

A SUMMARY OF THE 2025 PCV GENERAL ASSEMBLY

...Decisions, Events, Encouragements, People, Praise & Prayer...

OUR GOD WAS WORSHIPPED...

The 173rd General Assembly began with worship held in Scots' Church, Melbourne on the evening of Monday October 6 at a service in which **Rev Rod Waterhouse**, recently retired from Portland PC, was installed as Moderator. Rod preached a heartening and helpful sermon based on the Apostle Paul's visit to Thessalonica in Acts 17:1-10 and his subsequent letter to them in 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 entitled, 'What am I doing here?', encouraging us all to be faithful witnesses for the Lord Jesus. A time of fellowship and supper followed the joyful occasion.



THE SCRIPTURES WERE PREACHED...

The second sitting on Tuesday morning commenced with worship and the celebration of the Lord's Supper led by the Moderator. The General Assembly expositor was **Rev Dr Cameron Clausing** (Christ College, Sydney) on Mark 8:1-21. He continued his expositions on the Wednesday morning from Mark 9:30-37 and then on the Thursday morning from Mark 10:46-52. His preaching was incisive, engaging and a great blessing to all, always bringing into sharp focus the wonder of God's grace to us in Christ.

FAITHFUL SERVANTS WERE REMEMBERED AND CONGRATULATED...

The General Assembly paused to remember and give thanks to God for the lives and faithful service of **Rev Peter Swinn**, **Rev Stephen Giles**, **Rev Ivan Barker** and **Elder Elizabeth Cutler** who were all promoted to higher service during the past year. Appreciation was expressed to **Elder Alan York** (Drouin) who was congratulated on the 50th anniversary of his ordination and induction as an elder.

IMPORTANT VISITORS WERE WELCOMED...

At various times during the week, several visitors were welcomed, including Rev **David Burke**, GAA Moderator-General, **Rev Lesleigh Hall**, GAA Clerk, **Rev Kevin Murray**, outgoing APWM National Director, **Mrs Kathryn Gatt**, WMV Ministry Facilitator & **Mrs Jan Martin**, WMV Ministry Coach, **Mrs Roslyn Brown**, PWMU President & **Mrs Alison Stanley** PWMU Vice president, **Dr Emma Burgess**, PLC Principal, **Mr Nick Haines**, St Andrews Christian College Principal, **Mrs Louise Griffiths**, Safe Church Committee Convener & **Dr Rosemary Fethers**, Safe Church Committee member, a long list of **APWM Vic cross cultural workers** including new APWM Partner Church missionary **Rev Nat Ho** (NSW), and **Colin & Alison Morrow** (PIM).

FAITHFUL PEOPLE WERE THANKED....

- **Mr Michael Smith**, the PCV Archivist, for his ongoing commitment to improving the Archives and his team of volunteers, Laura Bligh, Bruce Garrett, Valentin Kentler, Irene Poon and Tom Vines.
- **Dr. Noel Johnston** for his willingness to care for the fleet of APWM cars for the use of missionaries on home assignment.
- **Mr Bruce & Mrs Lesley Miller** for the kind and generous provision of their holiday house for APWM missionaries on home assignment.
- **Mrs Siew Teng Yap** for efficient and helpful service rendered as admin assistant to the PCV Clerk.
- **Rev Chris Duke** for his contribution to the Change or Suppression Practices committee from 03/21-05/25 and also for his leadership as Convener of the Church and Nation committee.
- **Rev Ian & Mrs Anne Hutton** for their faithful, humble and careful service to the Lord and His church as Moderator and wife over the last two years.
- The volunteer **PCV chaplains** in hospitals, police stations, and prisons for their commitment and efforts to display the love of Christ in those settings.
- The members of the **Social Services Committee** for their ongoing dedication to ensure the continued support of those in need.
- All **PCV members** who have completed Safe Church Basic & Advanced Training through the year.
- **Mr Ashley Manly** for covering the workload since the PCV Safe Church Facilitator's resignation.

- The Church Architect, **Andrew Wilson**, for his service to the committee and the PCV.
- **Mrs Jeanette McHardy** and **Rev Robert White** for their service to the TEC, the PTC and PCV.

OUR GOD WAS PRAISED...

- For the 22 years of faithful service completed by **Mr Michael Ellison** as the PCV General Manager.
- For our civil governments and those in office.
- For the ministry of **Mrs Kathryn Gatt** and **Mrs Jan Martin** as they serve the women of the PCV.
- For the fruitful and effective service rendered to the church by the Clerkship team.
- For the 15 years of faithful service given by the outgoing APWM National Director, **Rev Kevin Murray**
- For the raising up of **Mr Daniel Zeunert** with IMJP (International Mission to Jewish People)
- For the new worship centre at New Life Church (Officer)
- For the team of 24 missionary units and families, serving with APWM in country and overseas.
- For the appointment of **Mrs Brenda Grant** as a paediatric chaplain at the Royal Children's Hospital.
- For the ongoing ministry of **Mrs Kellie Davis** and her pastoral support to ministry wives.
- For the life and service of **Dr John Neil** and his valued contribution to the work of the HCCC.
- For the ongoing work of **Rev Richard Wilson** as Church Planting Officer.
- For the faithful service of **Mrs Anna Harris** and **Rev Luke Brownley** to the METRO committee.
- For the working relationship with MTS in running full-time METRO-MTS traineeships.
- For all who graduated from METRO and YouthMETRO traineeships last year.
- For the provision of Kooyoora to provide safe church services for the PCV.
- For the answer to prayer in providing **Nick Attrill** as the PCV Youth & Children's Worker.
- For the contribution **Liza Christian** has made as the Assistant to the Y&C Worker's ministry.
- For the growth of ministry to children through the PYCC's Building Strong Foundations events.
- For the many volunteer leaders that give of their time, talents and treasure to serve PYCC events.
- For the establishment of the PYV ministry 30 years ago.
- For the **General Manager's** recovery enabling him to resume work on New Entity matters.
- For the continuing provision of candidates for ministry in PCV churches.
- For **Rev Chris Siriweera** and his seven years of service as the PCV Ministry Development Officer.
- For **Mrs Natalie Miller** and her contribution to the Ministry Development Committee in 24-25.
- For **Rev Stuart Withers** and his nine years of service on the MDC.
- For God's ongoing provision for and blessings on the Presbyterian Theological Committee.
- For the leadership and energy of the new PTC Principal, the **Rev Dr Jared Hood**.
- For the ministry and service of the **Rev Dr John Wilson** to the college, the students and the TEC.
- For the Australian College of Theology's new status as a university.
- For the appointment of **Rev Dr John Lee** to the PTC and for his knowledge and expertise.
- For the provision of two new **fulltime lecturers** in Practical Theology at the PTC.
- For 38 years of ministry completed by **Mr Alan & Mrs Faye Canavan** with APWM Vic/Wycliffe.

CONTINUED PRAYER WAS URGED ...

- For the incoming APWM National Director, **Rev Chris Siriweera**.
- For more labourers for the harvest fields, whether here or overseas.
- For the Indian government to protect Christians and to reinstate the license for PTS Dehra Dun so they can receive PCV funding.
- For the end of the war in Sudan, and for peace and gospel ministry in South Sudan.
- For **Mr Daniel Zeunert** and the work of IMJP.
- For the **Church and Nation Committee**, that they would present the claims of Christ and articulate to government biblical teaching in a manner that is bold, wise, and gospel centered.
- For our civil governments to make laws that are godly, just and that defend the vulnerable.
- For the PCV Clerk, **Rev Cam Garrett**, in the fulfillment of his duties.
- For Christian ministry to be protected in relation to current and proposed government legislation.
- For **Defence Chaplains** and the challenges facing ADF members in the current global context.
- For continued gospel work at Valley (Doreen) and Fresh Start (Donnybrook) congregations.

- For the operations of the Assembly's committees, boards and councils in the 24/25 year.
- For the Trusts Corporation and Social Services Committee working together to manage trusts.
- For the work of the State News Committee to inform and encourage the wider church.
- For YouthMETRO graduates' growth in character, convictions, and competencies.
- For the vulnerable and those who have been impacted by abuse in the PCV and wider community.
- For God to grant wisdom, insight and understanding to the New Entity committee.
- For God to continue to raise up students for the ministry and open avenues of ministry for them.
- For the provision of a qualified Ministry Development Officer and Ministry Leadership Coach.
- For **Rev Dr John & Mrs Paula Wilson** as they transition into retirement from the PTC.
- For the hardworking faculty and staff at the PTC and the smooth operation during the past year.
- For **Rev Dr Russell & Mrs Amy St John** as they make the transition from USA to the PTC.
- For **Rev Eugene & Mrs Pauline Hor** as they move from Sydney to the PTC.
- For the Board of Investment and Finance in guiding the financial affairs of the PTC.
- For this year's exit students to settle well into their ministry appointments.
- For churches receiving exit students that they will do so with warmth and joy.
- For the exit students to walk closely with the Lord and establish themselves in the ministry.
- For the exit process to become more effective in supporting the work of presbyteries and the PCV.
- For the progress made by the New Entity committee and for wisdom and insight for them.
- For the PYCC seeking to implement strategies formed through their consult with YouthWorks.
- For **Mr Alan & Mrs Faye Canavan** as they enter retirement.

RULE CHANGES WERE PROPOSED...

The Assembly remitted (i.e. sent to Presbyteries for approval/disapproval) proposed amendments to the Code (the rules of the Church).

- At 1.11.9 regarding the insert of relevant notes into the Code.
- At 4.156 and 5.49 regarding the examination of Presbytery and Assembly committee records.
- At 4.52 and 4.53 regarding leave of absence.
- At 3.40 regarding the election of deacons.
- At 4.55.1 regarding who may be authorized to hold a marriage licence within the PCV.
- At 2.48.1 regarding payment of current terms of settlement.
- At 2.13A, 2.14, 2.15, 2.45, 2.45A and 4.81 regarding approval of budgets by congregations.
- At 2.35A, 2.35.4, 3.6A, 3.40A, 3.40.9, 4.47A regarding holding a WWCC.
- At 6.10.7 regarding sitting in private.

SESSIONS WERE ENCOURAGED...

- To encourage women to make use of the resources in the WMV website, engage with WMV social media channels and direct 'key' women to attend the Leadership Training Day on 18/10/25.
- To identify women who could benefit from a gospel coaching relationship with the WMV coach.
- To prayerfully consider opportunities for ministry presented through the HCC committee.
- To consider the mother-daughter model of church planting in consultation with the CPC.
- To ensure that existing elders and deacons undergo the Safe Church Volunteer Approval Process.
- To identify and disciple suitable young people to be the next generation of leaders in the PCV
- To make use of the PYCC Discussion Paper for Children's and Youth ministry.

CONGREGATIONS WERE ALSO ENCOURAGED...

- To promote and attend the 2025 'March for the Babies'.
- To support the diaspora workers who serve here in Australia and whose support is often low.
- To take a lively interest in the work of APWM.
- To make use of the APWM bimonthly prayer updates (State & National) and the PWMU newsletter.
- To adopt at least one missionary or missionary family to financially and prayerfully support.
- To subscribe to receive 'Fellow Workers' through the sign-up form on the PCV website.
- To support the Coins (or Tap) 4 Mission program.

KEY DECISIONS WERE RESOLVED...

The bulk of the General Assembly's time is taken up with the committee reports and from these many decisions were made by the Assembly, including:

- Adopting the Affirmation Model paper (relating to gender ideology) prepared by the Church and Nation committee and resolving to distribute it to Victorian parliamentarians.
- Agreeing to the dissolution of the Mt Prospect, Hume and Stanhope congregations, as requested by their Presbyteries, permitting the sale of the properties associated for the purposes stated.
- Amending Church and Nation Committee regulations so that the committee will now be referred to as the 'Gospel, Church and Nation Committee'.
- Amending various Long Service Leave regulations and the payment of LSL levy.
- Amending the membership of the Exit (Students) Committee.
- Appointing Rev Ian Hutton as the Convener of the Business Committee.
- Approving the insertion of various notes in the Code for explanation and information.
- Approving the position descriptions for the Ministry Development Officer, Coach & Administrator.
- Authorising the Clerk (representing the PCV) and Rev Phil Campbell (representing Scots' Church) to finalise all matters in relation to the 'GAV having a minority interest in the Assembly Hall'.
- Authorising the Clifton Hill and Hawthorn congregations to access further Sites Reserve funds.
- Authorising the Presbytery of Geelong to halt the sale of the St George's Church, Geelong.
- Commending the National Journal Committee (GAA) for the recent printed edition of the 'Australian Presbyterian', recommending that further publications would be welcome.
- Consenting to the transfer of all property for the purposes of the Auburn (Chalmers) congregation from the local trustees to the PCV Trusts Corporation.
- Consenting to the transfer of all property for the purposes of the Hawthorn congregation from the local trustees to the PCV Trusts Corporation subject to the congregation providing confirmation.
- Enacting new rules in the PCV Code; 2.20(e), 3.38, 4.18.4, 4.31.2(b), 4.68A.2, 4.68B.2, relating to the Safe Church Volunteer Approval process, purchasing an existing building, approval of budgets, counting of votes in a Board election, urgent meetings of Presbytery and the basis of the union of congregations.
- Encouraging the Church Planting Committee to consult with the MDC and the CGAC to propose necessary changes to allow financial support for mother-daughter church plant projects.
- Permitting the Safe Church Committee to further report to the GAV Commission in May 2026.
- Receiving the reports of the Board of Investment & Finance and the Trusts Corporation.
- Remitting various items of business to the Commission of Assembly in May 2026.
- Revising the Long Service Leave levy for 25/26 to \$1,300.
- Sending greetings to His Majesty, King Charles III, and the Victorian Premier, Hon. Jacinta Allan, assuring them of the Assembly's prayers.
- Thanked and discharged the ad hoc committee on Deacons.

FINAL PRAYERS WERE OFFERED...

The Assembly concluded its business with prayer and a hymn and the benediction on Thursday afternoon (not as long as last year's that went until the Friday afternoon). All in all, the Assembly was marked by good debate with a harmonious tone, finally resolving to meet as a Commission on May 5, 2026 and then again in General Assembly on October 5, 2026.

"To God be the glory, great things He has done!"

Rev Philip Burns, Assistant to the Clerks