisions to ensure the future for Kirkbrae and in the best interests of our residents. We thank all those made redundant for their work and contribution to the life of the organisation throughout their employment and we wish them all well in their future endeavours.

As previously mentioned, the main focus has been on the aged care facility as this is the source of the deficits faced by Kirkbrae. However, the residents of the retirement village have not been forgotten. With the closure of Banksia House, it has been possible to make the Banksia House Dining Room and surrounding garden available to the retirement village residents to replace most of the current functions of the Community Hall, which is no longer fit for purpose. There is also a plan to refurbish a large shed on the property to operate as a men's shed for the men in the village.

Proposed capital works

Within the proposed 2021–2022 budget, there is no allowance for capital works to be undertaken at Kirkbrae. However, we have been able to engage an architect to inspect the aged care facility and suggest some works that may make this complex more fit for purpose and also improve the connectivity of three of the aged care houses (i.e. Jacaranda, Banksia and Waratah Houses). This work has been provided by a member of the PCV to Kirkbrae free of charge and for this, AHEC is most appreciative.

The proposed works will improve the linkages between the Jacaranda House and Banksia House and between Banksia House and Waratah House. It will also convert 12 of the rooms in Banksia House from having shared bathrooms to having their own ensuite bathroom. This is more in line with what the market expects and will make the rooms more marketable. The last piece of the proposed capital works will create a large open room in Banksia House that can be used for day respite activities, which has the potential to raise additional revenue for little or no additional cost.

To fund the proposed cost of the works (approximately \$4 million), Kirkbrae has applied for a grant of \$3.2 million from the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth makes such grants available each year for building or upgrading residential aged care facilities, as long as the provider meets certain criteria, such as providing services in a region that needs extra residential aged care services, which Kirkbrae does. This is an investment in the future of Kirkbrae, but should the grant application be unsuccessful, AHEC would not proceed with the full works but may consider a smaller portion than it could afford and the business case supported. The outcome of the capital grant application will not be known until 2021–2022, and so if a change to the draft budget is required, AHEC would seek to bring forward to the General Assembly in October a fully costed proposal should this be necessary, assuming control of Kirkbrae has not by that time passed to PCVL.

Barry Oakes
CHAIRMAN

CHURCH AND NATION COMMITTEE (Min 13)

The committee recognises that the question of whether or not one ought to receive one of the currently available vaccines for COVID-19 is a disputable matter where devout Bible-believing Christians legitimately reach differing conclusions. Wise and godly approaches to disputable matters are set forth in Romans 14 and summarised and explained by the Westminster Confession of Faith chapter 20.

The committee believes, given the debates occurring in our society surrounding the recently developed COVID-19 vaccines now being administered in Australia and elsewhere, it is right for the Commission to make a declaration about COVID-19 vaccines to promote the unity of the Church and to assuage the consciences of troubled Christians. These debates are happening now, and many in our churches are confused and concerned. To wait until the October Assembly would be too late for the Church to speak into this issue.

Our recent (March) update sought to fairly present the arguments on both sides of the debate to promote greater understanding and charity among believers.

We recommend reading the following two articles and the March Church and Nation Update:

<https://www.churchandnation.org/covid19-vaccine-options>

<https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/thanks-god-and-roll-up-your-sleeve/>

<http://churchandnation.org/s/March-Update-Table-2021.pdf>

Rev Christopher Duke
CONVENER

CLERK'S REPORT 2

PCV ARCHIVE (Min 9)

Rationale for bringing this forward to the Commission

Mrs Christine Palmer's retirement notice was lodged with the Clerk in the early part of this year, 2021. The retirement is effective from 14 July 2021.

This matter has emerged since the last (regular) General Assembly and should be considered urgent and in need of executive action.

Background

Since the foundation of the PCV, and even before 1859, this church has had valuable historical records, but there was not much system to our collection post-union. Under the expert eye of Dr Swanton and a few like-minded volunteers, the church preserved many historical records, storing the most valuable of them in the strong room on the top floor of 156 Collins Street. This formed the beginnings of today's iteration of the PCV Archive.

The General Assembly made a significant move in October 1994 when it agreed (min 26.6):

Form an Historical Records and Archives Committee of not less than three members appointed by the Assembly and request the Trusts Corporation to fund reasonable expenses of the committee including the employment of a casual or part time Archivist.

Part of the justification for this was that the church needed to 'catalogue and preserve this irreplaceable part of our Church's heritage' (GAV BB 1994, p. 142). From 1995, the TC/BIF has been providing funds for reasonable expenses to run the Archive, including the two days per week employment of an archivist.

The first employed archivist of the church was appointed following the decision of Assembly, October 1995, min 75.3, as follows:

Nominate Mrs Chris Palmer as the archivist of the PCV and direct the Trusts Corporation to negotiate a salary package.

In 1999, the General Assembly approved its Archive Policy (min 37)—a policy that included a brief job description for the position of archivist. This document forms the basis of the current proposal brought to this 2021 Commission of the General Assembly.

In 2015, the General Assembly dissolved the Church Records Management and Archive Committee and placed those duties within the role of the Clerk of Assembly (min 112.8).

Chris Palmer has served the church admirably for 25 years but wishes now to step away to pursue other interests. To take the rather ramshackle collection of the 1980s and turn them into the well-ordered collection of today has been a gargantuan task for Chris—one for the Assembly can be very thankful. Her meticulous and thorough research and her self-motivated ability to collate and organise means that the PCV now has an Archive of which it can be proud.

Way forward

For all the reasons referred to above, the church needs an archivist to care for its precious historical collection. The church has a very significant collection already catalogued and in storage, and there is still the gathering and sorting of fresh records as they are brought to the Archive from individuals, congregations, committees, and presbyteries.

For the continuity of the work, there ought not to be too long a gap between the appointment of archivists. To expedite such an appointment, it is recommended that the Commission appoint an ad hoc committee specifically for this purpose and direct that committee to bring a name for appointing, under Rule 5.19, to the October General Assembly.

Who would make a good archivist for the church? The following is preferable:

- a Christian with an understanding of and a love for the Presbyterian Church;
- a university graduate with research skills and an appreciation of history;
- a person who can demonstrate a flair for the organisation of material and records management;
- a person who views church archives as a ministry in itself and can see that satisfying inquirers can be a form of pastoral care;
- someone with good people skills;
- a person willing to adapt to current and emerging legal considerations such as the Privacy Act, Copyright Law, NRS, etc.

The proposed job description is set out in a Notice of Motion. In preparation for this, the following have been consulted:

- the website of the Australian Society of Archivists www.archivists.org.au
- Sue Pacey, GAA and GANSW Archivist and Ferguson Library librarian
- Paul Mishura, Scotch College Archivist
- the current church Archivist.

John P Wilson
CLERK OF ASSEMBLY

MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE (Min 10)

1. Committee

The committee has continued to meet regularly in Melton or on Zoom and notes that:

- Annual Charge Report (ACR) forms should be transmitted to Mr Dennis Wright in the first instance;
- continuing members are Rev Mark Crabb, Mr Reg Butcher, Rev Cam Garrett and Dennis Wright (Convener); and

2. Declaration of Terms Of Settlement

The committee notes that there were many charges that were yet to submit Annual Charge Report forms by 31 March 2021. In order to have Terms of Settlement declared, charges are reminded that the last date for lodgment is 28 February. The committee reminds presbyteries to be more vigilant in following up outstanding Annual Charge Reports and in checking their accuracy.

3. Annual Charge Reports

Charges and presbyteries should be aware that approval of grants and subsidies is dependent upon the lodgment of the Annual Charge Report, which is a requirement for all charges, appointment charges, and home mission charges. The overall quality of figures presented is improving slowly, though some confusion still occurs with linked charges. There is still some difficulty in the presentation and verification of budget figures. All presbyteries are urged to be diligent in the collection and assessment of Annual Charge Reports, and the committee asks that presbyteries appoint a registrar or committee with the task of facilitating this. The committee recognises that many charges do not have suitably qualified treasurers and administrators and require assistance from the presbytery and this committee. Our convener or registrar is available to assist charges. The committee endeavours to produce a more user-friendly Annual Charge Report in paper and electronic form.

4. Long Service Leave

The committee, in concert with the Code Committee, worked together to bring to the last Assembly more refined Long Service Leave Regulations. These now spell out the persons eligible for Long Service Leave Fund assistance. The committee has especially looked at the definitions of the former regulation as to whether a person is 'engaged by the Presbytery', 'appointed', or 'assigned'.

Notwithstanding the above, the committee is still seeking compliance with the PCV's rules and regulations regarding the taking of long service leave. Some problems continue to exist, thus exerting the same pressures on the Long Service Leave Fund as previously reported.

The committee recommends the continuance of the Long Service Levy at \$350 per charge per minister per annum, but see the comments above. It may be that as the regulations are refined and the calculations are reworked to ascertain the total LSL Fund liability, because of claims made on the LSL Fund for persons not previously advised to the committee, the committee may have to ask the Assembly to approve that the LSL Levy be increased sooner than later. This would be to a figure approximating what is actually accrued each year by each minister per charge (\$1,000+).

5. Non-Cash Benefits and reporting to the ACNC

The committee reminds Assembly that, even though the current Federal Government is taking no action on the non-cash benefits exemption and the charitable definition of churches, the church should appreciate these benefits and adhere to the spirit of the laws of the land that allows these concessions. In particular, each congregation must ensure that it has lodged its Annual Information Statement (AIS) to the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) to maintain the tax exemption on the minister's NCBs. The committee again asks that each presbytery make this a reporting point on its agenda each year for each of its constituent charges.

6. Superannuation

The committee recommends the rate of each charge's contribution to the PCV Superannuation Fund remains at 15% of actual remuneration (\$8,604, 2021–2022).

7. Minister's remuneration

The committee recommends that there be an increase in minimum remuneration to \$57,360.00:

Stipend: \$37,536.00 NCB: \$19,824.00 Total: \$57,360.00.

8. Fuel Prices

The committee believes that there are continuing stabilising effects on oil prices in Australia. It is noted that fuel costs have held steady over the past six months. There is no recommendation to increase excess travel—the rate remaining at 50 cents per kilometre.

9. Supply Preaching Fees

In accordance with the above, it is recommended that:

- Supply preaching fees do increase;
- Travel reimbursement for supply preachers remain at 50 cents per kilometre.

Thanks go to the PCV General Manager and the office staff for all their assistance given to the convener and the committee.

Dennis K Wright
CONVENER

NOMINATIONS FOR MODERATOR-DESIGNATE (Min 6)

The following nominations for the position of Moderator-Designate 2021-22 have been received:

Rev Philip Donald Mercer (minister Trinity Camberwell): presbyteries of Melbourne East and South West Victoria.

Rev Peter William Phillips (retired minister): presbyteries of Ballarat and Geelong.

John P Wilson
CLERK OF ASSEMBLY

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES VICTORIA COMMITTEE (Min 12)

At the 2020 General Assembly, the newly established Women's Ministries Victoria Committee was tasked with (BB 2020 min 28.3, 4):

- bringing to the 2021 Commission of Assembly a proposed Job Description for a Women's Ministries Facilitator.
- seeking appropriate sources of funding from congregations and presbyteries and to make an application for funding from next year's GMP budget for the regular activities of the committee and the employment of the Women's Ministries Facilitator.

The application for funding from next year's GMP budget is included in the WMV 2021–22 budget submitted to the Board of Investment and Finance. The committee has sought to be sympathetic as much as possible to the request not to increase the demand on GMP compared with previous years on account of the current financial position of the PCV.

There are several significant reasons as to why the committee should seek to appoint a facilitator for this gospel work, and these have been presented to the General Assembly previously (see GAV BB 2020, p242ff).

The proposed job description for a Women's Ministries Facilitator is as follows:

Position Description: Women's Ministries Facilitator

The successful applicant will have experience working in ministry. She will have a heart for seeing women grow in Christian maturity and their ministry to others. The facilitator will have the opportunity to meet women in metropolitan and rural Presbyterian churches and related organisations across the state. She will also be involved in further developing this vital ministry within our denomination.

1. Position Summary

a) Objectives

This position exists to facilitate, develop and encourage women's ministries within the PCV. In particular, to:

- i. Promote and encourage women's ministries within the PCV
- ii. Facilitate the organisation of women's ministry events
- iii. Develop resources for the training and support of women within the PCV
- iv. Advocate for greater representation of women within formal PCV bodies
- v. Enhance networks relevant to women within the PCV
- vi. Equip local churches for supporting women

b) Terms and Conditions

The Women's Ministries Facilitator will be employed on a part-time basis for 24 hours (TBC) per week (0.6FTE). Remuneration will be tied to the salary determined annually for a committee appointment. Agreed travel expenses will be included in the remuneration package. The employee will be required to work from home, with agreed office expenses included.

2. Organisational Environment

a) Employment

The Women's Ministries Facilitator will be employed by the WMV Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Victoria.

3. Reporting Relationships

a) Accountability and Reporting

The Women's Ministries Facilitator will work under the Women's Ministries committee and report directly to the committee.

b) Personal support

The Women's Ministries Facilitator will undergo a performance review annually, conducted by a subcommittee of the WMV, which shall include the Convener and at least one other member. The committee shall also provide pastoral support to the coordinator, and professional support may also be obtained as needed.

4. Key Duties and Responsibilities

a) Strengthening existing church and other networks. This involves but is not limited to:

- i. maintaining church and individual databases
- ii. liaising with PTC, METRO, PWMU, PYV and other PCV committees
- iii. energising an active website and social media presence

b) Event management. This involves but is not limited to coordinating:

- i. "On the Road" events
- ii. State Conferences
- iii. training opportunities

c) Resourcing. This involves but is not limited to sourcing and/or developing :

- i. training and bible study materials
- ii. WMV blog posts and articles for denominational publications
- iii. complementarian perspectives for the benefit of the PCV

d) Advocating for women within a complementarian model. This involves but is not limited to:

- i. representing women to State Assembly as required
- ii. visiting Presbyteries as required
- iii. actively engaging in developing mutually beneficial partnerships

e) Additional responsibilities as negotiated with the WMV Committee.

5. Selection Criteria

a) General competencies and skills

- i. Proven experience in Christian ministry and pastoral care, able to teach the bible and train in ministry skills
- ii. Availability to travel as required to regional Victoria (or interstate as required)

- iii. Communicant member or willing to become a communicant member of a Presbyterian church
- iv. High level of demonstrated relationship skills
- v. Management and team leadership skills
- vi. Communication skills – verbal, written, social media
- vii. Familiarity with Google suite
- viii. Highly organised with an ability to multi-task
- ix. Strong passion for ministry to women and for women
- x. Strong reformed, gospel centred, complementarian theology and a commitment to Presbyterian polity
- xi. Driver's licence
- xii. Current Working with Children Check

b) Preferable but not essential skills

- i. Theological training
- ii. Tertiary education
- iii. Strong relationships within the PCV
- iv. Understanding of the history of the PCV

Ben Johnson
CONVENER

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
OCTOBER 2021

**PROCEEDINGS
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
of the
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
1st Sitting: Tuesday 5 October**

By Zoom, an electronic means of meeting, on Tuesday 5 October 2021 at 9:00am.

1. Constitution

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria met by appointment of the General Assembly 16 March 2021 (BB March 2021 min 25). Moderator Rev Philip Mercer welcomed members in attendance and those watching proceedings on YouTube, and constituted the Assembly with a reflection based on Philippians 2:1-11 and prayer.

2. Roll

The Clerk moved notice of motion A-1:

That the Assembly:

Declare that the names recorded in the draft Roll of Assembly as amended, compiled from the certified rolls of presbyteries, be the Roll of the 2021 General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

3. Appointment of Moderator

The Clerk intimated that Rev Peter William Phillips, Deputy Clerk, had been elected as Moderator Designate of this General Assembly by the Commission of Assembly in May 2021 (min 8).

The Clerk moved notice of motion A-2:

That the Assembly:

Appoint Rev Peter William Phillips BA, BTh, as Moderator of the 2021 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

The motion was seconded and approved.

4. Induction of Moderator

Past Moderator Rev Philip Mercer put the moderatorial questions to Mr Phillips and inducted him into his office with prayer.

The Moderator will sign the Assembly Bible when COVID-19 restrictions permit, which has been signed by every moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria since its formation in 1859.

The Moderator addressed the Assembly.

5. Welcomes

The Moderator introduced his chaplains Rev Jesse Walz and Ben Nelson to the members of the Assembly.

6. Devotion

Moderator's chaplain, Rev Jesse Walz read from Romans 3:21-26, reminding members of the need to remain the first generation of believers who believe and cherish the gospel, rather than the second who assume it and the third who deny it.

Mr Walz closed his devotion with prayer.

7. Business Committee

The report of the Business Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause-by-clause.

Clauses 1-15 were approved.

(1) Elder Colin Morrow moved:

That the Assembly:

Alter the orders of the day to move the report of the Ad Hoc Negotiation Sale of Assembly Hall Committee to the second sitting.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clause 16 as amended was approved.

(2) The Convener, Rev Dr Jared Hood, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Assembly:

1. Determine that the hours of meeting be:

First Sitting, Tuesday 5 October 2021, 9:00am–5:00pm

Second Sitting, Wednesday 6 October, 9:00am–5:00pm, and Thursday 7 October 9:00am–5:00pm if needed.

2. Determine that lunch be taken daily 12:30pm–1:30pm, and that refreshments be taken daily 10:30am–10:50am and 3:00pm–3:20pm, as necessary.

3. Determine the time for speakers to be as follows:

15 minutes in total for:

Conveners and seconders moving deliverances (as a whole and total of clause-by-clause)

Petitioners stating the petition

Appellants stating the appeal

Respondents to appeals

Question time (including 15 mins for total deliverance questions)

10 minutes in total for:

Overturists stating the overture

5 minutes for:

Appellants in reply

Movers of substantive motions and amendments

Seconders of substantive motions and amendments

All other speakers.

4. Appoint a Ballot Committee for the Assembly consisting of:

Rev Adam Humphries (Convener), Luke Brownley, Brett Cummins, Stephen McDonald,

and determine that this committee be held to be thanked and discharged at the dissolution of this Assembly.

5. Appoint the Zoom meeting hosts as follows:

Rev Adam Humphries, Luke Brownley, Dean Carroll, Brett Cummins, Stephen McDonald,

and thank them for their service.

6. Permit committee conveners and chairpersons who are not members of the Assembly to address the Assembly when their respective Committee's report and proposed deliverance is before the Assembly.

7. Permit the General Manager to be present in the Assembly including when meeting in private, and to answer any financial management questions.

8. Permit the Privacy Officer to be present in the Assembly including when meeting in private, and to give advice as requested or required during any privacy-related matters.

9. Permit the Safe Church Facilitator to be present in the Assembly including when meeting in private, and to give advice as requested or required during any Safe Church related matters.
10. Permit the Law Agent to be present in the Assembly including when meeting in private, to give advice as requested or required during all matters, and to ask questions of petitioners, appellants, and respondents.
11. Suspend sufficient of standing orders to enable the Assembly to meet by Zoom in accordance with the meeting procedures in the 2021 Assembly Zoom Meeting Guide.
12. Suspend sufficient of standing orders to enable the use of a limited consent agenda as explained in the Business Committee report.
13. Authorise the live-streaming of the public sessions of this Assembly on YouTube.
14. Appoint the Moderator and the Clerks of Assembly a Special Commission to scrutinise the minutes of this Assembly with the power to make any necessary corrections and to confirm them, and that a copy thereof be sent to all members, unless a later determination be made by this Assembly.
15. Approve generally the outline of business as given in the report.
16. Approve the Order of Business for the first sitting, Tuesday 5 October 2021.

The motion was seconded and approved.

8. Apologies

The following apologies were sustained:

Ministers:

For all sittings: Keith Allen, Ivan Barker, Keith Bell, Robert Boan, Trevor Cox, Peter Owen, Bruce Riding, Andrew Slater, John Sutherland, Ian Touzel, Wally Zurrer.

Elders:

For this sitting: Rory Weightman.

For all sittings: Malcolm Browning, Geoff Cross, Andre Dahmen, Rob Herweynen, Brett McArdle, Stewart Miller, Bert Stasse, Richard Worth.

9. Associations

It was agreed to associate the Moderator-General, Rev Dr Peter E Barnes, and the National Director for APWM, Rev Kevin Murray, for all sittings.

10. Minutes of the May 2021 Commission of Assembly

The confirmed minutes of 4 May 2021 meeting of the Ordinary Commission of Assembly were received.

11. New Members

The Moderator invited the new members to the Assembly to identify themselves.

New members of the Assembly introduced themselves to the Assembly.

12. Ministerial and Elders' Jubilees

The Clerk reported that Elders Robert Belcher, Bill Gray, Noel Johnston and Gary Rourke have celebrated jubilees since the last meeting of Assembly.

The Clerk moved notice of motion A-6:

That the Assembly:

1. Note with appreciation, and place on record, the discerning and faithful service of Robert Belcher, first ordained as an elder of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria at the Erskine Church, Carlton, in April 1952, serving almost

- continuously as a PCV elder since that day, lately serving on the Caulfield Elwood Session; next year, 70 years an elder of the church.
2. Note with appreciation, and place on record, the conscientious and faithful service of Bill (William) Gray, first ordained and inducted as an elder at Pyramid Hill, 25 May 1961, serving almost continuously from that day until now, including many years at St John's Bendigo and lately at Eaglehawk; 60 years an elder.
 3. Note with appreciation, and place on record, the diligent and faithful service of Noel Johnston, first ordained as an elder of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria at the Reservoir Church in 1971, serving continuously as a PCV elder since that day, lately serving on the Gisborne Session; 50 years an elder.
 4. Note with appreciation, and place on record, the thoughtful and faithful service of Gary Rourke, first ordained and inducted as an elder at West Footscray, 10 November 1977, and serving on Session continuously since that day; next year, 45 years an elder.

The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

13. Ministerial and Elders' Deaths

The Clerk reported that Home Missionary Ron Williamson, Elder Brian D Bayston OAM and Rev Joseph Nixon had died since the last meeting of Assembly.

The Clerk moved notice of motion A-7:

That the Assembly:

1. Note the passing of Ron Williamson in March 2020 and insert into the Assembly record this memorial minute of the General Assembly's sincere gratitude for faithful gospel service to the church.
 Ron, with his wife Jean, began full-time ministry with The Salvation Army in the early 1980s, serving in churches and in social welfare arms of ministry. They returned to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in the mid-1990s to continue serving Jesus.
 Ron served as a home missionary at Mildura and then Kaniva/Nhill before retiring from full-time ministry. Having retired to a home in Snake Valley, outside Ballarat, Ron took on the ministry of the Ballarat North parish for a few years before finally retiring.
 Ron was Brian Harvey's father-in-law and is survived by his wife Jean, five children and their spouses, 11 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.
2. Note the passing of Elder Brian D Bayston OAM in May 2021 and insert into the Assembly record this memorial minute of the General Assembly's sincere gratitude for faithful gospel service to the church.
 Brian was a long-serving Law Agent of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (1974–2014), Moderator of this General Assembly (1999–2000), loyal Presbyterian, friend of the church, faithful and tireless defender of the Christian faith, Presbyterian Ladies College Council member (36 years) and Scotch College Council member (31 years). The General Assembly is grateful for his indefatigable and faithful service to the church.
3. Note the passing of Rev Joseph Nixon in June 2021 and insert into the Assembly record this memorial minute of the General Assembly's gratitude for faithful gospel service to the church.
 In the early 1970s, Joseph Nixon trained at the Theological College of the Presbyterian Church in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and was licensed on 22 June 1975 by the presbytery of Down. He then emigrated to Australia, studied for a BA at Deakin University, and was accepted into the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. He was ordained and inducted at Colac in 1982 and then later given responsibility for Seymour and Nagambie

as stated supply. He returned to Northern Ireland in 1990, where he served as a parish minister until his retirement in 1998.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer.

14. Royal Address and Loyal Addresses

The Clerk moved notice of motion A-8:

That the Assembly:

1. Send the following address through the Governor of Victoria to her majesty, Queen Elizabeth II:

‘To the Queen’s most excellent Majesty. May it please your Majesty: We, the members of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, now convened via Zoom in Melbourne, 5 October 2021, respectfully renew our expression of loyalty to your Majesty’s person and to the throne.

We were saddened at the news this year of the passing of your loving husband and friend, HRH Prince Philip. We recognise his loyalty to the throne and the commonwealth, and we thank God for his long years of exemplary service. We cannot pretend to know how you feel at the passing of someone to whom you have been married for so long, but we pray to Almighty God that the grace of the gospel will be your comfort and sustain you in your sorrow.

We are mindful of the responsibilities laid upon you by the duties of your Majesty’s high office as Queen of Australia. Therefore we, in our General Assembly, in our local congregations and in our private devotions, pray that the Sovereign Triune God will by his Holy Spirit grant your Majesty every blessing needful for discharging the duties of your office.

We, the ministers and elders of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, representing the congregations of our people, pledge ourselves to continue to work under your leadership for the common good in Australia and for the glory of God, through Christ Jesus our Lord.’

2. Send greetings to the Victorian Premier, Hon Daniel Andrews, to the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council, with assurances of the regular prayers of the members of this General Assembly, and also of the people of our congregations, for all our parliamentary representatives in the exercise of their responsibilities especially during this difficult time.

The motion was seconded and approved.

15. Immediate Past Moderator

The report of the Immediate Past Moderator, Rev Philip Mercer, was received.

(1) The Clerk moved notice of motion A-9.

That the Assembly:

1. Express its sincere gratefulness to Rev Philip D Mercer for the thoughtful and gracious way he has served the church as Moderator for the year 2020–2021, noting in particular that he has done so amidst the not inconsiderable hindrances of COVID-19 restrictions.
2. Noting that COVID-19 restrictions prevented him from visiting the mission field in Northern Australia, encourage Mr Mercer to speak with the APWM(Vic) Committee about taking his postponed mission trip on behalf of the church during 2022 when it is safe and proper to do so.
3. Declare that any postponed trip (referred to in clause 2) shall not in any way interfere with or take precedence over Rev Peter Phillips attending to his planned mission field visits during 2022.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Immediate Past Moderator addressed the Assembly.

(2) Rev Cameron Garrett moved notice of motion B-22.

That the Assembly:

Request moderators to include in their Assembly reports all presbytery assessors appointed and discharged during their terms as moderator.

The motion was seconded and approved.

16. Board of Investment and Finance

The report of the Board of Investment and Finance was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause-by-clause.

Clauses 1-3 were approved.

Clause 4 was approved.

Clause 5 was moved and seconded.

(1) Rev Cameron Garrett moved notice of motion B-23:

That the Assembly:

Amend the proposed deliverance clause 5f by replacing the words, 'for an extended period of time.' with 'by 31 December 2029.' so that the clause will read:

5.f. reserving the right of the Assembly to reallocate the funds for another purpose should there not be any call on the funds by 31 December 2029.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clause 5 as amended was approved.

Clause 6 was approved.

The Safe Church Facilitator left the Assembly.

Clause 7 was approved.

The Safe Church Facilitator returned to the Assembly.

Clause 8 was moved and seconded.

Question time was adjourned to take up a fixed order of the day. (min 18)

17. Moderator-General

The Moderator welcomed Rev Dr Peter Barnes, Moderator-General of the General Assembly of Australia, and invited him to speak. Dr Barnes brought the Assembly encouragement from the Scriptures; referring to Daniel 2 and comparing the four worldly kingdoms with Christ's kingdom. Christ's kingdom is divine, Christ's kingdom will stand forever, Christ's kingdom cannot be undone and Christ's kingdom is certain.

The Moderator-General led the Assembly in prayer.

18. Board of Investment and Finance (min 16)

Question time was resumed.

Clause 8 was approved.

The Chairman, Rev Barry Oakes, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Assembly:

1. Express its appreciation to Mr Tony Arnold for his service to the church as a member of the Board of Investment and Finance and Trusts Corporation over ten years.
2. Express its appreciation to Mr Stuart Williamson for his service to the church as a member of BIF and Trusts Corporation over the last four years.
3. Express its appreciation to Rev Andrew Venn for his service to the church as a member of BIF and Trusts Corporation over the last four years.
4. Commend those charges and presbyteries which have fully subscribed their allocations for the 2020–2021 General Mission Program.

5. Make provision to meet any unforeseen employment liabilities that a congregation may become unable to meet due to unforeseen or extreme circumstances by:
 - a) raising an initial amount of \$36,000 which represents 6 months minimum remuneration plus superannuation of a full-time minister, plus 10% to allow for inflation, with amount to be held within General Assembly funds;
 - b) providing the initial amount over 3 years at \$12,000 per year through an additional component of the Assembly Rate;
 - c) requiring the General Assembly or Commission of Assembly to approve any proposed disbursement of funds consistent with the intended purpose;
 - d) the General Assembly making an advance from its funds to temporarily cover any shortfall in the provision to meet approved expenditure;
 - e) approving the replenishment of any funds expended through a further component of the Assembly Rate which may be spread over a period up to three years;
 - f) reserving the right of the Assembly to reallocate the funds for another purpose should there not be any call on the funds by 31 December 2029.
6. Remind presbyteries to inquire into the employment arrangements which exist within its presbytery so that the extent of potential financial exposure of the church can be quantified.
7. Approve the following increases in remuneration effective from 1 November 2021 with the increased cost to be funded for the current financial year from General Assembly funds, and thereafter within the regular SCU funding by way of GMP:
 - a) Safe Church Facilitator (currently 24 hours per week), annualised FTE salary to increase from \$68,440 to \$95,000 plus superannuation;
 - b) Compliance & Administration Officer (currently 15 hours per week), annualised FTE salary to increase from \$51,332 to \$72,500 plus superannuation.
8. Instruct the Board of Investment and Finance to engage an external consultant, with experience in the governance of the temporal affairs in a Presbyterian context, to do a review of the PCV structure, consult widely within the PCV and make tangible recommendations for change that can be considered by the 2022 Assembly. The consultancy fees to be sourced from the General Assembly budget.

The motion was seconded and approved.

19. Trusts Corporation

The report of the Trusts Corporation was received.

20. Ad Hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd Committee

The report of the Ad Hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd Committee was received, notwithstanding questions had not yet been asked.

The Clerk introduced Ms Angelica Oyarzun, the new Kirkbrae CEO.

The Moderator welcomed Ms Oyarzun and invited her to speak.

Ms Oyarzun addressed the Assembly.

Moderator's Chaplain, Rev Jesse Walz, prayed for Ms Angelica Oyarzun in her role.

The Convener, Mr Duncan McGregor, answered questions of the report.

Elder Colin Morrow moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Continue to pray for:

- a) the wellbeing of Kirkbrae residents, staff and management and the members of ad hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd Committee;
 - b) the continued improvement in the financial situation for the betterment of the Kirkbrae residents and staff;
 - c) the staff members who were made redundant, many of whom had a long association and commitment to Kirkbrae.
2. Request the Selection Committee to seek out suitably qualified persons who might consider joining the ad hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd Committee and encourage members of the Assembly to consider joining the committee.
 3. Thank Mr John Fogarty for his significant contribution to Kirkbrae during his time as Interim Chief Executive Officer.

The motion was seconded and approved.

21. Ad Hoc Change or Suppression Prohibition Legislation Committee

The report of the Ad Hoc Change or Suppression Prohibition Legislation Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Philip Mercer, sought leave to move clause 8 in an amended form.

Leave was granted.

(1) Rev Philip Mercer moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend clause 8 by adding the words 'the final wording of the overture to be approved by the Moderator, Clerk and Law Agent' to the end of the clause.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Convener, Rev Philip Mercer, moved the proposed deliverance as amended.

The motion was seconded. (min 22)

The Assembly resumed after the lunch break with the Moderator's chaplain, Rev Ben Nelson, leading with a devotion based on Psalm 46:1-11 and in prayer.

22. Ad Hoc Change or Suppression Prohibition Legislation Committee (min 21)

Debate was resumed after the adjournment.

Rev Jordan Born moved, arising out of debate, that the word 'guidelines' in clause 4 be changed to 'protocols'.

The motion was seconded.

Debate was adjourned to take up a fixed order of the day. (min 24)

23. Commission for Church Institutions

The report of the Commission for Church Institutions was received.

The Clerk introduced Mr Andy Callow, Principal of Belgrave Heights Christian School, to the Assembly.

The Moderator thanked Mr Callow for his service, recognising his retirement after 18 years as Principal, and invited him to speak.

Mr Callow addressed the Assembly.

Moderator's Chaplain, Rev Ben Nelson, prayed for Mr Callow and the school.

The Clerk introduced Mr Tom Batty, Principal of Scotch College, to the Assembly.

The Moderator thanked Mr Batty for his service, recognising his retirement after 14 years as Principal, and invited him to speak.

Mr Batty addressed the Assembly.

Moderator's Chaplain, Rev Ben Nelson, prayed for Mr Batty and the school.

The Clerk moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Appoint the Moderator (chairman), Clerks of Assembly, Rev Ivan Barker, John Cho, Trevor Cox, Peter Hastie, Philip Mercer, Graham Nicholson, John Stasse, Graeme Weber, elders Tom Guilford, Dr Jim Hare, Stewart Miller, Dennis Wright and Tony Zirngast, with five members to form a quorum as the Commission for Church Institutions, a commission to exercise the powers of the General Assembly:
 - a) with respect of or conferred by constitutional documents of Scotch College and Presbyterian Ladies' College, and instruct the Commission that in making appointments to Group A and Group C of the Council of these schools it should appoint persons committed to upholding the trusts on which those schools are held;
 - b) with respect to the constitutions of any other school or institution in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria as may be necessary or expedient from time to time and in particular powers of appointment or removal of officers and directors.
2. Instruct the Commission, when considering appointments to church schools or institutions, to satisfy itself prior to appointment that the nominee has a current Working With Children's Check card and can meet requirements set out under ACNC regulations for the governance of not-for-profits organisations.

The motion was seconded and approved.

24. Ad Hoc Change or Suppression Prohibition Legislation Committee (min 22)

Debate on the amendment from Rev Jordan Born was resumed.

The motion was disapproved.

The motion to approve the proposed deliverance as amended was put.

That the Assembly:

1. Authorise the committee to distribute the questionnaire included in the report to all ministers, elders, and Session-appointed ministry leaders in order to better understand the general nature and content of pastoral practices and teaching currently undertaken within the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.
2. Authorise the committee to undertake a review of the 2019 Assembly statement, *The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Statement on Sex, Gender and Marriage*, in light of the *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021*, and report to the Commission of Assembly in May 2022 with a proposed revision, noting that the committee will co-opt members if deemed necessary.
3. Request the committee to draft written protocols and codes of conduct relative to the Act, including steps to train ministers, elders, and Session-appointed ministry leaders in dealing with issues in a manner consistent with *The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Statement on Sex, Gender and Marriage*.
4. Request the committee to draft clear guidelines for the use of social media by all ministers, elders, and Session-appointed ministry leaders.
5. Request the committee to draft protocols outlining what steps are required to be taken to support a member of the church who has become the subject of a complaint under the Act, such protocols to include eligibility criteria, the full range of legal, pastoral, and financial help that is on offer, both for the member, and where relevant, their family and congregation, and to quantify the limits of such assistance and how it may be accessed.
6. Request the committee to monitor the implementation of the Act and request the Law Agent to report to the 2022 Assembly with a view to further refining the Assembly's protocols, policies, and procedures.

7. Request the Church and Nation Committee to continue to provide up-to-date and accurate information to the church on this issue as it comes to hand.
8. Overture the General Assembly of Australia, drawing its attention to the legislation, outlining the response of the General Assembly of Victoria, and seeking its support and advocacy in the federal sphere, the final wording of the overture to be approved by the Moderator, Clerk and Law Agent.
9. Request the Moderator and Clerk of the Assembly to engage with other like-minded denominations to develop a coordinated and strategic response to the Act and its implementation.

The motion was approved.

25. Ad Hoc Response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Committee

The report of the Ad Hoc Response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Philip Court, moved the proposed deliverance.

That the Assembly:

1. Refer Royal Commission recommendation 16.44 to the Code and General Administration Committee, requesting that, after consultation with the Safe Church Unit, it bring a report to the next General Assembly as to how the concept of 'annual performance appraisals' for ministers might best fit within the polity and practice of the church.
2. Encourage and recommend that all ministers and paid pastoral ministry workers in the PCV undertake regular collegial pastoral supervision.
3. Thank and discharge the committee.

The motion was seconded and approved.

26. Building and Property Committee

It was agreed to sit in private.

The Business Convener moved to receive the report of the Building and Property Committee.

The motion was seconded.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Delete words from Private Paper 2, all words in the third paragraph after the sentence concluding '...this view or otherwise.'

The motion was seconded and approved.

It was agreed to receive the amended report.

The Convener sought leave to amend clause 2 by adding words.

Leave was granted.

(2) Mr Ralph Kop moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend clause 2 by adding the words ' , director Warc Studio,' after 'Andrew Wilson'.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clause 1 was approved.

Clause 2 was approved.

(3) The Convener, Mr Ralph Kop, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Assembly:

1. Thank the Church Architect, Les Oliver, for his many years of dedicated and sacrificial service to the committee and the congregations of the Presbyterian

Church of Victoria and pray that God would bless him with a long and healthy retirement.

2. Extend the temporary appointment of Andrew Wilson, director Warc Studio, to the position of Church Architect until the 2022 General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

It was agreed to resume in open court.

The Moderator welcomed Les Oliver to the Assembly and thanked him for his long service to the PCV as Church Architect.

The Moderator welcomed Mr Andrew Wilson, Church Architect, informing him of the extension of his appointment for another twelve months, and extending the good wishes of the Assembly as he continues in the role.

The Moderator's Chaplain, Rev Jesse Walz, led in prayer for Mr Les Oliver and Mr Andrew Wilson.

27. Australian Presbyterian World Mission (Vic) Committee

The report of the Australian Presbyterian World Mission (Vic) Committee was received.

The Convener, Elder Noel Johnston, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Praise God for the missionary team and commend to God and the wider church those who serve the Lord Jesus as part of that team.
2. Encourage all churches to pray regularly for the APWM missionaries wherever they are, asking the Lord of the Harvest to send out more labourers and that His church may be enabled to set them aside and fully support them.
3. Request the Moderator to give the greetings of the Assembly to all of the committee's serving missionaries.
4. Give thanks for God's blessing upon the Coins for Mission program, the participating churches, and the extra support provided for the committee's workers in times of need, and encourage other churches to join.
5. Praise God for the committee's relationships with PTS India and the Partner Churches of South Sudan, Malawi, Zambia, Myanmar, Timor Leste, Vanuatu, Ethiopia, North India, and Japan, remembering that all Partner Churches will benefit from regular prayer.
6. Remember, when contributing to partner churches, that financial gifts and donations should be made carefully, following the ACNC External Conduct Standards.
7. Encourage ministers, sessions, and mission committees to seriously consider a short-term mission trip as a method of increasing interest and involvement in world mission (depending on international travel becoming more readily available and appropriate vaccinations).
8. Promote the work among indigenous communities, for example, that of Rev Rick and Mrs Kayleen Manton (APWM NSW).
9. Praise God for the work of the PWMU State Council and branches in their support of missions.
10. Thank God for the ministry of the APWM National Office in Sydney and encourage the wider church to extend financial and prayerful support for the ministry of the APWM National Director, Rev Kevin Murray.
11. Commend the regular APWM Vic Prayer Update and APWM National publications to the wider church.
12. Pray for the Moderator and his wife, who will visit and encourage one or more of the mission team in the field in the coming year (DV).

13. Encourage Presbyterian Church of Victoria congregations to prayerfully review their giving to the work of cross-cultural mission, both locally and overseas.
14. Pray that the committee will be able to find suitable and skilled replacements during the year to replace key members retiring under the 9-year rule at the 2022 Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

28. Christian Education and Nurture Committee

The report of the Christian Education and Nurture Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Matt James, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Give thanks to God for the work of the PYV council, Miss Anna Burns, (Acting Convener), PYV camp leaders, and all those within the PCV who tirelessly give up much of their time and personal resources to support this gospel ministry amongst the youth of the church.
2. Thank Mr Scott McNabb, who has recently left the role as PYV Council Convener.
3. Give thanks to God for Mr Andrew Edmonds and pray that God will bless the work of the Youth Ministries Director and for his family as they wait for their storm-damaged home to be repaired.
4. Thank Mrs Fiona Bligh, Safe Church Facilitator, for the invaluable assistance given to the work of PYV.

The motion was seconded and approved.

29. Safe Church Committee

The report of the Safe Church Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-5 were approved.

Clauses 7-8 were approved.

It was agreed to sit in private.

Clause 6 was approved.

The Convener, Rev Brian Harvey, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole:

That the Assembly:

1. Give thanks to God for the work of Fiona Bligh and Ian Atkinson.
2. Give thanks to God for Sandy Carroll and her years of faithful service to the PCV as a member and secretary of the Safe Church Committee.
3. Give thanks to God for Amy Isham and her time on the committee and pray for God's blessing on her role in the Women's Ministries Victoria Committee.
4. Give thanks to God for the members of the Safe Church Committee.
5. Give thanks to God for the commitment to safe ministry practices by faithful servants across the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.
6. Instruct the Safe Church Committee to report to the 2022 Commission on the new Victorian Child Safe Standards.
7. Remind presbyteries of the need to monitor safe church compliance at each meeting with the following line items in their agenda (BB 2019 min 75.4,5):
 - a. 'Safety agreements: is each Safety Agreement up to date with the monitors faithfully discharging their duties?'
 - b. 'Have there been any pastoral appointments made where Safe Church training requirements have not been fulfilled?'
8. Request ongoing prayer that God would bless PCV endeavours to make its churches safe places for all.

The motion was seconded and approved.
It was agreed to resume in open court.

30. Privacy Officer

The report of the Privacy Officer was received.

31. Presbyterian Ladies' College

The report of Presbyterian Ladies' College was received.

32. Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union

The report of Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union was received.

33. St Andrews Christian College

The report of St Andrews Christian College was received.

34. Scotch College

The report of Scotch College was received.

35. Business Committee

The Convener read out submitted notices of motion and advised of supplementary reports received.

36. Adjournment

The Assembly adjourned to meet at 9:00am on Wednesday 6 October 2021 by Zoom, which, having been duly intimated, the Moderator closed the sitting with prayer and the benediction.

CLERKS
J P Wilson
D A Carroll

**PROCEEDINGS
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
of the
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
2nd Sitting: Wednesday 6 October**

By Zoom, an electronic means of meeting, on Wednesday 6 October 2021 at 9:00am.

37. Constitution

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria met pursuant to adjournment. The Moderator, Rev Peter Phillips, constituted the Assembly with a reading from Psalm 90 and prayer.

38. Devotion

The Moderator's Chaplain, Rev Jesse Walz, led the Assembly with a devotion from Romans 4:1-8 and in prayer.

39. Apologies

The following apologies for this sitting were sustained:

Ministers: Graham Bradbeer, Bill Medley.

Elders: Tom Cunneen, Jeremy Peet.

40. Business Committee

The Convener, Rev Dr Jared Hood, moved:

That the Assembly:

Approve the proposed agenda.

The motion was seconded and approved.

41. Minutes of the Previous Sitting

The Acting Deputy Clerk tabled the minutes of the 1st Sitting.

42. METRO Committee

The report of the METRO Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Toby McIntosh, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Thank God for the METRO, EquipMETRO, and YouthMETRO graduates who have been trained for living for and serving Christ through their traineeships.
2. Pray for all the present trainees to grow to be more like Jesus and to think and serve like Jesus.
3. Pray that God would continue to raise up many more METRO, EquipMETRO, and YouthMETRO trainees and that he will raise up future gospel workers, pastors, and evangelists from among them.
4. Thank God for the new committee members, Andrew Edmonds and Joy Arundell, and the return of Clinton Le Page.
5. Pray that the partnership between MTS and METRO will continue to enable more METRO trainees in the future.

The motion was seconded and approved.

43. Ministry Development Committee

The report of the Ministry Development Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-7 were approved.

Clauses 10-14 were approved.

Rev Chris Siriweera left the meeting.

It was agreed to sit in private.

Clauses 8-9 were approved unanimously.

It was agreed to resume in open court.

Rev Chris Siriweera returned to the meeting and the Moderator informed him of his reappointment, carried unanimously, and affirmed the Assembly's confidence in him.

Rev Siriweera addressed the Assembly.

The Convener, Rev Stuart Withers, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole:

That the Assembly:

1. Commend the work of Rev Chris Siriweera in the role of Ministry Development Officer and ask the Assembly to pray that his efforts would help others bear fruit as God's fellow workers.
2. Thank God for the contribution of retiring committee member Rev Ian Hutton and request prayer for his ongoing ministry and service in the Kingdom.
3. Thank God for the contribution of Mrs Anne Lawry as a professional review panel member and ask the church to pray for her as she continues to serve Christ.
4. Thank God for the provision of the Thompson Trust and for the work of evangelism that has been funded in the past year and request prayer for the Lord to draw all his people to himself (John 6:44).
5. Give thanks to God for the Kingdom Come Online Prayer meetings that have been held to date and encourage ministers, home missionaries, and elders to attend, when possible, future Kingdom Come Online Prayer meetings.
6. Approve one additional question for the annual statistical returns, namely: 'How many people serve within the life of the congregation?'
7. Approve the inclusion of two occasional supplementary questions in the statistical returns for 2021, namely:
 - a) 'For the leaders at your church (minister, elders, and deacons), please indicate for each of them which age range category they belong to.'
 - b) 'Please indicate which online format has been used by your congregation for Sunday gatherings during COVID-19 lockdowns.'
8. Approve the Ministry Development Officer's Job Description, as follows, for a five-year term commencing on 1 January 2022.

MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION 2022–2026

1. Ministry Development Officer (MDO)

The committee shall, when occasion warrants, bring to the General Assembly the name of a suitably gifted person for appointment as the Ministry Development Officer (MDO). The MDO will be accountable to the committee and work under a General Assembly of Victoria approved job description to help prosecute the purpose and function of the committee.

2. Attributes

The successful applicant will display the following attributes:

- a) be a mature disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ and prayerfully dependent on Him;
- b) be committed to God's Word and faithfully applying God's Word to all areas of life and ministry;
- c) have a passion to see churches revitalised and help other people participate in creating spiritually healthy and growing local congregations;

- d) have good verbal, written and relational skills;
- e) be able to make wise decisions with grace;
- f) be self-motivated, well organised, and able to handle challenging and complex situations;
- g) be prepared to undertake professional development in selected areas of ministry as approved by the MDC.

3. Preferred Skills and Experience

The MDO of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria shall be a person who:

- a) is an experienced minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia;
- b) has experience in the revitalisation, spiritual health and growth of churches;
- c) has some experience in developing and implementing ministry training programs relating to church spiritual health and revitalisation;
- d) has experience in evangelism and be able to train others in evangelism;
- e) has basic counselling and conflict resolution skills;
- f) has competency in church financial matters, including budgeting and understanding basic financial documents.

4. Key Duties and Responsibilities

The Ministry Development Officer will:

- a) preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and so participate in the ingathering of God's people and the equipping of the saints for local church ministry;
- b) advance biblically-based ministry practices amongst people within the PCV;
- c) identify, develop, and deploy suitable training resources for the further development of competent ministry skills in local Presbyterian churches;
- d) provide oversight of the home mission program;
- e) assist the MDC in the governance and roll out of ministry development grants;
- f) assist the MDC in aspects of policy development and implementation;
- g) assist the exit student appointment process under the direction of the Exit Student Committee convener;

5. Professional Development

- a) The MDO is expected to undertake regular professional development.
- b) The MDC, subject to committee approval, will provide funds for expenses incurred while attending courses, conferences, or sourcing other development materials. The MDO may also include travel expenses as the occasion arises.
- c) The MDO is expected to connect, network and partner with other people and organisations working in the area of the advance and formation of healthy multiplying churches.

6. Accountability, Supervision and Review

- a) The MDO is directly accountable to the MDC and will work towards fulfilling the purpose and goals of the committee.
- b) The MDO will be encouraged to establish a 'supervisor' relationship with an appropriate person outside the PCV for debriefing, objective discussion, and accountability.
- c) The MDC will establish suitable internal performance review mechanisms for the MDO.

- d) The MDO appointment can be extended up to a 5-year term, subject to a professional role review. The MDC, in undertaking a professional review, will form a review panel, which will include at least one person external to the committee.

7. Terms of Employment

- a) 1.20 times minister's minimum remuneration package.
 - b) Manse provided or manse allowance, to be reviewed annually.
 - c) Agreed communication costs.
 - d) Fully serviced vehicle with work-related expenses, running costs or equivalent benefit.
 - e) Manse energy up to \$2,600 a year, to be reviewed annually.
 - f) Superannuation at the ministerial rate.
 - g) Five weeks annual leave.
 - h) One-week study leave for professional development, subject to the concurrence of the committee and in line with MDC purpose and goals, with approved associated expenses also being provided.
 - i) Removal costs are ordinarily paid once at the time of first appointment, but, in special circumstances, the committee may approve a part of or all additional removal costs in the contract period.
 - j) Work Cover and minister's disability insurance.
 - k) Long service Leave according to provisions for ministers under the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee.
 - l) Professional supervision costs, for the long-term welfare of the MDO, subject to committee approval,
 - m) Any other provision the Assembly may determine from time to time.
 - n) The position is a full-time appointment.
 - o) The position will include annual internal committee performance reviews.
 - p) The appointment can be extended by a further 5-year term, with a satisfactory professional review before any reappointment. Any professional review panel should include one person external to the MDC.
9. Appoint Rev Ananda Chris Siriweera to the position of Ministry Development Officer 1 January 2022 – 31 December 2026, in accordance with the terms and conditions.
 10. Give thanks to God for the continuing gospel ministry and congregational life in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria reflected in the 2020 Statistical Returns.
 11. Thank congregations, through presbyteries, for submitting their 2020 Statistical Returns through the new online collection system.
 12. Thank Rev Cameron Garrett for his work in establishing and operating the online collections system for the Statistical Returns.
 13. Encourage presbyteries to utilise the Statistical Returns data as a tool for ministry planning and congregational revitalisation in their bounds.
 14. Urge sessions and congregations to pray for conversions, for the raising up of new elders, and for the Lord to bless the work of church revitalisation that is being carried out across the state.

The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

44. Church and Nation Committee

The report of the Church and Nation Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause-by-clause.

Clauses 1-11 were approved.

Clause 12 was approved.

Clauses 13-14 were moved and seconded.

Question time was adjourned to take up a fixed order of the day. (min 47)

45. Women's Ministries Victoria Committee

The report of the Women's Ministries Victoria Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Ben Johnson, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Pray for the women in the church that they might continue to mature in Christ, be equipped to minister to others in the body of Christ, and be salt and light as ambassadors of Christ in the world.
2. Encourage the women in the congregations of the church to commit to attending the closest 'On the Road' conference in the next twelve months to be built up in their faith and to strengthen the bonds of fellowship across women in the denomination.
3. Commend the appeal to presbyteries, churches, and individuals for financial support of the Women's Ministries Facilitator so that this vital ministry to the women of the church can continue with strength.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Moderator welcomed Mrs Amy Isham to the Assembly, and invited her to address the Assembly.

Mrs Isham addressed the Assembly.

46. Ad Hoc Archivist Search Committee

The report of the Ad Hoc Archivist Search Committee was received.

The Clerk moved the proposed deliverance.

The motion was seconded.

It was agreed to sit in private.

The motion to approve the proposed deliverance was put.

That the Assembly:

1. Approve the addition of words 'through the Clerk' to the job description (clause 9), so as it reads:

PCV Archivist

The archivist, under the supervision of and reporting to the Clerk of Assembly, shall be the principal person to care for the PCV Archive, and in particular, will:

1. take every reasonable step to preserve the church's historical collection from loss or deterioration;
2. take every reasonable step to satisfy church-based inquiries, and secondarily, if time permits, outside inquiries;
3. in appropriate ways and when appropriate, remind the church courts, committees and organisations of the importance of preserving historical records;
4. from time to time, arrange for special displays of any archival material that might be of interest to the church on suitable public occasions;
5. supervise the depositing of fresh material to the Archive;
6. give advice, when required, as to what material is to be sent to the Archive under rules 4.96.6 and 5.49.2;
7. as required, provide personal assistance to any PCV congregation or organisation preparing to celebrate significant anniversaries or milestones;
8. be responsible for the selection and supervision of volunteers;

9. report annually to the General Assembly, through the Clerk, on the state and use of the Archive, together with any suggestions for improvement.
2. Under rule 5.19, appoint Mr Michael G Smith as PCV Archivist (EFT 0.4), commencing at a time to be negotiated with the Clerk, under the usual provisos that Mr Smith is confirmed as WWCC and Safe Church Training compliant, and upon signing a BIF approved contract of employment.
3. Pray for the newly appointed PCV Archivist that he will be used of God in the service of the church and for the blessing of God's people.
4. Request the Presbytery of Melbourne East, on behalf of the General Assembly, to recognise this appointment – to pray with and for Michael Smith in a way deemed appropriate by the presbytery and at a time close to the commencement of employment.
5. Thank and discharge the committee.

The motion was approved unanimously.

It was agreed to resume in open court.

The Moderator welcomed Mr Michael G Smith to the Assembly and congratulated him on his appointment to this role.

Moderator's Chaplain, Rev Ben Nelson, prayed for Mr Smith.

Mr Smith addressed the Assembly.

47. Church and Nation Committee (min 44)

Question time was resumed.

Elder Colin Morrow raised a point of order.

The Moderator ruled there was no point of order.

Rev David Brown moved, arising out of debate:

That the Assembly:

Alter words in clause 13(a) as follows:

- a) replace 'efforts' with 'intention'; and
- b) replace all words following the word 'denomination' with 'has encouraged people to be vaccinated at their earliest convenience.'

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clause 13 as amended was approved.

Debate was adjourned for lunch. (min 48)

The Assembly resumed after the lunch break with the Moderator's chaplain, Rev Ben Nelson, leading in a devotion based on Psalm 84:1-12 and prayer.

48. Church and Nation Committee (min 47)

Debate resumed after the adjournment.

Clause 14 had been moved and seconded. (min 44)

Rev Dean Carroll moved, arising out of debate:

That the Assembly:

Amend clause 14 by replacing all words with the following: Inform the State Opposition, Minor Parties and Independents of its decision in clause 13 above.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clause 14 as amended was approved.

The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer.

Rev Phil Campbell led the Assembly in prayer for the Moderator. (min 108)

49. Social Services Committee

The report of the Social Services Committee was received.

The Clerk moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Pray for the Trusts Corporation and the Social Services Committee as they work together to ensure the administration of the trusts is aligned with the terms of each trust.
2. Thank all the members of the Social Services Committee for their ongoing dedication to ensuring that the social service of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria continues to support those in need.

The motion was seconded and approved.

50. State News Committee

The report of the State News Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Stephen McDonald, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Give thanks to God for the assistance of Virtual Church Assist in the publication of *Fellow Workers*.
2. Encourage committees, presbyteries, and churches to inform the State News Committee of items of interest to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.
3. Encourage presbytery clerks to keep the State News Committee up to date with ministry moves.
4. Encourage members of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to subscribe to receive *Fellow Workers* through the sign-up form on the PCV website.

The motion was seconded and approved.

51. Theological Education Committee

The report of the Theological Education Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause-by-clause.

Clauses 1-9 and 11 were approved.

Rev Peter Hastie left the meeting.

It was agreed to sit in private.

Clause 10 was approved unanimously.

It was agreed to resume in open court.

Rev Peter Hastie returned to the meeting and the Moderator informed him of his reappointment, carried unanimously.

Rev Hastie addressed the Assembly.

The Moderator prayed for Mr Hastie.

The Convener, Rev Kevin Maxwell, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole:

That the Assembly:

1. Pray that God will enable the Presbyterian Theological College to return to face-to-face lectures and meetings to strengthen fellowship and the bonds of unity in Christ.
2. Thank God that the Rev Ben Nelson and the Rev Dr Jared Hood have been able to complete six months of Sabbatical leave in 2020–2021.
3. Praise God for the provision of a gifted team of adjunct lecturers who ably support the College, staff, and students.
4. Thank God for the competent, gracious staff that support the students and PTC faculty.
5. Praise God for the gifted students and candidates preparing for gospel ministry at PTC, and pray that they will continue to grow in the knowledge of God and love of his Son, Jesus Christ.

6. Ask Christ to continue to give gifts to his church in the form of faithful and godly men and women who are willing to serve his people in gospel ministry.
7. Urge ministers and trainers to encourage all those considering studying for gospel ministry in the PCV to speak with the Academic Dean at PTC before commencing a course of study.
8. Give thanks to God for the service of the Principal, Rev Peter Hastie, and the blessing that he has provided to the students, staff, faculty, TEC, and wider PCV.
9. Commend the Principal, Rev Peter Hastie, for his hard work, diligence, example, and godliness of character and conduct.
10. Reappoint Rev Peter Hastie as Principal of the Presbyterian Theological College for a further two years from 1 January 2022, in accordance with the existing job description and remuneration.
11. Authorise the committee to consult with the Board of Investment and Finance regarding an increase of funding by the 2023 financial year to provide for a fifth full-time lecturer and a full-time business administrator.

The motion was seconded and approved.

52. Substantive Motion—Brimbank Session

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Permit Brimbank Session to meet on Wednesday evening 6 October 2021 notwithstanding that the second sitting of the General Assembly may not have closed.

The motion was seconded and approved.

53. Ad hoc Negotiation of Sale of Assembly Hall Committee

It was moved and seconded to receive the report of the ad hoc Negotiation of Sale of Assembly Hall Committee.

It was agreed to sit in private.

Rev Luke Isham raised a point of order (objectionable language).

Rev Barry Oakes raised a point of order (personal explanation).

The Moderator ruled that the language was objectionable and should be withdrawn.

Elder Colin Morrow withdrew the objectionable language and apologised.

The motion to receive the report was approved.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clause 1 was approved.

Rev Barry Oakes moved notice of motion B-24:

That the Assembly:

Amend the proposed deliverance by adding the following new clause 2:

2. Establish an ad hoc committee called Ad Hoc Committee: Options Regarding the Minority Interest in Assembly Hall, comprising three members of the Trust Corporation, the Moderator, and the Clerk of Assembly to investigate the feasibility of the options available in relation to the PCV's beneficial interest in Assembly Hall, namely:
 - a) the commercial feasibility of maintaining the 37% interest in Assembly Hall through the redevelopment of the building and/or reassessment of the leasing options, working jointly with representatives of the Scots' Church Board of Management,
 - b) the sale of the PCV's 37% interest to a third party, and
 - c) any other option that may arise,
 and report to the 2022 General Assembly.

It was agreed to resume in open court. (min 58)

54. Adjournment

The Assembly adjourned to meet at 9:00am on Thursday 7 October 2021 by Zoom, which, having been duly intimated, the Moderator marked the adjournment with prayer.

CLERKS:
J P Wilson
D A Carroll

**PROCEEDINGS
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
of the
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
2nd Sitting continued: Thursday 7 October**

By Zoom, an electronic means of meeting, on Thursday 7 October 2021 at 9:00am.

55. Resumption

The Assembly resumed pursuant to adjournment with the Moderator, Rev Peter Phillips, leading the Assembly in a reading from John 1 and prayer.

56. Devotion

Moderator's Chaplain, Rev Jesse Walz, led the Assembly with a devotion from Romans 12:9-21 and in prayer.

57. Business Committee

The Convener, Rev Dr Jared Hood, thanked the chaplains for their devotions, the Zoom team for their diligent work, and Siew Teng for her cheerful assistance to the Assembly. Dr Hood informed the court that it was continuing with agenda item 13.

58. Ad hoc Negotiation of Sale of Assembly Hall Committee (min 53)

A motion to sit in private was moved and seconded.

The motion was disapproved.

Rev Philip Court raised a point of order (privilege).

The Moderator ruled that the privileges of the house had been breached and that the remedy would be to hold another vote to sit in private.

A motion to sit in private was moved and seconded.

The motion was approved.

Question time resumed.

Elder Colin Morrow raised a point of order (personal explanation).

Rev Darren Middleton raised a point of order (personal explanation).

Rev Philip Court raised a point of order (privilege).

The Moderator ruled that there was no breach of privilege.

Rev Barry Oakes raised a point of order (personal explanation).

Elder Colin Morrow sought leave to move an amendment arising out of debate.

The Moderator allowed the amendment but suggested that an adjournment would give time for more careful wording.

It was agreed to adjourn debate to after lunch.

It was agreed to resume in open court. (min 66)

59. Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee

The report of the Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Miles Fagan, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Give thanks to the Lord for the work of Rev Trevor Cox, firstly as a chaplain in Army Reserve and secondly on the Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee.
2. Give thanks to the Lord for the exuberance of Rev Bryce Wiegandt as he moves to South Australia and embarks on a long and faithful ministry of chaplaincy in the RAAF.
3. Pray for the Assembly's ADF chaplains as they engage in all facets of life with the men and women of the ADF, that they may be the presence of Christ in the

midst.

4. Encourage and urge presbyteries and congregations to put forward candidates for this unique ministry, as the ADF needs Christian chaplains.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Rev Matt Deroon led the Assembly in prayer for Rev Bryce Wiegandt as he moves to chaplaincy work in South Australia.

The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer for the March for the Babies 2021 online gathering this Saturday 9 October.

60. Church Planting Committee

The report of the Church Planting Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-3 were approved.

Clauses 4-6 were approved.

Clause 7 was approved.

The Convener, Rev Cameron Garrett, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole:

That the Assembly:

1. Thank God for the Officer and Donnybrook church plants, praying for their continued establishment.
2. Praise God for the changes to the requirements made by the Local Government Area prior to the VCAT hearing for the Officer church plant's use of the land.
3. Pray for the Church Planter Evangelist and presbyteries as they meet over the coming year with the Church Planting Committee, seeking to 'encourage and assist presbyteries to establish new congregations' and to help 'develop and maintain strategies for the establishment of new congregations' (regulations 4a and 4b).
4. Authorise the 2022 Commission of Assembly to receive and deal with the Position Description and Terms of Settlement for the Church Planting Officer (however titled).
5. Authorise the Church Planting Committee to bring a name for the Church Planting Officer (however titled) position to the 2022 Assembly.
6. Send the current draft Church Planting Officer position description and draft Terms of Settlement to all presbyteries with all suggestions and comments made by presbyteries or presbytery members to be submitted to the Church Planting Committee by 31 March 2022 for consideration, as follows:

DRAFT Church Planting Officer (position description)

1. Title

There shall be an Official (see rule 5.19) of the General Assembly (the Assembly) called the Church Planting Officer (CPO), formerly known as the Church Planter Evangelist (CPE).

2. Accountability

The CPO shall be accountable to the Church Planting Committee (CPC).

3. Attributes

- a) mature, wise, humble, prayerful
- b) consistent life and doctrine
- c) hard-working, self-motivated
- d) leadership and team gathering
- e) strategic thinker and clear communicator
- f) able to analyse church and secular culture

- g) discipling
 - h) evangelistic
4. **Qualifications**
- a) Essential
 - i. Demonstrated church planting experience.
 - ii. A minister in full standing with the Presbyterian Church of Australia or willing to satisfy the requirements of the rules of the General Assembly of Australia relative to the reception of ministers from other churches.
 - iii. Practitioner of a training model of Ministry.
 - b) Desirable
 - i. More than five years pastoral experience.
 - ii. Denominational policy, governance, and vision experience.
 - iii. Ministry experience in multiple contexts (e.g. city, regional, cross-cultural).
 - iv. Well-read in the field of Church Planting.
5. **Responsibilities**
- a) Provide advice to the CPC concerning but not limited to:
 - i. church planting progress;
 - ii. future church plants;
 - iii. grant applications;
 - iv. potential church planters;
 - v. barriers to effective church planting;
 - vi. systems and processes;
 - vii. developments in church planting practice, both domestic and international;
 - viii. recent academic thought in the area of church planting;
 - ix. cultural trends and population statistics as they touch upon the work of the committee;
 - x. property suitable for land banking and future church planting; and
 - xi. the training of church planters.
 - b) Report to the Assembly annually by means of an addendum to the CPC report.
 - c) Engage with:
 - i. presbyteries to:
 - identify potential locations for new congregations;
 - develop and maintain strategies for the formation of new congregations;
 - identify suitable property for land banking and church planting;
 - ii. sessions to:
 - equip the charge to church plant;
 - foster a church planting outlook;
 - partner with other sessions to work towards church planting;
 - iii. Assembly committees to:
 - keep church planting on their agendas;
 - promote a unified denominational church planting approach;
 - iv. church officials to:

- identify areas of mutual understanding and potential cooperation.
 - d) Produce content for circulation in state and federal church media.
 - e) Develop and revise:
 - i. policies and procedures;
 - ii. handbooks and manuals;
 - iii. other resources and materials.
 - f) Be an ambassador for church planting within the denomination.
 - g) Seek and identify potential church planters from:
 - i. within the PCV;
 - ii. interstate presbyterian churches;
 - iii. theological colleges;
 - iv. church planting and ministry networks.
 - h) Oversee the ongoing training, coaching, and mentoring of church planters.
 - i) Execute any other CPC directive.
6. **Safe Church Obligations**
- a) The CPO shall:
 - i. at all times hold a current Working with Children Check;
 - ii. complete Basic Safe Church Training or equivalent;
 - iii. complete Advanced Safe Church Training; and
 - iv. complete the relevant Safe Church Refresher course annually.
7. **Denominational Involvement**
- a) The CPO shall have a seat on the presbytery in which he resides.
 - b) The CPO shall not without CPC approval:
 - i. serve on any committee, board, panel, or council of the Church;
 - ii. serve as Moderator of a Home Mission Charge or Interim Moderator of a vacant charge;
 - iii. serve as Presbytery Moderator or Presbytery Clerk;
 - iv. serve as Assembly Moderator; or
 - v. teach at the theological college.
8. **Residence**
- The CPO shall have his place of residence within the Melbourne Metropolitan Area.
9. **Appointment**
- a) The appointment is full-time (1.0 EFT).
 - b) The initial appointment shall be for five years.
 - c) Subsequent appointments shall be for five years.
10. **Performance Reviews**
- a) The CPO shall receive annual formative reviews performed by the CPC.
 - b) Prior to any subsequent appointment, the CPO shall undergo a summative review performed by the CPC (with external support).
11. **Termination or Resignation**
- a) The position shall conclude effective 90 days after:
 - i. termination notice is given by the CPC or Assembly; or

- ii. resignation notice is given by the CPO.
- b) Termination shall be immediate if the CPO ceases to be an Ordained Minister.

12. Position Description Changes

- a) The Assembly may at any time change this position description.
- b) Prior to each appointment, the CPC shall review the CPO position description, and if necessary, bring any recommended changes to the attention of the Code and General Administration Committee for consideration before seeking Assembly approval.

DRAFT Church Planting Officer (Terms of Settlement)

- a) Minimum Terms of Settlement for Ministers as approved by the Assembly with the following additions:
 - i. Manse allowance;
 - ii. Manse energy up to 10% Stipend;
 - iii. Communications (phone/internet/mobile/NBN) up to 4% Stipend; and
 - iv. Children's primary and secondary education up to 5% Stipend.
 - b) Work Cover and Disability Insurance.
 - c) Removal costs for initial appointment only.
 - d) Long Service Leave subject to the PCV Ministers Long Service Leave and LSL Fund Regulations.
 - e) Any other provision the Assembly may declare from time to time.
7. Pray for the Ministry Development Committee and Church Planting Committee dialogue as they seek to bring a recommendation to the 2022 Assembly concerning the distribution of Scots' Church Property Trust funds for the work of Home Mission and Church Extension within the State of Victoria.

The motion was seconded and approved.

61. Clerkship Committee

The report of the Clerkship Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Robert White, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Express its appreciation and give thanks to God for the role played by the Clerk, Rev Dr John Wilson, in the life of the church, noting the generous, God-honouring contribution he makes to the life and work of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.
2. Express its appreciation and give thanks to God for Rev Peter Phillips' dedicated, meticulous, and wise contribution to the work of the church in his capacity as Deputy Clerk.
3. Express its appreciation and give thanks to God for Rev Dean Carroll's conscientious and prayerful support of the clerks in their work on behalf of the Assembly.
4. Note, with thankfulness and deep appreciation, the support Siew Teng Yap provides for the clerks and the wider church by her generous-hearted, gracious, and efficient work in the church office.
5. Note the appointment of Rev Dean Carroll as Acting Deputy Clerk for the period 4 October 2021 – 10 October 2022.

The motion was seconded and approved.

62. Exit Students Committee

The report of the Exit Students Committee was received.

(1) The Convener, Rev Gerald Vanderwert, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Thank the Lord for his continuing provision of candidates for ministry in the churches of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and ask him for his blessing on those taking up exit appointments in early 2022.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) Rev Stephen McDonald moved notice of motion B-26, clause 3 (clause 2 was withdrawn):

That the Assembly:

3. Direct the Code and General Administration Committee to bring to the 2022 General Assembly proposed amendments to Code rules and committee regulations such that exit students will be appointed by the relevant presbytery or called by congregations through the usual processes for appointments and calls, with the facilitation and advice of the Exit Students Committee.

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

63. Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee

The report of the Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Philip Court, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Thank God for the work over many years of Mr Ian Waller as the committee's paediatric chaplain at Western Health's Sunshine Hospital, and wish him every blessing in the years ahead.
2. Thank the congregations, boards of management, and individuals generously supporting this year's Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee Good Friday Appeal.
3. Thank The Scots' Church Melbourne for its generous grant to sustain the ongoing viability of paediatric chaplaincy at the Royal Children's Hospital.
4. Thank the committee's volunteer chaplains in public hospitals, police stations, and prisons for their commitment and efforts in manifesting the love of Christ in those settings.
5. Encourage sessions to consider the opportunities presented through health and community chaplaincy for suitable members of their congregations to reach out to others in the name of Christ.

The motion was seconded and approved.

64. Maintenance of the Ministry Committee

The report of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee was received.

Rev Dr Jared Hood declared a conflict of interest such that he would abstain from voting on notice of motion B-27.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-6 were approved.

The Assembly adjourned for lunch (min 65).

The Assembly resumed after the lunch break with the Moderator's chaplain, Rev Ben Nelson, leading in a devotion based on Acts 14:11-18 and prayer.

65. Maintenance of the Ministry Committee (min 64)

The Convener moved clause 7.

The motion was seconded.

(1) Rev Andy Buchan moved notice of motion B-27.

That the Assembly:

Amend the deliverance by:

- a) replacing the figure of 61% in clause 7a with the figure of 65%.
- b) replacing the figure of 35% in clause 7b with the figure of 40%.

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

Clause 7 was approved.

Clause 8 was approved.

(2) The Convener, Elder Dennis Wright, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole:

That the Assembly:

1. Direct the Code and General Administration Committee to bring rules and or regulations requiring those covered under the LSL scheme to reduce any accrued LSL above six weeks to six or less weeks before being appointed or inducted into a new charge.
2. Declare that under the LSL Scheme regulation 24b:
 - a) Rev Paul Huynh be included under the previous regulations where it reads: 'while he is employed in his current position.'
 - b) no additional persons shall be included as the time limit in regulation 24b has lapsed.
3. Remind all 'responsible bodies' that the LSL Fund provides grants equal to the Assembly approved Minimum Remuneration (see regulation 22b), and it remains the responsibility of the 'responsible body' to ensure persons receive all their entitlements (Terms of Settlement) while on LSL (regulations 22c and 4).
4. Remind all presbyteries that LSL for inducted ministers no longer requires presbytery approval. LSL is now authorised by the appropriate 'responsible body' (see regulation 13).
5. Remind all those covered under the LSL Fund that approval to accumulate LSL beyond thirteen (13) weeks is only possible with the approval of the 'responsible body' and the MMC (see regulation 10).
6. Remind all ministers that, while presbytery approval to take LSL is no longer needed, any minister who intends to be away from his pulpit for more than two (2) months must seek the leave of presbytery (see rule 4.52).
7. Declare from 1 July 2022 that:
 - a) The Minimum Ministerial Remuneration (MMR) in any financial year shall be 61% of the 'Earnings; Males; Full Time; Adult; Ordinary time earnings; Victoria' as published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the November of the preceding tax year (ABS cat. no. 6302.0; table 13B, series id. A85006425W) except where this will result in a reduction in MMR. In the latter case, it will remain unchanged for that financial year, with the actual dollar (\$) figure rounded down to the nearest multiple of 12.
 - b) The maximum Non-Cash Benefit (NCB) proportion of actual Ministerial Remuneration shall be 35%, with the actual dollar (\$) figure rounded down to the nearest multiple of 12.
 - c) The minimum rate of Employer Superannuation Contributions shall be 15% of the actual Ministerial Remuneration, with the actual dollar (\$) figure rounded up to the nearest multiple of 12.
 - d) The Long Service Leave Levy (LSLL) in any financial year shall be 0.7% of MMR, with the actual dollar (\$) figure rounded down to the nearest multiple of 10.
 - e) The Sustentation Qualifying Stipend (SQS) in any financial year shall be 50% of MMR, with the actual dollar (\$) figure rounded down to the nearest dollar (\$).

- f) The Supply rates in any financial year be set at, rounded to the nearest dollar (\$):
 - i. 0.25% of MMR for one service;
 - ii. 0.30% of MMR for two services with the same sermon;
 - iii. 0.35% of MMR for three services with the same sermon;
 - iv. 0.45% of MMR for two or more services with more than one sermon.
 - g) The Travel Rate in any financial year shall be equal to 75% of the Australian Tax Office's 'cents per kilometre method' rate for the previous tax year, with the actual dollar (\$) figure rounded to the nearest cent.
8. Direct the MMC to report to the next immediate Assembly should two consecutive annual decreases in the 'Earnings; Males; Full Time; Adult; Ordinary time earnings; Victoria' occur, with a proposed way forward for determining Minimum Ministerial Remuneration rates.

The motion was seconded and approved.

66. Ad hoc Negotiation of Sale of Assembly Hall Committee (min 58)

Debate was resumed after the adjournment.

The Moderator ruled that the Assembly sit in private.

(1) Elder Colin Morrow moved, arising out of debate:

That the Assembly:

Replace the words 'the Moderator, and the Clerk of Assembly' with 'and four other members as follows: Rev Darren Middleton, Graham Nicholson, Richard O'Brien and Mr Sebert Ruddock, the convener to be appointed by the Trusts Corporation'.

The motion was seconded.

(2) Rev Barry Oakes moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend the amendment by replacing the composition of the committee with the following: 'comprising three members of the Trusts Corporation (with the Chairman of the Trusts Corporation as Convener), the Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, and the conveners of the Ministry Development Committee and Church Planting Committee or their nominees'.

The motion was seconded.

The amendment to the amendment was approved.

The amendment was approved.

The motion to approve notice of motion B-24 as amended was approved.

(3) Rev Cameron Garrett moved notice of motion B-25:

That the Assembly:

Amend the deliverance by adding the following new clauses 3–6:

- 3. Note that the Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiating Committee offer of 24 July 2021 does not appear to grasp the nature of the charitable purposes for which the Assembly Hall is held viz. 63% for the Building, Maintenance & Improvement Fund, 37% Home Mission and Church Extension in the state of Victoria.
- 4. Note that the Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiating Committee offer includes ancillary benefits (1, 2 & 3) that, if enacted, could breach trust law by denying the 63% holder of Assembly Hall viz. the Building, Maintenance and Improvement Fund, its rightful income for at least ten years.
- 5. Direct the Assembly Hall Joint Management Committee report to the 2022 Commission of Assembly its reasons for denying the charitable purposes (BMI and HM&CE) their rightful income by not collecting rent for all use of Assembly Hall (including, but not limited to use by Scots' Church and the PCV) and how it is acting consistently with trust law.

6. Direct the Assembly Hall Joint Management Committee report to the 2022 Commission of Assembly how it plans to fund the 'current façade restoration' (estimated at \$4M–\$5M) mentioned within the Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiating Committee offer of 24 July 2021.

The motion was seconded.

The previous question was moved, seconded and approved.

(4) Rev Phil Campbell moved notice of motion C-34 in an amended form.

That the Assembly:

- a) Instruct the committee (referred to in clause 2 above) to continue negotiations with Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiating Committee, noting the financial constraints as detailed by The Scots' Church, that development options are limited and anticipated future maintenance costs are high.
- b) Suggest to the committee (referred to in clause 2 above) that it seek from The Scots' Church an increase to the proposed rent-free period to the PCV, and a component of direct financial benefit to the charitable purposes for which the PCV's interest in the Assembly Hall is held.
- c) Suggest that the committee (referred to in clause 2 above) investigate means to allocate a portion of funds from future rental savings toward the charitable purposes mentioned in clause (b) above.

The motion was seconded.

The previous question was moved, seconded and disapproved.

Notice of Motion C-34 was approved in its amended form.

Rev Phil Campbell sought leave to move an additional subclause (d).

Leave was not granted.

Clause 4 was approved.

(5) The Convener, Elder Colin Morrow, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Assembly:

1. Note the proposal from the Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiation Committee to purchase the 37% share of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in the Assembly Hall, received 24 July 2021, as follows:
 - a) To purchase the building for a nominal amount, with the Scots' Church Board of Management taking on the full responsibility for all current and future repairs and maintenance requirements for the building (with the current façade restoration alone estimated at \$4–5 million).
 - b) To provide for the benefit of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Home Mission Committee and the Presbyterian Church of Victoria:
 - i. The PCV Office on the Mezzanine Floor for its exclusive use for a rent-free period of ten years.
 - ii. The office currently occupied by the Ministry Development Committee on the 2nd floor provided for its exclusive use for a rent-free period of ten years.
 - iii. The Presbyterian Church of Victoria has the right to use the Werner Brodbeck Hall, Robert White Hall, and meeting rooms for meetings, the Commission of Assembly, and General Assembly, Graduation Ceremonies, and other Church events for free, provided that reasonable notice is given to the Scots' Church Office to avoid double bookings.
 - iv. The three car spaces currently used by the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in the 150 Collins Street Car Park continue to be provided for a rent-free period of ten years.

- v. At the end of the ten-year rent-free period, the Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiation Committee proposes that the rent-free arrangement be reviewed in the spirit of goodwill and faithfulness.
- 2. Establish an ad hoc committee called Ad Hoc Committee: Options Regarding the Minority Interest in Assembly Hall, comprising three members of the Trusts Corporation (with the Chairman of the Trusts Corporation as Convener), the Moderator and Clerk of Assembly, and the conveners of the Ministry Development Committee and Church Planting Committee or their nominees, to investigate the feasibility of the options available in relation to the PCV's beneficial interest in Assembly Hall, namely:
 - a) the commercial feasibility of maintaining the 37% interest in Assembly Hall through the redevelopment of the building and/or reassessment of the leasing options, working jointly with representatives of the Scots' Church Board of Management,
 - b) the sale of the PCV's 37% interest to a third party, and
 - c) any other option that may arise,
 and report to the 2022 General Assembly.
- 3.
 - a) Instruct the committee (referred to in clause 2 above) to continue negotiations with Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiating Committee, noting the financial constraints as detailed by The Scots' Church, that development options are limited and anticipated future maintenance costs are high.
 - b) Suggest to the committee (referred to in clause 2 above) that it seek from The Scots' Church an increase to the proposed rent-free period to the PCV, and a component of direct financial benefit to the charitable purposes for which the PCV's interest in the Assembly Hall is held.
 - c) Suggest that the committee (referred to in clause 2 above) investigate means to allocate a portion of funds from future rental savings toward the charitable purposes mentioned in clause (b) above.
- 4. Thank and discharge the Ad hoc Negotiation of Sale of Assembly Hall Committee.

The motion was seconded and approved.

It was agreed to resume in open court.

67. Selection Committee

The report of the Selection Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-10 were approved.

(1) Rev Cameron Garrett moved notice of motion B-30:

That the Assembly:

- 11. In respect to GAA committee nominations:
 - a) Direct the Selection Committee to invite nominations from presbyteries, with responses due 28 February 2022, for the following GAA Committees in keeping with GAA Rules 9.2 and 9.4.1 and Selection Committee Regulation 3(j):
 - i. Christian Education;
 - ii. Code;
 - iii. Defence Force Chaplaincy;
 - iv. Finance;
 - v. Presbyterian Inland Mission;
 - vi. Public Worship and Aids to Devotion;
 - vii. Reception of Ministers; and

- viii. Relations with Other Churches.
- b) Direct the Selection Committee to report to the 2022 Commission of Assembly:
 - i. the names of those PCV members currently serving on the aforementioned GAA committees;
 - ii. the total number of years served on the committee by each person; and
 - iii. the willingness of each person to serve for another triennium.
- c) Authorise the Selection Committee to bring all competent presbytery nominations (noting eligibility under GAA Rule 9.6) to the 2022 Commission of Assembly for the approval of two State Assembly nominees per committee, by ballot if necessary.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Convener, Rev Adam Humphries, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Assembly:

1. Thank Almighty God for the operations of the Assembly's committees, boards, and councils in the 2020–2021 assembly year.
2. Thank all committee members and conveners who have served in the past year.
3. Confirm the appointment of those members appointed by the Selection Committee to fill casual vacancies on committees since the 2020 Assembly.
4. Notwithstanding rule 5.24.1, appoint Elder Dennis Wright as convener of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee for one additional year.
5. Appoint all persons nominated to committees, boards, councils, and other bodies and positions as presented in the Selection Committee's Report.
6. Conduct a ballot at an appropriate time to elect two of the following ministers as GAV commissioners to the GAA and appoint Rev Russ Ginter as an alternate: Rev Cam Garrett, Rev Peter Hastie, Rev Martin de Pyle, Rev Ben Nelson.
7. Appoint the following elders as GAV commissioners to the GAA: Mr Kevin Childs, Mr Tom Guilford, Mr Steve Harris, Dr Noel Johnston.
8. Conduct a ballot at an appropriate time to determine which three of the following ministers and which three of the following elders will serve on the GAA Moderator's Nominating Committee. Ministers: Rev Philip Burns, Rev Chris Duke, Rev Don Elliott, Rev Chris Siriweera, Rev Gary Stephens, Rev Robert White. Elders: Mr Daniel Combridge, Mr Andrew Deeming, Mr Steve Harris, Mr Roger McIvor, Mr Ben Palmer, Mr Tony Zirngast.
9. Nominate Mr Colin Morrow for the position of Moderator-General and request the Clerk of the General Assembly of Victoria to communicate this to the Clerk of the General Assembly of Australia along with Mr Morrow's written consent as received by the Selection Committee.
10. Notwithstanding rule 5.25.1, extend Rev Mark Crabb's service on the Maintenance of Ministry Committee for one additional year, in line with rule 5.25.2.
11. In respect to GAA committee nominations:
 - a) Direct the Selection Committee to invite nominations from presbyteries, with responses due 28 February 2022, for the following GAA Committees in keeping with GAA Rules 9.2 and 9.4.1 and Selection Committee Regulation 3(j):
 - i. Christian Education;
 - ii. Code;
 - iii. Defence Force Chaplaincy;

- iv. Finance;
 - v. Presbyterian Inland Mission;
 - vi. Public Worship and Aids to Devotion;
 - vii. Reception of Ministers; and
 - viii. Relations with Other Churches.
- b) Direct the Selection Committee to report to the 2022 Commission of Assembly:
- i. the names of those PCV members currently serving on the aforementioned GAA committees;
 - ii. the total number of years served on the committee by each person; and
 - iii. the willingness of each person to serve for another triennium.
- c) Authorise the Selection Committee to bring all competent presbytery nominations (noting eligibility under GAA Rule 9.6) to the 2022 Commission of Assembly for the approval of two State Assembly nominees per committee, by ballot if necessary.

The motion was seconded and approved.

68. Ballots

A ballot was held to elect two ministers to serve as GAV commissioners to the 2022 GAA.

(1) Rev Cam Garrett and Peter Hastie were elected as GAV commissioners to the 2022 GAA.

A ballot was held to elect three ministers and three elders to serve on the GAA Moderator's Nominating Committee.

(2) Rev Philip Burns, Chris Siriweera and Robert White were elected to serve on the GAA Moderator's Nominating Committee.

(3) The declaration of result for the ballot for elders was withdrawn by the Moderator.
(min 70)

69. Code and General Administration Committee

The report of the Code and General Administration Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-6 were moved and seconded.

Rev David Brown sought leave to move an amendment.

Leave was granted.

(1) Rev David Brown moved:

That the Assembly:

Add to clause 6.3 the words 'with a current Working With Children Check' after the words 'a suitable qualified person'.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Rev Barry Oakes sought leave to move an amendment.

Leave was not granted.

Clauses 1-6 as amended were approved.

Clause 7 was approved.

Clause 8 was approved.

Clause 9 was moved and seconded.

Rev Hui Lim sought leave to move an amendment.

Leave was not granted.

Clause 9 was approved.

Dissent:

Rev Kevin Maxwell

Rev Brett Peatman
Rev Gary Wentworth
Rev Wayne McArdle

Clause 10 was approved.

(2) The Convener, Rev John Wilson, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Assembly:

1. Re-number the Ministry Development Committee regulation 7 and add a new clause (b) so that it will read:

7. Accreditation as a home missionary

Before accrediting anyone as a home missionary, the committee must:

- a) by interviewing the applicant and by any other means it chooses to adopt, satisfy itself of:
 - i) the applicant's Christian character and conviction and his sense of divine call;
 - ii) his satisfactory length of membership in and service to the Presbyterian Church of Australia, which should not be less than 12 months;
 - iii) his subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith as read in the light of the Declaratory Statement;
 - iv) his attainment to a sufficient level of theological understanding;
 - v) his owning and acceptance of the purity of worship as practised in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria;
 - vi) his owning of the Presbyterian form of government as founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto and his commitment to firmly and constantly adhere to, and to the utmost of his power, to assert, maintain and defend the same;
 - vii) his right motivation for gospel ministry, namely, zeal for the glory of God, love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire to save souls;
 - viii) his willingness and ability to undertake such further study as may be directed by the presbytery in consultation with the committee;
 - ix) his ability in preaching and public speaking;
 - x) his capacity for making acceptable contacts with people;
 - xi) his good health as assessed by a medical practitioner;
 - xii) his having a satisfactory police record check;
 - xiii) his having a current Working with Children Check;
 - xiv) his having completed all PCV Safe Church requirements for a person in leadership; and
 - xv) if the applicant is a candidate for the ministry, his application having the approval of the Theological Education Committee.
- b) by requiring the applicant to undergo psychological testing and assessment to be arranged by the committee at its expense and administered by a mental health professional external to the PCV, satisfy itself of the applicant's suitability to undertake work involving children as a home missionary.

2. Replace Board of Investment and Finance regulation 12 with the following:

12. General Mission Program

The BIF shall:

- a) present to the General Assembly or to a Commission thereof each year for approval a mission program for the church for the ensuing financial year, to be known as the General Mission Program (GMP), which shall include the following recommendations:
 - i) the total amount of money to be sought from charges through presbyteries during the relevant year to fund the program;
 - ii) an equitable formula for the allocation to presbyteries of the total amount of the program, such formula remaining in operation for such period as the General Assembly or the Commission may determine;
 - iii) the allocation to presbyteries of amounts based on the formula referred to in regulation 12(a)(ii), which in total equal the amount of the program referred to in regulation 12(a)(i);
 - iv) the distribution of the total amount of the GMP to the relevant committees of the General Assembly and/or to any other organisations within or outside the church which the General Assembly has approved for financial support;
- b) in assessing the amount of money to be sought from charges under (a) above, observe the following guiding principles:
 - i) General Assembly committees are to fund all proposals of support for ministries related to their committee responsibilities from their allocated committee funds;
 - ii) without weakening guiding principle (i), the GMP is for the support of General Assembly committees with limited or zero committee funds;
 - iii) in general, the expansion of the GMP levy on congregations is to be resisted;
- c) for the purpose of determining its recommendations to be submitted to the General Assembly or Commission of the Assembly:
 - i) require each committee of the General Assembly which desires to apply for a distribution from the GMP to prepare in a form approved by the BIF a budget for the ensuing year clearly indicating the amount sought by that committee from the GMP, supplemented by a submission supporting the application, such budget to be provided to the BIF by a specified date;
 - ii) receive a copy of the budget for the ensuing year of each committee of the General Assembly which desires to apply for a distribution from the GMP, clearly indicating the amount sought by that committee from the GMP, where necessary supplemented by a submission supporting the application;
 - iii) at its discretion, confer, with any General Assembly committee or its convener for the purpose of clarifying any item in the budget submitted by that committee;
 - iv) at its discretion, reduce or increase the amount sought by any General Assembly committee, or decline to include any amount for that committee;
 - v) at its discretion, from time to time, require each presbytery to supply to it by a specified date, such financial and other information relating to the several charges or a specific charge

within its bounds, as it may deem necessary for it to prepare the formula referred to in regulation 12(a)(ii);

- d) encourage presbyteries and charges to fully subscribe the amounts allocated to them under the GMP;
- e) include in its report to the General Assembly each year a table listing all charges and their respective annual contributions to the GMP during the preceding financial year.

3. Enact the following rule changes such that the rules referred to shall read:

3.40.6 A session must count the votes cast in the election, and in deciding who is to be elected must follow the order of the voters' preference, first satisfying itself that each of the persons indicated by this choice has demonstrated a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and a giftedness for diaconal ministry within the life of the congregation and that he or she has a current Working With Children Check and has completed all relevant PCV Safe Church requirements. Insofar as it is so satisfied it records this by resolution.

3.45 Appointment of congregational officers

3.45.1 Session is responsible for the appointment, but not the financial arrangements, of congregational officers, including choir-director, organist or other musicians, or church officer, using wherever possible contracts approved by the Board of Investment and Finance.

3.45.2 Session must ensure that any appointee has a current Working With Children Check and has completed all relevant PCV Safe Church requirements.

3.45.3 Nonetheless, session shall not appoint or continue the appointment of any congregational officer who is under the minister's direction in the conduct of public worship if the minister is dissatisfied with his or her character, conduct, qualifications or efficiency.

3.45.4 Subject to the terms of any contract, a congregational officer may:

- a) resign in writing;
- b) be removed by a session if it is dissatisfied with his or her character, conduct, qualifications or efficiency.

4.70 Pastoral support and resident supply ministry

4.70.1 To provide adequate pastoral support or resident supply ministry to vacant charges, a presbytery may appoint (whether full-time or part-time) a minister, licentiate, candidate for the ministry, home missionary, church planter or another suitably qualified person on appropriate terms.

4.70.2 Presbytery must ensure that any appointee:

- a) is eligible for the appointment and has any necessary certificates; and
- b) has a current Working With Children Check and has completed all relevant PCV Safe Church requirements.

4.132 Sustaining a call

4.132.1 At the earliest opportunity, the interim moderator must present the call and a report on proceedings connected with it to the presbytery, following which the presbytery hears the congregational commissioners.

4.132.2 The presbytery may then sustain the call if satisfied that:

- a) the terms of the proposed settlement have been approved by any relevant General Assembly committee;
- b) the rules preliminary to the signing of the call have been complied with;
- c) no improper canvassing for the person to whom the call is addressed has occurred;
- d) the person to whom the call is addressed is eligible, or entitled to become eligible, under either the rules of the General Assembly governing status or of the General Assembly of Australia governing reception of ministers from other churches, and he:
 - i) presents satisfactory certificates when such are required;
 - ii) has a current Working With Children Check; and
 - iii) has completed all relevant PCV Safe Church requirements;
- e) the number of signatures of communicants subscribed is not less than three-fifths (60%) of the number of communicants on the electoral register; and
- f) there are no petitions from persons dissatisfied with the proceedings leading to the call, or that such petitions have been disposed of.

4. Enact new rules 2.12A and 6.12A and new clause 2.38.6 as follows:

2.12A Meeting by technological means

A congregation may meet by the members communicating with each other by any technological means by which they are able simultaneously to hear each other, participate in discussion and vote. In these circumstances, the members need not be physically present in the same place.

2.38 Meetings of the Board of Management

2.38.6 A board may meet by the members communicating with each other by any technological means by which they are able simultaneously to hear each other, participate in discussion and vote. In these circumstances, the members need not be physically present in the same place.

6.12A Meeting by technological means

A court, or a commission, may meet by the members communicating with each other by any technological means by which they are able simultaneously to hear each other, participate in discussion and vote. In these circumstances, the members need not be physically present in the same place.

5. Enact new rules 2.38.7–9 and 6.12B as follows:

2.38 Meetings of the Board of Management

2.38.7 Provided that every member has access to email, a board may, without meeting, approve a proposed resolution by email if the proposed resolution is, with the approval of the chairman, emailed by the secretary in time for each member to make a considered decision and email response.

2.38.8 Any notification provided for in rule 2.38.7 must specify:

- a) the proposed resolution;

- b) a response time of not less than four days and that upon the expiration of that period the matter will be determined in accordance with the responses received;
 - c) that no response shall be considered if it has not been sent to all members; and
 - d) that any member of the board can, up to the voting deadline, veto the use of this procedure to determine this particular matter, thereby requiring that the matter be considered at the next meeting of the board.
- 2.38.9 The secretary must ensure that:
- a) all the members of the board are promptly advised of the result of the voting;
 - b) both the process followed and the result of the voting are correctly minuted; and
 - c) the minutes of the process are placed before the next meeting of the board for confirmation.

6.12B Resolution by email

6.12B.1 Provided that every member has access to email, a court or commission of a court may, without meeting, approve a proposed resolution by email if the proposed resolution is, with the approval of the moderator, emailed by the clerk in time for each member to make a considered decision and email response.

6.12B.2 Any notification provided for in rule 6.12B.1 must specify:

- a) the proposed resolution;
- b) a response time of not less than four days and that upon the expiration of that period the matter will be determined in accordance with the responses received;
- c) that no response shall be considered if it has not been sent to all members; and
- d) that any member of the court or commission can, up to the voting deadline, veto the use of this procedure to determine this particular matter, thereby requiring that the matter be considered at the next meeting of the court or commission.

6.12B.3 The clerk must ensure that:

- a) all members of the court or commission are promptly advised of the result of the voting;
- b) both the process followed and the result of the voting are correctly minuted; and
- c) the minutes of the process are placed before the next meeting of the court or commission for confirmation.

- 6. Replace the regulations for the Building and Property Committee with the following:

Building and Property Committee

1. Title

There shall be a committee of the General Assembly entitled the Building and Property Committee (the committee).

2. Membership

The committee shall consist of three members, including a convener, appointed by the General Assembly.

3. Appointment of Church Architect

The committee shall submit to the General Assembly from time to time the name of a suitably qualified person with a current Working With Children Check for appointment by it as Church Architect. In the event of a vacancy occurring between General Assemblies, the vacancy shall be filled by the Selection Committee until the next General Assembly.

4. Duties – Church Architect

The Church Architect:

- a) may advise and assist boards:
 - i) with church and manse building matters, including the preparation of plans and specifications of proposed new congregational buildings or alterations to congregational buildings; and/or
 - ii) in completing to the satisfaction of the committee plans and specifications of proposed new congregational buildings or of alterations to congregational buildings referred to him by the committee;on such contractual terms as they agree.
- b) shall advise and assist the committee with applications for the approval of proposed new buildings or alterations to buildings by boards referred to him by the committee, with the cost to be borne by the board.

5. Duties – Committee

The committee shall:

- a) consider
 - i) plans and specifications of proposed new congregational buildings or alterations to congregational buildings; and
 - ii) any variations to the approved plans and specifications proposed during the course of the works;submitted to it in accordance with rule 2.20 (d) of the Code; and
- b) consult with either:
 - i) the Church Architect regarding the proposed works; or
 - ii) in the case of documentation prepared by the Church Architect, with another architect of its choice, provided that should there be any costs associated with the completion of the plans and specifications to the satisfaction of the committee, the committee shall before proceeding refer the matter to the board; and
- c) if satisfied:
 - i) that the proposed works, if constructed in accordance with the plans and specifications submitted, will:
 - A. meet the needs of the particular congregation; and
 - B. comply with the principles approved by the General Assembly, with such variations as the committee may in any special case approve; and
 - ii) that the site on which the proposed works are to be constructed is:
 - A. suitable in area, situation and character to the needs of the particular congregation; and

- B. laid out in such a manner as to ensure its full, proper and economic utilisation;
grant either preliminary or final approval of the plans and specifications as the case might require.

6. Spending Authority

The committee may remunerate the Church Architect for his services to the committee on an agreed hourly rate.

7. Documentation of Applications

Applications must be accompanied by sufficient information to enable the committee to make a proper evaluation of the proposal and with completed checklists obtainable from the committee for either in principle or final approval as the case may require. This information should include, but not be limited to the following:

- a) reasons for the proposed changes and a brief description of the project;
- b) outline of proposed uses for the new spaces or facilities including expected number of people;
- c) where appropriate, the number of members and adherents of the congregation;
- d) anticipated cost and method of funding the proposed works;
- e) plans (including a site plan) and specifications, notes and general information of sufficient detail to clearly define the extent of works proposed;
- f) in the case of extended or altered buildings, drawings indicating the existing conditions;
- g) details of any discussions with local Council and requirement for Planning and/or Building Permits.

8. Retention of plans and specifications

The committee shall encourage every board to retain in the permanent records of the congregation all plans and specifications approved by the committee, together with plans showing the location of underground services including electricity cables and gas, water and sewerage pipes, discovered and/or installed during construction.

7. Approve the Overture re: Prescribed Questions for Diaconal Ministry, and appoint the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to overture the General Assembly of Australia on behalf of the Assembly with the wording of the overture as follows:

From: the General Assembly of Victoria
Re: Prescribed Questions for Diaconal Ministry
(GAA ch 6, rule 6.7)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

In the light of:

- a) The introduction of rules relating to diaconal ministry in the Victorian church in 1999 recognising an office of the church with 'ministry distinct from that of elders or managers' (GAV rule 3.40.1).
- b) The GAA requirement that state churches use the prescribed set of questions for the ordination and induction of deacons (see GAA ch 6, rule 6.7).

- c) The appearance that the use of these six questions elevates the requirements for diaconal ministry to that more relevant to the eldership, especially questions 2 and 4.
- d) The unwarranted expectation that those serving in diaconal ministry must 'assert, maintain and defend' the Westminster Confession of Faith as their confession of faith.
- e) The unwarranted expectation that those serving in diaconal ministry must 'assert, maintain and defend' the Presbyterian form of government as founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto.
- f) Reports that insisting on such vows that belong to the realm of the eldership is acting as a barrier to some sessions proceeding with introducing diaconal ministry to their congregations and also to some candidates from agreeing to being appointed – thus hindering the work of the gospel.

Now therefore the General Assembly of Victoria humbly overtures the General Assembly of Australia to take these premises into consideration and redraft the prescribed questions for the ordination and induction of deacons so as to show more appropriate differentiation between offices of the church.

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

8. In the matter of determining Sustentation Grants:

- a) add a final clause (h) to MDC regulation 4 (Duties), namely: 'administer the Sustentation Fund.'
- b) add a new regulation, numbered 15, as follows:

15. Sustentation grants

The committee may make grants to charges, provided that funds are available.

All grants to sustain a pastoral or appointment charge shall be paid to the charge for a minister; or in event of his death, his estate.

The committee may examine applications at any time, making grants if funds are available. Applications are to be lodged using the current Annual Charge Report prepared from an audited statement and submitted via the presbytery. Under special circumstances of urgency an Annual Charge Report prepared from an unaudited financial statement may be considered. renumbering the final 3 regulations accordingly.

- c) delete clause (b) from MMC regulation 3 (Duties) and renumber the remaining clauses.
- d) delete the words 'the Sustentation Fund and all other' from the current clause (f) MMC regulation 3 (Duties);
- e) delete regulation 14 (Sustention grants) from the MMC regulations and renumber the remaining regulations accordingly.
- f) make any other necessary minor-order alteration to wording of MMC regs in order to clarify the move of Sustentation grants from MMC to MDC.

9. Replace BIF regulation 17 with the following:

17. Handling of the proceeds of the sale of church property

Preamble

All church property not held under any other formal declaration of trust is held upon trust for the Presbyterian Church of Victoria under the Model Trust Deeds pursuant to the *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890* for the charitable purposes of the church. The Model Trust Deeds provide the basis upon which a congregation may be given rights of occupancy and use of property held under these deeds. This regulation does not limit the operation and effect of these trust deeds, and to the extent of any inconsistency, the provisions of the trust deeds prevail.

Consequently, the Model Trust Deeds set out the basis upon which any property (including the proceeds of the disposition of that property) may be held and dealt with by the Presbyterian Church of Victoria for its charitable purposes.

Existing Congregations

- a) When in accordance with clause 5 of the Model Trust Deeds any land owned by or vested in trustees for the church is sold, the whole of the proceeds shall be paid to the BIF, which shall:
 - i) to the extent that the General Assembly has authorised the sale for a particular purpose or purposes, pay the balance of the proceeds as directed by the General Assembly to be applied in or towards the purpose or purposes for which it authorised the sale; or
 - ii) to the extent that the General Assembly has authorised the sale without having approved a particular purpose or purposes for such sale, forward:
 - A. 20% of the balance of the proceeds to be held by The Trusts Corporation of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria ('the Trusts Corporation') in a sinking fund for the general purposes of the church; and
 - B. 80% of the balance of the proceeds to be held by the Trusts Corporation in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the congregation which directed the sale until the application of such funds is approved by the General Assembly.
- b) Notwithstanding that funds held in a Sites Reserve Account by operation of clause 17(a)(i) are held for the charitable purposes of the church, a congregation or other church body that by operation of clause 17(a)(i):
 - i) holds funds; or
 - ii) for which such funds are held by the Trusts Corporation in a Sites Reserve Account;may petition the General Assembly to alter the purpose or purposes for which the Assembly authorised the sale, provided that any such petition by a congregation must be through the presbytery and with its approval.
- c) Notwithstanding that funds held in a Sites Reserve Account by operation of clause 17(a)(ii) are held for the charitable purposes of the church, a congregation associated with such funds may:
 - i) seek approval to apply such funds in whole or in part for any purpose or purposes that will serve the cause of the gospel and the building up of the church:
 - A. in the case of expenditure not greater than \$75,000 for any single application and up to a limit of \$150,000 in any 12 month period, from the presbytery; or
 - B. in the case of expenditure greater than \$75,000 or exceeding \$150,000 in any 12 month period, from both the presbytery and the General Assembly; and

should such approval be granted, make application to the Trusts Corporation for the release of the said funds to be applied in or towards the purpose or purposes for which the approval was granted; or

- ii) through the presbytery and with its approval petition the General Assembly to:
 - A. declare a purpose or purposes for which the funds are to be applied; or
 - B. alter the purpose or purposes declared by the Assembly under clause 17(c)(ii)(A) or any other regulation current at the time.

Deceased Congregations

- d) Where a congregation has ceased to exist and when, as a result, land owned or vested in trustees for the church is at the direction of the General Assembly sold in accordance with clause 14 of the Model Trust Deeds, the whole of the proceeds shall be paid to the BIF.
- e) Unless the General Assembly has otherwise directed, the BIF shall:
 - i) forward:
 - A. 20% of the balance of the proceeds to be held by the Trusts Corporation in a sinking fund for the general purposes of the church; and
 - B. 80% of the balance of the proceeds to be held by the Trusts Corporation in a Sites Reserve Account until the application of the funds in whole or in part is approved by the General Assembly by the operation of clauses 17(e)(i) or 17(e)(ii); and
 - ii) notify the presbytery of the deceased congregation of the amount available by operation of clause 17(e)(i)(B).
- f) Once notified by the BIF under clause 17(e)(ii), the presbytery shall inform all the congregations within its bounds that, within any time limits established by the presbytery, any congregation may seek approval to apply such funds in whole or in part for any purpose or purposes that will serve the cause of the gospel and the building up of the church:
 - i) in the case of expenditure not greater than \$75,000 for any single application and up to a limit of \$150,000 in any 12 month period, from the presbytery; or
 - ii) in the case of expenditure greater than \$75,000 or exceeding \$150,000 in any 12 month period, from both the presbytery and the General Assembly.
- g) Having considered any such applications the presbytery shall inform:
 - i) any congregation granted presbytery approval in accordance with clause 17(f)(i), that it must make application to the Trusts Corporation for the release of the said funds to be applied in or towards the purpose or purposes for which the approval was granted; or
 - ii) any congregation granted presbytery approval in accordance with clause 17(f)(ii), that it must also obtain the approval of the General Assembly for its proposed application of the funds before it can make application to the Trusts Corporation for the release of the said funds to be applied in or towards the purpose or purposes for which the approval was granted.

Other circumstances

- h) Where land owned or vested in trustees for the church is sold on behalf of the General Assembly in accordance with clause 14 of the Model Trust

Deeds in circumstances other than those to which clause 17(d) applies, the whole of the proceeds shall be paid to the BIF, which shall, unless the General Assembly has otherwise directed:

- i) pay the balance of the proceeds as may be directed by the General Assembly to be applied in or towards the purpose or purposes for which it authorised the sale; or
- ii) where the General Assembly authorised the sale without having approved a particular purpose or purposes for such sale, forward:
 - A. 20% of the balance of the proceeds to be held by the Trusts Corporation in a sinking fund for the general purposes of the church; and
 - B. 80% of the balance of the proceeds to be held by the Trusts Corporation in a Sites Reserve Account until the General Assembly authorises the application of such funds in whole or in part for some purpose or purposes.

10. Appoint the following to the Selection Committee:

Metro: Rev Adam Humphries (convener) (22), Rev Peter Orchard (22), Elder Ben Palmer (22), Elder John Angelico (23), *vacancy* (24)

Non-metro: Rev Ian Leach (23), Rev Jesse Walz (24).

The motion was seconded and approved.

70. Ballot (min 68)

The Convener of the Selection Committee advised that the ballot to elect three elders to serve on the GAA Moderator's Nominating Committee needed to be recommitted due to one person originally listed being a minister, not an elder.

The Moderator ruled that the ballot should be recommitted.

Rev Michael Jensen raised a point of order (privilege).

The Moderator ruled that there was no point of privilege.

It was moved and seconded to depart from the Moderator's ruling.

The Moderator's ruling was upheld.

The ballot was recommitted and elders Andrew Deeming, Steve Harris and Ben Palmer were elected.

71. Adjournment

Rev Ben Nelson led the Assembly in prayer for the 2021 Exit Students.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Adjourn to meet again 9.00am Wednesday 13 October 2021, via Zoom, for the completion of all items agreed to on the Second Sitting Agenda.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Moderator marked the adjournment with prayer.

CLERKS:
J P Wilson
D A Carroll

**PROCEEDINGS
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
of the
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
2nd Sitting continued: Wednesday 13 October**

By Zoom, an electronic means of meeting, on Wednesday 13 October 2021 at 9:00am.

72. Resumption

The Assembly resumed pursuant to adjournment with the Moderator, Rev Peter Phillips, reading from Psalm 102:11-22 and leading the Assembly in prayer.

73. Devotion

Moderator's Chaplain, Rev Jesse Walz, led the Assembly with a devotion from Romans 13:8-10 and in prayer.

74. Business Committee

The Convener, Rev Dr Jared Hood, informed the court that it was continuing with agenda item 22.

75. Special Judicial Committee

The report of the Special Judicial Committee was received.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Waive the normal 30-day notice period for petitions in this instance, thereby authorising the General Assembly to hear Petition 9.

The motion was seconded and approved.

76. Petition 1: Presbytery of Ballarat—Renaming the Presbytery of Ballarat

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Toby McIntosh and Greg Matthews.

The Assembly heard from the Special Judicial Committee.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

2. Change the name of the Presbytery of Ballarat to the Presbytery of Western Victoria.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Change the name of the Presbytery of Ballarat to the Presbytery of Western Victoria.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

77. Petition 2. Presbytery of Melbourne East—Rev Douglas Campbell and seat on presbytery

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Elder Philip Barton and Rev David Hann.

Questions were asked.

The Assembly heard from the Special Judicial Committee.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

2. Grant Rev Douglas Campbell a seat on the Presbytery of Melbourne East for such time as he continues as chaplain at Scotch College.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Grant Rev Douglas Campbell a seat on the Presbytery of Melbourne East for such time as he continues as chaplain at Scotch College.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

78. Petition 3: Presbytery of Geelong—Dissolution of Anakie congregation and sale of its property

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Matt Deroon and Luke McSeveny.

Questions were asked.

The Assembly heard from the Special Judicial Committee.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

2. Agree with the Presbytery of Geelong regarding its intention to dissolve the Anakie congregation.
3. Declare resolution 2 (above) immediately effective under rule 6.15, and thereby deem that Presbytery has in effect finally dissolved the congregation.
4. Request the Presbytery to submit to the Trusts Corporation certification that the congregation has been finally dissolved.
5. Authorise the sale of the Anakie property on Geelong-Ballan Road (Volume 10676, Folio 030), under Model Trust Deed clause 14, and direct that the net proceeds are paid:
 - a) as to 90%, to the Bannockburn Presbyterian Church for the purpose of its building redevelopment; and
 - b) as to 10%, to the Property Development Fund.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Agree with the Presbytery of Geelong regarding its intention to dissolve the Anakie congregation.
3. Declare resolution 2 (above) immediately effective under rule 6.15, and thereby deem that Presbytery has in effect finally dissolved the congregation.
4. Request the Presbytery to submit to the Trusts Corporation certification that the congregation has been finally dissolved.
5. Authorise the sale of the Anakie property on Geelong-Ballan Road (Volume 10676, Folio 030), under Model Trust Deed clause 14, and direct that the net proceeds are paid:
 - a) as to 90%, to the Bannockburn Presbyterian Church for the purpose of its building redevelopment; and
 - b) as to 10%, to the Property Development Fund.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

79. Petition 4: Presbytery of Geelong—Dissolution of Batesford congregation and sale of its property

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Matt Deroon and Luke McSeveny.

Questions were asked.

The Assembly heard from the Special Judicial Committee.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

2. Agree with the Presbytery of Geelong regarding its intention to dissolve the Batesford congregation.
3. Declare resolution 2 (above) immediately effective under rule 6.15, and thereby deem that Presbytery has in effect finally dissolved the congregation.
4. Request the Presbytery to submit to the Trusts Corporation certification that the congregation has been finally dissolved.
5. Authorise the sale of the Batesford property, 31 Cross Street (Volume 11041, Folio 279), under Model Trust Deed clause 14, and direct that the net proceeds are paid:
 - a) as to 90%, to the Bannockburn Presbyterian Church for the purpose of its building redevelopment; and
 - b) as to 10%, to the Property Development Fund.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(3) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

6. Declare that the Batesford Sites Reserve fund, however named or re-named, is one of the 35 funds designated as unallocated by the Commission of Assembly,

4 May 2021, and therefore is not permitted to be purposed or re-purposed until May 2026 unless for some exceptional circumstances RA-1(7).

The motion was seconded.

A motion to adjourn question time was seconded and approved.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar. (min 81)

80. Petition 5: Congregation of Ashburton—Sale of manse and purposing of funds

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Barry Oakes and Elder John Angelico.

The Assembly heard from the Special Judicial Committee.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

2. Authorise the sale of the Ashburton church manse, 21 Charles Street Glen Iris (Volume 5201, Folio 198), under Model Trust Deed clause 5, for the purposes of funding Ashburton Presbyterian Church's building redevelopment and minister's manse allowance.

3. Direct that the net proceeds of sale be paid to The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to be held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the Ashburton congregation for the above authorised purposes.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.

2. Authorise the sale of the Ashburton church manse, 21 Charles Street Glen Iris (Volume 5201, Folio 198), under Model Trust Deed clause 5, for the purposes of funding Ashburton Presbyterian Church's building redevelopment and minister's manse allowance.

3. Direct that the net proceeds of sale be paid to The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to be held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the Ashburton congregation for the above authorised purposes.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

81. Petition 4: Presbytery of Geelong—Dissolution of Batesford congregation and sale of its property (min 79)

Question time was resumed on motion 6.

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The previous question was moved, seconded and disapproved.

Elder Dennis Wright raised a point of order (question out of order).

The Moderator ruled that there was no point of order.

Rev Kevin Maxell raised a point of order (privilege).

The Moderator ruled that Rev Walz' privileges had been infringed.

Rev Walz gave a personal explanation.

The previous question on motion 6 was moved, seconded and approved.

The Clerk raised a point of order (privilege).

The Moderator ruled that the privileges of the house had been infringed and that this breach would be remedied by hearing from the Law Agent.

The Law Agent addressed the Assembly.

(1) Rev Jesse Walz moved:

That the Assembly:

Notwithstanding the moratorium on repurposing of Sites Reserve funds established in the 2021 Commission of Assembly, rename the PCV Sites Reserve account held in the name of the Batesford congregation, and under the management of the linked charge of Bannockburn, to be held in the name of the Bannockburn congregation, and place this new fund under the above-mentioned moratorium.

The motion was seconded.

Rev Barry Oakes asked the Moderator to rule on the competency of the motion.

The Moderator ruled that the motion was competent.

The previous question was moved, seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Agree with the Presbytery of Geelong regarding its intention to dissolve the Batesford congregation.
3. Declare resolution 2 (above) immediately effective under rule 6.15, and thereby deem that Presbytery has in effect finally dissolved the congregation.
4. Request the Presbytery to submit to the Trusts Corporation certification that the congregation has been finally dissolved.
5. Authorise the sale of the Batesford property, 31 Cross Street (Volume 11041, Folio 279), under Model Trust Deed clause 14, and direct that the net proceeds are paid:
 - a) as to 90%, to the Bannockburn Presbyterian Church for the purpose of its building redevelopment; and
 - b) as to 10%, to the Property Development Fund.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

82. Petition 6: Presbytery of Flinders—Sale of property at Kooweerup and purposing of funds

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev David Brown and Dave Martin.

The Assembly heard from the Special Judicial Committee.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

2. Request the Presbytery to submit to the Trusts Corporation certification that the congregation has been finally dissolved.

3. Authorise the sale of the Kooweerup property, Rossiter Street (Volume 2629, Folio 668), under Model Trust Deed clause 14, for the purposes of church planting and/or establishing a land bank in the Clyde area or in such other area within the Presbytery of Flinders as is determined by the Presbytery in conjunction with advice from the Church Planting Committee.
4. Direct that the net proceeds of sale be paid to The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to be held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the Presbytery of Flinders for the above authorised purposes.

The motion was seconded.

Rev Nello Barbieri moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend clause 3 by removing the words 'church planting' and replacing them with 'planting a new church'.

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

The motion to approve clauses 2-4 was approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Request the Presbytery to submit to the Trusts Corporation certification that the congregation has been finally dissolved.
3. Authorise the sale of the Kooweerup property, Rossiter Street (Volume 2629, Folio 668), under Model Trust Deed clause 14, for the purposes of church planting and/or establishing a land bank in the Clyde area or in such other area within the Presbytery of Flinders as is determined by the Presbytery in conjunction with advice from the Church Planting Committee.
4. Direct that the net proceeds of sale be paid to The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to be held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the Presbytery of Flinders for the above authorised purposes.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

83. Petition 7: Presbytery of North Western Victoria—Sale of Bendigo (St John's) manse property

The Immediate Past Moderator, Rev Philip Mercer, assumed the chair.

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Philip Burns and Elder Andrew Kerr.

Questions were asked.

The Assembly heard from the Special Judicial Committee.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

2. Authorise the sale of the St Johns Bendigo church manse, 4 Drechsler Street Flora Hill (Volume 9693, Folio 970), under Model Trust Deed clause 5, for any or all of the following purposes for St Johns Bendigo:
 - a) the purchase of a new manse;

- b) the payment of rental costs of a new manse;
 - c) the payment of maintenance costs of the St Johns church, hall or new manse; and
 - d) the payment of ministry costs as approved by the congregation.
3. Direct that the net proceeds of sale be paid to The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to be held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the St Johns Bendigo congregation for the above authorised purposes.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Assembly had resolved to:

- 1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
- 2. Authorise the sale of the St Johns Bendigo church manse, 4 Drechsler Street Flora Hill (Volume 9693, Folio 970), under Model Trust Deed clause 5, for any or all of the following purposes for St Johns Bendigo:
 - a) the purchase of a new manse;
 - b) the payment of rental costs of a new manse;
 - c) the payment of maintenance costs of the St Johns church, hall or new manse; and
 - d) the payment of ministry costs as approved by the congregation.
- 3. Direct that the net proceeds of sale be paid to The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to be held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the St Johns Bendigo congregation for the above authorised purposes.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

Moderator, Rev Peter Phillips, resumed the chair.

84. Petition 8: Congregation of Benalla—Sale of land and purposing of funds

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Stephen McDonald and Elder Graeme Hayes.

The Assembly heard from the Special Judicial Committee.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

- 2. Provisional upon a subdivision of the land at 3 Church Street and 15 Mitchell Street Benalla in accordance with the proposed subdivision plan annexed to the petition:
 - a) authorise the sale of the land identified and marked 'New Allotment 11' on the proposed subdivision plan (namely: part of the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 10510 Folio 958, together with part of the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 1497 Folio 228, comprising 1,900.50 m²) under Model Trust Deed clause 5, and
 - b) direct that the net proceeds are paid:
 - i. as to 4%, to the METRO Committee for its general purposes;
 - ii. as to 4%, to the Theological Education Committee for its general purposes;

- iii. as to 2%, to the Women's Ministries Victoria Committee for its general purposes; and
- iv. as to the balance, to the Benalla congregation for the purposes of funding maintenance and improvements to property, funding the cost of ministry in the parish and funding such other PCV ministries outside the parish as the congregation may determine.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Provisional upon a subdivision of the land at 3 Church Street and 15 Mitchell Street Benalla in accordance with the proposed subdivision plan annexed to the petition:
 - a) authorise the sale of the land identified and marked 'New Allotment 11' on the proposed subdivision plan (namely: part of the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 10510 Folio 958, together with part of the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 1497 Folio 228, comprising 1,900.50 m²) under Model Trust Deed clause 5, and
 - b) direct that the net proceeds are paid:
 - i. as to 4%, to the METRO Committee for its general purposes;
 - ii. as to 4%, to the Theological Education Committee for its general purposes;
 - iii. as to 2%, to the Women's Ministries Victoria Committee for its general purposes; and
 - iv. as to the balance, to the Benalla congregation for the purposes of funding maintenance and improvements to property, funding the cost of ministry in the parish and funding such other PCV ministries outside the parish as the congregation may determine.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

85. Petition 9: 5 members of Assembly—Support for advancing residency/ citizenship claims of 'boat people' connected with PCV congregations

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Andrew Vines and Neil Chambers.

Questions were asked.

The Assembly heard from the Special Judicial Committee.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

- Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

2. Acknowledge the dire situation faced by 'boat people' who have converted to Christian faith among us but have not yet secured permanent residency.
3. Request prayer be offered regularly in all our congregations to almighty God on behalf of those people described in 2 (above).

4. Encourage congregations to generously, and in practical ways, support these people, described in 2 (above), in amelioration of their physical, mental and spiritual needs.
5. Conduct a survey throughout the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to determine the numbers and immigration status of people known to a congregation who fit the general description as in 2 (above).
6. Request the Church and Nation Committee to liaise with: (i) Catholic, Anglican, Baptist and other Victorian churches, and (ii) the GAA Church and Nation Committee, in order to gain a wider picture of the situation with regard to numbers and immigration status.
7. Request the Church and Nation Committee to liaise with: (i) Catholic, Anglican, Baptist and other Victorian churches, and (ii) the GAA Church and Nation Committee, in order to ascertain their willingness to make joint representation to the Federal Government and Federal Opposition through the agency of Australian Christian Lobby (ACL).
8. Request the Church and Nation Committee to report progress to the 2022 Commission of Assembly, authorising the Commission to take further action if it sees fit to do so.

The motion was seconded.

The Moderator was asked to rule on whether a person at the Bar could make a personal explanation.

The Moderator ruled that a person at the Bar is not able to make a personal explanation.

It was moved and seconded to depart from the Moderator's ruling.

The Moderator's ruling was departed from.

Rev Andrew Vines made a personal explanation.

The motion to approve clauses 2-8 was approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Acknowledge the dire situation faced by 'boat people' who have converted to Christian faith among us but have not yet secured permanent residency.
3. Request prayer be offered regularly in all our congregations to almighty God on behalf of those people described in 2 (above).
4. Encourage congregations to generously, and in practical ways, support these people, described in 2 (above), in amelioration of their physical, mental and spiritual needs.
5. Conduct a survey throughout the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to determine the numbers and immigration status of people known to a congregation who fit the general description as in 2 (above).
6. Request the Church and Nation Committee to liaise with: (i) Catholic, Anglican, Baptist and other Victorian churches, and (ii) the GAA Church and Nation Committee, in order to gain a wider picture of the situation with regard to numbers and immigration status.
7. Request the Church and Nation Committee to liaise with: (i) Catholic, Anglican, Baptist and other Victorian churches, and (ii) the GAA Church and Nation Committee, in order to ascertain their willingness to make joint representation to

the Federal Government and Federal Opposition through the agency of Australian Christian Lobby (ACL).

8. Request the Church and Nation Committee to report progress to the 2022 Commission of Assembly, authorising the Commission to take further action if it sees fit to do so.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

The Assembly resumed after the lunch break with the Moderator leading the Assembly in prayer for a number of people.

Moderator's chaplain, Rev Ben Nelson, then led with a devotion based on Acts 16:16-24 and concluded in prayer.

86. Clerk's Report—records inspection

The report of the Clerk was received.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Note that COVID-19 lockdown restrictions have made it too difficult to inspect every presbytery's records and each committee's records for 2020–2021.
2. Thank presbyteries and committees that have submitted their minute books this year despite the difficulty, and encourage full submission to this process for the year 2022, subject to travel restrictions being lifted.

The motion was seconded and approved.

87. Ad hoc Reporting on Outcomes of Appeals Committee

It was agreed to sit in private.

The Ad hoc Reporting on Outcomes of Appeals Committee report (Private Paper 1) was received.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Direct the Belgrave Heights Presbyterian Church Board of Management, at its earliest opportunity, to negate the offer made to the Tonkins to purchase the manse, such negation to be achieved by rescinding the motion of 16 December 2010.
2. Direct the Belgrave Heights Presbyterian Church Board of Management to inform the Clerk when this rescission (see clause 1) has been achieved.
3. Following receipt of satisfactory notification (see clause 2), direct the Clerk to notify the General Assembly of Australia that its requests of 2019 have been attended to.

The motion was seconded.

Rev Mark Tonkin made a personal explanation.

The motion to approve the proposed deliverance was approved.

The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer.

It was agreed to resume in open court.

88. Overture 1: Code and General Administration Committee—rule 4.31.2 Royal Commission response

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by the Clerk.

Questions were asked of the overturist.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rule change to presbyteries via the Barrier Act under rule 6.27.2(a)(i), for approval or disapproval, with replies to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May 2022, such that rule 4.31.2 shall have an additional clause (c), as follows:

- c) the presbytery must also require the candidate to undergo psychological testing and assessment, arranged by the presbytery at its expense and administered by a mental health professional external to the PCV, for the purpose of assisting the presbytery in determining the candidate's suitability undertake work involving children as a minister of the church.

The motion was seconded and approved.

89. Overture 2: Code and General Administration Committee—rule 4.74.1 Church Planters

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by the Clerk.

Questions were asked of the overturist.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rule change to presbyteries via the Barrier Act under rule 6.27.2(a)(i), for approval or disapproval, with replies to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May 2022, such that all words of rule 4.74.1 shall be replaced with:

A presbytery must supervise the selection of church planters for appointment to church plants by the presbytery. Church Planters are ministers or licentiates accredited by the Church Planting Committee as church planters.

The motion was seconded and approved.

90. Overture 3: Code and General Administration Committee—rule 2.7.1 Congregation Assets

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by the Clerk.

Questions were asked of the overturist.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rule change to presbyteries via the Barrier Act under rule 6.27.2(a)(i), for approval or disapproval, with replies to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May 2022, such that rule 2.7.1(a) shall read:

The material affairs:

- a) of a congregation are cared for by its board, provided that:
 - i) by agreement the material affairs of a linked congregation may be cared for by its federal board;

- ii) in the case of a congregation being dissolved, during the period of time between the cessation of services and final dissolution its material affairs may be cared for by the board of another congregation appointed by the presbytery for this purpose;

The motion was seconded and approved.

91. Overture 4: Code and General Administration Committee—rule 4.69 Congregation Dissolution

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by the Clerk.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rule change to presbyteries via the Barrier Act under rule 6.27.2(a)(i), for approval or disapproval, with replies to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May 2022, such that all words of rule 4.69 shall be replaced with:

4.69 Dissolution of congregations

4.69.1 Should a presbytery declare its intention to dissolve a congregation, it must:

- a) direct the session to:
 - i) cease services of worship in the congregation without unnecessary delay; and
 - ii) inform it of the date of the last regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship of the congregation held by a minister or elder or home missionary of the church;
- b) arrange through the session for the issue of transfer certificates to any communicants of the congregation and letters of introduction to any adherents of the congregation (see rule 3.31); and
- c) authorise the board of another congregation to care for the material affairs of the congregation until it is finally dissolved and the property sold or otherwise disposed of.

4.69.2 When a congregation (other than a newly formed congregation for which temporary arrangements have been made as provided for by rule 2.37) is unable either:

- a) i) to elect sufficient managers to enable a quorum for its board; or
- ii) in the case of a linked congregation, to arrange for the care of its property by its federal board;
- or
- b) i) to constitute for a congregational meeting; or
- ii) in the case of a linked congregation, to constitute for a joint meeting of the linked congregations;

within four months of its being required to meet by rule or regulation,

the presbytery must be informed forthwith of the particulars of this inability.

- 4.69.3 The presbytery, having been informed of the congregation's inability, must then, without delay, inquire into the circumstances which resulted in the inability. Should the presbytery judge:
- a) that the congregation is unable to manage its affairs as required by the rules of the church; and
 - b) that this inability is unlikely to be rectified within a reasonable time;
- it must consider whether to dissolve the congregation.
- 4.69.4 If the presbytery then proposes to dissolve the congregation, it must follow the procedure prescribed by rule 4.68.2 so far as possible, except that the agreement of the inducted ministers of any pastoral charge affected by the proposed dissolution is not necessary. If after following this procedure the presbytery declares its intention to dissolve the congregation it must follow the procedure prescribed by rule 4.69.1.
- 4.69.5 A presbytery cannot declare that a congregation is dissolved until:
- a) at least a year has elapsed since the last regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship of the congregation was held by a minister or elder or home missionary of the church; and
 - b) its intention to dissolve the congregation has been reported to the General Assembly and agreed to by it.
- 4.69.6 A presbytery must ensure that any monies held for all or some of the purposes of a congregation that is dissolved are forwarded to The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to be dealt with by it according to law.

The motion was seconded and approved.

92. Overture 5: Code and General Administration Committee—Conflict of Interest Policy

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by the Clerk.

Questions were asked of the overturist.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Adopt the following as the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy:

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to enable the courts, committees, organisations, boards and congregations of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (PCV) to effectively manage any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest in a way that is 'honourable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man' (2 Cor 8:21).

2. Scope

This policy applies:

- a) to all persons under the jurisdiction of the PCV, especially in regard to their role as members or employees of courts, committees, organisations, boards or congregations of the PCV; and

- b) in connection with all business of the PCV including, without limitation, all business conducted in responding to or arising from complaints of child sexual abuse.

3. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- a) encourage the highest possible standards of honesty, transparency and integrity in every aspect of the life of the PCV;
- b) guide courts, committees, organisations, boards and congregations of the PCV in the effective identification, disclosure and management of actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest; and
- c) honour God's name by guarding the reputation of the PCV in the eyes of the world and protecting the rights of all.

In order to ensure that these objectives are achieved:

- d) individuals to whom this policy applies must:
 - i) exhibit the highest possible standards of honesty, transparency and integrity;
 - ii) act responsibly by disclosing the existence of all actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest that may exist in relation to their work for the church; and
 - iii) not make decisions for personal promotion or gain, or for the purpose of furthering another financial or non-financial interest.
- e) courts, committees, organisations, boards and congregations of the PCV must:
 - i) take cognisance of any conflict of interest, whether disclosed by any of its members or employees or otherwise determined by it; and
 - ii) effectively manage any such conflict of interest in accordance with this policy.

4. Definition of conflict of interest

- a) A conflict of interest arises where the interests of an individual are different from, and conflict with, the interests of a court, committee, organisation, board or congregation of the PCV of which the individual is a member or employee. A conflict of interest exists when it is likely that the individual could be influenced, or could be perceived to be influenced, by a personal interest in carrying out his or her duties, over and above the interests of the PCV. For the purposes of this policy, a reference to a conflict of interest (whether financial or other) includes:
 - i) an actual conflict of interest;
 - ii) a potential conflict of interest; and
 - iii) an appearance of a conflict of interest (i.e. a perceived conflict of interest).
- b) Personal interests which may give rise to a conflict of interest include direct interests, as well as the interests of family, or any other party (such as a friend, associate or organisation) with whom the person may be involved or to whom the person has loyalty or owes duty.

5. Policy statement

- a) Every member or employee of a court, committee, organisation, board and congregation must ensure that any conflict of interest (defined above) is fully declared to the applicable entity.
- b) Every court, committee, organisation, board and congregation where a conflict of interest has been declared or determined must:
 - i) ensure that the conflict of interest does not interfere with the proper or fair outcome of the business of that entity;
 - ii) manage the conflict of interest in accordance with this policy; and
 - iii) respond to any breach of this policy according to church law.

6. Monitoring and review

The General Assembly shall monitor compliance with this policy throughout the PCV and review this policy on an annual basis to ensure that the policy is operating effectively. Until the establishment of a Risk Committee (or an alternate body for this purpose), the Clerks of Assembly, acting collectively, shall report to each General Assembly on the operation of this policy.

7. Managing conflicts of interest

A. Conflicts of interest of members or employees of a court, committee, organisation, board or congregation

- a) Except where a conflict of interest has been declared by a conflicted person and he/she has voluntarily withdrawn from the meeting, once any conflict of interest has been declared or otherwise determined to exist (for example, after its being brought to light by a non-conflicted person), the court, committee, organisation, board or congregation, excluding the conflicted person, must decide whether or not the conflicted person is permitted to do any or all of the following:
 - i) vote on the matter;
 - ii) participate in any debate; and
 - iii) be present during the debate and the voting.
- b) Any decision taken under clause 7A(a) is to be by a majority of votes of those members of the court, committee, organisation, board or congregation present and entitled to vote at the meeting, excluding the conflicted person.
- c) Any action under this clause including a declaration of a conflict of interest by a conflicted person and his/her voluntary withdrawal from a meeting and the result of any vote must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

B. Matters to be considered

For the purposes of a decision under clause 7A(a), the following must be considered:

- a) determining what is right is to be followed rather than what is comfortable or expedient;
- b) whether proper management of the conflict of interest demands the exclusion of the conflicted person;
- c) the extent to which the conflict of interest may impair the conflicted person's capacity to impartially participate in decision-making or discharge their duties; and
- d) the extent to which the conflicted person's participation may adversely affect PCV's reputation and the honour of God's name.

8. Matters relating to congregations

Within a congregational meeting there remains the possibility of a conflict of interest as defined by this policy, without limitation, in such matters as:

- a) its approval of the annual financial statements, or appointment of an auditor during the regular business of the ACM; or
- b) determining a Call or the Terms of Settlement, or its approval of a new construction proposal at a special meeting.

Congregations are advised to either invite prior to the meeting declarations of conflict of interest in writing from their members in relation to any item/s of business on the proposed agenda or to pause at the commencement of any meeting for the chairman to ask: 'Is there anyone who ought to declare a Conflict of Interest, as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business of this meeting?'

9. Matters relating to boards of management

Within a board of management meeting there remains the possibility of a conflict of interest as defined by this policy, without limitation in such matters as the counting and banking of plate offerings, awarding of contracts (whether big or small) to workers for jobs of repair, building or maintenance. In all matters, a board member must ensure that he/she:

- a) does not make improper use of information acquired as a member;
- b) does not divulge business to anyone outside board membership (rule 2.39.5); and
- c) does not allow personal interests, or the interests of any family or associated persons, to conflict with the interests of the congregation or the PCV as a whole.

Boards of management are advised to either invite prior to the meeting declarations of conflict of interest in writing from their members in relation to any item/s of business on the proposed agenda or to pause at the commencement of any meeting for the chairman to ask: 'Is there any member of this board who ought to declare a Conflict of Interest, as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business of this meeting?'

10. Matters relating to courts of the church or their committees

Within the business of a court, commission or committee of the church there remains the possibility of a conflict of interest as defined by this policy relating to its business. While not being comprehensive or prescriptive, at least the following must be considered:

- a) for a committee of the General Assembly, consider rule 5.30;
- b) for a court of the church, a member must ensure that he/she:
 - i) does not make improper use of information acquired as a member;
 - ii) does not divulge business to anyone outside membership of the court whenever meeting in private is determined (bearing in mind rule 3.9.1);
 - iii) does not allow personal interests, or the interests of any family or associated persons, to conflict with the interests of the court or the PCV as a whole; and
 - iv) does not take part in debate or vote whenever his own appointment or re-appointment (including licensing, call, induction, ordination) is being considered; but may take part in discussion if invited to do so by a unanimous decision by all other members of the meeting.

Courts and committees of the church are advised to either invite prior to the meeting declarations of conflict of interest in writing from their members in relation to any item/s of business on the proposed agenda or to pause at the commencement of any meeting for the moderator/chairman to ask: 'Is there any member of this meeting who ought to declare a Conflict of Interest, as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business of this meeting?'

11. Compliance with this policy

If a court, committee or board has a reason to believe that a person subject to the policy has failed to comply with it, it must investigate the circumstances. If it is found that this person has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, the court, committee or board may take appropriate action to remedy the situation. If a person suspects that a member of the court, committee, organisation, board or congregation has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, it is that person's responsibility to notify the moderator or chairman as soon as practicable.

The motion was seconded and approved.

93. Leave sought

The Business Convener sought leave to move that the Assembly suspend sufficient standing orders to allow more time for the Church and Nation Committee to submit its report for Friday's sitting.

Leave was granted.

Rev Dr Jared Hood moved:

That the Assembly:

Suspend standing order 7.12.3 so that a report from the Church and Nation Committee for the Friday 15 October 2021 sitting must be submitted to the Business Committee by 12.00pm Thursday 14 October and notices of motion must be submitted to the Business Committee by 5.00pm Thursday 14 October.

The motion was seconded and approved.

94. Overture 6: Code and General Administration Committee—rule 3.38 Safe Church requirements for Board Members

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by the Clerk.

Questions were asked of the overturist.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

2. Remit the following rule change to presbyteries via the Barrier Act under rule 6.27.2(a)(i), for approval or disapproval, with replies to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May 2022, such that rule 3.38 shall read:

3.38 A session must count the votes in a board election and in deciding who is to be declared elected it must follow the order of the voters' preference, first satisfying itself that each of the persons indicated by this choice:

- a) has received the number of votes session considers sufficient;
- b) is suitable to hold office; and
- c) has a current Working With Children Check and has completed all relevant PCV Safe Church requirements.

Insofar as it is so satisfied, it records this by resolution.

3. Declare, under rule 5.47.1(b), the rule change referred to in clause 2 to have interim authority.

The motion was seconded and approved.

95. Overture 7: Code and General Administration Committee—rules 2.20, 21 Church Architect

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by the Clerk.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rule change to presbyteries via the Barrier Act under rule 6.27.2(a)(i), for approval or disapproval, with replies to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May 2022, such that rules 2.20 and 2.21 shall read:

2.20 Board responsibility

The board must:

- a) ensure that the property of the congregation is kept in good condition and repair, and raise funds for this;
- b) appoint a property committee which must inspect the property before and after winter each year and report to it on its condition;
- c) obtain the advice of the Church Architect, on such contractual terms as they agree, when:
 - i) there is any serious defect in any building; or
 - ii) a new building is to be erected or purchased; or
 - iii) an existing building is to be substantially altered.However, plans and/or specifications of proposed works are not required to be prepared by the Church Architect.
- d) when:
 - i) a new building is to be erected; or
 - ii) proposed alterations to an existing building require the issue of a building permit prior to the commencement of work;obtain from the Building and Property Committee:
 - iii) in principle approval of the proposed works at the concept stage; and
 - iv) final approval of the completed plans and specifications of the proposed works; and
 - v) approval of any variations to the approved plans and specifications proposed during the course of the works;
- e) not without congregational approval spend on repairs in any one of its annual reporting periods more than 10% of the preceding annual reporting period's ordinary congregational revenue;
- f) obtain approval, at a congregational meeting called for that purpose, by a majority of at least two-thirds of the communicants and adherents personally present (as required by the Model Trust Deeds) to:

- i) sell, purchase, lease, mortgage, or otherwise incur debt which is to be secured on, property;
- ii) erect, demolish, remove or structurally alter or add to any building.
- g) fix and collect any charges for use of congregational buildings, where the session has approved this use.

2.21 Approval for property matters

2.21.1 The erection, demolition, removal, alteration or addition to a congregational building which must be approved by the Building and Property Committee is subject to prior approval by the presbytery and any other prescribed authority.

2.21.2 The sale, lease, purchase or mortgage of congregational property is subject to approval by the presbytery, the Law Agent, and any other prescribed authority.

The motion was seconded and approved.

96. Overture 8: Code and General Administration Committee—Model Trust Deeds

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by the Clerk.

Questions were asked of the overturist.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Declare the following to be the Model Trust Deeds for both Church Sites and Manse Sites:

MODEL TRUST DEED FOR CHURCH SITE

To all whom these presents shall come

all of [Trustees or Trustee]

Send Greeting -

A. **Whereas** under and by virtue of the [Certificate of Title or Conveyance] particularly mentioned or referred to in the First Schedule hereunder written the piece or parcel of land and hereditaments particularly described in the Second Schedule hereunder written, and the fee simple and inheritance thereof in possession are now vested in the said [Trustees or Trustee] as joint tenants

B. **And whereas** the said hereditaments do not belong to the said [Trustees or Trustee] beneficially but have been acquired by and become vested in them as Trustees only for the purposes hereinafter mentioned, and they are desirous of declaring by this deed the trusts ends intents and purposes upon and for which they acquired and shall henceforth stand seised and possessed of the said land and hereditaments and all buildings now and hereafter to be erected upon the same or any part thereof

Now therefore know ye and these presents witness that

1. the said [Trustees or Trustee] do and each of them doth **hereby declare** that they and the survivors and survivor of them and the heirs of such survivor their or his assigns (all and every of whom are hereinafter referred to as the said Trustees or Trustee) shall hold and stand seised of all the hereditaments

described in the said Second Schedule **upon trust** for the religious denomination mentioned in the Act 22 Vic. No. 82* (*Printed in Blue Book of 1883, page 106.) and known as and called "The Presbyterian Church of Victoria" (hereinafter styled **the said Church**)

(a) and to permit and suffer the said land and hereditaments to be used for such purposes and by such person or persons as the General Assembly of the said Church (hereinafter called **the Assembly**) may from time to time direct (of which direction the certificate in writing under the hand of the Moderator for the time being of the Assembly shall be sufficient evidence), and

until such direction

(b) to permit and suffer the same to be used as a site for a church for the public worship of God by such persons as are now or at any time or times hereafter may be recognised by the Assembly as a Congregation of the said Church and who hold and shall continue to adhere to the standards of religious belief and of ecclesiastical government of the said Church (herein referred to as **the said Congregation**), and

(c) to permit and suffer the Minister for the time being of the said Congregation together with the Elders and other office-bearers thereof –

(i) to have free and uninterrupted enjoyment of the said land and hereditaments not only for the purposes of public worship as aforesaid but for such objects in connection with the affairs of the said Congregation as the Presbytery of the said Church for the time being entrusted by the Assembly with the superintendence of the said Congregation (hereinafter called **such Presbytery as aforesaid**) may approve of direct or appoint and

(ii) to enter on the said land and hereditaments or a sufficient part or parts thereof to erect and build such church and other necessary buildings and from time to time alter pull down remove renew enlarge and repair the same as shall at any time or from time to time hereafter be directed by the vote of at least two-third parts in number of such of the members and adherents for the time being as shall be personally present at a public meeting thereof called and held pursuant to notice in that behalf duly given in accordance with and conformity to the rules and regulations of the said Church for the time being affecting the convening and holding of meetings of members and adherents in similar cases.

2. **And it is hereby declared** that the said Trustees or Trustee shall have no power or authority to appoint dismiss or in anywise interfere with the appointment or dismissal of the Minister or any Office-bearers of the said Congregation nor in anywise meddle or interfere with such Minister or Office-bearers in the discharge of their official duties and that a certificate under the hand of the Moderator for the time being as aforesaid shall be conclusive evidence of the person for the time being claiming to minister as aforesaid being in fact such Minister

3. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall be bound to obey and give effect to the orders rules decisions and appointments made and to be made by the Assembly and of any such Presbytery as aforesaid and of the Office-bearers thereof relating to or concerning the admission or removal of the Minister and Office-bearers of the said Congregation and the rights and privileges belonging to him them or any of them in virtue of his or their office

and concerning every other matter or thing whereon the Assembly or such Presbytery as aforesaid may or shall be by these presents or the constitution of the said Church declared to have authority and shall furnish to the Assembly and to such Presbytery as aforesaid such returns reports and other information as may be required

4. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall by a mortgage or mortgages of or other security or securities over all or any part or parts of the said hereditaments raise such sums or sum of money for the completion extension or reparation of the said buildings or the improvement of the said hereditaments or for any other purposes of the said Congregation and on such terms in all respects as shall with the consent of the Assembly be directed by any such vote as aforesaid and shall make any such mortgage or other security either with or without a power of sale of the mortgaged hereditaments and with all usual and incidental covenants clauses and agreements and execute all necessary and proper assurances for effecting any such mortgage or other security provided always that the said Trustees or Trustee shall not be obliged to execute any covenant rendering them or him personally responsible to repay the amount mentioned in any such mortgage
5. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall absolutely make sale and dispose of the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof and the fee simple and inheritance thereof when and on such terms and in such manner and subject to such conditions as to the title or otherwise as shall with the consent aforesaid be directed by any such vote as aforesaid and convey the hereditaments sold to the purchaser or purchasers thereof and shall pay the moneys received by virtue of any such mortgage or sale as aforesaid to the Treasurer for the time being of the Assembly (whose receipt shall be a sufficient discharge to the said Trustees or Trustee) who shall in the first place deduct thereout all costs and expenses attending such mortgage or sale and then payoff and discharge any encumbrance or encumbrances for the time being affecting the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof and then pay the balance to the said Congregation or otherwise as may be directed by the Assembly to be applied and disposed of in or towards the purposes for which such mortgage or sale shall have been authorised which purposes the Assembly may vary from time to time and, in the absence of any such authorisation as to the purposes of such mortgage or sale, in or towards such purposes as the Assembly may in its discretion otherwise declare from time to time
6. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall from time to time demise or let such part or parts of the said hereditaments as shall not for the time being be actually required for the purpose of public worship or other Congregational purposes for such term or terms, at such rent or rents, upon such conditions, and subject to such covenants as shall be approved under the Rules of the Church and shall have been directed by any such vote as aforesaid but the reversion in the hereditaments demised or let shall continue subject to the powers of mortgaging and selling respectively herein contained Provided that the clear rents arising from any such demise or letting shall be collected by the Treasurer for the time being of the said Congregation and be paid and applied for such purposes as shall have been directed by any such vote as aforesaid and approved by such Presbytery as aforesaid
7. And it is hereby further declared and agreed that any receipt which shall be given by the said Trustees or Trustee for any money payable for or in respect

of any mortgage sale or lease of or other dealings with the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof shall effectually discharge the person or persons paying the same from being answerable or accountable for the non-application or misapplication or from being obliged or concerned to see to the application of the money in such receipt acknowledged or expressed to have been received

8. And that every covenant and agreement that shall be entered into and every mortgage conveyance or lease which shall be executed by the said Trustees or Trustee pursuant to the trusts hereinbefore declared shall be as good and effectual both at law and in equity as if every member and adherent of the said Congregation had joined therein or assented thereto and shall be binding and conclusive on all persons claiming any benefit or interest under or by virtue of these presents
9. And that it shall not be incumbent on any mortgagee purchaser lessee or tenant of the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof to inquire into the necessity or propriety of any such mortgage sale demise or letting or whether the same is authorised by these presents or into the due nomination election or appointment of any Trustees or Trustee under these presents and that a solemn statutory declaration by the persons or person purporting and claiming to mortgage sell lease or let as the Trustees or Trustee for the time being of these presents shall be conclusive evidence in favour of any mortgagee purchaser lessee or tenant of such person or persons being such Trustees or Trustee
10. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall have no power or authority to collect the revenues or to manage or interfere with the management of the temporal affairs of the said Congregation
11. And further that three Trustees shall be held to be an actual quorum at any meeting duly convened and
12. if any of the said Trustees shall die or desire to resign his trust or shall cease to be a member or adherent of the said Congregation or shall have removed his residence to a distance of one hundred miles from the said place of worship for at least, twelve consecutive months or shall refuse to exercise and execute any of the powers and authorities hereby reposed in him when so required as aforesaid or shall disobey or neglect or refuse to carry out any order instruction or decision of the Assembly or of such Presbytery as aforesaid or shall by the Assembly be declared to have been guilty of conduct unbecoming a Trustee then and in any of the said cases it shall be lawful for and incumbent on such Presbytery as aforesaid by resolution reciting the facts to declare a vacancy in the Trusteeship in respect of such Trustee who shall immediately thereupon *ipso facto* cease to be a Trustee and shall be deprived of all powers and privileges vested in him of which resolution the certificate of the Moderator for the time being of such Presbytery as aforesaid shall be conclusive evidence and
13. that as often as the number of Trustees shall be reduced by any of the ways or causes aforesaid to less than three it shall be lawful for and incumbent on the said Congregation at a meeting duly convened for that purpose to proceed to the appointment of one person being a member of the said Church or Congregation for every such vacancy in the office of Trustee and that when and so often as such presbytery as aforesaid shall have ratified such appointment the said hereditaments shall thereupon with all convenient speed be conveyed and assured by the surviving and acting Trustees or Trustee

(together as the case may be with the Trustee or Trustees as to whom such vacancy or vacancies shall have been declared) so and in such manner as that the same shall be effectually vested in the surviving and acting Trustees or Trustee and in the new Trustees or Trustee jointly upon the same trusts and conditions and for the same purposes as have hereinbefore been provided and declared

14. Provided always, and notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained, it is hereby further agreed and declared that, should any Congregation at any time cease to exist (and such cesser of existence shall be deemed to have occurred if no Presbyterian Church service is held by a Minister or Elder or Home Missionary of the said Church, on the said land and hereditaments, for a continuous period of twelve months, and of which cesser the certificate in writing of the Moderator for the time being of the Assembly shall be sufficient evidence), or in the case of any land and hereditaments and the buildings and erections thereon not held for the use of any Congregation, the Assembly shall be at liberty to direct the Trustees or Trustee to sell, mortgage, lease, exchange, or otherwise deal with or dispose of the said land and hereditaments, and the buildings and erections thereon, or any part thereof, in any manner and upon such conditions as to disposition of the proceeds or otherwise (if any) as the Assembly may from time to time direct
15. Provided always, and notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained, it is hereby further agreed and declared that should the said Congregation unite with another Congregation or more than one Congregation by way of a Basis of Union in accordance with the rules and regulations of the said Church to form a single Congregation, the Trustees or Trustee shall hold the said land and hereditaments and the fee simple and inheritance thereof described in the said Second Schedule –
 - (a) in trust to sell the whole or so much of the said land and hereditaments, and the buildings and erections thereon, in either case, as the Assembly when approving the property arrangements dealt with in the Basis of Union has determined is surplus to the needs of the Congregation that results from the union, and has not determined is required for any alternate use by the said Church, in any manner and upon such conditions as to disposition of the proceeds or otherwise (if any) as the Assembly may direct; and
 - (b) where the Assembly when approving the property arrangements dealt with in the Basis of Union has allocated property to the Congregation which results from the union, on the same trusts as are constituted by the provisions of clauses 1 to 15 (both inclusive) of this Deed, substituting for any reference to the said Congregation a reference to the Congregation that results from the union of the said Congregation with another Congregation or Congregations; and
 - (c) otherwise where the Assembly when approving the property arrangements dealt with in the Basis of Union has determined the alternate use of any property not needed by the Congregation which results from the union, under the same trusts as are constituted by the provisions of clauses 1 to 15 (both inclusive) of this Deed.

The certificate of the Moderator as to the date of the union of the Congregations shall be conclusive evidence of that date for the purposes of this clause.

In witness whereof the said
have hereunto set their bands and seals the day of A.D., 20...

The First Schedule hereinbefore referred to
[Description of the Certificate of Title or Conveyance]

The Second Schedule hereinbefore referred to
[Description of the Land as in the Title]

MODEL TRUST DEED FOR MANSE SITE

To all whom these presents shall come

all of [Trustees or Trustee]

Send Greeting -

- A. **Whereas** under and by virtue of the [Certificate of Title or Conveyance] particularly mentioned or referred to in the First Schedule hereunder written the piece or parcel of land and hereditaments particularly described in the Second Schedule hereunder written, and the fee simple and inheritance thereof in possession are now vested in the said [Trustees or Trustee] as joint tenants
- B. **And whereas** the said hereditaments do not belong to the said [Trustees or Trustee] beneficially but have been acquired by and become vested in them as Trustees only for the purposes hereinafter mentioned, and they are desirous of declaring by this deed the trusts ends intents and purposes upon and for which they acquired and shall henceforth stand seised and possessed of the said land and hereditaments and all buildings now and hereafter to be erected upon the same or any part thereof

Now therefore know ye and these presents witness that

1. the said [Trustees or Trustee] do and each of them doth **hereby declare** that they and the survivors and survivor of them and the heirs of such survivor their or his assigns (all and every of whom are hereinafter referred to as the said Trustees or Trustee) shall hold and stand seised of all the hereditaments described in the said Second Schedule **upon trust** for the religious denomination mentioned in the Act 22 Vic. No. 82* (*Printed in Blue Book of 1883, page 106.) and known as and called "The Presbyterian Church of Victoria" (hereinafter styled **the said Church**)
 - (a) and to permit and suffer the said land and hereditaments to be used for a site for a Manse or Minister's dwelling to be occupied solely by such person or persons in succession as shall from time to time be inducted by the said Church into the office of and shall continue to be recognised by the General Assembly of the said Church (hereinafter called **the Assembly**) as the officiating Minister for the time being in connection with the Congregation at in the Colony of Victoria which now is or at any time or times hereafter may be recognised by the Assembly as a Congregation of the said Church and holding and continuing to adhere to the standards of religious belief and of ecclesiastical government of the said Church
 - (b) and to permit and suffer the Minister for the time being of the said Congregation to have free and uninterrupted enjoyment of the said land and hereditaments for the purposes aforesaid

- (c) and also to permit and suffer such Minister together with the Elders and other Office bearers of the said Congregation –
 - (i) to have free and uninterrupted enjoyment of the said land and hereditaments for such other objects in connection with the affairs of the said Congregation as the Presbytery of the said Church for the time being entrusted by the Assembly with the superintendence of the said Congregation (hereinafter called **such Presbytery as aforesaid**) may approve of direct or appoint and
 - (ii) to enter on the said land and hereditaments or a sufficient part or parts thereof to erect and build such Manse and other necessary buildings and from time to time alter pull down remove renew enlarge and repair the same as shall at any time or from time to time hereafter be directed by the vote of at least two-third parts in number of such of the Members and Adherents for the time being as shall be personally present at a public meeting thereof called and held pursuant to notice in that behalf duly given in accordance with and conformity to the rules and regulations of the said Church for the time being affecting the convening and holding of meetings of Members and Adherents in similar cases.
- 2. **And it is hereby declared** that the said Trustees or Trustee shall have no power or authority to appoint dismiss or in anywise interfere with the appointment or dismissal of the Minister or any Office-bearers of the said Congregation nor in anywise meddle or interfere with such Minister or Office-bearers in the discharge of their official duties and that a certificate under the hand of the Moderator for the time being as aforesaid shall be conclusive evidence of the person for the time being claiming to minister as aforesaid being in fact such Minister
- 3. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall be bound to obey and give effect to the orders rules decisions and appointments made and to be made by the Assembly and of any such Presbytery as aforesaid and of the Office-bearers thereof relating to or concerning the admission or removal of the Minister and Office-bearers of the said Congregation and the rights and privileges belonging to him them or any of them in virtue of his or their office and concerning every other matter or thing whereon the Assembly or such Presbytery as aforesaid may or shall be by these presents or the constitution of the said Church declared to have authority and shall furnish to the Assembly and to such Presbytery as aforesaid such returns reports and other information as may be required
- 4. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall by a mortgage or mortgages of or other security or securities over all or any part or parts of the said hereditaments raise such sums or sum of money for the completion extension or reparation of the said buildings or the improvement of the said hereditaments or for any other purposes of the said Congregation and on such terms in all respects as shall with the consent of the Assembly be directed by any such vote as aforesaid and shall make any such mortgage or other security either with or without a power of sale of the mortgaged hereditaments and with all usual and incidental covenants clauses and agreements and execute all necessary and proper assurances for effecting any such mortgage or other security provided always that the said Trustees or Trustee shall not be obliged to execute any covenant rendering them or him personally responsible

- to repay the amount mentioned in any such mortgage
5. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall absolutely make sale and dispose of the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof and the fee simple and inheritance thereof when and on such terms and in such manner and subject to such conditions as to the title or otherwise as shall with the consent aforesaid be directed by any such vote as aforesaid and convey the hereditaments sold to the purchaser or purchasers thereof and shall pay the moneys received by virtue of any such mortgage or sale as aforesaid to the Treasurer for the time being of the Assembly (whose receipt shall be a sufficient discharge to the said Trustees or Trustee) who shall in the first place deduct thereout all costs and expenses attending such mortgage or sale and then payoff and discharge any encumbrance or encumbrances for the time being affecting the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof and then pay the balance to the said Congregation or otherwise as may be directed by the Assembly to be applied and disposed of in or towards the purposes for which such mortgage or sale shall have been authorised which purposes the Assembly may vary from time to time and, in the absence of any such authorisation as to the purposes of such mortgage or sale, in or towards such purposes as the Assembly may in its discretion otherwise declare from time to time
 6. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall from time to time demise or let such part or parts of the said hereditaments as shall not for the time being be actually required for the purpose of public worship or other Congregational purposes for such term or terms, at such rent or rents, upon such conditions, and subject to such covenants as shall be approved under the Rules of the Church and shall have been directed by any such vote as aforesaid but the reversion in the hereditaments demised or let shall continue subject to the powers of mortgaging and selling respectively herein contained Provided that the clear rents arising from any such demise or letting shall be collected by the Treasurer for the time being of the said Congregation and be paid and applied for such purposes as shall have been directed by any such vote as aforesaid and approved by such Presbytery as aforesaid
 7. And it is hereby further declared and agreed that any receipt which shall be given by the said Trustees or Trustee for any money payable for or in respect of any mortgage sale or lease of or other dealings with the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof shall effectually discharge the person or persons paying the same from being answerable or accountable for the non-application or misapplication or from being obliged or concerned to see to the application of the money in such receipt acknowledged or expressed to have been received
 8. And that every covenant and agreement that shall be entered into and every mortgage conveyance or lease which shall be executed by the said Trustees or Trustee pursuant to the trusts hereinbefore declared shall be as good and effectual both at law and in equity as if every member and adherent of the said Congregation had joined therein or assented thereto and shall be binding and conclusive on all persons claiming any benefit or interest under or by virtue of these presents
 9. And that it shall not be incumbent on any mortgagee purchaser lessee or tenant of the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof to inquire into the necessity or propriety of any such mortgage sale demise or letting or whether the same is authorised by these presents or into the due nomination election

or appointment of any Trustees or Trustee under these presents and that a solemn statutory declaration by the persons or person purporting and claiming to mortgage sell lease or let as the Trustees or Trustee for the time being of these presents shall be conclusive evidence in favour of any mortgagee purchaser lessee or tenant of such person or persons being such Trustees or Trustee

10. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall have no power or authority to collect the revenues or to manage or interfere with the management of the temporal affairs of the said Congregation
11. And further that three Trustees shall be held to be an actual quorum at any meeting duly convened and
12. if any of the said Trustees shall die or desire to resign his trust or shall cease to be a member or adherent of the said Congregation or shall have removed his residence to a distance of one hundred miles from the said place of worship for at least, twelve consecutive months or shall refuse to exercise and execute any of the powers and authorities hereby reposed in him when so required as aforesaid or shall disobey or neglect or refuse to carry out any order instruction or decision of the Assembly or of such Presbytery as aforesaid or shall by the Assembly be declared to have been guilty of conduct unbecoming a Trustee then and in any of the said cases it shall be lawful for and incumbent on such Presbytery as aforesaid by resolution reciting the facts to declare a vacancy in the Trusteeship in respect of such Trustee who shall immediately thereupon *ipso facto* cease to be a Trustee and shall be deprived of all powers and privileges vested in him of which resolution the certificate of the Moderator for the time being of such Presbytery as aforesaid shall be conclusive evidence and
13. that as often as the number of Trustees shall be reduced by any of the ways or causes aforesaid to less than three it shall be lawful for and incumbent on the said Congregation at a meeting duly convened for that purpose to proceed to the appointment of one person being a member of the said Church or Congregation for every such vacancy in the office of Trustee and that when and so often as such presbytery as aforesaid shall have ratified such appointment the said hereditaments shall thereupon with all convenient speed be conveyed and assured by the surviving and acting Trustees or Trustee (together as the case may be with the Trustee or Trustees as to whom such vacancy or vacancies shall have been declared) so and in such manner as that the same shall be effectually vested in the surviving and acting Trustees or Trustee and in the new Trustees or Trustee jointly upon the same trusts and conditions and for the same purposes as have hereinbefore been provided and declared
14. Provided always, and notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained, it is hereby further agreed and declared that, should any Congregation at any time cease to exist (and such cesser of existence shall be deemed to have occurred if no Presbyterian Church service is held by a Minister or Elder or Home Missionary of the said Church, on the said land and hereditaments, for a continuous period of twelve months, and of which cesser the certificate in writing of the Moderator for the time being of the Assembly shall be sufficient evidence), or in the case of any land and hereditaments and the buildings and erections thereon not held for the use of any Congregation, the Assembly shall be at liberty to direct the Trustees or Trustee to sell, mortgage, lease, exchange, or otherwise deal with or dispose of the said land and

hereditaments, and the buildings and erections thereon, or any part thereof, in any manner and upon such conditions as to disposition of the proceeds or otherwise (if any) as the Assembly may from time to time direct

15. Provided always, and notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained, it is hereby further agreed and declared that should the said Congregation unite with another Congregation or more than one Congregation by way of a Basis of Union in accordance with the rules and regulations of the said Church to form a single Congregation, the Trustees or Trustee shall hold the said land and hereditaments and the fee simple and inheritance thereof described in the said Second Schedule –

- (a) in trust to sell the whole or so much of the said land and hereditaments, and the buildings and erections thereon, in either case, as the Assembly when approving the property arrangements dealt with in the Basis of Union has determined is surplus to the needs of the Congregation that results from the union, and has not determined is required for any alternate use by the said Church, in any manner and upon such conditions as to disposition of the proceeds or otherwise (if any) as the Assembly may direct; and
- (b) where the Assembly when approving the property arrangements dealt with in the Basis of Union has allocated property to the Congregation which results from the union, on the same trusts as are constituted by the provisions of clauses 1 to 15 (both inclusive) of this Deed, substituting for any reference to the said Congregation a reference to the Congregation that results from the union of the said Congregation with another Congregation or Congregations; and
- (c) otherwise where the Assembly when approving the property arrangements dealt with in the Basis of Union has determined the alternate use of any property not needed by the Congregation which results from the union, under the same trusts as are constituted by the provisions of clauses 1 to 15 (both inclusive) of this Deed.

The certificate of the Moderator as to the date of the union of the Congregations shall be conclusive evidence of that date for the purposes of this clause.

In witness whereof the said

have hereunto set their bands and seals the day of A.D., 20...

The First Schedule hereinbefore referred to

[Description of the Certificate of Title or Conveyance]

The Second Schedule hereinbefore referred to

[Description of the Land as in the Title]

The motion was seconded and approved.

97. Overture 9: Presbytery of Melbourne East—conflict of interest

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by Elder Philip Barton and Rev David Hann.

Questions were asked of the overturists.

(1) Elder Philip Barton moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

A motion to dismiss the overture was seconded and approved.

98. Substantive Motion—COVID-19 restriction advice

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Appoint an ad hoc Committee for COVID-19 Restriction Advice consisting of the clerk (convener), Andy Buchan, Stephen McDonald, Cam Garrett, and Dean Carroll.
2. Instruct the committee, seeking the advice of the Law Agent whenever necessary, to prepare timely advice for church sessions each time COVID-19 restrictions issued by the Government and its Chief Health Officer change in ways that materially affect the life and work of the church.

The motion was seconded and approved.

99. Substantive Motion—deaths and jubilees

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Determine that in the matter of recording ministerial and elders deaths in the opening session of each General Assembly, the acceptance of such names for a memorial minute shall be determined by the following principles:
 - a) a minister or home missionary who has served in paid pastoral work within the PCV;
 - b) an elder who has served for a significant time as a member of the General Assembly and his or her name is submitted to the Clerk of Assembly 30 days prior to the meeting and only upon recommendation of the presbytery of the bounds.
2. Determine that in the matter of recording jubilees and other milestones in the lives of ministers, home missionaries, and elders in the opening session of each General Assembly, the acceptance of such names for mention shall be determined by the following principles:
 - a) a person's length of service shall be not less than 40 years, following the pattern of 40, 50, 60, etc (commonly called 'noughty' celebrations) unless for exceptional or compassionate reasons;
 - b) the person is willing to be present at the Assembly meeting unless for exceptional or compassionate reasons;
 - c) the person's name is submitted to the Clerk of Assembly 30 days prior to the meeting and only upon recommendation of the presbytery of the bounds.

The motion was seconded and approved.

100. Commendation

The Immediate Past Moderator, Rev Philip Mercer, took the chair.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Express best wishes to its Moderator, Rev Peter W Phillips, and his wife Lorraine, for God's blessing on them both for the coming year.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer for Mr and Mrs Phillips.

Moderator Rev Peter Phillips resumed the chair.

101. Adjournment

The Assembly adjourned to meet at 9:00am on Friday 15 October 2021 by Zoom, which, having been duly intimated, the Moderator closed the sitting with prayer.

CLERKS:
J P Wilson
D A Carroll

**PROCEEDINGS
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
of the
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
3rd Sitting: Friday 15 October**

By Zoom, an electronic means of meeting, on Friday 15 October 2021 at 9:00am.

102. Constitution

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria met pursuant to adjournment. The Moderator, Rev Peter Phillips, constituted the Assembly with a reading from Hebrews 1:1-12 and prayer.

103. Devotion

Moderator's Chaplain, Rev Jesse Walz, led the Assembly with a devotion from Romans 13:11-14 and prayer.

104. Apologies

The following apologies for this sitting were sustained:

Ministers: David Brown, Trevor Cox, Philip Mercer, Richard Wilson.

Elders: David Cutler, Colin Morrow.

105. Business Committee

The Convener, Rev Dr Jared Hood, moved:

That the Assembly:

Approve the proposed agenda.

The motion was seconded and approved.

106. Minutes of the Previous Sitting

The Acting Deputy Clerk tabled the minutes of the 2nd Sitting.

107. Communication: Clerk, GAA—re vaccination

The Business Convener moved that the Assembly receive the communication.

The motion was seconded and approved.

108. Church and Nation Committee (min 48)

The report of the Church and Nation Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 15-16 were approved.

Clause 17 was approved.

Clause 18 was moved and seconded in its reissued form.

(1) Rev Luke Isham moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend the proposed deliverance clause 18c by adding the words 'that do not exclude those of unknown vaccination status' after 'worship services', so that the clause will read:

18.c. Provide a hybrid of in-person and online worship services that do not exclude those of unknown vaccination status;

The motion was seconded.

The Moderator was asked to rule on the competence of the amendment.

The Moderator ruled that the amendment was incompetent.

It was moved and seconded that the Assembly depart from the Moderator's ruling.

The Moderator's ruling was upheld.

(2) Rev Tony Archer moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend the proposed deliverance clause 18d by adding the words 'that does not make use of vaccine passports' after 'relevant limits' at the end of the clause, so that the clause will read:

18.d. Something other than a–c that does not make use of vaccine passports.

The motion was seconded.

Rev Phil Campbell raised a point of order (privilege).

Rev Tony Archer made a personal explanation.

The Moderator was asked to rule on the competence of the amendment.

The Moderator ruled that the amendment was incompetent.

It was moved and seconded that the Assembly depart from the Moderator's ruling.

The Moderator's ruling was upheld.

(3) Rev Luke Isham moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend the proposed deliverance clause 18 by omitting clause d.

The motion was seconded.

The Moderator was asked to rule on the competence of the amendment.

The Moderator ruled that the amendment was incompetent.

It was moved and seconded that the Assembly depart from the Moderator's ruling.

The Moderator's ruling was upheld.

Clause 18 was approved.

Dissent:

Rev Tony Archer

Reason: It allows segregation and complicity in vaccine passports.

Rev Nicholas Arundell

Rev Kyung Ee

Rev Neil Harvey

Rev Luke Isham

Rev Greg Matthews

Reason: Unity is not emphasised enough. Vaccination status should not be a condition of entry.

Rev Stephen McDonald

Rev Ben Nelson

Elder Jeremy Peet

Rev Jesse Walz sought leave to move an amendment.

The Moderator ruled that leave was not needed as the amendment arose out of debate and did not alter the substance.

(4) Rev Jesse Walz moved to add the words 'insofar as they are not in defiance of biblical principles' after 'Public Health Orders'.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The previous question on Clause 19 was moved, seconded and approved.

(5) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Adjourn debate on Clause 20 to be taken up at the conclusion of notice of motion D-43.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clause 21 was approved.

(6) Rev Don Elliott moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend the proposed deliverance by adding new clauses 22–24:

22. With the love of the Lord Jesus working in and through us, encourage the vaccinated in PCV congregations to show a measure of self-sacrificing flexibility towards the unvaccinated and encourage the unvaccinated to show a measure of self-sacrificing flexibility towards the vaccinated (Phil 2:1–5).
23. With confidence in the sovereignty of the God who draws people to himself, recognise that while the Assembly regards physical attendance at church as essential under normal circumstances, temporary limitations imposed by emergency health measures cannot stop the saving work of God and the growth of his church (John 6:44; 14:6, Rom 1:16–17; Prov 21:1).
24. Urge the State Government to remove the requirement of vaccination for all religious gatherings once the State of Victoria reaches the 80% double vaccination target as in NSW.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(7) Rev Stephen McDonald moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend the proposed deliverance by adding new clause 25:

25. Encourage the Moderator, along with the leaders of like-minded Christian denominations, to call for a day of prayer to give thanks for God's gracious protection, and to ask that He would protect the unity of His Church, grant discernment to secular authorities, and provide for the safety and daily needs of people affected by COVID-19 and measures to reduce its spread and severity.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(8) Rev Luke Brownley moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend the proposed deliverance by adding new clause 26:

26. Instruct the Moderator to make representations to the Victorian Government on behalf of churches that rent public buildings for worship services, so that buildings, such as community centres, would be available for religious gatherings in line with all current public health orders and directions for 'places of worship'.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(9) The Acting Deputy Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Resume debate on Clause 20.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clause 20 as amended was approved.

(10) The Convener, Rev Christopher Duke, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Assembly:

1. Give thanks to God for the prayerful support of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria for the Church and Nation Committee as it has sought to present the claims of Christ and Christian concerns and perspectives to members of Parliament and other leaders in the community.
2. Continue to encourage members of the General Assembly to pray for the work of the Church and Nation Committee and its members, praying that God will continue to equip and guard committee members in this challenging ministry.

3. Gives thanks to God for the hard-working and dedicated researcher, Mrs Moira Deeming, the secretary, Mr Ian Waller, and all members of the Church and Nation Committee.
4. Commend the work of Rev Graham Bradbeer for his service as the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Multifaith Advisory Group representative.
5. Encourage all Presbyterian Church of Victoria ministers, elders, and congregations to make good use of the Church and Nation website, Facebook page, Monthly Updates and other PCV Network articles to maintain prayerful engagement in and support for the work of the committee.
6. Commend the work of Nourishing Media and the related Church and Nation sub-committee to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and its congregations for prayerful support as they seek to produce a range of videos that address beliefs and biblical responses to contemporary issues, and encourage Presbyterian Church of Victoria churches, ministers, elders, and congregants to view and share when videos are released.
7. Give thanks to God for the generous donation of funds received thus far to seed the video project.
8. Encourage the members of the General Assembly and the sessions and congregations of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to support the efforts of the Victorian March for the Babies through advertising, participation, and prayer.
9. Encourage all sessions to become familiar with the (Revised) Victorian Institutional Child Safe Standards and pray for the boldness of all Christian churches and institutions to remain faithful to biblical teaching on sexuality and gender.
10. Encourage the members of the General Assembly and congregations and members of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to make their own submissions in relation to any proposed State and Federal Government legislation that is counter to the cause of the gospel of Christ and his church.
11. Enclose with the Assembly's communication of greetings to the Victorian Premier, the Legislative Assembly, and the Legislative Council, a letter lobbying for legal protection of the unborn from abortion, the elderly and sick from assisted suicide, and children from radical gender theory, with the wording of the letter determined by the Church and Nation Committee and signed by the Moderator.
12. Adjourn at the close of every other item of business in order to conduct a specific one-item agenda final sitting on Friday, 15 October, to receive a report from the Church and Nation Committee and relevant correspondence from the General Assembly of Australia in order to consider any necessary COVID-19 related responses.
13. Inform the State government that:
 - a) it supports the Government's intention to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus in the community and to protect our hospitals from exceeding critical care capacity, and advise the Government that our denomination has encouraged people to be vaccinated at their earliest convenience.
 - b) it is concerned for the impact of mandating vaccination for all authorised workers on all those who for various reasons consider themselves unable to receive the vaccination and requests the government to provide, if possible, some alternative to vaccination that would achieve the same result of restricting the spread of the COVID-19 virus without depriving them of their livelihoods and service.

14. Inform the State Opposition, Minor Parties and Independents of its decision in clause 13 above.
15. Acknowledge with much thanks to God the creativity, hard work, and faithfulness of ministers, elders, and members of PCV congregations who have worked to maintain gospel ministry during challenging times brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.
16. Commend to PCV congregations the use of the new technologies that have enabled live streaming/pre-recording of worship services, prayer meetings, bible study, and other meetings of the saints to continue when physical gatherings have not been possible.
17. Note and embrace the General Assembly of Australia decision, namely:
 - a) Exhort all members and ministers to work hard at maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, treating issues of vaccination as a matter of liberty of conscience not determined by church law (Rom. 14:22, 15:4; WCF chapter 20).
 - b) Affirm that in light of the Bible's teaching on the free offer of the gospel and the unity of the Church, the Presbyterian Church of Australia does not desire anyone to be denied entry for the public worship of God on the grounds of vaccination status.
18. Encourage sessions to apply the GAA principles in clause 17 above when deciding the best option for their congregation when conducting worship services, those options being:
 - a) Continue to conduct online services only while waiting in gospel solidarity until the whole congregation can legally join as one;
 - b) For the sake of maintaining the unity of and ministry to those who may otherwise be excluded, hold multiple in-person services in smaller groups subject to the relevant limits for those of unknown vaccination status, until larger gatherings can be held;
 - c) Provide a hybrid of in-person and online worship services; or
 - d) Something other than a–c.
19. Instruct the Moderator to make urgent representations to the Victorian Government on behalf of regional churches, requesting those who are able to attend services under the current guidelines also be permitted to serve in various ministries in those services.
20. With the love of the Lord Jesus working in and through us, encourage the vaccinated in PCV congregations to show a measure of self-sacrificing flexibility towards the unvaccinated and encourage the unvaccinated to show a measure of self-sacrificing flexibility towards the vaccinated (Phil 2:1–5).
21. With confidence in the sovereignty of the God who draws people to himself, recognise that while the Assembly regards physical attendance at church as essential under normal circumstances, temporary limitations imposed by emergency health measures cannot stop the saving work of God and the growth of his church (John 6:44; 14:6, Rom 1:16–17; Prov 21:1).
22. Urge the State Government to remove the requirement of vaccination for all religious gatherings once the State of Victoria reaches the 80% double vaccination target as in NSW.
23. Encourage the Moderator, along with the leaders of like-minded Christian denominations, to call for a day of prayer to give thanks for God's gracious protection, and to ask that He would protect the unity of His Church, grant discernment to secular authorities, and provide for the safety and daily needs of people affected by COVID-19 and measures to reduce its spread and severity.

24. Instruct the Moderator to make representations to the Victorian Government on behalf of churches that rent public buildings for worship services, so that buildings, such as community centres, would be available for religious gatherings in line with all current public health orders and directions for 'places of worship'.
25. Instruct the Clerk to circulate clauses 15–24 above to all presbyteries and sessions.

The motion was seconded and approved.

109. Appointment of the Commission of Assembly

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Appoint a Commission of Assembly consisting of all the members of this Assembly who remain eligible, with a quorum of sixteen (eight of whom must be ministers), representing at least four presbyteries.
2. Empower this Commission to consider and determine every matter referred to it by the Assembly, and instruct the Commission to be careful to follow all instructions given to it by the Assembly. With the exception of urgent matters, as permitted in clause three below, the Commission is not entitled to take up any matter that has not been referred to it.
3. Empower this Commission to consider and determine all matters that have emerged since the last meeting of the Assembly that are considered urgent and in need of executive or judicial action. In taking up these emergent matters the Commission is to consider the best interests of the church on every occasion.
4. Charge this Commission in all its decisions to proceed according to the rules and constitution of this church. For all its decisions, this Commission is accountable to and censurable by the next Assembly.
5. Charge this Commission that it must not enact, amend or repeal any rules or regulations of the Assembly nor enter into the consideration of any overture or motion proposing legislation.
6. Direct this Commission to submit its minutes duly confirmed, and relevant papers, to the next Assembly through the Clerk.
7. Instruct this Commission to meet in the Werner Brodbeck Hall, within the Assembly Hall, 156 Collins Street, Melbourne, Tuesday 3 May 2022, at 10:30am, or at such other times and places as the Moderator of the Assembly shall determine.

The motion was seconded and approved.

110. Appointment of the next General Assembly

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Appoint the next General Assembly to convene within The Scots' Church, Melbourne, on Monday 3 October 2022, at 7:30pm for the opening sitting, and on Tuesday 4 October 2022, at 9:30am for a Communion Service, and thereafter for business in the Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall, or at such other times and places as the Moderator of the Assembly shall determine.

The motion was seconded and approved.

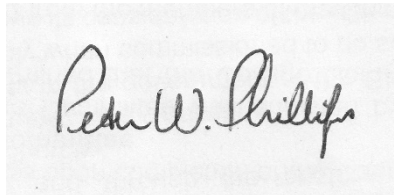
111. Dissolution

The business of the Assembly now being concluded, the Moderator intimated that the next General Assembly would meet on Monday 3 October 2022 at 7.30pm for the opening sitting.

The Moderator dissolved the Assembly with encouragement, thanks, prayer and the benediction.

CLERKS:
J P Wilson
D A Carroll

I certify that the minutes of 5, 6, 7, 13 and 15 October 2021, having been carefully scrutinised, are hereby confirmed in terms of minute 7.14 thereof.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Peter W. Phillips". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a long, sweeping underline.

Rev Peter W Phillips
Moderator

ROLL OF ASSEMBLY

Presbytery of Ballarat (V1)

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Ararat-Skipton-Lismore		Stewart McKerrow
Ballarat North	John Brennan	Graham Hammond
Ballarat South	Toby McIntosh	Keith Mitchell
Ballarat West		Jeremy Peet
Carisbrook-Castlemaine (HMC)		Brett McArdle
Daylesford	Mark Crabb	
Horsham	Greg Matthews	Peter U'Ren
Kaniva-Nhill (HMC)		Bruce Meyer
Retired Minister:	Keith Allen	

Presbytery of Flinders (V2)

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Aspendale	Brett Peatman	Kevin Savage
Brighton		Elizabeth Cutler
Cheltenham	David Brown	
Clarinda (HMC)		
Clarinda Nuer		
Clayton	Michael Jensen Lam Paul Gak (Associate)	Arnis Putnins
Cranbourne	Peter Roberts	
Dandenong	Joel Mestry	
Dromana-Mornington	Matt Cole	
Frankston	Jared Keath (Associate)	
Mordialloc (AC)	Paul Huynh	
Officer (New Life)	David Martin	Sabyan Hardjo
Somerville	Ken Brown	
Sorrento-Rye	Hui Lim	
South East Samoan (HMC)	Kainano Opetaiia	
Retired Ministers:	Peter Barclay	
	Ivan Barker	
	Frank Savage	
	Graeme Weber	
	Wally Zurrer	

Presbytery of Geelong (V3)

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bannockburn	Matthew Deroon	G (Bert) Stasse
Bellarine		Neil Mansfield
Geelong West	Luke McSeveny	Drew Chittenden
North Geelong	Darren Middleton	Richard Worth
The Leigh	Surendra Wesley	Jim Venters
Retired Ministers:	Andrew Bray	
	John Cromarty	
	Allan Harman	
	Ian Hutton	
	Robert White	

Presbytery of Gippsland (V4)

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bairnsdale	Gary Stephens	Roger McIvor
Drouin	Heath Easton Stephen Jones (Associate)	Alan York
Leongatha (HMC)	Gary Wentworth	Steve Weir
Moe-Yarram	Stephen Deroon	
Morwell	Cameron Garrett	
Sale (HMC)		
Warragul		Tom Guilford
PTC Lecturer	Karl Hood	
Retired Ministers:	Robert Boan	Ray Patchett
	Michael Wharton	

Presbytery of Maroondah (V5)

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Belgrave Heights	Mark Tonkin	David Death
Blackburn (HMC)		Keith Ferres
Croydon	Cameron Griffiths	Andrew Letcher
Donvale	Gerald Vanderwert Jordan Born (Assistant)	Iain Bramley
Heathmont	Brian Harvey	Doug Fraser
Kirkbrae	Matthew James	
Mt Evelyn	Miles Fagan	Bruce Timmins
Warburton (HMC)		Stewart Miller
Woori Yallock	Tony Archer	Andre Dahmen
PTC Lecturers	Felix Chung Jared Hood	
Retired Ministers:	Tony Bird	Parity: Endre Papajcsik
	Trevor Cox	
	Wally Gear	
	Grant Lawry	
	Peter Orchard	
	Andrew Slater	
	Willem Vandenberg	
	Cor Vanderhorn	
	Andrew Venn	

Presbytery of Melbourne East (V6)

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Arabic	Karam Krayyem	Zaher Saad
Ashburton	Barry Oakes	John Angelico
Auburn (Chalmers)	Nick Arundell	
Burwood Community	John Elnatan	Frans Herjanto
Camberwell	Philip Mercer	Philip Barton
Canterbury	David Hann Dong Choi (Assistant)	Kevin Childs
Caulfield-Elwood	Phillip Chang	Micheal Javaid
Deaf	Tony Salisbury	
Gardenvale East		David Thomson
Hawthorn	Graham Nicholson	John Singleton
Korean		In Paek Chung
Malvern		
South Yarra		Jack Adlawan
St Kilda/Balaclava	Luke Isham	
Surrey Hills	John Huynh Oliver Blythe (Assistant)	Stephen Moody
Scotch Chaplains	David Assender	Parity: Jim Hare
	Douglas Campbell	Ben Palmer
PTC Lecturer	Ben Nelson	
MDC Officer	Chris Siriweera	
Retired Ministers:	Graham Bradbeer	
	Alan Every	
	Douglas Milne	
	Richard O'Brien	
	John Stasse	
	Bob Thomas	

Presbytery of Melbourne North (V7)

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bundoora	Neil Chambers Clinton Le Page (Associate) Chris Shaw (Assistant)	Andrew May
Donnybrook (Fresh Start)	Ben Kelada	
Eltham	Don Elliott Andy Buchan (Associate)	Ian Courts
Epping	Nello Barbieri	Neil Furlong
Heidelberg	Bagoes Seta	Tom Cunneen
Hume	Luke Brownley	
Kangaroo Ground (HMC)		
Reservoir	Andrew Vines Dean Carroll (Associate)	Reg Butcher
Samoan		Nanai M Nanai
Templestowe (HMC)		Colin Flynn
Valley	Richard Wilson	Luke Yelland
Whittlesea-Mernda	Botros Botrosdief	
Clerk of Assembly	John Wilson	
PTC Principal	Peter Hastie	
Retired Ministers:	Simalu Cowley	Parity:
	Theo Fishwick	Rob Herweynen

Presbytery of Melbourne West (V8)

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Brimbank	John Hudson	Andrew Deeming
Clifton Hill/Essendon	Christopher Duke Bill Medley (Assistant)	David Cutler
Darebin	Aaron Boyd Adam Humphries (Assistant)	Adam Foster
Gisborne	Wayne McArdle	
Melbourne Scots – Snr CBD Flemington Indonesian	Philip Campbell Andrew Wong (Assistant) Christian Tirtha (Assistant)	Graeme Harris
Melton		Nathan Williams
Point Cook	Peter Owen	Peter Stanton
Sunshine	John Cho	Charles Okwo
West Footscray (HMC)	Martin de Pyle	
West Melbourne Korean	Samuel Seog-Hoon Son	Ho-Hyun Do
Williamstown	Daniel Dixon	
Wyndham	Peter Greiner	Harold Carpenter
Defence Force Chaplain	Bryce Wiegandt	
Retired Ministers:	Philip Court	Parity: Bob Farquharson
	John Ellis	
	Walter Johnson	
	Len Pearce	
	Bruce Riding	
APWM Convener		Noel Johnston
MMC Convener		Dennis Wright

Presbytery of North East Victoria (V9)

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Benalla	Stephen McDonald	Graeme Hayes
Broadford (AC)	Barry Porter	Ross Barnett
Numurkah		
Seymour-Nagambie-Yea (HMC)		Bonnie Purbrick
Shepparton-Stanhope-Kyabram	Kyung Ee	Philip Betts
Tatura	Kevin Maxwell	James Finster
Wangaratta-Yarrawonga-Myrtleford	Brett Cummins	Malcolm Browning
Wodonga		
Retired Ministers:	Neil Harvey	Parity: Ralph Kop
	Ian Touzel	Gary Dunstan

Presbytery of North Western Victoria (V10)

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bendigo	Philip Burns	Andrew Kerr
Eaglehawk	Jesse Walz	
Kerang/Swan Hill	Paul Lee	Ken Pinchen
Pyramid Hill (HMC)		
Rochester	Stuart Withers	
Reforming (East Bendigo)	Russ Grinter	Rory Weightman
Sunraysia (HMC)		Colin Morrow
Retired Ministers:	Keith Bell	Parity: Ryan Smith
	Peter Phillips	Tony Zirngast
	John Sutherland	

Presbytery of South West Victoria (V11)

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Camperdown-Terang-Noorat	Damian Meeuwissen	Craig Coates
Colac		Geoff Cross
Hamilton	David Schulz	Graeme Presser
Heywood-Portland	Rod Waterhouse	
Koroit-Port Fairy-Woodford	Ian Leach	
Warrnambool	Ben Johnson	Robert Prout
Retired Minister:	Neil Benfell	Parity: David Selman

BUSINESS COMMITTEE (Min 7)

But may it not be that I would boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Gal 6:14)

The Business Committee has received all papers of a non-judicial nature currently proposed to be submitted to the Assembly. It has resolved to transmit to the Assembly in the form of this White Book those papers which seem competent and respectful.

Online Assembly

Whilst there was considerable hope that a face-to-face meeting of the Assembly would be possible, Victoria is still in 'lockdown' only weeks out from the meeting date, so a Zoom Assembly has been called by the Moderator. The committee is proposing that the Assembly be structured similarly to the October 2020 Assembly, meeting 9:00am–5:00pm on the Tuesday and Wednesday, and on the Thursday if needed. Papers for the Assembly will be released on the repository on the PCV website. Assembly members are advised to ensure that they note the password when that is circulated and to check the website at appropriate junctures.

Moderator's address, expositions, communion, lunches, etc

There is again no plan to have Assembly expositions but to have short devotions. There will be no communion service, and the mission lunch will be held online and a week after the Assembly, Thursday 21 October.

Prayer meetings

The plan at this stage is to have Assembly prayer meetings held over Zoom from 8:00am–8:45am each morning. Details will be provided.

Using the technology

The *Assembly Zoom Meeting Guide* seems to have worked quite well, and the committee will seek to suspend sufficient standing orders to allow the 2021 Assembly version to be used. The *Guide* is almost entirely the same as used on previous occasions, with only the Zoom and Youtube links and the dates being updated.

Member introductions

It would be helpful if members introduced themselves the first time in the week that they 'rise to speak' in the Assembly. Quickly stating one's name and ministry or congregational context would suffice.

Report writing suggestions

It seems that most committees have taken on board the occasional recommendation of the Business Committee to avoid using the first person singular, 'I', in their reports. Reports thus appropriately have the perspective of being from committees rather than from conveners.

This year's tip from the Business Committee is to encourage committees to consider also moderating the use of first-person plural language, 'we, us, our'. Ideally, reports to the Assembly will be accurate and precise, yet 'we' can be ambiguous. Who is 'we'?

In this year's reports, 'we' moved from being the committee, the Assembly, Assembly committees, ministers and elders who are also Assembly members, ministers and elders of the PCV, PCV congregations, the PCV, several denominations in Victoria or

Australia, the Christian Church, Christians, Victorians, Australians, and various other committees, institutions, and groupings related to the PCV. Such language can be confusing, especially if 'we' is used in multiple ways in proximity or even in the same sentence. The Business Committee has attempted to parse out some of these uses, although it is sometimes hard to determine what the thought is.

Thanks

The Business Committee takes this opportunity to thank:

- Siew Teng Yap for her work in assisting in the smooth running of the Assembly;
- Brett Cummins for data 'projection' (screen sharing the Powerpoint presentation that helps to guide the Assembly); and
- the Zoom meeting hosts.

Commission and next Assembly

The Business Committee recommends that, subject to the decision of the Moderator after consultation with the clerks and Business Convener:

- the ordinary Commission of Assembly meet on Tuesday, 3 May 2022, at 10:30am in Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall; and
- the General Assembly convene in the Scots' Church, Melbourne, at 7:30pm on Monday, 3 October 2022, for worship and the induction of the Moderator, then at 9.30am on Tuesday, 4 October, for a Communion Service, and thereafter in Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall for business.

The Clerk will move motions to this end at the close of the Assembly.

Consent agenda

In accordance with the approach of the October 2020 Assembly, the Business Committee proposes the use of a limited consent agenda. The Business Committee will mark with an asterisk on the proposed agenda for each day those items of business that it believes can be approved in this way. Such items will be approved without debate at the time when the agenda is approved, unless a member indicates at the time of the debate on the approval of the agenda that the item should be taken up in the ordinary way (i.e. as per the standing orders).

To clarify, if the Assembly adopts this procedure, items on the agenda with an asterisk will not be discussed. If a member wants to discuss the item, there is no need to move an amendment to the Business Committee's deliverance. The member simply needs to say to the Moderator when the Business Committee's agenda approval motion is before the Assembly words to the effect, 'I wish to discuss item x'. No explanation is needed of the request, no debate is had about the request, and no leave is needed to effect the change. Without any further comment, the item will be treated as a regular agenda item.

To save a debate about which items are placed into the consent agenda category (which debate would somewhat defeat the point of a consent agenda), the Business Committee proposes that members should not seek to add extra items to the consent agenda beyond what the Business Committee has proposed.

Outline of business

The Business Committee is required to present an agenda at the start of each sitting. As a guide, the Committee will seek to arrange business according to the following outline.

Asterisks indicate items proposed to be part of the consent agenda.

FIRST SITTING

Tuesday 5 October 2021, 9:00am–5:00pm

Constitution

Roll, NOM A1

Appointment and Induction of Moderator, NOM A2

Welcomes

Devotion: Moderator's Chaplain

Business Committee

* Apologies, NOM A3

* Associations, NOM A4

* Minutes of the May 2021 Commission of Assembly, NOM A5

New members

Ministerial and Elders' Jubilees, NOM A6

Ministerial and Elders' deaths, Prayer, NOM A7

* Royal address and Loyal addresses, NOM A8

Past Moderator, NOM A9

Board of Investment and Finance

Trusts Corporation

[10:30am–10:50am Refreshments]

FOD 10:50am Ad hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Committee
Angelica Oyarzun (Kirkbrae CEO)

FOD 11:10am Moderator-General, GAA, Rev Dr Peter Barnes

Ad hoc Change or Suppression Prohibition Legislation Committee

Ad hoc Negotiation of Sale of Assembly Hall Committee

Ad hoc Royal Commission Committee

Australian Presbyterian World Mission (Vic) Committee

Christian Education and Nurture Committee

[12:30pm–1:30pm Lunch]

FOD 1:30pm Devotion: Moderator's Chaplain

Church and Nation Committee

FOD 1:50pm Commission for Church Institutions

1:50pm Andy Callow (Belgrave Heights Christian School Principal)

2:00pm Tom Batty (Scotch College Principal)

Church Planting Committee

Clerkship Committee

Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee

[3:00pm–3:20pm Refreshments]

FOD 3:20pm Building and Property Committee

Private Paper 2: Building and Property Committee

Andrew Wilson (Church Architect)

Exit Students Committee

Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee

Maintenance of the Ministry Committee

Code and General Administration Committee
* Belgrave Heights Christian School
* Privacy Officer
* Presbyterian Ladies' College
* Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union
* St Andrews Christian School
* Scotch College
Business Committee

SECOND SITTING

Wednesday 6 October 2021, 9:00am–5:00pm

Constitution and Devotion: Moderator's Chaplain
Apologies
Business Committee
* Minutes of previous sitting
METRO Committee
Ministry Development Committee
Safe Church Committee
Social Services Committee
State News

[10:30am–10:50am Refreshments]

FOD 10:50am Clerk's Report: Archive
PCV Archivist
FOD 11:00am Women's Ministries Victoria Committee
Amy Isham
Theological Education Committee
Petition 1: Presbytery of Ballarat—renaming
FOD 12:15pm Ballot (if required)
Petition 2. Presbytery of Melbourne East—seat on Presbytery for Rev Douglas Campbell

[12:30pm–1:30pm Lunch]

FOD 1:30pm Devotion: Moderator's Chaplain
Petition 3. Presbytery of Geelong—dissolution/sale Anakie
Petition 4. Presbytery of Geelong— dissolution/sale Batesford
Petition 5. Ashburton Presbyterian Church—sale of manse
Petition 6. Presbytery of Flinders—sale of Kooweerup property
Petition 7. Presbytery of North Western Victoria—sale of Bendigo manse
Selection Committee
Private Paper 1: Ad hoc Reporting on Outcomes of Appeals Committee
Overture 1: Code and General Administration Committee—rule 4.31.2 Royal Commission response, NOM A10
Overture 2: Code and General Administration Committee—rule 4.74.1 Church Planters, NOM A11

[3:00pm–3:20pm Refreshments]

Overture 3: Code and General Administration Committee—rule 2.7.1
Congregation Assets, NOM A12

Overture 4: Code and General Administration Committee—rule 4.69
Congregation Dissolution, NOM A13
Overture 5: Code and General Administration Committee—conflict of interest
Policy, NOM A14
Overture 6: Code and General Administration Committee—rule 3.38 Board
Members, NOM A15
Overture 7: Code and General Administration Committee—rules 2.20, 21
Church Architect, NOM A16
Overture 8: Code and General Administration Committee—Model Trust Deed,
NOM A17
Overture 9: Presbytery of Melbourne East—conflict of interest, NOM A18
Unfinished business from the previous sitting
Closing formalities
Commendation, NOM A19
Appointment of Commission and next Assembly, NOM A20, A21
Dissolution

Jared C Hood
CONVENER

AD HOC ARCHIVIST SEARCH COMMITTEE (Min 46)

In response to the instruction of the GAV Commission, May 2021, min. 9.2, the committee conducted a wide search for applicants for the position of PCV Archivist. Six applications were received by the closing date, with one person withdrawing soon after. Considering the job was advertised solely within the PCV, it was good to see such a level of interest in the ministry of the archive, and the committee was grateful to receive these competently written expressions of interest.

Because her advice was thought to be particularly useful for the interview process, the committee invited the Safe Church Facilitator, Mrs Fiona Bligh, to join as a co-opted member.

First-round interviews were conducted on Monday 13 September, during which each applicant was given the same opportunity to answer set questions related to the job description. The committee, now acting as the Interview Panel, agreed unanimously that two applicants presented compelling cases beyond that of the others. These two were invited to a second round.

As permitted by the GAV, May 2021, min. 9.3, and because of her long service to the PCNSW Archive, the committee invited Mrs Sue Pacey to sit with the committee to give balance and to ensure the evaluation process included the right level of archival expertise. Second round interviews were conducted on Friday, 17 September, during which each applicant was given the same opportunity to answer set scenario questions related to the work of an archivist within the unique ministry setting of the PCV and to answer questions related to the job description. The committee agreed unanimously that one applicant presented a compelling case for appointment: Michael G Smith, BA, JLPT N-2 Cert (Japanese), Grad Cert Divinity, Mini MBA (Marketing), Session Clerk, Canterbury Presbyterian Church.

Michael Smith has over 30 years of professional experience in the design, print and web publishing industries and extensive experience scoping, designing, building, integrating, and using a variety of web applications and frameworks, including several different CRMs, CMSs, and DAM systems. He is also very familiar with schema mark-up, meta-tagging, content describing, the maintenance of information architecture and data security systems. Michael has an abiding interest in archival practice, local history, and issues of provenance. He is an amateur member of the Australian Society of Archivists and has completed their Records Management online training program (six courses). He has a strong love of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and understands PCV polity and procedural practice. Michael understands that collecting, organising, and facilitating access to the church's institutional memory is of vital importance for us and is a ministry in and of itself.

In summary, the committee is convinced that Michael is the one who can bring the PCV Archive into new life for freshened purposes and use. Upon appointment, this will fill a vacancy that has existed since 15 July this year, and the PCV Archive can reopen and its ministry to the church resume.

John P Wilson
CLERK OF ASSEMBLY

AD HOC COMMITTEE: TO CONSIDER THE DENOMINATION'S RESPONSE TO THE PASSING OF THE CHANGE OR SUPPRESSION PROHIBITION LEGISLATION (Min 24)

The *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021* (the Act) passed both houses of the Victorian Parliament in the summer of 2021 and will pass into law on 16 February 2022. The Act blurs the positive intent to minimise harm with an extreme gender ideology, affirms LGBTQIA+ orientation or ideation to be not broken, and asserts that any contrary view or practice amounts to 'bigoted quackery' against which the Victorian community needs to be protected. The legislation seeks to stamp out abusive therapies and practices of a spiritual or psychiatric nature that are no longer practised, and in doing so, appears to deliberately catch up what we would regard as Gospel ministry and practice into the ban, thus placing the church on a collision course with the state regarding these issues. The church has long held that questions of morality are to be determined by the truth of God's Word. This legislation seeks to impose upon both church and society a secular morality determined by a parliamentary majority that is contrary to the truth of God's Word. Much wisdom, discernment, and grace are called for to navigate these new challenges to faith and godliness.

To guide the church in forming a considered response to the passing of this legislation, a committee was formed and tasked with the responsibility of preparing advice for the Assembly to consider and act upon in relation to these matters. Membership of the committee is comprised of the Moderator (Convener), the Clerk, the Law Agent, Rev Neil Chambers, and Rev Chris Duke, all of whom have contributed substantially to this report. Your committee was requested to address at least four key areas of concern, which form the main body of this report and variously address legal, insurance, pastoral, and practical implications of the Act in respect to how we operate as a church. In providing this advice, the committee has sought to explain, equip, prepare, and mobilise the church concerning the substantial challenge posed by the passing of this legislation. What has resulted is a long and complex report, but the committee trusts it will be a useful resource to guide the church as it seeks to find a way to remain true to its calling in Christ amid this new environment. First, a word is given on what ought to constitute 'best practice' in light of this Act passing into law.

1. Best practice in response to the Act

The Act seeks to alter human behaviour by creating new criminal offences and penalties along with a civil response scheme and thereby seeks to induce fear of being made the subject of a report or criminal proceeding. Christians must not give in to fear. The Christian goal ought to be to comply with the law in so far as it does not involve any form of compromise or disobedience to God. However, when the law or its application requires us to disobey God, Christians must all have the courage to choose to obey God rather than human authorities.

In order to be good citizens, it is vital that the church establish written policies and codes of conduct and take reasonable precautions so as to act responsibly, and in so doing to give to all our employees and volunteers a due diligence defence in the event of a complaint being made.

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria has already issued a statement entitled, *The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Statement on Sex, Gender and Marriage* (2019). That statement clearly articulates the agreed position. It predates the Act and may need to

be revised in light of the new environment Victorians now find themselves in. All teaching and practice within the PCV by ministers, elders, youth group leaders, etc., ought to comply with that statement, which in turn is a summary of what it is believed the Bible teaches on these issues.

It is essential that any preaching or teaching of these truths be done with winsomeness and in love. Likewise, private pastoral counselling ought to unashamedly uphold the truth of God's Word but then encourage the individual to search their own conscience and seek to find out God's will for their life as their own personal choice. In so doing, Christians cannot reasonably be accused of seeking to change or suppress that person's sexuality, rather providing them with information vital to the choice they ultimately will make for themselves.

Private pastoral counselling concerning issues of gender and sexuality ought never to be done alone but with a fellow worker present. Best practice would suggest that a diary entry or contemporaneous note be made of each meeting.

Best practice would also suggest that it is time for the church to enact a policy on the use of social media for the simple reason that online posts can be misconstrued. It would seem prudent for the denomination to provide clear guidelines regarding the use of social media with respect to these issues. Written policies and clear codes of conduct will assist both employees and volunteers to exercise due caution and will provide a due diligence defence in the event of a complaint being made against an individual.

In the event of a complaint being made and a process initiated in respect to an individual, 'best practice' suggests that the denomination stand by that person and provide them with all necessary representation and support.

As the Act prohibits certain conversion practises, it is essential that the Assembly be clear about a biblical and reformed theology of conversion: that God is sovereign in the salvation of the lost, that Christians do not change anyone, but rather God does by His Spirit, through His Word, as the Gospel is proclaimed. Being convinced of that reality will keep Christians humble and trusting God to bring about any change in the hearer and free Christians from any coercive conduct. The PCV believes in the fallenness and sinfulness (brokenness) of human nature, the necessity of the cross, and the grace of forgiveness and transformation, which is received through repentance and faith in the finished work of Christ. These are non-negotiable elements of the Gospel the Church proclaims. Christian labours must always be directed toward making known the good news of salvation in the hope that God Himself will work in the hearts of the hearer and move them supernaturally to repent and believe the Gospel.

2. Possible liabilities and risks

This section seeks to provide advice from a legal perspective. In order to be proactive in assessing possible liabilities and risks arising from current practices, the committee is of the view that a questionnaire of all office-bearers, both paid and voluntary (below) be authorised in order to assess the general nature and content of the pastoral practises and teaching currently undertaken in the PCV, in both its churches and institutions. Once such assessment has been made, proactive steps can be taken to mitigate any risk.

Part 2 of the Act—Offence Provisions

It is the current view of the committee that with the enactment of written policies, codes of conduct, and reasonable precautions, the risk of conviction under the criminal offence provisions in Part 2 of the Act is low because the standard for establishing an offence is high. Risk applies to individuals within the PCV, both paid and voluntary. For an offence to be made out, the Act requires that one person intentionally engage in a change or suppression practice directed towards another person, which causes serious injury or injuries, as to the causation of which person A is negligent. The relevant part of the definition of 'change or suppression practice' is 'a practice or conduct directed towards a person...on the basis of the person's sexual orientation or gender identity...for the purpose of changing or suppressing (it), or inducing the person to change or suppress (it)'. For the purposes of the definition, a change or suppression practice includes 'a religious practice, including but not limited to, a prayer based practice, a deliverance practice or an exorcism'. There is a lower penalty for causing injury than for causing serious injury.

Because of the sheer breadth of the Act, there is a potential risk that any person engaged in teaching and pastoral ministry (in a paid or unpaid capacity) in the PCV may be found to have committed an offence. However, in order to convict under Part 2, the court must be satisfied according to the criminal standard of proof.

Although a change or suppression practice as defined in the Act does not depend upon an individual's consent, it must be somehow 'directed towards a person'. Further, it must be a practice or conduct: a) on the basis of a person's sexual orientation or gender identity; and b) for the purpose of bringing about a change or suppression of that person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Biblical teaching in the context of public worship or even a small group setting such as a youth group, camp, or Bible study, would always be intended to reach and impact individuals. However, for the purposes of satisfying the definitional question, arguably, such conduct could be shown not to be 'directed towards a person'. Current guidelines published by the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission ('VEOHRC') seem to support that position provided that such teaching 'is not being directed at an individual in a group setting'.

Conduct in the pastoral sphere is where a greater risk lies. However, again the risk of conviction remains low because the standard of proof for any successful prosecution remains high and in particular because of the requirement to show a causal link between the conduct and resultant harm in the form of injury or serious injury.

Part 3 of the Act—Civil Response Scheme

The risk of a complaint being lodged with VEOHRC under the civil response scheme in Part 3 of the Act concerning the conduct of an individual is higher because the complaints process remains anonymous and may be initiated by any person. The process of enquiry and investigation triggered by a complaint will be arduous. Legal representation should be sought and provided as soon as notification of a complaint is received by an individual.

Enactment and implementation of written policies, codes of conduct and reasonable precautions would significantly mitigate the risk in relation to complaints under the civil response scheme.

3. Professional indemnity under existing public liability cover

This section seeks to give advice on the insurance implications of the Act. At this stage, it is difficult to provide definitive answers to hypothetical questions, but the bottom line is that we cannot expect and will not obtain public liability cover for the consequences of breaking the law.

The PCV has Professional Indemnity Insurance that covers all PCV ministers, elders, chaplains, or members who have been requested or appointed by a Session to engage in all duties and activities of the church, including counselling. The limit of that indemnity for any one loss is \$5,000,000. Ordinarily, while there is insurance cover for legal costs associated with defending a claim, there is no certainty of indemnity for penalties or fines for breaking the law.

Professional indemnity exists under our present insurance to cover the PCV's liability to pay compensation in respect to personal injury caused by any appointed or authorised person in the provision of counselling services in connection with our operations. The cover requires the PCV to exercise due care in the selection, appointment and supervision of persons undertaking counselling services for the PCV.

Cover is in place in respect to the delivery of professional services, including counselling, for and on behalf of the PCV. However, it would appear highly unlikely that the insurance would operate to cover the PCV or its people in connection with proceedings initiated under the Act. It follows then that the financial penalties which may result from these legislative processes would not be covered by the existing insurance. It is questionable whether such cover would be available.

4. The process if made the subject of a VEOHRC complaint

This section seeks to provide pastoral and practical advice to members of the PCV in the event of becoming the subject of a complaint. The committee under this heading had two issues to consider. Firstly, what process should be followed by a member if made the subject of a complaint. Secondly, what assistance might be provided by the denomination in such circumstances, and how might it be accessed. The committee will present the results of its discussion in reverse order, for there is still a lot that is unknown about the VEOHRC process in responding to complaints ('reports') made to it under the Civil Response Scheme established by the Act.

4.1 Denominational Assistance

4.1.1 Forms of assistance

Principle: no one should be left to deal with the VEOHRC on their own, and the forms of support available and the process for accessing that support should be made widely known. Further, presbytery and any Assembly committee involved should formally note any support it has provided to a member in connection with a report made to VEOHRC concerning that member.

The committee considered that, depending on the scenario, various forms of assistance might be needed. The focus of its consideration has been to provide support in connection with the VEOHRC processes under the Civil Response Scheme. However, in the event that a person is made the subject of criminal proceedings under the offence provisions, the same forms of assistance would likely have a critical role to play. The following have been considered:

a) Legal

Legal assistance, whether for advice in relation to the report and the VEOHRC process for dealing with the report or representation before VEOHRC. At all stages of the process, a person who is reported to have engaged in change or suppression practices and who is called upon by the VEOHRC to provide information or otherwise respond would be entitled to assistance, and this should be available.

The committee recommends that the initial legal assistance be accessed through the Church's Law Agent.

b) Pastoral

Being subject to a report will be stressful for both the individual and their family if they have one. Pastoral support should be available from the time the person is notified of the report. That support could initially come from the moderator of presbytery (for a minister) or the local minister (for those not members of presbytery). Still, as the process continues, further support should be enlisted. E.g. the presbytery might appoint one of its members to walk with the person subject to the report throughout the duration of the process, or the denomination may make available professional counselling support for both the person and their family, particularly if the process is drawn out.

The committee recommends that the denomination commit itself to provide the necessary pastoral support to persons subject to a report and publicises the pathway to accessing that support.

c) Financial

There are a number of scenarios where financial support would be helpful. Payment of legal and counselling fees may be required for each report. Still, there may be other costs: payment, or sharing in the payment, of agreed compensation under the Civil Response Scheme or of penalties handed down under the criminal offence provisions of the Act where the teaching and behaviour which is the focus of the proceeding is in line with Scripture and the current PCV biblical pastoral practice and teaching. While it is highly unlikely at present, the PCV may also need to consider financial support for a family in a situation where the breadwinner faces imprisonment for faithfulness to the teaching of Scripture or for a congregation whose minister is detained.

The committee recommends that the denomination make financial provision, either through insurance or provision in the Assembly budget, to support members embroiled in these processes.

d) Media

There may be a need to respond to publicity surrounding a report or proceeding or a desire for the PCV to publicise the same. Individual members may not have experience or skill in dealing with the media or in bringing the case to the attention of others. The provision of assistance through denominational or committee officers who have had media training and/or have access to journalists would be helpful.

The committee recommends that those who can provide such assistance be clearly identified and members consult them before engaging with the media.

4.1.2 For whom should this assistance be provided

Principle: while all persons under the jurisdiction of the church engaged in church-related activities (e.g. youth group leaders, small group leaders, playgroup and Mainly Music leaders, elders and pastors) must be included, no member of the church should be excluded in principle from denominational support. Members who find themselves subject to a complaint arising from a non-church related activity should have their circumstances and eligibility for assistance assessed on a case-by-case basis.

This legislation is wide in its scope, covering conversations in homes between a parent and a child, formal counselling (in church or in a counsellor's office), youth group teaching and discussion, and prayer. It also seeks to alter behaviour by fear, fear of being made subject to a report or criminal proceeding. The committee does not believe that believers should be self-censoring. Believers should faithfully speak the truth in whatever situation they find themselves, and the committee believes the PCV should be willing to support them where that makes them the subject of a report or criminal prosecution.

For example, a member of the PCV may be having a conversation with one of their own children who is troubled by same-sex desire in which the member urges the child to keep living faithfully to Scripture, to live a chaste life, and to resist their same-sex desire. The conversation may be voluntary and amicable, but the child may recount it to a school counsellor, who, without the child's knowledge, could make that conversation the subject of an anonymous report.

A member of a PCV congregation who is a Christian counsellor or doctor may be made the subject of a report to VEOHRC for being faithful to the teaching of Scripture in their work. The committee would not want that faithful parent or professional to be excluded from support by their church and the family of churches to which they belong.

No member should be excluded from potentially receiving support from the denomination, for the effect of the legislation will be felt most, not in the formal teaching from the pulpit, but in conversations in homes and offices.

4.1.3 How assistance should be accessed

Principle: denominational assistance should be provided through engagement with the denominational process.

Denominational process requires an initial point of contact and then some way to assess the request for help and determine what help may be offered. The initial referral by the presbytery moderator, minister, or by a member of the Assembly self-referring, could be to the clerk of Assembly who could guide the person concerned through the process.

The committee does not expect such requests to be frequent, so perhaps the conciliation committee assisted by the Law Agent could serve to assess the request. Their role would be to assess whether the behaviour complained about was consistent with the denomination's accepted doctrine and practice and, if so, to refer them on to suitable help, whether to the Law Agent, counselling services, or help with handling the media. They could also appoint one of their members to monitor the provision of that help and the course of the process. With the provision of suitable guidelines or regulations, they could also administer whatever financial assistance would be made available. Report would be made to the Assembly of the number of requests and their

outcome. The Assembly may decide, however, that another existing committee or even a new committee would be preferable for this role.

4.2 The VEOHRC process under the Civil Response Scheme

This is more difficult to give guidance on as much is still not known about the functioning of the legislation and how the VEOHRC will go about its task. At the time of writing, VEOHRC has not given great detail in terms of the design of its reporting and facilitation processes.

4.2.1 General Principles of interaction with the VEOHRC

- a) The Assembly should accept until there is evidence to the contrary that the operation of the VEOHRC is fair and reasonable and the legislation is a response to the distressing lived experience of some members of the community. In its engagement, the Church should seek to 'do what is good in the sight of all' (Rom 12:17).
- b) While it will be difficult as the process can make one defensive, one ought not to respond to someone in distress as if a threat.
- c) The PCV should submit to the government where its rulings and activities do not require disobedience to God.
- d) It should be remembered that the goal is not vindication but to enhance the reputation of Christ in the community, and so all engagement should evidence the 'obedience of faith.'
- e) Christians should make sure that if their lives are examined, they will be of such a character, so rich in doing good, that they can 'silence the ignorance of foolish people' (1 Pet 2:11–17).

4.2.2 VEOHRC process

It would be expected that the initial request would be a written one so that there will be time for the member to prepare a response. The time frame for a response is as yet unclear. By way of preliminary thought, the committee offers the following:

- When first contacted by VEOHRC, it is recommended that the member (with any required assistance) should immediately ascertain whether VEOHRC is responding to a report or conducting an investigation. The answer to that question will then determine the way forward in the member's engagement with the process.
- At all times throughout the process, the member would be entitled to assistance and, in the context of VEOHRC investigations where a person can be compelled to provide information or evidence, there would be protection against self-incrimination. The VEOHRC can ask a person who is alleged to be engaging in a change or suppression practice for 'any further information that the Commission considers necessary to assist in determining its response to a report' (s26).
- Having considered a report, VEOHRC, if satisfied that a person or organisation is engaging or has engaged in a change or suppression practice, may respond in one or more ways, including education, facilitation of outcome, referral or decline (s28). If the report were reckoned sufficiently serious, the response could also involve investigation under s34. An investigation conducted by VEOHRC under s34 must follow principles of natural justice (s35(2)). At any attendance which is compelled, the person/organisation may have representation (s37(2)(b)).
- The facilitation of outcome response would involve VEOHRC collaborating with affected parties to reach an agreed outcome (s32). The process is voluntary and confidential. A party to the process may withdraw at any time (s31). The scope of what may be contained in any facilitated agreement is not defined in the Act. In its

guidelines currently published online, VEOHRC states, 'The outcomes of the facilitation process that impact both parties must be agreed upon by both sides. Such outcomes may include an agreement to change or stop behaviour (verbal or written, private or public), or financial compensation.'

- Careful consideration must be given by any person or organisation invited by VEOHRC to participate in a facilitation of outcome process and at any stage of such a process. This is especially because of the potential ramifications of the making of an agreement. Any party may request a written record of the agreement be made. That written record may then be certified by VEOHRC. An agreement that has been certified by VEOHRC can then be lodged with VCAT. If VCAT considers it can enforce or supervise compliance with the agreement, VCAT may register it. Under section 33, a registered agreement is taken to be an order of VCAT and may be enforced accordingly.
- The risk here is that in the making of an agreement in good faith, a member of the church or the denomination may ultimately be brought under the supervision of VCAT in relation to compliance with its terms. For example, an agreement that involves a commitment 'to change or stop behaviour' may become a benchmark against which all further conduct is measured, including conduct that is in line with Scripture and the current PCV biblical pastoral practice and teaching. Depending on the breadth and clarity of the written record, that could prove most unhelpful and may open up the possibility of enforcement proceedings at VCAT.

4.2.3 Further outcomes

If in response to a report, VEOHRC refers the matter to the ombudsman or Victoria Police (under s29), then the matter is taken out of the VEOHRC, which is likely to create not insignificant consequences and potentially involve a criminal investigation.

If VEOHRC declines to respond to a report, then there may still be some reputational consequences depending on the actions of the reporting party.

Apart from its function in responding to reports, VEOHRC may conduct an investigation of its own volition, provided specific criteria are met under the Act. In that case, the possible consequences involve the compulsion to give evidence or produce documents. There is protection against self-incrimination (s39) as part of this process. VEOHRC otherwise has a level of discretion as to what is published or disclosed out of an investigation.

An investigation can result in a range of outcomes, including an agreement made with VEOHRC, an enforceable undertaking or a compliance notice (s42).

The PCV should also be aware that in connection with the Civil Response Scheme and the conduct of individual employees (including volunteers) in the course of their work in the PCV, the employer itself may be vicariously liable and be taken to have engaged in that conduct. As such, a report made to VEOHRC may be made in respect of the individual, the organisation or both. Vicarious liability would not operate if the organisation can show it took reasonable precautions to prevent the person from engaging in the change or suppression practice.

The committee notes the potential position of conflict in respect of actions of an individual within the organisation regarding the liability of the organisation. Measures within the PCV to establish a clear code of conduct and training in response to the Act for those engaged in paid and unpaid work within the church would serve to mitigate

the risks of such a conflict arising. Mark Sneddon (Institute for Civil Society) recommended that the Assembly should have a clear statement of faith or biblical values in relation to sexuality and gender issues, a policy on gender issues and sexual orientation issues that could be given to any joining our congregations, and the development of procedures for and training of staff so that they act in line with the statement of faith and policy, and so that they keep adequate records of all conversations and interactions in relation to these issues.

Recommendation: that the Assembly request the committee to coordinate the review of (i) the statement: *The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Statement on Sex, Gender and Marriage* (2019) and update it if necessary, in light of the Act, (ii) draft an exemplar for local congregations of a policy on gender issues and sexual orientation issues that congregations could adapt and adopt, and (iii) draft guidelines for procedures and training for staff in congregations in dealing with these issues consistent with the above policy; these to be brought to the next Assembly (or the Commission of Assembly) for adoption as guides for congregations.

4.2.4 The educative role

The VEOHRC has very general powers in relation to its educative role in relation to the broader community and to those persons or organisations engaged in change or suppression practices (s17(1)(a) & s18 and 17(1)(e) & s28(1)(a)). The latter involves an offer that, presumably, could be declined. The legislation states the VEOHRC has 'all the powers necessary' to fulfil this function (s17(2)). Section 49 also states that where a report relates to an organisation, then an offer of education may be made to a proper officer of the organisation. It is unclear who that would be in the case of an organisation such as PCV and its congregations. It is likely that the identity of the relevant officer will turn on the specific report being made and the circumstances of the case. Any decision of the church to identify or appoint a relevant person would not be likely to bind the VEOHRC.

4.2.5 Conclusion

There is much that is still unclear about the operation of the Act. The committee suggests that the implementation of the Act should be monitored, and a report be made to the 2022 Assembly by the Law Agent on the operation of the Act with a view to giving further guidance to the Assembly on the process and its response.

The goal is a process where it is clear what a member should do from the moment they receive a complaint. They should know at that point: whom to ring; how to respond initially to the receipt of the complaint, if an initial response is required; what they will need to provide; what denominational aid is available; and what is required to access denominational aid.

5. Engaging others

'If you want peace, prepare for war', and this is a war of information and persuasion. The following are suggestions to the Assembly about how all, individually and collectively, can go about informing and persuading. There may come a time when the Assembly wants to amplify its concerns, and even now, it is helpful not to let the issues involved in the legislation drop out of public view.

5.1 Every member engagement

Every member of the Assembly should be seeking to engage with others as they have opportunity.

Previously, the Assembly has sought to restrict engagement to those authorised to speak on behalf of the PCV. That should still apply to the formal channels of engagement at a denominational level. Still, to wage this campaign, the Assembly has to broaden the base of engagement and encourage every Assembly member to use what channels they have to bring this to the attention of others. This is something that the Assembly needs to start cultivating and encouraging now so that channels of communication and the dissemination of information are already in existence if the need should arise.

This needs engagement at a local level, and so it also needs clarity about the purpose of engagement, clarity about the issues, and the provision of timely and reliable information to Assembly members about particular incidents.

Recommendation: that the Assembly encourage the Church and Nation Committee to continue to provide up to date and accurate information as they have been doing, and encourage members to make use of these resources and share them amongst others who may be interested.

5.2 Clarity about goals

The goals of engagement with other denominations and the public should be to:

- publicise (bring to the light) any action of the VEOHRC taken against a member. The Church and Nation Committee could keep a register of these cases.
- clearly explain the PCV position, e.g., that love requires that Christians make known the call to repentance and faith in Jesus to all; that Christian parents have a responsibility to teach their children Christian truth; and in all this to relate what is said to the commitment that Jesus is Lord; i.e., Christians should seek to use it as an opportunity to commend the Gospel.
- argue for and seek to protect the freedom of speech for all.
- argue for and seek to protect the freedom of association for all.
- argue for and seek to protect the freedom of gospel proclamation.
- seek to persuade other denominations to be faithful to biblical teaching and to commit to protecting these freedoms.
- seek to persuade the public of the value of these freedoms.
- encourage politicians to protect these freedoms.
- develop a process for engaging the denomination in the event a complaint is made.

5.3 Various engagements

5.3.1 Presbyteries

The Assembly should seek to keep presbyteries informed, who in turn will inform their congregations of issues or developments. The call would be for watchful prayer.

With notification of matters to the Moderator and Clerk, they could then send information to every presbytery subsequent to assessment by a panel established by Assembly (e.g., the Conciliation Committee). This information could also be published on the Church and Nation Committee website as part of a constantly updated public register for people to visit periodically.

5.3.3 General Assembly of Australia

The General Assembly of Australia should have its attention drawn to the Victorian situation, and it should be encouraged to consider what kind of involvement and

response it deems necessary through the GAA Church and Nation Committee and other State committees.

The GAV could write to the GAA, drawing attention to the legislation, outlining the GAV response, and seeking GAA support and advocacy. It is vital that the federal church be informed of developments in Victoria and of Victorians' diminishing liberties under the law. Similar restrictions may threaten those interstate, and as of now, interstate ministers need to know if considering a call to Victoria or if invited to speak within Victoria, or counselling someone from Victoria.

5.3.4 Other denominations

The Assembly should utilise the current avenues of engagement with other denominations, e.g., the Multifaith Group that the convener of the Church and Nation Committee attends. Not all faith groups are sympathetic to the position of the PCV, but relationships with key people have already occurred with other denominations who share these concerns.

The Church and Nation Committee could host a meeting of these leaders when it was felt appropriate.

At a local level, opportunities may exist within local associations of ministers.

As well as formal links, the committee encourages all ministers to develop and sustain relationships with like-minded ministers of other denominations that they have already formed through common activities like carols. The goal is to be able to amplify our concerns and not allow one particular denomination to be isolated from the wider Christian constituency.

Ministers could also consider obtaining a list of churches in their area and initiating contact with them, including Orthodox and ethnic churches. Everyone has an interest in preserving the freedom to preach and teach.

From his experience, the convener of the Church and Nation Committee observes:

Personal relationships are key. Each minister needs to take leadership in his geographical area, to try and build relationships around this shared issue—but we need to make sure that there is a clear channel of energy, as in making contacts and discussing issues, inviting to local dinners for local leaders to meet each other, inviting representatives to a state conference to strategise, and overseeing the strategy in one's own local area.

5.3.5 Parachurch organisations

This issue will also concern many parachurch groups who endeavour to preach and teach the Gospel, who face the possibility of complaints under this legislation. AFES and Christian campsites may be particularly vulnerable. Many PCV members have formal and informal links with these organisations, and they should share with them both concerns and resources.

In addition, there is a range of not for profits like ACL. While the Church and Nation Committee has contacts with a range of organisations seeking to promote freedom of speech and association, like CIS, IPA, AFA, etc., the PCV should all make

organisations it is a part of, especially national organisations, aware of the issues that confront it and seek their help and prayers. Again, personal relationships will be key.

5.3.6 The public

The Church and Nation Committee has already produced material on the web available to the public and has also facilitated contact with local MPs. Also, it has cultivated contacts in a range of media organisations.

Everyone should ask whether they know people in the media—print or broadcast—who would be happy to receive information that would allow them to effectively raise the issue in the public mind.

Where there are local papers and radio stations, the committee encourages ministers—either individually or through their networks—to cultivate a relationship with local journalists.

There are also opportunities from time to time on talkback radio and letters to the editor, not only for Assembly members but for PCV members who can be equipped and encouraged to speak up as they are able.

5.3.5 Contacts interstate

Finally, contacts interstate can be used. The goal is to sustain consistent attention to the shortcomings of the legislation and the opportunities it creates for harassment of those teaching Christian truth.

Outcome: that every member consider how they can communicate the impact of the legislation and the issues involved in both their private and official capacities.

6. Questionnaire

The committee will seek approval to distribute the following questionnaire.

To all ministers, elders, and Session appointed ministry leaders

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assist the Committee of the General Assembly appointed to consider the response of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to the *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021* to gain a better understanding of the general nature and content of the pastoral practices and teaching in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria on a day-to-day basis, in order to further guide the General Assembly in that response.

The Committee is not looking for the disclosure of details of pastoral interactions. Its interest is in understanding the general nature of those practices and teaching as currently demonstrated to better advise the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in terms of the corresponding risks in light of the legislation.

The Committee would be very interested in having your responses to any or all of these questions:

1. Please describe the kinds of biblical pastoral practices which currently feature in your role.

2. Which of those biblical pastoral practices would you say may involve discussions around the issues of sexual orientation or gender identity?
3. How are those subjects raised?
4. How prevalent are those subjects in the overall context of your pastoral ministry?
5. When engaging in pastoral ministry around those subjects:
 - a. What would you say is your chief purpose?
 - b. What and how would you typically advise in relation to a person's choices and/or a biblical perspective on God's purpose and boundaries for sexual relations?
6. In your experience, how has such pastoral ministry on these issues been received?
7. To what extent are you in the practice of recording the nature and content of interactions in your pastoral ministry?
8. Please describe the various contexts in which you are engaged in biblical teaching in your role.
9. In terms of your current approach to biblical teaching, how frequently would you say you touch on matters of sexual orientation and gender identity in that context?
10. How are those subjects raised?
11. In addressing those matters in your teaching, what would you say is your chief purpose?

Philip D Mercer
CONVENER

AD HOC COMMITTEE: ENACTMENT OF PRESBYTERIAN CARE VICTORIA LTD (Min 20)

Incorporation and registration of Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited

The Ad Hoc Committee: Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd (AHEC) was formed for the purpose of setting up Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited (PCVL, accomplished October 2020) and then seeking registration with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) as a charity with status as a public benevolent institution subtype. On achievement of these objectives, PCVL will seek approval by the Australian Government's Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) as an 'approved aged care provider'. On receipt of this approval, PCVL will work with the PCV Trusts Corporation to enable the transfer of the aged care residents together with the assets and liabilities of Kirkbrae to PCVL.

AHEC has had the responsibility for the operational governance of Kirkbrae since November 2020, taking over from the PCV Social Services Committee. The application for registration with the ACNC was lodged on 27 July 2021 and was approved on 10 August 2021. The committee will now begin the process of being approved by the Australian Government as an approved aged care provider.

Financial performance

The difficult decisions implemented earlier this year have started stabilising operations at Kirkbrae, and losses have been reduced considerably.

However, the overall operating result for the financial year ended 30 June 2021 was terrible. Following the entry in June 2020 of COVID into the residential aged care facility (RACF) and the resulting 22 deaths, the operating loss for the year was \$4.26 million against a budget of \$2.46 million. This was due to the loss of revenue caused to:

- A drastic fall in the number of residents;
- The delay in reducing the staff complement;
- Extra-normal costs relating to the COVID outbreak. This included extra specialist staff required by Eastern Health and the Federal Government; and
- Other expenses that needed tighter control.

The dramatic operating loss was mitigated, albeit not completely, by COVID-related government assistance and favourable investment returns resulting in a net lower deficit of \$1.05 million when compared with the budgeted deficit of \$2.17 million.

At the end of the financial year, the RACF was still running at a much-reduced monthly loss which is budgeted to continue to reduce across the 2021–2022 financial year. The independent living units (ILUs) continue to generate a modest operating surplus which helps mitigate the position. The committee is reasonably confident that Kirkbrae's starting point for the 2021–2022 financial year positions Kirkbrae favourably to achieve the overall budget approved by the General Assembly, which is a small surplus, without any contribution from investment returns. The caveat is that there are many moving parts and margins are narrow. The committee, therefore, continues to examine opportunities to improve and seek new revenue opportunities and control and, if possible, reduce expenses.

Residential Aged Care

Prior to COVID, Kirkbrae was averaging some 80 residents in four wings. After the outbreak of COVID, Kirkbrae was subject to a Notice to Agree from ACQSC, which

initially meant it could not take additional residents after the deaths experienced. Numbers fell to just over 50. This situation occurred at the time of the restructure and facilitated a decision to consolidate the remaining residents into two wings. One of the wings closed is essentially no longer commercially viable due to its shared bedroom-and-bathroom configurations. Residents and families were consulted, and the consolidation was effected with only one complaint, which came in some time after the move. This was a fundamentally important event as it permitted significant efficiency gains in staff rostering. Kirkbrae is now averaging just under 60 residents, which is effectively 100% occupancy of the RACF as it currently stands.

The infrastructure of four wings is really not suitable for the current environment. The layout is cumbersome and does not allow the effective deployment and rostering of staff. This means that in the medium term, Kirkbrae will not be able to fully utilise all 108 bed licenses. While Kirkbrae has made an application to the Commonwealth Department of Health for a significant grant with which it would fund the remodelling of one wing; the view of Kirkbrae senior management and the committee is it may not be the best use of the funds, as what is really needed is a new facility designed for the most effective provision of care. However, this will take time to plan, receive approval and raise the funding required.

Clinical Governance

There have been a number of visits from ACQSC inspectors to review compliance with clinical governance standards. Apart from one hiccough, which was quickly remedied, these inspections have proceeded without issue.

COVID readiness

The staff and the Clinical Governance Committee are paying frequent and particular attention to COVID readiness. Lockdowns are, regrettably, now almost routine, and they are implemented smoothly.

Transitional Care Program (TCP)

The State Government, via its instrumentalities, operates TCPs for hospital patients who require transitional care prior to returning home. Eastern Health, with whom Kirkbrae developed a rather close relationship because of COVID, approached Kirkbrae with a request for tender. The committee interprets this as a vote of confidence in Kirkbrae, post the COVID crisis. Kirkbrae submitted a tender for 15 TCP beds that has been accepted and will proceed subject to documentation. This is a good opportunity for Kirkbrae as it permits it to derive revenue from a portion of one of the closed wings. The TCP rate per occupied bed day is somewhat better than the ACFI Kirkbrae receives for RAC residents, and TCP unoccupied beds are still paid for on a daily rate, albeit a little lower. Two of the key staff have experience in this type of care which is a significant advantage. Apart from contributing to revenue, this opportunity serves to strengthen the relationship with Eastern Health, promote the business, and act as a feeder for the facility.

Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA)

The existing EBA expired some years ago, and the committee instructed Kirkbrae's management to proceed with negotiating a new agreement. The proposed agreement was put to the staff and rejected. At the time of writing this report, compulsory meetings have been scheduled for the purpose of updating staff on developments and receiving their feedback so the committee and management can respond to their concerns. The

AHEC convener and one other member of the committee will be participating with the Kirkbrae Chief Executive Office/Facility Manager in these meetings.

Independent Living Units (ILU)

Kirkbrae has 78 ILUs, of which 12 are vacant, and two of these are under offer. However, a number of the vacant ILUs are not fit for the market and cannot be sold. With the exception of eight relatively new units, the Retirement Village cottages present as a tired, poorly maintained 1960's time warp, although they are structurally sound and are refurbished at every change-over.

Although the ILUs were Kirkbrae's original *raison d'être*, for years now, they have not been Kirkbrae's major business: it is Residential Aged Care. This is where the majority of revenue is generated and where the majority of the risk lies.

However, the ILUs are largely trouble-free and, based on the present allocation of overheads, deliver a reliable annual surplus which contributes towards covering part or all of the RAC deficits.

However, due to the necessary attention directed to the RAC business, the ILUs have not been managed as closely as they could have been. Thus, in order to quickly understand how this business is, in fact, performing, Kirkbrae recently commissioned an independent review of the ILU operation. This will be presented to AHEC at its next meeting. The committee is fairly confident that there will be opportunities to increase revenue, together with the opportunity to recover additional expenses. Kirkbrae will also determine if overheads are accurately and equitably distributed between the ILUs and RAC. Finally, Kirkbrae will be looking to see whether its product is fairly priced with regard to financial returns and its position in the market.

As alluded to in the opening paragraph of this section, the ILUs have suffered from a lack of attention and, therefore, a lack of reinvestment. The tired appearance is one thing. There is infrastructure that can no longer be utilised, the community hall is in need of considerable, urgent repair, and there are unmarketable cottages. With the benefit of the review, AHEC will be able to turn its mind to how, when and where to reinvest in the ILUs.

However, Kirkbrae has opened discussions with Anchor Group, a not-for-profit charity that provides accommodation for homeless people, especially those who are victims of domestic violence. Some of the ILUs that are not commercially viable are, subject to some maintenance and cosmetic changes, suitable for this purpose, and the committee has agreed to rent a maximum of four units to potential clients of the Anchor Group. The rental income, while not that material, will contribute to the overall profitability of Kirkbrae.

With the small number of ILUs rented, the committee and Kirkbrae's management are confident that this limited assistance will not impact the amenity of the existing residents of the retirement village.

Personnel

Like any service industry, Kirkbrae is dependent on its staff. The going hourly wage is not much, yet most of the staff work cheerfully and deliver a high standard of care to residents. The staff experienced a torrid time during the COVID outbreak, and the committee sincerely appreciates their efforts and devotion to duty.

As mentioned earlier, the staffing restructure in March 2021 was necessary to right-size the staff complement relative to the ongoing facility population, and approximately 30 staff left in its employ. Management was not excluded from this necessity, and Kirkbrae bid farewell to some long-serving members. In particular, following advice from an independent consultant and input from the Insurer Ansvar, AHEC restructured management, combining the roles of the CEO and the Facility Manager, and eliminating the roles of the Quality Manager, HR Manager, and Bookkeeper, to be replaced by outsourcing the finance function and reallocation of duties in the RACF.

With the decision to restructure the senior management team and combine the CEO role with the facility manager position, the then CEO Mr Mark Sketcher became redundant and was replaced on an interim basis by Mr John Fogarty, who came to Kirkbrae at the height of the COVID crisis, courtesy of the Commonwealth Government.

Mr Fogarty is highly experienced in aged care management and hospitals in particular, especially those in financial difficulty. His calm, measured approach and ability to make decisions were critical to Kirkbrae navigating through that very difficult time. He was also instrumental in formulating and then implementing the restructure. AHEC, and indeed the PCV, are indebted to Mr Fogarty for his services. His contract expired 30 June 2021, and he carries the committee's very best wishes for the future.

Prior to the departure of Mr Fogarty, Kirkbrae advertised the position of CEO/Facility Manager and received a number of qualified applicants. Those who could not qualify on the basis of being unable to sign the Doctrinal Statement were still interviewed in order to benchmark other management abilities.

Ms Angelica Oyarzun came to Kirkbrae on contract as Facility Manager in early November 2020, and she impressed with her knowledge, professionalism and attitude. The committee was pleased when she applied for the CEO/FM role and, at the interview, clearly proved to be the best candidate. It was also important to Kirkbrae in making the appointment that Ms Oyarzun had the strong support and endorsement of Dr Elizabeth Lewis, the Chair of the Clinical Governance Committee. In addition, as a member of Trinity Lutheran Church East Melbourne, she had no hesitation in agreeing to sign the Doctrinal Statement, and she commenced her role on 1 July 2021. As this is Ms Oyarzun's first CEO appointment, AHEC acknowledges she needs some additional support from the committee while she establishes herself.

The next priority from the personnel perspective was seeking a Commercial Business Manager to take care of the administrative side of the business and support the CEO/FM. The first advertisement attracted no suitable applicants, so the position was filled on a temporary basis via an employment agency. The second round produced better quality applicants. Five were interviewed in the third week of July, one of which was Mrs Wendy Pennycuick, who was acting in the position.

After conducting the interviews and making the final assessment, the committee determined that Mrs Pennycuick was the stand-out candidate, and the committee were delighted when she accepted the offer.

General

As a result of the restructure, the new administration building is vacant. Kirkbrae is considering options for rental income. Some interest has been shown by medical practitioners who provide services at Kirkbrae. That could be a very good fit.

Pastoral Care

Rev Matt James and Mrs Janine Motyer provide chaplaincy and pastoral care to both the RAC residents and those in the ILUs. Apart from delivering one-on-one pastoral care, there are three church services a week, the Lord's Supper is celebrated twice monthly, and there is a weekly Bible study. These opportunities are open to residents, their families and friends, and staff. The team also participates in various social activities. Attendances at Sunday worship typically varies between 12 and 20.

The COVID crisis saw them innovate ways to continue ministering to the residents, including preparing laminated Scripture readings, which could be sanitised! Twice weekly phone calls were made to help ease the loneliness of enforced isolation.

This last year has been overshadowed by the tragic suffering and death of 22 residents and the many personal losses that followed, especially for their families.

The impact on the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the staff (and their families) has also been significant. To assist with alleviating this grief, debriefing sessions were offered where staff could share stories and grieve together. Memorial services were conducted for the staff to commemorate the lives of the residents who died.

The Committee

I am indebted to my fellow members of AHEC for their diligence, engagement and support. However, I wish to make special mention of the three members of the Clinical Governance Sub-Committee who are not members of AHEC. Dr Elizabeth Lewis as Chair, Mrs Jenny Pilgrim and Mrs Jill Barnett. They have long been involved with Kirkbrae, and their care and devotion continue. Clinical governance is not just pivotal to Kirkbrae; it is crucial. If Kirkbrae fails on clinical governance, it fails on everything in terms of providing aged care. The committee is truly grateful for the continuing service of these three servants of the Lord.

The Finance and Audit Committee is chaired by Iain Bramley. That committee has made an important contribution towards getting the financial reporting in shape. It is, however, still a work in progress.

AHEC remains a committee of seven against the desired complement of nine. In common with many Assembly committees, the majority of this committee's members are no longer young, and renewal and succession planning are essential.

Apart from new and younger blood, the committee needs relevantly skilled members, in particular, those with geriatric or healthcare skills as well as commercial, accounting, and legal skills. While the committee has had a few names to contact as potential members (and directors, which is again a bit different), it is not experiencing great success.

Looking forward

Kirkbrae is stabilising financially, but unrelenting effort is required to see it consolidate and rebuild. Kirkbrae does not have a future if it is unable to reinvest in its

infrastructure, both the RACF and the ILUs. The market will reject it, and so too will its main funder, the Australian Government.

However, the committee gives thanks to Almighty God for the improvements to date, which have allowed it to start contemplating, in very general terms, how Kirkbrae should be preparing for a future in a very challenging environment. Stewardship does not mean standing still.

Kirkbrae, by the providence of God and the foresight of the General Assembly, does have plenty of land. When it is once again generating acceptable levels of revenue and taking care of its staff, the committee will consider responsibly leveraging the value of that asset to improve both businesses. The committee has some ideas; perhaps call them dreams. Whatever the committee does, it will be for the glory of God and the extension of his kingdom.

Duncan McGregor
CONVENER

AD HOC COMMITTEE: NEGOTIATION OF SALE OF ASSEMBLY HALL (Min 66)

At the Commission of Assembly in June 2020, the ad hoc Negotiation of Sale of Assembly Hall Committee was appointed under the terms of the extract minute below.

18. Ad Hoc Assembly Hall Committee

3. *Appoint an ad hoc committee of the General Assembly, called the ad hoc Negotiation of Sale of Assembly Hall Committee, to negotiate a proposal for the sale of the interest of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in the Assembly Hall to the congregation of The Scots' Church Melbourne for consideration by the October 2020 General Assembly.*

Although required to report back to the Assembly in October 2020 with a proposal, no such proposal had been developed at that time, and the October 2020 Assembly approved an extension of time to the 2021 Commission, but again, at that time, there was no real progress, and the committee had no proposal to bring to the Assembly.

Process thus far

The committee met six times as a committee and once together with Scot's Church Assembly Hall Negotiating Committee (SCAHNC).

The ad hoc Negotiation of Sale of Assembly Hall Committee received advice on 12 February 2021 (via email) that an initial offer of \$3.25 million made by a group of Scots' representatives in April 2019 to 'PCV Home Missions' was revoked, and thereby this offer was not considered.

Following this, at the committee's suggestion, the Trusts Corporation of Presbyterian Church of Victoria (PCVTC) sought and received a new valuation for the Assembly Hall. The valuation they received was provided to the committee for its consideration. The Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiating Committee also obtained its own valuation, and this, too, was provided to the ad hoc Negotiation of Sale of Assembly Hall Committee.

The summary valuations shared are below.

	Before Stonework repairs	Assuming Stonework repairs completed before sale
PCVTC	\$27.5m	\$30.5m
SCAHNC	\$2.8m	\$7.5m

These valuations are for 100% of the land and buildings. The PCV share would be only 37%.

The reasons for the disparity in valuations are essentially twofold:

1. Different discount factors used by the valuers (3.5% JLL for PCVTC and 6% Urbis for Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiating Committee); and
2. The instructions given to the valuers as to the basis upon which the valuations were to be determined were completely different. The ad hoc Negotiation of Sale of Assembly Hall Committee asked JLL to value the building based on market value if the whole building was put on the open market for sale, and essentially, Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiating Committee asked Urbis

for their valuation based on ongoing usage by Scots' and the wider denomination in an 'as functioning' state.

Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiating Committee and the ad hoc Negotiation of Sale of Assembly Hall Committee met together on 15 March 2021. At that meeting, it was agreed that Rev Barry Oakes (also Chairman of the PCV Trusts Corporation) would meet with the convener of the Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiating Committee, Mr Sebert Ruddock, to 'open the Scots' books' and to assess the Scots' finances, and basically, to assess the capacity to pay. Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiating Committee was also asked to submit a proposal.

Mr Oakes reported his finding following his meeting with Mr Ruddock. He concluded that based on information provided, that Scots' Church has nothing else which it can put forward to purchase PCV's 37% share and that this is widely acknowledged by Scots' and the members of this committee.

Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiating Committee submitted two emails. One on 23 July (copy below) and the second containing a proposal on 24 July (copy below).

Assembly Hall Negotiation Committee Communication



Sebert Ruddock <sebert@scotschurch.com>
To: colinmorrow@bigpond.com; John Wilson

[Reply](#) [Reply All](#) [Forward](#) [...](#)

Fri 23/07/2021 11:00 AM

Dear Colin and John,

I advise that the Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiation Committee (the Committee) met on the 21st July to discuss the report that we had commissioned Mr Jon Purcell of SEMZ to provide to us. As you are aware, the report has detailed the potential development opportunities that might be possible on the Assembly Hall site. These opportunities appear to be extremely limited due to the significant heritage restrictions that exist on the building together with very limited access.

The Committee further discussed whether it was feasible to make an offer to purchase the PCV Home Mission's 37% ownership share of the building. Given the current state of the Scots' Church Board of Management's finances, the impact of Covid-19 on the commercial property returns in the CBD and church, the SEMZ report concluding that future development potential of the building being all but non-existent and the imminent cost of the façade restoration, any material offer is simply not feasible. In considering any offer, the Committee must take into consideration the liability to repair the façade of the building. This cost is estimated to be between \$4M and \$5M.

The Assembly Hall Management Committee is presently attempting to recruit a Façade Engineer to advise it on the façade repairs and to seek quotes for completing this work. Unfortunately, a number of engineers have refused to take on the project due to its size and their current workloads. Two disparate quotes have been received so far and the Managing Agent is waiting for a third.

Under the circumstances therefore, the Committee proposes that the only viable offer is for it to purchase the PCV Home Mission Committee's 37% ownership share for a peppercorn amount. Whilst this might seem unreasonable, it would relieve the Home Mission Committee of any current and future liabilities associated with the maintenance of the building. All current and future costs associated with the maintenance of the building, including the façade restoration would become the full responsibility of the Scots' Church Board of Management. This would relieve the PCV of a liability of between \$1.4m and \$1.5m in the short term, based on the most recent estimated cost of the façade restoration, not to mention the future costs of repairs and maintenance on the building generally.

Current financial circumstances and potential liabilities have tied our hands and we do not wish to saddle the Congregation with any further long-term debt, above the cost of the façade repair, which will be a challenge in any event.

If your Committee is unable to accept this offer, we propose that we continue to own and manage the building jointly, which has worked quite successfully over recent years.

We look forward to your response.

In Christ's name,
Sebert

Scots' Church Assembly Hall Negotiation Committee Offer



Sebert Ruddock <sebert@scotschurch.com>
To: colinmorrow@bigpond.com

[Reply](#) [Reply All](#) [Forward](#) [...](#)

Sat 24/07/2021 5:29 PM

You forwarded this message on 4/08/2021 5:11 PM.

Dear Colin,

As you are aware, limited development options and high projected maintenance costs mean we are unable to make a substantial cash offer for the PCV Home Mission's 37% interest in the building.

However, we offer to purchase the building for a nominal amount, with the Scots' Church Board of Management taking on the full responsibility for all current and future repairs and maintenance requirements for the building (current façade restoration alone estimated at \$4M to \$5M).

Our Committee is also willing to offer the following for the benefit of the PCV Home Mission Committee and the PCV;

1. The PCV Office on the Mezzanine Floor is provided for its exclusive use for a rent-free period of ten years.
2. The office currently occupied by the Ministry Development Committee on the 2nd Floor is provided for its exclusive use for a rent-free period of ten years.
3. The PCV and the wider Presbyterian Church has the right to use the Werner Brodbeck Hall, Robert White Hall and meeting rooms for meetings, the Commission of Assembly and General Assembly, Graduation Ceremonies and other Church events for free, provided that reasonable notice is given to the Scots' Church Office to avoid double bookings.
4. The three car spaces currently used by the PCV in the 150 Collins Street Car Park will continue to be provided for a rent-free period of ten years.
5. At the end of the ten year rent-free period, the Committee proposes that the rent free arrangement be reviewed in the spirit of goodwill and faithfulness.

Given the expected maintenance challenges, we estimate that this proposal provides significant future savings from repair and maintenance costs, as well as rent free benefits and access.

Colin, the Scots' Church is mindful that the Assembly Hall is seen as the Denomination's home in Victoria and would very much want that to continue into the future. There is so much Presbyterian history in the building.

Thank you for the spirit of cooperation and openness that has characterised our discussions.

In Christ's Service,
Sebert.

Sebert Ruddock
Honorary Treasurer
The Scots' Church
156 Collins Street
Melbourne
VIC 3000

Ordinarily, members of the Assembly might have expected to see a recommendation from the committee. However, having brought the negotiations to this stage, the committee was unable to agree as to whether it should accept the terms proposed. In the absence of a recommendation, the best the committee can do is to ask the Assembly to note the offer from Scots' Church.

Colin Morrow
CONVENER

AUSTRALIAN PRESBYTERIAN WORLD MISSION (VIC) (Min 27)

1. Committee

The committee has met eight times since the October 2020 Assembly. It met using Zoom. The committee is made up of ten people appointed by the Assembly and two by the PWMU. All members are continuing, and the committee thanks each member for their positive contributions.

2. Missionary interviews, applicants, departures and endorsements

Apart from regular items of business, the committee also met with and interviewed the following missionaries on home assignment, leaving APWM, or preparing to return to the field. These included D [redacted] and C [redacted] (South Asia), P [redacted] and A [redacted] (diaspora), R [redacted] (diaspora), Kate Vinicombe (Groote Eyelandt, NT), Ian and Dorcas Denness (South Asia), Julie Dean (heading to Timor Leste with husband Rev Chris), Ross Maxwell (Madagascar), Rev Rob Falls (NSW, heading to Vanuatu with wife El and children), Jared and Bethany (nee Canavan) Killey (prospective candidates heading to Vanuatu as Bible translators with WBT), Calvin and Ruth Mathys (WBT), Rhys and Rhondda Hall (Uganda), Hannah Davies (South Korea), C [redacted] and N [redacted] (South East Asia), Andrew Adams (Japan), and Douglas and Jeanette Bennett (Kangaroo Ground). The committee always appreciates meeting with its missionaries as it gives them the opportunity to review and discuss firsthand their experiences and/or concerns and to share any special needs they may have. The committee also met the APWM National Director Rev Kevin Murray (twice) in order to be kept up to date with developments within APWM National.

At the time of writing, there are three families waiting to go to the field, four on home assignment, and three waiting to return to Victoria. The following no longer have membership with APWM Vic either by reason of resignation, change of plans or translation to other avenues of service: Ben and Penny Teng and Ian and Dorcas Denness (now Associate Members of APWM National and under the pastoral care of the APWM NSW Committee),

The committee realises that not all missionaries who seek financial and prayerful support from the wider church have applied for the endorsement of this committee. However, it encourages Assembly members, if it is their desire and intention to give priority to APWM-endorsed missionaries or if they have any concerns about missionaries who come seeking financial support, to contact either the convener or the secretary to enquire about the status of that missionary with respect to this committee.

3. Missionary Poster

The committee expects to have a new poster this year in printed version. Digital photos will be available on request.

4. Finances

The committee continues to praise God for his wonderful provision of funds to help us provide pastoral care to its missionaries while on home assignment. The committee is also able to give to the whole team of missionaries (including the many children among them) Christmas gifts in November. Superannuation contributions are made to all its workers each June, providing some support towards their retirement. Both of these grants will be decreasing this financial year.

The committee's trust funds continue to provide support for its Vanuatu Partner Church missionaries plus scholarship assistance for students at the Talua Ministry Training Centre (Vanuatu) and the Presbyterian Theological Seminary Dehra Dun (India), as well as support for ministry among Aboriginal peoples through the ministries of Rev Rick and Mrs Kayleen Manton (APWM NSW) and Alvin and Narelle Chai (PIM, Mount Magnet, WA).

The committee wishes to thank churches that take a specific and committed interest in any of its missionaries by both prayer and financial support. While missionaries are financially supported by individuals, it is actually the support of the churches (often with a tithing of church income), which keeps these special people in the work.

5. Coins for Mission (C4M)

The committee continues to praise God for the 30 plus Victorian churches that gave nearly \$40,000 in the last financial year. The committee was able to give funds from C4M to assist with emergency health/medical and travel needs, unanticipated quarantine costs when returning to Australia, repairs and purchases not covered by normal supply funds, as well as support shortfall. All monies that are given through the C4M program are distributed by the APWM Vic Committee.

Again, the committee wants to point out that the program was never meant to replace a church's or individual's missionary giving but as a supplementary effort. The committee encourages churches to let us know of any urgent needs of which they are aware in relation to any APWM missionaries they support. Please prayerfully consider your participation in this program and the wonderful blessings it provides to our missionaries.

The C4M representative is now Rev Rod Waterhouse, while Rev Len and Mrs Wendy Pearce are willing to visit any church anywhere in Victoria to help promote this program. Rod can be contacted at coins@apwmvic.org.au

6. Cars for missionaries on home assignment

The four cars owned by the PCV that are available for use by our missionaries on furlough are all in use. One of the two larger cars was stolen while in Sydney. It has been recovered but has now been written off by the insurance company. The committee sincerely thanks the Board of Investment and Finance for allowing the committee a variation to its approved budget so that it can obtain a replacement car. These cars are significant to the missionaries so they can travel to report back to their current supporters and continue to build up their support teams. Missionaries using these cars have often expressed their sincere thanks to the committee.

7. Prayer Updates

This is the most critical part of the committee's program. The committee distributes a bi-monthly Prayer Update to the PCV email network and other interested parties. The Update gives the latest news regarding missionary movements and a summary of prayer needs. If Assembly members or their congregation are not included in the circulation of the Update and would like to be, they can email secretary@apwmvic.org.au with that request.

8. Mission Lunch

The committee has sadly made the decision to cancel the Mission Lunch for this year. Instead, it is hoped to organise one or more Zoom events the following week so the

committee can briefly meet and hear from many of its missionaries. It will also hear from its speakers on reaching the diaspora within our own backyard. The speakers have the advantage of having lived among an ethnic group overseas, so they know some language and culture. God has brought these people from overseas to live near us, and some from these ethnic groups will be gathered around the throne (Rev 7:9). How can the Church reach out to them? Who can help? Which churches are already doing this? How could they train, encourage, and help to equip?

The committee would love for Assembly members to come to this free Virtual Meeting. More information will become available, and registers may be made.

The committee wishes to thank the Assembly for previous years of faithful support to the Mission Lunch and looks forward to your continued support.

9. Partner Churches and Partner Mission Agencies

The committee has been enabled to continue with APWM National to support and encourage our relationship with PTS India and our Partner Churches in South Sudan, Malawi, Zambia, Myanmar, Vanuatu, Timor Leste, Ethiopia, North India, and Japan. In addition, the committee seeks to work closely with the many Partner Mission Agencies within Australia (with whom most of our missionaries serve) in order to provide a more comprehensive pastoral service to its missionaries in the field and on home assignment.

10. Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union

The PWMU State Council has continued to work alongside the committee in support of the team of workers across the world, and the Council continues to be represented on the committee through the two members they appoint. The committee thanks them for their support and generosity, interest in and care for the committee's workers while on the field and at home.

11. APWM National

APWM Vic has two members (the convener and Mrs Lyn Ellis) on the APWM National Committee, which meets annually in Sydney for the AGM and for an additional three meetings throughout the year. The meetings have been via Zoom, and the committee hopes to be able to meet in person later this year. The committee greatly appreciates the support, encouragement, and partnership it enjoys with the APWM National Director, Rev Kevin Murray, and the members of the National Committee.

Noel Johnston
CONVENER

BOARD OF INVESTMENT AND FINANCE (Min 18)

Duties

The Board of Investment and Finance (BIF) is elected by the General Assembly. Its regulations are approved by the General Assembly, as for any other committee. The BIF consists of ten members, each of whom is required to retire after 5 years from date of appointment but is eligible for re-election for a second 5-year term. Members of the BIF also form the membership of the Trusts Corporation.

The duties of the BIF are to:

- Administer the financial affairs of, and act as Treasurer of, the General Assembly;
- Maintain the office of the General Assembly including engaging staff for this purpose;
- Co-operate with other committees of the Assembly in the appointment of office or other staff and determine the salary conditions and employment of such staff;
- Present to the Commission of the Assembly a recommended Budget for approval;
- Formulate a budget and allocation of the General Mission Program for approval by the Assembly;
- Manage the property of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria for which responsibility is not vested in another committee;
- Take steps to prevent committees from incurring expenditure beyond their means or in unauthorised ways;
- Approve urgent applications for the sale, mortgage or lease of property;
- Hold the proceeds of sale of property in the Sites Reserve account and disburse funds as approved by presbytery and the General Assembly; and
- Administer the Capital Fund including the approval of loans from the fund.

Membership of the Board of Investment and Finance

Membership and committee responsibilities in the past year were as follows:

Rev Barry Oakes	Chairman, Audit Committee
Mr James Bligh	Audit Committee
Mr Edward de Zilwa	Vice-Chairman, Audit Committee
Mr Adam Foster	Audit Committee
Mr Matt Gibson	Investment Committee
Mr David Graham	Investment Committee
Mr Stuart Williamson	Investment Committee (to February 2021)
Rev Andrew Venn	Secretary, Vice-Chairman, Investment Committee
Mr John Walter	Audit Committee

Following the General Assembly in October 2021, Mr Tony Arnold completed 10 years on BIF and Trusts Corporation and retired in accordance with the regulations. Mr Arnold made a valuable contribution to the church during his term particularly as a member of the Investment Committee where he was instrumental in establishing the new governance and investment model which is now operational.

In February 2021, Mr Stuart Williamson resigned from BIF and Trusts Corporation after 4 years' service. Mr Williamson was also a member of the Investment Committee where he made a valuable contribution.

Rev Andrew Venn has indicated his intention to retire from the BIF following the General Assembly in October this year after 4 years' service. Mr Venn served previously on the BIF for 5 years to October 2013. During this term Mr Venn has served as BIF Secretary, Vice-Chairman and Convener of the Investment Committee.

We acknowledge the faithful service of each to the church and Christ's kingdom through their membership of the BIF and Trusts Corporation and wish them every blessing.

Church Office

The BIF is grateful for the dedicated service of the General Manager, Mr Michael Ellison, and the office staff (Mrs Sharee Barnett and, most recently, Mr Jason Zhang) who support the Assembly, congregations and denominational bodies through their administrative support and advice. We also express appreciation for Michael's expertise and application brought to extraordinary and complex matters that confront the church from time to time.

Accountant

We welcome Mr Jason Zhang who was appointed as Accountant in May 2021 following the retirement of John Vandenberg. He previously worked as Finance Manager at the Victoria Hotel for 10 years and comes with a breadth of experience. He is finding the church an interesting challenge as he seeks to get on top of the scope and breadth of his responsibilities.

Law Agent's Retainer

In accordance with the Code 5.16c the Trusts Corporation and BIF has fixed the Law Agent's retainer for the 2020/21 year at \$42,000.

General Mission Program receipts: 2020–2021

A report showing all charges and their annual contributions to GMP during the preceding year is attached in accordance with BIF regulation 12(d).

Capital Fund

The interest rate charged on Capital Fund loans is 2.5% per annum. The costs of funds borrowed from the Trusts Corporation is 4.0% per annum. Income from the investment of the Capital Fund reserves is used to fund the difference in interest and provide a low cost of funds to congregations and schools.

A summary of accounts in relation to the Capital Fund follows:

	2020/21	2019/20
	\$	\$
Receipts		
Interest on loans to congregations	59,335	79,250
Interest from Common Fund	107,375	128,892
Other Investment Income	143	560
Total Income	166,853	208,703
Payments		
Interest paid on loans from Common Fund	88,652	126,104
Interest paid on deposits	591	586

Interest rebate to borrowers	23,073	12,223
Grants to borrowers	0	69,710
Grant to Property Development Fund	54,537	0
Total Expenditure	166,853	208,624
Surplus	0	79
Balance of Capital Fund Reserve	1,498,629	1,498,426
Deposits held for congregations,	59,407	58,924
Loans to Congregations and Schools	2,040,956	2,342,777

Property matters

Since last reporting to the Assembly approval was given by the BIF under BIF Reg. 16 (a) for the following urgent property transaction:

- lease of the manse at 46 Montgomery Street Skipton for up to three years at a rental of not less than \$1,000 per month (BIF 085/21).

Additional Expenditure

Since last reporting to the Commission of Assembly, the BIF has approved the following amendment to committee budgets in accordance with BIF regulation 9(b)(ii)(1):

Committee	Amount \$	Purpose
APWM	\$22,000	for the purchase of a suitable vehicle to replace the stolen 2006 Toyota Tarago (\$8,441 insurance received).

Assembly approved appeals

Donations to the 'Kirkbrae Appeal' approved by the October 2020 General Assembly (BB 2020, min 17.9, p 170) totalling \$16,090 have been received to June 2021.

Donations to the 'Sinking Fund Appeal' approved by the Commission of Assembly in May 2021 totalling \$29,200 have been received to June 2021.

Church Funds

The funds available to the church to meet its ministry objectives are shown in the table below. The Assembly has allocated general funds to each committee and given the committees authority to spend the funds within the specific purposes relevant to each trust and in accordance with the committee's regulations.

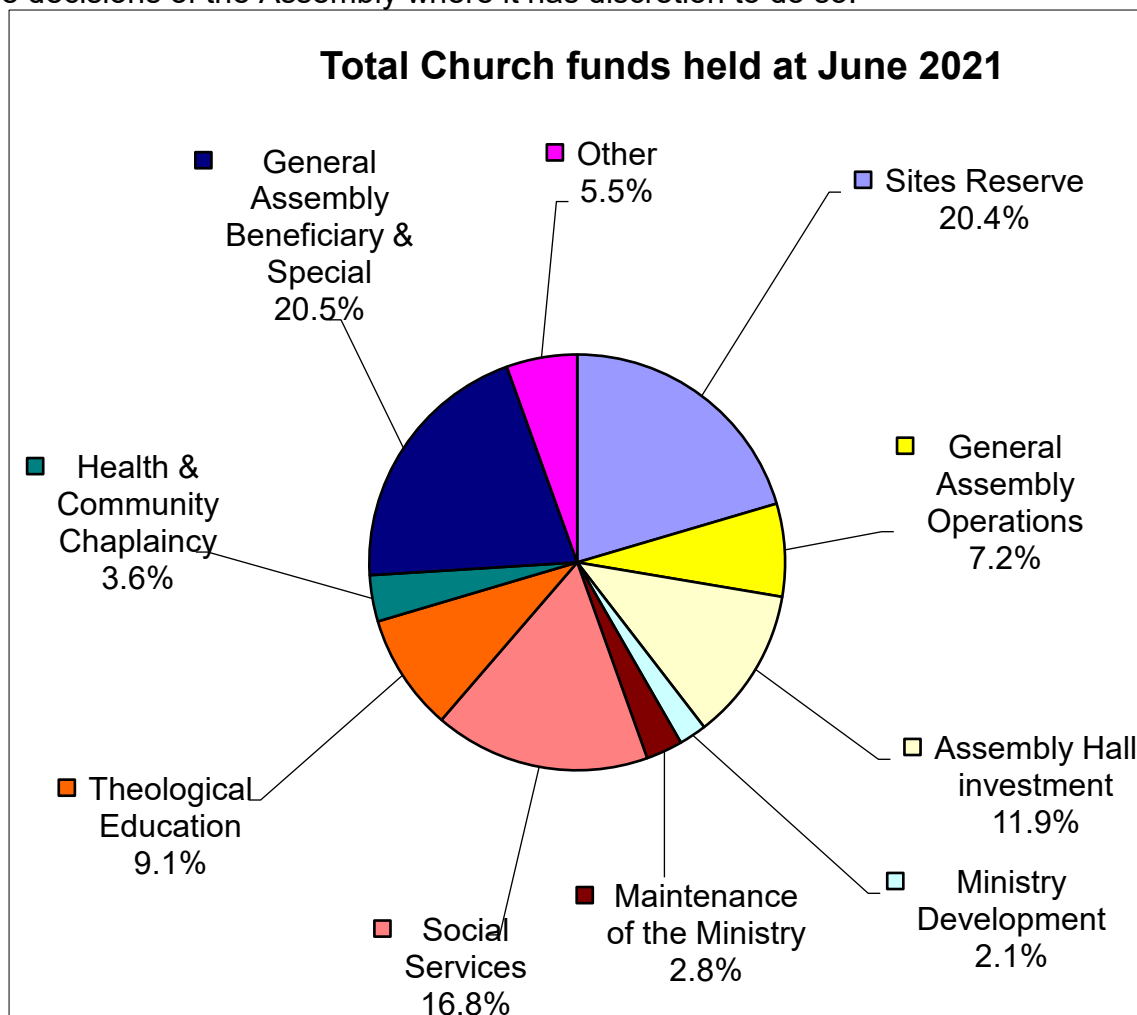
	June 2020	Balance as at 30 June 2021			
	Total Invested	Common Fund	Separate Investments	Total Funds Invested	% of Total
GA - Beneficiary & Special	14,197,197	9,137,487	8,383,699	17,521,186	20%
Sites Reserve	18,083,821	8,917,767	8,563,891	17,481,658	20%
Social Services	20,495,737	594,431	13,762,827	14,357,258	17%
Assembly Hall held for HM	10,175,000	-	-	10,175,000	12%
Theological Education	7,314,081	7,783,544	-	7,783,544	9%
General Assembly Operations	5,259,047	6,173,349	-	6,173,349	7%
Health & Community Chaplaincy	2,881,245	1,748,125	1,329,480	3,077,605	4%
Maintenance of the Ministry	2,370,517	2,436,282	-	2,436,282	3%

Ministry Development	2,412,756	1,830,106	-	1,830,106	2%
Christian Education & Nurture	1,461,545	1,438,447	-	1,438,447	2%
APWM (Victoria)	820,792	830,926	-	830,926	1%
METRO	771,407	729,849	-	729,849	1%
Property Development Fund	509,422	626,113	-	626,113	1%
Presbyterian Youth in Victoria	476,426	507,323	-	507,323	1%
Church & Nation	355,053	359,866	-	359,866	0%
Safe Church	64,792	151,351	-	151,351	0%
State News	65,104	60,423	-	60,423	0%
Church Planting	81,586	-	-	-	0%
Total Church funds	87,795,530	43,325,388	32,039,898	85,540,286	100%

The investment in Assembly Hall which is held by the PCV for home mission and church extension forms part of the funding available to the church.

The Church Planting Committee has a loan of \$87,628 from the General Assembly. The Ministry Development Committee has a loan of \$50,023 from the General Assembly.

The chart below shows the relative percentages of trust funds which are allocated to the various ministries and bodies of the church. The allocation of funds in this way is generally determined by the purposes of the underlying trusts and bequests as well as the decisions of the Assembly where it has discretion to do so.



Sites Reserve Accounts

The Sites Reserve Account holds funds which are the proceeds of sale of church property. The following is a summary of movements in the accounts for the year:

	2020/21	2019/20
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July	18,083,821	19,123,399
Plus		
Receipts from Sale of Property	1,467,219	636,968
Interest & Other Income	679,632	1,159,513
Capital gain/(loss) on Investments	1,018,430	(508,220)
Less		
Payments – ministry support	(624,032)	(720,966)
Property improvements and expenses	(1,041,587)	(835,678)
Funding for PCV purposes	(2,021,142)	(771,196)
Balance at 30 June	17,562,341	18,083,821

Unforeseen Employment Liabilities

The General Assembly in March 2021 resolved at minute 18 under the Board of Investment and Finance to:

2. Note the responsibility that presbytery has under the PCV Code in relation to filling vacancies in a pastoral charge, making ministry appointments and approving other employment by the congregation and/or its officers; as well as the 'general responsibility and duty for the well-being of the church and its work, and of the congregations, and all congregational property, organisations and activities, within its jurisdiction'.
3. Instruct each presbytery to inquire into the employment arrangements which exist within its presbytery so that the extent of potential financial exposure of the church can be quantified.
4. Request the Board of Investment and Finance to formulate plans to fund from within the church, by way of a levy or other means, any unforeseen employment liabilities that a congregation may become unable to meet due to unforeseen or extreme circumstances.

The BIF to date has not received any information from any presbytery in response to point 3.

The specific circumstances which the fund is expected to apply to remain unclear to the BIF. It would appear that any possible employment arrangement relating to congregations in the church might be within the scope of the intended funding. Without more clarity as to when and how funds might be accessed, the BIF recommends that this be left up to the Assembly to determine on a case-by-case basis.

The BIF recommends establishing a fund, in the first instance, sufficient to meet the minimum remuneration including superannuation of a full-time ministry worker for a period of 6 months. This is likely to be the limit of most employment obligations although in certain circumstances it can be higher. This comes to just under \$33,000. If that sum proves to be insufficient the provision could be increased. Such a sum could

be raised by an additional amount within the Assembly Rate say over a 3-year period, which is the recommendation.

Any time the provision falls below the determined level the fund would be topped up with an additional contribution within the Assembly Rate as outlined above. The initial funding can include an extra 10% to provide for inflation over the initial years.

Other Unfunded Liabilities

The church has been faced with the challenge in recent years of raising other funds to meet extraordinary liabilities which are unfunded. While the recommendation in response to the above request to fund some employment liabilities addresses some recent issue, it is a reactive approach to funding after the matter has arisen. Such an approach tends to be somewhat piecemeal and does not address the larger issue of other areas of unfunded needs in a co-ordinated and planned way.

Recent appeals have also been approved to assist the funding of Women's Ministry Victoria and PYV. Such appeals to meet new or unfunded expenses, in addition to the General Mission Program (GMP) and other levies, can lead to donor fatigue and a diminishing of the role of the GMP as the preferred mechanism of funding relevant committees which the General Assembly has approved for financial support. It also does not mesh well with the 2020 Assembly's endorsement of the principle that the expansion of the GMP levy on congregations is to be resisted.

In recent times the Assembly has looked primarily to Sites Reserve funds to meet large unfunded extraordinary liabilities. While the Assembly has the authority to determine the purposes these funds are applied towards, the allocation of the responsibility for funding church liabilities from other 'excess' assets held by congregations is also worthy of consideration.

In raising these issues, the BIF seeks to encourage the good stewardship of the resources entrusted to the church for the benefit of the gospel, and a sharing of the financial responsibilities equitably across the church.

SCU staff remuneration

The General Assembly in May 2021 requested the BIF, in consultation with the Safe Church Committee, to bring a proposal for an appropriate increase in the SCU workers' remuneration to the May 2021 Commission of Assembly. (Minute 22).

BIF engaged Mr Stephen Leslie of SJL Consulting to benchmark the remuneration of the Safe Church Committee staff. Mr Leslie conducted a survey which included interviews with the staff and a Job Evaluation matrix based on the Hay model which considers 'accountability,' 'know-how' and 'problem solving' as aids to understanding the particular roles and performance indicators.

Based on the report, BIF in consultation with the Safe Church Committee is recommending that the Assembly approve the following increases in remuneration effective from 1 November 2021 with the increased cost to be funded for the current financial year from General Assembly funds, and thereafter within the regular funding of the Committee by way of GMP:

- a. Safe Church Facilitator (currently 24 hours per week), annualised FTE salary to increase from \$68,440 to \$95,000 plus superannuation;

- b. Compliance & Administration Officer (currently 15 hours per week), annualised FTE salary to increase from \$51,332 to \$72,500 plus superannuation.

The report made further recommendations including a review of the job descriptions and roles for both positions, a change in the job title for the Facilitator, and for that role to become a full-time position. The report has been forwarded to the Safe Church Committee for its further consideration.

Legal Structure and Governance

In 2019 the General Assembly requested that the board consider the financial, governance, and legal identity structure of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria with a view to making suggestions for changes and the best way such a review can be effected (BB 2019, min. 25.6, p153). These changes were intended to promote operational efficiency and to improve the ability of the PCV to respond to ever increasing legal and regulatory obligations.

Since that time, the board has undertaken several investigative activities that have been previously reported to the Assembly. Most recently, the board has produced a paper analysing the challenges that the PCV is facing and briefly analysing some approaches adopted by comparable bodies. This paper was shared with the Code and General Administration Committee and led to some very useful collaboration and commentary.

After performing these activities, the board has concluded that the potential long-term ramifications of structural change are too significant for a single body, in isolation, to recommend concrete changes.

The board therefore recommends that an external consultant be engaged by the board to do an independent review of the options for change available to the PCV and to make a series of recommendations. This recommendation is included as a deliverance below. The board anticipates that the review process will include consultation with committees and presbyteries. Upon review of the consultant's finding, the board would bring a report and recommendation to the 2022 General Assembly or 2023 Commission of Assembly. The board estimates that the cost will be in the order of \$50,000–\$100,000.

To validate this approach, the board held a consultation session in late August with invitations sent to the Assembly clerks, committee convenors, and presbytery clerks and moderators. The level of attendance and engagement in this session was very encouraging, indicating a high degree of awareness and concern regarding the topic of structural change across the PCV. During this session, the case for change was revisited, the engagement of an external consultant was discussed, and the possible approach for how the wider PCV should be consulted was also discussed.

The drivers for structural change have been communicated in previous reports. As a reminder for the Assembly the more critical reasons are:

- The increasing level of regulatory and legal obligations impacting all institutions, including Churches.
- The recent impacts to the Presbyterian Church of Queensland that highlight the risk of poor structure and operational governance.

- Operational issues, such as child safety issues and Kirkbrae, that have become serious and have needed resolution by Assembly.
- Recurring issues related to employment such as ensuring contracts are valid, entitlements are managed, and working environments are safe and compliant.
- The need to identify and manage risk throughout the PCV.

A summary of the feedback from this session is outlined below and has been incorporated into the recommended approach:

- The need for structural change was understood and supported. Concerns were raised about some of the challenges facing the PCV from a legal and risk perspective and there was affirmation of the need for these to be addressed.
- It was clearly expressed that the essence of what it means to be 'Presbyterian' must be retained through this process.
- There was support for the engagement of a consultant on the condition that the engaged firm was faith oriented and understood the PCV or other Presbyterian denominations based on previous experience.
- The focus should be on the 'temporal' aspects of the structure of the PCV such as operations, governance, and risk management, rather than the role of courts of the Church.
- The wider PCV should be engaged in the process, preferably via face-to-face meetings with each Presbytery to obtain feedback and address concerns.

During this session, feedback on the language of the deliverance was also provided and this has been incorporated.

As a result of this feedback and consultation, the board feels comfortable in recommending the engagement of an external consultant and requests the endorsement of this approach by the Assembly. In addition, the process of consultation was very positive. The board's proposed recommendation was materially improved as a result of the feedback received. This may, therefore, be an approach that is used in the future for complex issues with broad impact to the PCV.

Scots' Church Properties Trust

The board as the Assembly Treasurer has received a copy of the Statement of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 30 June 2021 of the Scots' Church Properties Trust. The board forwards the report to the Assembly.

Barry Oakes
CHAIRMAN

BUILDING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE (Min 26)

This year the number of applications for the approval of building works has fallen, with the only application received being from Warrnambool Presbyterian Church for the conversion of an office to a unit that can be leased out. In addition to that, the church architect provided advice and assistance to Sunshine Presbyterian Church, Aspendale Presbyterian Church, Lismore Presbyterian Church, and Malvern Presbyterian Church.

The church architect, Mr Les Oliver, whilst not a committee member, is an integral part of the services provided by the committee and the committee could not do its work without his valued and professional input. Les has been a valuable resource to many congregations throughout the PCV for many years.

Retirement of church architect

During the last six months, Les advised the committee that after 20 years of service to the PCV, he was retiring. When Les commenced his duties as church architect, it was for a short period whilst the then church architect Keith Butler went on leave. That leave was extended and just before the end of that leave Les got a call from Keith to say he was retiring. So much for just filling in for a short period!

During his time, Les has seen many changes in names of committees and reporting. He started reporting to the Home Missions Committee which then had a name change to Healthy Church Committee and then shortly after was changed to the Ministry Development Committee. Then in 2008 the Building and Property Committee was formed.

Through all those changes Les has always seen his work as a means of using his God given gifts to serve God by giving of his time, experience, and abilities to assist congregations and the various committees he has served to get the best outcomes for their building matters whether it be maintenance, alterations, or new projects. The rates that he charged for this valuable work was well below market rates and reflected his desire to serve God in this way.

The committee wishes to express its sincere thanks to Les for his many years of dedicated and sacrificial service to the PCV and pray that God might bless him with a long and healthy retirement.

Appointment of church architect

Role

The role of the church architect is twofold:

- To advise and assist boards with church and building matters
- To advise and assist the committee with applications for approval of proposed new buildings and alterations to buildings

The role is largely an advisory one, although congregations may engage the church architect to produce designs and plans.

Quantum of work

The workload related to providing assistance to Boards of Management over the last 4 years is detailed below.

Date	Description
Mar 2017	Cranbourne East - establish manse property boundaries
Apr 2017	Kyabram - assess proposed extension
Aug 2017	Horsham - advise re new worship centre
Nov 2017	Clarinda - assess proposed manse upgrade
Feb 2018	Cheltenham - assess effect of proposed carpark building on manse (elevated railway)
Feb 2018	Mernda - review authority approvals for hall-drop in centre
Feb 2018	Mordialloc - manse inspection and report
May 2018	Mornington - new church development
Sept 2018	Broadford - assessment of proposed toilet block
Sept 2018	Canterbury - internal lighting assessment of church
Oct 2018	Bendigo East - provide CAD files of planning drawings
Nov 2018	Williamstown - drainage and paving assessment
Mar 2019	Eltham - requirements re assisted listening systems
Mar 2019	Malvern - manse inspection and report
Apr 2019	Heidelberg - new manse planning
June 2019	Richard Wilson - new church site evaluations
July 2019	Bannockburn - search for manse plans
Aug 2019	Rochester - advice re building movement
Sept 2019	Belgrave Heights - advice re proposed sale of land parcel
Nov 2019	Valley - master planning – property assessment – site evaluations
Dec 2019	Clifton Hill - options for building modifications and upgrades (on-going assistance required)
Apr 2020	Officer - assessment of new temporary church building
May 2020	Moe - provision of CAD files for new hall
Jul 2020	Sunshine - inspection and assessment of proposed repairs to church building
Oct 2020	St Kilda - deterioration of stonework to church building
Nov 2020	Aspendale - request re upgrading of foyer and toilet facilities
Apr 2021	Lismore - advice re building movement (on-going assistance required)
Apr 2021	Malvern - provide advice re project management consultants

The workload related to providing assistance to the committee is as follows.

Date	Description
Feb 2018	Geelong West Presbyterian Church – new church
May 2018	Horsham Presbyterian Church – substantial renovations to church building
May 2018	Mornington Presbyterian Church – new church
Aug 2019	Belgrave Heights Presbyterian Church – building redevelopment
Jan 2020	New Life Presbyterian Church Officer – new church building
Feb 2020	Moe Presbyterian Church – new hall
Feb 2021	Warrnambool Presbyterian Church – internal alterations to office to convert to a unit that can be leased out.

The workload above equates to less than a 0.2 EFT per annum.

Filling the Vacancy

See Private Paper 2 for details

Temporary Appointment

As stated above, the church architect informed the committee that he would like to retire on the 30 June 2021 or as soon after as was possible. When a vacancy occurs between General Assemblies the selection committee is given the task of filling the vacancy until the next General Assembly as per regulation 3 of the Building and Property Committee.

The committee forwarded a recommendation to the Selection Committee that it appoint Andrew Wilson to fill the vacancy until the next General Assembly. The Selection Committee advised on the 13 July 2021 that it had resolved to 'engage Mr Andrew Wilson, Principal of Warc Studio, to undertake the role of church architect as an interim position until the next meeting of the General Assembly where a replacement for Les Oliver can be appointed and that this decision be conveyed to the Building and Property Committee.' Mr Andrew Wilson was advised of his appointment by letter on the 27 July 2021 and confirmed his acceptance of the appointment by email dated 3 August 2021. The appointment commenced on the 9 August 2021.

The Selection Committee also raised some questions relating to the appointment that may be raised by the Assembly. The questions, together with responses are listed below.

Question 1: are the qualifications detailed in the job advertisement necessary for a church architect and have they unnecessarily excluded other applicants? The response is that the Code defines the position as church 'architect'. Only qualified architects can use the term architect. To practice as an architect within the State of Victoria, one needs to be registered as an architect with the Architects Registration Board of Victoria.

It is appropriate that the church architect be a qualified architect as the committee receives some plans that have been prepared by architects and therefore it is appropriate that the person reviewing those plans holds at least the same qualification. It is acknowledged that there are aspects of the work that do not require an architect to undertake it. However, to complete all the duties of a church architect a qualified architect is required. It should be remembered that individual congregations are not obliged to use the church architect for their projects or advice. They can use whichever person or company is best suited to their needs and location.

Question 2: how long is this arrangement intended to last—will it be a 5–10 year engagement or an indefinite, ongoing one? The answer is that previous appointments have been indefinite appointments. The current church architect suggests that it might be wise to simply make it a 12-month appointment initially so that both parties have an opportunity to see if it is working for each. If all is going well at the end of the 12 months, then make it an indefinite appointment at that time.

Fees

As part of the expression of interest, Warc Studio submitted the following schedule of fees that would be applicable to works undertaken as church architect.

Architectural Director	\$230 / hour + GST
Senior Architect	\$160 / hour + GST
Interior Design Director	\$140 / hour + GST
Architect	\$140 / hour + GST
Graduate Architect	\$120 / hour + GST
Assistant	\$100 / hour + GST

Disbursements (e.g. photocopying, permit fees, postage, courier charges. Etc.) are charged in addition to the above fixed fee. It should be noted that any work undertaken by Andrew Wilson will be charged at the rate of Architectural Director.

Changes to the Code and Committee's Regulations

The committee has requested the Code Committee to consider making changes to its regulations to:

1. Make it clearer when a congregation is expected to pay for the services of the church architect.
2. Define 'substantial' in Rule 2.20.
3. Provide clarification on the information required to make an application for the committee's approval and introduce a two-step approval to make it easier to supply that information when it was available.
4. Require a congregation to supply 'as built' drawings at the completion of the project so that accurate records are available for that building.

Ralph Kop
CONVENER

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND NURTURE COMMITTEE (Min 28)

People have become familiar with a high degree of uncertainty in these times. The virus comes and goes through communities highlighting the ties that bind and reminding of human frailty. Everyone can appreciate that these conditions have increased the worries of everyday life for families and in particular for younger people.

While it is impossible to fully appreciate the long-term impact of these disruptions on the Church's younger members, the Assembly can be sure that a Christ-focused youth ministry is as crucial now as it has ever been. So, the committee is thankful to the Lord for the extraordinary way that the Youth Ministries Director (YMD), Mr Andrew Edmonds, and the Presbyterian Youth Victoria (PYV) leadership, have risen to this challenge and instituted new ways of bringing a state-wide Christian ministry to the Church's youth and the youth group leaders.

The committee also extends its great thanks to Mr Scott McNabb for the significant contribution he has made to the work of PYV over several years. He has only recently left the role as PYV Council Convener, and so the committee thanks him for his service and welcomes Miss Anna Burns, who has been appointed to this key role.

The PYV is currently making the most of the current disruptions to the camping timetable by undertaking a thorough review and rewrite of their policies, and the committee thanks God for the impressive way the PYV Council has taken on this challenge.

At the 4 May 2021 Commission of Assembly, the CENC was directed to bring to the next Assembly a long-term plan for the ministry of the YMD (minute 7.8). Due to the committee's current commitments, this direction has not been fulfilled.

Lastly, the committee has a desperate need for new committee members who have an interest in youth work and Christian education. At this time, the committee is non-compliant with regard to its committee regulations. If members of the Assembly know of potential additions to the committee, please give the committee their details, and the committee will contact them.

Presbyterian Youth Victoria Council Report, 2021

Over the last 12 months, PYV's regular calendar of events has been radically altered. Our 'Spring Camp Online' in September 2020 was a time of great refreshment in an otherwise locked-down world. Though COVID restrictions lifted closer to the New Year, PYV Council also elected to move our Summer Camp to an online platform, with the opportunity for local, church-based 'hubs'. The ministry of 2021 has continued to be a hybrid of face-to-face and online ministry events, depending on the resources and restrictions at the given time. We were blessed to be able to run our West Camp in person, although we were not able to proceed with our planned North and East Camps due to a variety of factors. We are thankful for our technologically skilled leaders who helped to coordinate two online workshops so far in 2021 ('Singing' and 'Daily Devotions'), which were well attended throughout the state and a source of great encouragement to youth, families, and local Youth Groups.

The PYV Council has seen some changes in membership and processes since our last report. We farewelled Katherine Moody and thank her for her time of service. We welcomed Louise Griffiths to Council and developed a new policy sub-committee in

close consultation with the Safe Church Unit. Scott McNabb stepped down from his position of PYV Council Convener in May of 2021, after leading in this role since the end of 2017. We are so thankful for Scott's service during these years. Further Council recruitment is ongoing.

As we look to 'what's next', the Council sees the need for ongoing flexibility and new ideas for ministry in an ever-changing world. We remain committed to our aim to glorify God by assisting the congregations of the PCV in the development and nurture of youth for the service of Christ Jesus. The Council is also aware of the pressures facing our leaders involved in youth ministry and seeks to encourage these leaders to continue in their faithful work. We look forward to raising funds to secure our economic status, particularly in regard to the position of the Youth Ministries Director, who remains invaluable to our work. We are thankful for the prayer and practical support of the CENC and broader PCV.

The work of PYV is God's work. May he achieve great things through this ministry for his name and glory.

Anna Burns
Acting Convener, Presbyterian Youth Victoria

Youth Ministries Director Report

Thank you so much for your continued prayers for the ministry of the CENC Youth Ministries Director and the ministry of Presbyterian Youth of Victoria. Despite this past year of challenges, I have continued to serve as the Youth Ministries Director to assist PYV and the PCV in ministering to young people in ways we can in these unpredictable days.

This last year was an opportunity for us to harness online ministry for both our Spring and Summer Camps, and then in March, we had a return to 'in-person' ministry for West Camp at Halls Gap. I was privileged to not only be at my first PYV Camp but to also be the speaker and share from the gospels on discipleship. This was a very encouraging experience for many, and I look forward to more camps and opportunities like this in the future.

PYV has stepped back from running more regional camps this year, and as a ministry, is taking the opportunity to assess and enhance the operation. So, in recent times, I have been geared towards this effort, and I have been assisting with those involved in this process and look forward to more events, training opportunities, workshops, as well as a great Summer Camp being planned for January 2022 (Lord willing).

This past year also saw the launch of a revamped 'Catechism Experience' for individuals and families. The version we offered utilised an online platform and worked from the book 'Firm In The Faith' by Dennis Hustedt. Many people got involved and contributed online. I look forward to later this year to continue to offer the Catechism online to serve the youth and families of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and beyond.

Personally, this year has been unsettling and challenging with job security concerns, COVID lockdowns, and most recently, having to relocate and live in temporary accommodation due to storm damage to our residence. Despite the upheaval and challenges of these days, I will continue to trust the Lord in the midst of it.

Andrew Edmonds
Youth Ministries Director

See For Yourself Primary

The CENC continues to oversee the writing and production of a primary version of 'See for Yourself'. The entire project is quite large, which creates difficulties for the committee as it seeks to have lessons published online. The committee is now working towards consolidating the lessons that have been written, which involves further editing of content, and improving design and layout. The prayer is that in due course, these lessons will be made available on our website.

Conclusion

The committee is thankful for Mr Robert Allan, whose legacy lives on through the generous bequest he made in 1875. The committee owes Mr Allan a debt of gratitude for his significant financial contribution to advancing the Christian faith amongst the youth of Victoria.

Matthew F W James
CONVENER

CHURCH AND NATION COMMITTEE (Min 108)

Committee composition and membership

Since the October 2020 General Assembly, the committee has welcomed three new members, Rev Michael Jensen, Rev Stephen McDonald, and Rev Jesse Walz. The current members are Rev Chris Duke (Convener), Mr Ian Waller (Secretary), Mr John Ballantyne, Mrs Jeanette McHardy, Mr Shane Robertson, the above new members, and Mrs Moira Deeming (researcher and non-voting).

Monthly Updates

The Church and Nation Committee publishes regular monthly updates prepared by our researcher. The goal of these updates has been to raise awareness and encourage prayer amongst our congregations, especially regarding issues that impact the free practice of Christianity in Victoria, Australia, and the world.

Due to the increasing pace and seriousness of changes to laws and regulations which impact the practice of Christian faith in Victoria over the past twelve months, the committee has commissioned its researcher to produce more and more Special Edition Updates which provide a detailed research report covering a single important issue, and have included:

- a) How civil, political, and religious rights are eroded in legislation.
- b) The National Curriculum.
- c) The Racial and Religious Tolerance Inquiry.
- d) Summary of COVID-19 vaccine views.
- e) The Change or Suppression Practices Prohibition Bill.
- f) The revised Child Safe Standards of the Victorian Commission for Children and Young People.

The committee's updates are distributed via the PCV Network to ministers, elders, and others (including some MPs, researchers from other organisations, and leaders from other denominations). It has been the committee's hope that church ministers would distribute these via local church email lists or print them out for congregations.

The committee has discovered that many people appreciate these updates. The intent has been to increase the distribution of these, and the committee is finding that many people outside of the PCV are also very appreciative of receiving them, especially some leaders in other denominations. Often, they write back and seek permission for circulation amongst their own denomination.

Facebook page

The committee has primarily used Facebook as a vehicle to share updates with other Christians and Christian Facebook pages, and to make it easier for Christians to share the committee's updates via social media. This strategy was successful in that the committee received much positive feedback and interaction from Christians who seemed less likely to hear about the updates in their churches than on Facebook.

No doubt, the page is also visited by people who would take an opposing view to the Presbyterian Church, especially concerning issues around sexuality and gender. The committee is mindful of this while seeking to be faithful in bearing witness to the truth of God's word. In time, the committee hopes that many people will visit the Facebook page and be encouraged in faith or challenged to consider the claims of Christ. In

recent months this appears to be taking place with an increased number of visits and likes recorded.

Thankfully, the very quiet Facebook page is beginning to get an increased number of visits and likes. Currently, the page has almost 500 'likes', of which 45% come from Metro Melbourne, 15% from regional Victoria, and 10% from Sydney, and the rest is small percentages from across Australia and overseas. Males make up 60% and females 40% of those 'likes'.

Data collected from Facebook over the past 12 months demonstrates that the Special Edition Updates are the most popular publications by far and that they have been able to gain traction with a wider non-Christian audience. They have shown the greatest interactions and generated the greatest positive feedback of all the posts. The last four Special Edition Updates averaged 75 likes, 55 comments, and 28 shares, respectively. A selection of politically active, left-leaning, atheist women was very appreciative and sent them to reporters and lawyers in their own networks as reference documents.

New website

In order to minimise costs and improve the functionality of the committee's website, it was decided to transfer all 'Religion in the Public Square' content (which was being hosted on its own website at great cost) to a 'page' or 'tab' on the main Church and Nation website. Additionally, the committee has taken this opportunity to undertake a wholesale redesign of the outward appearance and internal serviceability of the website, and it is currently a work in progress.

Video library and campaign project

The Church and Nation Committee was recently provided with a generous donation to fund the first phase in creating a set of brief and winsome video resources for a new generation of 'visual consumers'.

This project is designed to:

- a) produce approximately 86 short videos (2–4 minutes long) within the next 12 months, projected to be 'culturally useful' for at least ten years. The videos will utilise a mixture of customised animated graphics and audio effects, as well as a diverse range of presenters/narrators and range from approximately 2–4 minutes long.
- b) communicate the core beliefs of the denomination as part of a timely, accessible and 'shareable' rebuttal to claims made about PCV beliefs by malicious or ignorant social commentators and by advocates of severe restrictions on Christian religious freedom.
- c) enable the committee to increase its effectiveness by expanding its communication toolkit as it raises awareness about proposed and/or enacted legislation that is likely to negatively impact Christians and the church.

The committee has engaged Nourishing Media, a Christian owned multimedia production company, to create the videos. They have been operating for 11 years and have previous experience with similar clients and projects, including the 2020 March for the Babies campaign. The committee is gratified that they, along with the committee, are praying for the divine effectiveness of each video as they are produced.

The team at Nourishing Media will work closely with a subcommittee of the Church and Nation Committee to produce the videos. The Church and Nation subcommittee will

initially comprise Rev Chris Duke (convener), Rev Peter Barnes, Rev Darren Middleton, Rev Neil Chambers, and Rev Benjamin Nelson as theological researchers and scriptwriters, and Mrs Moira Deeming as a consultant. Additional Presbyterian ministers or other relevant experts will also be invited as necessary to contribute to specific video topics soon.

Although the style of these videos targets an audience from the younger 15–40-year-old cohort, the committee also hopes and prays that these videos will be a blessing to the whole of the PCA and also to the wider community. The committee also sees them very much as part of its kingdom work.

As such, the committee will make the videos free and publicly available on the Church and Nation website (and other multimedia platforms). The committee prays that God will bless the significant amount of money, planning, effort, and expertise invested in this project. The committee also prays that the finished library of videos will have such high-quality content and production value that both Christians and non-Christians, and all Christian organisations, will be pleased to use and promote them. The committee will also invite churches and individuals to participate through giving to the project as well. More will follow, especially after we complete some early videos.

The committee would ask for prayer for the success of the project, that God would graciously provide the additional funds necessary to complete it.

March for the Babies

The committee supports and promotes the work of the March for the Babies rally each year. It is highly likely that this year's event will have to be held online, just as last year's was.

The March for the Babies committee needs people willing to give their testimony on camera or have their testimony spoken by a friend or actor (to protect identities). These testimonies can be about the damage of abortions or the joy of having avoided the pressure to have an abortion. As such, the March for the Babies committee has asked that the Church and Nation Committee request prayer that people will come forward and bear witness to the evil of abortion in such a way that they might warn a younger generation who have been lied to about the benefits and morality of abortion.

The March for the Babies rally will be held this year on Saturday, 9 October 2021. Details will follow.

Multifaith Advisory Group

The committee convener Christopher Duke replaced Rev Graham Bradbeer as the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Representative on the Victorian State Government Multifaith Advisory Group in November 2020. The membership of this committee has enabled some direct communication with Victorian State Cabinet members during lockdowns and is a means of communicating the committee's thoughts. One victory was around ministers being allowed to provide personal pastoral care as the State was coming out of lockdown in late 2020. The committee would like to take this opportunity to thank Graham for his years of faithful service over many years as the PCV Multifaith Advisory Group representative.

Campaigning

The Church and Nation Committee has had an extremely busy year in terms of campaigning against what can reasonably be described as anti-Christian legislation. At times, the committee has acted ahead of others in this sphere, but at all times, the committee has worked collaboratively across political, religious, and cultural divides, always remembering that it represents Christ and the denomination. Some of the organisations that the committee was blessed to build constructive relationships with include:

- The Coalition for Biological Reality
- The Australian Christian Lobby
- The Australian Family Association
- Freedom For Faith
- The Institute for Public Affairs
- True Arrow Events
- CAUSE (Coalition Against Unsafe Sexual Education) and its affiliate Free to Change
- LGB Alliance
- Women's Guild Victoria
- Women's Place Tasmania
- Partners For Ethical Care (USA & International)
- Family Voice Australia

Specific campaigns

1. Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 (Vic)

Throughout this campaign as a whole, the committee collaborated with many other people of faith, faith organisations, and interestingly, with many people and organisations that oppose the tenets of Christianity and yet who align with the Presbyterian Church in opposition to transgender ideology. This was a very intense period of time and was quite exhausting, physically, emotionally, and spiritually, for the committee, especially because, as is now known, the legislation was passed in full, without amendments.

Background: building on the previous year's monthly Updates, which warned of this legislation, from early November, the committee embarked on a concerted, wide-ranging campaign to build a movement of opposition. The committee aimed to promote awareness about the Bill, prompt members of the denomination to register their disagreements with MPs and the media and to find and collaborate with other groups who opposed it, and ultimately, to have it fail to pass both Houses of Parliament.

One of the groups the committee collaborated with was the organisation, Free To Change, which had conducted some helpful research debunking the claims of the Government that current Christian practices such as prayer, counselling, and teachings about homosexuality and transgenderism are harmful. They requested that the committee's researcher create a video wherein she interviewed an ex-lesbian, Leah Gray, about the consequences of the upcoming Bill. This video, which humanised and legitimised the concept of being 'ex-gay', was distributed widely across denominations, social media, and to MPs. It received much positive feedback, in particular, from families who had not properly understood how their parental and religious rights were at risk. This led to a further opportunity to collaborate with Ms Gray, helping her write and submit a successful article for the Spectator, which helped humanise the claim that seeking to live according to God's commands can be healing, as well as a full testimony which was published in The Australian Presbyterian online and widely shared amongst Christians.

After the Bill passed the State Parliament Legislative Assembly (lower house), the committee intensified its campaign and focused on building support for amendments in the Legislative Council (upper house). Toward this goal, the committee prayed for, sought out, and received some generous anonymous donations from members of one particular PCV church and one other denomination, and together funded the work of Mark Sneddon, Lawyer and Executive Director at the Institute For Civil Society (I4CS). The result was a proposal paper, backed by expert legal arguments and thorough research, which outlined the fundamental flaws in the Bill and proposed a set of reasonable recommendations that MPs could propose in Parliament. Notably, these were of such high quality that they were gladly proposed in Parliament by at least 5 MPs and have also since been utilised as a blueprint by opponents to the very similarly worded Tasmanian proposed Suppression Practices legislation.

The committee would like to express its deep thanks to all ministers, elders, and congregants for their engagement during this time. The committee knows that all of the letter and email writing, the phone calls, and the personal meetings with MP's were a burden, albeit a worthy one, upon all. Even though the Bill was passed without amendments, God has blessed everyone's efforts in this campaign by helping the committee to find and forge strong relationships with like-minded people, organisations, and MPs.

Note: the committee has been told that the Liberal Party will bring amendments to the Parliament should they win the next state election. A subcommittee met with Neil Angus MP to discuss the validity of the promise, advising him that unless the promise was made official public policy and published on their website, people would be likely to view it as insincere. Further, the committee spoke of its deep disappointment with the lack of conviction shown by most Liberal MPs on this basic issue of freedom, in particular, religious and parental rights. The committee drew attention to the widely felt disappointment and betrayal felt by Christians who were Liberal voters or who preferenced the Liberals. The committee suggested that the message they sent by abstaining from the vote in the Lower House was one of lack of conviction, and the message sent by the majority (7 of 9) Liberal MLC's voting in favour of the unamended legislation, was one of 'playing politics' rather than standing on principle. They bothered to proposed excellent amendments that the committee and others had worked hard to provide for them, but once these failed to pass, they simply gave the Bill their full support. The committee suggested that the overall message the Liberal Party had sent to their Christian and conservative voter base was that they did not, in fact, represent their interests at all and that they had until the election to change that view.

2. The COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020

On 24 April 2020, the Victorian Parliament passed the COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020, which introduced a wide-ranging package of temporary powers for government and government agencies, and temporary restrictions of individual freedoms, as part of the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These powers have since been regularly extended and altered just prior to their expiry.

The Omnibus Act is the source of authority for lockdown measures (among other things). The Church and Nation Committee has closely watched the evolution of rule changes over time, and in every instance where churches were subjected to unequal restrictions as compared with other like bodies or activities, the committee contacted

MPs and registered its disappointment through email campaigns (and often found support in the Liberal Democrats and the Liberals).

For example, the committee created an official Parliamentary e-petition, asking to re-open churches that can meet the same physical criteria as restaurants and other clubs that were allowed to open. The petition was sponsored (presented and argued for in Parliament) by Bernie Finn MLC. This reasonable request was ignored, with many MPs simply walking out of Parliament.

3. Education and Training Reform Amendment (School Employment) Bill 2020

In late 2020, Fiona Patten of the Reason Party announced her intention to legislate to remove Christian chaplains from State Schools. The committee immediately moved to raise awareness within the denomination through the Monthly Update and began pre-emptively lobbying against the idea to MPs via email.

Many politicians indicated that they did not take Ms Patten's announcement seriously and suggested that she would not actually produce legislation or that if she did, it would not receive support because the Victorian Labor Party does not support private members bills. Whilst these communications were somewhat reassuring at the time and indicative of a growing relationship between the committee and various MPs, Ms Patten did, in fact, propose her legislation. Titled, *The Education and Training Reform Amendment (School Employment) Bill 2020*, it will prevent public schools from hiring non-teaching staff through a third-party provider if that third-party provider requires those staff to be professing Christians. In short, it is intended to prevent schools from engaging Christian chaplains, who provide an incredibly cost-effective and highly beneficial service to the students who voluntarily engage with them.

At the time of writing, the Bill has passed a first and second reading in the Upper House. Currently, debate on the bill is adjourned to give MPs time to study the Bill. As such, the committee is preparing for a second round of lobbying.

4. Federal Religious Discrimination Bill 2019 (Possible reintroduction)

Although this Bill was sidelined by serious criticisms during the first and second drafting phases, and then also by the COVID-19 pandemic, it appears that the Bill may be resurrected as a supposed 'conservative vote winner' in the upcoming Federal election.

The committee consulted with many Christian lawyers and organisations and wrote submissions for the first and second drafts of the Bill. Like so many others, the committee was appalled to find many serious and fundamental flaws, which, if enacted, would, in fact, reduce the amount of freedom Australians currently have.

The religious community, in general, is hopeful that a much better Bill will be designed based on principles of freedom rather than 'anti-discrimination exemptions' or that the Bill will remain off the national agenda. However, the LGBTQ+ lobby has since rallied and organised an impressive and widespread campaign to frame any such moves toward protecting religious freedom as a failure to protect human rights.

Either way, this issue remains unresolved, although the committee expects to hear more about this as the year ends.

5. The (Revised) Victorian Institutional Child Safe Standards

The 'legal persecution' of Christians and Christian organisations who refuse to abandon the biblical definition of marriage, gender, and sexuality is surely increasing.

The committee is currently preparing to raise awareness and help the denomination develop a strategic response to drastic changes to Child Safety Standards that will come into effect on 1 July next year. For in-depth information, the committee would draw the attention of Assembly members to the Church and Nation July Update.

In short, these standards are binding for every organisation in Victoria that provides services or facilities to children and have redefined a 'safe environment' to include affirmation and celebration of transgender and homosexual 'identities'. Organisations that fail to comply will face fines, de-registration, and de-accreditation. The government has said that more detail will be provided during the year.

Overview

The committee is mindful of the great need for the Lord to send a spiritual revival to the nation. The committee has witnessed the resistance to sound and reasonable arguments in support of the Christian faith and Christian understandings that have so much of the nation's heritage. In the face of this opposition, the Assembly is reminded that Christians wrestle not with flesh and blood but rather with 'spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places'. The faithful witness of those who put on the whole armour of God in the congregations of Presbyterian churches and the prayers of God's people are critical to realising future victories as Christians seek to advance the kingdom of God by the proclamation of the gospel in this world. It is the gospel, not politics, which is the primary hope and strategy for a more just and compassionate society.

COVID-19 and GAA meeting

The Committee is very aware of the imminent reality of COVID-19 vaccine passports for parts of regional Victoria, operating as a trial for the State. While there is a broader concern for the impact on society, the Committee's immediate concern is the potential impact on churches, should vaccine passports be required for entry into church services.

The General Assembly of Australia is due to meet on Tuesday 12 October to discuss this issue. Therefore, the Church and Nation Committee believes it would be prudent to wait for any resolution from that meeting before discussing the matter at the Victorian Assembly. The goal of such discussions, in the Committee's mind, is for a unified response and action plan for the potential legal requirement of vaccine passports. Therefore, the Committee believes the Assembly should reconvene shortly after receiving communication from the GAA to discuss how to implement any decisions made there on the State level.

In response to the most recent announcements of the State Government concerning the mandatory vaccination of authorised workers, including ministers and church volunteers, there is a need for the Church to inform the Government of its position (2021 BB min 11 (6)) and seek a remedy for those whose consciences prevent them from complying.

COVID-19 – post GAA meeting

In bringing a report on the way forward for PCV congregations as the government moves the community out of lockdowns, the committee acknowledges the tremendous work that has been done to maintain effective Christian ministry in challenging times.

Individual sacrifices have been made to ensure that ministries have continued and people have been prayed for, nourished with the word, and cared for in practical ways. The use of emerging technologies within congregations by ministers, sessions, boards, and individual members has made possible the proclamation of the gospel in ways that perhaps never would have been imagined. Live streaming of worship services and zoom gatherings for prayer, bible study, and business meetings of the church have opened new doors through which the gospel has been shared. Many people within PCV churches have worked hard to maintain these new forms of ministry and the committee thanks God for their faithful service throughout the church.

As the pathway to return to physical gatherings for worship, fellowship, and service continues to be rolled out, assembly members need to reflect upon what the Lord has done to inspire new ministry experiences that will continue to be useful. There is also a need for all to encourage each other to continue to endure hardships that may be imposed by secular authorities with much grace and as true witnesses of the gospel we proclaim. The apostle Peter reminded his friends who were living under the rule of Nero and Domitian, two very oppressive rulers, ‘Honour everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the emperor’ (1 Pet 2:17). The present challenge is to harness all that God has taught us through these difficult times and remain faithful to him in moving forward in each of our congregations.

The Commission of the General Assembly of Australia, 12 October 2021

The General Assembly of Australia met to address an overture concerning Vaccine Certificates on the issue of separation and exclusion of worshippers based on their COVID-19 vaccine status. After wide and considered discussion, the General Assembly of Australia decided the following:

- 1) Exhort all members and ministers to work hard at maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, treating issues of vaccination as a matter of liberty of conscience not determined by church law (Rom. 14:22, 15:4; WCF chapter 20).
- 2) Affirm that in light of the Bible’s teaching on the free offer of the gospel and the unity of the Church, the Presbyterian Church of Australia does not desire anyone to be denied entry for the public worship of God on the grounds of vaccination status.

The Victorian Church and Nation Committee notes that (1) is very similar to what the May 2021 Commission of Assembly decided.

The challenge of applying (2) to the Victorian Roadmap and the ‘COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination (Workers) Directions’ recently released by the Acting Chief Health Officer is the issue at hand. The committee recognises that each session will be faced with difficult decisions concerning how it will conduct worship services and ministry once churches are allowed to reopen. The committee therefore suggests the following as options for sessions to consider when opening of services is available:

- a. Continue to conduct online services only while waiting in gospel solidarity until the whole congregation can legally join as one;
- b. For the sake of maintaining the unity of and ministry to those who may otherwise be excluded, hold multiple in-person services in smaller groups subject to the relevant limits until larger gatherings can be held;
- c. Provide a hybrid of in-person and online worship services; or
- d. Something other than a–c.

The Victorian Roadmap for reopening

To assist sessions in managing the implementation of their plans to reopen or otherwise the committee provides a summary of the Victorian Roadmap, noting that this is subject to change.

70% double dosed of 16+

METRO

Funerals - 20 fully vaccinated indoors and 50 fully vaccinated outdoors

Weddings - 50 fully vaccinated outside

Religious services - 50 fully vaccinated (DQ4) outdoors; 20 unknown status (DQ4) outdoors

REGIONAL

Funerals - 30 fully vaccinated indoors and 100 fully vaccinated outdoors

Weddings - 30 fully vaccinated indoors and 100 fully vaccinated outdoors

Religious services - 30 fully vaccinated indoors (DQ4) and 100 fully vaccinated outdoors (DQ2); unknown vaccination - up to 20 persons per facility (DQ4)

80% double dosed of 16+

ALL VICTORIA

Religious services - 150 fully vaccinated indoors (DQ4) and 500 fully vaccinated outdoors (DQ2); unknown vaccination - up to 20 persons (DQ4)

80% double dose of 12+

Victoria will transition to the National Plan, but the committee has no details for what will be required or allowed for religious gatherings.

Potential Penalties

The Victorian Government has threatened severe penalties for any individual or organisation who tries to 'game the system' or not comply. Consider the following:

- A person or body corporate providing false or misleading information about vaccination status may be fined: \$10,904.40 for an individual; 300 penalty units for a body corporate (\$54,522).
- From 15 October, employers must not allow anyone who is working away from home who has not received their first vaccination or made an appointment to receive their first dose by 22 October (or who is not exempt) to work on site. There is a penalty of up to 120 penalty units (\$21,808) for an individual or up to 600 penalty units (\$109,044) for a corporation.

Any session considering whether to defy the Government's mandates in these areas must consider whether it is able to pay such significant fines, and whether it is willing to have unvaccinated persons in its congregation face such serious penalties.

Inconsistent situation in regional churches

The committee brings to the Assembly's attention a frustration for regional churches, who under the current rules are able to meet for worship in groups of 20 regardless of vaccination status. The newly imposed rules for vaccinated workers raises the possibility of, for example, an unvaccinated person being able to attend worship but being unable to move one seat over to be on the sound desk. The committee does not believe this situation is logical and rather believes it is an unnecessary strain on churches with no health benefits.

Christopher Duke
CONVENER

CHURCH PLANTING COMMITTEE (Min 60)

This year, the committee has continued its assigned duties.

Numbers 11–14

The committee knows all too well the grumbings of the people of God (life is hard, the food is not as good as before, and God's appointed leader is not so special) and the bad report the ten spies gave the people of Israel as they were near the promised land. The committee hears the grumbles that say planting churches is too hard. It hears the nostalgia that says if only we could go back to the good old days when everyone went to church and children were in Sunday School. It hears the bad reports that say Australian culture is too far gone, and we are but grasshoppers.

It is easy to complain, easier still to listen to the bad reports, and almost natural to conclude that we should give up and go home. The mission, making disciples of all nations, and especially the Australian nation, at times, seems all too difficult. Australians, in particular Victorians, are more like concrete than good soil. The parliament is wielding the sword and makes laws that harm and sometimes fail to protect the vulnerable. The rhetoric at times could suggest Australians live in a land that devours Christians.

The Assembly needs to stop and listen to the words of the two who entered God's rest: 'we are well able to take the land' (Num 13:30), and 'the LORD is with us' (Num 14:9). Assembly members need to remember our Lord Jesus has bound the strong man (Matthew 12:29), and he will build his church (Matt 16:18).

This does not mean the task is easy. It does not mean that we will face no opposition. Nor does it mean the decisions to go forward will be natural. The flesh still craves comfort, hates hard work, and would prefer the simple life. Christians, however, have not been given a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power.

Presbytery Visits

During the last year, the Church Planter Evangelist (CPE) has visited and ran workshops with some presbyteries, while restrictions have hindered his ability to visit all presbyteries this past year. What is pleasing to the CPC is that of the visited presbyteries, all are favourably disposed to seeing new congregations established. Even while the desire to see new congregations come into being is present, there remains a number of barriers to planting congregations.

There is a natural concern about a new church being planted too close to an existing church that may lead to the existing church losing members. However, the overwhelming majority of elders and ministers recognised the great need for new gospel work, and the big challenge is how to find the property for them.

How many churches do we need?

The number of churches needed to reach a population is one question that was discussed by the CPE during the workshops. When presbyteries are considering the projected population growth within their bounds and the necessary increase in congregations to reach the new population, it is found that the need does not match the current expression. In regional towns, there often is a ratio of one congregation for every 10,000 people, sometimes even one for every 1,000 people. However, in metropolitan Melbourne, the ratio is more like one congregation for every 100,000

people, and with rapid population growth, that number is moving towards one for every 200,000. It is one thing to have a reformed presence in an area; it is quite another thing for the gospel of the Lord Jesus to significantly impact a population for his glory. The committee is praying for the latter.

How close is too close?

The second question raised by the CPE focused on the question of how close physically to an existing congregation was too close for a new congregation. Distances have varied, but often a figure of 10km was suggested to be about right in Metropolitan Melbourne. It is a nice round figure but again does not represent present practice. It also fails to recognise the increasing population density and slowing travel times, especially in inner Melbourne.

If just two metro congregations are considered, Scots' Melbourne and Surrey Hills, it can be seen that this arbitrary distance of 10km does not reflect the realities of current practice.

- Scots' CBD (14 congregations are within 10km): West Footscray, Essendon, Flemington, Williamstown, Darebin, Clifton Hill, Hawthorn, Auburn, Camberwell, South Yarra, St Kilda, Balaclava, Elwood, Malvern.
- Surrey Hills (15 congregations are within 10km): Heidelberg, Templestowe, Balwyn, Donvale, Hawthorn, South Yarra, Balaclava, Ashburton, Blackburn, Malvern, Caulfield, Auburn, Canterbury, Camberwell, Burwood.

If the Assembly is going to see new congregations established, especially in growing Melbourne, it needs to be comfortable with not only more churches but also bigger presbyteries and closer gospel works. The Assembly needs to let go of comfort and do all that some might be saved.

Current Church Plants

Officer

The Officer church plant is now nearing the end of year three. Many are aware of the difficulties the congregation has faced with the Local Government Area seeking to impose a great number of restrictions and charges upon the congregation in order to subdivide and obtain building permits. The congregation determined to seek VCAT adjudication. The committee is amazed by God's abundant grace. He has answered the prayers of the saints, and those barriers that were onerous have now been dropped by the Local Government Area and the need to come before VCAT was avoided. Please praise God, thank him, and ask for his wisdom to be granted to the session and board as they make plans for stage one of the master plan that will see facilities to seat 190 and parking for 57 established in the near future. Officer has also seen a great many who have visited but have not joined the church plant. Please pray with them that those who come will find a family, a home, and a place to serve Christ.

Donnybrook

The past two years have been tough for all ministries and congregations. The rolling lockdowns and restrictions as a result of COVID-19 have affected everyone in various ways. Still, in the midst of uncertainty and difficult times, the Donnybrook church plant commenced at the beginning of 2021 and is making steady progress. Challenges, like a place to meet, have been overcome, with God superintending all things to his glory. The only public space suitable in the rapidly developing Donnybrook became available to the congregation at just the right time. The soft launch went well, and the

congregation has met a number of small but significant milestones. A number of families have joined the congregation even during lockdown. While this is a cause for joy, there is still much to do. Please pray for Donnybrook as they continue to become established.

Need for land

The committee has flagged for a number of years the ongoing need for land. Some presbyteries are giving serious attention to their future needs as populations grow and shift within their bounds. The committee is excited to see presbyteries consider how they might redirect resources towards new works.

The committee has also been pleased to see congregations consider loaning money to the Property Development Fund so that it is better positioned to acquire property in the future. The committee continues to have properties come before it, which, while suited to future works, in good locations are simply out of reach due to limited funds.

SCPT distribution review

A few years ago, the Church Planting Committee and the Ministry Development Committee spent considerable time negotiating a recommendation to the Assembly for the distribution of the Scots' Church Property Trust. This saw a new ratio of distribution of 70:30 (MDC:CPC) introduced. While this change has occurred, both committees have not seen any income, as the distributions have been used to cover the costs incurred by the PCVTC v SCPT court case. The PCV authorised a delay to negotiations between the two committees, which was scheduled to bring a recommendation to this Assembly (BB 2020 min 48.10). The Church Planting Committee looks forward to meeting with the Ministry Development Committee following this Assembly to again consider the strategic priorities of the PCV and how the finite resource of the SCPT might best be deployed to that end.

During this dialogue, the Ministry Development Committee wants to continue to affirm, in line with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Vision Statement (BB 1997 min 50), that it must 'be aware of the culture in which we minister' and 'be prepared to take bold steps' so that 'there will be growth and maturity in existing churches' and 'new churches will be planted'. It is clear to the committee that some of the SCPT needs to be directed to the Property Development Fund if the PCV is to see new congregations firmly established with their own property.

New Position Description

In 2006, following a strategic review, the General Assembly dissolved the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee (often abbreviated simply as Home Missions) and created two new committees, today known as the Ministry Development Committee and the Church Planting Committee. At the same time, the Assembly approved a position description for the Church Planter Evangelist (BB 2006 min 89.6). It was the first time such a position description was developed, and the result was very brief. When it came time to make the first appointment, some four years later, a new position description was approved (BB 2010 (July) min 8.1). This position description currently resides in the Code, p. 204. A quick glance at the following position descriptions demonstrates how short a description it really is. The committee believes that this brevity, lack of detail, and specificity has at times led to consternation within the Assembly, the Church Planting Committee, the Board of Investment and Finance, the CPE himself, and others.

As the CPE's current contract is due to expire on 31 December 2022, it is now time to revisit the position description. The committee wants to make explicit what was implicit or assumed and to provide clarity to all involved in the work of church planting.

The first appointment desired to have a roving church planter who parachuted in for 24 months before passing the leadership of the newly established congregation over to a pastor who would continue the work while the CPE jumped straight into a new church plant. This plan, while exciting and visionary, was difficult to implement and faced significant problems.

The PCV has moved from church planting being under-resourced and seldom practised to being funded, having rules enacted to facilitate church planting and seeing six church plants established. The committee would like many more plants in the future, and it is excited by what God has done in 15 years and what he will do in the future.

Phase two of the church planting strategy for the PCV must recognise that planting churches, while once rare, now occurs with some frequency. The PCV also needs to be cognisant of the cultural changes that have occurred since the inception of the committee. No longer are public schools and community spaces readily available for church use. The PCV now needs to shift gear and build upon the work established to further entrench a culture of church planting. The committee wants to see the current crop of church plants that are established partner with presbyteries and work towards establishing new congregations. As such, the committee is proposing a new position description that will see it through phase two.

The committee has already consulted with the BIF, the Presbytery of Melbourne North, and the Safe Church Facilitator. Having made adjustments factoring in feedback, the committee desires broader comment and suggestions from the wider church, as this position is an Assembly appointment. With this in mind, the committee presents to the Assembly the current draft seeking the Assembly's endorsement of the road thus travelled and the path forward. The committee wants this process to be transparent and give the opportunity to hear from interested parties about what should be included or excluded from such a description.

The committee also, at this stage, proposes a change to the title of the position. This change seeks to follow the title of Ministry Development Officer. This will offer consistency across the two committees. The Church Planting Committee has found the Ministry Development Officer position description most helpful in revising the Church Planting Officer position description.

As the committee would like to see no gap between appointments, it desires to receive all feedback so that the position description can be considered at the May Commission. Necessary advertising and interviews can occur and a name brought to the 2022 Assembly, with the commencement of the new position to begin on 1 January 2023. The committee does not want to ask the moderator to call a special purpose meeting of the Assembly to do this.

The words of the position description together with terms of settlement are within clause six of the proposed deliverance.

Church Planting Conference

There has been a decline in overall interest in church planting across the state from the hay-days of a decade ago when it seemed that church planting was the flavour of the month. The committee needs to inspire and equip the next generation of church planters and their teams for the great task before them.

For this reason, the committee is running 'Advance', a church planting conference, on 19–20 November this year, Lord willing, and COVID permitting. The conference will tell the stories of what the Lord has done from the earliest days of the church and in more recent times in Victoria. It will consider the challenges and opportunities of being part of a church plant and invite people to prepare for action. It is for all those with a desire to reach our state with the gospel of the Lord Jesus through church planting and especially for the next generation of emerging leaders. David Jones will be the keynote speaker along with Derek Hannah, Murray Capill, and various local church planters. Assembly members can pray about whom they could bring along from their congregation.

The committee greatly appreciates the hard work and dedication of all its committee members over the past year.

Cameron Garrett
CONVENER

CLERK'S REPORT (Min 86)

RECORDS INSPECTION

The clerk is responsible for scrutinising presbytery and Assembly committee records (job description, point 4, p. 206 Code Book). Among other things, the clerk is required to:

- a) report on the state of the church's records with any necessary recommendations;
- b) furnish to clerks and conveners a statement on the records submitted, indicating any omissions, irregularities and recommendations inscribed on the records themselves;
- c) keep a permanent record of all comments on material matters inscribed in the records inspected.

Every clerk whose presbytery minute book was submitted has received a page or two of comments, and I am assured that this list of omissions, irregularities and recommendations is being considered and corrected where necessary.

Every convener whose committee minute book was submitted will shortly receive a page or two of comments, and I am assured that this list of omissions, irregularities and recommendations will be considered and corrected where necessary.

There are several presbyteries and committees who have not, despite being asked, submitted their minute books for inspection. Maybe the reasons are COVID related or maybe not. The clerk looks for full compliance next year as per rule 5.49.1, which binds all.

Without reciting the whole raft of feedback that's already been referred back to presbyteries and will be referred to committees shortly, which would cloud the picture with too much detail, there are two most recurrent faults that deserve the Assembly's attention.

1. Presbyteries

Some presbyteries do not understand how to call a 'Special Purpose Meeting' or an 'Urgent Meeting' and even appearing not to see the difference. There are instances in the last two years of a 'Special Meeting' of Presbytery (whatever that is) without any reference to it *at all* in the previous 'Ordinary Meeting'. I ask: 'On what authority has this Special Meeting been called?' and 'What legitimacy does any decision it purports to have made have?'

Each meeting of a presbytery must be precisely designated, and only according to rule 4.14:

4.14 Types of meetings

Meetings of a presbytery are:

- a) Ordinary;
- b) Special Purpose;
- c) Urgent;
- d) Adjourned.

If it is to be (b) (Special Purpose), then the nature of the special purpose and the calling of the meeting ought to be specifically stated and appear in the minutes of the previous Ordinary Meeting.

If it is unforeseen business, then the only meeting you can call is (c) (Urgent), and the moderator's calling of it must be approved as the first item of business.

Sincere thanks and congratulations to some eleven heroes of the church: our PCV presbytery clerks. Keith Allen, David Brown, Robert White, Gary Stephens, Doug Fraser, Kevin Childs, Dean Carroll, John Ellis, Brett Cummins, Philip Burns and Ian Leach.

Theirs is an enormous load they carry—cheerfully and willingly—month after month in order to serve the Lord. Many hours of personal time is given in this labour – for our benefit. Some, like Kevin, have been clerking continuously for 25 nearly years. Is that the record from among those currently serving? Gold star for the neatest and most carefully compiled minute book: North Western Victoria.

2. Committees

Committees appear to be taking shortcuts with respect to email decision making. Therefore, on the extremely rare chance that a decision is challenged or complained of, its effectiveness will be seen to be shaky because the protocol of rule 5.20.4 has not been followed.

The use of this protocol enables a committee to decide a matter, but only if every member has been duly notified and any member given the chance to veto the process. The convener must table all responses at the next meeting of the committee.

The fact of the convener tabling responses and the final decision voted on should appear in the next minutes of the committee. Unless the decision is minuted, it cannot be verified that it was made.

On the whole, committee conveners and committee secretaries ought to be thanked and congratulated for the way they conduct business. Gold star award to the neatest committee book: Women's Ministries Victoria Committee, runner-up: APWM(Vic) Committee.

John P Wilson
CLERK OF ASSEMBLY

CLERKSHIP COMMITTEE (Min 61)

The committee has met only once since last reporting to the General Assembly, and, owing to COVID lockdown restrictions, the meeting was conducted via Zoom. All other business has been conducted quite satisfactorily by email protocol.

Once again, the committee is indebted to the committee members for their willing co-operation and faithful commitment to the tasks at hand. All members have participated fully in the committee's business, and Doug Fraser, who is up for re-election this year, is willing to continue as a member of the committee.

In seeking to exercise its duty of providing pastoral care and support for the clerk, the committee is very much aware of the increasingly heavy and varied workload John Wilson carries. He is in many ways the public face of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and has to deal with many public interactions and demanding situations about which most Assembly members know nothing. He is usually also the first port of call for people who want information and have a problem that needs solving. There are many, many calls on his time, knowledge, and wisdom, and his responses are invariably gracious, patient, thoughtful, and tactful. The Assembly is greatly blessed to have as its clerk a man with a passion for the work of the Gospel and a deep love and clear vision for the denomination he serves. Assembly members should give thanks to God for John Wilson and often pray for him.

In his report to the Assembly via the Clerkship Committee, which is included below, the clerk expresses his deep appreciation for the work of Peter Phillips, Dean Carroll and Siew Teng Yap. This committee wishes to add to that and express appreciation for their work on behalf of the Assembly and to give thanks to God for the provision He has made for the Assembly through them. The Assembly must never take them for granted.

Accordingly, the committee once again acknowledges its thankfulness to God for the work done by the Deputy Clerk, Peter Phillips, and the Assistant to the Clerks, Dean Carroll. The clerk has in both of them men who provide invaluable support in his work as clerk, and their presence adds considerably to the work of this committee in supporting the clerk. While their roles, by very definition, mean that they do not carry the same load as the clerk, they are nevertheless very committed to supporting him and serving the Assembly in whatever capacity is required. Again, the committee gives thanks to God for them and ask Assembly members to pray for them.

Finally, the committee wishes to acknowledge the work of Siew Teng Yap, known affectionately to most as ST. Few have not benefitted from ST's expertise, efficiency, generosity of spirit, and gracious warmth whenever they have had occasion to ring the Church Office. How blessed the Church is that God gave her a heart to serve the Church with such efficiency and loyalty. Assembly members should uphold ST before the Lord as she assists John, Peter, and Dean in their various tasks, and serves the Church so graciously.

Acting Deputy Clerk Appointment

The Deputy Clerk, Rev Peter Phillips, will be Moderator of the General Assembly for 2021–2022, so after consultation with the clerks, the Clerkship Committee has appointed the Assistant to the Clerks, Rev Dean Carroll, as Acting Deputy Clerk for the

duration of Peter's period as Moderator, and approved his receipt of an honorarium equivalent to that currently received by the Deputy Clerk.

The Assembly Clerk's Report

In my 41st year of ordination and 16th as the clerk, I am very grateful to God for preserving me in mind, body, and soul such that I may continue to serve my master with full energy and concentration. One's health, sharpness of mind, and general well-being are all God's gifts, and there is nothing in that to take for granted or of which to be boastful. Despite my personal unworthiness, God has decided to allow me to continue working for the Church this past year.

In previous years' reports, I have described the work in its various capacities and assessed progress in each area of the clerk's role. I thought it might be more useful this year to say that all of what I have reported on previously continues and so to report only on those areas where circumstances have changed or pressures emerged.

In brief, everything from 1(a) to (r) listed as specific duties of the clerk continues to be faithfully, diligently, constantly attended to except for:

- (g) 'periodic training with respect to the media and other outside bodies', for reasons previously stated; and
- (l) 'provide annual training of presbytery clerks and committee representatives', although this does take place incidentally as I visit each presbytery during the year and interact with clerks upon return of minute books.

The same can be said of duties listed under 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 (see Code pp. 205–206).

The particular blessings and challenges of the last Assembly year, 2020–2021:

- COVID restrictions affecting churches change—infrequently, but at times with little warning. Though we are all used to these restrictions now, and we react accordingly to comply, ministers and elders still look to the PCV office for guidance and confirmation that they are doing the right thing. In the absence of a specific direction, I have stepped in to provide fresh and reliable advice each time the rules change. My unofficial COVID advice committee being: Dean Carroll, Andy Buchan, Andrew Vines, Stephen McDonald, Luke Isham, and Cameron Garrett.
- Presbytery visits this year (mostly in-person, though three have had to be via Zoom) have been a significant blessing to me. What a privilege, as the clerk, to be invited to sit with each presbytery, to pray with them, and to listen and hear of struggles and blessings of the Church in each region. This is so helpful to me in terms of understanding the overall work and progress of the PCV as a denomination.
- I have altered the way in which inspection of presbytery minute books is accomplished (see specific role 4(a): 'records of all presbyteries to be deposited at the office of the Clerk two weeks prior to the meetings of the General Assembly for scrutiny by the clerks of the presbyteries'). In my opinion, asking presbytery clerks to meet for a day and trawl through all the minute books is not the best method for achieving consistent and useful inspection. It is not the competence of the clerks, but rather it is more to do with the time constraints and the fact that there are eleven different inspectors at work—a method that cannot achieve consistency. Thus, I have checked each one this year and discovered that serious improvements are needed in some areas.

- I think I shall do something similar regarding the inspection of committee minute books. The same set of eyes on each book is the way to go.
- It is a different scene now at the PCV Archive. I have to act as the interim archivist, and so I have spent two mornings recently at the archive learning where things are and how the system operates should there be an urgent request. There are three applications for the position, and I hope to bring a recommendation to the General Assembly for appointment.
- Personally, I have felt the pressure and the enormous burden of having to read and process National Redress Scheme requests for information, mandatory Commission for Children and Young People reports of child sexual abuse, and, of course, the Supreme Court writ. It seems that the amount of the clerk's responsibilities in dealing with outside bodies, government commissions on behalf of the denomination is not receding, but possibly it is escalating.
- Originating from instructions of the General Assembly, there has been more work assigned this year to the clerks and the Code Committee involving review and improvement of the structure within which the PCV operates. The Code Committee, along with members of the Trusts Corporation, is engaged in mounting scrutiny of rule, regulation, and trust deed in order to provide greater clarity for the Church regarding how we hold property and assets and how they may be applied for the work of the Gospel. This work is ongoing and will involve wide consultation across the Church and also learning from practice in the other state churches.

I have a great team: Peter Phillips, Dean Carroll, and Siew Teng Yap. We are genuinely a team. They are each precious to me in the work of the clerk.

Peter's understanding of what is the best and most appropriate solution to a problem is second-to-none, and his appetite for difficult assignments and willingness for hard work is inspiring. Peter's wisdom on polity, while maybe not appreciated or known widely, is first class, and he gives this service to the Church in a voluntary capacity while (allegedly) retired.

Dean's eye for detail and wisdom from the vantage of a younger generation minister is valued by the team. His meticulous work and willingness to give time to the job makes his work so valued. I repeat what Paul said of young Mark: 'Get Mark (Dean) and bring him with you because he is helpful to me in my ministry.'

While it is true that each of us can be replaced, because of the value-add she offers, Siew Teng is almost irreplaceable to me. We are so grateful for her bright and cheery presence, her initiative, and for the way she applies herself diligently and with great skill to any assignment for the benefit of the office of the clerk and for the good of the Church.

I have other interests I pursue that I believe add depth of understanding to my service as the clerk rather than compete with it:

- I serve Andrew Vines and Dean Carroll in a voluntary capacity at Reservoir as Assistant to the ministers, stepping in whenever needed.
- I serve Kangaroo Ground Presbyterian Church as Session Clerk because the congregation has only one very senior elder.

- I am deputy chair of Scotch College Council, where duties this year have increased as we search for a new principal.
- I am the convener of the Relations with Other Churches Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Australia as well as Acting Convener for PresAID, for which overseas visits (for the time, halted) are extremely useful.

This October, should I live that long, will be my 45th consecutive PCV General Assembly I have attended. I have enjoyed each one and look forward to many more in the years to come.

I doubt that we appreciate what a masterful contribution Andrew Melville made to the foundations of Presbyterian polity, nor in particular his gift of promoting the purpose and powers of the General Assembly. When Melville returned to Scotland in 1574, the polity of the Scottish Kirk was in a state of confusion. Despite the best efforts of John Knox and the influence of the First Book of Discipline, reform in polity had not taken effect. We were no closer to each congregation providing an adequate stipend for their own minister, nor a school in every parish. The government was wary of the Church, even in general Assembly, making her own decisions. Aristocrats and other wealthy patrons still had unacceptable control over which minister was appointed to which parish.

Government, especially in the hands of such men as the Earl of Morton (Regent from 1572 to 1578), was inherently opposed to any assembly which could meet at will and discuss what it liked; and men in high office...were invariably anxious to curtail the preachers' freedom. (Macleod, *Therefore, the Truth I Speak*, p. 89).

The genius of Andrew Melville's leadership (honed by Beza in Geneva) was that by his leadership and through the Second Book of Discipline, we enjoy freedom of association as a church to meet whenever we like, to decide what we like, and to establish how to govern our Church for the advance of the Gospel. Today, our congregations choose their own ministers, provide adequate income for them, and we are self-regulated through the courts of the Church, which regulation ultimately rests in the General Assembly. It was under Melville's influence that the Kirk finally departed from bishops, considered the biblical words 'presbyter' and 'bishop' as interchangeable, and regarded all ministers of the Gospel as equal.

Perhaps, we see the annual gathering called the PCV General Assembly as a chore or 'something to endure'. I hope not. We owe much to Andrew Melville, for at the heart of his lifelong struggle lay a passion for the right of the Church to convene its own General Assemblies free of outside control or pressure. We admire his fortitude for the cause and his bold assertions in church life and public life, together with his battles against James 1, brave suffering in the Tower of London and his ultimate exile to France, where he died aged 77.

In an era in which the state no longer listens to the Church and almost has no regard for the Church, we do not sense how precious the General Assembly is. There is a symbolic statement each time the moderator constitutes the meeting in prayer because we are declaring at that moment that we decide as prayerful elders, meeting in the presence of God, what the Church is to do. The privilege and freedom of meeting together during the first week of October each year was hard-won.

John P Wilson
July 2021

Proposed Mission to Malawi and Zambia

The Assembly's attention is drawn to the fact that the clerk has been unable to conduct his planned Mission to Malawi and Zambia this year, but that he still intends to make the planned visit as soon as he is able, and this committee intends to honour the undertaking given to the clerk as indicated in the committee's previous report to Assembly.

Robert White
CONVENER

CODE AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (Min 69)

The committee met seven times since the October 2020 General Assembly to address matters referred to it.

1. Response to the Royal Commission

Members of the Assembly will no doubt remember the report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and especially the specific recommendations relative to churches. The General Assembly ad hoc Committee reported that while the Presbyterian Church of Victoria had fully implemented most of the Royal Commission's 28 recommendations to religious institutions, there remained two recommendations not yet attended to. The committee is addressing the remaining recommendation (16.39) relating to conflict of interest, via Overture 5.

Recommendation 16.42, namely that 'each religious institution should require that candidates for religious ministry undergo external psychological testing, including psychosexual assessment, for the purposes of determining their suitability to be a person in religious ministry and to undertake work involving children' is not addressed anywhere in the current rules, regulations, policies, or procedures of the PCV.

This matter may in part be addressed by the addition of a clause to the Ministry Development Committee's regulations (reg 7). Clause 1 of the proposed deliverance advances this proposal to the Assembly.

2. BIF reg 12 and principles for GMP recipients

Arising from the instruction of the General Assembly (GAV 2020 min. 19.2), the committee proposes a new Board of Investment and Finance regulation 12 in response to the Assembly's adoption of guiding principles for GMP distribution. The committee has consulted with the Board of Investment and Finance and gained its approval.

Clause 2 of the proposed deliverance advances the change to Board of Investment and Finance regulations to the Assembly.

3. Returns from remits: Safe Church requirements for appointments (rules 3.40, 3.45, 4.70, 4.132)

This 2020 overture brought to the General Assembly a proposal to insert Working with Children Check compliance and Safe Church training into the rules as necessary qualifications prior to appointment as deacons, congregational officers, pastoral support, resident supply, and inducted ministers.

The Presbytery of Melbourne East disapproved the change with respect to rule 4.132 on the basis that there does not seem to be adequate provision for those who might be called from overseas who will need a subscribed call in order to enter Australia before they can comply with these Safe Church requirements.

The committee is thankful for the point raised but is not convinced that it warrants bringing a further overture to the Assembly on this matter on the basis that there is written confirmation from the Safe Church Unit that 'promise of compliance with safe church requirements upon entry to Victoria is sufficient base upon which to continue the process of call.' Of course, should the Assembly instruct, the committee will gladly comply and raise a further overture on the matter.

Ten out of the eleven presbyteries approved the changes. Clause 3 of the proposed deliverance advances the change of rules.

4. Returns from remits: boards and church courts meeting online (rules 2.12A, 2.38.6, 6.12A)

This 2020 overture brought to the General Assembly a proposal to insert into the rules specific permission for boards and church courts to meet online (via technological means). It came to the committee's attention that boards and courts were doing this anyway, so this proposed change of rules will regularise current practice.

All eleven presbyteries approved the changes. Clause 4 of the proposed deliverance advances this to the Assembly.

5. Returns from remits: boards and church courts to use email protocol for decision-making (rules 2.38.7-9, 6.12B)

This 2020 overture brought to the General Assembly a proposal to insert into the rules specific permission for boards and church courts to use email protocol for decision-making. It came to the committee's attention that some boards and courts were doing this anyway, so this proposed change of rules will regularise current practice.

All eleven presbyteries approved the changes. Clause 5 of the proposed deliverance advances this to the Assembly.

6. Building and Property Committee regulations

The appointment of a new Church Architect has brought issues into sharp focus, and the time was right to clarify and sharpen certain parts of both the regulations and rules relating to the appointment of a church architect and the expectation of this office. The Code Committee has worked consultatively with the Building and Property Committee and, with its agreement, is advancing the proposed change to its regulations in clause 6 of the proposed deliverance.

7. GAA Overture—deacons vows

The Victorian Assembly introduced rules relating to diaconal ministry in 1999, recognising an office of the church with 'ministry distinct from that of elders or managers' (GAV rule 3.40.1).

It was pointed out to the committee that the GAA vows that are to be used in setting apart deacons requires a doctrinal commitment and assigns a giftedness that elevates in part the requirements for diaconal ministry to that more equivalent to eldership, especially vows 2 and 4. The committee believes that it is an unwarranted expectation that those serving in diaconal ministry must 'assert, maintain and defend' the Westminster Confession of Faith as their confession of faith, or 'assert, maintain and defend' the Presbyterian form of government as founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto.

The committee believes the best way to address this apparent confusion between what should be the standard expected of an elder and that of a deacon is for the GAV to approach the General Assembly of Australia via overture, asking the GAA to modify the deacon's vows. Clause 7 of the proposed deliverance will seek Assembly's agreement to overture the GAA in this regard.

8. Sustentation Fund and Grants: MDC and MMC

The Ministry Development Committee and the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee have agreed that the better place for determining Sustentation Grants lies with the Ministry Development Committee. In the past, it has sometimes been the case of the right hand not knowing what the left hand is doing: the MDC not always being informed of sustentation grants being awarded and to which congregations by the MMC. It makes better sense to make the MDC the grant-awarding committee of the church so as there is a one-stop-shop for all grants and clause 8 of the proposed deliverance seeks to make this change.

9. BIF reg 17 and the Model Trust Deeds

The 2020 General Assembly (min. 63) instructed the committee as follows:

3. Request the Code and General Administration Committee and the BIF to report to the October 2021 General Assembly on possible amendments to BIF Regulation 17 that would provide for an Assembly declaration of purpose for funds held in Sites Reserve Accounts.
4. Request the Code and General Administration Committee to report to the October 2021 General Assembly on the question of whether a purpose for the proceeds of the sale of property declared pursuant to clause 5 of the Model Trust Deed can be changed, and, if not, make recommendations as to what amendments to the Model Trust Deed or the rules and regulations of the church would be necessary to make such change possible.

The committee has worked diligently on this, consulted with the Board of Investment and Finance/Trusts Corporation several times and together, significant progress has been made. It is a complex issue, and the committee has made every effort to bring proposed alterations to the Model Trust Deeds (MTDs) and corresponding amendments to the BIF regs to achieve a workable outcome. After many consultations, the committee believes it is ready to advance a proposal that will satisfy the Assembly's request.

While noting that the alteration of the MTDs will be advanced to the Assembly by Overture 8, it is important to remember that the alterations proposed to BIF reg 17 in clause 9 of the proposed deliverance will only be operative alongside, and subordinate to, the proposed newly worded MTDs. Overture 8 proposes additional words to the MTDs which accommodate the 2020 GAV request as well as the carry-over request from 2019 in regard to the new rule 4.68A (union of congregations).

10. Appointment of the Selection Committee

It is given to this committee the task of presenting to the General Assembly nominations for the Selection Committee. Clause 10 of the proposed deliverance advances these names.

11. Doing away with mandatory ACRs

The 2019 General Assembly (Min. 80.3) instructed the committee as follows:

Direct the Code and General Administration Committee to bring to the 2020 General Assembly proposed amendments to Code rules and committee regulations so that all charges other than those required to submit under clause 2 above, shall submit annually to presbytery, for approval and transmission to the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee, audited

Financial Statements, Terms of Settlement, and proposed budget, as approved by the Annual Congregational Meeting.

The committee has worked diligently on this and consulted with the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee and has made significant progress. However, the committee does not believe it is ready at this time to advance a proposal that will satisfy the request. It is a very complex matter, and the committee considers that it would be best to continue its work and engage further with the MMC so as to arrive at an agreeable and reliable solution.

Following MMC approval, the committee will ask the clerk to visit and consult with presbyteries during 2022, seeking agreement or suggestions for improvements so that the committee can prepare a final version in time for the 2022 General Assembly. Advancing changes now that will then need further revision later is not in the best interests of the church.

12. Other overture proposals

It is noted that both the Ministry Development Committee and the Presbytery of Maroondah presented overture proposals for the committee to consider. Considering that they arrived late in the Assembly year, and also in the light of the fact that the substance of each requires significant consultation first, it was thought wise to delay these until next year.

John P Wilson
CONVENER

COMMISSION FOR CHURCH INSTITUTIONS (Min 23)

At the time of writing, the following appointments have been made for the 2021–2022 council years:

Belgrave Heights Christian School Council

i) General Assembly – Presbyterian nominees (7):

Mr Ian Birchall
Mr Ian Byles
Rev Warwick F Davidson
Mr Andrew Edmonds
Mr Tom Hoerner
Mr Dirk Jackson (*chair*)
Mr Chris White

ii) BHCS Association (Parents Association) nominees (4):

Mrs Sandra Aggromito
Mrs Yolanda Cox
Mrs Amanda Wight
Mr Trent Young

Presbyterian Ladies College Council

Group A appoint:

Mrs Fiona J Hare
Mr Daniel J Gregor
Rev Benjamin P Johnson
Mrs Elizabeth McGregor
Dr Peter Y K Yong

Group B appoint:

Ms Mui-Chun Chew
Mrs Sze Lin Foong
Mrs Christine Hopper
Dr Tanya Josev
Dr Andrew McDonald

Group C approve & appoint:

Mr Wing Chang
Rev Mark Chew (*chair*)
Mrs Priscilla Mellado
Mr Wayne Rice
Mrs Kate Sampson
Ms Andrea Sim
Mr Ben de Waard

St Andrews Christian College Board

i) Nominator, the Presbytery of the bounds:

Mrs Susan Dunn, term concludes 2021
Mr Vincent Lopes, term concludes 2021
Rev Brian Harvey, term concludes 2022
Mr James Bligh, term concludes 2023 (*chair*)

ii) Nominator, retiring members of the Board:

Mr Peter Lewis, term concludes 2021
Rev Dean Carroll, term concludes 2022
Mrs Sharon Rowland, term concludes 2023
Mr Jonathan Green, term concludes 2023

iii) Nominator, the Company in General Meeting (Parent Group):

Mr Sab Ambrosino, term concludes 2022
vacancy, term concludes 2022
Mr Thomas Chong, term concludes 2023
Mr Alan MacGavin, term concludes 2024

Scotch College Council**Group A appoint:**

Mr David P Graham
Mr W Duncan McGregor
Rev Graham J Nicholson
Mr John Walter
Rev Dr John P Wilson

Group B appoint:

Mr Jonathan P Buckley
Mr Peter M Findlay
Mr Robert W Phillpot
Mr Alex T Sloan (*chair*)
Mr Andrew A G Wilson

Group C approve & appoint:

Mr James C Douglas
Mrs Alison J Legge
Mr Richard J Loveridge
Mrs Fiona M Pearce
Mr Michael K Sim
Ms Debra J Stirling
Mr Hamish R Tadgell

John P Wilson
CLERK OF ASSEMBLY

DEFENCE FORCE CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE (Min 59)

The Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee exists to support the work of Defence Force Chaplaincy. The committee comprised the following people: Rev Trevor Cox, Rev Philip Mercer, Rev Bryce Wiegandt, and all Defence Force Chaplains serving in Victoria.

It is with deep appreciation that the committee says farewell to two of its members—Rev Trevor Cox and Rev Bryce Wiegandt.

- Trevor has served in Defence Force Chaplaincy, first as an active Army Reserve chaplain with the engineers and secondly as a member of this committee. His wisdom and love for the Lord are evident to all. The committee will miss him greatly.
- Bryce begins his first posting as an RAAF chaplain in South Australia, so the committee prays for his mission. He has had excellent preparation through studying at PTC, practising Bible study and one-to-one discipleship at Point Cook Presbyterian Church, being mentored by chaplains Peter Owen and Martin de Pyle, and being ordained into the ministry of the word and sacraments on Friday 4 December 2020.

Defence Force Chaplaincy is a role that encompasses an all-of-life ministry to the Defence members. On any given day, a chaplain may be giving instruction about character formation, then having a conversation about a miscarriage, then celebrating the advancement of a member, and then supporting others who face disciplinary action. COVID-19 has impacted greatly upon many members, whether that be separation from family, inability to advance because courses are cancelled, or missing significant family and home milestones.

Defence Force Chaplaincy has always been about taking Christ into the workplace. The workplace is often closed to most. However, chaplaincy offers a listening ear, counsel soaked in prayer, and being intentionally present when situations arise. Two areas that have been whispered about for many years are suicide and atrocities. Both have received extra attention through the Royal Commission of Veteran Suicide and the Inspector General's report into Afghanistan. The committee is tracking both areas.

Chaplains are religious practitioners serving in an unusual workplace. To support the multifaith nature of the ADF, the Religious Advisory Committee has produced the 2021 edition of *ADF@Worship: Services and Ceremonies for the ADF*, and *Faith and Belief: A Guide to Religious Practice in the ADF*. Both books contain all faith and religious practices that are found in the ADF, including Christian.

Chaplaincy in the ADF is not dissimilar from chaplaincy in other fields. The pressures for purely spiritual wellbeing support are growing within the ADF. The pressures are real and felt by many. The answer, this committee believes, is to present Christian chaplains who can engage with Defence members of all ranks from all different backgrounds and yet bring the presence of Christ into the midst. The ADF needs Christian chaplains.

The ADF released late last year a new set of values to which all Defence members are beholden. They are service, courage, respect, integrity, and excellence. These are useful in bringing a definition for Defence. The Christian chaplain can support these values, and when viewed through the lens of Scripture, they become empowered:

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversations be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (Col 4:2-6)

The committee implores this Assembly to pray for its Defence chaplains as they face not only the pastoral pressures that come with the ministry but equally the pressures to present Christ amongst the many tribes and nations that call Australia their home and serve in the ADF.

Chaplains who are currently members of the General Assembly are:

Navy

Chaplain Barry Porter	RAN	HMAS Cerberus
Chaplain Paul Lee	RAN	HMAS Cerberus
Chaplain Miles Fagan	RAN	HMAS Cerberus

Army

Chaplain Kyung Ee	ARES	School of Ordnance
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RAAF

Chaplain Peter Owen	RAAFSR	21 SQN RAAF Williams
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Miles Fagan
CONVENER

EXIT STUDENTS COMMITTEE (Min 62)

The Exit Students Committee meets with the sole function of the placement of exit students for ministry in charges where there is a reasonable prospect of obtaining a settlement. The membership of the committee varies from year to year. In 2021, the committee consists of Ministry Development Committee member Rev Gerald Vanderwert (Convener, reg 2(a)), Ministry Development Officer Rev Chris Siriweera, Principal of PTC Rev Peter Hastie, and a presbytery representative from each candidate's presbytery: Rev David Martin (Flinders), Rev Steve Jones (Gippsland), Rev Peter Orchard (Maroondah), Rev Ben Nelson (Melbourne East), Rev Luke Brownley (Melbourne North), and Rev David Schulz (South West Victoria).

In God's provision, there were six exiting PCV ministry candidates available for appointing this year; Marcus Campbell, Robert Koh, Brian Luong, Shady Mehanni, Ray Patchett, and Kalpan Vasa. They and their wives were interviewed by the committee.

The committee finalised the remaining appointments in September. The full list of appointments is:

- Marcus Campbell to Malvern.
- Robert Koh to Hamilton (working with Rev D Schulz).
- Brian Luong to Epping (working with Rev N Barbieri).
- Shady Mehanni to Warrnambool (working with Rev B Johnson).
- Ray Patchett to Warragul.
- Kalpan Vasa to Tatura-Rushworth.

Gerald Vanderwert
CONVENER

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE (Min 63)

The committee's responsibilities are twofold:

- to arrange for spiritual welfare through various forms of chaplaincy, and
- to support the pastoral care of ministers and their families.

Paediatric chaplaincy

Through a trust dedicated to the provision of paediatric chaplaincy—the Harold Hughes Trust—the committee has been able to employ professionally trained and qualified chaplains for several years, commencing with the appointment of one chaplain to the Royal Children's Hospital and peaking at four part-time chaplains across three major public hospitals. However, as the committee reported to the 2020 General Assembly, the continuing record low interest rates affecting the Trust necessitated reducing the number of paid paediatric chaplaincy positions to two. These are both 0.4 FTE positions assigned to the Royal Children's Hospital, Victoria's principal paediatric public hospital. The chaplains filling these positions are Mrs Gita Dickinson and Mrs Suzanne Oakes.

When Mrs Christine Le Page retired in June 2020, her position at Northern Health was deliberately not backfilled, but the service agreement between the PCV and Northern Health remains in place, should future funding make the position viable again.

The position at Western Health's Sunshine Hospital became redundant on 30 June this year, resulting in the termination of Mr Ian Waller's employment as a PCV paediatric chaplain. Ian held the position for over eight years, bringing great credit to himself and the PCV. In God's providence, he has now been snapped up as an employed chaplain with a non-denominational Christian aged care facility.

Even with the savings coming from the two staffing cuts, the medium to long term viability of the two remaining positions was looking grim. Whatever grant money the committee receives from the State Government's Safer Care Victoria, via the Spiritual Health Association,¹ has, since June 2020, been paid into the Hughes Trust to extend its longevity. However, the provision (or not) of a government grant is never more than a year-by-year proposition, typically decided too late for any reliable planning.

The situation has, however, now taken a significant turn for the better. That is because The Scots' Church Melbourne has provided a particularly generous grant specifically to support the ongoing provision of PCV paediatric chaplaincy to the Royal Children's Hospital. Therefore, with thanks to God, the committee believes it can now continue to fund its remaining paediatric chaplaincy positions for the foreseeable future.

During the last financial year, the committee's three paid paediatric chaplains recorded 1,335 patient contacts, compared with 1,286 patient contacts the previous year. It should be borne in mind that they have been working on the front line in public hospitals in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee is grateful for their outstanding efforts in difficult circumstances.

¹ The Spiritual Health Association (SHA) is the umbrella organisation representing pastoral care services and faith communities providing chaplaincy to Victoria's public hospitals. Among other things, it is the body dealing with the State Government's agency, Safer Care Victoria. PCV, through the Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee, is a member organisation of SHA.

Volunteer visiting hospital chaplains

During the last financial year, seven committee-authorised Presbyterian chaplains provided voluntary pastoral care in seven public hospitals and one private hospital. Their ability to conduct face-to-face visits was severely restricted for most of that year because of the pandemic and the various hospitals' precautionary limits on visitors. Nonetheless, they collectively managed to record a remarkable 338 patient contacts.

Volunteer-visiting hospital chaplaincy remains a largely untapped yet fertile field of ministry. A full list of Victoria's public hospitals can be found at this link:

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/public-hospitals-victoria>

The committee encourages sessions to take stock of the public hospitals within their parish bounds. Which of them do not yet have a Presbyterian visiting chaplain? Are there people within their congregation(s) that would be suitable and willing to engage in this sort of mercy ministry? If so, they can contact the Chaplaincy Support Worker, Mr Ashley Manly, to get the ball rolling (chaplaincy@pcv.org.au or 0432 537 359).

Police chaplains

The committee has seven volunteer chaplains assigned to Victoria Police. In November 2020, at the committee's request, Rev Chris Siriweera inaugurated a Zoom fellowship group for PCV police chaplains, providing a safe forum and enabling mutual support in the many challenging situations and circumstances our police chaplains face. The committee is grateful to Chris for this development.

Good Friday appeal

The committee is delighted to report that, as of 30 June, this year's Assembly-sanctioned Good Friday Appeal had generated \$26,959 from PCV congregations, boards of management, and individuals. This is an exceptional result, significantly exceeding the committee's expectations. The committee thanks God for this outpouring of generosity during a time of pandemic and uncertainty.

Ministry family camp

The committee has no immediate plans to conduct ministry family camps. Once the National Cabinet's COVID vaccination targets have been achieved and Victoria's State of Emergency has ended with no foreseeable likelihood of its sudden resumption, the committee will consider this issue.

Ministry family assistance

Not surprisingly, given the uncertainties of this time of pandemic, the committee's Ministry Family Assistance Program has been well-patronised of late. It provides up to four free and strictly confidential Christian counselling sessions per family per year. The committee encourages ministers and their wives and dependent children to make use of this service provided for their spiritual and psychological wellbeing.

Pastoral support for ministry wives

Mrs Robyn Johnson has been employed on an 0.6 FTE basis since March 2018 as the committee's Pastoral Support Worker to ministry wives.

Her appointment, for a term of three years, was extended by the committee for a further 12 months through to March 2022. This allows the committee sufficient time to review the position and, if appropriate, to revise the position description and its terms and conditions. To that end, a confidential and anonymous survey was recently sent to

around 80 ministry wives, this being every PCV minister's wife the Church Office had an email address for. The results will inform the committee's review.

During the last year, as with so many other people, Robyn's work program and plans were frustratingly disrupted time and time again by the series of pandemic lockdowns. However, despite those setbacks, she has been active, effective and innovative in reaching out to and supporting ministry wives as they grapple with any number of challenges. The committee thanks Robyn for her perseverance and dedication.

Chaplaincy support

The committee employs Mr Ashley Manly as its Chaplaincy Support Worker on a 0.4 FTE basis. In addition to secretarial work, Ashley receives and processes invoices associated with the committee's various services and is the first point of contact for anyone seeking assistance, advice or information from the committee. He manages the committee's Good Friday Appeal and provides administrative and IT support to Robyn Johnson in her role as Pastoral Support Worker—Ministry Wives. The committee thanks Ashley for his good work throughout the year.

Committee membership

Mrs Louise Campbell has joined the committee, filling a casual vacancy and bringing to nine the number of committee members, with one vacant position. Committee members come from seven parishes across six presbyteries: Ballarat, Flinders, Gippsland, Maroondah, Melbourne East, and Melbourne West.

The committee meets bi-monthly. It used to meet at the Assembly Hall building in Collins Street Melbourne. With members coming from as far west as Ballarat and as far east as Drouin, meeting days were an onerous and time-consuming commitment for some. With the commencement of pandemic-triggered lockdowns, the committee switched to meeting by electronic means (Zoom). This was found to be so efficient and effective that it is now the standard format for the committee's regular meetings.

Under the nine-year rule, three members of the committee, including the convener, are scheduled for retirement at the dissolution of the October 2022 General Assembly. If Assembly members know of any suitable candidate(s) for committee selection, they may let the convener know.

Philip Court
CONVENER

MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE (Min 65)

The Maintenance of the Ministry Committee (MMC) exists to ensure that ministers receive their entitlements and to provide recommendations to the Assembly concerning many figures and rates.

1. Minimum Ministerial Remuneration

The committee is tasked via regulations 3a and 3c to bring recommendations each year to the Assembly or the Commission concerning the appropriate Minimum Ministerial Remuneration (MMR). As the committee has a key role in recommending the remuneration of ministers, it has been often articulated that it is helpful to have elders serve on the committee rather than ministers to reduce the potential appearance of a conflict of interest. The committee notes that all ministers have confessed that they are not engaged in the ministry of word and sacraments for 'worldly inducements', yet annually the Assembly votes to determine a dollar figure that acts as a minimum within the PCV.

At times, discussions have occurred concerning what to benchmark the MMR against. Graduate teachers at one time served this purpose, as having a four-year degree was similar to candidate training. Teachers are remunerated relative to experience, so that a graduate teacher in the Victorian Government Schools system would today receive \$72,058, while a teacher with experience (Classroom Teacher: Range 2) would earn between \$86,370 and \$108,003.¹ At other times, the committee has looked to other state churches like PCQ and PCNSW or to other denominations like Baptist or Anglican for comparative rates.

As the committee has not had a review of remuneration in more than two decades, it considers it time to come to a fresh rationale of why it recommends what it does. As the committee has no official internal policy as to how to come up with a figure each year and has used varying approaches over the years, the current system is largely opaque to those outside the committee, especially to congregational members who vote each year on the Terms of Settlement (TOS).

This has, over time, seen the MMR erode relative to the average Victorian wage and Australian pension. In 2001, MMR was 86% of the Victorian average wage (Earnings; Males; Full Time; Adult; Ordinary time earnings; Victoria) and 358% of the Australian pension. Twenty years later, in 2021, this has reduced to 62% and 254%, respectively. The pension is now linked to the Australian (*contra* Victorian) average wage (25%).

To ensure further erosion is eliminated, the committee is now of the opinion that moving to a policy-based, principled link to the average wage will provide transparency and give a clear rationale for how and why the MMR is set. The committee considers a set formula is particularly needed in terms of perceived 'conflict of interest'. The committee notes that PCNSW set its MMR at 65% of the average wage in 2013. A link to the average wage ensures ministers are likewise impacted together with their congregation members when wages rise and fall.

In 2018, the Assembly moved away from annual decisions concerning the various honoraria and determined to make all regular honoraria relative to MMR (see BB 2019 min 25.1). This provides clarity and certainty and ultimately saves time on the Assembly

¹ <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/Salary-Teacher.pdf>

floor. Once set, there is only a need for revision when significant changes are necessary.

If, as the committee recommends, the PCV adopts a system that is linked to the external ABS data, it will have a system where the rates and values for all positions and honoraria will become formulaic calculations based on figures that are timely and reflect the wages of those in Victoria. The committee also sees this as a way to save both committee and assembly time going forward.

As there are occasions (e.g., 1998, 1999) when the average wage decreases year on year, the committee proposes that should the average wage decrease, the MMR would remain unchanged for that year. Should there be two consecutive annual decreases in the average wage, the MMC would be required to report and bring a recommendation to the Assembly concerning the future determination of the MMR.

The committee will submit a supplementary report with sample figures based on the May ABS data, which will be published on 18 August.

Superannuation

The Compulsory Superannuation Guarantee (CSG) has risen in the past year so that as of 1 July 2021, the CSG now sits at 10%. The committee notes that PCNSW has set its superannuation rate at CSG + 6% of MMR. The GAV set it at 15% (2008 Commission min 11.6c) when the CSG was 9%. The CSG is scheduled to increase to 12% from 1 July 2025.² At this time, the MMC sees no need to change the current figure. The committee notes that as the CSG increases, the disparity between PCNSW and PCV will widen.

Travel Rates

In recent times, the value of the travel component of Supply and TOS has been tied to the cost of petrol. This, at times, has more or less correlated to LPG and diesel prices as they fluctuate relative to petrol prices. The RACV in 2020 reported that fuel costs only account for 10% of actual running costs.³

The world is more and more embracing electric vehicles (EV). The Victorian Government is seeking 50% of vehicle sales in 2030 to be EV, while Mercedes-Benz has pledged to be 100% EV by 2030.

With the above in mind, the MMC is of the opinion that it is now time to re-evaluate the way it determines the travel component of TOS and Supply. There are two easily accessible external and independent sources of data that may be helpful in determining travel reimbursement rates that could be used by the PCV:

- The RACV's 'Driving Your Dollars survey', which has been publishing figures for more than fifty years. The 'most affordable' car within the 'small car' category may provide a basis for PCV travel rates.
 - 2020 Hyundai i30 GO provides a rate of \$0.697908/km.⁴
 - 2019 Kia Cerato S provides a rate of \$0.473691333/km.⁵

² <https://www.ato.gov.au/rates/key-superannuation-rates-and-thresholds/>

³ <https://www.racv.com.au/on-the-road/buying-a-car/car-running-costs.htm>

⁴ https://www.racv.com.au/content/dam/racv/images/royalauto-2019/moving/news-information/car-running-costs-2020/VOC_2020_tables_FINAL.pdf

⁵ <https://www.racv.com.au/content/dam/racv/documents/on-the-road/buying-a-car/small-car-running-costs-2019.pdf>

- 2018 Kia Cerato S provides a rate of \$0.44863/km.⁶
- The Australian Tax Office (ATO) publishes rates that are regularly reviewed as part of the 'Cents per kilometre method' of determining claims.⁷
 - \$0.72/km for 2020–2021 and 2021–2022
 - \$0.68/km for 2018–2019 and 2019–2020
 - \$0.66/km for 2017–2018, 2016–17 and 2015–2016.

As can be seen, by the figures above, the ATO's rate is more stable over time. The MMC is of the opinion that long term stability and clarity would be achieved by using the ATO figures. As a change from the present PCV figure of \$0.50/km to the current ATO figure of \$0.72/km would yield a significant increase (44% year on year) and is above the current figures of other States (PCNSW \$0.56/km and PCQ \$0.66/km), the MMC recommends setting the PCV rate annually at 75% of the ATO figure for the previous tax year. This provides clarity and certainty about how the rate is determined and is less than the rates of PCNSW and PCQ. If adopted by the Assembly, the rate, as reviewed regularly by the ATO, will allow ministry workers and preachers to know that the rate takes into account all vehicle running expenses (including registration, fuel, servicing, and insurance) and depreciation and will ensure a clear path moving forward.⁸

Supply Rates

Supply rates have been steadily increasing over the years but, again, with no set policy to determine the annual change to figures. The committee notes that the Victorian rates (currently \$146 for a single service) are higher than PCNSW (\$80) and PCQ (\$100).

Both PCNSW and PCQ have a single rate for a single service. Multiple services, locations, and sermons are determined by way of mutual agreement between the charge and the preacher. The PCV, in contrast, has mandated minimum fees for various situations.

The MMC is of the opinion that there is no gain to be made by moving to a single-rate system, nor does it hold the PCV rates excessive.

As with previous rates, the committee again desires to provide clarity and propose linking the Supply Rates to the MMR to give certainty to all about how rates are determined. The committee suggests that the rates follow the following schedule:

- 0.25% of MMR for one service
- 0.30% of MMR for two services with the same sermon
- 0.35% of MMR for three services with the same sermon
- 0.45% of MMR for two or more services with more than one sermon.

The committee notes that in 1891, the PCV had a Minimum Stipend of £300 and a Supply rate of £2 per Lord's Day. This equated to 0.667% of the Minimum Stipend.

2. Sustentation

The MMC has been in negotiations with the Ministry Development Committee over the past 12 months to investigate the benefits of a 'one-stop-shop' for committee grants. This would make the grant application process easier for congregations, while the

⁶ <https://www.racv.com.au/content/dam/racv/images/public-policy/pdfs/vehicles/small.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.ato.gov.au/Business/Income-and-deductions-for-business/Deductions/Deductions-for-motor-vehicle-expenses/Cents-per-kilometre-method/>

⁸ Ibid.

MDC would not be left wondering if a Sustentation Grant will be/is to be forthcoming from the MMC, and the MMC would not be left wondering if a Ministry Development Grant will be/is to be forthcoming from the MDC for congregations which have applied to both committees. This would result in less work for the MMC, a committee which has seen its membership reduced in recent times. The MMC sees this as both a logical and beneficial change that has MDC support, and the MMC commends the transfer of responsibilities to the Assembly, with the MDC taking on responsibility for Sustentation Grants from 1 July 2022. This means that the MMC will continue to manage the grants for the current financial year. To enable MDC to perform this function, the MMC recommends a transfer of \$850,000 of committee funds to the MDC from 1 July 2022, for the purpose of administering Sustentation Grants, until such time as the Assembly defines another purpose.

The role of setting the Sustentation Qualifying Stipend (SQS) remains with the MMC and, while the method of determining the figure annually has varied considerably, the committee, again, is of the opinion that providing a set percentage of the MMR will provide clarity.

The committee suggests the initial SQS be set at 50% MMR, which is approximately the current rate. The committee will continue to monitor the usefulness of the figure in consultation with MDC, which will have the ongoing responsibility for administering Sustentation Grants.

3. Annual Reports

In 2019, the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee brought an overture to the Assembly in a bid to provide a simplified reporting process for charges in terms of the completion of the Annual Charge Report (ACR) (BB 2019 min 80 pp. 179–180). The Code and General Administration Committee will bring recommendations to a future Assembly.

4. Long Service Leave

The committee has moved to a new Long Service Leave (LSL) system as of 1 January 2021. There is great confusion, with many presbyteries continuing to approve LSL, a task which is now the function of the 'responsible body.' In the vast majority of cases, the 'responsible body' will be the Session.

Transition arrangements

There has been one request for a person (Paul Huynh) to be covered under the transition arrangements of new regulation 24b. This resolves a decade long impasse the MMC has endured. The committee looks forward to the clarity provided by the new regulations.

Leave Approved

The MMC is required to report LSL taken annually (regulation 3h). Since the last Assembly, the following have taken Long Service Leave, and LSL Grants have been made for the respective persons to their charges:

- Rev Philip Burns (Bendigo, North Western Victoria)
- Rev John Stasse (South Yarra, Melbourne East)
- Rev Philip Daffy (Malvern, Melbourne East)

- Rev Clinton Le Page (Bundoora, Melbourne North)
- Rev Richard O'Brien (Scots' CBD, Melbourne West)
- Rev Simalu Cowley (Samoan Coolaroo, Melbourne North)
- Rev Peter Owen (Point Cook, Melbourne West)
- Rev Donald Elliott (Eltham, Melbourne North)

Accrued LSL

One of the more significant challenges for the MMC has been the significant building up of LSL by ministers. Significant means beyond 26 weeks (half a year or double the maximum). The committee has repeatedly informed presbyteries of this issue, as it longs to see ministers serve without burnout. The committee also notes how this is a big challenge for congregations. By not using LSL progressively, the final charge faces hardship. When a minister retires, all LSL must be used before retirement. While the minister is on LSL, the charge is not vacant. This means the congregation must wait at times more than half a year before being able to begin entertaining a call for a new minister. This unnecessary delay for congregations can be avoided if ministers ensure their entitlements do not exceed 13 weeks (regulation 10).

To this end, the committee recommends that ministers in their 6th year begin planning when and how they might build in a system of periodic LSL to ensure they do not hinder the work and witness of their final congregations.

In the PCNSW, LSL must be below a threshold before starting in a new charge. Over time, this has been found to keep LSL entitlement below the maximum thresholds. The committee sees this as a helpful system to help ministers begin new works refreshed. To this end, the committee asks the Assembly to have the Code and General Administration Committee draft additional regulations that require the reduction of LSL to six weeks or less weeks before ministry workers begin new works. This means that upon beginning a new work, the minister can continue to accrue LSL for five years without hitting the maximum limit of 13 weeks. This provides the time needed to develop ministry and plan for leave in year six.

Permission granted

It is now necessary to receive approval from the 'responsible body' and the MMC (regulation 10) in order to have a leave entitlement accrue beyond 13 weeks. Since the new regulations came into effect (1 January 2021), the MMC has given such approval to the following persons for a 12-month period:

- Rev Stephen Deroon (Moe/Yarram Charge)
- Rev Cameron Garrett (Morwell Charge)
- Rev Richard Wilson (Church Planting Committee)

MMC reminds those members whose leave entitlement is approaching 13 weeks and who wish to defer for 12 months that formal approval to do so must be sought and obtained from the 'responsible body' and the MMC.

Long Service Leave Levy (LSLL)

For many years, the LSLL was set at \$350 per parish per minister or worker. This changed on 1 July 2021, as vacant charges no longer contribute to the scheme. The LSLL for 2021–2022 is now \$410, an increase of 17% for those required to contribute. While unpleasant, this levy is far better than the actual cost of LSL, which is 2.5% of MMR, or \$1,451. This much higher cost only covers the present cost of the LSL accrued and not any future increases in MMR. The only reason the LSL Fund and the

PCV more generally is able to set the LSL Levy lower than actual cost is by using interest on unused LSL accruals, as well as ineligible accruals supplementing the system. Also, those who do not complete seven years of continuous service are ineligible for payout and their provision for entitlement becomes part of the greater LSL Fund upon the conclusion of their service. While the PCV has enjoyed high interest rates in the past, committee interest rates are decreasing, and with them, the benefit of having had lower levies.

As is noted earlier in the report, the LSLL is one of the few remaining figures that is not determined by the annual MMR. The MMC recommends that the LSLL be linked to MMR so that, as the liability increases, so does the Levy. At present, the committee recommends that the LSLL be set at 0.7% of MMR, with the MMC continuing to monitor the appropriateness of the current LSLL rate and, if necessary, bringing any needed changes to a future Assembly to ensure it is able to meet all its obligations.

5. Publishing Figures

As the committee is proposing that all rates and figures be based on external figures and then calculated, anyone is able to look up these rates from the ABS, ATO, or other external agency to determine the figures themselves. As the necessary figures are all available by 28 February annually, the MMC will publish the new figures on the PCV website by the end of March each year. The committee recommends that all charges become accustomed to accessing the official rates from the PCV website.

6. Conclusion

This report has a great many proposals and, while they will require significant consideration at this Assembly, it is the committee's hope that future assemblies will benefit from the time spent. As always, the committee welcomes queries and questions on the report before the assembly.

Dennis Wright
CONVENER

METRO COMMITTEE (Min 42)

The METRO committee has continued to partner with churches across the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to train, equip, and raise up gospel workers. YouthMETRO and EquipMETRO enable church members to undertake a 1-year part-time traineeship, and METRO enables church members to undertake a 2-year full-time traineeship. The churches of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria need to continually make disciples and develop all generations to become disciple-makers.

In recent months, there have been many challenges and issues facing PCV churches. The gospel of Jesus can easily be overlooked with all the pressure and demands during this time. Still, what PCV churches need more than ever is the gospel. The task of making and maturing disciples of Jesus remains this committee's highest priority. The committee's various traineeships provide opportunities for people in churches to receive the training and experience so that they can better serve God and his people. From the teenager training to become a youth group leader or Sunday school teacher to the young mum training to be a bible study leader, to the retired couple training to be mentors for younger people and training up the next generation of gospel workers, METRO is here to partner with PCV churches.

MTS pathways

The partnership with MTS (Ministry Training Strategy) has been of great benefit for PCV churches involved in METRO. MTS has a national conference in January called G8 that provides great bible teaching, lectures, and tutorials for both the trainees and trainers. The speakers are of the highest quality, and joining with over 100 apprentices from across Australia is a great encouragement for METRO apprentices.

In 2019, the committee had the following included in its traineeships:

METRO

- Lydia Jensen from Clayton PC
- Hannah Tin from Bundoora PC

YOUTHMETRO 14 people from 7 churches including:

- Bundoora PC
- Cranbourne PC
- Epping PC
- North Geelong PC
- Rochester PC
- Tatura PC
- Warragul PC

In 2020, the committee had the following included in its traineeships:

METRO

- Kathryn Gatt from Bundoora PC
- Michelle Ullrich from Ebenezer PC
- Jordan O'Hara from Valley PC

YOUTHMETRO 11 people from 6 churches including:

- Donvale PC
- Epping PC
- Surrey Hills PC
- Warragul PC
- Warrnambool PC
- Wyndham Vale PC

EQUIPMETRO 6 people from Warrnambool PC

In 2021, the committee has the following undertaking its traineeships:

METRO

- Jon Ullrich from Ebenezer PC
- Caitlyn Brammar from New Life PC

YOUTHMETRO 5 people from 5 churches including:

- Bannockburn PC
- Drouin PC
- Gisborne PC
- Heathmont PC
- Reservoir PC

EQUIPMETRO 1 person from Bundoora PC

Committee

The METRO committee would like to thank the Assembly for approving its request to appoint an administrative assistant. Maddy O'Brien has recently started and, within a couple of weeks, has been a wonderful help and enabled the committee better to achieve its goals and mission.

This year, the committee has three new members. The committee is pleased to welcome back Rev Clinton Le Page after his year of sabbatical. Andrew Edmonds, the PYV director, has joined the committee, which will be a great help as the committee continues to develop and improve its YouthMETRO traineeship and continue its vital partnership with PYV. Joy Arundell has also just joined the committee, and her enthusiasm for the gospel and discipling women will be a great asset to the committee.

Toby McIntosh
CONVENER

MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (Min 43)

1. Personnel

1.1 Committee

The membership of the committee currently consists of Rev Stuart Withers (Convener) and six committee members: Rev Ian Hutton, Rev Gerald Vanderwert, Rev Peter Greiner, Rev Darren Middleton, and Elders Mr Iain Bramley and Mr Ralph Kop. Long-serving member Rev Ian Hutton, under the nine-year rule, is retiring from committee service at the end of this Assembly. The committee takes this opportunity to express heartfelt thanks to him for his faithful and sacrificial service, especially for the years that he spent as the MDC convener. The committee prays that in the coming years, he will continue to discover new avenues for Kingdom service with his gifts and abilities.

1.2 Ministry Development Officer

The committee is pleased with the work of the Ministry Development Officer (MDO), Rev Chris Siriweera. This reporting period marks the completion of the MDO's first three-year term. It has been a challenging time for the MDO, with the COVID pandemic impacting his role. Details of the MDO's work across the past year are provided in his personal report that is included below. The committee is pleased to report that the MDO has undertaken the recommended professional development highlighted in an internal review. The committee trusts that the refresher course on basic counselling skills will assist in better serving others as needs arise.

1.3 MDO review

During this past year, the committee formed a professional review panel that undertook a position and performance review of the MDO appointment. Assembly members may recall that a professional review was a prerequisite of any appointment extension being offered to an incumbent MDO. The panel consisted of convener Rev S. Withers, Rev I. Hutton, Mr R. Kop, and Mrs Anne Lawry. Mrs Lawry was included to meet the job description requirement for a non-committee member to be included in the review process. The review has been beneficial and enabled a transparent discussion, and provided valuable feedback from stakeholders.

During the review, the committee was once again made very aware of the ministry development needs across the PCV. The committee was pleased that stakeholders unanimously expressed thanks for the MDO's ability to communicate, listen, and engage with people in local ministry contexts during the past three years. The review also underscored the importance of this role and the limitations of this Assembly appointment. It is important that the MDO teaches and shows sessions and congregations what is involved in stepping towards greater church health, but he cannot take the steps of developing the ministry himself. The MDO is also building a bank of helpful resources for leaders to utilise and engage with when embarking on church revitalisation, but the MDO is unable to personally lead healthy change himself. Ministry development in local congregations is done by local saints as they embrace all that Jesus Christ calls on them to do.

Across the MDO's first three years, the committee has been encouraged by the organic development of peer support groups amongst younger pastors. There are now two groups with seven members in each group. What happens? It should be said that peer groups are not retreat groups. A retreat group deals mainly with personal spiritual formation, while MDC peer groups provide an opportunity for ministry discussion and

the development of ministry ideas and practice. The review identified three things for the development of the peer group system. Firstly, the size of each group. Given the purpose, it is felt that smaller rather than larger will prove more effective. Secondly, the natural life cycle and timeline of each group will need to be monitored. Natural beginnings and endings ought to be discussed within each group. Lastly, it is clear to the committee that the MDO's initiative has tapped into a need. Over time it is possible that other leaders may be encouraged to take on a peer group so that this initiative can be multiplied. We pray that this initiative will continue to develop helpfully and serve ministry development across the PCV. Should a minister or elder have an interest in joining or forming a group, they may speak with the MDO.

The committee was pleased to hear the confidence people had in the revitalisation workshop material. Feedback used words like 'sound' and 'biblical'. It was made clear to the panel that the issue of leadership in revitalisation is a critical factor. The MDO also drew attention to leadership in his interview. Likewise, stakeholders also provided feedback on this issue. Poor or ineffective leadership is still leadership. Leadership will be a key area for refinement and further development in the revitalisation training. Helping local leaders engage in meaningful biblical self-reflection and then discovering a vision for leading church families in healthy change is a key revitalisation dynamic.

As part of the review process, the committee re-drafted the MDO job description. It is presented in the proposed deliverance for Assembly approval. In passing, the committee wants to highlight two aspects of the job description. Firstly, members ought to notice the first key duty. The committee wants the MDO to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and so participate in the ingathering of God's people and the equipping of the saints for local church ministry. While his role is not based within a local church, this is essential in the committee's view. The committee trusts that the MDO's preaching will be used by God to encourage and grow his people. Secondly, the committee wants readers to notice a particular change in the accountability and supervision section. It is proposed that the MDO establish a 'supervisor' relationship with an appropriate professional outside the PCV for debriefing, objective discussion, and accountability. This is not mentoring, nor is the committee relinquishing the MDO's accountability to it. A supervisor is a specifically trained and qualified professional who is paid to provide an employee with what is termed 'supervision'—one on one confidential support, accountability to their client and those the client interacts with, reflection on things done well and not so well and direction and advice if needed. In many organisations, supervisory arrangements are set in place by management in recognition of the role that professional supervision plays in achieving quality service outcomes. In proposing this, the committee is not relinquishing direct oversight of the MDO and his work. The committee notes that the PTC is running a pilot subject called 'Collegial (Pastoral) Supervision' this spring. This is an important issue that the denomination is only just beginning to grapple with. While there are financial implications in establishing such a relationship, the committee is convinced that the benefits will outweigh the costs. The committee trusts that the updated job description will provide a clear focus for the appointment.

Having presented and highlighted the issues raised within the review, the committee is also pleased to recommend the name of Rev A. Chris Siriweera to the Assembly and ask that he be appointed as MDO for a five-year term 2022–2027, on the terms of employment stated in the revised position description.

1.4 MDC Administration Officer

The committee would like to acknowledge the valuable administrative work done by Mr Ben Palmer in supporting the MDO and the committee as a whole. His work and accumulated denominational experience are invaluable, and he is often the first person responding to queries and clarifying processes for those dealing with the committee.

1.5 Home Missionaries

The committee is mindful that it has a long and valued history with home missions and church extension across the PCV. Within the home mission program, the committee is connected with a number of home missionaries who serve in Victoria. The table immediately below provides a summary of the home missionary appointments and charges. The committee is thankful for these men and the valuable gospel ministries they lead.

	Home Mission Charge	Home Missionary/Minister
1	Blackburn	Rev Graham Bradbeer
2	Castlemaine / Carisbrook	Vacant
3	Clarinda	Michael Lee
4	Clarinda Nuer (Sudanese)	Supply
5	Footscray West	Rev Martin De Pyle
6	Kangaroo Ground	Vacant
7	Kaniva / Nhill	Tobias Crabb
8	Leongatha	Rev Gary Wentworth
9	Pyramid Hill	Vacant
10	Sale	Vacant
11	Seymour / Nagambie / Yea	Vacant
12	Sunraysia	Colin Morrow
13	Templestowe	Adrian Kebbe
14	Warburton	Supply

2. Committee Projects

2.1 Ministry Development Grants and Church Health Inventory

The committee is satisfied that the revised Ministry Development Grant (MDG) program is increasingly effective. In a later section of this report, almost as an appendix, the committee has included ministry development stories for edification. The committee trusts that they are illuminating. The committee has been pleased with the initial uptake and participation in the Church Health Inventory (CHI). Members will recall that the primary aim of the CHI is for local leadership to monitor the unfolding ministry development story in a congregation. The CHI is completed every third year while a charge is receiving an MDG. The results of completed CHIs are collated by the MDC office. In the first instance, reports are given to the relevant session. Our advice to overseeing presbyteries is that a CHI, if received, ought to be discussed as a private document. Additionally, the CHI can be used by any charge in the PCV for its own information even though it may not be receiving an MDG.

2.2 Governance of Sustentation

The committee can report that the discussion with the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee (MMC) about the governance of sustentation has been productive. The discussion led to both committees submitting a proposal to the Code Committee for new MDC regulations. The Code Committee has suggested a simple first step approach with further regulation refinements to be made in the future. If the Assembly accepts the proposed regulation changes, it will effectively make MDC a 'one-stop-shop' for charges seeking financial assistance. In the coming financial year, the Maintenance of Ministry Committee will set the 'qualifying stipend' as part of its normal operation. MDC will administer oversight of sustentation. Application for sustentation grants for the 2022–2023 financial year will be made through the MDC office. MDC trusts that the 'one-stop-shop' will not only simplify administration but, in the long-term, lead to the better coordination of financial assistance within the PCV. The proposed regulation change can be found within the Code Committee report to the Assembly.

2.3 Collection of Statistics

The collection of statistical data across the PCV has moved online. The committee extends its thanks to Rev Cameron Garrett for the further development of an existing database that now enables congregations to log in and complete the standard statistical questions. This reporting period has seen 133 of a possible 136 congregation submit data. This is the highest ever compliance rate. It should be noted that this new system has exposed a discrepancy in the order of 500-persons in overall membership numbers across the PCV between 2019 and 2020. Accuracy was one of the reasons the committee favoured moving to an online reporting system.

The committee is actively working with a sunset date on hardcopy statistical returns. In total, 19 out of 136 congregations requested a hardcopy return in the last reporting period. In the next reporting period, for 2021, it will be possible to access hardcopy forms, but beyond that time, MDC does not anticipate providing this service free of charge.

It must be said that an over fascination with statistics can create a kind of blindness to the biblical truths that establish better church health. After all, a church is people, proclamation, and prayer, not numbers. Conversely, a lack of attention to statistics can blind the Assembly to critical issues that need its attention. Wisdom is required. Being informed by numbers can provide the basis for discussion and assist in making intentional, biblically informed responses. With a desire to better serve charges and presbyteries, the committee is proposing two modifications to the statistical return.

Firstly, to better assist presbyteries in undertaking five-yearly charge reviews, the committee wants to put forward, for inclusion, one new standard question. When included, it will enable presbyteries simply to request a report that immediately provides statistical information on the seven metrics that form part of the review process (Code 4.88.2). The question for inclusion is: 'How many people serve within the life of the congregation?' The question will have guidelines to assist in providing an answer. Areas of service will include, but not be limited to, practical maintenance, church event hospitality, children's ministries, youth ministries, shut-in transport, bible-study leaders (other than a minister), music and singing, multimedia, and welcoming and cleaning. Those submitting data should find the interface helpful.

Secondly, the committee is seeking permission for two occasional supplementary questions. Two occasional supplementary questions would be 'one-off' questions to

be included in the next reporting period. The committee is firmly committed to ensuring the statistical returns are simple and slim. The two occasional supplementary questions would provide flexibility to collect data on 'one off' issues, for example, questions about youth ministries or the seating capacity of church buildings. The committee is confident that completion rates would remain high when only two additional questions are included. As proposed in clause 7 of the deliverance, permission is sought for supplementary questions: a) For the leaders at your church (Minister, elders, and deacons), please indicate for each of them which age range category they belong to; and b) Please indicate what online format has been used by your congregation for Sunday gatherings during COVID lockdowns.

The statistical report for 2020 is still being finalised and will be provided before the Assembly as a Supplementary Report.

2.4 The Home Mission Program

Assembly members may recall that GAV 2020 resolved at min 46.8 to 'Ask the MDC to explore the role of home missionaries and present a report to the GAV outlining how the PCV can better seek, train, accredit, and recommend suitable gifted home missionaries to presbyteries for ministry appointment.' They call it a 'Dorothy Dix.'

The resolution centres on a discussion about MDC reg 4b, which states: 'seek, train, accredit and recommend home missionaries to presbyteries for appointment to home mission charges'. MDC remains committed to the concept of lay leadership being an option for presbytery appointments for gospel ministry and mission. The committee anticipates continuing to think through how lay ministry and mission leaders can be sought, taught, and brought into active service. Undoubtedly, as a denomination, it will be helpful if it can articulate to potential gospel servants a pathway into service. This will include showing how in-service training and development is possible so that ministry and mission competencies can be grown. To that end, the committee has been in consultation with the Presbyterian Theological College and sought to establish a suitable course of training. The committee anticipates working towards providing financial assistance to lay ministry and mission workers to help them complete a Certificate of Theology. In particular, those studying will complete six units of study, namely, Old Testament Survey, New Testament Survey, Westminster Confession of Faith, Preaching, Pastoral Leadership, and Worship, with two electives also to be chosen out of Pastoral Care, Evangelism and Missiology, Presbyterian Polity, and Church History. The committee looks forward to offering this training opportunity.

A perennial challenge the PCV must face up to is finding avenues for potential lay ministry workers to discover possibilities and be shown that it is possible for them to enter into gospel service. As the committee focused on the question of how it can raise up workers for the harvest, it became clear that to some degree, the cart was before the horse. Home Missionaries are just one part of the Home Mission programme. Thus, before moving forward on how it might actively try to raise up more workers, the committee sought clarity of purpose in the home mission programme.

What is the home mission programme?

Presbyterianism, wherever it has established itself around the world, has formed 'Home Mission Committees'. In broad-brush terms, it is always about gospel mission at home rather than abroad. One can find historical accounts of this mission focus driving the early Presbyterian Church of Victoria during the settlement period. However, modern Australia is now a post-Christian society. The high tide of Christian

influence on society has been receding for decades. Has the Assembly's sense of Home Mission developed and adjusted to the times? The answer is important. In all likelihood, it is both yes and no.

In 2006–2007 the GAV formed a separate Church Planting Committee (CPC) and rebranded a smaller Home Missions Committee, the Ministry Development Committee. Each committee has worked independently in its particular sphere since 2007. Under God, the CPC ventures have been largely successful, and the MDC is encouraged by unfolding reports that funding assistance is helping with ministry development in congregations. However, the helpful separation of the old Home Mission Committee has seen the traditional idea of a home mission station as a 'new work' lose its place in the constellation of charge status. Additionally, anecdotal evidence points to a PCV practice that, more often than not, has seen the status of home mission charge assigned as a relegation—a status given to congregations in decline. Undoubtedly, the mission to the lost is a significant part of the work needed to renew declining congregations. Is it possible that mission has been the great omission? It is a question that deserves the Assembly's attention. The committee's home mission programme, at a principal level, ought to focus on partnering with people within the PCV in the development of biblically healthy gospel ministries so that local Presbyterian congregations experience spiritual health and growth and are better equipped to fulfil the great commission.

Given the rapid changes that Australian society and culture are undergoing, the Assembly's thinking and approach need great clarity in a new generation. For the best part of 1000 years, the so-called western world has operated within a 'Christendom' worldview. Even as little as 30 years ago, many fellow countrymen shared similar moral and ethical views on what it was to live a good life, even though they did not share the church's faith in Jesus Christ. 'Christendom' has had its good entailments, but they are quickly vanishing. Also, while the gospel of God is an unchanging message of truth from God to us (Rom 1:1–4), how the church communicates the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection in context needs careful thought. Insofar as this committee can provide helpful thinking, resources, and a sense of entrepreneurial 'how we might do this', the committee is committed to developing a renewed home mission programme.

In stepping towards a changing future, the committee has begun thinking through how the MDC can best serve the PCV with a renewed home mission programme. The committee can report that progress has already been made in reviewing committee regulations for clarity and purpose. The committee trusts that across the next year, helpful conclusions will be reached and the Assembly provided with an opportunity to discuss any changes.

The home mission program also has the capacity to develop new models for ministry and mission. Issues like 'tentmaking' ministry and mission appear to be an underutilised ministry model. Does the PCV have suitable contexts in which it would work? While tentmaking ministries are not a new idea, it will require much more thought and planning before it can be wheeled out. There also appears to be opportunities to review and reframe the role of district interim moderators. Alongside this, the committee notes that the PCV's Free Church cousins in Scotland have a variety of charge statuses. Most are very familiar, but there are terms such as district charges as well as preaching places that are not familiar. The latter provides for small groups of disciples not large enough to form a functioning congregation. These ideas seem particularly important for ministry and mission in regional and rural Victoria. Careful

visionary thought is needed. Clarity in knowing what a congregation is will be helpful. How can the denomination be nimble and effective in its gospel mission?

To this end, one of the projects the committee has begun discussing is the establishment of an MDC conference. The aim would be to provide for the ongoing theological and biblical formation that enables people within the PCV to think through ministry and mission development that brings renewal. There are no fixed dates, but the committee looks forward to developing the idea into maturity. The committee welcomes wider discussion to sharpen what can be achieved in a renewed home mission programme.

3. Committee Finances

Currently, the Scots' Church Property Trust distribution ratio between the Ministry Development Committee and the Church Planting Committee stands at 70:30, respectively. The timetable for further discussion on this ratio will see MDC and CPC engage in discussion prior to July 2022 with the aim of bringing a joint recommendation to the 2022 Assembly. The outcome of these discussions will have an impact on future funding available to the MDC, as does the loss of SCPT distributions, which has reduced the balance of General Funds to zero as at 30 June 2021. These factors have influenced the committee budget for 2021–2022 and the coming years, further reinforcing the need for careful budgeting and the management of expenditure.

The zero balance of General Funds has meant that the committee is now relying on an overdraft facility established with the Board of Investment and Finance. This facility will be needed until the end of the 2023–2024 financial year. The overdraft enables the committee to maintain its commitments to existing activities, albeit at reduced levels of support for charges that receive grants from the committee. As such, there is a need to continue undertaking a thorough analysis of grant requests to support existing charges, second workers and cross-cultural workers.

3.1 Ministry Development Grants

The table below indicates the charges where ministry development grants are currently being received. It also tables the cumulative total of support received over time. Rural and regional churches are shaded.

Charge	Starting year of grants	Total grants paid	Grant paid in 2020-21	MDG approved for 2021–2022
Brimbank	2005	208,416	5,000	12,000
Broadford	2020	0	N/A	20,000
Clarinda	2017	130,385	30,112	27,000
Cranbourne	2004	405,204	12,500	10,000
Dandenong	2017	104,500	15,000	12,000
Daylesford	2013	232,100	25,000	22,000
Deaf Church	2002	375,333	18,000	16,200
Eaglehawk	2013	144,900	21,500	21,150

Charge	Starting year of grants	Total grants paid	Grant paid in 2020-21	MDG approved for 2021–2022
Heidelberg	2017	48,000	9,000	8,100
Horsham	1994	500,862	22,000	19,800
Hume	2019	57,764	16,400	concluded
Kangaroo Ground	2018	99,002	27,002	4,215
Kaniva-Nhill	2019	19,524	9,762	34,912
Kerang-Swan Hill	2020	20,000	15,000	15,000
Leongatha	2013	242,850	15,000	10,000
Mt Evelyn	2016	79,000	14,000	12,000
Sunraysia	2014	100,131	13,131	concluded
West Footscray	2020	50,000	37,500	37,500

The committee notes that both the Hume and Sunraysia charges have concluded receiving MDG support, and the committee congratulates them on this progress.

3.2 Second Worker Grants

The primary purpose of this infusion of funds is to enable a church to attain the next level of development through the employment of a second ministry worker. The committee has supported second workers in the following congregations.

Congregation (Second Worker)	Paid in 2020–2021	Approved for 2021–2022
Darebin [REDACTED]	26,250	11,250
Drouin [REDACTED]	10,000	concluded
Epping [REDACTED]	35,000	30,000
Korean North Balwyn [REDACTED]	15,000	10,000

3.3 Cross-Cultural Worker Grants

As part of its support for second workers, the committee has made specific grants to support cross-cultural gospel work in the following congregations.

Congregation (Worker)	Paid in 2020–21	Approved for 2021–2022
Ashburton [REDACTED]	24,000	23,500
Bundoora [REDACTED]	15,000	18,000
Clayton [REDACTED]	18,000	16,200

3.4 Capital Grants

One significant impact of the changed funding arrangements for the committee and the need to reduce the call on funds has been its decision regarding capital grants. In the

past, the committee has set aside some of its funds to support charges not in the employment of workers but in developing and renewing their church property. Due to the need to restrict the level of expenditure, the committee is not expected to be able to support churches in this way for the next four to five years. Even then, the committee cannot guarantee it will be possible to provide these grants as it will depend on the financial position of the committee at that time.

3.5 Evangelism Grants

The committee is also responsible for an Evangelism Trust used to fund the work of evangelism across Victoria. Many churches apply for Evangelism Grants of up to a total of \$1,500 each year. In 2020–2021, grants totalling \$14,600 were paid to the following charges: Ballarat South, Broadford, Canterbury, Clarinda, Clayton, Cranbourne, Donvale, Eaglehawk, Hume, Mordialloc, The Leigh, and Valley. In addition, the committee approved a grant of \$1,500 to the Gippsland Presbytery to support the purchasing of evangelistic resources for distribution to all churches in the presbytery. However, like 2019–2020, there were fewer of these grants applied for than usual due to the impact of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, the Trust has been used to support AFES workers labouring on university campuses and who are connected with PCV congregations. Likewise, it is used to pay 25% of Second Ministry worker grants. Two important and unique projects have also been supported by this fund: one at Daylesford and another at Bundoora. Finally, the Trust also supports evangelism training for students at the Theological College.

3.6 English Classes Ministry Start-up Grant

A grant of \$1,500 was made to Ebenezer-St John's (Ballarat South) to assist with start-up costs for its Sunday afternoon English Classes Ministry. If this kind of ministry development is suitable in the context of the churches of Assembly members, the committee encourages ministers and elders to explore the opportunity.

4. Ministry Development Officer's Report—Rev Chris Siriweera

My third year in this role continued to face many challenges of the COVID pandemic and the associated restrictions and lockdowns. However, I am thankful that though the pandemic slowed down the work, it did not stop me from fulfilling my responsibilities.

This year also included a comprehensive review of my work by the 'MDO Review Panel' appointed by the committee. At a personal level, it was very valuable for me to go through this process, to help me evaluate how I am tracking in my role and to receive their feedback and encouraging comments. I am thankful for the hard, diligent work, time, and effort of the panel.

Much of the work, including pastoral support of home missionaries and ministers, has continued online. When the lockdowns were lifted, I was able to recommence visits to congregations, presbyteries and conduct 'Revitalisation Seminars' in churches. In-person meetings were also had with ministry colleagues. These ministry activities are outlined in my report.

4.1 Summary of Ministry Activities

Ministry Meetings and Contacts

Conducted 64 one-on-one meetings with PCV ministers, home missionaries, and other related personnel. These frequently involved pastoral care, support, or mentoring, and

15 of these were meetings with home missionaries or ministers serving in home mission charges.

Undertook 234 phone contacts with PCV ministers, home missionaries, and other related personnel. In total, 33 of these were contacts with home missionaries or ministers serving in home mission charges.

Preaching/Church visits

I am thankful for the opportunity to preach the Word in the following churches:

Video sermons: Aspendale, Benalla, and Brisbane (St Paul's Spring Hill)

In-person preaching visits: Ashburton, Ballarat West, Broadford, Benalla, Cranbourne, Dandenong (x2), Donvale, Heathmont, Malvern (x2), Mt Evelyn, Rochester, Sunraysia, Terang, and Wodonga.

Church Revitalisation Seminars

I am thankful that it has been possible to resume our program of Church Revitalisation Seminars with a number of congregations this year; at Benalla, Ballarat West, Mt Evelyn, Dandenong, Heathmont, and Ashburton. Some had to be rescheduled due to the unexpected lockdowns, however, more are planned for this year, and it is hoped that we can meet these commitments to churches subject to any possible future lockdowns.

Presbytery Visits

Visited the Presbyteries of Flinders, Geelong, North East Vic and North West Vic (online). Presented material on Church Health Inventory, Revitalisation and other MDC-related matters, and listened to presbyters regarding matters of concern and strategic planning within their bounds.

Meetings/Consultations with Sessions

It has been important to meet with sessions prior to the Revitalisation Seminars that were conducted in the churches. This gave me an opportunity to walk through the material with the elders and for them to ask me any questions relating to the material. It also provided me with an opportunity to meet the elders and to get to know them. It was also good to join with them in prayer and to encourage one another in the Lord and in our ministries. I met with the following Sessions: Ashburton, Aspendale, Ballarat West (x2), Benalla, Dandenong, Heathmont, Mt Evelyn, and Wodonga.

Peer Support Groups

I meet regularly with two 'Peer Support Groups', comprised of 13 of our ministers, for mentoring and encouragement. We are working our way together through *Preaching for Revitalisation* by Michael F Ross. Both Groups have met seven times since August 2020. We also had Rev Darren Middleton address the groups on the area of 'Leadership'.

Kingdom Come Online Prayer meetings: 5 December, 27 March, 24 July

This has been a great opportunity for ministers, home missionaries and elders of the PCV to come together in prayer. As we continue to have these online prayer times, let me encourage you to join so that together we can seek the Lord's grace, favour and blessings upon the congregations and our ministries.

Ordinations and Inductions Attended (in person or online)

- Rev Oliver Blythe at Surrey Hills
- Rev Bryce Wiegandt

- Rev Ben Kelada (at Bundoora to work at the Donnybrook Church Plant)
- Rev Dong Choi at Canterbury
- Andrew Wong at Scots Church (to minister at Flemington)

Presbyterian Theological College Involvement

I have preached twice at College Chapel services and attended the PTC's Ministry Conference in March. I also audited the Pastoral Care Course under Rev Dr Karl Hood in First Semester 2021

Home Missionaries' Course

Worked with the PTC and the MDC to develop a certificate-level training course for Home Missionaries.

MDC Website

Our website <https://www.mdcpcv.org.au/> has undergone a redesign, including the incorporation of our new logo.

Exit Students Committee

This has involved a number of meetings and interviews, along with administration and making connections between students and charges.

European Leadership Forum

For a second year, the 2021 European Leadership Forum was held online in May. It was a privilege to attend the forum in my own study from around 10 pm to the early hours of the morning! I enrolled for the 'Leadership Foundations Network.' There were participants from many European countries, all with a passion and desire to reach Europe and beyond for Christ. The keynote speaker was Peter J Williams, Principal of Tyndale House, Cambridge, who spoke on the Book of Judges. Let us remember the Church in Europe in our prayers as they face numerous challenges as well as opportunities for ministry.

The Main 'Network' talk program covered the following topics over four days:

Day 1 focused on understanding our times. Good leaders understand their context and what the Bible has to say about it. It began by thinking about Europe in general terms, then moved to see our setting through a biblical lens.

- How a Biblical Worldview Shapes Our Teaching and Leadership: Dr Greg Pritchard
- Gospel-Shaped Leaders: Dr Michael Reeves

Day 2 focused on engaging with our times. Good leaders have strategies to engage with the culture around them. Strategies for engaging (particularly apologetics) and move onto the manner of our engagement.

- How the Church Responds to the Secularisation of Europe: Dr Stefan Gustavsson
- Communicating Persuasively in a Post-Christian World: Dr Lars Dahle

Day 3 focused on being equipped for our times. Good leaders are actively growing and developing in both gifting and godliness. The session assessed what a godly leader is and then moved on to a particular way we can grow ourselves and help others to do so.

- Spiritual Maturity: Dr Emanuel Tundrea
- Growing as a Leader Through Being Mentored and Mentoring Others: Rev Tony Myrick

Day 4 focused on personal planning for our times. Good leaders are honest about their own challenges and engage in focused planning to develop. This day brought together all that we heard so far and making plans for our future growth.

- Measuring Your Effectiveness as a Leader: Adrian Reynolds
- Writing and Implementing a Personal Development Plan: Adrian Reynolds and Ann Blaser

I am thankful to the committee for enabling me to engage in this spiritually refreshing and professionally enriching international conference.

Other GAV and GAA Committee Work

- Women's PCV ad hoc Committee.
- GAA Reception of Ministers Committee.
- GAA Relations with Other Churches

Responsibilities with the Presbytery of Melbourne East

Candidates Committee, plus served on some special subcommittees as required.

Police Chaplaincy

I continue in my role as Police Chaplain. Attended an online conference in July 2021. Ongoing ministry relating to the Eastern Freeway tragedy, including leading local Police Station memorial services for the first anniversary in April 2021, as well as regular station visits.

PCV Police Chaplains Network Fellowship

At the request of the HCCC, I have convened a PCV Police Chaplains' Network Fellowship and Support Group, which has met online twice so far. This network is a forum for our chaplains to share with each other about their ministries, pray and support each other in our role as VicPol chaplains.

African Enterprise Australian Board

I continue to serve on the Board, and I am thankful for the opportunity to be part of an organisation that raises financial and ministry support for gospel work in Africa. It is truly exciting to hear what the Lord is doing in many African countries, and it is a privilege to partner with the wider work of the gospel in Africa! For further information on AE, see <https://africanenterprise.com.au/>

4.2 Where to from here?

In my travels and communications to the various congregations, I am very much aware of the challenges we face today in a society that is increasingly moving away from Christianity and the church in general. This can at times be very discouraging, but let us not lose heart for as the apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 4:7-9, 'But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.' We are thankful to the LORD for entrusting this treasure to us! So, let us continue by his Spirit to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord.

Let us continue to encourage all our congregations scattered throughout the State of Victoria to grow in their love for the Word of God, their love for Christ and each other and continue to have a high view of who our Lord is, take comfort to know that he is reigning on the throne, and he deserves our worship and praise, as in Rev 5:13: 'And

I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, 'To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might forever and ever!' Whilst we give thanks to the Lord for all our congregations, let us remember our struggling congregations who have fewer members and financial resources for ministry. Let us partner with them where possible so that they may never feel isolated but be assured that there is a wider body of believers who care for them, support, pray and encourage them along the way. Let's also keep praying for wisdom on how to reach the lost in our communities for Christ as we continue in prayer for conversions that people will come to know and trust in Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour.

Going forward, the focus is 'Helping Grow Healthy Churches by His Spirit and for His Glory.' To enable this to happen, amongst other areas, I believe that we need to focus on:

1. Church Revitalisation
2. Leadership training
3. Church health
4. Pastoral support to Ministers and Home Missionaries
5. Continuing to pray for a mighty work of His Spirit in His Church.

4.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the past year has been a challenge for all of us as we sought to minister to his people during the COVID pandemic and lockdowns.

I want to express my sincere thanks to the MDC and its convener Rev Stuart Withers, for their prayers, support, and encouragement in my work. I deeply value their input, wisdom, and guidance. I believe that we have an excellent working relationship and that we work as a team.

I am very thankful for the assistance of the MDC's secretary and office administrator, Mr Ben Palmer, who handles much of the MDC's administrative load and keeps me on track with all my appointments and maintaining my schedule. Ben works very closely with me, and I appreciate his administrative skills.

I also want to thank the Assembly Clerk Rev John Wilson and the PCV Office staff, especially the General Manager, Mr Michael Ellison. Their help and assistance are invaluable as I seek to fulfil my role.

There are many times that I am away from home on travels across the State, and I am very thankful to Rose for her understanding and love. She continues to be a great support and prayer partner to me. Where possible, she has also met with ministers' wives to listen, chat, encourage and pray with them.

I want to thank the General Assembly and the wider church for your ongoing prayers, support, and encouragement in my role. My thanks also to the congregations I have visited for their very warm and loving welcome extended to me.

Finally, I want to express my humble thanks to my Lord for his amazing grace, kindness and enabling given to me throughout this year. I thank him for his saving grace in my life. I thank him for his sustaining power and wisdom granted to me in my role as the MDO.

I am deeply honoured and humbled to serve the LORD and his precious people in the PCV.

Soli Deo Gloria.

Rev Chris Siriweera
Ministry Development Officer

5. Ministry Development Stories

5.1 Bairnsdale: revitalisation in regional Victoria

The present ministry appointment of Rev Gary Stephens began at the Bairnsdale congregation as an exit appointment in 2006. From a low point of 25 mostly elderly regulars in 2010, the intervening years have seen the congregation grow to around 75 weekly regular attendees, half of which are families with school-age children. In those beginning years, Bairnsdale received a combined \$25,000–\$35,000 in subsidies from the MMC and MDC. In the last financial year, both those subsidies were no longer required. The congregation has been in discussions with both presbytery and the MDC regarding the appointment of a part-time second worker to further consolidate the ministry of the church. This year Bairnsdale has been raised from an Appointment Charge to a Full Charge.

This progress has been a local church and presbytery partnership. In addition to regular visitations as required by the Code, through those years, presbytery met with the church at significant steps in the congregation's development to understand the circumstances accurately. There have been generous-spirited but also realistic and challenging conversations. Presbytery's considerations always sought to balance decisions with a mind for statistics (attendees and finances) while ensuring that there was a genuine foundation of church health and active ministry of the congregation into the town. The leadership of the church has also developed a blueprint for the long-term ministry of the congregation into the East Gippsland region. The congregation has been consulted on this blueprint, and the church is working towards it. This has seen the church communicating the ministry strategy with the presbytery and discussing the place of a second worker in that strategy.

As the Bairnsdale Charge moved towards a second worker appointment, presbytery supported the idea but insisted on establishing wise and realistic benchmarks for the congregation to work towards before it would recommend a second worker grant be approved. The guide behind those benchmarks was to ensure, as best as possible, that the next stage of development was realistic, strategic, sustainable, and beneficial rather than idealistic, wishful, burdensome, and faltering. Those benchmarks, set in consultation and agreement with the leadership of the congregation, were revisited within the timeframes allocated and have been adjusted accordingly as the progress of the congregation has been monitored. The church and presbytery relationship continue to be productive, beneficial, and encouraging. While a second worker appointment has not yet been made, we are all prayerfully looking forward to this development.

5.2 West Footscray: revitalisation in the inner city

The congregation at the West Footscray Home Mission Charge arrived at a significant decision point in 2019. Numbers had thinned, the surrounding community had changed, and although for the few who remained, the spirit was willing, there was also

the realisation that the flesh was weak. A change was needed. A new vision seemed urgent. Having a full-time pastor was essential.

With prayerful, practical, and financial support from the MDC, Martin de Pyle commenced as a home missionary in April 2020. The session moved to approve a vision document for the church, knowing that in seasons of change, there was the need to communicate the invisible why behind the visible what. It was their prayerful desire to keep everyone aligned as they reshaped ministry. Among other things, they approved a mission strategy and affirmed a pathway to change. It was written to hold both the MDC, the pastor, and the session accountable; it was to set priorities, stimulate discussion and assess performance.

It is no surprise that the shape of faithful ministry was centred around the ministry of the Word. Emphasis was placed on clear teaching and preaching undergirded with prayer. Public worship was designed to uplift, edify, and encourage the members of the church family, as well as all others in attendance. The importance of pastoral care was prioritised to guard against the devolution of pastors from Word-driven shepherds who care for the souls of their people to business professionals who farm out wounded sheep to allied professionals and who administer the church like a business CEO. A decentralised ministry approach was affirmed, noting that every member has spiritual gifts and is therefore commissioned by Christ to work in His Kingdom. The pastor has also been specifically working on evangelism, church membership, and leadership specific discipleship. There has been intentional work to train people for assuming leadership positions in the life of the church, such as the Board of Management, safe church, and church greeters.

At the time this report was written, the average attendance was at approximately 40, a fivefold increase. Given that 90% of these people now attending have arrived in the last 12 months, the focus was also on the development of a new community. This is a needed challenge as it takes time to establish as an actual reality, as opposed to something artificial or contrived. Outreach events that involved the entire congregation were run. One was an Australia Day BBQ with the reading of bush poetry, and the other was an ANZAC Day luncheon presentation. There was also an increased social media presence with support from the Darebin Presbyterian Church. In ministry, as in all things, the *status quo* never lasts, and the new is constantly emerging. Given the challenges faced in seeking to revitalise a church during a pandemic, the MDC and West Footscray Presbyterian Church have much to be encouraged by and thankful to God for.

5.3 Dandenong: revitalisation in a multicultural community

In 2017, the Exit Students Committee appointed licentiate Joel Mestry to the Dandenong congregation after a period of congregational decline. Joel was subsequently ordained in July 2017. The appointment was facilitated by a ministry grant from the MDC in consultation with the congregation. At the committee's request, Joel has forwarded the following case study of Dandenong's situation and progress.

In 2014, the congregation at Dandenong lost its minister. At the beginning of 2015, the session was able to employ a supply preacher for two days a week, who preached each Sunday and led a fortnightly prayer meeting and a weekly Bible study. The continuity in ministry was important. In 2016, the Interim Moderator, Rev David Palmer, with the support of the Dandenong Session, the Presbytery, and the MDC, applied to

the Exit Student Committee for a ministry candidate starting in January 2017. This was a leap into a fresh start.

During the two years 2018–2019, the congregation's average attendance grew from 28 to 49 people, and by the end of 2019, about 60 people were attending the worship services most weeks. The congregation was, therefore, able to reduce the amount of its ministry grant application.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant disruption to the life of the church over the past 18 months. As well as stop-start Bible studies and prayer meetings, attendance at worship services has declined to an average of 45 each week. Please pray with us that when we regain a settled pattern of ministry, attendance will grow as people return and newcomers join us.

Dandenong is a multicultural, multilingual, and multi-faith suburb in the southeast of Melbourne. 65% of residents in the Dandenong area were born overseas, and 62% of households speak a language other than English at home. The suburb is a working-class, low-income area, with an average weekly household income of just 75% of the Victorian average.

Partly because of these demographics, many people live in Dandenong for just a few years after arriving in Australia, before relocating to surrounding suburbs. This is reflected in the geographical location of our members. Most of our communicant members at Dandenong live outside Dandenong; of the average 45 people that now attend each week, 19 live in the Dandenong area, while others commute from areas such as Berwick, Pakenham, Cranbourne, and Frankston.

To address this situation and to be more present in the local community, the session has recently employed a cross-cultural worker with overseas mission experience to help us reach out with the gospel into the Dandenong community. The session is thankful to the MDC for the Cross-Cultural Worker grant in support of this new ministry.

The church participated in the church revitalisation seminar earlier this year. It has given us all food for thought. I am personally thankful that the MDO, Rev Chris Siriweera, has regular contact with me for follow-up discussions and prayer. Please pray for the Lord's blessing on the continuing partnership between the MDC, the presbytery, and the Dandenong congregation.

PCV Statistical Returns for 2020

1. Executive Summary

The statistical data return for the PCV in 2020 was the most complete and accurate collection for many years. In summary, the committee notes the following:

- There are 5,343 Communicant members and 815 adherents in the PCV.
- The average weekly attendance is 6,927.
- 71% of PCV congregations have 50 or fewer members
- The average size of a PCV congregation is 46 members.
- 40 out of 133 congregations do not have any people younger than ten years of age.
- The average age of congregations with fewer than 50 members is 10–20 years older than congregations with more than 50 members.
- 50 congregations have less than two elders
- 44 charges out of 103 reported that their annual giving was less than the Stipend and NCB of \$56,508.
- Nearly 80 congregations reported greater than 40% of the membership attending regular bible studies.
- The number of professions of faith and baptisms is small compared to the total number of communicant and adherent members and has significantly dropped over the last 12 months.

2. Introductory Comments

The committee thanks congregations for adapting to the new online collection system this year. The committee is confident that the new system has resulted in a more accurate collection, even if there is still room for refinement. For the 2020 returns, the committee had a submission rate of 133 out of 136 congregations (97.8%), representing 103 out of 104 charges (99.0%). The committee is confident that the data collected represent the most up-to-date statistics across the PCV.

New Questions

Assembly members will recall that the 2020 GAV approved a new set of questions for the Statistical Returns. This change has meant that not all of the old data and new data match. Where there is a correlation, comparisons can be built, but in many ways, the 2020 return functions as a 're-set' from which future returns can be compared.

Accuracy

The committee notes that the figures submitted seem to have some internal discrepancies. Average attendance and the ages breakdown totals are divergent in 84/133 congregations. This means that there are manual entry mistakes, simple calculation errors, or confusion concerning the question. Next year's collection will include a simple integrity check to ensure figures align and the parameters of each question are clearly understood.

Older Data Methodology

If data was not submitted by a charge in previous years, the most recent available figures were substituted. This has enabled the calculation of items like GMP allocations. If, for example, charge X did not submit statistics for 2019, the most recent data was carried over from the most recent return. It is possible that, in some cases, the 2020 return was the first for many years. The high compliance levels (almost 100%) in 2020 have virtually eliminated 'old data', which accounts for the significant difference between the 2019 and 2020 statistics.

Some Enigmatic Results

A careful reading of statistics is needed because the data does not tell the whole story. Still, the data is worth reflection. Analysis may prompt questions that will help answer the reasons behind the data. There are some statistics that would benefit from future investigation. They are not reliant on previous years' data and, as such, sit by themselves. For example, there were 61 congregations in 2020 where the average attendance was less than the number of communicants and adherents. There were seven congregations in 2020 where there were more adherents than communicants. And there were 18 congregations in 2020 where the number of Lord's Supper participants was greater than the average attendance. What do these observations mean in the life of PCV churches? How might church leaders begin to address issues in church life and culture? Of course, it is when God's people embrace God's will more and more that congregations become healthy.

Statistical Information and Analysis of congregations to be forwarded to Presbyteries

This report gives the statistical picture for the PCV overall. The MDC is also preparing a package for each Presbytery containing statistics for each congregation in their bounds consisting of:

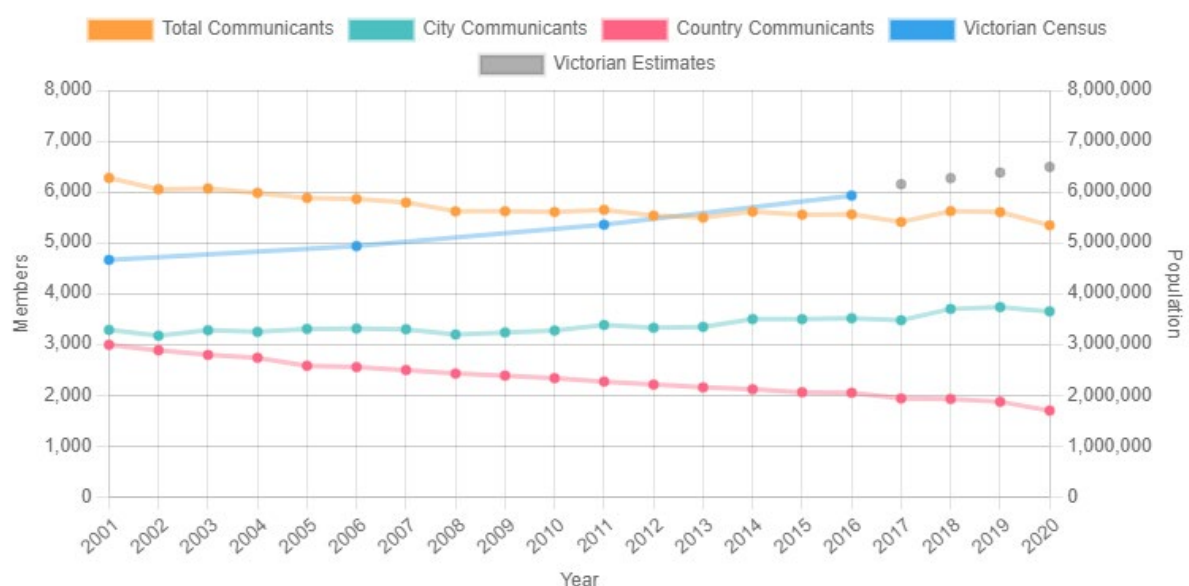
1. The raw data that was collected
2. Calculated fields such as average giving/head/week; % of average attendance at bible study; average age; % of children
3. A range of indicators that will provide Presbyteries with a snapshot of the State of congregations (currently being developed)

This data and analysis will assist Presbyteries in their congregational oversight and strategic planning.

3. Total membership/adherents/population

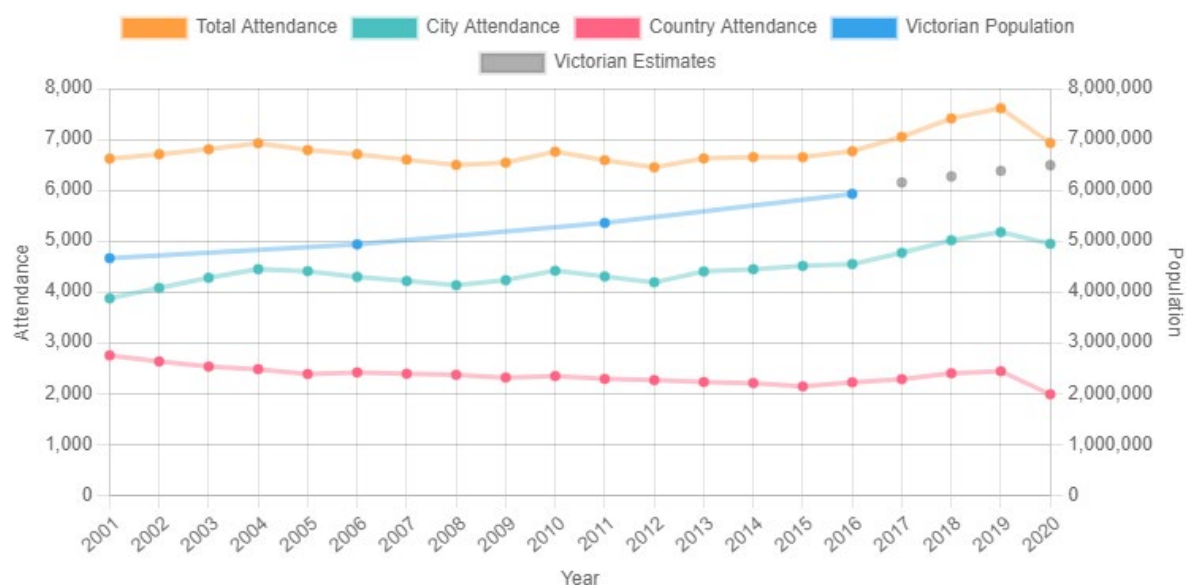
Communicants vs. Population

2001-2020



Attendance vs. Population

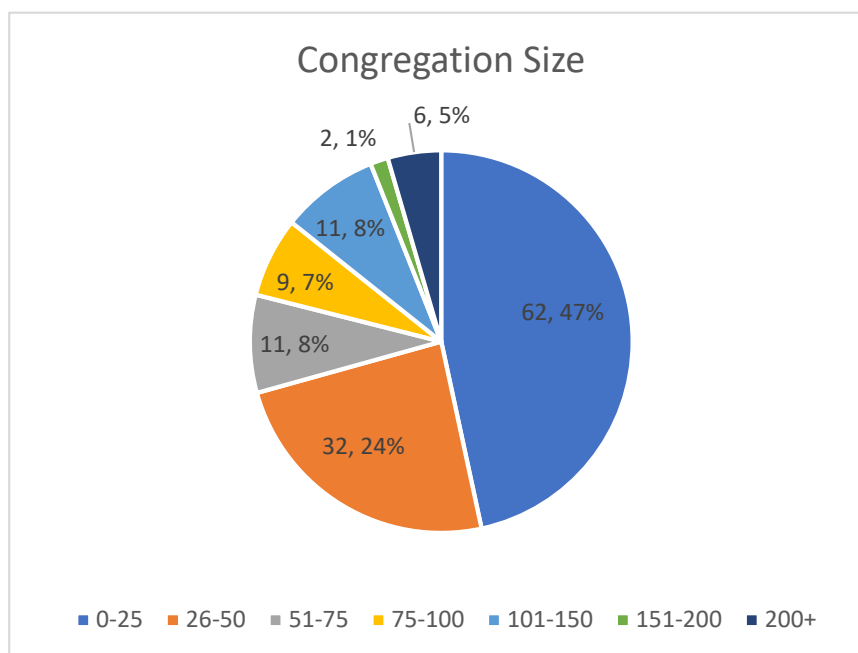
2001-2020



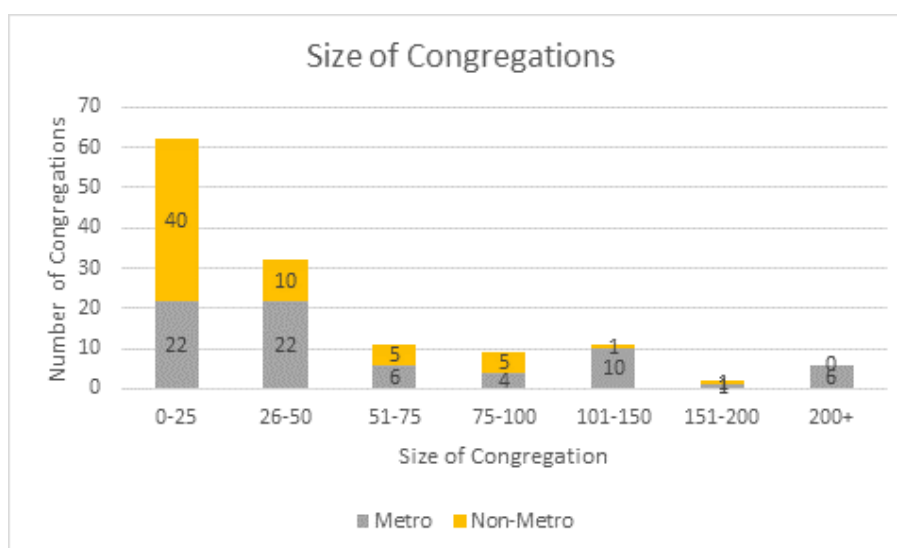
The new online system for collecting and reporting PCV statistics has produced a fall in reported membership and attendance figures. The committee trusts that this is a one-year adjustment to a new, more accurate baseline. In the case of attendance, answers to the question on Lord's Day attendance at services appear in some cases to have omitted to include attendance at evening services. The Covid pandemic has probably also had an effect on the attendance reported.

	2019	2020	change
Communicants	5,601	5,343	-258
Adherents	1,132	815	-317
Attendance	7,612	6,927	-685

4. Congregation Size



71% of PCV congregations have 50 or fewer members, while 5% of congregations are over the 200-mark. The mean average of congregational membership is 46.



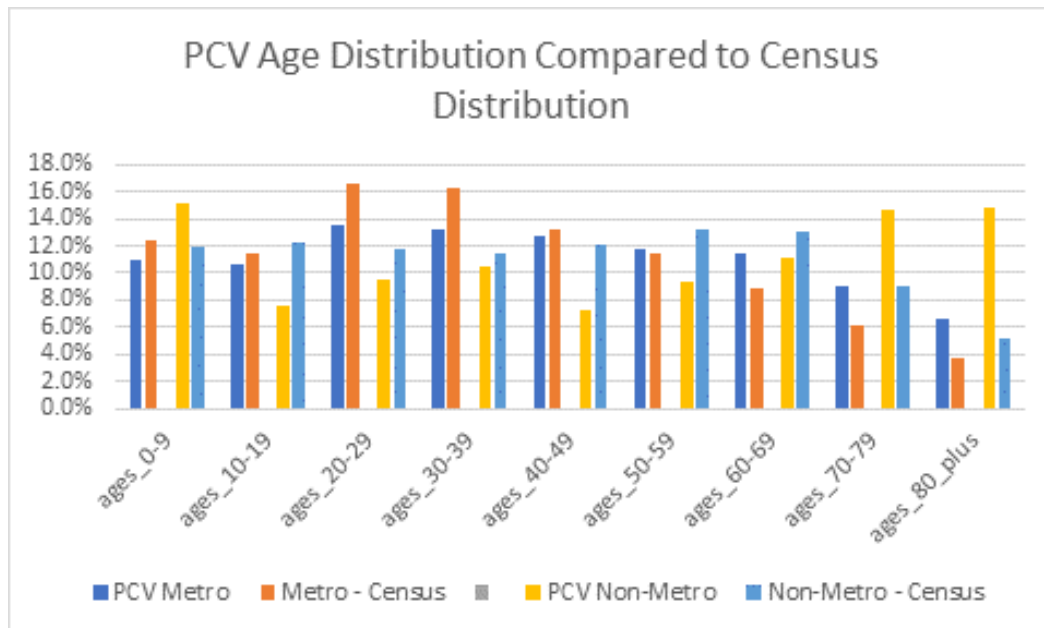
Seventy-one reporting congregations are in metropolitan presbyteries, and 62 are in rural and regional presbyteries. 80% of non-metropolitan congregations have 50 or fewer members, with 65% having 25 or fewer.

5. Age distribution

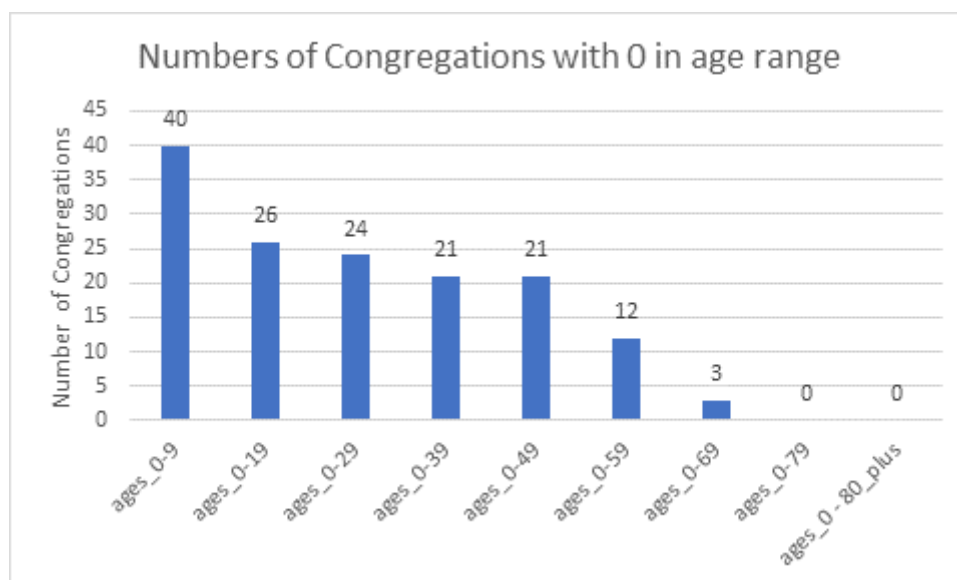
This graph compares the age distributions in metropolitan and non-metropolitan congregations with distributions in the 2016 ABS Census figures for Victoria. The graph shows us that there are variations in the age distribution in both metropolitan and non-metropolitan congregations compared with the Census data for these locations.

For metropolitan congregations, there is a deficit in the 20–40 age group when compared to census data, and then the variation goes the other way from the 60 plus

age groups. In non-metropolitan congregations, the drop is over a larger age distribution from 10–70. However, from 70+ there are significantly more people in church than the Census data for the general population. Some of these differences can be explained by young people leaving rural areas for education and then work. Are they then coming back later in life?

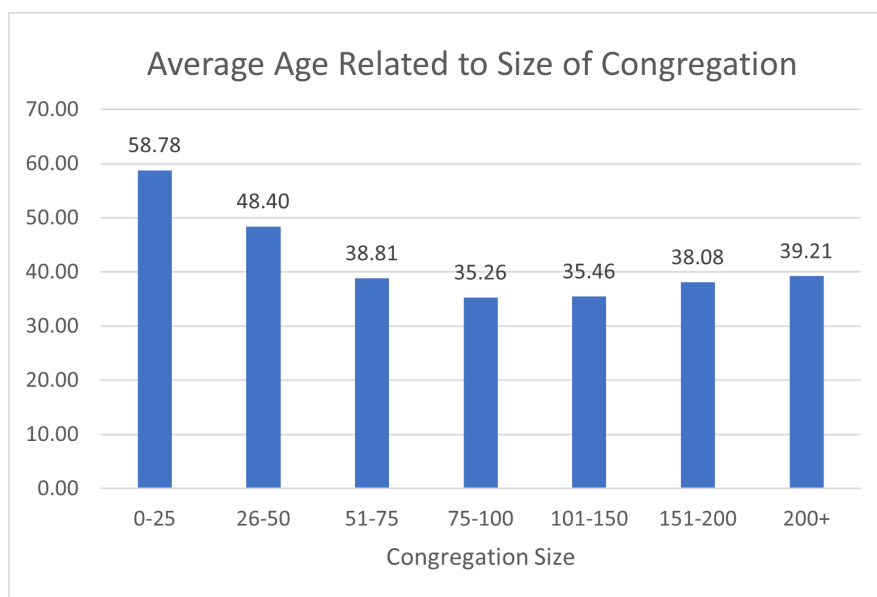


The following graph displays the number of congregations that do not have people attending in the given age range. For example, 40 of 133 congregations do not have any children from 0-9 years of age.



Three congregations are not included in this graph as they did not provide age breakdowns.

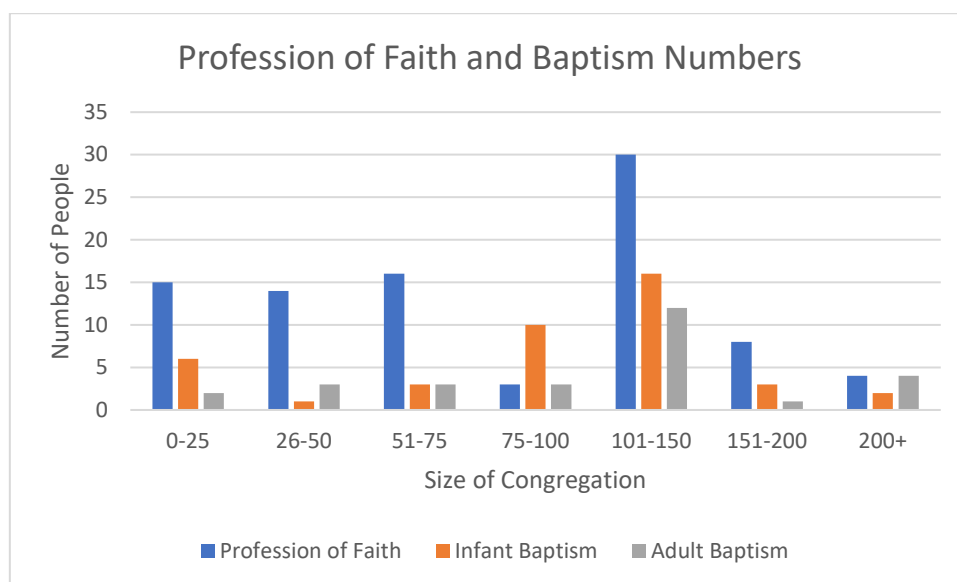
The following graph shows that congregations larger than 50 all have average ages in the mid-to-high 30s.



6. Professions of Faith, Baptisms and Visitors

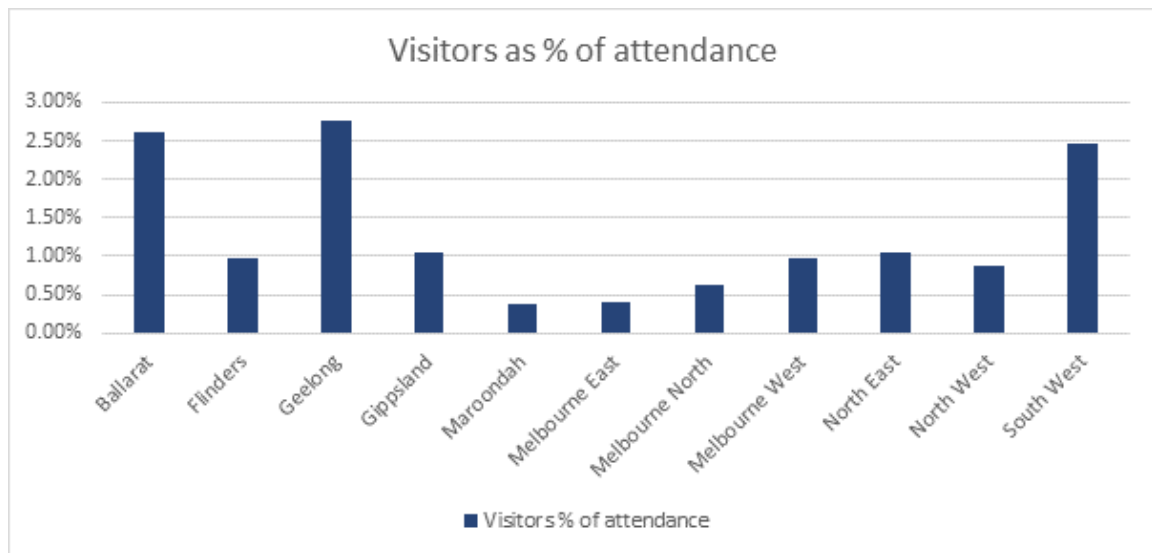
For 2020, congregations reported a total of 90 Professions of Faith, 41 infant baptisms and 28 adult baptisms. These figures were all less than half of their equivalents in 2019, which may reflect the lengthy periods of lockdown in 2020.

The following graph analyses where this growth is occurring.



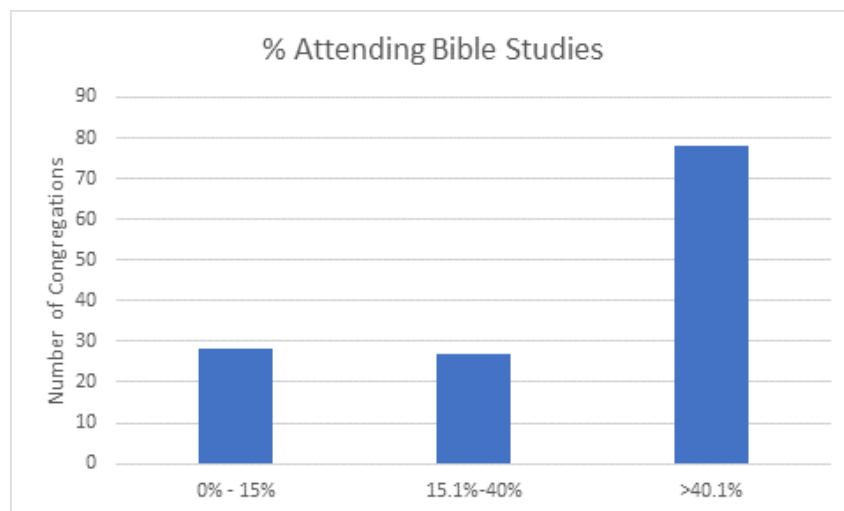
When looking at this graph, it should be remembered that just over 70% of the congregations have less than 50 people, which means that around 30% of the congregations are responsible for the majority of growth that is occurring. i.e. 61 of the 90 Professions of Faith; 34 of the 41 infant baptisms, and 23 of the 28 adult baptisms.

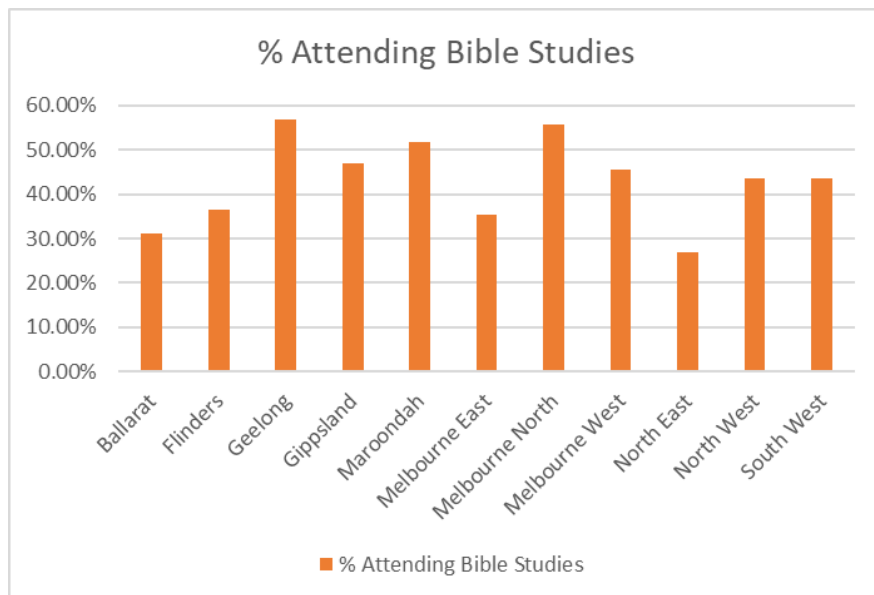
Three thousand five hundred twelve unique visitors were reported for the year.



7. Bible Study Groups

The following two graphs provide information on the percentage of PCV people who are engaging in mid-week bible study.





23 congregations out of 133 reported having no Bible Study attendees. Still, overall, the 2020 Statistical Returns reflect a good level of engagement in Bible Studies in many of congregations.

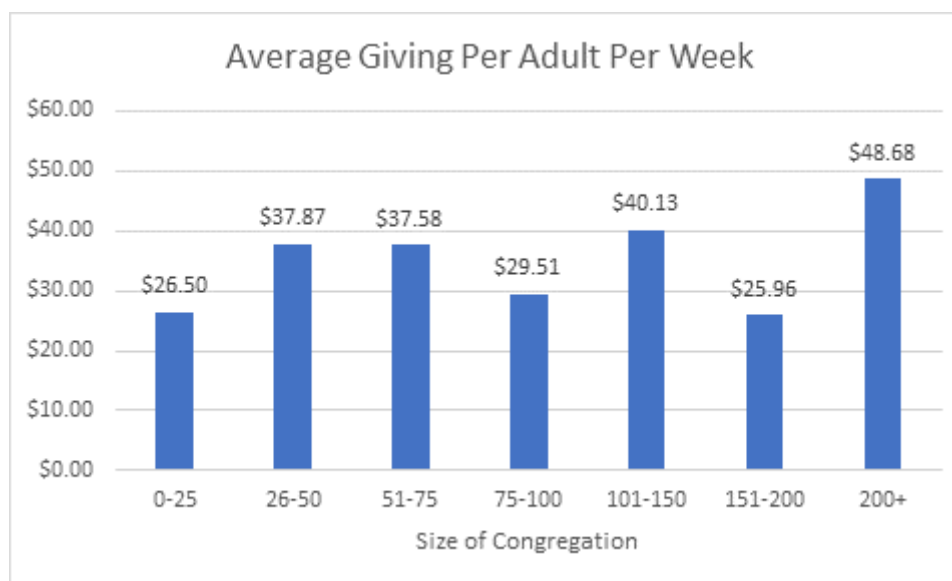
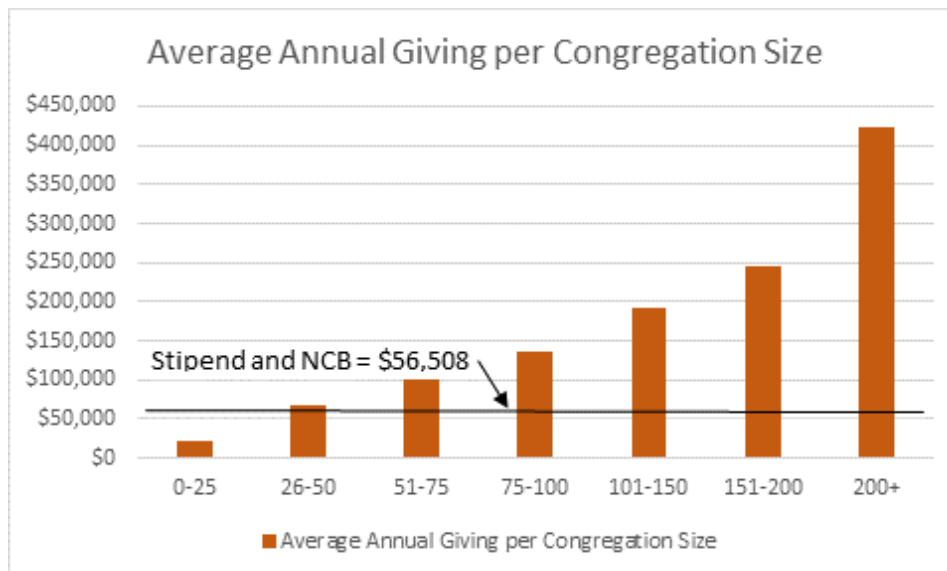
8. Finances

Giving

Healthy, self-sustaining congregations can afford the cost of a minister to provide local leadership in the mission of a church. There are some complexities, and potential sensitivities, when presenting financial information. In what follows, the committee report on whether congregations can fund one minister from the regular weekly giving of the people for ministry and mission. (This is the first time the giving figures have been collected since 1986 when an ad hoc committee was tasked with exploring the viability of congregations.)

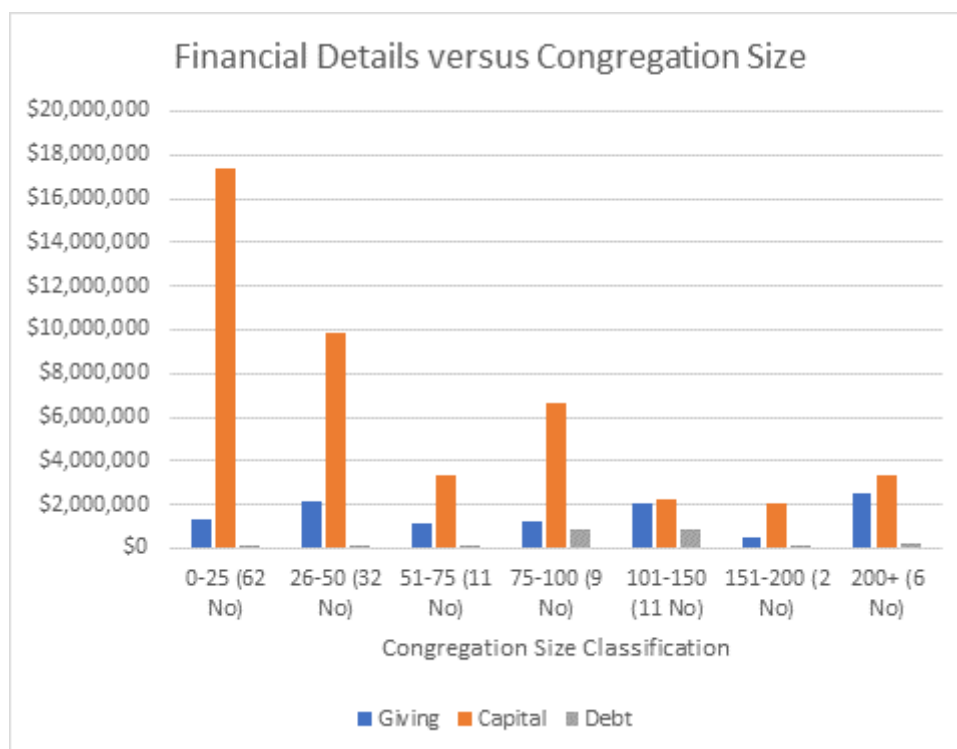
In 2020 there were 76 out of 133 reporting congregations that had annual giving less than the minimum full-time ministerial Stipend and NCB of \$56,508. Of course, stipend and NCB do not represent all the costs a congregation face when setting aside a minister. Likewise, the committee is aware that some congregations are linked to create a charge, which enables them to sustain the costs of having a minister or home missionary. When the data is analysed at charge level, there are 44 charges out of the 103 reporting charges where the annual giving is less the Stipend and NCB of \$56,508 (Though it should be noted that this total includes an early-stage church plant and a congregation meeting in a nursing home).

In 2020 there were 11 congregations that had annual giving less than \$7,696, which was the minimum required to pay for weekly supply preaching. One of these congregations did not meet due to Covid-19 for the whole year to take up collections. One was the newly established Donnybrook that existed on paper in 2020 but did not meet until 2021. Three are metropolitan congregations.



The average weekly adult giving per head across all PCV congregations is \$36.33.

Overall Finances

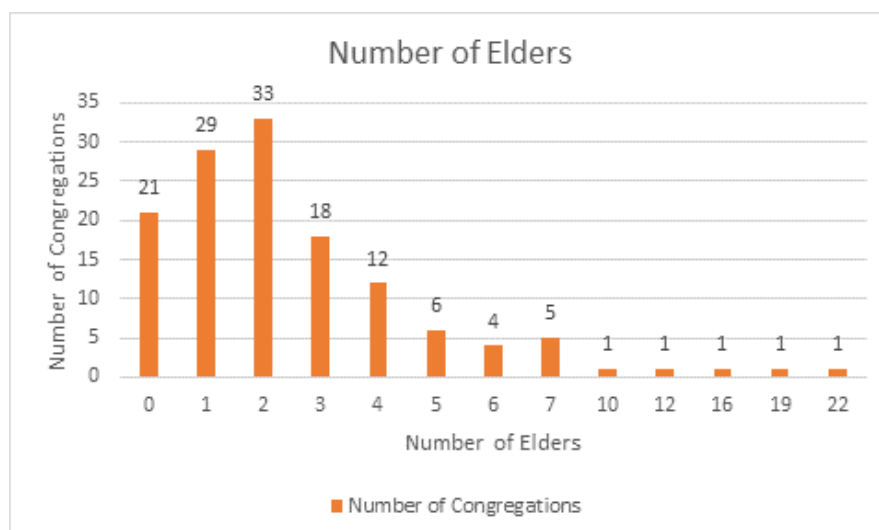


9. Leadership

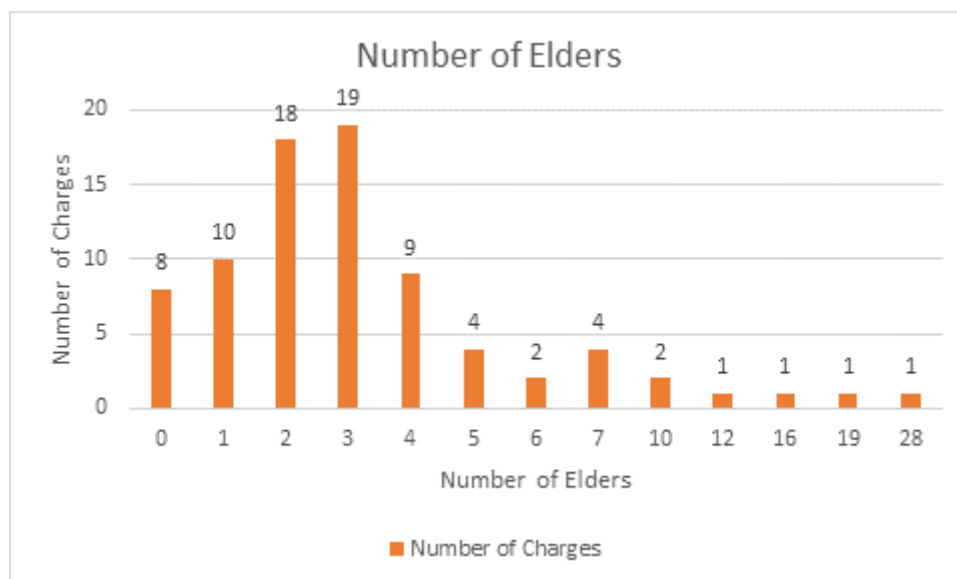
Biblical leadership within local congregations is vital for church health. The committee knows from Paul's instructions to Titus that appointing qualified elders was a high priority for the sustained health and growth of local churches. In the following graphs, the committee offers information on eldership, deacons, and Boards of Management. Of course, the function and role of each are distinct. Each provides particular leadership within the life of a congregation.

Eldership in the PCV

There are a total of 365 active elders in the PCV. The graph below shows how they are distributed across the 133 reporting congregations.



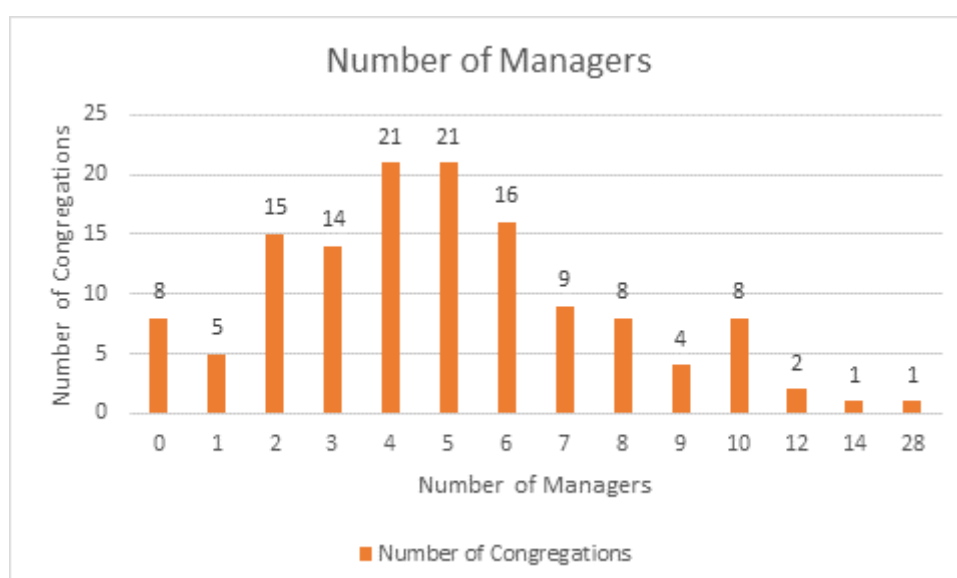
Some linked congregations operate as a Charge. This table presents the number of elders serving in PCV Charges.



Deacons

There are currently 115 deacons in the PCV, both men and women, who serve across 23 congregations. The committee notes that the average attendance at congregations with deacons is 105 people in contrast with the congregations without deacons, where the average attendance is 41 people. Additionally, the committee notes that of the 23 congregations with deacons, 17 are metropolitan congregations and six non-metropolitan. Looking at the data, the committee wonders if this biblical office is underutilised and underdeveloped.

Board of Management Members



There are 671 elected Board of Management members in the PCV. The most common number of managers per congregation is 4 or 5.

10. 2020 Statistical Returns by Presbytery

Presbytery (& no. of congs)	communi- cants	adher- ents	total members	attendance	professions of faith	visitors	elders	assessor elders	deacons	managers	giving	capital	debt
Ballarat (14 congs)	276	43	319	362	3	492	24	3	2	53	\$522,692	\$2,476,720	\$0
Flinders (17)	666	52	718	840	15	399	41	16	19	98	\$1,256,134	\$7,521,440	\$984,618
Geelong (5)	222	11	233	315	7	451	13	5	0	28	\$503,456	\$2,436,146	\$0
Gippsland (8)	367	27	394	465	2	251	16	9	7	39	\$608,070	\$2,285,499	\$0
Maroondah (9)	432	72	504	631	4	122	35	5	13	41	\$1,191,403	\$5,457,411	\$0
Melbourne East (17)	947	231	1178	1363	19	309	66	7	17	94	\$2,190,847	\$10,001,866	\$863,705
Melbourne North (13)	693	149	842	1160	23	371	54	7	44	81	\$1,792,950	\$2,001,736	\$331,037
Melbourne West (15)	900	88	988	935	13	419	53	9	2	70	\$1,353,816	\$3,244,643	\$0
North East Vic (16*)	285	45	330	307	3	155	23	17	0	71	\$595,276	\$2,974,549	\$0
North West Vic (7)	183	16	199	202	1	100	12	8	2	32	\$376,265	\$679,713	\$130,483
South West Vic (12)	372	81	453	347	0	443	28	2	9	64	\$579,513	\$5,824,944	\$0
COUNTRY TOTAL	1705	223	1928	1998	16	1892	116	44	20	287	\$3,185,272	\$16,677,571	\$130,483
CITY TOTAL	3638	592	4230	4929	74	1620	249	44	95	384	\$7,785,149	\$28,227,097	\$2,179,360
PCV TOTAL	5343	815	6158	6927	90	3512	365	88	115	671	\$10,970,421	\$44,904,667	\$2,309,843

Presbytery (& no. of congs)	baptisms infant	baptisms adult	lords supper participants	bible study attendance	ages 0-9	ages 10-19	ages 20-29	ages 30-39	ages 40-49	ages 50-59	ages 60-69	ages 70-79	ages 80+
Ballarat (14 congs)	3	1	271	113	74	28	42	34	36	30	57	49	52
Flinders (17)	2	2	604	306	135	108	102	100	81	107	89	73	94
Geelong (5)	3	2	236	179	95	25	23	54	30	27	34	39	33
Gippsland (8)	2	0	399	218	72	61	64	70	37	62	63	86	77
Maroondah (9)	0	2	552	326	48	68	59	92	94	81	93	71	73
Melbourne East (17)	9	2	928	515	123	142	190	172	178	182	147	106	60
Melbourne North (13)	13	15	406	645	127	104	132	138	124	116	95	85	50
Melbourne West (15)	5	3	805	381	147	113	175	146	127	104	136	112	87
North East Vic (16*)	0	0	258	85	33	32	15	29	21	32	45	63	91
North West Vic (7)	1	1	193	94	46	11	57	37	28	34	17	11	32
South West Vic (12)	3	0	322	151	60	33	38	40	28	48	64	121	85
COUNTRY TOTAL	12	4	1679	840	380	190	239	264	180	233	280	369	370
CITY TOTAL	29	24	3295	2173	580	535	658	648	604	590	560	447	364
PCV TOTAL	41	28	4974	3013	960	725	897	912	784	823	840	816	734

*

There are 19 congregations in North East Victoria Presbytery, but the Seymour, Nagambie and Yea congregations did not submit returns.

Stuart Withers
CONVENER

PAST MODERATOR'S REPORT (Min 15)

At the outset, I want to express my heartfelt thanks for the opportunity to serve Christ and His church as moderator for the past 12 months. It has been an absolute joy to exercise this leadership role within the church through these challenging times. The ongoing COVID pandemic has ensured that it has been a year like no other. Three Zoom assemblies, an in-person Commission with COVID restrictions, and numerous commitments needing to be deferred, rescheduled, or dealt with via Zoom have kept us on our toes and dependent on the grace of God more than ever. I am deeply grateful to Trinity Session and congregation for releasing me to take on this role and supporting me in it; to my wife Lavena, who has been a constant support and source of strength and encouragement throughout the year; to my chaplains: Rev Graham Nicholson (Hawthorn) and Rev John Huynh (Surrey Hills) for their excellent support, wisdom and advice; to the officers of the assembly for managing a paired down agenda; and to past moderator Colin Morrow who went the extra mile in assisting me to take on the responsibilities of this office. Thank you also to each of the members. Conducting the business of the assembly remotely and relating to one another in debates through a computer screen has been new for all of us and has had its challenges, but the patience, care, and respect you demonstrated and the excellent arrangements put in place by the Assembly committee meant that our Zoom assemblies particularly went ahead smoothly, were rarely bogged down due to technology or other technical difficulties, which in turn led to constructive and God-honouring decision making.

The role of moderator may best be described as being entrusted with the responsibility to lead, encourage and represent the church for a season. In reporting on my year as moderator, I will do so under those three headings.

1. Lead

Our meetings this year lacked the expositions that are a regular feature of our assemblies due to lockdown and border closures. However, this gave the opportunity for my chaplains and me to bring Bible talks, prayer and praise so as to set the spiritual tone for our meetings. In chairing the meetings of the Assembly, it was always my goal to be firm, fair and impartial, and to follow due process within an atmosphere of faith in dependence upon the grace of God.

Early on in my year as moderator, multiple letters were written on behalf of the church to the government seeking to advocate for a reopening of churches after their enforced closure both in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria that extended to 35 weeks throughout 2020. In addition to that, numerous occasions arose in which we were able to collaborate with other denominations in lobbying the government for fair and equal treatment so that churches could reopen in a COVID safe way.

I was also charged with the responsibility to advocate for the church with respect to the Victorian Government's 'Gay Conversion Prohibition Bill' as it passed through both houses of parliament. In partnership with the Church and Nation Committee and other denominations, no stone was left unturned to communicate our position regarding the proposed legislation. 'Thank you' to the many Presbyterians throughout the state who answered the call and signed petitions, wrote letters, or visited politicians to voice our concerns in relation to this extreme legislation.

Throughout the year, I have participated in several licensing and induction services, when approached I have sought to advocate for ministers and elders experiencing

difficulty, and on six occasions, have responded to requests by presbyteries for the appointment of assessors for a set time and purpose.

2. Encourage

It has been a particular joy to visit the congregations of the Gippsland Presbytery. The role of moderator grants one entry into the life and work of local congregations and to witness first-hand the kingdom-building work that is going on. What I saw encouraged me greatly: a deep love for Jesus; a strong commitment to the Bible; faithfulness in proclaiming the Gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit; unity in the truth; and a deep appreciation of their pastor by the people of each congregation. We are all in this together, all part of the one body of Christ. The light of Christ is shining brightly in many regional communities for which we should all be thankful, and I personally would consider it a blessing to be a part of any one of the churches visited.

However, it must be said that many country congregations contend with small numbers, limited financial resources, an aging membership, in some cases no locally elected eldership, and little backup for the pastor. Yet, we are not to despise the day of small things. God's kingdom is built, not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God working through His people one life at a time. We must remain ready and willing in the day of God's power. To be sure, lay leadership of congregations has been in numerical decline for many decades and needs revitalisation in our day. Please join me in praying to that end. Throughout His ministry, Jesus prioritised training up the twelve so as to take on leadership of the church after His ascension into Heaven. Ministers likewise must prioritise training up elders to share the task of leadership within the local congregation and to seek to grow the work so as to maintain viability. Strong locally elected lay leadership is essential to the health and vitality of congregations.

Throughout the year, I have visited several brethren hospitalised and in poor health, attended the funeral of Brian Bayston, wrote pastoral letters to the wider church at various times such as Christmas and Easter, wrote to encourage all our missionaries who have faced particular challenges during COVID restrictions, visited the PTC, sought to encourage the vital work that is being done there, and presented awards at the PTC Graduation/Commencement service.

At the time of writing, our plan is to visit and encourage APWM missionaries in the top end engaged in indigenous ministry, in late July for three weeks. However, this may need to be rescheduled due to current COVID outbreaks and border closures. I shall report on this at a later date.

3. Represent

In representing the church, I was invited to give the message at the Scotch Easter service and received an attentive and warm welcome. I represented, along with John Wilson, the interests of the church in the redrafting of the PLC constitution. I officiated at the commissioning service for the new principal for PLC, Mrs Cheryl Penberthy. It was a joy to represent the church at the annual conference of the APWM held online this year and to witness the outstanding work being done to nurture grassroots support for our missionaries. I was invited to record Christmas and Easter messages which were broadcast on Light FM. At the passing of HRH Prince Philip, I was invited to attend Government House to sign the official condolence book on behalf of the PCV. I was also called upon to chair the meetings of the Commission for Church Institutions, which is diligently exercising oversight of our treasured institutions: Scotch College,

Presbyterian Ladies College, St Andrew's Christian School, and Belgrave Heights Christian School.

Conclusion

There are many challenges facing the church at this time. We hear much about the secular notions of equality and inclusion, which are code for tolerance toward anything except biblical morality. Likewise, the biblical model for marriage and the family, along with the biblical standard for sexual purity, is under sustained attack today. In light of this, churches need to be radically counter-cultural. Our churches must be places where families are nurtured and strengthened and havens where our young people can be taught to love with purity and integrity and supported to form families of their own that will be a blessing for generations to come. It is necessary for us all to remember that we are a community of the forgiven and the redeemed, so to forgive as we are forgiven and to love as we are loved. Brotherly love is essential. The church has always been a community based on God-given equality and inclusion. We are all one in Christ Jesus. We all stand on level ground at the foot of the cross. In the church, people of every race, colour, and language, right across the spectrum of social class and status, come together as equals, as brothers and sisters in Christ, as those who belong, and who have an equal share in an eternal inheritance. As we embody these realities, and in so doing, hold out the hope that is in Christ, we will remain faithful, quite likely become the target of increasing persecution, but pleasing to God and a blessing in our day and generation. When Joshua was about to lead Israel in to take possession of their inheritance, the promised land, God instructed him: 'Be strong and courageous, for I am with you wherever you go'. We all need to heed that same encouragement as we seek in our day to take possession of the good things God has promised us.

Every blessing and strength for the task ahead.

Philip D Mercer
PAST MODERATOR



Presbyterian Ladies' College

MELBOURNE

(Min 31)

Chair's Report to Members of PLC at the AGM

In accordance with Article 13 of the College's Constitution, the Chairman presents this report to the Members of PLC at its AGM. A copy of this report will also be forward to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria as the Annual report on the Life and Work of the College for 2020 as per Article 41.

'Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, His steadfast love endures forever.' Ps 136:1

Like every other organisation in Australia and across the world, the year 2020 has been one of the most challenging that Presbyterian Ladies' College has faced in many years. Perhaps if the Chair's report (if one existed) could be found for the year of the Spanish Flu epidemic in 1918, something similar may have been written of those times. Yet in the midst of the uncertainty of the coronavirus pandemic, PLC has, under God's providential hand, remained focused on its mission. The College community has stayed cohesive, and the College has been able to maintain its work of providing the best of education to its girls, and developing them to be critical thinkers, servant-hearted leaders, resilient in character and being respectful of all. The Christian Gospel continues to be at the heart of College, influencing its strategy and shaping the culture of the College.

Teaching and Learning in Lockdown

But for a few weeks, most of Term 2 and 3 in 2020 was spent in lockdown. As with the rest of students in Melbourne, remote learning was the order of the day, and the Principal, Mrs Cheryl Penberthy and her staff had to adapt with amazing agility to this untried method of teaching. Under Mrs Penberthy's calm and steady leadership, this was achieved with relative seamlessness, and the girls proved the resilience of their character by adapting to this with minimal fuss.

Co-curricular activities were however significantly impacted, and sports, music and other programs had either to be delivered in an innovative fashion, or else severely curtailed. Staff and students however brought their creativity and ingenuity into play through the introduction of virtual choirs and performances, fitness training over Zoom, and house challenges on fitness apps such as Strava. Mrs Penberthy and her senior leadership staff also worked very hard to provide pastoral support to staff working in isolation at home, sometimes under the added stress of their own parental responsibilities.

With the closure of the international borders, the Boarding House also faced many challenges. International students who were in Melbourne at the time of the first lockdown have not been able to return to their home overseas, while those who were outside faced difficulty returning to Australia. We thank particularly both Deputy Principals, Mrs Lisa Saffin and Mrs Anne-Marie Williams, who went beyond their duties to become residents in the Boarding House over extended periods of the lockdown to provide additional pastoral care for the boarders.

Despite the initial fears that the lockdown would bring significant financial pressure and hardship on parents, the availability of JobKeeper and government assistance provided to childcare operators meant that the impact on student enrolments were kept to a minimum. Thanks to the prudent stewardship of financial resources by earlier Councils, the College was also able to provide targeted financial assistance to families most severely impacted by the pandemic. This has been a source of great joy for the Council, and the Principal has conveyed to Council the appreciation of those families who have been able to retain their girls in the school because of this support being provided.

Thriving through adversity

Many of the highlight events of the school calendar were cancelled as a result of the pandemic. Both Senior School and Junior School musicals and plays were cancelled, as were sporting events such as the House Swimming Carnivals and inter-school competitions. Likewise, the annual Gala Concert could not be held at Hamer Hall in August. Most severely impacted was the graduating Year 12 cohort, who missed out on their formal and other final year milestone events. Their opportunities for leadership were also greatly diminished.

Nevertheless, what appeared at first to be missed opportunities on the surface, provided learning and growth through adversity. As with many others, Council, staff and students learnt to adapt and grow in resilience through times of adversity. In particular, the various prayer groups and Christian Union grew in prayerful dependence on God, and there were many and varied opportunities to extend the love of Christ through care and encouragement of one another.

Despite the challenges of the year, the girls maintained their focus and diligence to the end of the year, and again the graduating class of 2020 achieved outstanding Year 12 VCE and IB results. The median ATAR score was 95.2, with 91% of the girls achieving an ATAR above 80. We congratulate the 'Class of 2020' on these outstanding results and wish them the very best as they enter the next phase of life after high school. May the values and character instilled in them from their years at PLC stand them in good stead to make their contribution as leaders, serving their communities with excellence wherever they may be.

Senior Appointments and Farewells in 2020

At the end of 2020, we welcomed Dr Michelle Cafini as the Head of Junior School. Dr Cafini has extensive leadership experience in educational settings, particularly in the Junior School environment. She holds qualifications specialising in educational leadership, inquiry learning, mathematics, music and gifted education. Dr Cafini was previously the Head of College for Rivercrest Christian College as well as Head of Junior School at Hillcrest College. She has also held leadership positions in Newhaven College and Eton House International in Singapore.

We also farewelled Mr John Law, who retired as Head of Junior School, having served in the Junior School since 1990, when he began as a temporary Swimming and PE teacher. Mr Law was then appointed full-time, and over the next thirty years taught Year 3, held the positions of Middle Primary Coordinator and Head of Junior School PE and Specialists, and coached Year 7 and 8 Sport. He was appointed Deputy Head of Junior School in 2004, Head of Junior School Operations in 2019 and finally took on the role as Head of Junior School in 2020. We wish Mr Law and Mrs Bronwyn Law

(who was also a valued staff member of the Junior School), the very best in their retirement.

Likewise, Council itself also saw a changing of the guard in 2020. The faithful leadership of Mr Russell Walley came to a conclusion, as he retired from Council. Under his leadership, the College has maintained its position as a leading independent girls' school in Australia, and it has retained its clear commitment to the Christian foundations of the school. I wish to thank Mr Walley for his sacrificial leadership and the guidance he has provided me as I step into the position of Chair of Council. Other long-serving Council Members, Mrs Catherine O'Leary, Mrs Jan Markham and Dr Greg Barton also stepped down from Council, and their service and contribution to Council and the College is likewise acknowledged with thankfulness and gratitude. In particular, Dr Barton served as Chair of the Risk Management and Audit Committee and Mrs Catherine O'Leary as the Chair of the Group B Selection Committee.

These retirements therefore created an opportunity for renewal of Council, and we are glad to welcome the Group A appointments of Rev Ben Johnson, Mr Daniel Gregor and Dr Peter Yong; the Group B appointment of Dr Tanya Josev; and the Group C appointment of Mr Wing Chang. Both Rev Ben Johnson and Mr Wing Chang are casual appointments arising from the resignation of Mrs Fiona Bligh and Dr Janice Smith respectively, at the start of the previous Council year. One final Group C vacancy remains to be filled before the end of the Council year. We welcomed all new Council members into our ranks and take heart at the fruitful contribution they have begun to make on Council.

A good start to 2021

We began 2021 with the hope of some semblance to normality, even as the impact of the coronavirus pandemic across the globe is ongoing. Thankfully, this has largely been the case so far during the year. The College has been able to resume its extensive co-curricular program and activities, and the wider school community has welcomed the ability to come back to the College for in-person gatherings and celebrations. All of this has been done with a careful attention paid to the safety of children, staff and visitors.

Throughout 2020, Mrs Penberthy had provided the necessary and steady leadership that the College needed. She not only navigated the uncertainty of the pandemic with the confidence and wisdom which the staff and students looked to for assurance, she also continued the important work of implementation of the strategic plan. She is capable of high-level strategic thinking as well as paying attention to the detail of implementation in the form of processes and policies and the delivery of measurable outcomes. Her Christian character is strongly evident in the way she conducts herself with students and staff and provides an example for them to follow.

Given that the College is in the midst of its strategic plan, *Towards 2023 and beyond*, Council extended Mrs Penberthy's contract as Principal to the end of 2023 to enable her to lead this important work to its completion.

Mrs Penberthy was officially commissioned on 28 April 2021 by Rev Philip Mercer, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. It was a joyous and solemn occasion and well-wishes and prayers were offered for her success as Principal. The Junior School girls took great delight in surprising and greeting Mrs Penberthy with a parade of honour outside the Performing Arts Centre after the service. Numerous other heads

of schools, past colleagues of Mrs Penberthy and her family and friends were present to celebrate with her on this special occasion.

Property and Finances

Compared to previous years, the extent of property enhancements to the College was relatively small in 2020. Nevertheless, certain minor improvements such as refurbishment of senior school classrooms M, N and P, updating and creation of student toilets, and building of the Cubby House, took place with the advantage of the absence of the girls on-site for a large part of the year. In the meantime, significant planning work is being undertaken to deliver the Master Plan in the coming years.

Despite the financial pressures during the year, the College has maintained an operating surplus which has enabled the College to continue reinvesting for the future of the College. The College has no borrowings and remains in a strong financial position to meet all its financial obligations in the coming year. Enrolments are healthy, and applications for future years are strong by comparison to previous years. One area of concern continues to be the extended closure of international borders which has significantly impacted the College's ability to attract international enrolments into its Boarding House. The Principal is working hard to mitigate the financial risks of this situation, but the College remains committed to the boarders currently residing in the Boarding House and to the operation of the Boarding House as an integral aspect of the College's offering. It has enabled PLC to have an international outlook and brought richness in cultural diversity to the College.

Council commends to members the 2020 audited financial statements of the College, which has been approved by Council. The audit report is unqualified and following the acceptance of the financial statements by members at the AGM, it will be submitted to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, along with this report.

We express our gratitude to Mr Hamish Blair, Business Manager, and his staff, for their work in managing the business and finances of the College. Mr Blair's responsibility extends to his role as the Company Secretary of the College, and we thank him for his support of Council as it conducts its affairs.

Council

College Council consists of 17 volunteer directors, five of whom are appointed directly by the Presbyterian Church of Victoria as Group A members, five as Group B members are nominated by a selection committee that represents the Old Collegians and the Parents' Association, and seven being the Group C members are nominated to the Church by the Council itself. They set the vision, principles, values and priorities that govern the College, in alignment with the Christian and academic aims that are enshrined in the College's constitution. All appointments are for one year, with no restriction on being re-nominated.

Given my appointment as the new Chair of Council, I have taken the opportunity to undertake a review and restructure of the sub-committees of Council, and their associated Terms of Reference. The following office bearers were appointed at the start of the Council Year in November 2020.

- Deputy Chair, Mr Wayne Rice
- Chair, Finance Risk and Audit Committee, Ms Mui Chun Chew (with Mr Wayne Rice as Deputy Chair)

- Chair, Property and Planning Committee, Mr Ben de Waard
- Chair, Group B Selection Committee, Mrs Kate Sampson
- Chair, Policy Review Working Group, Ms Sze Lin Foong

I retain the chairs of the Executive and Strategy Committee (new), Governance and Leadership Committee (new) and Remuneration Committee.

The Council has an independently incorporated company to hold in trust accumulated scholarship funds. The membership of the Board of Directors of 'Charles Pearson Pty Ltd' consists of the selected Council Members, nominated by Council. It is chaired by Mrs Christine Hopper.

The Council has also re-appointed Dr Andrew McDonald and appointed Mrs Priscilla Mellado as its representatives on the Board of the PLC Foundation. Dr Andrew McDonald continues to serve as its President. Mrs Christine Hopper has stepped down as a director of the PLC Foundation and we thank her for her long service in that role.

Mrs Christine Hopper also stepped down as Vice-Chair of Council, while continuing to serve as a Council member. Her longstanding contribution in this role, supporting previous Chairs and acting in their absence is acknowledged with much appreciation.

Update to Constitution

One final significant achievement needs to be reported and that is the update of PLC's Articles and Memorandum of Association. PLC's constitution has served the College well for the last 40 years since 1980, and the requirement to update the constitution has been brought about by new minimum standards set by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). These new standards require a school to explicitly provide for the operation of an Early Learning Centre in its statement of purpose in the constitution.

Council commends the updated constitution for members' approval by special resolution at this AGM. It is the result of careful work undertaken with the expert legal advice of Moores and consultation with stakeholders including the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, PLC Old Collegians' Association and Parent Association.

In addition to compliance with VRQA's requirements, the Constitution has been updated to reflect the existing regulatory framework governing not-for-profit charities and incorporated entities. Otherwise, the key principles that underpin the original constitution remain unchanged.

Conclusion

PLC continues to thrive and excel under the blessing and providence of God. The quality and strength of its community, the strong leadership of the Principal and its staff, and the enduring Christian heritage and culture are gifts from God which enable the College and the students who come under its tutelage to thrive and prosper. The motivation and work of Council continue unchanged and that is to be good stewards, exercising careful judgement and thoughtful wisdom to steer and guide the strategic direction of the College and to support the Principal and her team in their work so that under God, the Christian mission of the College is fulfilled and the name of Christ honoured.

Rev Mark Chew
CHAIR OF COUNCIL

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY UNION (Min 32)

State meetings

The activities of PWMU have changed due to pandemic restrictions. The only state meeting to be held in 2020-2021 was the annual meeting online. Eighty-seven people were in attendance, with seven cross-cultural workers and five mission agencies submitting videos, edited by our new secretary, Alison Stanley. Attendees still prayed together in breakout groups and sang to the backing of a YouTube video. Our guest preacher was Rev Michael Lee, which was very fitting, as it was 130 years since a dedicated group of women founded PWMU Victoria and sent their first missionaries to Korea.

Newsletter

Thanksgiving in 2020 was marked with a special insert added to the August newsletter to celebrate 130 years. This included a brief history of PWMU written by Jenny Sharman, with some testimonies from workers and Council members of what PWMU has meant to them.

Pandemic restrictions necessitated sending out the newsletter in email form only for several months, as our office manager worked from home. Since the resumption of a printed newsletter to the minority of members who receive it in this form, the number of 'packers' needed has decreased, which has meant adhering to density limits at the office is also easier.

On the road

PWMU is pleased to have travelled *On The Road* with Women's Ministries Victoria in April and June, where an entertaining skit communicated the changing nature of PWMU meetings. Our promotional video related the work we do, the finances we distribute to APWM-Vic workers, the bursaries we finance and the support we give to cross-cultural workers and those women preparing themselves for such service. In June, each of these workers was contacted by council members with a message of encouragement in trying pandemic times. One cross-cultural worker also received a care package from PWMU.

Children's work

The financial year ended with a new *Dayspring Day* in Geelong—*Take the challenge*. We had envisaged two such days, but just one eventuated. Led by Sue White and a team from Geelong West in their new building, the day was once again a resounding success. It was a wonderful opportunity to encourage youngsters to be interested in gospel work around the world and gave the children of cross-cultural workers the opportunity to share *their* experiences. We thank Cassie Hood for initiating these children's days and for her outstanding service in running them for many years at Kangaroo Ground, along with her family and other helpers. The children's magazine *Dayspring*, produced by Stephanie Hood three times a year, continues to be well-received.

Bursaries

Our most recently graduated bursary student, Chanreiso Lungleng (Aso), is now back at Dehra Dun Presbyterian Theological Seminary in India with his wife Alice and baby son Jared, lecturing in Old Testament and braving the pandemic there. It was a privilege to walk with them through the trials of submitting the thesis and giving birth in

a foreign land. We express a hearty thankyou to Joan Milne, who has now retired from the role of Bursary Liaison after many years of distinguished care and organisation.

Eight Gambella South Sudanese refugees recommended by Motor Isaac Yat recommenced their theological studies, which had been interrupted by war. These gracious men are studying in two different colleges in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. PWMU is paying their fees, which include living expenses, and has paid for laptops for each one to assist in their studies.

PWMU Cookbook

It was a big year for the PWMU Cookbook Committee, as a revised edition was launched in April. The new format has been well-received, and the committee is gifting copies to hundreds of fire victims in Gippsland through a Uniting Church chaplain working there. PWMU Vic royalties support bursary students.

Overview

The number of PWMU groups has shrunk to ten, and only one Regional Association is in operation. The Devotional Booklet, written by workers and members, is a ready source of inspiration for these groups and others. In fact, PWMU Council is heartened by the picture we have discovered throughout the state. Where churches have prayer groups that focus specifically on mission, many make use of the PWMU Newsletter, produced by Elspeth Slater in an off-council role. Many of these groups involve men. There are also people meeting in twos and threes to pray for mission at home and abroad, using the newsletter, and numerous churches incorporate mission and outreach into their services. We continue to encourage church mission coordinators to join up to get the latest digest of news, with photos and ready-made praise and prayer points from Victorian cross-cultural workers.

The role of treasurer has changed hands from Robyn Crocker to Rosalie Fleming, whilst Pam Vandenberg, Rosemary Zurrer and Gaye McKenzie are the other serving Council members. In 2020-2021 PWMU distributed \$151,000 to APWM Cross Cultural Workers.

The PWMU website is regularly updated as more resources are being added and functionality improved.

Liaison with APWM

We are grateful to continue in close liaison with APWM Vic and APWM National. We are honoured to continue in the footsteps of women who have gone before us as we share their heart—to play a part in bringing people from all tongues and nations into God's Kingdom.

Roslyn Brown
PRESIDENT

PRIVACY OFFICER (Min 30)

The work of the Privacy Officer has continued for the Assembly in 2021, seeking to ensure that the practice of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria observes legislative privacy requirements within PCV churches, committees, and other bodies. There is an ongoing commitment across the PCV to ensure that ministry and administrative practices operate at best practice level in regard to privacy.

While there continue to be several enquiries relating to best practice in privacy within the PCV, there have been no privacy complaints for the year 2020–2021 (to date). This is the second year in a row that there have been no complaints. Thank you to the Assembly for the care and diligence exercised across the PCV in this aspect of church life.

The Privacy Officer continues to provide:

1. Ongoing privacy training to new PCV employees and other PCV personnel, committees, and organisations as requested.
2. Responses to privacy enquiries and complaints (as required).
3. Practical advice, information, and resources, such as privacy-compliant forms, via the Privacy page at the Safe Church PCV website.

For any concerns about data breaches within presbyteries, sessions, and organisations, please contact the Privacy Officer of the General Assembly or visit www.safechurchpcv.org.au/privacy.

Fiona Bligh
PCV PRIVACY OFFICER

SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE (Min 29)

Committee Membership

The committee would like to acknowledge the work and commitment of Amy Isham and Sandy Carroll. Both have made a significant contribution since the forming of this committee, and the committee has valued their presence. In particular, the committee thanks Sandy for her role as secretary to the committee. Louise Griffiths has filled one of the spots on the committee and will take this up in 2022. There is now a vacancy on the Safe Church Committee, and the committee is working to fill this position as soon as possible.

National Redress Scheme Claims

Claims brought forward to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria via the National Redress Scheme operators are processed and completed according to the requirements. To date, no claim involving the PCV has resulted in a determination for financial redress. A number of claims are still to be processed by the NRS.

Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme

In accordance with State law and the committee's regulations, the committee has approved the appointment of investigator(s) for a number of Reportable Conduct Scheme matters to ensure that the PCV is meeting the relevant obligations of the Scheme.

Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 (Vic)

No issues or concerns relating to this Act have been raised to the Safe Church Unit. However, it may be possible that a person or persons *might* in the future raise an issue to the Safe Church Unit, relating to this Act, in the belief such an issue is a Safe Church issue. The committee advises the Assembly that it has no role to play in responding to complaints made in connection with this Act.

New Victorian Child Safe Standards

The Victorian Government has announced that new Child Safe Standards will be in place from 1 July 2022. The committee is working with the Safe Church Unit staff in regard to compliance with these Standards in the PCV. The committee will ensure that PCV compliance continues to uphold biblical standards and adhere to the Christian faith. The committee will report to the Commission in May 2022 regarding this.

Compliance

Safe Church compliance across the church continues to be at very high levels. The committee is very thankful for the work of Safe Church representatives in each church, who give their time to ensure everything is complete in order to maintain their respective church records. The committee also thanks the sessions of each church for working to ensure that each church is a safe place for children and vulnerable adults. The committee reminds sessions to ensure any appointments of children's ministry workers etc., are communicated to their safe church representative promptly.

Safe Church enquiries and concerns

The Safe Church Unit continues to receive enquiries from across the PCV, including the seeking of information and advice relating to safe ministry best practices and the raising of concerns related to Safe Church issues. This includes a growing number of enquiries relating to domestic and family violence.

COVID-19

The uncertainty and instability brought about by COVID-19 have continued to impact the training calendar for 2021. The Safe Church Facilitator has worked hard this year to ensure that all the postponed 2020 scheduled training dates, plus extra dates for 2021, have been made available across the PCV. In total, the Safe Church Facilitator will deliver eleven Basic Training events and twelve Advanced Training events across the PCV in 2021. These dates are in addition to the fourteen congregational in-house Basic Training events held by local churches (as at the date of writing this report), allowing ready access to training across the state.

Financing the Safe Church Unit

The changes to the funding of SCU approved at the 2021 Commission are gratefully acknowledged by this committee. The committee sees it as a positive sign that it is regarded more as a mission and funded as such, rather than as an impost that needs to be supported by a levy.

Safe Church and Presbytery Responsibilities

In the years since federal (and state) establishment of safe child related practices across all organisations with children, it has become increasingly difficult for those who seek to harm children and vulnerable adults to find freedom to act. It is now apparent that such people are looking to avoid the restrictions inherent in Safety Agreements and are moving from one organisation to another to find a gap to exploit. The PCV needs to be extra vigilant in these days.

Therefore, the committee wishes to remind members of the Assembly that under the polity of the PCV, the function of the Safe Church Committee and its officers in relation to compliance is fundamentally administrative. It is for this reason that the Assembly has approved that compliance related questions be routinely asked at each ordinary Presbytery meeting in order that in this vital matter the Presbytery may have up to date information (GAV 2019 min. 75.4,5). It is also the reason that, in the event of persistent non-compliance in any charge, the relevant presbytery is informed by the Safe Church Committee so that it can address the matter.

Finally, the committee wants to acknowledge that all this systematic, diligent activity on its part to make the church a safe place for all is in vain unless the Lord blesses the work. Accordingly, the committee asks churches to pray that God would bless the committee's endeavours and make PCV churches safe places for all.

Rev Brian Harvey
CONVENER

ST ANDREWS CHRISTIAN COLLEGE (Min 33)

As the Chairman of the Board of St Andrews, it is my pleasure and privilege to report on the progress of the College. The last few years have not been easy as the College has had to weather a variety of significant challenges, both local and global. I am happy to report that, with the grace of God, the College is thriving and growing despite these challenges.

The challenge of COVID-19

The COVID-19 has been a significant challenge for the College, as it has been for many organisations. The Board and College leadership were concerned that the pandemic would create financial or structural issues, but this has turned out not to be the case. Enrolments have increased over the last eighteen months to the point where the College is now at maximum capacity, and the support from federal and state governments have allowed the College to remain financially strong in the face of unexpected costs.

The main cost of the pandemic has been in terms of wellbeing and mental health. The period of the pandemic has been difficult for students, parents and teachers alike. The College community has shown significant resilience and fortitude, but everyone is tired and stretched. As a result, we have invested in appropriate counselling support for the community, and our chaplain has been particularly valuable.

Please pray for the members of our community in the face of these challenges.

Child safety

Improving and implementing child safety policies and procedures has been a major focus of the College for several years. We have invested a great deal of time at the Board in ensuring that our processes are appropriate and effective. There is increased regulatory focus in this area, and we have been addressing these changes, but the College board and staff strongly believe that the protection of children is a fundamental part of our mission and what Jesus expects of us as stewards.

Despite this focus, there was an incident that arose last year involving an alleged sexual predator on staff. This is a clear demonstration that all the best thought and preparation may be insufficient to prevent harm. Discussing the details of this case is inappropriate in this report for many reasons. What can be discussed is the impact. It is not an underestimation to say that this case has been devastating for the College. Cases of this nature obviously impact the victims and their families, and they must be supported and cared for. In addition, the College community has experienced natural feelings of anger, betrayal and fear. Working through the legal implications is important, but the challenge of supporting the community as the case progresses has been a serious challenge for College staff who have, themselves, been similarly impacted.

Please pray for a rapid and just outcome to this case and for those in the College community who are struggling, especially the victims and their families.

Legislative environment

The freedom and support that faith-based schools enjoy in Australia are significant and quite unusual on the global stage. The way we operate and the stances we take, founded on Biblical truth, conflict with the secular worldview. We do not find ourselves

in conflict with those around us and enjoy a good reputation with the people and organisations we interact with, both faith-based and secular. We do find ourselves in conflict with activists seeking to change the law and remove our religious freedom.

We are engaging with these challenges as Jesus teaches, with love and grace. We are, however, being firm in stating what we believe and need the support of the Church in these public debates.

Please pray for, and support our appeals, to retain our religious freedom in Australia to believe and teach as we believe Jesus requires.

Current progress

Moving to more positive matters, despite the challenges previously discussed, the College is performing exceptionally well. Financially, the College maintains a systemic surplus that is allowing for capital investment and expansion. The College remains highly focused on being a Christ aligned organisation and conveying this to our students. We also continue to develop our mission focus, to expand the scope and vision of our students.

In addition, the performance and progress of the students have been excellent. This is demonstrated by the College being awarded the best school in Melbourne's East by *The Age*. The article describing this achievement can be found at:

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/schools-that-excel-st-andrews-a-standout-in-the-east-20210518-p57sty.html>

We thank God for this and are now actively seeking to expand the operation of the College, either to nearby land or to another campus. These discussions are exciting but also complex and difficult as we strive to ensure the plans we make are aligned to God's will for the College.

I thank the Assembly for the ongoing support of the College provided by the PCV and ask for your prayers for the continued health and growth of St Andrews Christian College.

James Bligh
CHAIRMAN

SCOTCH COLLEGE (Min 34)

In conjunction with the objects set down in the Memorandum and Articles of Association of Scotch College, the strategic intent of the school is to offer a distinctive brand of education built on the traditions of our past, our Christian belief and our confidence in embracing innovation and progress. We aim to deliver an education, which, for each boy, improves the opportunity to discover interests and talents; and improves outcomes, both in those things which are measured and those for which school years are the formative years: his sense of self; interaction and dealings with others; engagement with family and with communities near and far. We seek to promote curiosity, individuality and independence of thought while inculcating a strong sense of compassion, community, service and belonging, and so empower each boy to challenge those things which need challenging and support those which need supporting.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic, and subsequent actions of the State and Federal Governments, has continued to have a significant impact on the school. The pandemic has seen boys undertake periods of remote learning and has caused the cancellation or postponement of many of the programmes and events that would normally take place during the school year. Activities and events that have been affected by the pandemic include: the Debating Association of Victoria debating competition; the end of Term 1 camps; the APS Winter Sport season; the school's overseas exchange programmes; the Easter Breakfast; the annual visit of boys to, and from, Tiwi College; the Year 9 and 10 Service and Activities program (including Cadets and the Pipe and Military bands); the Year 11 Immersion programme; the annual music concert program including the Foundation Day concert; and, the Annual Family day and House Athletics carnival. Other events, including the Parent Information Evenings and Parent-Teacher interviews, have been held but in a different format.

Enrolments

Under the leadership of our Principal, Tom Batty, there continues to be high demand for admission into the school at all entry points. At the start of 2021, there were 1470 boys enrolled in the Senior School, compared to the 1469 enrolments in 2020. Within the total enrolments, 174 (158 in 2020) are boarders, of whom 56 were new to the Hill community. Nine indigenous students are members of the 2021 Scotch community, six of whom reside on the Hill. The School Roll at the start of 2021 included 24 full fee-paying Overseas Students (25 in 2020), with new overseas students joining Scotch from Hong Kong, mainland China, and Malaysia. Eighty-one new boys joined the Junior School, and demand for both casual and regular entry places at Prep, Year 4, Year 7 and Year 9 remains very strong. Day places in the Senior School have again been keenly sought; however, the school's approach to enrolment will maintain a Senior School of approximately 1460 boys.

The COVID pandemic continues to cause significant disruption and uncertainty for our 60 or so boys from overseas, particularly those on student (500) visas who are finding it difficult to return to Australia. With this in mind, where sensible, the school added additional enrolments to act as a buffer to possible COVID disruption of capacity and desire to meet the fee. This increased our Year 7 enrolment from its already high number of 234 (average desired working number for the year is 225, being nine classes of 25) to 239, and saw us add one boy to each of the three classes in Year 6. Where possible, new enrolments were biased towards Boarding to offset possible losses there

due to travel and quarantine restrictions. The Boarding House now has 174 boys enrolled. This compares to 158 at the same time last year.

Chaplaincy

In both Senior and Junior Schools, the School Chaplains, Rev David Assender and Rev Doug Campbell, together with the Assistant to the Chaplains, Rev Grant Watson, continue to preach at their weekly Assemblies and Chapel services, teach Christian Education classes, and help with special events. They continue to work with purpose and great effect amongst the boarding houses of the Hill and carry out pastoral care of boys and staff. The Easter Breakfast, scheduled for Friday, 26 March 2021, again proved an unfortunate casualty of ongoing restrictions. Our guest speaker was once more to be Associate Professor Alan Gijbbers, who works at the Royal Melbourne Hospital. Dr Gijbbers combines an active clinical practice with a research program that aims to reduce the burden of infections in Indigenous Australian populations. He is a member of St Thomas Anglican Church, Burwood.

Rev David Assender continues to oversee the Christian Movement lunchtime group, where numbers remain positive with loyal boys reaching out to their friends and serving the Scotch community. The boys have initiated a lunchtime Table Top Games Club where they can meet with their friends, and they maintain a shared vision of helping establish a school in Malawi.

Term 2 saw Mr Assender centrally involved with the running of Year 9 Retreats at Healesville. The retreats are organised and run by the Christian Education Department under the leadership of the Head of Department, Mr Cameron Cutchie. Amidst the glorious environment of the Healesville camp, the retreats mark the transition, in a Christian setting, of boys into the Upper School and into their designated houses. The feedback from staff and boys was again very encouraging. Throughout the periods of remote learning, the chaplains have continued to connect with the wider school body to share the good news of the gospel and nurture a sense of community and belonging via the chaplaincy section within the *Keeping Scotch Connected* zone of the school's webpage.

December gifts brought news that Rev Doug Campbell had been awarded his PhD in New Testament from North-West University (Potchefstroom, South Africa) for his thesis *Sharing in Christ's Glory: A Study of Doxa in 1 Peter*.

Academic

All at Scotch are very much aware that education is about much more than a final set of examination results. In particular, we are guided by our foundational teaching and learning principle (the inherent value of each individual) and foundational teaching and learning question (How did the world evolve to be as it is and how might it be made to evolve for the greater good?)

VCE performance may not be the best measure of the intellect of our boys, their growth and contribution to our school, or their potential to contribute to communities and future families, but it is the one we have and probably the one most used to determine immediate post-school opportunities, academic or otherwise. It is also a measure of our success, both internally and externally.

The 2020 VCE results were most encouraging. There is little doubt that the marketplace is, thankfully, tightening (some APS schools again didn't fare as well as

might normally be expected), as schools from all sectors lift their game and make better use of data. We should also keep in mind that, whilst, scholarships aside, Scotch adopts a non-selective entry, some of our nearest and strongest competitors have admissions policies that incorporate elements of academic selection. Even with a large cohort of 253, spanning the full range of academic aptitudes, our results continued to be very strong when viewed through both the internal (value-adding) and external (comparison of published ATAR results) lenses. The school's median ATAR was 88.6, compared to 91.65 in 2019.

Six boys achieved the maximum possible ATAR of 99.95, ensuring an exceptionally strong Scotch representation at the very 'top end' of the state-wide order of merit. Only 38 students (32 boys) across the state achieved the maximum ATAR score of 99.95 in 2020. Whilst it is worth noting the performance of our scholarship boys who continue to perform strongly (occupying seven of the top 10 ATAR ranks), it is pleasing to note the high-level performance of boys outside of the scholarship group, providing further evidence of our ability to challenge, engage and 'lift' boys at the top end of the ability spectrum. Further, 12.6% of boys made the top 1% of the State; 36.4% the top 5%; 46.6% the top 10%; and 67.2% the top 20%. There were 21 highest possible subject scores of 50 (compared to 13 in 2019) across 17 boys and 11 subjects, and nine boys won VCE Premier's Awards. Based on Year 5 ability testing data, the mean value-added percentile for the Class of 2020 was 16.8%, second only to the 2019 result for the period 2012 - 2020. The results of the school's analysis of 'value add' align strongly with contemporary educational research, which underscores the powerful influence that teachers have on academic outcomes, and highlights the expertise of Scotch staff in influencing those factors that make a difference. Ongoing initiatives in academic care, relational learning, teacher action research, and program and departmental reviews will further improve teacher capacity in this area and continue to support high-quality outcomes for future Year 12 cohorts.

Campus

The school's building program continues apace. Construction of two House rooms around St Andrew's square has finished, and the conversion of the ground floor of the Language and Culture Centre into four House rooms and offices for senior staff has commenced. When complete, homes for all day Houses will be located around the square. In preparation for providing new accommodation for boarders and boarding staff, with construction planned to commence at the start of 2022, a number of enabling projects, including infrastructure upgrades; road network alterations; repurposing of existing buildings; and relocation of services are underway.

Teaching and learning

In addition to alterations to the physical landscape of the school, a number of teaching and learning initiatives have been introduced, premised on the belief that knowing each boy, and challenging him just beyond his level of comfort, leads to the greatest gains in unearthing interests and improving learning outcomes. Such initiatives include discussion and planning to the four themes of: Personalisation (how might technology, including Artificial Intelligence, better improve learning relationships and outcomes in a Scotch context); Diversity (how might we better engage with, learn from and serve communities and agencies beyond our immediate bounds); Enterprise (how might we better prepare boys for the densely connected low hierarchical environment into which they will enter post-school); and, Sustainability.

Another key initiative is the development of a coordinated and sequenced program for boys from Preparatory to Year 12 under the heading of *Growth of Scotch boys*. This

program will provide curriculum links and standalone prescribed year-by-year encounters through contact with a diverse range of people; reflection on moral position; community values (e.g. belief in a cause bigger than oneself, a sense of other); and challenge (what excellence really looks like, what it takes to pursue it, and the vulnerability inherent in such pursuit).

The school has also instituted its bespoke Staff Experience and Engagement Survey, with all members of the teaching and non-teaching staff undertaking the survey in Term 1 this year. The results of the survey will be used to inform future initiatives and programmes. It is envisaged that the survey will be completed triennially.

The school is in the last year of its three year Australian Childhood Foundation safeguarding accreditation and is in the process of seeking reaccreditation. This process will involve a desktop audit of safeguarding documentation followed by an on-site audit seeking confirmation that a safeguarding culture is well established within the school.

Co-curricular

Sport continues to play an important role in the lives of our boys. The summer season once again proved a successful hunting ground for Scotch sport, with the high levels of performance that have been the bedrock for good consistency of recent year and, of course, the sheer joy for all in having the boys out again playing with their contemporaries in competitive fixtures. Adding to the excitement came the thrill of pulling on the new sports uniform for its first run out on Scotch ovals. In addition to the thrill of the new, the change has brought greater consistency to our uniform across all sports. Initial feedback suggests this has been well received by boys and parents, and great credit goes to our Director of Sport for the hours spent in consultation, design and procurement. The highlight of the summer season was the 1st VIII tennis team's securing of a second APS premiership in three years. Under excellent coaching and the outstanding leadership of the Captain, the team members maintained a high work ethic and commitment to standards while holding their nerve under the week by week challenges offered by Caulfield Grammar School. In tandem with their success, the team showed great sportsmanship and respect for opposition teams throughout the season, highlighted by their respectful celebration following their final game against Carey Grammar. In the pool, our divers maintained recent high standards to record a fifth consecutive second place at the APS Finals behind St Kevin's College, and, with five Year 8 boys in the team, the foundations are strong.

Our swimmers put in their best performance in many years to also clinch second place on the night. They broke two APS relay records in the Under 13 4 x 50 metres breaststroke relay and the Under 17 4 x 50 metres freestyle relay. That our relay performances were the source of the great majority of our points speaks strongly of the programme. At our instigation, the night witnessed the introduction of multi-class swimming events, which saw a Year 7 boy compete in the 50 metres freestyle, and do so with a cast, having broken his arm four weeks before the APS finals competition. Our first team cricketers had a hugely impressive season, recovering from the disappointment of losing their opening game in the narrowest of circumstances to win all remaining fixtures to finish second. In a season that reduced fingernails, in a similar fashion to that first match, a number of contests went down to the final over, only in our favour. A frustrating and inconsistent season for our first rowing crew resulted in a third placing at the Heads of the River and an eighth placing at the National Championships held at Lake Barrington in Tasmania, where they won their heat in

devastating time. Our second and third crews performed strongly to win Division 2 and 3, respectively, at the Heads of the River. After very promising starts against strong opposition, both our first futsal and volleyball teams fell away and suffered losses in the final two rounds of the season, seeing them finish third and fifth, respectively.

Our Badminton team is in a phase of rebuilding and experienced a more challenging year than has been the norm this past decade. Playing with customary verve and discipline, they won all bar three contests to finish fourth.

The Scotch Sailing team competed strongly at the Victorian State Sailing Championships, with the first crew claiming a bronze medal and qualification for the national competition in Sydney in November and the second crew finishing fourth.

Our cyclists performed consistently in the Victorian Interschool Cycling Series to finish sixth overall, while Scotch golfers, competing each week in the Kew Golf Club, finished second overall in the school series. Our table tennis team battled to a fifth-place finish, while our squash teams enjoyed success, with the Scotch Blue team finishing top of the ladder. In the four-race Schools Challenge held each summer between Scotch and Camberwell Grammar School for the Roger Slade trophy, our orienteers came second, while our three lawn bowls teams all qualified for their finals. The Old Scotch Athletics program honed fitness and times leading into the State Finals, where our middle distance runners continued their successes of recent years with a Year 8 boy winning the Under 14 800m competition and setting a new national record of 4:11.07 to take the gold medal in the U14 1500m. Several other boys qualified for the national competition.

The school is committed to providing a broad range of sporting opportunities beyond that offered within the APS competition. The breadth of the sporting program allows boys to be involved in summer, winter and spring sport and produces an extremely high level of participation. Individual boys have enjoyed success at both state and national levels in a wide range of sports, including athletics, cricket, cycling, diving, football, golf, hockey, and swimming.

The Scotch Enterprise Programme, introduced in 2015, continues to attract Year 10 boys with a passion for designing and making things and solving problems. Boys involved in the program have designed an exercise stepping ladder that can be used in the comfort of one's home, a new breathable, flexible, light and recyclable school uniform, a remote heart rate monitor, a device that monitors customer numbers in real-time, a smart vermin trap, and a self-contained laptop charging station.

In a new initiative, this year, every boy in Year 7 has enrolled in a Club run by Year 11 boys. These range from Movie club to Model-making club, Economics club, Politics club, Cards club and Basketball club. Other boys have also initiated clubs at lunchtimes, sharing interests in Rubik's cubes and drawing, while Senior boys have offered assistance to younger boys with organisation and homework. There is a Chess Club, a Table Top Games group, and Christian Movement, all of which continue to support and stimulate boys' minds. The Environmental Group has led the way for boys and staff through the introduction of composting bins for food scraps in three House rooms.

The Year 8 and Year 11 Big Ideas Lecture series, delivered by members of staff on topics such as *Artificial Intelligence*, *The Reformation*, *Slavery* and *The Holocaust*, have encouraged boys to think about how the world came to be as it is.

Boys have performed exceptionally well in national and international competitions, many of which have been held online. A Year 11 boy won the Years 10 -12 section of the Victoria Parliament prize, two Year 11 boys finished in the top ten speakers in the Debating Association of Victoria British Parliamentary competition, and a Year 8 boy won the Paul McDermott violin scholarship for 2021. A Year 10 boy finished second in Victoria in the 2020 Australian Cancer and Health Sciences competition, a Year 11 boy was selected as one of three Victorian state finalists in the History Teachers of Victoria National History challenge, and a Year 9 boy was placed eighth in the Australia Individual Debating and Public Speaking competition, qualifying for the Australian team. A Year 8 boy achieved a perfect score in the Bebras Australia Computational Thinking challenge, and a Year 11 boy was named third best speaker in an online debating competition run by the Malaysian Debating Association. A Year 12 boy was appointed captain of the Victorian Schools Debating team, which won the national championships; subsequent to this, he was named captain of the Australian team. A team of seven Year 7 boys were state winners of the Da Vinci Decathlon competition and finished third in the Australian competition, five Year 10 boys received Honourable Mentions in the Victorian Year 10 Ethics competition, and a team of four Year 10 boys were placed third overall and first in the Junior division (Years 9 and 10) in the Australian Computational and Linguistics Olympiad. Four boys from the class of 2020 were invited to audition for the VCE Top Class in Drama, and two members of the class of 2020 were accepted into the VCE Top Design, one in Visual Communications, the other in Product Design.

A team of six boys across all year levels won both the Victorian and Australian Schools Chess championships. Six boys were chosen to represent Australia in the Asia Pacific Mathematics Olympiad, and in a truly remarkable achievement, three boys were chosen as part of the six-person team to represent Australia in the International Mathematics Olympiad, this being the most prestigious Mathematics competition in the world. This is the first time in the history of the competition that one school has provided 50% of the team. In addition, the first reserve for the team is a Year 7 Scotch boy.

Performing arts and public speaking

The excellent facilities of the James Forbes Academy provide an opportunity for boys to involve themselves in the performing arts. Many boys participate in the drama programme, which this year saw boys, despite COVID-19 restrictions, produce a highly entertaining performance of Bertolt Brecht's chilling *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*. The Music department, which delivers over 1000 music lessons each week, provides an opportunity for the various ensembles and orchestras to perform at one of the many concerts and recitals held throughout the year. Opportunity is also provided for boys to work with professional musicians and conductors, giving them a greater insight into the world of music whilst challenging them to produce music of the highest quality. Both the A and B Scotch Pipes and Drums bands achieved success, winning the only competition that has been held this year. The Senior Band participated in the annual ANZAC day march. Sadly the Military Band was not permitted to participate.

Over 100 Scotch boys are involved in the Debating Association of Victoria (DAV) Debating competition, including three teams of Extension Studies Challenge boys in Year 8, who debate in an accelerated program in our D grade (Year 9) squad. The

Scotch contingent again constitutes the largest school squad in this state-wide competition, with 22 teams in total. Twelve outstanding coaches work alongside the boys, including five national-level speakers from beyond the Scotch community, who have come on board this year to share their expertise alongside seven ex-Scotch debaters.

Alongside the DAV competition, a myriad of competitions and training occurs throughout the year for boys at every level, including teams in the National Virtual Debating Competition, British Parliamentary debating, a substantial mooting program with Bond, Monash and Latrobe universities, Model United Nations experiences, International online debating and UN Youth programmes.

Services program

The Services program continues to be an integral aspect of the school's offerings, with Cadets and Scouts continuing to be core elements. The Cadet Unit comprises over 150 boys from Years 9 to 12. In addition to parading each Wednesday, the boys in Cadets attend two camps throughout the year. Sadly this year, boys were unable to participate in the ANZAC Day parade, and the annual Cadet Tattoo and Retreat Ceremony had to be postponed to later in the year. The Scout troop, made up of boys from Year 6 to Year 8, undertakes a range of activities both during its weekly meetings and at the camp that is held at the School's Healesville campsite. Boys in Year 11 undertake a week-long service-learning experience as part of the School's Immersion programme. This program sees boys assisting at Specialist School in Ballarat, undertake work for the Les Twentyman Foundation, work alongside members of an indigenous community situated in the northern Flinders Ranges, South Australia, undertake conservation work in Queensland, provide music at local aged care facilities, and, work with World Vision, raising monies to assist with literacy programmes to the community's primary schools, and spending time at the headquarters of World Vision assisting with packing birthing kits. The work with World Vision also supports both the community of Chipapa and other projects within Zambia.

Community

A number of fundraising activities have been held throughout the year. Monies have been raised for: the Indigenous Literacy Foundation, the *You Matter* charity, which supports women and families affected by domestic and family violence, and the *Cystic Fibrosis Community Care*, which provides support and programmes for individuals diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis. The school's commitment to the inherent value and dignity of each person has seen further conversation on consent and respectful relationships, highlighted by recognition of International Women's Day, Denim Day, and IDAHOBIT (sexual diversity), with strong Assembly presentations by prefects being further explored in Tutor and Form groups. The prefects organised a fun run with Lauriston Girls' School, a trivia evening with mixed teams combining with Methodist Ladies' College and, in time-honoured tradition, mixed netball games at both St Catherine's School and Methodist Ladies' College. Just prior to the long weekend in Term 1, 119 hikers, supported by 23 boys and 13 staff in various support roles, undertook the 24-hour hike, covering an average distance of 58.1 km, and raising just over \$50,000, monies that have been promised for the Bo Children's Hospital in Sierra Leone. The school's partnerships with Hume Central and Auburn High continue to be mutually beneficial, with students from Hume Central enjoying the facilities of our property at Cowes and accompanying our boys and staff on the annual VCE Art tour to Sydney, Canberra, and Bundanon.

With the retirement of Head of Junior School, Mr Jon Abbott, at the end of Term 2, 2021, the school appointed Mr Tom Savill as its eighth Head of Junior School. Tom hails from Sheffield in the UK, is a graduate of Cambridge University and has played first-class cricket for Cambridge and Nottinghamshire CCC. He arrived at Scotch from Trinity Grammar School in Kew, where he had been since 2018 and held the position of Deputy Head (and Acting Head) of the Junior School. Prior to joining Trinity, Tom spent 12 years at Dulwich Prep School in South London. Dulwich Prep is the largest boys' independent prep school in the UK. It was during this time that he met his Australian wife Ellen, who is also a junior school teacher. Tom took up the reins in Semester 2, 2021.

During Term 2, 2021, Mr Tom Batty announced his decision to resign as Principal of Scotch College in order to return, with his wife Lee, to the UK, where his two daughters now reside, and his elderly father has entered a care home. Tom will leave Scotch at the conclusion of Semester 1, 2022. The College Council is engaged in the search for the school's 10th Principal.

Governance

At the end of 2021, the Hon Dr David Kemp AC, who was dux of Scotch College in 1959, announced his retirement as Chairman of Scotch College Council. Dr Kemp had been in the Chair for eight years, and he was a member of the Council from 2004. The school flourished during Dr Kemp's service as Chairman and is most grateful for his significant contribution.

Mr Alex Sloan was duly elected by the Council as its new Chairman. Mr Sloan was a member of the Council 2007–2014 and returned in 2019. He attended Scotch from 1965 to 1971. He is a company director, including family companies.

Conclusion

The school remains in a strong financial position, without debt. It has achieved this while providing financial assistance through deferred payments or fee remission to families in financial hardship as a result of the impact of the pandemic. The College Council also decided to provide certainty to our parent body in their financial planning by keeping school fees at their present level for the coming year. With the full support of the senior executive staff, the Council also determined that there will be no staff wage and salary increases during this period. I am pleased to report that this has been well received. There has been a wide appreciation of the continuity of employment to permanent staff that the school has implemented during this time of uncertainty.

I wish to take this opportunity to once again note the outstanding leadership of our Principal Tom Batty, which is reflected in Scotch's continuing academic improvement and the outstanding academic results in 2020 and has been very much in evidence this year in the response of the school and its community to the uncertainties and challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. We have been very fortunate to have the confident and stable leadership during this period that Mr Batty has provided. The magnificent response of the teaching, administrative and grounds staff to the exigencies of the pandemic has been especially notable, and the capacity of the school to continue to offer teaching through remote learning has been greatly appreciated by the boys and their families. Mr Batty continues to be an international leader in boys' education as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the International Boys School Coalition.

Throughout this period, the College Council has also provided positive and cohesive leadership. The members of the Council demonstrate a deep love and regard for the school and its contribution to the future of its community and to a better world. I personally thank the Rev Dr John Wilson for his unfailing wisdom and support as Vice-Chairman of the Council.

In conclusion, I can report with confidence that the school is currently in a strong position within the marketplace, with high demand for places. The school remains committed to improving and refining its programmes and the opportunities and experiences it provides so that each boy is appropriately challenged, supported and is as prepared as he can be to take responsibility for his life and make a positive contribution to the world around him.

Mr Alex Sloan
CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL

SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT (Min 67)

The committee has continued to do its work behind the scenes, and Zoom has been a very useful tool to ensure meetings can take place. The committee endeavours to make decisions in a timely manner to enable other committees to engage in the work with which they have been charged. It has commenced work on an online database that will help the committee to keep track of all committee members, and it is hoped in the future to make it available to conveners.

The Selection Committee has been pleased to help various committees fill vacancies. The committee has worked particularly with relevant people to fill the PWMU Cookbook Committee and the St Andrew's Foundation Trustees. Currently, there is only one committee with more than two vacancies, and the Selection Committee is in communication with it regarding this. The Selection Committee has also been in communication with the Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee and is awaiting nominations to fill the vacancies. It is noted that there is a vacancy on the Commission for Church Institutions, which can have 13 members chosen from among assembly members.

The Selection Committee is grateful for the presbyteries who responded to the request for names to put on the Appeals Commission. Those presbyteries which did not respond will find that the previous names have been rolled over.

The Selection Committee thanks all the other committees for submitting their annual reviews, which now include details on which church each committee member belongs to. This enables the Selection Committee more accurately to follow regulation 3f about how many people from the same church can serve on the same committee. The information is being added to the database.

Committee member numbering system

It is good to remind the Assembly how the numbering system works. Generally, each year a third of a committee's membership is required to retire,¹ hence the rotation (RT) numbers. If a member is willing and eligible, they can be renominated and serve up to a total of nine years; hence the numbers in square brackets indicating the year they must have a break from the committee. Conveners can usually serve for seven consecutive years,² which means they will sometimes have different square-bracketed numbers next to their name. As an example, someone with these numbers – **RT 23: Rev A Minister [29]** – would be eligible for renomination at the 2023 General Assembly and must end their service on the committee at the 2029 General Assembly.

It is also worth noting that when someone is appointed to fill a vacancy, they will be added to that vacancy's rotation year so that their first term on the committee may be less than three years before they need to be reappointed.

GAV commissioners to the GAA

The General Assembly of Victoria is able to elect commissioners to the General Assembly of Australia in addition to those commissioners elected by individual presbyteries. GAV is able to elect one minister and one elder for every 16 sanctioned charges, as well as electing alternates.³ By the committee's count, there are currently

¹ PCV Code 5.25.3. Note, the BIF operates on five-year terms.

² PCV Code 5.24.1.

³ GAA Code ch. 1, regulation 1.4.

69 positions to which a minister can be called, which permits the GAV to elect five ministers and five elders.

The committee received the following nominations from presbyteries.

Ministers: Rev Cam Garrett, Rev Russ Grinter, Rev Peter Hastie, Rev Martin de Pyle, Rev Ben Nelson.

Elders: Mr Kevin Childs, Mr Tom Guilford, Mr Steve Harris, Dr Noel Johnston.

The Assembly generally allocates positions to the assembly officers, so Rev Peter Phillips (Moderator), Rev Dean Carroll (Assistant to the Clerks) and the next moderator designate (assuming he is a minister) will take three of the minister positions. Rev John Wilson already has a seat at the GAA as a past Moderator-General, and Rev Russ Grinter has indicated he is willing to be an alternate.

Therefore, the committee recommends a ballot for the ministers (excepting Rev Russ Grinter, who will be listed as an alternate) and that the following elders be elected as GAV commissioners to the GAA:

1. **Elders:** Mr Kevin Childs, Mr Tom Guilford, Mr Steve Harris, Dr Noel Johnston.

Nominations for Moderator's Nominating Committee

The year prior to a meeting of the GAA, state assemblies are invited to make a nomination for Moderator-General and also to nominate three ministers and three elders to serve on the Moderator's Nominating Committee.⁴ The Moderator's Nominating Committee is made up of representatives from each state, and they vote on the nominations for Moderator-General submitted by each state assembly.

Presbyteries were invited to make nominations for the nominating committee, and the following names were submitted. A ballot should be conducted to determine which three ministers and three elders will serve on the committee.

1. **Ministers:** Rev Philip Burns, Rev Chris Duke, Rev Don Elliott, Rev Chris Siriweera, Rev Gary Stephens, Rev Robert White.
2. **Elders:** Mr Daniel Combridge, Mr Andrew Deeming, Mr Steve Harris, Mr Roger McIvor, Mr Ben Palmer, Mr Tony Zirngast.

Nomination for Moderator-General

The Selection Committee received three nominations from presbyteries for Moderator-General. Two of these men declined when the committee sought written consent. Therefore, the committee is able to present the name of Mr Colin Morrow as the sole nominee for Moderator-General. If Mr Morrow is successful in becoming the Victorian nominee, the committee will be able to transmit his written consent to the Clerk of the GAV so that it can be forwarded on.

It has been noted that given Mr Morrow is an employee of the Presbyterian Inland Mission, if he were to be elected as Moderator-General, he would be an *ex officio* member of that committee, which may be seen as a conflict of interest. The committee has been in contact with Rev Bruce Meller, Clerk of the GAA, who has stated in written communication that 'potential conflicts of interest cannot be eliminated and therefore require careful management; and there is no basis known to me that would prevent the

⁴ GAA Code ch. 10, regulation 11.1.

relevant nomination from proceeding.' The committee has also spoken with Mr Morrow, who has expressed that if there is any conflict of interest (perceived or real) that he will declare it.

Conciliation Committee

The committee has made a minor adjustment to how the Conciliation Committee appointments are recorded. A three-year rotation as for other committees will now be used. The numbering has been added below.

GAV Committee nominations and membership

The committee reminds all members of the Assembly that it is possible to make additional nominations prior to noon on the Tuesday of Assembly. Any nomination needs to be in the hands of the Selection Committee convener in writing (email is sufficient). If this results in multiple nominations for a single position, a ballot will occur on the Wednesday of Assembly to determine the membership of Committees. For more details, please read Selection Committee regulation 3a.

After consulting the respective committees, boards, councils, and other bodies, the Selection Committee brings the following nominations to the Assembly for their appointment to those bodies.

One matter to note is that Mr Dennis Wright is due to finish his seven consecutive years as convener of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee but has one year left of his nine years as a member. Therefore, the Selection Committee is requesting that the Assembly make an exception to rule 5.24.1 and permit Mr Wright to continue as convener for one more year. His convener year has already been changed from 21 to 22 in anticipation of this.

After further work, the Selection Committee has updated nominations for the Assembly to approve, specifically:

- Rev Keith Allen is nominated for the Appeals Commission.
- Rev Paul Huynh, Rev Luke Isham and Rev Bagoes Seta are nominated for the Christian Education and Nurture Committee.
- Rev Stephen McDonald has resigned from the Church and Nation Committee.
- Mr Adam Foster has resigned from the Code and General Administration Committee.
- Mrs Sabine de Pyle is nominated for the Code and General Administration Committee.
- Rev Mark Crabb's term on the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee is to be extended, Assembly permitting, for a further 12 months.
- Rev Martin de Pyle is nominated for the Theological Education Committee.

In relation to Rev Mark Crabb, he is due to leave the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee after serving nine years. However, the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee has requested that he be permitted to serve an additional 12 months while he finishes off some work that he has begun. This requires special permission from the Assembly in line with rule 5.25.2.

Finally, the Selection Committee has updated nominations for the Assembly to approve, specifically:

- Mr David Death will no longer serve on the Appeals Commission, as advised by the Presbytery of Maroondah.

- Rev Grant Lawry had previously resigned from the Social Services Committee and, through an error on our part, the original Selection Committee report did not reflect this.
- Mr Chris Perry and Mr Jamie Kapelles are nominated for the Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee.

GAV appointments

Appeals Commission

[Moderator, a past-moderator, presbytery clerks and parity members]

Ballarat: Rev K Allen (Clerk), Mr S McKerrow (parity)

Flinders: Rev D Brown (Clerk), (nil for parity)

Geelong: Rev R White (Clerk), Mr B Stasse (parity)

Gippsland: Rev G Stephens (Clerk), Mr T Guilford (parity)

Maroondah: nil (clerk/alt), Rev M Tonkin (parity)

Melbourne East: Mr K Childs (Clerk), Rev B Nelson (parity)

Melbourne North: Rev A Buchan (alt), Mr T Cunneen (parity)

Melbourne West: Rev J Ellis (Clerk), (nil for parity)

North East Victoria: Rev B Cummins (Clerk), Mr G Dunstan (parity)

North Western Victoria: Rev P Burns (Clerk), Mr C Morrow (parity)

South West Victoria: Rev I Leach (Clerk), Mr T Warburton (parity)

Past-Moderator: Vacancy

Chairman: Moderator

Assessors Committee

[Membership *ex officio* – The Moderator, the Assembly Clerk, the convener of the Selection Committee and the convener of the Business Committee]

Convener: Moderator

Australian Presbyterian World Mission [Victoria] Committee

[12 Members, 10 nominated by GAV, 2 nominated by PWMU, all appointed by the Assembly]

RT 22: Rev J Mestry [28], Mrs W Moody [25], Dr N Johnston [22], Mrs S Hammond [28]

RT 23: Rev T Archer [24], Rev R Waterhouse [26], Rev P Burns [22]

RT 24: Mrs L Ellis [25], Mrs W Pearce [22], Rev D Schulz [26]

PWMU: Mrs Sue White [29], Mrs P Vandenberg [24]

Convener: Dr N Johnston [22]

Ballot Committee

[Appointed by each Assembly or Commission]

Board of Investment and Finance

[10 Members]

RT 22: Vacancy, Mr A Foster [27]

RT 23: Mr E de Zilwa [28], Mr D Graham [28]

RT 24: Mr J Walter [29], Rev B Oakes [24]

RT 25: Mr Matt Gibson [30], Mr D Wright [30]

RT 26: Vacancy, Mr J Bligh [26]

Chairman: [Appointed annually by the Board]

Building and Property Committee

[3 Members]

RT 22: Mr D Wright [24]

RT 23: Mrs G Wright [28]

RT 24: Mr R Kop [27]

Convener: Mr R Kop [26]

Business Committee

[4 Members of Assembly (who are not conveners of other reporting committees), *ex officio* the clerks of Assembly, Procurator, Law Agent, and during Assembly, the clerks of all presbyteries]

RT 22: Mr D Fraser [24]

RT 23: Mr K Childs [22], Rev Dr J Hood [26]

RT 24: Brett Cummins [30]

Convener: Rev Dr J Hood [24]

Christian Education And Nurture Committee

[7 Members, at least 4 members of Assembly (including the convener)]

RT 22: Mrs R Walz [30], Rev P Huynh [30]

RT 23: Rev L Isham [30], Rev B Seta [30], Rev D Assender [22]

RT 24: Rev C Griffiths [27], Rev M James [24]

Convener: Rev M James [22]

Church And Nation Committee

[10 Members]

RT 22: Rev M Jensen [30], Mrs J McHardy [27], Rev C Duke [25]

RT 23: vacancy, Mr P Stanton [29], Mr J Ballantyne [26]

RT 24: Rev J Walz [30], Vacancy, Mr S Robertson [28], Mr I Waller [27]

Convener: Rev C Duke [25]

Church Planting Committee

[7 Members]

RT 22: Ms A Bransgrove [29], Rev J Huynh [24]

RT 23: Vacancy, Rev L McSeveny [30], Rev C Garrett [22]

RT 24: Vacancy, Rev A Boyd [24]

Convener: Rev C Garrett [22]

Clerkship Committee

[4 Members (a convener who is a past Moderator, appointed for a three-year term, and three clerks of presbyteries), plus *ex officio* the Moderator and the Chairman of the Board of Investment and Finance (or his deputy)]

Clerks of presbyteries:

RT 22: Rev P Burns

RT 23: Mr K Childs

RT 24: Mr D Fraser

Convener: Rev R White [22]

Code And General Administration Committee

[3 Members, plus *ex officio* the Clerks of Assembly, Business Convener, Procurator, Law Agent, Chairman of Trusts Corporation (or a minister or elder in his place)]

RT 22: Mr R McIvor [30]

RT 23: Mrs S de Pyle [30]

RT 24: Rev A Buchan [26]
Convener: The Clerk of Assembly

Conciliation Committee

[6 Members: 3 Ministers and 3 Elders, from at least four presbyteries]

RT 23: Mr B Farquharson (Melbourne West) [29], Mr V Vasiliades (Melbourne West) [23]

RT 24: Rev A Vines (Melbourne North) [27], Mr A Letcher (Maroondah) [29]

RT 25: Rev Dr K Hood (Gippsland) [29], Rev D Martin (Flinders) [29]

Convener: Immediate Past Moderator of the Assembly

Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee

[3 Members, *ex officio* all ADF Chaplains serving in Victoria]

RT 22: Rev P Mercer [22]

RT 23: Mr C Perry [30]

RT 24: Mr J Kapelles [30]

Convener: Rev M Fagan [24]

Exit Student Committee

[Refer to code for extensive membership details, none of which appointed by GAV]

Convener: MDC Convener

Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee

[10 Members]

RT 22: Mrs R O'Brien [26], Rev G Vayne [22], Rev P Court [22]

RT 23: Mrs L Campbell [30], Mrs M Jones [27], Rev D Dixon [26]

RT 24: Mrs J Martin [28], Rev Dr K Hood [27], Vacancy, Rev P Chang [22]

Convener: Rev P Court [22]

Maintenance Of The Ministry Committee

[4 Members]

RT 22: Mr R Butcher [28]

RT 23: Rev C Garrett [29], Rev M Crabb [22]

RT 24: Mr D Wright [22]

Convener: Mr D Wright [22]

METRO Committee

[8 Members]

RT 22: Rev C LePage [30], Mrs A Harris [26]

RT 23: Mr A Edmonds [29], Mr A May [27], Rev L Brownley [26]

RT 24: Mrs Joy Arundell [30], Rev T McIntosh [22], Mr S Denness [30]

Convener: Rev T McIntosh [22]

Ministry Development Committee

[7 Members]

RT 22: Rev S Withers [25], Mr I Bramley [27]

RT 23: Rev D Middleton [29], Mr R Kop [29], Rev G Stephens [30]

RT 24: Rev P Greiner [24], Rev G Vanderwert [22]

Convener: Rev S Withers [25]

Overseas Visitors' Fund Committee

[Membership *ex officio* – The members of the Board of Investment and Finance and the conveners of the Christian Education and Nurture Committee, the Theological Education Committee, the Ministry Development Committee and the Church Planting Committee.]

Convener: BIF Chairman

Panel of Discipline Assessors

[12 members, appointed by the Code and General Administration Committee; nominations permitted from presbyteries]

Revs M Crabb, R Waterhouse, K Brown, R White, C Garrett, G Stephens, P Court, P Orchard, T Fishwick, I Leach, Mr C Morrow, Vacancy

Safe Church Committee

[6 Members]

RT 22: Vacancy, Rev D Brown [27]

RT 23: Mrs A Thomas [29], Mrs L Griffiths [30]

RT 24: Mr G Hui [26], Rev B Harvey [26]

Convener: Rev B Harvey [24]

Selection Committee

[Nominated by the Code and General Administration Committee]

Social Services Committee

[7 Members]

RT 22: Mr D Conradi [25], Rev G Lawry [25]

RT 23: Mrs J Pilgrim [28], Mr T Cunneen [24], Rev L Isham [29]

RT 24: Rev Wayne McArdle [30], Vacancy

Convener: Mrs J Pilgrim [28]

State News Committee

[5 Members: 2 Ministers and 2 Elders]

RT 22: Mr P Betts [29], Mr A Zirngast [22]

RT 23: Rev L Isham [24], Mrs J Craig [29]

RT 24: Rev S McDonald [27]

Convener: Rev S McDonald [26]

Theological Education Committee

[10 Members, *ex officio* the College Principal and another member of faculty]

RT 22: Rev R White [28], Mrs J McHardy [26], Rev S Jones [25]

RT 23: Rev J Born [30], Rev G Nicholson [25], Rev N Benfell [23]

RT 24: Mr D Wright [24], Rev K Maxwell [26], Rev I Barker [22], Rev M de Pyle [30]

Convener: Rev K Maxwell [26]

Women's Ministries Victoria Committee

[7 Members, at least two of whom are members of the Assembly]

RT 22: Mrs S McDonald [30], Rev R Grinter [29]

RT 23: Mrs A Isham [29], Rev B Johnson [29], Mrs ST Yap [29]

RT 24: Mrs C Dunstan [29], Mrs M Girgis [29]

Convener: Rev B Johnson [27]

GAA appointments

GAV Commissioners for 2022 GAA

Ministers [5]: Moderator, Moderator Designate, Assistant to the Clerks, *remaining two positions to be filled by ballot.*

Minister Alternates [5]: Rev Russ Grinter, *remaining positions to be filled by ballot*

Elders [5]: Mr Kevin Childs, Mr Tom Guilford, Mr Steve Harris, Dr Noel Johnston, vacancy.

Elder Alternates [5]: Vacancy, vacancy, vacancy, vacancy, vacancy.

Commission of the General Assembly of Australia

[3 ministers and 3 elders, *ex officio* Officers of the GAA & former Moderators-General]

Ministers: Moderator, Deputy Clerk, Assistant to the Clerks

Elders: Mr P Betts, Mr A Letcher, Mr C Morrow

ex officio: Rev Dr A Harman, Rev Dr CR Thomas, Rev JP Wilson

Other positions

Family Council of Victoria (BB 2007 Min 99.9 – Appointed by GAV, reports through Church and Nation Committee)

Mr J Ballantyne

Multifaith Advisory Group (MAG) Representative (BB 2015 min 123.2) – Appointed by GAV, reports through Church and Nation Committee)

Rev C Duke

PWMU Cookbook Committee

[3 PCV, 1 PWMU + Convener (alternates between PCV & UCA Victoria/Tasmania)]

PWMU: Mrs R Brown

GAV: Mrs C Closter, Mrs G McKenzie, Mrs D Cutler

Convener: UCA appointee

St Andrew's Foundation Trustees (ABN 26 539 374 087)

Mrs M Conradi, Dr B Ellis, Mr I Bramley.

It has been a pleasure to serve as convener of this committee and to draw upon the support and wisdom of the committee members. Hui Lim completes his term of service at this Assembly, and we are appreciative of his contribution over the years.

Adam Humphries
CONVENER

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE (Min 49)

The past year has been one of change for the Social Services Committee as the governance of Kirkbrae is now managed by the ad hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited Committee (PCVL). The handover of Kirkbrae to the PCVL occurred in November 2020. This has enabled the committee to focus all efforts on the application of the trust funds.

Currently, the committee administers four trusts:

1. Thomas Hall Trust—for the benefit of children living in residential service. The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation determined that funds may be applied 'as near as possible' to this purpose.
2. Douglas Family Trust—for the assistance of the poor and needy anywhere in Australia.
3. Challenger Trust—to provide assistance to the poor in the city of Melbourne and surrounding districts.
4. Brocklesby 'Anna M White' Rest Home Trust—for the benefit of protestant women in Victoria who are in genuine need.

There have been two applications to the Thomas Hall Trust, totalling \$4,900.

- Brimbank Presbyterian Church was given \$2,400 for a camp, which due to COVID-19 lockdown did not eventuate, and the money has been returned.
- Darebin Presbyterian Church was given \$2,500 for a camp. As only \$1,560 was required to fund the camp, \$940 is to be returned.

In June 2021, the Trusts Corporation notified the committee of its intention to review the application of the trusts the committee administers on behalf of the church. The review is ongoing, with the TC and the committee working to ensure the application of the trusts is in line with the individual trust terms. It is hoped through the review process to ensure there is a clear understanding of the application of the trusts by the committee and applicants.

The current members of the committee are Luke Isham, Tom Cunneen, Denis Conradi, Elizabeth Lewis, Grant Lawry and Jenny Pilgrim, with Bruce Evans and Greg Hamilton both having retired from the committee earlier this year after serving faithfully for many years. The dedication of the members of the committee is greatly appreciated, and the convener thanks the members for their support.

Jenny Pilgrim
CONVENER

STATE NEWS COMMITTEE (Min 50)

Over the past twelve months, the State News Committee has taken to its task of informing and encouraging the Presbyterian Church of Victoria with relish. Publication of *Fellow Workers* has continued at a rate of four editions per year, and the committee looking forward with anticipation to increasing that to six editions as directed by the General Assembly in 2020.

The committee is thankful to the most recent Commission of Assembly for allocating \$13,500 from the General Mission Program towards the operating costs of the committee. This concludes a process of assessment, review, and adjustment for the committee, which began in 2019.

During that time, the committee's regulations were revised, the method of producing *Fellow Workers* has changed in partnership with Virtual Church Assist, and the committee has been blessed by having its membership increased to five, with the addition this year of Jo Craig from Warragul Presbyterian Church.

Circulation numbers are encouraging, with 527 hard copies being sent to 61 individuals or churches. A further 177 digital copies were provided by email. The committee believes that this represents a strong readership.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. The feedback on each edition of *Fellow Workers* shows that the denomination is benefitting from a high-quality print and electronic publication with news, articles, opinion pieces, and comments from across the church.

This is only possible with the support and input of the denomination. If there is something noteworthy happening in an Assembly member's corner of the harvest field, they can let the committee know. Members' news items, book reviews, ministry moves, and suggestions for people to interview are what makes *Fellow Workers* such a blessing to the wider church. The committee thanks fellow workers for their partnership with the committee as it seeks to encourage the church in the gospel.

Stephen McDonald
CONVENER

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Min 51)

Introduction

The Theological Education Committee (TEC) is pleased to report that despite the pandemic, the Presbyterian Theological College (PTC) remains productively and effectively engaged in training an increasing number of men and women for ministry. Sadly, the committee must also report a general COVID-19 weariness that rests heavily upon the faculty, staff, and students. It is fair to say that the brief return to face-to-face learning early in 2021 lifted the spirits of all those involved at PTC and renewed and refreshed the enthusiasm of the student body. However, the return to lockdown soon sapped that enthusiasm and switching back and forward is wearying. The committee is thankful to the Rev Dr Jared Hood for the installation and operation of technology that allows for the smooth transition from face-to-face to online learning. This capability has allowed the College to continue to deliver a high standard of theological education with minimum disruption. The committee is thankful that the Rev Dr Jared Hood and Mr Ben Nelson have been able to take six months sabbatical leave in 2020–2021. The committee and the College are thankful for the support of the General Manager and his team in head office in managing the difficulties presented by the disruptions of this pandemic.

Committee membership

The previous 12 months have seen committee membership remained relatively stable. As convener, I continue to give thanks for the support and contribution of each member of the committee and the thorough reporting of the Principal and Faculty Representative. The committee office bearers for 2021 are Dennis Wright (Treasurer) and Annie Weir (Minute and Correspondence Secretary). They continue to serve the TEC with dedication and diligence. In May, the committee accepted the resignation of Craig Manners and thanks him for his many years of service, insightful contribution, and prayerfulness. In August, the committee welcomed Rev Jordan Born to the TEC. Jordan brings to the committee a passion for theological education, specific knowledge of theological educational landscape in North America, and experience in student engagement. The committee looks forward to his contribution to the operation of PTC.

Governance

Good governance depends upon strong relationships and collegial leadership. Strong relationships and collegial leadership depend upon the opportunity to spend time face-to-face with each other. Government-imposed isolation restricts the opportunity for face-to-face contact. Such isolation results in weakened relationships and collegiality and thereby creates a vulnerability in the governance structure of a complex organisation, like PTC. While the committee is alert to this phenomenon, it does not believe that it has had a material impact on the governance of the College to date. However, the General Assembly should be aware of the subtle impacts of the pandemic and government policy on church structures and the vulnerabilities they create.

Although the pandemic has meant that the committee has been unable to meet face-to-face or view the operations of the College in person as much as it would like, the committee remains thoroughly informed through the comprehensive reports (including pictures) of the Principal, Faculty Representative, and maintenance team, and regular financial updates from the church office. The TEC is pleased to report that despite the pressures of the pandemic throughout the 2021 financial year, the College has managed to complete the financial year with a modest surplus. The committee

expresses its sincere thanks to the Principal, Faculty, and staff for their hard work and wise management of the College's financial resources.

In 2019, the TEC reported that the Australian College of Theology (ACT) had commenced a consultation process with all 16 colleges in the consortium to determine the precise nature of the relationship between the ACT and the colleges. The committee also reported that that process had been disrupted by the ACT's change of CEO, the pandemic, and the Federal Government's Higher Education Reform 2020. The TEC is pleased to report that the Federal Government Higher Education Reform 2020 had no material impact on the PTC and is unlikely to do so in the foreseeable future. In addition, the committee can report that the appointment of Mr James Dalziel as CEO has shifted the focus of the ACT from that of a purely academic institution to one that is committed to academic excellence and the preparation of pastors for the local church. The new CEO believes that the consortium can function as a university of specialisation. This means that some member colleges under the ACT umbrella will focus on the production of research for publication biblical journals while others will function more like a seminary, preparing people for ministry in the local church. The TEC views this as a welcome and positive change and is encouraged by the direction of the new CEO and the Board of the ACT, which supports him. The committee thanks all who joined it in prayer concerning these matters.

As was reported to the Assembly in 2019, the committee has identified various capital assets at the College that need replacing as they wear out. This asset replacement program, while necessary, needs careful consideration. The pandemic has created a certain unpredictability about the future of tertiary education in Australia. It is hard to determine whether there is pent-up demand in the system caused by students who are waiting for the education sector to return to some form of normality or whether enrolments in online courses have helped fill the many hours of isolation imposed upon the lives of individuals. While capital asset replacement and investment are certainly necessary, prudence dictates the committee moving cautiously forward in asset replacement.

Educational delivery

The College continues to be served by a dedicated team of full-time and adjunct lecturers ably supported by the office staff and Librarian. The TEC gives thanks to God for the appointment of Mrs Janelle Born as Office Administrator and looks forward to her contribution to the life of the College. It is worth noting that this faculty structure of a dedicated full-time team supported by a significant number of adjunct lectures gives PTC the flexibility to consistently deliver a broader range of subjects and offer a growing number of qualifications to the theological education marketplace. This increased offering is, of course, essential to attracting a larger student body and the benefits that increased student numbers provide.

The College continues to support the Chinese reformed community by investing in and expanding the course offerings to the Chinese speaking community. The College plans to invest in and develop these courses, furthering the committee's aim to provide a complete pathway into ministry in the Australian Reformed Chinese church.

Unfortunately, circumstances have dictated PTC has been unable to run the annual Women's Ministry Conference. This is a great disappointment to the committee and to many women across the denomination who look forward to these events. The TEC

continues to consider how to best meet this growing desire and deliver training that meets the unique needs of women's ministry.

Candidate requirements

In recent years, the TEC has seen an increase in the number of students seeking approval as candidates with partial or full qualifications from non-Presbyterian theological institutions. Among those who present to the TEC with prior qualifications, there is an expectation that the committee will simply require the student to complete one or two Presbyterian distinctives subjects and approve them for ministry within the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. Disappointment and frustration often follow when these expectations are not met.

However, it is important to remember that the Presbyterian Church of Victoria established PTC for the purpose of ensuring that the theological convictions and ministerial practice of graduating ministers are consistent with the confessional standards. The TEC is entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that the intention of the PCV is practised.

To better appreciate this issue, it must be remembered that every ordination candidate within the PCA comes under the jurisdiction of the GAA College Committee, as it is the College Committee that sets the required subjects for those seeking ordination within the PCA. Irrespective of where a candidate lives, and regardless of the institution in which he may have done prior theological studies, he is still required to meet the common requirements for ordination. Further, he always remains subject to the rules and decisions of the GAA College Committee, which sets the subjects mandated for ordination. The TEC, in partnership with the faculty, is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the GAA College committee are met and, in this sense, acts as an agent of the GAA committee.

The TEC acknowledges that while the Presbytery has jurisdiction in the matter of the acceptance or termination of its candidates, it belongs solely in the province of the GAA College Committee to determine a candidate's status, admit him to the course of training, assign him an appropriate grading in that course, and ultimately, grant him an Exit Certificate. Thus the GAA College Committee has the jurisdiction over the matters of admission to and exit from the course of training. The GAA College Committee also sets the standards by which each of the state colleges operates its own educational and training programs within the framework of the Australian College of Theology.

Therefore, before a candidate commences a course of study for ordination at any Presbyterian theological college in Australia, he must present official academic records of any prior and relevant studies that he has undertaken in any other recognised Presbyterian college or colleges, ACT institutions, Moore Theological College, or appropriate overseas theological colleges.

When candidates have trained in any of the above-mentioned colleges, it is the responsibility of the TEC and Presbyterian college in the state to which they have applied to complete a report on any outstanding GAA requirements they must meet to be ordained within the PCA. This list is then shared with the GAA College Committee, which then grades the student's status and determines the anticipated time that the candidate will require to complete his studies.

This process for determining the remaining course of studies is applied in exactly the same way with respect to every student, irrespective of which institution the student may have previously attended. Institutional cross-credits are given wherever they are permitted, regardless of where the student may have previously studied. It is not uncommon for those who complete their degree at a non-Presbyterian theological College to be required to complete two years (and in some circumstances three years) of additional study before they can obtain their Exit Certificate.

Presbyteries and ministers need to understand that the PTC simply acts as an administrative agent for the GAA to ensure that its requirements are met for ordination candidates. If the PTC is unable to claim that its students have completed the approved curriculum, it cannot request an Exit Certificate on their behalf. Only when that has been done can the Convener of the GAA College Committee sign the candidate's Exit Certificate. Therefore it is preferable for a student to do all his studying at PTC: students obtain good results and complete their ordination requirements in the shortest possible time. This saves everybody time and money and benefits both the candidates and the PCV.

Student body

The TEC continues to give thanks to God for the gifted and godly character of the candidates Christ has raised up for the ministry to his people and proclamation of the gospel to the world. The TEC considers it a privilege to be entrusted with the responsibility of training the ministers of Christ for his glory and for the good of his people. The committee endeavours to ensure attendees at PTC grow in godliness, in love for God and are better equipped to proclaim the gospel in their community.

The pandemic has meant that the committee has seen less of the student body than would normally be the case. Consequently, there is a growing distance between the TEC and the student body. The committee prays that government restrictions will soon be lifted and that the joy of seeing young men and women growing in Christ and maturing in the knowledge of his word will again become part of College life. The TEC thanks God for the students' willingness to adapt to the changes in the learning environment, and they are thanked for this. The committee thanks the student body for putting up with the necessary changes and doing so without grumbling and complaining.

Principal's review

In early 2021, the TEC conducted a performance review of the principal with the purpose of bringing a recommendation to the 2021 General Assembly of Victoria. The committee adopted a modified version of the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) process for reviewing CEOs. This process examines both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of a CEO's performance.

In conducting this review, the TEC found that the Principal, Rev Peter Hastie, has proven to be an exemplary leader, educator, and pastor to the faculty, staff, and students of PTC. Peter has demonstrated himself to be an able administrator, a collegial leader, and a competent lecturer. Peter works hard to ensure that all aspects of college life are maintained at the highest standards and the student experience is positive and biblical. The TEC is pleased to report that Peter has consistently operated within the budget set by the GAV and proved himself to be a prudent manager of the College's resources. Peter has pursued the objectives of the Strategic Review and has overseen the improvement of the College grounds for the enjoyment of the staff,

faculty, and students and the benefit of those who reside there. In addition, the College website, which in so many ways is now the front door of PTC, has had a significant update.

During the review process, Peter informed the committee that he was only seeking reappointment for a further two years. While disappointed by this news, the committee believes that it is appropriate to lift the heavy burden that Peter has shouldered. The demands of driving significant improvements in the general life of the College, coupled with the rigours of a regular lecturing load and administration of a tertiary institution, are significant. In addition, Peter has the additional burden of leading the College through the pandemic. Peter leads without complaint and with grace. The committee would like to thank him for his exemplary service. The reappointment of the Rev Peter Hastie as Principal of PTC for a further two years is unanimously supported by the faculty, staff, student body, and TEC.

Further observations

The review of the principal highlighted that the workload of all members of the PTC faculty and staff is far greater than their job description requires and beyond any reasonable expectation. Consequently, the College trades on the generosity and goodwill of the faculty and staff, and the cost of these benefits is most often born by their most intimate relationships, families, and friendships. The PCV General Assembly ought to address this matter and provide sufficient resources to ensure that unreasonable workload expectations are not placed upon the faculty and staff of the PTC.

Kevin Maxwell
CONVENER

FACULTY REPORT 2021

The last eighteen months have been an unusual time of turbulence and uncertainty within Australia as a whole and at every level of the educational sector. Theological education and postgraduate research have not escaped this dislocation. Every theological institution within Australia has been affected both by far-reaching legislative and administrative changes in educational standards (the AQF, *The Australian Qualifications Framework* levels 5–10), as well as the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic. This, in turn, has presented significant challenges for faculty and staff members, who are required to achieve and ensure these standards in theological education and ministerial training. A new and different educational world has been unfolding around us.

This is especially so for those responsible for leadership, and particularly the principal. The principal's challenge is to achieve 'quality with soul' by coming to terms with the new demands for excellence and academic freedom while keeping faith with his own spiritual and theological traditions. The principal believes that the PTC has achieved this outcome, but it always remains an ongoing struggle. Unfortunately, today's higher education leaders are largely unsympathetic to the Christian worldview and seem to understand the work mainly in terms of careers (i.e. something people choose for themselves) rather than 'callings' (something to which God sets people apart). A 'one-size fits all' secular model for tertiary education will always have a particular problem regarding the processes and emphases in the education and training of ministers. There are no other vocations where personal convictions and character are so essential, representing a major differentiation between theological education and other tertiary studies.

During 2020–2021, faculty and students alike have faced significant difficulties in various ways. First, they have spent most of their time apart due to the restrictions imposed during the four significant lockdowns. This has meant that a vital part of college life—in-person student-to-staff and student-to-student interaction—has been largely lost during this period, although the College has tried to compensate in other ways. It has also made it harder for students to form lifelong collegial relationships that are essential in Presbyterian ministry. Likewise, it has prevented students from participating in person in chapel on 78 occasions during a normal academic year. Another opportunity students have lost on several occasions is the opportunity to share immediately in the development of their preaching and service-leading in 2020. However, fortunately, this has been reinstated this year (75 occasions, although 15% of these have taken place during lockdown).

The lockdowns have also had a serious impact on the students' education. Several students have experienced unusual pressure in their studies—in all categories, undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate—particularly in their ability to obtain adequate resources and materials for their assignments. They have also suffered from the dearth of opportunities for face-to-face instruction and discussion with their peers. Fortunately, the use of Zoom and Microsoft Teams has managed to bridge some of that gap. Several students have also faced serious emotional challenges that have affected their performance. This has meant that the faculty has sometimes spent prolonged periods on the phone or Facetime to encourage them, especially those who live interstate or in distant regional areas. The problem has surfaced again in August 2021, and faculty members have been quick to show support to distressed students and provide help wherever needed.

TEC, Faculty, and Staff

In the light of all the dislocation that has followed the outbreak of COVID-19 infection in Australia, the faculty would like to thank all members of the TEC for their warm support, sympathy and understanding—particularly Kevin Maxwell (Convener) and Dennis Wright (Treasurer)—who have displayed calm leadership and optimism during a very trying time for the College. The principal, in particular, has felt privileged to serve in his role with their unwavering support, and he is especially grateful for having such capable and committed colleagues and board members to advise and assist him. This also includes the faculty members, Rev Drs Jared Hood and Felix Chung, and Rev Ben Nelson, and the adjunct lecturers and HDR supervisors, Drs Allan Harman, Douglas Milne, Ming Leung, Michael Brautigam, Tony Bird, Peter Barnes, Karl Hood, Rowland Ward, Murray Adamthwaite, Bruce Riding and Revs Martin Pakula, Matt Cole, Stuart Bonnington, Chris Siriweera, David Cook, David Jones, Andrew Vines, and Richard O'Brien, all of whom have played an invaluable role in our ministry and training.

The faculty is deeply grateful for the continued involvement in the College of Drs Douglas Milne and Allan Harman, previous principals of the College, for their generosity and willingness to assist whenever they can. Both have been fully supportive and are a great source of encouragement to the whole College community. Dr Harman retains an active connection with the College as a Principal Research Supervisor for postgraduate and doctoral candidates and has played a key role in guiding Chanreiso Lungleng through his Old Testament doctoral studies. He is also teaching a short course in Church history in semester 2. Dr Milne also plays an invaluable role in New Testament studies at the College, and he and his wife, Joan, have also provided Chanreiso and his wife, Alice, with warm pastoral support throughout the prolonged period of Chanreiso's studies (2016–2020). PTC is also indebted to the Milnes, David Palmer, and the support of the PWMU for making it possible to assist the Presbyterian Church of India in providing additional postgraduate training for their lecturing staff.

The faculty is grateful for the friendly and efficient administrative staff, Annie Weir (Administration Officer), Annie's successor, Mrs Janelle Born, Dr Mei Chung (Registrar), Ms Heather Fiedler, and Suzanne Yao (Librarians), Walter Bruining (PTC Media), and Annie and Cameron Weir (PTC Media). It also thanks the PCV office for its help with PTC affairs, Michael Ellison (General Manager), Jason Zhang (Accountant), Sharee Barnett (Bookkeeper), Rev Dr John Wilson (GAV Clerk), and Siew Teng Yap (Assistant to the Clerk), as well as the assistance of the Board of Investment and Finance.

The faculty wishes to acknowledge the generosity of Cameron and Annie Weir and the help they have given the College throughout the entire year in improving the appearance, safety, and use of the College buildings and grounds. Their assistance with property maintenance and the general administration of the College has been invaluable. Annie interrupted her BTh studies for around seven months to keep the office running smoothly amid so much new government health legislation during the pandemic. Cameron has been engaged in major maintenance and renovation of parts of the property, often late into the night. Sometimes he has been assisted by Scott Thomas and Daniel Soong, who have also made significant contributions to the site's appearance.

The Academic and Ministry Training Program

The College works alongside the theological education provider, the Australian College of Theology (ACT). The ACT is a Sydney-based incorporated body that provides administrative and educational services to its consortium members, consisting of seventeen colleges.

In a previous survey, the ACT was rated as the leading education provider in 'Overall Student Experience in Australia'. It was assessed as particularly strong in both undergraduate and postgraduate experience and is recognised by the federal government as performing well above any of the universities in overall educational experience. It is listed among a small group of providers that are regarded as 'sites of best practice'. The ACT is one of the top five providers for undergraduate experience and achieves the highest rating of any institution in the sector in postgraduate experience.

One of the services that the ACT provides is the Data Profile that is released annually in June. This information profile results from a national benchmarking exercise conducted by the Australian government that surveys students concerning their experience at all Australian universities and independent higher education providers. The latest statistics for the ACT and the PTC relate to 2019–2020. In light of these comments, the data following reveal the significance and impact of the PTC as the theological education and ministry training college for the PCV.

The following points should be noted:

1. PTC is ranked number 1 out of the 17 colleges in three essential areas: skills development, learner engagement, and teaching quality.
2. The enrolment trend at PTC over the last two years has been up 23%. In other colleges, there has been a negative downtrend of 7%.
3. 94% of students at PTC are positive about their overall experience of the College. Other colleges rank on average 92%. 96% of PTC students are positive about student support in academic and pastoral areas. Other colleges have an average approval ranking of 92%.
4. At PTC, 99% of students complete subjects that they start. In other colleges, the average figure is 92%.
5. PTC students' academic performance (as assessed by ACT moderators) is impressive compared with the equivalent cohorts in other colleges. 52% achieve Distinction and High Distinction standards, and 34% achieve Credit levels. In other colleges, 40% of students achieve Distinction and High Distinction levels, and 33% achieve Credit levels.
6. The majority of PTC students (74%) are mature age (between 22–50 years), and 19% of students are between the ages of 22–29.
7. Our gender profile of students in terms of total enrolments has shifted from 9 male/1 female (2018) to 3 male/1 female (2020).

8. PTC has a higher proportion of full-time students (32%), although part-time students are increasing significantly (68%), particularly in 2020–2021. Other colleges have full-time students at 20% and part-time at 80%.
9. The educational emphasis at PTC focuses on face-to-face instruction as the optimal form of training. The GAA College Committee mandated in May 2019 that all Presbyterian candidates for the ministry within Australia must complete 85% of the required ACT units in face-to-face instruction. Only 15% may be taken in distance mode.
10. Students at the PTC in the 'ordination track' are involved in the BTh/BMin and MDiv/GradDipDiv with a more significant proportion in the latter. The higher numbers in the MDiv/GradDipDiv reflect that most candidates are mature age graduates from other universities or higher education providers. PTC continues to maintain a significantly higher ratio of students taking the MDiv in relation to other colleges that offer this course.
11. At PTC, 82% of students enrol with either ordination or a full-time/part-time Christian ministry of some kind in mind. In other colleges, the ordination figure is 33%, cross-cultural mission 21%, and employment in Christian agencies 40%.
12. One important problem that the College does face is the existing library. It is too small (35,500 books in English and 2,700 books in Chinese). Despite the quality of the books located there and the excellent quality of acquisitions, the collection does not match the size of other comparable theological libraries. The problem is that the library has run out of space and has to warehouse a growing portion of current journals and stock of books in different sites. This makes access very difficult for students. A new library building is desperately needed. Growing student numbers and increasing demand only exacerbates the problem. The faculty thanks all those who have made significant donations to the College library, particularly the Geneva Trust in Sydney and the Loyal Orange Lodge of Victoria.

Student Enrolments 2021

The number of students (candidates and non-candidates) who have been studying at the College in 2021 is as follows:

1. Semester 1, 2021: total 85 (23% FT; 77% PT) English Course
2. Semester 2, 2021: total 102 (30% FT; 70% PT) English Course
3. Semester 1, 2021: total 16 (3 ACT Diploma) Chinese course
4. Semester 2, 2021: total 15 (4 ACT Diploma) Chinese course

The overall ratio between male and female students is 66% (male) and 34% (female). The rise in the number of enrolments in 2021 is due to the increasing take-up of online courses.

Candidates for the Ministry

The Presbyterian Theological College exists to provide the highest quality biblical, theological, and pastoral training to equip people for gospel ministry who believe, affirm, and defend the gospel in order to advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At the end of 2020, PTC graduated five candidates to the following churches: Billy Kurniawan (Burwood Community), John Hudson (Brimbank), Ben Kelada (Donnybrook), Andrew Wong (Flemington), and Xien Yao (Donvale).

The faculty is encouraged that 82% of students have some form of church-based ministry in mind and that the number of provisional candidates for pastoral ministry within the Presbyterian Church of Victoria now stands at 10. There are three female students (Annie Phelan, South Yarra; Kerry Selvaraj, Drouin; Rebecca Barry, Darebin) who wish to engage in some form of Bible-teaching and pastoral care within the PCV.

The names of the ordination candidates (in alphabetical order), their presbyteries, and anticipated year of exit are as follows:

Mitchell Amoah	Melbourne West	2023
Ryan Brightwell	Maroondah	2024
Marcus Campbell	Melbourne East	2021
Jung (Tim) Choi	Melbourne West	2022
Robert Koh	Maroondah	2021
Brian Luong	Melbourne North	2021
Shady Mehanni	South West Victoria	2021
Raymond Patchett	Gippsland	2021
Scott Thomas	Melbourne North	2024
Kalpan Vasa	Flinders	2021

The number of candidates from each of the presbyteries is: Flinders (1), Melbourne East (1), Melbourne North (2), Melbourne West (2), Maroondah (2), Gippsland (1), and South-West Victoria (1). Total: 10.

Projected exit dates for candidates:

2021: Marcus Campbell, Robert Koh, Brian Luong, Shady Mehanni, Raymond Patchett, Kalpan Vasa.

2022: Jung (Tim) Choi.

2023: Mitchell Amoah.

2024: Ryan Brightwell, Scott Thomas.

The need for further candidates

Over the last three years, one trend has been a declining number of candidates, even though the total number of students enrolled (both F/T and P/T) is at its highest level (102 FT/PT) in the last ten years. At the writing of this report, the faculty is hopeful that the lower entry rates for candidates will not necessarily be a long-term problem. However, the faculty would make several observations:

1. The supply of ministers of the Word is a matter that lies within the gift of Christ (Eph 4:7,11).
2. The short supply of workers for Christian ministry tends to be a perennial problem. It certainly was during the time of Christ (Matt 9:37).

3. This raises the important question: are PCV ministers and elders putting the need for the ministry of the Word to the younger members of the church? Are sessions and ministers discipling and cultivating potential candidates to this end? Unless this is a priority for presbyteries and local churches, the PCV will find at some stage that growing numbers of churches will become vacant and potentially inactive,
4. The divine solution to this problem is earnest prayer to God to send workers into His harvest field (Matt 9:38) and a suitable development program that might prompt those with suitable character and potential to consider whether God is calling them to serve as Gospel ministers.

Therefore, reminding the church of the need for Gospel ministers of all ages (including suitable young men), and providing a special training and discipleship culture for them in all congregations, should be a common concern of ministers, sessions, and presbyteries in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

College commencement and conferral of degrees 2020

The 2021 academic year commenced on 28 March in the Werner Brodbeck Hall in the Assembly Hall building. The service has been held there for the last eight years because it is a central location and makes the ceremony more accessible to the wider church. This year was particularly notable not only for the large attendance but also in 2020 it had proved impossible to hold the service due to the lockdown. On this occasion in 2021, PTC formally acknowledged its graduates from 2020, many of whom were in attendance to receive their awards.

On this occasion, the guest speaker was Dr Stephen Chavura, an Australian historian from Sydney, previously a senior lecturer at Macquarie University and now lecturing at Campion College. The faculty is grateful for the attendance and support of Rev Philip Mercer, the Moderator of the Victorian Assembly, and Rachel Viljoen, a former Administration Officer, who organised a small musical ensemble for the evening. Once again, PTC thanks the Scots' Church and their minister for their kindness and generosity in allowing the use of the Werner Brodbeck Hall and the upstairs Robert White Hall for the reception.

The ministry training program

The Presbyterian churches of Melbourne and regional Victoria play an equal and important role in the training and education of theological students. Not only do they have many godly and talented ministers who are ideal trainers, but they afford theological students the opportunity to be immersed in friendly and familiar environments as they train for their future vocations.

The PTC is thankful for its links to many local churches. This is one of the advantages that the College has in its theological education program. There are many experienced trainers and churches that welcome the involvement of students. A church setting is important for the students' learning because it is in the churches where much of what is learned from books and lectures at the College can be translated into meaningful pastoral service. This happens in a wide variety of activities where students can show initiative and leadership in developing relationships and skills based on sympathetic listening, understanding, caring, welcoming, evangelism, offering practical help, counselling, and teaching. In the local church, too, many students take their first fledgling steps in preaching and leading in public worship. It is here where they have real-life experience.

The local church is, therefore, a vital part of theological education. Students can become so immersed in their academic programs that they can underestimate the importance of their learning experience with their trainer-supervisor in the local church and the many—and often lifelong—relationships they form within the congregation. The advantage of the program at PTC is that it allows students to participate in a variety of different church settings with quite diverse demographics, cultures, and histories. Students need this experience to broaden their understanding and appreciation of the social breadth and features of the denomination. Working in settings that are sometimes quite unlike their home churches plays an essential role in their development.

The primary elements of the students' practical training, the Supervised Learning Experience (SLE) or Supervised Field Experience (SFE), extend over the four years of the candidates' course. During this time, they engage in the reading of important pastoral texts on different aspects of ministry with their trainers, have their preaching regularly assessed, participate in teaching programs within the church, lead in worship or particular parts of the Sunday services, welcome newcomers, visit congregational members, conduct evangelism, and attend church leadership meetings as required.

A further advantage of the College and local church connection is that BTh/BMin and MDiv/GradDip candidates can undertake supervised ACT subjects in practical ministry through the College in active association with the local church. In the first year of their course, David Cook teaches Introductory Preaching (PC047-612/712/812). This is followed in their second year by Preaching for Lifelong Learning (PC132-612/712/812). The aim is to ensure that when students graduate, they understand the fundamental principles of effective preaching and can preach with some ability. Some of the work for these units is conducted and assessed in the local churches. Preaching has also been emphasised at the Ministry Conference in recent years, where the focus has been on helping preachers develop more biblical and spiritually impacting sermons.

Early in their course, candidates also study Ministry Formation (PC001-512/712). This unit aims to develop in candidates a clear sense of their personal identity and vocational role as Gospel ministers. This unit is also designed to instil an open and affirming attitude towards others, especially those who are vulnerable and require special care. It is also designed to remind them of the high spiritual and ethical standards expected of ministers and to give an appreciation of how these qualities are developed in them by the training process. This subject is important because it acquaints students with a mindset that will prepare them for work in a Presbyterian context

Congregational Field Education and Pastoral Care Field Education (PC 042-612/712/812) and PC043-612/712/812) are taught and assessed in liaison with experienced ministers and the faculty. These units are an essential part of ministry training and are designed to prepare candidates for engaging in pastoral work within the structures of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. Foundations of Pastoral Care (PC002-612/712/812) and Pastoral Skills and Methods (PC003- 612/712/812) provide the foundational perspectives, tools, and skills for exercising proper pastoral care with individuals and congregations. The most recent national Student Experience Survey (released June 2021) indicate that these courses are crucial to candidates' preparation and that PTC students are performing strongly compared to students from other colleges in these areas.

Candidates at PTC also have other opportunities to build their involvement in ministry in the local church through intensive involvement in the annual mission. In recent years, College mission teams have visited Presbyterian churches within Victoria and interstate for eight days each year. During the week, they were also involved in ministry training, visiting, conversations with passers-by outside churches, and assisting local congregations in some of their outreach and public Christmas presentations. These are all important team-building exercises that foster lifelong friendships, familiarity, and trust, which are essential for Presbyterian ministers who need to work in strong collegial relationships.

The College also maintains the focus on the local church by having academic staff who have previously acted as pastors in local churches or who are actively involved in the ministry of a local church during their tenure at the College. Whether they hold office or not, all faculty at PTC must be actively involved in the local churches. Not all colleges in the ACT require that lecturing staff have been pastors or hold some form of pastoral office in the church. However, there is a distinct advantage in having lecturers who have been intimately involved with pastoral care and leadership over many years. They can provide insights, examples, and nuance in their teaching that simply cannot be gained in any other way than by being directly involved in some pastoring and oversight within the church.

A further development in the support of the ministry of local churches and presbyteries is available through the Ministry Development Committee. Rev Chris Siriweera is making regular visits to the College to become acquainted with candidates for the ministry so that he can build contact and friendships with future exit students and provide them with mentoring in their early years of pastoral ministry. He also assists with the SLE/SFE training program. Having the Ministry Development Officer involved in mentoring students from their early candidature creates a vital pastoral and denominational contact that is designed to provide long-term support and encouragement that will assist ministers through crucial transitions in their service of the church. It ensures continuity of support for those in training and full-time ministry. It is one of the denominational distinctives in the PCV. Students are helped while at College and throughout a pastor's ministry in a very personal way. Also, this is free. Pastors do not need to pay professional coaches because the Ministry Development Officer's assistance is available as a service.

The faculty is indebted to the many local churches that are currently involved with the College in the training of candidates and the ministers who give so generously of their time: Officer (David Martin) Reservoir (Andrew Vines), Croydon (Cameron Griffiths), Epping (Nello Barbieri), Drouin (Heath Easton, Stephen Jones), Bundoora (Chris Shaw), Woori Yallock (Tony Archer), and Canterbury (David Hann).

Pathways into Presbyterian ministry

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria is blessed to receive candidates in a variety of different ways. Some will train in independent colleges in Australia, while others will train in Presbyterian colleges overseas. Alternatively, some may train in Presbyterian colleges within Australia and obtain an ACT degree but will not complete all their study requirements for ordination in the Presbyterian Church of Australia. In all these cases, they will need to complete the prescribed study requirements set by the GAA College Committee.

In order to grasp this issue, it must be remembered that every ordination candidate within the PCA comes under the jurisdiction of the GAA College Committee. The College Committee sets the required subjects for those seeking ordination within the PCA. Irrespective of where a candidate lives, and regardless of the institution in which he may have done prior theological studies, he is still required to meet the common requirements for ordination. Further, he always remains subject to the rules and decisions of the GAA College Committee, which sets the subjects mandated for ordination (GAV Code Rule 4:32).

While individual presbyteries have jurisdiction in the matter of the acceptance or termination of their candidates, it belongs solely in the province of the GAA College Committee to:

- a) determine a candidate's status,
- b) admit him to the course of training,
- c) assign him an appropriate grading in that course, and ultimately,
- d) grant him an Exit Certificate.

Thus, the GAA College Committee has jurisdiction over admission to and exit from the course of training. The GAA College Committee also sets the standards by which each of the state colleges operates its own educational/training programs within the framework of the Australian College of Theology curriculum.

Therefore, before a candidate commences a course of study for ordination at any Presbyterian theological college in Australia, he must present official academic records of any prior and relevant studies that he has undertaken in any other recognised Presbyterian college/s, ACT institutions, and independent or overseas theological colleges.

When candidates have trained in any of the above-mentioned colleges, it is the responsibility of the Presbyterian college in the state to which they have applied to complete a report on any outstanding GAA requirements they must fulfil to be ordained within the PCA. This list is then shared with the GAA College Committee, which then grades the student's status and determines the anticipated time that the candidate will require to complete his studies.

The process for determining the remaining course of studies for any student transferring from, or having completed studies in another college, is the same. The PTC has an official GAA approved form that sets out cross-credits from other theological institutions, which is applied in exactly the same way with respect to every student, irrespective of which institution the student may have previously attended. Institutional cross-credits are given wherever they are permitted, regardless of where the student may have previously studied.

For instance, PTC has had students at Ridley College who have applied to become candidates. Some of them have completed their BTh or MDiv at Ridley, while others have realised earlier in their course that they want to become Presbyterian candidates. Those who complete their degree at Ridley and other colleges usually have another two years of additional study before obtaining their Exit Certificate. Other Ridley students decide to transfer earlier and reduce the time required to one year so as to complete the necessary studies for Presbyterian ordination. In both cases, these students have made earlier choices that mean that they will have to study for up to

one, two, or even possibly three years extra, in addition to the time they have already expended attaining their theological degree from elsewhere.

Sometimes students may study for a degree at PTC, but not as candidates. The same rule applies to them. If they chose at an earlier time not to study the GAA prescribed subjects for ordination, they will still be required to complete those units even if they have previously qualified for a BTh or an MDiv.

These examples demonstrate that the PTC does not single out particular students from other colleges and require them to undertake additional studies from which others are exempt. The standards set by the GAA College Committee are clear: all candidates or ordained ministers who are received from other denominations, irrespective of where they have previously studied, must complete the GAA prescribed courses before they can receive an Exit Certificate.

In this process, the PTC simply acts as an administrative agent for the GAA to ensure that its requirements are met for ordination candidates. If the PTC is unable to claim that its students have completed the approved curriculum, it cannot request an Exit Certificate on their behalf. Only when the necessary subjects have been completed can the Convener of the GAA College Committee sign the candidate's Exit Certificate.

The point that is made here is that all candidates are treated in exactly the same way. Their task is to complete the prescribed course of training. The PTC stands ready to assist students from other colleges in any way that it can. However, both ministers and presbyteries should bear in mind some of the consequences of advising students to study in a non-Presbyterian Australian college. Such a decision will inevitably prolong a student's time of study and increase the cost that he has to bear. This is why studying at the PTC is preferable—students can obtain good results and complete their ordination requirements in the shortest possible time. This saves both time and money and benefits candidates and the PCV.

Higher Degree by Research

The responsibility for Higher Degrees by Research (HDR) resides with Dr Felix Chung. In the last four years, the College has seen significant development under his leadership, and PTC now has four persons working towards PhDs and another a Masters. The level of interest in HDR study at PTC is significant and is well above other colleges on a proportional basis. The hope is that this program will be the means to provide ministers trained to a high level and also create a pool of potential lecturers for the PTC and other allied colleges.

The College has very able supervisors for the HDR program: Prof Allan Harman, Drs Felix Chung, Rowland Ward, Jared Hood, Peter Barnes, and Michael Brautigam. The faculty is very grateful to God for such a capable and experienced team to help in the HDR program.

Staff development, sabbatical leave, and contribution

1. Peter Hastie has taught five subjects in 2021: Biblical Theology, Introduction to Apologetics, The Knowledge and Doctrine of God, Ministry Formation and Creation and the Fall/The Person and Work of Christ. He also supervises a Pastoral Care Group. As part of his HDR studies, he has been engaged in research for two published articles related to his PhD studies on Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin. The first one is

'The Great Betrayal: A Structural and Rhetorical Analysis of the Eden Narrative in Genesis 2–3'. This will comprise a chapter in a Festschrift to be presented in 2022. The second is 'The Pauline Understanding of the Fall and Original Sin in Gen 1–3'. Peter also serves the PCV as the Moderator of Kangaroo Ground Presbyterian Church, and as a member of the Commission for Church Institutions and the Exit Students Committee.

2. Jared Hood had an article published in *Reformed Theological Review* in April 2020, 'Warfield, Infallibility, and the Westminster Confession'. He has also prepared three further items for publication; 'Yhwh Tsevaot—God of the Canaanite Council? A Critical Review of a Half-Century Perspective'; 'Yhwh Tsevaot—God of Angels'; and 'Limited or Universal Atonement? Why not have both?' He is editor of *RTR* and is overseeing a major development of the journal, which includes expanding the editorial board to include many overseas academics (see rtrjournal.org for information). Jared continues as Academic Dean, is a PhD Supervisor accredited with the ACT, and oversees IT at the College. He is on study leave in semester two 2021, focussing on research and publication, and serves the Assembly as the Convener of the Business Committee. In first semester, he taught Old Testament Foundations, Interpreting and Applying Psalms, and the Westminster Confession of Faith. He attends church at South Yarra and preaches from time to time in other Presbyterian churches.

3. Felix Chung has published a book section of 'Suggestions on Training Strategies for Chinese Missionaries in Hong Kong.' It was included in the e-book *Today's Missionary Training—An Asian Experience* published by the Christianity and Culture Research Centre of Alliance Bible Seminary in 2020. Felix continues working on an academic research project entitled, *The Historical Development of Foreign Missions to the Chinese in the Late 19th Century and the Implications for the PCV's Modern Mission*.

Felix also coordinates the HDR program at PTC. He represents the PTC in communicating with the ACT to ensure the College HDR policy aligns with the ACTs. This includes drafting PTC HDR policy, implementing the ACT regulations and requirements, organising HDR postgraduate research seminars, assessing HDR applicants' academic qualifications, and forming study plans for those who cannot meet the research pathway requirement of ACT HDR study. One of the PhD candidates, Chanreiso Lungleng, completed his thesis in 2021 under the supervision of Professor Allan Harman and Rev Dr Jared Hood. There are four PhD candidates at PTC currently; three have progressed to the status of full PhD candidates, and one is in the process of being assessed in 2021.

In 2021, Felix is working on the consolidation of the Chinese program at PTC. His significant duties are teaching four Chinese classes at the College each week and an English Mission class on Thursday afternoon. He launched a Chinese Mission conference, 'Missional Church and Spiritual Formation', on 17 April 2021, with speakers and participants from Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, Cambodia, the USA, Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane.

Felix coordinates SFE lectures, the Pastoral care groups, and the college mission for the candidates. He also organised the Master of Theological Studies (MTS) intensive (formerly MA intensive) in August each year at PTC. These were taken by Rev Dr Rowland Ward on 'Advanced Issues on Covenant Theology' in August.

Felix also serves as the Chinese Moderator (Ministry and Practice) for the ACT consortium. Under his leadership, the Chinese Diploma of Theology/Ministry was approved by the ACT in early 2020. In 2021, four new Chinese students enrolled in the courses at PTC, so seven students are taking the Chinese courses for credit (four Diploma level and three Certificate level), and twelve students are taking the Chinese classes for audit. One of the primary criteria for establishing the Chinese program under ACT accreditation is the number of Chinese resources in the Swanton Library. It has to be increased from the current 2,350 (approximately) to 5,000 items before applying to offer Bachelor's degrees. Anyone who wants to donate books or funds to the Chinese program can contact Felix.

Felix has taken up preaching and seminar opportunities at several Chinese churches to promote the Chinese theological program at PTC.

4. Ben Nelson teaches Study Skills, Biblical Greek, New Testament Introduction (NT001/NT002), Christianity in History (CH001/CH002), and contributes to the New Testament exegesis units with Rev Dr Douglas Milne. He is the faculty secretary and leads a pastoral care group. He is editor of the new online journal *Catechesis*, which is connected to the *Reformed Theological Review*. He serves as the PTC representative on the ACT Coursework Committee. He is continuing to pursue his PhD dissertation, 'Johannes Oecolampadius' Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in John's Gospel', and was able to present (via Zoom) on some of his research at the REFORC Conference on Reformation History in Budapest, Hungary, in May 2021. He is on the Session of the South Yarra congregation, where he regularly preaches, especially as South Yarra is in vacancy. He also acts as the Convener of the Candidates' Committee of Melbourne East Presbytery.

Promoting the College

This activity is the responsibility of the Administrative Officer in consultation with the Principal and Academic Dean. Over the last year, Annie Weir has been renewing the website and maintaining the College social media. Jared Hood has also made important technical contributions to the IT network to help expand PTC's presence on the web. The College is also in the process of engaging a person to assist with providing video and photographic support for the website, especially with a view to expanding the offering of online Certificate and Diploma courses.

Moderator's Visitation

In March, PTC was privileged to have the Rev Philip Mercer, Moderator of the General Assembly of Victoria, visit the College in his official capacity. He also presented awards and prayed at College commencement. Philip preached at a chapel service and afterwards met with faculty and staff. He has corresponded with students, for which the faculty is grateful, and he participated recently in the College in September. The College has appreciated his genuine interest and support.

Candidates' Wives

Candidates' wives normally meet each month, and there are also occasional social get-togethers. Some of the wives travel considerable distances to attend the meetings.

The group holds a planning session at the beginning of each year. The principal's wife attends these meetings to provide support and encouragement to the group. The wives themselves play a direct role in the leadership and programming of the group. The

group is a very positive experience for the students' wives. Around ten to twelve women regularly attend the monthly meetings.

Engagement with the denomination

The faculty plays a significant role in the denomination. Apart from their work at the College, which is quite demanding, they also maintain commitments in the wider church through various church committees, presbyteries, and the Assembly. Faculty members are available to preach for congregations on Sundays and at occasional services on other days.

Peter Hastie
PRINCIPAL

TRUSTS CORPORATION (Min 19)

Duties

The Trusts Corporation was formed by resolution of the General Assembly having been empowered to do so by the Parliament of the State of Victoria which enacted the *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890* ('the Act'). The main functions of the Trusts Corporation are to:

- Hold in trust the property, including money, belonging to the Church and also to hold congregational property where it has been so requested by the relevant congregation;
- Establish a register of Trustees of Congregations;
- Facilitate the conveyance and transfer of church property.

The Trusts Corporation is a corporate body and must act in accordance with the prevailing legislation including the provisions of the *Trustee Act 1958* and the Act. The legislation sets out the manner in which trustees in general and the Trusts Corporation in particular must act. Responsibilities and obligations of the Trusts Corporation include:

- Exercising care, diligence and skill in investing funds held in trust;
- Exercising its powers in the best interests of all present and future beneficiaries of each trust;
- Acting impartially towards beneficiaries and between different classes of beneficiaries.

Under the Act the Trusts Corporation may at its discretion invest funds either separately or in a Common Fund.

Membership of the Trusts Corporation

The members of the Board of Investment and Finance form the membership of the Trusts Corporation.

Investment Committee

The implementation of the new investment strategy has continued over the last 12 months. The strategic asset allocation for the portfolios has been reviewed and updated in the context of the low interest rate environment. This has led to a repositioning of some investments which is still in progress.

The financial markets recovered strongly in the last 12 months in terms of the capital position. The low interest rate environment continues to impact on the income returns and is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

The Investment Committee continues to monitor the performance of all portfolios and the Investment Managers closely.

Explanation of The Common Fund

The Common Fund is a convenient mechanism for investing smaller sums collectively. By grouping them together an appropriate diversification of investment can be achieved to reduce the risk, while maximising income potential through having larger sums to invest.

Included in the Common Fund is a reserve account to which any capital gains and losses are charged. This is called the Common Fund Reserve. The Common Fund

Reserve provides a level of protection for the funds invested in the Common Fund against the loss of capital in times when the investment market experiences a downturn. The Common Fund Reserve also generates additional income which can be distributed across the funds which are invested in the Common Fund.

The Common Fund also includes the Income Suspense Account which represents the balance of income not yet distributed. In accordance with section 14B of the Act, the amount in the Income Suspense Account can only be distributed to those committees and trusts which have funds invested in the Common Fund. Investment returns generated by the Common Fund are paid into the Income Suspense Account and then distributed as interest to the various trusts at rates determined by the Trusts Corporation. Funds invested in the Common Fund are not entitled to share in capital gains (or losses).

Investment performance

The Common Fund Balance is comprised of the following amounts:

	\$ 2021	\$ 2020
Common Fund		
Balance of Trusts and Committee Funds	47,241,471	41,861,311
Income Suspense Account	3,454,037	2,667,241
Common Fund Reserve	43,457,936	35,584,927
Total Common Fund	94,153,444	80,113,478
Separately Invested Funds	36,566,405	43,428,601
Total Funds Invested	130,719,849	123,842,079

The Common Fund Investments have yielded income of \$3.2 million after operating costs (2020 \$2.5M) and have increased in value by \$8.1 million as a result of capital gains (2020 losses of \$2.7M). This presents an overall return of 14.1% (2020 negative 0.25%).

The balance carried forward in the Income Suspense Account has been used to smooth the decline in interest rates paid on trust funds from the Common Fund to committees and other trusts.

The annual interest rates paid on amounts invested in the Common Fund for the year ended 30 June 2021 were:

Common Fund interest rates paid on funds	
General Assembly, Committees and Trusts	7.00%
Sites Reserve funds	3.50%
Congregational deposits in the Capital Fund	1.00%
Congregational general funds	1.00%

A total of \$2.6 million (2020 \$3.6M) was distributed to church committees, groups, and congregations during the year.

The return on funds which have been invested outside the Common Fund in a diversified portfolio has varied between the different funds depending on various

factors including the cash drawdowns, size of funds and investment mix. The average return for funds invested separately was income of 3.3% and capital gains of 10.2% for a total return of 13.5% (2020 negative 1.5%).

Movement in Balance of Funds held

The movement of the balance of funds held by the Trusts Corporation is explained as follows:

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Common Fund Movements		
Income Suspense Account		
Investment Income	3,414,523	2,733,454
Distributions to Trusts and Committees	(2,627,727)	(3,614,459)
	<u>786,796</u>	<u>(881,005)</u>
Common Fund Reserve		
Capital Gains/(Losses)	8,091,238	(2,748,629)
Expenses	(218,228)	(204,682)
	<u>7,873,010</u>	<u>(2,953,311)</u>
Common Fund Movements		
Deposits/(Withdrawals) of Trust Funds	<u>5,380,160</u>	<u>(4,063,819)</u>
Total change in Common Fund balance	14,039,966	(7,898,135)
Separately Invested Funds		
Investment Income	1,296,858	1,475,345
Capital Gains/(Losses)	4,069,643	(2,156,057)
Deposits/(Withdrawals) of Trust Funds	(12,528,697)	(1,516,956)
Change in Separately Invested Funds	<u>(7,162,196)</u>	<u>(2,197,667)</u>
Total change in Funds	6,877,770	(10,095,802)
Total Funds Invested	130,719,849	123,842,079

For more detailed information concerning the funds managed by the Trusts Corporation please refer to the Annual Financial Report distributed with the Assembly papers.

Bequests

The following bequest have been received during the year:

Estate of	Beneficial Purpose	Amount
Ian Malcolm Warner	Batesford Presbyterian Church	\$10,000
David Walter Mickle	Presbyterian Church of Victoria	\$60,000
Marion Isabel Jennings	Hawthorn Presbyterian Church	\$150,000

The General Assembly allocated the Mickle Bequest funds to the Safe Church Committee as general funds.

Sinking Fund

The Sinking Fund approved by the Commission of Assembly in May 2021 has been established.

National Redress Scheme

Since the Presbyterian Church of Victoria joined the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse, the corporation has received four Requests For Information. Each of these have been responded to in the terms of the Scheme. One of these cases has been resolved without any finding against the church. The other three remain outstanding.

Hinneberg Matter

The Court has accepted the nomination of The Presbyterian Church of Victoria as the proper defendant in the matter. The plaintiff has filed an amended Statement of Claim to reflect this position. The matter is proceeding in accordance with the timetable set down by the Court. The church's defence is due to be filed in late August.

Barry Oakes
CHAIRMAN

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES VICTORIA COMMITTEE (Min 45)

At the 2020 Assembly, the newly established Women's Ministries Victoria Committee was tasked with (BB 2020 min 28.3, 4):

- bringing to the 2021 Commission of Assembly a proposed Job Description for a Women's Ministries Facilitator.
- seeking appropriate sources of funding from congregations and presbyteries and making an application for funding from next year's GMP budget for the regular activities of the committee and the employment of the Women's Ministries Facilitator.

The committee members have been Clare Dunstan, Mairi Girgis, Jenni Graham, Amy Isham, Siew Teng Yap, Russ Grinter, and Ben Johnson (convener). Jenni was unable to continue through this year and resigned. Sarah McDonald was co-opted to fill the casual vacancy and is one of the nominations for election at the 2021 Assembly, the others being returning members Clare Dunstan and Mairi Girgis. The committee has met nine times until the time of this report submission on 11 August 2021.

The committee is very thankful that the proposed job description for a Women's Ministries Facilitator was approved with helpful minor additions at the May 2021 Commission of Assembly. That came as a culmination of consultation with other State bodies and with women ministry workers.

The committee is in the midst of fundraising and urges churches, presbyteries, and individuals who would like to support the Women's Ministries Facilitator not to wait until the committee comes to them but to be in touch with the committee about ways they can pledge regular support of this vital role in the denomination. Currently, the committee is sitting on \$4,000 per annum and is looking to raise a total of \$35,000. There is a long way to go.

While all this has been going on behind the scenes, the WMV has been coordinating three of four 'On the Road' conferences for 2021 at Frankston, North Geelong, and Reservoir. Frankston and North Geelong were held in person; however, at the time of writing, the Reservoir conference has just been cancelled due to a metropolitan outbreak of COVID. The last conference for 2021 is to be held on 16 October at Shepperton.

The topic for 2021 has been 'Sustained'—a welcome relief in these COVID times, that despite much deprivation, Christians have been given everything they need for life and godliness and so, therefore, should make every effort to grow in faith and godliness. The committee thanks Jan Martin for teaching God's word from 2 Peter 1 in two talks to four conferences.

At these conferences, three electives also have been provided:

- Steady in the storm (Moir Deeming and Sarah Weber);
- Parenting: eyes on eternity (Alyson Peatman and Fleur Letcher);
- Connecting cross-culturally (Ros Brown).

The conferences have also included panel interviews and presentations from PWMU and Mukti. A new feature of these conferences is that local hosting teams are responsible for the music and catering and the setup and pack up. A very big thank you is given to the many women (and men) who helped in so many different ways.

Next year, the committee hopes to bring three conferences in Ballarat, Benalla, and Warragul on the theme 'Women of the Word'. Assembly members should look out for them. The committee hopes that advertising will be ready for the Assembly.

Ben Johnson
CONVENER



THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

Rev. Dr John Wilson
Assembly Clerk
Presbyterian Church of Victoria
By email to john.wilson@pcv.org.au

14 October 2021

Dear John,

I have been instructed to provide you with a copy of

- (i) an overture presented to a special meeting of the General Assembly of Australia (GAA);
- (ii) a related report from its Church and Nation Committee; and
- (iii) consequent resolutions of the Assembly concerning vaccination certificates and attendance at public worship.

Extract minute

By videoconference on Tuesday, 12 October 2021 at 10.30 a.m. (AEDT) the assembly met, pursuant to a requisition submitted to the Moderator-General. The meeting constituted with prayer, the Moderator presiding.

Among other things, the Assembly approved the following resolutions:

- (1) Exhort all members and ministers to work hard at maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, treating issues of vaccination as a matter of liberty of conscience not determined by church law (Rom. 14:22, 15:4; WCF chapter 20).
- (2) Affirm that in light of the Bible's teaching on the free offer of the gospel and the unity of the Church, the Presbyterian Church of Australia does not desire anyone to be denied entry for the public worship of God on the grounds of their vaccination status.

The meeting was closed with prayer.

Extracted from the minutes of the General Assembly of Australia on 14 October 2021 by me, Bruce Meller, Assembly Clerk.

Regrettably, some false representations of the Assembly's conduct and decisions have been expressed in digital media. I want to assure your Assembly that the meeting was conducted without rancour or hostility. Significant effort was expended to ensure that the resolutions would accurately convey the mind of the Assembly but at no point did the meeting become "heated" as the false reports asserted.

Yours sincerely,

Bruce Meller
Assembly Clerk

MAIL Assembly Clerk,
PO Box 2196
Strawberry Hills NSW 2012
Australia

PHONE 0418 650 618
FAX (02) 9310 2148
EMAIL gaclerk@pcnsw.org.au
WEBSITE www.presbyterian.org.au

OVERTURE 1 (Min 88)
From: the Code and General Administration Committee
Re: Royal Commission Response
(rule 4.31.2(c))

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) The report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, and especially the specific recommendations relative to churches.
- b) The fact that the Assembly ad hoc committee reported that while the PCV had fully implemented most of the Royal Commission's 28 recommendations to religious institutions, there remained two recommendations not yet attended to.
- c) The need to address recommendation 16.42, namely that 'each religious institution should require that candidates for religious ministry undergo external psychological testing, including psychosexual assessment, for the purposes of determining their suitability to be a person in religious ministry and to undertake work involving children' which is not addressed anywhere in the current rules, regulations, policies or procedures of the PCV.
- d) The fact that this matter may be attended to by the addition of a clause to rule 4.31.2.

Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit the following rule change to presbyteries via the Barrier Act under rule 6.27.2(a)(i), for approval or disapproval, with replies to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May 2022, such that rule 4.31.2 shall have an additional clause (c), as follows:

- c) the presbytery must also require the candidate to undergo psychological testing and assessment, arranged by the presbytery at its expense and administered by a mental health professional external to the PCV, for the purpose of assisting the presbytery in determining the candidate's suitability to undertake work involving children as a minister of the church.'

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.



(Convener, Code and General Administration Committee)

22 July 2021

OVERTURE 2 (Min 89)
From: the Code and General Administration Committee
Re: Church Planters Appointed by Presbytery
(rule 4.74.1)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) The fact that there is an inconsistency in the rules that outline how church planters are appointed, which should state that it is only by a presbytery, not the Church Planting Committee.
- b) The fact that, while expecting the committee to give due attention to the qualification of applicants and for the committee to declare eligibility (or not) of any applicant, the proper body of the church to appoint church planters is the presbytery.
- c) To have presbytery as the only body that appoints church workers is more consistent with our Presbyterian polity.
- d) The Code Committee believes that this alteration to rule 4.74.1 would make it consistent with the rule changes made by the GAV in 2019, see min. 111.

Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit the following rule change to presbyteries via the Barrier Act under rule 6.27.2(a)(i), for approval or disapproval, with replies to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May 2022, such that all words of rule 4.74.1 shall be replaced with:

A presbytery must supervise the selection of church planters for appointment to church plants by the presbytery. Church Planters are ministers or licentiates accredited by the Church Planting Committee as church planters.

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.



(Convener, Code and General Administration Committee)

22 July 2021

OVERTURE 3 (Min 90)
From: the Code and General Administration Committee
Re: Caring for Congregational Assets when Approaching Dissolution
(rule 2.7.1(a))

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

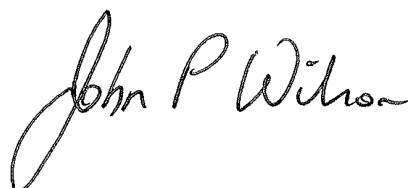
- a) The fact that there is no provision in the rules for the proper management of a dissolving congregation's assets during the transition period between when worship services end and the final dissolution of the congregation.
- b) There being no legal basis to give authority to another board of management (other than that of the congregation being dissolved) to manage money, property and other assets while there is no congregational board to administer them.
- c) The need to more carefully address these omissions with the addition to rule 2.7.1 to provide for the care of vacated properties and other assets of an about-to-be dissolved congregation.
- d) The failure to approve this proposed rule change when presented to the 2020 GAV because it was packaged together with the not-so-popular proposed expansion of rule 4.69.

Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit the following rule change to presbyteries via the Barrier Act under rule 6.27.2(a)(i), for approval or disapproval, with replies to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May 2022, such that rule 2.7.1(a) shall read (showing additions to the rule by underlining the new words):

The material affairs:

- a) of a congregation are cared for by its board, provided that:
 - i) by agreement the material affairs of a linked congregation may be cared for by its federal board;
 - ii) in the case of a congregation being dissolved, during the period of time between the cessation of services and final dissolution its material affairs may be cared for by the board of another congregation appointed by the presbytery for this purpose;

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.



(Convener, Code and General Administration Committee)

22 July 2021

OVERTURE 4 (Min 91)
From: the Code and General Administration Committee
Re: Process of Dissolution of a Congregation
(rule 4.69)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) The need to enlarge rule 4.69 to more carefully outline the process of dissolving a congregation, emphasising a presbytery's obligation in the process to ensure that any congregation under its oversight complies with the rules of both church and state, including requirements for AGMs and ACNC registration.
- b) Objections raised by members of the Assembly that the 2020 proposal did not give presbytery sufficient space to exercise its rightful judgment on any particular circumstance.
- c) Extensive consultation with presbyteries during the year, which brought forward several very useful improvements.
- d) The need to more carefully address omissions of process with an expanded rule.

Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit the following rule change to presbyteries via the Barrier Act under rule 6.27.2(a)(i), for approval or disapproval, with replies to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May 2022, such that all words of rule 4.69 shall be replaced with:

4.69 Dissolution of congregations

4.69.1 Should a presbytery declare its intention to dissolve a congregation, it must:

- a) direct the session to:
 - i) cease services of worship in the congregation without unnecessary delay; and
 - ii) inform it of the date of the last regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship of the congregation held by a minister or elder or home missionary of the church;
- b) arrange through the session for the issue of transfer certificates to any communicants of the congregation and letters of introduction to any adherents of the congregation (see rule 3.31); and
- c) authorise the board of another congregation to care for the material affairs of the congregation until it is finally dissolved and the property sold or otherwise disposed of.

4.69.2 When a congregation (other than a newly formed congregation for which temporary arrangements have been made as provided for by rule 2.37) is unable either:

- a) i) to elect sufficient managers to enable a quorum for its board;
or
ii) in the case of a linked congregation, to arrange for the care of its property by its federal board;
or
- b) i) to constitute for a congregational meeting; or

- ii) in the case of a linked congregation, to constitute for a joint meeting of the linked congregations;
within four months of its being required to meet by rule or regulation,
the presbytery must be informed forthwith of the particulars of this inability.
- 4.69.3 The presbytery, having been informed of the congregation's inability, must then, without delay, inquire into the circumstances which resulted in the inability. Should the presbytery judge:
 - a) that the congregation is unable to manage its affairs as required by the rules of the church; and
 - b) that this inability is unlikely to be rectified within a reasonable time; it must consider whether to dissolve the congregation.
- 4.69.4 If the presbytery then proposes to dissolve the congregation, it must follow the procedure prescribed by rule 4.68.2 so far as possible, except that the agreement of the inducted ministers of any pastoral charge affected by the proposed dissolution is not necessary. If after following this procedure the presbytery declares its intention to dissolve the congregation it must follow the procedure prescribed by rule 4.69.1.
- 4.69.5 A presbytery cannot declare that a congregation is dissolved until:
 - a) at least a year has elapsed since the last regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship of the congregation was held by a minister or elder or home missionary of the church; and
 - b) its intention to dissolve the congregation has been reported to the General Assembly and agreed to by it.
- 4.69.6 A presbytery must ensure that any monies held for all or some of the purposes of a congregation that is dissolved are forwarded to The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to be dealt with by it according to law.

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.



(Convener, Code and General Administration Committee)

22 July 2021

OVERTURE 5 (Min 92)
From: the Code and General Administration Committee
Re: PCV Conflict of Interest Policy

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) The report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, and especially the specific recommendations relative to churches.
- b) The fact that the Assembly ad hoc committee reported that while the PCV had fully implemented most of the Royal Commission's 28 recommendations to religious institutions, there remained two recommendations not yet attended to.
- c) The need to address recommendation 16.39, namely that 'religious institutions should have a policy relating to the management of actual and perceived conflicts of interest that may arise in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse' which is not addressed anywhere in the current rules, regulations, policies or procedures of the PCV.
- d) The fact that it was thought prudent to develop a PCV denomination-wide policy to embrace not only the specific recommendation 16.39 (above) but to include areas of church life generally.
- e) The fact that a PCV-wide denominational policy like this, once adopted by the General Assembly, is considered part of the law of the church in terms of rule 1.10.1(c).

Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and adopt the following as the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy:

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to enable the courts, committees, organisations, boards and congregations of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (PCV) to effectively manage any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest in a way that is 'honourable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man' (2 Cor 8:21).

2. Scope

This policy applies:

- a) to all persons under the jurisdiction of the PCV, especially in regard to their role as members or employees of courts, committees, organisations, boards or congregations of the PCV; and
- b) in connection with all business of the PCV including, without limitation, all business conducted in responding to or arising from complaints of child sexual abuse.

3. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- a) encourage the highest possible standards of honesty, transparency and integrity in every aspect of the life of the PCV;
- b) guide courts, committees, organisations, boards and congregations of the PCV in the effective identification,

- disclosure and management of actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest; and
- c) honour God's name by guarding the reputation of the PCV in the eyes of the world and protecting the rights of all.

In order to ensure that these objectives are achieved:

- d) individuals to whom this policy applies must:
 - i) exhibit the highest possible standards of honesty, transparency and integrity;
 - ii) act responsibly by disclosing the existence of all actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest that may exist in relation to their work for the church; and
 - iii) not make decisions for personal promotion or gain, or for the purpose of furthering another financial or non-financial interest.
- e) courts, committees, organisations, boards and congregations of the PCV must:
 - i) take cognisance of any conflict of interest, whether disclosed by any of its members or employees or otherwise determined by it; and
 - ii) effectively manage any such conflict of interest in accordance with this policy.

4. Definition of conflict of interest

- a) A conflict of interest arises where the interests of an individual are different from, and conflict with, the interests of a court, committee, organisation, board or congregation of the PCV of which the individual is a member or employee. A conflict of interest exists when it is likely that the individual could be influenced, or could be perceived to be influenced, by a personal interest in carrying out his or her duties, over and above the interests of the PCV. For the purposes of this policy, a reference to a conflict of interest (whether financial or other) includes:
 - i) an actual conflict of interest;
 - ii) a potential conflict of interest; and
 - iii) an appearance of a conflict of interest (i.e. a perceived conflict of interest).
- b) Personal interests which may give rise to a conflict of interest include direct interests, as well as the interests of family, or any other party (such as a friend, associate or organisation) with whom the person may be involved or to whom the person has loyalty or owes duty.

5. Policy statement

- a) Every member or employee of a court, committee, organisation, board and congregation must ensure that any conflict of interest (defined above) is fully declared to the applicable entity.
- b) Every court, committee, organisation, board and congregation where a conflict of interest has been declared or determined must:

- i) ensure that the conflict of interest does not interfere with the proper or fair outcome of the business of that entity;
- ii) manage the conflict of interest in accordance with this policy; and
- iii) respond to any breach of this policy according to church law.

6. Monitoring and review

The General Assembly shall monitor compliance with this policy throughout the PCV and review this policy on an annual basis to ensure that the policy is operating effectively. Until the establishment of a Risk Committee (or an alternate body for this purpose), the Clerks of Assembly, acting collectively, shall report to each General Assembly on the operation of this policy.

7. Managing conflicts of interest

A. Conflicts of interest of members or employees of a court, committee, organisation, board or congregation

- a) Except where a conflict of interest has been declared by a conflicted person and he/she has voluntarily withdrawn from the meeting, once any conflict of interest has been declared or otherwise determined to exist (for example, after its being brought to light by a non-conflicted person), the court, committee, organisation, board or congregation, excluding the conflicted person, must decide whether or not the conflicted person is permitted to do any or all of the following:
 - i) vote on the matter;
 - ii) participate in any debate; and
 - iii) be present during the debate and the voting.
- b) Any decision taken under clause 7A(a) is to be by a majority of votes of those members of the court, committee, organisation, board or congregation present and entitled to vote at the meeting, excluding the conflicted person.
- c) Any action under this clause including a declaration of a conflict of interest by a conflicted person and his/her voluntary withdrawal from a meeting and the result of any vote must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

B. Matters to be considered

For the purposes of a decision under clause 7A(a), the following must be considered:

- a) determining what is right is to be followed rather than what is comfortable or expedient;
- b) whether proper management of the conflict of interest demands the exclusion of the conflicted person;
- c) the extent to which the conflict of interest may impair the conflicted person's capacity to impartially participate in decision-making or discharge their duties; and
- d) the extent to which the conflicted person's participation may adversely affect PCV's reputation and the honour of God's name.

8. Matters relating to congregations

Within a congregational meeting there remains the possibility of a conflict of interest as defined by this policy, without limitation, in such matters as:

- a) its approval of the annual financial statements, or appointment of an auditor during the regular business of the ACM; or
- b) determining a Call or the Terms of Settlement, or its approval of a new construction proposal at a special meeting.

Congregations are advised to either invite prior to the meeting declarations of conflict of interest in writing from their members in relation to any item/s of business on the proposed agenda or to pause at the commencement of any meeting for the chairman to ask: 'Is there anyone who ought to declare a Conflict of Interest, as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business of this meeting?'

9. Matters relating to boards of management

Within a board of management meeting there remains the possibility of a conflict of interest as defined by this policy, without limitation in such matters as the counting and banking of plate offerings, awarding of contracts (whether big or small) to workers for jobs of repair, building or maintenance. In all matters, a board member must ensure that he/she:

- a) does not make improper use of information acquired as a member;
- b) does not divulge business to anyone outside board membership (rule 2.39.5); and
- c) does not allow personal interests, or the interests of any family or associated persons, to conflict with the interests of the congregation or the PCV as a whole.

Boards of management are advised to either invite prior to the meeting declarations of conflict of interest in writing from their members in relation to any item/s of business on the proposed agenda or to pause at the commencement of any meeting for the chairman to ask: 'Is there any member of this board who ought to declare a Conflict of Interest, as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business of this meeting?'

10. Matters relating to courts of the church or their committees

Within the business of a court, commission or committee of the church there remains the possibility of a conflict of interest as defined by this policy relating to its business. While not being comprehensive or prescriptive, at least the following must be considered:

- a) for a committee of the General Assembly, consider rule 5.30;
- b) for a court of the church, a member must ensure that he/she:
 - i) does not make improper use of information acquired as a member;
 - ii) does not divulge business to anyone outside membership of the court whenever meeting in private is determined (bearing in mind rule 3.9.1);

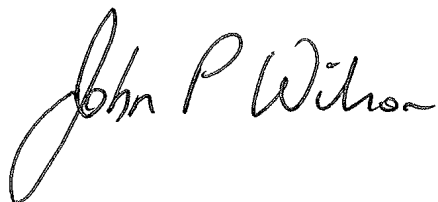
- iii) does not allow personal interests, or the interests of any family or associated persons, to conflict with the interests of the court or the PCV as a whole; and
- iv) does not take part in debate or vote whenever his own appointment or re-appointment (including licensing, call, induction, ordination) is being considered; but may take part in discussion if invited to do so by a unanimous decision by all other members of the meeting.

Courts and committees of the church are advised to either invite prior to the meeting declarations of conflict of interest in writing from their members in relation to any item/s of business on the proposed agenda or to pause at the commencement of any meeting for the moderator/chairman to ask: 'Is there any member of this meeting who ought to declare a Conflict of Interest, as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business of this meeting?'

11. Compliance with this policy

If a court, committee or board has a reason to believe that a person subject to the policy has failed to comply with it, it must investigate the circumstances. If it is found that this person has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, the court, committee or board may take appropriate action to remedy the situation. If a person suspects that a member of the court, committee, organisation, board or congregation has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, it is that person's responsibility to notify the moderator or chairman as soon as practicable.

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.



(Convener, Code and General Administration Committee)

22 July 2021

OVERTURE 6 (Min 94)
From: the Code and General Administration Committee
Re: Safe Church Requirements – Board Members
(rule 3.38)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) The fact that there is a requirement:
 - for acceptance as a candidate for the ministry;
 - before declaration of the election of a new elder;
 - for appointment of other church workers (deacons, congregational officers, pastoral support, resident supply and inducted ministers);that the person has a current Working With Children Check (WWCC) and has completed the PCV Safe Church requirements.
- b) The fact that the Safe Church website and the Policy, Procedure and Practice Manual state that the same standards also apply to board members (i.e. that the person has a current WWCC and has completed the PCV Safe Church requirements).
- c) The General Assembly being alerted to the lack of any specific requirement in the rules of the church for board members to hold a current WWCC or to have completed the PCV Safe Church requirements.
- d) The Safe Church Committee informing the committee that this omission (referred to above) is of a serious nature and in urgent need of correction.


Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit the following rule change to presbyteries via the Barrier Act under rule 6.27.2(a)(i), for approval or disapproval, with replies to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May 2022 and, in the light of advice from the Safe Church Committee, give the change interim authority under rule 5.47.1(b) – such that rule 3.38 shall read (showing additions to the rule by underlining the new words):

3.38 A session must count the votes in a board election and in deciding who is to be declared elected it must follow the order of the voters' preference, first satisfying itself that each of the persons indicated by this choice:

- a) has received the number of votes session considers sufficient;
- b) is suitable to hold office; and
- c) has a current Working With Children Check and has completed all relevant PCV Safe Church requirements.

Insofar as it is so satisfied it records this by resolution.

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.



(Convener, Code and General Administration Committee)

22 July 2021

OVERTURE 7 (Min 95)
From: the Code and General Administration Committee
Re: Role of Church Architect
(rules 2.20, 2.21)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) The lack of clarity with regard to the meaning of ‘substantially’ in rule 2.20(d)(ii), which provides that a board must ‘obtain the approval of the Building and Property Committee (BPC) when an existing building is to be substantially altered’.
- b) This lack of clarity has led to confusion and disagreement with regard to which works require the approval of the BPC, and which do not, a state of affairs not conducive to the peace of the church.
- c) The church architect’s recommendation: ‘It is important for submissions to be made as early as possible, so that any major design or configuration changes required by the BPC do not require extensive re-documentation. There should be a two-step approval process: an initial one at the concept stage which provides ‘approval in principle’, and a later one to ensure the documentation is adequate and has not deviated significantly from the initial approval.’
- d) The lack of clarity with regard to the necessity for the approval of amended plans and specifications by the BPC where necessary changes to the works occur during construction.
- e) The lack of clarity with regard to the meaning of ‘structural’ in rule 2.21, which provides that ‘The erection, demolition, removal, structural alteration or addition to a congregational building is subject to approval by the presbytery and any other prescribed authority’.
- f) The timeliness of being able to address these matters as the appointment of a new church architect brings these issues into sharp focus.
- g) The proposed changes will provide a smoother and more efficient approval process which will benefit boards and the BPC.

Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit the following rule changes to presbyteries via the Barrier Act under rule 6.27.2(a)(i), for approval or disapproval, with replies to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May 2022, such that rules 2.20 and 2.21 shall read (with added words underlined for ease of understanding the proposed changes):

2.20 Board responsibility

The board must:

- a) ensure that the property of the congregation is kept in good condition and repair, and raise funds for this;
- b) appoint a property committee which must inspect the property before and after winter each year and report to it on its condition;
- c) obtain the advice of the Church Architect, on such contractual terms as they agree, when:
 - i) there is any serious defect in any building; or
 - ii) a new building is to be erected or purchased; or
 - iii) an existing building is to be substantially altered.

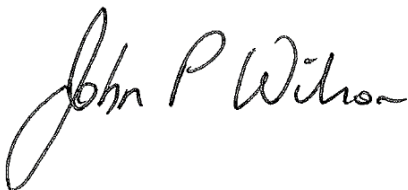
However, plans and/or specifications of proposed works are not required to be prepared by the Church Architect.

- d) when:
 - i) a new building is to be erected; or
 - ii) proposed alterations to an existing building require the issue of a building permit prior to the commencement of work;
 - obtain from the Building and Property Committee:
 - iii) in principle approval of the proposed works at the concept stage; and
 - iv) final approval of the completed plans and specifications of the proposed works; and
 - v) approval of any variations to the approved plans and specifications proposed during the course of the works;
- e) not without congregational approval spend on repairs in any one of its annual reporting periods more than 10% of the preceding annual reporting period's ordinary congregational revenue;
- f) obtain approval, at a congregational meeting called for that purpose, by a majority of at least two-thirds of the communicants and adherents personally present (as required by the Model Trust Deeds) to:
 - i) sell, purchase, lease, mortgage, or otherwise incur debt which is to be secured on, property;
 - ii) erect, demolish, remove or structurally alter or add to any building.
- g) fix and collect any charges for use of congregational buildings, where the session has approved this use.

2.21 Approval for property matters

- 2.21.1 The erection, demolition, removal, alteration or addition to a congregational building which must be approved by the Building and Property Committee is subject to prior approval by the presbytery and any other prescribed authority.
- 2.21.2 The sale, lease, purchase or mortgage of congregational property is subject to approval by the presbytery, the Law Agent, and any other prescribed authority.

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.



(Convener, Code and General Administration Committee)

12 August 2021

OVERTURE 8 (Min 96)
From: the Code and General Administration Committee
Re: Model Trust Deeds

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) The Model Trust Deeds (MTDs) are deeds by which most PCV properties are held for the charitable purposes of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.
- b) In particular, the MTD for Church Site is the deed by which most PCV church sites are held by the Presbyterian Church of Victoria primarily to be used for the public worship of God by congregations recognised by the General Assembly provided they continue to hold to the church's standards of religious belief and ecclesiastical government.
- c) In particular, the MTD for Manse Site is the deed by which most PCV manse dwellings are held by the Presbyterian Church of Victoria primarily to be occupied by the inducted minister of the church in connection with the congregation duly recognised by the General Assembly provided they continue to hold to the church's standards of religious belief and ecclesiastical government.
- d) Both MTDs have been part of the church's records since the 1890s but because there has been no proper formatting, paragraphing or punctuation, they are in need of re-formatting and paragraph numbering to enable clearer understanding of the document and better application of its terms.
- e) Up until this day, the MTD for Manse Site has never been fully set out in our PCV Code books, but the abbreviation used: 'same as for church site except that the following Trusts are substituted for the corresponding clause in deed for Church site', which abbreviation is considered now better to be replaced with the full text.
- f) The 2020 General Assembly (min. 63) instructed the committee as follows:
 - 4. Request the Code and General Administration Committee to report to the October 2021 General Assembly on the question of whether a purpose for the proceeds of the sale of property declared pursuant to clause 5 of the Model Trust Deed can be changed, and, if not, make recommendations as to what amendments to the Model Trust Deed or the rules and regulations of the church would be necessary to make such change possible.*

This overture advances changes which are in line with this Assembly request, particularly with regard to the change to clause 5 of the MTD.

- g) As part of a process commencing in 2015, when the General Assembly was responding to a request from the Presbytery of Geelong, an overture was raised to introduce a new rule 4.68A that would provide a process by which a presbytery could bring about a union of two or more congregations. In the 2019 overture, it was noted that alongside the introduction of rule 4.68A there would also need to be a corresponding alteration to the MTDs in order to establish proper authority for such unions. Agreement to the proposed additional clause 15 of the MTDs, which this overture advances, will be the final step in what has been a complex six year deliberation.

Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and declare the following to be

the Model Trust Deeds for both Church Sites and Manse Sites, (with new words underlined for ease of understanding):

MODEL TRUST DEED FOR CHURCH SITE

To all whom these presents shall come

all of [Trustees or Trustee]

Send Greeting -

- A. **Whereas** under and by virtue of the [Certificate of Title or Conveyance] particularly mentioned or referred to in the First Schedule hereunder written the piece or parcel of land and hereditaments particularly described in the Second Schedule hereunder written, and the fee simple and inheritance thereof in possession are now vested in the said [Trustees or Trustee] as joint tenants
- B. **And whereas** the said hereditaments do not belong to the said [Trustees or Trustee] beneficially but have been acquired by and become vested in them as Trustees only for the purposes hereinafter mentioned, and they are desirous of declaring by this deed the trusts ends intents and purposes upon and for which they acquired and shall henceforth stand seised and possessed of the said land and hereditaments and all buildings now and hereafter to be erected upon the same or any part thereof

Now therefore know ye and these presents witness that

1. the said [Trustees or Trustee] do and each of them doth **hereby declare** that they and the survivors and survivor of them and the heirs of such survivor their or his assigns (all and every of whom are hereinafter referred to as the said Trustees or Trustee) shall hold and stand seised of all the hereditaments described in the said Second Schedule **upon trust** for the religious denomination mentioned in the Act 22 Vic. No. 82* (*Printed in Blue Book of 1883, page 106.) and known as and called "The Presbyterian Church of Victoria" (hereinafter styled **the said Church**)
 - (a) and to permit and suffer the said land and hereditaments to be used for such purposes and by such person or persons as the General Assembly of the said Church (hereinafter called **the Assembly**) may from time to time direct (of which direction the certificate in writing under the hand of the Moderator for the time being of the Assembly shall be sufficient evidence), and until such direction
 - (b) to permit and suffer the same to be used as a site for a church for the public worship of God by such persons as are now or at any time or times hereafter may be recognised by the Assembly as a Congregation of the said Church and who hold and shall continue to adhere to the standards of religious belief and of ecclesiastical government of the said Church (herein referred to as **the said Congregation**), and
 - (c) to permit and suffer the Minister for the time being of the said Congregation together with the Elders and other office-bearers thereof –
 - (i) to have free and uninterrupted enjoyment of the said land and hereditaments not only for the purposes of public worship as aforesaid but for such objects in connection with the affairs of the said Congregation as the Presbytery of the said Church for the time being entrusted by the Assembly with the

superintendence of the said Congregation (hereinafter called **such Presbytery as aforesaid**) may approve of direct or appoint and

- (ii) to enter on the said land and hereditaments or a sufficient part or parts thereof to erect and build such church and other necessary buildings and from time to time alter pull down remove renew enlarge and repair the same as shall at any time or from time to time hereafter be directed by the vote of at least two-third parts in number of such of the members and adherents for the time being as shall be personally present at a public meeting thereof called and held pursuant to notice in that behalf duly given in accordance with and conformity to the rules and regulations of the said Church for the time being affecting the convening and holding of meetings of members and adherents in similar cases.

2. **And it is hereby declared** that the said Trustees or Trustee shall have no power or authority to appoint dismiss or in anywise interfere with the appointment or dismissal of the Minister or any Office-bearers of the said Congregation nor in anywise meddle or interfere with such Minister or Office-bearers in the discharge of their official duties and that a certificate under the hand of the Moderator for the time being as aforesaid shall be conclusive evidence of the person for the time being claiming to minister as aforesaid being in fact such Minister
3. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall be bound to obey and give effect to the orders rules decisions and appointments made and to be made by the Assembly and of any such Presbytery as aforesaid and of the Office-bearers thereof relating to or concerning the admission or removal of the Minister and Office-bearers of the said Congregation and the rights and privileges belonging to him them or any of them in virtue of his or their office and concerning every other matter or thing whereon the Assembly or such Presbytery as aforesaid may or shall be by these presents or the constitution of the said Church declared to have authority and shall furnish to the Assembly and to such Presbytery as aforesaid such returns reports and other information as may be required
4. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall by a mortgage or mortgages of or other security or securities over all or any part or parts of the said hereditaments raise such sums or sum of money for the completion extension or reparation of the said buildings or the improvement of the said hereditaments or for any other purposes of the said Congregation and on such terms in all respects as shall with the consent of the Assembly be directed by any such vote as aforesaid and shall make any such mortgage or other security either with or without a power of sale of the mortgaged hereditaments and with all usual and incidental covenants clauses and agreements and execute all necessary and proper assurances for effecting any such mortgage or other security provided always that the said Trustees or Trustee shall not be obliged to execute any covenant rendering them or him personally responsible to repay the amount mentioned in any such mortgage
5. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall absolutely make sale and dispose of the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof and the fee simple and inheritance thereof when and on such terms and in such manner and subject to such conditions as to the title or otherwise as shall

with the consent aforesaid be directed by any such vote as aforesaid and convey the hereditaments sold to the purchaser or purchasers thereof and shall pay the moneys received by virtue of any such mortgage or sale as aforesaid to the Treasurer for the time being of the Assembly (whose receipt shall be a sufficient discharge to the said Trustees or Trustee) who shall in the first place deduct thereout all costs and expenses attending such mortgage or sale and then payoff and discharge any encumbrance or encumbrances for the time being affecting the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof and then pay the balance to the said Congregation or otherwise as may be directed by the Assembly to be applied and disposed of in or towards the purposes for which such mortgage or sale shall have been authorised which purposes the Assembly may vary from time to time and, in the absence of any such authorisation as to the purposes of such mortgage or sale, in or towards such purposes as the Assembly may in its discretion otherwise declare from time to time

6. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall from time to time demise or let such part or parts of the said hereditaments as shall not for the time being be actually required for the purpose of public worship or other Congregational purposes for such term or terms, at such rent or rents, upon such conditions, and subject to such covenants as shall be approved under the Rules of the Church and shall have been directed by any such vote as aforesaid but the reversion in the hereditaments demised or let shall continue subject to the powers of mortgaging and selling respectively herein contained Provided that the clear rents arising from any such demise or letting shall be collected by the Treasurer for the time being of the said Congregation and be paid and applied for such purposes as shall have been directed by any such vote as aforesaid and approved by such Presbytery as aforesaid
7. And it is hereby further declared and agreed that any receipt which shall be given by the said Trustees or Trustee for any money payable for or in respect of any mortgage sale or lease of or other dealings with the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof shall effectually discharge the person or persons paying the same from being answerable or accountable for the non-application or misapplication or from being obliged or concerned to see to the application of the money in such receipt acknowledged or expressed to have been received
8. And that every covenant and agreement that shall be entered into and every mortgage conveyance or lease which shall be executed by the said Trustees or Trustee pursuant to the trusts hereinbefore declared shall be as good and effectual both at law and in equity as if every member and adherent of the said Congregation had joined therein or assented thereto and shall be binding and conclusive on all persons claiming any benefit or interest under or by virtue of these presents
9. And that it shall not be incumbent on any mortgagee purchaser lessee or tenant of the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof to inquire into the necessity or propriety of any such mortgage sale demise or letting or whether the same is authorised by these presents or into the due nomination election or appointment of any Trustees or Trustee under these presents and that a solemn statutory declaration by the persons or person purporting and claiming to mortgage sell lease or let as the Trustees or Trustee for the time being of these presents shall be conclusive evidence in favour of any mortgagee purchaser lessee or tenant of such person or

- persons being such Trustees or Trustee
10. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall have no power or authority to collect the revenues or to manage or interfere with the management of the temporal affairs of the said Congregation
 11. And further that three Trustees shall be held to be an actual quorum at any meeting duly convened and
 12. if any of the said Trustees shall die or desire to resign his trust or shall cease to be a member or adherent of the said Congregation or shall have removed his residence to a distance of one hundred miles from the said place of worship for at least, twelve consecutive months or shall refuse to exercise and execute any of the powers and authorities hereby reposed in him when so required as aforesaid or shall disobey or neglect or refuse to carry out any order instruction or decision of the Assembly or of such Presbytery as aforesaid or shall by the Assembly be declared to have been guilty of conduct unbecoming a Trustee then and in any of the said cases it shall be lawful for and incumbent on such Presbytery as aforesaid by resolution reciting the facts to declare a vacancy in the Trusteeship in respect of such Trustee who shall immediately thereupon *ipso facto* cease to be a Trustee and shall be deprived of all powers and privileges vested in him of which resolution the certificate of the Moderator for the time being of such Presbytery as aforesaid shall be conclusive evidence and
 13. that as often as the number of Trustees shall be reduced by any of the ways or causes aforesaid to less than three it shall be lawful for and incumbent on the said Congregation at a meeting duly convened for that purpose to proceed to the appointment of one person being a member of the said Church or Congregation for every such vacancy in the office of Trustee and that when and so often as such presbytery as aforesaid shall have ratified such appointment the said hereditaments shall thereupon with all convenient speed be conveyed and assured by the surviving and acting Trustees or Trustee (together as the case may be with the Trustee or Trustees as to whom such vacancy or vacancies shall have been declared) so and in such manner as that the same shall be effectually vested in the surviving and acting Trustees or Trustee and in the new Trustees or Trustee jointly upon the same trusts and conditions and for the same purposes as have hereinbefore been provided and declared
 14. Provided always, and notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained, it is hereby further agreed and declared that, should any Congregation at any time cease to exist (and such cesser of existence shall be deemed to have occurred if no Presbyterian Church service is held by a Minister or Elder or Home Missionary of the said Church, on the said land and hereditaments, for a continuous period of twelve months, and of which cesser the certificate in writing of the Moderator for the time being of the Assembly shall be sufficient evidence), or in the case of any land and hereditaments and the buildings and erections thereon not held for the use of any Congregation, the Assembly shall be at liberty to direct the Trustees or Trustee to sell, mortgage, lease, exchange, or otherwise deal with or dispose of the said land and hereditaments, and the buildings and erections thereon, or any part thereof, in any manner and upon such conditions as to disposition of the proceeds or otherwise (if any) as the Assembly may from time to time direct
 15. Provided always, and notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained, it is hereby further agreed and declared that should the said Congregation unite

with another Congregation or more than one Congregation by way of a Basis of Union in accordance with the rules and regulations of the said Church to form a single Congregation, the Trustees or Trustee shall hold the said land and hereditaments and the fee simple and inheritance thereof described in the said Second Schedule –

- (a) in trust to sell the whole or so much of the said land and hereditaments, and the buildings and erections thereon, in either case, as the Assembly when approving the property arrangements dealt with in the Basis of Union has determined is surplus to the needs of the Congregation that results from the union, and has not determined is required for any alternate use by the said Church, in any manner and upon such conditions as to disposition of the proceeds or otherwise (if any) as the Assembly may direct; and
- (b) where the Assembly when approving the property arrangements dealt with in the Basis of Union has allocated property to the Congregation which results from the union, on the same trusts as are constituted by the provisions of clauses 1 to 15 (both inclusive) of this Deed, substituting for any reference to the said Congregation a reference to the Congregation that results from the union of the said Congregation with another Congregation or Congregations; and
- (c) otherwise where the Assembly when approving the property arrangements dealt with in the Basis of Union has determined the alternate use of any property not needed by the Congregation which results from the union, under the same trusts as are constituted by the provisions of clauses 1 to 15 (both inclusive) of this Deed.

The certificate of the Moderator as to the date of the union of the Congregations shall be conclusive evidence of that date for the purposes of this clause.

In witness whereof the said
have hereunto set their bands and seals the day of A.D., 20...

The First Schedule hereinbefore referred to
[Description of the Certificate of Title or Conveyance]

The Second Schedule hereinbefore referred to
[Description of the Land as in the Title]

MODEL TRUST DEED FOR MANSE SITE

To all whom these presents shall come

all of [Trustees or Trustee]

Send Greeting -

- A. **Whereas** under and by virtue of the [Certificate of Title or Conveyance] particularly mentioned or referred to in the First Schedule hereunder written the piece or parcel of land and hereditaments particularly described in the Second Schedule hereunder written, and the fee simple and inheritance thereof in possession are now vested in the said [Trustees or Trustee] as joint tenants
- B. **And whereas** the said hereditaments do not belong to the said [Trustees or Trustee] beneficially but have been acquired by and become vested in them

as Trustees only for the purposes hereinafter mentioned, and they are desirous of declaring by this deed the trusts ends intents and purposes upon and for which they acquired and shall henceforth stand seised and possessed of the said land and hereditaments and all buildings now and hereafter to be erected upon the same or any part thereof

Now therefore know ye and these presents witness that

1. the said [Trustees or Trustee] do and each of them doth **hereby declare** that they and the survivors and survivor of them and the heirs of such survivor their or his assigns (all and every of whom are hereinafter referred to as the said Trustees or Trustee) shall hold and stand seised of all the hereditaments described in the said Second Schedule **upon trust** for the religious denomination mentioned in the Act 22 Vic. No. 82* (*Printed in Blue Book of 1883, page 106.) and known as and called "The Presbyterian Church of Victoria" (hereinafter styled **the said Church**)
 - (a) and to permit and suffer the said land and hereditaments to be used for a site for a Manse or Minister's dwelling to be occupied solely by such person or persons in succession as shall from time to time be inducted by the said Church into the office of and shall continue to be recognised by the General Assembly of the said Church (hereinafter called **the Assembly**) as the officiating Minister for the time being in connection with the Congregation at in the Colony of Victoria which now is or at any time or times hereafter may be recognised by the Assembly as a Congregation of the said Church and holding and continuing to adhere to the standards of religious belief and of ecclesiastical government of the said Church
 - (b) and to permit and suffer the Minister for the time being of the said Congregation to have free and uninterrupted enjoyment of the said land and hereditaments for the purposes aforesaid
 - (c) and also to permit and suffer such Minister together with the Elders and other Office bearers of the said Congregation –
 - (i) to have free and uninterrupted enjoyment of the said land and hereditaments for such other objects in connection with the affairs of the said Congregation as the Presbytery of the said Church for the time being entrusted by the Assembly with the superintendence of the said Congregation (hereinafter called **such Presbytery as aforesaid**) may approve of direct or appoint and
 - (ii) to enter on the said land and hereditaments or a sufficient part or parts thereof to erect and build such Manse and other necessary buildings and from time to time alter pull down remove renew enlarge and repair the same as shall at any time or from time to time hereafter be directed by the vote of at least two-third parts in number of such of the Members and Adherents for the time being as shall be personally present at a public meeting thereof called and held pursuant to notice in that behalf duly given in accordance with and conformity to the rules and regulations of the said Church for the time being affecting the convening and holding of meetings of Members and Adherents in similar cases.
2. **And it is hereby declared** that the said Trustees or Trustee shall have no power or authority to appoint dismiss or in anywise interfere with the appointment or dismissal of the Minister or any Office-bearers of the said

- Congregation nor in anywise meddle or interfere with such Minister or Office-bearers in the discharge of their official duties and that a certificate under the hand of the Moderator for the time being as aforesaid shall be conclusive evidence of the person for the time being claiming to minister as aforesaid being in fact such Minister
3. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall be bound to obey and give effect to the orders rules decisions and appointments made and to be made by the Assembly and of any such Presbytery as aforesaid and of the Office-bearers thereof relating to or concerning the admission or removal of the Minister and Office-bearers of the said Congregation and the rights and privileges belonging to him them or any of them in virtue of his or their office and concerning every other matter or thing whereon the Assembly or such Presbytery as aforesaid may or shall be by these presents or the constitution of the said Church declared to have authority and shall furnish to the Assembly and to such Presbytery as aforesaid such returns reports and other information as may be required
 4. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall by a mortgage or mortgages of or other security or securities over all or any part or parts of the said hereditaments raise such sums or sum of money for the completion extension or reparation of the said buildings or the improvement of the said hereditaments or for any other purposes of the said Congregation and on such terms in all respects as shall with the consent of the Assembly be directed by any such vote as aforesaid and shall make any such mortgage or other security either with or without a power of sale of the mortgaged hereditaments and with all usual and incidental covenants clauses and agreements and execute all necessary and proper assurances for effecting any such mortgage or other security provided always that the said Trustees or Trustee shall not be obliged to execute any covenant rendering them or him personally responsible to repay the amount mentioned in any such mortgage
 5. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall absolutely make sale and dispose of the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof and the fee simple and inheritance thereof when and on such terms and in such manner and subject to such conditions as to the title or otherwise as shall with the consent aforesaid be directed by any such vote as aforesaid and convey the hereditaments sold to the purchaser or purchasers thereof and shall pay the moneys received by virtue of any such mortgage or sale as aforesaid to the Treasurer for the time being of the Assembly (whose receipt shall be a sufficient discharge to the said Trustees or Trustee) who shall in the first place deduct thereout all costs and expenses attending such mortgage or sale and then payoff and discharge any encumbrance or encumbrances for the time being affecting the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof and then pay the balance to the said Congregation or otherwise as may be directed by the Assembly to be applied and disposed of in or towards the purposes for which such mortgage or sale shall have been authorised which purposes the Assembly may vary from time to time and, in the absence of any such authorisation as to the purposes of such mortgage or sale, in or towards such purposes as the Assembly may in its discretion otherwise declare from time to time
 6. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall from time to time demise or let such part or parts of the said hereditaments as shall not for the time being be actually required for the purpose of public worship or other

Congregational purposes for such term or terms, at such rent or rents, upon such conditions, and subject to such covenants as shall be approved under the Rules of the Church and shall have been directed by any such vote as aforesaid but the reversion in the hereditaments demised or let shall continue subject to the powers of mortgaging and selling respectively herein contained Provided that the clear rents arising from any such demise or letting shall be collected by the Treasurer for the time being of the said Congregation and be paid and applied for such purposes as shall have been directed by any such vote as aforesaid and approved by such Presbytery as aforesaid

7. And it is hereby further declared and agreed that any receipt which shall be given by the said Trustees or Trustee for any money payable for or in respect of any mortgage sale or lease of or other dealings with the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof shall effectually discharge the person or persons paying the same from being answerable or accountable for the non-application or misapplication or from being obliged or concerned to see to the application of the money in such receipt acknowledged or expressed to have been received
8. And that every covenant and agreement that shall be entered into and every mortgage conveyance or lease which shall be executed by the said Trustees or Trustee pursuant to the trusts hereinbefore declared shall be as good and effectual both at law and in equity as if every member and adherent of the said Congregation had joined therein or assented thereto and shall be binding and conclusive on all persons claiming any benefit or interest under or by virtue of these presents
9. And that it shall not be incumbent on any mortgagee purchaser lessee or tenant of the said hereditaments or any part or parts thereof to inquire into the necessity or propriety of any such mortgage sale demise or letting or whether the same is authorised by these presents or into the due nomination election or appointment of any Trustees or Trustee under these presents and that a solemn statutory declaration by the persons or person purporting and claiming to mortgage sell lease or let as the Trustees or Trustee for the time being of these presents shall be conclusive evidence in favour of any mortgagee purchaser lessee or tenant of such person or persons being such Trustees or Trustee
10. And further that the said Trustees or Trustee shall have no power or authority to collect the revenues or to manage or interfere with the management of the temporal affairs of the said Congregation
11. And further that three Trustees shall be held to be an actual quorum at any meeting duly convened and
12. if any of the said Trustees shall die or desire to resign his trust or shall cease to be a member or adherent of the said Congregation or shall have removed his residence to a distance of one hundred miles from the said place of worship for at least, twelve consecutive months or shall refuse to exercise and execute any of the powers and authorities hereby reposed in him when so required as aforesaid or shall disobey or neglect or refuse to carry out any order instruction or decision of the Assembly or of such Presbytery as aforesaid or shall by the Assembly be declared to have been guilty of conduct unbecoming a Trustee then and in any of the said cases it shall be lawful for and incumbent on such Presbytery as aforesaid by resolution reciting the facts to declare a vacancy in the Trusteeship in respect of such Trustee who shall immediately thereupon *ipso facto* cease

- to be a Trustee and shall be deprived of all powers and privileges vested in him of which resolution the certificate of the Moderator for the time being of such Presbytery as aforesaid shall be conclusive evidence and
13. that as often as the number of Trustees shall be reduced by any of the ways or causes aforesaid to less than three it shall be lawful for and incumbent on the said Congregation at a meeting duly convened for that purpose to proceed to the appointment of one person being a member of the said Church or Congregation for every such vacancy in the office of Trustee and that when and so often as such presbytery as aforesaid shall have ratified such appointment the said hereditaments shall thereupon with all convenient speed be conveyed and assured by the surviving and acting Trustees or Trustee (together as the case may be with the Trustee or Trustees as to whom such vacancy or vacancies shall have been declared) so and in such manner as that the same shall be effectually vested in the surviving and acting Trustees or Trustee and in the new Trustees or Trustee jointly upon the same trusts and conditions and for the same purposes as have hereinbefore been provided and declared
14. Provided always, and notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained, it is hereby further agreed and declared that, should any Congregation at any time cease to exist (and such cesser of existence shall be deemed to have occurred if no Presbyterian Church service is held by a Minister or Elder or Home Missionary of the said Church, on the said land and hereditaments, for a continuous period of twelve months, and of which cesser the certificate in writing of the Moderator for the time being of the Assembly shall be sufficient evidence), or in the case of any land and hereditaments and the buildings and erections thereon not held for the use of any Congregation, the Assembly shall be at liberty to direct the Trustees or Trustee to sell, mortgage, lease, exchange, or otherwise deal with or dispose of the said land and hereditaments, and the buildings and erections thereon, or any part thereof, in any manner and upon such conditions as to disposition of the proceeds or otherwise (if any) as the Assembly may from time to time direct
15. Provided always, and notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained, it is hereby further agreed and declared that should the said Congregation unite with another Congregation or more than one Congregation by way of a Basis of Union in accordance with the rules and regulations of the said Church to form a single Congregation, the Trustees or Trustee shall hold the said land and hereditaments and the fee simple and inheritance thereof described in the said Second Schedule –
- (a) in trust to sell the whole or so much of the said land and hereditaments, and the buildings and erections thereon, in either case, as the Assembly when approving the property arrangements dealt with in the Basis of Union has determined is surplus to the needs of the Congregation that results from the union, and has not determined is required for any alternate use by the said Church, in any manner and upon such conditions as to disposition of the proceeds or otherwise (if any) as the Assembly may direct; and
- (b) where the Assembly when approving the property arrangements dealt with in the Basis of Union has allocated property to the Congregation which results from the union, on the same trusts as are constituted by the provisions of clauses 1 to 15 (both inclusive) of this Deed, substituting for any reference to the said Congregation a

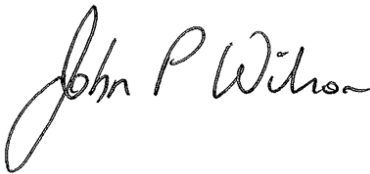
reference to the Congregation that results from the union of the said Congregation with another Congregation or Congregations; and
(c) otherwise where the Assembly when approving the property arrangements dealt with in the Basis of Union has determined the alternate use of any property not needed by the Congregation which results from the union, under the same trusts as are constituted by the provisions of clauses 1 to 15 (both inclusive) of this Deed.
The certificate of the Moderator as to the date of the union of the Congregations shall be conclusive evidence of that date for the purposes of this clause.

In witness whereof the said
have hereunto set their bands and seals the day of A.D., 20...

The First Schedule hereinbefore referred to
[Description of the Certificate of Title or Conveyance]

The Second Schedule hereinbefore referred to
[Description of the Land as in the Title]

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.



(Convener, Code and General Administration Committee)

5 August 2021

OVERTURE 9 (Min 97)
From: the Presbytery of Melbourne East
Re: Conflict of Interest – contractual relationships

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) The wisdom of and difficulties in a member of an organisation tendering for, entering into, and then being in a contractual relationship with that organisation, including:
 - i. Suspicion of favoritism, whether based on reality or imagination.
 - ii. Difficulty by other organisation members in assessing whether the tendering member should be awarded the contract.
 - iii. If the contract is awarded, and then things go badly with the contract, it being harder for the organisation to challenge an insider than an outsider, and there could be resultant acrimony and division.
 - iv. In the case of a contract with a member of a Board of Management, the fact that it is deprived of the full input of a Board member.
- b) The flow of literature and opinions on the topic of conflict of interest, in both the church and secular sphere.
- c) Nonetheless, the fact that in the case of a minor contract a church member may be well placed to perform the contract.

Now therefore the Presbytery of Melbourne East humbly overtures the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and amend the Rules of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (the Code) by inserting the following new rule as Rule 2.24A:

‘A. Any contract between:

- a) a member of a congregation, or a company in which a member of a congregation is a director or shareholder, or a partnership in which a member of a congregation is partner, of the one part;

and

- b) either the Board, its Secretary, or the Trustees of that congregation of the other part;

in which the sum of money to be paid by the Board and/or the value of any other benefit to be provided by the Board:

- i. exceeds \$10,000 but does not exceed \$50,000 should be reported to the Presbytery at its next meeting;
- ii. exceeds \$50,000 is subject to Presbytery approval;
- iii. exceeds \$100,000 is prohibited.

B. Any contract between:

- a) a member of a congregation, or a company in which a member of a congregation is a director or shareholder, or a partnership in which a member of a congregation is partner, of the one part;

and

- b) either the Board, its Secretary, or the Trustees of that congregation of the other part;

in which the sum of money in fact paid by the Board and/or the value of any other benefit in fact provided by the Board has exceeded \$10,000 should be reported to the Presbytery at its next meeting with a statement of the amount in fact paid or value of the benefit in fact provided.’

or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

Signed: Kevin Childs
PRESBYTERY CLERK

Date: 21 August 2021

Extracted from the minutes of the meeting of the Presbytery of Melbourne East on 20 August 2021 by me: Kevin Childs, clerk.

The following persons have been appointed to state the overture: Philip Barton and Rev David Hann.

SPECIAL JUDICIAL COMMITTEE

Report on petitions (Min 75)

The Special Judicial Committee is expected to report on petitions (rule 5.55(c)).

Petition 1

From: Presbytery of Ballarat; re: renaming

The General Assembly has administrative oversight of a presbytery and as such may name it (rule 4.1.1(a)) or even alter its bounds (rule 5.51.1). We note that the ordinary way for a presbytery to achieve this is via petition (rule 4.153(a)).

The Special Judicial Committee sees no barrier to the General Assembly considering the merits of this petition under the rules mentioned above.

Petition 2

From: Presbytery of Melbourne East; re: seat for Rev Douglas Campbell

Qualification for ministerial membership of a presbytery comes about by satisfying one of the categories listed in rule 4.2, part 1. Should a minister not qualify by falling into any of the categories listed (a) to (j), then clause (k) allows a presbytery to petition the General Assembly to plead special circumstances.

The Special Judicial Committee sees no barrier to the General Assembly considering the merits of this petition under the rule mentioned above.

Petition 3

From: Presbytery of Geelong; re: dissolution of Anakie and sale of property

Prior to the final dissolution of a congregation, a presbytery needs the General Assembly's agreement (rule 4.69). Provided immediate effect is declared by applying the provision of rule 6.15, the presbytery may request the General Assembly to direct the trustees to sell the property for a particular purpose under clause 14 of the Model Trust Deed.

The Special Judicial Committee sees no barrier to the General Assembly considering the merits of this petition under the rules mentioned above and MTD clause 14.

Petition 4

From: Presbytery of Geelong; re: dissolution of Batesford and sale of property

Prior to the final dissolution of a congregation, a presbytery needs the General Assembly's agreement (rule 4.69). Provided immediate effect is declared by applying the provision of rule 6.15, the presbytery may request the General Assembly to direct the trustees to sell the property for a particular purpose under clause 14 of the Model Trust Deed. In that regard, the Special Judicial Committee sees no barrier to the General Assembly considering the merits of this petition under the rules mentioned above and MTD clause 14.

With regard to the final request (renaming a Sites Reserve Fund) the committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to BIF reg 15 and also to the mind of Assembly expressed in the moratorium clause of the Commission of Assembly, May 2021.

Petition 5

From: Congregation of Ashburton; re: sale of manse and purposing of funds

A congregation may request the General Assembly to direct the trustees to sell property for a particular purpose under clause 5 of the Model Trust Deed. The relevant rules of the church for selling property are 2.20(f), 2.21.2 and 4.79.

The Special Judicial Committee sees no barrier to the General Assembly considering the merits of this petition under the rules mentioned above and MTD clause 5.

Petition 6

From: Presbytery of Flinders; re: sale of property at Kooweerup

The presbytery may request the General Assembly to direct the trustees to sell the property of a deceased congregation for a particular purpose under clause 14 of the Model Trust Deed.

The Special Judicial Committee sees no barrier to the General Assembly considering the merits of this petition under the MTD clause 14.

Petition 7

From: Presbytery of NW Victoria; re: sale of manse and purposing of funds

The committee notes that the Presbytery is petitioning the General Assembly on behalf of the congregation of St John's Bendigo. A congregation may request the General Assembly to direct the trustees to sell property for a particular purpose under clause 5 of the Model Trust Deed. The relevant rules of the church for selling property are 2.20(f), 2.21.2 and 4.79.

The Special Judicial Committee sees no barrier to the General Assembly considering the merits of this petition under the rules mentioned above and MTD clause 5.

Petition 8

From: Congregation of Benalla Presbyterian Church; re: sale of land and purposing of funds

A congregation may request the General Assembly to direct the trustees to sell property for a particular purpose under clause 5 of the Model Trust Deed. The relevant rules of the church for selling property are 2.20(f), 2.21.2 and 4.79.

The Special Judicial Committee sees no barrier to the General Assembly considering the merits of this petition under the rules mentioned above and MTD clause 5.

Petition 9

From: D Palmer, N Chambers, C Duke, A Vines, J Mestry; re: support for advancing residency/citizenship claims of 'boat people' connected with PCV congregations

This doesn't require any particular comment from the Committee. The General Assembly is free to consider this request on its merits.

The Special Judicial Committee notes that the petition arrived after the 30-day cut-off time, so the proper thing to do is to move first to grant an exemption from this specified notification period. The committee seeks to waive the notice period relating to petition 9.

John P Wilson
CLERK OF ASSEMBLY

PETITION 1 (Min 76)
From: Presbytery of Ballarat
Re: Renaming the Presbytery of Ballarat

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

This petition shows that:

- a) There is a Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, named the Presbytery of Ballarat, which was formed before 1862.
- b) This Presbytery covers an area from the South Australian border across to Castlemaine, Daylesford in the north, Skipton and Lismore in the south and Ballan to the east.
- c) The City of Ballarat is a significant city in Victoria, and everyone within and outside the Presbyterian Church of Victoria are aware of its location. However, our Presbytery is much bigger than the city of Ballarat.
- d) The present convention in naming presbyteries in Victoria is to denominate them based on their geographical region.
- e) The Presbytery of Ballarat lies between the Presbytery of North-Western Victoria and the Presbytery of South West Victoria.
- f) The region under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery is widely known as Western Victoria.
- g) The Presbytery of Ballarat resolved at its meeting at Ararat on 10 August 2021 to petition the General Assembly of Victoria to change its name to the Presbytery of Western Victoria and appointed Rev Toby McIntosh and Rev Greg Matthews to state the petition (Minute 17.10.24).

Now therefore the Presbytery of Ballarat humbly petitions the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and change its name to the Presbytery of Western Victoria (as provided for in PCV Code 4.153.a);

or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

Signed:



Keith Allen
PRESBYTERY CLERK

Date: 11 August 2021

Extracted from the minutes of the meeting of 10 August 2021 on 11 August by me:
Keith Allen, clerk.

PETITION 2 (Min 77)
From: Presbytery of Melbourne East
Re: Rev Douglas Campbell and membership of presbytery

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

This petition shows that:

- a) Scotch College, Hawthorn, is a school that exists for educational purposes in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.
- b) Since 1977 an anomalous situation has existed with respect to the work of ministering in chaplaincy at Scotch College in that the Articles of Association of Scotch College require the chaplain to be a minister of the Presbyterian Church, yet as a chaplain he is not automatically entitled to a seat on presbytery.
- c) It is therefore advantageous both to church and school that chaplains at Scotch be made members of the Presbytery of Melbourne East while employed in that capacity.
- d) Rev Douglas Campbell, Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, has been appointed as chaplain at Scotch College.
- e) Rev Graham Bradbeer, Rev John Buchanan, Rev Charles Green and Rev David Assender, ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, were, in response to petitions from the Presbytery of Melbourne East, granted seats on the Presbytery by the General Assembly in 1984, 1992, 2001 and 2011 respectively, following their appointments as chaplains at Scotch College and Presbyterian Ladies College.
- f) A precedent therefore exists which suggests that Mr Campbell should be treated in the same manner as the other chaplains at Scotch and PLC.

Now therefore the Presbytery of Melbourne East petitions the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and:

Grant Rev Douglas Campbell a seat on the Presbytery of Melbourne East for such time as he may continue as chaplain at Scotch College;

or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may deem fit, and consider appropriate.

The petition will be presented on behalf of the presbytery by Mr Philip Barton and Rev David Hann.

Signed: Kevin Childs
 PRESBYTERY CLERK

Date: 16 August 2021

PETITION 3 (Min 78)
From: Presbytery of Geelong
Re: Dissolution of Anakie congregation
and sale of its property

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

This petition shows that:

- a) The final dissolution of a congregation cannot be executively declared by the presbytery but requires the agreement of the General Assembly (rule 4.69).
- b) Anakie congregation together with Batesford and Bannockburn congregations forms the linked charge of Bannockburn.
- c) Anakie services ceased on 6/7/2014 with more than one year having elapsed since regular authorised Presbyterian services of worship have been held.
- d) Presbytery noted that the remaining members are now under the pastoral care of the Bannockburn congregation.
- e) Presbytery, at its meeting held 8 December 2020 agreed to intimate its intention to dissolve the congregation in accord with rule 4.69.
- f) The heritage-listed Anakie building is in poor structural condition, which Ansvar Insurance Co refuses to cover for practical use until it is restored to a safe condition; and so Presbytery sees no possible use for the building either now or in the future.
- g) Maintaining the property has been, and would continue to be, a waste of considerable financial and physical resources.
- h) Given future growth corridor projections and the proximity to other congregations, it is unlikely that the Anakie site will provide viable church planting opportunities.
- i) Presbytery, at its meeting held 10 August 2021 resolved to seek the approval of the General Assembly to sell the Anakie (Ballan Road) property.
- j) Bannockburn is one of the localities earmarked by the State Government for rapid population growth.
- k) The Bannockburn congregation is an established and growing ministry requiring urgent facility expansion to accommodate its present use and future ministry plans.
- l) As a result of the revitalisation project conducted by North Geelong Presbyterian Church the Bannockburn congregation has seen significant,

rapid on-going growth and has already outgrown the building constructed in 2002.

- m) The existing kitchen and toilet facilities are inadequate and the congregation has insufficient space for indoor activities, functions, youth and family events, as well as regular outreach ministries such as Mainly Music.
- n) Concept plans which would double the size of the existing building from 200 to 400m² (adjustable depending on available finance) with estimated costing of between \$1 - \$1.5 million, have been drawn up in discussions with an experienced Christian builder from Geelong.
- o) Without the addition of increased facilities including meeting rooms, office space, a foyer, larger toilet and kitchen facilities, undercover outdoor entertainment space, and additional car parking, Presbytery believes the future growth and gospel outreach of the congregation will be significantly restricted.
- p) Real estate sale estimate for Anakie is \$350,000.

Now therefore, the Presbytery of Geelong humbly petitions the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and agree with the intention of the Presbytery of Geelong to:

1. Dissolve the Anakie congregation in accord with rule 4.69.
2. Approve the sale of the Anakie property (Vol 10676, Folio 030), with 90% of the net sale proceeds be paid to Bannockburn Presbyterian Church for the purpose of funding its building redevelopment, with the remaining 10% applied to church planting via the Property Development Fund.

or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

Extracted from the minutes of the meeting of Geelong Presbytery held 10 August 2021 by me:

Rev Robert White, Clerk.

The Petition will be presented by Rev M Deroon and Rev L McSevery.

Attachments:

1. Anakie Site aerial and street views
2. Anakie sale price range estimate

Attachment 1



Attachment 2

ATT: Bert Stasse 3rd March 2020 Treasurer
Bannockburn Presbyterian Church
3 Melissa Way, Bannockburn VIC 3331

Dear Bert,
RE: Value Range - 1985 Ballan Road, Anakie VIC 3213 & 31 Cross Street, Batesford, VIC 3213

Thank you for the opportunity to provide independent property advice for the above properties. It is our considered opinion that the market values of the properties above are as follows:

1985 Ballan Road, Anakie VIC 3213; comprises an allotment of 3,997 sqm located on the south west corner of Church Lane (unmade road) and Ballan Road, Anakie. The land is in a Farm Zone, and is approximately 800 metres south of the Anakie township zone boundary. The property comprises a dilapidated cottage and a small bluestone church of a typical style. We note that the property appears to have been vacant for some time and may not have existing use rights for residential purposes. However we note the lot is far too small to be considered for farming, we consider the highest and best use is for low density residential, with regard to the planning issues surrounding this use.

In our opinion the market value range for this property is - \$300,000 - \$350,000.

Regards



Gareth Kent AAPI CPV
Director
Preston Row Paterson Geelong Pty Ltd.

**Preston Rowe Paterson Geelong Pty Limited
Preston Rowe Paterson Warrnambool Pty Limited**

Geelong office Unit 2/5 Villamanta Place, Geelong West, VIC 3218 Australia	Warrnambool Office 71 Kepler Street, Warrnambool Victoria 3280
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PETITION 4 (Min 81)
From: Presbytery of Geelong
Re: Dissolution of Batesford congregation
and sale of its property

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria

This petition shows that:

- a) The final dissolution of a congregation cannot be executively declared by the presbytery but requires the agreement of the General Assembly (rule 4.69).
- b) Batesford congregation, together with Anakie and Bannockburn congregations, forms the linked charge of Bannockburn.
- c) Batesford services ceased on 23/7/2017 with more than one year having elapsed since regular authorised Presbyterian services of worship have been held.
- d) Presbytery noted that the remaining members are now under the pastoral care of the Bannockburn congregation.
- e) Presbytery, at its meeting held 8 December 2020 agreed to intimate its intention to dissolve the congregation in accord with rule 4.69.
- f) The heritage-listed Batesford building is of small size, is in an area with no government plans for growth or re-population; the Presbytery sees that it has no potential use for future ministry.
- g) Maintaining the property has been, and would continue to be, a waste of considerable financial and physical resources.
- h) Given future growth corridor projections and the proximity to other congregations, it is unlikely that the Batesford site will provide viable church planting opportunities.
- i) Presbytery, at its meeting held 10 August 2021 resolved to seek the approval of the General Assembly to sell the Batesford (Cross Street) property.
- j) Bannockburn is one of the localities earmarked by the State Government for rapid population growth.
- k) The Bannockburn congregation is an established and growing ministry requiring urgent facility expansion to accommodate its present use and future ministry plans.
- l) As a result of the revitalisation project conducted by North Geelong Presbyterian Church the Bannockburn congregation has seen significant, rapid and on-going growth and has already outgrown the building constructed in 2002.

- m) The existing kitchen and toilet facilities are inadequate and the congregation has insufficient space for indoor activities, functions, youth and family events, as well as regular outreach ministries such as Mainly Music.
- n) Concept plans which would double the size of the existing building from 200 to 400m² (adjustable depending on available finance) with estimated costing of between \$1 - \$1.5 million, have been drawn up in discussions with an experienced Christian builder from Geelong.
- o) Without the addition of increased facilities including meeting rooms, office space, a foyer, larger toilet and kitchen facilities, undercover outdoor entertainment space, and additional car parking, Presbytery believes the future growth and gospel outreach of the congregation will be significantly restricted.
- p) Real estate sale estimate for Batesford is \$550,000.
- q) There is a PCV Sites Reserve account in the name of the Batesford congregation of approx. \$160,000.
- r) From 2002, when Russells Bridge sold and moved to Bannockburn, until they were incorporated into the North Geelong charge in 2017, the three congregations of Anakie, Batesford, and Bannockburn, operated under the name of Moorabool charge, with a Federal Board of Management.
- s) 12 July 2017 Presbytery linked the former Moorabool charge together with North Geelong congregation to form the North Geelong parish with all Sites Reserve Funds and any Common Fund deposits falling under the authority of the newly linked congregation's Session and Federal Board of Management.
- t) The BIF/Trustees were approached and in correspondence dated 25 April 2019 agreed to allow the release of the Moorabool funds (which included Batesford's) for use by the linked charge.
- u) On 13 October 2020 Presbytery de-linked the congregations which formed the North Geelong charge to create two new charges, namely North Geelong charge and Bannockburn charge which now comprises the former Moorabool parish congregations of Anakie, Batesford and Bannockburn.
- v) The Church Office and BIF were notified of the sequence of name changes from Moorabool charge, to North Geelong Parish and then, after being delinked from North Geelong, to Bannockburn charge.
- w) 12 Feb 2021 Presbytery wrote to the Trustees requesting release to Bannockburn charge of the Sites Reserve funds currently held under the name of Moorabool charge.
- x) On 22 April 2021 Presbytery was informed that the BIF had obtained advice from the Law Agent that the request from Presbytery to 'release to Bannockburn charge of the Sites Reserve funds currently held under the

name of the Moorabool charge is not in accordance with the regulations (BIF 17(a) and (b)) and therefore the BIF is unable to comply with presbytery's request, and to do so the Trusts Corporation would be acting in breach of trust.'

- y) In the same letter (22 April 2021) Presbytery was informed that BIF had been advised by the Law Agent that the Model Trust Deed recognises only a congregation as distinct from a charge.
- z) BIF also advised Presbytery that 'Given that the funds arose from the sale of the manse of the Batesford congregation, the Sites Reserve account will be renamed to 'Batesford' to avoid any further confusion.'

Now therefore, the Presbytery of Geelong humbly petitions the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and agree with the intention of the Presbytery of Geelong to:

1. Dissolve the Batesford congregation in accord with rule 4.69.
2. Approve the sale of the Batesford property (Vol 11041, Folio 279), with 90% of the net sale proceeds be paid to Bannockburn Presbyterian Church for the purpose of funding its building redevelopment, with remaining 10% applied to church planting via the Property Development Fund.
3. Rename the PCV Sites Reserve account held in the name of the Batesford congregation, and under the management of the linked charge of Bannockburn, to be held in the name of the Bannockburn congregation.

or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

Extracted from the minutes of the meeting of Geelong Presbytery held 10 August 2021 by me:

Rev Robert White, Clerk.

The Petition will be presented by Rev M Deroon and Rev L McSeveny.

Attachments:

1. Batesford Site aerial and street views
2. Batesford sale price range estimate



ATT: Bert Stasse 3rd March 2020 Treasurer
Bannockburn Presbyterian Church
3 Melissa Way, Bannockburn VIC 3331

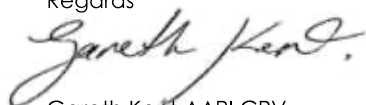
Dear Bert,

RE: Value Range - 1985 Ballan Road, Anakie VIC 3213 & 31 Cross Street, Batesford, VIC 3213

31 Cross Street, Batesford, VIC 3213; comprises a land area of 1,997 sqm, located within the township zone of Batesford. The property is regular in shape with frontage to Cross Street, approx. 150 meters south of the corner of Midland Hwy. The property is improved by a heritage bluestone church. It is our opinion the highest and best use of the property is as a Low density residential property, suitable for one dwelling, be that incorporated into the church or a new separate dwelling. We note it would likely be prohibitive to erect two separate dwellings on the lot. We also consider it likely that the church has heritage significance and it would be unlikely it could be removed lawfully.

Having regard to the above, we consider the market value range for the property is - \$450,000 - \$550,000.

Regards



Gareth Kent AAPI CPV
Director
Preston Row Paterson Geelong Pty Ltd.

**Preston Rowe Paterson Geelong Pty Limited
Preston Rowe Paterson Warrnambool Pty Limited**

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PETITION 5 (Min 80)
From: Congregation of Ashburton Presbyterian Church
Re: Sale of manse and purposing of funds

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

This petition shows that:

- a) The Ashburton Presbyterian Church manse at 21 Charles Street, Glen Iris has been leased until 22 August 2021 when the tenant vacated the property. The net rental proceeds after agent's fees, rates, fire levy, land tax and repairs and maintenance is around 35-50% of the gross rental.
- b) The congregation faces growing costs for repairs and maintenance on both the manse and the church buildings. The timber church hall is now past its useful life, having been built in 1952.
- c) The drain on finances in meeting maintenance costs may compromise gospel ministry as the congregation may have difficulty meeting any significant future repair and maintenance costs.
- d) The existing church building was designed and built as a hall and the proposed worship facility on the west side of the block (the corner of High Street Road and High Street) was never built. The layout and facilities are not entirely fit for purpose and do not meet our current needs for Sunday school rooms etc.
- e) The building is not recognisable as a church to passing traffic owing to its design, a large tree obscuring the cross, and poor signage. New signage would require planning approval. There is consequently very low awareness in the community.
- f) The congregation is in the process of revitalisation and wishes to redevelop the church property to provide a new worship facility, foyer, and multi-purpose meeting rooms, at the same time raising the awareness of the church in the community through new signage.
- g) In terms of budget impact, the redevelopment can be best funded through the sale of the manse (along with congregational donations) rather than debt.
- h) Market conditions make this an opportune time to sell the manse. The appraised value has risen by \$500,000 over the last two years. The market continues to be strong but some downward adjustment is widely anticipated in 2022.
- i) Provision for the minister's housing will be by way of manse allowance, with sale proceeds in excess of redevelopment costs to be held in sites reserves for that purpose.
- j) Plans for the site will be subsequently developed and the necessary approvals (both church and statutory) to be subsequently obtained with a view to construction commencing in 2024.
- k) The congregation has a vision for church planting and assisting in church revitalisation. We therefore wish to provide facilities for the congregation to

grow to a size that will enable it to plant new churches or to send people to assist in revitalising other parishes.

- l) In terms of rule 2.20(f) the congregation approved the sale of the manse on 27 June 2021 and, in terms of rules 2.21.2 and 4.79 the Presbytery of Melbourne East approved the sale on 18 August 2021.

Now therefore, the congregation of Ashburton Presbyterian Church humbly petitions the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and

1. Authorise the sale of the church manse at 21 Charles Street, Glen Iris (Certificate of Title Vol. 5201; Folio 1040198) under the Model Trust Deed clause 5 for the purposes of:

- a. funding the redevelopment of the church property on the corner of High Street and High Street Roads, Ashburton, and
- b. assisting with the funding of the minister's manse allowance.

2. Direct that the balance to be used to assist with the funding of the minister's manse allowance be held by the Trusts Corporation in a Sites Reserve account.

or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

Signed:



Rev Barry Oakes

Dated: 27 August 2021

PETITION 6 (Min 82)
From: the Presbytery of Flinders
Re: Sale of property at Kooweerup

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

This petition shows that:

- a) The PCV holds a property under the model trust deed at Rossiter Street, Kooweerup (Vol. 2629; Folio 525668) which is best sold to further the work of the church.
- b) At the 2020 General Assembly (Minute 76) the Assembly agreed to the presbytery's decision to dissolve the congregation at Kooweerup.
- c) At the request of the Presbytery of Flinders, the Church Planting Committee investigated the Kooweerup property with a view to a future church plant, but the committee considered it disadvantageous for a church plant.
- d) The Presbytery of Flinders desires that the property be sold and the money used for another church plant within the bounds of the Presbytery of Flinders.
- e) The presbytery has committed itself to planning for planting a new church at Clyde in the next 5-10 years, Lord willing.
- f) The presbytery has committed itself to planning for planting a new church at Pakenham in the next 5-10 years, Lord willing.
- g) The presbytery has asked the Church Planting Committee, in consultation with the presbytery, to seek suitable land for a church plant and/or land banking in the expanding Clyde area.

Now therefore the Presbytery of Flinders humbly petitions the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and approve the sale of the Kooweerup property at Rossiter Street (Vol. 2629; Folio 525668) for the purpose of establishing a church plant and/or a land bank in the expanding Clyde area by the the Presbytery of Flinders in conjunction with advice from the Church Planting Committee.

or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

Rev David Brown and Rev Dave Martin are appointed to state the petition.

Signed: Rev David A R Brown
(Clerk of Flinders Presbytery)

PETITION 7 (Min 83)
From: Presbytery of North Western Victoria
Re: Sale of Bendigo (St John's) manse property

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

This petition shows that:

- a) The manse of Bendigo (St John's) Presbyterian Church is situated at 4 Drechsler Street, Flora Hill (Allotment 482N in Section H, County of Sandhurst, Parish of Bendigo, Volume 9693, Folio 970) comprising a land area of approximately 2075 square metres. It was purchased in 1985, the debt on the property was discharged in 2006, and the property is now in need of extensive repair and upgrade.
- b) St John's congregation applied to the General Assembly in October 2012 and received permission to subdivide and sell a portion of the rear yard of the manse (approximately 20 metres by 20 metres) at an agreed price to a neighbour whose property backs on to the manse yard.
- c) The sale of this rear portion of land did not proceed due to the neighbour's inability to raise the needed funds to complete the sale, thus leaving St John's Board with no capital base required to complete a planned upgrade to the manse.
- d) Since 2012, St John's Board of Management has made numerous attempts to raise the monies needed to upgrade the manse. These have included;
 - proposing a two-lot subdivision of the rear yard of the manse which was rejected by the congregation (2017);
 - holding an appeal within St John's congregation (2018);
 - inviting contributions to a 'one-off' appeal from congregations within the PCV who have Sites Reserve funds (2019);
 - offering a sizeable portion of the rear yard for sale to land developers who were purchasing land on the eastern side of the manse (2020).
- e) With all the above-mentioned proposals ultimately proving unfruitful, the board made recommendations at a duly held congregational meeting on 15 August 2021 at which St John's congregation voted unanimously to:
 1. *Approve borrowing up to \$800,000 from the PCV Capital Fund as bridging finance to purchase a new manse prior to the sale of the property at 4 Drechsler Street, Flora Hill.*
 2. *Approve the sale of the property at 4 Drechsler Street, Flora Hill, with the intended purpose of using the funds realised for:*
 - i) *the purchase of a new manse, and/or*
 - ii) *the rental costs of a new manse, and/or*
 - iii) *the maintenance costs of the church, hall or new manse, and/or*
 - iv) *ministry costs as approved by the congregation.*
 3. *Approach and request the Presbytery of North Western Victoria and the PCV General Assembly to give approval to the above decisions.*
- f) The Presbytery of North Western Victoria at its meeting on 27 August 2021, also resolved to approve the proposed sale with stated purposes and also the petition to the General Assembly in these terms.

Now therefore the Presbytery of North Western Victoria humbly petitions the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and authorise the sale of the current manse at 4 Drechsler Street, Flora Hill (Allotment 482N in Section H, County of Sandhurst, Parish of Bendigo, Volume 9693, Folio 970) under the Model Trust Deed (clause 5) for the purposes of:

- i) the purchase of a new manse, and/or
- ii) the rental costs of a new manse, and/or
- iii) the maintenance costs of the church, hall or new manse, and/or
- iv) ministry costs as approved by the congregation.

or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

This petition is to be presented by Rev Philip Burns and Elder Andrew Kerr.

PETITION 8 (Min 84)
From: Congregation of Benalla Presbyterian Church
Re: Sale of land and purposing of funds

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria

This petition shows that:

- a) A church building was constructed at Benalla for the use of the local congregation around 1861, but has not been used for public worship since the construction of the present church in 1905, nor for any purpose of the congregation for at least 20 years.
- b) The kinder hall was constructed for use by the Sunday School in 1926, and extended in 1947. A new hall was built in 1958 as a Youth Centre, and has plenty of space for Kids Club, Sunday School, Youth Group, Bible studies, PWMU, Board and Session meetings, morning tea, and other social events.
- c) The Benalla Congregation met on 7 December 2019 and approved the subdivision of the property, the sale of the original church and kinder hall and the land on which they stand, with more than the two-thirds majority of the members present at the meeting as required in PCV Code 2.20f.
- d) The Benalla Congregation met on 28 October 2020 and recommitted the motion defining the boundaries of the subdivision to retain the western tennis court, and approved the sale of the redefined block of land, being a part of the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 10510 Folio 958 (being the rear portion of Allotment 13, Section G, Township of Benalla, 15 Mitchell Street, Benalla) together with a part of the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 1497 Folio 228 (being a portion of Allotment 11, Section G, Township of Benalla, 3 Church Street, Benalla) comprising 1,900.50 m² being the land identified and marked "New Allotment 11" on the proposed subdivision plan annexed to the Petition, with more than the two-thirds majority of the members present at the meeting as required in PCV Code 2.20f.
- e) The Benalla Congregation met on 3 February 2021 and declared the purpose of the sale to be "for funding maintenance and improvements to property, funding the cost of ministry in the parish, and allocating a percentage of the net proceeds of sale, after accounting for costs of the necessary subdivision and of the sale, to other ministries outside the parish, including giving a one-off amount of 10% to ministries of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, namely 4% to the METRO Committee, 4% to the Theological Education Committee and 2% to the Women's Ministries Victoria Committee" with more than the two-thirds majority of the members present at the meeting as required in PCV Code 2.20f.
- f) The Benalla Congregation met on 30 June 2021 and resolved to petition the General Assembly of Victoria to approve the sale of the original church and hall at Benalla, appoint Graeme Hayes and Stephen McDonald to state the petition, and approve the petition presented.
- g) The Presbytery of North East Victoria resolved at its meeting at Shepparton on 11 February 2020 to approve the sale (min 20.02.19).

- h) The Presbytery of North East Victoria resolved at its meeting at Broadford on 13 July 2021 to approve the purpose of sale, and to approve the petition and forward it to the General Assembly (min 21.07.15).

Now therefore the Benalla Congregation humbly petitions the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and

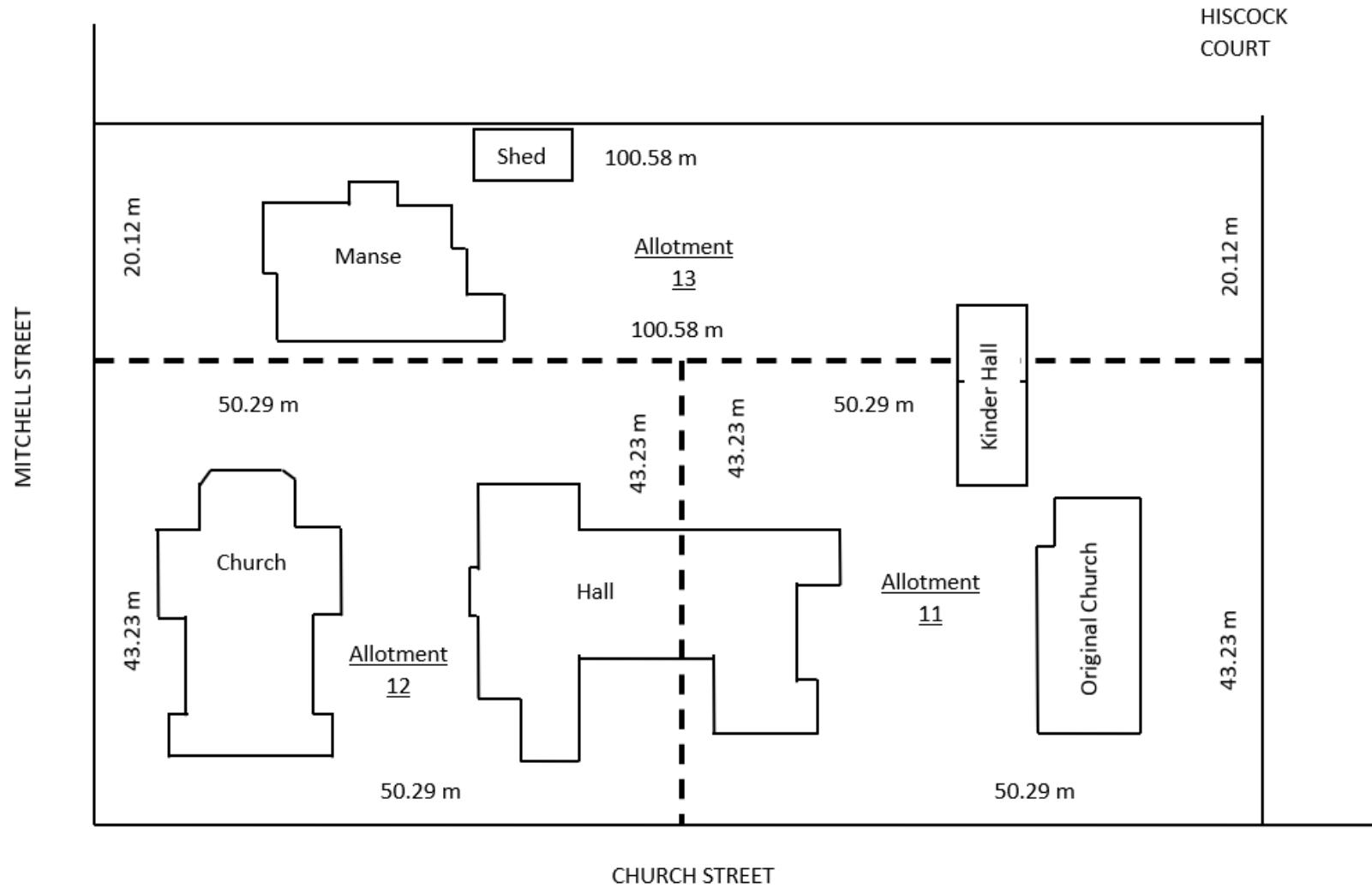
1. Approve the sale of land, as requested by the Congregation of Benalla, namely: part of the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 10510 Folio 958 (being the rear portion of Crown Allotment 13, Section G, Township of Benalla, 15 Mitchell Street, Benalla) together with part of the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 1497 Folio 228 (being a portion of Crown Allotment 11, Section G, Township of Benalla, 3 Church Street, Benalla) comprising 1,900.50 m² being the land identified and marked "New Allotment 11" on the proposed subdivision plan annexed to the Petition, with such sale being provisional upon a re-subdivision of the land at 3 Church Street and 15 Mitchell Street Benalla in accordance with the said plan; and
2. Authorise the said sale and the application of the net proceeds of sale after accounting for costs of the necessary re-subdivision and of the sale, for the following purposes:
 - a. As to 4% of the net proceeds of sale, to the METRO Committee for its general purposes;
 - b. As to 4% of the net proceeds of sale, to the Theological Education Committee for its general purposes;
 - c. As to 2% of the net proceeds of sale, to the Women's Ministries Victoria Committee for its general purposes; and
 - d. As to the balance of the net proceeds of sale, to the Benalla Congregation for funding maintenance and improvements to property and funding the cost of ministry in the parish and funding such other PCV ministries outside the parish as the Congregation may determine.

or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

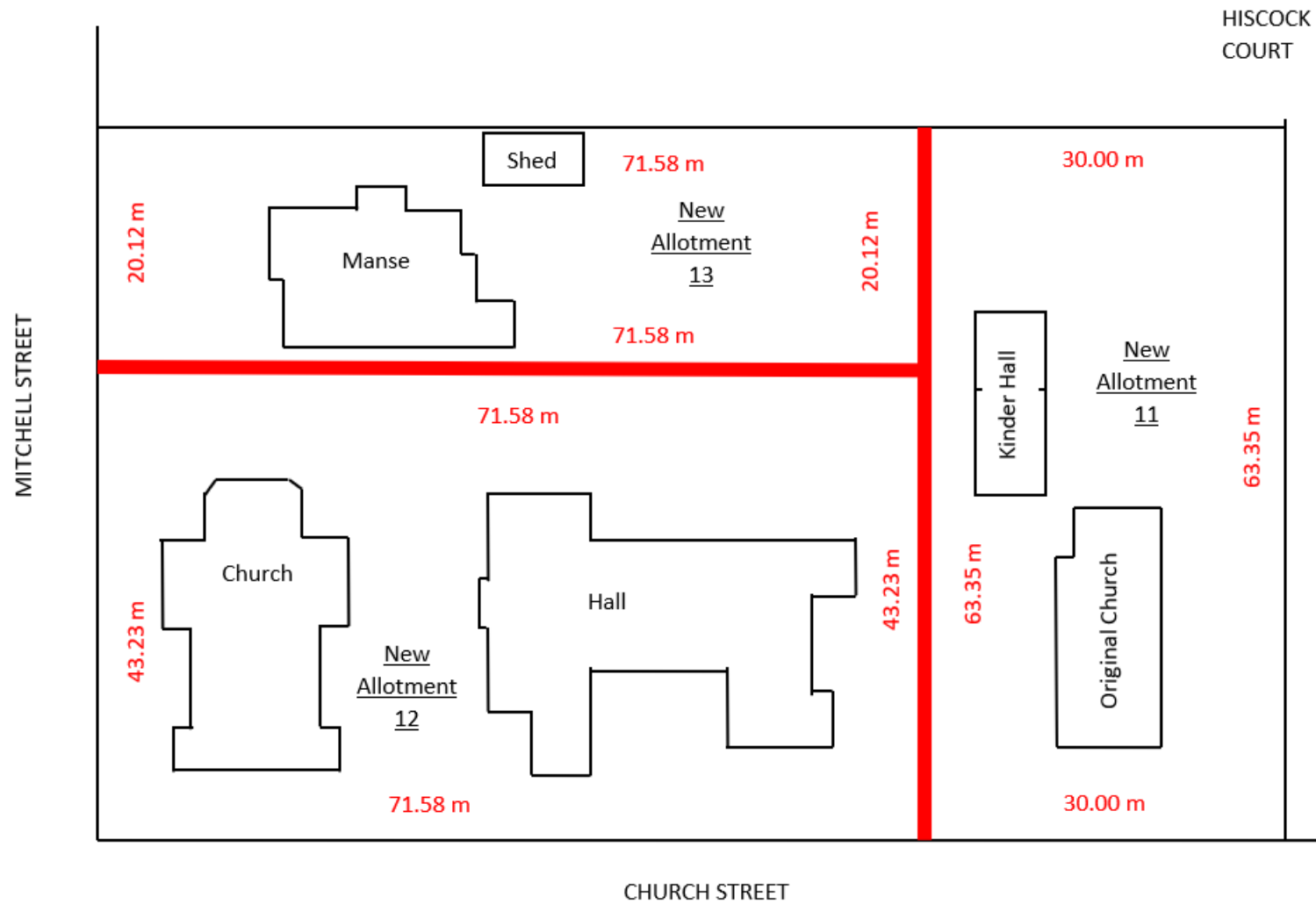
Signed:
Stephen McDonald
30/06/2021

Graeme Hayes
30/06/2021

Present Boundaries of Allotments 11, 12, & 13, Section G, Township of Benalla



Proposed Subdivision of Allotments 11, 12, & 13, Section G, Township of Benalla



PETITION 9 (Min 85)
From: D Palmer, N Chambers, C Duke, A Vines, J Mestry
Re: Support for advancing residency/citizenship claims of ‘boat people’ connected with PCV congregations

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria

This petition shows that:

- a) Following the so-called Tampa and Children Overboard affairs, the Australian Government in 2001 introduced the Pacific Solution whereby boats carrying asylum seekers were intercepted by the ADF and the asylum seekers sent to detention centres on Nauru and Manus Island, PNG.
- b) The dismantling of the Pacific Solution by the Australian Government in 2008 resulted in a rapid escalation of asylum seekers arriving by boat in Australia: 2,726 in 2009, 6,555 in 2010, 4,565 in 2011, 17,204 in 2012 and 20,587 in 2013. These asylum seekers did not possess a valid visa permitting their arrival.
- c) The introduction of Operation Sovereign Borders by the incoming Australian Government after the 2013 Federal election quickly led to a cessation in boat arrivals.
- d) Under the *Migration Act 1958*, asylum seekers who arrive in Australia without a valid visa must be held in immigration detention until they are granted a visa. Typically, the asylum seeker applies for a Protection visa.
- e) In late 2013, the Australian government resolved that maritime arrivals who had not yet been given asylum would, if their case was found to be genuine, not be given permanent protection or allowed to ‘settle’ in Australia. Instead they would be given temporary protection visas (TPVs) for three years, or for five years if the applicant agreed to reside and work in regional Australia. These TPVs have to be renewed every three (or five) years, and the case for asylum is potentially subject to re-assessment on each re-application. Holders of TPVs have only limited access to benefits and services. Their ability to travel outside the country is also strictly limited.
- f) It was not feasible to hold the thousands of maritime arrivals in detention, so they were released into the community, initially on what was called ‘community detention’, holding temporary Bridging Visas.
- g) The Australian government has been very slow in processing the asylum applications: after almost a decade, some asylum seekers who arrived before Operation Sovereign Borders are still waiting for an interview to determine their case.
- h) Now, 8–12 years after arrival, there are five categories of maritime arrival asylum seekers:
 - i. those whose cases were accepted before 2014 have become permanent residents or citizens;
 - ii. those whose cases were accepted in 2014 or later are on revolving Temporary Protection Visas;

- iii. those who are still waiting for their cases to be heard;
 - iv. those who have been rejected and are living in the community with no visa, no access to benefits and services, no options remaining;
 - v. those who have been rejected and are waiting for the outcome of an appeal to the courts, which takes several years to process: some of these have been granted Bridging Visas, and some have not.
- i) Without a visa or permanent residency, an asylum seeker is precluded from Centrelink benefits or being given a Medicare card and TFN. Their only option to support themselves is to work for cash.
 - j) The current condition of asylum seekers who arrived by boat and who have not secured permanent residency is deplorable. In most cases they remain separated from family still in their home country, and are precluded from travel.
 - k) Many of the asylum seekers came from Iran and it is estimated that at least 15% of the Iranians have converted from Islam to Christianity and are found attending Christian congregations.
 - l) A number of Presbyterian Churches in Victoria have such converts attending their services, becoming members and in a number of instances taking responsibilities such as membership of Boards of Management. There is an Iranian congregation attached to Bundoora charge with its own Iranian pastor.
 - m) The Scriptures are clear in the command to love our neighbour. The plight of the alien is addressed in Leviticus 19:34: *The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.*
 - n) As a church that takes pastoral responsibility for all its people, including the 'alien' among us we have an opportunity to bring our concerns about these people before all our congregations and to intercede on their behalf with Government, preferably in concert with other Christian bodies and the Australian Christian Lobby, indeed with any willing to join us.
 - o) The appropriate Committee to gather information and to intercede on behalf of the General Assembly is the Church and Nation Committee.

Now therefore David Palmer, Neil Chambers, Chris Duke, Andrew Vines and Joel Mestry humbly petition the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and

1. Acknowledge the dire situation faced by 'boat people' who have converted to Christian faith among us but have not yet secured permanent residency.
2. Request prayer be offered regularly in all our congregations to almighty God on behalf of those people described in 1. (above).
3. Encourage congregations to generously, and in practical ways, support these people, described in 1. (above), in amelioration of their physical, mental and spiritual needs.

4. Conduct a survey throughout the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to determine the numbers and immigration status of people known to a congregation who fit the general description as in 1. (above).
5. Request the Church and Nation Committee to liaise with: (i) Catholic, Anglican, Baptist and other Victorian church bodies, and (ii) the GAA Church and Nation Committee, in order to gain a wider picture of the situation with regard to numbers and immigration status.
6. Request the Church and Nation Committee to liaise with: (i) Catholic, Anglican, Baptist and other Victorian church bodies, and (ii) the GAA Church and Nation Committee, in order to ascertain their willingness to make joint representation to the Federal Government and Federal Opposition through the agency of Australian Christian Lobby (ACL).
7. Request the Church and Nation Committee to report progress no later than the 2022 General Assembly.

or to do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

Signed by:
David Palmer
Neil Chambers
Andrew Vines
Chris Duke
Joel Mestry

Rev Andrew Vines and Rev Neil Chambers to state the petition.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

Treasurer's Financial Report For the year ended 30 June 2021



THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021
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THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA - BOARD OF INVESTMENT AND FINANCE

MEMBERS:

Rev B R Oakes B.Bus, M.Tax, B.Th. B.Min, MA(Min) - Chairman
Mr T C Arnold, B.Com, Dip FP, Grad Dip App Fin, F Fin (to October 2020)
Mr J Bligh B.Sc, B.Com
Mr E G de Zilwa B.Ec, LL.B, LL.M
Mr A Foster LLB(Hons), BA
Mr M Gibson B Surv(Hons), Grad Dip FP, CFP, SMSF SA (from December 2020)
Mr D Graham B.E(Hons), B.Sc
Rev A J Venn Dip Int Des, Grad Dip OB, Dip Th, ICT
Mr J Walter LL.B(Hons), MBA
Mr S R Williamson B. Eng, Adv Dip FP, CFP (to February 2021)
Mr D Wright B.Bus, MIPA AFA (from December 2020)

AUDITORS:

Saward Dawson

BANKERS:

National Australia Bank Limited

GENERAL MANAGER:

Mr M E Ellison, B.Sc, B.Com

SOLICITORS:

McCracken & McCracken

GENERAL OFFICE:

Assembly Hall
156 Collins Street
Melbourne Vic 3000

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021
ABN 89276382053**

**AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION UNDER SECTION 60 40 OF THE CHARITIES
AND NOT FOR PROFITS COMMISSION ACT 2012 TO THE BOARD OF INVESTMENT AND
FINANCE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA**

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2021, there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in section 60 40 of the Australian Charities and Not for profits Commission Act 2012 in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.


SAWARD DAWSON
Peter Shields

Principal

20 Albert Street, Blackburn.

Dated: 27 September 2021

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021
ABN 89276382053**

Opinion

We have audited the attached financial report being a special purpose financial report of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and its committees, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, and the statement of Income and expenditure and comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the Board of Investment and Finance Members' members' declaration.

In our opinion, the financial report of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria:

- a. gives a true and fair view of the organisation's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1; and
- b. complies with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of matter

a) Basis of Accounting

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 (page 10) to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to meet the requirements of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to prepare financial statements. As a result the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021
ABN 89276382053**

Board of Investment and Finance Members' responsibility for the financial report

The Board of Investment and Finance Members' are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements are appropriate to meet the requirements of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and are appropriate to meet the needs of the Board of Investment and Finance Members'. The Board of Investment and Finance Members' responsibility also includes designing, implementing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal controls relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Board of Investment and Finance Members', as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Presbyterian Church of Victoria internal control.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021
ABN 89276382053**

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the members.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Board of Investment and Finance Members' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on Presbyterian Church of Victoria's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause Presbyterian Church of Victoria to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

The financial statements have been prepared for distribution to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria for the purpose of fulfilling the accountability of the Board of Investment and Finance as Treasurer of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial statements to which it relates to any person other than the members of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

We communicate with the Board of Investment and Finance Members' regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.


SAWARD DAWSON
Peter Shields
Principal

20 Albert Street, Blackburn

Dated: 27 September 2021

BOARD OF INVESTMENT AND FINANCE MEMBERS' STATEMENT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

It is the opinion of the Board of Investment and Finance that:

- (a) the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements; and
- (b) this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 of the financial statements; and
- (c) the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria meets the definition of a Not for Profit Entity;
- (d) the financial statements, set out on pages 7 to 58 are drawn up so as to present fairly the financial position of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria at 30 June 2021 and the results of its operations for the year then ended and are in accordance with the basis of accounting described in Note 1 Page 11.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Investment and Finance dated at Melbourne this eighteenth day of August 2021.



B Oakes
Chairman



D Wright
Board of Investment and Finance member

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Capital			
Accumulated Funds		60,419,711	58,049,769
Reserves		30,682,865	30,481,562
Total Church Funds	2	91,102,577	88,531,331
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash Assets	5.1	5,695,746	8,404,658
Committee book stocks		6,481	6,462
Prepayments		5,676	8,819
Receivables	4	247,212	940,075
Investments	1.10		
Common Fund		36,243,491	33,192,925
Separately Invested Funds		26,642,540	28,581,634
Total Current Assets		68,841,144	71,134,574
Non-Current Assets			
Investments	1.10		
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	21,440,948	22,519,490
Property held for Investment - Assembly Hall	1.18(iv), 7	10,175,000	10,360,000
Common Fund - Perpetual Trust Funds		7,081,897	7,016,661
Secured Loans		4,905,080	5,271,901
Separately Invested Funds - Perpetual		1,122,334	1,005,643
Total Investments		44,725,259	46,173,695
Total Non-Current Assets		44,725,259	46,173,695
Total Assets		113,566,403	117,308,269
Current Liabilities			
Employee Benefits		34,001	23,350
Trade and Other Payables		1,392,653	926,409
Kirkbrae Ingoings		17,006,148	22,969,552
Provisions for Annual, Long Service and Study Leave		1,644,115	1,876,975
Trust Funds and Deposits		60,142	58,924
Total Current Liabilities		20,137,059	25,855,210
Non-Current Liabilities			
Loan PCV Common Fund		2,040,956	2,342,777
Provisions for Long Service and Study Leave		285,811	578,950
Total Non-Current Liabilities		2,326,768	2,921,728
Total Liabilities		22,463,827	28,776,938
Net Assets		91,102,577	88,531,331

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 11 to 19.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue			
Operating Revenue			
Bequests		60,000	-
Camp and Conference Income		11,198	92,097
Contributions, Donations and Levies		729,049	500,524
General Mission Programme		126,851	212,082
Grants and Subsidies Received		7,950,116	5,900,422
Interest and Investment Income		3,061,598	4,219,507
Kirkbrae Fees, Ingoings and Meals		2,330,024	3,488,385
Lease Finance Income		336,542	596,766
Management Fees		142,240	146,528
Rental Income		96,406	86,102
Scots' Church Properties Trust		1,080,673	1,057,386
Tuition Fees and Bookshop Profit		482,160	376,015
Total Operating Revenue		16,406,856	16,675,815
Other Income			
Net Realised and Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments	1.10	2,544,028	(1,873,166)
Total Other Income		2,544,028	(1,873,166)
Expenses			
Audit and Review Fees		122,229	56,912
Agencies outside PCV		27,440	75,460
Bursaries, Prizes and Tuition Fees		73,071	78,890
Camp Expenses		14,343	112,747
Depreciation		1,096,413	1,053,230
Distributions, Grants and Subsidies		2,049,768	3,066,906
Education, Training and Library		187,952	230,685
Fees Chaplaincy and Consulting		99,456	100,070
General Assembly Expenses		35,972	161,882
Impairment on Assets		185,000	-
Insurance Fire and General		132,217	159,457
Interest Paid		89,313	130,692
Kirkbrae Residents Expenses		702,192	1,060,920
Lease Finance Expense		336,542	596,766
Legal Fees and Costs		83,004	78,179
Loss/(Profit) on sale of assets		408,577	386
Office Expenses		661,331	434,671
Personnel Related Costs		9,929,035	10,167,123
Net Impairment on Bed Licences	1.18	-	3,300,000
Property Expenses and Improvements		1,530,257	1,845,662
Total Expenses		17,764,111	22,710,638
Surplus/(Deficit) before Sites Reserve		1,186,774	(7,907,989)

Consolidated Statement of Income and Expenditure and Other Comprehensive Income is continued on the following page

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021 (continued)

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Sites Reserve			
Revenue			
Interest and Investment Income		656,203	772,895
Net Realised and Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments	1.10	1,017,697	(281,671)
Other Income		49,864	-
Proceeds of sale of property		<u>1,467,219</u>	<u>636,968</u>
Total Sites Reserve Revenue		<u>3,190,983</u>	<u>1,128,192</u>
Expenses			
Ministry expenses incurred by congregations		764,924	734,770
Property improvements and expenses		<u>1,041,587</u>	<u>835,678</u>
Total Sites Reserve Expenses		<u>1,806,511</u>	<u>1,570,448</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) from Sites Reserve		<u>1,384,472</u>	<u>(442,256)</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities		<u>2,571,246</u>	<u>(8,350,245)</u>
Other Comprehensive Income		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Comprehensive Income	5.2	<u>2,571,246</u>	<u>(8,350,245)</u>

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 11 to 19.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	Retained Earnings \$	Sites Reserve \$	Other Reserves \$	Total \$
Balance at 30 June 2019		62,862,507	19,356,352	14,662,716	96,881,576
(Deficit) attributable to beneficiaries		(4,607,989)	(442,256)	(3,300,000)	(8,350,245)
Transfers to/from Reserves		(204,750)	(771,196)	975,946	-
Balance at 30 June 2020	2	58,049,769	18,142,900	12,338,662	88,531,331
Surplus attributable to beneficiaries		1,186,774	1,384,472	-	2,571,246
Transfers to/(from) Reserves		1,183,169	(2,021,142)	837,973	-
Balance at 30 June 2021	2	60,419,711	17,506,230	13,176,635	91,102,577

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash receipts from operations		16,405,789	15,682,369
Cash payments from operations		(18,117,151)	(19,707,922)
Net cash (used in) operating activities	5.2	(1,711,363)	(4,025,553)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest Received		1,765,757	1,636,295
Dividends Received		832,331	2,045,536
Decrease in Trust funds and deposits		1,219	39
Payments for investment securities and term deposits		(18,073,274)	(25,489,822)
Payments for property, plant and equipment		(390,448)	(703,772)
Proceeds from sale of investment securities and term deposits		20,708,405	35,953,403
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		-	1,809
Net cash provided by investing activities		4,843,990	13,443,488
Cash flows from financing activities			
Interest paid		(89,313)	(130,692)
Net decrease in Capital Fund and Retirement Housing loans		(301,821)	(580,145)
Net decrease in residents loans and ingoings		(5,450,406)	(2,523,896)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities		(5,841,540)	(3,234,733)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		(2,708,912)	6,183,202
Cash at the beginning of the year		8,404,658	2,221,456
Cash at the end of the year	5.1	5,695,746	8,404,658

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 11 to 19.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The significant policies which have been adopted in the presentation of these financial statements are:

1.1 Basis of Preparation

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria is an unincorporated association and is domiciled in the state of Victoria.

In the opinion of the Board of Investment and Finance, the Presbyterian Church of Victoria is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements. The financial statements of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, set out on pages 7 to 57, have been drawn up as a Special Purpose Financial Report for use by the General Assembly.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis under the historical cost convention and on a going concern assumption. All figures are in Australian dollars. They do not take into account changing money values or current valuations of non-current assets except to the extent that the revaluation of land and buildings and investments (as noted in the financial statements) partially reflects such changes. Except where noted, the accounting policies have been consistently applied.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the significant accounting policies disclosed below, which the members have determined are appropriate to meet the purposes of preparation. Such accounting policies are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise.

1.2 Consolidation

The assets and liabilities, income and expenses of the General Assembly and its Committees form the Consolidated Statements of the "Presbyterian Church of Victoria" as set out on page 7.

The Consolidated Financial Statements, together with these notes have been prepared from the audited books and records for the year ended 30 June 2021 of the following entities:

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria
Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes for Aged People (Refer to Note 1 Page 48)
Sites Reserve

All inter-entity balances and transactions have been eliminated.

1.3 Common Fund Investments - at Call are shown in three categories:

- (a) General Purposes - Those available for all purposes of the General Assembly and of each Committee.
- (b) Specific Purposes - Those available for specified purposes only, details of which appear in the notes attached to the accounts.
- (c) Perpetual - Capital sums which must be preserved and cannot be expended.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

1.4 Revenue

The core principle of AASB 15 is that revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration the Presbyterian Church of Victoria expects to receive in exchange for those goods or services. Revenue is recognised by applying a five-step model as follows:

1. Identify the contract with the customer.
2. Identify the performance obligations.
3. Determine the transaction price.
4. Allocate the transaction price to the performance obligations.
5. Recognise revenue as and when control of the performance obligations is transferred.

Generally the timing of the payment for sale of goods and rendering of services corresponds closely to the timing of satisfaction of the performance obligations, however where there is a difference, it will result in the recognition of a receivable, contract asset or contract liability.

None of the revenue streams of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria have any significant financing terms as there is less than 12 months between receipt of funds and satisfaction of performance obligations.

Provision of services

Revenue from the rendering of services is recognised upon the delivery of the service.

Camp, Conference Income and Tuition fees are therefore only recognised where the participant attends the camp or conference or the tuition has been provided.

Revenue in relation to rendering of services is recognised depending on whether the outcome of the services can be estimated reliably.

If the outcome can be estimated reliably then the stage of completion of the services is used to determine the appropriate level of revenue to be recognised in the period.

If the outcome cannot be reliably estimated then revenue is recognised to the extent of expenses recognised that are recoverable.

Contributions, Donation

Contributions, donations and levies are recognised as revenue when the Presbyterian Church of Victoria gains control of the assets, as there is no enforceable contract.

Grant and Subsidies Received

Revenue recognition relating to grant funding is recognised on the basis that the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration expected to be received in exchange for those goods or services. Each agreement is analysed to determine the revenue recognition in accordance with the five step model. Where performance obligations have not been met, it will result in unearned income at year end.

Interest and Investment Income

Interest and Investment Income is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets and the point in time the Presbyterian Church of Victoria gains control of the income.

Kirkbrae Fees, Ingoings and Meals

Daily Accommodation Payments (DAPs) are recognised as income where a resident has not paid the full balance of a refundable accommodation deposit from the date of entry into permanent care. DAPs may be drawn down from the refundable deposit or paid in cash.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

1.4 Revenue (continued)

Rental income

Rental income is recognised at the time of property occupancy as the customer receives the benefit over time of the occupancy.

Sale of goods

Revenue is recognised on transfer of goods to the customer as this is deemed to be the point in time when control of the performance obligations are transferred.

Other revenue

Other revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration the Presbyterian Church of Victoria expects to receive in exchange for those goods or services.

Revenue from the distribution of the surplus from Scots' Church Properties Trust for the purpose of home mission and church extension is recognised when it is received.

1.5 Leases

At inception of a contract, the organisation assesses whether a lease exists - i.e. does the contract convey the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration.

This involves an assessment of whether:

- The contract involves the use of an identified asset - this may be explicitly or implicitly identified within the agreement. If the supplier has a substantive substitution right then there is no identified asset.
- The organisation has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from the use of the asset throughout the period of use.
- The organisation has the right to direct the use of the asset i.e. decision making rights in relation to changing how and for what purpose the asset is used.

Right-of-use asset

At the lease commencement, the organisation recognises a right-of-use asset and associated lease liability for the lease term. The lease term includes extension periods where the organisation believes it is reasonably certain that the option will be exercised.

The right-of-use asset is measured using the cost model where cost on initial recognition comprises of the lease liability, initial direct costs, prepaid lease payments, estimated cost of removal and restoration less any lease incentives received.

The right-of-use asset is depreciated over the lease term on a straight line basis and assessed for impairment in accordance with the impairment of assets accounting policy.

Lease liability

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments at the commencement of the lease. The discount rate is the rate implicit in the lease, however where this cannot be readily determined then the organisation's incremental borrowing rate is used.

Subsequent to initial recognition, the lease liability is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. The lease liability is remeasured whether there is a lease modification, change in estimate of the lease term or index upon which the lease payments are based (e.g. CPI) or a change in the organisation's assessment of lease term.

Where the lease liability is remeasured, the right-of-use asset is adjusted to reflect the remeasurement or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

1.5 Leases (continued)

Kirkbrae - Refundable Accommodation Deposits

Contracts with customers contain provisions for accommodation and use of common areas and facilities for provision of care and other services. The organisation has concluded that its contractual arrangements relating to the provision of residential aged care and retirement living accommodation are an operating lease pursuant to AASB 16, being the exclusive right to the use of a room/unit by a resident.

For residential aged care accommodation arrangements where the resident has elected to pay a Refundable Accommodation Deposit (RAD), the organisation receives a financing benefit, being non-cash consideration in the form of an interest free loan. On adoption of AASB 16 the fair value of this non-cash consideration is required to be recognised as income (to reflect the interest free loan financing benefit received on RADs) and correspondingly interest expense (to record the financial liability associated with RADs at fair value) with no net impact on profit or loss.

The application of AASB 16 for the year ended 30 June 2021 has been based on

- average RAD balance for the year, and
- interest rate equal to Maximum Permissible Interest Rate of 4.01% applicable at 30 June 2021 which is a Government set interest rate used to calculate the Daily Accommodation Payment (DAP) to applicable residents.

The organisation's Statement of Income and Expenditure and Other Comprehensive Income presents Income of \$336,542 and an additional Finance cost (i.e. interest expense) of \$336,542 with nil impact to net result for the year. The accounting treatment for residential aged care accommodating arrangements where residents have elected to pay a DAP has not changed upon adopting AASB 16.

1.6 Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, Plant and Equipment are recorded at cost or deemed cost and are depreciated using the straight line method.

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at the end of each reporting period. Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains and losses are included in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Other Comprehensive Income.

1.7 Provision for Employee Entitlements

The provision for employee entitlements relates to amounts expected to be paid to or on behalf of employees for annual leave, long service and study leave and is based on legal and contractual entitlements.

Provision is made for the organisation's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus related on-costs. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may not satisfy vesting requirements.

Contributions made by the organisation to an employee superannuation fund are charged as expenses when incurred.

1.8 Income Tax

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria is a non-profit entity registered as a religious charitable organisation with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and as such is exempt from Income Tax pursuant to Section 50-5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. Two trusts have Deductible Gift Recipient status. These are the Theological Education Committee Building Fund, and the Theological Education Committee Library Fund. The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Social Services Committee has been classified as a Public Benevolent Institution with Deductible Gift Recipient Status.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

1.9 Inventories

Inventories are carried at the lower of cost or net realisable value. Cost is based on the first-in first-out principle and includes expenditure incurred in acquiring the inventories and bringing them to their existing condition and location.

1.10 Investments

Investments are carried in the financial statements at fair value and unrealised gains and losses are recognised in the Income Statement. Shares and units in investment trusts have been revalued to market value as at 30 June 2021 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$2,544,028 (2020 losses of \$1,873,166), and a net gain in Sites Reserve of \$1,017,697 (2020 loss of \$281,671).

1.11 Comparative Figures

When changes are made as a result of changes to accounting standards or as a result of changes in accounting policies, comparative figures are adjusted to conform with the presentation in the current financial year.

1.12 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at-call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

1.13 Impairment of Assets

At the end of each reporting period, the organisation assesses whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. If such an indication exists, an impairment test is carried out on the asset by comparing the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, to the asset's carrying amount. Any excess of the asset's carrying amount over its recoverable amount is recognised immediately in profit or loss, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount in accordance with another standard. Any impairment loss of a revalued asset is treated as a revaluation decrease in accordance with that other standard.

Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the organisation estimates the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

1.14 Trade and other payables

Trade and other payables represent the liabilities for goods and services received by the organisation during the reporting period that remain unpaid at the end of the reporting period. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

1.15 Accommodation Bonds and Retentions

Accommodation Bonds and Refundable Accommodation Deposits for residents in aged care facilities are held in accordance with the Aged Care Act 1997. Retention amounts are only deducted from accommodation bonds received from residents who entered care before 30 June 2014 in accordance with the Aged Care Act 1997. Retentions are not applicable on refundable accommodation deposits for residents who entered care after 1 July 2014. Residents have a choice of paying their accommodation cost as a refundable lump sum or as a daily payment. Daily payments may be drawn down from the refundable balance or paid in cash.

The accommodation deposit liability is recognised when a resident pays a deposit. The net liability is refunded according to the requirements of the Act when a resident leaves. All of these liabilities have been classified as current as the organisation does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement beyond 12 months.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

1.16 Ingoing Contributions and Retentions

Ingoing contributions from cottage residents are held in accordance with the signed resident agreement. The non-refundable portion of the ingoing contribution is deducted in accordance with the signed resident agreement. The ingoing contribution liability is recognised when a resident moves into a facility. All of these liabilities have been classified as current as Kirkbrae does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement beyond 12 months.

1.17 Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are presented as operating cash flows included in receipts from customers or payments to suppliers.

1.18 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

The Board of Investment and Finance evaluates estimates and judgements incorporated into the financial report based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the organisation.

(i) Key estimates - Impairment

The organisation assesses impairment at each reporting date by evaluating conditions specific to the organisation that may lead to impairment of assets. Where an impairment trigger exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined. Value-in-use or depreciated replacement cost calculations performed in assessing recoverable amounts incorporate a number of key estimates.

(ii) Key judgements - Useful lives of property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment are depreciated over their useful life and the depreciation rates are assessed when the assets are acquired or when there is significant change that affects the remaining useful life of the asset.

(iii) Key estimates - Bed licence values

The committee reviews current information available for the values of bed licences each year. This information is used to assess bed licences for impairment at each reporting date. For the year ended 30 June 2021 the value has been assessed to be fully impaired and is shown as a nil value

(iv) Value of the interest held in Assembly Hall

The Board of Investment and Finance has assessed the fair value of Assembly Hall to be \$27.5 million. This sum was based on a valuation obtained in October 2020. Based on that value the 37% interest now held by the Presbyterian Church of Victoria for Home Mission and church extension is worth \$10,175,000.

2. Accumulated Funds and Reserves

Balance at beginning	88,531,331	96,881,576
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	2,571,246	(8,350,245)
Consolidated Church Funds	91,102,577	88,531,331
Represented by:		
Committee and General Assembly Funds	60,419,711	58,049,769
Asset Revaluation Reserves		
Land and Buildings: Kirkbrae Properties	3,276,956	3,276,956
Church Extension and Home Mission Reserve	9,899,679	9,061,706
Sites Reserve	17,506,230	18,142,900
Total Reserves	30,682,865	30,481,562
Total Accumulated Funds and Reserves	91,102,577	88,531,331

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

		2021	2020
		\$	\$
3. Property, Plant and Equipment			
Land and Buildings at cost		32,299,499	32,123,174
Accumulated Depreciation		(11,390,488)	(10,540,195)
Accumulated Impairment Loss		(176,770)	-
		<u>20,732,242</u>	<u>21,582,979</u>
Plant and Equipment at cost		1,450,419	1,752,970
Accumulated Depreciation		(1,313,449)	(1,549,022)
		<u>136,970</u>	<u>203,948</u>
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at cost		1,973,761	1,955,361
Accumulated Depreciation		(1,496,560)	(1,331,609)
		<u>477,201</u>	<u>623,751</u>
Motor Vehicles at cost		301,906	280,956
Accumulated Depreciation		(207,372)	(172,145)
		<u>94,534</u>	<u>108,811</u>
Total Property, Plant and Equipment		<u>21,440,948</u>	<u>22,519,490</u>
4. Receivables			
Franking Credits Receivable		84,030	260,158
Sundry Debtors and Kirkbrae Resident Receivables	1.2	<u>163,182</u>	<u>679,917</u>
		<u>247,212</u>	<u>940,075</u>

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
5.1 Reconciliation of Cash		
For the purpose of the Statement of Cash Flows, cash includes cash on hand and at bank and on short term deposit. Cash as at the end of the financial year as shown in the Statement of Cash Flows is reconciled to the related items in the Statement of Financial Position as follows:		
Cash on Hand and at Bank	5,695,746	8,404,658
5.2 Reconciliation of operating result to net cash provided by operating activities		
Total Comprehensive Income	2,571,246	(8,350,245)
Add/(less) items classified as investing/financing activities		
Interest paid	89,313	130,692
Interest/dividends received	(2,426,654)	(2,867,250)
Add/(less) non-cash items:		
Depreciation and amortisation of assets	1,096,413	1,053,230
Retentions claimed	(487,371)	(593,712)
Net losses on sale of property, plant and equipment and investments	168,964	1,294,364
Net unrealised losses/(gains) on revaluation of Investments	(3,561,709)	2,154,872
Net impairment on Assembly Hall investment	185,000	-
Net impairment on Kirkbrae Assets	203,613	610,631
Net impairment on Bed Licences	-	3,300,000
Net cash (used in) operating activities before change in assets and liabilities	(2,161,185)	(3,267,418)
Change in assets and liabilities during the financial year		
Decrease/(increase) in sundry debtors	519,879	(205,544)
Decrease/(increase) in bookstore stock and Kirkbrae inventory	(19)	(931)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors and accruals	455,961	(466,387)
Increase/(decrease) in amounts set aside for provisions	(525,998)	(85,273)
Net cash (used in) operating activities	(1,711,363)	(4,025,553)

6. Related Party Information

The persons listed on page 1 of this report each held office as a member of the Board of Investment and Finance during the period ended 30 June 2021. The Board of Investment and Finance members receive no remuneration or other benefit for their services as trustees.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

7. Scots' Church Properties Trust

Arising from proceedings in the Supreme Court of Victoria between the Attorney-General of Victoria on the relation of The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation and the Trustees of the Scots Church Properties Trust ("SCPT"), the Court found that there had been several breaches of trust by the Trustees of the SCPT. Specifically, the Court held that the sum of \$11,402,419.64 used to acquire, develop and improve Assembly Hall had been used or applied by the Trustees in breach of trust. The Court declared that Assembly Hall (156 Collins Street Melbourne) is held on trust:

- a) as to a 63% interest for Scots' Church Board of Management Limited [ACN 618 924 155] as nominee of the Board of Management of the congregation of the Scots' Church Melbourne which interest is to be held and applied for the charitable purposes stipulated in the sixthly provision of clause 7 of the Deed of Trust made 23 July 1891, as amended ("the Trust Deed"), for which payments under that clause are made to the board of management of the congregation of the Scots' Church Melbourne; and
- b) as to the remaining 37% interest for The Presbyterian Church of Victoria as nominee for the Presbyterian Church of Victoria which interest is to be held and applied for the charitable purposes stipulated in the sixthly provision of clause 7 of the Trust Deed, for which payments under that clause are made to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

By Order of the Court, Assembly Hall was subsequently transferred to Scots' Church Board of Management Limited and The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation. The title issued in June 2018. The interest in Assembly Hall arising from the proceedings in the Supreme Court of Victoria was awarded for nil consideration.

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria holds its interest in the building for the purposes of home mission and church extension in Victoria.

8. Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes

On 16 June 2020 the Presbyterian Church of Victoria took the decision to incorporate a new entity Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd (PCVL) which will assume the oversight of Kirkbrae. All assets in connection with Kirkbrae will be transferred to PCVL once it is incorporated.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Capital			
Accumulated Funds		26,833,365	23,570,017
Reserves		9,899,679	9,061,706
Total General Assembly Funds	1	36,733,044	32,631,723
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank and on Hand		10,318	5,703
Franking Credits Receivable		17,739	16,555
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		297	3,058
		28,355	25,316
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		4,300,594	3,386,292
Specific Purposes	3	8,570,588	6,230,457
Separately Invested Funds	4	8,383,699	7,399,842
Total Investments		21,254,881	17,016,591
Total Current Assets		21,283,236	17,041,907
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Loans to Assembly Committees		137,651	-
Secured Loans	5	4,989,080	5,355,901
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		2,439,653	2,439,653
Total Investments		7,566,385	7,795,555
Property, Plant and Equipment	6	16,081	18,328
Property held for Investment	6.1	10,175,000	10,360,000
Total Non-Current Assets		17,757,466	18,173,882
Total Assets		39,040,702	35,215,789
Current Liabilities			
Capital Fund Deposits by Congregations		59,407	58,924
Sundry Creditors and Accruals	7	102,538	70,959
Provision for Annual Leave		38,473	37,792
Provision for Long Service Leave		66,283	73,614
Total Current Liabilities		266,701	241,289
Non-Current Liabilities			
Loan from Common Fund		2,040,956	2,342,777
Total Non Current Liabilities		2,040,956	2,342,777
Total Liabilities		2,307,658	2,584,066
Net Assets		36,733,044	32,631,723

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 22 to 24.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	General \$	Specific \$	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue					
Bequests, Donations, Gifts & Levies		2,530	242,464	244,994	89,693
General Mission Programme		26,440	-	26,440	142,746
Government Grants	2	966,517	-	966,517	21,078
Interest and Investment Income		488,008	709,283	1,197,290	1,580,492
Jobkeeper allocation	2.1	68,729	-	68,729	-
Management Fees Received		142,240	-	142,240	146,528
Realised and Unrealised Gains/(Losses) on Investments	4	-	799,580	799,580	(33,845)
Rental Income		20,424	6,350	26,774	12,809
Scots' Church Properties Trust	1.1	57,700	1,022,973	1,080,673	1,057,386
Sundry Income		3,000	-	3,000	4,417
Total Revenue		1,775,588	2,780,649	4,556,237	3,021,304
Expenses					
Accounting and Audit Fees		37,020	-	37,020	21,182
Depreciation		4,377	-	4,377	5,646
Distributions, Grants and Subsidies		5,400	321,187	326,587	420,629
Education and Training		1,330	-	1,330	-
General Assembly Expenses		24,562	11,411	35,972	161,882
General Mission Programme Distributions		26,440	-	26,440	59,460
Impairment on Assets		-	185,000	185,000	-
Insurance and Risk Management		6,937	23,630	30,567	32,933
Interest Paid		-	89,244	89,244	126,690
JobKeeper disbursements to committees and congregations	2.1	857,168	-	857,168	-
Legal Fees and Costs		43,669	12,204	55,873	67,492
Office Expenses		13,571	-	13,571	19,559
Personnel Related Costs		669,628	1,453	671,082	565,437
Property Expenses and Improvements		81,827	-	81,827	18,976
Total Expenses		1,771,929	644,129	2,416,058	1,499,884
Surplus from ordinary activities		3,659	2,136,520	2,140,179	1,521,419
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		3,659	2,136,520	2,140,179	1,521,419

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 22 to 24.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
1. General Assembly Funds			
Balance at beginning		23,570,017	22,253,348
Surplus from ordinary activities		2,140,179	1,521,419
Transfers from Sites Reserve	1.2	2,021,142	771,196
Less: transfer of Mickle bequest to Safe Church committee		(60,000)	-
Less: transfer to Reserves	6.1	(837,973)	(975,946)
Accumulated Funds		26,833,365	23,570,017
Home Mission and Church Extension Reserve			
Balance at beginning		9,061,706	8,085,760
Repayment of General Assembly funds advanced	1.1	1,022,973	975,946
Surplus/(Deficit) from Other Comprehensive Income		(185,000)	-
Total Home Mission and Church Extension Reserve		9,899,679	9,061,706
Total General Assembly Funds		36,733,044	32,631,723

1.1 Scots Church Properties Trust distributions

Distributions from the Scots' Church Properties Trust will be applied towards a reduction of the amounts advanced by the General Assembly towards the legal costs relating to the charitable purposes of home mission and church extension, until those funds have been recovered. An amount of \$1,022,973 (2020 \$975,946) was received in the current year and applied in this way.

Income Distributions from the Scots' Church Properties Trust are accounted for on a cash basis.

1.2 Transfers from Sites Reserve

In May 2019 the General Assembly approved the transfer of amounts totalling \$1,603,457 from various Sites Reserve accounts to fund the liabilities for the National Redress Scheme. An amount of \$771,196 was transferred in the prior year.

In May 2021 the General Assembly approved the transfer of amounts totalling \$2,021,142 from various Sites Reserve accounts to a fund for Designated Purposes.
(See note 2.1 on page 58)

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
2. Government Grants			
Cash Flow Boost		18,217	21,078
JobKeeper receipts	2.1	948,300	-
		<u>966,517</u>	<u>21,078</u>
2.1 JobKeeper Receipts and Disbursements			
The JobKeeper receipts represent the gross figure received by the Church excluding amounts paid to Kirkbrae. After meeting top-up wage payments, professional fees and administration costs amounts totalling \$857,168 were disbursed to congregations and committees.			
3. Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes			
Beneficiary Funds		282,827	193,747
Capital Fund		1,558,036	1,498,426
General Assembly of Australia		263,393	245,734
Insurance Fund		119,678	134,311
Moderator's and Visiting Missionary Expenses		267,322	260,483
Overseas Visitors		251,577	234,711
Balfour Memorial Trust		994,901	990,341
Simon Fraser Trust		931,410	917,339
Pres-AID Appeals		25,808	19,580
Designated Purposes		2,045,106	-
National Redress Scheme		1,830,531	1,735,785
		<u>8,570,588</u>	<u>6,230,457</u>
4. Separately Invested Funds			
Beneficiary Funds		2,729,272	2,358,255
Ministers Retirement Housing		5,654,427	4,982,460
Capital Fund		-	59,127
		<u>8,383,699</u>	<u>7,399,842</u>
Investments have been revalued to market value as at 30 June 2021 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$799,580 (2020 losses of \$33,845). These funds are designated for Specific Purposes.			
5. Secured Loans			
Ministers' Retirement Housing Fund		2,948,124	3,013,124
Capital Fund		2,040,956	2,342,777
		<u>4,989,080</u>	<u>5,355,901</u>
6. Property, Plant and Equipment			
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment		75,245	73,114
Accumulated Depreciation		(59,164)	(54,787)
Total Property, Plant and Equipment		<u>16,081</u>	<u>18,328</u>

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	2021 \$	2020 \$
6.1 Property held for Investment - Assembly Hall		
Land and Buildings at Cost - Assembly Hall	10,175,000	10,360,000

Arising from proceedings in the Supreme Court of Victoria between the Attorney-General of Victoria on the relation of The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation and the Trustees of the Scots Church Properties Trust ("SCPT"), the Court found that there had been several breaches of trust by the Trustees of the SCPT. Specifically, the Court held that the sum of \$11,402,419.64 used to acquire, develop and improve Assembly Hall had been used or applied by the Trustees in breach of trust. The Court declared that Assembly Hall (156 Collins Street Melbourne) is held on trust:

- a) as to a 63% interest for Scots' Church Board of Management Limited [ACN 618 924 155] as nominee of the Board of Management of the congregation of the Scots' Church Melbourne which interest is to be held and applied for the charitable purposes stipulated in the sixthly provision of clause 7 of the Deed of Trust made 23 July 1891, as amended ("the **Trust Deed**"), for which payments under that clause are made to the board of management of the congregation of the Scots' Church Melbourne; and
- b) as to the remaining 37% interest for The Presbyterian Church of Victoria as nominee for the Presbyterian Church of Victoria which interest is to be held and applied for the charitable purposes stipulated in the sixthly provision of clause 7 of the Trust Deed, for which payments under that clause are made to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

By Order of the Court, Assembly Hall was subsequently transferred to Scots' Church Board of Management Limited and The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation. The title issued in June 2018. The interest in Assembly Hall arising from the proceedings in the Supreme Court of Victoria was awarded for nil consideration.

In October 2020, the trustees obtained a sworn valuation of \$27.5 million for Assembly Hall. The valuation has been used by the trustees to determine the value of the 37% interest in Assembly Hall which is held by the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria holds its interest in the building for the purposes of home mission and church extension in Victoria.

7. Sundry Creditors and Accruals

Accounting and Audit Fees	19,894	12,160
Employee Benefits	10,018	5,403
PAYG Tax and Fringe Benefits Tax	49,004	50,787
Trade and Other Payables	23,622	2,609
	<u>102,538</u>	<u>70,959</u>

8. Archives & Historic Records

Expenses

Office Expenses and Rent	7,362	7,729
Personnel Related Costs	29,982	36,864
Storage and Retrieval Costs	10,295	11,350
Total Expenses	<u>47,639</u>	<u>55,943</u>
(Deficit) from ordinary activities	<u>(47,639)</u>	<u>(55,943)</u>

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
AUSTRALIAN PRESBYTERIAN WORLD MISSION (VIC) COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Committee Funds	1	852,868	849,562
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		256,756	242,559
Specific Purposes	2	200,047	204,112
Total Current Assets		456,804	446,670
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		374,122	374,122
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	21,942	28,770
Total Non-Current Assets		396,064	402,892
Total Assets		852,868	849,562
Net Assets		852,868	849,562

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	General \$	Specific \$	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue					
Donations and Appeals		590	40,749	41,339	36,612
General Mission Programme		34,948	-	34,948	20,822
Interest and Investment Income		40,126	18,763	58,888	71,386
Other Income		-	-	-	1,825
Total Revenue		75,663	59,512	135,175	130,645
Expenses					
Depreciation		6,828	-	6,828	7,156
Distributions, Grants and Subsidies		40,209	58,027	98,236	115,525
Motor Vehicle Expenses		11,517	-	11,517	12,456
Office Expenses		169	-	169	3,443
Personnel Related Costs		15,119	-	15,119	16,165
Total Expenses		73,843	58,027	131,870	154,746
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities		1,821	1,485	3,306	(24,101)
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		1,821	1,485	3,306	(24,101)

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 26.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

AUSTRALIAN PRESBYTERIAN WORLD MISSION (VIC) COMMITTEE

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	849,562	873,663
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	3,306	(24,101)
Committee Funds	852,868	849,562
2. Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes		
Dayspring (Transport in Vanuatu)	3,565	3,070
Dehra Dun Presbyterian Theological College	1,824	2,227
Overseas Missionary work	80,245	82,494
Overseas Missionary work within Australia	114,413	116,320
	200,047	204,112
3. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Motor Vehicles	90,233	90,233
Accumulated Depreciation	(68,291)	(61,463)
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	21,942	28,770

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND NURTURE COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Committee Funds	1	<u>1,439,651</u>	<u>1,463,431</u>
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		487,934	495,203
Specific Purposes	2	<u>654,411</u>	<u>670,241</u>
Total Current Assets		<u>1,142,345</u>	<u>1,165,444</u>
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		296,102	296,102
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	<u>1,204</u>	<u>1,885</u>
Total Non-Current Assets		<u>297,306</u>	<u>297,987</u>
Total Assets		<u>1,439,651</u>	<u>1,463,431</u>
Net Assets		<u>1,439,651</u>	<u>1,463,431</u>

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 28.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND NURTURE COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	General \$	Specific \$	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue					
Interest and Investment Income		52,955	48,023	100,978	125,452
Women's Ministry Income		3,425	-	3,425	464
Total Revenue		56,380	48,023	104,403	125,916
Expenses					
Bursaries and Prizes		-	5,135	5,135	5,330
Depreciation		681	-	681	513
Education, Training and Seminars		4,186	-	4,186	2,093
Grants and Subsidies		57,551	45,899	103,450	114,206
Insurance		450	-	450	450
Office Expenses		1,254	736	1,990	880
Personnel Related Costs		208	12,083	12,290	27,025
Total Expenses		64,330	63,853	128,183	150,498
(Deficit) from ordinary activities		(7,950)	(15,830)	(23,779)	(24,583)
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		(7,950)	(15,830)	(23,779)	(24,583)

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	1,463,431	1,488,013
(Deficit) from ordinary activities	(23,779)	(24,583)
Committee Funds	1,439,651	1,463,431
2. Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes		
Sunday School work and scholarships in the terms of the Allan Bequest	654,411	670,241
3. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at cost	6,267	6,267
Accumulated Depreciation	(5,063)	(4,382)
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	1,204	1,885

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CHURCH AND NATION COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Committee Funds	1	356,922	352,710
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		359,866	355,053
Total Current Assets		359,866	355,053
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	2	610	1,276
Total Non-Current Assets		610	1,276
Total Assets		360,476	356,329
Current Liabilities			
Annual Leave Provision		3,554	3,619
Net Assets		356,922	352,710

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue		
Colloquium - Registration Fees	-	17,705
Donations	1,000	-
Government Grants	8,287	766
Sponsorship of Colloquium	-	3,000
Overseas Speaker Grant	-	10,000
Interest and Investment Income	24,894	29,954
Profit on Sale of Publications	31	395
Total Revenue	34,213	61,820
Expenses		
Conferences	-	40,365
Depreciation	666	668
Insurances	450	450
Office Expenses	850	1,424
Personnel Related Costs	28,036	30,302
Total Expenses	30,002	73,208
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	4,211	(11,388)
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income	4,211	(11,388)

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 30.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

CHURCH AND NATION COMMITTEE

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	352,710	364,099
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	4,211	(11,388)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Committee Funds	356,922	352,710
	<hr/>	<hr/>
2. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at cost	3,549	3,549
Accumulated Depreciation	(2,938)	(2,272)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	610	1,276
	<hr/>	<hr/>

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CHURCH PLANTING COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Accumulated Funds	1	529,464	585,508
Represented by:			
Current Assets:			
Cash at Bank and on Hand		858	729
Deposits and prepayments		900	900
		<u>1,758</u>	<u>1,629</u>
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		-	81,586
Specific Purposes - Property Development		626,113	509,422
		<u>626,113</u>	<u>591,008</u>
Total Investments		<u>626,113</u>	<u>591,008</u>
Total Current Assets		<u>627,871</u>	<u>592,637</u>
Total Assets		<u>627,871</u>	<u>592,637</u>
Current Liabilities			
Annual Leave Provision		9,921	6,400
Employee Benefits		858	729
Total Liabilities		<u>10,779</u>	<u>7,129</u>
Non-Current Liabilities			
Loan from General Assembly		87,628	-
Total Liabilities		<u>98,407</u>	<u>7,129</u>
Net Assets		<u>529,464</u>	<u>585,508</u>

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 32.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

CHURCH PLANTING COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	General \$	Property Development Fund \$	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue					
Donations		-	25,045	25,045	-
Grants		13,174	54,537	67,711	1,205
Interest and Investment Income		1,908	37,109	39,016	55,887
Rental Income		16,350	-	16,350	-
Total Revenue		31,432	116,691	148,122	57,092
Expenses					
Consultancy expenses		1,800	-	1,800	-
Donations to outside organisations		1,000	-	1,000	16,000
Education and Training		-	-	-	1,810
Grants	2	99,398	-	99,398	1,360,144
Interest		1,004	-	1,004	-
Personnel Related Costs		100,964	-	100,964	101,649
Total Expenses		204,167	-	204,167	1,479,603
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities		(172,735)	116,691	(56,044)	(1,422,511)
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		(172,735)	116,691	(56,044)	(1,422,511)

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
1. Accumulated Funds			
Balance at beginning		585,508	2,008,019
(Deficit) from ordinary activities		(56,044)	(1,422,511)
Committee Funds		529,464	585,508
2. Grants			
Operating grant re Officer congregation		39,198	55,200
Start-up grant re Donnybrook congregation		16,200	-
Operating grant re Donnybrook congregation		44,000	-
Property grant re Officer congregation	2.1	-	1,304,944
		99,398	1,360,144

- 2.1** In June 2020, the Commission of the General Assembly in response to a request from the New Life Presbyterian Congregation and in accordance with the authority under s19 of the *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890* gave the final approval for the property at 101 Tivendale Road Officer to be held under the Model Trust Deed. The property was previously held in the name of the committee. The transfer was affected by a grant from the committee to the congregation based on the book value of the asset.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
HEALTH AND COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Committee Funds	1	<u>3,052,051</u>	<u>2,855,921</u>
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank and on Hand		372	305
Franking Credits Receivable		3,317	7,183
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		1,092,833	1,066,250
Specific Purposes	2	655,292	632,494
Separately Invested Funds			
Specific Purposes	2	<u>207,146</u>	<u>176,858</u>
Total Investments		<u>1,955,271</u>	<u>1,875,602</u>
Total Current Assets		<u>1,958,961</u>	<u>1,883,090</u>
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Separately Invested Funds - Perpetual Funds	2	1,122,334	1,005,643
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	<u>848</u>	<u>1,615</u>
Total Non-Current Assets		<u>1,123,182</u>	<u>1,007,258</u>
Total Assets		<u>3,082,143</u>	<u>2,890,348</u>
Current Liabilities			
Accrued Annual Leave		23,571	25,776
Accrued Long Service Leave		6,149	8,346
Employee Benefits		<u>372</u>	<u>305</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>30,093</u>	<u>34,427</u>
Net Assets		<u>3,052,051</u>	<u>2,855,921</u>

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 35.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	General \$	Specific \$	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue					
Donations and Levies		26,959	22,500	49,459	18,019
Family Camp Income	4	-	-	-	16,905
Grants and Subsidies Received		6,608	61,824	68,432	27,733
Interest and Investment Income		75,480	93,062	168,542	186,843
Profit on Sale of Asset		-	-	-	67
Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments	2	-	137,268	137,268	(26,346)
Total Revenue		109,047	314,653	423,700	223,221
Expenses					
Chaplaincy & Pastoral Support		52,675	1,750	54,425	60,639
Depreciation		767	-	767	912
Education and Training		697	-	697	788
Family Camp	4	-	-	-	33,394
Insurance Professional Indemnity		1,125	-	1,125	1,125
Office Expenses		3,120	605	3,725	4,771
Personnel Related Costs		20,446	146,386	166,832	196,013
Total Expenses		78,830	148,741	227,571	297,642
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities		30,218	165,911	196,129	(74,422)
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		30,218	165,911	196,129	(74,422)

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 35.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
HEALTH AND COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	2,855,921	2,930,343
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	196,129	(74,422)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Committee Funds	3,052,051	2,855,921
	<hr/>	<hr/>
2. Investments - Specific Purposes		
Specific Purposes		
Common Fund at Call		
Children or Other Social Service	600,679	595,583
Children's Hospital Chaplaincy	54,613	36,911
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	655,292	632,494
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Separately Invested Funds		
Children's Hospital Chaplaincy	207,146	176,858
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	862,438	809,352
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Perpetual Funds		
Separately Invested Funds		
Children's Hospital Chaplaincy	1,122,334	1,005,643
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Separately Invested Funds	1,984,772	1,814,995
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Separately Invested Funds have been revalued to market value as at 30 June 2021 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$137,268 (2020 losses of \$26,346). These funds are designated for Specific		
3. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment	4,302	4,302
Accumulated Depreciation	(3,454)	(2,687)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	848	1,615
	<hr/>	<hr/>
4. Ministers Family Camp Expenses		
Camp Expenses	-	33,394
Camp Fees	-	(16,905)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	16,489
	<hr/>	<hr/>

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Committee Funds	1	1,454,456	1,462,510
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		902,573	919,229
Long Service Leave Funds		1,491,244	1,408,823
Total Investments		2,393,817	2,328,052
Total Current Assets		2,393,817	2,328,052
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		42,466	42,466
Total Non-Current Assets		42,466	42,466
Total Assets		2,436,282	2,370,517
Current Liabilities			
Provision for Long Service Leave Benefits		848,674	763,130
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provision for Long Service Leave Benefits		133,152	144,878
Total Liabilities		981,826	908,007
Net Assets		1,454,456	1,462,510

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 37.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	General	Long Service	2021	2020
	\$	Leave	\$	\$
		\$		
Revenue				
Interest and Investment Income	67,479	102,415	169,894	211,148
Long Service Leave Levy	-	42,000	42,000	59,393
Total Revenue	67,479	144,415	211,894	270,541
Expenses				
Grants	74,592	142,911	217,503	208,055
Interest Subsidy on Ministers' Car Loans	2,445	-	2,445	4,002
Office Expenses	-	-	-	451
Total Expenses	77,037	142,911	219,948	212,507
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	(9,558)	1,504	(8,054)	58,034
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income	(9,558)	1,504	(8,054)	58,034

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	1,462,510	1,404,476
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	(8,054)	58,034
Committee Funds	1,454,456	1,462,510

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
METRO COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Accumulated Funds	1	729,849	771,407
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		729,849	771,407
Net Assets		729,849	771,407

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue		
Donations	4,000	5,790
Interest and Investment Income	52,013	67,565
Sundry Income	-	819
Youth Metro Income	1,000	3,950
Total Revenue	57,013	78,124
Expenses		
Grants paid	95,377	103,478
Office Expenses	46	1,553
Personnel Related Expenses	3,148	9,513
Total Expenses	98,571	114,544
(Deficit) from ordinary activities	(41,558)	(36,420)
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income	(41,558)	(36,420)

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
1. Accumulated Funds			
Balance at beginning		771,407	807,827
(Deficit) from ordinary activities		(41,558)	(36,420)
Committee Funds		729,849	771,407

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Accumulated Funds	1	<u>1,775,478</u>	<u>2,415,031</u>
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank and on Hand		372	1,589
Prepaid Expenses		2,500	2,500
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		-	497,971
Specific Purposes	2	<u>1,631,288</u>	<u>1,715,967</u>
Total Current Assets		<u>1,634,160</u>	<u>2,218,027</u>
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		198,818	198,818
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	<u>26,377</u>	<u>31,904</u>
Total Non-Current Assets		<u>225,195</u>	<u>230,722</u>
Total Assets		<u>1,859,355</u>	<u>2,448,749</u>
Current Liabilities			
Employee Benefits		372	1,589
Provisions	4	<u>33,482</u>	<u>32,129</u>
Total Current Liabilities		<u>33,854</u>	<u>33,718</u>
Non-Current Liabilities			
Loan from General Assembly		<u>50,023</u>	-
Total Liabilities		<u>83,877</u>	<u>33,718</u>
Net Assets		<u>1,775,478</u>	<u>2,415,031</u>

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 41.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	General \$	Specific \$	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue					
Interest and Investment Income		14,198	131,955	146,153	254,475
Donations		-	40	40	-
Government Grants		27,224	-	27,224	3,207
Rental Income		49,050	-	49,050	-
Total Revenue		90,472	131,995	222,467	257,682
Expenses					
Depreciation		8,057	-	8,057	7,676
Distributions, Grants and Subsidies		335,003	146,665	481,668	630,911
Education and Training		173	530	703	4,555
Grants - Property		103,833	-	103,833	237,156
Interest		69	-	69	-
Office Expenses		7,596	-	7,596	24,641
Personnel Related Costs		188,115	69,479	257,594	214,090
Property Expenses and Improvements		2,500	-	2,500	23,029
Total Expenses		645,345	216,674	862,020	1,142,058
(Deficit) from ordinary activities		(554,873)	(84,679)	(639,553)	(884,375)
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		(554,873)	(84,679)	(639,553)	(884,375)

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 41.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
1. Accumulated Funds			
Balance at beginning		2,415,031	3,299,406
(Deficit) from ordinary activities		(639,553)	(884,375)
Committee Funds		1,775,478	2,415,031
2. Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes			
Church extension in Victoria		6,485	4,246
Evangelism		1,343,593	1,390,364
Home Missionaries Beneficiary Fund		242,923	285,170
Home Missionary Workers		38,287	36,187
		1,631,288	1,715,967
3. Property, Plant and Equipment			
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment		15,244	12,714
Accumulated Depreciation		(10,839)	(8,779)
		4,405	3,934
Motor Vehicle		39,981	39,981
Accumulated Depreciation		(18,008)	(12,011)
		21,973	27,970
Total Property, Plant and Equipment		26,377	31,904
4. Provisions			
Provision for Annual Leave		9,850	10,734
Provision for Long Service Leave		23,632	21,395
		33,482	32,129

5. Scots' Church Properties Trust

Income Distributions from the Scots' Church Properties Trust are accounted for on a cash basis.

The distribution for the current year was applied towards a reduction of the amount advanced by the General Assembly to fund the legal costs associated with protecting the interests of the charitable purpose arising from the Scots Church Properties Trust, namely: home mission and church extension.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH IN VICTORIA
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Committee Funds	1	529,058	509,488
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank and on Hand		10,459	5,345
Common Fund at Call - General Purposes		239,073	208,176
Prepaid Deposits		2,000	1,409
Total Current Assets		251,532	214,930
Non-Current Assets			
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		268,250	268,250
Property, Plant and Equipment	2	28,167	35,518
Total Non-Current Assets		296,416	303,768
Total Assets		547,948	518,698
Current Liabilities			
Employee Benefits		10,459	5,293
Annual Leave Provision		8,431	3,916
Total Liabilities		18,890	9,209
Net Assets		529,058	509,488

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 43.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH IN VICTORIA

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue			
Camp Fees and Sale of Merchandise	3	11,653	75,518
Donations		5,614	2,802
Grants and Subsidies		125,462	102,524
Interest and Investment Income		34,071	39,821
Total Revenue		176,799	220,665
Expenses			
Depreciation		7,352	7,454
Expenditure re Camps and Cost of Merchandise	3	14,343	79,353
Insurance Public Liability		2,570	2,570
Office Expenses		9,090	9,627
Personnel Related Expenses		123,875	121,436
Total Expenses		157,230	220,440
Surplus from ordinary activities		19,570	226
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		19,570	226

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	2021 \$	2020 \$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	509,488	509,263
Surplus from ordinary activities	19,570	226
Committee Funds	529,058	509,488
2. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture Fittings and Equipment at Cost	55,244	55,244
Accumulated Depreciation	(27,077)	(19,725)
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	28,167	35,518
3. Camp Activities		
Income from Camp Fees and Merchandise Sales	11,653	75,518
Expenses from Camp Fees and Merchandise Sales	(14,343)	(79,353)
Loss on Camp Activities	(2,691)	(3,835)

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Committee Funds	1	<u>135,715</u>	<u>59,011</u>
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
SCU Levy receivable		<u>-</u>	<u>1,491</u>
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		<u>151,351</u>	<u>64,792</u>
Total Current Assets		<u>151,351</u>	<u>66,283</u>
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	2	<u>2,890</u>	<u>2,462</u>
Total Assets		<u>154,241</u>	<u>68,745</u>
Current Liabilities			
Provision for Annual Leave		11,600	9,734
Provision for Long Service Leave		<u>6,926</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>18,526</u>	<u>9,734</u>
Net Assets		<u>135,715</u>	<u>59,011</u>

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 45.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Revenue		
Levy	83,184	90,375
Government Grants	20,411	1,881
Interest and Investment Income	8,729	7,269
Total Revenue	112,325	99,525
Expenses		
Depreciation	1,000	653
Counselling assistance	-	109
Legal Fees	4,000	-
Personnel related expenses	82,222	75,228
Office expenses	8,399	10,338
Total Expenses	95,621	86,329
Surplus from ordinary activities	16,704	13,196
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income	16,704	13,196

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	59,011	45,815
Transfer of Mickle Bequest	60,000	-
Surplus from ordinary activities	16,704	13,196
Committee Funds	135,715	59,011
2. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture Fittings and Equipment at Cost	7,325	5,896
Accumulated Depreciation	(4,434)	(3,434)
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	2,890	2,462

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
SOCIAL SERVICES
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Committee Funds			
Committee Funds	2	13,495,080	14,326,981
Reserves	3	3,276,956	3,276,956
Total Committee Funds		16,772,036	17,603,937
Represented by			
Current Assets			
Cash Assets		1,381,750	553,919
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments	4	201,562	843,330
Investments			
Common Fund at Call - Specific Purposes	5	505,281	456,135
Separately Invested Funds	6	13,762,827	19,950,452
Total Investments		14,268,108	20,406,587
Total Current Assets		15,851,420	21,803,836
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		89,150	89,150
Property, Plant and Equipment	7	19,823,728	20,823,445
Total Non-Current Assets		19,912,878	20,912,595
Total Assets		35,764,298	42,716,432
Current Liabilities			
Kirkbrae Ingoings	8	17,090,148	23,053,552
Provision for Annual and Long Service Leave		481,963	860,155
Trade and Other Payables	9	1,285,814	855,644
Total Current Liabilities		18,857,925	24,769,351
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provision for Long Service Leave		134,337	343,144
Total Non-Current Liabilities		134,337	343,144
Total Liabilities		18,992,262	25,112,495
Net Assets		16,772,036	17,603,937

Notes to and forming part of these accounts are set out on pages 48 to 51.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	Kirkbrae \$	Other \$	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue					
Donations		105,510	-	105,510	106,960
Grants and Subsidies Received		6,827,778	-	6,827,778	5,827,158
Interest and Investment Income		500,215	38,434	538,649	887,911
Lease Finance re Residential Accommodation Deposits	10	336,542	-	336,542	596,766
Kirkbrae Fees, Ingoings and Meals		2,330,024		2,330,024	3,488,385
Net Realised and Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments	6	1,607,181	-	1,607,181	(1,812,975)
Sundry Income		4,139		4,139	-
Total Revenue		11,711,389	38,434	11,749,823	9,094,206
Expenses					
Accounting and Audit Fees		79,209	-	79,209	29,932
Depreciation		996,085	-	996,085	948,621
Distributions, Grants & Subsidies		-	13,770	13,770	24,099
Education and Training		25,324	-	25,324	33,293
Fees, Chaplaincy and Consulting		43,231	-	43,231	39,431
Insurances		85,531	-	85,531	110,191
Kirkbrae Residents Expenses		702,192	-	702,192	1,060,920
Legal Fees		23,131	-	23,131	10,688
Lease Finance re Residential Accommodation Deposits	10	336,542	-	336,542	596,766
Net Loss/(Profit) on Sale of Assets		408,577	-	408,577	453
Net Impairment on Bed Licences		-	-	-	3,300,000
Net Impairment on Development Costs		-	-	-	610,631
Office Expenses		584,204	-	584,204	304,311
Personnel Related Costs		7,811,223	-	7,811,223	8,119,102
Property Expenses and Improvements		1,472,705	-	1,472,705	1,104,712
Total Expenses		12,567,954	13,770	12,581,724	16,293,149
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities		(856,565)	24,664	(831,901)	(7,198,943)
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		(856,565)	24,664	(831,901)	(7,198,943)

Notes to and forming part of these accounts are set out on pages 48 to 51.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Consolidation of Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes

The ad hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd Committee (AHEPCVL) administers the Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes, and as Kirkbrae is a major activity of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, its activities have been included in the financial statements of the Social Services Committee.

Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes for the Aged prepares General Purpose Accounts which are audited annually.

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
2. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	14,326,981	18,225,923
(Deficit) from ordinary activities	(831,901)	(7,198,943)
Transfer Deficit relating to Reserve	-	3,300,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Committee Funds	13,495,080	14,326,981
	<hr/>	<hr/>
3. Reserves		
Asset Revaluation Reserve	<hr/> 3,276,956	<hr/> 3,276,956
	<hr/>	<hr/>
4. Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		
Franking Tax Credits on Dividends	38,402	177,341
Sundry Debtors and Resident Receivables	<hr/> 163,160	<hr/> 665,989
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	201,562	843,330
	<hr/>	<hr/>
5. Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes		
Brocklesby Trust - Protestant Women in Need	2,092	-
Douglas Family Trust - Poor & needy in Australia	12,792	12,904
Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes	18,876	(5,607)
Poor of Melbourne	55,743	52,967
Residential Care for Children	<hr/> 415,778	<hr/> 395,870
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	505,281	456,135
	<hr/>	<hr/>
6. Separately Invested Funds		
Investments and Shares	12,150,557	14,586,982
Term Deposits and Short Term Cash	<hr/> 1,612,270	<hr/> 5,363,470
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	13,762,827	19,950,452
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Investments have been revalued to market value as at 30 June 2021 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$1,607,181 (2020 losses of \$1,812,975).

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
7. Property, Plant and Equipment			
Land and Buildings at Cost	7.1	30,026,573	29,850,248
Accumulated Depreciation		(10,605,895)	(9,816,592)
Accumulated Impairment Loss		(176,770)	-
		<u>19,243,909</u>	<u>20,033,656</u>
Plant and Equipment at Cost		1,358,829	1,661,380
Accumulated Depreciation		(1,225,757)	(1,463,591)
		<u>133,072</u>	<u>197,789</u>
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at Cost		1,457,700	1,460,803
Accumulated Depreciation		(1,061,573)	(920,874)
		<u>396,127</u>	<u>539,929</u>
Motor Vehicles at Cost		142,381	121,431
Accumulated Depreciation		(91,761)	(69,359)
		<u>50,620</u>	<u>52,072</u>
Total Property, Plant and Equipment		<u>19,823,728</u>	<u>20,823,445</u>
7.1	In accordance with the requirements of the Retirement Village Act a caveat is recorded over part of the land.		
8. Ingoings and Bonds - Hostel, Nursing Home and Independent Living Units			
Residents are assessed on their ability to pay an incoming fee for admission into Kirkbrae. This fee is refundable when a resident leaves Kirkbrae less certain retentions and charges depending upon the period of occupancy.			
The ingoings are repayable when a resident leaves and therefore are all classified as a current liability. Kirkbrae has sufficient funds to meet the projected cashflows associated with refunds.			
		<u>17,090,148</u>	<u>23,053,552</u>
9. Trade and Other Payables			
Creditors and Accruals		<u>1,285,814</u>	<u>855,644</u>

10. Leases

At inception of a contract, the organisation assesses whether a lease exists - i.e. does the contract convey the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration.

This involves an assessment of whether:

- The contract involves the use of an identified asset - this may be explicitly or implicitly identified within the agreement. If the supplier has a substantive substitution right then there is no identified asset.
- The organisation has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from the use of the asset throughout the period of use.
- The organisation has the right to direct the use of the asset i.e. decision making rights in relation to changing how and for what purpose the asset is used.

10. Leases (continued)

Right-of-use asset

At the lease commencement, the organisation recognises a right-of-use asset and associated lease liability for the lease term. The lease term includes extension periods where the organisation believes it is reasonably certain that the option will be exercised.

The right-of-use asset is measured using the cost model where cost on initial recognition comprises of the lease liability, initial direct costs, prepaid lease payments, estimated cost of removal and restoration less any lease incentives received.

The right-of-use asset is depreciated over the lease term on a straight line basis and assessed for impairment in accordance with the impairment of assets accounting policy.

Lease liability

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments at the commencement of the lease. The discount rate is the rate implicit in the lease, however where this cannot be readily determined then the organisation's incremental borrowing rate is used.

Subsequent to initial recognition, the lease liability is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. The lease liability is remeasured whether there is a lease modification, change in estimate of the lease term or index upon which the lease payments are based (e.g. CPI) or a change in the organisation's assessment of lease term.

Where the lease liability is remeasured, the right-of-use asset is adjusted to reflect the remeasurement or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

Exceptions to lease accounting

The organisation has elected to apply the exceptions to lease accounting for both short-term leases (i.e. leases with a term of less than or equal to 12 months) and leases of low-value assets. The organisation recognises the payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight line basis over the lease term.

Kirkbrae - Refundable Accommodation Deposits

Contracts with customers contain provisions for accommodation and use of common areas and facilities for provision of care and other services. The organisation has concluded that its contractual arrangements relating to the provision of residential aged care and retirement living accommodation are an operating lease pursuant to AASB 16, being the exclusive right to the use of a room/unit by a resident.

For residential aged care accommodation arrangements where the resident has elected to pay a Refundable Accommodation Deposit (RAD), the organisation receives a financing benefit, being non-cash consideration in the form of an interest free loan. On adoption of AASB 16 the fair value of this non-cash consideration is required to be recognised as income (to reflect the interest free loan financing benefit received on RADs) and correspondingly interest expense (to record the financial liability associated with RADs at fair value) with no net impact on profit or loss.

The application of AASB 16 for the year ended 30 June 2021 has been based on

- average RAD balance for the year, and
- interest rate equal to Maximum Permissible Interest Rate of 4.01% applicable at 30 June 2021 which is a Government set interest rate used to calculate the Daily Accommodation Payment (DAP) to applicable residents.

The organisation's Statement of Income and Expenditure and Other Comprehensive Income presents Income of \$336,5472 and an additional Finance cost (i.e. interest expense) of \$336,542 with nil impact to net result for the year. The accounting treatment for residential aged care accommodating arrangements where residents have elected to pay a DAP has not changed upon adopting AASB 16.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

11. Going Concern

- a) Current Ratio - The ad hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd Committee (AHEPCVL) oversees the aged care ministry undertaken by Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes. As at 30 June 2021, Kirkbrae's current liabilities are greater than its current assets by \$3,006,505. AHEPCVL's financial report has been prepared on a going concern basis as the majority of the current liabilities related to refundable accommodation bonds, refundable accommodation deposits and refundable ILU entry contribution from residents. AHEPCVL has determined that the current assets are sufficient to meet projected resident payments for the next 12 months and that Kirkbrae Presbyterians Homes is required to maintain sufficient liquidity and credential standards to enable payment of refundable accommodation bonds and deposits.
- b) Financial performance – Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes made a deficit of \$856,565 for the year.
- c) On 16 June 2020 the Presbyterian Church of Victoria took the decision to incorporate a new entity Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd (PCVL) which will assume the oversight of Kirkbrae. All assets in connection with Kirkbrae will be transferred to PCVL once it is incorporated.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
STATE NEWS COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Committee Funds	1	60,423	65,104
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		60,423	65,104
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	2	-	-
Total Assets		60,423	65,104

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue		
Advertising Income	45	-
Contributions from PIM and APWM	200	-
General Mission Programme	-	3,332
Interest and Investment Income	4,468	5,155
Total Revenue	4,714	8,487
Expenses		
Depreciation	-	148
Personnel related expenses	-	17
Printing and Postage	9,395	-
Total Expenses	9,395	165
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	(4,681)	8,322
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income	(4,681)	8,322

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	65,104	56,782
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	(4,681)	8,322
Committee Funds	60,423	65,104
2. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture Fittings and Equipment at Cost	1,772	1,772
Accumulated Depreciation	(1,772)	(1,772)
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	-	-

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Committee Funds	1	<u>9,175,332</u>	<u>8,763,086</u>
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank and on Hand		16,593	13,401
Common Fund at Call - General Purposes		2,573,125	2,286,919
Common Fund at Call - Specific Purposes	2	1,837,082	1,719,062
Debtors		-	13,390
PTC Media Stock		<u>6,481</u>	<u>6,462</u>
Total Current Assets		<u>4,433,281</u>	<u>4,039,234</u>
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		3,373,337	3,308,100
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	<u>1,519,100</u>	<u>1,574,286</u>
Total Non-Current Assets		<u>4,892,437</u>	<u>4,882,386</u>
Total Assets		<u>9,325,718</u>	<u>8,921,620</u>
Current Liabilities	4	132,064	67,605
Non Current Liabilities	5	<u>18,322</u>	<u>90,928</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>150,386</u>	<u>158,533</u>
Net Assets		<u>9,175,332</u>	<u>8,763,086</u>

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 55 to 56.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	General \$	Specific \$	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue					
Bookshop Sales	6	5,136	-	5,136	7,379
Donations and Levies		8,647	181,367	190,014	92,080
General Mission Program		-	65,463	65,463	45,183
Grants		116,332	-	116,332	38,601
Interest and Investment Income		236,057	285,404	521,460	696,148
Ministers' Conference		5,442	-	5,442	6,270
Tuition Fees	7	606,742	-	606,742	508,830
Rental Income		69,632	-	69,632	73,293
Total Revenue		1,047,988	532,234	1,580,222	1,467,783
Expenses					
Audit Fees		6,000	-	6,000	5,799
Bookshop Cost of Sales	6	4,921	-	4,921	5,064
Bursaries, Grants and Prizes	7.1	-	210,016	210,016	226,830
Depreciation		69,310	1,290	70,600	73,784
Education, Training and Library, Fees		155,711	-	155,711	147,781
Insurances		5,885	5,638	11,524	11,738
Office Expenses		22,221	75	22,296	53,673
Personnel Related Costs		519,161	129,122	648,283	687,243
Property Expenses and Improvements		36,543	2,081	38,625	88,314
Total Expenses		819,754	348,222	1,167,976	1,300,226
Surplus from ordinary activities		228,235	184,011	412,246	167,557
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		228,235	184,011	412,246	167,557

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 55 to 56.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	8,763,086	8,595,529
Surplus from ordinary activities	412,246	167,557
	<u>9,175,332</u>	<u>8,763,086</u>
Committee Funds		
2. Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes		
Fernside Trust - Manse Allowance	167,592	176,856
Bursaries & Scholarships	512,090	547,096
Diaconal Funds	233,013	232,547
Memorial Lecture	36,574	36,999
Needy Students	232,568	225,251
Overseas Students	60,403	54,774
Prizes	146,968	142,536
Theological College Building Fund	190,507	196,720
Theological College Building Fund - Library Appeal	257,368	106,283
	<u>1,837,082</u>	<u>1,719,062</u>
Total Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes		
3. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Land and Buildings at cost	2,272,926	2,272,926
Accumulated Depreciation	(784,593)	(723,603)
	<u>1,488,333</u>	<u>1,549,323</u>
Plant and Equipment at Cost	91,590	91,590
Accumulated Depreciation	(87,692)	(85,431)
	<u>3,898</u>	<u>6,159</u>
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at Cost	347,115	331,701
Accumulated Depreciation	(320,246)	(312,897)
	<u>26,869</u>	<u>18,804</u>
Motor Vehicle at Cost	29,312	29,312
Accumulated Depreciation	(29,312)	(29,312)
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	<u>1,519,100</u>	<u>1,574,286</u>

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
4. Current Liabilities			
Accrued Audit Fees		6,022	4,000
Bonds Received		5,418	1,210
Prepaid Tuition Fees		735	-
Employee Benefits		11,922	10,031
Provision for Annual Leave		16,247	5,091
Provision for Long Service Leave		19,297	15,687
Provision for Study Leave		69,543	31,586
Tuition Fees received in advance		2,880	-
		<u>132,064</u>	<u>67,605</u>
5. Non-Current Liabilities			
Provision for Study Leave		<u>18,322</u>	<u>90,928</u>
		<u>18,322</u>	<u>90,928</u>
6. Bookshop Trading Result			
Sales		5,136	7,379
Cost of Sales		<u>(4,921)</u>	<u>(5,064)</u>
		<u>215</u>	<u>2,315</u>
7. Tuition Fees			
Tuition Fees received in cash		464,662	355,560
Tuition Fees funded from specific trusts	7.1	<u>142,080</u>	<u>153,270</u>
		<u>606,742</u>	<u>508,830</u>
7.1	Bursaries, Grants and Prizes includes an amount of \$142,080 (2020 \$153,270) which is an internal allocation of funds from specific trusts for scholarships.		

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
SITES RESERVE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Church Funds	2	<u>17,506,230</u>	<u>18,142,900</u>
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund at Call - General purposes		8,917,767	9,205,671
Separately Invested Funds	3	8,563,891	8,878,150
Sundry Debtors: Franking Credits		<u>24,572</u>	<u>59,079</u>
Total Assets		<u>17,506,230</u>	<u>18,142,900</u>

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

		2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue			
Interest and Investment Income		656,203	772,895
Other Income		49,864	-
Net Realised and Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments		1,017,697	(281,671)
Proceeds from sale of property	4	<u>1,467,219</u>	<u>636,968</u>
Total Revenue		<u>3,190,983</u>	<u>1,128,192</u>
Expenses			
Ministry expenses incurred by congregations		764,924	734,770
Property improvements and expenses		<u>1,041,587</u>	<u>835,678</u>
Total Expenses		<u>1,806,511</u>	<u>1,570,448</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities		<u>1,384,472</u>	<u>(442,256)</u>
Other Comprehensive Income		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Comprehensive Income		<u>1,384,472</u>	<u>(442,256)</u>

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 58.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

SITES RESERVE

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Sites Reserve Funds

Properties are held by the Church under the terms of the Model Trusts Deeds. Sites Reserve funds arise from the proceeds of the sale of property held by the Church. The General Assembly may approve the charitable purposes for which such funds may be applied.

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
2. Church Funds			
Balance at beginning		18,142,900	19,356,352
Less: Transfers to General Assembly	2.1	(2,021,142)	(771,196)
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities		1,384,472	(442,256)
Committee Funds		17,506,230	18,142,900

2.1 Transfers to General Assembly

In May 2019 the General Assembly approved the transfer of amounts totalling \$1,603,457 from various Sites Reserve accounts to fund the liabilities for the National Redress Scheme. An amount of \$771,196 was transferred in the prior year.

In May 2021 the General Assembly approved the transfer of a total of \$2,021,142 from various Sites Reserve accounts for Designated Purposes.

3. Separately Invested Funds

Cash Assets	1,316,864	1,117,735
Investments and Securities	7,247,027	7,760,415
Total Separately Invested Funds	8,563,891	8,878,150

4. Proceeds from Sale of Property

Ballarat South	-	415,487
Belgrave Heights	747,447	-
Clifton Hill	391,500	-
Dergholm	33,118	-
Lismore	-	119,437
Moe	295,154	-
Smythesdale	-	102,045
Total Proceeds from Sale of Property	1,467,219	636,968

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION

**Financial Report
For the year ended 30 June 2021**



THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021
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THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION

MEMBERS:

Rev B R Oakes B.Bus, M.Tax, B.Th. B.Min, MA(Min) - Chairman
Mr T C Arnold, B.Com, Dip FP, Grad Dip App Fin, F Fin (to October 2020)
Mr J Bligh B.Sc, B.Com
Mr E G de Zilwa B.Ec, LL.B, LL.M
Mr A Foster LLB(Hons), BA
Mr M Gibson B Surv(Hons), Grad Dip FP, CFP, SMSF SA (from December 2020)
Mr D Graham B.E(Hons), B.Sc
Rev A J Venn Dip Int Des, Grad Dip OB, Dip Th, ICT
Mr J Walter LL.B(Hons), MBA
Mr S R Williamson B. Eng, Adv Dip FP, CFP (to February 2021)
Mr D Wright B.Bus, MIPA AFA (from December 2020)

AUDITORS:

Saward Dawson

BANKERS:

National Australia Bank Limited

GENERAL MANAGER:

Mr M E Ellison, B.Sc, B.Com

INVESTMENT ADVISORS:

JBWere

SOLICITORS:

McCracken & McCracken

GENERAL OFFICE:

Assembly Hall
156 Collins Street
Melbourne Vic 3000

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021
ABN 89276382053**

**AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION UNDER SECTION 60 40 OF THE CHARITIES
AND NOT FOR PROFITS COMMISSION ACT 2012 TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION**

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2021, there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in section 60 40 of the Australian Charities and Not for profits Commission Act 2012 in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.


SAWARD DAWSON



Peter Shields

Principal

20 Albert Street, Blackburn.

Dated: 27 September 2021

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021
ABN 89276382053**

Opinion

We have audited the attached financial report being a special purpose financial report of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, and the statement of Income and expenditure and comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the Trusts Corporation members' declaration.

In our opinion, the financial report of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation, is in accordance with the Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890, including:

- a. giving a true and fair view of the trustee's financial position as at 30 June 2020 and of its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1; and
- b. complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 and complying with the Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890 as amended.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Basis of Accounting

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to meet the requirements of the Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890 to prepare financial statements. As a result the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

Trusts Corporation Members' responsibility for the financial report

The Trusts Corporation Members' are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements are appropriate to meet the requirements of the Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890 and are appropriate to meet the needs of the Trusts Corporation Members'. The Trusts Corporation Members' responsibility also includes designing, implementing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021
ABN 89276382053**

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal controls relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Trusts Corporation Members', as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Trusts Corporation.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Trusts Corporation Members' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021
ABN 89276382053**

The financial statements have been prepared for distribution to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation for the purpose of fulfilling the Trusts Corporation Members' accountability requirements under the Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial statements to which it relates to any person other than the Trusts Corporation Members' or members of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

We communicate with the Trusts Corporation Members' regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.


SAWARD DAWSON



Peter Shields
Principal

20 Albert Street, Blackburn

Dated: 27 September 2021

TRUSTS CORPORATION MEMBERS' STATEMENT

It is the opinion of the members of The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation that:

- (a) The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements; and
- (b) this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 of the financial statements; and
- (c) The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation meets the definition of a Not for Profit Entity; and
- (d) the financial statements, set out on pages 7 to 27 are drawn up so as to present fairly the financial position of The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation at 30 June 2021 and the results of its operations for the year then ended and are in accordance with the basis of accounting described in Note 1 Page 10 and comply with the provisions of the *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890 as amended*.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation dated at Melbourne this eighteenth day of August 2021.



B Oakes
Chairman



D Wright
Trusts Corporation Member

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Trust Funds and Reserves			
Income Suspense Account		3,454,037	2,667,241
Common Fund Reserve		43,457,936	35,584,927
Total Church Funds	2	46,911,973	38,252,167
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash Assets	5(i)	10,893,935	18,798,133
Receivables	4	1,356,521	996,030
Investments	1		
Cash on Term Deposit		2,600,000	100,000
Investments and Securities		114,031,870	101,655,294
Total Current Assets		128,882,326	121,549,457
Non-Current Assets			
Investments	1		
Advances to Ministers		87,477	92,345
Mortgages and Loans		2,088,816	2,393,410
Total Investments		2,176,293	2,485,755
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	-	-
Total Non-Current Assets		2,176,293	2,485,755
Total Assets		131,058,618	124,035,211
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables		483,067	193,133
Trust Funds and Deposits		74,552,395	76,698,491
Total Current Liabilities		75,035,461	76,891,624
Non-Current Liabilities			
Trust Funds and Deposits - Perpetual		9,111,183	8,891,420
Total Non-Current Liabilities		9,111,183	8,891,420
Total Liabilities		84,146,645	85,783,044
Net Assets		46,911,973	38,252,167

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 10 to 14.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue			
Bequests		220,000	3,357
Commissions		57,700	81,440
Interest and Investment Income		4,711,382	4,208,800
Net Realised and Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments	1	12,160,881	(4,904,686)
Total Revenue		17,149,963	(611,089)
Expenses			
Audit and Review Fees		32,400	39,312
Grants		57,700	81,440
Insurance Fire and General		9,290	11,284
Income Credited to Beneficial Trusts		8,214,229	2,937,105
Legal Fees and Costs		8,000	634
Management Fees		162,664	147,931
Office Expenses		2,321	3,084
Personnel Related Costs		3,553	2,436
Total Expenses		8,490,157	3,223,227
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	5(ii)	8,659,806	(3,834,316)
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		8,659,806	(3,834,316)

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 10 to 14.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	Income Suspense Account	Common Fund Reserve \$	Separately Invested Funds \$	Total \$
Balance at 30 June 2019		3,548,245	38,538,238	-	42,086,483
Surplus/(deficit) attributable to beneficial trusts		2,733,454	(204,682)	1,475,345	4,004,117
Realised and Unrealised gains/(losses)		-	(2,748,629)	(2,156,057)	(4,904,686)
(Surplus)/Deficit credited to beneficial trusts		(3,614,459)	-	680,711	(2,933,748)
Deficit from ordinary activities	2	(881,005)	(2,953,311)	-	(3,834,316)
Balance at 30 June 2020	2	2,667,241	35,584,927	-	38,252,167
Surplus/(deficit) attributable to beneficial trusts		3,414,523	(218,228)	1,296,858	4,493,154
Realised and Unrealised gains/(losses)		-	8,091,238	4,069,643	12,160,881
Surplus credited to beneficial trusts		(2,627,727)	-	(5,366,502)	(7,994,229)
Surplus from ordinary activities	2	786,796	7,873,010	-	8,659,806
Balance at 30 June 2021	2	3,454,037	43,457,936	-	46,911,973

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash receipts from operations		273,515	79,716
Cash payments from operations		14,006	(265,208)
Net cash (used in) operating activities	5(ii)	287,521	(185,492)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest Received		1,420,436	2,349,335
Dividends Received		2,934,639	4,415,407
Decrease in Trust funds and deposits		(1,926,333)	(7,108,868)
Payments for investment securities and term deposits		(16,813,437)	(53,697,134)
Proceeds from sale of investment securities and term deposits		14,402,336	67,758,580
Decrease in advances to Ministers		4,868	28,848
Net cash provided by investing activities		22,510	13,746,168
Cash flows from financing activities			
Interest paid and investment distributions		(8,214,229)	(2,933,748)
Net cash provided by financing activities		(8,214,229)	(2,933,748)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		(7,904,198)	10,626,928
Cash at the beginning of the year		18,798,133	8,171,205
Cash at the end of the year	5(i)	10,893,935	18,798,133

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 10 to 14.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The significant policies which have been adopted in the presentation of these financial statements are:

Basis of Preparation

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation is incorporated under the Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890 of the State of Victoria ("the Act") as a corporate body of trustees to hold property in trust for the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. It is domiciled in the state of Victoria.

In the opinion of the Trustees, The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements. The financial statements of The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation, set out on pages 7 to 27, have been drawn up as a Special Purpose Financial Report for use by the Trustees and to fulfil the requirements of the *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890*, and of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to prepare financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis under the historical cost convention and on a going concern assumption. All figures are in Australian dollars. They do not take into account changing money values or current valuations of non-current assets except to the extent that the revaluation of land and buildings and investments (as noted in the financial statements) partially reflects such changes. Except where noted, the accounting policies have been consistently applied.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the significant accounting policies disclosed below, which the Trustees have determined are appropriate to meet the purposes of preparation. Such accounting policies are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise.

Consolidation

The assets and liabilities, income and expenses of the Common Fund, and Separately Invested Funds held on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria form the Consolidated Statements of "The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation" as set out on pages 7 to 9.

The Consolidated Financial Statements, together with these notes have been prepared from the audited books and records for the year ended 30 June 2021 of the following activities:

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation - Common Fund
The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation - Separately Invested Funds

Properties which are used for the purposes of the Church or for any congregation are not included in these accounts.

All inter-activity balances and transactions have been eliminated.

Common Fund Investments are shown in three categories:

- (a) General Purposes - Those available for all purposes of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.
- (b) Specific Purposes - Those available for specified purposes only, details of which appear in the notes attached to the accounts.
- (c) Perpetual - Capital sums which must be preserved and cannot be expended.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Revenue

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation has adopted AASB 15: Revenue from Contracts with Customers in 2020.

The core principle of AASB 15 is that revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation expects to receive in exchange for those goods or services.

Revenue is recognised by applying a five-step model as follows:

1. Identify the contract with the customer.
2. Identify the performance obligations.
3. Determine the transaction price.
4. Allocate the transaction price to the performance obligations.
5. Recognise revenue as and when control of the performance obligations is transferred.

Generally the timing of the payment for sale of goods and rendering of services corresponds closely to the timing of satisfaction of the performance obligations, however where there is a difference, it will result in the recognition of a receivable, contract asset or contract liability.

None of the revenue streams of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation have any significant financing terms as there is less than 12 months between receipt of funds and satisfaction of performance obligations.

Interest Revenue

Interest revenue is recognised as it accrues and dividend revenue is recognised when the right to receive a dividend has been established.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, Plant and Equipment are recorded at cost or deemed cost and are depreciated using the straight line method. Properties held by the Trusts Corporation for church purposes including for congregational purposes are not included in the accounts.

The assets' residual value and useful life are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at the end of each reporting period. Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains and losses are included in the statement of comprehensive income.

Income Tax

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria is a non-profit entity registered as a religious charitable organisation with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and as such is exempt from Income Tax pursuant to Section 50-5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Investments

Investments are carried in the financial statements at fair value and unrealised gains and losses are recognised in the Income Statement. Share and units in investment trusts have been revalued to market value as at 30 June 2021 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$12,160,881 (2020 loss of \$4,904,686).

Impairment of Assets

At the end of each reporting period, the organisation assesses whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. If such an indication exists, an impairment test is carried out on the asset by comparing the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, to the asset's carrying amount. Any excess of the asset's carrying amount over its recoverable amount is recognised immediately in profit or loss, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount in accordance with another standard. Any impairment loss of a revalued asset is treated as a revaluation decrease in accordance with that other standard.

Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the organisation estimates the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

Comparative Figures

When changes are made as a result of changes to accounting standards or as a result of changes in accounting policies, comparative figures are adjusted to conform with the presentation in the current financial year.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at-call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

Trade and other payables

Trade and other payables represent the liabilities for goods and services received by the organisation during the reporting period that remain unpaid at the end of the reporting period. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are presented as operating cash flows included in receipts from customers or payments to suppliers.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

The Trusts Corporation evaluates estimates and judgments incorporated into the financial report based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the organisation.

(i) Key estimates - Impairment

The organisation assesses impairment at each reporting date by evaluating conditions specific to the organisation that may lead to impairment of assets. Where an impairment trigger exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined. Value-in-use or depreciated replacement cost calculations performed in assessing recoverable amounts incorporate a number of key estimates.

(ii) Key judgements - Useful life of property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment are depreciated over their useful life and the depreciation rates are assessed when the assets are acquired or when there is significant change that affects the remaining useful life of the asset.

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
2. Accumulated Funds and Reserves		
Balance at beginning	38,252,167	42,086,483
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	8,659,806	(3,834,316)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Consolidated Funds	46,911,973	38,252,167
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Represented by:		
Income Suspense Account	3,454,037	2,667,241
Common Fund Reserve	43,457,936	35,584,927
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	46,911,973	38,252,167
	<hr/>	<hr/>
3. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at cost	10,327	10,327
Accumulated Depreciation	(10,327)	(10,327)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
4. Receivables		
Interest Receivable	335	989
Dividends Receivable	908,218	247,524
Franking Credits Receivable	397,057	700,790
Sundry Debtors	50,911	46,727
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,356,521	996,030
	<hr/>	<hr/>

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
5(i) Reconciliation of Cash		
For the purpose of the Statement of Cash Flows, cash includes cash on hand and at bank and on short term deposit. Cash as at the end of the financial year as shown in the Statement of Cash Flows is reconciled to the related items in the Statement of Financial Position as follows:		
Cash on Hand and at Bank	4,826,520	10,683,240
Cash on Short Term Deposit	6,067,415	8,114,893
	<u>10,893,935</u>	<u>18,798,133</u>
5(ii) Reconciliation of operating result to net cash provided by operating activities		
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	8,659,806	(3,834,316)
Add/(less) items classified as investing/financing activities		
Interest paid	8,214,229	2,933,748
Interest/dividends received	(4,711,382)	(4,208,800)
Increase in creditors	350,000	-
Add/(less) non-cash items:		
Net (Gain)/Loss on sale of property, plant and equipment and investments	-	(540,865)
Net Realised and Unrealised (Gains)/Losses on Investments	(12,160,881)	5,445,551
Net cash (used in) operating activities before change in assets and liabilities	351,772	(204,682)
Change in assets and liabilities during the financial year		
Decrease in sundry debtors	(4,185)	(1,724)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors and accruals	(60,066)	20,914
Net cash provided from/(used in) operating activities	<u>287,521</u>	<u>(185,492)</u>

6. Related Party Information

The persons listed on page 1 of this report each held office as a member of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation during the period ended 30 June 2021. The Trusts Corporation members receive no remuneration or other benefit for their services as trustees.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Trust Funds and Reserves			
Accumulated funds	2	-	-
Represented by:			
Net Assets		-	-

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue			
Bequests	3	220,000	3,357
Commission from Scots Church Properties Trust	1	57,700	81,440
Total Revenue		277,700	84,797
Expenses			
Grant to General Assembly		57,700	81,440
Income credited to trusts for beneficial purposes		220,000	-
Payments made for beneficial purposes		-	3,357
Total Expenses		277,700	84,797
Surplus from ordinary activities		-	-
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		-	-

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 16.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

1. Commission from Scots Church Properties Trust

The Scots Church Trust Deed stipulates that the trustees of that trust shall pay a yearly sum to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation calculated at the rate of 2.5% of the rents received by the Scots Church Properties Trust from the commercial properties after deducting the cost not exceeding 5% of collection.

This represents the only income attributable to The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation in its own right. All other income of the Trusts Corporation is earned on behalf of the trusts managed by the Trusts Corporation.

The Trusts Corporation has resolved to pass this income to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

		2021 \$	2020 \$
2. Accumulated Funds			
Balance at beginning		-	-
Surplus from ordinary activities		-	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Accumulated Funds		-	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>
3. Bequests			
Hugh Keith McLean	for Skipton Presbyterian Church	-	3,357
Ian Malcolm Warner	for Batesford Presbyterian Church	10,000	-
David Walter Mickle	for the Presbyterian Church of Victoria	60,000	-
Marion Isabel Jennings	for Hawthorn Presbyterian Church	150,000	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		220,000	3,357
		<hr/>	<hr/>

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
COMMON FUND
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Trust Funds and Reserves			
Income Suspense Account	2	3,454,037	2,667,241
Common Fund Reserve	2	43,457,936	35,584,927
Total Trust Funds		46,911,973	38,252,167
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash Assets		6,093,742	8,130,298
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments	3	1,286,650	831,299
Investments and Securities			
Cash held on Term Deposit	4	2,600,000	100,000
Investments and Securities	5	82,520,078	68,848,948
Total Investments		85,120,078	68,948,948
Total Current Assets		92,500,470	77,910,544
Non-Current Assets			
Investments and Securities			
Mortgages and Loans	6	2,088,816	2,393,410
Ministers' Car Loans	7	87,477	92,345
Total Investments		2,176,293	2,485,755
Property, Plant and Equipment	8	-	-
Total Non-Current Assets		2,176,293	2,485,755
Total Assets		94,676,762	80,396,299
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables	9	523,318	282,821
Trust Funds General and Specific	10	39,547,012	34,242,089
Total Current Liabilities		40,070,331	34,524,910
Non-Current Liabilities			
Trust Funds Perpetual	10	7,694,458	7,619,221
Total Non-Current Liabilities		7,694,458	7,619,221
Total Liabilities		47,764,789	42,144,132
Net Assets		46,911,973	38,252,167

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 19 to 23.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
COMMON FUND
INCOME SUSPENSE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue			
Interest and Investment Income		3,414,523	2,733,454
Total Revenue		<u>3,414,523</u>	<u>2,733,454</u>
Income Suspense carried forward from prior year	2	2,667,241	3,548,245
Distribution to Beneficiaries	10	(2,627,727)	(3,614,459)
Income Suspense	2	<u>3,454,037</u>	<u>2,667,241</u>
The rate of interest applied to the average monthly fund balances for distribution purposes were:			
		%	%
Perpetual, Specific and General Trust Funds		7.00	8.50
"At Call" Account amounts up to \$600,000		3.50	5.50
Excess "At Call" amounts above \$600,000		3.50	3.50

**STATEMENT OF MOVEMENT IN COMMON FUND RESERVE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

Expenses

Accounting and Audit Fees		32,400	39,312
Insurance - Management Liability & Fidelity		9,290	11,284
Legal Fees and Costs		8,000	634
Management Fees Paid	11	162,664	147,931
Office Expenses		2,321	3,084
Training and Seminars		2,660	-
Travel and meeting costs		893	2,436
Total Expenses		<u>218,228</u>	<u>204,682</u>
Net Realised and Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments	1	8,091,238	(2,748,629)
Accumulated Funds at beginning of the year		<u>35,584,927</u>	<u>38,538,238</u>
Common Fund Reserve		<u>43,457,936</u>	<u>35,584,927</u>

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 19 to 23.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
COMMON FUND
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The significant policies which have been adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are:

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements, together with these notes have been prepared from the books and records for the year ended 30 June 2021 for the following entities:

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation - Common Fund

Basis of Accounting

In the opinion of the Trustees, the Common Fund is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements. The financial statements of this entity have been drawn up as a Special Purpose Financial Report for use by the Trustees and to fulfil the requirements of the *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890* for the preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and on a going concern assumption. Property, Plant and Equipment assets have been valued under the historical cost convention but investments have been revalued to their market value at 30 June 2021.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the significant accounting policies disclosed below, which the trustees have determined are appropriate to meet the purposes of preparation. Such accounting policies are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise.

Investments

Investments are carried in the financial statements at fair value. Shares, and units in investment trusts and managed funds have been revalued to market value as at 30 June 2021 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$8,091,238 (2020 loss of \$2,748,629). Except where noted, the accounting policies have been consistently applied.

Trust Funds on Deposit

Trust Funds are either invested on separate account or are placed on deposit with the Common Fund. All deposits are at call with the exception of Perpetual Funds. The General and Specific Funds on deposit are recorded as current liabilities and the Perpetual Funds on deposit are recorded as non-current liabilities.

Revenue

Interest revenue is recognised as it accrues and dividend revenue is recognised when the right to receive a dividend has been established.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, Plant and Equipment are recorded at cost or deemed cost and are depreciated using the straight line method.

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at the end of each reporting period. Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains and losses are included in the statement of comprehensive income.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
COMMON FUND
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Comparative Figures

When changes are made as a result of changes to accounting standards or as a result of changes in accounting policies, comparative figures are adjusted to conform with the presentation in the current financial year.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at-call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

Impairment of Assets

At the end of each reporting period, the organisation assesses whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. If such an indication exists, an impairment test is carried out on the asset by comparing the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, to the asset's carrying amount. Any excess of the asset's carrying amount over its recoverable amount is recognised immediately in profit or loss, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount in accordance with another standard. Any impairment loss of a revalued asset is treated as a revaluation decrease in accordance with that other standard.

Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the organisation estimates the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

Trade and other payables

Trade and other payables represent the liabilities for goods and services received by the organisation during the reporting period that remain unpaid at the end of the reporting period. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are presented as operating cash flows included in receipts from customers or payments to suppliers.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

The Trusts Corporation evaluates estimates and judgments incorporated into the financial report based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the organisation.

(i) Key estimates - Impairment

The organisation assesses impairment at each reporting date by evaluating conditions specific to the organisation that may lead to impairment of assets. Where an impairment trigger exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined. Value-in-use or depreciated replacement cost calculations performed in assessing recoverable amounts incorporate a number of key estimates.

(ii) Key judgements - Useful lives of property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment are depreciated over their useful life and the depreciation rates are assessed when the assets are acquired or when there is significant change that affects the remaining useful life of the asset.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
COMMON FUND
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

2. Income Suspense Account

Common Fund distributable income in excess of the amounts distributed, as determined by the Trusts Corporation are carried forward to the credit of the Income Suspense Account.

Common Fund Reserve

In accordance with the provisions of the *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890* capital gains or losses within the Common Fund are charged to the credit or debit of the Common Fund Reserve and are not available for distribution to the beneficiaries.

Monies standing to the credit of the Common Fund Reserve are applied to the payment of costs and expenses to the extent allowed under the provisions of the Act as authorised by the Trusts Corporation.

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Common Fund Reserve and Income Suspense Account		
Common Fund Reserve at beginning	35,584,927	38,538,238
Net Realised and Unrealised Gains/(Losses) on Investments	8,091,238	(2,748,629)
Less Expenses	(218,228)	(204,682)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Common Fund Reserve	43,457,936	35,584,927
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Income Suspense Account at beginning	2,667,241	3,548,245
Distributed during year	(2,627,727)	(3,614,459)
Interest and Investment Income	3,414,523	2,733,454
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Income Suspense Account	3,454,037	2,667,241

3. Sundry Debtors and Prepayments

Dividends due from Public Companies and Unit Trusts	908,218	247,524
Fixed rate income accrued on term deposits	335	989
Franking credits on dividends	327,187	536,059
Goods and Services Tax refund	50,911	46,727
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,286,650	831,299

4. Cash held on Term Deposit

Current		
NAB	100,000	100,000
ANZ	1,250,000	-
NAB	1,250,000	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2,600,000	100,000

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
COMMON FUND
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
5. Investments and Securities		
Fixed Interest - Domestic	27,244,077	29,341,560
Fixed Interest - International	3,248,555	2,552,812
Alternative Assets - Defensive	2,858,475	2,429,544
Property	4,130,733	2,019,555
Australian Equities	29,205,571	21,829,485
International Equities	15,832,667	10,675,992
	<hr/> 82,520,078	<hr/> 68,848,948
6. Mortgages and Loans		
Loan to Presbyterian Church of Victoria Capital Fund	2,040,956	2,342,777
Other secured loans	47,859	50,632
	<hr/> 2,088,816	<hr/> 2,393,410
These funds are advanced under the authority of s14A(4) of the <i>Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890</i> and are a charge on the assets of the Church. The loans are secured by mortgages over residential property.		
7. Ministers' Car Loans		
Opening Balance	92,345	121,193
Add New Advances - Ministers	53,500	22,861
Interest and Administration Charges	3,478	5,052
	<hr/> 149,323	<hr/> 149,106
Less Interest subsidy - Maintenance of the Ministry	(2,445)	(4,002)
Less Repayments - Ministers	(59,401)	(52,759)
	<hr/> 87,477	<hr/> 92,345
These funds are advanced under the authority of s14A(4) of the <i>Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890</i> and are a charge on the assets of the Church.		
8. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at cost	10,327	10,327
Accumulated Depreciation	(10,327)	(10,327)
	<hr/> -	<hr/> -
9. Trade and Other Payables		
Trade Creditors and Accruals	173,318	282,821
Unsettled Investment transactions	350,000	-
	<hr/> 523,318	<hr/> 282,821

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
COMMON FUND
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
10. Trust Funds		
General Assembly	15,310,836	12,056,403
Assembly Committees		
Australian Presbyterian World Mission (Vic)	830,926	820,792
Christian Education and Nurture	1,438,447	1,461,545
Church and Nation	359,866	355,053
Church Planting	626,113	591,008
Health and Community Chaplaincy	1,748,125	1,698,744
Ministry Development	1,830,106	2,412,756
Maintenance of the Ministry	2,436,282	2,370,517
Metro	729,849	771,407
Presbyterian Youth in Victoria	507,323	476,426
Safe Church	151,351	64,792
Social Services	594,431	545,285
State News	60,423	65,104
Theological Education	7,783,544	7,314,081
Total Assembly Committees	19,096,785	18,947,512
Other		
Congregations	3,158,420	855,237
Sites Reserve	8,917,767	9,205,671
Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union	757,663	796,488
Total Trust Funds	47,241,471	41,861,311
Statement of Movement in Trust Fund Balances for the year ended 30 June 2021		
Trust funds at beginning	41,861,311	45,925,129
Deposits received	(2,627,727)	4,485,321
Income credited to trusts for beneficial purposes	2,627,727	3,614,459
Payments made for beneficial purposes	5,380,160	(12,163,598)
Total Trust Funds	47,241,471	41,861,311
Consisting of:		
Trust Funds General and Specific	39,547,012	34,242,089
Trust Funds Perpetual	7,694,458	7,619,221
Total Trust Funds	47,241,471	41,861,311
11. Management Fees Paid		
Common Fund Reserve	162,664	147,931

The method of charging management fees is based on services provided by the General Assembly office.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
SEPARATELY INVESTED FUNDS
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Accumulated Funds and Reserves	2	-	-
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash Assets		4,800,194	10,667,836
Franking Credits Receivable		110,122	254,419
Investments and Securities			
Fixed Interest - Domestic		4,308,595	8,647,293
Fixed Interest - International		1,284,401	1,298,181
Alternative Assets - Defensive		1,471,678	1,313,911
Alternative Assets - Growth		1,476,565	1,189,516
Property		2,220,100	1,170,073
Australian Equities		11,737,057	10,386,174
International Equities		9,013,397	8,801,199
Total Investments		31,511,792	32,806,346
Total Current Assets		36,422,108	43,728,600
Total Assets		36,422,108	43,728,600
Current Liabilities			
Trust Funds General and Specific	3	34,895,261	42,201,983
Undistributed Income		110,122	254,419
Total Current Liabilities		35,005,382	42,456,402
Non-Current Liabilities			
Trust Funds Perpetual	3	1,416,725	1,272,198
Total Non-Current Liabilities		1,416,725	1,272,198
Total Liabilities		36,422,108	43,728,600
Net Assets		-	-

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 26 to 27.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
SEPARATELY INVESTED FUNDS
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue			
Interest and Investment Income		1,296,858	1,475,345
Net Realised and Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments	1	4,069,643	(2,156,057)
Total Revenue		<u>5,366,502</u>	<u>(680,711)</u>
Expenses			
Income/(Loss) Credited to Beneficiaries		<u>5,366,502</u>	<u>(680,711)</u>
Total Expenses		<u>5,366,502</u>	<u>(680,711)</u>
Surplus from ordinary activities		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Other Comprehensive Income		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Comprehensive Income		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 26 to 27.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
SEPARATELY INVESTED FUNDS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The significant policies which have been adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are:

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements, together with these notes have been prepared from the books and records for the year ended 30 June 2021 for the following entities:

Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation
Separately Invested Funds

Basis of Accounting

In the opinion of the Trustees, the Separately Invested Funds is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements. The financial statements of this entity have been drawn up as Special Purpose Financial Reports for use by the Trustees and to fulfil the requirements of the *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890* for the preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and on a going concern assumption.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the significant accounting policies disclosed below, which the trustees have determined are appropriate to meet the purposes of preparation. Such accounting policies are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise.

Investments

Investments are carried in the financial statements at fair value. Shares, convertible preference shares and units in investment trusts have been revalued to market value as at 30 June 2021 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$4,069,643 (2020 loss of \$2,156,057). Except where noted the accounting policies have been consistently applied.

Trust Funds on Deposit

Trust Funds are invested on separate account for each trust.
All deposits are at call with the exception of Perpetual Funds. The General and Specific Funds on deposit are recorded as current liabilities and the Perpetual Funds on deposit are recorded as non-current liabilities.

Revenue

Interest revenue is recognised as it accrues and dividend revenue is recognised when the right to receive a dividend has been established.
All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
SEPARATELY INVESTED FUNDS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
2. Accumulated Funds		
Balance at beginning	-	-
Surplus from ordinary activities	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Accumulated Funds	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
3. Trust Funds		
Congregations	4,272,088	6,063,237
General Assembly		
Sites Reserve	8,563,891	8,878,150
Capital Fund	-	59,127
Donaldson Trust	2,729,272	2,358,255
Ministers Retirement Housing	5,654,427	4,982,460
Health and Community Chaplaincy	1,329,480	1,182,501
Social Services	13,762,827	19,950,452
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Trust Funds	36,311,986	43,474,181
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Statement of Movement in Trust Fund Balances for the year ended 30 June 2021		
Trust funds at beginning	43,474,181	45,926,268
Deposits received	8,677,659	31,657,252
Income earned	5,366,502	(680,711)
Less Franking Credits Receivable	(110,122)	(254,419)
Payments to or on behalf of beneficiaries	(21,096,235)	(33,174,208)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Trust Funds	36,311,986	43,474,181
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Consisting of:		
Trust Funds General and Specific	34,895,261	42,201,983
Trust Funds Perpetual	1,416,725	1,272,198
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Trust Funds	36,311,986	43,474,181
	<hr/>	<hr/>

ASSEMBLY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES 2020 - 2021

Assessors Committee

[Moderator, Clerk of Assembly, Selection Committee convener, Business Committee convener]

Convener: Moderator

Australian Presbyterian World Mission [Victoria] Committee

[12 Members, 10 nominated by GAV, 2 nominated by PWMU, all appointed by the Assembly]

RT 22: Rev J Mestry [28], Mrs W Moody [25], Dr N Johnston [22], Mrs S Hammond [28]

RT 23: Rev T Archer [24], Rev R Waterhouse [26], Rev P Burns [22]

RT 24: Mrs L Ellis [25], Mrs W Pearce [22], Rev D Schulz [26]

PWMU: Mrs S White [22], Mrs P Vandenberg [24]

Convener: Dr N Johnston [22]

Ballot Committee

[Appointed by each Assembly or Commission]

Board of Investment and Finance

[10 Members]

RT 22: Vacancy, Mr A Foster [27]

RT 23: Mr E de Zilwa [28], Mr D Graham [28]

RT 24: Mr J Walter [29], Rev B Oakes [24]

RT 25: Mr Matt Gibson [30], Mr D Wright [30]

RT 26: Vacancy, Mr J Bligh [26]

Chairman: [Appointed annually by the Board, currently Rev B Oakes]

Building and Property Committee

[3 Members]

RT 22: Mr D Wright [24]

RT 23: Mrs G Wright [28]

RT 24: Mr R Kop [27]

Convener: Mr R Kop [26]

Business Committee

[4 members of Assembly (who are not conveners of other reporting committees), Clerks of Assembly, Procurator, Law Agent, and during Assembly: clerks of all presbyteries]

RT 22: Mr D Fraser [24]

RT 23: Mr K Childs [22], Rev Dr J Hood [26]

RT 24: Rev B Cummins [30]

Convener: Rev Dr J Hood [24]

Christian Education and Nurture Committee

[7 members, at least 6 members of Assembly (including the convener)]

RT 22: Mrs R Walz, [30], Rev P Huynh [30]

RT 23: Rev L Isham [30], Rev Bagoes Seta [30], Rev D Assender [22]

RT 24: Rev C Griffiths [27], Rev M James [24]

Convener: Rev M James [22]

Church and Nation Committee

[10 members]

RT 22: Rev M Jensen [30], Mrs J McHardy [27], Rev C Duke [25]

RT 23: Vacancy, Mr P Stanton [29], Mr J Ballantyne [26]

RT 24: Rev J Walz [30], Vacancy, Mr S Robertson [28], Mr I Waller [27]

Convener: Rev C Duke [25]

Church Planting Committee

[7 members]

RT 22: Ms A Bransgrove [29], Rev J Huynh [24]

RT 23: Vacancy, Rev L McSeveny [30], Rev C Garrett [22]

RT 24: Vacancy, Rev A Boyd [24]

Convener: Rev C Garrett [22]

Clerkship Committee

[4 Members (a convener who is a past Moderator and three clerks of presbyteries), plus *ex officio* the Moderator and the Chairman of the Board of Investment and Finance (or his deputy)]

RT 22: Rev P Burns

RT 23: Mr K Childs

RT 24: Mr D Fraser

Convener: Rev R White [22]

Code and General Administration Committee

[3 members, plus *ex officio* Clerks of Assembly, Business Convener, Procurator, Law Agent, Chairman of Trusts Corporation (or a deputy)]

RT 22: Mr R McIvor [30]

RT 23: Mr A Foster [30]

RT 24: Rev A Buchan [26]

Convener: Clerk of Assembly

Conciliation Committee

[6 members: 3 ministers and 3 elders, from at least four presbyteries, appointed annually]

RT 22: Mr B Farquharson (Melbourne West) [29], Mr V Vasiliades (Melbourne West) [23]

RT 23: Rev A Vines (Melbourne North) [27], Mr A Letcher (Maroondah) [29]

RT 24: Rev Dr K Hood (Gippsland) [29], Rev D Martin (Flinders) [29]

Convener: Immediate Past Moderator of the Assembly

Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee

[3 Members, *ex officio* all ADF Chaplains serving in Victoria]

RT 22: Rev P Mercer [22]

RT 23: Mr C Perry [30]

RT 24: Mr J Kapelles [30]

Convener: Rev M Fagan [24]

Exit Student Committee

Convener of the Ministry Development Committee, Ministry Development Officer, Principal of the Presbyterian Theological College [or his faculty representative], Training Officer, Convener of the Church Planting Committee [whenever a Church planting placement is being considered], Convener of the Health and Community

Chaplaincy Committee [whenever a chaplaincy placement is being considered], a representative of each candidate's Presbytery [preferably the convener of the Presbytery's Candidates' Committee or equivalent]

Convener: Convener of Ministry Development Committee (or MDC appointee)

Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee

[10 members]

RT 22: Mrs R O'Brien [26], Rev G Vayne [22], Rev P Court [22]

RT 23: Mrs L Campbell [30], Mrs M Jones [27], Rev D Dixon [26]

RT 24: Mrs J Martin [28], Rev Dr K Hood [27], Vacancy, Rev P Chang [22]

Convener: Rev P Court [22]

Maintenance of the Ministry Committee

[4 members]

RT 22: Mr R Butcher [28]

RT 23: Rev C Garrett [29], Rev M Crabb [22]

RT 24: Mr D Wright [22]

Convener: Mr D Wright [22]

METRO Committee

[8 members]

RT 22: Rev C LePage [30], Mrs A Harris [26]

RT 23: Mr A Edmonds [29], Mr A May [27], Rev L Brownley [26]

RT 24: Mrs J Arundell [30], Rev T McIntosh [22], Mr S Denness [30]

Convener: Rev T McIntosh [22]

Ministry Development Committee

[7 members]

RT 22: Rev S Withers [25], Mr I Bramley [27]

RT 23: Rev D Middleton [29], Mr R Kop [29], Rev G Stephens [30]

RT 24: Rev P Greiner [24], Rev G Vanderwert [22]

Convener: Rev S Withers [25]

Overseas Visitors' Fund Committee

[Membership *ex officio*: The members of the Board of Investment and Finance, and the conveners of the Christian Education and Nurture Committee, the Theological Education Committee, the Ministry Development Committee, and the Church Planting Committee.]

Convener: BIF chairman

Safe Church Committee

[6 members]

RT 22: Vacancy, Rev D Brown [27]

RT 23: Mrs A Thomas [29], Mrs L Griffiths [30]

RT 24: Mr G Hui [26], Rev B Harvey [26]

Convener: Rev B Harvey [24]

Selection Committee

[Nominated by the Code and General Administration Committee]

Metro: Rev A Humphries [22], Rev P Orchard [22], Mr Ben Palmer [22], Mr J Angelico [23], Vacancy

Non-metro: Rev I Leach [23], Rev J Walz [24]

Convener: Rev A Humphries [22]

Social Services Committee

[7 members]

RT 22: Mr D Conradi [25], Vacancy

RT 23: Mrs J Pilgrim [28], Mr T Cunneen [24], Rev L Isham [29]

RT 24: Rev W McArdle [30], Vacancy

Convener: Mrs J Pilgrim [28]

State News Committee

[5 members: 2 ministers and 2 elders]

RT 22: Mr P Betts [29], Mr A Zirngast [22]

RT 23: Rev L Isham [24], Mrs J Craig [29]

RT 24: Rev S McDonald [27]

Convener: Rev S McDonald [26]

Theological Education Committee

[10 Members, ex officio the College Principal and another member of faculty]

RT 22: Rev R White [28], Mrs J McHardy [26], Rev S Jones [25]

RT 23: Rev J Born [30], Rev G Nicholson [25], Rev N Benfell [23]

RT 24: Mr D Wright [24], Rev K Maxwell [26], Rev I Barker [22], Rev M de Pyle [30]

Convener: Rev K Maxwell [26]

Women's Ministries Victoria Committee

[7 Members, at least two of whom are members of the assembly]

RT 22: Mrs S McDonald [30], Rev R Ginter [29]

RT 23: Mrs A Isham [29], Rev B Johnson [29], Mrs S T Yap [29]

RT 24: Mrs C Dunstan [29], Mrs M Girgis [29]

Convener: Rev B Johnson [27]

ad hoc committee PTC Library Fund

Rev Dr Allan Harman (convener), Chris Siriweera, Grant Lawry, David Brown, Neil Benfell, Robert White, Mr Matthew Duke, Russell Walley, David Selman.

ad hoc committee Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd

Duncan McGregor (Convener), James Bligh, Iain Bramley, Grant Lawry, Colin Morrow, and Toni Orchard

ad hoc committee Denomination's response to Change or Suppression Practices Prohibition Bill

Moderator, Clerk, Law Agent, a member of the Board of Investment and Finance appointed by it and Rev Chris Duke (or alternate appointed by the Church and Nation Committee) and Rev Neil Chambers

ad hoc committee COVID-19 restriction advice

Clerk (convener), Andy Buchan, Stephen McDonald, Cam Garrett, and Dean Carroll.

ad hoc committee Minority Options Negotiation of Sale of Assembly Hall

Three members of the Trusts Corporation (with the Chairman of the Trusts Corporation as Convener), the Moderator, Clerk of Assembly, conveners of the Ministry Development Committee and Church Planting Committee or their nominees.

GAV COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS**Appeals Commission**

[Moderator, a past-moderator, presbytery clerks and parity members]

Flinders: Rev D Brown (clerk), (nil for parity);

Geelong: Rev R White (clerk), Mr B Stasse (parity);

Gippsland: Rev G Stephens (clerk), Mr T Guilford (parity);

Maroondah: Mr D Fraser (clerk), Rev M Tonkin (parity);

Melbourne East: Mr K Childs (clerk), Rev B Nelson (parity);

Melbourne North: Rev A Buchan (alt), Mr T Cunneen (parity);

Melbourne West: Rev J Ellis (clerk), (nil for parity);

North East Victoria: Rev B Cummins (clerk), Mr G Dunstan (parity);

North Western Victoria: Rev P Burns (clerk), Mr C Morrow (parity);

South West Victoria: Rev I Leach (clerk), Mr T Warburton (parity).

Western Victoria: Rev K Allen (clerk), Mr S McKerrow (parity).

Past-Moderator:

Chairman: Moderator

Commission for Church Institutions

Moderator (chairman), Clerks of Assembly, Rev Ivan Barker, John Cho, Trevor Cox, Peter Hastie, Philip Mercer, Graham Nicholson, John Stasse, Graeme Weber, elders Tom Guilford, Dr Jim Hare, Stewart Miller, Dennis Wright and Tony Zirngast, with five members to form a quorum

Special Commission for Confirming the Minutes (GAV 2021, Min 7.14)

Moderator and the Clerks of Assembly

GAV PANEL**Panel of Discipline Assessors**

[12 members, appointed by the Code and General Administration Committee; nominations permitted from presbyteries]

Rev M Crabb, R Waterhouse, K Brown, R White, C Garrett, G Stephens, P Court, P Orchard, T Fishwick, I Leach, Mr C Morrow, Vacancy

APPOINTMENTS for the GAA**Commission of the General Assembly of Australia**

[3 ministers and 3 elders, *ex officio* Officers of the GAA & former Moderators-General]

Ministers: Moderator, Deputy Clerk, Assistant to the Clerks

Elders: Mr P Betts, Mr A Letcher, Mr C Morrow

Ex officio: Rev Dr A M Harman, Rev Dr C R Thomas, Rev J P Wilson

GAV Commissioners for 2022 GAA

Ministers [5]: Moderator, Moderator Designate, Assistant to the Clerks, Rev C Garrett, Rev P Hastie.

Minister Alternates [5]: Rev M de Pyle, Rev R Grinter, Rev B Nelson vacancy, vacancy.

Elders [5]: Mr K Childs, Mr T Guilford, Mr S Harris, Dr N Johnston, vacancy.

Elder Alternates [5]: Mr Kevin Childs, Mr Tom Guilford, Mr Steve Harris, Dr Noel Johnston, vacancy.

Moderator's Nominating Committee (GAV representatives for 2022)

Ministers [3]: Rev P Burns, Rev C Siriweera, Rev R White.

Elders [3]: Mr A Deeming, Mr S Harris, Mr B Palmer.

OTHER POSITIONS

Family Council of Victoria (BB 2007 Min 99.9)

Mr J Ballantyne

Multifaith Advisory Group (MAG) Representative (BB 2015 Min 123.2)

Rev C Duke

PWMU Cook Book Committee

[3 PCV, 1 PWMU + Convener (alternates between PCV and UCA Victoria/Tasmania)]

PWMU: Mrs R Brown

GAV: Mrs C Closter, Mrs G McKenzie, Mrs D Cutler

Convener: UCA appointee

St Andrew's Foundation (ABN 26 539 374 087)

Mrs M Conradi, Dr B Ellis, Mr I Bramley

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