

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA



PROCEEDINGS OF THE

**URGENT MEETING GENERAL ASSEMBLY
MARCH 2024**

AND OF THE

**COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY
MAY 2024**

AND OF THE

**URGENT MEETING GENERAL ASSEMBLY
AUGUST 2024**

AND OF THE

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OCTOBER 2024**

AND OF THE

**URGENT MEETING GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NOVEMBER 2024**

ASSEMBLY OFFICERS

2023-24

Moderator:	Rev Ian Hutton, BAgrSc, DipEd, BTh Email: moderator@pcv.org.au
Chaplains:	Rev Luke McSeveny Rev Gerald Vanderwert
<i>January-June 2024</i> Acting Clerk of Assembly:	Rev Peter W Phillips, BA, BTh
Acting Deputy Clerk:	Rev Philip Burns BAppSc, BTh
Assistant to the Clerks:	Rev Cameron Garrett, BSc, GDipEd, MDiv
<i>July 2024 onwards</i> Clerk of Assembly:	Rev Cameron Garrett, BSc, GDipEd, MDiv clerk@pcv.org.au
Deputy Clerk:	Rev Peter W Phillips, BA, BTh
Acting Assistant to the Clerks:	Rev Philip Burns BAppSc, BTh
Business Convener: <i>January-March 2024</i> <i>April 2024 onwards</i>	Rev Robert White (pro tem) Rev Brett Cummins BComp, BTh, BMin
Law Agent:	Mr Geoff Cox, BA, LLB McCracken and McCracken Level 9 – 501 La Trobe Street MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Office of the General Assembly

Presbyterian Church of Victoria
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**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
URGENT MEETING OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
MARCH 2024**

PROCEEDINGS OF THE URGENT MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

Via Zoom on Tuesday 5 March 2024 at 11:00am.

1. Constitution and Devotion

The Moderator, Rev Ian Hutton, led the Assembly in a brief devotion based on 1 Timothy 6:3-10 and constituted the Assembly with prayer.

2. Roll

The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Declare that the names recorded in the draft Roll of Assembly, compiled from the certified rolls of presbyteries, as amended, be the Roll of the March 2024 Urgent Meeting of the General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

3. Approval of Moderator's actions

The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

In accordance with Code 5.38(c), approve the Moderator's action in convening this March 2024 Urgent Meeting of the General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

4. Apologies

The following apologies were received and sustained:

Ministers: Justin Ang, Philip Campbell, Trevor Cox, Stephen Deroon, Rob Duncanson, Adam Humphries, John Huynh, Jesse Walz, John Wilson

Elders: John Angelico, Philip Barton, Ken Fuhrmeister, Colin Spackman, Tony Zirngast

5. Associations

Nil.

6. Business Committee

The report of the Business Committee was received.

Rev Brett Cummins, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Determine the hours of meeting to be 11:00am to the finish of business, with breaks as determined by the Moderator.
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)
Question time (including 20 mins for total deliverance questions)
5 minutes for:
Movers of substantive motions and amendments
All other speakers.
3. Appoint a Ballot Committee for the Assembly consisting of: Revs Stuart Withers (Convener), Luke McSeveny, Andrew Vines and Elder Doug Fraser and determine that this committee be held to be thanked and discharged at the dissolution of this Assembly.

4. Permit John Walter, Chairman of the Trusts Corporation, to be present in the Assembly including when meeting in private, to address the Assembly when the Trust Corporation's report and proposed deliverance is before the Assembly and to give advice as requested or required.
5. Permit the General Manager to be present in the Assembly including when meeting in private, and to answer any financial management questions.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. Approve the Order of Business.

The motion was seconded and approved.

7. Conflict of Interest Declarations

The Moderator asked for declarations by members of the court of any Conflict of Interest as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business of this Commission. None were forthcoming.

8. Trusts Corporation

The report of the Trusts Corporation was received.

Elder Russell Walley moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

Noting that the May 2020 Commission of Assembly resolved to transfer the Kirkbrae operations and assets to Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited without requiring compensation, unconditionally and irrevocably indemnify The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation against any and all demands, claims, suits, actions, damages, liabilities, losses, costs and expenses which may be made or brought against or suffered or incurred by The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation in respect of or arising from or in the course of The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation being approved as a provider of, or acting in its capacity as approved provider of, aged care services under the Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth) for and on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the Social Services Committee, Ad Hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited committee and Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes for Aged People, with any funding to be provided from funds available to the General Assembly.

The motion was seconded.

Mr John Walter, Chairman of the Trusts Corporation, spoke to the proposed deliverance and answered questions.

The motion was approved.

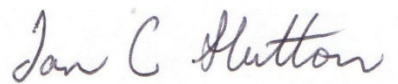
9. Dissolution

The business of the Assembly now being concluded, the Moderator closed the meeting with prayer and the benediction.

CLERKS
P W Phillips
P J Burns
C B Garrett

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 dark ink, reading "Ian C Hutton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev Ian C Hutton
Moderator

**BY ORDER OF THE MODERATOR
13 February 2024**

Members of the General Assembly

In response to a request dated 9th Feb 2024 from Mr Dennis Wright, Secretary Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation and eleven other persons entitled to be members of the General Assembly and representing more than three presbyteries, in accordance with Code rule 5.38, I hereby give notice of an Urgent Meeting of the General Assembly to be held via Zoom, Tuesday 5th March 2024 at 11am, to deal with an urgent matter which has arisen in relation to the transfer of Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes to Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited.

Ian Hutton
Moderator
Presbyterian Church of Victoria

BUSINESS COMMITTEE (Min 6)

The Business Committee has received all papers of a non-judicial nature currently proposed to be submitted to the 5 March 2024 Urgent Meeting of Assembly to be conducted via ZOOM. It has resolved to transmit to the Assembly those papers that seem competent and respectful.

It is proposed that the Zoom Guide previously used at on-line meetings of Assembly and Commissions be used for this Urgent Meeting.

The Ballot Committee members have been asked to also serve as Meeting Hosts.

Please be prepared!

In order to facilitate the smooth running of the meeting commissioners are strongly encouraged:

- to be well prepared before the meeting, having read all the material.
- to advise conveners of questions in advance (which is our customary courtesy).
- to curtail unnecessary speeches and questions.
- to omit humorous and other interjections.

Outline of business

The committee will present a proposed agenda at the start of the Urgent Meeting. As a guide, the committee will seek to arrange business according to the following outline, and if no updates are required, will present this as the proposed order of business.

1. Devotions and Constitution
2. Roll (NOM A1)
3. Moderator's action approval (code 5.38.c, NOM A2)
4. Apologies (NOM A3)
5. Associations
6. Business Committee Report, WB p11 (Del WB p12)
7. Conflict of Interest Declarations
8. Trust Corporation Report (WB p13; Del p16)
9. Dissolution

Robert White
CONVENER PRO TEM

TRUSTS CORPORATION (Min 8)

Proposed transfer of Kirkbrae Assets and Liabilities to Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited

Background

The Trusts Corporation reported to the General Assembly of October 2019 on matters relating to the structure and governance of Kirkbrae (GAV 2019 BB p409). Arising from the decisions of the October 2019 General Assembly and following General Assemblies, a new corporate entity was created with the intention that it assume full legal and operational responsibility for Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes.

At the same time the General Assembly (GAV 2019, min 26.3 p155) agreed to indemnify the Trusts Corporation as follows:

3. Unconditionally and irrevocably indemnify The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation and the Trustees against any and all demands, claims, suits, actions, damages, liabilities, losses, costs, and expenses which may be made or brought against or suffered or incurred by The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation in respect of or arising from or in the course of The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation being approved as a provider of, or acting in its capacity as approved provider of, aged care services under the *Aged Care Act 1997* (Cth) for and on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the Social Services Committee, and Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes for Aged People.

In May 2020 the Commission of the General Assembly (GAV Commission 2020, min 17 p20) further approved:

1. Authorise the incorporation of a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee (Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd.) under the Constitution appended (Appendix A).
2. Approve for adoption by the Board of the company the Board Charter appended (Appendix B).
3. Establish an ad hoc Committee of the General Assembly entitled the 'Ad hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd. Committee' to enact the incorporation of the new company and to carry out all necessary preparations for the new entity to take a transfer of the assets in connection with Kirkbrae including the approved provider licence.
4. Appoint the membership of this ad hoc Enactment Committee as follows, noting that the members will become the first Directors of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd: Duncan McGregor (Convener), James Bligh, Iain Bramley, Julie Duke, Grant Lawry, Colin Morrow and Toni Orchard.
5. Authorise the use of Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes' funds to cover any costs arising from the process of incorporation.
6. Authorise the transfer to Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd. of all assets held for and in connection with Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes including funds, land and all improvements situated on such land, and the licence to operate as an aged care approved provider, subject to any and all trusts which attach to such assets.
7. Authorise the use of Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes' funds to cover any costs arising from these transfers.
8. Request the ad hoc Kirkbrae Committee to report on the progress of these matters to the General Assembly at an appropriate time.

In October 2020 Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited (PCVL) was registered with the Australian Securities & Investments Commission as a company limited by guarantee under ACN 654 045 852.

Since then PCVL has been seeking to obtain the relevant approvals and licences to become authorised to act as an Aged Care Service Provider. On November 2023 PCVL was notified of its approval by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission as a provider of residential aged care under the Aged Care Act, 1997.

In the meantime the directors of PCVL through their membership of the Ad Hoc Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited committee of the General Assembly have been responsible for the operational governance of Kirkbrae in the place of the Social Services Committee (BB 2020 November urgent meeting, min 6 p596).

PCVL is now in a position to assume full legal responsibility for Kirkbrae as approved by the Commission of Assembly of May 2020, and receive the Kirkbrae assets and liabilities by way of transfer. Both parties are keen for this to occur as soon as possible. Legislative changes which come into effect from July 2024 place added pressure on the timetable.

There has never been any intention that PCVL should make any payment to “purchase” the Kirkbrae operation including the assets. The motivation behind the transaction is not one of profit but seeking the better governance of Kirkbrae. Neither the members of the Trusts Corporation nor the PCVL directors have any beneficial or personal interest in Kirkbrae. They act as volunteer trustees to fulfil the charitable purposes of Kirkbrae.

While the transfer may not be considered to be a sale in the normal context of that word, in the legal sense it effectively is a sale for nil value (or \$1). This situation gives rise to a difficulty in relation to the continuing residual liability of the Trusts Corporation for past actions up to the date of transfer.

While any claims which may be made in relation to actions *after* the date of transfer will be the sole responsibility of PCVL, there remains a risk that claims may be made in the future relating to activities *prior* to the transfer.

Any such claims would be made against the operator and licence holder at the time of the incident which gives rise to the claim. Until now, the Trusts Corporation has held the Kirkbrae assets and been in a position to draw on them when required to meet any liabilities associated with the operations. Once the transfer has taken place, the assets will be beyond the reach of the Trusts Corporation and the General Assembly to pay any such liabilities. This means neither the Trusts Corporation nor the General Assembly will have a legal claim on those assets. If this were a commercial sale, the Trusts Corporation and the General Assembly would have received payment for the disposal of the operations and property which would provide a source of funds to meet any future claims, should they arise.

There are currently no known circumstances which are likely to give rise to a claim against the Trusts Corporation. This does not mean that there is no risk that a claim could arise at some time in the future. The risk will diminish over time. Ultimately it will be negligible once the statute of limitations on claims is reached. Until that time, the Trusts Corporation cannot ignore the contingent liability and the risks to which it is

exposed. It should be borne in mind, however, that even some statutory limitations on claims can be set aside by a plaintiff applying to a court to do so, depending on the circumstances.

Indemnity

The Trusts Corporation has sought security from PCVL by way of either

- a) registered mortgage over the title, or
- b) security deposit of say \$2 million held by the Trusts Corporation, or
- c) Director's personal guarantees.

None of these have been acceptable to the PCVL directors.

The PCVL directors have agreed to provide an unsecured indemnity to the Trusts Corporation. While that is of some comfort and as things currently stand is most likely able to be funded from the Kirkbrae assets, there is no certainty that this will be the case at some point in the future. A variety of changes in circumstances may arise which could diminish the availability of Kirkbrae funds.

The PCVL directors acknowledge that there is no guarantee that "Kirkbrae can be made sustainable". If that is the case, the directors would need to respond appropriately. This could among other things include a sale of Kirkbrae, or winding up the operation.

The directors' desire is to be unencumbered with respect to undertaking property development and/or improvements, possibly in the near future, which will most likely be funded through external debt. This would further diminish the ability of PCVL to meet any liability that may arise under its indemnity to the Trusts Corporation, who would then be ranked after any secured external debt.

These factors give rise to the possibility that despite their best intentions the PCVL directors may not have sufficient assets and liquidity available at the time of a future claim to meet any unsecured indemnity they provide. For those reasons the proposed indemnity of the PCVL directors is insufficient to protect the assets of the Trusts Corporation and the PCV which are held for other specific purposes.

The Trusts Corporation feels a responsibility to inform the Assembly of the material consequences arising from the implementation of previous Assembly decisions and the changes in circumstances which have occurred since the 2019 Assembly provided the indemnity to the Trusts Corporation. The Trusts Corporation considers it appropriate and necessary to seek a more specific indemnity from the Assembly in the knowledge of the changed circumstances and now identifiable risk.

Proposed Remedy

The proposal is that

1. PCVL provide an indemnity to the Trusts Corporation against any future claims which may arise. This will be included in the documentation which formalises the transfer of operations including the assets and liabilities.
2. To the extent that such indemnity may for whatever reason, despite the best intentions of the PCVL directors, not be able to meet any future claim against the Trusts Corporation in relation to Kirkbrae, the General Assembly provide an indemnity in similar terms to the one in GAV minute 26.3 of 2019.

Should the Trusts Corporation be required to call on this indemnity, the intention is to meet the expense from funds available to the General Assembly. Given that it is not certain that any funding will be required, it does not seem necessary to reserve funds by specifically setting them aside and tying them up for an indefinite time. Provided the Trusts Corporation has access to funds when required, the ultimate source of funds can be considered at the time.

John Walter
VICE CHAIRMAN

ROLL OF ASSEMBLY (5 MARCH 2024)

Presbytery of Flinders

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Aspendale	Brett Peatman	
Brighton (HMC)		
BayChurch	Paul Huynh	Ross McKinnon
Clarinda (HMC)		Michael Lee
Clarinda Nuer (HMC) Clayton		Arnis Putnins
	Michael Jensen	
Cranbourne	Lam Paul Gak (Associate)	
Cranbourne	Peter Roberts	
Dandenong	Andrew Wong	Robert Paix
Dromana-Mornington	Matt Cole	
Embrace Melbourne (AC)	Paul Jang	
Frankston	Jared Keath	
New Life, Officer	David Martin	Sabyan Hardjo
Somerville (HMC)		
Sorrento-Rye	Hui Lim	
South East Samoan	Kainano Opetai	
Retired Ministers:	Peter Barclay	
	Ivan Barker	
	David Brown	
	Ken Brown	
	Frank Savage	

Presbytery of Geelong

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bannockburn	Matthew Deroon	G (Bert) Stasse
Bellarine (AC)	Brett Cummins	Neil Mansfield
Geelong West	Luke McSeveny	Drew Chittenden
North Geelong	Darren Middleton	Richard Worth
The Leigh	Surendra Wesley	Jim Venters
Retired Ministers:	Andrew Bray	Parity: Ben Saunders
	John Cromarty	
	Allan Harman	
	Ian Hutton	
	Scott Kroeger	
	John Stasse	
	Robert White	

Presbytery of Gippsland

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bairnsdale	Gary Stephens	Roger McIvor
Drouin	Heath Easton	Alan York
	Stephen Jones (Associate)	
Leongatha (HMC)	Stephen Denness	
Moe-Yarram	Stephen Deroon	John Ollis
Morwell	Cameron Garrett	Neil Akers
Sale (HMC)		
Warragul	Raymond Patchett	
PTC Lecturer	Karl Hood	
Retired Ministers:	Robert Boan	Parity: Alan Solidium
	Michael Wharton	Stephen Weir

Presbytery of Maroondah

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Belgrave Heights	Mark Tonkin	
Blackburn (HMC)		Keith Ferres
Croydon	Cameron Griffiths	Roni Tobing
Doncaster (HMC)		Colin Flynn
Donvale	Gerald Vanderwert	Iain Bramley
	Joel Mestry (Assistant)	
	Jordan Born (Assistant)	
	Xien Yao (Assistant)	
Heathmont	Brian Harvey	Doug Fraser
Kirkbrae	Paul K B Lee	
Mt Evelyn (AC)	Miles Fagan	Bruce Timmins
Warburton (HMC)		
Woori Yallock	Tony Archer	Andre Dahmen
PTC Lecturer:	Jared Hood	
Retired Ministers:	Tony Bird	
	Graham Bradbeer	
	Trevor Cox	
	Wally Gear	
	Grant Lawry	
	Peter Orchard	
	Andrew Slater	
	Willem Vandenberg	
	Andrew Venn	

Presbytery of Melbourne East

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Arabic	Karam Krayyem	Zaher Saad
Ashburton		John Angelico
Auburn (Chalmers)	Nick Arundell	Colin Spackman
Burwood Community	John Elnatan	Paul Lee
	Billy Kurniawan (Assistant)	
Camberwell	Philip Mercer	Philip Barton
Canterbury	David Hann	Kevin Childs
	Dong Choi (Assistant)	
Caulfield-Elwood	Phillip Chang	Haddon Chang
Gardenvale East (AC)		
Hawthorn	Graham Nicholson	John Singleton
Korean	Jae Kook Kim	Daniel Chung
Malvern	Marcus Campbell	
South Yarra		Ben Palmer
St Kilda-Balaclava	Luke Isham	
Surrey Hills	John Huynh	Russell Walley
	Oliver Blythe (Associate)	
Scotch Chaplains:	David Assender	
	Douglas Campbell	
PTC Lecturer	Ben Nelson	
MDC Officer	Chris Siriweera	
Retired Ministers:	Alan Every	Parity:
	Douglas Milne	Ken McClimont
	Richard O'Brien	Jim Hare
	Anthony Salisbury	
	Bob Thomas	

Presbytery of Melbourne North

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bundoora	Neil Chambers	Andrew May
	Clinton Le Page (Associate)	
Donnybrook, Fresh Start (CPC)	Ben Kelada	
Eltham	Don Elliott	Ian Courts
Epping	Nello Barbieri	Neil Furlong
	Brian Luong (Associate)	
Heidelberg (PC)	Ignatius Bagoes Seta	Tom Cunneen
Hume (AC)	Luke Brownley	Tony Ruggeri
Kangaroo Ground (HMC)		
Reservoir	Andrew Vines	Reg Butcher
Samoan		
Valley (AC)	Richard Wilson	Luke Yelland
Whittlesea-Mernda	Botros Botrosdief	
PTC Principal	Peter Hastie	
PTC Lecturer	John Wilson	
Retired Ministers:	Simalu Cowley	Parity:
	Theo Fishwick	Rob Herweynen

Presbytery of Melbourne West

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Brimbank (AC)	Daniel Dixon	Ken Fuhrmeister
Clifton Hill-Essendon	Christopher Duke	David Cutler
	Bill Medley (Associate)	
Darebin	Aaron Boyd	Adam Foster
	Adam Humphries (Assistant)	
Gisborne	Wayne McArdle	Adrian Guillot
Melbourne Scots'	Philip Campbell	Graeme Harris
	Justin Ang (Senior Assistant)	
	Christian Tirtha (Assistant)	
Melton	Dinesh Taunk	Dennis Wright
Sunshine-Melbourne West Korean (AC)	Samuel Son	Charles Okwo
West Footscray (HMC)	Martin de Pyle	
Williamstown-Point Cook		
Wyndham	Peter Greiner	Harold Carpenter
Retired Ministers:	John Cho	
	Philip Court	
	John Ellis	
	Walter Johnson	
	Len Pearce	
	Bruce Riding	

Presbytery of North East Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Benalla-Balmattum-Thoona	Stephen McDonald	Graeme Hayes
Broadford (AC)	Barry Porter	Ross Barnett
Numurkah-Tallygaroopna (AC)		George Elliott
Seymour-Nagambie-Yea (HMC)		Bill Day
Shepparton-Stanhope-Kyabram	Kyung Ee	Philip Betts
Tatura-Rushworth	Kalpan Vasa	Gary Dunstan
Wangaratta-Myrtleford-		
Wodonga (AC)	Stuart Withers	
Yarrawonga (HMC)		Malcolm Browning
Retired Ministers:	Neil Harvey	Parity:
	Kevin Maxwell	Ralph Kop
	Neil McDonald	
	Ian Touzel	

Presbytery of North Western Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bendigo	Philip Burns	Andrew Kerr
Bendigo East (Reforming)	Russ Grinter	Ryan Smith
Castlemaine (HMC)	Daryl Jackson	Richard McArdle
Eaglehawk (AC)	Jesse Walz	
Kerang/Swan Hill (AC)		
Rochester	Michael Riske	
Sunraysia (HMC)		Colin Morrow
Acting Clerk of Assembly	Peter Phillips	
Retired Ministers:	Keith Bell	Parity: Rory Weightman
	John Sutherland	Tony Zirngast

Presbytery of South West Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Camperdown-Terang-Noorat	Damian Meeuwissen	Tom Fleming
Colac		Geoff Cross
Hamilton	David Schulz	Graeme Presser
	Robert Koh (Associate)	
Koroit-Port Fairy		
Portland	Rod Waterhouse	
Warrnambool	Ben Johnson	Robert Prout
	Shady Mehanni (Associate)	
Retired Ministers:	Neil Benfell	Parity: David Selman
	Ian Leach	Damien Craig

Presbytery of Western Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Ararat-Skipton-Lismore (AC)		Stewart McKerrow
Ballarat North (AC)		Graham Hammond
Ballarat South (Ebenezer St John's)	Toby McIntosh	Keith Mitchell
Ballarat West	Robert Duncanson	Jeremy Peet
Horsham	Greg Matthews	Jonathan Starks
Kaniva-Nhill (HMC)		Bruce Meyer
Retired Minister	John Brennan	

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
MAY 2024

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

At Melbourne, and in the Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall, on Tuesday 7 May 2024 at 10:30am.

1. Devotion and Constitution

The Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria met in accord with Min. 117.7 GAV 2023, after singing of a hymn, and then a reading and devotion based on Joshua 2:8-14 led by the Moderator's Chaplain, Rev Luke McSeveney, after which the Moderator, Rev Ian Hutton constituted the Assembly in 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, October 2023, and who remain qualified to be members of the Assembly.

3. Apologies

The following apologies were received and sustained:

Ministers: Tony Bird, Graham Bradbeer, Keith Bell, Robert Boan, David Brown, Philip Campbell, John Cho, Matt Cole, John Cromarty, Miles Fagan, Theo Fishwick, Alan Harman, Neil Harvey, Ben Johnson, Robert Koh, Ray Patchett, Brett Peatman, Barry Porter, Bruce Riding, David Schulz, Ignatius Seta, Garry Stephens, John Sutherland, Bob Thomas, Ian Touzel, Willem Vandenberg, Gerald Vanderwert, Surendra Wesley, Andrew Wong

Elders: John Angelico, Malcolm Browning, Tom Guilford, Adrian Guillot, Jim Hare, Graeme Harris, David Hayward, Robert Herweynen, Andrew Kerr, Ralph Kop, Keith Mitchell, Jeremy Peet, Graeme Presser, John Singleton, Jonathan Starks, Stephen Weir, Anton Zirngast

4. Associations

Nil

5. Business Committee

The report of the Business Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Brett Cummins, 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 A Humphries (Convener), L Brownley
Elders D Fraser, D Wright
and determine that this committee be thanked and discharged at the dissolution of the Commission.
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. Appoint the Moderator (chairman) and the Clerks of Assembly a Special Commission to scrutinise the minutes of this Commission 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 Commission.
10. Approve the Order of Business.

The motion was seconded and approved.

6. Conflict of Interest

The Moderator asked for declarations by members of the court of any Conflict of Interest as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business of this Commission.

Rev Cameron Garrett declared a conflict of interest with the Clerkship Committee's deliverances concerning his proposed appointment, but also indicated through the Acting Clerk that he would leave the house during that business item.

Rev Philip Burns declared a conflict of interest with regards to the notice of motion concerning his appointment.

The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly;

Permit Rev Philip Burns to remain in the court for this business item but not to debate or vote in the matter.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Rev Luke Isham declared a conflict of interest with Petition 1.

The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly;

Allow Rev Luke Isham to present Petition 1 and to answer any questions.

The motion was seconded and approved.

7. Election of Moderator-Designate

The Past Moderator, Rev Philip Mercer, took the chair.

The Acting Clerk's report was received.

The Acting Clerk moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Receive the nominations of Rev Kyung Ee (Shepparton) and Rev Ian Colin Hutton (retired minister).
2. Proceed as per regulation 4 of the nomination procedure for Moderator-Designate.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Convener of the Ballot Committee, Rev Adam Humphries, moved:

That the Commission of Assembly;

Receive the report of the Ballot Committee that Rev Ian Hutton had been elected by ballot as Moderator-Designate for 2024/25.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Past Moderator led the Commission of Assembly in prayer.

Rev Ian Hutton addressed the Commission of Assembly.

8. Clerkship Committee

Rev Ian Hutton resumed the chair.

The report of the Clerkship Committee was received.

The Moderator ruled that the Assembly sit in private

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause

Clause 1 was approved.

Clause 2 was approved unanimously.

Clause 3 was approved.

Clause 4 was approved.

It was moved that the Assembly sit in open court.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Rev Cameron Garrett returned to the court and was congratulated by the Moderator who led the court in prayer.

(1) Rev John Wilson moved additional clauses 5 and 6.

That the Commission of Assembly:

5. Thank Rev Peter Phillips for giving time, thought and energy in serving Christ as Acting Clerk of the Assembly since 1 January 2024.
6. Thank Mrs Lorraine Phillips for her patience and cheerfulness in standing by her husband in this call of duty.

The motion was seconded and approved with acclamation.

The Moderator thanked Rev Peter Phillips and Mrs Lorraine Phillips and led the court in prayer.

(2) Elder Colin Morrow moved an additional clause 7.

That the Commission of Assembly:

7. Appoint Rev Philip Burns as Acting Assistant to the Clerks upon the new Clerk taking up his role until an appointment of an Assistant to the Clerks can be made.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(3) Rev Philip Mercer moved the deliverance as a whole as amended.

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Vary the Terms of Appointment for the Clerk's position by deleting the current clauses 6 and 7, and replacing them with the following:

6. Remuneration

A salary package based on providing the same after-tax benefit as the minimum ministerial remuneration as declared by the General Assembly from time to time with a 25% loading and the after-tax equivalent of a full manse allowance and payment of manse energy.

7. Financial Support

The General Assembly will make provision for a home office for the Clerk by paying:

- a. the cost of providing his home phone and internet connection; and
- b. additional travel over 5000 km p.a. at the nominated rate.

so that the approved Terms of Appointment shall read:

Clerk of Assembly – Terms of Appointment

1. Employer

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

2. Position Title

Clerk of the General Assembly of Victoria.

3. Location

The Clerk's Office, 156 Collins Street Melbourne or such other location as determined by the General Assembly.

4. Probationary Period

Nil for the right candidate but as decided at the discretion of the General Assembly of Victoria.

5. Hours of Work

38 hours per week.

6. Remuneration

A salary package based on providing the same after-tax benefit as the minimum ministerial remuneration as declared by the General Assembly from time to time with a 25% loading and the after-tax equivalent of a full manse allowance and payment of manse energy.

7. Financial Support

The General Assembly will make provision for a home office for the Clerk by paying:

- a. the cost of providing his home phone and internet connection; and
- b. additional travel over 5000 km p.a. at the nominated rate.

8. Leave

a. Annual leave

5 weeks p.a. to be taken annually unless prior approval to defer is given by the Clerkship Committee.

b. Study leave

- 1 week p.a. (not cumulative).
- c. **Long Service Leave**
In accord with PCV provisions.
- d. **Sick leave**
As per ministerial leave provisions in the code.
- e. **Carers and Special Leave**
In accord with State legislation.

9. Expenses

- a. **Work related**
Reimbursement as authorised by the Clerkship Committee.
- b. **Relocation**
As authorised by the Clerkship Committee in consultation with the BIF.

10. Termination of Appointment

- a. **By the Assembly**
If after review of the Clerk's performance, the Assembly resolves that the Clerk not be re-appointed, the Assembly shall give him, through the Moderator, six months written notice of termination.
- b. **By the Clerk**
If the Clerk desires to resign his appointment, he shall give at least six months' notice in writing to the Clerkship Committee, unless the General Assembly should allow a shorter period of notice.
- c. **Immediate by change of circumstance**
 - i Deposition or Excommunication
 - ii WWCC exclusion

11. Clerical Assistance

Shall be provided at the expense of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

- 2. Appoint Rev Cameron Bruce Garrett, to the position of Clerk of Assembly in Victoria, with a commencement date of 1 July 2024 on the terms and conditions approved in clause 1 above.
- 3. Request the incoming Clerk to relinquish his current responsibilities as Clerk of the Presbytery of Gippsland, at least in the first instance, to enable him to become settled and established in his new role.
- 4. Authorise the Moderator and Acting Clerk, in consultation with the committee, to make suitable arrangements for the commissioning of Rev Cam Garrett as the incoming Clerk prior to his commencement in the role.
- 5. Thank Rev Peter Phillips for giving time, thought and energy in serving Christ as Acting Clerk of the Assembly since 1 January 2024.
- 6. Thank Mrs Lorraine Phillips for her patience and cheerfulness in standing by her husband in this call of duty.
- 7. Appoint Rev Philip Burns as Acting Assistant to the Clerks upon the new Clerk taking up his role until an appointment of an Assistant to the Clerks can be made.

The motion was seconded and approved.

9. Code and General Administration Committee

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

The Convener, Rev Peter Phillips, moved the proposed deliverance.

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Defer any decision regarding the proposed discharge of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee until the matter has been fully considered by the Code and General Administration Committee and the wider church in the context of and in the resolution of the New Entity proposals.
2. Refer the proposed transfer of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee's duties to other bodies within the church to the ad hoc New Entity Committee for consideration and inclusion as it sees appropriate in its New Entity proposals to the General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

10. Maintenance of the Ministry Committee

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

The Convener, Elder Colin Morrow, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Note that charges and committees paying 'religious practitioners' are legally allowed to claim back GST, on their BAS Statements, paid on purchases from the NCB account provided the charge or committee hold copies of Tax Invoices (unless for amounts less than \$82.50 – currently – where no Tax Invoice is available, in which case a claim equivalent to 10% GST may be claimed).
2. Note that if GST is claimed by charges or committees for NCB purchases, then that GST may either be treated as income for the charge, or it may be paid to the religious practitioner NCB Account for his benefit.
3. Recommend to charges that if GST is claimed back by charges that it be paid to religious practitioners as NCB.
4. Note that the committee, as reported in October 2023, has decided not to proceed with preparing a separate Maintenance of Ministry Report and that should the committee require additional information in its review role, like Presbyteries, Audited Annual Reports will suffice together with Budgets and the ARMS based TSR.
5. Note that the MMC no longer requires the ACR but acknowledges that accounts prepared in the old ACR categories will allow for standardisation and ease of use for Presbyteries as they review Annual Accounts, Budgets and TSR reports annually.
6. Note the new rates that apply from 1 July 2024 as per the schedule below:

Presbyterian Church of Victoria

Maintenance of the Ministry Committee

2024/2025

All amounts are \$s unless marked otherwise		2024/2025
Remuneration		
61%	Minimum Ministerial Remuneration (MinMR)	61,560
	Stipend (1)	36,936
85%	Stipend (Home Missionary Minimum)	31,396
40%	Non-Cash Benefits (NCB) (1)	24,624
16.5%	Superannuation	10,164
	<i>MinMR + Superannuation</i>	<i>71,724</i>
Honorarium		
2%	Business Convener	1,231
3%	Assistant to the Clerks	1,847
6%	Deputy Clerk	3,694
10%	State Moderator	6,156
Levies		
1.4%	Long Service Leave Levy	860
Other Figures		
50%	Sustentation Qualifying Stipend (SQS)	30,780
Supply Rates		
0.25%	One Service	154
0.30%	Two Services (same sermon)	185
0.35%	Three Services (same sermon)	215
0.45%	Two or More (different sermons)	277
Travel Rate		
75%	per km	0.64
		2024/2025

7. Remind charges and committees that employ ministry workers that the LSL levy is currently charged based on the number of eligible ministry workers employed (whether part-time or full-time) as at 1st July each year.
8. Remind presbyteries and charges of their obligations under rule 4.71 and 4.82 to monitor and manage part-time ministries and report them to the MMC annually.
9. Strongly urge and encourage charges, in the light of increasing complexity to make use of the centralised payroll system run through the church office to minimise risk.
10. Remind charges that if a religious practitioner is retiring or leaving ministry that any exempt benefit 'cashed out' would, by virtue of being 'cashed out', become subject to tax and should be reported as assessable income.

The motion was seconded and approved.

11. Theological Education Committee

The report of the Theological Education Committee was received.

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

That the Commission of Assembly;

1. Approve the job description for the permanent part-time lecturer in Biblical Languages and Old Testament as follows;

Lecturer in Biblical Languages and Old Testament – Position Description

1. Position Summary

The lecturer in Biblical Languages and Old Testament is appointed by the Faculty in consultation with the Theological Education Committee (TEC).

The appointment is on a permanent two days per week basis (0.4 FTE). The lecturer in Biblical Languages and Old Testament is a faithful Christian, academically able in the disciplines of the biblical languages and Old Testament and with experience in ministry and pastoral oversight.

As a teaching position, the Lecturer has a leadership role within the PCV as it engages with theological and ministry issues. The Faculty sets the lecturer apart for this ministry and teaching appointment by a public act of commissioning, usually at the Commencement and Graduation Service.

2. Responsibilities

The lecturer in Biblical Languages and Old Testament is responsible, under the Principal of the PTC, for delivering and assisting to deliver Hebrew, Greek, and Old Testament units, as assigned by the Faculty. The lecturer is under the oversight of the faculty head of the department or departments in which he is lecturing.

The usual responsibilities are:

- Hebrew language units (two units, 0.2 FTE)
- Old Testament recorded online units (three units, 0.075 FTE)
- One Hebrew exegesis unit every 3.5 years (0.03 FTE)

Additional responsibilities as required and as 0.4 FTE permits may include:

- Greek language units (two units, 0.2 FTE)
- Old Testament tutoring and grading (0.025 FTE per unit)
- Higher degree research or research output (0.05 FTE).

Significant, temporary increases in the load for a semester will be appropriately remunerated,

The lecturer must:

- Set an example in life and ministry to the students.
- Contribute to the well-being of the college community.
- Undertake administrative tasks related to the units being taught.
- Stay abreast of educational developments and innovate in the delivery of the assigned courses and their assessment.

These responsibilities do not involve attendance at faculty meetings. They may involve participation in Australian College of Theology Biblical Languages or Old Testament department meetings as negotiated with the relevant PTC department head.

3. Attributes

- Meets the qualifications of a ministry leader as described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, i.e. demonstrating a mature Christian character.
- Prayerful.
- The capacity to communicate clearly.
- Ability to relate to people of diverse cultural backgrounds.

4. Qualifications

Essential

- Qualified at Research Masters level or ACT equivalence or above and able to meet ACT approval criteria for the delivery of level 8 Biblical Language and Old Testament units.
- A minister in full standing with the Presbyterian Church of Australia, or a minister of another denomination.
 - A wholehearted commitment to the Westminster Confession of Faith, as read in the light of the Declaratory Statement of 1901, as a systematic exposition of the teaching of Scripture.
- Fully committed to the Bible as the inerrant Word of God.
- Possesses or can obtain a Working with Children's Check and is willing to sign the Safe Church policy agreement.

Achievements and Capabilities

- Demonstrated ability to teach in his discipline, ideally with some experience in curriculum design and assessment.
- Educational experience with an awareness of different modes of delivery of courses.
- Understanding of the Australian higher educational context, especially of the expectations of the Australian College of Theology.
 - Involvement in discipling and training others in ministry skills.
- Demonstrated capacity to work in a team.
- Availability to teach evening classes.
- Availability to preach on Sundays and represent the College.
- Administrative experience with an ability to share in the administrative work of a tertiary institution relating to the assigned units.

5. Remuneration

- a) 0.4 times the minister's minimum remuneration package as defined by the Assembly.
- b) when applicable any additional paid hours will be remunerated proportionately based on the minimum ministerial remuneration.
- c) manse allowance set by the TEC as appropriate for a 0.4 FTE appointment.
- d) superannuation at the ministerial rate.
- e) 0.4 times ministerial annual leave as defined by the Assembly, currently five weeks.
- f) Workcover.
- g) any other provisions the Assembly may determine.

6. Termination of Appointment

- a) By the committee

- If after review of his performance the committee resolves that the appointee not be re-appointed, the committee shall give him six months written notice of termination.
- b) By the appointee
If the appointee desires to resign his appointment, he shall give at least six months' notice in writing to the committee, unless the committee resolves to allow a shorter period of notice.
 - c) Immediate by change of circumstance
 1. Deposition or Excommunication.
 2. WWCC exclusion.
2. Approve the job description for the permanent part-time lecturer in Biblical Counselling as follows:

Lecturer in Biblical Counselling – Position Description

1. Position Summary

The lecturer in Biblical Counselling is appointed by the Faculty in consultation with the Theological Education Committee (TEC). The appointment is on a permanent two days per week basis (0.4 FTE).

The lecturer in Biblical Counselling is a faithful Christian, academically able in the discipline of Biblical Counselling and with experience in ministry and pastoral oversight. As a teaching position, the Lecturer has a leadership role within the PCV as it engages with theological and ministry issues.

With the TEC, the Faculty sets the lecturer apart for this ministry and teaching appointment by a public act of commissioning, usually at the Commencement and Graduation Service.

2. Responsibilities

The lecturer in Biblical Counselling is responsible, under the Principal of the PTC, for delivering and assisting to deliver ACT and PTC units in Biblical Counselling and Pastoral Ministry, as assigned by the Faculty. The lecturer is the department head of and responsible to the Faculty for the field of Biblical Counselling at PTC (the PTC National Centre of Biblical Counselling). In the delivery of other Pastoral Ministry units, the lecturer is under the oversight of the faculty Practical Theology department head.

The usual responsibilities are:

- Introductory Biblical Counselling units (two units, PC002 and PC003, 0.2 FTE)
- Biblical Counselling recorded online units and projects (five units, 0.125 FTE)
- Biblical Counselling field education unit (0.05 FTE)
- Biblical Counselling programme (Centre) development, promotion, and reporting (0.025 FTE)
- Higher degree research or research output (0.05 FTE, with sabbatical allowance)

Additional responsibilities as 0.4 FTE permits may include:

- Pastoral Supervision unit (0.025 FTE)
- PTC conferences (0.025 FTE)

Significant, temporary increases in the load for a semester will be appropriately remunerated,

The lecturer must:

- Set an example in life and ministry to the students.
- Contribute to the well-being of the college community.
- Undertake administrative tasks related to the units being taught.
- Stay abreast of educational developments and innovate in the delivery of the assigned courses and their assessment.

These responsibilities involve attendance for relevant agenda items at faculty meetings. They may involve participation in Australian College of Theology Pastoral Ministry department meetings as negotiated with the faculty Practical Theology department head.

3. Attributes

- Meets the qualifications of a ministry leader as described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, i.e. demonstrating a mature Christian character.
- Prayerful.
- The capacity to communicate clearly.
- Ability to relate to people of diverse cultural backgrounds.

4. Qualifications

Essential

- Qualified at Research Masters level or ACT equivalence or above and able to meet ACT approval criteria for the delivery of level 9 Pastoral Care units.
- A minister in full standing with the Presbyterian Church of Australia, or a minister of another denomination.
- A wholehearted commitment to the Westminster Confession of Faith, as read in the light of the Declaratory Statement of 1901, as a systematic exposition of the teaching of Scripture.
- Fully committed to the Bible as the inerrant Word of God.
- Possesses or can obtain a Working with Children's Check and is willing to sign the Safe Church policy agreement.

Achievements and Capabilities

- Demonstrated ability to teach in his discipline, ideally with some experience in curriculum design and assessment.
- Educational experience with an awareness of different modes of delivery of courses.
- Understanding of the Australian higher educational context, especially of the expectations of the Australian College of Theology.
- Involvement in discipling and training others in ministry skills.
- Demonstrated capacity to work in a team.
- Availability to teach evening classes.

- Availability to preach on Sundays and represent the College.
- Administrative experience with an ability to share in the administrative work of a tertiary institution relating to the assigned units.

5. Remuneration

- 0.4 times the minister's minimum remuneration package as defined by the Assembly.
- when applicable any additional paid hours will be remunerated proportionately based on the minimum ministerial remuneration.
- manse allowance set by the TEC as appropriate for a 0.4 FTE appointment.
- superannuation at the ministerial rate.
- 0.4 times ministerial annual leave as defined by the Assembly, currently five weeks.
- six months of 0.2 FTE paid study leave during each fourth and each seventh year of employment or twelve months of 0.4 FTE paid study leave during each seventh year of employment
- Workcover.
- any other provisions the Assembly may determine.

1. Termination of Appointment

- By the committee
If after review of his performance the committee resolves that the appointee not be re-appointed, the committee shall give him six months written notice of termination.
- By the appointee
If the appointee desires to resign his appointment, he shall give at least six months' notice in writing to the committee, unless the committee resolves to allow a shorter period of notice.
- Immediate by change of circumstance
 - Deposition or Excommunication.
 - WWCC exclusion.

- Request the TEC in conjunction with the Code Committee to review the TEC regulations concerning the appointment of permanent part-time lecturers and bring a recommendation to the General Assembly of the PCV.

The motion was seconded and approved.

12. Archives Committee

The members of the Commission were updated on the progress of the leased property at 690 Elgar Road, Box Hill, through a multimedia presentation.

13. 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 1-6 were approved.

Clause 7 was approved.

Clauses 8 – 9 approved.

Clause 10 was disapproved.

Rev Neil Chambers sought leave to move a new clause 10.

Leave was granted.

(1) Rev Neil Chambers moved,
That the Commission of Assembly;

10. Request the BIF to bring the guidelines for exempt benefits eligibility to the October 2024 Assembly when the BIF and other relevant Committees (such as the Code and General Administration Committee) have considered further how those men and women employed in pastoral and teaching work in team ministries can qualify for exempt benefits.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clauses 11-13 were approved.

(2) Rev Cameron Garrett moved additional clauses 14 and 15.

That the Commission of Assembly:

14. Note that the audited Statement of Accounts of the Scots' Church Properties Trust for the year ended 30 June 2023 has been deposited with the Assembly Treasurer (the Board of Investment and Finance) pursuant to Scots' Church Properties Trust Deed clause 8.
15. Thank the Trustees of the Scots' Church Properties Trust (SCPT) for successfully negotiating a new 50-year lease of the Georges Building, which will benefit the charitable purposes of Home Mission and Church Extension

The motion was seconded and approved.

(3) Elder Dennis Wright moved the deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Approve the General Mission Program for the financial year 2024/25 as follows:

	2024/25 \$
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES:	
Australian Presbyterian World Mission (Vic.)	48,000
Safe Church Committee	170,000
State News Committee	7,500
Theological Education – Bursary Fund	15,000
Women's Ministries Victoria	23,000
Total General Mission Program	263,500

2. Resolve that the total GMP be apportioned according to the attendance figures in the respective presbyteries as reported to the Ministry Development Committee by 15 March 2024.
3. Approve the allocation of the total GMP for the financial year 2024/25 as follows:

PRESBYTERY	Percentage of total	2024/25 \$
Flinders	12.93%	34,069
Geelong	5.67%	14,940
Gippsland	6.61%	17,430
Maroondah	10.41%	27,429
Melbourne East	18.07%	47,625
Melbourne North	13.03%	34,346
Melbourne West	13.83%	36,440
North East Victoria	4.42%	11,659
North Western Victoria	3.87%	10,197
South West Victoria	6.21%	16,363
Western Victoria	4.93%	13,002
TOTAL	100.00%	263,500

4. 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.
5. Request presbyteries to ask charges to pay their General Mission Program allocations in full early in the financial year 2024/25, or where this is not possible, to pay the amounts by monthly or quarterly instalments.
6. Set the General Assembly Rate at \$130,000 for 2024/25 (in addition to the component of \$12,000 to fund unforeseen employment liabilities); to be allocated to each congregation in proportion to the attendance figures collated by the Ministry Development Committee as at March 2024.
7. Approve the transfer of half the interest earned on Common Fund investments in the prior year, being \$150,000, from Theological Education Committee (TEC) General Operations to the Bursary Fund.
8. Request the TEC to review its policy on scholarships including the anomaly of providing full scholarships to many other categories while candidates only receive a scholarship for 50% of their tuition fees.
9. Approve the committee budgets for General Operations for 2024/25 as presented.
10. Request the BIF to bring the guidelines for exempt benefits eligibility to the October 2024 Assembly when the BIF and other relevant Committees (such as the Code and General Administration Committee) have considered further, how those men and women, employed in pastoral and teaching work in team ministries can qualify for exempt benefits.
11. Remind boards of management that they are ultimately responsible for the financial obligations and consequences in their entirety for ministry appointments made to the charge, including those arising as a consequence of any lack of compliance with relevant legislation.
12. Encourage presbyteries, boards and sessions when appointing workers to clearly identify which rule provides the authority for the appointment and to comply with the relevant requirements of the appointment under the Code.
13. Encourage congregations and presbyteries to seriously consider the future viability of continuing to hold property which is expensive to maintain and insure, especially in the case where the property is subject to heritage classification.
14. Note that the audited Statement of Accounts of the Scots' Church Properties Trust for the year ended 30 June 2023 has been deposited with the Assembly Treasurer (the Board of Investment and Finance) pursuant to Scots' Church Properties Trust Deed clause 8.
15. Thank the Trustees of the Scots' Church Properties Trust (SCPT) for successfully negotiating a new 50-year lease of the Georges Building, which will benefit the charitable purposes of Home Mission and Church Extension

The motion was seconded and approved.

14. Special Judicial Committee

The report of the Special Judicial Committee was received.

The Acting Clerk sought leave to include clauses 1c), 1d) 1e) and clause 2 in the proposed deliverance.

Leave was granted.

The Acting Clerk moved;

That the Commission of Assembly:

1. Declare that the following petitions conform to the requirements of rule 5.34.1(c):
 - a) Petition 1 from St Kilda Congregation, re: Expenditure of funds held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the congregation
 - b) Petition 2 from Presbytery of Melbourne East, re: Proposed sale of St Kilda church property
 - c) Petition 3 from the Presbytery of South West Victoria, re: Sale of the Heywood Property and distribution of funds
 - d) Petition 6 from the Clifton Hill Congregation, re: Approval of the expenditure of funds held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the congregation
 - e) Petition 7 from the Presbytery of Gippsland, re: Requesting a seat on the Presbytery of Gippsland for the incoming Clerk of Assembly, Rev Cameron Garrett and proceed to hear these petitions in the regular way.
2. Waive the requirement as provided by rule 5.54.2 that petition 7 be lodged with the Assembly Clerk at least 30 days before the meeting of the Commission of Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

15. Petition 1 – St Kilda Congregation – Expenditure of funds held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the congregation

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Luke Isham.

Questions were asked.

(1) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Approve the application by the St Kilda Congregation of \$260,000 from the Sites Reserve Account associated with the congregation as provided for by Board of Investment and Finance regulation 17(c)(i)(B) for any one or more of the following purposes:

- i repairs to the manse drains;
- ii repairs to the Balaclava church building roof;
- iii payment of insurance bill of \$89,000;
- iv inspection and maintenance requirements for church buildings;
- v revitalisation training for the minister through Reach Australia.

Rev Ben Kelada moved an amendment deleting the words 'of \$89,000' in iii) above

The amendment was seconded and approved.

Rev Chris Duke moved an amendment replacing the figure of '\$260,000' with the words, 'up to \$270,000'.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was seconded and approved.

(3) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly;

Inform the St Kilda congregation that it may now make application to the Trusts Corporation for the release of these funds to be applied in or towards the purpose or purposes for which the approval was granted.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Commission of Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Approve the application by the St Kilda Congregation of up to \$270,000 from the Sites Reserve Account associated with the congregation as provided for by Board of Investment and Finance regulation 17(c)(i)(B) for any one or more of the following purposes:
 - i) repairs to the manse drains;
 - ii) repairs to the Balaclava church building roof;
 - iii) payment of insurance bill;
 - iv) inspection and maintenance requirements for church buildings;
 - v) revitalisation training for the minister through Reach Australia.
3. Inform the St Kilda congregation that it may now make application to the Trusts Corporation for the release of these funds to be applied in or towards the purpose or purposes for which the approval was granted.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the bar.

16. Petition 2 – Presbytery of Melbourne East – re: Proposed sale of St Kilda church property

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Luke Isham and Elder Russell Walley.

Questions were asked.

(1) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- a) Authorise the sale of the St Kilda Church building, (Volume, 10501, Folio 074 and Volume 10502, Folio 352), under Model Trust Deed clause 5, for the purpose of the purchase of a new church building in the St Kilda area or the upgrading of the St Kilda East (Balaclava) church building, 106 Hotham Street.
- b) 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 Kilda congregation for the above authorised purposes.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Commission of Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Authorise the sale of the St Kilda Church building, (Volume, 10501, Folio 074 and Volume 10502, Folio 352), under Model Trust Deed clause 5, for the purpose of the purchase of a new church building in the St Kilda area or the upgrading of the St Kilda East (Balaclava) church building, 106 Hotham Street.
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 Kilda congregation for the above authorised purposes.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

17. Petition 3 – Presbytery of South West Victoria – Sale of Heywood property and distribution of funds

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Ian Leach and Red Rod Waterhouse.

Questions were asked.

(1) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- a) Agree with the Presbytery of South West Victoria regarding its intention to dissolve the Heywood congregation;
- b) Declare resolution (a) above immediately effective under Rule 6.15, and thereby deem that Presbytery has in effect finally dissolved the congregation.
- c) Request the Presbytery to submit to the Trusts Corporation certification that the congregation has been finally dissolved;
- d) Direct the Trustees to sell the Heywood property at 3 Hunter Street, Heywood, Vol. 10670 Fol. 027 as provided for under clause 14 of the Model Trust Deed for Church Site;
- e) Direct the Trustees to hold the net proceeds of sale of the property in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the Portland congregation to be applied towards funding ongoing ministry in the charge.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Commission of Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Agree with the Presbytery of South West Victoria regarding its intention to dissolve the Heywood congregation;

3. Declare resolution (1) 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. Direct the Trustees to sell the Heywood property at 3 Hunter Street, Heywood, Vol. 10670 Fol. 027 as provided for under clause 14 of the Model Trust Deed for Church Site;
6. Direct the Trustees to hold the net proceeds of sale of the property in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the Portland congregation to be applied towards funding ongoing ministry in the charge.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

18. Petition 4 - Presbytery of Geelong – Batesford Sites Reserve Use

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by

Questions were asked.

(1) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Direct the Trustees to dispose of the funds from the proceeds of the sale of the Batesford property held in the Batesford No. 1 Sites Reserve Fund as provided for by clause 5 of the Model Trust Deed by their allocation to the Bannockburn congregation for the purpose of the redevelopment of the Bannockburn property.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Commission of Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Direct the Trustees to dispose of the funds from the proceeds of the sale of the Batesford property held in the Batesford No. 1 Sites Reserve Fund as provided for by clause 5 of the Model Trust Deed by their allocation to the Bannockburn congregation for the purpose of the redevelopment of the Bannockburn property.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

19. Petition 5 - Presbytery of Western Victoria – Sale of Ballarat North Manse

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Toby McIntosh.

Questions were asked.

(1) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- a) Authorise the sale of the Ballarat North (Scots) Presbyterian Church manse, 506 Neill Street, Soldiers Hill (Volume 02835, Folio 885) for the purpose of the purchase of a new manse for the congregation having regard to the General Assembly's Manse Design Manual;
- b) Direct that the net proceeds of the sale be paid to The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to be held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the Ballarat North congregation for the above authorised purpose.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Commission of Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Authorise the sale of the Ballarat North (Scots) Presbyterian Church manse, 506 Neill Street, Soldiers Hill (Volume 02835, Folio 885) for the purpose of the purchase of a new manse for the congregation having regard to the General Assembly's Manse Design Manual;
3. Direct that the net proceeds of the sale be paid to The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to be held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the Ballarat North congregation for the above authorised purpose.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

20. Petition 6 – Clifton Hill Congregation, re: Approval of the expenditure of funds held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the congregation

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Chris Duke.

Questions were asked.

(1) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

- a) Note the presbytery's approval of the expenditure proposed by the petition.
- b) Approve the application by the Clifton Hill Congregation of up to \$900,000 from the Sites Reserve Account associated with the congregation as provided for by BIF regulation 17(c)(i)(B) for the purpose of upgrading the Clifton Hill church buildings.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Commission of Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.

2. Note the presbytery's approval of the expenditure proposed by the petition.
3. Approve the application by the Clifton Hill Congregation of up to \$900,000 from the Sites Reserve Account associated with the congregation as provided for by BIF regulation 17(c)(i)(B) for the purpose of upgrading the Clifton Hill church buildings.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

21. Petition 7 – Presbytery of Gippsland, re: Requesting a seat on the Presbytery of Gippsland for the incoming Clerk of Assembly, Rev Cameron Garrett

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by

Questions were asked.

(1) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Grant the prayer of the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Acting Clerk moved:

That the Commission of Assembly:

Grant Rev Cameron Garrett a seat on the Presbytery of Gippsland as provided for by rule 4.2(k), effective 1 July 2024, while he is the Clerk of the General Assembly of Victoria.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator advised the petitioners of the Commission of Assembly's decision as follows:

That the Commission of Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Grant Rev Cameron Garrett a seat on the Presbytery of Gippsland as provided for by rule 4.2(k), effective 1 July 2024, while he is the Clerk of the General Assembly of Victoria.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

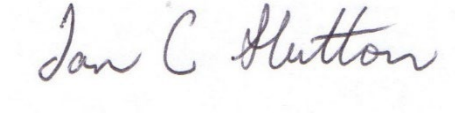
22. Dissolution

The business of the Commission of Assembly now being concluded, the Moderator closed the meeting with prayer and the benediction.

CLERKS
P W Phillips
P J Burns
C B Garrett

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 dark ink, reading "Ian C Hutton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'I' and 'H'.

Rev Ian C Hutton
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.

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
6. Conflicts of Interest
7. Nominations for Moderator-Designate
8. Board of Investment and Finance
9. Clerkship Committee
10. Code and General Administration Committee
11. Maintenance of the Ministry Committee
12. Special Judicial Committee
13. Petition 1: Presbytery of South West Victoria – Sale of Heywood property
14. Petition 2: St. Kilda Presbyterian Church – Use of Sites Reserves
15. Petition 3: Presbytery of Melbourne East – Sale of St Kilda property
16. Petition 4: Presbytery of Geelong – Batesford Sites Reserve Use
17. Petition 5: Presbytery of Western Victoria – Sale of Ballarat North Manse
18. Dissolution

Brett Cummins
CONVENER

BOARD OF INVESTMENT AND FINANCE (Min 13)

General Mission Program

Women's Ministries Victoria

The General Assembly in October 2023 authorised the WMV Committee to fund the Women's Ministries Facilitator from GMP in preference to fund-raising by the committee. This has resulted in an increase from \$5,000 to \$23,000 in GMP allocated to the committee.

GMP recommendation

The requests from other committees are shown in the table below. The resulting net total of the GMP for 2024/25 is \$263,500. This represents a small decrease (0.8%) compared to the prior year.

The proposed GMP funding for 2024/25 is shown below with the 2023/24 amounts shown for comparison:

	Approved 2023/2024	Recommendation 2024/2025
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES	\$	\$
APWM (Vic)	53,000	48,000
Safe Church Committee	170,000	170,000
State News	7,500	7,500
Theological Education (Bursary)	30,000	15,000
Women's Ministries Victoria	5,000	23,000
TOTAL GMP	265,500	263,500

As foreshadowed to the Commission of Assembly in May 2022, the BIF has reviewed the basis of allocation of GMP to presbyteries and in particular the country loading which has applied for many years.

The most recent explicit explanation presented to the Commission to justify this was in 2005 when there was a very complex method of allocation involving a financial calculation and a membership component, and then a further adjustment which was:

The resulting figure to be adjusted by an equalisation factor **to take into account the higher cost of travelling, telephone etc in:**

1. Outer metropolitan area, and
2. Country areas.

(BB 2005 p21)

While travel costs are generally higher in country areas, other costs are lower. Most notably housing costs are considerably lower in country areas. Fixed price phone plans with unlimited calls are now commonplace and equally cost-effective in country areas. It is evident that the total cost of funding a pastor in the country is less than the comparable costs in the city.

Generally country parishes have lower attendance figures and consequently are often under significant financial strain. That factor is already considered with the attendance-based formula.

Following the review the BIF recommends that the allocation of the total GMP to presbyteries be apportioned according to the attendance figures in the respective

presbyteries as reported to the Ministry Development Committee (using the latest data available).

Based on this method the recommended allocations to presbyteries for 2024/25 are as follows:

PRESBYTERY	Percentage of LY total	Percentage of total	2024/25 \$
Flinders	14.93%	12.93%	34,069
Geelong	3.93%	5.67%	14,940
Gippsland	4.58%	6.61%	17,430
Maroondah	12.02%	10.41%	27,429
Melbourne East	20.88%	18.07%	47,625
Melbourne North	14.47%	13.03%	34,346
Melbourne West	15.97%	13.83%	36,440
North East Victoria	2.65%	4.42%	11,659
North Western Victoria	2.68%	3.87%	10,197
South West Victoria	4.46%	6.21%	16,363
Western Victoria	3.42%	4.93%	13,002
TOTAL	100.00%	100.00%	263,500

The percentage allocation for 2023/24 are shown for comparison purposes. There have been significant movements for some presbyteries, due to the proposed removal of GMP Country loading.

General Assembly Rate

In accordance with BIF regulation 10, the BIF recommends a General Assembly Rate of \$130,000 to be allocated to each congregation in proportion to the attendance figures collated by the Ministry Development Committee at March 2024, which is the same basis as was applied last year.

Note that the General Assembly has previously approved an additional component of the General Assembly Rate of \$12,000 for each of three years in order to fund unforeseen employment liabilities (BB 2021 min 18.5). This will be the last of the three years.

Sustentation grants funding

As reported last year the Ministry Development Committee does not consider it necessary that additional funds are transferred to the committee to fund sustentation. However the specific details of the level of sustentation required and an appropriate source of funds to meet that demand is still being considered by the committee and BIF.

Budget presentation - Specific Trusts

Under the authority of Section 14 of the Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890, any trust funds which are not subject to any express trust are to be “dealt with in such a manner as the General Assembly may from time to time direct”. This includes the general funds which are assigned to the various committees of the Assembly. Property which is subject to an express trust, is to be “managed and dealt with by [The Trusts Corporation] in conformity with such expressed trust”. We refer to such funds as Specific Trusts.

While both types of trusts are included in the presentation of committee budgets to the Commission of Assembly for approval, the consequences of such approval has a

different meaning in respect of the trusts which the Trusts Corporation has authority to manage.

For specific trusts, the Trusts Corporation does not require the approval or consent of the Commission or Assembly in order to expend funds in its administration of trusts. Conversely, the approval of the budget for any specific trust does not limit the authority of the Trusts Corporation to approve or otherwise any expenditure from such trusts. Nevertheless it remains helpful for the Commission to have the opportunity to see and consent to the proposed expenditure from specific trusts which in some cases is broad and extensive such as the MDC and CPC funds which flow from the Scots Church Properties Trust.

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 and details from committees where appropriate.

Maintenance of the Ministry committee

Following the decisions of the General Assembly up to and including in October 2023, the Maintenance of the Ministry committee no longer has any funds apart from those for the Long Service Leave fund.

The key issue for the Long Service Leave Fund is to ensure that the fund has sufficient reserves to meet the liabilities which arise under the regulations governing the fund. The key variable that the committee has the ability to exercise control over is the rate of the LSL levy.

The BIF has reviewed the funding and is confident that the proposed levy of \$860 is adequate to fund the anticipated liabilities. Presenting a budget for the Long Service Leave Fund for approval by the Commission is not relevant in this circumstance.

Theological Education Committee

Over recent years the balance of the Bursary Fund has diminished due largely to funding of scholarships in categories other than candidates. This has been a conscious decision of the TEC to try and assist those with potential to become lecturers at the college to acquire the appropriate training and qualifications.

The Bursary Fund is again in need of replenishment. The TEC has proposed a transfer an amount of \$175,000 (which represents the 2022/23 surplus) from its General Fund to the Bursary Fund. While that will restore the Bursary Fund to a suitable level to fund future candidates, there remains a structural anomaly which also needs to be addressed.

In 2015 the TEC recommended to the Commission of Assembly a reduction in the level of scholarships awarded to candidates from 100% to 50%. The Commission supported the recommendation which was approved. However the other categories of scholarships were not part of the review. Many of those allow for full scholarships to other categories of students which has significant consequences on the funding model for candidates. It is recommended that the TEC review its policy of awarding scholarships in these other categories to more appropriately align with the policy for candidates and facilitate the ongoing financial viability of the scholarship program. The TEC supports this recommendation.

Archives budget

The Archives budget is funded within the General Assembly General operations budget.

Last year approval was given to house the archives in rented accommodation at 690 Elgar Road, Box Hill North. The property is being used by other committees of the church.

The fit-out and related establishment costs in bringing the property to a satisfactory state were more than anticipated. The on-going operating costs have increased by \$10,000 this year from what was previously projected. Nevertheless the facility is proving to be a productive resource in supporting ministry.

General Assembly budget

The budget includes provision for consultants' fees of \$20,000 and legal fees of \$70,000 in anticipation of expenditure in relation to the ad hoc New Entity committee.

The budget prospectively includes provision for an additional full-time person in the General Office from January 2025 onwards. Ideally this will be in the context of the New Entity. Without pre-empting any decision of the General Assembly in this regard, the demands on the present staff are such that additional resources are necessary in order to sustain the office in the face of the increasing expectations and demands which are being placed on the office.

Property matters

Since last reporting to the Assembly approval was given by the BIF under BIF regulation 16(a) for the following urgent property transaction:

- sale of 7 Rossmoyne St Thornbury (Vol 12499 Fol 998), being the residential portion of the Darebin church site (295/23).
- lease of the manse at 313 Rodier Street Ballarat East (Ebenezer) for up to three years at a rental of not less than \$1,517 per month (033/24).

Additional Expenditure

Since last reporting to the General Assembly, the BIF has not approved any amendment to committee budgets in accordance with BIF regulation 9(b)(ii)(1).

SCPT Accounts

The Financial Statements of the Scots Church Properties Trust for the year ended 30 June 2023 were received in November 2023. Copies are available from the Clerk of Assembly to members upon request.

The distribution of the surplus arising from the commercial properties under clause 7 of the Scots Church Trust Deed included an abnormal amount of \$7.550 million which resulted in distributions to the Scots Church for building and maintenance and PCV for home mission and church extension in Victoria of \$3.775 million each. This amount arose from the up-front payment of rent on the renewal of the lease of the George's building for a further 50 years. The distribution was in addition to regular distribution of surplus in the amount of \$770,160 each. The latter amount was apportioned to the Church Planting and Ministry Development committees in the approved percentages 30/70.

In view of the abnormal nature of the \$3.755 million, the BIF has sought input from the two committees in consultation as to the best application of these funds. We await a response from the committees.

Similarly the commission paid to the Trusts Corporation of 2.5% on gross rentals (less collection costs) was abnormally inflated. The recent practice of the Trusts Corporation has been to pass the commission on to the General Assembly to assist in balancing its budget. The Trusts Corporation has passed on \$80,000 to the General Assembly consistent with the budget expectation for 2023/24. In view of various changing circumstances including the review of the legal structure of the church, there may be future expenses arising which could appropriately be met from the remainder of \$187,500. The intention of the Trusts Corporation in retaining these funds is to provide flexibility in addressing these future needs.

Exempt benefits eligibility

The May 2023 Commission of Assembly requested the BIF to:

- a. Consult with an expert in the field of interpreting the application of Tax Ruling 2019/3 to obtain a report providing comprehensive guidelines to assist the Assembly in acting as the final arbiter in deciding who may be treated as a religious practitioner for payroll purposes (and thereby entitled to Exempt Benefits under s57 of the FBT Act). Such advice is to be paid for from the General Assembly General Operating budget.
- b. Provide that report to the October 2023 Assembly.

Minute 12.11

The BIF consulted the Law Agent on this matter who provided advice in the form of a Guidance paper which outlines the relevant considerations. A copy of that paper is attached to this report.

As an opening remark the Law Agent made the following observation and comments:

In my view, Minute 12.11 is based on a false premise. When it comes to the question of who may or may not be treated as a religious practitioner for the purposes of an entitlement to exempt fringe benefits, the authority to determine such matters rests with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

However, perhaps the Assembly's underlying intention for minute 12.11 was:

- (a) to gain clarity as to how the range of ministry/pastoral workers across the PCV should be treated for exempt fringe benefits purposes in light of TR 2019/3; and
- (b) in turn, to assist the Assembly in setting and adjusting rules and procedures for the appropriate recognition of those workers across the church particularly in terms of spiritual leadership and status.

Following the advice the BIF engaged further with the Law Agent in drafting a concise set of guidelines for the Assembly to adopt. Noting the Law Agent's remarks the guidelines are presented as the most prudent way for the church to address this significant issue so that the risk associated with incorrectly paying exempt benefits is minimised.

The proposed guidelines are presented in the Appendix attached to this report for adoption by the General Assembly with the consent and approval of the Law Agent. The BIF acknowledges the desire to have a comprehensive set of guidelines which can be applied in all situations and take away any uncertainty or ambiguity in relation to this question. However that is not entirely possible for the reasons below.

Paragraphs 1 to 3 and 5 of the proposed guidelines are straightforward and do not require further explanation.

The basis for paragraph 4 is that we are advised by the Clerks that workers appointed under rules 4.70, 4.72, 4.73 and 4.74 perform the same role and function as an inducted minister. The primary difference between these appointments and inducted ministers is that they have limited tenure. In almost all of these cases the worker will fall within the scope of paragraphs 1 to 3 of the guidelines. There are a small number of circumstances where this is not the case. It is considered that the requirements of the appointment are such that the worker must meet all six characteristics set out in paragraph 14 of the tax ruling TR2019/3. If not then it is questionable whether the appointment should be made.

Paragraph 6 relates to appointments made under rule “4.75 Appointment of assistant to the minister of a pastoral charge” which is where the lack of certainty arises.

This rule has very broad application across a myriad of different circumstances and facts. At one end of the spectrum, it can apply to a non-ordained person who for all practical purposes functions in a manner very similar to the inducted minister, for example within a specific ethnic or demographic group within the charge. At the other end of the spectrum it could apply to a member of the congregation who spends one day a week visiting members in a pastoral capacity. In between there is a wide variety of different factual circumstances which will bear on the question.

The Code characterises appointments under rule 4.75 quite differently to other pastoral appointments. It is clearly intended to be an employment arrangement, under the authority and supervision of the inducted minister. The fact that these appointments work under the authority of the minister may add weight to the argument that the worker does not meet all six characteristics set out in paragraph 14 of the tax ruling.

The BIF is aware that appointments are sometimes made without reference to any rule at all. In most cases on further analysis these tend to fall within the scope of rule 4.75 but that is not always the case. Failing to identify and follow the process relevant to the appointment creates confusion and uncertainty which invariably undermines the position of the body responsible for making the appointment in justifying its position. In the current context the factual basis for arguing compliance with the tax legislation becomes less obvious and more difficult to sustain in these instances.

The PCV Code is clear that candidacy for the ministry is only open to men. In those circumstances it is very difficult to sustain within the PCV context the position that women appointees are religious practitioners. As a consequence of the polity of the PCV it is very unlikely that the following specific requirements in paragraph 14 of the tax ruling could be satisfied in relation to women:

- is recognised by ordination or other admission or commissioning, or has authority from the religious institution to carry out the duties of a minister based on theological training or other relevant experience
- is officially recognised as having authority on doctrine or religious practice
- is an acknowledged leader in spiritual affairs of the institution, and
- is authorised to act as a minister or spiritual leader, including the conduct of religious worship and other religious ceremonies.

In view of these issues the BIF is not confident to recommend that any appointments of persons under rule 4.75 of themselves satisfy the requirements that the worker can be considered to be a religious practitioner.

Even though it may be unlikely, that is not to say that it is not possible for a lay person appointed under rule 4.75 to be considered to be a religious worker. The only way to proceed with any degree of certainty in that instance is to seek a private ruling from the Australian Taxation Office. The BIF acknowledges that is not a simple or inexpensive path which may be a barrier in itself for some charges. However it is not within the power of the BIF to overcome the difficulties in framing guidelines.

While the investigation and analysis has focused on the method of appointments and roles appointed to, it is important to remember that the assessment of whether someone is considered to be a religious practitioner is a separate question to whether they are engaged in ministry. The above analysis is only valid because in the case of rules 4.70, 4.72, 4.73 and 4.74, the inherent requirements of the position are such that they overlap the requirements under the legislation and tax ruling in a way that only persons who meet the tax requirements would satisfy our own expectations and requirement. The same cannot be said in respect of rule 4.75.

In the event that the ATO were to find a ministry worker was inappropriately paid exempt benefits, it is expected that the ATO would reassess the benefit as being a taxable fringe benefit. For a ministry worker who is remunerated on the minimum settlement terms, this could amount to a sum of around \$40,000 tax becoming payable. The ATO could apply penalties on top of that figure. Clearly this is a significant matter which requires proper scrutiny.

Under presbyterian polity, congregations are responsible for meeting the financial obligations of workers engaged within the charge notwithstanding the involvement of presbytery in various circumstances. Once a worker is appointed the charge through its board is responsible for meeting the terms of settlement / employment. That extends to any liabilities which may arise both financial and otherwise in relation to the engagement of the worker.

It is in the best interest of every congregation to follow the guidelines to mitigate risks as far as possible.

Insurance – Congregational property

The BIF reported to the Commission of Assembly in May 2023 some of the challenges facing the church in relation to maintaining insurance cover on congregational properties.

In particular the church committed to a program of specific risk improvement measures directed towards 16 identified locations. The specific actions are:

- Risk Engineering Surveys to be completed at all 16 locations, noting that some have already been completed – **remainder to be actioned prior to December 2023**
- Risk Recommendations from the Risk Engineering Survey reports to be actioned – **all to be completed by March 2024**
- Thermographic scanning, and commitment to completing any electrical rectification work evident from the scan results (reports to be provided to Ansvar) - **to be completed by September 2023**
- Quarterly roof and gutter inspections by qualified contractor, with any blockages cleared and repairs to be carried out (evidence of quarterly inspections will be required by Ansvar) – **ongoing each quarter** (i.e. September 2023, December 2023, March 2024 and June 2024)
- Ansvar's own Risk Engineer will also attend 5 locations during the 2023/24 policy period to undertake their own review – **to be scheduled during 2023/24**

This has proven to be a challenging task for the church and particularly the identified congregations. Understandably it has required a significant commitment in time and finances which in some instances has stretched the already pressured budgetary position to breaking point.

The Risk Engineering Surveys have been completed for all locations. Thermographic scans have also been completed or are scheduled for completion in the next few days.

Recommendations arising from the surveys and scans have not yet all been attended to.

While the requirements may appear to be onerous, it has thrown light on matters which the church is already responsible for – maintaining the property in good order and attending to sound risk management. The main focus of the action points is to reduce the fire risk associated with our properties. Our own claims history shows that fire is the most significant factor contributing to our high claims value.

All insurers now want to see evidence of good risk management and building maintenance programs in place before they are prepared to offer terms for insurance. The progress which has been made in the last 12 months in response to our current insurer has put the church in a position where it is now a more attractive proposition for other insurers who previously have not shown any interest in our portfolio.

The commitment to these measures over the last year has been worth it. It does not end there. We will need to continue to exercise good risk management and maintain our buildings to an appropriate standard.

Notwithstanding the improvements in these areas we are still anticipating a substantial increase in the rates for the renewal period. Insurers are far more focused on maintaining margins in the face of increased claims generally due to fire, flood and other disasters. Our own claims history is not good.

We will continue to experience increased costs for risk management and appropriate maintenance, increased premiums, increased deductibles and tightening of benefits.

These are all industry trends which we cannot isolate ourselves from or avoid through a change of insurer.

The church needs to recognise this reality and become more pro-active in dealing with the consequences. Under the polity of the PCV the material affairs of charges rest with the board of management under the supervision of session and presbytery. The BIF encourages congregations and presbyteries to seriously consider the future viability of continuing to hold property which is expensive to maintain and insure. This is especially the case where the property is subject to heritage classification. We should not wait for the property costs to overwhelm the finances of a charge before we try to deal with this challenge.

The BIF is continuing to work closely with our insurance broker to deliver the best possible outcome for the renewal of the property portfolio. That is a wide-ranging discussion which involves a consideration of changing the basis of insurance to make it more affordable. The trade-off is that in order to do so, we assume more risk. Whichever way we proceed, the attention to maintenance and risk management is becoming ever more critical.

John Walter
CHAIRMAN

APPENDIX - Proposed Guidelines for determining whether a worker is considered to be a religious practitioner within the PCV under the terms of TR2019/03

1. An ordained minister of any denomination is considered to be a religious practitioner.
2. A Home Missionary of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria is considered to be a religious practitioner.
3. A licentiate or candidate for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Australia is considered to be a religious practitioner.
4. A person other than those mentioned above in 1 to 3 who is a member of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and is commissioned to perform the functions of a minister when appointed under any of the rules 4.70, 4.72, 4.73 or 4.74 is considered to be a religious practitioner.
5. Any appointments of persons other than those mentioned above in 1 to 3 under either rule 3.40 or 3.45 is not considered to meet the requirements of being a religious practitioner.
6. Any appointments of persons under rule 4.75, other than those mentioned in 1 to 3 above is generally unlikely to meet the requirements of being a religious practitioner. In instances where the board of management of the charge believes such a worker may meet the requirements it is recommended that a private tax ruling be sought from the Australian Taxation Office.

Notes:

- A. When it comes to the question of who may or may not be treated as a religious practitioner for the purposes of an entitlement to exempt fringe benefits, the ultimate authority to determine such matters rests with the Australian Taxation Office.
- B. Under *Section 57 of the Fringe Benefits Assessment Act 1986* a benefit is an exempt benefit where **all** of the following conditions are satisfied:
 - (a) the employer of an employee is a registered religious institution; and
 - (b) **the employee is a religious practitioner**; and
 - (c) a benefit is provided to, or to a spouse or a child of, the employee; and
 - (d) the benefit is not provided principally in respect of duties of the employee other than:
 - (i) any pastoral duties; or
 - (ii) any other duties or activities that are directly related to the practice, study, teaching or propagation of religious beliefs;

These guidelines only address the issue in (b) above. It is important that the other conditions are also considered, especially (d).
- C. The charge where a ministry worker is appointed bears the risk associated with the appointment and is solely responsible for the financial consequences including those related to paying a worker exempt benefits where the requirements under the legislation as determined by the ATO are not satisfied.

Exempt Fringe Benefits and the meaning of Religious Practitioner

A Guidance Paper for the Presbyterian Church of Victoria

Introduction

Section 57 of the *Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act 1986* provides as follows (emphasis added):

Where:

- (a) the employer of an employee is a registered religious institution; and*
- (b) the employee is a religious practitioner; and*
- (c) a benefit is provided to, or to a spouse or a child of, the employee; and*
- (d) the benefit is not provided principally in respect of duties of the employee other than:*
 - (i) any pastoral duties; or*
 - (ii) any other duties or activities that are directly related to the practice, study, teaching or propagation of religious beliefs;*

the benefit is an exempt benefit.

Who is to be considered a religious practitioner for the purpose of section 57(b)?

Tax Ruling TR 2019/3 defines 'religious practitioner' to mean:

- a minister of religion;
- a student at an institution who is undertaking a course of instruction in the duties of a minister of religion;
- a full-time member of a religious order; or
- a student at a college conducted solely for training persons to become members of religious orders.

The first and second of the above points of the definition are the relevant aspects for the PCV. The term 'minister of religion' has no fixed definition.

Paragraph 13 of TR 2019/3 states:

13. The expressions 'minister of religion' and 'member of a religious order' included in the definition of 'religious practitioner' take their ordinary meaning in the context of where they appear. They cover members of the clergy (or their equivalent) across religions.

Elsewhere, TR 2019/3 also provides that religious practitioners can include 'lay persons commissioned to perform the ministry of a minister of religion, or other persons acting in those capacities from time to time...'

Paragraph 14 then sets out a description of the characteristics of a 'minister of religion'. It states that 'except in rare cases, a minister of religion would have all of these characteristics'.

I now extract each of these six characteristics in turn and summarise them, including observations applicable to the PCV context:

is a member of a religious institution

General observations

- The term 'member' is not separately defined in the relevant income tax legislation.
- As confirmed by TR 2019/3, the term takes its ordinary meaning as 'each of the persons composing a society, party, community or other body.'
- The term 'religious institution' is to be understood by reference to paragraphs 7 to 10 of TR 2019/3 which requires that the institution is one that maintains current ACNC registration under sub-type 'advancing religion'.

In the PCV context:

- a person who is a communicant member or adherent of a PCV congregation which is registered with the ACNC is likely to satisfy this criteria.
- Within the PCV, an 'institution' can also be taken to include a PCV-associated organisation and the PCV itself all subject to the maintenance of ACNC registration under sub-type 'advancing religion'.

is recognised by ordination or other admission or commissioning, or has authority from the religious institution to carry out the duties of a minister based on theological training or other relevant experience

General observations

- Ordination not required. Status can also be recognised in other forms such as admission or commissioning.
- Absent any formal recognition of ministerial status, a person may satisfy this characteristic if authorised by the institution to carry out the duties of a minister. Such authorisation must be based on the person's theological qualifications, training or experience.
- Although TR 2019/3 explicitly provides that lay persons may be eligible for exempt benefits, such lay persons would only seem to qualify in circumstances where they are especially commissioned or authorised to carry out the duties of a minister of religion (i.e. to in effect replicate the duties of an ordained minister). Where the lay person is precluded from performing certain ministerial duties such as sacraments, it is not likely that the person would meet this characteristic.

In the PCV context:

- this characteristic is most likely able to be met by ordained persons.
- No appointment of any person as congregational officer under Rule 3.45 or within the ministry of diaconal care under Rule 3.40 would appear to satisfy the requirements of this characteristic.
- Persons appointed by a Presbytery under Rules 4.70, 4.72, 4.73 and 4.74 may qualify in terms of having the requisite recognition and/or authority within the applicable charge to which they are appointed.
- Non-ordained lay persons appointed as an assistant to the minister under Rule 4.75 may be recognised or appointed to perform specified duties of a minister but it is not the case that they are recognised or appointed more broadly to replicate the role or duties of an ordained minister of the church.

is officially recognised as having authority on doctrine or religious practice

General observations

- The requisite ‘authority on doctrine or religious practice’ must be demonstrated by some form of official recognition.
- The official recognition of authority would need to be broad in scope and not confined to a particular area of religious practice.
- In the context of lay workers serving under ordained persons, the requisite authority is not likely to be satisfied.

In the PCV context:

- an ordained minister would satisfy this characteristic.
- No appointment of any person as congregational officer under Rule 3.45 or within the ministry of diaconal care under Rule 3.40 would appear to satisfy the requirements of this characteristic.
- Similarly, the appointment of a lay person as an assistant to the minister under Rule 4.75 is unlikely to meet this characteristic. Although theoretically, an employment contract could convey some official recognition of authority on doctrine or religious practice, Rule 4.75.2 places clear limits on the authority of a person in such a position.
- Persons appointed by a Presbytery under Rules 4.70, 4.72, 4.73 and 4.74 may qualify in terms of having requisite authority within the applicable charge to which they are appointed.

is distinct from ordinary adherents of the religion

General observations

- This would be demonstrated by the person being appointed to a defined ministry role and commissioned or set apart for that work.
- There would need to exist some form of official recognition that the person has a position distinct from that of the ordinary adherents of the religion.

In the PCV context:

- although the specific act of commissioning occurs at various levels of formality across the church, arguably this characteristic may be satisfied in a wider range of appointments, including congregational officers and deacons. This would particularly be the case where the role is adequately defined in the applicable employment agreement.

is an acknowledged leader in spiritual affairs of the institution

General observations

- This involves the demonstration of oversight for spiritual matters within the institution.
- It is not likely sufficient that the person exercises spiritual leadership (or leadership more broadly) in particular domains within the institution. The applicable form of spiritual leadership would need to be of a more comprehensive nature within the institution.
- Further, it is not likely that a lay person appointed to serve in a ministry role under the authority of an ordained person could satisfy this characteristic.

In the PCV context:

- an ordained minister would satisfy this characteristic.
- No appointment of any person as congregational officer under Rule 3.45 or within the ministry of diaconal care under Rule 3.40 would appear to satisfy the requirements of this characteristic.
- Similarly, the appointment of a lay person as an assistant to the minister under Rule 4.75 is unlikely to meet this characteristic due to the accountability to the inducted minister inherent to the role.
- Persons appointed by a Presbytery under Rules 4.70, 4.72, 4.73 and 4.74 may qualify in terms of having requisite oversight and leadership within the applicable charge to which they are appointed.

is authorised to act as a minister or spiritual leader, including the conduct of religious worship and other religious ceremonies.

General observations

- The person must be explicitly authorised to function as a minister or spiritual leader.
- It is not likely sufficient that the person has a role within a particular religious ministry or even exercises responsibilities within corporate worship and other activities of the institution.
- Further, it is not likely that a lay person appointed to serve in a ministry role under the authority of an ordained person could satisfy this characteristic.

In the PCV context:

- an ordained minister would satisfy this characteristic.
- No appointment of any person as congregational officer under Rule 3.45 or within the ministry of diaconal care under Rule 3.40 would appear to satisfy the requirements of this characteristic.
- Similarly, the appointment of an assistant to the minister under Rule 4.75 is unlikely to meet this requirement due to the accountability to the inducted minister inherent to the role.
- Persons appointed by a Presbytery under Rules 4.70, 4.72, 4.73 and 4.74 may qualify in terms of having requisite authority within the applicable charge to which they are appointed.

Geoff Cox
LAW AGENT

**General Assembly
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25**

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%						Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No	Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Income								
1020	Assembly Rate	100,000	130,000	130,000	130,000	130,000	130,000	130,000
1020	Assembly Rate: Employment Liabilities	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	-	-
1340	Grants	1,625	-	-	-	-	-	-
1350	Interest Common Fund General and Assembly Hall	588,175	575,421	390,922	597,000	618,000	615,000	605,000
	Interest Transfer ex Fraser Trust & Unallocated	-	56,194	85,496	143,711	139,647	141,620	142,211
1440	Other investment income (Porter)	33,963	28,000	25,214	33,619	34,000	34,000	34,000
1530	Management Fees	170,070	177,142	133,404	200,106	201,184	208,427	214,301
1620	Trusts Corporation donation (SCPT)	83,902	80,000	-	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000
	Sundry Income	7,226	4,000	8,695	10,395	8,000	8,000	8,000
	Archives Income	35,406	36,750	17,286	27,154	22,116	22,441	22,770
Total Income		1,032,367	1,099,507	803,017	1,233,985	1,244,948	1,239,487	1,236,282
Expenditure								
2290	Grants PWMU Rent	3,750	3,780	2,580	3,750	3,780	3,893	4,010
2400	Subsidy - Ministers Car loans	-	-	1,060	1,590	2,000	2,000	2,000
Clerk of Assembly								
2811	Telephone & Internet: Assembly Officers	-	-	45	271	280	0	0
Staff Related Expenses								
2910	Salaries & Wages	455,105	507,262	334,953	504,126	605,666	747,586	772,869
2940	Superannuation	51,844	60,619	38,559	52,488	64,753	69,934	72,375
2920	Fringe Benefits (Employee)	47,700	47,700	31,800	47,700	47,700	47,700	47,700
2925	Fringe Benefits Tax	22,419	22,419	14,946	22,419	22,419	22,419	22,419
2980	Temporary Staff	7,463	4,000	-	-	32,340	4,000	4,000
2950	WorkCover Levy	5,624	5,710	6,799	6,799	6,317	7,455	8,926
2960	Long Service Leave accrual	11,584	5,776	7,240	11,324	(11,770)	(5,056)	14,447
2990	Other Personnel Costs	12,000	12,000	12,301	17,301	67,000	12,000	5,000
Total Staff Related Expenses		613,738	665,487	446,598	662,156	834,426	906,039	947,737

**General Assembly
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25**

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%						Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No	Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Other Expenses								
2010	Accounting & Audit Fees	25,884	22,382	18,828	22,382	24,184	25,394	26,663
2060	Bank Charges	138	200	137	200	200	200	200
2110	Cleaning & Rubbish Removal	2,054	3,093	875	3,003	2,000	2,000	2,100
2120	Committee Expenses - Travel	1,419	600	438	600	600	600	600
2120	Church Architect	7,618	8,400	5,624	8,000	8,000	8,200	8,405
2120	MOMC Committee expenses		1,200	0	0	0	0	0
2120	BIF Chairman's parish		20,400	11,486	11,486	0	0	0
2130	Computer & Software Costs	14,895	16,000	11,469	16,000	24,000	24,720	25,462
2150	Consultancy	11,790	45,000	-	20,000	20,000	20,000	10,000
2180	Depreciation - Furniture & Equipment	6,015	8,250	5,209	8,200	8,450	8,360	8,360
2220	Education & Training	1,068	4,000	761	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
2230	General Assembly week - Expenses	8,903	10,000	3,537	8,614	8,500	8,500	8,713
2230	Ministers Wives Dinner	-	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
2235	General Assembly Australia Expenses	17,440	-	-	-	-	-	-
2250	General Expenses	443	500	624	624	500	500	500
2340	Honoraria	8,123	6,014	6,636	6,636	6,772	6,975	7,184
2390	Insurance	8,325	8,741	10,049	10,049	10,552	11,079	11,633
2500	Legal Expenses	45,134	80,000	63,064	105,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
2660	Postage Printing & Stationery	4,041	5,000	3,984	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
2700	Property Maintenance	65	2,000	-	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
2720	Office Rent General Assembly	69,384	71,466	47,640	71,466	73,609	75,818	78,092
2730	Repairs & Maintenance - Equipment	-	200	-	200	200	200	200
2770	Staff Amenities	743	500	81	500	500	500	500
2810	Telephone & Internet	2,259	4,000	1,601	2,300	4,000	4,000	4,000
2820	Travel & Accommodation	1,671	500	4,009	2,432	4,000	500	500
2830	Utilities	1,324	2,000	1,288	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
2840	Website-Maintenance & Support	3,215	4,000	4,561	4,561	4,800	4,800	5,040
Total Assembly Related Expenses		241,952	325,946	203,399	316,753	335,368	336,846	332,653
Total Archive Related Expenses		69,676	98,648	89,665	118,330	99,889	102,275	104,531
Total Expenses		929,116	1,093,860	743,347	1,102,850	1,275,742	1,351,053	1,390,931
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations		103,251	5,647	59,671	131,135	(30,795)	(111,566)	(154,649)

**General Assembly
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25**

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%						Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No	Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Capital Items								
	Server/ws replacement / Computer equipment		3,000	11,000	11,000	4,000	2,000	3,000
	Office Furn & Equip	11,835	1,000	1,500	1,500	2,500	1,000	1,000
	Archives Capital Items			51,200	51,200	4,000	0	0
Balance Sheet Items								
	Flood Appeal				50,524			
Total Capital Expenditure & BS items		11,835	4,000	63,700	114,224	10,500	3,000	4,000
General Funds		4,540,232	4,545,879	4,571,125	4,580,459	4,541,264	4,435,445	4,305,069
Perpetual Funds		2,286,996	2,286,996	2,286,996	2,286,996	2,286,996	2,286,996	2,286,996

**General Assembly
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25**

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%						Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No	Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
ARCHIVES								
Income								
1160	Donations	-	10,000	5,150	10,000	-	-	-
1345	Insurance Settlement	34,625	-	-	-	-	-	-
1600	Rent received - TEC+MECCC+PWMU+MDC	-	26,250	10,036	15,054	21,616	21,941	22,270
1650	Archival Fees ex Private Researchers	781	500	2,100	2,100	500	500	500
Total Archival Income		35,406	36,750	17,286	27,154	22,116	22,441	22,770
Staff expenses								
2910	Salaries	34,643	34,755	24,528	36,793	38,685	39,846	41,041
2940	Superannuation	3,543	3,823	2,698	4,047	4,449	4,782	4,925
2950	WorkCover Levy	374	373	425	425	498	513	529
2960	Long Service Leave Accrual	419	643	400	643	719	744	766
Total Staff expenses		38,979	39,594	28,051	41,908	44,351	45,884	47,261
Other Expenses								
2110	Cleaning & Preservation Costs	-	1,920	403	1,200	1,300	1,339	1,379
2130	Computer & Software Costs	3,011	3,800	3,705	3,800	3,000	3,000	3,000
2180	Depreciation-Furniture & Equipment	404	3,150	1,505	3,150	4,700	4,700	4,700
2184	Depreciation-Plant & Equipment	-	-	2,176	3,800	5,800	5,800	5,800
2220	Education & Training	-	500	-	500	500	500	500
2250	General Expenses	144	700	-	700	700	700	700
2390	Insurance	-	1,080	-	-	1,000	1,030	1,061
2660	Postage, Printing & Stationery	278	1,300	757	1,000	900	900	900
2700	Property Maintenance	-	1,664	1,530	1,664	5,700	5,700	5,700
2720	Rent & Outgoings - 690 Elgar Road	-	35,000	15,152	22,727	24,432	25,165	25,920
2730	Repairs & Maintenance	15,911	-	21,864	21,864	-	-	-
2770	Staff Amenities	-	-	143	143	250	258	266
2790	Storgae & Retrieval	10,578	-	13,036	13,036	2,200	2,200	2,200
2800	Subscriptions & Reference Books	372	410	488	488	805	829	854
2810	Telephone & Internet	-	380	293	450	650	670	690
2820	Travel	-	400	8	400	1,200	1,200	1,200
2830	Utilities - 690 Elgar Road	-	8,750	553	1,500	2,400	2,400	2,400
Total Other Expenses		30,697	59,054	61,613	76,422	55,537	56,391	57,270
Total Archives Related Expenses		69,676	98,648	89,665	118,330	99,889	102,275	104,531
Surplus/(Deficit) on Archives Operations		(34,270)	(61,898)	(72,379)	(91,176)	(77,773)	(79,835)	(81,761)

**General Assembly
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25**

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%						Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No	Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Capital Items: Archives								
	Shelving		8,000	8,798	8,000			
	Office Furn & Equip		3,000	2,863	3,000			
	IT Equipment		6,000	5,168	6,000	4,000		
	Airconditiponer / Dehumdifier		2,000		2,000			
	Freezer		1,500	1,389	1,500			
	Printer		1,200		1,200			
	690 Elgar Road Fitout		35,000	27,947	35,000			
Total Capital Items			56,700	46,165	56,700	4,000	0	0

General Assembly
Specific Trusts
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

						Budget for Approval		
						9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No	Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Deakin (Moderators) Trust								
Income								
1350	Interest from Common Fund	22,024	14,800	16,398	24,410	24,700	25,000	25,300
Payments								
2340	Honoraria	5,906	6,014	6,014	6,014	6,156	6,341	6,531
2820	Travel & Accommodation	8,467	8,000	19,182	25,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
	Total Expenditure	14,374	14,014	25,196	31,014	21,156	21,341	21,531
	Surplus	7,650	786	(8,798)	(6,604)	3,544	3,659	3,769
	Balance of Specific Funds	280,998	281,784	267,084	274,394	277,938	281,597	285,367
Fraser Trust								
Income								
1350	Interest from Common Fund	78,801	53,533	60,955	92,640	97,300	101,700	105,200
Payments								
2290	Grants&Subsidies (Rent Paid Miss on Home Assnment)	19,250	4,400	-	4,400	20,000	31,085	32,140
2400	Interest paid/transferred	-	-	-	17,500	28,663	31,085	32,140
2940	Superannuation (Missionaries)	4,500	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total Expenditure	23,750	4,400	0	21,900	48,663	62,170	64,280
	Surplus (Indexation of Capital)	55,051	49,133	60,955	70,740	48,637	39,530	40,920
	Balance of Funds	1,010,193	1,059,326	1,056,148	1,080,933	1,129,570	1,169,100	1,210,020
Insurance								
						0		
Income								
1350	Interest from Common Fund	9,030	5,000	7,196	10,910	11,700	12,700	13,800
Payments								
2390	Insurance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Surplus	9,030	5,000	7,196	10,910	11,700	12,700	13,800
	Balance of Funds	118,569	123,569	123,964	129,479	141,179	153,879	167,679
Balfour Memorial Trust								
Income								
1350	Interest from Common Fund	61,105	28,333	32,252	48,970	52,400	52,400	52,400
1600	Rent Received (Ministers Holiday Homes)	3,608	9,333	-	-	14,000	14,000	14,000
	Total Income	64,713	37,667	32,252	48,970	66,400	66,400	66,400
Payments								
2720	Grants	20,011	37,333	-	-	66,000	66,000	66,000
2890	Transfers Out (to Sinking Fund)	512,236	-	-	-	-	-	-
2910	Salaries & Wages (Ministers' Holiday Home)	579	965	-	-	-	-	-
	Total Expenditure	532,826	38,298	0	0	66,000	66,000	66,000
	Surplus	(468,113)	(631)	32,252	48,970	400	400	400
	Balance of Funds	532,930	532,299	557,182	581,900	582,300	582,700	583,100

**General Assembly
Specific Trusts
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25**

						Budget for Approval		
						9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No	Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Capital Fund Reserve								
Income								
1430	Interest Other (on Loans to Congregations)	85,907	110,000	75,051	113,853	137,500	150,000	150,000
1350	Interest from Common Fund	119,872	81,867	94,538	110,000	142,500	141,900	142,300
1440	Investment Income	-	183	-	269	269	269	269
Total Income		205,779	192,050	169,588	224,123	280,269	292,169	292,569
Payments								
2290	Grants & Subsidies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2400	Interest paid/transferred (on Loans from TC @ 5%)	157,788	183,328	150,077	230,547	275,000	300,000	300,000
2400	Interest paid to Depositors	183	183	183	269	269	269	269
Total Expenditure		157,971	183,511	150,260	230,816	275,269	300,269	300,269
Surplus		47,808	8,539	19,328	(6,694)	5,000	(8,100)	(7,700)
Balance of Funds		1,582,857	1,591,395	1,548,417	1,576,163	1,581,163	1,573,063	1,565,363
Deposits from Congregations, PWMU etc		36,557	39,618	26,946	26,946	26,946	26,946	26,946
Loans		4,266,090	4,500,000	4,656,350	5,000,000	6,000,000	6,000,000	6,000,000
Break Even Loan Balance: ie maximum loans available		7,386,665	7,533,092	5,574,300	5,674,187	5,674,187	7,115,234	7,078,784
GAA Funds								
Income								
1350	Interest from Common Fund	22,533	14,333	15,354	17,700	24,300	22,000	20,400
Total Income		22,533	14,333	15,354	17,700	24,300	22,000	20,400
Payments								
2235	General Assembly Australia	56,124	35,000	22,887	30,000	50,000	40,000	30,000
Total Expenditure		56,124	35,000	22,887	30,000	50,000	40,000	30,000
Surplus		(33,591)	(20,667)	(7,533)	(12,300)	(25,700)	(18,000)	(9,600)
Balance of Funds		282,852	262,185	235,107	270,552	244,852	226,852	217,252
Surplus/(Deficit) Specific Trusts		(382,164)	42,160	103,399	105,022	43,581	30,189	41,589
TOTAL	Balance of Specific Funds	3,808,398	3,850,559	3,787,902	3,913,421	3,957,002	3,987,191	4,028,781
						1%	1%	1%
National Redress Scheme Fund ##								
This budget is presented for information purposes only. The approval of the Commission is not required.								
Income								
1350	Interest from Common Fund	28,059	11,847	47,154	65,194	16,865	14,033	14,174
Total Income		28,059	11,847	47,154	65,194	16,865	14,033	14,174
Payments								
2500	Legal Fees (NRS)	-	350,000	-	150,000	300,000	-	-
2510	Legal Settlements (NRS)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditure		0	350,000	0	150,000	300,000	0	0
Surplus		28,059	(338,153)	47,154	(84,806)	(283,135)	14,033	14,174
NRS Transfers In		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Balance of Funds		1,771,278	1,433,125	1,804,060	1,686,472	1,403,337	1,417,370	1,431,544

**General Assembly
Specific Trusts**

Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

Sinking Fund ##

This budget is presented for information purposes only. The approval of the Commission is not required.

Income								
1160	Donations, Gifts and Sponsorships	4,095,603	-	-	-	-	-	-
1350	Interest from Common Fund	44,444	20,533	114,619	148,523	25,852	11,110	11,221
Total Income		4,140,047	20,533	114,619	148,523	25,852	11,110	11,221
Payments								
2500	Legal Fees	106,773	-	1,628,935	2,500,000	1,500,000	-	-
	Total Expenditure	106,773	0	1,628,935	2,500,000	1,500,000	0	0
	Surplus	4,033,274	20,533	(1,514,316)	(2,351,477)	(1,474,148)	11,110	11,221
	Balance of Funds	4,936,629	4,957,162	3,390,484	2,585,153	1,111,004	1,122,114	1,133,335

**General Assembly
Beneficiary Trusts
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25**

						Budget for Approval	9.0%	
Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%						9.0%	9.0%	
Account No	Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
David and Sarah Donaldson Trust ##								
This budget is presented for information purposes only. The approval of the Commission is not required.								
Income								
1350	Interest from Common Fund	953	-	1,672	2,330	-	-	-
1298	Franking Credits	9,929	-	5,558	5,558	-	-	-
1440	Investment Income	86,657	28,110	30,431	40,000	97,600	92,300	92,600
1996	Gain/Loss on Investments	171,785	-	96,393	96,393	-	-	-
Total Income		269,324	28,110	134,055	144,281	97,600	92,300	92,600
Payments								
2290	Grants & Subsidies	21,823	76,500	16,675	76,500	90,000	85,000	90,000
Surplus		247,501	(48,390)	117,380	67,781	7,600	7,300	2,600
Balance of Specific Funds in Comm Fund		37,046	0	22,043	0	0	0	0
Perpetual Funds (Separately Invested)		281,779	302,759	309,668	309,668	309,668	309,668	309,668
Specific Balance (Separately Invested)		2,412,453	2,670,247	2,651,226	2,480,235	2,487,835	2,495,135	2,497,735
Forster Trust ##								
This budget is presented for information purposes only. The approval of the Commission is not required.								
Income								
1350	Interest from Common Fund	2,405	1,600	1,835	2,710	2,700	2,800	2,800
Payments								
2290	Grants & Subsidies	2,520	2,500	2,535	2,535	2,500	2,400	3,500
Surplus		(115)	(900)	(700)	175	200	400	(700)
Balance of Specific Funds		1,292	1,136	131	1,467	1,667	2,067	1,367
Perpetual Funds		29,000	29,000	29,000	29,000	29,000	29,000	29,000
Ministers Retirement Housing ##								
This budget is presented for information purposes only. The approval of the Commission is not required.								
Income								
1298	Franking Credits	19,929	-	11,645	14,000	-	-	-
1350	Interest from Common Fund	14,916	3,333	13,233	15,000	5,000	2,000	2,000
1440	Investment Income	161,273	54,510	61,680	150,000	199,900	180,700	171,700
1996	Gain/Loss on Investments	356,003	-	187,758	187,758	-	-	-
Total Income		552,121	57,843	274,316	366,758	204,900	182,700	173,700
Payments								
2290	Grants & Subsidies	25,000	24,000	20,000	25,000	36,000	48,000	48,000
2400	Interest Paid/transferred	256	160	162	240	240	240	240
2500	Legal Fees	3,189	4,000	3,275	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Total Expenditure		28,445	28,160	23,437	31,240	42,240	54,240	54,240
Surplus		523,676	29,683	250,879	335,518	162,660	128,460	119,460
Capital Items / Balance Sheet Payments								
	Loans Advanced/Repaid	36,786	36,786	100,000	300,000	400,000	400,000	400,000
Balance of Specific Funds		206,773	0	93,124				
Balance of Specific Funds (Separately Invested)		5,677,259	5,706,942	6,179,429	5,712,777	5,475,437	5,203,897	4,923,357
Surplus/(Deficit) Beneficiary Trusts		784,064	(27,807)	377,928	419,204	167,260	132,660	117,560
TOTAL	Balance of Specific Funds in Common Fund	245,111	1,136	115,299	1,467	1,667	2,067	1,367
TOTAL	Perpetual Funds in Common Fund	29,000	29,000	29,000	29,000	29,000	29,000	29,000
TOTAL	Balance of Specific Funds (Separately Invested)	8,089,712	8,377,190	8,830,655	8,193,012	7,963,272	7,699,032	7,421,092
TOTAL	Perpetual Funds (Separately Invested)	281,779	302,759	309,668	309,668	309,668	309,668	309,668

[illegible]

Australian Presbyterian World Mission Vic
Specific Trusts
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%					Budget for Approval	9.0%	9.0%
Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Vanuatu Trusts							
Income							
1350--Interest from Common Fund	9,967	10,000	7,445	11,300	11,400	11,600	11,800
Expenditure							
2290 - Grants & Subsidies	9,300	9,300	4,650	9,300	9,300	9,300	9,300
Total Expenditure	9,300	9,300	4,650	9,300	9,300	9,300	9,300
Surplus/(Deficit)	667	700	2,795	2,000	2,100	2,300	2,500
Specific Funds	83,367	84,067	86,162	85,367	87,467	89,767	92,267
Perpetual Funds	41,451	41,451	41,451	41,451	41,451	41,451	41,451
Beatty Trust							
Income							
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	8,976	8,900	6,629	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Expenditure							
2290 - Grants & Subsidies	10,000	10,000	5,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Surplus/(Deficit)	(1,024)	(1,100)	1,629	0	0	0	0
Specific Funds	111,345	110,245	111,375	111,345	111,345	111,345	111,345
Dehra Dun							
Income							
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	2,327	2,400	1,740	2,600	2,800	2,900	3,000
Expenditure							
2290 - Grants & Subsidies	1,500	1,500	750	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Surplus/(Deficit)	827	900	990	1,100	1,300	1,400	1,500
Specific Funds	4,579	5,479	5,169	5,679	6,979	8,379	9,879
Perpetual Funds	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations	23,741	23	69,492	25,778	6,273	9,456	12,740
Surplus/(Deficit) Specific Trusts	471	500	5,415	3,100	3,400	3,700	4,000
Total Surplus/(Deficit)	24,211	523	74,907	28,878	9,673	13,156	16,740
TOTAL Specific Funds	199,291	199,791	202,706	202,391	205,791	209,491	213,491
TOTAL Perpetual Funds	66,451	66,451	66,451	66,451	66,451	66,451	66,451

Church & Nation Committee
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%

Budget for Approval

9.0%

9.0%

[illegible]

Church Planting Committee
Specific - Scots Church Properties Trust
Income & Expenditure Budget - 2024/25

					Budget for Approval		
Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%					9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Income							
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	4,851	12,500	5,726	12,300	15,000	11,000	9,900
1600 - Rent Received	20,815	20,208	14,292	21,438	29,442	37,906	39,043
1620 - SCPT Distribution	304,011	300,000	231,048	231,048	50,000	110,000	110,000
Total Income	329,678	332,708	251,066	264,786	94,442	147,906	149,043
Expenditure							
Committee Grants							
2290 - Grants & Subsidies	53,400	51,120	30,180	51,120	119,160	110,980	79,200
Total Committee Grants	53,400	51,120	30,180	51,120	119,160	110,980	79,200
Church Planter Evangelist							
2911 - Salaries & Wages: Assembly Officers	25,155	19,551	13,032	19,548	18,675	19,235	19,812
2930 - Non-Cash Benefits	15,821	10,521	6,826	10,524	12,450	12,823	13,208
2935 - Manse Allowance	19,110	12,738	8,493	12,740	12,740	12,740	12,740
2941 - Superannuation: Assembly Officers	6,645	4,511	3,208	4,812	5,136	5,450	5,613
2833 - Utilities: Manses	4,713	2,500	1,518	1,875	2,500	2,500	2,500
2811 - Telephone & Internet: Assembly Officers	1,060	725	618	544	1,092	1,092	1,092
2955 - Disability Insurance	3,818	1,299	2,777	1,299	1,300	1,339	1,379
2965 - LSL Levy	410	800	840	840	840	840	840
Total Church Planter Evangelist	76,732	52,646	37,313	52,182	54,732	56,019	57,185
Other Expenses							
2140 - Conferences & Events	-	5,000	1,364	5,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
2130 - Computer Software and Hardware	210	-	-	-	300	300	300
2220 - Education & Training	599	25,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
2250 - General Expenses	-	2,000	389	-	2,000	2,000	2,000
2400 - Interest paid /transferred	4,007	-	-	-	-	-	-
2720 - Rents & Property Hire	-	540	-	-	540	540	540
2820 - Travel & Accommodation	-	6,000	392	1,000	-	2,000	2,000
2840 - Website-Maintenance & Support	-	1,000	-	500	500	1,000	1,000
Total Other Expenses	4,816	39,540	2,145	7,500	6,340	8,840	8,840
TOTAL Expenses	134,948	143,306	69,639	110,802	180,232	175,839	145,225
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations	194,729	189,402	181,427	153,984	(85,791)	(27,933)	3,819
Balance of General Funds	58,745	248,148	238,108	212,730	126,939	99,006	102,824
Overdraft prior to receipt of distribution	(169,177)	(28,938)	0	0	0	0	0
MAXIMUM approved overdraft: prior to distribution	(340,000)	(190,000)	(190,000)	(190,000)	(15,000)		

Church Planting Committee
Specific - Property Development Fund
Income & Expenditure Budget - 2024/25

Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	9.0% 2024/2025 Proposed	9.0% 2025/2026 Projected	9.0% 2026/2027 Projected
Income							
1160 - Donations, Gifts and Sponsorships	134,691	27,500	22,370	22,370	27,500	27,500	27,500
1170 - Donations from Sites Reserve	-	-	15,699	15,699	-	-	-
1620 - SCPT Distribution	-	-	-	-	350,000	440,000	440,000
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	26,695	9,600	11,697	18,200	18,500	52,300	97,300
Total Income	161,386	37,100	49,766	56,269	396,000	519,800	564,800
Expenditure							
2150 - Consultancy Fees	-	20,000	-	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
2290 - Grants & Subsidies	828,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses	828,000	20,000	0	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Surplus/(Deficit)	(666,614)	17,100	49,766	36,269	376,000	499,800	544,800
Property Development Fund	169,357	186,457	216,123	205,627	581,627	1,081,427	1,626,227

Health & Community Chaplaincy Committee
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/2025

Account No - Description	Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%				Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Other Income							
1160 - Donations, Gifts and Sponsorships	23,893	18,750	1,560	18,750	18,750	18,750	18,750
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	90,099	90,800	69,099	104,500	105,600	105,900	106,900
Total Other Income	113,992	109,550	70,658	123,250	124,350	124,650	125,650
Ministry Family Camp							
1100 - Camp Fees and Income	22,183	29,000	12,314	29,000	29,000	39,000	39,000
2090 - Camp Expenses	(21,884)	(35,000)	0	(35,000)	(35,000)	(35,000)	(35,000)
Surplus(Deficit) Ministry Family Camp	299	(6,000)	12,314	(6,000)	(6,000)	4,000	4,000
Total Income	114,291	103,550	82,972	117,250	118,350	128,650	129,650
Expenditure							
Grants							
2310 - Grants: Tertiary Chaplains(AFES Workers)	20,000	20,000	10,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
2311 - Grants: Community Chaplaincy(Deaf)	20,000	20,000	-	20,000	7,200	7,200	7,200
Total Grants	40,000	40,000	10,000	40,000	27,200	27,200	27,200
RCH Chaplain					33,000	33,990	35,009
Chaplaincy Support Worker							
2910 - Salaries & Wages	20,559	21,840	16,892	22,308	23,089	23,781	24,495
2940 - Superannuation	2,276	2,402	1,858	2,454	2,655	2,854	2,939
2980 - Temporary / Adjunct Staff	-	4,000	-	4,673	4,000	4,000	4,000
2950 - Workers Compensation	323	332	304	332	344	354	365
Total Chaplaincy Support Worker	23,158	28,575	19,054	29,767	30,088	30,989	31,799
Other Expenses							
2030 - Advertising	-	750	-	750	750	750	750
2100 - Chaplaincy Fees	2,050	6,350	1,200	6,350	6,350	6,350	6,350
2130 - Computer & Software	231	210	-	210	210	216	223
2180 - Depreciation-Furniture & Equipment	263	264	50	75	8	8	8
2220 - Education & Training	-	2,000	-	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
2250 - General Expenses	170	500	307	500	500	500	500
2280 - GMP Distributions	1,000	1,300	1,000	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300
2390 - Insurance	725	761	731	731	768	783	822
2590 - Ministers & Families Support	4,460	9,000	2,846	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
2660 - Postage, Printing & Stationery	169	400	44	400	400	400	400
2720 - Rents & Property Hire	2,880	2,880	1,920	2,880	2,880	3,024	3,175
2740 - Resources	469	500	253	500	500	500	500
2810 - Telephone & Internet	175	360	-	360	360	360	360
2840 - Website-Maintenance & Support	-	-	359	359	375	375	375
Total Other Expenses	12,591	25,275	8,710	25,415	25,401	25,566	25,763
Total Expenses	75,749	93,850	37,764	95,182	115,688	117,746	119,771
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations	38,542	9,700	45,207	22,068	2,662	10,904	9,879
General Funds	1,151,584	1,161,548	1,181,541	1,173,727	1,176,396	1,187,309	1,197,195
Capital Items							
Accrued Leave		78	(1,128)				
Total Capital Expenditure	0	0	(1,128)	0	0	0	0

Health & Community Chaplaincy Committee
Specific Trusts
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/2025

**Budget
for
Approval**

P Burnett Trust

Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Income							
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	46,376	46,300	34,156	51,100	51,300	50,400	49,200
Total Income	46,376	46,300	34,156	51,100	51,300	50,400	49,200
Expenditure							
Ministry Wives Chaplain							
2910 - Salaries & Wages	41,405	41,837	29,736	42,952	44,455	45,789	47,163
2940 - Superannuation	4,265	4,602	3,271	4,725	5,112	5,495	5,660
2950 - Workers Compensation	484	500	610	500	630	651	671
Total Ministry Wives Chaplain	46,154	46,939	33,617	48,177	50,198	51,935	53,493
Other Expenses							
2100 - Chaplaincy Fees	1,175	4,000	750	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
2660 - Postage, Printing & Stationery	57	-	-	-	-	-	-
2680 - Professional Development	166	500	-	500	500	500	500
2690 - Professional Supervision	709	750	482	750	1,000	1,000	1,000
2810 - Telephone & Internet	150	480	84	480	480	480	480
2820 - Travel & Accommodation	7,679	5,000	3,994	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
2840 - Website-Maintenance & Support	-	-	359	359	377	396	415
Total Other Expenses	9,936	10,730	5,668	11,089	11,357	11,376	11,395
Total Expenses	56,090	57,669	39,286	59,266	61,555	63,310	64,889
Surplus/(Deficit)	(9,715)	(11,369)	(5,130)	(8,166)	(10,255)	(12,910)	(15,689)
Specific Funds - Burnett	578,433	567,065	564,505	570,268	560,013	547,103	531,414

Health & Community Chaplaincy Committee
Specific Trusts
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/2025

**Budget
for
Approval**

Harold Hughes Trust

Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Income							
1160 - Donations, Gifts and Sponsorships	15,000	-	-	22,500	-	-	-
1298 - Franking Credits	4,619	-	2,526	2,526	-	-	-
1340 - Grants Received	22,367	20,000	17,448	22,368	-	-	-
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	8,420	4,800	1,139	1,400	1,800	900	900
1440 - Investment Income	40,389	40,780	13,852	41,100	40,200	40,400	40,100
1650 - Sundry Income	624	-	1,728	-	-	-	-
Total Income	91,418	65,580	36,692	89,894	42,000	41,300	41,000
Expenditure							
Committee Staff							
2910 - Salaries & Wages	64,485	54,047	32,485	39,821	35,574	36,641	37,740
2940 - Superannuation	6,492	5,945	3,573	4,380	4,091	4,397	4,529
2950 - Workers Compensation	637	669	661	669	702	737	774
2960 - Long Service Leave Accrual	3,018	1,304	720	2,381	1,008	1,011	1,062
2990 - Other Personnel Costs	624	-	-	9,910	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total Committee Staff Expense	75,256	61,965	37,439	57,160	42,375	43,787	45,105
Other Expenses							
2461 - JBWere Fees - Separate Investments	-	-	1,995	3,991	4,000	4,300	4,500
2680 - Professional Development	623	900	124	900	900	900	1,800
2690 - Professional Supervision	670	900	270	900	900	900	1,800
Total Other Expenses	1,293	1,800	2,390	5,791	5,800	6,100	8,100
Total Expenses	76,548	63,765	39,829	62,951	48,175	49,887	53,205
Surplus/(Deficit)	14,870	1,815	(3,136)	26,943	(6,175)	(8,587)	(12,205)
Common Fund - Hughes	34,651	10,000	8,995	20,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Separately Invested Specific Funds - Hughes	191,586	218,052	167,890	233,180	237,006	228,419	216,214
1996 - Gain/Loss on Investments	77,224	-	42,137	42,137	-	-	-
Perpetual Funds (Separately Invested) - Hughes	982,230	1,028,457	1,182,524	1,024,367	1,024,367	1,024,367	1,024,367
Total Hughes Funds	1,208,467	1,256,509	1,359,409	1,277,547	1,271,373	1,262,786	1,250,581
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations	38,542	9,700	45,207	22,068	2,662	10,904	9,879
Surplus/(Deficit) Specific Trusts	5,155	(9,554)	(8,266)	18,778	(16,429)	(21,497)	(27,894)
Total Surplus/(Deficit)	120,921	146	79,078	82,983	(13,768)	(10,593)	(18,015)

METRO Committee
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%					Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Other Income							
1160 - Donations, Gifts and Sponsorships	1,200	-	2,400	2,400	-	-	-
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	56,506	55,600	41,840	63,100	65,100	63,900	62,900
1650 - Sundry Income	3,001	3,000	-	3,000	3,000	2,500	2,500
Total Other Income	60,708	58,600	44,240	68,500	68,100	66,400	65,400
Conference and Event							
1110 - Conference and Event Income	-	600	-	600	600	600	600
2140 - Conferences & Events Expenses	(8,608)	(10,000)	(7,463)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(11,000)
Total Conference and Event Surplus(Deficit)	(8,608)	(9,400)	(7,463)	(9,400)	(9,400)	(9,400)	(10,400)
Total Income	52,100	49,200	36,777	59,100	58,700	57,000	55,000
Grants							
2290 - Grants & Subsidies	44,617	56,050	28,500	42,250	56,050	53,100	50,600
Total Grants	44,617	56,050	28,500	42,250	56,050	53,100	50,600
Committee Staff							
2910 - Salaries & Wages	5,968	7,000	880	1,320	7,000	7,000	7,000
2940 - Superannuation	627	770	97	145	805	840	840
2950 - Workers Compensation	71	78	86	86	78	78	78
Total Committee Staff	6,665	7,848	1,062	1,550	7,883	7,918	7,918
Other Expenses							
2030 - Advertising	-	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	500	500
2250 - General Expenses	60	5,500	-	-	5,500	5,500	5,500
2660 - Postage, Printing & Stationery	135	350	-	350	350	350	350
2820 - Travel & Accommodation	-	500	-	500	500	500	500
Total Other Expenses	195	7,350	0	1,850	7,350	6,850	6,850
Total Committee Expenditure	51,478	71,248	29,562	45,650	71,283	67,868	65,368
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations	622	(22,048)	7,214	13,450	(12,583)	(10,868)	(10,368)
General Funds	710,359	688,311	708,032	723,809	709,726	698,857	688,489
Capital Items							
Notebook computer Enter Details Here					1,500		
Total Capital Expenditure	0	81 0	0	0	1,500	0	0

Ministry Development Committee
Specific - Scots Church Properties Trust
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

					Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%							
Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Other Income							
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	11,180	18,800	7,180	14,359	27,100	38,500	50,660
Sustentation Funding	-	-	-	-	10,000	10,000	10,000
1600 - Rent Received	48,569	46,511	33,348	50,000	51,523	53,068	54,660
1620 - SCPT Distribution	709,360	700,000	539,112	539,112	600,000	550,000	550,000
Total Other Income	769,108	765,311	579,640	603,471	688,623	651,568	665,320
Conference and Event							
1110 - Conference and Event Income	1,197	2,000	-	1,196	3,000	3,500	4,000
2140 - Conferences & Events	- 3,158	(5,000)	-	(4,500)	(5,500)	(6,000)	(6,000)
Total Conference and Event	(1,962)	(3,000)	-	(3,304)	(2,500)	(2,500)	(2,000)
Total Income	767,146	762,311	579,640	600,167	686,123	649,068	663,320
Expenditure							
1. Grants							
2291 - Grants: Ministry Development	180,446	250,000	113,070	190,000	250,000	260,000	270,000
2293 - Grants: Second Ministry Workers	8,438	26,250	26,282	24,750	33,750	33,750	37,500
2294 - Grants: Cross Cultural	41,163	42,000	38,651	39,500	40,000	38,000	38,000
Grants: Sustentation	-	15,000	-	-	10,000	10,000	10,000
Total Grants	230,046	333,250	178,003	254,250	333,750	341,750	355,500
2. Ministry Development Officer							
2911 - Salaries & Wages: Assembly Officers	49,741	46,915	31,277	46,915	44,797	46,141	47,525
2930 - Non-Cash Benefits	24,797	25,258	16,838	25,258	29,865	30,761	31,683
2935 - Manse Allowance	30,000	30,000	20,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
2941 - Superannuation: Assembly Officers	10,632	11,548	9,109	11,548	12,319	13,073	13,465
2833 - Utilities: Manses	2,500	2,600	1,667	2,600	2,800	3,000	3,200
2811 - Telephone & Internet: Assembly Officers	2,400	2,400	1,600	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,400
2955 - Disability Insurance	3,466	2,298	2,710	2,710	2,710	2,818	2,931
2965 - LSL Levy	410	800	840	840	840	840	840
2821 - Travel & Accommodation: Assembly Officers	5,269	6,300	1,209	6,300	6,300	6,400	6,400
Total Ministry Development Officer Expenses	129,215	128,119	85,249	128,570	132,031	135,433	138,445
3. Committee Staff							
2910 - Salaries & Wages	50,034	58,532	37,593	55,530	51,734	53,286	54,885
2940 - Superannuation	5,155	6,439	2,613	6,439	5,949	6,394	6,586
2950 - Workers Compensation	1,600	1,609	1,772	1,772	1,523	1,565	1,601
2960 - Long Service Leave Accrual	5,136	1,488	1,200	1,488	1,322	1,367	1,408
Total Committee Staff	61,924	68,068	43,178	65,229	60,528	62,612	64,479

Ministry Development Committee
Specific - Scots Church Properties Trust
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

					Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%							
Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
4. Office							
2030 - Advertising	-	500	-	500	400	400	400
2130 - Computer Software and Hardware	2,643	1,500	746	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
2180 - Depreciation-Furniture & Equipment	1,384	845	1,152	1,452	784	636	600
2182 - Depreciation-Motor Vehicle	5,997	6,048	4,009	6,400	6,646	6,646	6,646
2190 - Discretionary Expenditure	1,829	2,000	1,191	2,000	2,100	2,200	2,300
2210 - Ministry Development Coaches/Mentors	-	-	-	-	12,000	18,000	20,000
2220 - Education & Training	4,339	4,500	279	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500
2250 - General Expenses	279	1,000	139	1,000	900	950	1,000
2400 - Interest paid /transferred	7,654	1,800	968	91	-	-	-
2500 - Legal Fees	-	1,000	-	-	-	-	-
2600 - Motor Vehicle Expense	8,168	7,500	5,967	7,500	7,500	7,600	7,600
2660 - Postage, Printing & Stationery	1,637	2,300	208	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300
2690 - Professional Supervision	-	600	-	600	600	600	600
2720 - Rents & Property Hire	-	-	-	2,500	6,000	6,200	6,400
2770 - Staff Amenities	624	400	581	560	500	500	500
2800 - Subscriptions	201	200	19	200	200	200	200
2810 - Telephone & Internet	938	1,404	400	600	600	600	600
2820 - Travel & Accommodation	94	500	40	300	500	500	500
2840 - Website-Maintenance & Support	449	-	718	718	743	765	788
Total Office Expenses	36,236	32,097	16,418	32,721	47,773	54,097	56,434
Total Expenses	457,421	561,534	322,848	480,770	586,082	611,893	634,859
Surplus/(Deficit) Operations	309,725	200,777	256,791	119,397	100,041	37,175	28,462
Balance of General Funds / (overdraft)	62,717	246,875	322,949	142,147	246,940	292,765	329,880
Overdraft prior to receipt of distribution	(340,464)	(196,973)	(73,969)	(73,969)	(22,089)	(8,016)	-
MAXIMUM approved overdraft: prior to distribution	(600,000)	(410,000)	(410,000)	(410,000)	(180,000)	(15,000)	-
Capital/Balance Sheet Items							
3920--Furniture & Equipment	(2,380)	-	-	-	4,000	-	-
Painting and carpet of 690 Elgar Road	-	-	-	25,000	-	-	-
Increase in leave provisions	(309)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Motor Vehicle for MDO	-	50,000	-	44,307	-	-	-
Trade in value of motor vehicle	-	(25,000)	-	(20,000)	-	-	-
Write off WDV for current vehicle	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Capital Expenditure	(2,688)	25,000	-	49,307	4,000	-	-

Ministry Development Committee
Specific Trusts
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

Account No - Description	Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%				Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Projected	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected

Church Extension - Victoria

Income							
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	2,889	3,000	2,286	3,500	3,700	4,100	4,400
Total Income	2,889	3,000	2,286	3,500	3,700	4,100	4,400
Expenditure							
2290 - Grants & Subsidies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Surplus/(Deficit)	2,889	3,000	2,286	3,500	3,700	4,100	4,400
Specific Funds	11,024	14,024	12,750	14,524	18,224	22,324	26,724
Perpetual Funds	26,913	26,913	26,913	26,913	26,913	26,913	26,913

Church Extension - Other States

Income							
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	553	600	311	500	600	600	600
Total Income	553	600	311	500	600	600	600
Expenditure							
2290 - Grants & Subsidies	553	600	311	500	600	600	600
Total Expenses	553	600	311	500	600	600	600
Surplus/(Deficit)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Specific Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Perpetual Funds	6,913	6,913	6,913	6,913	6,913	6,913	6,913

Thompson Evangelism

Income							
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	109,704	107,600	82,099	123,400	121,100	111,800	104,300
Total Income	109,704	107,600	82,099	123,400	121,100	111,800	104,300
Expenditure							
2293 - Grants: Second Ministry Workers	2,812	8,750	8,761	8,250	11,250	11,250	12,500
2295 - Grants: Evangelism	46,100	65,000	40,624	65,000	115,000	104,000	105,000
2296 - Grants: Evangelism Workers(See table below)	22,500	46,500	8,333	46,500	63,500	44,600	40,100
2298 - Grants: AFES Workers	30,000	30,000	15,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
2140 - Conferences & Events	-	5,000	-	5,000	5,000	5,500	6,000
Total Expenses	101,412	155,250	72,717	154,750	224,750	195,350	193,600
Surplus/(Deficit)	8,292	(47,650)	9,382	(31,350)	(103,650)	(83,550)	(89,300)
Specific Funds	1,337,395	1,289,745	1,326,777	1,306,045	1,202,395	1,118,845	1,029,545
Perpetual Funds	39,992	39,992	39,992	39,992	39,992	39,992	39,992

**Ministry Development Committee
Specific Trusts
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25**

					Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%							
Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Projected	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Noble Trust							
Income							
1160 - Donations, Gifts and Sponsorships	480	-	320	400	-	-	-
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	26,243	25,100	18,105	27,600	25,700	23,600	21,300
Total Income	26,723	25,100	18,425	28,000	25,700	23,600	21,300
Expenditure							
2140 - Conferences & Events	1,105	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
2290 - Grants & Subsidies	-	2,000	-	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
2930 - Non-Cash Benefits	20,881	20,815	29,821	20,815	8,000	6,000	4,000
2940 - Superannuation	28,119	33,681	23,025	33,681	35,931	38,130	39,274
2950 - Workers Compensation	-	303	-	-	323	343	353
2250 - General Expenses	1,600	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
2820 - Travel & Accommodation	-	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total Expenses	51,705	59,799	52,846	59,496	49,254	49,473	48,628
Surplus/(Deficit)	(24,982)	(34,699)	(34,421)	(31,496)	(23,554)	(25,873)	(27,328)
Specific Funds	192,300	157,601	153,479	160,804	137,250	111,377	84,049
Perpetual Funds	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000
HMWA							
Income							
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	30/06/2023	30/06/2024	29/02/2024	45,400	3,800	3,900	4,000
Total Income	0	0	0	45,400	3,800	3,900	4,000
Expenditure							
2290 - Grants & Subsidies	3,135	3,100	2,473	3,100	3,000	3,000	3,000
Total Expenses	3,135	3,100	2,473	3,100	3,000	3,000	3,000
Surplus/(Deficit)	(3,135)	(3,100)	(2,473)	42,300	800	900	1,000
Specific Funds	0	(3,100)	0	42,300	43,100	44,000	45,000
TOTAL							
Surplus/(Deficit) Specific Trusts	(16,936)	(82,449)	(25,226)	(17,046)	(122,704)	(104,423)	(111,228)
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations	309,725	200,777	256,791	119,397	100,041	37,175	28,462
Total Surplus/(Deficit)	292,790	118,328	231,565	102,352	(22,663)	(67,248)	(82,766)
Total Specific Trusts	1,540,719	1,458,270	1,493,007	1,523,673	1,400,969	1,296,546	1,185,318
Total Perpetual Funds	198,818	198,818	198,818	198,818	198,818	198,818	198,818

Presbyterian Youth & Children's Committee
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

Account No - Description	Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%				Budget for Approval	9.0%	9.0%
	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Summer Camp (Jan 2025)							
1100 - Income	65,995	61,200	18,591	61,200	61,200	63,036	64,927
2090 - Expenses	64,679	61,200	-	61,200	61,200	63,036	64,927
Surplus/(Deficit) on Summer Camp (Jan 2025)	1,316	0	18,591	0	0	0	0
Winter Camp (July 2024)							
1100 - Income	26,718	35,000	-	35,000	35,000	36,050	37,132
2090 - Expenses	29,183	35,000	-	35,000	35,000	36,050	37,132
Surplus/(Deficit) on Winter Camp (July 2024)	(2,465)	0	0	0	0	0	0
North State Event							
1100 - Income	-	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,030	1,061
2090 - Expenses	-	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,030	1,061
Surplus/(Deficit) on North State Event	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
East State Event							
1100 - Income	-	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,030	1,061
2090 - Expenses	-	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,030	1,061
Surplus/(Deficit) on East State Event	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
West State Event							
1100 - Income	-	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,030	1,061
2090 - Expenses	480	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,030	1,061
Surplus/(Deficit) on West State Event	(480)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Camp Income & Expenses							
1060 - Bookstall/Tuckshop Income	-	-	-	-	800	800	800
2160 - Bookstall/Tuckshop costs	-	-	-	-	800	800	800
1060 - Merchandising Income	2,261	3,800	632	3,800	3,000	3,000	3,000
2160 - Merchandising costs	1,341	3,600	2,976	3,600	2,800	2,800	2,800
2090 - Other camp expenses e.g. first aid	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Surplus/(Deficit) on Other Camp Income & Expenses	920	200	(2,344)	200	200	200	200
Net Surplus/(Deficit) on all Camps & Events	(709)	200	16,247	200	200	200	200
Other Income							
1160 - Donations, Gifts and Sponsorships	2,300	3,000	1,500	3,000	3,000	3,090	3,183
1340 - Interest from Common Fund	101,600	100,500	77,225	117,100	113,100	113,400	114,000
1610 - Royalties	-	-	18	18	-	-	-
1900 - Profit/Loss on Sale of Asset	150	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Other Income	104,050	103,500	78,743	120,118	116,100	116,490	117,183
Camps							
1100 - Camp Fees and Income	92,713	99,200	37,796	99,200	99,200	102,176	105,241
2090 - Camp Expenses	(94,342)	(99,200)	(65,036)	(99,200)	(99,200)	(102,176)	(105,241)
Surplus/(Deficit) on Camps	(1,629)	0	(27,241)	0	0	0	0
Conference and Event							
1110 - Conferences & Events Income	817	-	1,277	1,277	-	-	-
2140 - Conferences & Events Expenses	(392)	-	(785)	(1,178)	-	-	-
Surplus/(Deficit) on Conference and Event	425	0	492	100	0	0	0

Presbyterian Youth & Children's Committee
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%					Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Book & Merchandising							
1060 - Book & Merchandising Sales	2,261	3,800	632	3,900	3,800	3,800	3,800
2160 - Cost of Sales	(1,341)	(3,600)	(2,976)	(3,600)	(3,600)	(3,600)	(3,600)
Surplus/(Deficit) on Book & Merchandising	920	200	(2,344)	300	200	200	200
Total Other Income	103,767	103,700	49,650	120,517	116,300	116,690	117,383
Expenditure							
Grants							
2290 - Grants & Subsidies	-	8,000	-	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
Total Grants	0	8,000	0	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
Assembly Officers							
2911 - Salaries & Wages: Assembly Officers	-	31,350	-	31,350	31,350	32,291	33,259
2941 - Superannuation: Assembly Officers	-	6,270	-	3,449	6,555	7,045	7,257
Total Assembly Officers	0	37,620	0	34,799	37,905	39,336	40,516
Committee Staff							
2910 - Salaries & Wages	31,190	34,320	3,044	30,328	34,320	35,350	36,410
2940 - Superannuation	3,246	3,775	313	3,775	3,947	4,242	4,369
2950 - Workers Compensation	728	757	834	834	762	789	813
2990 - Other Personnel Costs	865	-	4,708	4,708	47	50	52
Total Committee Staff	36,029	38,852	8,899	39,644	39,076	40,431	41,644
Other Expenses							
2060 - Bank Charges & Fees	716	542	221	542	542	542	542
2130 - Computer Software and Hardware	2,157	1,547	-	-	1,547	1,547	1,547
2150 - Consultancy Fees	100	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
2180 - Depreciation-Furniture & Equipment	7,725	2,797	5,291	7,862	6,831	255	-
2220 - Education, Training & Seminars	202	643	-	643	643	643	643
2250 - General Expenses	664	800	-	800	800	800	800
2390 - Insurance	6,425	6,618	6,231	6,618	6,849	7,055	7,266
2660 - Postage, Printing & Stationery	520	500	95	500	500	500	500
2720 - Rents & Property Hire	5,340	6,240	4,160	6,240	6,240	6,240	6,240
2740 - Resources	-	112	-	112	112	112	112
2800 - Subscriptions	544	630	1,002	1,002	1,037	1,068	1,100
2810 - Telephone & Internet	100	200	266	266	200	200	200
2820 - Travel & Accommodation	-	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
2840 - Website-Maintenance & Support	269	1,000	918	1,000	1,000	1,030	1,061
Total Other Expenses	24,762	23,628	18,184	27,584	28,301	21,992	22,011
Total Expenses	60,790	108,100	27,083	110,027	113,282	109,759	112,171
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations	42,976	(4,400)	22,568	10,490	3,018	6,931	5,211
General Funds	771,569	767,169	791,853	720,034	723,052	729,983	735,195
Perpetual Funds	536,499	536,499	536,499	536,499	536,499	536,499	536,499

Presbyterian Youth & Children's Committee
Specific Trusts - Allan Trust
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%					Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Income							
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	57,013	58,700	43,384	65,800	69,600	75,300	81,600
Total Income	57,013	58,700	43,384	65,800	69,600	75,300	81,600
Expenditure							
2070 - Bursaries & Prizes	145	6,000	-	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
2150 - Consultancy Fees	2,268	-	-	-			
2500 - Legal Fees	-	-	33,459	33,459			
Total Expenses	2,413	6,000	33,459	39,459	6,000	6,000	6,000
Surplus/(Deficit) on Specific Trusts	54,600	52,700	9,925	26,341	63,600	69,300	75,600
Specific Funds	719,134	771,834	718,578	745,475	809,075	878,375	953,975
Perpetual Funds	27,852	27,852	27,852	27,852	27,852	27,852	27,852

Safe Church Unit
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

					Budget for Approval		
					9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Income							
1320 - General Missions Program	146,826	170,000	159,325	161,500	170,000	170,000	170,000
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	14,237	11,688	12,652	20,000	14,655	12,914	10,375
Other interest - from GA funds							
Total Income	161,063	181,688	171,977	181,500	184,655	182,914	180,375
Grants							
2290 - Grants & Subsidies	-	1,200	-	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Total Grants	0	1,200	0	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Committee Staff							
2910 - Salaries & Wages	93,498	109,195	76,767	111,315	115,211	118,668	122,228
2940 - Superannuation	9,728	12,011	8,444	12,245	13,249	14,240	14,667
2950 - Workers Compensation	1,012	1,212	1,334	1,334	1,285	1,317	1,350
2960 - Long Service Leave Accrual	(725)	1,777	1,440	1,777	1,865	1,959	2,057
Total Committee Staff	103,513	124,195	87,985	126,671	131,611	136,183	140,301
Other Expenses							
2150 - Consultancy Fees	14,324	47,268	2,929	47,268	47,268	47,268	47,268
2180 - Depreciation-Furniture & Equipment	913	526	827	1,238	1,135	1,029	318
2220 - Education & Training	360	1,920	-	1,920	1,920	1,968	2,017
2390 - Insurance	725	725	731	731	768	806	846
2660 - Postage, Printing & Stationery	3,033	4,028	1,182	4,028	3,528	3,616	3,707
2720 - Rents & Property Hire	4,640	5,040	3,360	5,040	5,040	5,141	5,346
2770 - Staff Amenities	36	204	-	204	204	214	214
2800 - Subscriptions	443	900	735	900	1,300	1,333	1,366
2810 - Telephone & Internet	1,779	1,320	1,447	1,320	1,820	1,911	2,007
2820 - Travel & Accommodation	3,516	4,464	2,081	4,464	5,500	5,775	6,064
2840 - Website-Maintenance & Support	-	-	718	718	718	754	791
Total Other Expenses	29,770	66,395	14,010	67,831	69,200	69,814	69,944
Total Expenses	133,282	191,790	101,996	195,702	202,011	207,197	211,445
Surplus/(Deficit)	27,780	(10,102)	69,982	(14,202)	(17,356)	(24,283)	(31,070)
Capital Items							
Office Furniture & Equipment	0	3,000	2,844	2,844	1,250	3,000	
	0	3,000	2,844	2,844	1,250	3,000	0
89							
General Funds	180,413	167,837	237,919	162,829	143,492	115,279	82,471

State News Committee
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%					Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Income							
1320 - General Missions Program	13,312	7,500	7,029	7,350	7,500	7,500	7,500
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	6,031	5,796	4,817	7,300	6,900	6,800	6,400
1650 - Sundry Income	600	1,200	600	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Total Income	19,943	14,496	12,446	15,850	15,600	15,500	15,100
Expenditure							
2670 - Production, Design & Publication	11,051	14,000	8,396	18,500	16,500	19,100	19,200
2740 - Resources	-	100	-	100	100	100	100
Total Expenses	11,051	14,100	8,396	18,600	16,600	19,200	19,300
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations	8,892	396	4,050	(2,750)	(1,000)	(3,700)	(4,200)
General Funds	79,106	79,502	82,004	76,356	75,356	71,656	67,456
Capital Items							
Computer							
Enter Details Here							
Enter Details Here							
Total Capital Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Theological Education Committee
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

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Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0% 9.0% 9.0%

Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Income							
Tuition Fees							
Fee paying	471,249	400,000	228,918	428,918	430,000	430,000	430,000
Candidates	195,171	190,017	120,178	281,554	344,304	350,058	293,419
Other Scholarships	44,416	35,064	19,040	46,040	37,750	21,500	21,500
Diaconal	6,209	20,000	8,283	13,283	15,000	15,000	15,000
Chinese	14,970	40,000	-	-	-	-	-
Short Course	10,350	-	2,400	2,400	5,000	-	-
Other unallocated (should be zero)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL Tuition Fees	742,365	685,081	378,819	772,195	832,054	816,558	759,919
Other Income							
1160 - Donations, Gifts and Sponsorships	8,665	-	3,938	3,938	-	-	-
1340 - Grants Received	-	10,000	23,595	23,595	-	-	-
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	297,940	308,000	235,256	352,000	352,000	356,000	360,000
1440 - Investment Income	34,092	28,271	21,754	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
1600 - Rent Received	78,350	87,760	52,200	74,596	73,560	75,264	77,019
Total Other Income	419,047	434,030	336,742	484,129	455,560	461,264	467,019
Conference and Event Income							
1110 - Conference and Event Income	15,205	6,000	12,554	12,554	16,000	6,000	6,000
2140 - Conferences & Events	(17,912)	(11,000)	(10,178)	(11,000)	(16,000)	(16,000)	(16,000)
Total Conference and Event Income	(2,706)	(5,000)	2,377	1,554	0	(10,000)	(10,000)
Book & Merchandising (PTC Media)							
1060 - Book & Merchandising Sales	14,238	6,000	11,574	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
2160 - Cost of Sales	(15,932)	(5,700)	(8,694)	(14,250)	(14,250)	(14,250)	(14,250)
2800 - Stocktake Variance	840	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Book & Merchandising	(854)	300	2,881	750	750	750	750
Total Income	1,157,851	1,114,411	720,819	1,258,628	1,288,364	1,268,572	1,217,688
Expenditure							
Faculty Staff Costs							
2911 - Salary & Wages	129,579	152,473	92,868	233,808	256,095	283,974	313,296
2930 - Non-Cash Benefits	79,660	82,050	49,997	80,727	109,060	125,797	143,439
2941 - Superannuation: Assembly Officers	34,435	35,178	19,082	36,908	44,987	53,464	60,962
2813 - Telephone & Internet: Lecturers	4,499	7,200	2,688	6,000	7,200	7,200	7,200
2833 - Utilities: Manses	10,552	13,750	8,564	12,000	13,500	12,000	12,000
2955 - Disability Insurance	9,678	12,857	5,054	6,000	6,000	6,180	6,365
2965 - LSL Levy	1,640	4,100	2,520	4,100	3,280	3,280	3,280
2970 - Study Leave Accrual	27,825	51,543	28,000	44,819	35,401	44,230	42,880

Theological Education Committee
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

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Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0% 9.0% 9.0%

Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Manse Allowance not funded from Fernside					19,398	15,320	12,320
Total Faculty Staff Cost	297,868	359,151	208,773	424,362	494,922	551,444	601,742
Committee Staff							
2910 - Salaries & Wages	138,203	136,276	91,138	133,452	136,913	140,870	144,946
2940 - Superannuation	22,877	28,850	17,080	28,850	28,395	30,104	30,594
2950 - Workers Compensation	6,679	6,880	7,981	7,981	8,220	8,467	8,721
2960 - Long Service Leave Accrual	12,310	1,436	4,160	6,500	6,825	7,166	7,525
2980 - Temporary / Adjunct Staff	82,671	110,000	56,833	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000
2981 - Temporary / Adjunct Staff: Exam Marking	15,598	16,000	12,131	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Total Committee Staff Cost	278,338	299,442	189,324	286,783	290,353	296,608	301,785
Other Expenses							
2010 - Accounting & Audit Fees	7,154	6,000	4,930	7,200	7,500	7,500	7,500
2030 - Advertising	-	1,000	-	-	1,000	1,000	1,000
2040 - Affiliation & Admin Fees	99,987	91,630	59,433	102,960	110,618	109,215	101,639
2060 - Bank Charges & Fees	1,884	1,797	888	1,797	1,869	1,944	2,022
2110 - Cleaning & Rubbish Removal (Grounds)	15,244	15,000	-	-	2,000	2,000	2,000
2130 - Computer Software and Hardware	1,867	4,000	1,550	2,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
2180 - Depreciation-Furniture & Equipment	8,890	8,856	5,752	8,660	11,250	11,200	11,900
2184 - Depreciation-Plant & Equipment	517	500	3,402	5,170	7,400	9,100	10,900
2186 - Depreciation-Buildings	59,256	61,260	38,204	57,300	57,300	57,300	57,300
2220 - Education & Training	-	6,000	-	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
2250 - General Expenses	1,899	2,000	469	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
2350 - Hospitality	4,435	3,000	1,154	2,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
2390 - Insurance	9,506	9,981	11,407	11,407	11,977	12,576	13,205
2520 - Library Expenses	130,311	122,045	67,496	102,046	111,250	113,272	115,085
2550 - Marketing	1,218	4,000	2,721	2,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
2600 - Motor Vehicle Expense	7,493	6,500	5,409	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500
2660 - Postage, Printing & Stationery	3,535	4,000	1,819	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
2680 - Professional Development	-	3,000	1,174	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
2700 - Property Maintenance - Garden and grounds only	5,781	9,500	4,805	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
2710 - Property Rates & Taxes	12,333	14,000	10,320	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000
2730 - Repairs & Maintenance	-	500	-	500	500	500	500
2760 - Security Costs	1,257	1,500	649	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
2770 - Staff Amenities	169	200	0	200	200	200	200
2775 - Student's Expenses	816	1,000	502	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
2800 - Subscriptions	2,218	1,850	468	1,850	1,850	1,850	1,850
2810 - Telephone & Internet	4,607	10,000	4,319	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000

Theological Education Committee
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

**Budget
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Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0% 9.0% 9.0%

Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
2820 - Travel & Accommodation	16,050	32,000	25,536	32,000	24,000	24,000	24,000
2830 - Utilities	10,525	11,244	7,906	11,244	11,694	12,162	12,649
Total Other Expenses	406,951	432,363	260,313	406,335	429,409	432,819	430,749
Total Expenses	983,158	1,090,955	658,410	1,117,481	1,214,684	1,280,871	1,334,277
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations	174,694	23,456	62,408	141,148	73,679	(12,300)	(116,589)
Total Staff Related CASH Expenses	543,565	612,114	371,346	666,326	749,549	803,156	859,623
Capital Items / Balance Sheet Payments							
Office furniture	1,654						
Motor Vehicle					40,000		
Air Conditioning Unit at Registrar's Office*1					2,000		
Carpet replacement	41,318			-			
HWS & Boiler	900		12,063				
Computer Equipment & IT	11,429	11,000	1,669	11,000	12,000	6,000	6,000
Units - replacement of carpets, fixtures		3,000		3,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Units - bathrooms				40,000	40,000	40,000	-
Trnsfer to Bursary				175,000			
Long Service Leave Payments (J Hood)			5,146	5,146			
Total Capital Exenditure	55,301	14,000	18,878	234,146	99,000	51,000	11,000
Non-Cash Items							
Depreciation	68,663	70,616	47,358	71,130	75,950	77,600	80,100
Long Service Leave Accrual	12,310	1,436	4,160	6,500	6,825	7,166	7,525
Study Leave Accrual	(10,985)	51,543	28,000	44,819	35,401	44,230	42,880
Total Non-Cash Items	69,988	123,595	79,518	122,449	118,176	128,996	130,504
Cash Movement	189,381	133,050	123,048	(7,177)	54,782	65,697	2,916
General Funds	2,923,188	3,056,238	3,043,672	2,916,011	2,970,793	3,036,490	3,039,406
Perpetual Funds	965,159	965,159	965,159	965,159	965,159	965,159	965,159

**Theological Education Committee
Specific Trusts
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25**

						Budget for Approval		
Projected Common Fund Interest Rates:						9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No	Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Building Fund - DGR								
Income								
1050	Bequests	1,019,818						
1160	Donations, Gifts and Sponsorships	5,960	-	-	-	-	-	-
1160	Donations, Gifts and Sponsorships - Library appeal	49,120	50,000	7,017	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
1298	Franking Credits	46,018		5,107	5,107	-		
1350	Interest from Common Fund- Library Appeal	30,388	-	26,134	40,100	47,700	56,500	66,000
1350	Interest from Common Fund	15,933	14,100	40,182	77,200	114,600	119,300	124,200
1996	Capital Gain/(Loss) on Invesments			(32,563)	(32,563)			
1690	Transfers In(Dividends)	87,051		13,880	13,880			
Total Income		1,254,288	64,100	59,758	153,724	212,300	225,800	240,200
Expenditure								
2060	Bank Charges Building Fund		-					
2390	Insurance	13,373	9,842	10,232	10,232	10,744	11,281	11,845
2110	Cleaning & Rubbish Removal	-	-	10,551	13,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
2550	Library Appeal - fundraising		5,000		-	-	-	-
	Library Upgrade - Capital Costs		-		-	-	-	-
2700	Property Maintenance	15,917	51,051	19,103	51,051	51,000	53,550	56,228
Total Expenses		29,290	65,893	39,886	74,283	76,744	79,831	83,073
Surplus/(Deficit) Building Fund		1,224,998	(1,793)	19,872	79,441	135,556	145,969	157,127
Specific Funds - Library Appeal		439,567	484,567	466,718	529,667	627,367	733,867	849,867
Specific Funds - Building		271,886	1,210,317	1,235,597	1,273,027	1,325,883	1,380,352	1,436,479
Separately Invested Funds - Building		985,224	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Theological Education Committee
Specific Trusts
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25**

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%						Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No	Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Library Fund								
Income								
1160	Donations, Gifts and Sponsorships	4,668	3,000	740	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
1345	Insurance Settlement	662	-	-	-	-	-	-
1350	Interest from Common Fund	17,787	22,700	13,205	19,900	20,000	20,000	20,000
1650	Sundry Income	136	-	273	273	-	-	-
Total Income		23,254	25,700	14,218	22,900	23,000	23,000	23,000
Committee Staff								
2910	Salaries & Wages	70,118	51,571	55,533	45,099	52,386	53,957	55,576
2940	Superannuation	7,251	5,157	6,109	4,510	6,024	6,475	6,669
Total Committee Staff Expenses		77,369	56,728	61,641	49,608	58,410	60,432	62,245
Other Expenditure								
2060	Bank Charges & Fees	236	240	81	240	240	240	240
2130	Computer Software and Hardware	9,599	10,000	-	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
2180	Depreciation-Furniture & Equipment	389	389	-	-	-	-	-
2520	Library Books	25,611	30,000	4,939	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
2520	Higher Degree by Research books	305	4,400	-	4,400	4,400	4,400	4,400
2520	Mags & Journals	21,487	20,000	12,164	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
2520	Chinese Books	-	10,000	-	-	-	-	-
2520	Library Expenses Sub-Total	47,403	64,400	17,103	54,400	54,400	54,400	54,400
2660	Postage, Printing & Stationery	3,973	6,000	1,526	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
2720	Rents & Property Hire	-	10,000	3,030	4,548	5,000	5,000	5,000
2830	Utilities	-	-	92	150	200	200	200
2960	Long Service Leave Accrual	73	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Other Expenses		61,672	91,029	21,832	75,338	75,840	75,840	75,840

**Theological Education Committee
Specific Trusts
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25**

						Budget for Approval		
Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%						9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No	Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Total Expenses		139,041	147,757	83,473	124,946	134,250	136,272	138,085
2001	Expenses Funded By General Trust	130,311	122,057	67,496	102,046	111,250	113,272	115,085
Surplus/(Deficit) Library Fund		14,524	0	(1,759)	0	0	0	0
	Specific Funds	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Perpetual Funds	98,964	98,964	98,964	98,964	98,964	98,964	98,964
	H Swanton Bequest - Perpetual	123,377	123,377	123,377	123,377	123,377	123,377	123,377
Fernside Trust								
Income								
1350	Interest Common Fund - Fernside	117,412	120,000	87,864	132,800	141,000	144,000	148,000
Total Income		117,412	120,000	87,864	132,800	141,000	144,000	148,000
Expenditure								
2935	Manse Allowance-Specific	85,540	112,320	65,867	112,320	125,840	112,320	112,320
Total Expenses		85,540	112,320	65,867	112,320	125,840	112,320	112,320
Surplus/(Deficit) Fernside Trust		31,872	7,680	21,997	20,480	15,160	31,680	35,680
Expenses funded from General budget						19,398	15,320	12,320
	Specific Funds	41,961	6,641	13,815	10,442	0	0	0
	Indexation of Capital	66,588	43,000	29,644	52,000	45,000	47,000	48,000
	Perpetual Funds	1,455,846	1,498,846	1,485,490	1,507,846	1,552,846	1,599,846	1,647,846

Theological Education Committee
Specific Trusts
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

						Budget for Approval		
Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%						9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No	Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Bursary Trusts								
Income								
1160	Donations-Bursary	1,700	10,000	21,500	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
1160	Donations-Harman Scholarship	10,000	-	14,800	14,800	-	-	-
1160	Distributions from GAA - Whyte	30,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
1320	GMP Funding - Scholarships	39,154	30,000	28,116	29,100	15,000	-	-
1350	Interest Common Fund - Bursary	97,641	96,800	69,580	105,200	116,500	109,400	101,600
1350	Interest Whyte Scholarship Fund	13,231	12,400	11,376	17,300	16,000	14,700	14,200
1350	Interest - Oliver Trust	22,846	25,800	18,052	29,500	33,600	34,400	35,300
	Transfer from General Funds				175,000			
1350	Interest - Harman	5,509	5,000	5,104	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Total Income		220,080	180,000	168,528	385,900	196,100	173,500	166,100
Expenditure								
2070	Bursaries - Specific - Kent	-	-	33,500	33,500	10,000	10,000	10,000
2070	Bursaries (Oliver)	-	25,000	-	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
2070	Bursaries (Whyte)	26,040	30,000	-	30,000	30,000	20,000	20,000
2750	Scholarships - Candidates	97,091	95,009	54,934	140,777	172,152	175,029	146,710
2750	Scholarships - Other (Categories 2 to 6)	35,724	35,064	21,254	46,040	37,750	21,500	21,500
Total Expenses		158,855	185,073	109,688	275,317	274,902	251,529	223,210
Surplus/(Deficit) Bursaries		61,225	(5,073)	58,840	110,583	(78,802)	(78,029)	(57,110)
Surplus/(Deficit) Bursary fund excl Whyte, Kent etc		3,980	(3,273)	21,508	122,483	(78,402)	(87,129)	(66,610)
	Specific Funds - Bursary Fund	437,436	444,163	430,945	536,419	458,017	370,889	304,279
	Specific Funds - Whyte Scholarship Fund	190,223	172,623	198,879	177,523	163,523	158,223	152,423
	Specific Funds - Oliver Trust	273,994	274,794	287,646	278,494	287,094	296,494	306,794
Total Specific Funds for Bursary		901,653	891,580	917,469	992,436	908,634	825,606	763,496
	Perpetual Funds - Bursary Fund	757,682	757,682	757,682	757,682	757,682	757,682	757,682
	Perpetual Funds - Oliver Trust	26,000	26,000	26,000	26,000	26,000	26,000	26,000
	Perpetual Funds - A&M Harman Scholarship	76,593	76,593	95,298	95,298	95,298	95,298	95,298
Total Perpetual Funds for Bursary		860,276	860,276	878,980	878,980	878,980	878,980	878,980

Theological Education Committee
Specific Trusts
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%						Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No	Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Prizes Trusts								
Income								
1350	Interest Common Fund - Prizes	14,808	14,600	11,219	17,100	17,300	17,800	18,300
Total Income		14,808	14,600	11,219	17,100	17,300	17,800	18,300
Expenditure								
2070	Prizes Specific	8,652	12,000	-	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Total Expenses		8,652	12,000	0	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Surplus/(Deficit) Prizes		6,157	2,600	11,219	5,100	5,300	5,800	6,300
	Specific Funds	156,668	159,268	165,202	161,768	167,068	172,868	179,168
	Perpetual Funds	30,515	30,515	30,515	30,515	30,515	30,515	30,515
Diaconal Fund								
Income								
1350	Interest Common Fund - Diaconal	18,542	18,700	14,362	21,600	22,200	22,900	23,600
Total Income		18,542	18,700	14,362	21,600	22,200	22,900	23,600
2750	Scholarships - Diaconal Fund	6,209	20,000	6,882	13,283	15,000	15,000	15,000
Total Expenses		6,209	20,000	6,882	13,283	15,000	15,000	15,000
Surplus/(Deficit) Diaconal Fund		12,333	(1,300)	7,480	8,317	7,200	7,900	8,600
	Specific Funds	238,754	237,454	242,634	247,071	254,271	262,171	270,771
Miscellaneous Trusts - Hopkins, Overseas Students								
Income								
1350	Interest Common Fund - Hopkins	3,429	3,356	2,649	4,000	4,174	4,549	4,959
1350	Interest Common Fund - O/S Students	7,295	5,787	5,211	7,200	6,542	7,131	7,772
Total Income		10,724	9,143	7,860	11,200	10,716	11,680	12,731
Expenditure								
2750	Scholarships (Overseas Students)	8,244	-	2,802	-	-	-	-
2910	Salaries - Preaching Lecturer (Hopkins)	-	-	-	3,486	6,972	6,972	6,972
2820	Travel and Accommodation (Hopkins)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses		8,244	0	2,802	3,486	6,972	6,972	6,972
Surplus/(Deficit) Miscellaneous		2,480	9,143	5,058	7,714	3,743	4,708	5,759
	Specific Funds	107,862	117,005	111,120	115,576	119,319	124,027	129,786
	Perpetual Funds	26,225	26,225	26,225	26,225	26,225	26,225	26,225
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations		174,694	23,456	174,694	141,148	73,679	(12,300)	(116,589)
Surplus/(Deficit) Specific Trusts		1,353,588	11,257	122,706	231,635	88,158	118,028	156,357
Total Surplus/(Deficit)		1,528,282	34,713	297,400	372,783	161,837	105,728	39,768
Total Specific Funds		2,158,352	3,106,833	3,152,555	3,329,986	3,402,542	3,498,890	3,629,567
Total Perpetual Funds		2,595,203	2,638,202	2,643,551	2,665,907	2,710,907	2,757,907	2,805,907

Women's Ministries Victoria
General Operations
Income & Expenditure Budget 2024/25

Projected Common Fund Interest Rates: 9.0%					Budget for Approval 9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Account No - Description	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	8 Months to Feb-24	2023/2024 Projected	2024/2025 Proposed	2025/2026 Projected	2026/2027 Projected
Other Income							
1160 - Donations, Gifts and Sponsorships	21,940	11,500	9,390	16,975	-	-	-
1320 - General Missions Program	4,894	5,000	4,686	5,000	23,000	24,290	26,555
MDC	-	-	-	-	15,000	16,000	16,000
1350 - Interest from Common Fund	2,186	1,800	1,757	2,900	3,400	2,588	1,909
Total Other Income	29,020	18,300	15,833	24,875	41,400	42,878	44,464
Conference and Event							
1110 - Conference and Event Income	6,912	7,150	3,203	7,150	9,570	10,049	10,551
2140 - Total Conferences & Events Expenses	(3,223)	(6,310)	(2,512)	(6,310)	(9,135)	(9,408)	(9,694)
Total Conferences and Events	3,689	840	691	840	435	640	857
Books & Merchandising							
1060 - Book & Merchandising Sales	-	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
2160 - Cost of Sales(Bookstall Costs)	-	(1,000)	-	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
Total Books & Merchandising	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Income	32,709	19,140	16,524	25,715	41,835	43,518	45,321
Committee Staff							
2910 - Salaries & Wages	14,276	18,521	13,845	20,769	38,131	40,038	42,039
2940 - Superannuation	1,380	2,037	1,523	2,285	4,385	4,805	5,045
2950 - Workers Compensation	242	206	204	206	425	448	471
Total Committee Staff	15,898	20,764	15,572	23,259	42,941	45,290	47,555
Other Expenses							
2030 - Advertising	472	360	83	360	400	500	500
2130 - Computer Software & Supplies	-	-	-	-	2,237	2,461	2,707
2730 - Repairs & Maintenance	-	-	-	-	150	300	500
2180 - Depreciation	190	383	256	383	384	193	-
2220 - Education & Training	150	700	234	700	1,275	158	165
2390 - Insurance	-	-	487	-	500	550	605
2660 - Printing, Stationery & Postage	-	-	-	-	250	258	265
2740 - Ministry Training Resources	-	-	-	-	2,000	2,100	2,205
2810 - Telephone, Internet & Software	162	1,000	40	1,000	-	-	-
2820 - Travel & Accommodation	462	100	331	331	970	999	1,029
2840 - Website-Maintenance & Support	299	-	359	359	678	712	747
Total Other Expenses	1,735	2,543	1,790	3,133	8,844	8,230	8,724
Total Expenses	17,633	23,307	17,362	26,392	51,785	53,520	56,279
Surplus/(Deficit) on Operations	15,076	(4,167)	(838)	(677)	(9,950)	(10,002)	(10,958)
General Funds	39,041	33,974	36,814	37,464	28,751	21,210	11,459
Capital Items							
Equipment		900		900	1,000		1,500
Donated Dell Laptop	1,150						
Total Capital Expenditure	1,150	900	0	900	1,000	0	1,500

CLERKSHIP COMMITTEE (Min 8)

With the resignation of Rev Dr John Wilson as Clerk effective 31 December 2023, the Clerkship Committee enacted the procedure outlined in its regulations for filling the vacancy in the Clerk's position.

An advertisement was prepared and circulated to all presbyteries. That same advertisement was also publicised via the PCV email network, in lieu of a printed advertisement in 'Fellow Workers', which had just published its latest issue. Applications were sought from suitably qualified persons and nominations were sought from presbyteries, with the consent of the nominee. A due date of 29 February 2024 was set.

Upon close of applications, the committee had received communication from seven presbytery clerks: Western Victoria, North Western Victoria, North East Victoria, Melbourne North, Melbourne West, Gippsland, and Geelong; all nominating Rev Cam Garrett to fill the vacancy.

One expression of interest was also received from Rev Cam Garrett, along with CV and written responses to the approved Job Description, demonstrating his experience and suitability for the role.

The committee interviewed Cam for the position of Clerk on Friday 15 March 2024 via Zoom. The interview was extensive, being 1 hour 20 minutes duration. Due diligence was thoroughly attended to. The committee was grateful for the frank and forthright way that Cam engaged with us in the process.

After the interview, the committee resolved unanimously to bring the nomination of Rev Cameron Bruce Garrett, minister of Morwell Presbyterian Church, to the Commission of Assembly, with a view to filling the vacancy in the Clerk's position. We commend Rev Cameron Garrett to the house as having all the gifts, graces, and experience needed to fulfill the role of Clerk in such a way as to be a blessing to the church through maintaining right order, peace, and unity in our assemblies.

Further to making this nomination, the committee has sought to anticipate the Assembly's acceptance of our nomination by attending to several matters that require direct action, should Cam be appointed as Clerk of Assembly:

1. It is the view of the committee that Cam should relinquish his current responsibility as Clerk of the Presbytery of Gippsland, at least in the first instance, in order to become settled and established in his new role as Clerk of Assembly.
2. Cam has indicated that due to family circumstances, it is his intention, in the first instance, to reside within the bounds of the Presbytery of Gippsland, and hence would benefit from more flexible working arrangements, working from home several days per week. The committee is very open to a more flexible work arrangement for the Clerk so long as a strong and reliable internet connection can be supplied to the home.
3. Since Terms of Appointment for the incoming Clerk were approved at the urgent meeting of Assembly held in November 2023, it has been brought to

our attention by the General Manager that there are inadequacies in the approved terms. We have accepted both the General Manager's advice and his proposal to remedy the fault by deleting all words under clauses 6 and 7 of the Terms of Appointment and replacing them with the following:

6. Remuneration

A salary package based on providing the same after-tax benefit as the minimum ministerial remuneration as declared by the General Assembly from time to time with a 25% loading and the after-tax equivalent of a full manse allowance and payment of manse energy.

7. Financial Support

The General Assembly will make provision for a home office for the Clerk by paying:

- a. the cost of providing his home phone and internet connection; and
- b. additional travel over 6000 km p.a. at the nominated rate.

Our request is that the Assembly approve this variation to the Clerk's Terms of Appointment.

Philip Mercer
CONVENER

CODE AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (Min 9)

The October 2023 General Assembly, having received the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee's (MMC) report, resolved (BB 2023 min 46):

1. With respect to the committee's ongoing existence:
 - a) Note the committee's plan to discontinue the committee as at 30 June 2025, with only a final report required at the October 2025 Assembly.
 - b) Request the Code and General Administration Committee in consultation with the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee and other committees, as appropriate, to report on the committee's plan to the May 2024 Commission of the General Assembly, with a recommendation that considers church-wide issues.

This report, prepared in consultation with the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee, the Board of Investment and Finance and the Ministry Development Committee, focusses on the committee's plan to discontinue the committee and with bringing to the Commission a recommendation that considers church-wide issues as requested.

Although the deliverance quoted above speaks of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee's plan to 'discontinue itself', the proposal, as the MMC puts it in its report, is that the 'Assembly should look toward dissolving the Committee', or, as Code rule 6.50 puts it, that the Assembly should discharge the MMC.

Naturally, before the General Assembly would take such a course of action it must be fully persuaded that there is good and sufficient reason for it.

The Maintenance of the Ministry Committee's reasons for its being discharged were largely spelled out in the first part of its report to the 2023 General Assembly, and what was in the report was given more substance in the committee's suggested amendments to relevant Code rules and to its regulations furnished to the Code Committee.

A key paragraph in the Committee's report to the General Assembly states:

'Over the last several years the Committee has worked toward automating and vastly simplifying its role. With certain systems changes, including the ongoing development of the 'in-house' system ARMS (Administrative Reporting Made Simple), we believe this Assembly should look toward dissolving the Committee, with any remaining functions at best being a sub-function of the BIF through the Church Office or a Human Resources professional.'

However, it is fair to say that neither the Code and General Administration Committee (CGAC) nor the Board of Investment and Finance find the reasons the MMC gives for its being discharged convincing.¹ And while the suggested amendments to the relevant rules and regulations show that in terms of rules and regulations the MMC could be discharged, they do not provide reasons to demonstrate that it should be discharged.

¹ The Ministry Development Committee's only comment on the proposal was that 'the MDC believes the dissolution of the MMC will have no material effect on the MDC and so we are not opposed to it.'

What is clear is that while it would be possible, perhaps even desirable, for some of the responsibilities presently borne by the MMC to be transferred elsewhere – for example, the final declaration of Terms of Settlement to the presbyteries, or the keeping of records of service for the calculation of long service leave entitlements to – maybe a better resourced Church Office, or the proposed New Entity – it is not necessarily desirable that the MMC should be discharged. Certainly, neither the BIF nor the CGAC is as yet convinced that the PCV would be equally well served without a MMC as it is with a MMC.

In fact, the BIF (letter to the CGAC, 21 December 2023) expressed opposition to the proposal as it stands on the grounds that:

- the proposal is premature and should be considered in the context of the proposals to restructure the church and constitute a New Legal entity.
- the New Entity is anticipated to provide a regulatory basis with appropriate authority to properly execute the functions which the BIF does not have.
- an interim proposal seeking to devolve these functions to the BIF would duplicate considerable effort and is fraught with legal complications.
- there is currently no HR function within the church and the Assembly should not assume that the BIF has that responsibility.
- ARMS is not working yet and is a long way off providing a reliable tool to meet the complex requirements of the church.

And in a further response (letter to the CGAC, 28 February 2024), the BIF said:

‘Outside the context of the New Entity considerations the BIF is not convinced that the MMC has no role and ought to be wound up. Should the proposals for the New Entity not be approved our view is that the MMC has an important role which should continue.’

The CGAC finds the MMC’s plan to discontinue itself is unpersuasive.

The Assembly also asked the CGAC to bring ‘to the Commission a recommendation that considers church-wide issues.’

The ad hoc New Entity Committee, in considering how the New Entity might function as the legal employer and deemed employer of persons working within the PCV, had already prior to this matter coming before the General Assembly formed the opinion that the New Entity might well perform many of the functions presently performed by the MMC, and the BIF statements quoted above support this position.

The CGAC agrees that the future of the MMC ought to be considered in the context of the preparation of the New Entity proposals, and therefore recommends to the Commission of Assembly that:

1. Any decision regarding the proposed discharge of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee should be deferred until the matter has been fully considered by the Code and General Administration Committee and the wider church in the context of and in the resolution of the New Entity proposals; and

2. The proposed transfer of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee's duties to other bodies within the church should be referred to the ad hoc New Entity Committee for consideration and inclusion as it sees appropriate in its New Entity proposals to the General Assembly.

Peter Phillips
CONVENER

MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE (Min 10)

1. Non-Cash Benefits and GST

The question of whether it is 'ethical' to claim back the GST for expenses paid using the Non-Cash Benefit (NCB) account has been discussed in previous years by the Commission and the Assembly as a whole.

The committee has found there is a significant lack of understanding about what an NCB account is and who 'owns' the unexpended funds held in an NCB account.

The reality is that the NCB funds belong to the paying institution (whether a charge or a committee) notwithstanding that, payments are made from the NCB account by an authorised 'Religious Practitioner'² or their spouse or their child³.

In summary an NCB account is set up to make payments *for and not to* a religious practitioner and their family.

As an extension of that, the committee wishes to clarify several things relating to NCB accounts and GST paid when monies are paid for goods and services from these accounts. The points are that:

- 1) The funds in the NCB accounts are *not*, and should not be, cash payments to the religious practitioner who receives 'exempt benefits' under the Fringe Benefits Assessment Tax Act 1986. If payments are paid as cash, then the payments would be 'taxable income' in the hands of the religious practitioner and should be declared as such on their annual tax return.
- 2) The Australian Tax Office (ATO) has made it very clear by their own publication that GST paid by an institution for Exempt Benefits may be claimed back by the institution (see link below).

<https://www.ato.gov.au/Business/GST/In-detail/Rules-for-specific-transactions/GST-and-employee-reimbursements/>,

Below is an extract from the above link with the key lines highlighted.

GST and employee reimbursement

Employers are entitled to GST credits for employee reimbursements.

Last updated 23 May 2017

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On this page

- [Reimbursements](#)
- [Allowances](#)
- [Payments for notional expenses](#)

As an employer you're entitled to a GST credit when you reimburse an employee for a taxable expense that is directly related to your business activities. This includes paying an expense payment benefit.

You can claim the credit in your activity statement in the normal way once your employee gives you a tax invoice or receipt for the expense.

² 'Religious Practitioner' is a defined term at s.57 of the Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act 1986 (FBT Act) and further clarified under TR2019/3. Details on this were presented in the committee's report to Commission in May 2023. Centrelink refers to a Minister of Religion only.

³ S57(c) FBT Act

This means that if charges or committees provide exempt benefits to 'religious practitioners' via an NCB account, they can either effectively increase the income to the charge or committee by claiming back the GST and crediting it to income for the charge or committee, or they can pay the GST claimed for purchases to the religious practitioner to either the NCB account or as Taxable Income.

However, for such a GST claim to be made, for all amounts spent greater than \$82.50 (currently – this amount changes based on Government regulations), a copy of the Tax Invoice⁴ must be retained.

For amounts less than \$82.50, and only if there were no Tax Invoice available, a GST rate of 10% should be assumed. However, if the Tax Invoice is available the correct amount of GST per the Tax Invoice should be claimed.

Overall, it cannot just be assumed that all monies spent from the NCB account are taxed at 10%!

If the charge or committee chooses to make a claim on their BAS statement, then the religious practitioner will need to provide to the treasurer Tax Invoices as required by law. This will ensure the charge or committee will be compliant if they are subject to a Tax Audit.

2. Maintenance of the Ministry Report (per code 4.81.1)

In our report to the Assembly in October we advised:

'The committee has decided not to proceed with preparing a separate Maintenance of Ministry Report.'

The committee, in seeking to reduce paperwork for charges, has recognised that should the committee require additional information in its review role, like Presbyteries, audited annual accounts together with a copy of the approved budget and the TSR, will suffice.

Based on queries we have received since the Assembly it seems we failed to communicate this adequately in that it was written in the report but since there was no deliverance associated with it, the message did not get through.

Once again, we advise as per the extract above.

3. Annual Charge Reports (ACRs)

The committee reminds members that the ACRs are no longer required to be submitted to Presbyteries or the MMC, for MMC compliance purposes. Audited annual accounts together with budget projections are all that is required.

The committee recommends, however, that the ACR format (Chart of Accounts) be retained for reporting of Income and Expenses for consistency of reporting format.

4. Rates (per MMC Regulation 5)

Below is a table showing:

- Current stipend, honorarium, levies, supply and travel rates; and

⁴ A Tax Invoice is normally provided as a "Receipt" but must have the words "Tax Invoice" written on it and include how much GST was paid in the transaction.

- Revised stipend, honorarium, levies, supply and travel rates for the 2024/25 financial year.

The new rates are calculated in accordance with MMC Regulation 5, previous resolutions of the Assembly and the committee's recommended adjustment to the Superannuation percentage.

This table will also appear on the PCV website.

Presbyterian Church of Victoria

Maintenance of the Ministry Committee

2024/2025

All amounts are \$s unless marked otherwise			2024/2025	2023/2024	Change	
Remuneration						
61%	Minimum Ministerial Remuneration (MinMR)	61,560	60,144	+1416	2.35%	
	Stipend (1)	36,936	36,096	+840	2.33%	
85%	Stipend (Home Missionary Minimum)	31,396	30,682	+714	2.33%	
40%	Non-Cash Benefits (NCB) (1)	24,624	24,048	+576	2.40%	
16.5%	Superannuation	10,164	9,624	+540	5.61%	
	MinMR + Superannuation	71,724	69,768	+1956	2.80%	
Honorarium						
2%	Business Convener	1,231	1,203	+28	2.35%	
3%	Assistant to the Clerks	1,847	1,804	+42	2.35%	
6%	Deputy Clerk	3,694	3,609	+85	2.35%	
10%	State Moderator	6,156	6,014	+142	2.35%	
Levies						
1.4%	Long Service Leave Levy	860	840	+20	2.38%	
Other Figures						
50%	Sustentation Qualifying Stipend (SQS)	30,780	30,072	+708	2.35%	
Supply Rates						
0.25%	One Service	154	150	+4	2.66%	
0.30%	Two Services (same sermon)	185	180	+4	2.35%	
0.35%	Three Services (same sermon)	215	211	+5	2.35%	
0.45%	Two or More (different sermons)	277	271	+6	2.35%	
Travel Rate						
75%	per km	0.64	0.59	+0.05	8.47%	
			2024/2025			

4. Terms of Settlement Report (TSR)

At the General Assembly our report advised that the TSR was live and that it had superseded what the Church Office needed to adjust stipends.

The committee was incorrect in doing so as the TSR, although planned to be completed, was not completed in time for the General Assembly nor approved by the Church Office.

The committee apologises to this Commission and the Church Office on this score.

However, the TSR is the required and approved format for submission from Presbyteries to the MMC for it to declare Terms of Settlement as required under the Code, even though the committee recognises that, as a format, it will evolve over time.

All charges are reminded that the TSR should be completed and submitted in ARMS to 'workflow' to the presbytery for their review and approval, and if the presbytery approves, it will 'workflow' onto the MMC for their approval, to finally 'declare' the Terms of Settlement.

5. Reporting

Under its regulations the committee provides reports on certain Long Service Leave statistics. Due to time constraints these tables are not included in this report and will be reported either as a Supplementary report or to the General Assembly in October. The information not included herein relates to:

- LSL approved and paid from Fund in the calendar year ended 30 June 2024 (**per MMC Reg 3(a)(iv)**); and
- LSL Accrued exceeding 13 weeks (including if an approved plan has been submitted to the committee is in place)
- The table for part-time ministries.

6. Paying out NCB and Exempt Benefits on retirement of Religious Practitioners

The committee is concerned by reports that when some religious practitioners decide to retire, that charges are simply paying *as cash* any potential NCB and exempt benefits they would otherwise be entitled to as exempt benefits.

The committee reminds charges that the 'cashing out' of NCB or exempt benefits at the time of retirement or leaving ministry means that those benefits become assessable income for tax purposes requiring the payer to deduct appropriate tax. The amount so paid would then be included as assessable income for tax return purposes. This means that the value of what was intended to be an exempt benefit for the religious practitioner would be reduced.

If a religious practitioner decides to retire or leave the ministry, to retain the exempt nature of the benefit, the best thing they can do is take any leave and use up the benefits during the time of accrued leave.

As always, the committee welcomes queries and questions on the report before the Commission.

Colin Morrow
CONVENER

NOMINATIONS FOR MODERATOR-DESIGNATE 2024-2025 (Min 7)

The following nominations for the position of Moderator-Designate 2024-25 have been received:

Rev Kyung Ee (minister Shepparton): Presbytery of North Western Victoria

Rev Ian Colin Hutton (retired minister): presbyteries of Geelong, Gippsland, Melbourne North, North Western Victoria and Western Victoria.

Peter W Phillips
ACTING CLERK OF ASSEMBLY

SPECIAL JUDICIAL COMMITTEE (Min 14)

The Special Judicial Committee met and makes its report under authorisation of rule 5.55(c); at the time of writing five petitions have been submitted for this year's Commission of Assembly to consider.

These are (in order of receipt):

1. From: St Kilda Congregation, re: Expenditure of funds held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the congregation
2. From: Presbytery of Melbourne East, re: Proposed sale of St Kilda church property
3. From: Presbytery of South West Victoria, re: Sale of the Heywood Property and distribution of funds
4. From: Presbytery of Geelong, re: Release of the Batesford Sites Reserve Fund for the Bannockburn church property redevelopment
5. From: Presbytery of Western Victoria, re: Sale of Ballarat North (Scots') manse property.

This Commission was empowered by the 2023 General Assembly to consider and determine every matter referred to it by the Assembly and all matters that have emerged since the last meeting of the Assembly that are considered urgent and in need of executive or judicial action. (BB 2023 min 117)

The matters covered by petitions 4 and 5 were referred to this Commission by the 2023 General Assembly.

However, the matters covered by petitions 1, 2 and 3 were not so referred. The Special Judicial Committee sought the advice of the Business Committee regarding the emergence and urgency of these petitions. Having considered the advice of the Business Committee and the relevant resolutions of the presbyteries concerned, the Special Judicial Committee commends these petitions to the Commission as covering matters which have emerged since the last meeting of the Assembly and which are in need of urgent judicial action.

Petition 1

From: St Kilda Congregation, re: Approval of the expenditure of funds held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the congregation

The congregation brings this request for the application of Sites Reserve funds for stated purposes to the Assembly under BIF reg 17(c)(i)(B). The presbytery has approved the petition and forwarded it to the Assembly; however, it is not clear that the presbytery has approved the proposed expenditure. It is expected that by the time the Commission of Assembly meets this will be resolved and that provided that the presbytery has approved the proposed expenditure the Assembly will be entitled to consider this request.

Petition 2

From: Presbytery of Melbourne East, re: Proposed sale of St Kilda church property

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. It appears that in this instance the presbytery is acting on behalf of the congregation in bringing this petition to the Commission of Assembly.

Although the prayer of the petition says, 'Dispose of the 2 Alma Rd, St Kilda church-building during the 2024-2025 financial year by first testing a long-term-freehold-lease and then proceeding to a sale' the matter of any proposed lease of the building is not ready for consideration by the Commission, and the only matter before the Commission is the proposed sale; any proposed lease will be subject to a further petition in due course.

The relevant rules of the church for selling property are 2.20(f), 2.21.2 and 4.79. The congregation approved the proposed sale by a two-thirds majority of those present and the presbytery has approved the proposal. The Special Judicial Committee sees no barrier to the Commission of Assembly considering the merits of this petition under the rules mentioned above and MTD clause 5.

Petition 3

From: Presbytery of South West Victoria, re: Dissolution of the Heywood Congregation, the sale of the Heywood property and application of net proceeds for stated purposes

Firstly, the presbytery requests that the Assembly agree to the final dissolution of the Heywood congregation under rule 4.69.5(b), asking it to evaluate the request. The committee notes that more than a year has elapsed since the last regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship of the congregation was held (29 January 2023).

Secondly, the presbytery requests the Assembly to direct the trustees to sell the property and to hold the proceeds of the sale in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the Portland congregation for the purpose of assisting ongoing ministry in the charge.

Clause 14 of the Model Trust Deed provides that 'should any Congregation at any time cease to exist... 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.'

The committee believes that the Commission of Assembly is entitled to consider these requests.

Petition 4

From: Presbytery of Geelong, re: Release of the Batesford Sites Reserve Fund for the Bannockburn church property redevelopment

This matter came before the 2023 General Assembly as a request for the purposing of funds subject to the moratorium imposed by the 2021 Commission of Assembly on their purposing or re-purposing for a period of five years unless for exceptional circumstances. The Assembly declared that exceptional circumstances had not been demonstrated sufficient to meet the exception clause to the moratorium and declined the request to rename and authorise a purpose for the Batesford Sites Reserve Fund.

This renewed petition seeks to address the demonstration of circumstances which the Commission might consider exceptional and so open the way for the purposing of the funds. However, the moratorium was never intended to hinder the expenditure of the funds held in those sites reserve accounts, and this petition takes the matter further

than its predecessor in that it also requests approval of the expenditure of the funds in the Batesford Sites Reserve Fund.

These funds are the proceeds of the sale of property of the Batesford congregation. The sale of the property occurred before the dissolution of the Batesford congregation. It is therefore open to the Commission of Assembly to direct the disposition of the funds as it sees fit as provided for in clause 5 of the Model Trust Deed.

Petition 5.

From: Presbytery of Western Victoria, re: Sale of Ballarat North (Scots') manse property

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. It appears that in this instance the presbytery is acting on behalf of the congregation in bringing this petition to the Commission of Assembly.

The relevant rules of the church for selling property are 2.20(f), 2.21.2 and 4.79. The congregation approved the proposed sale by a two-thirds majority of those present and the presbytery has approved the proposal. The Special Judicial Committee sees no barrier to the Commission of Assembly considering the merits of this petition under the rules mentioned above and MTD clause 5.

Supplementary Report

The Special Judicial Committee reports under authorisation of rule 5.55(c) on two additional petitions which have been submitted for the Commission to consider.

These are (in order of receipt):

6. From: Clifton Hill Congregation, re: Expenditure of funds held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the congregation
7. From: Presbytery of Gippsland, re: Requesting a seat on the presbytery for the incoming Clerk of Assembly, Rev Cameron Garrett.

Neither of these matters was referred to this Commission by the 2023 General Assembly. However, the Special Judicial Commission commends to the Commission both of these petitions as relating to matters which have emerged since the last meeting of the Assembly and which are in need of urgent judicial action.

Petition 6 complies with rule 5.54.2 in that it was lodged 30 days before the meeting of the Commission of Assembly. However, for what the committee considers good and sufficient reasons, Petition 7 was not received within that 30 day period. The committee recommends that the Commission waive the requirement that this petition should be lodged with the Assembly Clerk at least thirty days before the meeting of the Commission and proceed to hear the petition in the usual manner.

Petition 6

From: Clifton Hill Congregation, re: Approval of the expenditure of funds held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the congregation

The congregation brings this request for the application of Sites Reserve funds for stated purposes to the Assembly under BIF reg 17(c)(i)(B). This regulation requires that such an application be approved by both the presbytery and the General Assembly. When the petition was lodged with the Acting Clerk the presbytery had not

considered the matter; however, since then the presbytery has approved the proposed expenditure, and the Commission is now entitled to consider this request.

Petition 7

From: Presbytery of Gippsland, re: Requesting a seat on the Presbytery of Gippsland for the incoming Clerk of Assembly, Rev Cameron Garrett

The Clerk of Assembly's Job Description (BB 2023 min 10(2) states that 'The Clerk shall ordinarily have a seat on the presbytery of the bounds in which he resides, rule 4.2(k) or (n)(iv).' The reference to these rules indicates that while the Clerk is expected to have a seat on presbytery, the provisions of the Code in this matter are to be followed.

4.2 Membership and roll

The membership of a presbytery consists of the following ministers and elders, whose names are placed on its membership roll.

Part 1 – Ministers

- k) every minister in special circumstance, following successful petition by the presbytery to the General Assembly.

The Commission is entitled to consider this request.

Peter Phillips
CONVENER

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Min 11)

Establishment of permanent part-time faculty at Presbyterian Theological College (PTC)

The Presbyterian Church of Australia requires that ministers trained for service in the denomination are trained in the areas of Biblical Languages, and Biblical Counselling. Historically, at PTC, these areas of study have been delivered using a combination of permanent faculty and casual lecturing staff. In recent years the College has been, and continues to be, well served in a casual capacity by Rev Martin Pakula in Biblical Languages and Rev Dr Karl Hood in Biblical Counselling.

In 2022 the current federal government responded to the growth of insecure employment in the higher education sector by enacting the *Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Secure Jobs, Better Pay) Act 2022 (the Act)*. The primary objective of the Act is to increase job security for casual lecturing staff and encourage tertiary education providers to invest in the ongoing development of permanent faculty with the goal of maintaining and increasing the quality of tertiary education across Australia. The TEC supports the goals and objectives of the Act.

In summary the Act requires employers using Fixed Term Contracts and Casual employment agreements to convert their fixed term contract and casual employment agreements to full-time or permanent part-time employment. The Act sets out the eligibility requirements for employees to undergo “casual conversion” and the obligations of employers to undertake that conversion. At PTC both Rev Pakula and Rev Dr Hood meet the eligibility requirements set out in the Act and PTC has an obligation to transition them from casual to permanent part-time.

Although the Act provides institutions with adequate time to complete the “casual conversion” of eligible employees (1 Jan 2025), recent communication from the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and the Australia College of Theology (ACT) requires PTC to comply with the Act as one of the requirements to be completed in the College’s return to a fully compliant tertiary education provider. Complying with the Act has an ongoing budget impact for the Committee budget and requires inclusion in FY24-25 budget cycle. The compliance requirements of the ACT and the budgetary impact combine to make this an urgent matter.

The TEC views the establishment of permanent part-time faculty positions as a significant change in the employment structure at PTC. To adequately address the budgetary requirements of this restructure, detailed job descriptions and terms of employment need to be specified. Although the Committee’s regulations make some provision for the appointment of part-time lecturers/staff, the regulations are ambiguous concerning the appointment of permanent part-time faculty. Consequently the TEC and faculty propose the following job descriptions and remuneration to ensure the College meets its compliance obligations.

Lecturer in Biblical Languages and Old Testament – Position Description

1. Position Summary

The lecturer in Biblical Languages and Old Testament is appointed by the Faculty in consultation with the Theological Education Committee (TEC). The appointment is on a permanent two days per week basis (0.4 FTE).

The lecturer in Biblical Languages and Old Testament is a faithful Christian, academically able in the disciplines of the biblical languages and Old Testament and with experience in ministry and pastoral oversight. As a teaching position, the Lecturer has a leadership role within the PCV as it engages with theological and ministry issues.

The Faculty sets the lecturer apart for this ministry and teaching appointment by a public act of commissioning, usually at the Commencement and Graduation Service.

2. Responsibilities

The lecturer in Biblical Languages and Old Testament is responsible, under the Principal of the PTC, for delivering and assisting to deliver Hebrew, Greek, and Old Testament units, as assigned by the Faculty. The lecturer is under the oversight of the faculty head of the department or departments in which he is lecturing.

The usual responsibilities are:

- Hebrew language units (two units, 0.2 FTE)
- Old Testament recorded online units (three units, 0.075 FTE)
- One Hebrew exegesis unit every 3.5 years (0.03 FTE)

Additional responsibilities as required and as 0.4 FTE permits may include:

- Greek language units (two units, 0.2 FTE)
- Old Testament tutoring and grading (0.025 FTE per unit)
- Higher degree research or research output (0.05 FTE).

Significant, temporary increases in the load for a semester will be appropriately remunerated,

The lecturer must:

- Set an example in life and ministry to the students.
- Contribute to the well-being of the college community.
- Undertake administrative tasks related to the units being taught.
- Stay abreast of educational developments and innovate in the delivery of the assigned courses and their assessment.

These responsibilities do not involve attendance at faculty meetings. They may involve participation in Australian College of Theology Biblical Languages or Old Testament department meetings as negotiated with the relevant PTC department head.

3. Attributes

- Meets the qualifications of a ministry leader as described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, i.e. demonstrating a mature Christian character.
- Prayerful.

- The capacity to communicate clearly.
- Ability to relate to people of diverse cultural backgrounds.

4. Qualifications

Essential

- Qualified at Research Masters level or ACT equivalence or above and able to meet ACT approval criteria for the delivery of level 8 Biblical Language and Old Testament units.
- A minister in full standing with the Presbyterian Church of Australia, or a minister of another denomination.
- A wholehearted commitment to the Westminster Confession of Faith, as read in the light of the Declaratory Statement of 1901, as a systematic exposition of the teaching of Scripture.
- Fully committed to the Bible as the inerrant Word of God.
- Possesses or can obtain a Working with Children's Check and is willing to sign the Safe Church policy agreement.

Achievements and Capabilities

- Demonstrated ability to teach in his discipline, ideally with some experience in curriculum design and assessment.
- Educational experience with an awareness of different modes of delivery of courses.
- Understanding of the Australian higher educational context, especially of the expectations of the Australian College of Theology.
- Involvement in discipling and training others in ministry skills.
- Demonstrated capacity to work in a team.
- Availability to teach evening classes.
- Availability to preach on Sundays and represent the College.
- Administrative experience with an ability to share in the administrative work of a tertiary institution relating to the assigned units.

5. Remuneration

- 0.4 times the minister's minimum remuneration package as defined by the Assembly.
- when applicable any additional paid hours will be remunerated proportionately based on the minimum ministerial remuneration.
- manse allowance set by the TEC as appropriate for a 0.4 FTE appointment.
- superannuation at the ministerial rate.
- 0.4 times ministerial annual leave as defined by the Assembly, currently five weeks.
- Workcover.
- any other provisions the Assembly may determine.

2. Termination of Appointment

- By the committee
If after review of his performance the committee resolves that the appointee not be re-appointed, the committee shall give him six months written notice of termination.
- By the appointee

If the appointee desires to resign his appointment, he shall give at least six months' notice in writing to the committee, unless the committee resolves to allow a shorter period of notice.

- c) Immediate by change of circumstance
1. Deposition or Excommunication.
 2. WWCC exclusion.

Lecturer in Biblical Counselling – Position Description

1. Position Summary

The lecturer in Biblical Counselling is appointed by the Faculty in consultation with the Theological Education Committee (TEC). The appointment is on a permanent two days per week basis (0.4 FTE).

The lecturer in Biblical Counselling is a faithful Christian, academically able in the discipline of Biblical Counselling and with experience in ministry and pastoral oversight. As a teaching position, the Lecturer has a leadership role within the PCV as it engages with theological and ministry issues.

With the TEC, the Faculty sets the lecturer apart for this ministry and teaching appointment by a public act of commissioning, usually at the Commencement and Graduation Service.

2. Responsibilities

The lecturer in Biblical Counselling is responsible, under the Principal of the PTC, for delivering and assisting to deliver ACT and PTC units in Biblical Counselling and Pastoral Ministry, as assigned by the Faculty. The lecturer is the department head of and responsible to the Faculty for the field of Biblical Counselling at PTC (the PTC National Centre of Biblical Counselling). In the delivery of other Pastoral Ministry units, the lecturer is under the oversight of the faculty Practical Theology department head.

The usual responsibilities are:

- Introductory Biblical Counselling units (two units, PC002 and PC003, 0.2 FTE)
- Biblical Counselling recorded online units and projects (five units, 0.125 FTE)
- Biblical Counselling field education unit (0.05 FTE)
- Biblical Counselling programme (Centre) development, promotion, and reporting (0.025 FTE)
- Higher degree research or research output (0.05 FTE, with sabbatical allowance)

Additional responsibilities as 0.4 FTE permits may include:

- Pastoral Supervision unit (0.025 FTE)
- PTC conferences (0.025 FTE)

Significant, temporary increases in the load for a semester will be appropriately remunerated,

The lecturer must:

- Set an example in life and ministry to the students.

- Contribute to the well-being of the college community.
- Undertake administrative tasks related to the units being taught.
- Stay abreast of educational developments and innovate in the delivery of the assigned courses and their assessment.

These responsibilities involve attendance for relevant agenda items at faculty meetings. They may involve participation in Australian College of Theology Pastoral Ministry department meetings as negotiated with the faculty Practical Theology department head.

3. Attributes

- Meets the qualifications of a ministry leader as described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, i.e. demonstrating a mature Christian character.
- Prayerful.
- The capacity to communicate clearly.
- Ability to relate to people of diverse cultural backgrounds.

4. Qualifications Essential

- Qualified at Research Masters level or ACT equivalence or above and able to meet ACT approval criteria for the delivery of level 9 Pastoral Care units.
- A minister in full standing with the Presbyterian Church of Australia, or a minister of another denomination.
- A wholehearted commitment to the Westminster Confession of Faith, as read in the light of the Declaratory Statement of 1901, as a systematic exposition of the teaching of Scripture.
- Fully committed to the Bible as the inerrant Word of God.
- Possesses or can obtain a Working with Children's Check and is willing to sign the Safe Church policy agreement.

Achievements and Capabilities

- Demonstrated ability to teach in his discipline, ideally with some experience in curriculum design and assessment.
- Educational experience with an awareness of different modes of delivery of courses.
- Understanding of the Australian higher educational context, especially of the expectations of the Australian College of Theology.
- Involvement in discipling and training others in ministry skills.
- Demonstrated capacity to work in a team.
- Availability to teach evening classes.
- Availability to preach on Sundays and represent the College.
- Administrative experience with an ability to share in the administrative work of a tertiary institution relating to the assigned units.

5. Remuneration

- a) 0.4 times the minister's minimum remuneration package as defined by the Assembly.
- b) when applicable any additional paid hours will be remunerated proportionately based on the minimum ministerial remuneration.
- c) manse allowance set by the TEC as appropriate for a 0.4 FTE appointment.
- d) superannuation at the ministerial rate.

- e) 0.4 times ministerial annual leave as defined by the Assembly, currently five weeks.
- f) six months of 0.2 FTE paid study leave during each fourth and each seventh year of employment or twelve months of 0.4 FTE paid study leave during each seventh year of employment
- g) Workcover.
- h) any other provisions the Assembly may determine.

3. Termination of Appointment

- a) By the committee
If after review of his performance the committee resolves that the appointee not be re-appointed, the committee shall give him six months written notice of termination.
- b) By the appointee
If the appointee desires to resign his appointment, he shall give at least six months' notice in writing to the committee, unless the committee resolves to allow a shorter period of notice.
- c) Immediate by change of circumstance
 - 1. Deposition or Excommunication.
 - 2. WWCC exclusion.

Kevin Maxwell
CONVENER

PETITION 1: ST KILDA CONGREGATION—ST KILDA SITES RESERVE (Min 15)

To the Commission of Assembly.

This petition shows that:

- a) A drainage report found that the manse drains needed major repairs ('Drainage report', May 2022).
- b) The Balaclava roof was damaged in late September and then made safe, however it requires more extensive repairs or an insurance claim. ('Photograph Balaclava roof damage from windshear', Sept 2023 & 'Invoice Balaclava make-safe-work', Sept 2023 & 'Text Message from Jeff W. about Balaclava roof', Sept 2023)
- c) The Board received an insurance bill of \$89,000 and letter from the BIF describing new inspection and maintenance requirements for old PCV church-buildings. ('St Kilda Insurance invoice', June 2023 & 'Letter St Kilda from the BIF', July 2023)
- d) The Board is committed to a proactive maintenance program; which will require spending substantial amounts to catch up on neglected maintenance over the next couple of years, and then shift into a pattern of lower-cost preventative maintenance after that.
- e) Session resolved to support Luke receiving Revitalisation training through Reach Australia. ('Reach Australia Leadership Development Program', 2023 &) Luke, the Session, and the Congregation, are all committed to moving towards a budget where ministry is entirely supported by free-will offerings, however this may take a few years.
- f) As per Union of Congregation's petition, the intention of the pastor, the session and the congregation is to consolidate into a single more suitable and easier to maintain church building. A separate petition requests disposing of the St Kilda Church building during 2024-2025, however the building needs to be insured during that period.
- g) Therefore, at a special congregational meeting on Sunday 26 November the congregation adopted a budget estimate for 2024-2025 and resolved to petition the Commission of Assembly via the Presbytery of Melbourne for \$260,000 from the Sites Reserve Account associated with their congregation. ('St Kilda Budget 2024-2025', Nov 2023 & 'Extract of Congregational Minutes', Nov 2023)

Now therefore the St Kilda Presbyterian Church congregation humbly petitions the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and grant this special Sites Reserve request of \$260,000 with the Balaclava roof and drainage portions available as soon as possible after the Commission of Assembly.

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

Signed: Luke Isham and Nate Raiter
Dated: 13 December 2023

This petition will be presented by Luke Isham.

PETITION 2: PRESBYTERY OF MELBOURNE EAST—PROPOSED SALE OF ST KILDA CHURCH PROPERTY (Min 16)

To the Commission of Assembly.

This petition shows that:

- a) The St Kilda Presbyterian Church charge contains two church-buildings, 2 Alma Rd St Kilda and 106 Hotham St, St Kilda East and one congregation.
- b) The 2 Alma Rd, St Kilda building is a large gothic-style church-building with a slate roof, tall 'limestone composite' (appears and acts like sandstone) spire and bluestone walls in a prominent location on a small hill above St Kilda. There is seating for 500 people, laneway parking for four or five cars, three tiny toilets without disabled access, no kitchen or hall, no suitable breakout spaces for creche, children's Sunday School, youth-group etc, and inadequate heating and cooling. The church building fills the small land site of 1,076 square meters with only the laneway parking undeveloped.
- c) In 2016 \$220,058.25 worth of stonework was completed on the southern and western walls. ('Church Stonework Restoration report', April 2017)
- d) However, the stonework of the spire and around the roof has been decaying for some time. In 2017 the church architect Les Oliver recommended a professional survey of the entire roof and spire. ('Church Stonework Restoration' report, April 2017)
- e) The Board commissioned Lovell Chen to conduct a full survey of the spire and roof in 2021 and found that \$4.9 million worth of remedial work needed to take place on the spire and roof over the next five years. ('Lovell Chen report', May 2021)
- f) A Future Plans group was formed by the Board to investigate options.
- g) This Future Plans group found that a new building could be purchased in the St Kilda area and the possibility existed of it being re-zoned as a place of Worship. ('Advice from the Town planner', Sept 2021) They also talked to the church architect (Andrew Wilson) about the viability of improving the 106 Hotham St, St Kilda East building which he regarded as a possibility. (This was confirmed by email in July 2023, 'St Kilda Presbyterian/Balaclava Presbyterian', July 2023 & '230705 Site Ideas', July 2023) The group also investigated fundraising, interviewed and received a report from Everalld Compton, a fundraiser with a reputation for raising money for large churches and cathedrals. He did not believe fundraising from the secular community to restore a place of worship of St Kilda's type, history and location would be viable unless the church building was leased to a different entity and transformed into a theatre or musical venue. ('Everalld Compton' Report, Feb 2022)
- h) The Future Plans group also sought a curbside real estate valuation for both buildings. It was found that St Kilda church-building was valued at \$5.4 million and the Balaclava church-building was valued at \$3.6 million. ('Curbside real estate valuation', Sept 2021)

- i) During this time the Board considered how to remove pigeons living inside the tower (\$10,720.30) and improve the heating and cooling inside the St Kilda church-building (\$65,000). Quotes were sourced for both matters. ('Quote St Kilda removing Pigeon access', July 2022 & 'Quote St Kilda heating and cooling system', July 2021)
- j) Later the Board sought a real estate broker's opinion about selling or long-term freehold leasing the St Kilda building, and he stated that it would be easier to sell than arrange a long-term freehold lease. ('Real Estate Brokers Report', July 2023)
- k) At the same time two documents impacting the insurance and maintenance of the St Kilda building were then received by the Board. An insurance invoice for the St Kilda building of \$89,345 ('St Kilda Insurance invoice', June 2023) and a letter from the BIF outlining new inspection and maintenance requirements for older PCV buildings. ('Letter St Kilda from the BIF', July 2023)
- l) After receiving the Future Plans Group's findings, the Board then considered nine different possibilities ranging from draining all the financial resources of the charge to pay for remedial work and insurance through to either selling both buildings and purchasing a new church-building or making the 106 Hotham St, St Kilda East into a suitable place of worship. ('Extracted Minutes BOM', October 2023). The congregation then workshopped these nine possibilities before Session brought a proposal to the congregation at a Special Congregational meeting on Sunday 26 Nov 2023.
- m) The congregation resolved to dispose of the St Kilda Building [6 members voted yes, 1 member voted no, and 1 member abstained. A 2/3 majority "of communicate members present" as per PCV Code 2.20(f).] and nominated Luke Isham and Nate Raiter to sign for the Trustees if necessary as per PCV Code page 294. The Congregation also resolved that any proceeds "be assigned to either the purchase and/or maintenance of a St Kilda Presbyterian Church (the congregation) church-building." ('Extract of Congregational Minutes', Nov 2023)
- n) The Congregation did not make this decision lightly; some noted that it was sad that there was the possibility the building would no longer be used for public-gathered Christian worship. Some were excited by the possibility of purchasing a new building better suited to the congregation's needs and were thankful for the resources God had already provided. Some expressed the hope for a last-minute miraculous gift of a lump-sum of many millions of dollars that would pay for the repairs, upgrades and insurance. ('Extract of Congregational Minutes', Nov 2023)
- o) The congregation then requested the Presbytery to assist them by petitioning the Commission of Assembly so that the building could be disposed of during the 2024-2025 financial year. ('Extract of Congregational Minutes', Nov 2023)
- p) The average attendance is 25, membership is 16 and the full flock is 35 people. Although plans are in train seeking to grow the congregation (with Reach

Australia) it will take some years to grow to a sustainable state to meet the core expenses including minister's remuneration.

- q) Our Sites Reserve fund is anticipated to be exhausted within the next ten years if it were used to pay for insurance and maintenance of the St Kilda church-building in addition to supporting the growth of the congregation.
- r) Our FY25 budget estimate indicates an annual deficit of \$185,000 excluding pressing repair works of \$70,000. If the St Kilda church-building is sold this deficit would reduce to \$75,000.
- s) The required repair works (roof and spire) and upgrades (better toilets, heating and cooling, hall and suitable breakout spaces for ministry) of the St Kilda building are in excess of \$5million and high insurance premiums \$90,000 per annum are beyond the congregation's resources.
- t) There is no foreseeable way to make the building suitable for the comprehensive needs of a future growing congregation (see #b), either financially or due to the physical constraint of the site and building.
- u) Retention of the St Kilda building would cause the modest resources of the congregation to be completely absorbed and be inadequate for the needed St Kilda building capital expenditure and maintenance requirements. Alternatively, the sale of the St Kilda building would remove its financial drain on Gospel focused mission.

Now therefore the Presbytery of Melbourne East humbly petitions the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and

1. Dispose of the 2 Alma Rd, St Kilda church-building during the 2024-2025 financial year by first testing a long-term-freehold-lease and then proceeding to a sale.
2. Assign the purpose of the proceeds, after costs, to the purchase of a new church-building in the St Kilda area or the upgrading of the 106 Hotham Street, St Kilda East church-building.

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

Signed: Kevin Childs
CLERK OF PRESBYTERY
Dated: 14 February 2024

This petition will be presented by Luke Isham and Russell Walley.

PETITION 3: PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH WEST VICTORIA—SALE OF HEYWOOD PROPERTY AND DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS (Min 17)

To the Commission of Assembly.

This petition shows that:

- a) The Presbytery informs the Assembly that it intends to dissolve the congregation of Heywood, which made up the second congregation of the Heywood/Portland Charge. The final dissolution of a congregation cannot be executively declared by Presbytery until it has the agreement of the General Assembly (rule 4.69.5).
- b) Regularly authorised Presbyterian services of worship at Heywood ceased on 29 January 2023.
- c) Given the proximity to Portland and the local population base of Heywood, it is highly unlikely that the Heywood site will provide viable church planting opportunities.
- d) Maintaining the property and seeing that it is preserved from needless deterioration and misuse (rule 4.80) is a waste of considerable financial and physical resources.
- e) A real estate sale estimate for the Heywood property is in the vicinity of \$150,000 –\$200,000.
- f) Portland was the first European settlement in Victoria, and today is a thriving rural, industrial and port city, with a population of around 10,000 people. Although the Portland congregation is small it is the only Reformed witness in the town. With no other Presbyterian congregation within a one-hour drive in any direction the Presbytery of South West Victoria considers the ongoing witness and ministry in Portland an integral part of our future strategy as gospel ministry continues in South West Victoria.

Now, therefore, the Presbytery of South West Victoria humbly petitions the Commission of Assembly to take these premises into consideration and agree with the intention of the Presbytery of South West Victoria to:

- 1. Dissolve the Heywood congregation in accord with rule 4.69.5.
- 2. Approve the sale of the Heywood Church property, at 3 Hunter St, Heywood, Vol 10670, Folio 027.
- 3. The Presbytery requests the allocation of proceeds of sale to go to the Portland congregation to assist the ongoing ministry of the charge.

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

Signed: Rev Ian Leach
CLERK OF PRESBYTERY
Dated: 6 March 2024

The petition will be presented by Rev Ian Leach and Rev Rod Waterhouse.

PETITION 4: PRESBYTERY OF GEELONG—BATESFORD SITES RESERVE FOR BANNOCKBURN REDEVELOPMENT (Min 18)

To the Commission of Assembly.

This petition shows that:

- a) The 2023 General Assembly permitted the Presbytery of Geelong to bring a petition to the 2024 Commission of Assembly with regards to the Batesford Sites Reserve No 1 fund.
- b) The Batesford Sites Reserve No 1 fund is one for which no purpose is allocated. It is therefore one of the sites reserve funds which is subject to the 5-year moratorium on purposing or re-purposing, enacted by the Commission of Assembly in May 2021.
- c) The resolution enacting the moratorium contemplates that in exceptional circumstances applicable funds may be assigned a purpose during the period of the moratorium.
- d) The Bannockburn Township has seen considerable growth and has been earmarked by the State Government for rapid growth trajectory in the short term. The Golden Plains Shire is in the top three fastest growing regional Local Government Areas (LGA) in Victoria by percentage and there is considerable growth planned for Bannockburn by 2030.
- e) There is a vibrant and rapidly growing gospel community and ministries within the Bannockburn Charge such that urgent property redevelopment and expanded ministry are needed. The allocation of the “Batesford” Sites Reserve Fund No 1 towards this property development work is critical for the viability of the ongoing ministry at Bannockburn.
- f) The united Bannockburn congregation (which included former Batesford members) at its meeting held on 26th March 2023 unanimously agreed to request Presbytery to petition the General Assembly for the allocation of the Sites Reserve funds for the Bannockburn Property redevelopment. This earlier petition failed to adequately address the exceptional circumstances under which the funds could be purposed.
- g) Bannockburn Charge has continued to grow with an average attendance of 86 for 2023 (72 for 2022) and with an average for Dec 2023 of 104 of which some 42% are children under the age of 16 and as a consequence the noise level and child movement over morning tea or other activities is incredibly difficult to deal with on days/evenings especially when it is cold or wet outdoors. This is a disincentive for new families and makes a welcoming environment more difficult.
- h) Seating is running at above 80% of capacity making it difficult to accommodate families on arriving.
- i) The Mainly Music group has had to apply a waiting list due to insufficient space. The Youth group has also been restricted in activities by lack of space. The

kitchen is under-sized and as a result has limited resources and capacity for catering for morning teas and functions.

- j) The toilets are insufficient and need increasing in number. The Cry room is too small for any more than one baby and parent. There are no meeting rooms available. Storage is limited and restricts the Mainly Music team and youth group.
- k) In the year following the sale of the Anakie and Batesford church properties, the congregation has diligently engaged in planning and cost assessments while awaiting the availability of the Builder. Unfortunately, during this period, the costs associated with building materials and labour have surged beyond any reasonable expectations. This escalation in expenses has rendered any moderately sized and practical redevelopment financially unfeasible without resorting to borrowing funds. Such a course would prove to be unaffordable for the congregation's financial capacity at present. The only really achievable solution available to the congregation lies in accessing the Batesford Sites Reserve No 1 Fund balance, approximately \$146,000 as of 31 December 2023, to meet the financial demands of the project and realise the gospel opportunities.
- l) The project costing is:
 - a. \$1,650,000 is the builder's estimate including asphalted Carpark.
The carpark cost will be between \$50,000 (for stone) and \$300,000 (for asphalt). Our builder believes that Council will be flexible as their own carpark is stone and accessible to the public, and on street parking is also available.
 - b. \$1,370,000 is held in accessible Sites Reserve Funds.
 - c. \$146,000 would be available via the granting of this petition.
 - d. \$134,000 would be the resultant shortfall.
We believe this much smaller shortfall can be met via carpark negotiations with the council, compounding interest on Sites Reserve funds pending building drawdowns, negotiation with the builder to find ways to reduce the cost and finish the project without losing essential design and construction components, ensuring that contingency funds are not unnecessarily used and appeal to the congregation for gifts and loans.
- m) Delaying the Builder (who also acted for Geelong West's construction) may result in him not being able to meet the urgent timeframe, thereby delaying his availability and resulting in further cost blowouts and hamstringing congregational growth and gospel ministry activities in the meantime.
- n) Presbytery failed to show the urgency of the original petition in the belief that it could not expect a release of the funds prior to the end of the moratorium in 2026, as well as having an outdated understanding from the builder that the project could be met at a much lower cost thereby lessening the urgency. At the time, it was believed that the best that could be achieved would be a renaming and repurposing of the funds as well as approval to access the funds as soon as the moratorium ended. The builder has now been able to cost the project in current day values and it is obvious that waiting until the moratorium is ended is not a viable option as escalation of costs that occurred are not likely to reduce

or slow down in the immediate future, thereby straining cash resources further if we do not proceed now.

Recent rapid attendance growth has also highlighted the urgent need to proceed much more quickly.

Now therefore, the Presbytery of Geelong humbly petitions the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and agree with the intention of the Presbytery of Geelong taken on 11 April 2023 and on 13 February 2024, to:

- a) Agree that this is an exceptional request from Presbytery and that there is an urgency for the use of the Batesford Sites Reserve Fund No 1 for the redevelopment of the Bannockburn property.
- b) Agree with its release prior to the end of the current moratorium in 2026 so that the Bannockburn redevelopment can proceed without delay.

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

Extracted from the minutes of the meeting of Geelong Presbytery for Bannockburn Re-development Commission on 26 March 2024 by me:

Robert White
CLERK OF PRESBYTERY
Dated: 26 March 2024

This petition will be presented by Rev Darren Middleton and Rev Matthew Deroon.

PETITION 5: PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN VICTORIA—SALE OF BALLARAT NORTH MANSE (Min 19)

To the Commission of Assembly.

This petition shows that:

- a) The manse of Ballarat North (Scots) Presbyterian Church is situated at 506 Neill Street, Soldiers Hill (Volume 02835, Folio 885). Comprising a land area of approximately 918 square metres. It was built in 1890 and is listed as heritage overlay HO170 which is the Soldier Hills precinct.
- b) This property was used as a manse for over 100 years. The last minister occupied the manse in 2007. The manse has been leased since 2013. The last tenants did not maintain the property and the manse has deteriorated in recent years.
- c) The manse does not meet the PCV Manse requirements with the Manse Design Manual or the Residential Tenancies Act. The Manse requires major refurbishment and repairs. Due to financial limitations, the BOM has been unable to repair the manse and it has been vacant for over a year.
- d) Three independent real estate agents valued the manse in March 2024 between \$900k-\$1 million and that it will need another \$1 million to properly restore the property. Soldiers Hill is next to the Ballarat Railway Station and has become one of the most sought-after and expensive suburbs of Ballarat. All three real estate agents stated that it is a desirable property that can be sold as is.
- e) After the 2023 GAV requested another petition to be presented at this COA a congregation meeting was held on the 25 Feb 2024. The congregation voted unanimously to:
 - approve the sale of the current manse to purchase a new manse to the value of up to \$800,000 under manse recommendations, and to present to the General Assembly 2024 a vision for future ministry and how to invest the remaining funds from the proceeds of the sale.

Now therefore the Presbytery of Western Victoria humbly petitions the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and approve the sale of the Scots manse and direct the funds into the site reserves of Ballarat North sites reserves to:

- -purchase a new manse to the value of up to \$800,000 under manse recommendations and
- -direct the presbytery to present to the 2024 General Assembly a plan to utilise the balance of funds in the sites reserve account.

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

Signed: Rob Duncanson
CLERK OF PRESBYTERY
Dated: 4 April 2024

This petition will be presented by Rev Toby McIntosh and Rev Rob Duncanson

PETITION 6: CLIFTON HILL CONGREGATION—APPLICATION OF SITES RESERVE (Min 20)

To the Commission of Assembly:

This petition shows that:

- a) The Commission of Assembly (16 Jun 2020):
 - i. gave its consent to the sale of the Clifton Hill manse at 103 Rowe Street Fitzroy North (Volume 6485 Folio 937; and
 - ii. approved the application of up to \$600,000 from the proceeds of the sale to cover the cost of upgrading the Clifton Hill church buildings. (BB 2020, min 13).
- b) In March 2021 the manse was sold by auction and since then the nett proceeds of the sale have been held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the Clifton Hill Congregation.
- c) In September 2021 following approval by the Presbytery of Melbourne West of the charge's ministry plan Rev Bill Medley was appointed as an assistant to the minister of the linked Clifton Hill – Essendon charge.
- d) In early 2023 planning commenced regarding renovations/upgrades to the middle building (the former Kindergarten building). The Church Architect was appointed to assist the congregation.
- e) Since the Rev Bill Medley has commenced ministry at Clifton Hill the following growth has occurred:
 - i. The small number of original congregational members is still attending and remains a vital part of the congregation.
 - ii. Average weekly attendance exceeds 60 per week.
 - iii. Communicant members are now 25.
 - iv. Average weekly Bible Study attendance is 20.
 - v. There have been 2 infant baptisms and 1 adult baptism.
 - vi. Evangelical events have been conducted and are well attended.
 - vii. Average annual offerings have increased sevenfold.
 - viii. Ministries now include a young adults group and a Sunday School.
- f) In February 2023 the congregation approved proceeding with planning towards renovations of the former Kindergarten Building (the middle building).
- g) As planning has proceeded the Quantity Surveyor's reports have made it clear that the sum of \$600,000 allocated for this purpose by the Commission of Assembly will be greatly exceeded, with the estimated cost more likely \$900,000. The actual cost will only be known after tenders have been received.
- h) This planned work is necessary because this part of the building is in a major state of disrepair, with the roof needing to be totally replaced. Also, the toilets and kitchen are highly unsatisfactory and need to be brought up to standards expected in the 21st century.

- i) When these works are completed they will greatly add to the warm and welcoming environment of the church buildings, creating a useful space for fellowship and variety of ministry opportunities thus enhancing further ministry and growth in the proclamation of the gospel in the Lord's providence.

Now therefore the Clifton Hill congregation humbly petitions the Commission of Assembly to take these premises into consideration and approve the application of up to \$900,000 from the proceeds of the sale of the manse to cover the cost of upgrading the Clifton Hill church buildings, subject to the necessary congregational and presbytery approval

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

Signed: David Cutler (Session Clerk, Clifton Hill – Essendon Linked Pastoral Charge)
Dated: 6 April 2024

This petition will be presented by Rev Christopher Duke and Rev Bill Medley

PETITION 7: PRESBYTERY OF GIPPSLAND— *anent* SEAT ON PRESBYTERY (Min 21)

To the Commission of Assembly:

This petition shows that:

- a) The Rev Cameron Garrett has been nominated for the position of Clerk of the General Assembly of Victoria; and
- b) The Rev Cameron Garrett, if appointed, is to begin the new role on 1 July 2024 making the need for and relief sought by this petition both emergent and urgent; and
- c) It is desirable for the Clerk to be a member of the General Assembly; and
- d) The Rev Cameron Garrett, if appointed, will by necessity resign his Charge under Rule 4.104 to take up the position of Clerk and will cease to have a seat on presbytery (and assembly); and
- e) There is provision in the rules of the church (Rule 4.2k) and the Clerk's Job Description (6a) for the Assembly to grant the Clerk, as a minister in special circumstances, a seat on presbytery; and

Now therefore, the Presbytery of Gippsland humbly petitions the Commission of Assembly to take these premises into consideration and grant Rev Cameron Garrett a seat on the Presbytery of Gippsland upon taking up the position of Clerk (if appointed)

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

Signed: Rev. C Garrett
CLERK OF PRESBYTERY
Dated: 17 April 2024

This petition will be presented by Rev H Easton and S Jones

ROLL OF ASSEMBLY (7 May 2024)

Presbytery of Flinders

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Charges	Ministers	Elders
Aspendale	Brett Peatman	
Brighton (HMC)		
BayChurch	Paul Huynh	Ross McKinnon
Clarinda (HMC)		Michael Lee
Clarinda Nuer (HMC)		
Clayton	Michael Jensen	Arnis Putnins
	Lam Paul Gak (Associate)	
Cranbourne	Peter Roberts	
Dandenong	Andrew Wong	Robert Paix
Dromana-Mornington	Matt Cole	
Embrace Melbourne (AC)	Paul Jang	
Frankston	Jared Keath	
New Life, Officer	David Martin	Sabyan Hardjo
Somerville (HMC)		
Sorrento-Rye	Hui Lim	
South East Samoan	Kainano Opetaiia	
Retired Ministers:	Peter Barclay	
	Ivan Barker	
	David Brown	
	Ken Brown	
	Frank Savage	
	Wally Zurrer	

Presbytery of Geelong

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bannockburn	Matthew Deroon	G (Bert) Stasse
Bellarine (AC)	Brett Cummins	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	
	Scott Kroeger	
	John Stasse	
	Robert White	

Presbytery of Gippsland

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bairnsdale	Gary Stephens	Roger Mclvor
Drouin	Heath Easton	Alan York
	Stephen Jones (Associate)	
Leongatha (HMC)		
Moe-Yarram	Stephen Deroon	
Morwell	Cameron Garrett	
Sale (HMC)		
Warragul	Raymond Patchett	Tom Guilford
PTC Lecturer	Karl Hood	
Retired Ministers:	Robert Boan	Parity:
	Michael Wharton	Stephen Weir

Presbytery of Maroondah

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Belgrave Heights	Mark Tonkin	
Blackburn (HMC)		Keith Ferres
Croydon	Cameron Griffiths	Roni Tobing
Doncaster (HMC)		Colin Flynn
Donvale	Gerald Vanderwert	Iain Bramley
	Joel Mestry (Associate)	
	Jordan Born (Associate)	
	Xien Yao (Associate)	
Heathmont	Brian Harvey	Doug Fraser
Kirkbrae	Paul K B Lee	
Mt Evelyn (AC)	Miles Fagan	Bruce Timmins
Warburton (HMC)		
Woori Yallock	Tony Archer	Andre Dahmen
PTC Lecturers:	Jared Hood	
Retired Ministers:	Tony Bird	
	Graham Bradbeer	
	Trevor Cox	
	Wally Gear	
	Grant Lawry	
	Peter Orchard	
	Andrew Slater	
	Willem Vandenberg	
	Andrew Venn	

Presbytery of Melbourne East

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Arabic	Karam Krayyem	Zaher Saad
Ashburton		John Angelico
Auburn (Chalmers)	Nick Arundell	Colin Spackman
Burwood Community	John Elnatan	Paul Lee
	Billy Kurniawan (Assistant)	
Camberwell	Philip Mercer	Philip Barton
Canterbury	David Hann	Kevin Childs
	Dong Choi (Assistant)	
Caulfield-Elwood	Phillip Chang	Haddon Chang
Gardenvale East (AC)		
Hawthorn	Graham Nicholson	John Singleton
Korean	Jae Kook Kim	Daniel Chung
Malvern	Marcus Campbell	
South Yarra		Ben Palmer
St Kilda-Balaclava	Luke Isham	
Surrey Hills	John Huynh	Russell Walley
	Oliver Blythe (Associate)	
Scotch Chaplains:	David Assender	
	Douglas Campbell	
PTC Lecturer	Ben Nelson	
MDC Officer	Chris Siriweera	
Retired Ministers:	Alan Every	Parity:
	Douglas Milne	Ken McClimont
	Richard O'Brien	Jim Hare
	Anthony Salisbury	
	Bob Thomas	

Presbytery of Melbourne North

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bundoora	Neil Chambers	Andrew May
	Clinton Le Page (Associate)	
Donnybrook, Fresh Start (CPC)	Ben Kelada	
Eltham	Don Elliott	Ian Courts
Epping	Nello Barbieri	Neil Furlong
	Brian Luong (Associate)	
Heidelberg (PC)	Ignatius Bagoes Seta	Tom Cunneen
Hume (AC)	Luke Brownley	Tony Ruggeri
Kangaroo Ground (HMC)		
Reservoir	Andrew Vines	Reg Butcher
Samoan		
Valley (AC)	Richard Wilson	Luke Yelland
Whittlesea-Mernda	Botros Botrosdief	
PTC Principal	Peter Hastie	
PTC Lecturer	John Wilson	
Retired Ministers:	Simalu Cowley	Parity:
	Theo Fishwick	Rob Herweynen

Presbytery of Melbourne West

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Brimbank (AC)	Daniel Dixon	Ken Fuhrmeister
Clifton Hill-Essendon	Christopher Duke	David Cutler
	Bill Medley (Associate)	
Darebin	Adam Humphries (Assistant)	Adam Foster
Gisborne	Wayne McArdle	Adrian Guillot
Melbourne Scots'	Philip Campbell	Graeme Harris
Melton	Dinesh Taunk	Dennis Wright
Sunshine-Melbourne West Korean (AC)	Samuel Son	Charles Okwo
West Footscray (HMC)	Martin de Pyle	
Williamstown-Point Cook		
Wyndham	Peter Greiner	Harold Carpenter
Retired Ministers:	John Cho	
	Philip Court	
	John Ellis	
	Walter Johnson	
	Len Pearce	
	Bruce Riding	

Presbytery of North East Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Benalla-Balmattum-Thoona	Stephen McDonald	Graeme Hayes
Broadford (AC)	Barry Porter	Ross Barnett
Seymour-Nagambie-Yea (HMC)		Bill Day
Shepparton-Stanhope-Kyabram	Kyung Ee	Philip Betts
Tatura-Rushworth	Kalpan Vasa	Gary Dunstan
Wangaratta-Myrtleford		
Wodonga (AC)	Stuart Withers	
Yarrawonga (HMC)		Malcolm Browning
Retired Ministers:	Neil Harvey	Parity:
	Kevin Maxwell	Ralph Kop
	Neil McDonald	
	Ian Touzel	

Presbytery of North Western Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bendigo	Philip Burns	Andrew Kerr
Bendigo East (Reforming)	Russ Grinter	Ryan Smith
Castlemaine (HMC)	Daryl Jackson	Richard McArdle
Eaglehawk (AC)	Jesse Walz	
Kerang/Swan Hill (AC)		
Rochester	Michael Riske	
Sunraysia (HMC)		Colin Morrow
Acting Clerk of Assembly	Peter Phillips	
Retired Ministers:	Keith Bell	Parity:
	John Sutherland	Tony Zirngast

Presbytery of South West Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Camperdown-Terang-Noorat	Damian Meeuwissen	Tom Fleming
Colac		Geoff Cross
Hamilton	David Schulz	Graeme Presser
	Robert Koh (Associate)	
Koroit-Port Fairy		
Portland	Rod Waterhouse	
Warrnambool	Ben Johnson	Robert Prout
	Shady Mehanni (Associate)	
Retired Ministers:	Neil Benfell	Parity:
	Ian Leach	David Hayward

Presbytery of Western Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Ararat-Skipton-Lismore (AC)		Stewart McKerrow
Ballarat North (AC)		Graham Hammond
Ballarat South (Ebenezer St John's)	Toby McIntosh	Keith Mitchell
Ballarat West	Robert Duncanson	Jeremy Peet
Horsham	Greg Matthews	Jonathan Starks
Kaniva-Nhill (HMC)		Bruce Meyer
Retired Minister	John Brennan	

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
URGENT MEETING OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
AUGUST 2024**

PROCEEDINGS OF THE URGENT MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

Via Zoom on Wednesday 7 August 2024 at 2:00pm

1. Constitution and Devotion

In the absence of the Moderator, Rev Ian Hutton, the immediate Past Moderator, Rev Peter Phillips, read from 2 Timothy 1:8-14 and 2:1-2, gave a brief exposition on these verses and 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, as amended, be the Roll of the August 2024 Urgent Meeting of the General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

3. Approval of Moderator's actions

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

In accordance with Code 5.38(c), approve the Moderator's action in convening this August 2024 Urgent Meeting of the General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

4. Apologies

The following apologies were received and sustained:

Ministers: Keith Bell, Marcus Campbell, Stephen Deroon, Alan Every, Brian Harvey, Ian Hutton, Michael Jensen, Ian Leach, Peter Orchard, Chris Siriweera, Ian Touzel, Rod Waterhouse

Elders: John Angelico, Colin Morrow, Sabyan Hardjo, Richard McArdle, Roger McIvor, Neil Mansfield, Graeme Presser, Caleb Schulz, Stephen Weir

5. Business Committee

The report of the Business Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Brett Cummins, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Determine the hours of meeting to be 2:00pm to the finish of business.
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 Assembly consisting of:
Rev Adam Humphries (Convener), Luke Brownley
Elders Bert Stasse, Doug Fraser
and determine that this committee be held to be thanked and discharged at the dissolution of the Assembly.
4. 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.
5. Permit the General Manager to be present in the Assembly including when meeting in private, and to answer any financial management questions.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. Permit the Law Agent to be present in the 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. Appoint the Acting Moderator and the Clerks of Assembly to a special commission to scrutinise the minutes of this Assembly, 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. Conflict of Interest Declarations

The Acting Moderator asked for declarations by members of the court of any Conflict of Interest as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business of this Commission. None were forthcoming

7. Theological Education Committee

The report of the Theological Education Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Kevin Maxwell, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Approve the position description of Lecturer in Theological Studies:

Lecturer in Theological Studies

1. Position Summary

The Presbyterian Theological College (PTC) is the ministry

training college of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (PCV) and is a reformed and evangelical institution that has a vital role in developing, disseminating, and supporting faithful gospel ministry in Melbourne, regional Victoria and beyond. The Lecturer in Theological Studies is appointed to the PTC by the General Assembly of the PCV, through the Theological Education Committee (TEC), the body entrusted with the oversight of the College by the Assembly.

The Lecturer in Theological Studies is a faithful Christian, academically able in the discipline of historical and systematic theology and with experience in pastoral oversight, who can help students understand the doctrines of scripture and how those doctrines have been understood by the Church. The lecturer also has a role in leading the PCV as it engages with theological and ministry issues.

Through the TEC, the Assembly sets the lecturer apart for this ministry and teaching appointment by a public act of commissioning.

2. Responsibilities

The Lecturer in Theological Studies is responsible for the following, under the oversight and at the direction of the Principal.

Key responsibilities (0.7 FTE total):

- Lecturing in Systematic and Historical Theology and other Christian studies, and undertaking related activities such as assessment, research supervision, and conference speaking, as assigned by the faculty (0.4 FTE).
- Producing research publication outputs at world-class level or above typically on a per semester basis (0.3 FTE, excluding study leave).

Institutional and consortium responsibilities (0.2 FTE):

- Participating in faculty meetings and activities.
- Undertaking administrative tasks.
- Meeting Australian College of Theology academic and administrative requirements.
- Participating in Australian College of Theology meetings.

Denominational responsibilities (0.1 FTE):

- Being involved in and representing the College's interests in the life of the PCV.
- Representing the College by leading and preaching in congregational worship.
- Advising Assembly committees as requested and required.

General responsibilities:

- Setting an example in life and ministry to the students.

- Contributing to the well-being of the college community.
- Staying abreast of educational developments and innovating in the delivery of his courses and their assessment.
- Teaching evening classes.

3. **Attributes, Qualifications, Experience**

Essential:

- Qualified at research doctoral level.
- Meets the qualifications of a ministry leader as described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, i.e. demonstrating a mature Christian character.
- A minister in full standing with the Presbyterian Church of Australia, or willing to satisfy the requirements of the General Assembly of Australia relative to the reception of ministers from other churches, or similarly able to provide theological and spiritual leadership as a teacher of the Church, including in conducting worship services.
- A wholehearted commitment to the Westminster Confession of Faith, as read in the light of the Declaratory Statement of 1901, as a systematic exposition of the teaching of scripture.
- Fully committed to the Bible as the inerrant word of God.
- Prayerful.
- The capacity to communicate clearly.
- Ability to relate to people of diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Ability to work in a team.
- Possesses or can obtain a Working with Children's Check and is willing to sign the Safe Church policy agreement.

Preferred at application:

- Demonstrated ability to teach in the discipline.
- Demonstrated ability to produce academic publications.
- Experience in curriculum design, assessment, and different modes of course delivery.
- Understanding of the Australian higher educational context and the expectations of the Australian College of Theology.
- Experience in discipling and training others in ministry skills.
- Experience in the activities of the courts of the Church.
- Administrative experience in a tertiary institution.

4. Terms

- a) 1.05 times the minister's minimum remuneration package as defined by the Assembly.
- b) manse provided or benefit as set by the TEC.
- c) telephone rent plus all calls.
- d) superannuation at the ministerial rate.
- e) six months of paid study leave during each fourth and each seventh year of employment or twelve months of paid study leave during each seventh year of employment.
- f) removal costs paid by the TEC within Australia but a negotiated figure if from overseas.
- g) annual leave equivalent to ministerial annual leave as defined by the Assembly, currently five weeks.
- h) Workcover.
- i) payment of manse energy bills up to \$3,000 per annum as a non-cash benefit.
- j) any other provisions the Assembly may determine.
- k) The appointment will be for two years in the first instance, and any subsequent appointment will be in compliance with workplace legislation.

5. Termination of Appointment

- a) By the committee
If after review of his performance the committee resolves that the appointee not be re-appointed, the committee shall give him six months' written notice of termination.
- b) By the appointee
If the appointee desires to resign his appointment, he shall give at least six months' notice in writing to the committee, unless the committee resolves to allow a shorter period of notice.
- c) Immediate by change of circumstance
 - 1. Deposition or excommunication.
 - 2. WWCC exclusion.
 - 3. Not meeting or no longer able or willing to meet a position description responsibility or no longer possessing an essential attribute or qualification.

- 2. Approve the position description of Lecturer in Practical Theology (Evangelism and Mission).

Lecturer in Practical Theology (Evangelism and Mission)

1. Position Summary

The Presbyterian Theological College (PTC) is the ministry training college of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (PCV) and is a reformed and evangelical institution that has a vital role in developing, disseminating, and supporting faithful gospel ministry in Melbourne, regional Victoria and beyond. The Lecturer in Practical Theology (Evangelism and Mission) is appointed to the

PTC by the General Assembly of the PCV, through the Theological Education Committee (TEC), the body entrusted with the oversight of the College by the Assembly.

The Lecturer in Practical Theology (Evangelism and Mission) is a faithful Christian, academically able in the discipline of Practical Theology, with a demonstrable ability as a personal formational advisor, and with experience in pastoral oversight, who can help students understand the challenges and gospel opportunities of the intellectual, moral, and cultural context in Australia and support students as they prepare for ministry. The lecturer also has a role in leading the PCV as it engages with theological and ministry issues.

Through the TEC, the Assembly sets the lecturer apart for this ministry and teaching appointment by a public act of commissioning.

2. Responsibilities

The Lecturer in Practical Theology (Evangelism and Mission) is responsible for the following, under the oversight and at the direction of the Principal.

Key responsibilities (0.7 FTE total):

- Lecturing in evangelism, apologetics, mission, church planting, and other Christian studies, and undertaking related activities such as assessment and research supervision, as assigned by the faculty (0.4 FTE).
- Developing relationships with ministry students that will be spiritually and personally formative and supportive for them and continuing the relationships into at least the first two years of students' ministries after College (0.2 FTE).
- Engaging in conferences relevant to the teaching area (0.05 FTE).
- Leading the College mission evangelism week (0.025 FTE).
- Producing research and scholarly publication outputs (0.025 FTE, excluding study leave)

Institutional and consortium responsibilities (0.2 FTE):

- Participating in faculty meetings and activities.
- Undertaking administrative tasks.
- Meeting Australian College of Theology academic and administrative requirements.
- Participating in Australian College of Theology meetings.

Denominational responsibilities (0.1 FTE):

- Being involved in and representing the College's interests in the life of the PCV.
- Representing the College by leading and preaching in congregational worship.

- Advising Assembly committees as requested and required.

General responsibilities:

- Setting an example in life and ministry to the students.
- Contributing to the well-being of the college community.
- Staying abreast of educational developments and innovating in the delivery of his courses and their assessment.
- Teaching evening classes.

3. Attributes, Qualifications, Experience

Essential:

- Qualified at research masters level or above.
- Meets the qualifications of a ministry leader as described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, i.e. demonstrating a mature Christian character.
- A minister in full standing with the Presbyterian Church of Australia or committed to applying or having already applied to be received as a minister of the General Assembly of Australia.
- A wholehearted commitment to the Westminster Confession of Faith, as read in the light of the Declaratory Statement of 1901, as a systematic exposition of the teaching of scripture.
- Fully committed to the Bible as the inerrant word of God.
- Demonstrable ability in discipling and training others in ministry skills.
- Demonstrable ability in advising others in spiritual formation.
- Prayerful.
- The capacity to communicate clearly.
- Ability to relate to people of diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Ability to work in a team.
- Possesses or can obtain a Working with Children's Check and is willing to sign the Safe Church policy agreement.

Preferred at application:

- Already possessing or working toward a doctorate (preferably a research doctorate).
- Demonstrated ability to teach in the discipline.
- Demonstrated ability to produce academic or scholarly publications.
- Experience in curriculum design, assessment, and different modes of course delivery.
- Understanding of the Australian higher educational context and the expectations of the Australian College of Theology.
- Experience in the activities of the courts of the Church.
- Administrative experience in a tertiary institution.

4. Terms

- a) 1.05 times the minister's minimum remuneration package

- as defined by the Assembly.
- b) manse provided or benefit as set by the TEC.
- c) telephone rent plus all calls.
- d) superannuation at the ministerial rate.
- e) six months of paid study leave during each fourth and each seventh year of employment or twelve months of paid study leave during each seventh year of employment.
- f) removal costs paid by the TEC within Australia but a negotiated figure if from overseas.
- g) annual leave equivalent to ministerial annual leave as defined by the Assembly, currently five weeks.
- h) Workcover.
- i) payment of manse energy bills up to \$3,000 per annum as a non-cash benefit.
- j) any other provisions the Assembly may determine.
- k) The appointment will be for two years in the first instance, and any subsequent appointment will be in compliance with workplace legislation.

5. Termination of Appointment

- a) By the committee
If after review of his performance the committee resolves that the appointee not be re-appointed, the committee shall give him six months' written notice of termination.
- b) By the appointee
If the appointee desires to resign his appointment, he shall give at least six months' notice in writing to the committee, unless the committee resolves to allow a shorter period of notice.
- c) Immediate by change of circumstance
 - 1. Deposition or excommunication.
 - 2. WWCC exclusion.
 - 3. Not meeting or no longer able or willing to meet a position description responsibility or no longer possessing an essential attribute or qualification.

The motion was seconded and approved.

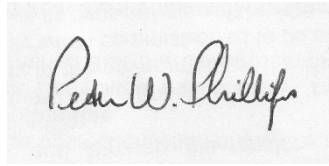
8. Dissolution

The business of the Assembly now being concluded, the Acting Moderator closed the meeting with prayer and the benediction.

CLERKS
C B Garrett
P J Burns

Certificate

I certify that the minutes of this General Assembly, having been carefully scrutinised,
are hereby confirmed in terms of minute 5.9 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 'P'.

Rev Peter W Phillips
Acting Moderator

BY ORDER OF THE MODERATOR
24 July 2024

Members of the General Assembly

In response to a request dated 12th July 2024 from Rev Kevin Maxwell, Convener Theological Education Committee and signed by nine other persons entitled to be members of the General Assembly and representing more than three presbyteries, in accordance with Code rule 5.38, I hereby give notice of an Urgent Meeting of the General Assembly to be held via Zoom, on Wednesday 7th August 2024 at 2.00pm, to consider an urgent matter regarding the approval of job descriptions for the positions of Practical Theology and Theological Studies at the Presbyterian Theological College. In Christ's service

Rev Ian Hutton
Moderator
Presbyterian Church of Victoria

BUSINESS COMMITTEE (Min 5)

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 those papers that seem competent and respectful.

Outline of business

The committee will present a proposed agenda at the start of the Assembly. 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
6. Conflicts of Interest
7. Theological Education Committee
8. Dissolution

Brett Cummins
CONVENER

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Min 7)

Faculty new position descriptions for 2025

At the end of the 2024 academic year, the appointments of the Rev Peter Hastie and Rev Dr Felix Chung expire. Rev Hastie and Dr Chung lecture in the areas of Systematic Theology and Evangelism/Missions, respectively. To maintain the standard and quality of the teaching program at PTC, these appointments will require replacements for the 2025 academic year and beyond. In consultation with the faculty and having reviewed the applications for the position of Principal, the TEC has approved the following position descriptions to meet the ongoing lecturing needs of the College and recommend them to the Assembly for approval. The Committee would like to advertise these positions as soon as possible.

Recent history of the College has demonstrated the need to maintain a faculty of five full-time lecturers. Failure to maintain a faculty with five full-time lecturers has resulted in an unreasonable workload and significant stress for all members of the faculty and staff. It creates an unacceptable risk that the College would not be able to meet the compliance standards of the industry regulator. In addition, inadequate staffing levels have the potential to reduce the quality of the teaching program and learning environment. The TEC is committed to ensuring that adequate faculty and staffing levels are maintained to ensure the well-being of all College employees and students.

In addition to the above, recent changes to workplace legislation governing the tertiary education sector have required the TEC and Faculty to redraft the position descriptions in the areas of theological studies and practical theology (evangelism and missions) to meet these requirements.

Lecturer in Theological Studies Position Description

1. Position Summary

The Presbyterian Theological College (PTC) is the ministry training college of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (PCV) and is a reformed and evangelical institution that has a vital role in developing, disseminating, and supporting faithful gospel ministry in Melbourne, regional Victoria and beyond. The lecturer in Theological Studies is appointed to the PTC by the General Assembly of the PCV, through the Theological Education Committee (TEC), the body entrusted with the oversight of the College by the Assembly.

The lecturer in Theological Studies is a faithful Christian, academically able in the discipline of historical and systematic theology and with experience in pastoral oversight, who can help students understand the doctrines of scripture and how those doctrines have been understood by the church. The lecturer also has a role in leading the PCV as it engages with theological and ministry issues.

Through the TEC, the Assembly sets the lecturer apart for this ministry and teaching appointment by a public act of commissioning.

2. Responsibilities

The lecturer in Theological Studies is responsible for the following, under the oversight and at the direction of the Principal.

Key responsibilities (0.7 FTE total):

- Lecturing in Systematic and Historical Theology and other Christian studies, and

undertaking related activities such as assessment, research supervision, and conference speaking, as assigned by the faculty (0.4 FTE).

- Producing research publication outputs at world-class level or above typically on a per semester basis (0.3 FTE, excluding study leave).

Institutional and consortium responsibilities (0.2 FTE):

- Participating in faculty meetings and activities.
- Undertaking administrative tasks.
- Meeting Australian College of Theology academic and administrative requirements.
- Participating in Australian College of Theology meetings.

Denominational responsibilities (0.1 FTE):

- Being involved in and representing the College's interests in the life of the PCV.
- Representing the College by leading and preaching in congregational worship.
- Advising Assembly committees as requested and required.

General responsibilities:

- Setting an example in life and ministry to the students.
- Contributing to the well-being of the college community.
- Staying abreast of educational developments and innovating in the delivery of his courses and their assessment.
- Teaching evening classes.

3. Attributes, Qualifications, Experience

Essential:

- Qualified at research doctoral level.
- Meets the qualifications of a ministry leader as described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, i.e. demonstrating a mature Christian character.
- A minister in full standing with the Presbyterian Church of Australia, or willing to satisfy the requirements of the General Assembly of Australia relative to the reception of ministers from other churches, or similarly able to provide theological and spiritual leadership as a teacher of the church, including in conducting worship services.
- A wholehearted commitment to the Westminster Confession of Faith, as read in the light of the Declaratory Statement of 1901, as a systematic exposition of the teaching of scripture.
- Fully committed to the Bible as the inerrant word of God.
- Prayerful.
- The capacity to communicate clearly.
- Ability to relate to people of diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Ability to work in a team.
- Possesses or can obtain a Working with Children's Check and is willing to sign the Safe Church policy agreement.

Preferred at application:

- Demonstrated ability to teach in the discipline.
- Demonstrated ability to produce academic publications.
- Experience in curriculum design, assessment, and different modes of course delivery.

- Understanding of the Australian higher educational context and the expectations of the Australian College of Theology.
- Experience in discipling and training others in ministry skills.
- Experience in the activities of the courts of the Church.
- Administrative experience in a tertiary institution.

4. Terms

- 1.05 times the minister's minimum remuneration package as defined by the Assembly.
- manse provided or benefit as set by the TEC.
- telephone rent plus all calls.
- superannuation at the ministerial rate.
- six months of paid study leave during each fourth and each seventh year of employment or twelve months of paid study leave during each seventh year of employment.
- removal costs paid by the TEC within Australia but a negotiated figure if from overseas.
- annual leave equivalent to ministerial annual leave as defined by the Assembly, currently five weeks.
- Workcover.
- payment of manse energy bills up to \$3,000 per annum as a non-cash benefit.
- any other provisions the Assembly may determine.
- The appointment will be for two years in the first instance, and any subsequent appointment will be in compliance with workplace legislation.

5. Termination of Appointment

- By the committee
If after review of his performance the committee resolves that the appointee not be re-appointed, the committee shall give him six months' written notice of termination.
- By the appointee
If the appointee desires to resign his appointment, he shall give at least six months' notice in writing to the committee, unless the committee resolves to allow a shorter period of notice.
- Immediate by change of circumstance
 - Deposition or excommunication.
 - WWCC exclusion.
 - Not meeting or no longer able or willing to meet a position description responsibility or no longer possessing an essential attribute or qualification.

Lecturer in Practical Theology (Evangelism and Mission) Position Description

1. Position Summary

The Presbyterian Theological College (PTC) is the ministry training college of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (PCV) and is a reformed and evangelical institution that has a vital role in developing, disseminating, and supporting faithful gospel ministry in Melbourne, regional Victoria and beyond. The lecturer in Practical Theology (Evangelism and Mission) is appointed to the PTC by the General Assembly of the PCV, through the Theological Education Committee (TEC), the body entrusted with the oversight of the College by the Assembly.

The lecturer in Practical Theology (Evangelism and Mission) is a faithful Christian,

academically able in the discipline of Practical Theology, with a demonstrable ability as a personal formational advisor, and with experience in pastoral oversight, who can help students understand the challenges and gospel opportunities of the intellectual, moral, and cultural context in Australia and support students as they prepare for ministry. The lecturer also has a role in leading the PCV as it engages with theological and ministry issues.

Through the TEC, the Assembly sets the lecturer apart for this ministry and teaching appointment by a public act of commissioning.

2. Responsibilities

The lecturer in Practical Theology (Evangelism and Mission) is responsible for the following, under the oversight and at the direction of the Principal.

Key responsibilities (0.7 FTE total):

- Lecturing in evangelism, apologetics, mission, church planting, and other Christian studies, and undertaking related activities such as assessment and research supervision, as assigned by the faculty (0.4 FTE).
- Developing relationships with ministry students that will be spiritually and personally formative and supportive for them and continuing the relationships into at least the first two years of students' ministries after College (0.2 FTE).
- Engaging in conferences relevant to the teaching area (0.05 FTE).
- Leading the College mission evangelism week (0.025 FTE).
- Producing research and scholarly publication outputs (0.025 FTE, excluding study leave)

Institutional and consortium responsibilities (0.2 FTE):

- Participating in faculty meetings and activities.
- Undertaking administrative tasks.
- Meeting Australian College of Theology academic and administrative requirements.
- Participating in Australian College of Theology meetings.

Denominational responsibilities (0.1 FTE):

- Being involved in and representing the College's interests in the life of the PCV.
- Representing the College by leading and preaching in congregational worship.
- Advising Assembly committees as requested and required.

General responsibilities:

- Setting an example in life and ministry to the students.
- Contributing to the well-being of the college community.
- Staying abreast of educational developments and innovating in the delivery of his courses and their assessment.
- Teaching evening classes.

3. Attributes, Qualifications, Experience

Essential:

- Qualified at research masters level or above.
- Meets the qualifications of a ministry leader as described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, i.e. demonstrating a mature Christian character.

- A minister in full standing with the Presbyterian Church of Australia or committed to applying or having already applied to be received as a minister of the General Assembly of Australia.
- A wholehearted commitment to the Westminster Confession of Faith, as read in the light of the Declaratory Statement of 1901, as a systematic exposition of the teaching of scripture.
- Fully committed to the Bible as the inerrant word of God.
- Demonstrable ability in discipling and training others in ministry skills.
- Demonstrable ability in advising others in spiritual formation.
- Prayerful.
- The capacity to communicate clearly.
- Ability to relate to people of diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Ability to work in a team.
- Possesses or can obtain a Working with Children's Check and is willing to sign the Safe Church policy agreement.

Preferred at application:

- Already possessing or working toward a doctorate (preferably a research doctorate).
- Demonstrated ability to teach in the discipline.
- Demonstrated ability to produce academic or scholarly publications.
- Experience in curriculum design, assessment, and different modes of course delivery.
- Understanding of the Australian higher educational context and the expectations of the Australian College of Theology.
- Experience in the activities of the courts of the Church.
- Administrative experience in a tertiary institution.

4. Terms

- b) 1.05 times the minister's minimum remuneration package as defined by the Assembly.
- c) manse provided or benefit as set by the TEC.
- d) telephone rent plus all calls.
- e) superannuation at the ministerial rate.
- f) six months of paid study leave during each fourth and each seventh year of employment or twelve months of paid study leave during each seventh year of employment.
- g) removal costs paid by the TEC within Australia but a negotiated figure if from overseas.
- h) annual leave equivalent to ministerial annual leave as defined by the Assembly, currently five weeks.
- i) Workcover.
- j) payment of manse energy bills up to \$3,000 per annum as a non-cash benefit.
- k) any other provisions the Assembly may determine.
- l) The appointment will be for two years in the first instance, and any subsequent appointment will be in compliance with workplace legislation.

5. Termination of Appointment

- a) By the committee
If after review of his performance the committee resolves that the appointee not be re-appointed, the committee shall give him six months' written notice of

termination.

b) By the appointee

If the appointee desires to resign his appointment, he shall give at least six months' notice in writing to the committee, unless the committee resolves to allow a shorter period of notice.

c) Immediate by change of circumstance

1. Deposition or excommunication.

2. WWCC exclusion.

3. Not meeting or no longer able or willing to meet a position description responsibility or no longer possessing an essential attribute or qualification.

Kevin Maxwell
CONVENER

ROLL OF ASSEMBLY (7 AUGUST 2024)

Presbytery of Flinders

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Aspendale	Brett Peatman	
Brighton (HMC)		
BayChurch	Paul Huynh	Ross McKinnon
Clarinda (HMC)		Michael Lee
Clarinda Nuer (HMC)		
Clayton	Michael Jensen	Arnis Putnins
	Lam Paul Gak (Associate)	
Cranbourne	Peter Roberts	
Dandenong	Andrew Wong	Robert Paix
Dromana-Mornington	Matt Cole	
Embrace Melbourne (AC)	Paul Jang	
Frankston	Jared Keath	
New Life, Officer	David Martin	Sabyan Hardjo
Somerville (HMC)	Gary Wentworth	
Sorrento-Rye	Hui Lim	
South East Samoan	Kainano Opetaiia	
	Retired Ministers:	
	Peter Barclay	
	Ivan Barker	
	David Brown	
	Ken Brown	
	Frank Savage	
	Wally Zurrer	

Presbytery of Geelong

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bannockburn	Matthew Deroon	G (Bert) Stasse
Bellarine (AC)	Brett Cummins	Neil Mansfield
Geelong West	Luke McSeveny	Drew Chittenden
North Geelong	Darren Middleton	Richard Worth
The Leigh	Surendra Wesley	Jim Venters
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Andrew Bray	Ben Saunders
	John Cromarty	
	Allan Harman	
	Ian Hutton	
	Scott Kroeger	
	John Stasse	
	Grant Vayne	
	Robert White	

Presbytery of Gippsland

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bairnsdale	Gary Stephens	Roger McIvor
Drouin	Heath Easton	Alan York
	Stephen Jones (Associate)	
Leongatha (HMC)	Stephen Denness	
Moe-Yarram	Stephen Deroon	John Ollis
Morwell		Neil Akers
Sale (HMC)		
Warragul	Raymond Patchett	Tom Guilford
Clerk of Assembly	Cameron Garrett	
PTC Lecturer	Karl Hood	
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Robert Boan	Alan Solidium
	Michael Wharton	Stephen Weir

Presbytery of Maroondah

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Belgrave Heights	Mark Tonkin	
Blackburn (HMC)		Keith Ferres
Croydon	Cameron Griffiths	Roni Tobing
Doncaster (HMC)		Colin Flynn
Donvale	Gerald Vanderwert	Iain Bramley
	Jordan Born (Associate)	
	Joel Mestry (Associate)	
	Xien Yao (Associate)	
Heathmont	Brian Harvey	Doug Fraser
Kirkbrae	Paul K B Lee	
Mt Evelyn (AC)	Miles Fagan	Bruce Timmins
Warburton (HMC)		
Woori Yallock	Tony Archer	Andre Dahmen
MDC Officer	Chris Siriweera	
PTC Lecturer	Jared Hood	
	Retired Ministers:	
	Tony Bird	
	Graham Bradbeer	
	Trevor Cox	
	Wally Gear	
	Grant Lawry	
	Peter Orchard	
	Andrew Slater	
	Willem Vandenberg	
	Andrew Venn	

Presbytery of Melbourne East

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Arabic	Karam Krayyem	Nageib Seedhom
Ashburton		
Auburn (Chalmers)	Nick Arundell	Caleb Schulz
Burwood Community	John Elnatan	Frans Herjanto
	Billy Kurniawan (Assistant)	
Camberwell	Philip Mercer	Philip Barton
Canterbury	David Hann	Kevin Childs
	Dong Choi (Assistant)	
Caulfield-Elwood	Phillip Chang	Haddon Chang
Gardenvale East (AC)		
Hawthorn	Graham Nicholson	John Singleton
Korean	Jae Kook Kim	Wonil Kim
Malvern	Marcus Campbell	
South Yarra		Ben Palmer
St Kilda	Luke Isham	Nate Raiter
Surrey Hills	John Huynh	Russell Walley
	Oliver Blythe (Associate)	
Scotch Chaplains:	David Assender	
	Douglas Campbell	
PTC Lecturer	Ben Nelson	
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Alan Every	John Angelico
	Douglas Milne	Jim Hare
	Richard O'Brien	Ken McClimont
	Anthony Salisbury	
	Bob Thomas	

Presbytery of Melbourne North

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bundoora	Neil Chambers	Andrew May
	Clinton Le Page (Associate)	
Donnybrook, Fresh Start (CPC)	Ben Kelada	
Eltham	Don Elliott	Ian Courts
Epping	Nello Barbieri	Neil Furlong
	Brian Luong (Associate)	
Heidelberg	Bagoes Seta	Tom Cunneen
Hume (AC)	Luke Brownley	Tony Ruggeri
Kangaroo Ground (HMC)		
Reservoir		Steve Harris
Samoan		
Valley (AC)	Richard Wilson	Luke Yelland
Whittlesea-Mernda	Botros Botrosdief	
PTC Principal	Peter Hastie	
PTC Lecturer	John Wilson	
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Simalu Cowley	Rob Herweynen
	Theo Fishwick	

Presbytery of Melbourne West

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Brimbank (AC)	Daniel Dixon	Ken Fuhrmeister
Clifton Hill-Essendon	Christopher Duke	David Cutler
	Bill Medley (Associate)	
Darebin	Adam Humphries	Ken Koh
Gisborne	Wayne McArdle	Adrian Guillot
Melbourne Scots'	Philip Campbell	Graeme Harris
	Justin Ang (Assistant)	
Melton	Dinesh Taunk	Dennis Wright
Sunshine-Melbourne West Korean (AC)	Samuel Son	Jacky Lam
West Footscray (HMC)	Martin de Pyle	
Williamstown-Point Cook	Matthew Tegart	
Wyndham	Peter Greiner	Steven Letcher
	Retired Ministers:	
	John Cho	
	Philip Court	
	John Ellis	
	Walter Johnson	
	Len Pearce	
	Bruce Riding	

Presbytery of North East Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Benalla-Balmattum-Thoona	Stephen McDonald	Graeme Hayes
Broadford (AC)	Barry Porter	Ross Barnett
Numurkah-Tallygaroopna		
Seymour-Nagambie-Yea (HMC)		Bill Day
Shepparton-Stanhope-Kyabram	Kyung Ee	Philip Betts
Tatura-Rushworth	Kalpan Vasa	Gary Dunstan
Wangaratta-Myrtleford		
Wodonga (AC)	Stuart Withers	
Yarrawonga (HMC)		Malcolm Browning
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Neil Harvey	Ralph Kop
	Kevin Maxwell	
	Neil McDonald	
	Ian Touzel	

Presbytery of North Western Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bendigo	Philip Burns	Andrew Kerr
Bendigo East (Reforming)	Russ Grinter	Ryan Smith
Castlemaine (HMC)	Daryl Jackson	Richard McArdle
Eaglehawk (AC)	Jesse Walz	
Kerang/Swan Hill (AC)		
Rochester	Michael Riske	
Sunraysia (HMC)		Colin Morrow
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Keith Bell	Tony Zirngast
	Peter Phillips	
	John Sutherland	

Presbytery of South West Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Camperdown-Terang-Noorat	Damian Meeuwissen	Tom Fleming
Colac		Geoff Cross
Hamilton	David Schulz	Graeme Presser
	Robert Koh (Associate)	
Koroit-Port Fairy		
Portland	Rod Waterhouse	
Warrnambool	Ben Johnson	Robert Prout
	Shady Mehanni (Associate)	
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Neil Benfell	Damien Craig
	Ian Leach	David Selman

Presbytery of Western Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Ararat-Skipton-Lismore (AC)		Stewart McKerrow
Ballarat North (AC)		
Ballarat South (Ebenezer St John's)	Toby McIntosh	Keith Mitchell
Ballarat West	Robert Duncanson	Jeremy Peet
Horsham	Greg Matthews	Jonathan Starks
Kaniva-Nhill (HMC)		Bruce Meyer
	Retired Ministers:	
	John Brennan	
	Maurie Cropper	

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
OCTOBER 2024

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

1st Sitting: Monday 7 October (pm)

At Melbourne, and within The Scots' Church, Monday 7 October 2024 at 7:30pm.

1. Constitution

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria met by appointment of the previous Assembly (BB 2023 min 118).

Past Moderator Rev Peter Phillips constituted the Assembly with prayer.

2. Roll

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant interim authority to the Roll of Assembly, compiled from the certified rolls of presbyteries as amended, and direct that this Roll be submitted for declaration at the second sitting.

The motion was seconded and approved.

3. Apologies

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the apologies received by the clerks prior to the constitution of this sitting and record their names in the minutes.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The following apologies were sustained:

Ministers:

For this sitting: Theo Fishwick, Adam Humphries, Ben Kelada, Ian Touzel.

For all sittings: Keith Bell, Tony Bird, Luke Brownley, Neil Harvey, Paul Huynh, Stephen Jones, Billy Kurniawan, Bill Medley, Clinton Le Page, Shady Mehanni, Neil McDonald, Len Pearce, Bruce Riding.

Elders:

For this sitting: Nil.

For all sittings: John Angelico, Phil Betts, Ken Fuhrmeister, James Hare, Ralph Kop.

4. Associations

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Associate the following members of coordinate courts:

- a) Rev Dr Stuart Bonnington (General Assembly of Western Australia) for all sittings;
- b) Rev David Burke (General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales) for sittings one through five;
- c) Rev Dr Davi Gomes (General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Brazil) for all sittings;
- d) Rev Kevin Murray (General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales) for all sittings; and
- e) Rev Lesleigh Hall (General Assembly of Queensland) for all sittings.

The motion was seconded and approved.

5. Appointment of Moderator

The Clerk intimated that Rev Ian Colin Hutton, retired minister, had been elected as Moderator Designate of this General Assembly by the May 2024 Commission of the General Assembly (2024 Comm. min 7).

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Appoint Rev Ian Colin Hutton, BAgrSc(Hons), DipEd, BTh, as Moderator of the 2024 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

The motion was seconded and approved.

6. Installation of Moderator

Past Moderator Rev Peter Phillips put the moderatorial questions to Mr Hutton, installed him into the office of Moderator with prayer, and, together with the ex-moderators, gave him the right hand of fellowship.

7. Signing of Assembly Bible

The Moderator signed the Assembly Bible, which has been signed by every Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria since its formation in 1859.

8. Moderator's Reflections

The Moderator addressed the Assembly.

9. Worship resumed

The Moderator conducted public worship and preached the occasional sermon, 'Our God Who Turns This World's Thinking On Its Head', based on Acts 17:22-34.

10. Adjournment

The Assembly adjourned to meet at 9:30am on Tuesday 8 October 2024 in The Scots' Church Melbourne and thereafter in the Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall, 156 Collins Street Melbourne, which, having been duly intimated, the Moderator closed the sitting with the benediction.

CLERKS:
C B Garrett
P W Phillips
P J Burns

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

2nd Sitting: Tuesday 8 October (am)

At Melbourne, and within The Scots' Church, and afterwards in the Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall, Tuesday 3 October 2024 at 9:30am.

11. Communion Service and Constitution

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria met pursuant to adjournment. The Moderator, Rev Ian Hutton, constituted the Assembly with prayer and led the Assembly in worship. The Assembly Expositor, Rev Dr Davi Gomes, led the Assembly in the first of his Assembly expositions, 'Of Swords, Ploughs and Global Change', based on Micah 4:1-8.

12. Roll

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Declare the names recorded in the draft Roll of Assembly, compiled from the certified rolls of presbyteries, as amended, to be the Roll of the 2024 General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

13. Apologies

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the apologies received by the clerks prior to the constitution of this sitting and record their names in the minutes.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The following apologies were sustained:

Ministers: Ben Kelada.

Elders: David Cutler.

14. Associations

Nil.

15. Welcomes

The Moderator welcomed Rev David Burke, Moderator General, Rev Lesleigh Hall, Clerk of General Assembly of Australia, Assembly Expositor Rev Dr Davi Gomes, and Rev Kevin Murray APWM National Director, to the Assembly.

16. Business Committee

The report of the Business Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-13 were approved.

Rev Graham Nicholson sought leave to move a motion without notice.

Leave was granted

Rev Graham Nicholson moved:

That the Assembly.

Vary the Order of Business to shift item 14 to a subsequent sitting.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Rev Kevin Maxwell sought leave to move a motion without notice.

Leave was granted.

Rev Kevin Maxwell moved:

That the Assembly:

Vary the Order of Business to provide a fixed order of the day for the Theological Education Committee at 12:20pm today.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Clause 14 as amended was approved.

Rev Brett Cummins, Business Convener, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Assembly:

1. Encourage Assembly members to attend the remaining Assembly prayer meetings on Wednesday and Thursday mornings at 8:30am in the Robert White meeting room.
2. Determine that the hours of meeting be:
 - First Sitting, Monday 7 October, 7:30pm
 - Second Sitting, Tuesday 8 October, 9:30am–5:30pm
 - Third Sitting, Tuesday 8 October, 7:00pm–9:00pm
 - Fourth Sitting, Wednesday 9 October, 9:30am–5:30pm
 - Fifth Sitting, Wednesday 9 October, 7:00pm–9:00pm
 - Sixth Sitting, Thursday 10 October, 9:30am to the finish of business
3. Determine that lunch be taken daily from 12:30pm–2:00pm, that refreshments be taken daily from 3:30pm–3:50pm, and that a dinner break be taken on Thursday from 5:30pm–6:30pm, as necessary.
4. 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
 - Overturists stating the overture
 - Question time (including 20 mins for total deliverance questions)
 - 5 minutes for:
 - Appellants in reply
 - Movers of substantive motions and amendments
 - Seconders of substantive motions and amendments
 - All other speakers.
5. Appoint a Ballot Committee for the Assembly consisting of:
 - Stuart Withers (Convener), Steven Jones, Luke McSeveny, Dennis Wright, and Doug Fraser; and determine that this committee be held to be thanked and discharged at the dissolution of this Assembly.
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. 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 motion be required to allow for dissent as per Rule 6.40.3 or some other later determination be made by this Assembly.
12. Approve generally the outline of business as given in the report.
13. Approve the consent agenda.
14. Approve the Order of Business for the second sitting, Tuesday, 8 October 2024 as amended.

The motion was seconded and approved.

17. Conflict of Interest Declarations

The Moderator invited declarations by members of the Assembly of any Conflict of Interest as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business on the agenda.

No declarations were forthcoming.

The Clerk informed the Assembly that Rev John Wilson, Elder Colin Morrow, Rev Ben Nelson and Rev Jared Hood had declared conflicts of interest in respect of various agenda items.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Note the declaration of a Conflict of Interest by Rev John Wilson in respect of the Clerkship Committee's proposed deliverance clauses 1-3.
2. Manage Mr Wilson's declared conflict by permitting Mr Wilson to remain in the house, but request him to abstain from voting on the relevant clauses and have his abstentions recorded in the minutes.
3. Note the declaration of a Conflict of Interest by Elder Colin Morrow in respect of the Code and General Administration Committee's proposed deliverance clause 5.
4. Manage Mr Morrow's declared conflict by permitting Mr Morrow to remain in the house, but not speak or vote on the relevant clause.
5. Note the declaration of a Conflict of Interest by Rev Dr Jared Hood in respect of the Theological Education Committee's proposed deliverance clause 9 and that as Dr Hood will voluntarily absent himself from the house for the relevant clause no further management of this declared conflict is necessary.
6. Note the declaration of a Conflict of Interest by Rev Ben Nelson in respect of the Theological Education Committee's proposed deliverance clause 10 and that as Mr Nelson will voluntarily absent himself from the house for the relevant clause no further management of this declared conflict is necessary.

The motion was seconded and approved.

18. Minutes of the Previous Sitting

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

19. Minutes of the May 2024 Commission of Assembly

The confirmed minutes of the May 2024 Commission of Assembly were received.

20. Minutes of the March 2024 Urgent Meeting of Assembly

The confirmed minutes of the March 2024 Urgent Meeting of the Assembly were received.

21. Minutes of the August 2024 Urgent Meeting of Assembly

The confirmed minutes of the August 2024 of the Assembly were received.

22. New Members

New members of the Assembly introduced themselves to the Assembly.

The Moderator welcomed the new members to the Assembly.

23. Ministerial and Elders' Deaths

The Clerk reported that the passing of Rev Barry Richard Oakes, Elder Frederick Norman Sharp and Rev John Todd Mercer since the 2023 General Assembly.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Note the passing of Rev Barry Richard Oakes (31 January 1957 – 12 January 2024) and insert into the Assembly record this memorial minute of the General Assembly's sincere gratitude for faithful gospel service to the church.

Barry Oakes began his studies as a private student at the Presbyterian Theological College (PTC) in 1995 and was accepted as a candidate for the Ministry of Word and Sacraments in 1997. He graduated from the PTC receiving his Exit Certificate and two prizes, in Practical Theology and Hebrew, in November 1998. As there were no exit parishes available at the start of 1999, Barry did not move to his exit appointment at Noorat until the June of 1999.

Barry was ordained and inducted into the pastoral charge of Noorat on 3 December 1999. Barry was subsequently called to the pastoral charge of Swan Hill where he was inducted on 16 January 2006. Barry demitted on 9 May 2010, discouraged and burnt out, concerned for the for the sake of his own health and that of his family.

After a two year sabbatical, Barry returned to pastoral ministry at Ashburton on 18 March 2012 on a part time basis, moving to full time on 1 July 2014.

Barry was committed in his involvement in the work of the presbyteries of South West Victoria (formerly Kilnoorat), North Western Victoria (formerly Bendigo) and most recently Melbourne East, and over the years served as Presbytery Moderator on several occasions.

Barry was in continuous service in Assembly Committees from 2002 including: Church and Nation Committee (2002-2006); Theological Education Committee (2006-2015); Board of Investment and Finance (2014 until his death, serving as Chairman from 2019 until his death).

Barry fulfilled his ordination and induction vow promising to "give conscientious attendance upon courts of the church, and to direct (his) best attention to the business thereof, doing all in the spirit of faithfulness, brotherly, kindness and charity."

2. Note the passing of Elder Frederick Norman Sharp (13 October 1935 – 15 March 2024) and insert into the Assembly record this memorial minute of the General Assembly's sincere gratitude for faithful gospel service to the church.

Norm was ordained and inducted into the Eldership in 1957. Since that time Norm served the church and her people in various ways. Over the years Norm helped several congregations as a supply preacher, with extended periods at Ararat (seven years) and Ballarat West (four years).

Norm was a long-time member of the Western Presbytery (formerly Ballarat) and was commissioned to the General Assembly of Victoria for eighteen years (1999-2017).

Norm was involved with several Victorian committees including the Assessors Panel, Church and Nation, Maintenance of the Ministry, Home Missions, Healthy Churches, and Conciliation Committees, and was convener of the General Mission Program.

Norm was commissioned by the General Assembly of Victoria to the 2004 and 2007 General Assemblies of Australia and served federally on the Moderator General Nominating Committee in 2014 and 2018.

Norm fulfilled his ordination and induction vow promising to "give conscientious attendance upon courts of the church, and to direct (his) best attention to the business thereof, doing all in the spirit of faithfulness, brotherly, kindness and charity."

3. Note the passing of Rev John Todd Mercer (30 October 1927 – 27 June 2024) and insert into the Assembly record this memorial minute of the General Assembly's sincere gratitude for faithful gospel service to the church.

John Todd Mercer, born at North Ryde, NSW, was the eldest of eight children born to first generation Scots migrants, David and Elizabeth Mercer. At the age of 5, John contracted polio in the first epidemic to sweep the nation, leaving him with permanently deformed feet and ankles.

At the age of 19, John was converted through the witness of work colleagues. Under the mentorship of Rev Donald Begbie (North Ryde Anglican), John felt the call of God to prepare for a life of witness to Christ. From 1949-1951, John studied at Melbourne Bible Institute under the principalship of Rev John Searle, who took a particular interest in his development. Upon completion of his studies, John embarked on a 12-year career with CMS, serving indigenous communities of the Northern Territory: first at Ngukurr (Roper River); then pioneering a work at Numbulwar (Rose River); then as superintendent on Groote Eylandt; then in Darwin. After his first deployment, John married Phyllis Hughes, whose wedding also served as a commissioning of them both to the work of mission, after which they returned to begin the work at Numbulwar. Four sons were born to them while on the mission field. In 1963, John felt the need to return south to provide an education for his growing family. He enrolled in the Home Mission Service of the PCV, and served from 1963-

1965 at Dimboola, and from 1966-1968 at Thornbury, all the while studying at Ormond College in preparation for ordination. At the time, Ormond College had become predominantly liberal, and John's defence was to read two reformed and evangelical books for every liberal book on his reading list. John was ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament by the Presbytery of Melbourne at the end of 1968.

He was exiled to the Union Charge of Lindisfarne (TAS) (1969-1971), during which time their only daughter, Grace, was born to them. John was then called to Ascot Presbyterian Church (QLD) (1972-1974); then serve with the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canberra for 18 months; and was then called as associate minister of St. Andrew's Canberra (1976-1979); then ministered at Kogarah PC (1979-1984), and finally at Logan PC (QLD) (1985-1991), prior to his retirement.

Subscribing to the view that it is better to wear out rather than rust out, and so John and Phyllis gave themselves unstintingly in retirement to minister the Gospel wherever an invitation was extended to them. For the next 25 years, they embarked on countless journeys throughout Australia and around the world, doing locum work for ministers taking extended leave, filling in during vacancies, seeking to strengthen the church's witness to the Gospel of Christ. Retirement was also an opportunity for them to author many books and pamphlets, all of which sought to proclaim and commend Christ, were self-published, and mostly sold out of the boot of their car.

John's ministry was marked by his encouragement of many to seek the call of God upon their life, and through his influence, many have entered ministry or missionary service.

At his death aged 96, John is survived by 78 direct descendants by both birth and marriage.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer.

24. Royal and Loyal addresses

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Send the following address through the Governor of Victoria to His Majesty King Charles III:

To the King's most excellent majesty,

May it please your majesty: We, ministers and elders of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria convened in General Assembly at Melbourne in the State of Victoria on the eighth day of October 2024, take leave to assure your Majesty of our loyalty and devotion to your most gracious Person and to the Throne.

Instructed by the Scriptures, we pray regularly in our congregations and in the General Assembly asking that the Lord Jesus Christ, before whom every knee will bow, might sustain your Majesty in His providential care,

granting to you all gifts necessary for the discharge of your Majesty's exacting duties so that your work might be a joy and not a burden and that we may be quietly and peaceably governed.

Signed in our name and in our presence and at our appointing.

Rev Ian C Hutton

3. Send greetings to the Victorian Premier, Hon Jacinta Allan, to the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council, with assurances of the regular prayers of the members of this General Assembly, and of the people of our congregations, for all our parliamentary representatives in the exercise of their responsibilities.

25. Immediate Past Moderator's Report

Past Moderator Rev Peter Phillips assumed the Chair.

The Immediate Past Moderator's report was received.

The Immediate Past Moderator, Rev Ian Hutton, addressed the Assembly.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Express its thanks to Rev Ian Hutton for serving as the 2023 Moderator of the General Assembly of Victoria.

The motion was seconded and approved with acclamation.

The Moderator resumed the chair.

26. Board of Investment and Finance

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

The Chairman of the Board of Investment and finance, Mr John Walter, addressed the Assembly in support of the proposed deliverance.

Elder Dennis Wright moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Give thanks to God for the faithful life of service of Rev Barry Oakes, and particularly as member of the Board of Investment and Finance and The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation from October 2013 until January 2024.
2. Commend all charges and presbyteries for fully meeting the subscribed allocations for the 2023/24 General Mission Program.
3. Approve an increase in the maintenance budget for the Theological Education Committee building fund to a total of \$250,000.
4. Convey its appreciation to the 15 congregations: Bendigo, Ballarat North, Benalla, Camberwell, Hawthorn, Hamilton, Geelong (St George's), Gisborne, Malvern, Noorat, South Yarra, St Kilda, Terang, Warrnambool, Williamstown, who have undertaken risk management and property maintenance in order to meet the requirements of the insurer to retain cover for the whole of the PCV.
5. Request the Board of Investment and Finance to:
 - a) identify suitable contractors to conduct Thermographic scans of congregational buildings;
 - b) for all buildings covered under the Gallaghers PCV Group Insurance policy, to arrange for Thermographic scans to be performed if they have not already been done;
 - c) meet the cost of the scans from General Assembly funds.

6. Request the Board of Investment and Finance to report to the Commission of Assembly in May 2025 in relation to eligibility guidelines for exempt benefits arising from 2024 Commission minute 13.10.

The motion was seconded and approved.

27. Trusts Corporation

The Trusts Corporation's report was received.

The Chairman of the Trusts Corporation, Mr John Walter, addressed the Assembly in support of the proposed deliverance.

The Clerk moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Approve the allocation of the \$3.775M special distribution from Scots' Church Properties Trust as follows: \$2M to the Property Development Fund and \$1.775M to the Ministry Development Committee.
2. Consent to the Trusts Corporation recommendation to apply the income from the Allan Bequest to the purposes of the METRO committee which based on the legal advice are consistent with the purposes of the trust.
3. Acknowledge and adopt the alternative arrangements for the application of the Allan Bequest funds.
4. Approve the return to the General Assembly funds of the balance of General Fund of the METRO Committee less \$30,000 (ie, leaving METRO Committee with \$30,000) and allocate the funds returned to the Presbyterian Youth and Children committee as general funds to be applied to the work of the committee.

The motion was seconded and approved.

28. Theological Education Committee

The report of the Theological Education Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 2-8, 13 and 15-17 were approved.

Clause 1 was approved with acclamation.

The business was adjourned for lunch and then a fixed order of the day. (min 34)

29. Women's Ministries Victoria Committee

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

The Moderator welcomed Mrs Kathryn Gatt, Women's Ministry Facilitator, to the Assembly, who addressed the Assembly, especially in regard to clauses 3-4 of the committee's proposed deliverance.

A video discussion of pastoral ministry by women was screened.

The Convener introduced Mrs Jan Martin recently appointed as women's ministry coach, who addressed the Assembly on her task in this role.

The Convener, Rev Ben Johnson, moved the deliverance as a whole.

That the Assembly:

1. Give thanks for the second year of the Women's Ministries Facilitator (Events, Training and Communications) Kathryn Gatt.
2. Pray for women throughout the PCV 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.
3. Encourage sessions to identify and support women in their congregations who could lead a local church women's ministry that focuses on women's bible study groups, one on one discipleship, women teaching women, and

- women evangelising women and encourage those women to reach out to the WMF (Events, Training and Communications).
4. Encourage the women of the PCV to attend the March and August masterclasses (on 'Talking About Jesus' and 'Prayer' respectively) and the State Conference on 13 September 2025 to explore biblical theology through the topic of 'Relentless Love' from the book of Hosea in the Werner Brodbeck Hall, 156 Collins St, Melbourne.
 5. Encourage sessions to identify suitably gifted women to consider training as a women's pastoral worker through identified pathways with a view to being employed with the help of a Ministry Development Committee Second Worker Grant.

The motion was second and approved.

Moderator's chaplain Rev Gerald Vanderwert led the Assembly in prayer.

30. Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union (PWMU)

The Moderator welcomed Mrs Roslyn Brown, President, PWMU and Mrs Gaye McKenzie, Vice President, PWMU.

Mrs Brown addressed the Assembly on the work of the PWMU.

The Moderator thanked Mrs Brown for her presentation.

The report of the PWMU was received with acclamation.

The Moderator led in prayer for the work of PWMU.

31. Clerkship Committee

The report of the Clerkship Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 4-7 were approved.

Clauses 1-3 were approved with acclamation.

Rev John Wilson abstained from voting.

The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer.

Mr Wilson addressed the Assembly.

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

That the Assembly:

1. Give grateful thanks to God for the services of Rev Dr John Wilson in various clerkship capacities over a period of 38 years continuously: first as Junior Clerk of Assembly (1985-1994), then as Deputy Clerk of Assembly (1994-2007), and most recently as Clerk of Assembly (2007-2023), in a full-time capacity from 2014. We gratefully acknowledge John's dedication to the task, his sacrificial devotion to the duties entrusted to him, his missional focus, his faithfulness to the Scriptures, his wisdom in seeking to navigate us through a period of substantial change, and his abiding concern for the welfare, unity, and peace of the church.
2. Express its grateful thanks to Mrs Paula Wilson for her sacrificial support of her husband in his various clerkship roles.
3. Pray for good health and strength for John and Paula Wilson for the next season of ministry that is ahead of them.
4. Commend Rev Cameron Garrett to the grace of God in fulfilment of his duties as incoming Clerk of Assembly and assure him of the prayerful support of the Assembly.
5. Approve the Position Description and terms of appointment for the position of Deputy Clerk of Assembly as follows:

Deputy Clerk of Assembly – Position Description

1. Title

There shall be an official of the General Assembly (the Assembly) called the Deputy Clerk.

2. Accountability

The Deputy Clerk shall be accountable to the Clerk of Assembly.

3. Attributes

The Deputy Clerk shall:

- a) be a mature Christian;
- b) demonstrate a pastoral heart;
- c) possess exceptional interpersonal skills;
- d) be comfortable understanding matters of law and be able to relate to lawyers, officials external to the church, members of the public and the media, if required.

4. Qualifications and/or Skills

The Deputy Clerk must:

- a) be either a minister or an elder who is a member of the General Assembly;
- b) have a good working knowledge of Presbyterian polity;
- c) have in-depth knowledge of the:
 - i) Code of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria;
 - ii) GAA Constitution, Procedure and Practice;
- d) possess an ability to teach polity to candidates for the ministry in the PCV;
- e) hold and maintain a current WWCC and be compliant with all Safe Church requirements.

5. Key Duties and Responsibilities

The Deputy Clerk shall:

- a) support the Clerk of Assembly in his duties as required and as necessary with counsel and advice;
- b) assist the Clerk as requested in providing assistance and guidance for members of the church, and for the church courts and committees, in the interpretation and application of the rules, practice and procedure of the church and in providing advice to parties who wish to bring business to the court;
- c) attend all sittings of the General Assembly and of the Commission of Assembly;
- d) serve as minute secretary of the General Assembly and of the Commission of Assembly and assist the Clerk of Assembly in the preparation of these minutes for publication;
- e) be an active member of the Code and General Administration Committee in assisting the Clerk of Assembly in the preparation of draft rules and regulations and other documents for meetings of the committee;
- f) serve as minute secretary of the Code and General Administration Committee;

- g) serve as the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Email Network Operator;
- h) serve as Acting Clerk of Assembly when the Clerk of Assembly is for any reason unable to carry out his duties.

6. Position Description Changes

The Assembly may at any time change this position description.

7. Terms of Appointment

The Deputy Clerk:

- a) holds office at the pleasure of the General Assembly and his role as Deputy Clerk is supernumerary to any other role he may hold in the church;
- b) is ordinarily not an employee of the General Assembly but is paid an honorarium as determined by the Assembly from time to time, with his reasonable costs in his performance of the duties required by his service as Deputy Clerk as authorised by the Clerk (or, in his absence, by the General Manager) being reimbursed by the Assembly.
- c) may, should the Clerk resign his office or be otherwise unable to fulfil his duties for an extended period of time, be appointed as Acting Clerk for such period of time and on such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed upon between the Deputy Clerk and the General Assembly or the Clerkship Committee as the case might require.

- 6. Approve the Position Description and terms of appointment for the position of Assistant to the Clerks as follows:

Assistant to the Clerks – Position Description

1. Title

There shall be an official of the General Assembly (the Assembly) called the Assistant to the Clerks.

2. Accountability

The Assistant to the Clerks shall be accountable to the Clerk of Assembly.

3. Attributes

The Assistant to the Clerks shall:

- a) be a mature Christian;
- b) demonstrate a pastoral heart;
- c) possess exceptional interpersonal skills;
- d) be comfortable understanding matters of law and be able to relate to lawyers, officials external to the church, members of the public and the media, if required.

4. Qualifications and/or Skills

The Assistant to the Clerks must:

- a) be either a minister or an elder who is a member of the General Assembly;

- b) have a good working knowledge of Presbyterian polity;
- c) have sufficient knowledge of the:
 - i) Code of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria;
 - ii) GAA Constitution, Procedure and Practice;
 to be able to assist the Clerks and to deputise for the Clerks as may be necessary;
- d) hold and maintain a current WWCC and be compliant with all Safe Church requirements.

5. Duties and Responsibilities

The Assistant to the Clerks shall

- a) provide assistance to the Clerk of Assembly and to the Deputy Clerk of Assembly as may be reasonably directed or required or arranged by mutual agreement;
- b) attend all sittings of the General Assembly and of the Commission of Assembly;
- c) be active in his membership of the Code and General Administration Committee.

6. Position Description Changes

The Assembly may at any time change this position description.

7. Terms of Appointment

The Assistant to the Clerks:

- a) holds office at the pleasure of the General Assembly and his role as Assistant to the Clerks is supernumerary to any other role he may hold in the church;
- b) is ordinarily not an employee of the General Assembly but is paid an honorarium as determined by the Assembly from time to time, with his reasonable costs in his performance of the duties required by his service as Assistant to the Clerks as authorised by the Clerk (or, in his absence, by the General Manager) being reimbursed by the Assembly.
- c) may, should the Clerk resign his office or be otherwise unable to fulfil his duties for an extended period of time and the Deputy Clerk be unavailable, be appointed as Acting Clerk for such period of time and on such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed upon between the Deputy Clerk and the General Assembly or the Clerkship Committee as the case might require.

7. Refer the matter of filling the position of Assistant to the Clerks to the May 2025 Commission of Assembly and permit the committee to report and bring a nomination to the Commission.

The motion was seconded and approved.

32. Declaration of Faithful Duty

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Note that Rev Cameron Garrett made the declaration of faithful duty, upon assuming the office of Clerk of the General Assembly, before many witnesses on 1 July 2024.

The motion was seconded and approved.

33. PWMU Cookbook Committee Report

The report of the PWMU Cookbook Committee was received

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Thank the PWMU Cookbook Committee for their generosity in serving afternoon tea in recognition of Rev Dr John Wilson's service as Clerk of the General Assembly of Victoria and for their ongoing work which supports the proclamation of the gospel throughout the world.

The motion was seconded and approved.

34. Theological Education Committee (min 28)

The business was resumed after the adjournment.

Rev Jared Hood left the Assembly.

It was agreed to sit in private.

Clause 9 was approved.

It was agreed to resume in open court.

Rev Jared and Mrs Cassie Hood were brought into the Assembly.

The Moderator informed Mr Hood that the Assembly has appointed him as Principal of the PTC from 1 Jan 2025.

The Assembly applauded the announcement.

The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer.

Mr Hood addressed the Assembly.

The business was adjourned. (min 103)

35. Adjournment

The Assembly adjourned to meet at 7:00 pm on Tuesday 8 October 2024, which, having been duly intimated, the Moderator closed the sitting with the benediction.

CLERKS
C B Garrett
P W Phillips
P J Burns

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

3rd Sitting: Tuesday 8 October (pm)

At Melbourne, and in the Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall, Tuesday 8 October 2024 at 7:00pm.

36. Constitution

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria met pursuant to adjournment. The Assembly was constituted by the singing of a hymn, a reading by Moderator's chaplain Rev Gerald Vanderwert of Job 38:1-11, 42:1-6 and prayer.

37. Apologies

The following apologies were sustained:

Ministers: Ben Kelada

Elders: Nil.

38. Business Committee

Rev Brett Cummins moved:

That the Assembly:

Approve the proposed agenda.

The motion was seconded and approved.

39. Conflict of Interest Declarations

The Moderator invited declarations by members of the Assembly of any Conflict of Interest as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business on the agenda.

No declarations were forthcoming.

40. Minutes of the Previous Sitting

The Deputy Clerk tabled the minutes of the 2nd Sitting.

41. Special Judicial Committee

The report of the Special Judicial Committee was received.

Petition 7: Presbytery of Maroondah – seat on presbytery for Rev K B Lee

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Waive the 30 days' notice period in this instance in order to receive and deal with
Petition 7 in accordance with rule 5.54.2.

The motion was seconded and approved.

42. Code and General Administration Committee

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

The deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-4 were approved.

Clause 5 was approved.

Elder Colin Morrow did not speak and refrained from voting.

Clauses 6-9 were approved.

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

That the Assembly:

1. Repeal the regulations of the Assessors Committee.

2. In the light of BB 2023 min 46.2 and BB 2024 Comm. min 10.6:
 - a) Repeal Maintenance of the Ministry Committee regulation 4(c) and enact in its place new regulation 4(c) as follows:
 - c) 'Minimum Stipend' is 60% of Minimum Ministerial Remuneration;
 - b) Repeal Maintenance of the Ministry Committee regulation 5(b) and enact in its place new regulation 5(b) as follows:
 - b) Maximum non-cash benefit: the maximum non cash benefit proportion of actual ministerial remuneration is 40%, with the actual dollar (\$) figure rounded down to the nearest multiple of 12;
 - c) Declare clauses (a) and (b) to have been in effect since 1 January 2024.
 - d) Repeal Maintenance of the Ministry Committee regulation 5(e) and enact in its place new Regulation 5(e) as follows:
 - e) Minimum rate of Employer Superannuation Contributions: is equal to the Government's Super Guarantee percentage plus 5%, which percentage is to be calculated on the actual ministerial remuneration, with the actual dollar figure rounded up to the nearest multiple of 12.
 - e) Declare clause (d) to have been in effect since 1 July 2024.
3. Repeal Ballot Committee regulation 4 and enact in its place new regulation 4 as follows:

4. Regulations

The following regulations shall apply except where otherwise specifically stated:

- a) Appointment of Assembly officials (rule 5.19)
 - i) the committee authorised by the General Assembly to receive nominations and/or applications for offices to be filled shall furnish a list of those names to go to ballot to the Ballot Committee not later than the commencement of the morning sitting on the day on which the ballot is to be held;
 - ii) nominees and/or applicants for offices to be filled who desire to withdraw their names from the ballot should notify the convener of the committee authorised by the General Assembly to receive them as soon as possible, and not later than the closing of the evening sitting prior to the day on which the ballot is to be held;
 - iii) the ballot shall be by preferential voting;
 - iv) the committee shall report the result of the ballot to the moderator, who shall privately inform the person whose name is first on the list and ascertain his willingness to accept the office; if the office is accepted he shall inform the General Assembly of the result of the ballot. Should the person whose name is

first on the list indicate his unwillingness to accept the office the moderator shall approach the other persons in order of preference until he is in a position to notify the General Assembly of the result of the ballot in terms of the one who accepts the office.

- b) Appointment of Assembly Committee members (rule 5.23)
 - i) where there is more than one candidate to be elected, the nominees, to the number required, receiving the highest number of votes are elected;
 - ii) where there is only one candidate to be elected, the nominee receiving the highest number of votes is elected;
 - iii) the ballot shall be by first past the post voting.

- 4. Repeal Building and Property Committee regulation 5 and enact in its place new regulation 5 as follows:

5. Duties – Committee

The committee shall:

- a) i) consider:
 - A. plans and specifications of proposed new congregational buildings or alterations to congregational buildings;
 - B. floor plans, pre-purchase condition inspection reports from qualified inspectors and other reports as required by the committee in connection with any proposed purchase of any building by a congregation for the use of the congregation;
submitted to it in accordance with rule 2.20 of the Code; and
- ii) consult with the Church Architect regarding the proposed works (or, in the case of documentation prepared by the Church Architect, with another architect of its choice) or the proposed purchase; and
- iii) if satisfied:
 - A. that the proposed works, if constructed in accordance with the plans and specifications submitted, will:
 - 1. meet the needs of the particular congregation; and
 - 2. comply with the principles approved by the General Assembly, with such variations as the committee may in any special case approve; and
 - B. that the site on which the proposed works are to be constructed is:
 - 1. suitable in area, situation and character to the needs of the particular congregation; and
 - 2. laid out in such a manner as to ensure its full, proper and economic utilisation;

- approve the plans and specifications; or
 - C. in the case of the proposed purchase of a building for the use of the congregation:
 - 1. that the building meets the needs of the congregation or is able to be adapted to meet the needs of the congregation; and
 - 2. that the cost of any maintenance or remedial works to make the building suitable for the needs of the congregation has been costed and able to be funded by the congregation; and
 - 3. that the building complies with the principles approved by the General Assembly, with such variations as the committee may in any special case approve.
 - approve the proposed purchase.
 - b)
 - i) administer the General Assembly's Manse Design Manual; and
 - ii) submit to the General Assembly for approval from time to time any alterations necessary to keep the Manual in line with best practice.
5. In respect of Ministry Development Committee regulation 13(d)(ii)
- a) Repeal regulation 13(d)(ii) and enact in its place new regulation 13(d)(ii) as follows:
 - ii) ensure that the home missionary's remuneration is not less than:
 - A. 85% of the minimum stipend for ministers as declared from time to time by the General Assembly for appointees that have not completed MDC-prescribed Home Missionary training; or
 - B. 93% of the minimum stipend for ministers likewise declared for appointees that have completed MDC prescribed Home Missionary training at PTC and have less than seven years of ministry service; or
 - C. 100% of the minimum stipend for ministers likewise declared for appointees that have completed MDC-prescribed training and have more than seven years of ministry service;
 and in every case 100% of the maximum NCB component of minimum remuneration likewise declared;
 - b) Declare clause (a) to come into effect on 1 January 2025.
 - c) Request presbyteries with home missionaries under their jurisdiction to pay particular attention to the implementation of (b) above to ensure Home Missionaries receive all the rights and privileges owing to their station.

- d) Request the Ministry Development Committee to inform all accredited home missionaries of the changes arising from clauses (a) and (b) above.
6. Repeal the 'Ministers Long Service Leave and LSL Fund Regulations' clauses 3, 4, 6 and 22 and enact the new clauses 3, 4, 6, and 22 in their place as follows

3. Definitions

In these regulations:

- a) 'service' means employment in
- i) any of the categories of service listed in regulation 3(b); or
 - ii) any other category of pastoral ministry immediately followed by employment in any of the categories of service listed in regulation 3(b);
- b) 'responsible body' means a church body obliged to provide long service leave for persons to whom these regulations apply, namely:
- i) in the case of:
 - A. a minister inducted into or appointed to a charge; or
 - B. a minister or a licentiate appointed as an assistant to a minister of a charge; or
 - C. a licentiate or home missionary appointed to a charge; the charge, with the session responsible for administrative matters;
 - ii) in the case of a minister accredited by APWM (VIC) serving as a Partner Church Missionary under the auspices of APWM (National), APWM(Vic);
 - iii) in the case of a minister, licentiate or home missionary employed by a committee of the General Assembly, that committee;
- c) 'the committee' means the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee.

4. Entitlement to leave

Every person at any time after completing seven years of continuous service within the scope of regulation 3(a) is entitled to an amount of long service leave on ordinary pay equal to 1/40th of his total period of continuous service less any period of long service leave taken during that period. Part-time service shall be calculated on a pro-rata basis according to the terms of the appointment, and recorded as a full-time equivalent value. In the case of a minister, licentiate or home missionary inducted into or appointed to a charge, 'on ordinary pay' means 'in accordance with his terms of settlement as approved'.

6. Continuous service

Continuous service is service undertaken on a continuous basis for or in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria within the scope of regulation 3(a). For the purpose of these regulations:

- a) A person's service is taken to be continuous despite an

absence from work caused by the person taking:

- i) annual leave;
 - ii) study leave;
 - iii) long service leave;
 - iv) leave from work because of illness or injury;
 - v) carer's leave;
 - vi) paid or unpaid parental leave;
 - vii) compassionate leave, or
 - viii) any other form of paid or authorised unpaid leave in accordance with that person's employment.
- b) A person's service is taken to be continuous despite failure by the responsible body to pay the Levy (see regulation 21) on one or more occasion.
 - c) A person's service is taken to be continuous despite an absence from work caused by termination of the person's appointment at the initiative of the responsible body, or the person, if the person is reinstated within 12 weeks.

22. Grants from the Fund

- a) Every responsible body that has paid the Levy annually for each person **during his service** in **any of** the categories of service listed in regulation 3(b) for which it is responsible is eligible for a grant from the Fund towards the remuneration to be paid by that responsible body to a person for the period of that person's long service leave, **provided that where the person's long service leave entitlement arises from service as defined by regulation 3(a)(ii), the grant from the Fund shall be calculated only in respect of the person's period of service in a category of service listed in regulation 3(b).**
- b) The amount of the grant to which the responsible body is eligible shall be based on the declared minimum remuneration for ministers as at 1 July of the financial year in which the taking of leave commences.
- c) Nothing in this regulation 22 is intended to affect the remuneration to which a person who is entitled to an amount of long service leave is to be paid in accordance with regulation 4.

7. In respect of the 'Conflict of Interest Policy' In respect of the 'Conflict of Interest Policy':

a) Amend clause 10(b)(ii) by replacing all words with the following:

- ii) does not divulge business to anyone not present whenever meeting in private is determined (bearing in mind rule 3.9.1);

b) Reissue the policy including the change in (a) above as 'Conflict of Interest Policy 2024'.

8. Appoint the Selection Committee, noting those persons denoted by an asterisk are from non-metropolitan presbyteries, as follows:

RT 2025: Mr B Palmer [2028], Rev R White* [2033].

RT 2026: Rev P Orchard [2029], Rev B Porter* [2033].
RT 2027: Rev K Ee* [2032], Rev J Walz* [2029], Vacant.
Convener: Rev R White* [2031].

9. Repeal Building and Property Committee regulation 2 and enact in its place new regulation 2 as follows:

2. Membership

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

The motion was seconded and approved.

43. Overture 6: Code and General Administration Committee (rule 4.31.2(b) – Candidate requirements

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by Rev Cameron Garrett.

Questions were asked of the overturist.

(1) Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

2. Remit the following rule to presbyteries under the Barrier Act for approval or disapproval, with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025:

4.31.2 When a person applies to be accepted as a candidate for the ministry, the presbytery must examine him in accordance with the following rules:

- a) it must instruct the applicant to appear in person before a duly convened meeting of the presbytery's students' committee, or other committee especially appointed for the purpose, his own minister being associated with the committee if he is not a member of it;
- b) by this means, and by any other means it chooses to adopt, the presbytery must satisfy itself of the following points:
 - 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 (specified by GAA College Committee regulation 4(a) as 6 months);
 - iii) his ability in preaching and public speaking;
 - iv) his capacity for making acceptable contacts with people;
 - v) his plans for financing himself during the course, especially if he is married;
 - vi) his general health, including being provided with a medical report from an approved medical examiner;
 - vii) a satisfactory police record check;
 - viii) his having a current Working With Children Check ('WWCC');

- ix) his having completed the Safe Church Volunteer Approval process;
- 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.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Rev Cameron Garrett sought leave to move a motion without notice.

Leave was granted.

Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant the remitted rule above interim authority under rule 5.47.1(b).

The motion was seconded and approved.

44. Overture 7: Code and General Administration Committee (rule 2.20) – Purchasing property

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by Rev Cameron Garrett.

Questions were asked of the overturist.

(1) Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rule to presbyteries under the Barrier Act for approval or disapproval, with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025:

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) when purchasing an existing building for the use of the congregation, obtain:
 - i) a pre-purchase condition inspection report from a qualified inspector; and
 - ii) other reports as required by the committee in any particular case; and
 - iii) the prior approval of the Building and Property Committee of the proposed purchase;
- f) 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;
- g) 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.
- h) fix and collect any charges for use of congregational buildings, where the session has approved this use.

Note: the ordinary revenue of a congregation is the income referred to in rule 2.44.2(a) and (b).

The motion was seconded and approved.

45. Overture 8: Code and General Administration Committee (rules 2.35A, 2.35.4, 3.6A, 3.40A, 3.40.9, 4.47A) Holding a Working With Children Check

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by Rev Cameron Garrett.

Questions were asked of the overturist.

(1) Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rules to presbyteries under the Barrier Act for approval or disapproval, with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025:

2.35A Working With Children Check requirements – managers

2.35A.1 Every person serving on a board as a manager must hold a current Working With Children Check.

- 2.35A.2 Upon becoming aware that a manager does not hold a current Working With Children Check due to a failure to renew the Working With Children Check, the session must immediately suspend the person from the board until the person renews the Working With Children Check.
- 2.35A.3 Upon becoming aware that a manager has had his or her Working With Children Check refused or excluded, the session must immediately remove the person from the board.
- 2.35A.4 A manager who has had his or her Working With Children Check reinstated after a refusal or exclusion will be eligible for election to any board only after being cleared for service through the Safe Church screening processes.

2.35.4 Managers' term of office

A manager's term ceases if he or she is removed from the roll of communicants or adherents, is suspended from privileges by disciplinary process of a church court, or removed from the board by the operation of Rule 2.35A.3.

3.6A Working With Children Check requirements – elders

- 3.6A.1 Every elder who is a member of a session must hold a current Working With Children Check.
- 3.6A.2 Upon becoming aware that an elder does not hold a current Working With Children Check due to a failure to renew the Working With Children Check, the session must immediately suspend him from the session until he renews the Working With Children Check.
- 3.6A.3 Upon becoming aware that an elder has had his Working With Children Check refused or excluded, the session must immediately remove him from the session.
- 3.6A.4 An elder who has had his Working With Children Check reinstated after a refusal or exclusion will be eligible for election to any session only after having been cleared for service through the Safe Church screening processes.
- 3.6.2 An elder remains a member of the session which has inducted him while a communicant of a congregation under the jurisdiction of that session, or until he resigns, or he is deposed, or he is removed by the operation of rule 3.6A.3, or the law of the church otherwise deprives him of his status as an elder.

3.40A Working With Children Check requirements – deacons

- 3.40A.1 Every person serving as a deacon as provided for in rule 3.40 above must hold a current Working With Children Check.
- 3.40A.2 Upon becoming aware that a deacon does not hold a current Working With Children Check due to a failure to renew the Working With Children Check, the session must immediately suspend the person from the diaconate until the person renews the Working With Children Check.
- 3.40A.3 Upon becoming aware that a deacon has had his or her Working With Children Check refused or excluded, the session must immediately remove the person from the diaconate.

3.40A.4 A deacon who has had his or her Working With Children Check reinstated after a refusal or exclusion, will be eligible for election to any diaconate only after having been cleared for service through the Safe Church screening processes.

3.40.9 A deacon serves for a three-year term and is then eligible for re-election for the same term. However, any term may be reduced by session:

- a) if the deacon resigns in writing addressed to it or ceases to be a communicant of the congregation; or
- b) if it determines that the deacon has become mentally unsound; or
- c) if it determines that the deacon has ceased to demonstrate a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and a giftedness for diaconal ministry within the life of the congregation; or
- d) by the operation of rule 3.40A.3.

4.47A Working With Children Check requirements – persons in pastoral ministry

4.47A.1 Every:

- a) minister inducted into a charge;
- b) minister, licentiate, home missionary or candidate for the ministry appointed to a charge; and
- c) other church worker appointed to a remunerated or volunteer pastoral and/or teaching role in a charge; must hold a current Working With Children Check.

4.47A.2 Upon becoming aware that such a person does not hold a current Working With Children Check due to a failure to renew the Working With Children Check, the session or the presbytery as the case may require must immediately suspend the person from his or her office or role until the person renews the Working With Children Check.

4.47A.3 Upon becoming aware that such a person has had his or her Working With Children Check refused or excluded, the session or the presbytery as the case may require must immediately

- a) in the case of a minister inducted into a pastoral charge, sever the pastoral tie;
- b) in the case of a minister, licentiate, home missionary or candidate for the ministry appointed to a pastoral charge, terminate his appointment;
- c) in the case of any other church worker appointed to a remunerated or volunteer pastoral and/or teaching role in a charge, remove the person from his or her role.

4.47A.4 Such a person who has had his or her Working With Children Check reinstated after a refusal or exclusion, will be eligible for:

- a) induction into or appointment to any charge; or
- b) appointment to a volunteer or remunerated pastoral and/or teaching role in any charge;

only after having been cleared for service through the Safe Church screening processes.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Rev Brian Harvey moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant the remitted rules above interim authority under rule 5.47.1(b).

The motion was seconded and approved.

**46. Overture 9: Code and General Administration Committee (rule 6.19)
Meeting in private**

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by Rev Cameron Garrett.

Questions were asked of the overturist.

(1) Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rule to presbyteries under the Barrier Act for approval or disapproval, with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025:

6.10.7 When a court meets in private all information shared with the members of the court present, whether orally or in writing, is strictly private to those present and must not be divulged outside any subsequent meeting of the court to any member of court not present when the court sat in private or to any other person.

The motion was seconded and approved.

47. Overture 10: Code and General Administration Committee (rules 4.68A and 4.68B) – Allowance nomenclature

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by Rev Cameron Garrett.

Questions were asked of the overturist.

(1) Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

It was agreed to adjourn the debate. (min 120)

48. Overture 11: Code and General Administration Committee (rules 2.13A, 2.14, 2.15, 2.45, 2.45A, 4.81) – Annual Congregational Meetings

The overture was received.

The overture was stated by Rev Cameron Garrett.

Questions were asked of the overturist.

(1) Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rules to presbyteries under the Barrier Act for approval or disapproval, with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025:

2.13A Approval of budgets, terms of settlement etc.

2.13A.1 Every congregation (except in the case of linked congregations) prior to the commencement of the charge's financial year must:

- a) approve:
 - i) the proposed terms of settlement for its next financial year of any minister, licentiate or home missionary inducted into or appointed to the charge; and/or
 - ii) the proposed terms and conditions for its next financial year of any assistant to the minister and/or other church worker appointed to a remunerated pastoral and/or teaching role in the charge; or
 - iii) in the case of a vacancy in a pastoral charge, the proposed terms of settlement for its next financial year for the filling of the vacancy; and
- b) adopt an acceptable congregational budget for its next financial year;

2.13A.2 A congregation may as an alternative to rule 2.13A.1 grant its board authority to:

- a) deal with the matters specified in this rule, provided that where such approval is granted the board must report its actions to the next annual meeting of the congregation; and
- b) adopt a provisional budget for the charge's next financial year until the adoption of the congregational budget at the annual congregational meeting.

2.13A.3 If a charge's financial year is other than 1 July – 30 June the congregation must grant the board authority in terms of rule 2.13A.2 so that the board can make timely adjustments to changed stipend and other payments from 1 July.

2.13A.4 The congregations of a linked charge meeting jointly prior to the commencement of the charge's financial year must:

- a) approve:
 - i) the proposed terms of settlement for its next financial year of any minister, licentiate or home missionary inducted into or appointed to the charge; and/or
 - ii) the proposed terms and conditions for its next financial year of any assistant to the minister and/or other church worker appointed to a remunerated pastoral and/or teaching role in the charge; or
 - iii) in the case of a vacancy in a pastoral charge, the proposed terms of settlement for its next financial year for the filling of the vacancy;
- b) adopt an acceptable federal board budget for the charge's next financial year.

2.13A.5 The congregations of a linked charge meeting jointly may as an alternative to rule 2.13A.4 grant their federal board authority to:

- a) deal with the matters specified in this rule, provided that where such approval is granted the board must report its actions to the next annual joint meeting of the congregations; and
- b) adopt a provisional budget for the charge's next financial year until the adoption of the congregational budget at the annual joint congregational meeting.

2.13A.6 If a linked charge's financial year is other than 1 July – 30 June the congregations meeting jointly must grant their federal board authority in terms of rule 2.13A.5 so that the board can make timely adjustments to changed stipend and other payments from 1 July.

2.14 Annual congregational meetings

2.14.1 Every congregation must meet within four months of its annual reporting period to:

- a) approve the annual report of its board;
- b) adopt the annual audited financial statement of accounts submitted by its board;
- c) where the congregation has granted its board authority to act under rule 2.13A.2 or 2.13A.3:
 - i) receive the board's report required by rule 2.13.A2(a); and
 - ii) adopt an acceptable budget for the current financial year;
- d) appoint congregational auditors for the coming year (see rule 2.16);
- e) determine the number of persons to be elected from and by the communicants and adherents of the congregation, termed 'managers', or in special circumstances determine for a limited time to delegate this right of determination to the session; and
- f) consider any other matter referred to it by the session.

2.14.2 A written review by the session of the life and work of the congregation may be presented to this meeting. Reports of congregational organisations, with or without financial statements, may also be presented in whole or in part to this meeting as the session sees fit. But, unless the session has resolved to seek the mind of the congregation on any particular matter, no such review or report is received or adopted or formally dealt with by this meeting.

2.14.3 This meeting may resolve to refer to the session for consideration any complaints or recommendations concerning the report or financial statement of a congregational organisation.

2.14.4 The congregations of a linked charge must meet jointly within four months of the federal board's annual reporting period to:

- a) approve the annual report of the federal board;
- b) adopt the annual audited financial statement of accounts submitted by the federal board;
- c) where the congregations have granted their federal board authority to act under rule 2.13A.5 or rule 2.13A.6:
 - i) receive the board's report required by rule 2.13A.5(a).
 - ii) adopt an acceptable budget for the current financial year;
- d) appoint federal board auditors for the coming year; and
- e) consider any other matter referred to it by the session.

Note: A board must report on the congregation's property and its activities during the preceding year (see rule 2.45).

2.15 Annual submission of financial documents to presbytery

Every charge must submit annually to the presbytery:

- a) its audited financial statements;
- b) the terms of settlement for the charge's next financial year of any minister, licentiate or home missionary inducted into or appointed to the charge and/or the proposed terms and conditions for the charge's next financial year of any assistant to the minister and/or other church worker appointed to a remunerated pastoral and/or teaching role in the charge as congregation or congregations or the board or federal board; and
- c) the budget or budgets adopted.

2.45 Annual reporting by a congregational board

2.45.1 Except where there is a federal board or where the congregation has granted its board authority to act under rule 2.13A.2 or rule 2.13A.3, every congregational board must annually prepare, approve and submit to a congregational meeting to be held prior to the commencement of the charge's financial year:

- a) the terms of settlement it proposes for the charge's next financial year for any inducted or appointed minister, licentiate or home missionary in the form approved by the General Assembly; and/or
- b) the terms and conditions for the charge's next financial year for any appointed assistant to the minister or any other church worker appointed to a remunerated pastoral and/or teaching role; or
- c) in the case of a vacancy in a pastoral charge, the proposed terms of settlement for the charge's next financial year for the filling of the vacancy;
- d) a proposed budget for the charge's next financial year.

2.45.2 Every congregational board must annually prepare, approve and submit to the annual congregational meeting:

- a) a report on the congregation's property and the board's activities during the preceding year;
- b) a financial statement of its accounts, which is audited; and
- c) where the congregation has granted its board authority to act under rule 2.13A.2 or rule 2.13A.3:
 - i) the report required by rule 2.13.2A(a); and
 - ii) a proposed budget for the charge's current financial year.

2.45A Annual reporting by a federal board

2.45A.1 Except where the congregations of a linked charge have granted their federal board authority to act under rule 2.13A.4 or rule 2.13A.6, every federal board must annually prepare, approve and submit to a joint congregational meeting to be held prior to the commencement of the charge's financial year:

- a) i) the terms of settlement it proposes for the charge's next financial year for any inducted or appointed minister, or

- licentiate or home missionary in the form approved by the General Assembly; and/or
 - ii) the terms and conditions it proposes for the charge's next financial year for any appointed assistant to the minister or any other church worker appointed to a remunerated pastoral and/or teaching role; or
 - iii) in the case of a vacancy in a pastoral charge, the proposed terms of settlement for the charge's next financial year for the filling of the vacancy; and
 - iv) a proposed budget for the charge's next financial year
- 2.45A.2 Every federal board must annually prepare, approve and submit to the annual joint meeting of the congregations of the charge:
- a) a report on any congregational property used as a manse and the board's activities during the preceding year;
 - b) a financial statement of its accounts, which is audited;
 - c) where the congregations have granted the board authority to act under rule 2.13A.5 or rule 2.13A.6:
 - i) the report required by rule 2.13A.5(a); and
 - ii) a proposed budget for the charge's current financial year.

4.81 Submission of financial documents to presbytery

- 4.81.1 A presbytery must ensure that every charge within its bounds submits to the presbytery annually; or when, in the opinion of the presbytery, any change in circumstances requires a review of the terms of settlement:
- a) its audited financial statement;
 - b) the terms of settlement of any minister, licentiate or home missionary inducted into or appointed to the charge approved by the congregation or congregations of the charge; and
 - c) the budget or budgets adopted.
- 4.81.2 The presbytery must consider the proposed terms of settlement in the light of all available information and either approve them or return them to the congregation for reconsideration.

The motion was seconded and approved.

49. Communication 1 and remit: GAA – Standing Order 23

Communication 1 was received.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Approve the remit from the General Assembly of Australia contained in Communication 1.

The motion was seconded and approved.

50. Communication 4: GAA – Welcome to Country

Communication 4 was received.

51. Adjournment

The Assembly adjourned to meet at 9:30am on Wednesday 9 October 2024, which, having been duly intimated, the Moderator closed the sitting with the benediction.

CLERKS:
C B Garrett
P W Phillips
P J Burns

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

4th Sitting: Wednesday 9 October (am)

At Melbourne, and in the Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall, Wednesday 9 October 2024 at 9:30am.

52. Constitution

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria met pursuant to adjournment. After the singing of a hymn the Assembly was constituted with the reading of Hebrews 11:8-16 and prayer by Moderator's chaplain Rev Luke McSeveny.

53. Assembly Expositor

The Assembly Expositor, Rev Dr Davi Gomes, led the Assembly in the second of his Assembly expositions, 'Living as People Who Are Really Seeking a Homeland' based on Hebrews 11:8-16.

The Moderator thanked Dr Gomes for his message.

54. Apologies

The following apologies were sustained:

Ministers: Graham Bradbeer

Elders: Nil.

55. Business Committee

Rev Brett Cummins moved:

That the Assembly:

Approve the proposed agenda.

The motion was seconded and approved.

56. Conflict of Interest declarations

The Moderator invited declarations by members of the Assembly of any Conflict of Interest as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business on the agenda.

No declarations were forthcoming.

57. Minutes of Previous Sitting

The Deputy Clerk tabled the minutes of the 3rd Sitting.

58. Presbyterian Ladies College

The report of Presbyterian Ladies' College was received.

The Moderator welcomed Mrs Cheryl Penberthy, Principal of PLC, to the Assembly.

Mrs Penberthy addressed the Assembly.

The Moderator expressed appreciation of the work of PLC, thanked Mrs Penberthy for her address and led the Assembly in prayer.

Mrs Penberthy left the Assembly.

59. METRO Committee

The report of METRO Committee was received.

In the absence of the Convener, Rev Clinton Le Page, Rev Toby McIntosh moved the proposed deliverance:

1. Thank God for all who've graduated from their METRO and YouthMETRO traineeships last year, for their faithful service and growth in character, convictions, and competencies.
2. Pray for those trainees finishing their training this year to continue serving Christ faithfully, and for God's guidance regarding next steps in that.
3. Pray for Stefanie Rowe to settle into her new role as Administration Assistant and be a great help and blessing to our ministry
4. Pray for the Lord to bring more people to apply to do METRO, YouthMETRO and EquipMETRO traineeships next year, to grow and train more men and women in Gospel ministry for the future.
5. Pray for more pastors, small group leaders, pastoral carers, evangelists, missionaries and church planters to be raised up to make and grow disciples of the Lord Jesus around Victoria and beyond.
6. Approve the following Memorandum of Understanding between the PCV and Ministry Training Strategy (MTS) for a period of five years from 1st January 2025:

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Between

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria of 156 Collins Street Melbourne VIC 3000 (**PCV**)

and

MTS Limited of Suite 5.40, Level 5, 34 Macmahon Street Hurstville NSW 2220 (**MTS**)

This MOU supersedes all existing MOUs signed between **PCV** (including the METRO Committee of the PCV) and **MTS Limited**

1. Purpose

- a. The PCV, and MTS each desire to further develop the training of gospel workers through ministry apprenticeships and the sharing of resources, for the vital task of gospel ministry;
- b. PCV currently undertakes this endeavour through the METRO Committee (Ministry, Equipping, Training and Recruiting Organisation) of the PCV (**METRO**). Through METRO, PCV appoints ministry apprentices (**METRO Apprentices**);
- c. This MOU is intended to facilitate a partnership between MTS and PCV whereby, under the terms set out in this MOU, MTS will provide to PCV access to its Apprentice Pathways Training Program (**the Program**) to enable the PCV to prepare METRO apprentices for ministries within the PCV and beyond.
- d. The National Director of MTS and the Convener of METRO have been authorised by MTS and PCV respectively, to enter into this MOU and to act on their behalf in relation to all matters arising under this MOU.
- e. MTS and PCV will use their best endeavours to ensure that the matters agreed upon and specified in this MOU are supported and implemented.

- f. This MOU allows the parties to work in partnership and draws on the parties' experience and support networks to further this significant gospel initiative.

2. Initiative

- a. MTS grants to PCV for the term of this MOU, the right to access and use the Program for training and equipping men and women to be grown in the areas of personal godliness, theological reflection & ministry skills.
- b. The rights attaching to the grant set out in clause 2a are subject to the following conditions:
 - i PCV maintains its autonomy over the application process for and appointment of METRO Apprentices.
 - ii It will not be compulsory for METRO Apprentices to attend MTS apprentice training days, annual apprentice conference (GB) and annual recruiting conference however PCV will look to take advantage of and promote the MTS apprentice training days, annual apprentice conference (G8) and the annual recruiting conference and will encourage METRO Apprentices to participate in such events.
 - iii PCV will appoint its own coaches / apprentice trainers (**METRO Trainers**) and will require that any METRO Trainers adhere to the MTS coaching / apprentice training framework as set out in the Program.
 - iv PCV is permitted to promote *Presbyterian Theological College of Victoria* at MTS events as mutually agreed with the MTS National Director from time to time.
 - v PCV will encourage METRO Apprentices into ministry within the Presbyterian Church as appropriate.
- c. MTS grants to PCV for the term of this MOU, the right to access its 'Passing the Baton Workshops' free of charge together with other MTS online training resources.
- d. Where appropriate PCV is permitted to promote the METRO apprenticeship program at events at which MTS is also present.
- e. MTS will establish and maintain tax-deductible and non-tax-deductible gift funds dedicated for the receipt of monies for the sponsorship and support of METRO Apprentices.
- f. MTS will provide receipts to donors and maintain detailed financial records of all donations received in connection with the sponsorship and support of METRO Apprentices and report these to PCV on a monthly basis.
- g. MTS will manage scholarship payments to METRO Apprentices through an industry standard payroll system in accordance with a payment schedule agreed between the parties and the respective METRO Apprentices.

3. Funding and Term

- a. This MOU will commence on 1 January 2025 and will continue in effect for a term of sixty (60) months (**Term**).
- b. PCV will make a Marketing Support contribution to MTS of \$5,000 per annum (**Contribution**), payable in the following instalments in each year of the Term:
 - i. \$2,500 on or before 30 May; and
 - ii. \$2,500 on or before 31 Octoberor as may otherwise be agreed between the parties from time to time.
- c. The Term may be extended by the parties' mutual agreement in writing. In the event that the Term is extended in accordance with this clause 3c PCV would contribute to MTS for resources used if required.
- d. Either party may elect to end this MOU on the giving of 3 months' written notice. If the MOU is ended in accordance with this clause 3d:
 - i. Any instalment of the Contribution due on or before the MOU is ended remain due and payable in accordance with this MOU;
by notice given by MTS, then PCV is permitted access to such of the Program as may be critically necessary for the PCV to maintain its METRO apprenticeship program.
any and all monies held by MTS to the credit of PCV in the gift funds provided for under this MOU, to the extent that such monies are not payable to MTS under this MOU, must be remitted to PCV to be applied by the PCV to the METRO apprenticeship program
- e. This MOU may be varied only by written agreement between the parties.
- f. The parties will conduct a review of the partnership established by this MOU on or around twenty four (24) months after its commencement to be arranged by mutual agreement.

Convener

Date:

METRO

for and on behalf of PCV

Date:

Ben Pfahlert

National Director

for and on behalf of MTS Limited

The motion was seconded and approved.

Moderator's Chaplain Rev Luke McSeveny led the Assembly in prayer.

60. Scotch College

The report of Scotch College was received.

61. Belgrave Heights Christian School

The report of Belgrave Heights Christian School was received.

62. St Andrews Christian College

The report of St Andrews Christian College was received.

63. Commission for Church Institutions

The report of the Commission for Church Institutions was received.

64. Nominations for Moderator-General

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Note that the Clerk did not see correspondence calling for nominations for the 2026 Moderator-General from the GAA Clerk until 19 July 2024.
2. Notwithstanding Selection Committee regulation 3(j), permit the Selection Committee to bring nominations for Moderator-General to the Assembly for consideration provided they were received from presbyteries prior to 30 September 2024.

The motion was seconded and approved.

65. Selection Committee

The report of the Selection Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-8 were approved.

Clause 9 was approved.

The Convener, Rev Adam Humphries, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole:

That the Assembly:

1. Thank Almighty God for the operations of the Assembly's committees, boards and councils in the 2023/2024 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 2023 Assembly.
4. Extend Mr Dennis Wright's service on the Theological Education Committee for a tenth year.
5. Appoint all those nominated to committees, boards, councils and other bodies and positions as presented in the Selection Committee's Report.
6. Approve the nominations for the Building and Property Committee, the Church and Nation Committee, the Church Planting Committee and the Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee as presented in the Selection Committee's supplementary report.
7. Appoint the following Victorian elders to the GAA Moderator's Nominating Committee: Mr Tom Cunneen, Mr Trevor McKeeman, Mr Anton Zirngast
8. Conduct a ballot at an appropriate time to determine which three of the following Victorian ministers will serve on the GAA Moderator's Nominating Committee: Rev Philip Burns, Rev Matt Cole, Rev Martin de Pyle, Rev David Hann, Rev Bagoes Seta.

9. Approve Rev Phil Case as the General Assembly of Victoria's nominee for Moderator-General, and to request the Clerk to communicate his name to the Clerk of the General Assembly of Australia along with his written consent.

The motion was seconded and approved.

66. Membership – Building and Property Committee

Rev Adam Humphries moved:

That the Assembly:

Appoint Mr Jack Adlawan, member at South Yarra, and Mr Adel Mousa, member at Donvale, to the Building and Property Committee.

The motion was seconded and approved.

67. Presbyterian Youth and Children Committee

The report of the Presbyterian Youth and Children Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-5 were approved.

The Moderator declared that the Assembly would sit in private.

Clause 6 was approved.

Clause 7 was approved.

The vote was unanimous.

It was agreed to resume in open court.

Clause 8 was approved.

In the absence of the Convener, Rev Stephen Jones, Rev Cameron Griffiths moved the proposed deliverance as a whole:

That the Assembly:

1. Praise God for the many young people connected to PCV churches, and the privilege and responsibility it is for the committee to partner with parents to disciple them well.
2. Praise God for the many leaders, committee members and helpers who give of their gifts, with which they have been richly blessed, for the sake of young people in our churches.
3. Pray that God would provide a much needed Youth and Children's Worker and an Administration Assistant in the coming year.
4. Pray that God would direct the committee to best meet the needs of youth and children in the PCV going forward.
5. Encourage sessions to actively identify and disciple suitable young people under their care to be the next generation of leaders of youth and children's ministries in the PCV.
6. Approve the following variations of budget subject to the reallocation of committee funds (between the METRO and Presbyterian Youth and Children's Committees):
 - a) 2911 - Salaries & Wages: Assembly Officers from \$31,350 to \$52,035.
 - b) 2950 - Workers Compensation from \$762 to \$963.
7. Appoint Mr Nicholas Attrill to the position of Youth and Children's Worker in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, to lead and implement the operations of the PYCC of Victoria, reporting to, supervised by, and reviewed by the PYCC, on the following terms:
 - a) Full-time position regulated by a PCV Trusts Corporation employment agreement, reviewed annually and terms varied accordingly.
 - b) Appointed for a period of two years, starting 4 November 2024, with a one-year probation, and with the possibility of an ongoing position after a review.

- c) Provision of a laptop.
 - d) Travel and accommodation expenses.
 - e) Appropriate professional development.
 - f) Use of the committee office as required (Heathmont).
8. Give thanks to God for the wonderful provision of Nicholas Attrill to serve in this role and pray for his ongoing ministry.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Moderator's chaplain Rev Gerald Vanderwert led the Assembly in prayer.

68. Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee

The report of the Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Miles Fagan, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole:

That the Assembly:

1. Encourage congregations to pray for the safety and welfare of all who serve in our armed forces, especially those deployed on operational service.
2. Urge congregations to pray for military chaplains in their unique ministry for the gospel to Australian Defence Force personnel in Australia and overseas.
3. Thank the Rev Miles Fagan for his work as convener of the Defence Force Chaplaincy committee since 2017.
4. Encourage ministers to consider and apply for ministry as Defence Force chaplains, both full-time and as reservists.

The motion was seconded and approved.

69. Australian Presbyterian World Mission (Vic) Committee

The Convener, Rev David Schulz, introduced the following persons to the Moderator:

Mr Rhys and Mrs Rhondda Hall (ACROSS)

Mr James Wait (OM)

Mr Laszlo and Mrs Eva Mihalyi (Pioneers)

Mr Chris and Mrs Julie Dean (CMS)

Mr Chris Griffioen (OMS)

Rev Kevin Murray (National Director, APWM)

Rev Hiralal Solanki (Pastoral Coordinator, Indian Reformed Fellowship)

Rev Kevin Murray addressed the Assembly with a special focus on bibles and the needs of the poor in Malawi.

Rev Hiralal Solanki addressed the Assembly on the work of Indian Reformed Fellowship and Indian Reformed Fellowship Australia and the persecution of Christians in India.

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

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-19 were approved.

Rev Michael Jensen moved:

That the Assembly approve the following additional clause to the proposed deliverance:

20. Given the providence of God in connecting a significant number of Sudanese and Southern Sudanese refugees to our church in Victoria, and given the current challenges faced in these nations by our brothers and sisters in the presbyterian churches in Sudan and South Sudan, urge ministers, elders and congregations to pray for and support current godly initiatives to strengthen gospel centred, biblical ministry through Motor Isaac Yat with his wife Julia, Yousif Kunda with his wife Vivian and Rev Lam Gak with his wife Rebecca.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Convener moved the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

That the Assembly:

1. Praise God for the wonderful missionary team that he has raised up within our denomination with a passion to win the lost for Jesus Christ, both overseas and in Australia.
2. Give thanks to God for fresh workers coming forward for missionary service in answer to prayer.
3. Encourage all congregations to pray to the Lord of the harvest to thrust forth more labourers into the harvest fields of the world.
4. Commend all presbyteries and sessions who responded to the questionnaire put out by the APWM Vic Committee.
5. Urge all our churches to pray for the man of God's choosing to replace Rev Kevin Murray as the APWM National Director, when he retires at the end of 2025.
6. Approve the setting aside of the third Sunday in October each year, throughout the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, as a day to specifically remember the work of APWM.
7. Commend the 'Coins for Mission' program
8. Pray that the Lord will give the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Dehra Dun favour with the Indian Government so that their financial registration can be reinstated.
9. Give thanks for the visit of Rev Hiralal Solanki to the October 2024 Assembly, and pray for the on-going work of Indian Reformed Fellowship Australia in India.
10. Encourage all congregations to subscribe to and make use of the APWM bi-monthly prayer updates, both State and National, as well as the valuable news updates in the PWMU Newsletter.
11. Encourage all congregations to adopt at least one missionary or missionary family to financially support on an annual basis, and to regularly pray for.
12. Note that Moderator has been unable to visit Calvin and Ruth Mathys and their family in Ukarumpa Papua New Guinea, and request him to consider visiting another missionary family in 2025.
13. Request the Moderator to give the greetings of the Assembly to all our serving missionaries.
14. Urge the church to pray that Motor Isaac Yat and his family will be able to return to Australia next year.
15. Thank Noel Johnston for his on-going commitment to look after the fleet of cars used by our APWM Missionaries on home assignment.
16. Thank the Miller family for the kind and generous provision of their holiday house at Portarlinton for our missionaries to enjoy a holiday break.
17. Encourage Presbyterian Youth Victoria to consider inviting an available missionary to come and share at their annual camp.
18. Commend the 'DaySpring' events organised by the Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union to the families of our church as an excellent way of promoting mission awareness among the children of our churches.
19. Thank all congregations who contributed to the PresAID Appeal at Easter and encourage on-going support for this important appeal.
20. Given the providence of God in connecting a significant number of Sudanese and Southern Sudanese refugees to our church in Victoria, and given the current challenges faced in these nations by our brothers and sisters in the Presbyterian churches in Sudan and South Sudan, urge ministers, elders and congregations to pray for and support current godly initiatives to strengthen

gospel centred, biblical ministry through Motor Isaac Yat with his wife Julia, Yousif Kunda with his wife Vivian and Rev Lam Gak with his wife Rebecca.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Moderator's Chaplain Rev Luke McSeveny led the Assembly in prayer.

70. Ballot

Ballots were held for the Moderator-General Nomination Committee and a late nomination for the Church Planting Committee.

The Assembly resumed after the lunch break with the singing of a hymn and prayer by the Moderator.

71. Petition 6: Morag Zwartz – PCV's Response to the 'Change or Suppression' Legislation

The petitioner was brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

It was agreed to sit in private.

The petition was stated by Mrs Morag Zwartz.

Questions were asked of the petitioner.

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.

(2) Rev Philip Court moved the previous question

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

The motion to grant the prayer of the petition was approved.

(3) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Request the Church and Nation Committee to prepare a report that can be submitted to government calling on the Government to abandon the current affirming model in the light of recent developments and report to the 2025 Commission of Assembly, empowering the Commission to determine the matter.

The motion was seconded

(4) The Rev John Wilson moved:

That the Assembly amend the motion by replacing all words with the following:

Request the Church and Nation Committee to prepare a report that can be submitted to Government calling on the Victorian Government to abandon the current affirming model in the light of recent developments and report to the 2025 General Assembly.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was seconded and approved.

(5) Rev Michael Jensen moved:

That the Assembly:

Recognise and commend the significant work that has been and is currently undertaken by the Church and Nation Committee and the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act (2021) Committee regarding the issues raised in the petition.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator announced the decision of the Assembly to the petitioner as follows:

That the Assembly had resolved to:

1. Request the Church and Nation Committee to prepare a report that can be submitted to Government calling on the Victorian Government to abandon the current affirming model in the light of recent developments and report to the 2025 General Assembly.
2. Recognise and commend the significant work that has been and is currently undertaken by the Church and Nation Committee and the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act (2021) Committee regarding the issues raised in the petition.

The Moderator removed the petitioner from the Bar.

72. Clerk's report

The Clerk reported.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Receive the Clerk's oral report.

The motion was seconded and approved.

73. Communication 10 – private paper

Communication 10 was received.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Note that the Presbytery of North East Victoria has given 'further consideration' to 'the question of the status of Mr Playfoot' in accordance with BB 2023 min 88.

The motion was seconded and approved.

It was agreed to resume in open court.

74. Ballot Committee Report

The Convener, Rev Stuart Withers, reported the result of the ballots as follows:

Moderator-General Nomination Committee – Rev Philip Burns, Matt Cole, David Hann.

Church Planting Committee – Rev Maurie Cropper.

The Convener moved:

That the report be received.

The motion was seconded and approved.

75. Safe Church Committee

The report of the Safe Church Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev David Brown, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Pray for the victims of child sexual abuse within the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (PCV) and ask God to show his love, comfort and salvation grace to them. Pray that the compensation provided to them by the PCV, whilst never able to fully remedy their pain and suffering, may be a blessing to them in their journey of healing and recovery.
2. Thank God for Rev Brian Harvey for his years of faithful service to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria as Convener of the Safe Church Committee, and supervisor of the Safe Church Unit.
3. Remind sessions to regularly record in minutes who is working for the session in their congregations – both paid and volunteer workers.

4. Request presbyteries to be especially mindful of the need for recording appointments in session minutes, at the annual examination of records (PCV Code Book 4.96 - Version 2024).
5. Appoint an ad hoc committee to consider the risk identified in this report and consider the implementation of a code of conduct or other rules to be applicable to officers of the church and bring recommendations to the Assembly.
6. Appoint the following people to the ad hoc committee: the Clerk (convener), the Law Agent, Dr Rosemary Fethers, Rev Peter Phillips.
7. Thank God for the continued work of Fiona Bligh as Safe Church Facilitator.
8. Thank God for the continued work of Ashley Manly as Safe Church Compliance and Administration Officer.
9. Thank God for the members of the Safe Church Committee.
10. Thank God for the commitment to safe ministry practices by faithful servants across the PCV.

The motion was seconded and approved.

76. Exit Students Committee

The Exit Students Committee report was received.

The Convener, Rev Gary Stephens, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Thank the Lord for his continuing provision of candidates for ministry in PCV churches and pray that he will continue to raise up suitable labourers for the shepherding of his people.
2. Pray for Ryan Brightwell, his wife Brialey and their son John, as Ryan completes his studies, engages in final assessments and goes through trials for licensing, and as they then relocate, set about establishing relationships in their new church family, love God's people and discern how to best carry out the ministry the Lord wants done.
3. Pray that the churches will receive their family well and look forward to striving side by side together in the gospel.
4. Pray that by God's grace this appointment will be fruitful and result in many years of productive ministry.
5. Pray that as the exit process continues to be assessed, that it can become more effective in benefiting the ongoing health of presbyteries and our denomination.
6. Pray for charges that applied but were unsuccessful in receiving an exit appointment, that the Lord would sustain those charges and lead them into beneficial ministry appointments.

The motion was seconded and approved.

77. Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee

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

The Convener, Rev Daniel Dixon, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Thank God for the dedicated and caring service of Mrs Suzanne Oakes as a PCV paediatric chaplain at the Royal Children's Hospital, and wish her every blessing in the years ahead.
2. Thank God for Grant Vayne's many years of service as a volunteer visiting hospital chaplain at St John of God Hospital in Ballarat.

3. Thank the congregations, boards of management, and individuals who generously contributed to the 2024 Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee Good Friday Appeal.
4. Thank the committee's volunteer chaplains in hospitals, police stations, and prisons for their commitment and efforts to show the love of Christ in those settings.
5. Encourage sessions to consider the opportunities for ministry presented through the Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee for suitable and willing members of their congregations.

The motion was seconded and approved.

78. Maintenance of the Ministry Committee

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

The Convener, Elder Colin Morrow, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

Note the committee's action in exercising its discretionary authority relating to the non-provision of a manse component of the Minimum Ministerial Remuneration for:

1. Rev Barry Porter (Broadford); and
 2. Mr Tut Jock Deng (Clarinda Nuer),
- with these arrangements to be reviewed annually by the relevant presbyteries per rule 4.81.2(c).

The motion was seconded and approved.

79. Ministry Development Committee

The report of the Ministry Development Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Stuart Withers, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Thank God for Mrs Suzy Vines and her contribution to the committee as Administrative Secretary in 2023.
2. Thank God for Rev Peter Greiner and his eight years of service to the committee and pray that the Lord will provide Peter with sufficient health and strength for the work God has prepared.
3. Commend the work of Rev Chris Siriweera as Ministry Development Officer and pray that he would be blessed with wisdom and insight that enables him to serve others in further developing ministry and mission in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.
4. Thank Mrs Natalie Miller for her work as the committee's Administrative Secretary and pray that the Lord will bless her in her administrative role supporting the committee and the Ministry Development Officer.
5. Thank Rev Cameron Garrett for his work in operating the ARMS online data collection system, and elder Ralph Kop for preparing and analysing the data collected from the 2023 Statistical Returns.
6. Thank God for the provision of the Thompson Trust and its support of evangelism in the past year and request prayer for the Lord to draw all his people savingly to himself (John 6:44).
7. Encourage the committee to finalise plans for developing training for gospel ministry coaches and the ministry development track for church revitalisation.
8. Endorse the further development of The Track through the introduction of the pilot program in the coming year with the committee to report back to the 2025 General Assembly on its progress and effectiveness.
9. Endorse the development of new initiatives for the redeployment of sustentation funds for the purpose of growing healthy congregations, with the

committee to bring a recommendation to a future General Assembly for consideration.

10. Encourage the committee to further develop the 'Presbytery Partnership' model for revitalisation and renewal within the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

The motion was seconded and approved.

80. Privacy Officer's Report

The Privacy Officer's report was received.

Moderator's chaplain Rev Gerald Vanderwert led the Assembly in prayer.

81. Adjournment

The Assembly adjourned to meet at 7:00pm on Wednesday 9 October 2024, which, having been duly intimated, the Moderator closed the sitting with the benediction.

CLERKS:
C B Garrett
P W Phillips
P J Burns

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

5th Sitting: Wednesday 9 October (pm)

At Melbourne, and in the Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall, Wednesday 9 October 2024 at 7:00pm.

82. Constitution

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria met pursuant to adjournment. The Assembly was constituted with the singing of a hymn, the reading of Psalm 144 and prayer by Moderator's chaplain Rev Luke McSeveny.

83. Apologies

The following apology for this sitting was sustained:

Ministers: Brian Harvey

Elders: Nil.

84. Business Committee

Rev Brett Cummins moved:

That the Assembly:

Approve the proposed agenda.

The motion was seconded and approved.

85. Conflict of Interest declarations

The Moderator invited declarations by members of the Assembly of any Conflict of Interest as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business on the agenda.

No declarations were forthcoming.

86. Minutes of the Previous Sitting

The Deputy Clerk tabled the minutes of the 4th Sitting.

87. Appeals Commission

The report of the Appeals Commission was received.

88. Social Services Committee

The report of the Social Services Committee was received.

The Deputy Clerk moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

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

The motion was seconded and approved.

89. 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 work of the State News Committee to inform and encourage the wider church.
2. Acknowledge the many contributors from the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and beyond who serve us by informing and encouraging the denomination through *Fellow Workers*.
3. Encourage committees, presbyteries, and churches to inform the State News Committee of items of interest to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.
4. Encourage presbytery clerks to keep the State News Committee up to date with ministry moves.
5. 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.

90. Ad Hoc Committee: Deacons

The report of the ad hoc Committee: Deacons was received.

The Convener, Rev Darren Middleton, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

Direct the committee to develop a proposal to replace Boards of Management with Deacons' Courts in consultation with the ad hoc New Entity Committee and the Code and General Administration Committee, inviting comments from all interested parties and report on its progress at the 2025 General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

91. Ad Hoc Committee: Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd

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

The Convener, Elder Iain Bramley, 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 the committee; and
 - b) the continued improvement in the financial situation for the betterment of the Kirkbrae residents and staff.
2. Pray and give thanks for the contribution to the work of the committee and to Kirkbrae, by Brad Georges, Colin Morrow, Joseph Daoud, and Mark Catchpoole, and that the Lord would continue to bless them and use them to help in the work of growing his kingdom here on earth.
3. Express its thanks and appreciation to Kirkbrae's CEO/FM Ms Angelica Oyarzun and to all Kirkbrae's staff for the contribution they make to the life and work of Kirkbrae and to the well-being of our residents.
4. Request all its members to prayerfully seek out potential candidates for appointment as directors of Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited (PCVL) and pass on the names of these candidates to the PCVL Chair.
5. Thank the committee for its work over the past four years in working to successfully enact Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited and discharge the committee.

The motion was seconded and approved.

92. Ad Hoc Committee: New Entity

The report of the ad hoc Committee: New Entity was received.

The Convener, Rev Peter Phillips, moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Notwithstanding the target date specified in BB 2023 min 100(1), request the ad hoc 'New Entity' Committee to continue its work with a view to bringing a proposal in terms of BB 2022 min 32(7)4(a)-(e) to the 2025 General Assembly.
2. Authorise the ad hoc New Entity Committee to pursue its proposed consultation with the presbyteries with a view to informing the presbyteries of the proposal and receiving feedback from the presbyteries for consideration prior to the submission of the proposal to the General Assembly for approval.
3. Pray that God would grant wisdom, insight and understanding to the committee and its legal advisers in order that all the matters that should be taken into account will be considered so that the proposal when fully ripened and matured will meet with the approval of the General Assembly and be of lasting value to the church in the management of its temporal affairs in the support of the church's gospel ministry.

The motion was seconded and approved.

93. Ad Hoc Committee: Options for Minority Interest in Assembly Hall

The report of the ad hoc Committee: Options for Minority Interest in Assembly Hall was received.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Thank God for Rev Barry Oakes, noting his significant contributions to the work of the committee.
2. Note that Lovell Chen completed 'stage one' and reported in October/November 2023.
3. Note that the 'stage one' report contains options for the redevelopment of the Assembly Hall.
4. Note that the redevelopment options presented in the 'stage one' report are costly and would require a significant if not complete reduction of ministry within the Assembly Hall.
5. Note the combined 'stage two and three' investigation, including costings for the redevelopment options and approaches to Heritage Victoria, commenced in February/March 2024 but is now in abeyance.
6. Determine that the combined 'stage two and three' report of Lovell Chen is no longer required.
7. Thank and discharge the committee.

The motion was seconded and approved.

94. Petition 7: Seat on Presbytery of Maroondah for Rev K B 'Paul' Lee

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Gerald Vanderwert.

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:

Grant Rev K B 'Paul' Lee a seat on the Presbytery of Maroondah under rule 4.2(k) while he is employed as Chaplain at Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes and resides within the presbytery bounds.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator announced the decision of the Assembly to the petitioner as follows:

That the Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Grant Rev K B 'Paul' Lee a seat on the Presbytery of Maroondah under rule 4.2(k) while he is employed as Chaplain at Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes and resides within the presbytery bounds.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

95. Petition 1: Presbytery of Melbourne East – Dissolution of Deaf Special Interest Congregation

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Elder Russell Walley.

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:

Agree to the dissolution of the Deaf Special Interest Congregation in accordance with rule 4.69 noting that more than a year has elapsed since the last regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(3) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Request the Presbytery to transfer all funds held by or for the Deaf Special Interest Congregation to the PCV Trusts Corporation in accordance with Code rule 4.69.6.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Announcement of Final Decision

The Moderator announced the decision of the Assembly to the petitioner as follows:

That the Assembly had resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Agree to the dissolution of the Deaf Special Interest Congregation in accordance with rule 4.69 noting that more than a year has elapsed since the last regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship.
3. Request the Presbytery to transfer all funds held by or for the Deaf Special Interest Congregation to the PCV Trusts Corporation in accordance with Code rule 4.69.6.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

Moderator's Chaplain Rev Luke McSeveny led the Assembly in prayer.

96. Adjournment

The Assembly adjourned to meet at 9:30am on Thursday 10 October 2024, which, having been duly intimated, the Moderator closed the sitting with the benediction.

CLERKS:
C B Garrett
P W Phillips
P J Burns

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

6th Sitting: Thursday 10 October

At Melbourne, and in the Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall, Thursday 10 October 2024 at 9:30am.

97. Constitution:

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria met pursuant to adjournment. Moderator's chaplain Rev Gerald Vanderwert constituted the Assembly with reading of Jeremiah 29:4-11 and prayer.

98. Assembly Expositor

The Assembly Expositor, Rev Dr Davi Gomes, led the Assembly in the third of his Assembly Expositions, 'How Do We Live Our Lives in Exile', based on Jeremiah 29:4-11.

The Moderator thanked Dr Gomes for his expositions and led the Assembly in prayer. Dr Gomes addressed the Assembly regarding his work with the World Reformed Fellowship, as a church planter and as a local pastor in the Presbyterian Church of Brazil, and the World Reformed Fellowship video was screened. The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer.

99. Apologies

The following apologies for this sitting were sustained:

Ministers: Nil.

Elders: Ian Courts, Malcom Browning.

100. Business Committee

Rev Brett Cummins moved:

That the Assembly:

Approve the proposed agenda.

The motion was seconded.

101. Conflict of Interest Declarations

The Moderator invited declarations by members of the Assembly of any Conflict of Interest as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business on the agenda.

No declarations were forthcoming.

102. Minutes of the Previous Sitting

The Deputy Clerk tabled the minutes of the 5th Sitting.

103. Theological Education Committee (min 34)

The business was resumed.

Rev Ben Nelson left the Assembly.

Clause 10 was moved and seconded.

The Moderator ruled that the Assembly sit in private.

Clause 10 was approved.

The vote was unanimous.

It was agreed to resume in open court.

Rev Ben Nelson was called into the Assembly.

The Moderator informed Mr Nelson of the Assembly's decision to appoint him to the position of Lecturer in New Testament at the Presbyterian Theological College from 1 January 2025.

The announcement was greeted with applause.

The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer.

Clause 14 was moved and seconded.

The Moderator ruled that the Assembly sit in private.

Clause 14 was approved.

The vote was unanimous.

It was agreed to resume in open court.

Rev Ben Nelson led the Assembly in prayer.

The Moderator announced that while the Assembly sat in private it had appointed Dr Seung-Joo (John) Lee to the position of Lecturer in Theological Studies at the Presbyterian Theological College, for a period of two years commencing on 1 January 2025.

Clauses 11-12 were approved.

The vote was unanimous.

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

That the Assembly:

1. Give thanks to God for the leadership of Rev Peter Hastie and his faithful service of the College, as Principal of PTC.
2. Give thanks to God for each faculty member at the PTC and their unique contribution to the running of the College.
3. Thank God for the service of Rev Stephen Jones on the Theological Education Committee.
4. Thank God for the hard work and dedication of Rosemary Chandra, Ben Palmer and Michael Smith, and pray that God will sustain them in their work at the College.
5. Thank God for the work of Elder Dennis Wright in assisting the staff at PTC and guiding the TEC.
6. Praise God for the provision of a gifted team of adjunct lectures who ably support the college, its staff and students.
7. Praise God for the calibre and quality of students and candidates preparing for gospel ministry at PTC. Pray that they will continue to grow in their love for God and giftedness for his service as they study.
8. Pray that Christ will continue to raise up godly men and women who are willing to serve his people in gospel ministry.
9. Appoint from 1 January 2025 the Rev Dr Jared Hood to the position of Principal of the Presbyterian Theological College, Melbourne.
10. Appoint from 1 January 2025 the Rev Ben Nelson to the position of Lecturer in New Testament at the Presbyterian Theological College, Melbourne.
11. Authorise the Theological Education Committee to employ a fifth fulltime lecturer.
12. Request the Board of Investment & Finance to consider ways in which funds may be applied to fully fund the employment of a fifth fulltime lecturer at the Presbyterian Theological College, Melbourne.
13. Praise God that the College has been able to quickly meet the requirements of the ACT Affiliated College Risk and Compliance Reporting Framework.
14. Appoint the Dr Seung-Joo (John) Lee to the position of Lecturer in Theological Studies at the Presbyterian Theological College, for a period of two years commencing on 1 January 2025.

15. Authorise the Theological Education Committee to approach the 2025 Commission of Assembly for matters relating to appointments.
16. Amend the Lecturer in Biblical Counselling job description remuneration from six months of paid study leave at '0.2' FTE to '0.4' FTE.
17. Encourage the Theological Education Committee to develop a committee membership and induction policy.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Moderator's chaplain Rev Luke McSeveny led the Assembly in prayer.

104. Acknowledgment

Rev Don Elliott moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Acknowledge that long before the arrival of Europeans, under God's good providence, the Kulin nations were placed in this land on which we now meet.
2. Acknowledge that the Triune God is the supreme Lord of all creation and has determined the time and the place of habitations for all the peoples on earth.
3. Pray for God's blessing on all Australia's First Nations' peoples and for a future of mutual understanding and respect which transcends the history of pain and injustice that came with colonialism and that God may heal us and unite us in the knowledge of his Son through whom and for whom all things were made, and in whom all our futures rest.

The motion was seconded.

Elder Colin Morrow sought to move the previous question.

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

The Moderator ruled that the motion was competent.

Elder Colin Morrow moved the previous question.

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

Rev Graham Nicholson moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend the motion by deleting clause 3 and inserting the following in its place:

3. Pray for God's blessing on all Australia's First Nations peoples and for a future of mutual understanding and respect which transcends any history of pain and injustice that has been experienced, recognising that in parallel with colonialism God was pleased also to send the gospel call of his Son, through whom and for whom all things were made, and in whom all our futures rest.

The amendment was seconded.

Rev Jesse Walz moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend the amendment by deleting the word 'any' and inserting in its place the word 'the', so that it would read:

3. Pray for God's blessing on all Australia's First Nations peoples and for a future of mutual understanding and respect which transcends the history of pain and injustice that has been experienced, recognising that in parallel with colonialism God was pleased also to send the gospel call of his Son, through whom and for whom all things were made, and in whom all our futures rest.

The amendment to the amendment was seconded and approved.

The amendment as amended was approved.

Debate was adjourned to take up the FOD (min 107) and the lunch break.

The business was resumed after the lunch break with the singing of a hymn and prayer.

Past Moderator Rev Peter Phillips took the chair.

105. Communication 9: Presbyterian Inland Mission

Communication 9 was received.

Rev Dr Stuart Bonnington (Superintendent, PIM) addressed the Assembly.

106. Commission for Church Institutions

The Clerk sought leave to move a proposed deliverance.

Leave was granted.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Appoint the Moderator (chairman), Clerks of Assembly, John Cho, Peter Hastie, Philip Mercer, Graham Nicholson, Luke Isham, Allan Harman and elders Tom Guilford, Dr Jim Hare, Dennis Wright and Tony Zirngast, John Angelico and Ben Palmer, with seven members to form a quorum as the Commission for Church Institutions, a special commission to exercise the powers of the General Assembly:

1. with respect of or conferred by constitutional documents of Scotch College 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;
2. 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.
3. 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.

107. Acknowledgment (min 104)

Debate was resumed.

The motion as amended was:

That the Assembly:

1. Acknowledge that long before the arrival of Europeans, under God's good providence, the Kulin nations were placed in this land on which we now meet.
2. Acknowledge that the Triune God is the supreme Lord of all creation and has determined the time and the place of habitations for all the peoples on earth.
3. Pray for God's blessing on all Australia's First Nations peoples and for a future of mutual understanding and respect which transcends the history of pain and injustice that has been experienced, recognising that in parallel with colonialism God was pleased also to send the gospel call of his Son, through whom and for whom all things were made, and in whom all our futures rest.

The motion as amended was seconded and approved.

The Moderator resumed the chair.

108. Church Planting Committee

The report of the Church Planting Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-4 were approved.

Clauses 5-8 were approved.

Clause 9 was approved.

The Convener, Rev Aaron Boyd, moved the deliverance as a whole:

That the Assembly:

1. Praise God for the faithful service of all members of the CPC.
2. Give thanks to God for the faithful and fruitful ministry of Rev Richard Wilson, the Church Planting Officer, and pray for his continued encouragement in this difficult post-COVID season.
3. Pray for continued growth in the work of the gospel at Fresh Start Presbyterian Church - Donnybrook and at Embrace Presbyterian Church.
4. Pray that more and more people across Victoria would turn and believe that the precious blood of Christ was shed for them, and be gathered into church communities that give Christ the praise and honour that he deserves.
5. Pray that the Lord would grant it all the wisdom necessary to identify and deploy appropriate financial resources towards the purchase of worship spaces for newly established congregations.
6. Endorse the intention of the CPC to continue exploring strategies that might help more churches in the PCV to become church planting churches.
7. Praise God for the generous initiative of the Presbytery of South West Victoria in bringing a petition to the Assembly that allocated proceeds of sale from the Woodford property to the Property Development Fund.
8. Urge all presbyteries, when petitioning the Assembly to approve the sale of properties, to request the Assembly to allocate a significant percentage of the proceeds to the Property Development Fund.
9. Encourage presbyteries to identify elders who may be suited to attend the online training course designed to equip assessor elders to serve effectively on church-plant sessions.

The motion was seconded and approved. (However, see min 118)

109. Building and Property Committee

The report of the Building and Property Committee was received.

In the absence of the Convener, Elder Ralph Kop, the Clerk moved the proposed deliverance:

That the Assembly:

1. Thank the Church Architect, Andrew Wilson, for his service to the committee and to the congregations of the PCV.
2. Thank Dennis Wright for his many years of dedicated service to the committee.
3. Urge congregations to keep historic records (utilising the Archives as appropriate) that describe worship and other church activities operating on properties which can be used to demonstrate existing use rights when making planning applications for property development.

The motion was seconded and approved.

110. Archives Committee

The report of the Archives Committee was received.

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

That the Assembly:

1. Thank the Archivist, Mr Michael Smith, for his work and oversight of the Archives especially in the setting up of the Archives at the 690 Elgar Road, Box Hill site.
2. Thank the volunteers; Valentin Kentler, Bruce Garrett, Irene Poon, Cameron Weir and Samson Ho for their valuable contributions to the work of the Archives.

3. Encourage the Archives Committee to engage with the Ministry Development Committee, the Theological Education Committee, the Safe Church Committee, the Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union and any other bodies that may have an interest in securing the 690 Elgar Road, Box Hill site to provide a permanent home for the archives and ministries of the church.

The motion was seconded and approved.

111. Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act (2021) Committee

The report of the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act (2021) Committee was received.

(1) The Convener, Rev Peter Phillips, sought leave to move the proposed deliverance in an amended form to allow a footnote to be provided to clause 8(b)(i) of the Code of Conduct.

Leave was granted.

(2) Rev Peter Phillips moved the deliverance as a whole in an amended form.

The motion was seconded.

(3) Rev Robert Duncanson requested that the clauses be dealt with separately.

The Moderator ruled that the clauses be taken together.

(4) Rev Stephen McDonald moved that the Assembly depart from the Moderator's ruling.

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

(5) Rev Rob Duncanson raised a point of privilege.

The Moderator ruled that Rev Rob Duncanson's privileges had been infringed and that the remedy was to take the clauses separately as provided for by rule 7.9(e)(ii).

Rev Rob Duncanson informed the Assembly that during the afternoon tea break he had reconsidered the matter and now did not wish to take the clauses separately.

(6) Rev Peter Phillips sought leave to fall from moving clause 1 separately.

Leave was granted.

(7) Rev Peter Phillips moved the deliverance as a whole in an amended form.

That the Assembly:

1. Repeal the 'PCV Code of Conduct for members of the church in the context of the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 (the Act)' approved by the 2023 General Assembly (BB 2023 min 47(3)).
2. Approve the following Code of Conduct:

Code of Conduct for members of the church in the context of the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021

1. Statement of faith

In adopting this Code of Conduct the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (the church) affirms that the gospel calls all people including those who are same-sex attracted or gender confused to salvation through repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Purposes

The purposes of this Code of Conduct are to:

- a) encourage members of the church to preach and teach the whole counsel of God, including in relation to sexuality and gender, with courage, boldness and wisdom;

- b) assist members of the church to be faithful to the teaching of the church and wise in their witness to God's will for human flourishing in the areas of sexuality and gender in the context of the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 (the Act);
- c) minimise any risk to members of the church of their being subject to proceedings under the Act for their continued faithfulness to the Lord Jesus Christ and gospel of his grace and to be able to mount a reasoned defence if they are;
- d) protect the church from possible consequences of ill-advised conduct by its members in these matters.

3. Definitions

Words and phrases in this Code have the following meaning:

- a) the **Teaching of the church** is that set forth in the church's:
 - i) **Supreme Standard**: the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; and
 - ii) **Subordinate Standard**: the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646), as amended from time to time by the General Assembly of Australia, read in the light of the Declaratory Statement contained in the Basis of Union (1901); and
 - iii) **subsidiary statements and codes**; including (but not limited to) the PCV Statement on Sex, Gender and Marriage, the PCV Safe Church Policy and the PCV Safe Church Code of Conduct as interpreted by the courts of the church.
- b) **gender** describes the physical, social and psychological expression of a person's sex; gender is an expression of sex and is not independent of it.
- c) **gender confusion** is where a person considers that their biological sex and/or associated physical characteristics do not align with their construct of gender identity.
- d) **gender identity** is a theoretical concept that involves a person's subjective conception of self-identity that a person manifests in self-description, appearance, behaviour and mannerisms that may or may not correspond to the person's biological sex or to societal sex-based norms, expectations and stereotypes.
- e) **marriage** is a union of a husband and a wife, to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life, which for the good order of society is established by a public commitment.
- f) **sex or biological sex** means the immutable biological identity of each person of either being male or female which is determined by a person's chromosomes (XX for female and XY for males) and reproductive function.
- g) **sexual attraction** means a person's sexual desire or attraction towards one or both sexes and is either heterosexual (opposite sex attraction), homosexual (same-sex attraction) or bisexual (attraction to both sexes).
- h) **sexual orientation** means a person's subjective conception of identity based on their sexual attraction.

4. General principles

The general principles undergirding faithfulness to the teaching of the church in this context are:

- a) every person who has saving faith in Christ, including persons whose personal trials and afflictions (form within or without) include same-sex attraction or gender confusion, is a member of the Christian church, beloved by God as his child, and rightfully a loved member of a congregation;
- b) holiness is the goal of the Christian life, not identifying as heterosexual or identifying with one's biological sex or entering into marriage;
- c) every person must at all times be treated with respect, courtesy, compassion and thoughtful love as befits one made in the image of God;
- d) the gospel commands of repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation are not medical advice or therapy intended to alter or change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

5. Setting an example

In order to reinforce preaching and teaching and especially preaching and teaching in relation to sexual expression, under this Code of Conduct every member of the church must:

- a) commit themselves to living sexually pure lives, which means faithfulness in marriage and chastity if they are unmarried;
- b) avoid all forms of pornography, acknowledging that sexual sin includes the indulging of lust in the heart and mind⁵; and
- c) reject the hypocrisy that tolerates opposite sex sin while condemning same-sex sin.

6. Preaching and/or teaching

At all times and in all places:

- a) preaching and/or teaching on sex, gender and marriage by any member of the church must be consistent with the teaching of the church and especially with the following affirmations of the church's Statement on Sex, Gender and Marriage:
 - i) the only place for sexual activity is within marriage; and
 - ii) all sexual activity outside marriage falls under the category of sexual immorality;
- b) the preaching and/or teaching regarding sexual attraction and gender by members of the church must be consistent with the following affirmations:
 - i) the goodness of God's creation and of sexual activity within marriage;
 - ii) the corruption of human nature due to the Fall and our personal sinful rebellion against God and his holy law;

⁵ Matthew 5:27-30

- iii) that God offers full and free forgiveness of every and any sin to every person upon condition of repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ;
- iv) that everyone who repents and believes is welcomed by God and has a place as his adopted child in the church; and
- v) that the command to repent and believe is also a call to follow the Lord Jesus in obedience to him in all things, including our thoughts, desires, words and actions in the areas of sexuality and gender;
- c) the preaching and/or teaching regarding same-sex attraction for a believer by members of the church must be consistent with the following affirmations:
 - i) that temptations to same-sex desires⁶ or sexual activity are only some of the many temptations believers may face;
 - ii) that the inclination to sin and our disordered desires are themselves sinful;
 - iii) that temptation to a sin is not the same as engaging in the sin;
 - iv) the teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith on Sanctification⁷; and
 - v) the scriptural assurance of forgiveness of sins.⁸

7. Faithful Christian witness

Faithful Christian witness to persons regarding sexual attraction or gender confusion may sometimes require members of the church to bring the gospel commands of repentance and faith to individuals and/or to pray for individuals in terms that might within the loose definitions of the Act be considered change or suppression practices. The church does not accept that it is a breach of the Act to engage in a faithful Christian witness of these gospel commands to any person including those who experience same-sex attraction or gender confusion.

8. Wisdom in Christian witness

Wisdom in Christian witness to same-sex attracted or gender confused persons in the context of the Act means that:

- a) prior to engaging in such witness, every member of the church must take every reasonable step to be well-informed in regard to the teaching of the church, the Act and to wise ways of presenting that teaching;
- b) in bringing the gospel commands of repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus to a person and/or praying for a person for whom gender identity or sexual orientation is known to be a relevant issue, every member of the church must:
 - i) remember that as they encourage, exhort, admonish, rebuke, correct and seek to persuade from the

⁶ James 1:12-15

⁷ [PCA - Westminster Confession of Faith](#) – Chapter 13 - Of Sanctification

⁸ e.g. 1 John 1:5-10

scriptures they must rely on the inner transformative work of the Holy Spirit to bring about change and so reject the use of coercion or secret shameful ways⁹; and

- ii) in any discussion of sexuality or gender, make clear without necessarily using any form of words that change in sexual behaviour or gender expression is not the focus of Christian witness; rather the goal is to lead people to trust and obey the Lord Jesus Christ in all areas of life;
- c) every member of the church with whom a conversation regarding sexual attraction and/or gender confusion is initiated must make every reasonable effort to discern whether the person initiating the conversation is a sincere seeker after truth, and:
 - i) in the case of a sincere seeker:
 - A. if the person is a believer, the member could gently and lovingly appeal to that person to do what they know God would have them do consistent with the teaching of the church; or
 - B. if the person is not a believer, the member could gently and lovingly present the gospel in trustful dependence upon God; or
 - ii) in the case of a person whose sincerity is not clear the member could state the teaching of the church on the matter without directing it at the person, pray privately for the person and leave the outcome in the hands of God;
- d) every member of the church who holds a gospel conversation about sexual attraction and/or gender confusion (as in (b) or (c) above) that might give rise to an allegation of the exercise of a change or suppression practice as defined by the Act must:
 - i) make as full a written record of the conversation as is possible, either during the conversation or immediately following it (or, if that is not possible, as soon as possible thereafter) preferably in the form set out in Appendix A of this Code of Conduct; and
 - ii) retain that documentation as a confidential, secure and permanent record.

9. Counselling and pastoral care

Members of the church must:

- a) when counselling unbelievers, present the teaching of the scriptures in such a way as to show that the focus of Christian witness is directed towards faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, to find in him forgiveness of sins and power to live an increasingly transformed life pleasing to God.
- b) when counselling believers, present the commands of scripture in the context of the scriptural teaching of what it

⁹ 2 Corinthians 4:1-2

means for a believer to be 'in Christ' and the enabling and empowering work of the Holy Spirit, so as to make it clear that the believer is to work out his or her salvation because God is at work in them;
provided that the principles in this Code of Conduct do not regulate the clinical practices of members of the church who are health care professionals.

Appendix A

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA SEXUALITY OR GENDER CONVERSATION RECORD

MEMBER
1:

DATE:

MEMBER
2

DATE:

PERSON:

TIME:

-
1. Please give details of the sexuality and/or gender issue that arose with the above person.

2. Did you inform the person that you cannot provide medical advice or therapy or about sexual orientation or gender identity? Did you inform that you are not trying to change or suppress the person's sexual orientation or gender identity? Give details.

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Did you pray with the person about the gender and/or sexuality issue? Please give details.

☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Write down any other observations or concerns

Signed by:

Signed by:

Member 1
Date:

Member 2
Date:

Appendix B

Practices that the VEOHRC has advised would be considered illegal under the Act include:¹⁰

IMPORTANT NOTE: The PCV does not accept that these practices are in fact prohibited by the Act. However, the VEOHRC is the government body that oversees and enforces the Act and has prepared this list as guidance as to their interpretation of conduct that is prohibited under the Act. It is reasonable to expect that VEOHRC would use its powers (investigation, education, compulsion and sanction) against a person who they consider has engaged in this conduct.

- a religious leader meeting one-on-one and pressuring a member of their congregation to suppress and ignore their feelings of same-sex attraction by practising celibacy
- running a peer-to-peer support group designed to coach a person who is exploring their gender identity to accept the sex they were assigned at birth
- a psychiatrist stating to their adult patient that their gender identity is a mental illness and proposing a long-term treatment plan to maintain the sex they were assigned at birth, while withholding information about other services that will affirm the patient's gender identity
- a parent refusing to support their child's request for medical treatment that will enable them to prevent physical changes from puberty that do not align with the child's gender identity and denying their child access to any health care services that would affirm their child's gender identity
- an adult child repeatedly denigrating an elderly parent's sexual orientation, including by telling them it is wrong to be same-sex attracted and that they must change, or the adult child will no longer support them
- a person repeatedly leaving pamphlets in the mailbox of their trans neighbour that state that it is wrong to transition their gender and that everyone's gender expression should match the sex they were assigned at birth. The pamphlet includes contact details of programs and professionals who claim to be able to change a person's gender identity to the sex they were assigned at birth.
- a religious leader tells a member of their congregation that they will be excommunicated if they continue their same-sex relationship and prohibited from returning as long as that relationship continues
- a teacher telling a student that God does not accept them unless they keep the sex they were assigned at birth and dress accordingly, and offering to meet with the child weekly to counsel them on how to be acceptable to God
- a parent sending their child away from Victoria to a conversion therapy camp that makes a false claim that they can 'cure' the child of being gay.

The motion was seconded and approved.

¹⁰ [Have you experienced a change or suppression practice? | Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission](#)

112. Overture 4: ad hoc Deacons Committee (rule 3.38) – Qualifications for Managers

The overture was received.

Rev Darren Middleton stated the overture.

(1) Rev Darren Middleton moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the Overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) Rev Darren Middleton moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rule to presbyteries under the Barrier Act for approval or disapproval, with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025:

3.38 Counting of votes and judgment of session

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) demonstrates mature Christian character and convictions (Gal 5:22-26, Tit 2:1-8, 2 Pet 1:5-9) and is otherwise suitable to hold the office of manager; 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.

The motion was seconded and approved.

113. Overture 5: ad hoc Deacons Committee (rule 3.40) – Diaconate

The overture was received.

Rev Darren Middleton stated the overture.

(1) Rev Darren Middleton moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the Overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) Rev Darren Middleton moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rule to presbyteries under the Barrier Act for approval or disapproval, with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025:

3.40 Diaconal ministry

- 3.40.1 The diaconate is an office of mercy, with a ministry that is biblical, perpetual, spiritual and practical and distinct from that the office of elder or and the position of manager.
- 3.40.2 The diaconate serves with and on behalf of the congregation to promote, according to biblical guidelines and as resources permit, the material well-being first of the poor and needy within the local body of believers, secondly of other believers, and finally of all humanity.
- 3.40.3 A session must establish a diaconal ministry and determine how many deacons are to be elected. In the case of a linked charge,

the election must be performed by the electorate voting as a single constituency.

- 3.40.4 Deacons are elected by communicants of the charge in which they are to serve by a manner of election determined by the session.
- 3.40.5 Any person who has been a communicant of the congregation for at least one year, and is aged at least 21 years is eligible for election as a deacon in that congregation. A person who has served as a deacon in one congregation does not do so in another congregation unless so elected in that congregation.
- 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, owns the standards of the Church and has shown 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.
- 3.40.7 After this resolution the session must:
 - a) by formal motion declare elected those with whom it is satisfied, up to a number not exceeding the number required;
 - b) make public announcement of the names of the deacons-elect arranged in alphabetical order.
- 3.40.8 After such public announcement the completion of a course of training set by the session and following the affirmative answering of the questions prescribed by the General Assembly of Australia (see PCA 'Code', 6.7), the session is to proceed with the ordination and appointment or appointment only of any deacon-elect by prayer during public worship. If a deacon-elect has previously been ordained in a Presbyterian Church, whether in Australia or elsewhere, he or she is appointed on affirmatively answering the questions prescribed by the General Assembly of Australia.
- 3.40.9 The Session must fix the term of a deacon's service, which is to be a minimum of three years, after which the deacon is then eligible for re-election. However, any appointment may be ended by session:
 - a) if the deacon resigns in writing addressed to it or ceases to be a communicant of the congregation; or
 - b) if it decides that the deacon has become physically or mentally infirm; or
 - c) if it decides that the deacon has ceased to demonstrate a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ or a giftedness for diaconal ministry within the life of the congregation.
 - d) by the operation of rule 3.40A.3
- 3.40.10 The diaconate must report on their activities to the session both regularly and also as required by session, and be available to assist elders as required.
- 3.40.11 Where there is more than one deacon, they must be formed into a diaconal care team for mutual prayer, support and

communication. The meetings of this team are chaired by the minister or, if he is unable to do so, by an elder or deacon appointed by him.

3.40.12 With the approval of the session, the deacons may enlist the assistance of other suitably godly and gifted church members who are not deacons to help them carry out their work (or in the absence of any deacons, the session may do so).

3.40.13 The ministry of the deacons is funded by the board. If any employment agreement is entered into, it should, if possible, be in a form approved by the Board of Investment and Finance.

The motion was seconded.

(3) Rev Peter Philips moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend clause 2 of the motion deleting the words 'must establish' and 'determine' and substituting in their place the words 'ordinarily establishes' and 'if so, determines', so that the rule would read:

3.40.3 A session ordinarily establishes a diaconal ministry and if so, determines how many deacons are to be elected. In the case of a linked charge, the election must be performed by the electorate voting as a single constituency.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

Final Decision

(4) The amended motion was approved as follows:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rule to presbyteries under the Barrier Act for approval or disapproval, with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025:

3.40 Diaconal ministry

3.40.1 The diaconate is an office of mercy, with a ministry that is biblical, perpetual, spiritual and practical and distinct from that the office of elder or and the position of manager.

3.40.2 The diaconate serves with and on behalf of the congregation to promote, according to biblical guidelines and as resources permit, the material well-being first of the poor and needy within the local body of believers, secondly of other believers, and finally of all humanity.

3.40.3 A session ordinarily establishes a diaconal ministry and if so, determines how many deacons are to be elected. In the case of a linked charge, the election must be performed by the electorate voting as a single constituency.

3.40.4 Deacons are elected by communicants of the charge in which they are to serve by a manner of election determined by the session.

3.40.5 Any person who has been a communicant of the congregation for at least one year, and is aged at least 21 years is eligible for election as a deacon in that congregation. A person who has served as a deacon in one congregation does not do so in another congregation unless so elected in that congregation.

- 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, owns the standards of the Church and has shown 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.
- 3.40.7 After this resolution the session must:
- a) by formal motion declare elected those with whom it is satisfied, up to a number not exceeding the number required;
 - b) make public announcement of the names of the deacons-elect arranged in alphabetical order.
- 3.40.8 After such public announcement the completion of a course of training set by the session and following the affirmative answering of the questions prescribed by the General Assembly of Australia (see PCA 'Code', 6.7), the session is to proceed with the ordination and appointment or appointment only of any deacon-elect by prayer during public worship. If a deacon-elect has previously been ordained in a Presbyterian Church, whether in Australia or elsewhere, he or she is appointed on affirmatively answering the questions prescribed by the General Assembly of Australia.
- 3.40.9 The Session must fix the term of a deacon's service, which is to be a minimum of three years, after which the deacon is then eligible for re-election. However, any appointment may be ended by session:
- a) if the deacon resigns in writing addressed to it or ceases to be a communicant of the congregation; or
 - b) if it decides that the deacon has become physically or mentally infirm; or
 - c) if it decides that the deacon has ceased to demonstrate a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ or a giftedness for diaconal ministry within the life of the congregation.
 - d) by the operation of rule 3.40A.3
- 3.40.10 The diaconate must report on their activities to the session both regularly and also as required by session, and be available to assist elders as required.
- 3.40.11 Where there is more than one deacon, they must be formed into a diaconal care team for mutual prayer, support and communication. The meetings of this team are chaired by the minister or, if he is unable to do so, by an elder or deacon appointed by him.
- 3.40.12 With the approval of the session, the deacons may enlist the assistance of other suitably godly and gifted church members who are not deacons to help them carry out their work (or in the absence of any deacons, the session may do so).
- 3.40.13 The ministry of the deacons is funded by the board. If any employment agreement is entered into, it should, if possible, be in a form approved by the Board of Investment and Finance.

The vote was unanimous.

114. Church and Nation Committee

The report of the Church and Nation Committee was received.

The Convener, Rev Christopher Duke, moved the proposed deliverance, including amended clause 10:

That the Assembly:

1. Give thanks to God for the prayerful support of the PCV, in relation to the work of the committee, as the committee has sought to present the claims of Christ and Christian concerns and perspectives to members of parliament and other leaders in our community.
3. Encourage members of the General Assembly to pray for the work of the committee and its members and researcher that God will continue to equip committee members in this challenging ministry.
3. Encourage all ministers, elders and congregations to make good use of the committee's Video Library housed on the PCV website, along with the Church and Nation Monthly Updates, and other articles.
4. Give thanks and pray for Rev Surendra Wesley in his role as the PCV representative on Victoria's Multifaith Advisory Group (MAG).
5. Give thanks to God for (a) the quality of the guest speakers at the two-day 2024 Religion in the Public Square colloquium on 'Living as if truth matters'; (b) the encouraging number of people who registered to attend; and (c) the attendees' appreciation of the event. We pray that God's people will continue to be equipped for the days ahead.
6. Pray that the PCV, its schools, and other Christian churches and schools would courageously stand firm for, and clearly articulate, biblical truth, including in areas where Christians today are facing increasing hostility over issues concerning sexuality and gender.
7. Pray for Australian Christians in the face of potential increased persecution that they would not give way to fear but would have courage and wisdom from Christ's Spirit as we imitate him.
8. Pray that governments, both state and federal, would amend abortion laws in order to reduce greatly the incidence of abortion, and that the Australian parliament will pass the *Human Rights (Children Born Alive Protection) Bill 2022*, in order to save many lives.
9. Encourage support for Melbourne's 12 October 2024 *March for the Babies* by members of the PCV's General Assembly, sessions and congregations through advertising, participation and prayer.
10. Request the Moderator to write to the Victorian Premier and Leader of the Opposition, and to all other members of Victoria's Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council, to plead for legal protection of the unborn from abortion, the elderly and sick from assisted suicide, and children from radical gender theory.
11. Encourage ministers, elders and congregations to make good use of the committee's series of papers on 'How the Gospel Shapes our Politics', including the first paper included within this report.

The motion was seconded and approved.

115. Petition 5: Congregation of West Footscray – Purchase of property by means of property exchange

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Martin de Pyle.

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:

1. Authorise the sale of Unit 1 Number 4 Alma Street, West Footscray (Volume 9815 Folio 738), under Model Trust Deed clause 5 and direct that the net proceeds of sale be applied:
 - a) firstly, toward the purchase of a new residential property for the use of the West Footscray congregation; and
 - b) to the extent of any balance of proceeds of sale remaining after satisfaction of the purpose in clause 2(a), by being paid to The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to be held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the West Footscray congregation toward the ongoing costs of building or maintenance works for the facilities of the West Footscray congregation.
2. Confirm that the sale and purchase authorised under clause 1 may be transacted by way of an exchange whereby the property at Unit 1, 4 Alma Street West Footscray is exchanged for the property to be purchased in full or part satisfaction of the consideration required for such purchase.

The motion was seconded and appointed.

Final Decision

The Moderator informed the petitioners of the Assembly's decision as follows:

The Assembly resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Authorise the sale of Unit 1 Number 4 Alma Street, West Footscray (Volume 9815 Folio 738), under Model Trust Deed clause 5 and direct that the net proceeds of sale be applied:
 - a) Firstly, toward the purchase of a new residential property for the use of the West Footscray congregation; and
 - b) To the extent of any balance of proceeds of sale remaining after satisfaction of the purpose in clause 2(a), by being paid to The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation to be held in a Sites Reserve Account associated with the West Footscray congregation toward the ongoing costs of building or maintenance works for the facilities of the West Footscray congregation.
3. Confirm that the sale and purchase authorised under clause 1 may be transacted by way of an exchange whereby the property at Unit 1, 4 Alma Street West Footscray is exchanged for the property to be purchased in full or part satisfaction of the consideration required for such purchase.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

116. Overture 1: Presbytery of North Western Victoria (rule 4.18.4) – Notice for Urgent Presbytery meetings

The overture was received.

Rev Jesse Walz stated the overture.

(1) Rev Jesse Walz moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the Overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) Rev Jesse Walz moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rule to presbyteries under the Barrier Act for approval or disapproval, with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025:

- 4.18.4 At least seven days' notice of an urgent meeting is given to presbytery members by the moderator or, with his authority, by the clerk, unless it is deemed time sensitive, in which case at least one day's notice may be given.

The motion was seconded.

(3) Rev Peter Phillips moved:

That the Assembly:

Amend clause 2 of the proposed motion by deleting all words and substituting in their place the following:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rule to presbyteries under the Barrier Act for approval or disapproval, with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025:

- 4.18.4 At least seven days' notice of an urgent meeting is given to presbytery members by the moderator or, with his authority, by the clerk, unless the moderator deems the proposed business requires immediate action, in which case, provided that every member of the court is notified, with the consent of two thirds of the members of the court one day's notice may be given.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was approved.

(4) Rev Jesse Walz moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant the remitted rule above interim authority under rule 5.47.1(b).

The motion was seconded and approved.

Final Decision

The Assembly resolved to:

1. Sustain the Overture.
2. Remit the following rule to presbyteries under the Barrier Act for approval or disapproval, with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025:

- 4.18.4 At least seven days' notice of an urgent meeting is given to presbytery members by the moderator or, with his authority, by the clerk, unless the moderator deems the proposed business requires immediate action, in which case, provided that every member of the court is notified, with the consent of two thirds of the members of the court one day's notice may be given.

3. Grant the remitted rule above interim authority under rule 5.47.1(b).

117. Overture 2: Presbytery of Gippsland – Supervision of Ministers (Royal Commission Recommendation 16.45)

The overture was received.

Rev Heath Easton stated the overture.

(1) Rev Heath Easton moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the Overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) Rev Heath Easton moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Appoint an ad hoc committee consisting of Rev Cam Garrett (Convener), Rev Don Elliott, Mrs Louise Griffiths, Rev Ian Hutton, Mrs Martina Jones and Rev Gary Stephens.
2. Request the committee to answer the following questions:
 - a) taking into consideration Scripture, Presbyterian teaching and polity, and Federal and State laws and regulations regarding professional supervision, what different formal processes could be implemented in response to Recommendation 16.45?
 - b) what are the advantages and disadvantages of each formal process identified?
 - c) what are the differences in complying with Recommendation 16.45 by using a trained professional versus pastoral supervisor?
 - d) who, according to our polity, would be covered by the phrase ‘all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders’ within the recommendation?
 - e) what ‘degree of independence’ will be required to reasonably meet the recommendation’s intent?
 - f) what are the costs (time, financial and other) associated with each process for:
 - i) the professional supervisors (trained profession or pastoral);
 - ii) those people in religious or pastoral ministry being supervised;
 - iii) congregations; and
 - iv) the Presbyterian Church of Victoria?
 - g) who will be responsible for ensuring:
 - i) that ‘all people in religious or pastoral ministry’ are being professionally supervised?
 - ii) that supervisors have the appropriate training and qualifications?
 - iii) that the formal process adopted is producing the outcomes intended by the Royal Commission’s recommendation?
3. Request the committee to interview and/or consult with:
 - a) those who have completed the pilot pastoral supervision training
 - b) those who have supervised
 - c) those who have been supervised
 - d) Rev Dr Karl Hood (developer of the pilot program)
 - e) Mrs Fiona Bligh (Safe Church Facilitator)
4. Request the committee to investigate:
 - a) investigate if other State churches are implementing Recommendation 16.45 and if so, how.
 - b) investigate if other denominations are implementing Recommendation 16.45 and if so, how.
5. Permit the committee to consider other questions from Assembly members submitted by 31 January 2025.

6. Request the committee to report with any recommendations to the 2025 General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

118. Clerk's Report – Church Planting Committee deliverance

The Clerk reported that he had become aware that the mover of the Church Planting Committee was not a member of the Assembly. The Clerk further informed the Assembly that the resolution was therefore invalid and that he proposed as a remedy to move the deliverance as a whole.

The Clerk's report was received.

The Clerk moved the Church Planting Committee's proposed deliverance as a whole: That the Assembly:

1. Praise God for the faithful service of all members of the CPC.
2. Give thanks to God for the faithful and fruitful ministry of Rev Richard Wilson, the Church Planting Officer, and pray for his continued encouragement in this difficult post-COVID season.
3. Pray for continued growth in the work of the gospel at Fresh Start Presbyterian Church - Donnybrook and at Embrace Presbyterian Church.
4. Pray that more and more people across Victoria would turn and believe that the precious blood of Christ was shed for them, and be gathered into church communities that give Christ the praise and honour that he deserves.
5. Pray that the Lord would grant it all the wisdom necessary to identify and deploy appropriate financial resources towards the purchase of worship spaces for newly established congregations.
6. Endorse the intention of the CPC to continue exploring strategies that might help more churches in the PCV to become church planting churches.
7. Praise God for the generous initiative of the Presbytery of South West Victoria in bringing a petition to the Assembly that allocated proceeds of sale from the Woodford property to the Property Development Fund.
8. Urge all presbyteries, when petitioning the Assembly to approve the sale of properties, to request the Assembly to allocate a significant percentage of the proceeds to the Property Development Fund.
9. Encourage presbyteries to identify elders who may be suited to attend the online training course designed to equip assessor elders to serve effectively on church-plant sessions.

The motion was seconded and approved.

119. Overture 3: Presbytery of North East Victoria – Frequency of Public Worship

The overture was received.

Rev Stephen McDonald and Rev Stuart Withers stated the overture.

Questions were asked.

(1) Rev Stephen McDonald moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the Overture.

The motion was seconded and disapproved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Dismiss the Overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

120. Overture 10: Code and General Administration Committee (rules 4.68A and 4.68B) – Allowance nomenclature (min 47)

The business was resumed.

Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the following rules to presbyteries under the Barrier Act for approval or disapproval, with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025:

4.68A.2 The proposed Basis of Union must deal with:

- a) the choice of a name for the united congregation;
- b) the fusion of the uniting congregational communicant and adherent rolls into single communicant and adherent rolls of the united congregation;
- c) the choice of a building as the place of worship for the united congregation where that is called for;
- d) the fusion of the funds of the uniting congregations, having regard to any trusts with which any congregational funds may be impressed
- e) the proposed allocation of any monies held in trust in sites reserve accounts for the uniting congregations;
- f) the proposed allocation of the property of the uniting congregations and the future use or disposal of any remaining property not needed by the united congregation;
- g) the placing of the united congregation under a session (rule 4.60.1);
- h) the bounds of the parish within which the united congregation will be situated;
- i) the provision of a manse or a ~~manse allowance~~ **an additional non-cash benefit** for any minister of the united congregation; and
- j); the provision of a minister or ministers for the united congregation.

4.68B.2 The proposed Basis of Linking must deal with:

- a) the choice of a name for the linked charge;
- b) the placing of the linked congregations under a session (rule 4.60.1); c) the bounds of the parish within which the linked congregations will be situated;
- d) the provision of a manse or a ~~manse allowance~~ **an additional non-cash benefit** for any minister or ministers of the linked congregations; and
- e) the provision of a minister or ministers for the linked congregations.

The motion was seconded and approved.

121. Overture 12: Archives Committee and Theological Education Committee – Elgar Road Property

The overture was received.

Rev John Wilson stated the overture.

Questions were asked.

(1) Rev John Wilson moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the Overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) Rev John Wilson moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Declare its mind that the purchase of 690 Elgar Road, Box Hill North for the utilisation of ministries of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria is a high priority.
2. Declare that such purchase (above) is a matter of urgency given the nature of the lease with Bolton Clarke.
3. Request the Board of Investment and Finance to consider ways in which funds might be applied to effect such purchase within the next two years, asking the Board to report back with recommendations to the 2025 May Commission of Assembly.
4. Empower this Commission to consider and determine the matter.

The motion was seconded and approved.

122. Overture 13: From Seven Members – Assembly Hall

The overture was received.

Rev Cameron Garrett and Rev Phil Campbell stated the overture.

(1) Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the Overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) Rev Cameron Garrett moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Note the encouragement of Justice Sifris to: 'resolve all matters once and for all' ([2018] VSC 200 at [62])
2. Note the goal of the signatories to this overture is to seek Assembly approval and support to 'resolve all matters once and for all', and inter alia, to provide the terms of a proposal that can be put to and agreed between the parties to transfer the minority interest to Scots' Church at an agreed valuation, to be funded from:
 - a) \$500,000 cash contribution from Scots' congregation
 - b) \$2.0M interest free loan from PCV to Scots' congregation
 - c) A grant from PCV for whatever amount is additionally required to meet the final agreed value (see 5 below).
3. Endorse the goal of the signatories, noting that all funds granted and loaned, along with the cash contribution, will be used for the charitable purposes of home mission and church extension via the MDC and CPC.
4. Note that (as we seek to establish an agreed valuation) Justice Sifris awarded the minority interest to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria for the charitable purpose of home mission and church extension in lieu of the \$4.21M not distributed; or \$5.35M accounting for CPI; and therefore request PCV Trusts Corporation to favourably consider a proposed base value of \$5.35M for the minority interest in the Assembly Hall, to which may be added pro-rata costs of façade repairs; noting that a grant (see 6 below) will be needed to meet the final agreed value.
5. Agree in principle to offering a loan to the Scots' congregation on the following terms:
 - a) Principal: \$2.0M
 - b) Period: 30 years
 - c) Interest: 0% per annum
 - d) Instalments: Quarterly

6. Agree in principle to offering a grant to the Scots' congregation equal to the difference between the final agreed value (see 5 above) the loan (see 6 above) and \$500,000 (cash from Scots' congregation) on the following terms:
 - a) The grant is for the purpose of purchasing the minority interest in Assembly Hall and may not be used for any other purpose.
 - b) The grant monies will only be advanced when and if a sale is approved.
 - c) The grant will be paid back in full to the PCV in the event of any future sale of Assembly Hall (or part thereof on a pro rata basis), provided that and final disposition value of Assembly is greater than the grant paid (or part thereof on a pro rata basis).
7. Request the Board of Investment and Finance to identify a source of funds for the grant (see 6 above) in light of the Final Agreed Value (see 4 above) and report to the 2025 May Commission of Assembly.
8. Refer the aforementioned matters to the Commission of Assembly, and authorise the Clerk and Rev Phil Campbell to continue to work towards finalising 'all matters once for all' in keeping with Justice Sifris' encouragement, and report to the 2025 May Commission of Assembly with any recommendations necessary for the Commission to 'resolve all matters once and for all'.

The motion was seconded.

Rev Peter Philips moved:

That the Assembly amend the motion as follows;

1. Delete the words '\$2.0M interest free loan from PCV to Scots' congregation' in clause 3(c). and
2. Delete all words in clause 5:

'Agree in principle to offering a loan to the Scots' congregation on the following terms:

 - a) Principal: \$2.0M
 - b) Period: 30 years
 - c) Interest: 0% per annum
 - d) Instalments: Quarterly'; and
3. Renumber the clauses accordingly, and
4. Delete in clause 6, the words 'the loan (see 5 above)',

so that the motion would read as follows:

 1. Note the encouragement of Justice Sifris to: 'resolve all matters once and for all' ([2018] VSC 200 at [62])
 2. Note the goal of the signatories to this overture is to seek Assembly approval and support to 'resolve all matters once and for all', and inter alia, to provide the terms of a proposal that can be put to and agreed between the parties to transfer the minority interest to Scots' Church at an agreed valuation, to be funded from:
 - a) \$500,000 cash contribution from Scots' congregation
 - b) A grant from PCV for whatever amount is additionally required to meet the final agreed value (see 5 below).
 3. Endorse the goal of the signatories, noting that all funds granted and loaned, along with the cash contribution, will be used for the charitable purposes of home mission and church extension via the MDC and CPC.
 4. Note that (as we seek to establish an agreed valuation) Justice Sifris awarded the minority interest to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria for the charitable purpose of home mission and church extension in lieu of the \$4.21M not distributed; or \$5.35M accounting for CPI; and therefore request PCV Trusts Corporation to favourably consider a proposed base

- value of \$5.35M for the minority interest in the Assembly Hall, to which may be added pro-rata costs of façade repairs; noting that a grant (see 5 below) will be needed to meet the final agreed value.
5. Agree in principle to offering a grant to the Scots' congregation equal to the difference between the final agreed value (see 4 above) and \$500,000 (cash from Scots' congregation) on the following terms:
 - a) The grant is for the purpose of purchasing the minority interest in Assembly Hall and may not be used for any other purpose.
 - b) The grant monies will only be advanced when and if a sale is approved.
 - c) The grant will be paid back in full to the PCV in the event of any future sale of Assembly Hall (or part thereof on a pro rata basis), provided that and final disposition value of Assembly is greater than the grant paid (or part thereof on a pro rata basis).
 6. Request the Board of Investment and Finance to identify a source of funds for the grant (see 4 above) in light of the Final Agreed Value (see 5 above) and report to the 2025 May Commission of Assembly.
 7. Refer the aforementioned matters to the Commission of Assembly, and authorise the Clerk and Rev Phil Campbell to continue to work towards finalising 'all matters once for all' in keeping with Justice Sifris' encouragement, and report to the 2025 May Commission of Assembly with any recommendations necessary for the Commission to 'resolve all matters once and for all'.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was seconded and approved.

123. Adjournment

The Assembly adjourned to meet at 9:30am on Friday 11 October 2024.

124. Resumption

The Assembly resumed its 6th Sitting Friday 11 October 2024 at 9:30am with the singing of a hymn, the reading of Psalm 30, and prayer by Moderator's Chaplain Rev Luke McSeveny.

125. Apologies

The following apologies were sustained:

Ministers: Brian Harvey.

Elders: Doug Fraser.

126. Communication 2 and remit: GAA – Deacons' Vows

Communication 2 was received.

The Clerk moved:

The Clerk gives notice that following the reception of Communication 2 he will move:
That the Assembly:

Approve the remit from the General Assembly of Australia contained in Communication 2.

The motion was seconded and approved.

127. Communication 3 and remit: GAA – Sacraments administered by those not ordained

Communication 3 was received.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Approve the remit from the General Assembly of Australia contained in Communication 3.

The motion was seconded and approved.

128. Communication 5: GAA – Confirmation Deacon’s Declaration

Communication 5 was received.

The Clerk moved:

The Clerk gives notice that following the reception of Communication 5 he will move:

That the Assembly:

Request the Code and General Administration Committee to consider how the decisions of the General Assembly of Australia contained in Communication 5 might be included or referred to within the Code.

The motion was seconded and approved.

129. Communication 6: GAA – Mission to Australia

Communication 6 was received.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Request the Mission to Australia Committee to consult with the Code and General Administration Committee to develop a common nomenclature for charges that might be adopted across the Presbyterian Church of Australia.
2. Request the Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee to evaluate the need for and interest in Renewal Retreat Groups and report to the next Assembly.
3. Request the Ministry Development Committee to evaluate the need for and interest in mentoring processes and report to the next Assembly.
4. Note that the Presbyterian Church of Victoria has not yet adopted any formal implementation of Recommendation 16.45 of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The motion was seconded and approved.

130. Communication 7: GAA – College Committee re: The condition and state of the reprobate in Hell

Communication 7 was received.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Request the Code and General Administration Committee to consider how the decisions of the General Assembly of Australia contained in Communication 7 might be included or referred to within the Code.

The motion was seconded and approved.

131. Communication 8: GAA – Women’s Ministry, Presbyterian Church of Australia

Communication 8 was received.

(1) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Remind Assembly committees that committee membership, in most cases, is open to all who are under the jurisdiction of the Assembly (6.50.1(b) and encourage committees to nominate suitable women for inclusion within their membership.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Request the Code and General Administration Committee to investigate the possibility of women having the privileges of Associates within the General Assembly of Victoria and how these women might be elected and or appointed.

The motion was seconded.

(3) Rev Russ Grinter moved:

That the Assembly amend the motion by deleting all words and inserting the following clauses in their place:

1. Encourage all sessions, presbyteries and the Assembly's Business Committee to make use of fixed orders of the day (FODs) in hearing from women in local and wider church ministry.
2. Pray for the growth of women's ministry across our wider church and in all local churches.

The amendment was seconded approved.

Dissent

Rev Phil Court

The motion as amended was approved.

Final Decision

The Assembly resolved to:

1. Remind Assembly committees that committee membership, in most cases, is open to all who are under the jurisdiction of the Assembly (6.50.1.b) and encourage committees to nominate suitable women for inclusion within their membership.
2. Encourage all Sessions, Presbyteries and the Assembly's Business Committee to make use of fixed orders of the day (FODs) in hearing from women in local and wider church ministry.
3. Pray for the growth of women's ministry across our wider church and in all local churches.

132. Communication 11: St. Andrew's Foundation

Communication 11 was received.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Note that the St Andrew's Foundation is changing its legal structure to that of a corporate trustee.

The motion was seconded and approved.

133. BayChurch

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Empower the 2025 May Commission of Assembly to receive a petition from the BayChurch congregation seeking approval to use Sites Reserve funds associated with the BayChurch congregation in excess of \$75,000 for building refurbishments at 8 Park Rd, Cheltenham and determine the matter.

The motion was seconded and approved.

134. Petition 2: Presbytery of North East Victoria – Dissolution of Numurkah and Tallygaroopna and sale of property

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Stephen McDonald.

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:

Agree to the dissolution of the Tallygaroopna and Numurkah congregations in accordance with rule 4.69 noting that more than a year has elapsed since the last regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship in each case.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(3) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Declare the above resolution immediately effective under rule 6.15, and thereby deem that Presbytery has in effect finally dissolved the congregations.
2. Request the Presbytery to transfer all funds held by or for the Tallygaroopna and Numurkah congregations to the PCV Trusts Corporation in accordance with rule 4.69.6.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Final Decision

The Moderator informed the petitioners of the Assembly's decision as follows:

The Assembly resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Agree to the dissolution of the Tallygaroopna and Numurkah congregations in accordance with rule 4.69 noting that more than a year has elapsed since the last regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship in each case.
3. Declare the above resolution immediately effective under rule 6.15, and thereby deem that Presbytery has in effect finally dissolved the congregations.
4. Request the Presbytery to transfer all funds held by or for the Tallygaroopna and Numurkah congregations to the PCV Trusts Corporation in accordance with rule 4.69.6.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

135. Petition 3: Presbytery of North East Victoria – Dissolution of Thoona Congregation and sale of property

The petitioners were brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Rev Stephen McDonald and Stuart Withers.

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:

Effective from 1 January 2025, and subject to there having occurred no regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship for a period of 12-months, agree with the Presbytery of North East Victoria regarding its intention to dissolve the Thoona congregation.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(3) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Request the Presbytery to submit to the Trusts Corporation certification that the congregation has finally been dissolved.
2. Request the Presbytery to transfer all funds held by or for the Thoona congregation to the PCV Trusts Corporation in accord with rule 4.69.6.
3. Direct the Trusts Corporation to sell the properties: 56 Saxton Street, Numurkah (Volume 10882 Folio 894), 58-62 Saxton Street, Numurkah (Volume 10882 Folio 894), and 48 Victoria Street, Tallygaroopna (Volume 03346 Folio 025) in accordance with clause 14 of the Model Trust Deed.
4. Effective from 1 January 2025, and following receipt of a certificate of final dissolution, direct the Trusts Corporation to sell 16 Johnston Street, Thoona (Volume 1439 Folio 287708), in accordance with clause 14 of the Model Trust Deed for Church Site.
5. Direct that the aggregate net proceeds of sale of the properties referred to in clauses 5 and 6 above be applied by the Assembly treasurer:
 - a) as to a sum of up to \$900,000, towards the purchase of a church site and building for the Wodonga congregation; and
 - b) as to the balance, towards the purchase of a manse for the Shepparton congregation.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Final Decision

The Moderator informed the petitioners of the Assembly's decision as follows:

The Assembly resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Effective from 1 January 2025, and subject to there having occurred no regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship for a period of 12-months, agree with the Presbytery of North East Victoria regarding its intention to dissolve the Thoona congregation.
3. Request the Presbytery to submit to the Trusts Corporation certification that the congregation has finally been dissolved.
4. Request the Presbytery to transfer all funds held by or for the Thoona congregation to the PCV Trusts Corporation in accord with rule 4.69.6.
5. Direct the Trusts Corporation to sell the properties: 56 Saxton Street, Numurkah (Volume 10882 Folio 894), 58- 62 Saxton Street, Numurkah (Volume 10882 Folio 894), and 48 Victoria Street, Tallygaroopna (Volume 03346 Folio 025) in accordance with clause 14 of the Model Trust Deed.
6. Effective from 1 January 2025, and following receipt of a certificate of final dissolution, direct the Trusts Corporation to sell 16 Johnston Street, Thoona (Volume 1439 Folio 287708), in accordance with clause 14 of the Model Trust Deed for Church Site.
7. Direct that the aggregate net proceeds of sale of the properties referred to in clauses 5 and 6 above be applied by the Assembly treasurer:
 - a) as to a sum of up to \$900,000, towards the purchase of a church site and building for the Wodonga congregation; and
 - b) as to the balance, towards the purchase of a manse for the Shepparton congregation.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

136. Petition 4: Congregation of Melton – Sale of manse

The petitioner was brought to the Bar.

The petition was taken as read and received.

The petition was stated by Elder Dennis Wright.

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:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Authorise the sale of the Melton church manse, 6 Asquith Place, Melton West, Victoria (Volume 9548, Folio 059), under Model Trust Deed [for Manse Site] clause 5, for any or all of the following purposes for Melton:
 - a) general expenses of the Melton Congregation (\$42,000);
 - b) purchasing a new Church property/house;
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 Melton congregation for the above authorised purposes.

Final Decision

The Moderator informed the petitioners of the Assembly's decision as follows:

The Assembly resolved to:

1. Grant the prayer of the petition.
2. Authorise the sale of the Melton church manse, 6 Asquith Place, Melton West, Victoria (Volume 9548, Folio 059), under Model Trust Deed [for Manse Site] clause 5, for any or all of the following purposes for Melton:
 - a) General expenses of the Melton Congregation (\$42,000);
 - b) Purchasing a new Church property/house;
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 Melton congregation for the above authorised purposes.

The Moderator removed the petitioners from the Bar.

137. Moderator commendation

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Express its best wishes to its moderator, Rev Ian Hutton, and his wife Ann, for God's blessing on them both for the coming year.

The motion was seconded and approved with acclamation.

The Moderator addressed the Assembly.

138. Appointment of 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 6 May 2025, at 10:30am, or at such other times and places as the Moderator of the Assembly shall determine.

The motion was seconded and approved.

139. Appointment of Next General Assembly

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Appoint the next General Assembly to convene within The Scots' Church, Melbourne, on Monday 6 October 2025, at 7:30pm for the opening sitting, and on Tuesday 7 October 2025, 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.

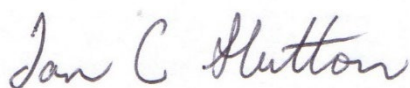
140. Dissolution

The business of the Assembly now being concluded, the Moderator intimated that the next General Assembly would meet within The Scots' Church, Melbourne, on Monday 6 October 2025, at 7:30pm for the opening sitting, and on Tuesday 7 October 2025, 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 the singing of a hymn and the benediction.

CLERKS:
C B Garrett
P W Phillips
P J Burns

I certify that the minutes of 7, 8, 9 10, 11 and October 2024, having been carefully scrutinised, are hereby confirmed in terms of minute 16(11) thereof.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Ian C Hutton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'I' and 'H'.

Rev Ian C Hutton
Moderator

COMMISSION REPORTS

APPEALS COMMISSION (Min 87)

The Appeals Commission (Commission) met and considered one appeal on 18 April 2024. The appeal of Mr Wallace Binnie against the decision of the Presbytery of North Eastern Victoria made on 12 December 2023 to reaffirm the decisions made regarding the dissolution of the Thoona congregation.

The Commission received a report of the Conciliation Committee reporting that conciliation did not occur as 'Mr Wallace Binnie agreed to participate in a conciliation process, however, the Presbytery declined'.

The Commission resolved to dismiss the appeal (min 10) and Mr Binnie indicated his intention to appeal (min 11). Mr Binnie subsequently sent correspondence to the Acting Clerk on 26 April 2024 (within the ten days required by rule 6.42.3 to lodge an appeal) advising that an appeal against the Commission's decision to dismiss would not be pursued. As any right of appeal has now lapsed the decision of the Presbytery of North East Victoria is final.

The minutes were subsequently confirmed and have been submitted to the General Assembly in accordance with Appeals Commission regulation 8d.

Cameron Garrett
CLERK

COMMISSION FOR CHURCH INSTITUTIONS (Min 106)

The Commission for Church Institutions (CFCI) appoints nominees to various boards and councils as authorised by the Assembly. The CFCI is established each Assembly to perform this role as the appointment cycles of boards and councils and the need to fill casual vacancies makes it impracticable for the Assembly to accommodate these with its regular meeting schedule.

The CFCI has met on a number of occasions in the past year and has not yet finalised all appointments within its remit and will continue to conduct its business following Assembly.

This year the work of the CFCI has been made more difficult due to a smaller membership which was below the usual as found in the regulations. This has made it difficult to schedule meetings to ensure quorum.

The Clerk will submit a notice to establish the CFCI afresh, including a full membership, and to seek Assembly permission to report fully on its activities to the 2025 May Commission of Assembly.

Cameron Garrett
CLERK

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AD HOC COMMITTEE: DEACONS (Min 90)

The Committee's Remaining Work

The 2023 General Assembly declared that the diaconate is a biblical, perpetual, spiritual and practical office that is distinct from the office of eldership. The Assembly affirmed the following principles outlined in the report (BB 2023 min 51):

- a) deacon is an office that is biblical, perpetual, spiritual, and practical;
- b) deacons serve on behalf of the congregation and are primarily concerned with ministering to the physical and material needs of the congregation;
- c) the office of deacon is not one of teaching or governance but has the necessary authority appropriate to the nature of the office;
- d) the office of deacon is open to suitably qualified men and women.

The committee was then left to report on recommendations on how we could improve our standards, principles and practice taking into account the recent GAA decisions that deacons are now to be ordained rather than merely set apart by prayer and that while deacons are not required to defend the Westminster Confession of Faith read in the light of the Declaratory Statement, they are still required to own and accept it.

Before moving to our proposals, we present some background to the discussion with examples of how the diaconate operates outside of the PCV.

Examples from history and other denominations

It seems that in the early church, deacons ministered to the needs of the poor, the sick and the disabled using support from the local congregations that had chosen them for this role.¹¹ As the church grew in size and power, responsibility for ministering to the needs of the poor was centralised under the local bishop and deacons became assistants to the bishop. By the fourth century, deacons were more involved in tasks related to running church services and by the seventh century, the office of deacon in the western church came to be one of the holy orders alongside offices like doorkeeper, acolyte, priest, and bishop. It was clear that the position of deacon was a stepping stone to the priesthood.

During the Reformation, the role of deacon was re-examined along biblical lines and thus work began to 'restore that office to its original task of helping the poor.'¹² In cities that were no longer Roman Catholic, the state had taken over the relief of the poor and so the reformers had their work cut out for them in convincing the civil authorities to allow the church a role within the existing structures. The example of John Calvin in Geneva demonstrates this well. Also, the teachings of Calvin on this topic were quite influential across the reformed churches which further increases the value of studying his model.

In 1535, the General Council of Geneva took over the various charitable institutions previously run by priests and nuns and established the General Hospital. The Council oversaw two key roles at the hospital, namely the procurators (*procureurs*), who raised and administered funds, and the hospitallers (*hospitalliers*), who lived onsite and took care of the sick. Calvin sought to integrate a biblical understanding of deacons with

¹¹ Cornelis Van Dam, "The Deacon", (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2016), 96.

¹² Van Dam, 101. See also Clowney who argues that "The use of the *diakonia* terminology points to the conclusion that the deacon serves not the bishop or elder, but the saints." (Edmund Clowney, "The Church", (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 213).

this existing system and did so by speaking of two classes of deacons.¹³ The first were to distribute alms and were aligned with the procurators while the second were to care for the poor and sick and were thus aligned with the hospitallers. To this second group, Calvin added the widows of 1 Timothy 5:9-10 who 'were received on the condition that the Church should relieve their poverty, and that, on their part, they should be employed in ministering to the poor, as far as the state of their health allowed.'¹⁴ These widows were not assistants to the deacons but rather deacons in their own right. This was one of the ways in which Calvin was able to accept Phoebe as a deacon in Romans 16:1.¹⁵

The deacons served in other ways outside of the General Hospital. Geneva housed many refugees and as their numbers grew, funds were set up to support them which the deacons oversaw. Also, the deacons raised money to pay for a man to transcribe Calvin's sermons and it was hoped that the sale of these sermon transcripts would raise further money for the poor.¹⁶

Today, as we reflect upon the historical model in Geneva there are at least four elements that relate to our own practices. One, deacons were divided into two classes which we could see as two distinct portfolios. Two, certain people (e.g. suitable widows) were only qualified to serve in one of those classes which could mean either a hierarchy within the diaconate or at least a subset of deacons who need additional qualifications for their role. Three, the deacons were concerned with administering church funds for the benefit of the sick and poor in the community which shows a combination of stewardship and mercy. Four, Calvin was forced to make certain compromises in Geneva which helps remind us that we will not always be able to deploy our 'perfect' model.

Other denominations have wrestled with the role of deacons. For example, the Free Church of Scotland has deacons' courts that operate like our boards of management with a focus on the temporal concerns of the church, particularly the management and maintenance of property. Where there are insufficient male communicants (note, women do not serve as deacons), a finance committee may be appointed as a temporary arrangement until a deacons' court can be elected. Deacons serve for life and must have a degree of spiritual maturity.

The Presbyterian Church in America also hands all property and finance matters over to the deacons. They tend to the mercy ministries as well. Only men can serve as deacons but there is a provision for men and women to be appointed as assistants to the deacons and these are not required to subscribe to the subordinate standards (WCF, catechisms).

BCO 9-7 *It is often expedient that the Session of a church should select and appoint godly men and women of the congregation to assist the deacons in caring for the sick, the widows, the orphans, the prisoners, and others who*

¹³ "If we accept this (as it must be accepted), there will be two kinds of deacons: one to serve the church in administering the affairs of the poor; the other, in caring for the poor themselves." Book Four, Chapter 3, Section 9. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, vol. 2, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960), 1061-1062.

¹⁴ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, trans. William Pringle, 500th Anniversary Edition, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2009), 128.

¹⁵ Van Dam, 103n22.

¹⁶ Van Dam, 104.

may be in any distress or need. These assistants to the deacons are not officers of the church (BCO 7-2) and, as such, are not subjects for ordination (BCO 17).

In the case of the Presbyterian Church in America, where there are insufficient suitable men to serve as deacons, the responsibilities fall back on the Session.

These two examples from other denominations show that deacons serve in the place of a board of management and that only suitably qualified men who can also subscribe to the presbyterian standards are eligible for that role. Where there are insufficient men, the responsibilities are covered by the session or a temporary finance committee.

Next Steps

In the committee's deliberations, we agreed to recommend two ways forward which we will describe as the minimalist and the reform positions. The first step represents what we would consider to be the minimal amount of work required for updating the Code to better clarify the work of the deacons while maintaining boards of management. The second step represents a larger change to our Code and practices which would see the work of boards of management absorbed by diaconates.

We believe that the following changes are necessary no matter how many steps the Assembly takes.

Having studied 1 Timothy 3 as part of our investigations, the committee is of the opinion that those who take care of the material affairs of the church ought to have suitable godly character regardless of whether they hold church office. In light of that, the committee has consulted with the Code and General Administration Committee on this proposal and is bringing an overture seeking a change to rule 3.38 to clarify that board managers must exhibit suitable Christian character (Galatians 5:22-26, Titus 2:1-5 and 2 Peter 1:5-9).

The present rules relating to the diaconate leave it to the session to determine whether there will be deacons in the charge under its jurisdiction. In line with the Assembly's endorsement of the principle that 'deacon is an office that is biblical, perpetual, spiritual, and practical', the committee suggests that the usual practice should be for each charge to have a diaconate. So, a change to rule 3.40.3 is at the heart of the overture we are bringing as one of our 'recommendations for the better functioning of this office.' (BB 2022 min 132).

Additionally, the committee proposes that rather than codifying a fixed term of three years, the Assembly should codify a minimum term of three years, thus allowing individual sessions to decide the appropriate length of service shaped by their own ministry contexts. For example, an established congregation may take the view that longer terms better reflect both the importance and perpetual nature of the office. Consequently, a session may conclude that longer terms (i.e., five years) encourages increased stability of the diaconate ministry while also allowing a greater period between elections.

Further, the committee realises the difficulties that can arise if there are not sufficient deacons (or are no deacons) in a congregation. Indeed, the expectation is not that deacons replace the congregation in serving one another, but that the whole congregation serves one another. So, it is proposed to provide for the deacons (or, if

there are none, the session) to enlist assistants to the deacons. These members would not be required to meet all of the qualifications of deacons and would not be formally set aside.

First Step - The Minimalist Position

This position incorporates the GAA decisions which are still to be dealt with by the Assembly as well as the GAV decisions regarding the nature of the office of deacon. This includes a change from deacons being set apart to them now being ordained. The following changes to seven rules would need to be made (and the renumbering of an eighth):

- 3.40 Diaconal ministry
- 3.40.1 The diaconate is an office of mercy, ~~with a ministry~~ **that is biblical, perpetual, spiritual and practical and** distinct from ~~that the office of~~ elders ~~or~~ **and the position of** managers.
- 3.40.2 The diaconate **serves with and on behalf of the congregation** ~~is to~~ promoting, according to biblical guidelines and as resources permit, the material well-being first of the poor and needy within the local body of believers, secondly of other believers, and finally of all humanity.
- 3.40.3 A session ~~may resolve to~~ **establishes** a diaconal ministry ~~in a every congregation~~ under its jurisdiction and ~~if so, it also~~ determines how many deacons are to be elected.
- 3.40.4 Deacons are elected by communicants of the congregations in which they are to serve by a manner of election determined by the session.
- 3.40.5 Any person who has been a communicant of the congregation for at least one year, and is aged at least 21 years is eligible for election as a deacon in that congregation. A person who has served as a deacon in one congregation does not do so in another congregation unless so elected in that congregation.
- 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, **owns the standards of the Church and has shown** 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.
- 3.40.7 After this resolution the session must:
 - a) by formal motion declare elected those with whom it is satisfied, up to a number not exceeding the number required;
 - b) make public announcement of the names of the deacons-elect arranged in alphabetical order.
- 3.40.8 After such public announcement the persons elected, must, if they have not already done so, first complete a course of training set by the session and must then, after answering the questions prescribed by the General Assembly of Australia (see GAA 'Code', 6.7), ~~be set apart~~ **ordained** for their ministry by prayer during public worship. **If a deacon-elect has previously been ordained in a Presbyterian Church, whether in Australia or elsewhere, they are inducted on affirmatively answering the questions prescribed by the General Assembly of Australia;**
- 3.40.9 ~~A deacon serves for a three year term and is then eligible for re-election for the same term.~~

The Session must fix the term of a deacon's service, which is to be a minimum of three years, after which the deacon is then eligible for re-election. However, any term may be reduced by session:

- a) if the deacon resigns in writing addressed to it or ceases to be a communicant of the congregation; or
 - b) if it determines that the deacon has become mentally unsound; or
 - c) if it determines that the deacon has ceased to demonstrate a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and a giftedness for diaconal ministry within the life of the congregation.
- 3.40.10 Deacons must report on their activities to the session both regularly and also as required by session, and be available to assist elders as required.
- 3.40.11 Where there is more than one deacon, they must be formed into a diaconal care team for mutual prayer, support and communication. The meetings of this team are chaired by the minister or, if he is unable to do so, by an elder or deacon appointed by him.
- 3.40.12 With the approval of the session, the deacons may enlist the assistance of other church members who are not deacons to help them carry out their work. While these diaconal assistants need not meet all the qualifications of a deacon, it would be expected that they exhibit suitable godly character and giftedness.
- 3.40.13 The ministry of diaconal care is funded by the board. If any employment agreement is entered into it should, if possible, be in a form approved by the Board of Investment and Finance.

In practice, these changes allow churches that already have a functioning diaconate to strengthen it by adding diaconal assistants and grants flexibility in the terms deacons serve.

Churches that presently have no deacons may find they have suitably qualified people, or may be able to encourage and equip people who become qualified, or may appoint diaconal assistants to assist the session.

After consulting with the Code and General Administration Committee, this committee is bringing an overture to the Assembly proposing these changes.

Second Step - The Reform Position

The committee, following the Assembly's affirmation that 'the office of deacon is biblical, perpetual, spiritual and practical' (BB 2023 min 51), believes that a biblical vision for the diaconate would need to absorb the work of the board of management. This is due to our conviction that overseeing church property ought to involve a level of godly character and spiritual-mindedness. Therefore, it is a logical progression to have deacons take on this work and this would be for the flourishing of the church (Acts 6:1-7, especially verse 7). Such changes to our practices would require a lot of work and so we are not proposing a comprehensive process at this time. The committee believes it is wiser to seek the mind of the Assembly before engaging in further work. If the reform position were to be adopted, it would be the next step after first adopting the minimalist position.

The committee understands certain challenges would make absorbing the work of boards of management into diaconates difficult, namely:

- Few congregations already have diaconates.
- Spiritual and theological qualifications for the diaconate are higher than that of the board of management.
- The potential deficit of sufficiently qualified people for the office of deacon.
- Deacons are currently focused on mercy ministry but would need to take on responsibility for finances and property which may be beyond their skills and capacity.
- The need for a sufficient transitional period of time and codified temporary provisions to cover situations where a diaconate cannot be formed.
- The arrangements for a diaconate in linked charges. It could be the case that a struggling congregation in a linked charge without deacons would not have any local office bearers tending to the material affairs of the church.

Possible responses to the potential difficulties:

- Where congregations do not have a diaconate, the elders often engage in diaconate work.
- Diaconal assistants who do not have voting rights but are empowered to serve in areas as needed under the supervision of the deacons. They could be recommended by the deacons, and would ultimately be approved by the elders.
- A linked charge could have a single diaconate just like it would have a single session. The session and diaconate would need to determine how best to ensure the material needs of individual congregations are attended to.
- A transition period of 10-12 years should allow time for changes, training or other provisions.

The Assembly would need to develop regulations to achieve the following:

1. Over twelve years, replace boards of management with a Deacons' Court.
2. Articulate the relationship between deacons and diaconal assistants.
3. Articulate the temporary provisions for congregations that do not have sufficient deacons (i.e. elders work with diaconal assistants) or assessor deacons.

The committee believes that such significant changes require consultation across the denomination, including significant engagement with the Code and General Administration Committee. So, we are seeking the Assembly's encouragement to conduct this consultation in line with our original mandate to 'report on the biblical definition and function of deacons and the diaconate... and to make recommendations for the better functioning of this office.'

Darren Middleton
CONVENER

AD HOC COMMITTEE: ENACTMENT OF PRESBYTERIAN CARE VICTORIA LTD (Min 91)

Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited

The Ad Hoc Committee: Enactment of Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd ('the committee') was formed for the setting up of Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited (PCVL), which was registered with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) in October 2020. The committee subsequently moved to seek registration with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) as a not-for-profit charity with status as a public benevolent institution subtype. The ACNC registration was successfully achieved in November 2020.

Following the successful registration of PCVL with both the ASIC and the ACNC, the committee prepared the necessary documentation for the Australian Government's Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) to be registered as an 'approved provider of aged care.' This process took longer than initially anticipated and has resulted in the ACQSC requesting further information on two occasions. On each occasion the ACQSC has given the committee 28 days in which to respond and on receipt of the response has added a further 90 days for the delegate to notify the committee of a decision. However, after much prayer and extra work in responding to the ACQSC on 10 November 2023 we were provided with the ACQSC's Notice of Decision approving PCVL as a provider of residential aged care.

As this decision was not received until November, some of the work required to transfer the aged care places for Kirkbrae from the Trusts Corporation and finalising the transfer of assets and liabilities could not be completed until the first half of 2024. However, this work was undertaken in earnest and there was a lot of extra burden put on the CEO/FM Ms Angelica Oyarzun and the Commercial and Business Manager Mr Alex Rajapaksha during this period in providing access to the property and providing reams of documentation to property valuers and insurance brokers. This information was an essential part of the asset transfer from the Trusts Corporation to satisfy the insurers and the State Revenue Office. The bank and investment brokers also required further documentation to be completed to enable the transfers to proceed.

All this extra work was undertaken while still managing to provide the residential aged care residents and our independent living units residents with the best possible care, while keeping an eye on the costs involved.

However, following all the work of the committee members, the trustees on the Trusts Corporation and the Kirkbrae management team, we can report that on 7 June 2024 all the assets and liabilities of Kirkbrae including the bed licences were transferred from the Trusts Corporation and the GAV's Social Services Committee, where appropriate, to PCVL. As such as from this date, PCVL officially took full control of Kirkbrae and is now responsible for its ongoing operations and viability.

Residential Aged Care

We are making every effort to maintain occupancy rates (as of 30 June 2024, occupancy was 91.2 percent), the residential aged care facility (RACF) continues to face ongoing challenges. The age of the buildings and their layout is reminiscent of the late 1970s era, and this provides a challenge to our staff to maintain a high standard of care. It also means that there can be significant distance between a resident's room and the dining and/or leisure area. This is not something that can be

remedied quickly or regrettably cheaply. However, it is something that PCVL will have to address in the coming years. It is only through the level of care that our staff provide and the vigilance of our Clinical Governance Committee paying frequent and particular attention to our COVID readiness and other actions that we can maintain the level of occupancy that we have currently.

Independent Living Units (ILU)

Kirkbrae has 78 ILUs of which at the end of June 2024 90.7 percent were occupied. While there is a need for some refurbishment and possible replacement of several existing units, it is pleasing to see the occupancy rate still high.

As mentioned in previous reports, the individual units have also suffered from a lack of attention and therefore a lack of reinvestment. The tired appearance is one thing, but infrastructure which can no longer be used is another. As reported last year, we have commissioned work on the community hall that needs considerable, urgent repair. This work will result in the replacement of the existing roof to prevent further water damage and a re-design of the spaces within the hall. The planning work has been completed and we are expecting work to begin in September/October 2024. This is a major piece of work and one that demonstrates the committee's (and PCVL's) commitment to Kirkbrae.

However, during the last 12 months we have been investigating the source of a water leak in the property. We are unsure whether this is coming from the RACF or the ILUs. It is difficult to identify the source of the leak due to the way the infrastructure has been added onto over the years and with the lack of independent water meters for the ILUs. To help identify and then repair the leak, Yarra Valley Water recommended the installation of water meters for each of the ILUs, and this work will be undertaken in early 2024-25. It is a major cost for Kirkbrae, although we expect to recoup the cost of installation through the provision of individual water bills to the ILU residents as provided for under their residential agreements.

Personnel

Like any service industry, we are dependent on our staff. Although wages across the industry are relatively low most of our people work cheerfully and deliver a high standard of care to our RACF residents. The committee gives thanks to the Lord for all the staff employed at Kirkbrae for their contributions to help maintain the level of care to our residents and support for the changes put in place over the last few years.

During the past twelve months we have had changes to our management staff. Mr Craig Bannister as our Quality and Risk Manager resigned to take some time out and travel back to family in the UK and Ms Wendy Pennicuick our Commercial and Business Manager resigned to take up further opportunities in the commercial sector. Further, Ms Miwon Lee resigned as Care Manager seeking to advance her career by pursuing a Facility Manager/Director of Nursing role closer to her home. However, through God's providence we were able to recruit three very capable replacements and ensure there was some period of handover.

We welcomed Mr Alex Rajapaksha as our new Commercial and Business Manager who has slotted into the role very well and we really appreciate how quickly he has been able to gain an understanding of Kirkbrae's operations and to make a difference. We also welcome Ms Sanja Palovic as our new Care Manager and thank her for being able to seamlessly step into the role. In January 2024, Ms Linda Mitchener joined us

as our new Quality and Care Manager, and we are also pleased with how well she has fitted into the Kirkbrae management team and for her contributions to date.

However, we specifically want to thank Ms Angelica Oyarzun, Kirkbrae's CEO/FM, for the support she has given to the committee in conducting its role.

2023-24 audited financial results

The consolidated audited financial results at the time of drafting this report are not yet available. However, they will be presented to the Assembly separate to the White Book and will be available for review by Assembly members.

The Committee

The members of the committee are Messrs James Bligh, Iain Bramley (convener), Brad Georges, Toni Orchard, and Mr Mark Catchpoole who has been co-opted to the committee. I am indebted to my fellow members of our committee for their diligence, engagement, and support.

The committee is ably supported in its work by its Clinical Governance Sub-Committee chaired by Mrs Deborah Court who is not a member of the committee. The committee is indebted to the work of its sub-committee. Clinical governance is not just pivotal to Kirkbrae, it is crucial. If we fail on Clinical Governance, we fail on everything in terms of providing aged care. We are truly grateful for the continuing service of Mrs Deborah Court, Mrs Jenny Pilgrim and Mrs Jill Barnett on this sub-committee, all of whom are not members of the committee or directors of PCVL.

Since last year, Mr Joseph Daoud due to personal issues and other matters felt it necessary to resign as a member of the committee. We were disappointed that circumstances had required Joseph to resign as we truly appreciated and were encouraged by his contribution to the committee through his pharmacy work and background. In addition, in May 2023, Mr Colin Morrow has had to resign from the committee and as a Director of PCVL due to personal issues. In receiving Colin's resignation, the committee was unanimous in recognising the significant contribution Colin has made to the committee and the valuable insights and assistance he provided to help get the Kirkbrae financial reporting and systems in a more robust shape. We were truly sorry that Colin had to step down from the committee and PCVL and we pray that the Lord will continue to bless Colin (and Alison) and use him to help in the work of growing His Kingdom here on earth.

Following PCVL receiving approval from the ACQSC as a provider of residential aged care, we recommended the appointment of Mr Brad Georges and Mr Mark Catchpoole as Directors of PCVL. This was especially important as following the resignation of Colin this left the Board of PCVL with only four Directors to carry on the governance and strategic direction of Kirkbrae. Unfortunately, due to differing circumstances neither of these appointments were successful.

PCVL Board

As such, with only four members of the Board we are getting close to our minimum number. Ideally, the Board would like to see nine Directors providing a variety of experience, age, and background.

To be appointed as a director a candidate must meet two criteria. They must be willing to consent to act as a director, agreeing to:

1. support the purposes of the company
2. regularly attend general meetings and directors' meetings
3. comply with the ACNC governance standards
4. be bound by the terms of the constitution as a director and member and
5. the Doctrinal Basis as being consistent with his or her religious beliefs.

Secondly, they must not be disqualified from managing a corporation under the Corporations Act nor disqualified from being a responsible entity under the ACNC Act.

Apart from new—and younger—blood, the board needs relevant skills; in particular, geriatric or healthcare skills, legal experience and financial or accounting skills. While PCVL has contacted several persons as potential directors it is not experiencing great success and so is now seeking the Assembly's assistance to see if individuals can be found to fill this role. PCVL has already written directly to presbyteries seeking their assistance and asking our request to be passed to sessions. Assembly should be aware that while the PCV Commission for Church Institutions makes the final appointment to the Board of Directors there is no formal requirement for directors and potential directors to be members of the PCV.

The Board meets monthly for two hours in the boardroom at Kirkbrae together with Kirkbrae's Chief Executive Officer/Facility Manager (CEO/FM) and the Commercial and Business Manager (CBM). For persons located outside the Melbourne metropolitan area it is possible to join the meeting via Zoom, although it would be beneficial to attend at least 1-2 meetings a year in-person. While directors are not paid for their services, consideration can be given to reimbursing travel expenses for those living outside the Melbourne metropolitan area.

Board Committees

Should persons be found with the relevant skills, although they do not believe they can fulfill the role of a director, they may wish to consider joining the PCVL team as members of one of our two board committees – the *Clinical Governance Committee* or the *Finance and Audit Committee*.

Conclusion

Kirkbrae has been established and running for over sixty years and has been providing a high standard of care to our aged care residents as evidenced by the reviews undertaken by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) – the ACQSC is the Commonwealth Government's regulator of aged care providers. Further, it has been working on improving its facilities for its retirement village residents with a recently approved project to update and redevelop the Community Hall amongst other things.

PCVL is working to maintain the existing standards of care and seeking to improve the level of care and the provision of services for all our residents. However, to do this requires careful management and a balance between level of care and financial resources to provide this care. PCVL would like to see Kirkbrae continuing in this role for another sixty years and is seeking like-minded persons to join the board and/or one of its committees to help achieve this outcome.

While we did say this last year, we believe this committee can now be thanked and discharged by the General Assembly having achieved its task of enacting PCVL, and

in future years PCVL will be reporting to the General Assembly having taken full control of Kirkbrae on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria on 7 June 2024.

Iain Bramley
CONVENER

AD HOC COMMITTEE: MINORITY OPTIONS NEGOTIATION OF SALE OF ASSEMBLY HALL (Min 93)

The 2022 General Assembly had requested the Committee to ‘further investigate’ two possibilities: (1) a purchase by the Scots’ Congregation or the Scots’ Church Properties Trust (SCPT) of the 37% interest of Assembly Hall; and (2) the development/commercialisation of the property so that it provides an acceptable return on investment to the respective beneficiaries.

The Assembly Hall Management Committee (AHMC) was requested to fund an investigation by Lovell Chen as to how the Assembly Hall might achieve greater financial returns for the respective beneficiaries (the charitable purposes). Lovell Chen were to proceed in three stages and as Lovell Chen had not completed ‘stage one’ at the time of the 2023 General Assembly the Committee was requested ‘to report to the 2024 Commission of Assembly’ (BB 2023 min 101).

Following the 2023 General Assembly ‘stage one’ was completed. Some elements of stage two were included in ‘stage one’ and Lovell Chen proposed combining ‘stage two and three’. The death of the then convener, Rev Barry Oakes on 12 January 2024, who had been the main point of contact and the main driver of the committee’s work, resulted in progress halting.

A question of diminishing returns was raised by members of the AHMC following consideration of the ‘stage one’ report and as a result the work of Lovell Chen was put on hold awaiting further instruction.

John Walter
CONVENER

AD HOC COMMITTEE: NEW ENTITY (Min 92)

This committee was established by the 2022 General Assembly (BB 2022 min 32(7)) to develop:

4. a) a constitution for a new entity as proposed in this report for advancement to the 2023 Commission of Assembly, or, if that is not possible, to the October 2023 General Assembly.
- b) a proposed service agreement between the PCV and the entity to define the role and responsibilities of the entity and govern its relationship to the church in all its forms;
- c) a proposal to ensure the proposed entity has the financial capability to deliver on its responsibilities to the Assembly;
- d) a proposal for the restructure of the Board of Investment and Finance;
- e) a proposal for the restructure of membership of The Trusts Corporation of the PCV.

Because the committee had not been able to complete its work in time, the October 2023 General Assembly resolved (min 100(1)) 'Notwithstanding the target date specified in BB 2022 min 32(7)4(a), [to] request the ad hoc 'New Entity' Committee to continue its work with a view to bringing a proposal in terms of BB 2022 min 32(7)4(a)-(e) to the 2024 General Assembly'.

Although the committee has done all that is within its power to fulfil the instructions given it by the General Assembly in a timely manner, it regrets it must again report that it is not yet able to present a proposal to the Assembly in terms of 4(a)-(e) above.

Much progress has however been made towards this end, firstly with the completion by the committee of a RACI Combined Accountability Model document. This document serves to clearly define the proposed areas of relationship between the church and the New Entity in the following areas – Employment, Risk Management, Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S), Finance, Insurance and Property matters. Its completion was a significant and necessary step forward in the committee's work.

Secondly, the committee has made significant progress in establishing the legal or constitutional basis for the proposed New Entity and the way forward for bringing to the Assembly the proposal requested by the 2022 General Assembly.

The committee resolved to ask Mr Michael Shand KC, 'How against the background and polity of the church (under the legislation, rule and functions of the General Assembly and the Trusts Corporation) the Combined Accountability Model might be implemented?'

The Law Agent prepared a Memorandum to Counsel which put this question into the context of the committee's work at the time. In conference with the General Manager and representatives of the committee Mr Shand identified two key steps associated with the New Entity proposal; the first being identifying any impediment to executing approval of the proposal by the General Assembly, and the second being the addressing of the detail necessary for the proposed New Entity to work within the structure of the church.

Regarding the first of these issues, after reviewing the constitutional documents of the church Mr Shand's advice is that he sees no constitutional impediment to the proposed New Entity.

Regarding the second of these issues, the committee had thought that the way to integrate the New Entity into the structure of the church would be by way of a Service Agreement between the General Assembly and the New Entity. However, Mr Shand's advice is that the New Entity should be embodied in the Code (a higher level document than a Service Agreement). While the committee had expected that the New Entity proposal would require amendments to Code rules, Mr Shand's advice would necessitate a fuller revision of the Code. His advice has therefore led to a change in direction by the committee on this aspect of the proposal.

Following his consultation with the committee, Mr Shand provided a Memorandum of Advice touching on particular key areas. His Memorandum is included as Appendix A to this report.

Since receiving Mr Shand's advice the committee has begun to address the detail necessary for the proposed New Entity to work within the structure of the church. It has retained the services of Herbert Smith Freehills lawyers to advise the committee on the steps to be taken in terms of necessary amendments to the Code rules and General Assembly Committee regulations to integrate the proposed New Entity into the church. The committee has also asked Herbert Smith Freehills to ensure that these amendments are drafted in such a way as to comply with relevant civil law and, especially in view of the proposed employment function of the New Entity, civil employment law.

The proposed employment function of the New Entity and the need for church compliance with employment law has also involved the committee in consideration of the matter of 'spiritual appointments' in relation to the 'employment' of ministers, licentiates and home missionaries within the PCV.

The Board of Investment and Finance has had a long-standing concern over the use of contracts for appointed ministers given that their work and responsibilities are identical with those of ministers inducted without the use of contracts. This concern prompted the BIF to seek specialist legal advice regarding the status of pastoral workers and the use of contracts in the 'employment' of pastors. On the basis of the advice received the BIF informed the New Entity committee that all pastors (ministers, licentiates and home missionaries) whether inducted or appointed are spiritual appointees, not common law employees, and that the Code should be amended to make this clear.

Given the evident wisdom of considering a single set of proposed employment rules and the overlap between New Entity proposed amendments and spiritual appointment proposed amendments, the New Entity Committee has agreed to incorporate draft Code rule amendments relating to spiritual appointments within its package of proposed New Entity Code amendments.

At the time of writing this report the situation is that while a great deal of foundational work has been completed much work remains to be done before the committee will be able to fulfil the task given it by the 2022 General Assembly. The committee must build upon the foundational work completed in consultation with our lawyers to ensure that

the proposal when it comes to the Assembly for approval is a coherent whole complying with both church and civil law.

Furthermore, the committee believes that after the proposal is well ripened and before it is brought to the General Assembly it should engage in a process of consultation and dialogue with the presbyteries. This process would enable the committee to explain the proposals to the presbyteries in a less formal environment than the General Assembly and to benefit from feedback from the presbyteries. Given the significance of the proposed New Entity for the church such a process is essential in ensuring that the proposal is well prepared and understood when it is finally brought to the General Assembly.

The committee is confident that the proposal will be ready for consultation with the presbyteries during the first half of 2025 and after that consultation for presentation to the October 2025 General Assembly.

Peter Phillips
CONVENER

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

PROPOSED NEW ENTITY

MEMORANDUM

- 1 On Wednesday 21 February 2024, I conferred with the chair of the Steering Group, Rev Peter Philips, my instructing solicitor, Geoff Cox, the chair of the Trusts Corporation, John Walter and the general manager of the PCV, Michael Ellison. I was asked to provide this memorandum as a way of recording my preliminary thoughts on the proposed governance reforms. It is by no means intended to a comprehensive or exhaustive discussion of all the issues raised by the proposal.

Church legislation

- 2 Preparatory to the above conference, I reviewed briefly the Victorian legislation directly relating to the PCV, enacted since 1837 and still in force. They are–

Presbyterian Churches Act 1837

Presbyterian Synod of Victoria Act 1854

Presbyterian Synod of Victoria Act 1859

Presbyterian Synod of Victoria Act 1867

Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890

Presbyterian Church of Australia Act 1900

Presbyterian Church of Australia Act 1971

- 3 The *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890* defines the statutory functions and powers of the Trusts Corporation. It will repay careful attention in examining the relationship between the proposed new entity and the Trusts Corporation.

The General Assembly of Australia

- 4 The *Presbyterian Church of Australia Act 1971* provides for the jurisdiction of the General Assembly of Australia (GAA). Article 2.1 of the GAA Code Book provides that the General Assembly shall have functions legislative, administrative and judicial which shall be supreme with respect to the matters there listed including the doctrine, worship and discipline of the Church. Chapter

8 contains the applicable code of discipline. This will bear on any discipline procedures that fall for consideration under the new model.

Employment

- 5 The General Assembly of Victoria (the GAV) appoints the Moderator, the Clerk of Assembly, the Law Agent, the Procurator and officers under cl 5.19 of the code book.
- 6 The proposal calls for the GAV to seek approval from the New Entity of terms and conditions of appointment of officers and any variation of them: para 1.1. The proposal speaks of New Entity approving, as legal and compliant, all proposed employment arrangements: para 1.1.1(d).
- 7 I assume the power of appointment and the setting of terms and conditions of appointment currently rest with the GAV. If there is reluctance on the part of the GAV to relinquish this power, there are two particular areas where a strong case for devolving this authority to New Entity can be made out. The first is where, as employer or deemed employer, New Entity has legal obligations cast on it by State law. New Entity must comply with State law.
- 8 The second is in the area of screening. If an underlying purpose of the provision is to ensure careful screening of officers to meet Victorian child safety standards and the need for appointees to be confirmed as fit for office, there may be merit in the New Entity through a separate safe ministry division having responsibility to issue a certificate of clearance to each person seeking to hold a prescribed office in ministry in the Church. Under this approach, the decision whether a person who is eligible for the clearance is actually appointed would remain with the GAV or other body as the case may be.
- 9 Similar comments may apply to the appointment of committee members. I assume New Entity would appoint and be responsible for the staff that supports each committee: para 1.2.1.

New Entity

- 10 It is proposed that New Entity act as legal employer or deemed employer. Where it is an employer (within the common law understanding of that expression), it

can document that arrangement with an employment agreement. The reference to *deemed employer* raises more complex issues.

- 11 It is desirable to have a clear and consistent approach in the appointment of ministers, whether they are appointed by the GAV, by a presbytery, by a session or by a minister in charge of a congregation. The traditional legal view is that a minister of religion is the holder of a spiritual office and not an employee of the Church within the common law understanding of that term. Most recently, the Fair Work Commission, both at first instance and on appeal, in *Fihaku* affirmed that position in relation to the Uniting Church of Australia.¹ These cases canvassed in detail the relevant authorities.
- 12 *Davies v Presbyterian Church of Wales*² concerned an unfair dismissal claim by a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Wales who had been inducted pastor of a united pastorate in Wales. Lord Templeman delivered the leading speech. He held that the claimant could not point to any contract between himself and the church. The book of rules did not contain terms of employment capable of being offered and accepted in the course of a religious ceremony.
- 13 If that traditional view is followed, there will most likely need to be amendments to the Code Book to provide for the relationship that New Entity bears to appointees. One approach would be to provide that where the GAV, a presbytery, a session or a minister in charge of a congregation makes an appointment, they do so on behalf of New Entity, the Church's operating corporate body. This was the approach the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne adopted when introducing the Melbourne Anglican Diocesan Corporation into its structure. The Synod enacted the [Melbourne Anglican Diocesan Corporation Act 2015](#). It ensures that liability for the acts and omissions of appointees can be sheeted home to New Entity as the legal entity available to be sued. This approach may also attract the immunity from suit available to volunteers under the *Wrongs Act 1958* (Vic), s 37.
- 14 As we discussed in conference, there is a separate question of WorkCover and the application of the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act*

¹ [Rev. Hedley Wycliff Atunaisa Fihaki v Uniting Church in Australia, Old Synod](#) [2023] FWC 1650 (Deputy President Andrew Bell) affirmed on appeal in [Fihaki v Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust \(Q\)](#) [2023] FWCFB 167 (Full Bench).

² 1986] 1 WLR 323

2013 (Vic). The Act has a wide definition of *worker* that extends to work carried out whether under a contract of employment (whether express, implied oral or in writing) or otherwise. At the request of a religious body, certain persons can be deemed workers under the above legislation: schedule 1, clause 13. It will therefore be for the PCV to decide whether it goes down this path, the outcome of which is an Order of the Governor in Council deeming those persons to be workers and deeming New Entity to be employer.

- 15 The introduction of New Entity will also raise the question of how appointees will be paid their salary or stipend – whether New Entity will conduct a central payroll service and how will that be financed by the relevant body or office holder making the actual appointment. As employer, New Entity will of course be subject to all the usual obligations that fall on an employer, including providing a secure and safe workplace. There will likely need to be some arrangement, be it lease or memorandum of understanding with the Trusts Corporation, governing the New Entity's possession of any Church premises constituting the workplace.
- 16 In my view, New Entity should be incorporated as a company limited by guarantee under the *Corporations Act 2001* and registered as a charity under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (**the ACNC Act**). Its constitution will bear careful consideration. The PCV will need to provide those drafting the constitution with instructions on some key areas – its purposes, its governing body and how they are appointed and the membership of the body. The purposes will reflect the mission of the PCV and be crafted to attract relevant charity exemptions. I assume that the GAV would appoint the directors of New Entity, with possibly power in the board to fill casual vacancies until the next annual general meeting after a session of the GAV. The Trusts Corporation could stand as sole member of the company, in its capacity as trustee for the PCV generally. This would mean, consistent with the *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890*, s 14 (extracted below), that the Trusts Corporation would be obliged to act, as sole member, as directed by the GAV.
- 17 The directors of New Entity would usually adopt a board charter setting out the role of directors under the ACNC Act, if not the *Corporations Act*. The conflict provisions in the constitution of New Entity will also bear close scrutiny. They are largely based on the requirements of the *Corporations Act* but their practical operation can be a source of controversy.

Functions of New Entity

- 18 The proposal contemplates that New Entity will have specific assigned functions – these appear to be largely service functions. Under the present structure, the GAV meets at least twice a year but according to the Code Book. Between sessions, it has no permanent existence. Clause 5.3 of the Code Book provides–

5.3 Unlike lower courts, the General Assembly has, as a body, no permanent existence. It meets to perform specific duties assigned to it by the constitution and law of the church. When those duties have been performed the members of the Assembly as such have no further powers. After fixing the time and place for the calling of another General Assembly, the General Assembly dissolves itself.

- 19 In that sense, the GAV does not have a standing committee with authority to act on its behalf in particular matters between sessions. I am instructed that to a degree, between sessions, those functions are carried out either by the committees appointed by the GAV or by the Trusts Corporation. The introduction of New Entity into the structure raises the question whether any other particular responsibilities should conveniently be devolved to New Entity, for example, a limited authority to grant leases or licences up to a set term. It is desirable to avoid overlapping functions or jurisdiction and to define clearly these responsibilities to avoid the risk of tension between New Entity and a relevant committee or the Trusts Corporation. It may be helpful when settling the proposed functions of New Entity to review the terms of reference of each of the GAV committees to better understand the nature of their work and any role New Entity may play.

Trusts Corporation

- 20 As discussed above, the Trusts Corporation has powers and functions specified by statute: *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890*, s 14 which provides in part–

All property becoming vested in the corporate body of trustees as hereinbefore mentioned or which shall in any manner be acquired by such corporate body shall, so far as the same is subjected to any express trust, be **held managed and dealt with** by such corporate body **in conformity with such expressed trust** and shall so far as the same is not subject to any express trust be **held managed and dealt with in such manner as the General Assembly may from time to time direct**, and such property shall be subject as to the management thereof to the rules or regulations of the General Assembly in force for the time being which are applicable thereto. [emphasis added]

It makes sense for New Entity to provide property management services to the Trusts Corporation on terms specified in an appropriate service agreement.

- 21 The Trusts Corporation has trustee responsibilities as the legal owner of real and personal property. Other responsibilities under occupational health and safety may attach to it as that legal owner. Its duties and interest as trustee under express trusts will not always be at one with those of the PCV and New Entity. When the Trusts Corporation holds property subject to express trusts, it must exercise its own judgement as to the sale or other disposition of the property to ensure compliance with those trusts. This is in contrast with property that the Trusts Corporation holds in trust for the Church in Victoria when it must act as directed by the GAV.
- 22 The question of conflicts of interest needs to be borne in mind. The New Entity is formed to advance the PCV and its mission. It may find itself in conflict in connection with an express trust under which the Trusts Corporation must act in the interests of the express trust and the purposes there stipulated. The Trusts Corporation will be conscious of this tension. It may be desirable for the Trusts Corporation to have a separate chair and secretary to those of the New Entity.
- 23 I shall be happy to discuss any queries that may rise in connection with the matters discussed above.



M.W. SHAND

Owen Dixon Chambers West
205 William Street
Melbourne

1 March 2024

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE (Min 110)

This year is the first year of the committee's work, although, the committee acknowledges any advancement sits firmly on the foundation laid by the *ad hoc* Archives Committee that preceded it. In every way, it has been a landmark year for the Archives and a significant step forward for the Church in the important work of preserving our rich cultural heritage (both church and state), as the following report makes clear.

Property

The highly favourable lease secured for 690 Elgar Road on land adjacent to the Theological College is an incredible provision—an answer to many prayers, petitions and labour by the committee and all friends of local church history. The support and commitment of the Presbyterian Theological College (PTC) and Melbourne East Christian Counselling Centre (MECCC) as co-tenants in the building has been central to the growing idea of a 'ministry hub' at Box Hill and has paved the way for both Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union (PWMU) and the Ministry Development Committee (MDC) to move their offices to the new premises. The tenancy income has enabled the Archives to properly establish a fit-for-purpose facility for the very first time. The committee thanks the Assembly and the Trusts Corporation for backing the project to the extent that they have, and we petition the church once more to consider purchasing the property outright—taking full advantage of this rare opportunity to secure its future for strategic church/ministry use and the expansion of our college campus.

Archives facility

The new Archives facility is a long way from the small vestry office that was its home for so many years. Much work went into creating a properly, fit-for-purpose preservation environment and workspaces. For the first time since the 1990s, the entire collection of historic records (some 1,800 archival boxes) is on site, immediately accessible, and appropriately housed, ordered, and stored. The central archives room is insulated from all UV light and features clean, pest-repellent flooring, 24/7 filtered airflow, temperature control to 18–20°C, and humidity control to an ideal 50%. The Archives now house 420 linear metres of metal shelving with further room to expand as needed. In addition to storage facilities, Archives now has a main office with six generous workstations, tables for box sorting and ample room for scanning equipment, light-pad, researcher computers, bookcases and display cabinets. In addition to the office, there are two essential work rooms, the first of which has been set up as a quarantine station and features a commercial grade freezer for arresting pest infestations present in many of the incoming records. The second room is set up for accessioning newly acquired records and for the key archival work of arrangement, housing, and description. All preservation work is done in this room, and specialist tools and materials are now available for this purpose including a new museum vac and tacking iron. Importantly, there is also a dedicated server room with raised floors, server rack, and cooling system from where the Archives' Collection Management System (CMS) database and public finding aid. Additionally, there is a small room for housing the church's collection of objects and regalia, a reading room, toilets, and a kitchen. The facility is a genuine 'Godsend' and will help transform for better, the workflow and outputs achievable within the Archives' remit.

The committee is aware that the gains realised will only see fruit by the continued use of the property. While it is true that the PCV as part of its lease agreement has first

option to purchase the site, there is no concrete plan to secure the site nor has any source of funding been identified.

Archivist

The Church Archivist, Mr Michael Smith, continues to fly the banner for the importance of the archival institution within the church and to promote the cause for compliance guidelines and improved records management across the church, particularly as we move rapidly into a fully 'born digital' environment and away from paper. There are looming, hugely problematic challenges ahead for the PCV with regards data retention and how we capture and record the work of the church (its courts, committees and communities) in this digital age. We must prepare now and act decisively to amend and update our operational code, compliance and procedures or risk losing valuable institutional knowledge forever.

Since the new facility opened for operations in January, Michael and his team of volunteers have set about recovering the work momentum lost to almost two years of disruption. Michael is pleased to confirm that the set up and configuration of the new collections database (ArchivesSpace) is now complete, and the web-based finding aid is accessible by the public for the first time. The committee expects to see the quantity and quality of data improve rapidly as we migrate 20 years of records data from the old database to the new over the next six months. The digitising of key records of interest has continued unabated, and the current project to scan our entire collection of presbyteries' minute books is well underway but with completion a long-term proposition. Now that the existence of the Archives is more broadly recognised, the rise in enquiries and requests for research information has been noticeable. Recent months have seen an increase in visitors to the Archives and researchers from local and abroad have been welcomed and it has been a joy to help connect people with the past. Pleasingly, because of increased contact with the church community and public, support and donations to the Archives have risen in kind. There remain many years of backlog records work to be done and Michael notes that working just two days a week in the Archives is proving wholly inadequate for the task. It is hoped that Assembly will consider expanding the employable hours available to the Archivist role going forward.

Volunteers

Given the limited hours each week, the contribution of our volunteers is invaluable. The committee takes time to gratefully acknowledge the tireless work of Valentin Kentler (box and archival object data management), Bruce Garrett (digitisation and indexing), and Irene Poon (research and data entry). Special thanks in 2024 goes to Samson Ho who was responsible for the setup of the new IT infrastructure, software, and who also maintains our server system, security, backups and CMS upgrades. Thanks too, to Cameron Weir for his above-and-beyond work on preparing the property grounds and building in the early days of our occupancy at 690 Elgar Road.

Michael also thanks fellow members of the committee for their incredible support and encouragement over the year. Finally, a reminder that the Archives welcomes the deposit of church records and public donations at any time. Small parcels can be sent to our PO Box, larger parcels to the PTC, and the Archivist is willing to visit anywhere in the state of Victoria to pick up significant bundles of records by car and trailer.

Cameron Garrett
CONVENER

AUSTRALIAN PRESBYTERIAN WORLD MISSION (VIC) (Min 69)

‘And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.’ Matthew 24:14.

‘Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’ Matthew 28:19a, 20b.

Introduction

There have been, and still are, voices that proclaim that the era of world mission is over. To be fair, those who say this, are normally thinking of the great missionary movement of the late 18th and 19th centuries and the western missionary societies that grew out of that movement. I’m sure we would all agree that that unique period of history with the expansion of the western colonial powers has passed, and with it, some of the missionary methods and practices of the day. But does that mean that the age of world mission is over? Certainly not! As we think of the sayings of Jesus above, taken from Matthew’s Gospel, it is clear that world mission is the task of the Church to the ends of the earth and to the end of time. The world may be a vastly different place to that which William Carey or Hudson Taylor faced, but the task is just the same, and the mandate has not changed.

As Webb-Peploe, of the Dohnavur Fellowship in South India, once expressed it, ‘The purpose is clear – evangelise to a finish.’ And we can have no doubt what he meant by that! ‘Finish’ must mean to the ends of the earth and to the end of time. In fact, he himself spelt out what he meant, when he wrote, ‘which means that everyone in every land must be told the good news that Jesus Christ died to save them from their sins and lives to lead them into the glorious liberty of the children of God.’

The Rev Thomas Walker in his studies on the book of Acts wrote, ‘The history of the Acts of the Apostles is the record of the elucidation of one supreme purpose, that of the evangelisation of the world.’

Shall we not, as a Presbyterian Church, play our part in co-operating with the Holy Spirit in this vast and glorious mission of the Son of God who said that when He was lifted up He would draw all people to Himself?

Our committee

Our Victorian APWM Committee meets every month through the year on the fourth Thursday of each month, except in January, April and September. Our meetings are usually via Zoom, although we endeavour to meet at least twice a year in person. Last year we conducted our December meeting in Ballarat with lunch together, which we hope to do again this year. Our committee works harmoniously as we all share a passion for world mission. Most of the committee members have had some missionary experience at some time or another in their lives. We always spend time at each meeting praying for our missionaries and their respective needs. We also seek to interview all our missionaries when they return to Australia on home assignment, to ascertain their general well-being and any needs that they may have on home assignment. This also includes our missionaries working here in Australia in what we now call ‘diaspora ministries’. In their case, ‘home assignment’ is a bit harder to define, as they are already serving here in Australia. Our committee, along with our partner mission agencies, is seeking to clarify how ‘home assignment’ and ‘deputation’ will work in the future for our missionary families working from home.

Last October Mrs Pam Vandenberg retired from the committee as PWMU representative, and since then we have welcomed Mrs Roslyn Brown onto the committee as her replacement. The other PWMU representative, Miss Robyn Crocker, continues to serve on our committee.

This past year, Rev Keith Bell has been able to visit various presbyteries and congregations representing both Wycliffe and APWM. We are thankful to Keith being able to represent us to the wider church despite some challenging health issues in the last twelve months.

During this time, he has been able to visit the following:

Presbyteries

Ballarat	23 November 2023
North Western Victoria	19 April 2024
Geelong	11 June 2024
Melbourne West	21 August 2024

Congregations

Eltham	5 November 2023

Mr Chris Griffioen, who is the Australian Ministry Director for OM Australia and an APWM approved missionary, has also offered to represent and speak for APWM when he is visiting Presbyterian Churches in his deputation work for OM. We thank him for this offer, and hope churches will invite him to share about OM and the work of APWM.

Mrs Wendy Moody has for some time been compiling a short history of all the people from Victoria who have served as APWM missionaries since 1997 to 2024. This task is now complete and we are thankful to Wendy for the time and effort she has put into this project, which will provide a valuable asset to our archives. Reading through each of the short cameo histories is a very real reminder of the faithfulness of God to our Victorian Church in raising up labourers for the harvest, both in the past as well as in the present.

After each Assembly, the newly elected Moderator meets with our committee to discuss plans for a visit to one of our mission fields. This year, we recommended to Rev Ian and Ann Hutton that they consider visiting Calvin and Ruth Mathys and family in Ukarumpa PNG. Once all their travel plans are in place, they will visit the Mathys in September.

Survey/Questionnaire.

We have put out a survey/ questionnaire this year to all our presbyteries and congregations in Victoria to try and assess the level of support for APWM and its missionaries across our denomination. Knowing how busy ministers of churches and clerks of presbyteries are, we wondered what level of response we would get, but we have been overwhelmed and greatly heartened by the responses so far received. This in itself speaks of a real concern for the great commission and cross-cultural ministry within our denomination.

Our National Committee

Mrs Lynette Ellis and Rev David Schulz (as convener) represent the Victorian Committee at the national level. All the national committee meetings are via Zoom except the first meeting of the year in February.

Rev Kevin Murray continues to serve our Australian Church well as our Mission Director. However, he has indicated his desire to retire from this position at the end of 2025. The National Committee has set up a sub-committee, consisting of all the State conveners, to seek a replacement for Kevin in 2026. As of this Assembly, we will be advertising this position and will value the prayers of the Assembly as we look for a replacement for Kevin.

A position Convener Brett Graham.

PTS Dehra Dun

The Presbyterian Church of Australia has had a long-running partner church relationship with the Presbyterian Church of North India. This has translated into on-going financial support for the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Dehra Dun. Since the establishment of the 'Ellis Chair of Theology' in honour of the Rev John Ellis, who with his wife Lynette ministered there for a number of years, our Victorian Church has financially supported this teaching position. Unfortunately, in the middle of this year, the seminary had their licence to receive foreign aid revoked by the then Indian Government. As a consequence, money that was sent from our Melbourne Office bounced back. The bottom line is that PTS Dehra Dun cannot receive any foreign aid, either for their staff appointments or building projects (they are in the midst of a large building project at the moment). Monies that are earmarked for the college must now remain in our bank accounts until further notice. There is nothing the National Committee can do but wait until such time as the Indian Government reinstates their licence. This is a matter for urgent prayer, as the college will struggle to survive without overseas aid.

Vanuatu

Praise God we are still able to financially support the Talua Theological College in Vanuatu from our specific Vanuatu Trusts and thus continue the historic partner church relationship with the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu. Rob and El Falls, from Hornsby Presbyterian Church NSW, live and minister full time at the Talua Theological Training Institute where they are preparing the next generation of gospel workers for God's church in Vanuatu and the South Pacific.

Rev Motor Isaac Yat

Rev Motor Isaac Yat is a partner church missionary with the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan, and so is solely dependent upon our Presbyterian Church for his support. Thankfully, he has been well supported, and he has many contacts with churches here in Victoria. Unfortunately, due to various factors, he and his family have not been able to return to Australia to connect with his supporting churches. Last year problems arose over visa restrictions for his wife Julia and son Mark. After legal assistance we were able to secure Mark's Australian citizenship, but due to technical issues, Julia's visa was not approved. Since then, Julia has fallen pregnant with their second child, and as a consequence cannot travel. The hope is now for them to return sometime in the new year. We pray that the pregnancy goes well, and that they can obtain all the necessary papers to return and reconnect with us all next year.

APWM Sunday.

The National APWM committee has resolved to recommend that congregations set aside the third Sunday in October as APWM Sunday, where the work of APWM is specifically remembered. In 2024 this will be on 20 October.

Our Missionary Team Movements

New Labourers for the Harvest Field.

Last year we urged the Assembly to pray to the Lord of the harvest to thrust forth fresh labourers for the harvest fields of the world. Praise God for answered prayer! This year we rejoice in the addition of a new missionary to our list of APWM approved missionaries. Ms Lauren Raiter, a member of The Scots' Church Melbourne, was commissioned at The Scots' Church on 4 February to serve with CMS in Spain. At the time of writing, she is currently in England awaiting a new visa. She has already been in Spain, and we have received her first few newsletters from Madrid with attached video clip, where she tells of her early language learning and adjustment to another culture.

James Wait

We have also received an application from Mr James Wait from our Bairnsdale congregation for approval as an APWM Missionary serving with OM on the ship, Doulos Hope. At the time of writing all his paperwork had been received and the final task of interviewing him was due to take place.

We are also conscious of another young couple from Victoria who are currently studying at SMBC who are looking to apply to APWM in the future. Praise God for His faithfulness!

Eva and Laszlo Mihalyi

Last year, in early November, Laszlo and Eva returned home from an extended term of service in Hungary. They returned very tired and in need of good rest. Laszlo also returned with some major health issues. He had a kidney operation at the end of January and subsequently, eye surgery and treatment in May. The kidney operation was successful, but further surgery is anticipated. If all goes well, they hope to return at the end of this year.

Rosie T

Living and working in a cross-cultural mission is never easy, and unfortunately Rosie faced some very stressful situations in her work, which meant she had to come home to her parents in New Zealand for a time. We have kept in touch with her and prayed for her. A couple of our committee members caught up with her in Melbourne to see how she was going and to encourage her. Praise God, she has commenced a new role within Pioneers.

Andrew Adams

Andrew returned for home assignment from Japan where he has been working for the last several years, most recently with the church in Hiroshima. He arrived back in April, and after a well-earned rest, began his deputation work in June. The committee interviewed him at their June meeting. He seems to be in good health and is looking forward to returning to Japan to continue his ministry there, where the need for Gospel workers is so very great.

Hannah Davies

Hannah was home briefly over Christmas and New Year from Yeosu in South Korea where she teaches ESL at Missionary Training Institute. Because of her living situation, she returned to Australia with a considerable jump in her living expenses, but praise God, by the time of her return her support level had reached the desired amount. Although suffering some continuing tiredness, she continues to be encouraged in the work, and returned in good health.

Chris and Julie Dean (CMS Timor Leste)

Chris and Julie have settled well into life in Timor Leste, and are making remarkable progress in the language of Tetun. Chris is kept busy with ministry and the wider church continues to support him and the local Timor Leste church with training workshops conducted by Rev David Burke (Moderator General of the GAA) and Rev Robert Duncanson from Ballarat West. These training workshops usually go for a couple of weeks at a time, the last one being conducted in August this year.

Calvin and Ruth Mathys and Ross Maxwell.

Both Calvin and Ross serve in the field of aeronautics. Calvin works as an aircraft engineer in PNG while his wife Ruth provides training for translators and support staff. Ross operates helicopters in Madagascar with 'Helimission' under the umbrella of Pioneers. Both the Mathys family and Ross Maxwell are coming home at the end of this year for leave and home assignment.

Prayer

How vital is it for us to pray always and not lose heart! How appropriate are Paul's words at the end of his Ephesian letter as we pray for our missionaries: 'Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication for all the saints, and also for me (here we may insert the names of our missionaries) that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel for which I am an ambassador...'

Our missionaries seek to put out both newsletters and WhatsApp or Facebook messages throughout the year to their supporters. We encourage members of the Assembly to subscribe to these periodic newsletters and WhatsApp/Facebook messages and to actively engage with our missionaries for their encouragement. It is so encouraging for a missionary to receive a reply from supporters back home, saying that they have received their newsletters and are praying for them.

Regular updates from our missionaries are provided through both the National Office and our Victorian State Committee. We highly recommend subscribing to the PWMU Newsletter that comes out every month except January. This is an excellent resource to keep you informed about our cross-cultural workers around the globe.

We hope that not just individual Christians will make use of these resources for their own personal devotions and prayer life, but also local churches in their congregational prayers on the Lord's Day.

Missionary Poster

Rev Marcus Campbell did a great job producing our latest missionary poster for last year's Assembly. We have not seen the need to produce a new poster for this year but would encourage churches and individuals to avail themselves of the poster that is still relevant and available for this year.

Marcus is presently working on revising and updating our website which should be up and running by the end of the year.

Finances

We praise God for the way our Victorian Church has been endowed with various trusts and bequests for missionary work both here and around the world. For these trust monies given in the past, and for the present on-going giving through GMP for the maintenance and care of all our missionary team, we are very grateful.

We are very thankful to the Church Office for managing our finances, helping us stay on budget for the year and effectively acting as our treasurers, in both keeping the books and sending funds to our missionaries as authorised by our committee and as special needs arise.

Trust funds continue to generate income to fund ministry at the Talua Ministry Training Centre in Vanuatu, as well as providing income for Rick and Kayleen Manton ministering to our indigenous Australians at Mt. Druitt.

This year we were again able to give Christmas gifts to all our missionary families and singles totalling just over \$8,000.

At the end of the last financial year, we were able to top up our missionaries' superannuation by a gift of \$941 each from our Simon Fraser Trust. This did not include the Manners who are self-employed and S & D whose remuneration package is managed by IRFA Victoria.

We also continue to support our missionaries on home assignment with homecoming grants of \$500 a single per year, \$750 a couple per year, and \$1,000 a family per year. For an ordinary three-year term this adds up to \$1,500, \$2,250 and \$3,000 respectively.

Coins for Mission.

During the last financial year, we received \$31,078.80 from those churches who gave so generously to the 'Coins for Mission' Programme. We were able to distribute \$30,257.03 for various needs that arose during the year. This programme has been very successful in raising funds for unexpected needs. They are not used for the general support of our missionaries.

If, as a congregation, you are not part of 'The Coins for Mission program', then we warmly encourage you to request a box, and use it at church so people can donate their loose change. As a committee we realise that cash and coins are becoming a rarer commodity among our younger people, and we have therefore sought to encourage churches to take up an alternative method by which church members could make small, incidental contributions through electronic means, whether this be through a Square, a QR Code or a Donate App on the church's website. These devices can be set up over Sunday morning tea or other occasions where people may wish to donate.

At this stage we are not aware of whether this suggestion has gained any traction around the state, but we believe it is a way of giving to missions that has potential going into the future.

Our Mission Lunch

This year our Mission Lunch will be held on the Wednesday of Assembly after the APWM Report. This year Rev Hiralal Solanki, the Indian Director of Indian Reformed Fellowship Australia will be speaking to our Assembly during the APWM report. We look forward to hearing from this Indian Church leader about the state of mission work in India. Our guest speaker at the lunch this year will be the CEO of Pioneers in Australia, Simon Longden. A number of our missionaries serve with Pioneers and those who are on home assignment will be present at the lunch.

Our Cars for Missionaries on Home Assignment

Praise God that we are blessed as a committee to own three cars for the use of missionaries returning for home assignment. We find that at least two of the cars are often in use at the same time, and sometimes all three, so it is clearly meeting a real need. We are so thankful to Dr Noel Johnston who continues to look after our fleet of cars, housing them on his own property and seeing to their regular servicing, and any other work that may be needed from time to time.

Our current fleet of cars includes:

Toyota Kluger Wagon 2010

Kia Seltos CVT Wagon 2022

Holden Commodore VF Evoke Sedan 2017

We also praise God for the provision of holiday accommodation for our missionaries provided by the Millers' holiday house at Portarlinton. We thank the Miller family for their generosity in providing this place for our missionaries' rest and relaxation.

David Schulz
CONVENER

BOARD OF INVESTMENT AND FINANCE (Min 26)

Membership of the Board of Investment and Finance

Membership and committee responsibilities in the past year were as follows:

Mr John Walter	Chairman (from January 2024)	Investment Committee
Rev Barry Oakes	Chairman (to January 2024)	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 Russell Walley	Vice-Chairman (from January 2024)	Investment Committee
Mr Dennis Wright	Secretary	Audit Committee
Rev Gary Wentworth		Audit Committee

Barry Oakes

Rev Barry Oakes was a member of the Board of Investment and Finance and The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation from the rising of the General Assembly 7 October 2013 until his sudden death on 12 January 2024.

During this entire period, he was a member of the Audit Committee which he chaired from February 2019 onwards. From December 2020 he served as chairman of the Board of Investment and Finance for four years; and as chairman, he was a member of several standing and ad hoc committees.

He led the Board of Investment and Finance through several difficult and complex issues with courage, integrity and grace. He continually questioned and challenged the way things are, motivated by a desire to provide better stewardship of the church's resources.

His commercial experience gained prior to entering the ministry equipped him with the technical skills to critically evaluate and manage the range of diverse projects within the remit of the Board of Investment and Finance. This was complemented by his engagement and awareness of the scope and breadth of the activities of the church throughout the state, and his deep desire to see the gospel advanced.

Without compromise, he sought the peace and harmony of the church at all times and led the Board of Investment and Finance with strength and humility. It is evident that his motivation lay in a real love and concern for the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, a cause for which he so often extended himself, sometimes at personal cost.

We give thanks to God for his service and valued contribution to the work of the church and the gospel on the Board of Investment and Finance and the Trusts Corporation.

Church Office

The BIF is grateful for the dedicated support of the team in the church office who faithfully serve the Assembly, congregations, committees and other denominational bodies. Our thanks go to the General Manager, Mr Michael Ellison, Mrs Sharee Barnett, Mr Jason Zhang and Mrs Beth Kavanagh, who recently joined the PCV staff.

We particularly wish to express our appreciation to Michael Ellison for his expertise, advice and significant input across a broad range of matters that impact upon the denomination and sit outside day-to-day operations.

Law Agent's Retainer

In accordance with the Code 5.16c, the Trusts Corporation and the BIF have fixed the Law Agent's retainer for the 2024/25 year at \$47,050.

General Mission Program receipts – 2023/24.

The BIF is pleased to report that the GMP allocations were paid in full by every charge this year. 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 to congregations is 2.5% per annum and 3.5% to schools. The costs of funds borrowed from the Trusts Corporation is 5.0% 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:

	2023/24	2022/23
	\$	\$
Receipts		
Interest on loans to congregations	111,349	85,907
Interest from Common Fund	141,235	119,872
Other Investment Income	0	0
Total Income	<u>252,584</u>	<u>205,779</u>
Payments		
Interest paid on loans from Common Fund	222,698	157,604
Interest paid on deposits	294	366
Legal Fees	0	397
Total Expenditure	<u>222,992</u>	<u>158,367</u>
Surplus	<u>29,592</u>	<u>47,412</u>
 Balance of Capital Fund Reserve	 1,599,113	 1,582,857
Deposits held for congregations,	<u>27,077</u>	<u>36,816</u>
Loans to Congregations and Schools	<u>2,899,442</u>	<u>4,266,090</u>

Property matters

Since last reporting to the Assembly approval was given by the BIF under BIF regulation 16 (a) for the following urgent property transactions:

- lease of 6 Asquith Place, Melton for a period of 12 months for no less than \$1,800 per month (BIF 127/24).

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
Ministry Development	\$25,000	Office fit-out – 690 Elgar Road (097/24)
Health and Community Chaplaincy	\$1,600	Laptop computer and phone (119/24)
Theological Education – Building Fund	\$120,000	Repair and restoration of bathrooms (120/24) – see below
Theological Education	\$30,000	Remuneration costs re part-time lecturers (121/24)
Safe Church	\$15,000	Consultancy
Ministry Development	\$5,000	Office fit-out – 690 Elgar Road (189/24)

The Theological Education Committee (TEC) requested a budget variation in order to attend to urgent maintenance to address water ingress from the bathrooms in each of the six residential units. The committee had proposed to attend to the repairs over the next two years primarily for budgetary reasons. In total the works will cost \$240,000. The BIF does not see the need to delay the repairs for budgetary reasons. The works will be funded from the building fund which has ample funds.

The BIF encouraged the TEC to proceed with the works in the most expeditious way and approved a variation of \$120,000 which is the limit of its authority under its regulation 9(b)(ii)(1). In addition to the \$40,000 which was initially approved in the budget a further \$80,000 is required. The BIF recommends that the Assembly approves the additional expenditure so that the works can proceed without delay.

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.

Specific Trusts are designated for the particular purposes defined within the trust instrument. They are allocated to the committee which most appropriately matches the terms of the trust to assist in the disbursement of funds. They do not form part of the general funds of the committee and cannot be applied by the committee or Assembly to any purposes outside the terms of the trust. While these trusts are assigned to various committees, expenditure from them is ultimately under the sole authority of the Trusts Corporation as articulated in S14 of the *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890*.

Bequests

A further amount was received during the year from the estate of Marion Jennings. This brings the total received from the estate to \$4.7 million. The expectation last year was that some of the uncertainties in relation to various funding matters may be clarified by now, not least of which is the implications of the proposed New Entity. Consequently, the BIF believes it is not appropriate to commit the bequest funds at this time.

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:

	2023/24	2022/23
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July	23,409,084	22,123,727
Plus		
Receipts from Sale of Property	2,441,974	4,387,150
Interest & Other Income	956,791	843,287
Capital gain/(loss) on Investments	543,538	738,880
Less		
Payments – ministry support	(913,699)	(778,566)
Property improvements and expenses	(2,903,614)	(1,362,731)
Funding for PCV purposes	-	(2,457,818)
Allocation to Property Development Fund	(331,399)	(84,846)
Balance at 30 June	23,202,676	23,409,084

Insurance – Congregational property

Renewal

As previously reported over the last 18 months the insurer has required a commitment to various risk mitigation remedial action in order to maintain cover. While we received little notice of these requirements, what was being asked was a reasonable request.

In requiring the PCV to face up to these issues, the insurer has done the church a service by forcing us to address property maintenance of church properties which is already required under the Code. In some cases, long outstanding building defects are now being addressed by congregations and presbyteries. They have also drawn attention to need to mitigate risk and identify defects in advance.

As a result of the work which has been done over the last year or more the PCV is now a more attractive proposition for insurers. Last year Ansvar was the only insurer that was prepared to offer terms to the church. This year five insurers were prepared to offer terms. This has opened up new avenues to provide insurance cover and provided opportunities beyond the current insurer.

This has come with extra cost. It is helpful when considering the renewal premiums to see these costs not as direct insurance costs but more as maintenance and risk management costs which we ought to have been incurring anyway.

Ultimately when considering the renewal, the BIF and the Trusts Corporation concluded that that Ansvar provided the best overall proposal. Key factors in coming to this conclusion were:

- Premiums. Compared to the rest of the market the premium was in most cases lower although the gap has closed. Our claims history is not good. A natural consequence of this is that premiums will increase.

- Extent of coverage. Other insurers excluded cover or placed significant limitations on cover for unoccupied properties (St George's, Geelong) and buildings under repair (South Yarra).
- Sexual Abuse Cover. Other insurers provide a much lower level of cover or no cover for sexual abuse claims. While this is not part of the property insurance there was some uncertainty as to whether the current cover could be maintained with Ansvar in the event that the property was insured elsewhere.
- Flood exclusions. The list of 15 locations which were not covered for flood last year has been reduced down to two – Seaford and Carisbrook.

Premiums

Following the renewal invoices being sent to congregations by the broker by far the most enquiries are related to the increase in the invoice compared to last year. It is often assumed that any change in the invoice is solely the consequence of the insurer increasing the rate. That is not the only variable.

The premium is calculated by applying the rate to the sums insured. If the sums insured increase over the previous year then naturally the premium will increase even if there is no increase in the rate.

One of the most significant factors impacting on what happens to the rate is our claims history. Whatever we can do to minimise risk and claims has a significant impact on the rate applied by the insurer.

This year the rate applied to each congregation reflected the claims history at that location rather than the claim history across the state. This has resulted in a more equitable allocation which is more directly correlated to the actions taken by the board to manage risk and attend to maintenance in a timely manner. An external factor which previously boards had no control over has been removed.

This has resulted in a more equitable outcome and reduced the number of queries and questions about premium increases.

Many congregations have seen a net reduction in the premium this year despite a higher overall rate being applied. After one of the most challenging renewals in memory, the response has been very positive with much fewer inquiries and complaints about the rise in premiums.

Ongoing risk management and maintenance requirements

There have been a few different expressions over the last year as to what the insurer's ongoing expectations are particularly in relation to maintaining and cleaning roof gutters. The initial stringent requirements have become more relaxed and reasonable. The current requirements of the broker are:

- Finalise the responses to items raised in the Risk Engineering Surveys. Most of these are already done but a few remain outstanding.
- Roof and gutter inspections are no longer required to be conducted by a qualified contractor. The focus is on ensuring that gutters are not accumulating combustible material such as leaves, and are not blocked by tennis balls or other material. The inspection can be done visually if there is a sufficiently high vantage point, or by drone inspection. A formal report is not required but records should be kept to demonstrate that this is being attended to on a regular basis.
- Evidence of regular maintenance inspections on some systematic basis.

The BIF acknowledges the actions taken by the 15 congregations nominated by the insurer to demonstrate the commitment of the church to these areas. These are Bendigo, Ballarat North, Benalla, Camberwell, Hawthorn, Hamilton, Geelong (St George's), Gisborne, Malvern, Noorat, South Yarra, St Kilda, Terang, Warrnambool, Williamstown. The whole of the church has benefited from their efforts which have been considerable.

To date our risk management and maintenance has been reactive to the requirements of the insurer. We were unable to present a narrative which gave confidence that we had systems in place to minimise the insurer's risk. The requirements which were placed on us were intended to improve our risk profile. This is not to say that some congregations are not already meeting their responsibilities in maintaining their buildings and seeking to mitigate risks.

While the requirements may appear to be onerous, it has drawn attention to the need to be proactive in maintaining our properties in good order and attending to sound risk management. The church should take the initiative to implement strategies rather than wait for an insurer to place demands on us because we are unable to demonstrate that these matters are being given appropriate priority. If we can demonstrate we have programs in place this will reduce the likelihood of insurers placing additional requirements on us.

To date the insurer has not imposed any new requirements beyond those from last year. That is not a reason to do nothing.

The biggest identifiable risk to the church is the fire risk. Two of the three most recent significant claims have been due to fire.

To mitigate and manage this risk the BIF is recommending that thermographic scans be done for all properties. A thermographic scan is essentially an x-ray of the electrical circuit boards which can show hot-spots and high risk areas with potential to start a fire.

In taking this action we can be comforted that a very significant risk has been assessed and managed. That will have a positive impact on renewal discussions in the future.

The cost of a thermographic scan is approximately \$1,000. It is recommended that the cost of the scans be met by the General Assembly to be funded out of the 2023/24 surplus. Any remedial actions arising from the scans would be the responsibility of the board consistent with its responsibilities under the Code to ensure the proper maintenance of buildings.

Obligations

Some are under the misapprehension that because the insurer has provided cover and received payment, the congregation is removed from any obligations to address known issues. This is certainly not the case. Under any type of insurance, there is a continuing obligation on the insured:

- a) to continuously disclose any matters which may impact on the risk to the insured,
- b) to manage and mitigate known risks, and
- c) to be able to demonstrate that maintenance is being considered regularly and systematically at each location.

A failure to do so may result in future claims being denied and the cover being cancelled. The insurer provides cover on the understanding that congregations will meet their express obligations summarised above.

Self insurance and deductibles

The question of self-insurance arises from time to time including at the most recent Commission of Assembly. While this idea may be seen as an attractive alternative to being subject to the demands of insurers and increasing premiums and maintenance costs, the reality is that it is not a straightforward proposition.

The first and most obvious issue is the setting aside of sufficient funds to meet the cost of any future claims. Based on our claims history this could mean an initial provision of \$10 million which would need to be set aside specifically for this purpose. More critically, the church would need to establish the infrastructure and skills that are inherent in the insurance model. This includes the need for:

- accurate and up to date property valuations for all properties,
- risk management and maintenance programs to mitigate the risk which would become more critical when the church bears all the consequences,
- expertise in assessing, valuing and managing any claims,
- a robust financial model to ensure that the pool of funds is replenished following from drawdowns to meet claims as well as maintained and increased in line with property valuations.

These are all specialised technical skills which the church does not have. These cannot be readily introduced or added to the responsibilities of existing staff. A whole new department would need to be resourced including new staff with specialist skills in this area.

The insurance market is increasingly more challenging and subject to rapid changes. This has led to some insurers going into administration.

The PCV does not have the size to justify the infrastructure overheads that attend to self-insurance. It is beyond the scope of the church to take on this obligation and the associated additional risks.

One simple way of achieving some form of self-insurance without taking on all these extra obligations is to increase the deductible (excess) applicable on claims. This has happened over recent years largely at the instigation of the insurers which serves to reduce premiums. The downside is that the lower end claims are below the deductible, so we are left to fund the repairs ourselves and the larger claims have a higher deductible which must be funded by church.

Guidelines for Exempt Benefits

There has been insufficient time since the May 2024 Commission of Assembly to complete the further inquiries and deliberations regarding proposed guidelines for exempt benefits requested by the Commission (minute 13.10). The BIF anticipates it will be in a position to report to the Commission of Assembly next May.

John Walter
CHAIRMAN

	Allocation FY24	Outstanding	Total Received
PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN VICTORIA			
Total Allocated to Presbytery	9,080.00		
Ararat/Skipton/Lismore	983	Paid	983
Ballarat North	896	Paid	896
Ballarat South	3,557	Paid	3,557
Ballarat West	1,620	Paid	1,620
Carisbrook/Castlemaine	521	Paid	521
Daylesford	-	Paid	
Horsham	925	Paid	925
Kaniva/Nhill	578	Paid	578
PRESBYTERY TOTAL	9,080.00		9,080
Presbytery allocation not received			

PRESBYTERY OF FLINDERS			
Total Allocated to Presbytery	39,650.00		
Aspendale	2,417	Paid	2,417
Brighton	1,960	Paid	1,960
Cheltenham	2,494	Paid	2,494
Clarinda	1,399	Paid	1,399
Clarinda Nuer	351	Paid	351
Clayton	5,124	Paid	5,124
Cranbourne	1,996	Paid	1,996
Dandenong	2,057	Paid	2,057
Dromana/Mornington	2,684	Paid	2,684
Embrace Melbourne Korean	1,247	Paid	1,247
Frankston	5,542	Paid	5,542
Mordialloc	2,863	Paid	2,863
New Life Officer	3,328	Paid	3,328
Somerville	1,434	Paid	1,434
Sorrento/Rye	3,422	Paid	3,422
South East Samoan	1,331	Paid	1,331
PRESBYTERY TOTAL	39,649.00	-	39,649
Presbytery allocation not received			

PRESBYTERY OF GEELONG			
Total Allocated to Presbytery	10,432.00		
Bannockburn	1,888	Paid	1,888
Bellarine	1,294	Paid	1,294
Geelong North	3,526	Paid	3,526
Geelong West	2,472	Paid	2,472
The Leigh	1,252	Paid	1,252
PRESBYTERY TOTAL	10,432.00	-	10,432
Presbytery allocation not received			

PRESBYTERY OF GIPPSLAND			
Total Allocated to Presbytery	12,171.00		
Bairnsdale	2,221	Paid	2,221
Drouin	4,857	Paid	4,857
Leongatha	-	Paid	
Moe/Yarram	1,540	Paid	1,540
Morwell	1,658	Paid	1,658
Sale	237	Paid	237
Warragul	1,658	Paid	1,658
PRESBYTERY TOTAL	12,171.00	-	12,171
Presbytery allocation not received			

	Allocation FY24	Outstanding	Total Received
PRESBYTERY OF MAROONDAH			
Total Allocated to Presbytery	31,923.00		
Belgrave Heights	1,355	Paid	1,355
Blackburn	935	Paid	935
Croydon Hills	3,832	Paid	3,832
Doncaster(Templestowe)	3,832	Paid	3,832
Donvale	14,019	Paid	14,019
Heathmont	2,336	Paid	2,336
Kirkbrae Chapel	100	Paid	100
Mt Evelyn	1,869	Paid	1,869
Warburton	841	Paid	841
Woori Yallock	2,804	Paid	2,804
PRESBYTERY TOTAL	31,923.00		31,923

Presbytery allocation not received

PRESBYTERY OF MELBOURNE EAST			
Total Allocated to Presbytery	55,427.00		
Arabic	2,356	Paid	2,356
Ashburton	1,652	Paid	1,652
Auburn	1,352	Paid	1,352
Burwood Community	5,654	Paid	5,654
Camberwell	11,484	Paid	11,484
Canterbury	4,828	Paid	4,828
Caulfield/Elwood	1,884	Paid	1,884
Gardenvale East	587	Paid	587
Hawthorn	2,417	Paid	2,417
Korean Balwyn	5,831	Paid	5,831
Malvern	1,297	Paid	1,297
South Yarra	1,774	Paid	1,774
St Kilda/Balaclava	1,413	Paid	1,413
Surrey Hills	12,898	Paid	12,898
PRESBYTERY TOTAL	55,427.00	-	55,427

Presbytery allocation not received

PRESBYTERY OF MELBOURNE NORTH			
Total Allocated to Presbytery	38,408.00		
Bundoora	7,258	Paid	7,258
Donnybrook	-	Paid	
Eltham	5,057	Paid	5,057
Epping	2,953	Paid	2,953
Heidelberg	1,847	Paid	1,847
Hume	520	Paid	520
Kangaroo Ground	3,260	Paid	3,260
Reservoir	5,385	Paid	5,385
Samoan	5,680	Paid	5,680
Valley	2,618	Paid	2,618
Whittlesea/Mernda	3,830	Paid	3,830
PRESBYTERY TOTAL	38,408.00		38,408

Presbytery allocation not received

	Allocation FY24	Outstanding	Total Received
PRESBYTERY OF MELBOURNE WEST			
Total Allocated to Presbytery	42,410		
Brimbank	1,406	Paid	1,406
Clifton Hill	800	Paid	800
Darebin	2,437	Paid	2,437
Essendon	1,150	Paid	1,150
Flemington	2,317	Paid	2,317
Gisborne	1,968	Paid	1,968
Indonesian (Scots Church)	3,925	Paid	3,925
Melton	1,543	Paid	1,543
Melbourne West Korean	2,982	Paid	2,982
Point Cook	1,500	Paid	1,500
Scots Melbourne	15,897	Paid	15,897
Sunshine	1,774	Paid	1,774
West Footscray	794	Paid	794
Williamstown	1,952	Paid	1,952
Wyndham	1,965	Paid	1,965
PRESBYTERY TOTAL	42,410		42,410
Presbytery allocation not received			
PRESBYTERY OF NORTH EAST VICTORIA			
Total Allocated to Presbytery	7,038.00		
Benalla	2,078.70	Paid	2,079
Broadford	399.75	Paid	400
Numurkah	-	Paid	
Seymour/Nagambie/Yea	506.35	Paid	506
Shepparton/Stanhope/Kyabram	1,015.10	Paid	1,015
Tatura	1,225.90	Paid	1,226
Wangaratta/Yarrawonga	1,252.55	Paid	1,253
Wodonga Grace	559.65	Paid	560
PRESBYTERY TOTAL	7,038.00	-	7,038
Presbytery allocation not received			
PRESBYTERY OF NORTH WESTERN VICTORIA			
Total Allocated to Presbytery	7,120.00		
Bendigo	1,721.66	Paid	1,722
Eaglehawk	899.80	Paid	900
SE Bendigo(Reforming)	1,778.82	Paid	1,779
Kerang/Swan Hill	809.74	Paid	810
Pyramid Hill	-	Paid	
Rochester	1,095.06	Paid	1,095
Sunraysia	814.93	Paid	815
PRESBYTERY TOTAL	7,120.01	-	7,120
Presbytery allocation not received			
PRESBYTERY OF SOUTH WEST VICTORIA			
Total Allocated to Presbytery	11,840.00		
Camperdown/Noorat/Terang	1,267	Paid	1,267
Colac	662	Paid	662
Hamilton	2,366	Paid	2,366
Heywood/Portland	518	Paid	518
Koroit/Port Fairy/Woodford	1,267	Paid	1,267
Warrnambool	5,760	Paid	5,760
PRESBYTERY TOTAL	11,840.00	-	11,840
			265,498.01

	Allocation FY24	Outstanding	Total Received
SUMMARY			
Total Allocated to Presbyteries	265,500		
WESTERN VICTORIA	9,080		9,080
FLINDERS	39,650		39,649
GEE LONG	10,432		10,432
GIPPSLAND	12,171		12,171
MAROONDAH	31,923		31,923
MELBOURNE EAST	55,427		55,427
MELBOURNE NORTH	38,408		38,408
MELBOURNE WEST	42,410		42,410
NORTH EAST VICTORIA	7,038		7,038
NORTH WESTERN VICTORIA	7,120		7,120
SOUTH WEST VICTORIA	11,840		11,840
TOTALS	265,499		265,498
			100.0%

BUILDING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE (Min 109)

The committee has seen an increase in the number of applications for approval over the last 12 months. Some applications have not been able to be granted due to inadequate information being provided with the application.

The committee urges congregations undertaking building projects to engage with the church architect as early as possible and to seek 'in principle' approval for the concept prior to proceeding to drafting detailed plans and specifications. Following this process will ensure faster approval times from the committee.

The committee

The committee consists of Dennis Wright, Philip Thomas and Ralph Kop (convener).

The committee thanks the Church Architect Andrew Wilson for the advice and experience he provides to the committee and the PCV.

Andrew is always looking for ways for improving the various projects that he has been asked to comment upon as well as looking at ways to simplify and clarify the regulations that congregations are to adhere to in relation to building projects.

The committee would like to thank Dennis Wright for his nine years of service to the committee. Dennis has been a valued and dedicated member of the committee, and he has carried out his duties diligently despite his involvement in many other committees. Dennis is retiring due to the nine-year rule.

Applications received for approval

During 2023-24 the committee received the following applications for approval:

Applicant	Date of application	Description of Application	Date of Approval
Belgrave Heights Presbyterian Church	12/11/2022	Seeking approval of plans to convert an existing building into a worship centre	18/1/2024
Clifton Hill Presbyterian Church	13/12/2023	Seeking approval for refurbishment of church	9/02/2024
Drouin Presbyterian Church	20/12/2023	Seeking in principle agreement for church refurbishment	Outstanding request for further information to be provided.
Cranbourne Presbyterian Church	11/1/2024	Seeking in principle agreement for church refurbishment	Outstanding request for further information to be provided.
Kangaroo Ground Presbyterian Church	11/4/2024	Seeking in principle approval for Stage 1 works at the manse	16/4/2024

Applicant	Date of application	Description of Application	Date of Approval
Horsham Presbyterian Church	21/07/2024	Seeking approval for extension to church complex	Further information has been supplied and the application is under consideration.

The committee and the Church Architect received a number of requests for advice which was provided.

Church Architect's report

This year the Church Architect brings the following advice to the PCV:

A caution to all congregations arising from a circumstance that my practice encountered earlier this year.

To explain this, many, if not most congregations exist within residential town planning zones. There often coincide with other planning overlays, such as heritage overlays, however the underlying default zoning is usually residential. To enable non-residential use, these zones typically afford some non-residential uses, of which one of these is a 'Place of Worship'. The Place of Worship zoning is however restricted. This usually limits the building footprint to a maximum number of square metres or a maximum number of attendees. These restrictions can be extremely inhibitive, such as a maximum footprint of 250sqm – which is both typical and miniscule.

To override this, there are what is called 'existing usage rights' which enable an existing use to be maintained based on prior historic use. The issue is proving this. My office recently completed a planning application for a refurbishment of a heritage listed inner urban church. As with most churches, the buildings are more than double the minimum area permitted within the zone. Accordingly, our planning application relied on existing usage rights. Despite the heritage listing and a foundation stone stating that construction commenced in 1892, the council questioned whether the usage had been *continuously maintained*. Fortunately, one of the board members found in the archives a document from the 80th anniversary celebrations in 1971 that extensively outlined the church's history. It comprehensively demonstrated continuous use and answered the council's concerns.

Demonstrating existing usage rights on non-residential buildings within a residential zone is usually not a showstopper. Notwithstanding, I think it is possible to envisage a cultural climate where this is used as a means to restrict the development of church buildings. Accordingly, it is recommended that congregations maintain an archive of historic records that demonstrate continuous existing use.

Seeking Advice from Church Architect and Associated Fees

Congregations should be aware that seeking advice from the Church Architect is not a free service provided to the church. This also applies to congregations seeking approval for plans and specifications for building projects. The cost of the Church Architect reviewing the plans and specifications and providing comments to the committee will be charged to the congregation.

Congregations who are seeking advice from the Church Architect should read the 'Seeking Advice from Church Architect Guidelines' so that they can make themselves aware of the types of information that the church architect can provide and noting that the cost of providing that advice will vary from project to project.

A copy of the Guidelines is available on the committee's webpage. The current hourly rate to engage the Church Architect is \$280 per hour.

Ralph Kop
CONVENER

BUSINESS COMMITTEE (Min 11)

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.

Assembly Expositor

The Business Committee is pleased to report that Rev Dr Davi Gomes, International Director of the World Reformed Fellowship (WRF), has agreed to be the Assembly Expositor for 2024.

In addition to his role as Director of the WRF, Dr Gomes has pastored and planted churches in the USA (Boston and Philadelphia) and in Brazil and is presently the senior minister of the Igreja Presbiteriana Paulistana, a church in downtown São Paulo that was planted under his leadership. He has published several books, articles and contributions to books in English as well as Portuguese. Besides having taught at institutions in the USA (Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and Reformed Theological Seminary) and Brazil, Dr Gomes has also lectured in countries throughout Latin America, Africa, Asia, Oceania and Europe. He lives in Mogi das Cruzes, Brazil, with his wife, Adriana Heringer Gomes and their twin adult sons.

It is planned that Dr Gomes will preach at the Tuesday morning communion service and at the opening of the Wednesday morning and Thursday sittings.

Lunches (including the Mission lunch) and Afternoon Tea

The Tuesday lunch will be held to thank and farewell Rev Peter Hastie as he finishes up his time as principal of the Presbyterian Theological College.

The Tuesday Assembly Lunch for Assembly members and invited guests will be held in the Robert White Hall on the 1st floor from 12:30pm to 2:00pm. Booking is required.

Afternoon Tea on Tuesday will be provided by Trinity Camberwell Presbyterian Church and the PWMU Cookbook Committee. This will be an opportunity to thank Rev Dr John Wilson who has served so diligently as Clerk of Assembly.

The Wednesday lunch is the Mission Lunch, held in the Robert White Hall during the usual lunchtime slot (12:30–2:00pm). Mr Simon Longden the Director of Pioneers Australia will be speaking at the lunch. Booking is required.

Prayer meetings

Prayer meetings will be held during the Assembly week in the Robert White Meeting Room on the 1st floor as follows:

Monday afternoon: 4:30pm

Tuesday—Thursday mornings: 8:30am to 9:15am

Thanks

The Business Committee takes this opportunity to thank:

- the Minister, Session and members of the Scots' Church, Melbourne, for the use of their facilities and especially for hosting the opening and communion services and organising the supper after the opening service.
- the Assembly Office staff members for their work in assisting in the smooth running of the Assembly.

- APWM (Vic) for organising the Mission Lunch and the speakers at the lunch.
- Mr Damien Craig and those assisting with data projection.
- Those who are assisting with the audio system; and
- Rev David Schulz and others assisting with music.

Commission and next Assembly

The Business Committee recommends that:

- the ordinary Commission of Assembly meet on Tuesday, 6 May 2025, at 10:30am in Werner Brodbeck Hall within the Assembly Hall; and
- the 2025 General Assembly convene in the Scots' Church, Melbourne, at 7:30pm on Monday, 6 October, for worship and the installation of the Moderator, then at 9.30am on Tuesday, 7 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.

Outline of business

The Business Committee is required to present an agenda at the start of each sitting (other than the first). As a guide, the Committee will seek to arrange business according to the following outline. However, the outline cannot be relied upon as definitive of when an item will be taken up.

Consent agenda

The Business Committee has undertaken to work with a consent agenda for the 2024 October General Assembly. Items that are marked with an asterisk (*) will be considered as approved by members of the Assembly. Any item marked as part of the consent agenda can be taken off at the request of any member of Assembly. This is done without debate or discussion and can happen prior to the start of business for each sitting or at the point where the agenda is being approved for each sitting.

FIRST SITTING

Monday, 7 October 2024, at 7:30pm in the Scots' Church, Melbourne
Service of worship and the induction of the Moderator

SECOND SITTING

Tuesday, 8 October 2024, 9:30am–5:30pm

Assembly Communion Service (constitution)
11:00am
Roll of Assembly
Apologies
Associations
Welcomes
Business Committee
Conflict of Interest declarations
Minutes of previous sitting
*Minutes of 2024 Commission of Assembly
*Minutes of the August 2024 Urgent Assembly
New members
Ministerial and Elders' Jubilees
Ministerial and Elders' deaths—Prayer
*Royal address and Loyal addresses
Past Moderator's Report
Board of Investment and Finance

Trusts Corporation
Theological Education Committee
[12:30pm—2:00pm Lunch]

- Assembly Lunch – Thank you to Rev Peter Hastie for service at PTC

FOD 2:10pm Women's Ministries Victoria
Building and Property Committee
FOD 2:45pm – PWMU Report

- President, Mrs Roslyn Brown

FOD 3:00pm – Clerkship Committee
[3:30pm—4:00pm Refreshments]

- Provided by PWMU Cookbook Committee
- Thank you to Rev Dr John Wilson for service as Clerk of Assembly

Clerk's Report
Commission for Church Institutions
Archive Committee
Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act (2021)
Committee
Church and Nation Committee
Appeals, Overtures, Communications, References, Petitions
Business Committee

THIRD SITTING

Tuesday, 8 October 2024, 7:00pm–9:00pm

Constitution
*Apologies
Business Committee
Conflict of Interest declarations
Minutes of previous sitting
Special Judicial Committee
Code and General Administration Committee
Overture 6: Candidate requirements
Overture 7: Purchasing property
Overture 8: Holding a WWCC
Overture 9: Meeting in private
Overture 10: Nomenclature regarding 'allowance'
Overture 11: Annual Congregational Meetings
Unfinished business from previous sitting
Appeals, Overtures, Communications, References, Petitions
Business Committee

FOURTH SITTING

Wednesday, 9 October 2024, 9:30am–5:30pm

Constitution
Assembly expositor
*Apologies
Business Committee
Conflict of Interest declarations
Minutes of previous sitting
METRO Committee
FOD 10:15am – PLC Report

- Mrs Cheryl Penberthy, Principal of PLC

*Scotch College

*Belgrave Heights Christian School

*St Andrew's Christian College

Presbyterian Youth and Children Committee

FOD 11:30am

- Introduction of missionaries to the Moderator
- Rev Kevin Murray (National Director, APWM) (10mins)
- Rev Hiralal Solanki (Indian Reformed Fellowship Australia) (10 mins)

Australian Presbyterian World Mission (Vic)

FOD 12:15pm – Ballot (if required)

[12:30pm—2:00pm Mission Lunch]

- Mr Simon Longden, Director at Pioneers Australia

FOD 2:10pm Petition 6: Morag Zwartz – Conversion and Suppression

Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee

FOD 3:15pm Clerk's report (private)

Communication 10 – private paper (private)

[3:30pm—3:50pm Refreshments]

FOD 3:50pm Safe Church Committee

Exit Students Committee

Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee

Maintenance of the Ministry Committee

Ministry Development Committee

Privacy Officer

Unfinished business from previous sittings

Appeals, Overtures, Communications, References, Petitions

Business Committee

FIFTH SITTING

Wednesday, 9 October 2024, 7:00pm–9:00pm

Constitution

*Apologies

Business Committee

Conflict of Interest declarations

Minutes of previous sitting

Selection Committee

Social Services Committee

State News Committee

Ad Hoc Committee: Deacons

Ad Hoc Committee: Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd

Ad Hoc Committee: New Entity

Ad Hoc Committee: Options for Minority Interest in Assembly Hall

Unfinished business from previous sittings

Appeals, Overtures, Communications, References, Petitions

Business Committee

SIXTH SITTING

Thursday, 10 October 2024, 9:30am to the finish of business

Constitution

Assembly expositor

*Apologies

Business Committee

Conflict of Interest declarations

Minutes of previous sitting

Church Planting Committee

Overture 1: Notice for Urgent Presbytery meetings

Overture 2: Supervision of Ministers (Royal Commission Recommendation 16.45)

Overture 3: Congregations to have public worship at least once on the Lord's Day

Overture 4: Deacons: Managers

Overture 5: Deacons: Diaconate

Overture 12: Elgar Rd Property

Communication 1 and remit: GAA – Standing Order 23

Communication 2 and remit: GAA – Deacons' Vows

Communication 3 and remit: GAA - Sacraments

Communication 4: GAA – Welcome to Country

Communication 5: GAA – Confirmation Deacon's Declaration

Communication 6: GAA – Mission to Australia

Communication 7: GAA – College Committee

Communication 8: GAA – WMPCA

Communication 9: PIM

- Rev Dr Stuart Bonnington (Superintendent, PIM)

Communication 11: St. Andrew's Foundation

[12:30pm—2:00pm Lunch]

Petition 1: Presbytery of Melbourne East – Dissolution of Deaf Special Interest Congregation

Petition 2: Presbytery of North East Victoria – Dissolution of Numurkah and Tallygaroopna and sale of property

Petition 3: Presbytery of North East Victoria – Dissolution of Thoona Congregation and sale of property

Petition 4: Congregation of Melton – Sale of manse

Petition 5: Congregation of West Footscray – Purchase of property by means of property exchange

[3:30pm—3:50pm Refreshments]

Unfinished business

Closing formalities

Commendation

Appointment of Commission of Assembly

Appointment of next Assembly

Dissolution

Brett Cummins
CONVENER

CHANGE OR SUPPRESSION (CONVERSION) PRACTICES PROHIBITION ACT (2021) COMMITTEE (Min 111)

Among its other duties as provided for by its regulations, the committee is required to provide training to the members of the PCV regarding bearing Christian witness in the context of the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 (the Act), to monitor the implementation and operation of the Act and report to the General Assembly on matters relevant to the implementation and operation of the Act.

Committee membership

Since the 2022 General Assembly the membership of this committee has been:

- a) four members of the General Assembly, including a convener, appointed by the General Assembly;
- b) the Moderator, the Assembly Clerk and the Convener of the Church and Nation Committee.

The members appointed by the Assembly are Rev Don Elliott and Rev Wayne McArdle and Peter Philips as convener, with a vacancy on the committee which the committee has unsuccessfully attempted to fill. The committee would welcome interest from members of the Assembly willing to consider serving in this role.

The committee had co-opted Rev Andrew Vines and Rev Jordan Born – but both these good men have been lost to the committee, Andrew by his translation to Hurstville and Jordan by his workload as an Associate Minister of Donvale Presbyterian Church and as acting Clerk of Maroondah Presbytery. The committee is grateful for their valued contribution to its work.

The implementation and operation of the Act

The committee is not aware of any action by the police or the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) in relation to complaints arising from the operation of the Act. However, it appears from the VEOHRC's 2022-23 Annual Report that some such complaints have been made (it states a 97% satisfaction rating from people accessing its complaints service under this heading) but no information is offered as to the number of or reason for these complaints.

From its report the main focus of VEOHRC in relation to the Act appears to be community involvement and education. The VEOHRC states that it aims to prevent change or suppression practices from happening using a harm-reduction approach and, that in line with this approach, it has increased its community and educational engagement with faith leaders, LGBTQA people of faith, young people (including young LGBTQA people, their friends and allies), health providers, religious institutions and service providers and other organisations.

The VEOHRC states that it is working with these groups to raise awareness of the issues; that it remains 'committed to closely working to support all faiths to better understand their obligations under the CSP Act' and that to 'further support religious organisations', it has developed an education program for faith leaders, *Providing safety and support for LGBTQA people of faith: Improving pastoral care* (p. 60 Annual Report).

The VEOHRC says 'This unique program, designed in collaboration with survivors, seeks to address knowledge gaps on providing supportive and appropriate pastoral

care for LGBTQA members of their faith. Having been successfully piloted, the program will be rolled out more broadly’.

The full VEOHRC report may be viewed at [Annual Report 2022–23 \(humanrights.vic.gov.au\)](https://annualreport2022-23.humanrights.vic.gov.au).

Training

As directed by the General Assembly, following approval by the committee of the training material in January 2024 the convener has been conducting training days in the presbyteries. At the time of writing this report training days have been conducted in five presbyteries and, if all goes according to plan, the training days in all the presbyteries will be completed by the end of August.

Thus far the training has been well received and appreciated. More than that, it has been very useful, especially in regard to the Code of Conduct.

When the committee brought the first version of the Code of Conduct to the 2022 General Assembly in its report it stated that ‘the proposed Code is not presented as the last word on this matter; rather, it will be subject to review and possible improvement in the light of any experience gained through its use and the operation of the Act.’

Comments and criticism from the wider Presbyterian community and the close examination of the Code of Conduct facilitated by the training days has confirmed this statement. On the whole, criticism of the Code has been constructive and helpful in pointing towards improvements to make the Code more accurate and more useful, and the committee expresses its gratitude to every person who took the trouble to read, digest and submit comments on the document.

The feedback included the following points in regard to the Code:

- It needs to be more positive upfront, to encourage the people of the church to continue to engage in gospel proclamation – at the moment it could create the false impression that the PCV is more concerned about avoiding conflict with the Act than with faithfulness to the gospel.
- It is too long, too complicated and too ‘lawyer speak’ in its language and doesn’t take sufficiently into account that it is a Code of Conduct for the membership of the church, not just for ministers and elders.
- It is too focused on gospel ministry to outsiders to the neglect of gospel ministry to believers.
- The ‘General Principles’ section contains material that is more prescriptive than of principle in nature.
- Section 6(d) appears to require a process that is impossible to follow in practice.

The committee has taken this feedback into account and submits for the approval of the Assembly a revised version of the Code of Conduct in its proposed deliverance.

The changes are extensive, and the best way of identifying them is to compare the proposed version with the existing version. However, the following summary covers the main points.

The proposed version includes:

- A clear statement of faith in regard to the gospel – clause (a) of the existing ‘Purposes’ section is a separate opening statement of faith.
- A more positive opening to the purpose section, from ‘where members of the church share the gospel and faithfully witness about God’s will for human flourishing in the areas of sexual attraction and gender identity’ to
 - encourage members of the church to preach and teach the whole counsel of God, including in relation to sexuality and gender, with courage, boldness and wisdom;
 - assist members of the church to be faithful to the teaching of the church and wise in their witness to God’s will for human flourishing in the areas of sexuality and gender in the context of the Act.
- Less lawyer language – for example, from ‘the doctrines, tenets and beliefs’ to ‘the teaching of the church’.
- Some simplification and less repetition.
- Simplified definitions together with the omission of definitions of terms not used in the Code.
- The inclusion of a definition of ‘marriage’ (from the PCV adopted Statement on Sex, Gender and Marriage) so that the expression ‘marriage of a man to a woman’ is not needed.
- A refining of the ‘General Principles’ with non-principle matters relocated elsewhere in the Code.
- The relocation of the ‘Setting an Example’ section higher in the Code to reflect its importance.
- The inclusion of ‘preaching’ with ‘teaching’ and the simplifying of the section to make it easier to understand and use.
- Simplifying ‘Faithful Christian Witness’ and its division to form a new ‘Wisdom in Christian Witness’ section.
- A new section on ‘Counselling and Pastoral Care’ distinguishing between ministry to believers and unbelievers.

Again, the committee does not put this version forward as the last word on this matter. However, since the first draft was prepared it has been shared with the presbyteries on subsequent training days for information and feedback, and the responses have been very positive and encouraging. The committee is therefore confident that it is a significant improvement on the present version and in that confidence commends the revised Code to the Assembly for its approval.

The committee’s provision of training has thus far been directed towards members of the church at greatest risk under the Act – that is, those members most directly engaged in word ministries of various sorts. However, the committee knows that the Act reaches into the lives of every member of the church, and so it intends in the near future to build on the experience gained through the training days to prepare training material that the ministers of the church can use with their sessions and congregations.

Peter Phillips
CONVENER

Appendix A

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA SEXUALITY OR GENDER CONVERSATION RECORD

MEMBER
1:

DATE:

MEMBER
2

DATE:

PERSON:

TIME:

-
5. Please give details of the sexuality and/or gender issue that arose with the above person.

6. Did you inform the person that you cannot provide medical advice or therapy or about sexual orientation or gender identity? Did you inform that you are not trying to change or suppress the person's sexual orientation or gender identity? Give details.

☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Did you pray with the person about the gender and/or sexuality issue? Please give details.

☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Write down any other observations or concerns

Signed by:

Signed by:

Member 1
Date:

Member 2
Date:

Appendix B

Practices that the VEOHRC has advised would be considered illegal under the Act include:¹⁷

IMPORTANT NOTE: The PCV does not accept that these practices are in fact prohibited by the Act. However, the VEOHRC is the government body that oversees and enforces the Act and has prepared this list as guidance as to their interpretation of conduct that is prohibited under the Act. It is reasonable to expect that VEOHRC would use its powers (investigation, education, compulsion and sanction) against a person who they consider has engaged in this conduct.

- a religious leader meeting one-on-one and pressuring a member of their congregation to suppress and ignore their feelings of same-sex attraction by practising celibacy
- running a peer-to-peer support group designed to coach a person who is exploring their gender identity to accept the sex they were assigned at birth
- a psychiatrist stating to their adult patient that their gender identity is a mental illness and proposing a long-term treatment plan to maintain the sex they were assigned at birth, while withholding information about other services that will affirm the patient's gender identity
- a parent refusing to support their child's request for medical treatment that will enable them to prevent physical changes from puberty that do not align with the child's gender identity and denying their child access to any health care services that would affirm their child's gender identity
- an adult child repeatedly denigrating an elderly parent's sexual orientation, including by telling them it is wrong to be same-sex attracted and that they must change, or the adult child will no longer support them
- a person repeatedly leaving pamphlets in the mailbox of their trans neighbour that state that it is wrong to transition their gender and that everyone's gender expression should match the sex they were assigned at birth. The pamphlet includes contact details of programs and professionals who claim to be able to change a person's gender identity to the sex they were assigned at birth.
- a religious leader tells a member of their congregation that they will be excommunicated if they continue their same-sex relationship and prohibited from returning as long as that relationship continues
- a teacher telling a student that God does not accept them unless they keep the sex they were assigned at birth and dress accordingly, and offering to meet with the child weekly to counsel them on how to be acceptable to God
- a parent sending their child away from Victoria to a conversion therapy camp that makes a false claim that they can 'cure' the child of being gay.

¹⁷ [Have you experienced a change or suppression practice? | Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission](#)

CHURCH AND NATION COMMITTEE (Min 114)

1. Committee membership

The current members since GAV October 2023 are as follows: Rev Chris Duke (convener), Mr Ian Waller (secretary), Rev Michael Jensen, Mrs Jeanette McHardy, Dr Ben Saunders and Mr Peter Stanton. Rev Jesse Walz finished his time on the committee at the end of June, and we would like to thank him for his valuable input and work in the committee over the past few years.

2. Researcher

Since the GAV 2023, the Church and Nation Committee is pleased to report that Mr John Ballantyne, who has served as a committee member for several years, was our successful applicant for the position of Church and Nation Committee researcher. John has been in this part-time role since January 2024. John brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to this role, and we wish him well in this endeavour of service.

3. Website

The website for the Church and Nation Committee is: www.churchandnationvic.org
This website can also be accessed via the PCV website under Church and Nation Committee.

The video library project, *Christian Basics*, which contains 70 short teaching-videos, can be accessed via the committee website and on the PCV YouTube Channel. The 70 short teaching videos can be accessed by clicking on the playlists. A number of people have expressed to us their appreciation for them.

4. Multifaith Advisory Group (MAG): a report from PCV representative Rev Surendra Wesley

Several meetings of the Multifaith Advisory Group (MAG) have been held, during which we have discussed many issues such as Victoria's laws against hate speech (vilification), anti-racism, strengthening Australia's democratic resilience, and many other issues.

Last year, we held an online meeting with a couple of MPs to discuss how the state government could be helpful in assisting multi-faith groups to minimise racism and hate speech. During the question-and-answer session, many people queried why the government was imposing restrictive rules and regulations on all religions, the results of which inhibit people and religious groups from being able to practise their faith and live out their core religious values. The answers were very ambiguous.

The MAG convener of the group, on one occasion, circulated a sheet of paper for people to sign to express their opposition to the Victorian government's bill to ban the recital of the Lord's Prayer at the beginning of each sitting day of Parliament. Even though the MAG has been able to achieve little, at least it is still allowed to share its issues and concerns with the authorities.

But above all this is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whom we serve, and he is on the side of his faithful followers. We must believe in him and in his holy word. As we read in 2 Kings 6:17:

‘Then Elisha prayed and said, “O LORD, please open his eyes that he see.”
So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold,
the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.’

In the same way, our Living God is present with us always, especially in these uncertain times.

Thank you for the giving us the opportunity to share our report. May our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ bless us all.

Surendra Wesley

5. Religion in the Public Square: PCV Colloquium, 12–13 July 2024: ‘Living as if Truth Matters’

On 12–13 July the Church and Nation Committee held a Religion in the Public Square colloquium, with the theme of ‘Living as if Truth Matters’, in the Assembly Hall, 156 Collins Street, Melbourne. The committee thanks the staff of Scots’ Church for all their help and support in enabling the colloquium to run smoothly.

The purpose of the colloquium was to equip Christians to face the challenges posed by what the American Reformed Protestant author, Aaron Renn, has called the ‘negative world’, which views Christianity as harmful.¹⁸

Christians face hostility and censorship from government, the media, business and Big Tech, and this poses challenges for evangelism, gospel ministry, discipleship and the institution of the church. The 2024 colloquium aimed to harness the rich resources within the history of the church to equip believers to speak with greater wisdom and clarity in response to those challenges.

A particular highlight was hearing from women who are courageously standing for truth at great personal cost in extremely controversial areas, including:

- Joanna Howe, professor of law at Adelaide University, who is very active in raising awareness about the evil of abortion;
- Rachel Wong, CEO of Women’s Forum Australia, an organisation which seeks to protect the rights and dignity of women in society.

Over 185 people registered and attended the colloquium.

The feedback we received from our colloquium evaluation surveys was very positive. The vast majority of responses expressed particular appreciation for the quality of speakers and the choice of topics. The ten speakers were informative and passionate, and it was gratifying to see a number of young people contributing.

Those who attended remarked how well it was organised.

¹⁸ Aaron M. Renn, ‘The three worlds of evangelicalism’, *First Things* (New York), February 2022. URL: <https://www.firstthings.com/article/2022/02/the-three-worlds-of-evangelicalism>
Aaron M. Renn, *Life in the Negative World: Confronting Challenges in an Anti-Christian Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2024).

One conspicuous take-away from the colloquium was that attendees were especially appreciative of suggestions from the speakers about the practical steps Christians can take to live out their faith, particularly in a time such as this.

We were also given some areas to consider improving for our next colloquium and some suggested topics. The committee will endeavour to consider these for next time.

The colloquium sub-committee worked hard in organising the event, especially Mrs Jeanette McHardy, Dr Ben Saunders and Mr John Ballantyne.

6. Religious freedom

a) Religious discrimination legislation¹⁹

Under Australian Federal Law there is no positive written law specifically to promote or protect religious freedom. Section 116 of the Australian Constitution says:

‘The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth.’

Section 116 is not a source of personal rights and does not provide individuals with an avenue for legal redress. Decisions of the High Court make clear that the section does not amount to a constitutional guarantee of the right to freedom of religion and belief. It also cannot be used to defend breaches of general laws that do not discriminate against religion generally, against particular religious conduct or against conduct characteristic of a particular religion. The court has generally adopted a narrow view of the scope of section 116. For example, the court has held that a law which provided for financial aid to the educational activities of church schools was not a law for establishing a religion, even though the law might indirectly assist the practice of religion. Accordingly, the law was not in breach of section 116.

i) The UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Article 18 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) says:

- Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.
- No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.
- Freedom to manifest one’s religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.
- The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the

¹⁹ The PCV’s Church and Nation Committee is grateful for the valuable insights of Melbourne lawyer Mark Sneddon in his talk, “A federal Religious Discrimination Act — why, what, where to next?”, at Freedom for Faith’s national conference, Freedom24, held in Sydney on August 5, 2024. URL: <https://freedomforfaith.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/3-Mark-Sneddon.pdf>

religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.

Religious freedom in Australian law has been framed mostly under 'anti-discrimination' legislation. In 2013, exemptions were written into the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Section 38) by the Gilliard Labor government in areas of sexuality, gender and intersex in regard to staff and students.

However, before the 2013 changes, no Commonwealth laws had existed that prohibited schools from such discrimination. It is argued that it is misleading to suggest those amendments created a situation whereby religious schools could discriminate on the basis of sexuality.

ii) The 2017–2018 Ruddock review of religious freedom

On 22 November 2017 — not long after 79.5% of eligible Australians had completed voting in the national postal plebiscite on legalising same-sex marriage — the then Coalition government under Malcolm Turnbull appointed an Expert Panel into Religious Freedom, chaired by a former federal Liberal cabinet minister, the Hon. Philip Ruddock. Its task was to examine whether Australian law adequately protected the human right to freedom of religion. Its terms of reference were:

- to consider the intersections between the enjoyment of the freedom of religion and other human rights;
- to have regard to any previous or ongoing reviews or inquiries that it considers relevant; and
- to consult as widely as it considers necessary.

The Ruddock Panel delivered its report to the government on 18 May 2018. However, for more than a year, the Coalition declined to make the report's contents public. In the meantime, Scott Morrison replaced Mr Turnbull as prime minister.

At the 2019 federal election, both the Liberal and National parties solemnly pledged a future Coalition government to enact laws to protect religious conscience rights.

Upon being re-elected, the Morrison government tried to devise a federal Religious Discrimination Bill (*not* a Religious Freedom Bill) that would alienate neither conservative religious voters nor the majority of Australians who, in the 2017 postal plebiscite, had voted in favour of same-sex marriage.

The bill, in the form it was introduced into the House of Representatives in late 2021, was a disappointment to many people of faith. Gone were the protections for 'statements of belief' that had been included in earlier drafts of the bill. One of these protective measures would have prevented employers from being able to sack employees for expressing their religious views in the social media.

The Morrison government's watered-down Religious Discrimination Bill, however, was not enough to satisfy everyone in the parliamentary Liberal Party. When the bill was moved in the House of Representatives, five dissident Liberal MPs crossed the floor to vote for amendments moved by the Labor opposition. This stripped the Morrison government's proposed legislation of important protections for Christian and single-sex schools.

The government, having been ambushed by the dissident Liberal MPs voting with Labor, stopped the amended bill from proceeding to a vote in the Senate.

It is reportedly unlikely that a Religious Discrimination Bill will be moved by the Albanese Labor government during its current term.

b) Threats to religious educational institutions from the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC)'s anti-discrimination recommendations

Religious schools will be prohibited from being able to give preference in employment to a person of the same religion if the federal government adopts the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC)'s recent recommendations.

The AHRC's final report to the government, *Maximising the Realisation of Human Rights: Religious Educational Institutions and Anti-Discrimination Laws*, was tabled in the Australian Parliament on 21 March this year. In its report the ALRC declared that 'a religious educational institution ... must not discriminate against a member of staff on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or relationship status or pregnancy', and called on the Australian government to repeal section 38 of the *federal Sex Discrimination Act 1984*.²⁰

Section 38, which provides important exemptions from the Act, has so far been able to guarantee faith-based schools the freedom to choose whom they employ as staff.

The AHRC report has recommended these radical legislative changes to ensure that the Australian government's policy regarding anti-discrimination laws and religious educational institutions is given legal effect in accordance with Australia's international legal obligations.

If the government adopts policies in accordance with the ALRC's recommendations, this will mean that, under federal law, religious schools will be in much the same position as all other schools, except that religious schools will not be prohibited by the Fair Work Act from being able to give preference in employment to a person of the same religion where that is reasonably necessary and proportionate to the school's objective of building a community of faith.

However, no school would be permitted to discriminate against students or staff based on those attributes protected by the *Sex Discrimination Act (SDA)*. The AHRC report, as has been noted above, has recommended the removal of Section 38 under which faith-based schools had exemptions under the SDA.

Currently, under federal law, religious educational institutions are permitted to discriminate against students and staff on certain grounds, including sexual orientation, pregnancy or marital status. However, anti-discrimination laws in many states and both territories already prohibit discrimination against staff and students at religious schools. It should be noted that there are no known cases where a student has been discriminated against, especially with expulsion from a school, owing to their sexual orientation or gender identity.

²⁰ Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) final report: *Maximising the Realisation of Human Rights: Religious Educational Institutions and Anti-Discrimination Laws*, ALRC Report 142 (December 2023), tabled in Australian Parliament on 21 March 2024, pp. 13, 87–89. URL: <https://www.alrc.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/ALRC-ADL-Final-Report-142.pdf>

So far, the federal government has not implemented any changes to the SDA. It has called for bipartisan agreement with the federal opposition to agree upon its proposed *Religious Discrimination Bill (RDB)* with its recommended removal of the SDA's Section 38, which has to date has guaranteed important religious exemptions.

However, the proposed *Religious Discrimination Bill* has not been made public. Only a few faith-based people have been allowed limited access to the proposed Bill. No copies have been made available to enable proper public scrutiny of the proposed RDB. To date a number of red flags have been identified in the draft legislation. Christian legal experts have concluded that faith-based communities would be worse off under the proposed legislation, especially with the elimination of section 38 of the SDA.

As this report is being written, the federal government has informed the public that it will not be pressing for implementing its RDB and changes to the SDA at this time. Politically this has brought protests from the Greens Party and also the powerful LGBTQ+ lobby organisation, Equality Australia, which is pressing for changes in its favour of these laws.

The Prime Minister, Mr Anthony Albanese, has sought to reassure the public that he would not proceed with a religious discrimination bill that lacked bipartisan political support. He has also stated publicly and promised faith-based communities that they would not be worse off with any of its proposed changes. Faith-based groups, however, have expressed to the government their areas of concern, but so far have not seen any amendments that would allay their concerns.

With a federal election imminent in less than a year, the government does not want to make this an election issue with people of faith. However, for many Christians, it does remain an area of deep concern.

c) Misuse of professional standards to stifle expressions of Christian belief

Victorian general practitioner Dr Jereth Kok, a well-respected medical professional with 15 years' experience, was suspended by the Victorian Medical Board in 2019 for expressing his pro-life and pro-family beliefs online.

From 2018, complaints were made against Dr Kok over an article he had written on transgenderism three years previously for the Christian newspaper, *Eternity News*. His social media posts on abortion, same-sex marriage and gender-transitioning also drew the ire of anonymous complainants.

Although none of Dr Kok's patients had ever complained about him, in August 2019 the Medical Board used its emergency powers to suspend him in the 'public interest' while they investigated his online comments.

Although he is married with two children and is the sole breadwinner for his family, he has been barred for the past five years from practising medicine.

Recently, he was finally given the chance to defend himself against the Medical Board during a five-day hearing, from 29 July to 2 August, at the Victorian Civil and

Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). He will soon learn whether he will be permanently banned from practising medicine on account of his publicly-expressed views.²¹

Nevertheless, even if Dr Kok's suspension is lifted, the five-year process to which he has been subjected will make resuming his medical career all but impossible.

'I think that the hurdles would just be insurmountable,' he told Perth commentator Rebekah Barnett. He listed the requirements to re-register and update his training, and the task of finding a practice willing to take him on now that he has a black mark against his name. He lamented: 'It's been a de facto deregistration, hasn't it?'²²

Protracted and expensive legal proceedings have been deployed not only against Victoria's Dr Jereth Kok (above), but also against Adelaide University law lecturer Dr Joanna Howe (see Section 7 below) and many other Christians across Australia. Christian believers have grave misgivings about the potential misuse of professional conduct regulation by accrediting boards in order to stifle expressions of Christian belief by professionals. This potentially has implications for all regulated professions, including doctors, nurses, lawyers, teachers, psychologists, dentists and others.

d) Victoria's 'Child Safe Standards' now a vehicle for radical gender ideology

The Victorian government's Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP)'s *Child Safe Standards* (updated and expanded in July 2022) is being used as a vehicle for radical gender ideology. The standards require organisations — including, presumably, churches and other religious organisations — to (among other things) pay 'particular attention to ... lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people' (5.3). When assessing this standard, the CCYP will examine 'how the organisation upholds equity for all children and prevents child abuse and harm resulting from discrimination based on ... gender identity or sexual orientation' (5.1, 5.3, 5.4).²³

e) Victoria's conversion practices prohibition and the censorship of counselling and prayer

Members of the Assembly will be familiar with the *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021* (Vic), which makes it unlawful in Victoria to engage in a practice which has the purpose of changing or suppressing a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Heavy penalties apply. Under the controversial law, anyone who offers any counselling, or even prayer, aimed at changing or suppressing an individual's gender identity or sexual orientation can face a jail term of up to two years or incur a maximum fine of nearly \$10,000.

²¹ John Steenhof, 'Free speech on trial as Christian doctor finally has day in court', Human Rights Law Alliance (Australia), 25 July 2024.

URL: <https://www.hrla.org.au/free-speech-on-trial-as-christian-doctor-finally-has-day-in-court>

John Sandeman, 'Inside the Jereth Kok hearing — the doctor suspended for conservative online comments', *The Other Cheek* (Sydney), 3 August 2024.

URL: <https://theothercheek.com.au/inside-the-jereth-kok-hearing-the-doctor-suspended-for-conservative-online-comments/>

²² Rebekah Barnett, 'Doctor under "emergency" five-year suspension finally goes to trial over social media posts', *Dystopian Down Under* (Perth, WA), 8 August 2024.

URL: <https://news.rebekahbarnett.com.au/p/doctor-under-emergency-five-year>

²³ The Victorian government Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP)'s *Child Safe Standards* (updated and expanded in July 2022): Standard 5: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

URL: <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/standard-5/>

Victoria's draconian 'conversion therapy' ban — also known as the counselling censorship law — has not gone unnoticed overseas.

'Prohibiting prayer in Australia' ran the headline of an article that Carl R. Trueman wrote 3½ years ago for the American religious journal, *First Things*. He said: 'It is an ominous sign when such a basic religious practice as prayer is now the target of hostile legislation in a democratic country.'²⁴

Early this year, the Heritage Foundation in Washington, DC, published a report headlined: 'Australian law forbids prayers, revealing the religious freedom threat of bans on "conversion therapy".' It declared: 'These laws only allow therapy in one direction; namely, for an LGBTQ identity — even if a patient expresses a desire to overcome unwanted feelings of same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria.'²⁵

f) The encroachment of government control on the freedom of the Church

The relentless encroachment of government control on the freedom of the Church and its members is anticipated to be a significant area of discussion in the year ahead. The committee will continue to help the church to think through questions of law and government from a biblical perspective and to expound the foundational principles of Protestant political theology.

To this end, the committee will produce a series of short 'occasional papers' on key topics of concern to Church members. The first one (which is reproduced below in this report) is *The Bible, Wisdom and Civil Government: A Crucial Distinction*.

7. Born alive but left to die?

The medical malpractice of allowing babies born alive during a failed abortion procedure to die, without any attempt to save their lives, could be outlawed if the *Human Rights (Children Born Alive Protection) Bill 2022* is passed by the Australian parliament.

The bill, which is still awaiting debate in the Senate, was introduced in late 2022 by Senators Matthew Canavan (LNP, Queensland), Alex Antic (Liberal, SA) and Ralph Babet (UAP, Victoria), and endorsed last year by the PCV's Church and Nation Committee in its parliamentary submission, 'Rescue the perishing'.²⁶

The *Human Rights (Children Born Alive Protection) Bill 2022*, if passed, would make it a criminal offence for health practitioners to neglect to provide medical care or treatment to a child born alive after a failed abortion.

Such an infant would be entitled to the same medical care (active treatment and/or palliative care) as any other child born alive in the usual way. Furthermore, the bill

²⁴ Carl R. Trueman, 'Prohibiting prayer in Australia', *First Things* (New York), 8 February 2021. URL: <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2021/02/prohibiting-prayer-in-australia>

²⁵ Tyler O'Neill, 'Australian law forbids prayers, Revealing the religious freedom threat of bans on "conversion therapy"', *The Daily Signal* (Heritage Foundation, Washington, DC), 2 January 2024. URL: <https://www.dailysignal.com/2024/01/02/australian-law-forbids-prayer-Revealing-religious-freedom-threat-conversion-therapy-bans/>

²⁶ 'Rescue the perishing', the PCV Church and Nation Committee's submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs, on 10 March 2023, regarding the *Human Rights (Children Born Alive Protection) Bill 2022*. URL: <https://www.apf.gov.au/DocumentStore.ashx?id=98ba29b0-b71a-435b-9a0c-d446dc8bd51e&subId=735136>

would make health practitioners responsible for reporting births of children born alive as a result of terminations, to correct the problem of insufficient data.

Not only in Australia, but also in Canada and some American states, numerous instances have been recorded of babies born alive during failed terminations being left to die.²⁷

One of the principal campaigners for the *Human Rights (Children Born Alive Protection) Bill 2022* is Dr Joanna Howe, a law lecturer at Adelaide University, who in January 2023 was promoted to be professor of law. She is married with five children. She recently delivered a talk, 'Why abortion should be unthinkable and how we can get there', at the PCV Church and Nation Committee's 'Living as if truth matters' colloquium held in Melbourne during 12–13 July.

Professor Howe's publicly expressed pro-life views, however, nearly jeopardised her academic career after she came under attack by online pro-abortion activists. Their complaints led to six different investigations into her research on abortion and prostitution since November 2019. Professor Howe was cleared of any wrongdoing in each investigation.

In July she successfully appealed against a demand by her employer, Adelaide University, that she should complete an 'anti-bias' course.

Despite her legal victories, Professor Howe has been denied any financial compensation for the \$100,000 she has had to spend defending herself.²⁸

On 13 August, she expressed her gratitude to the Presbyterian Church for its moral support for her during her ordeal. She wrote: 'Thanks so much for reaching out — I'm so thrilled to have won my case and to have reached this outcome. It is a massive relief and I'm really grateful for your support and also for the prayers and support of the Presbyterian church network.'²⁹

8. March for the Babies, Melbourne, Saturday, 12 October 2024

Melbourne's March for the Babies is held each year in loving memory of the babies lost through abortion in Victoria. It is a family-friendly event with a peaceful police presence.

²⁷ Canada's Campaign Life Coalition (CLC) national president Jeff Gunnarson's letter to Canada's Police Commissioner Mike Duheme, 4 March 2024, quoted by Patricia Maloney, 'RCMP must finally investigate horror of born-alive abortions', *Run With Life* blogspot (Ottawa, Canada), 6 March 2024. URL: <https://run-with-life.blogspot.com/2024/03/rcmp-must-finally-investigate-born.html>
Patricia Maloney, 'Late-term born-alive abortions', *Run With Life* blogspot (Ottawa, Canada), which lists the author's reports, from October 2012 to May 2023, on this practice. URL: <http://run-with-life.blogspot.com/p/born-alive-late-term-abortion.html>
Charles C. Camosy, 'VP nominee Tim Walz supports the right to infanticide', *First Things* (New York), 9 August 2024. URL: <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2024/08/vp-nominee-tim-walz-supports-the-right-to-infanticide>

²⁸ Joseph Kelly, 'Joanna Howe: The cost of speaking up for academic freedom', *The Weekend Australian*, 10–11 August 2024. URL: <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/inquirer/its-taken-six-months-and-100000-in-legal-costs-to-clear-my-name/news-story/7bde4e2daa5c87b91a6fd8704eca2b1b>

²⁹ Email from Joanna Howe to the PCV's Church and Nation Committee, sent 13 August 2024.

The PCA's Moderator-General, Rev David Burke, has called on all people of Christian faith to defend the rights of the unborn by participating in pro-life events. He has argued that there is a parallel with the abuse relating to domestic violence, vulnerable people such as children and people with disabilities as well as child abuse in all its forms.

He says: 'To my mind, one of the great unmentioned forms of child abuse is the fact that there is a capacity in Australia to kill a child still in its mother's womb — a living human being with all its actuality and potential made in the image of God.'³⁰

In particular, the March for the Babies seeks to commemorate the adoption 16 years ago, by Victoria's parliament, of the *Abortion Law Reform Act 2008*, one of the cruellest and most extreme models of abortion legislation to be found anywhere in the Western world. Its provisions have resulted in the following adverse outcomes in Victoria:

1. Abortion is legal, effectively for any reason, right up to birth.
2. Babies who survive abortion and are born alive are left to die (by legal omission).
3. Sex-selective abortion is legal.
4. There is no help offered to a woman with an unplanned pregnancy, such as independent counselling or financial assistance, to encourage her to consider options for her unborn child other than abortion.
5. A doctor with a conscientious objection to abortion is compelled by Victorian law to refer a woman seeking a termination to another doctor who is willing and able to organise one for her.
6. Unborn babies are not anaesthetised prior to being killed.

The details for the 2024 March for the Babies event are:

When: Saturday, 12 October at 1:00 pm.

Where: Meeting at Treasury Gardens, corner of Spring Street and Wellington Parade, Melbourne.

Further details:

URL: www.marchforthebabies.com

URL: www.facebook.com/marchforthebabies

9. Submission to the Victorian government review of anti-vilification laws

The Victorian government is proposing to significantly expand the state's existing anti-vilification laws. The current laws are contained in the *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001* (Vic), which makes it unlawful to incite hatred against a person on the basis of their race or religious belief.

In brief summary, the proposed changes include:

- Expanding the list of protected attributes to include (among other things) gender identity and sexual orientation.
- Lowering the threshold for bringing a claim.
- Narrowing the religious purpose defence.

In short, it will be easier for a person to bring a claim arguing that a Christian has engaged in hate speech on the basis of a person's gender identity or sexual orientation.

³⁰ Rev Dr David Burke, 'Call from the Moderator General to "Walk for Life"', *AP: Australian Presbyterian*, 10 July 2024.

URL: <https://ap.org.au/2024/07/10/call-from-the-moderator-general-to-walk-for-life/>

In October 2023 the Church and Nation Committee made a submission to the Victorian government's review of anti-vilification laws. It was signed by both the PCV Moderator Rev Ian Hutton and the committee convener Rev Chris Duke.³¹

10. Candidate forums

Freedom for Faith (FFF) is a Christian legal think-tank that exists to promote religious freedom. It is led by people drawn from a range of predominantly Protestant denominations, including the Presbyterian Church of Australia. Freedom for Faith is also financially supported by the PCA annually.

FFF is planning to organise candidate forums in the lead-up to the next federal and Victorian elections. The forums are not partisan and do not purport to tell Christians who to vote for. Candidates from all political parties are invited with the purpose of enabling Christians to ask questions and decide for themselves.

It is an opportunity to present the truths of Scripture to political parties and candidates. Congregations within the PCV are encouraged to consider hosting a candidate forum prior to the upcoming federal and/or Victorian election.

11. Optimism and pessimism

The Church and Nation Committee is conscious that its work often involves responding to developments within our culture which are of concern, and that this can promote a pessimistic or negative attitude. It is worth reminding ourselves of the many blessings we enjoy (both temporal and eternal) for which we have so much to be thankful, and the good news that Christ has overcome the world.

We are on the winning side. Jesus wins!

12. Discussion paper: 'The Bible, Wisdom and Civil Government: A Crucial Distinction' — the first in the committee's 'How the Gospel Shapes our Politics' series of occasional papers

Introduction

Christians rightly want to understand civil government and law from a biblically informed perspective. This paper is the first in an intended series of papers on the theme of 'How the Gospel Shapes our Politics', prepared by the Church and Nation Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The papers are intended to help the church think through issues of law and government and their implications for the church.

A crucial distinction

When thinking about matters of law and government, it is important to draw a distinction between matters that are clearly taught by Scripture or can be deduced by good and necessary consequence from biblical teaching, and matters that are not.

Scripture is 'the rule of faith and life' (*Westminster Confession of Faith*, 1.2) and is binding upon the believer. Christians are under an obligation to believe and submit to

³¹ PCV Church and Nation Committee's six-page submission to the Victorian government's Review of anti-vilification laws, dated 16 October 2023 and signed by both the PCV Moderator Rev Ian Hutton and the Church and Nation Committee convener Rev Chris Duke. It is available at: URL: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/ja10jhprhe98390s2d644/AntiVilification-Laws-Review-Submission-Final-Signed-16.10.23.pdf?rlkey=j61ok6gmzf0u6a718gwduy9ra&st=l68cwc&dl=0>

scriptural teaching. This includes the moral categories of sin and righteousness, which are determined by the law of God (as summarised in the Ten Commandments).

In contrast to this are matters of wisdom. Things that are not prohibited or commanded by Scripture or can be deduced by good and necessary consequence from biblical teaching are matters of wisdom, not of sin and righteousness. The Bible is relevant to matters of wisdom, but in many situations, it does not directly prescribe one or other course of action.

It is important to dispel some potential misconceptions about wisdom matters. First, the fact that something is a wisdom issue does not mean that it is unimportant or that Christians should have a dismissive attitude towards it. While it is true that wisdom decisions cannot affect a person's salvation, they can have very significant consequences for people (such as indigenous disadvantage or disability policy).

Secondly, the fact that something is a wisdom issue does not mean that truth is relative. It is either true, or it is not, that carbon emissions are causing rising global temperatures and irreversible damage to our planet. However, we do not have an infallible guide to what the truth is, and so our beliefs on this issue are not a matter of biblical prescription.

Thirdly, even though wisdom issues are not matters of sin and righteousness, there are degrees of wisdom, and some decisions can be more wise than others. Things may be unbeneficial and unwise, even if they are not sinful or unrighteous. It is not sinful to have a poor diet. But it may not be particularly good or wise.

It is also important not to read the Bible too narrowly. Scripture speaks to all of life, and has social and political implications, including implications for law and civil government. The Bible does not directly deal with issues such as transgender pronouns, discrimination law, educational methodologies, and the Voice to Parliament, but it sets out key principles which are relevant to how we think about those issues.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith* states that, 'The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture' (1.6). That is, doctrines may be deduced from scriptural teaching by good and necessary consequence, and truths arrived at in this way are as binding as the express teaching of Scripture.

Most questions of policy and government are matters of wisdom

The distinction between matters that are taught by Scripture and matters that are not may seem an obvious one. But it has important implications for how Christians navigate questions of law and government. Probably the key point is that the vast majority of questions of policy and government are matters of wisdom.

Take, for example, indigenous disadvantage. On any measure, indigenous people experience significant levels of disadvantage, including shorter life expectancy, lower attainment of education and literacy, unemployment and poor health, rates of domestic violence and substance abuse.

These problems need to be urgently addressed as a matter of justice (e.g., see Isaiah 1:17). However, the Bible does not prescribe what policies or actions should be

implemented to do so. As such, there is not one policy that Christians must support or advocate in order to deal with indigenous disadvantage.

The Bible is not an encyclopaedia of law or government. There are many questions it does not answer. Even where there is clear biblical teaching about a particular issue, this rarely translates neatly into a specific government policy or law.

Throughout history, Christians have typically thought of the Bible as the foundation, not a blueprint, for civil law. That is, the moral law (as summarised in the Ten Commandments) provides the foundational principles of law and morality which apply to all people at all times.

But there is not one single way of implementing the moral law. Timothy Keller argued that, while there is only one true gospel, ‘there is no culture-transcending way to express the truths of the gospel’, and that the gospel needs to be freshly articulated in each cultural context.³² This is also true for law: morality is not relative, but it needs to be applied in each context. And how governments and lawmakers do this will depend on the circumstances.

In the gospels Jesus explained that divorce was permitted in Israel because of the people’s ‘hardness of heart’ but noted that ‘from the beginning it was not so’ (Matt 19:8; Mark 10:5). Divorce is morally wrong because it is contrary to God’s will for marriage, but it was permitted as an allowance for the people.

That is, the Mosaic laws were accommodated to Israel’s sinfulness, permitting undesirable and sinful practices without either condoning or prohibiting them. The typical function of the laws in those contexts is, while permitting some wrongs, to regulate some aspects of those practices to mitigate their harshness or to prevent a greater evil.

If the ‘hardness of heart’ principle applied to Israel — God’s covenant people — then there seems to be no reason why it would not apply today. In today’s overwhelmingly secular climate, rigorously enforcing the moral law is not likely to be possible (leaving aside the question of whether this would be desirable), and so civil lawmakers may have to make many allowances for the sins of the people.

A controversial example

Abortion provides a good illustration of these points. Abortion is a clear breach of the sixth commandment: ‘you shall not murder’ (Exodus 20:13). The civil ruler is ‘the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God’s wrath on the wrongdoer’ (Romans 13:4). The civil ruler should protect the innocent and the vulnerable, and there is none more vulnerable than the unborn.

The moral principle is clear: abortion is wrong. This has clear implications for law: civil governments should enact laws which protect the unborn. But how precisely should they do this? Should the law target the woman (who consents to the procedure, but may have been coerced or pressured into having the abortion), the person performing the abortion, or, if applicable, a partner or family member who pressured the woman (which would be difficult to enforce)?

³² Timothy Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 17, 93.

In a culture which overwhelmingly considers that abortion should be legal, it may be that enacting a blanket ban would simply drive abortions underground or interstate. Any legislative change would need to be accompanied by an effort to change the hearts and minds of the people, or it may be ineffective. Christian legislators may have to entertain compromise. Should a Christian support the enactment of a law which reduces the number of abortions, but also endorses abortion as a legitimate choice?

These are not easy questions to answer. Even for an issue where the moral and legal principles are very clear, there remain difficult questions of wisdom and judgment.

Implications for unity and the church

These principles have several important implications.

The first is that Christians do not have an infallible guide to most questions of law, government and policy. Scripture has a great deal to say about justice, law and government but it is not an exhaustive encyclopaedia. This means that thinking through such questions requires wisdom, as well as prayerful and patient thought. Humility is warranted, as we recognise the fallibility of human reason, especially where Scripture does not clearly set out a position.

The second relates to the role of the church. It is important to bear in mind the distinction between the church as an institution and the organic church. The historic Presbyterian view is that the power of the institutional church and church officers is ministerial and declarative.³³ Their power is confined to the declaration of the Scriptures. That is, church officers and courts have the power to declare the truths of the Scriptures, and shepherd the flock by teaching, warning and exhorting.

Churches speak with the authority of God — but only to the extent that they accurately and faithfully speak biblical teaching. Ministers and office bearers may bind people's consciences to the teaching of Scripture, but church officers have no right to impose their own views on their congregations, whether about politics, education, etc.

Biblical principles are relevant to many matters of policy and government. But the Scripture rarely prescribes one particular policy or course of action, and so the majority of such questions are matters of wisdom. This means that the church, and officer bearers within the church, should be cautious about how they engage with matters of government, and should be careful about pronouncing in favour of or against a particular government policy.

This does not mean that the church should never speak publicly about a political matter. But it should do so recognising that its role is confined to the declaration of the truths of the Scriptures. It may be appropriate for the church to speak to the moral and biblical aspects of a particular issue, but not take a side on which policy is preferable. That may be a difficult line to draw.

A final implication relates to unity within the church. Matters of wisdom are not matters where the church can compel a person to believe or act in a certain way, or where a Christian can rebuke another for supporting or opposing a particular policy. Christians

³³ James Bannerman, *The Church of Christ: A Treatise on the Nature, Powers, Ordinances, Discipline, and Government of the Christian Church* [1869] (Edinburgh, UK: Banner of Truth, 1960), 1:220, 228.

are accountable to God alone, and the church must strive to maintain unity in matters of wisdom.

Approaching questions of law and government as matters of wisdom does not mean that those issues are unimportant, but it does mean that Christians should not treat them as matters of orthodoxy or biblical faithfulness. There is room for legitimate disagreement, and Christians should approach the matter in the spirit of Romans 14:10–12:

‘Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall confess to God.”

So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.’

Christopher Duke
CONVENER

CHURCH PLANTING COMMITTEE (Min 118)

1. Committee membership

The Church Planting Committee (CPC) currently consists of the following members (alphabetical order by last name): Aaron Boyd (convener), Phil Campbell, Aimee Grinter, John Huynh, Tanya Kelada and Luke McSeveny (secretary). Richard Wilson, the Assembly appointed Church Planting Officer (CPO), is not a member of the CPC but we are very grateful for his involvement in the work of the committee.

Following this assembly Rev Aaron Boyd and John Huynh will finish their term of service as members of the CPC. We thank God for their service.

The CPC is delighted that Rev Phil Campbell has accepted nomination to serve as the convener of the CPC post-Assembly. Please pray for him as he takes on this responsibility. Additionally, the CPC is thankful that Rev Maurie Cropper is willing to accept nomination to the committee. He will bring a wealth of wisdom and experience in the area of church planting, so we look forward to serving alongside him.

2. Currently supported plants

The CPC currently supports Fresh Start Presbyterian Church - Donnybrook, which is in the third year of its five-year funding cycle from the CPC. There have been some challenges for this church plant given that it was launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, but the CPC is thankful for their faithfulness and perseverance, under the leadership of Rev Ben Kelada, and we are encouraged that they are starting to see some real fruit for their labours.

The CPC has also provided a rental subsidy grant to Embrace Presbyterian Church, led by Rev Paul Jang, to assist them in obtaining suitable facilities for the Sunday services of their church plant at Wantirna. We are very encouraged by the bold and tireless efforts of Paul and his team as they seek to reach out to the lost with the gospel.

3. The decline of the church and church planting in Australia

In June this year Richard Wilson attended a national gathering of reformed evangelical denominational leaders to consider the state of the Australian church. Overall, the trends are concerning.

The National Church Life Survey (NCLS) estimates that **only 18%** of Protestant churches have **experienced net growth** of more than 10% **in their weekly attendance** between 2016-2021, while **69% have declined**. This is a large reduction in comparison to 2011-2016 when 31% of churches had experienced such growth and 50% had declined. There has also been a decline in church planting since 2011.

This decline in church planting is reflected in the PCV where we have noticed a reduction in the number of people offering to serve as church planters. This is not due to a lack of need or finances. It reveals a need for prayer and a focus on discipling people who have the necessary character, conviction, competency, and courage for church planting.

This is especially needed when you consider the rapid population growth projected in Melbourne, let alone across Victoria. City planners expect Melbourne's population to increase by three million people to eight million by 2050. If the PCV sets a goal of

planting just one church per 100,000 new people we would need to plant at least 30 new churches over the next 26 years. That is more than one church per year, which sounds like a lot when many of our existing churches are struggling. And yet, we should not consider one church per 100,000 new people to be particularly ambitious. We clearly need, under God, to turnaround the decline of church planting in the PCV.

4. Turning around the decline in church planting

a. Why do we need to keep planting churches?

Some might question, with so many churches across the PCV struggling to survive let alone thrive, why should we plant any new churches? Why not pool all our resources into sustaining and revitalising the churches that we already have?

And of course, we should always have a focus on church revitalisation, not least because one of the best ways to increase our rate of church planting is to increase the health and vitality of the existing churches in the PCV.

More profoundly, one of the central reasons why we must keep planting churches in Victoria is that among the masses of people that are flooding into our state each year are people who were purchased for our God by the precious blood of Christ (Revelation 5:9). These people must hear the good news that the blood our Lord Jesus was shed for them so that they can be gathered into churches that give Christ the praise and honour that he deserves.

More pragmatically, research across denominations and around the world has shown that the fresh energy and gospel focus that church plants bring to a denomination result in new evangelistic growth. This happens in particular where church plants are empowered to develop innovative and effective approaches that best suit their local circumstances, within the boundaries of our confessional framework, so this is something that the CPC will seek to do. With these things in mind let us keep prioritising the work of church planting across our state.

b. Mother Daughter Church Planting

Since its inception the CPC has typically sought to facilitate church planting in the PCV, in collaboration with presbyteries, by identifying places of gospel need and strategic importance, identifying, assessing and sending a suitable church planter, providing financial support to the church plant, and providing ongoing training and coaching to the church planter via the CPO.

While we are definitely open to continuing with this model of church planting in the future, we are increasingly aware that it has certain limitations, particularly with regard to the raising up of suitable church planters, the availability of church plant core teams, and the provision of sufficient funds for church plants.

With this in mind, in the years ahead the CPC intends to focus on the model of 'mother churches' planting churches. That is, a healthy and growing 'mother' church having the resources to plant a 'daughter' church. Planting without a mother church makes for slow growth, and makes developing a discipleship culture much more challenging. We want to help increasing numbers of churches in the PCV work towards being church planting churches.

Our nominated convener, Phil Campbell, is experienced in mother-daughter church planting, and is keen to encourage us to explore more in that direction. This will involve

more actively encouraging our stronger churches to become a mother church to a church plant. We will help our stronger churches to develop realistic plans to plant new churches, and assist with resourcing them however we can. We will also work with Reach Australia to equip pastors and churches to be ready for planting.

c. Identifying and raising up new church planters

Of course, for these churches to be planted we need to pray that the Lord would raise up the necessary church planters. Pray that the Lord would help each of us to disciple, envision, and equip the next generation of church planters in our own churches. Pray that the Lord would multiply the number of students training for ministry at our college and that he would move many of them to become church planters. Pray for the continued strengthening of our partnership with theologically aligned networks like Reach Australia so that we can actively recruit suitable planters.

d. Brownfields planting in existing church properties

The future growth of Melbourne will increasingly be in the middle and inner rings of the city, while greenfields areas will grow more slowly. This means we should seek to plant churches in these so-called brownfields areas while not neglecting the greenfields. The good news is that we already own property in many of these brownfields areas so we will look to plant churches in underutilised church properties in these areas. Please consider this possibility and contact us if your congregation has underutilised facilities.

As we seek to facilitate this model of church planting we are aware that there is a risk of mismatched expectations between the church plant and the existing church that owns the property. To mitigate this risk the CPC is working on a sample memorandum of understanding, to be used in these situations, so that there is opportunity to discuss all the relevant issues and put in place a clear agreement before the church plant begins to meet in the property. Alongside this we will continue to seek suitable property in the greenfields.

e. Advance Church Planting Conference

This year at the Advance church planting conference we will have a special focus on mother daughter planting. Scott Muir, who has successfully planted from Ipswich in Queensland will be the keynote speaker as he shares about his insights and learnings from his work there. There will also be workshops on other issues relating to church planting.

We encourage all PCV churches to send some representatives along to further develop a passion and plan for being involved in the vital work of church planting. If you have young people with a passion to reach the nations this is the conference to bring them to. Please set aside Saturday 9 November 2024 for the Advance church planting conference.

f. Church planting incubator

The CPO will continue to meet with prospective church planters at theological colleges to help them think and pray through the challenges and opportunities for church planting.

5. Property Development Fund

The CPC administers the Property Development Fund (PDF), and this year our committee fund balance returned to positive, leaving us no longer operating in overdraft. The CPC can now begin proportioning distributions from Scots Church

Property Trust into the PDF for the benefit of projects in recently established congregations.

We thank the Presbytery of South West Victoria, who at the Commission of Assembly in May 2023 petitioned the assembly to allocate \$300,000 of the sale proceeds of Woodford to the PDF. These funds were gratefully received in June 2024. We are encouraged by their support of newer congregations. We also thank Bundoora PC and Reforming PC Bendigo for their continuing contributions to the PDF after receiving grants in past years.

The PDF balance at 30 June 2024 was close to \$550,000. The CPC is well aware that projects relating to the acquisition of property and construction of worship facilities now cost multiple millions of dollars. In light of such a small PDF balance, We ask the Assembly to pray that the Lord would provide for the property needs of newly established congregations in the PCV, and that he would give the Assembly all the wisdom we need to channel the financial resources of the PCV towards these vital and strategic ends.

6. Assessor elders for church planting

As reported last year, the CPC has identified that there is a lack of trained, experienced, and available elders to serve as Assessors in the sessions of church plants. With the advent of Zoom session meetings, there is an opportunity to recruit and equip a cohort of elders who are willing to assist new congregations, without the need for regular travel. (Elders may be appointed across boundaries with the support of presbyteries and the Assembly Moderator.)

Over the past 12 months the CPC has been preparing an online training course designed to equip suitable elders to assist in this way. Once this course is finalised we will ask presbyteries and sessions to commend it to elders with appropriate gifts and a passion for serving in the church planting context.

Aaron Boyd
CONVENER

CLERKSHIP COMMITTEE (Min 31)

It has been a full year for the Clerkship Committee with the resignation of Rev Dr John Wilson as Clerk of Assembly, effective 31 December 2023, after serving for 38 years continuously in various clerkship capacities, most recently as Clerk of Assembly, and in seeking a suitable candidate to fill the ensuing vacancy, along with our regular responsibilities.

We wish to express our grateful thanks to John as outgoing Clerk for his valuable, dedicated, and sacrificial years of service to the Assembly in various clerkship roles, most recently as Clerk of Assembly from 2007-2023. During a period of rapid change for the Assembly in terms of our reporting and accountability, with the advent of 'Safe Church' protocols and requirements, John has served in a full-time capacity as Clerk since 2014 and has sought to navigate the Assembly through challenging times. We thank him for the wisdom, courage, and faithfulness of his service to the church, and his wife Paula, for her unwavering support for John throughout his term as Clerk. Several of the committee's deliverances give expression to our thankfulness and appreciation. In addition to which, we seek to present a gift on behalf of the Assembly, being a tangible expression of our gratitude. A celebratory afternoon tea will also be held at the conclusion of the committee's report, where we will have the opportunity to thank the Wilsons in person.

It is with grateful thanks to God that we also acknowledge the vital service of Rev Peter Phillips, who has during the vacancy, stepped up and served as Acting Clerk of Assembly, and Rev Philip Burns, who has served as Acting Deputy Clerk for that same period. The committee has full confidence in both men, who have served with distinction, ensuring the ongoing work of the church has continued unhindered throughout the period of the vacancy.

After due process, Rev Cameron Garrett, minister of the Morwell charge, was appointed by the Commission of Assembly in May 2024 to fill the vacant Clerk of Assembly position and has from 1 July 2024 commenced as our new Clerk. A service of commissioning, setting him apart for his new role, was held at the Scots' Church Melbourne on Sunday, 21 July 2024. Cameron has been intentional about learning and adapting to his new role, and the committee has every confidence that he will be an effective and productive Clerk for many years to come. We commit him to the grace of God for a season of fruitful ministry in his new role.

With Cameron vacating the position of Assistant to the Clerks to take on his new role as Clerk, it has fallen to the committee to undertake the process outlined in our regulations to seek to fill that vacancy also. Part of that process requires us to present to the Assembly a Position Description and terms of appointment for your approval, after which, advertisement of the vacancy can be made and applications invited. We do that now. It is also necessary that a Position Description and terms of appointment be approved for the position of Deputy Clerk, which does not currently exist, and so we present such for your approval, so that when a vacancy does occur in the Deputy Clerk's position, the committee can proceed to seek to fill the vacancy without undue delay. The committee commends to the Assembly the proposed position descriptions for both Deputy Clerk and Assistant to the Clerks and seeks your approval of them both.

The 2024 Commission of Assembly appointed Rev Philip Burns as Acting Assistant to the Clerks from 1 July 2024, and Philip will continue in that role until such time as the committee can advertise the vacancy, and most likely bring a nomination to fill the vacancy to the 2025 Commission of Assembly.

Philip Mercer
CONVENER

CODE AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (Min 42)

The Code and General Administration Committee (CGAC) continues to attend to the work assigned to it, to fulfil its duties as specified in its regulations and to provide advice when sought.

A. CONSULTATION

‘New Entity’

CGAC continues to engage with the proposals associated with the ‘New Entity’.

Clerkship Committee

The Clerkship Committee in order to fill the vacancy in the Assistant to the Clerks position had need to have a Position Description (PD) drafted for Assembly consideration. It was also considered expedient to draft a PD for the Deputy Clerk as no PD existed. The committees have worked together and the Clerkship Committee will advance for Assembly consideration two new position descriptions.

ad hoc Deacons Committee

The ad hoc Deacons Committee sought advice concerning possible rule changes in light of the committee’s work and will submit two overtures to the Assembly.

Theological Education Committee (TEC)

Within the regulations of the TEC exists clauses that are at now at odds with the federal Fair Work Act. The committee has begun consulting with the TEC to rewrite the necessary regulations so that they comply with the Act. If this work is completed prior to the Assembly, a supplementary report will advance the relevant regulation changes.

Exempt Benefits

The 2024 May Commission (minute 13.10) resolved to ‘Request the BIF to bring the guidelines for exempt benefits eligibility to the October 2024 Assembly when the BIF and other relevant committees (such as CGAC) have considered further how those men and women employed in pastoral and teaching work in team ministries can qualify for exempt benefits.’ CGAC has been approached by the Board of Investment and Finance and has requested the Clerk to investigate the responses and procedures in other states. Due to time constraints both this investigation and CGAC’s ability to mature a response has not occurred.

B. RULE CHANGES

CGAC advances six sets of rule changes, each of which is contained in a separate overture.

Overture *anent* Candidates Requirements

The first concerns a new requirement for candidates being the completion of the Safe Church Volunteer Approval Process (4.31.2.b.ix). As candidates will be engaged in ministry within congregations as part of their training it makes sense to complete this at the time of becoming a candidate.

Overture *anent* Purchasing Property for Congregation use

The second concerns the purchase of property for congregational use with an associated change to the regulations of the Building and Property Committee (see below).

Overture *anent* Meeting in Private

The third concerns meeting in private with a new proposed rule 6.10.7 with an associated change in the Conflict of Interest Policy 10(b)(ii).

Overture *anent* Holding (maintaining) WWCC

The fourth concerns a gap within the rules whereby to become an elder, deacon, manager or other pastoral worker requires a WWCC but currently the requirement for such persons to continue to hold a WWCC is not adequately covered.

Overture *anent* ‘allowance’ Terminology and Nomenclature

The fifth concerns a Maintenance of the Ministry Committee request for CGAC to consider removing the word ‘allowance’ from those parts of the rules, regulations and position descriptions where it may refer to a benefit received (exempt or otherwise) that may be captured by Tax Ruling 2019/3 or other taxation instruments. CGAC has found all such occurrences and proposes that the Assembly alter the church’s terminology to better reflect the technical terminology used by the Australian Taxation Office. This also involves regulations, and position descriptions. As this will be an ongoing concern CGAC also determined to refer the matter to the *ad hoc* New Entity Committee so that it might likewise incorporate the words in any rule and regulation changes it may bring to a future Assembly.

Overture *anent* Annual Congregational Meetings

The sixth arises from advice given by the Clerk to a congregation concerning the approval of Terms of Settlement. A question of good governance was raised whereby Terms of Settlement and Budgets are in operation for up to four months before being formally approved by the congregation. There is provision within the rules for a congregation to authorise a board to vary Terms of Settlement, but no corresponding provision exists for budgets. The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) expects all organisations to have good governance models. CGAC proposes rule changes that will allow congregations to approve Terms of Settlement and adopt budgets prior to the financial year beginning. This mirrors the Assembly’s practice of approving committee budgets in May in preparation for its new financial year starting 1 July. The rules will also allow congregations to grant boards the power to vary the Terms of Settlement and use a provisional budget until formal approval is received, with board reporting to the next Annual Congregation Meeting how the powers were discharged.

C. REGULATIONS

Assessors Committee

Presbytery Assessors are appointed by the Assembly Moderator. There is provision for the Moderator to seek the advice of the Assessors Committee. While this provision is available the Assessors Committee has not met, and the Moderator is always free to seek the advice and wisdom of others. CGAC proposes, in accordance with its regulation 4(d), that the relevant regulations be repealed with the Moderator continuing the practice of consulting as necessary prior to his appointing of Presbytery Assessors.

Ballot Committee

During the 2023 General Assembly a ballot was conducted by the Ballot Committee to determine who would be appointed to a committee of the Church. The regulations for ballot only provided for the election of Assembly Officers where one nominee would be successful. Applying this regulation to a different situation resulted in a nonsensical

result and a second ballot. To aid future assemblies CGAC advances new regulations that provide clarity concerning the ballot method in each case.

Building and Property Committee

The Building Property Committee seeks regulation and rule changes (see separate overture) to provide clarity in procedures for a property purchase.

The Building and Property Committee has approached the Code and General Administration Committee (CGAC) seeking a regulation change that would see the number of members on the committee increase from three to five. With only three members (including the convener) whenever an individual retires from the committee a significant proportion of the committee's accumulated knowledge and experience can be lost. A larger membership will increase the committee's ability to meet quorum and better position the committee to plan for succession. CGAC advances to the Assembly the requested regulation change for its consideration.

Maintenance of the Ministry Committee (MMC)

In 2023 the MMC requested an increase to the non-cash benefit (NCB) component of Minimum Ministerial Remuneration. Within the same approval are the words 'and change necessary regulations'. Regulations at that time were only alterable as part of the CGAC's proposed deliverance or by overture. CGAC now seeks to effect the change in the usual manner. The deliverance of the MMC advanced to the 2024 Commission of Assembly increased the minimum rate of Superannuation from 1 July 2024 and adjusted how it was to be calculated. As the Commission is unable to consider any changes to regulations the committee now advances a change to the relevant regulation and seeks the Assembly to declare the respective regulations to have retrospective authority.

Ministry Development Committee (MDC)

The 2023 May Commission of Assembly requested in BB 2023 Comm. min 12.7 that the MDC 'in consultation with the Code Committee to bring a recommendation revising Ministry Development Committee Regulation 13d(ii), to increase the base stipend for Home Missionaries from 85% of stipend to 100% of stipend.'

The MDC advanced a proposal for a new regulation which was then refined after consultation to ensure harmony with other rules and regulations. CGAC now advances the MDC proposal for Assembly consideration.

Long Service Leave Fund

Arising from a petition from the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee in BB 2023 min 107.3 the committee was requested to 'consider a review of the Long Service Leave regulations in the manner indicated'. CGAC has performed the review and advances revised regulations to provide for instances where a person prior to ordination has engaged in pastoral work within the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

D. POLICY

Conflict of Interest Policy

It became evident that there was a lack of clarity and a difference between the custom of the church and the rules and policies of the Church. It has been long held and practiced that when sitting in private the information is not only restricted and private to the members but to only those present who are sitting in private. This change to the

Policy and the Overture to amend rule 6.10 both seek to align the church's legislative enactment with its customary law (see rule 1.10.1).

E. POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Several position descriptions contain the word 'allowance' which in keeping with the change of nomenclature will also require updating. In particular CGAC advances changes to the following position descriptions:

- Ministry Development Officer
- Intentional Interim Minister
- PCV Training Officer
- Principal, Presbyterian Theological College
- Lecturer in Church History and Public Theology, PTC
- Lecturer in Church History and Practical Theology, PTC

F. NOMINATIONS

Selection Committee

Each year CGAC is to nominate the membership of the Selection Committee.

G. OVERTURES FROM OTHER SOURCES

The committee is to receive and report on overtures that will affect the Code (see regulation 4(f)).

Overture from the Presbytery of North East Victoria

The Presbytery of North East Victoria seeks the Assembly to amend rule 3.22 concerning the Session's power to 'fix the times of public worship'. The wording proposed by the presbytery has been considered and CGAC is of the opinion that the proposed change will not have a cascading effect on other rules or regulations.

Overture from North Western Victoria

The Presbytery of North Western Victoria seeks the Assembly to amend rule 4.18.4 in relation to the required notice for an Urgent Meeting of Presbytery. The wording proposed by the presbytery has been considered and CGAC is of the opinion that the proposed change will not have a cascading effect on other rules or regulations. It does however contain an ambiguity as to who determines if a matter is time sensitive. The desire of the presbytery could be met by having the moderator assess the need for immediate action and also providing the members of the court the ability to disagree with the moderator's assessment. The committee is of the opinion that the following wording would strike a balance and provide clarity.

4.18.4 At least seven days' notice of an urgent meeting is given to presbytery members by the moderator or, with his authority, by the clerk, unless the moderator deems the proposed business requires immediate action, in which case, provided that every member of the court is notified, with the consent of two thirds of the members of the court one days' notice may be given.

Overtures from the ad hoc Deacons Committee

The ad hoc Deacons Committee has submitted two overtures.

The first seeks to strengthen the qualifications of those who would serve as managers (3.38). The wording proposed has been considered and CGAC is of the opinion that the proposed change will not have a cascading effect on other rules or regulations.

The second is seeking to amend the rule concerning deacons (3.40). Some of the changes arise from recent determinations of the General Assembly of Australia and the General Assembly of Victoria. CGAC values the work already performed by the ad hoc committee. CGAC offers the following as an improvement on the ad hoc committee's work and includes considerations not anticipated by the committee concerning the need for a deacon to hold a WWCC.

3.40 Diaconal ministry

- 3.40.1 The diaconate is an office of mercy that is biblical, perpetual, spiritual and practical and distinct from that the office of elders and the position of managers.
- 3.40.2 The diaconate serves with and on behalf of the congregation promoting, according to biblical guidelines and as resources permit, the material well-being first of the poor and needy within the local body of believers, secondly of other believers, and finally of all humanity.
- 3.40.3 A session must establish a diaconal ministry and determine how many deacons are to be elected.
- 3.40.4 Deacons are elected by communicants of the congregations in which they are to serve by a manner of election determined by the session.
- 3.40.5 Any person who has been a communicant of the congregation for at least one year, and is aged at least 21 years is eligible for election as a deacon in that congregation. A person who has served as a deacon in one congregation does not do so in another congregation unless so elected in that congregation.
- 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, owns the standards of the Church and has shown 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.
- 3.40.7 After this resolution the session must:
 - 1. by formal motion declare elected those with whom it is satisfied, up to a number not exceeding the number required;
 - 2. make public announcement of the names of the deacons-elect arranged in alphabetical order.
- 3.40.8 After such public announcement, the completion of the a course of training as set by the session and following the affirmative answering of the questions prescribed by the General Assembly of Australia (see PCA 'Code', 6.7), the Session is to proceed with the ordination and appointment or appointment only of any deacon-elect by prayer during public worship. If a deacon-elect has previously been ordained in a Presbyterian Church, whether in Australia or elsewhere, he or she is appointed on affirmatively answering the questions prescribed by the General Assembly of Australia;
- 3.40.9 The Session must fix the term of a deacon's appointment, which is to be a minimum of three years, after which the deacon is then eligible for re-election. However, any appointment may be ended by session:
 - a) if the deacon resigns in writing addressed to it or ceases to be a communicant of the congregation; or
 - b) if it determines that the deacon has become mentally unsound; or

- c) if it determines that the deacon has ceased to demonstrate a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and a giftedness for diaconal ministry within the life of the congregation.
 - d) by the operation of rule 3.40A.3.
- 3.40.10 Deacons must report on their activities to the session both regularly and also as required by session, and be available to assist elders as required.
- 3.40.11 Where there is more than one deacon, they must be formed into a diaconal care team for mutual prayer, support and communication. The meetings of this team are chaired by the minister or, if he is unable to do so, by an elder or deacon appointed by him.
- 3.40.12 With the approval of the session, the deacons may enlist the assistance of other suitably godly and gifted church members who are not deacons to help them carry out their work.
- 3.40.13 The ministry of diaconal care is funded by the board. If any employment agreement is entered into it should, if possible, be in a form approved by the Board of Investment and Finance.

Cameron Garrett
CONVENER

DEFENCE FORCE CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE (Min 68)

This committee seeks to support the work that our state Australian Defence Force (ADF) Chaplains are undertaking. In addition to this, they remain available to answer questions as well as support in the recruiting process those considering chaplaincy service. As a committee, we remain thankful to God for the significant ministry that our Presbyterian chaplains are doing, at both a state and a national level.

Key Challenges

The committee have identified two key challenges. They are:

1. The ongoing need to identify and recruit suitable pastors for ADF Chaplaincy, both reserves and permanent force.
2. Mature an understanding of Presbytery members on the value of ADF chaplaincy and how it can complement parish ministry.

Veteran and family support

The Royal Commission into member and veteran suicide has resulted in a raft of recommendations that include chaplaincy support for ADF personnel after they have discharged. This means in the future there will be non-uniform chaplains funded through the Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) to work from veteran friendly congregations to support veterans and their families. Pilot programs for this new chaplaincy to veterans are presently being conducted in Perth, Townsville, and Brisbane.

Committee Membership

The committee are pleased to welcome Rev Matt Tegart back to Victoria after a period of service with the Permanent Air Force. Matt will take on the role of convener for the committee. Rev Barry Porter joins the committee and Mr Chris Perry continues to serve. Rev Miles Fagan has completed his period of service as convener. Rev Martin de Pyle continues to represent the PCA as the national assembly's representative on the Religious Advisory Committee to the Services.

Miles Fagan
CONVENER

EXIT STUDENTS COMMITTEE (Min 76)

The Exit Students Committee (ESC) is tasked with the sole responsibility of the placement of Exit Students into their first ministry appointment. Consideration is given to the individual and their families, congregational needs and availability and the needs in presbyteries and the denomination. From some perspectives the work of the committee is limited, focused and brief. However, the appointments made each year can have significant ongoing influences in the future of charges, presbyteries, ministries, the candidates and their families. That future years' effect is a responsibility the committee senses and carries into every appointment made.

Due to the nature of the exit process the membership of the committee varies from year to year with a representative from the MDC convening the committee, joined by the Ministry Development Officer, the Principal of the PTC (or appointed representative), and a representative from each exiting candidate's presbytery of jurisdiction. The MDC Administrative Secretary aids the administrative needs of the committee.

This year the committee was strengthened by inviting the PCV Ministry Wives Chaplain, Kellie Davis, to participate with the committee during the exit process. We anticipate this will be of benefit to the candidate's wives as they join with their husbands in the exit process, benefit the committee by adding another perspective to our deliberations, and benefit the work of the Ministry Wives Chaplain in connecting with and supporting the wives of exiting candidates.

Thus, this year, the Committee consisted of:

- Ministry Development Officer: Rev Chris Siriweera.
- MDC Representative: Rev Gary Stephens (convener).
- PTC Acting Principal: Rev Jared Hood.
- Rev Jordan Born (presbytery representative).
- Attending non committee member: Kellie Davis (PCV Ministry Wives Chaplain).
- Attending non committee member: Natalie Miller (MDC Administrative Secretary).

There was one exiting PCV ministry candidate available for an appointment this year, while the committee fielded multiple applications. At the end of July, the following appointment was made:

- Ryan Brightwell: Wangaratta / Myrtleford.

In the time between the 2023 and 2024 appointments the Exit Committee went through a review. The intent has been to strengthen the process, make more informed appointments, provide more effective exit appointment support so as to help appointments be fruitful first ministry experiences and consider how the exit process can better serve the overall health of presbyteries and our denomination. This has occurred in consultation with the MDC and will collaborate with the MDC in its implementation of its revitalisation endeavours.

Please join with the committee in praying for the Lord's work in and through this year's appointment, for the praise of His Name amongst His people and amongst those who are yet to return to the Shepherd and overseer of their soul.

Gary Stephens
CONVENER

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE (Min 77)

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 chaplains

The committee employs paediatric chaplains who work at the Royal Children's Hospital. These chaplains are greatly appreciated within their Spiritual Care team.

At the time of writing, Mrs Suzanne Oakes has informed the committee of her resignation as a PCV paediatric chaplain. The committee would like to thank Suzanne for her service in this role, her care of many people in difficult circumstances, and the way she has pointed them to Christ.

In the lead up to Assembly the committee will be advertising for two part-time chaplaincy positions 0.4FTE each (15 hours per week) to be based at the Royal Children's Hospital. One of these positions will be provided for from the Harold Hughes Trust, while the other will initially be provided for from the HCCC General Budget. Alternatively, the committee is also open to the possibility of having one part-time chaplaincy position at 0.8FTE (30 hours per week).

The committee invites sessions to contact the Chaplaincy Support Worker, Mr Ashley Manly for more information.

In previous years, a Victorian Government Grant had been provided to faith communities for hospital chaplaincy through the Spiritual Health Association Ltd. However, in the past financial year it was confirmed that the grant will no longer be available. Consequently, the committee has decided not to renew its membership with the Spiritual Health Association.

Volunteer hospital chaplains

During the last financial year, seven committee-authorised Presbyterian hospital chaplains have provided voluntary pastoral care in seven public hospitals and one private hospital. Collectively they made 293 patient contacts over this time.

Rev Grant Vayne recently finished in his chaplaincy role at St John of God Hospital in Ballarat, having provided many years of service there.

Volunteer hospital chaplaincy is largely untapped and yet can provide many opportunities for ministry. The committee encourages sessions to consider the public hospitals within their parish bounds and whether there are people within their congregation(s) who would be suitable and willing to engage in this sort of ministry.

If so, they may contact the Chaplaincy Support Worker, Mr Ashley Manly to discuss this possibility further.

Prison chaplains

The committee's two prison chaplains have been able to make regular visits and run soft toy classes across three prisons in Victoria. These visits have also included interactions with inmates and staff. The distance between the prisons is 135km.

Tertiary chaplains

The committee supports and contributes to the funding of tertiary chaplains/campus workers who are communicants or adherents of the PCV. Over the past financial year, a total of \$20,000 was given to the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students which was distributed between 16 workers in Victoria.

Good Friday Appeal

The 2024 Good Friday Appeal raised a final total of \$31,000. The committee praises God for this result and thanks the PCV congregations, boards of management, and individuals who gave towards the appeal. Your generosity is significant in providing for chaplaincy and the pastoral care of ministry families.

Ministers' Family Camp

The 2024 Ministers' Family Camp was held at Phillip Island Adventure Resort. It provided an opportunity for families to come together, connect, and be encouraged and refreshed in life and ministry. The guest speakers for the camp were Keith and Sarah Condie who gave insights on *persevering with joy in ministry*. The committee was thankful for their thoughtful and gracious approach to this topic.

Mrs Claire Pringle was appointed as the PCV Ministers' Family Camp Co-ordinator to assist with organising the camp. The committee would like to thank Claire for her terrific work in this role.

The committee is intending to run the camp again next year at Phillip Island Adventure Resort over the dates 7 – 9 Apr 2025. This is Monday – Wednesday in the first week of the school holidays.

Ministry Family Assistance

The committee's Ministry Family Assistance program provides up to four free and confidential counselling sessions per family each financial year. The committee encourages ministers, home missionaries, candidates for ministry and their families to make use of this program for their support and wellbeing.

Ministry Wives' Chaplain

Mrs Kellie Davis is employed three days per week in the position of Ministry Wives' Chaplain. Kellie is enthusiastic in her role and the pastoral support she provides to ministry wives is greatly appreciated.

Kellie has been very active in pastoral visits and phone calls. Also, she has visited all presbytery areas this year and has been present at events such as the Ministers' Family Camp, Women's Ministries Victoria events, PTC Candidate Wives meetings, gatherings for presbytery wives, and other significant events. Please pray for Kellie in her important ministry.

Chaplaincy Support Worker

The committee continues to employ Mr Ashley Manly as its Chaplaincy Support Worker on a two days per week basis. He is the first point of contact for enquiries regarding chaplaincy and the Ministry Family Assistance program. He also fulfils administrative duties which support the work of the committee.

Ashley's knowledge, experience, and diligence continues to be of great benefit to the committee. The committee thanks him for his good work in this role.

Committee Membership

The committee currently consists of seven members, with three vacant positions.

The committee's meets bi-monthly with five meetings being held via Zoom, and its December meeting being face-to-face at Heathmont House.

The work of the committee has been divided up among committee members which they have joyfully and diligently served in.

Daniel Dixon
CONVENER

MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE (Min 78)

1. Tax Seminar

The Maintenance of the Ministry Committee (MMC), in an attempt to 'value add', ran a Tax Seminar for the benefit of all religious practitioners in the Long Service Leave (LSL) Fund on 16 May 2024.

This seminar was designed to assist people in receipt of Exempt Benefits per the Fringe Benefits Tax Act.

100 people were invited to attend. Aside from the presenter, 25 people joined the seminar for some or all the presentation.

Following the seminar, the PowerPoint slides used in the presentation were circulated to all members of the LSL Fund, whether they joined the seminar itself or not.

A straw poll was conducted seeking a response from those who attended to assess if they found it useful or not useful. In the end 8 people responded and all responses were favourable.

Two people who were not in attendance, upon receiving the PowerPoint, commented that they felt it was a useful exercise.

2. Exercise of discretionary powers under Maintenance of the Ministry Committee regulation (12)

Under its regulations, the MMC has discretionary powers as detailed below:

12. Discretionary powers of committee

Notwithstanding the provisions of these regulations, the committee shall have discretionary powers to deal with exceptional cases not provided for therein, provided that the committee shall report annually any use of these discretionary powers to the General Assembly.

The committee reports that it has exercised its discretionary power twice under the above regulations relating to its regulation 6a) wherein a congregation is required to provide ministerial accommodation or payment as an additional exempt benefit if the minister either lives in his own home or lives in a property rented in his name, as per the extract below:

d) rent free occupation of a suitable dwelling in the locality of the church building or place of worship or an amount equivalent to rent as an additional non-cash benefit if the minister lives in his own home;

Both times the discretionary powers were exercised in relation to part-time ministries.

Part-time ministry: Rev Barry Porter

The facts

- The Presbytery of North-East Victoria has appointed Rev Barry Porter to Broadford congregation in a 60% part-time ministry capacity.
- At the time of his initial appointment Mr Porter was offered the Broadford manse but declined this offer for significant family personal reasons.

- The committee has been advised the congregation has insufficient funds to pay the additional exempt manse benefit as required, and
- Mr Porter, who is in receipt of additional income from another source, has agreed to accept the non-receipt of an “exempt manse benefit” and has agreed to receive a significant “travel benefit” instead.
- The amount of the “travel benefit” is significantly lower than what a “manse benefit” would be.
- Mr Porter, the congregation and the presbytery have all agreed to this arrangement.

Part-time Ministry: Home Missionary Tut Jock Deng

The facts

- The Presbytery of Flinders has appointed Mr Tut Jock Deng to Clarinda Nuer congregation (a Sudanese congregation) in a 50% part-time ministry capacity.
- At no time has a manse or manse allowance been offered to Mr Deng
- The committee has been advised the congregation has insufficient funds to pay the additional exempt manse benefit as required, and
- Mr Deng has additional income from secular employment.
- Mr Deng, the congregation and the presbytery have all agreed to this arrangement.

After considering the facts and knowing that all parties (minister, congregation and presbytery) have agreed to these arrangements and considering the financial status of Broadford (who are now receiving an MDC grant as well), and Clarinda Nuer (who have applied for an MDC grant as well), the MMC resolved to approve these arrangements under its discretionary powers.

These arrangements will be subject to annual review by both presbyteries and the MMC, as all part-time ministries are required to be.

3. Review of Non-Cash Benefits Guidelines

Following BIF approval of expenditure of up to \$1,500 to undertake a review of the NCB Guidelines, the Committee has sought the expertise of a consultant firm, Saward Dawson, to update the Guidelines to ensure they are consistent with secular law, the PCV code and regulations. This work has been completed and the revised guidelines will be issued in the near future.

4. Exercise of Regulation 14 of the Ministers Long Service Leave and LSL Fund (the Fund) Regulations

Regulation 14 of the Fund provides the following:

14. Portability of leave

The committee may enter into reciprocal arrangements with the other State churches to provide for portability of long service leave.

In recent times a number of personnel, eligible to join the Fund, have had LSL details and associated funds transferred by other states to Victoria. Likewise, the Committee has had ongoing reciprocal arrangements with other states where if a person transfers from Victoria to another state, we will transfer their leave details and associated Fund balance to that other state.

Colin Morrow
CONVENER

METRO COMMITTEE (Min 59)

Please remember that the METRO Committee is not on about promoting METRO trains or metropolitan Melbourne. We are the Ministry, Equipping, Training and Recruiting Organisation (METRO) of the PCV. We seek to facilitate Gospel ministry training, through formal traineeships, throughout the PCV.

With yet more PCV ministers retiring and soon to retire from paid pastoral ministry, with many thousands coming to Australia (to live, work and study), with millions of Victorians needing to hear the Gospel and put their trust in Jesus for salvation, it highlights the great need to equip and train more Gospel workers for the harvest. Please keep praying the Lord will raise up workers, empower his people and save the lost. The METRO committee wants to help you reach the lost and grow his people to further maturity in Christ (being, thinking and serving like Jesus).

2023 Graduates

METRO

Last year Jacob Martin from Warrnambool, Solomon Perecharla from Geelong West, Leighton Rowe from Clifton Hill and Alexandra Sheely from Darebin, all graduated from the two-year full-time METRO. We thank God that God grew and used each of these people, and that some have commenced their training as candidates for ministry at the PTC.

YouthMETRO

Eight young adults completed YouthMETRO (the one-year part-time traineeship in youth ministry), from Seymour, Surrey Hills, Epping, Hamilton and Benalla/Balmattum, and have been equipped for ongoing word ministry to youth and in their churches.

Present Trainees

METRO trainees finishing in 2024:

Aaron Tai & Paul Angeles - Epping with Brian Luong and Nello Barbieri
Aditya Kuthalam –St Stephen's Surrey Hills with John Huynh
Sam Braid – Ebenezer, Ballarat South with Toby McIntosh
Zack Grace – New Life, Officer with Dave Martin

We thank God for the growth and service of each of these men, the blessing they've been to their churches and Kingdom ministry. We praise God that some have started the process as ministry candidates in the PCV, and all are considering how they can best serve the Lord with their gifts.

The partnership our committee has with the Ministry Training Strategy (MTS) remains a close and very helpful one, for which we thank God. MTS continues to assist with the administration and organising of ministry apprenticeships, which we call METRO traineeships.

YouthMETRO trainees finishing in 2024:

Six trainees from Chalmers, Warrnambool, St Stephen's Surrey Hills, and Frankston will all, Lord willing, graduate in November this year. We thank God for their growth and ministry, and for the blessing they were at PYV Summer camp also.

Equip METRO

Sadly, for the second year in a row we received no applications for EquipMETRO. This is our one-year part time (10-12 hours a week) traineeship, ideal for stay at home parents, retirees, elders or potential elders, full or part-time workers, i.e. any adult at any stage of life. It's intended to equip people for 1-1 and small group word ministry, pastoral care visits and involvement in Sunday services. If you're a minister in the PCV please consider who might benefit from this training and your investment of time in them. Please take a moment to consider which women in your church could be equipped for word ministry through this traineeship.

METRO trainees who started in 2024 (Lord willing to finish in 2025):

Bill Buster – Bay Church, Cheltenham with Paul Huynh

The committee has funds to support at least four METRO trainees each year and numerous Youth and Equip trainees. We ask you to consider who'd benefit from ministry training in your church and get in touch with us to see how we can help.

METRO Recruit

Our second ever METRO Recruit event happened in June with a very encouraging turn out, a great talk by John Huynh, and it was encouraging to see people and pastors/ leaders consider all our traineeships.

Admin Assistant

After a brief period in the METRO Admin Assistant role sadly, Laura Brown had to step down to take up other full-time work. After readvertising and interviewing for the position, we were very pleased to appoint Stefanie Rowe to the role. Stef's husband, Leighton completed METRO last year so she's quite familiar with our work. Please pray she'll continue to help our committee run smoothly and facilitate our ministry.

Committee

The METRO Committee has stable membership for which we thank God. Anna Harris (Ebenezer) stepped down after many years of service, and we thank God for ministry, especially in getting Equip METRO and its curriculum established. We're still seeking a suitable replacement for Anna. We're thankful that Toby McIntosh (Ebenezer) has rejoined the committee, adding to Aaron Liew (Bundoorra, serving as our Treasurer), Joy Arundell (Chalmers, serving as Secretary), Andy May (Bundoorra), Steve Denness (Leongatha) and Luke Brownley (Hume), along with myself.

Ministry Training Strategy (MTS) Memorandum of Understanding

Ministry Training Strategy (MTS), whom we partner in offering our two year traineeships, brought to our attention that our Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was long out of date, and a new one needs to be approved.

Assembly last approved an MoU between PCV (METRO Committee) and MTS in 2019. This MoU was for a two-year period. But due to an oversight by MTS and the METRO Committee, no new MoU has been in place during the last three years. The committee apologises for this. However, things have continued as if an MoU were in place, and the partnership between METRO and MTS continues to be productive and beneficial. The METRO convener and Admin Assistant, and MTS leadership meet online quarterly to keep good lines of communication and maintain a good working relationship.

The METRO committee is very thankful to God for the assistance MTS offers in the administration and governance processes provided for establishing and overseeing the two-year traineeships/apprenticeships. They have taken a load off the METRO Committee, and we benefit from their expertise, training days and training materials. It is well worth \$5,000 p.a., the amount of which will not have increased at all between 2019 and 2029. This MoU also enables some of the METRO Apprentices to receive tax-deductible status for their supporters during their two-year apprenticeship and during their four-year study at PTC as candidates. There have been no drawbacks or negatives to the partnership with MTS. It has only been positive for the committee over the past five years, so we hope the Assembly will enable this to continue.

To avoid having to come back to Assembly we bring before the Assembly for approval a MoU for the next five years.

Clinton Le Page
CONVENER

MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (Min 79)

1. Personnel

1.1 Committee

The Ministry Development Committee (MDC) is served by Rev Stuart Withers (convener), Darren Middleton, Gary Stephens, Russ Grinter, Oliver Blythe and elders Iain Bramley and Ralph Kop. During the past year, Rev Peter Greiner retired from the committee after eight years of service. We thank him for his contribution and pray that the Lord will continue to use his gifts in Kingdom work. Rev Oliver Blythe has filled the casual vacancy on the committee following Peter's retirement.

1.2 Ministry Development Officer

The committee is glad to update Assembly members on the work of its appointed Ministry Development Officer (MDO), Rev Chris Siriweera. The committee undertook an internal review of the MDO and his work in the second half of 2023. The report and its findings have generated discussion across the first half of 2024. We are pleased to report that the MDO has recently established a pastoral supervision relationship with a suitable person outside the sphere of the PCV.

Further, the review has helped the committee assess and think through how best to focus the MDO's workload to better align with revitalisation goals. Key recommendations that are being worked through include the MDO undertaking ministry coach training as professional development. Ministry coaching helps further listening and questioning skills, provides biblical guidance, and creates the capacity to foster the kind of accountability needed for church leaders and gospel workers who undertake revitalisation ministries. This training will complement the development and implementation of the revitalisation track, ('The Track'), initially mentioned in last year's report.

More detail is provided within the MDO's report (see Section 4 within this report).

1.3 MDC Administrative Secretary

The committee appointed Mrs Suzy Vines at our February meeting in 2023, and she commenced work in March. Due to unforeseen circumstances, Suzy advised the committee that she was unable to continue in her role beyond December 2023. After advertising the position, assessing the applications and conducting an interview, the committee appointed Mrs Natalie Miller as its Administrative Secretary, to commence work in December 2023. The new appointment included a 'hand-over' week to help Natalie transition into her role. The committee thanks Suzy for her contribution to the management of the work of the MDC during her time as MDC Administrative Secretary.

1.4 Home Missionaries

The committee recognises its substantial and enduring history of involvement in home missions and church extension throughout the PCV. Through the home mission program, the committee maintains close relationships with numerous home missionaries serving in Victoria. The table below provides a summary of the home missionary appointments and their specific duties. The committee extends its appreciation for contributions to gospel work.

	Home Mission Charge	Home Missionary (HM) or Minister
1	Blackburn	Rev Graham Bradbeer
2	Brighton	Vacant - Supply
3	Castlemaine	Rev Daryl Jackson
4	Clarinda	HM Michael Lee
5	Clarinda Nuer (Sudanese)	HM Tut Jock
6	Doncaster	HM Adrian Kebbe
7	Kangaroo Ground	Vacant - Supply
8	Kaniva/Nhill	Vacant - Supply
9	Leongatha	Rev Stephen Denness
10	Sale	Vacant - Supply
11	Somerville	Rev Gary Wentworth
12	Seymour/Nagambie/Yea	Vacant - Supply
13	Sunraysia	HM Colin Morrow
14	Warburton	Vacant - Supply
15	West Footscray	Rev Martin De Pyle
16	Yarrawonga	Vacant - Supply

2. Committee Projects

2.1 Governance of Sustentation

Since alterations to the regulation of sustentation grants, which limit applications to pastoral charges for limited short-term grants, there has been a reduced call on funds. Following the committee's consultation with the Board of Investment and Finance (BIF), it was determined that due to the changed eligibility for sustentation (i.e. only full pastoral charges can apply) there will only be a limited call on funds, and so the annual budget requirement is significantly reduced. It raises the question of how the Assembly might make the best long-term use of the \$850,000 transferred from the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee that is being held in General Assembly funds.

The committee is taking time to consider how this money might be employed for ministry development in the PCV. At the time of writing this report, the committee has begun to draft concept ideas that could be developed into firm proposals for the GAV to consider following the necessary consultation with the BIF. Any firm proposals for the redeployment of these funds will also require prior approval by the GAV.

2.2 Collection of Statistics

The committee again extends its thanks to the majority of congregations who submitted their 2023 statistical return. The committee expresses its thanks to Rev Cameron Garrett for the further development of the Administration and Reporting Made Simple database (ARMS). Likewise, the committee thanks elder Ralph Kop for his leading effort in preparing the statistical report that is presented in Section 5 of this report.

2.3 The Home Mission Program

The committee's home mission program, at a fundamental level, focuses on partnering with people within the PCV in the development of biblical gospel ministry and mission so that, under God, local presbyterian congregations experience spiritual health and are better equipped to fulfil the great commission.

Development Track & Conference

The committee continues to work towards developing and deploying a two-year revitalisation curriculum called 'The Track'. In last year's report, we shared the concept in embryo but are now on the cusp of the first two congregations commencing engagement in the first year of this two-year pilot program. The hope is that The Track will engage ministers, elders, key leaders and church members in evaluating, developing, and leading healthy change in key aspects of church life and mission.

Two congregations will enter The Track in its inaugural year in 2025. Each year thereafter a further two congregations will enter the program, meaning four congregations can be signed up at any one time: two as '1st Year' participants and two as '2nd Year' participants. A broad outline of The Track's two-year curriculum for 2025-26 is included in the table below:

Year One (2025)		Year Two (2026)	
Nov-Dec 2024	• Sign up • Initial pastor/coach discussion	Nov-Dec 2025	• Ministry coach & the pastor meet for planning.
Feb-Mar 2025	• Conference & Workshops • Keynote address as well as offering workshop time for pastors, elders & other key leaders when they have signed up to The Track. • 1st Year Workshop ~ Church Evaluation Process	Feb-Mar 2026	• Conference & Workshops. • Keynote address as well as offering workshop time. • 1st Year Workshop ~ Church Evaluation Process • 2nd Year workshop ~ The training church
Mar-Jun 2025	• Evaluation of church life and mission, answering the question: Where are we at?	Mar-Jun 2026	• Equipping the saints for the work of ministry
Jul 2025	• Mid-year workshop on church leadership	Jul 2026	• Mid-year workshop on evangelism and mission
Jul-Nov 2025	• Leadership training and development at a local level	Jul-Nov 2026	• Evangelism training, planning and deployment

It is envisaged that the 2025 MDC Conference will be a key element of the ministry development track. The conference keynote address will provide biblical and theological teaching on the work of revitalisation. The conference will be open to anyone in the PCV who wants to attend. The Track workshops target preparation in next step issues for those engaging in The Track curriculum. The expectation is that signed-up congregations will have a high participation rate. However, this does not mean other congregations or leaders should stay away. The presentations will offer something to everyone interested in church revitalisation.

The Track curriculum will undergo development and refinement as participant feedback is received. Alongside this, the committee will monitor the capacity for more congregations to enrol in the curriculum as the pilot program develops. The committee

remains convinced that ministry coaching has a crucial role to play in assisting ministers and elders to be both faithful and fruitful in their shepherding of congregations.

Gospel Ministry Coaches

Coaching aims to help leaders discover and develop their God-given potential, align their lives with Christ's teachings, and fulfil their ministry purpose. Key aspects of gospel coaching include active listening, questioning with outside eyes, providing biblical guidance, and fostering the kind of accountability (both in personal and working life) that aids gospel work. Wisdom literature in Scripture reminds us, 'Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed' (Prov 15:22).

The committee has budgeted funds so that it can offer scholarships to three or four PCV ministers who are seeking professional development in this area. The committee has identified possible coach training providers. 'Oilstone' runs an intensive program that appears to be suitable (www.oilstone.com.au), Reach Australia provides a Leadership Development Program, however, we are unsure if it provides the desired outcomes (www.reachaustralia.com.au/leadership-development-program), and as discussed in last year's report Rev Matt Waldo of CMM Gospel Coaching in the UK is the preferred trainer used by the Free Church of Scotland. The committee hopes the training program offered by CMM UK might become available online soon (www.cmmnet.org/pages/uk). We remain convinced that a pool of PCV ministry coaches would greatly strengthen our denomination's collective ability to advance the work of the gospel in Victoria.

Church Floor Area Survey

The floor area survey was conducted by the MDC to explore the possibility that congregations face ministry difficulties because of the capacity of their buildings. At the close of the survey, 30 congregations contributed responses. The committee offers the following comments as a summary of the information collected.

Overall, 34% of respondents indicated that they had restrictions on the number of people who could attend their services. Further, 45% of respondents indicated that they did not have sufficient space for desired activities.

Why is this issue important? Buildings play an important part in the life of a congregation. While buildings never generate spiritual life, they do influence (shape) the life of a congregation. For instance, a building can create expectations through design, furniture layout and general appearance. If the building looks 'tired' and unkept it says something to visitors and potential newcomers. The design and layout of our buildings contribute to how people utilise spaces. Do people stay (longer) after a service? If the building does not facilitate it, the possibility of New Testament 'one anothering' is limited by the building.

Additionally, and perhaps significantly, the seating capacity of our main meeting spaces in smaller buildings creates a tension between maximum occupancy and comfortable capacity, which can threaten financial sustainability. There are implications between the number of people who can gather and the capacity to afford long-term settled pastoral ministry. Survey results indicate that several of our congregations are navigating this conundrum. Small buildings can constantly suggest that 'we will always be small'. There is a place for a denominational discussion on the strategic redeployment of capital from deceased congregations. The gospel of grace

teaches the church to be a people who are mindful of others. Our buildings ought to reflect our desire to serve people in our mission (Matt 28:18-20).

Presbytery Partnership

Committee regulations indicate that the MDC will seek to partner with presbyteries, which have primary oversight and responsibility for congregations, in developing healthy gospel ministries in churches. How can the MDC, via the MDO, actively help presbyteries engage in growing healthy congregations?

The following items have been identified as key areas of assistance for presbyteries in their work of developing health churches:

Building healthy presbyteries ~ Presbyterian polity invests key decision-making and oversight with its presbyteries. It means there is an opportunity for presbyteries to exercise leadership in developing itself into a healthy unified workplace for the progress of the gospel (Phil 1:25-27). A healthy presbytery enjoys 'truth in love' relationships, has clarity in its mission and is constantly working to align its activities to its biblical mission. When these things are pursued an environment is created that is good for gospel leaders and their shared work. Presbyteries can invite the MDO to evaluate and work on these things together.

Five-yearly visitations ~ should be seen as a strategic opportunity for thinking about the trajectory of the life and health of congregations. They provide for wise assessment, planning and recommendations that can shape the long-term trajectory of a congregation's mission. The committee is in a position, via the MDO, to assist presbyteries in this work by offering access to detailed health assessments by using Church Health Inventories for ministers, sessions and congregations. The MDO is available to presbytery, session and local church forums to assist congregations so that the mission and vision of churches is progressed.

Leadership training ~ all congregations have a discipleship 'glass ceiling' created by the maturity of local leadership. As seen in The Track, curriculum leadership development is a key pillar in revitalisation ministries. MDC believes that there are opportunities for presbytery-wide training events that address the development of ministers and elders in their gospel labours. Healthy gospel leadership will be open to stopping what is good and comfortable, to start what is better and uncomfortable.

Ministry coach deployment ~ it is hoped that as the MDC develops pathways for professional development in ministry coaching that it will benefit presbytery oversight of congregations. A pool of PCV ministers who engage with coach training would enable presbyteries to better help home missionaries, exiting students, and ministers in challenging contexts with a ministry coach.

The committee hopes and trusts that these areas of partnership will be helpful.

2.4 Kingdom Come Prayer

Since the latter half of 2021, the committee has promoted and hosted an online prayer meeting that is open to all ministers, elders and gospel workers within the PCV.

3. Committee Finances

Currently, the Scots' Church Properties Trust (SCPT) distribution received by the PCV for home mission and church extension within Victoria is split between the MDC and

the Church Planting Committee (CPC). GAV members will recall that the split ratio is moving towards a 50:50 share by 2025. The committee remains confident that this arrangement will enable it to continue its valuable mission.

Across the previous five years, the MDC has used an overdraft facility established with the BIF to fund its activities. The provision has worked well. The current budget forecast envisages this facility will no longer be required once the committee's share of the extraordinary distribution from the lease arrangements of Georges is completed.

The MDC thank the CPC for its good faith consultation process which resulted in an agreement between both committees on how to share the extraordinary distribution monies. The agreement submitted to the Trusts Corporation by both committees sees the SCPT Extraordinary Distribution split in the following proportions: CPC to receive \$2 million and the MDC \$1.775 million. Additionally, each committee has agreed to accept responsibility for its representative share of any future Assembly Hall repair costs (given the combined 37% stake). The MDC share of the distribution will enable the committee to eliminate the need to operate an overdraft facility with the BIF, provide contingency funding for Assembly Hall repairs, and commence the development of new initiatives that contribute to the development of healthy congregations in the PCV.

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.

Charge	Starting year of grants	Total grants paid (\$) **	MDG paid in 2023-24 (\$)	MDG approved for 2024-25 (\$)
Broadford	2020-	54,000	16,000	14,400
Castlemaine	2022-	247,869	32,107	45,000
Clarinda	2017-	176,660	4,607	20,250
Clarinda Nuer	2022-	10,634	8,966	10,000
Cranbourne	2010-	329,717	18,000	10,000
Eaglehawk	2013-	204,550	18,000	22,000
Horsham	2007-	363,982	16,000	14,000
Hume	2019-	106,064	23,300	10,000
Leongatha	2013-21	252,895	5,045	25,000
Somerville	2023-	9,186	9,186	30,000
West Footscray	2020-	167,375	23,625	20,000
Wodonga	2022-	19,000	9,000	8,000

** Includes amounts paid in 2023-24

3.2 Sustentation Grants

The committee has not awarded any sustentation grants in the reporting period.

3.3. 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 charges:

Charge	Paid in 2023–24 ^(*)	Approved for 2024–25 ^(*)
Bairnsdale - Daniel Johns	\$19,000	\$19,000
Ballarat South - Leona Lang and Mollie Milesi	\$8,332	\$4,500
Embrace Church Melbourne - Chang Ho (Matthew) Lee	\$26, 064	\$19,548

(*) Second worker grants are primarily funded from the SCPT distributions, although at times a portion of grants monies come from the Thompson Evangelism Trust.

Across 2024 the committee has discussed the criteria and assumptions that feed into second worker grant guidelines. At a fundamental level, second worker grants are provided so that growing charges can attain the next level of development by employing an additional worker. In simple terms, the grant is bridging finance.

Second worker grants can be awarded over three years within the following parameters:

- a grant not exceeding 50% of the terms of settlement
- annual congregational giving less than \$200,000
- capital reserves are less than \$100,000

Detailed grant guidelines can be accessed on the MDC website. Where charges fall outside the guidelines, we encourage consultation with the MDO on the possibility of partial eligibility.

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:

Charge	Paid in 2023–24	Approved for 2024-25
Ashburton - Mook Lee	\$15,000	TBC
Bundoora Iranian Worker - Sam Estiaghi	\$12,500	-
Canterbury - Makoto Fukuda	\$26,666	\$36,000
Clayton - Lam Paul Gak	\$13,500	\$12,000
Dandenong - Rob Paix	\$6,000	\$5,000

3.4 Capital Grants

Capital grants are not currently offered by the committee.

3.5 Evangelism Grants

The committee oversees funding from the Thompson Evangelism Trust for evangelism grants and payments to support Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES) workers. Congregations are encouraged to make applications for evangelism grants within the published guidelines.

Across 2023-24 grants totalling \$59,729 were paid to the following congregations: Ashburton, Aspendale, Bairnsdale, Ballarat South, Ballarat West, Bay Church,

Bendigo, Brighton, Burwood, Canterbury, Clayton, Colac, Cranbourne, Croydon, Dandenong, Darebin, Donnybrook, Donvale, Eaglehawk, Eltham, Embrace, Epping, Essendon-Clifton Hill, Melton, Moe-Yarram, Reservoir, Seymour-Nagambie-Yea, Surrey Hills, Tatura, Valley, West Footscray, Wodonga and Woori Yallock. In addition, the Presbytery of Gippsland received a \$2,000 evangelism grant.

In 2023-24, the Thompson Evangelism Trust has been used to support AFES workers who have established connections with PCV congregations and are labouring in the gospel on university campuses. In total \$30,000 was granted for this purpose. Further support of approximately \$11,600 was provided to the PTC to support evangelism training for its students.

4. Ministry Development Officer's Report - Rev Chris Siriweera

I never take for granted the opportunity I have been given to serve the Lord and His people in the PCV, and in the wider church, in my role as PCV MDO. I give thanks to the Lord for the ministry opportunities He puts before me, allowing me to use the gifts He has given me to work with the MDC and the churches within our denomination.

4.1 Summary of Ministry Activities

One-on-one Meetings and Ministry Contacts

I continue to build relationships with many ministers and home missionaries through both face-to-face meetings and phone calls, resulting in opportunities to share, talk through ministry strategies, pray, and give support where necessary. Occasionally, these engagements also facilitate follow-up relating to seminars/workshops recently conducted in their churches

Individual Mentoring

In addition to the one-on-one meetings, I have regularly met with three ministers for individual mentoring. This involves talking through issues such as spiritual disciplines, ministry life, support, pastoral wellbeing, self-care, and ongoing ministry strategy.

Online Peer Support Network

I also regularly meet with three peer support groups over Zoom. There are 14 ministers from both suburban and country churches who are part of this network. It is wonderful to have Rev Joel Otten from Western Australia as a member of one of the groups. I find meeting with these ministers has helped me understand both the blessings and challenges they face in pastoral ministry. I believe this network provides a forum to share, discuss ministry challenges, support, pray and encourage one another in gospel ministry. If you are interested in joining a peer support group, please contact me.

Preaching and Visits to Congregations

It has been both a privilege and an honour to visit many congregations across Victoria. I have enjoyed worshipping with them and connecting in fellowship together. In some instances, I have also conducted the Lord's Supper.

Over the past year, I have preached in the following churches, occasionally also conducting worship services: Eaglehawk, Donvale, Somerville, Dromana, Mornington, Clarinda-Nuer Sudanese, Essendon, Heidelberg, Burwood Community, Rochester, North Geelong, Gisborne, Bairnsdale, Sale, Yarrawonga, Noorat (150th Anniversary), Castlemaine and Horsham.

In addition to preaching, I have also taken the opportunity to visit these other congregations across Victoria: Sorrento, Burwood Community, Clarinda, Balwyn Korean, Brighton Korean, Blackburn, Ashburton, Heathmont and Leongatha.

Other Speaking Engagements

- i. PTC chapel services
- ii. Reservoir PC church camp
- iii. Broadford PC men's breakfast

Partnership with Presbyterian Church of Western Australia (PCWA)

The Assembly has encouraged me as its MDO to partner and support the ministry with the PCWA. This partnership continues to strengthen with my visits and regular contact with members of the presbytery and the Assembly. At the invitation of the PCWA I attended the commissioning service of Rev Damian Meeuwissen held at Freemantle Presbyterian Church. Damian and his family have settled in well to life in Western Australia. My visit also allowed me to meet with Rev Joel Otten and his wife, Steph.

Presbytery Visits

Engaging with presbyteries is an important part of my role, and I have appreciated attending presbytery meetings in the past year in the Presbyteries of Melbourne North and South West Victoria. Presbytery visits enable me to listen to the challenges and opportunities each presbytery faces within its bounds and to see how the MDC can support that presbytery to help grow healthy churches for God's glory.

Meeting with Counterparts in Sydney

I met with Revs Matt Oates (Superintendent PCNSW Ministry & Home Missions Committee), Dave Thurston (PCQM Healthy Churches), Bern Merchant, Paul McKendrick and several women's ministry workers. In light of the memorandum of understanding the PCA has with the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia (CRCA), Rev Clinton Berends, CRCA's Ministry Director was invited to attend our meeting for the first time. We discussed the challenges that different states face and explored how we can support each other's ministries, sharing resources where possible. Our desire is to encourage continued Gospel ministry focus throughout the PCA by regularly engaging with each other at the national level.

4.2 Meetings/Consultations with Sessions

I have met with some sessions for consultation and discussions regarding the seminars/workshops that I have conducted. When visiting Yarrawonga, I took part in meetings to discuss their future ministry strategy.

4.3 Training Seminars/Workshops

Along with the MDC, I am grateful our churches across Victoria continue to invite me to deliver our training seminars and workshops to their congregations. In this past year, 'Church Revitalisation' seminars have been delivered to congregations at Rochester and Castlemaine.

Our evangelism workshop, 'How to Share Your Faith', has been well received by congregations at Burwood Community, Heidelberg and Donvale, with more of these workshops scheduled in the months to come. In Australia's ever-increasing secular culture, the need for our congregations to access this practical training is crucial. At the time of Australia's 2021 Census, 39% of Victorians declared they held no religious belief, and data shows the number of other faiths is on the rise. This workshop focuses

on the local mission field and equipping congregations to share the gospel intentionally as individuals and collectively as a church community.

These training seminars and workshops are often presented to the congregation on a Saturday, and then I have been privileged to be invited to return the following day to preach the Word of God on a related topic at the Sunday morning service/s.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like me to present one of these training opportunities to your congregation. In Melbourne, the 'How to Share Your Faith' workshop can also be delivered once a week over four weeks to bible study groups in place of the usual weekly study.

Further training opportunities in 'Pastoral Leadership' and 'Developing Church Leaders' are available for sessions and emerging church leaders to help address the spiritual health of the church. Again, please contact me if you would like to know more.

4.4 Exit Students Committee

As the MDO, I am a member of the Exit Students Committee which recently finalised the Exit Appointment for 2025. We thank the Lord for our Exit student, Ryan Brightwell and his family, and trust that his appointment will be well received by the congregation. May we see, under God, a fruitful ministry for Ryan.

4.5 Presbyterian Theological College (PTC)

Together with the MDC, I continue to have an ongoing partnership with the PTC. I have spoken at two chapel services in the past year and have had meetings with the (now-former) Principal, Rev Peter Hastie and the (current) Acting Principal, Rev Dr Jared Hood. It is always great to chat with the students and to get to know them, too. I value this ongoing partnership with the faculty and appreciate the close working relationship with staff and students.

In March 2023, I attended the PTC Ministry Conference, which afforded me new insights and was a time of great blessing and connection, once again.

4.6 Kingdom Come Online Prayer Meetings

This is an opportunity for ministers, home missionaries, elders and ministry workers of the PCV to come together in unity and prayer. We hold four prayer meetings a year and they are held on Saturday morning from 8.00-9.00am. Let me encourage you to join as we together seek the Lord's face in prayer, for our congregations, our ministries, our state, nation and the world.

4.7 General Assembly of Australia (GAA) - Chaplain to the Moderator-General Rev David Burke

It was a privilege and a joy to serve as one of the Chaplains to Rev David Burke and to be part of the GAA. It was great to listen to the exposition of God's Word and share in the fellowship with Commissioners across Australia. It was a challenge to learn the procedures and the rules of the GAA!

4.8 Police Chaplaincy

I continue to serve as a Chaplain for Victoria Police. I am thankful for the opportunity to serve in this role. This year I was humbled to receive the Victoria Police Service Award from the Chief Commissioner following my 25 years of service to Victoria Police.

4.9 Pastoral Supervision

I have commenced the pastoral supervision, and I have found it to be very helpful to talk through issues and to debrief.

4.10 Presbytery Partnership

The MDC and I continue to focus on helping grow healthy churches and we are seeking to further assist this by entering into a 'partnership' with presbyteries. At the time of writing this report, I have received several replies from presbyteries putting forward one or two names who will represent their presbytery, as we assist them where possible, by working with and supporting them in growing healthy churches. I look forward to hearing from the remaining presbyteries soon.

4.11 Ministers Health Survey

Whilst we focus on the spiritual health of the church, the MDC and I are also mindful of the health of our ministers. A snapshot of results from the Ministers Health Survey is included below, which gives an indication of the challenge of pastoral ministry.

An analysis of exiting students into PCV ministry since 1989 has been carried out, with the aim to gain insights into the underlying reason behind ministers ceasing active service, for reasons other than death or retirement. Once known, it opens the possibility for a denominational response to be considered.

The following table shows the number of students exiting the PTC, the number from each cohort no longer in PCV ministry, and the reasons they left:

PTC Exit Year	Total Exit Students	Total Exit Students no longer in PCV ministry	Reasons for leaving PCV ministry role				% left PCV
			Infidelity, Adultery, Misconduct	Stress / Breakdown	Family	Other	
1989-1999	47	13	4	1		8	28%
2000-2010	32	16	3	2	2	9	50%
2011	2	1				1	50%
2012	5	1				1	20%
2013	3	0					0%
2014	5	3		2		1	60%
2015	4	0					0%
2016	5	1		1			20%
2017	6	1				1	17%
2018	5	2		1		1	40%
2019	6	0					0%
2020	5	1				1	20%
2021	5	0					0%
2022	0	0					0%
Total	130	39	7	7	2	23	30%
		30%	18%	18%	5%	59%	
		Total Exit Students no longer in PCV ministry (%)	Total Exit Students no longer in PCV ministry, by reason (%)				

The data shows that 30% of students who have exited the PTC from 1989-2022 are no longer working in a PCV ministry role. The reasons why this 30% segment left PCV ministry can be grouped into the following subsets:

- infidelity, adultery or misconduct – 18%
- stress or breakdown – 18%
- family-related issues – 5%
- other – 59%

The following groupings break down much of the 'other' subset within the 30% segment of students from the above table:

- missionary and chaplaincy work – 24%
- non-PCA ministry roles – 21%
- non-ministry (secular) employment – 21%
- poor health or death – 18%
- interstate ministry within the PCA – 6%

As we note there are varied reasons why some have left the ministry. We see the need to support one another, pray for one another and encourage one another in ministry. We also need to put in place self-care routines that will help in going the distance.

4.12 Gospel Coaching

The MDC sees the need for 'Gospel Coaching' to assist our ministers in ministry. The committee is keen for me to undergo training in this space, and I have already explored the possibility of such training.

4.13 The Challenges Ahead

As I travel across Victoria, I am aware of the many challenges that congregations are facing. Whilst we thank the Lord for our larger congregations, let us be mindful and prayerful of the struggling congregations and their challenges. These challenges are reflected in the statistical data collated by our committee.

Let me highlight some of these challenges:

- the decline in church attendance
- the need for more elders
- the need for eldership training
- the lack of financial resources - as numbers decline, this influences the church's budget
- the lack of personnel to focus on outreach and other ministries within the congregation
- the lack of younger families attending church

Due to some of the above and for other reasons, some presbyteries have closed churches. This report has highlighted the need to see the work of church revitalisation as an integral and essential aspect of our ministry paradigm. We are aware that we are in an ongoing spiritual battle, and it is the Lord Himself who can bring renewal and revival to our land and indeed across the world. The strategic focus of my role and that of the MDC continues to be helping grow spiritually healthy churches by God's Spirit and for His glory in the PCV.

4.14 Where to from here?

Ongoing Prayer for Revival

I am reminded of the prayer of Habakkuk (Hab 3:1-2):

3 A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to Shigionoth.

- ² O LORD, I have heard the report of you,
and your work, O LORD, do I fear.

In the midst of the years revive it;
in the midst of the years make it known;
in wrath remember mercy.

Let us continue earnestly to pray for revival, trust the Lord and work hard in gospel ministry, as we seek to serve Him and His people. We need His power and His grace and wisdom in this work.

Engage the Gospel in the Marketplace

As we face the changing cultural and religious landscape in Victoria with the influx of multi-faith migrants, we ought to seek opportunities to engage with these communities around us as the Apostle Paul did in the Areopagus (Acts 17).

Let us continue to pray for the 'regenerative' work of the Holy Spirit in drawing men, women, boys and girls to Himself as we proclaim the 'Gospel of God' (Romans 1).

Continue to work hard and well (1 Tim 2:1-10)

- as a good soldier
- as an athlete
- as a hard-working farmer

Ministry is hard work and at times can be very challenging and discouraging. But it is also marvellously rewarding as the Lord works His purposes through us for His glory.

Gospel Culture

Continue by His grace to maintain a 'Gospel Culture' in our congregations. One way of doing this is to constantly preach the gospel to ourselves. Let us by His enabling be 'passionate' and proclaim Christ to a dying world.

Strong and godly leadership

Let us continue to work well in developing Christ honouring leaders in the church. Leaders who are driven to see the church family continue to grow in their love for the Lord and for others.

Conclusion

As we engage and work as leaders in ministry in an increasingly hostile world, showing the love of God and sharing His love with His people, I am reminded we must be certain and sure of what we communicate and the content we communicate. This includes the way we present the truth of the gospel. Our interactions must be truthful, clear and gracious to be effective in ministry.

I can only do the work He has called me to do as He enables, drawing on Him for wisdom and strength, and with the support of those He has placed around me.

I want to thank the PTC faculty for their ongoing partnership and for graciously inviting me to preach at their chapel services.

I would also like to thank the ministers and sessions at the many churches I have visited or church events I have attended, and the presbyteries who support the work of the MDC.

I wish to thank the MDC, and its Convener Rev Stuart Withers, for the ongoing support, guidance and wisdom extended to me in my role. I value the discussions, debates and passion to see us work together in revitalising churches and in growing healthy churches by the Lord's enabling. I value this relationship and partnership with the committee.

I want to thank the former MDC Administrative Secretary, Mrs Suzy Vines, for her faithful service. I want to express appreciation to our current MDC Administrative Secretary, Mrs Natalie Miller, for her dedicated work. I thank her also for her work as my personal assistant in organising my appointments and dealing with other administrative work to assist me in my role.

Thanks also to the PCV office staff and the PCV General Manager Mr Michael Ellison, for their help and assistance with processing payments to congregations on behalf of the MDC.

I want to especially thank my wife Rose for her ongoing support, encouragement, love and prayers. As I have mentioned in my previous reports, I am often away from home with ministry activities, and without her support and understanding, I would not be able to work in this role. We are both by God's grace passionate in serving Christ together in the PCV and beyond.

Once again, I want to sincerely thank you, General Assembly of Victoria for your ongoing prayers, support and encouragement.

Finally, I express my humble thanks to my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. I continuously stand in awe of His amazing saving grace in my life. I am deeply humbled and honoured to serve Him and His people in the PCV and in the wider church. I never take this ministry for granted.

Let me close with these words from Romans 16:27

²⁷ to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria.

Chris Siriweera
MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

5. Statistical Returns Report for 2023

The statistics that are collected by the MDC on behalf of the PCV are for the purpose of measuring the health of congregations across the state. There are 29 measures that are collected for this purpose.

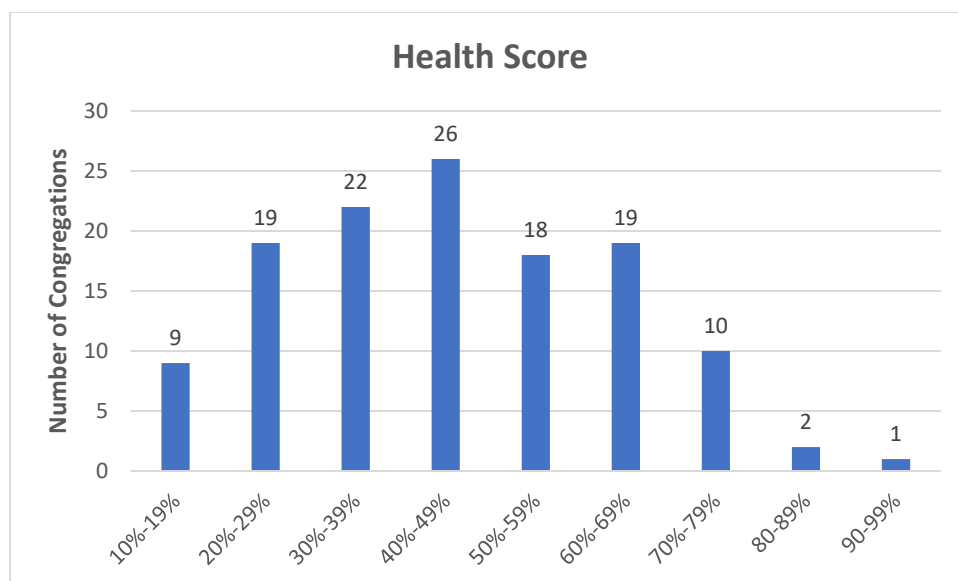
The MDC has developed a health score for each congregation so that instead of looking at 29 measures it can look at one measure and see how this one measure changes with time to gain an overall picture of the health of congregations across Victoria. The health score is based on the total of possible action and commendation indicators.

For details on how the health score is calculated visit the 'Resources' page on the MDC website at mdcpcv.org.au/resources and download the 'Health Analysis for 2023 Statistics' document.

This methodology has been applied to all statistics gathered since 2020 and now allows for presbyteries and sessions to monitor the change in health over time and determine whether it is significant.

5.1 Health Scores

The state of health in congregations across Victoria is displayed by their health score (expressed as a percentage) in the following graph:



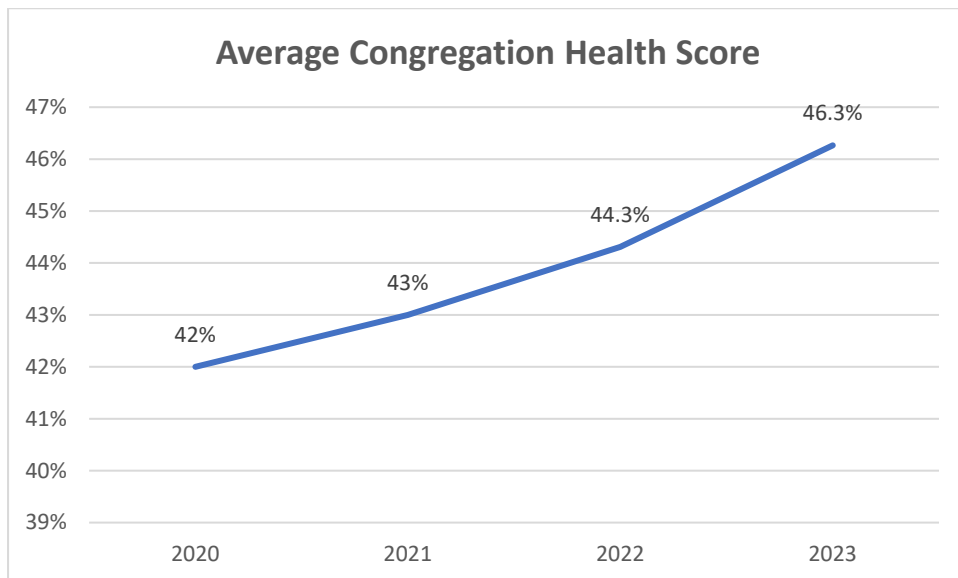
To best appreciate this graph, it is important to understand that since 2020 nine congregations have closed who had an average health score of 24% at the time. One of the nine had a health score of 34% when it closed.

Currently, 18 congregations have a health score of 24% or less. Only one of those congregations has seen an increase in growth since 2020 and that congregation has seen declining health since 2021. It is reasonable to expect that the majority of these congregations face an uncertain future, even closure without serious leadership intervention. We note that there are a further 10 congregations who have a health score between 25% and 30%. In this group, since 2020, five congregations have shown declining health, three have remained the same, and two have shown some growth.

Overall, there is a possibility that up to 23 congregations could close within five years. This represents 18% of the congregations within the PCV. The average health score of congregations across the state is 46.3%. Every renewal is preceded by crisis - though not every crisis leads to renewal.

5.2 Change in Health Scores

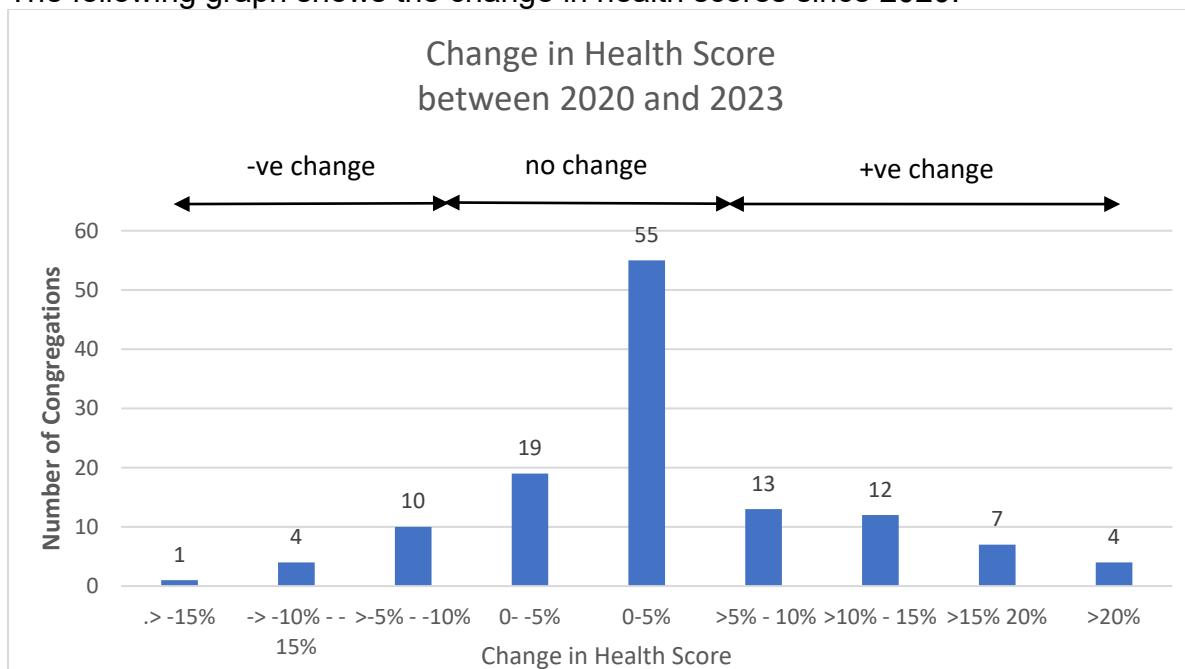
As stated above, the methodology of calculating health scores has been applied to all the statistics collected since 2020. This enables the PCV to measure the change of health of each congregation since that time. The following graph shows the change in average health score since 2020.



Whilst it is pleasing to see an increase in the average health score, there is a need to understand what is driving this change and whether the change is considered significant. The following table indicates the level of significance of the amount of change in health score between 2020-2023.

Change in Health Score - 2020 to 2023	Amount of change
0-5% or 0 to -5%	No significant change i.e. stable
5% to 10% or -5% to -10%	Minor change
10 -15% or -10% to -15%	Moderate change
>15% or >-15%	Significant change

The following graph shows the change in health scores since 2020.

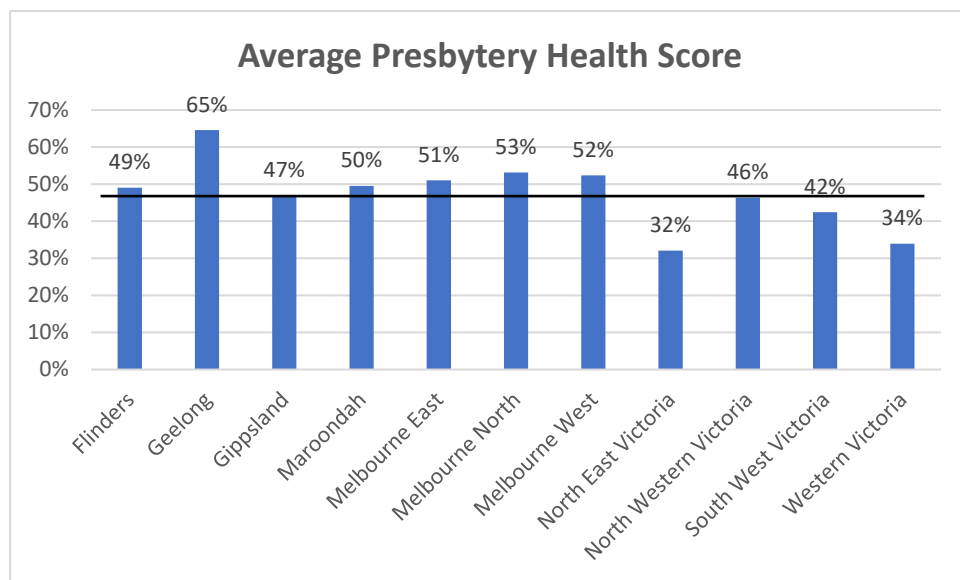


In summary, there are 15 congregations in decline since 2020 and 36 congregations showing improvements in their health. The remaining 74 congregations show stable health.

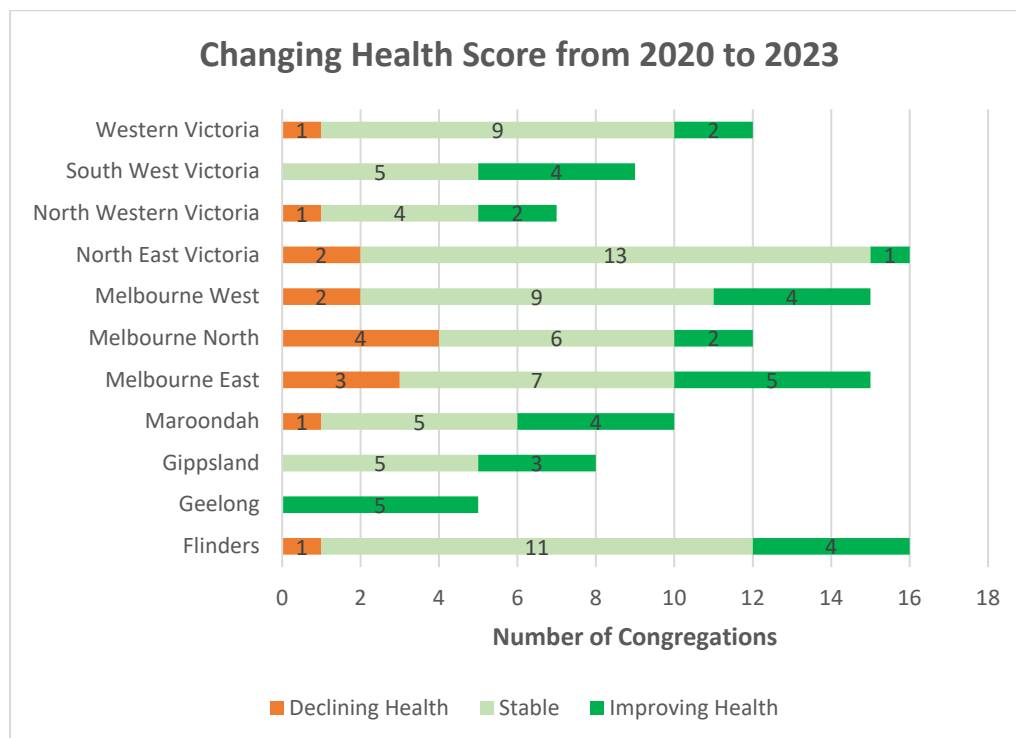
Recent data examining professions of faith, infant and adult baptisms shows:

- 37% of congregations contribute to 91% of the professions of faith
- 37% of congregations are responsible for 100% of the infant baptisms
- 26% of congregations are responsible for 100% of the adult baptisms

The challenge facing the PCV is to see a new generation of believers join the church. This will require working together to build healthier churches. As can be seen from the graphic below the work is not restricted to a few rural congregations.



While the change in health score for each presbytery gives a broad-brush picture it has limits because healthier congregation scores mask the health outcomes of declining congregations.



For specific details on all 29 statistical measures collected, visit the 'Resources' page on the MDC website at mdcpcv.org.au/resources and download the '2023 Statistics Report'.

5.3 Healthy Church Survey

In last year's report, the MDC indicated that it would undertake a survey of healthy churches from across the state to identify commonalities that could be shared to build healthier churches across Victoria. The survey has been completed, and if you would like to view the commonalities identified in growing healthy churches, visit the MDC website at mdcpcv.org.au/resources to read the full report.

5.4 Church Health Inventories

The health scores that have been calculated for each congregation are based on external indicators and therefore may not be an accurate measure of the actual health of a congregation. In the same way that a doctor may require a patient to undertake a series of tests to determine the reason for the symptoms, the MDC believes that a number of surveys can assist in determining the health of a congregation.

Such surveys need to consider the health of all the elements that make up a congregation and therefore the surveys will need to assess the health of the minister, the health of the session, and the health of each member of the congregation.

The MDC has developed a health inventory for each of these groups which can be completed online and provide a response giving a score for each of the elements in the survey. This will assist participants in identifying which areas they need to attend to improve their health. Visit the MDC website at mdcpcv.org.au/resources to complete one of these health inventories online or to read the 'Church Health Inventories' report. The report provides details for each survey and how they are scored.

At the time of writing this report, the MDC is conducting an anonymous survey of both ministers and sessions across the state. The results of these surveys will be presented in a supplementary report to the Assembly.

5.5 Data Quality

Data quality could be improved if each congregation used the tally sheets provided by the MDC to assist in keeping accurate records.

No checks have been undertaken to determine the accuracy of the data supplied.

5.6 Improvements

The accuracy of data analysis would be improved with standardised reporting out of the ARMS database. It would reduce human error and significantly reduce analysis time. MDC will be considering how this can be achieved.

5.7 Executive Summary of Statistical Data

A full report of the PCV 2023 statistics can be downloaded from the MDC website, on the 'Resources' page, at mdcpcv.org.au/resources. Readers are encouraged to make use of it. Below is an executive summary under six headings.

1. Congregations and charges

Since 2020 the number of congregations has fallen 7.4% from 136 to 126. Over the same period, the number of charges has dropped 5.8%. Since 2020 the average size of congregations has increased from 51 people in 2020 to 56.4 people in 2023.

2. Membership and attendance

Attendance has started to climb after dipping during COVID-19 and has returned to 2020 levels. The growth in attendance is occurring in the age groups below 60 years of age. The average age of congregations has decreased from 43.5 years in 2020 to 41.5 years in 2023. Visitor numbers have grown sharply but this is likely due to improved record keeping.

3. Growth

Since 2020 there has been a marked increase in the number of professions of faith. This category has been split into two fields of data: namely 339 professions of faith and 183 transfers between congregations. There is a concern that some congregations have misunderstood these two data fields and could be double counting.

Both infant and adult baptisms are significantly higher than in 2020 but have reduced in totals since last year.

4. Leadership

The number of elders has dropped 13.9% since 2020, and similarly, the number of managers has dropped 14% over the same period. The number of deacons and assessor elders has remained reasonably stable over that period.

Since 2022, the number of new elders and new deacons has been measured. There has been a significant increase in the number of new deacons whereas the number of new elders has fallen.

5. Financial

It is encouraging to see that giving has increased by nearly 40% since 2020 and the level of capital reserves has started to rise again after dipping in 2021.

6. Commitment

The number of people attending the Lord's Supper and bible studies has started to climb again after dipping in 2021. The number of people serving in the life of the congregation has been measured since 2021 and shows steady growth.

Stuart Withers
CONVENER

PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH AND CHILDREN COMMITTEE (Min 67)

Thanksgiving

Praise the Lord for the many impressive, servant hearted and godly people that have been working hard this past year in ministry to youth and children in our state. We are convinced of the strategic importance of fruitful and faithful ministry to young people, and so we praise God for what he has done this year through the Presbyterian Youth and Children's Committee (PYCC).

Our continuing committee of Elisabeth Roberts, Mel Denness, Rev Cameron Griffiths and Rev Bagoes Seta, have all worked hard in difficult circumstances this past year, with a heart for growing ministry to our next generation. Rev Paul Huynh and Bec Walz finished up over the course of the year and we praise God for their service. Rev Luke Isham stepped down as Convener after a great job particularly with restructuring, simplifying and clarifying the duties of committee. Rev Steve Jones joined the committee as convener after we were without one for a number of months. He is excited for what the future holds for our denomination amongst youth and kids. We strategically recruited two new committee members in August this year: Ian Jones (Surrey Hills Presbyterian) who has a speciality in children's ministry and Nick Attrill (Warrnambool Presbyterian) who has great experience in running youth camps and has also been convening our Operations Sub-Committee for the youth side of PYCC. With a full team, we are looking forward to the year ahead.

Our Big Day Out Admin support, Erin Dykstra, has done a wonderful job ensuring these one-day events are run to a high standard and are engaging to all types of youth. Louise Griffiths has been the backbone of many of our events, and a very helpful responsible person, working closely with the ever-informative Fiona Bligh, in ensuring camps are run to the highest safety standards and inclusive for all.

We have an amazing group of young adults who have been doing mountains of work on the various sub-committees, and in particular ensuring youth events and camps are run to a high standard in every way. Without them, camps would simply not run. We are indebted to God for their energy, hard work, and gospel convictions.

Over the past few years there have been great challenges with a large turnover in committee members creating a lack of long corporate memory, but this has been lessened through faithful, dedicated, and hardworking volunteer leaders, who give significant amounts of time to ensuring youth and children have every opportunity to be taught and disciplined well.

In all of this we are deeply thankful to our God, whose wonderful message of hope in Jesus for both this life and the next is what keeps us focussed, and his Spirit that empowers us to keep going.

Event Reports

2024 Summer Camp

Summer Camp 2024 was held at Christian Youth Camps (CYC) Phillip Island Adventure Resort from 8-12 January a week later than last year due to CYC's changing availability) saw over 130 youth and 50 leaders gather from 38 churches around the state to hear Steve Jones speak from Ecclesiastes on Meaning in a Meaningless World, delve deeper into the topic in studies, enjoy Medieval themed activities, and build new relationships and strengthen existing friendships.

Campers engaged very positively with Ecclesiastes, with the talks and studies being the biggest highlight of camp which is such an encouragement to their desire to hear and engage with God's word. The topic was very appropriate for the youth as so many search for meaning, and they were reminded that ultimately only Jesus can bring meaning. This year, campers had the opportunity to attend two workshops from a choice of five topics: Overseas Mission, Gender and Sexuality, Wealth and Consumerism, Reading the Bible with Others, and Sharing with People of Other Faiths.

The medieval-themed structured activities across the three days culminated in a tournament as teams competed against each other to conclude the quest storyline that had accompanied the activity sessions each day, while campers enjoyed the campsites activities (Flying Fox, Giant Swing, High Ropes Course, and swimming pool) and catching up with friends during free time.

The executive team was blessed to have a strong, united team that worked together very well to pull off the camp despite some significant challenges, primarily due to the lack of admin support and the Youth and Children's Worker (YCW) role, however, without additional support, Presbyterian youth events will struggle to continue, and we are at risk of burning out our leaders. Despite this, the last 12 months have shown increased interest and attendance from youth who are keen to hear God's word and build relationships with one another which is great. However, there are continued challenges with having sufficient leaders for the amount of interest which meant we needed to close registrations for Summer Camp prematurely, and leader shortages have created challenges at Big Day Outs during the year as well. This is such an important ministry that has such a big impact on so many of our youth that we pray that it can continue, but it can only do so with further support.

Laura Brown
CONVENER SUMMER CAMP 2024

Big Day Outs

Big Day Outs (BDOs) are one-day events that happen once a term (terms 2, 3 and 4) hosted by local Presbyterian churches across Victoria. The aims of the BDOs are to facilitate youth and churches to be able to catch up throughout the year between camps where they can meet, connect and be encouraged in their relationships with each other and most importantly in their faith.

So far in 2024, PYCC Operations Committee has run two BDOs at Drouin Presbyterian church and North Geelong Presbyterian church with the third upcoming BDO to be held at Canterbury Presbyterian church.

Each event is organised by the Operations Committee, the Big Day Out Event Manger and the Responsible Person in conjunction with the convener and a small exec team who plans the day.

The Drouin Big Day Out was a 5.5-hour event held on the 4 May. It was convened by Alistair Hood, with Rev Heath Easton speaking on what it means to be God's adopted children. We had 35 youth come from 12 different churches and enjoy a wonderful day of catching up, worship and hearing from God's word, and competing in team activities.

The North Geelong Big Day Out was also a 5.5-hour event held on the 3 August and was convened by Erin Dykstra. We had over 70 youth come from 22 different churches and heard Rev Matt Deroon speaking on the question of 'How can you know if you are really saved?' The day was pirate themed and included worship, a talk followed by discussion groups, lot of pirate group games, great food, and general hang out time for the youth to reconnect.

The 2024 Big Day Outs have grown in numbers from last year, showing that our youth are growing in their desire to be part of Presbyterian youth events. While this is so wonderful to see, we are struggling in the leader department which saw the North Geelong BDO experience difficulty in having enough leaders with some leaders beginning to become burnt out and less available to participate. Furthermore, the Event Manager Role (currently Erin Dykstra) is prior to the Canterbury BDO which will make continuing to run these events more difficult. We have a strong desire to see Presbyterian youth continue to grow and thrive and have ongoing opportunities to connect, meet and encourage each other and most importantly, grow in their knowledge and trust in God, however, further support is needed to enable this.

Erin Dykstra
BIG DAY OUT EVENT MANAGER

Upcoming Summer Camp 2025

We are deeply grateful to God for His continued support in this ministry and to the many leaders from across the state who have been instrumental in making each camp a success.

PYV Summer Camp 2025 will be held on 12 - 16 January 2025 at Phillip Island Adventure Resort. Rev Darren Middleton will be speaking on the Character of God. Matthew and Courteney Burns will be convening the camp, with Nicholas Attrill as the appointed PYCC responsible person. Elisabeth Roberts will be coordinating the studies, and Chiara Bilyj will be head of sessions.

Our vision for camp is to see young people across the state know more of God and connect with each other. We are also aiming to train and equip future executive leaders by providing opportunities to shadow the leadership team and learn about their roles. Please pray that God will provide and sustain the leaders and prepare the hearts and minds of the youth.

Nick Attrill and Matthew Burns
CONVENER PYCC OPERATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE
CONVENER SUMMER CAMP 2025

Committee Work

This past year has involved some really difficult times. Sadly, we had to cancel our Winter Camp because we were unable to get the leaders we needed to run the camp safely. Some leaders have been on the brink of burn out, without a YCW, admin support and enough leaders to share the load. We also appointed a part time admin worker to help out with this large load being put especially on our young people, but she resigned after a couple of weeks, finding it too difficult to work without a YCW. There have been times that we have thought we might have to cancel all our camps because it is too much for volunteers to coordinate and administrate everything that is

involved. We have been between a rock and a hard place for much of the year. We can't employ a YCW because no one wanted the large role part time, and we couldn't employ an Admin Assistant because they had no one to work for/under.

But out of these difficulties there have been some real highs. With the help of Michael Ellison and the BIF, we met with Stephen Leslie as a consultant to help us to work through a way of funding a Full Time YCW (without needing to use the contested Allan Bequest) and a part time Admin Assistant. We are very grateful it seems we have come to an encouraging solution. We have been given the green light to advertise for a Full Time YCW, and at the time of writing this report, we have had many encouraging conversations with potential candidates for the role, and are interviewing soon. We are hopeful to bring a name to the Assembly this October. After a YCW is employed, we intend to advertise again for a Part Time Admin Assistant too. Praise God. This has been a long time coming.

Also, we are in the process of organising a strategy/ministry consultancy session with Andy Stevenson from YouthWorks NSW to help us to think through how we can best fulfil our purpose and duties as a committee to benefit the denomination as a whole. In addition, we have been developing Presbyterian Youth connections across the country, through Dave Phillips (PYNSW), the representative for the General Assembly of Australia (GAA), who we have met with and encouraged us, and so we are looking forward to developing these in the coming years.

Needs of the committee

As mentioned, we have a great need for a full time YCW to be able to continue providing encouraging, faithful and fruitful ministry to our next generation. As well, we need Admin support for the committee and various sub-committees, and to enable the YCW to work more effectively.

We also need sessions to partner with us in seeking to raise up the next generation of young leaders from within our churches, so that our youth and children can be encouraged and built up in the faith for the decades to come.

As we have largely focussed on the 'Y' of PYCC, in the future we are thinking through various ways in which we can better encourage and equip the 'C' all around the state. Please pray for us in this.

We know our needs are great, but our God is greater, and so we need your prayers calling on our Lord to bless us as he so richly desires. We are very hopeful to bring an encouraging report back to next year's Assembly, knowing our God is good and he can do it.

Youth and Children's Worker Proposed Appointment

The committee is excited to announce that after a long search over the past few years, it is ready to bring a name to the Assembly to appoint as the Youth and Children's Worker for the Presbyterian Youth and Children's Committee (PYCC).

After getting approval from the Board of Investment and Finance (BIF), the committee advertised for a full-time position through the PCV News Network, Presbyterian Theological College, Reformed Theological College, Christ College, Youthworks College, Queensland Theological College, Presbyterian Youth NSW, and also with specific individuals who might be interested in applying for the role. The committee

had good conversations with a number of potential applicants, but for many it was either not the right role for them, or it was not the right time. In the end the committee only received one formal application, from Nick Attrill, and then proceeded to interview him, with the assistance of Mrs Fiona Bligh at Safe Church on our interview panel. After being very impressed with his interview the committee contacted his referees, Rev Ben Johnson (Warrnambool PC) and Mrs Louise Griffiths (Croydon PC) who both indicated that he was a fantastic candidate for the position. In light of this, the interview committee unanimously recommended him to the PYCC, and subsequently the PYCC unanimously resolved to bring his name to the Assembly to be appointed to the role of Youth and Children's Worker.



Nick is a well-respected, gifted, academically astute, kind, trustworthy, above reproach and loyal servant of God and the committee is overjoyed to recommend to the Assembly his appointment to this role. The committee is excited at what the future holds for our denomination as we work together for the building up of youth and children in Jesus.

Budget Revision

As the financial situation of the committee has been revised in conversations with the BIF as a way of appointing a full time Youth and Children's Worker, the committee also requires approval for a revised budget, which has been prepared in assistance with Michael Ellison, and submitted to the BIF for approval.

Stephen Jones
CONVENER

SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE (Min 75)

Facing our present – the ten-year anniversary of Safe Church Unit

On 1 July 2014 the Safe Church Unit commenced and the systems, training, procedures, reporting and compliance requirements were established. The work of the committee has been to make sure that these continue to be developed, to ensure that the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (PCV) meets our legal duty of care to the children and vulnerable in our Church, as well as our other legal and insurance obligations.

Since Safe Church PCV commenced, children and youth ministries continue across the PCV, operating in a Safe Church compliant manner. Ministries to adults continue across the PCV, also operating in a Safe Church compliant manner. Consistent feedback from churches, families and courts of the church is highly positive and expresses appreciation that Safe Church PCV is in place and actively implemented in the Church.

Subsequent to the adoption of Safe Church PCV by the Assembly and the commencement of operations of the Safe Church Unit in 2014, a significant array of child safety laws and obligations have come into place in Victoria. In addition to this, the requirements of our insurer have grown in relation to sexual abuse insurance coverage. The PCV, like all religious organisations operating in Victoria that work with children now has a regulator for the provision of children's services, namely the Commission for Children and Young People.

Certain cases that have required special meetings of the Assembly demonstrate what can occur when there are no, or weak, child safety systems and procedures in place in the PCV. Such cases have also demonstrated what can occur when warnings of a person who is a risk to the safety of children are ignored by the courts of the church.

The current systems and procedures in place via Safe Church PCV are necessary for the PCV to continue to fulfil our legal duty of care, maintain sexual abuse insurance coverage and comply with the relevant child safety laws.

Facing our future

The Assembly can be confident that with Safe Church PCV in place as currently operating, that the Church is taking the right and necessary steps to protect children and the vulnerable from abuse in the Church, so that together the PCV can continue to preach the Gospel and fellowship together in our denomination.

Session Minutes and Safe Church

One of the lessons learnt via the operations of Safe Church PCV, and the historical matters that have resulted in civil suits against the Church, is that session minutes need to reflect who is working for the session – both paid and volunteer workers. This is especially necessary when seeking to establish who is working on behalf of the session for the purposes of a redress claim, legal or compliance enquiry or a civil suit against the PCV.

The committee believes that it is necessary for sessions to record in their minutes all the names of people who are appointed by the session to serve in their congregations. It may be that sessions are already undertaking recording such in their minutes.

To further assist the sessions in this, the committee will provide upon request a simple, straightforward guide for this process, to ensure that the paid and volunteer workers are documented clearly in session minutes.

The committee asks the presbyteries to be especially mindful of this need, at the annual examination of records (PCV Code Book 4.96 - Version 2024).

An identified risk to the PCV

The committee is concerned that the rules and policies of the PCV do not adequately protect those in the PCV against the following forms of conduct by officers (ministers, elders, deacons, employees, etc.) of the church in the course of their duties:

- Harassment and/or bullying of an employee or a minister;
- Failure to uphold decisions and/or policies of the Assembly;
- Public attacks against the decisions and/or policies of the Assembly and/or the reputation of the church;
- Conduct contrary to acceptable standards for an officer of the church.

The committee considers that the lack of a code of conduct or other rules applicable to officers of the church, creates significant risk to the PCV across a number of aspects of the operations of the church. We alert the Assembly to this identified risk and ask that the Assembly give attention to remedying this risk to the PCV. The committee recommends establishing an Ad Hoc Committee to examine this risk and to bring recommendations to the Assembly.

Committee Membership

The committee would like to acknowledge the work and commitment of Rev Brian Harvey. Mr Harvey has completed his service on the committee. Mr Harvey has served on the committee, the Panel of Reference, and as the Safe Church Unit Supervisor, and has served for over a decade in the PCV in Safe Church. Mr Harvey's contribution has been extremely significant and valuable. We are very grateful for his commitment and dedication.

Dr Rosemary Fethers has now joined the committee and the committee is very grateful for her willingness to serve.

Rev David Brown has rejoined the committee, bringing to the committee his experience gained in his previous term.

National Redress Scheme Claims

At the time of writing, the PCV has received two new claims and these are in process.

Safe Church enquiries and concerns

The committee reminds members of the Assembly of the importance of contacting the Safe Church Unit in regards to any safe church matters. This is essential as part of our continued work and efforts to protect children and vulnerable people from abuse in the PCV.

An identified need for the PCV

The committee has identified the need for an additional part time worker to assist the Safe Church Facilitator. This is to meet the current workload of the Facilitator and to ensure that there is always a person available to receive reports and concerns when the Facilitator is on leave or otherwise unavailable.

Safe Church Compliance and Training

Safe Church compliance continues to be high across the PCV and the committee thanks the Safe Church Representatives and the sessions of each church and PCV organisation for this. Fourteen Safe Church Training days have been offered across the PCV in 2024 and attendance levels have been excellent. In particular, the committee thanks presbyteries for their support and commitment in ensuring that training is completed as required across the PCV. This has been of great help to the work of the committee.

David Brown
CONVENER

SELECTION COMMITTEE (Min 65)

Your committee has continued to do its work behind the scenes. We endeavour to make decisions in a timely manner to enable other committees to engage in the work with which they have been charged. The current members are John Angelico, Kyung Ee, Peter Orchard, Ben Palmer, Barry Porter, Jesse Walz and Adam Humphries.

John Angelico will be retiring at Assembly after nine years on the committee and Adam Humphries (convener) will be resigning from the committee with Rev Robert White stepping in to take over as convener.

Committee member numbering system

Here is a reminder of how our numbering system works. Generally, each year a third of a committee's membership is required to retire,³⁴ 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,³⁵ 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,³⁶ which means they will sometimes have different square-bracketed numbers next to their name. As an example, someone with these numbers – **RT 2025: Rev A Minister [2030]** – would need to be renominated at the 2025 General Assembly and must end their service on the committee at the 2030 General Assembly.

It is also worth noting that when someone is appointed to fill a vacancy, they will typically 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.

Online database of committee membership

The online database continues to be a wonderful tool for keeping track of committee memberships. All committee conveners have been given access to view the database and to make comments. These comments can then be reviewed by the Selection Committee and appropriate action taken. The Clerk's office also has access to view and add comments which has already improved accuracy of records.

Filling vacancies

We remind the Assembly and particularly committee conveners that the conveners must notify the Selection Committee if a vacancy arises on their committee. A person can only fill that vacancy and begin serving once the Selection Committee has appointed them or they are appointed by the Assembly.

Making additional nominations to GAV committees

For Assembly, there are two ways to make nominations in addition to those nominations brought forward by the Committee as listed below. These are spelt out in our regulations (3b and 3c). The first is nomination from a committee not later than ten days prior to the day of the opening service of the Assembly, which for this year will be Friday 27 September. With the approval of our committee, this nomination will generally be put forward in a supplementary report. The second is nomination from a committee or any member of the Assembly not later than noon on Tuesday of the Assembly, which for this year will be Tuesday 8 October. Such a nomination will be voted on by a ballot on the Wednesday of Assembly. Both types of nomination need

³⁴ PCV Code 5.25.3. Note, the BIF operates on five year terms.

³⁵ PCV Code 5.25.1. Note, BIF members serve for ten years.

³⁶ PCV Code 5.24.1.

to be in the hands of the Selection Committee convener in writing (we consider email to be sufficient).

Nominations for GAA Moderator

The Selection Committee received two nominations from presbyteries for Moderator-General. One nominee has subsequently withdrawn his name, leaving Rev Phil Case (Retired minister, Queensland) as the sole nominee. He has provided written consent.

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 (GAA Code chapter 10, regulation 11.1.). 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.

1. **Ministers:** Rev Philip Burns, Rev Matt Cole, Rev Martin de Pyle, Rev David Hann, Rev Bagoes Seta.
2. **Elders:** Mr Tom Cunneen, Mr Trevor McKeeman, Mr Anton Zirngast.

The elders can all be appointed but a ballot will be conducted to determine which three ministers will serve on the committee.

Updates about specific committees

The committee was tasked with appointing members to an *ad hoc* PCV Internet Presence Committee but have only found two people so far. Obviously that committee will not be reporting to the Assembly this year. If anyone has suggestions of names or is interested in joining, please let me know, noting that we would especially like to appoint some women to the committee.

Dennis Wright has served on the Theological Education Committee for nine years and is required to retire for at least a year. However, the TEC has requested that his term be extended for one more year for the sake of stability during a time of change. Rule 5.25.2 says that '*the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the committee concerned, with the concurrence of the Selection Committee, may extend this service for a specified period.*' The Selection Committee concurs with the TEC's request.

Nominations

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.

GAV APPOINTMENTS

Appeals Commission

[Moderator, a past-moderator (not the immediate-past), presbytery clerks and parity members]

Flinders: Rev B Peatman (clerk), Mr Arnis Putnins (parity)

Geelong: Rev R White (clerk), Mr B Stasse (parity)
Gippsland: Rev G Stephens (clerk), Mr T Guilford (parity)
Maroondah: Rev M Tonkin (alt), Mr C Flynn (parity)
Melbourne East: Mr K Childs (clerk), Rev B Nelson (parity)
Melbourne North: Rev C LePage (alt), Mr T Cunneen (parity)
Melbourne West: Rev A Humphries (alt), Mr D Wright (parity)
North East Victoria: Rev K Ee (alt), Mr G Dunstan (parity)
North Western Victoria: Rev R Grinter (alt), Mr R Smith (parity)
South West Victoria: Rev I Leach (clerk), Mr T Fleming (parity)
Western Victoria: Rev R Duncanson (clerk), Mr S McKerrow (parity)
Past-Moderator: Vacancy.
Chairman: Moderator

Archives Committee

[5 Members plus *ex officio* the Assembly Clerk (convener) and the PCV Archivist]

RT 2025: Rev J Wilson [2032], Mrs C Palmer [2032].

RT 2026: Rev B Nelson [2032].

RT 2027: Vacant, Mrs F Bligh [2032].

Convener: Rev C Garrett.

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 Committee (Victoria)

[12 Members - 10 nominated by GAV, 2 nominated by PWMU, all appointed by the Assembly]

RT 2025: Rev J Mestry [2028], Miss M Price [2031], Mrs W Moody [2025], Mrs D Brownley [2031].

RT 2026: Rev R Waterhouse [2026], Rev K Bell [2031], Mr C Griffioen [2033].

RT 2027: Mrs L Ellis [2025], Rev M Campbell [2031], Rev D Schulz [2026].

PWMU: Miss R Crocker [2032], Mrs R Brown [2033].

Convener: Rev D Schulz [2026].

Ballot Committee

[Appointed by each Assembly or Commission]

Board of Investment & Finance

[10 Members]

RT 2025: Mr M Gibson [2030], Mr D Wright [2030].

RT 2026: Mr R Walley [2032], Mr J Bligh [2026].

RT 2027: Rev G Wentworth [2032], Mr A Foster [2027].

RT 2028: Mr E De Zilwa [2028], Mr D Graham [2028].

RT 2029: Mr J Walter [2029], Vacant.

Chairman: [Appointed annually by the board]

Building & Property Committee

[3 Members]

RT 2025: Mr C Weir [2033].

RT 2026: Mr P Thomas [2031].

RT 2027: Mr R Kop [2027].

Convener: Mr R Kop [2026].

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 2025: Vacant.

RT 2026: Mr R Herweynen [2031], Vacant.

RT 2027: Rev B Cummins [2030].

Convener: Rev B Cummins [2027].

Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act Committee

[4 members, including convener, plus *ex officio* the Moderator, the Assembly Clerk, the Convener of the Church and Nation Committee]

RT 2025: Rev D Elliott [2031].

RT 2026: Rev D Middleton [2033].

RT 2027: Rev W McArdle [2031], Rev P Phillips [2031].

Convener: Rev P Phillips [2030].

Church & Nation Committee

[10 Members]

RT 2025: Rev M Jensen [2030], Rev C Duke [2025], Mrs J McHardy [2027].

RT 2026: Assoc Prof B Saunders [2031], Mr P Stanton [2029], Vacant.

RT 2027: Rev T Archer [2033], Vacant, Vacant, Mr I Waller [2029].

Convener: Rev C Duke [2025].

Church Planting Committee

[7 Members]

RT 2025: Mrs A Grinter [2031], Vacant.

RT 2026: Mrs T Kelada [2031], Rev L McSeveny [2030], Vacant.

RT 2027: Rev P Campbell [2031], Rev B Porter [2033].

Convener: Rev P Campbell [2031].

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 2025: Rev P Mercer [2032].

RT 2026: Rev B Peatman [2028], Mr K Childs [2028].

RT 2027: Rev R White [2028].

Convener: Rev P Mercer [2026].

Code and General Administration Committee

[3 Members, plus *ex officio* the Clerks of Assembly (Clerk is Convener), Business Convener, Procurator, Law Agent, Chairman of Trusts Corporation (or a minister or elder in his place)]

RT 2025: Rev P Burns [2032].

RT 2026: Vacant.
RT 2027: Mr D Wright [2032].
Convener: Rev C Garrett.

Conciliation Committee

[6 Members: 3 Ministers and 3 Elders, from at least four presbyteries]
RT 2025: Mr P Jellis [2032], Mr A Kerr [2033].
RT 2026: Vacant, Vacant.
RT 2027: Rev Dr K Hood [2029], Rev D Martin [2029].
Convener: Rev P Mercer.

Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee

[3 Members, *ex officio* all ADF Chaplains serving in Victoria]
RT 2025: Rev P Lee [2031].
RT 2026: Mr C Perry [2030].
RT 2027: Rev B Porter [2033].
Convener: Rev M Tegart [2031].

Exit Student Committee

[Membership *ex officio*]
Convener: MDC Convener (or MDC appointed representative)

Health & Community Chaplaincy Committee

[10 Members]
RT 2025: Mrs R O'Brien [2026], Mrs C LePage [2031], Vacant.
RT 2026: Mrs L Campbell [2030], Mrs G Dickinson [2033], Rev D Dixon [2026].
RT 2027: Mrs J Martin [2028], Rev Dr K Hood [2027], Dr J Neil [2031], Vacant.
Convener: Rev D Dixon [2026].

Maintenance of the Ministry Committee

[5 Members]
RT 2025: Vacant, Mr C Morrow [2031].
RT 2026: Vacant.
RT 2027: Mr A Putnins [2031], Rev G Wentworth [2032].
Convener: Mr C Morrow [2029].

METRO Committee

[8 Members]
RT 2025: Rev C LePage [2030], Vacant.
RT 2026: Rev T McIntosh [2032], Mr A May [2027], Rev L Brownley [2026].
RT 2027: Mrs J Arundell [2030], Mr A Liew [2032], Mr S Denness [2030].
Convener: Rev C LePage [2029].

Ministry Development Committee

[7 Members]
RT 2025: Rev S Withers [2025], Mr I Bramley [2027].
RT 2026: Rev D Middleton [2029], Mr R Kop [2029], Rev G Stephens [2030].
RT 2027: Rev O Blythe [2033], Rev R Grinter [2031].
Convener: Rev S Withers [2025].

Panel of Discipline Assessors

[12 members, appointed by the Code and General Administration Committee; nominations permitted from presbyteries]
Rev R Waterhouse, Rev K Brown, Rev R White, Rev G Stephens, Rev P Court, Rev P Orchard, Rev T Fishwick, Rev I Leach, Rev G Nicholson, Rev K Bell, Vacant, Vacant.

Presbyterian Youth and Children's Committee

[7 Members]

RT 2025: Rev S Jones [2033], Mr I Jones [2030].

RT 2026: Mr N Atrill [2032], Rev B Seta [2030], Miss E Roberts [2032].

RT 2027: Rev C Griffiths [2027], Mrs M Denness [2031].

Convener: Rev S Jones [2029].

Safe Church Committee

[6 Members]

RT 2025: Rev D Brown [2032], Rev B Cummins [2032].

RT 2026: Mrs H Thomas [2031], Mrs L Griffiths [2030].

RT 2027: Mr G Hui [2026], Dr R Fethers [2033].

Convener: Rev D Brown [2031].

Selection Committee

[Nominated by the Code and General Administration Committee]

Social Services Committee

[7 Members]

RT 2025: Mr D Conradi [2025], Mrs C Cunneen [2031].

RT 2026: Mrs J Pilgrim [2028], Vacant, Vacant.

RT 2027: Rev W McArdle [2030], Rev S Wesley [2031].

Convener: Mrs J Pilgrim [2028].

State News Committee

[5 Members: At least 2 Ministers]

RT 2025: Mr P Betts [2029], Mr A Zirngast [2032].

RT 2026: Mr R Paix [2031], Vacant.

RT 2027: Rev S McDonald [2027].

Convener: Rev S McDonald [2026].

Theological Education Committee

[10 Members, *ex officio* the College Principal and another member of faculty]

RT 2025: Rev R White [2028], Mrs J McHardy [2026], Vacant.

RT 2026: Rev J Born [2030], Rev G Nicholson [2025], Rev D Martin [2032].

RT 2027: Mr D Wright [2025], Rev K Maxwell [2026], Rev D Hann [2032], Vacant.

Convener: Rev K Maxwell [2026].

Women's Ministries Victoria Committee

[7 Members, at least two of whom are members of the assembly]

RT 2025: Mrs S McDonald [2030], Rev R Grinter [2029].

RT 2026: Mrs C Otten [2031], Rev B Johnson [2029], Mrs ST Yap [2029].

RT 2027: Mrs N Horman [2031], Mrs A Ludas [2032].

Convener: Rev B Johnson [2027].

GAA APPOINTMENTS

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, Rev P Hastie

Ministers Alternate: Rev P Court, Rev B Harvey, Vacant

Elders: Mr P Betts, Mr C Morrow, Mr D Wright

Elders Alternate: Mr T Guilford, Mr S Harris, Vacant

ex officio: Rev C Garrett, Rev Dr A Harman, Rev Dr CR Thomas, Rev Dr JP Wilson

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 S Wesley

PWMU Cook Book Committee

[3 PCV, 1 PWMU + Convener (alternates between PCV & UCA Victoria/Tasmania)]

PWMU: Mrs R Brown

GAV: Mr J Angelico, Mrs D Cutler, Mrs G McKenzie

Convener: Rev P Phillips (PCV)

St Andrew's Foundation (ABN 26 539 374 087)

Mr I Bramley, Dr B Ellis, Mrs L Walley.

It has been a pleasure to serve as convener of this committee and to draw upon the support and wisdom of the committee members.

Adam Humphries
CONVENER

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE (Min 88)

This year the Social Services Committee (SSC) has continued to focus all efforts on the application of the trust funds.

Currently the SSC administers four (4) trusts:

1. **Thomas Hall Trust** – for the benefit of children living in residential services
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.

A total of 87 persons in need have been supported during the financial year 2023/2024.

The Trust Disbursements for the Financial Year 2023/2024 are as follows:

Name of Trust	Description	Amount
Douglas Family Trust	School fees Second Semester 2024 for [REDACTED]	\$8,365.36
Challenger Trust	PYV summer camp January 2024 for 44 children	\$8,565.00
	Bannockburn PC camp October 2024 for 39 children	\$3,360.00
Brocklesby 'Anna M White' Rest Home Trust	Epping PC Counselling	\$9,000.00
	Leigh PC Counselling	\$390.00
	Valley PC Counselling	\$2,100.00
	Total payments made for the financial year 2023/2024	\$31,780.36

The SSC continues to ensure the application of the trusts are in line with the terms of the trusts by encouraging those making applications to read, understand, and then apply accordingly (these are available on the SSC Website). This means providing specific details in accordance with Trust Corporation requests. It is hoped that by doing so there is a clear understanding of the application of the trusts by all concerned.

The SSC reiterates that unless those making applications to SSC provide such specific details within the initial application the process will be delay until such details are provided.

The members of the committee are Jenny Pilgrim (Convener), Rev Wayne McArdle (secretary), Tom Cunneen (treasurer), Rev Surendra Wesley and Christine Cunneen.

It is with great regret that that Dennis Conradi retired from the SSC on 14 May 2024. Dennis has served on the committee for ten years and his knowledge and support will be greatly missed. The SSC are praying for two new members to join the committee who feel a calling to help those in need.

The dedication of the members of the SSC is greatly appreciated and I would like to thank the members for their support.

Jenny Pilgrim
CONVENER

SPECIAL JUDICIAL COMMITTEE REPORT (Min 41)

The Special Judicial Committee (SJC) reports as authorised by rule 5.55(c) that at the time of writing six petitions have been submitted in accordance with rule 5.54.2 for the 2024 General Assembly to consider.

A seventh petition was submitted after the 30 days' notice requirement of rule 5.54.2. The SJC recommends that in this particular case the Assembly waive the requirement.

PETITION 1: Presbytery of Melbourne East re Deaf Special Interest Congregation

The presbytery brings this request to agree to the final dissolution of the congregation to the Assembly under rule 4.69.5(b). The required 12-month period since authorised public worship has elapsed. The Assembly is entitled to consider this request.

PETITION 2: Presbytery of North East Victoria re Tallygaroopna and Numurkah

The presbytery brings this request to agree to the final dissolution of two congregations within the same charge to the Assembly under rule 4.69.5(b). The required 12-month period since authorised public worship has elapsed in each case. The Assembly is entitled to consider this request. The presbytery also requests that following any final dissolution of congregations, properties associated with the former congregations be sold for the purposes stated in the petition.

PETITION 3: Presbytery of North East Victoria re Thoona

The presbytery brings this request to agree to the final dissolution of the congregation to the Assembly under rule 4.69.5(b). The required 12-month period since authorised public worship has not yet elapsed. The Assembly is entitled to consider this request bearing in mind that any determination will be subject to the 12-month requirement being met. The presbytery also requests that following any final dissolution, that properties associated with the former congregation be sold for the purposes stated in the petition.

PETITION 4: Melton Congregation re Sale of Manse

The congregation petitions for the Assembly to authorise the sale of the Melton Manse for the purposes outlined in the petition. The Assembly is entitled to consider the request noting that more than two-thirds of the congregation approved the sale and presbytery has also given its approval.

PETITION 5: West Footscray re Purchase of New Property by means of Property Exchange

The congregation petitions for the Assembly to authorise the sale of a property associated with the West Footscray congregation for the purposes outlined in the petition. The Assembly is entitled to consider the request noting that more than two-thirds of the congregation approved the sale and presbytery has also given its approval.

PETITION 6: Morag Zwartz re Change or Suppression Response

The Assembly is approached by way of petition as 'no other constitutional means is open' to the petitioner by which she is able bring her case to the Assembly.

PETITION 7: Presbytery of Maroondah re Seat of Presbytery for KB Lee

The presbytery brings this request to the Assembly under rule 4.2(k). Provided the 30 days' notice requirement is waived, the Assembly is free to consider the petition.

Cameron Garrett
CONVENER

STATE NEWS COMMITTEE (Min 89)

This year, the State News Committee has published three editions of *Fellow Workers* to inform and encourage the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

Editions

The committee has received articles from congregations and members in the presbyteries of Flinders, Gippsland, Maroondah, South West Victoria, and Western Victoria. Other pieces have been published from Australian Presbyterian World Mission, the Church Planting Committee, Presbyterian Inland Mission, the PCV Archives, the Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union, the Presbyterian Theological College, and Women's Ministries Victoria.

The committee encourages presbyteries and committees with news to share to submit articles for publication. News items, book reviews, ministry moves, and suggestions for people to interview are what makes *Fellow Workers* such a blessing to the wider church.

Circulation numbers continue to be strong. Since our last report, the number of email subscriptions has grown by just 1 to 207. Printed editions circulated to individuals and churches are steady at 700.

There is no direct cost to your church to receive *Fellow Workers*. The committee encourages subscriptions at www.pcv.org.au/committees/fellow-workers/

Privacy and Archives

An online archive of editions of *Fellow Workers* back to 2004 has been maintained with assistance from Rev Cameron Garrett. Over those two decades, privacy policies have changed. It is not always clear whether permission was given for early editions to be freely available online. So, the committee is reviewing its collection and archiving practices with assistance from the PCV Privacy Officer to ensure that contributions to future editions have a clear authorisation for publication.

We intend to seek assistance from the PCV Archives to allow past editions continue to be available and will also be preserved for historic interest.

Committee Membership

The committee continues to be ably assisted by Sam Jensen and the team at Virtual Church Assist for all administrative tasks, and Malina Mumbi at Hello Church Graphic Design. This allows the committee to focus the content of each edition and the overall direction of the magazine.

Of the five spots on the committee, four are presently filled by Rev Stephen McDonald and elders Rob Paix, Phil Betts, and Tony Zirngast. If you are aware of a person within the church who would be of assistance to the committee, we would value your recommendation for filling the remaining vacancy. It's an excellent opportunity to serve the wider church with thought-provoking articles and encouraging news.

The committee expresses its thanks for the partnership of many fellow workers who share in our work.

Stephen McDonald
CONVENER

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Min 103)

Introduction

The Theological Education Committee (TEC) is pleased to report that our Lord continues to provide for the work of the Presbyterian Theological College (PTC). Despite the various difficulties faced over the past year, all those associated with the college can testify to God's sustaining grace. The committee gives thanks for the outstanding effort and service of the college staff and faculty and their dedication to preparing men and women for gospel service and pastoral ministry. The committee is particularly thankful for the capable leadership of the Principal, Rev Peter Hastie. The committee remains humbled by the responsibilities of preparing gifted men and women for gospel service. We give thanks to our triumphant Lord, who gives gifted individuals to the church, entrusting them with the gospel, and leads them to train at PTC for the advancement of the kingdom of heaven.

Committee Membership and Staff

The last 12 months has seen committee membership stable. We give thanks for the continued service of Rev Robert White. The addition of Rev Dave Martin has broadened the perspective of the committee, and we thank Dave for his insight and willingness to serve. This year sees the retirement of Rev Stephen Jones, who has taken on other responsibilities in the denomination. We thank Stephen for his many years of faithful service and valued contributions. The committee is prayerfully seeking suitable replacements that can add to the depth and experience of the current committee. Fulfilling the mandate to train men for pastoral ministry while governing a tertiary education institution and satisfying the requirements of various oversight bodies remains challenging and complex. As convener I remain grateful for the contribution and fellowship of each member of the committee, for the prayers of the church, for the dedication of the principal, and the faithfulness of the faculty, staff and student body representatives. Elder Dennis Wright remains the committee Treasurer. The committee gives thanks for Dennis' financial leadership in the affairs of the college and the dedicated support and assistance of the Registrar, Mr Ben Palmer. The committee thanks Ms Rosemary Chandra for her dedication to the administration of the office, and her support of the committee. I am very grateful for Rosemary's assistance in my role as convener. The committee is very thankful for the hard work the registrar, Ben Palmer in ensuring the college has met and maintained all its' compliance obligations. The committee also appreciates the hard work of the Librarian, Mr Michael Smith, particularly as part of the library has been moved to 690 Elgar Rd. We are blessed to have the services of Ben, Rosemary, and Michael and give thanks for our Lord's provision for the needs of the college this year.

Faculty

The committee expresses its appreciation to the principal Rev Peter Hastie for his willingness to serve an additional year as Principal and particularly for his pastoral care of the faculty and staff through a difficult situation. Additionally, the committee extends its thanks to Mrs Sue Hastie for supporting Peter over the past year. The committee also deeply appreciates the many contributions of Rev Ben Nelson and the very heavy workload that he faithfully fulfilled last year. Again, we extend our thanks to Ben's wife, Jen, and family for their support. The commencement of 2024 saw Rev Dr Felix Chung and Rev Dr John Wilson return to the faculty of PTC. The committee thanks them both for their willingness to serve the college again. The committee thanks Dr Chung for his work in ensuring the college met and complied with all regulations of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and the

Australian College of Theology (ACT). The college is, once again, fully compliant. The committee also thanks Dr Wilson for his initiative and personal contribution to the search for a new principal. We also thank him for strengthening our links with likeminded reformed seminaries and denominations in North America. The committee gives thanks to God that the Rev Dr Jared Hood has been able to return to fulltime work. We give thanks that the Lord has brought Jared, Cassie and the wider family through a great trial. This year has also seen the appointment of the Rev Martin Pakula and Rev Dr Karl Hood as permanent part-time faculty members. Despite these appointments PTC remains dependant on adjunct lecturers to support the teaching program. The committee gives thanks to God for those who are willing to serve him in this way

Principal Appointment

With the retirement of the Rev Peter Hastie from the Faculty, the TEC has been seeking a suitable replacement for Principal. The committee proceeded to advertise these positions widely across the Australia and via various suitable job sites internationally. The committee received a limited number of applications both from Australia and internationally. The committee resolved to extend the closing date for applications until 30 July 2024. During this time the committee, through the initiative and assistance of Rev Dr John Wilson contacted various reformed organisations in the USA for assistance in filling this position. This extension and international contact produced several more applications. A subcommittee reviewed all applications and produced a short list of three applicants. Two applicants from Australia and one from the USA all of whom were contacted for interview. One applicant withdrew from the process and of the two remaining (one in Australia, and one in the USA) the TEC decided to interview the local applicant first. On Friday 16 August 2024, six members of the TEC including the faculty representative held an extensive and wide-ranging interview and unanimously resolved to recommend this applicant to the whole committee as the TEC's preferred candidate for Principal of PTC. The TEC unanimously resolved to recommend to the PCV the appointment of Rev Dr Jared Hood for the position of Principal of PTC. This recommendation also has the unanimous support of the PTC faculty and staff.

Lecturer in New Testament

The appointment of Rev Ben Nelson to the position of Lecturer in New Testament expires in December 2024. Ben has demonstrated himself to be a very good lecturer in New Testament Studies with a growing mastery of this field. Ben has almost completed his PhD despite the demanding work required of him this past year. Ben brings a strong pastoral approach to his ministry at PTC and has demonstrated himself to be an excellent leader in the college community. The TEC unanimously recommends that Rev Ben Nelson be appointed to the position of Lecturer in New Testament at PTC.

A Fifth Fulltime Lecturer

In 2023 the TEC reported that PTC had failed to meet all its ongoing compliance requirements for ACT. The administrative workload to ensure that the college remains compliant has increased significantly in recent years. The capacity of the college to maintain high educational standards and fulfill the administrative compliance requirements is a function of the number of the faculty and staff. The capacity to meet the educational and administrative compliance requirements exceeds the capacity of the four fulltime faculty members. This situation is exacerbated when faculty members take sabbatical leave, effectively reducing the faculty to three fulltime faculty members

(a situation that occurs more than half (57%) of the time). This situation can quickly worsen when staff or faculty need extended leave. Any reduction in the number of faculty significantly increases the workload of the remaining faculty members, resulting in unreasonable workloads and stress on them and their families. In 2023 the educational and administrative compliance requirements significantly exceeded the capacity of the available faculty, and some matters were not completed on time. The TEC has formed the view that ensuring the requirements for both high-quality theological education and meeting the administrative compliance requirements, while ensuring the wellbeing of the staff and faculty members, requires the employment of a fifth fulltime lecturer.

Not only is the employment of a fifth fulltime lecturer necessary, it is also financially achievable. Over the last 6 years PTC has produced an average annual surplus on general operations of \$132,000 per year. This surplus has been made possible through the prudent management of the college's finances and an increase in student numbers. This surplus has been returned to the committee's common fund accounts. This surplus means that the TEC could fund the employment of a fifth fulltime lecturer from its existing funding. However, the TEC budget is vulnerable to a reduction in enrolments. Although the TEC and the college are working to broaden the courses offered at PTC and increase enrolments the committee cannot guarantee future student enrolments. Consequently, the committee is requesting the financial support of the General Assembly to ensure that the employment of a fifth fulltime lecturer is fully funded and secure. This could be secured by transfer of approximately 2 million dollars from General Assembly funds to the TEC. During the last 5 years the PCV General Assembly has accumulated a surplus on general operation expenditure of more than 7 million dollars. The TEC is requesting that the General Assembly redeploy some of this accumulated surplus to fully fund the position of a fifth lecturer at PTC.

Governance

The transition of the Australian College of Theology (ACT) to a standalone entity (independent from the Anglican Church) has been fully completed. The ACT board and CEO, James Dalziel, continues to pursue the status of "Australian University" for the ACT. The TEC maintains the view that university status for the ACT will be advantageous for the college, however this view is not universally held across the consortium. University status will result in a greater requirement for published research work. Published research work develops and deepens the expertise of faculty members. The committee is grappling with how faculty members can be adequately resourced to publish their research.

In partnership with the Archive Committee, 690 Elgar Rd, Box Hill North has been cleaned up and made usable again. The TEC thanks the Archive Committee for their initiative and partnership. PTC is using a portion of 690 Elgar Rd as an overflow area for the library. We give thanks to the students and staff that have worked diligently to make this partnership a practical reality. We continue to give thanks for the ongoing support of the Library Fundraising Committee. Ultimately a new library is the only satisfactory solution to meet the needs of an expanding college library.

Student Body

The TEC remains committed to fulfilling the task of equipping graduates to think theologically and to preach and pastor biblically. Developing this skill set is foundational to all ministry within the church of Christ. The TEC is also pleased to report that student enrolments continue to increase, and the college continues to

perform at or above average in the ACT student engagement surveys. The committee thanks the faculty, adjunct lecturers, support staff and students for their hard work and academic performance.

The student body participate in the grounds, garden and building maintenance program. The student body has also been very active preparing the newly leased buildings and grounds in partnership with the Archive Committee. The TEC thanks all those students (past and present) who have been involved in this work.

Appointment of Lecturer in Theological Studies

With the retirement of the Principal, the Rev Peter Hastie from the leadership and faculty of the Presbyterian Theological College (PTC) the Theological Committee (TEC) has been seeking a suitable replacement to lecture in the field of Theological Studies.

At an Urgent meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria held in August 2024 the committee proposed a position description to meet the ongoing lecturing needs of the college in this field. The position description of Lecturer in Theological Studies was approved. The Acting Principal and faculty proceeded to advertise this position widely across the Presbyterian Church of Australia, throughout the Australian College of Theology network and internationally.

Applications and Interview

The committee received several suitably qualified applications by the due date, a few unsuitable applications. Three suitably qualified applicants were shortlisted for interview and their curricula vitae circulated to members of the committee and faculty. Interviews were scheduled with each applicant. During the week prior to the scheduled interviews one applicant withdrew from the interview process. On the 13 September 2024 members of the TEC and PTC faculty interviewed the remaining applicants. As the whole committee was unable to be present, the recommendation of the interview committee was circulated by email to the full committee and approved. At the regular meeting of the TEC on 20 September 2024 the email decision was ratified. It was resolved to recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of Dr Seung-Joo (John) Lee to the position of the Lecturer in Theological Studies, at PTC, for a period of two years.

Appointments process

After the October Assembly, the committee may have an evangelism lecturer nomination that will need Assembly approval. The committee indicates that it may want to request an Urgent Assembly or approach the Commission of Assembly. Coming into 2025, there may be a need to revise the position description for what is currently the Lecturer in Church History and Practical Theology, and again, the committee would appreciate having the authority to approach the Commission of Assembly.

Lecturer in Biblical Counselling

The May Urgent Assembly approved a job description for a 0.4 FTE Lecturer in Biblical Counselling. The remuneration included 'six months of 0.2 FTE paid study leave during each fourth and each seventh year of employment or twelve months of 0.4 FTE paid study leave during each seventh year of employment'. TEC did not intend that the study leave for the six-month period be halved to 0.2 FTE and asks the Assembly to approve it at 0.4 FTE.

Committee membership

The tertiary education sector is becoming more complex, the requirements of TEQSA are becoming more onerous, and the ACT expects that the governance boards of the institutions in the consortium become increasingly professional. To some extent, TEC as PTC's governance board needs to follow the standard practices of an Australian educational institution governance board and reflect the typical membership of such a board. Currently, TEC membership is predominantly drawn from a pool of men whose primary qualification is that they are Presbyterian ministers. This accomplishes a major goal of the Assembly, ensuring that the College remains attuned to the Assembly. Still, TEC believes that there is room to move so that the Committee further reflects what a governance board typically looks like.

TEC has begun to think through what the membership would ideally look like and how the selection process could better function. At the very least, should the Committee have more of a balance between ministers and elders, but should it more intentionally seek membership from those with business, finance, legal, and educational experience? How could it best attract such members, should positions be advertised, do applicants need to be interviewed before being recommended to the Selection Committee, and does there need to be an induction process and governance training?

Taking such an approach would partially move the TEC away from being a standard Assembly committee, and there would need to be some consideration of how a new approach would dovetail with current selection processes. For example, the process by which a member can be appointed by a ballot during the Assembly week could be construed as presenting something of a risk to a properly construed governance board. A discussion needs to be had over whether more parameters need to be put around who is eligible for membership or how appointments are made.

At this stage, the committee simply wishes to advise the Assembly that it is considering these matters. The committee also notes that it currently has two vacancies and wishes to request that Assembly members allow those positions to remain open so that the committee can first conduct a policy review.

Closing Comments

The college has faced many challenges over the past year and has endured a brutal attack by the enemy. The TEC, the faculty and staff of the college have endured by the goodness and grace of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus. We thank the wider PCV for their support and prayers. Give thanks with us for all God's goodness. Pray that the Lord will provide all our needs, sustain the committee and college in his service and equip us to meet the demands of the coming year.

Kevin Maxwell
CONVENER

FACULTY REPORT

The faculty is focused on training increasing numbers of students for personal spiritual growth and ministry fruitfulness, and it does this from the position of being firmly rooted in Scripture and the Reformed theological tradition.

The faculty has various bodies to which it reports:

- the Australian College of Theology (ACT), and the ACT itself to TEQSA, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency of the Federal Government;
- the College Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia;
- the Theological Education Committee (TEC), through the Principal; and
- 'annually to the General Assembly by means of an addendum to the committee [TEC] report' (TEC regulation 10).

Retiring Principal

The faculty wishes to thank its retiring Principal, Rev Peter Hastie, for 13 years of service at PTC. Peter has laboured tirelessly for the College, has promoted the College to the denomination and more widely afield, and is known for his pastoral concern for lecturers, staff, and students. He has lectured in theology (the units now coded TH101–104), as well as worship, spiritual formation, apologetics, and the field education units. He has often led and participated in the annual College missions and has regularly provided individual feedback to candidates who preach in the College's morning worship times. An appropriate way for the Assembly to express its thanks to Peter is being arranged, and the faculty and staff had their own farewell lunch with him in late June. The faculty prays for abundant blessing for Peter and Sue in this new phase of their lives.

Key developments

2025 staffing

A primary concern of the faculty is that there be a full complement of lecturers for the 2025 academic year. It has become essential that this be a faculty of five, not the least so as not to place the registration of the College with the ACT consortium in danger. The faculty is grateful to the TEC and the Assembly for all they are doing to ensure that the faculty is properly resourced, including the approval of two job descriptions at the urgent Assembly of 7 August 2024.

It is hoped that various proposed appointments will be put to the Assembly in 2024 in sufficient time to ensure that the faculty is firmly established and able to move confidently into semester 1, 2025.

National Centre for Biblical Counselling

PTC's Biblical Counselling programme has attracted many students to the College, and students at other ACT colleges routinely enrol in these units. The programme has grown to the point that, in semester 1, 2024, it has been designated the 'National Centre for Biblical Counselling', a new website has been created for it, and a trademark application is underway. Under the leadership of Rev Dr Karl Hood, the Centre has a team of lecturers and trainers from around Australia and draws on material from CCEF Philadelphia. The Centre has a close relationship with the Melbourne East Christian Counselling Centre, which is based next door to the College. More information can be found at: centreforbiblicalcounselling.org.

Women's Support Worker

In July 2024, the faculty began considering the appointment of a Women's Support Worker. A primary issue is whether there is sufficient budget width to make an appointment. Discussions are ongoing.

Part-time lecturer appointments

The faculty is very pleased that Martin Pakula and Karl Hood are being brought on part-time. In July, the ACT again required the faculty to report on casualisation rates, which have been deemed to be significantly higher than what is desirable (implicitly permissible). It was pleasing to report to the ACT that PTC (faculty, TEC, and the Assembly) has listened and has taken a substantial step toward resolving the problem. The appointment of a fifth full-time lecturer would all but ensure that a report on casualisation will never have to be made again.

ACT consortium

The ACT remains determined to gain University status, having already attained the status of 'University College'. To secure this status, the ACT needs to demonstrate the commitment of its lecturers to research. The lecturers of the ACT are the lecturers of the consortium colleges, and hence, the ACT is very eager to ensure that PTC is producing research outputs at world-class and above level.

The faculty necessarily needs to live and breathe within the context of the consortium and so needs to engage with the ACT and meet its expectations. This is something of a challenge for an institution that is, at its core and by its DNA, a ministry training college. It requires that PTC and the Assembly adjust various expectations, particularly regarding faculty appointments. The faculty needs to be able to remain focused on ministry training, and lecturers need to have had significant pastoral experience, but a balance needs to be maintained so that the faculty overall can still meet research expectations. Also, with some limited room for flexibility, all faculty members will essentially need to have doctoral degrees or be demonstrably on that pathway.

Faculty and lecturer practice

Faculty meetings and prayer

The faculty routinely meets for prayer on Monday mornings and once a month for business.

Conference engagement

The faculty intends to be proactive about attendance and engagement with various external conferences and other meetings. Four lecturers attended the Church and Nation Committee colloquium in July. John Wilson and Karl Hood are planning to attend the January Engage Conference, and it is hoped that there will be a newly appointed Evangelism and Missions lecturer who will attend the 2025 Reach Conference. There are other conferences of an academic nature with which faculty members either can or must be involved.

Lecturers

The College website lists all lecturers and staff and their responsibilities: ptc.edu.au/staff. To find what units lecturers regularly teach, a lecturer's name can be entered in the search box at ptc.edu.au/units-list.

Rev Peter Hastie is on long service leave as of July 2024, prior to retirement. He serves as interim moderator at Kangaroo Ground and at Reservoir.

Rev Dr Jared Hood is the Acting Principal as of July 2024. He attended the annual ACT consortium conference in Sydney in June, along with Peter Hastie. He also attended the ACT Principals' Forum in August and the PCV Exit Students Committee in July, at which the one exit student for 2024 was assigned to his exit appointment. Jared is the Executive Editor of the academic journal *Reformed Theological Review* (rtrjournal.org), which in the last year has published issues focused on Zwingli and Faith in Paul, with articles from leading scholars in those fields. Planned issues include one on the Council of Nicaea (with Fred Sanders, Glenn Butner, Michael Haykin, and others) and another on J. I. Packer (with Mark Thompson, Gerald Bray, Mark Jones, Alister McGrath, and Carl Trueman).

Rev Ben Nelson is the Acting Academic Dean as of July 2024. He is continuing his PhD research with the ACT, which should be completed in early 2025. The thesis is on the early 16th-century reformer, Oecolampadius, and includes a translation from Latin of a previously untranslated commentary on John. Ben continues to serve on the ACT Coursework Committee, has responsibilities with the Presbytery of Melbourne East, and is providing pastoral support to the South Yarra congregation. He had sabbatical leave in semester 1, 2024.

Rev Dr John Wilson is the faculty secretary and pastoral dean. He serves as clerk of Melbourne North Presbytery and preaches in churches throughout the state and at his home church, Reservoir, which is currently vacant. John also serves on the Board of the World Reformed Fellowship and periodically assists the Presbyterian cause in Malawi and Zambia.

Rev Dr Felix Chung is the post-graduate coordinator and policies officer. The faculty is very grateful that Felix returned from retirement to serve PTC for 2024. This has ensured that PTC is able to satisfy consortium and government resourcing requirements, and Felix has strengthened the faculty with his experience, wisdom, and godliness.

Rev Martin Pakula has now transitioned from casual lecturing to a part-time appointment, teaching in biblical languages and some Old Testament units.

Rev Dr Karl Hood continues to forge ahead in developing the National Centre for Biblical Counselling. He has taken a break from his full lecture load in semester 2, 2024, to focus on his doctoral studies at Oxford.

Rev Andrew Vines oversaw the Supervised Learning Experience (or Supervised Field Education) program for candidates for several years until taking up a new ministry position in NSW. The faculty thanks Andrew for his very diligent and wise service. Rev Dr John Wilson is now responsible for the program.

Students

Student body

Whilst the numbers of students enrolled across the ACT consortium have been unstable in recent years, the trend at PTC, by God's grace, has been to have gradual increases in numbers. The Biblical Counselling program and the move into online delivery have contributed to these increases. This is reflected in the reduced enrolments in semester 2, 2024, which is because the biblical counselling lecturer has taken leave, and so most enrolments in that field have been deferred.

- Semester 1, 2024: 81 enrolments (30% full-time and 70% part-time).
- Semester 2, 2024: 66 enrolments (29% full-time and 70% part-time).

There is a 30% full-time and 70% part-time ratio. The ratio of male to female students is 64% male to 36% female; approximately 1.8 to 1 (2.7 to 1 in 2023).

Candidates for the ministry

Candidates for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, with their presbyteries and anticipated year of exit, are as follows:

Ryan Brightwell, Maroondah, 2024
 Aaron Maskell, Western Victoria, 2025
 Jordon O'Hara, Melbourne North, 2025
 Sam Semisi, Melbourne North, 2025
 Scott Thomas, Melbourne North, 2025
 Jason Wang, Maroondah, 2025
 Matthew (Chang Ho) Lee, Flinders, 2026
 Harrison Sawyer, Melbourne West, 2026
 Colin Spackman, Melbourne East, 2026
 Aditya Kuthalam, Melbourne East, 2027
 John (Seung-Joo) Lee, Melbourne East, 2027
 Jacob Martin, South West Victoria, 2027
 Solomon Perecharla, Geelong, 2027
 Leighton Rowe, Melbourne West, 2027
 Andrew Wort, Melbourne North, 2027

Reception of Ministers Committee applicants

There is one applicant through the Reception of Ministers Committee:

Ming Chen, Melbourne East, 2025

2023 exit students

Exiting candidates at the end of 2023, with their appointments, are as follows:

Mitchell Amoah, Frankson
 Stephen Denness, Leongatha
 Cameron Weir, Colac

Prayer

The faculty has confidence that the Lord will always provide for the ministry of His Church. Still, the Lord of the harvest calls His people to pray for the raising up of workers, and the PCV especially needs to be praying now in light of the increasing need for ministry in established and new works.

College community and events

Morning devotions

The regular preaching and worship times on Tuesday and Thursday mornings continue to be a source of encouragement and spiritual direction for staff and students. They also present the opportunity to link relevant PCV personnel into the College and connect them with candidates. For semester 2, CPC, MDC, and ESC personnel have been scheduled to be involved, and it is hoped that this involvement will continue in further years. Arrangements are also in place for the annual moderator's visit.

Women's Conference

The guest speaker at the 2023 Women's Conference was Janet Riley from Drummoyne Presbyterian Church, NSW. She spoke from Psalms 33 and 42 about 'Songs of the Heart'. There were 67 women in attendance.

The 2024 Women's Conference is planned for 9 November, with Joy Arundell as a guest speaker.

College Commencement and Conferral of Degrees

The guest speaker at the 2024 commencement service was Rev David Robertson, a former minister of St Peter's Free Church, Dundee, and now at Scots' Kirk Hamilton in Newcastle, NSW. The Dean of the ACT, Dr James Dalziel, and the PCV Moderator, Rev Ian Hutton, were in attendance to assist with the awarding of prizes and testamurs. Musicians from Donvale Presbyterian Church supported the congregational singing. The faculty is grateful to all who were involved and to the Scots' Church for the use of the Werner Brodbeck Hall and the Robert White Hall.

Ministry Conference

The speakers at the March 2024 Ministry Conference were Simon Manchester, John Wilson, Mark Powell, and Peter Barnes.

The 2025 Conference is tentatively set for 18–20 March.

James Dolezal conference

Dr James Dolezal, a noted Reformed theologian from Cairn University in Philadelphia, took an afternoon conference on 18 July. The focus was on God without parts and passions. There were 80–90 attendees, about half of whom were not Presbyterians, and it was very apparent that people's views of God were being reshaped and being brought into closer accord with Scripture and mainstream catholic (universal church) theology.

Men of God Conference

The 2024 Men of God conference was a very encouraging time. The Acting Principal gave a brief devotion, and Russ Grinter and Luke McSeveny were the main speakers. Approximately 90 men were in attendance. The event was primarily organised by Cameron and Annie Weir.

The 2025 Conference is set for 2 August.

David Briones lectures

Dr David Briones from Westminster Seminary, California, took the regular August intensive week, teaching on Philemon and Paul's theology of grace. He also led the Wednesday night open lecture on the topic of slavery in the New Testament, which was reasonably well-attended and thought-provoking. Ben Nelson was primarily responsible for arranging this.

2025 Scott Swain lectures

Dr Scott Swain is scheduled to deliver the August 2025 intensive week of lectures on a topic relating to the doctrine of God. Details are currently being arranged. Dr Swain is one of the foremost modern Reformed authors of the doctrine of the Trinity and is the President of Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando.

Open days and tours

College open days are set for 12 and 17 September. These allow interested people to come onsite and experience the College going about its normal activities. Guests can join regular lectures, attend chapel, meet with staff, seek academic advice, and join with staff and students for a provided morning tea or lunch. Those who cannot attend open days will be welcome to come on a tour at other times by arrangement with staff. Information is provided on the PTC website.

College Sunday

The College Sunday program continues to be very popular with ministers and congregations. It offers candidates a wider experience of the PCV and the experience of ministering in unfamiliar settings whilst also bringing congregations a greater understanding of the College and the opportunity to support the College.

Curriculum and training

Congregational Ministry

The faculty created a new unit called 'Congregational Ministry', which ran for the first time in semester 2, 2024. This is an introductory-level unit that focuses on the theory and aspects of the practice of ministry in congregations. Rev Dr John Wilson is the unit coordinator and main lecturer, and lectures drawing on specialised expertise will be contributed by Rev Darren Middleton, Andrew Vines, Richard Wilson, and Stuart Withers.

Cultural engagement

The faculty is seeking to reinvigorate the focus on ethics and philosophy and envisages the creation of two units in political philosophy and ethics or cultural engagement. A new unit application for a political philosophy unit was submitted to the ACT in August. This has been drawn up in consultation with Dr Simon Kennedy, and it is hoped that Simon will be able to teach the course in a one-week intensive in early 2025.

College mission

The December 2023 College mission took place in Freemantle and Mandurah, Western Australia. The 2024 mission is planned to be centred in congregations in the Presbytery of Melbourne West: Essendon, Clifton Hill, West Footscray, Williamstown, and Point Cook.

Ministry coach training

MDC representatives met with the Acting Principal to discuss the training of ministry coaches. The faculty sees that this could be valuable for the denomination and looks forward to this conversation being pursued.

Field placements

The Supervised Learning Experience or congregational field experience is a vital part of the training program for candidates. The faculty is grateful to all the ministers who take on students or contribute to the lecture tutorials. Those who have served include: Nello Barbieri, Jordan Born, Neil Chambers, Cam Griffiths, Peter Hastie, John Huynh, Paul Jang, Dave Martin, Luke McSeveny, Bill Medley, Ben Nelson, Andrew Vines, and John Wilson.

The program very intentionally requires that a candidate, in the final two years of his training, be placed in a congregation that is not his home congregation. Candidates and congregations sometimes wish to avoid this move, and the faculty acknowledges

that it can be hard for long-term relationships to be disrupted, but the purpose of the program is to train ministers for the Presbyterian Church of Australia, not for the one congregation. It would be helpful if sending congregations and presbyteries could prepare candidates for this shift.

Bookshop

Jessica Thomas maintains PTC Media's bookshop. The bookshop provides resources with a broad range of appeal, especially theological textbooks, bible study materials, children's books, and Christian literature by bestselling authors.

Thanks

Faculty is grateful to all those people who support the College, including donors and volunteers. The work of the College is ably overseen and assisted by the TEC and its convener, Kevin Maxwell, the Assembly Office, the General Manager, Michael Ellison, the Board of Investment and Finance, and the clerks, especially Cameron Garrett.

Jared Hood
ACTING PRINCIPAL

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES VICTORIA COMMITTEE (Min 29)

The Women's Ministries Victoria Committee exists to support and grow intentional gospel ministries by women, to and for women across PCV churches. The committee's goal is that women of the PCV would grow towards maturity in Christ, nurture, disciple and serve in their local churches and reach out to the community with the gospel.

The committee members are Natalie Horman, Alison Ludas (treasurer), Cheryl Otten, Sarah McDonald, Siew Teng Yap, Rev Russ Grinter (secretary) and Rev Ben Johnson (convener). The committee has met 12 times since the October 2023 Assembly.

The On the Road Conference 2024 - Discipleship

In 2024, at our On the Road conferences, we explored the topic of 'Discipleship'. Anna Harris from Ebenezer was our keynote speaker and did a superb job of unpacking 2 Timothy 1 and 2 to help women understand what it means to be a disciple-making-disciple.

After the talks, women participated in one of three elective workshops run by local leaders. '*Discipling New Believers*', run by Bec Walz in Bendigo, Suzy Vines in Reservoir and Natalie Horman in Geelong West. '*Everyday Discipleship*' run by our Women's Ministries Facilitator, Kathryn Gatt at all three locations. And '*Difficult Discipleship*', run by Aimee Grinter in Bendigo, Jean Williams in Reservoir, and Nicole Rolley in Geelong West.

The committee is so thankful for the hard work of many people that make On the Road a success. Many thanks to Esther Kerr, Sandra and Phillip Burns and their team who worked incredibly hard to put on a beautiful event at Bendigo Presbyterian, and to the Vines family and their team of helpers who did a wonderful job organising the Reservoir conference. At the time of writing, the committee has not yet held the Geelong West conference but is already impressed by the organisational skills of Jo McSeveny and her fabulous team.

The committee is planning a WMV State Conference to be held at 156 Collins St, Melbourne on Saturday 13 September 2025. The keynote speaker will be Jenny Salt, who will be opening up the book of Hosea to explore biblical theology through the topic of 'Relentless Love'. The committee is looking forward to women gathering from across the state for this wonderful day.

'Good Evenings' 2024

'Good Evenings' was developed as an online meeting space for women to be equipped and encouraged in women's ministry in the home, local church and community. The 'Good Evenings' program was designed to provide regular teaching by women for women on a range of topics related to Christian life and ministry and consists of a collection of some existing WMV talks, some new talks by the Women's Ministries Facilitator (WMF), Kathryn Gatt, and some online talks from The Gospel Coalition and Keswick Convention.

At the time of writing, 237 women were registered for this program. The evenings have included topics such as complementarianism, mentoring, and pastoral care.

There were up to 90 women connecting live, with an average of 85 further views of the teaching content after the event by women who were unable to join on Monday evenings.

The committee is very thankful to all the women who have worked to contribute to the 'Good Evenings' program, either by sharing a talk, helping to run the Zoom sessions, or simply participating in the discussion time together. It has been a rich time of teaching and fellowship together, and the committee was encouraged by positive feedback from a number of women.

'I wanted to say that I really appreciate the opportunity to engage with other Christian women in the Good Evenings programme. To receive good teaching and be encouraged in my walk with God.'

'Such an encouraging and well organised event on every level.'

'Please know that [Good Evenings has] made a difference. You have made a difference to some women who would have no way to attend a city conference. You have made a difference to some women who would never be able to hear speakers like this in person. You have made a difference to some people who are struggling. You have made a difference to me.'

Women's Ministry Training Day 2024

WMV has planned a training event on 19 October 2024, for women who are already serving in women's ministry in their church and for women who would like to start a women's ministry but need support and advice. 'Women's Ministry: Why it Matters, Where to Get Started, and How to Persevere'.

The goal is to provide practical steps for women when starting a new women's ministry; ensuring firm biblical foundations and focus on the precious truths of the gospel, as well as encouraging those who have already begun this ministry to further establish and keep persevering. Kathryn Gatt will be giving the keynote 'Word-filled Women's Ministry: Why it Matters'. This will be followed by two strand groups. Joy Arundel will lead 'Where to start' and Jan Martin will lead 'How to Persevere'. There will be time for small groups to plan and apply what they have learned as well as a panel discussion to share stories and experiences in women's ministry; ministry by women to women and related nurturing, serving and discipling spheres in the life of their local congregation and community. The committee is hoping for this to be an annual event.

Masterclasses in 2025

As a follow on to the 2024 'Good Evenings' program, in 2025, WMV will be offering two short masterclasses to be run in Autumn and Spring. The sessions will consist of teaching as well as discussion time to allow attendees to dig deeply into the topics.

In March, Amy Isham will host and teach 'Talking About Jesus', personal evangelism that's not awkward and in August, Michelle McIntosh will host and teach on 'Prayer'.

These courses will be held online to allow women across the state to attend and will run once a week for a month. These masterclasses will have a small fee to attend in order to cover costs.

Help with identifying Training Pathways and Paid Positions

1) Training Pathways for women

Many women have expressed that they find it hard to know what ministry training opportunities are available to them. Women have often reflected on the financial cost of training for ministry. WMV has identified different training pathways that are available to equip women in the PCV to nurture, disciple and serve in their local churches across the State. Some of these pathways may even be considered sufficient by Sessions for equipping women to be paid pastoral workers in their congregations. The WMV's document 'Paid Pathways' is annexed to this report.

2) Gospel ministry women's workers in local churches of the PCV

The committee would also like to highlight the availability of the Ministry Development Committee (MDC) Second Ministry Worker Grant, which can assist congregations with the cost of hiring gospel workers, including women workers. This means, for example, a congregation could develop plans for employing a full-time or part-time women's ministry worker in an ongoing position. The MDC guidelines for the 2024/25 financial year currently state the MDC Second Worker Grant may provide a grant of up to 50% of the first-year salary, reducing by 12.5% in subsequent years. Congregations are expected to fully fund the position by the fourth year.

To assist congregations as they consider employing a paid Women's Ministry Worker (WMW), we have estimated the cost for the first four years of a 0.20 FTE employee remunerated under the current Miscellaneous Award 2020. Depending on experience, the base hourly rate (incl. leave loading, excl. superannuation) could be in the range of \$25.32 (Level 2) - \$30.04 (Level 4) per hour.

Level 2 ¹	Salary incl. super	MDC grant	Net cost	MDC %
Year 1	11,205.59	5,602.79	5,602.79	50.0%
Year 2*	11,653.81	4,370.18	7,283.63	37.5%
Year 3*	12,119.96	3,029.99	9,089.97	25.0%
Year 4*	12,604.76	1,575.60	11,029.17	12.5%
Total	\$47,584.13	\$14,578.56	\$33,005.57	

* Includes estimated CPI/FairWork increase of 4%

¹ Salary is determined from the Miscellaneous Award 2020 for the pay period commencing 1 July 2024 and includes leave loading for normal work hours between 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday. Superannuation includes 12% SG effective 1 July 2025. Minimum rates may be subject to change by the FairWork Commission. This is a guide only and should not be relied upon for employment advice.

To support churches in employing a paid Women's Ministry worker, WMV has also created a position description template that may be used and adapted by congregations. A 'Sample Position Description for Women's Ministry Worker' can be found annexed to this report.

The committee is prayerfully hopeful more women in our denomination would be able to be trained and equipped for gospel ministry and that churches would help create space in their lives by remunerating them for their labour.

The financial support of the Women's Ministries Facilitator (WMF)

Until June 2024, the support of the WMF has been through donations from congregations and individuals in the PCV. The committee has been greatly encouraged by the financial support received that has enabled the employment of a Women's Ministry Facilitator for 0.34 FTE. Without this support, the committee could not do the work that has encouraged and blessed PCV women across the state. For

the 2023/2024 financial year, WMV received \$14,540.00 in donations made up as follows:

Recurring pledges	\$9,090.00
One-off pledges	\$2,000.00
General donations & fundraising	\$3,450.00
Total	\$14,540.00

In addition, income from *On The Road* conferences was \$7,603.35. After associated conference costs, a surplus of \$1,796.711 contributes to WMV ministry expenses.

The main expense is the WMF salary, representing 91% of total ministry expenses. Financial resources were also allocated to general ministry overheads including website, PCV email subscription, zoom subscription, education for our WMF (The Gospel Coalition women's ministry leadership), and travel expenses in respect to conferences.

The Commission of Assembly approved the funding of the WMF at 0.6 FTE. The WMF was able to increase her hours from 0.34 FTE to 0.4 FTE however, she was not able to take on another 0.2 FTE. The committee highly values her continuity in the role and so we have split the role as follows:

WMF (Events, Training and Communications) 0.4 FTE - Kathryn Gatt
WMF (Coaching) 0.2 FTE - position being advertised at the time of writing this report.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians in Chapter 4:

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (NIV)

It is the committee's prayer that through the work of WMV, women throughout the PCV will grow in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, and then play their part speaking the truth in love to others so that the body of Christ itself may be mature bringing him glory.

Ben Johnson
CONVENER

Training Pathway Options for Women

These training pathways can be undertaken by any women wanting to grow in their faith, knowledge and service. There are options for women at every stage of their Christian walk, and to fit every budget and schedule. Churches looking to engage a Women's Ministry Worker or similar, may like to identify and encourage suitable women to undertake some of these training options to equip them for formal ministry.

1

WMV Masterclass

Time: 4-6 evening sessions twice a year online
Cost: \$20 per class

Our WMV Masterclasses will be held twice a year, and run online in the evenings for 4-6 weeks.

These classes will cover a theological or practical topic to help train and equip you in Christian life and ministry.

2

Simeon Trust

Time: Each course is 8 sessions long and can be taken at your own pace online.
Cost: \$24 USD (\$30-40 AUD)

Simeon Trust provides online courses to help believers grow in their ability to study and teach God's word to others. There is a unit focused on First Principles for Women, that is particularly relevant for woman seeking to grow in this area, but all units will be useful in growing the ability to unpack God's word, for yourself and others.

3

MTW Course

Time: 10 x 3 hour MTW sessions per year at Christ College or on Zoom.
Cost: \$418* for MTW Course per semester (\$1672* overall)

This course is a great one for women who want training specifically in women's ministry issues, and in an Australian context.

The Ministry Training for Women course is a two-year program, and includes 10 lectures per year, as well as one-to-one mentoring and peer support.

4

TGC Cohort

Time: 2 hours x 8 weeks
Cost: \$225*

TGC Cohorts run online throughout the year.

Each of the TGC cohorts is designed with three goals in mind; to equip, encourage, and connect women.

The cohorts involve teaching time by and for women, an online discussion group with a consistent group of women to think through the topics, and Q & A time to ask your big questions.

These cohorts are run for US timezones, but US Evening Cohorts equate to a morning/midday session for Victoria.

5

METRO Equip

Time: Part time for 1 year
 12 hours p/w for METRO

Cost: Free!
 (\$250* contribution from your church to METRO)

This is a wonderful option for women who are beginning to explore women's or youth ministry but don't have a lot of time or money to spare.

METRO Equip gives opportunities in practical ministry, and opportunities to discuss and explore ministry issues together with church leadership.

Because this traineeship is part time, it can be completed while undertaking other work, study or family responsibilities.

6

METRO

Time: Full time for 2 years

Cost: Participants will need to undertake fundraising to raise their financial support for METRO, which they will receive as an income during their traineeship.

This is a great option for women who would like to dive deeper into on the ground experience of ministry.

METRO gives practical experience in a range of areas, as well as exploring discussion papers on a range of ministry and theological issues.

7

PTC Short Courses

Time: 12 hours of lectures per unit at certificate level, plus individual study time. One live unit offered each semester (on campus or online); other recorded units available online.

Cost: \$300* per unit for credit
 \$150* per unit to audit

This is a wonderful option for women who already have practical experience, but want to grow in their theological understanding. Students can choose to audit classes, which have a reduced cost and no assessment tasks, or students can undertake these courses for credit, which will gain them a Certificate level academic qualification if 6 or more units are completed.

8

Higher Level Study

Time: Dependent on subjects chosen. Roughly 150 hours per subject (lectures, reading and assessment tasks).

Cost: Starting at \$2679* per unit for Undergraduate study
 Fee-Help may be available

This is a great option for women who want to gain a formal theological qualification, and have time available to study at a more rigorous, academic level.

There are a range of study options available, but units in Pastoral Care, NT and OT studies, and Ministry Formation are likely to be particularly helpful for women's ministry.

*Costs based on 2024 figures. Please be aware that these costs may have changed.

Women's Ministry Worker

CHURCH NAME

Location: , VIC

Date last revised and approved:

Job Type: Part time ongoing, 0.2 FTE (7.6 hrs / week)

Closing Date: ASAP

Reports to: Senior Pastor

CHURCH NAME seeks to ... VISION STATEMENT

PARAGRAPH DESCRIPTION OF OUR CHURCH AND ITS MINISTRIES

1. Position Purpose

CHURCH NAME is seeking to employ a mature, godly woman to encourage, support, train and grow the ministry of women in our congregations.

2. Main Responsibilities

Ministry Coordination

- Gain a general oversight of the contexts in which women serve in ministry at NAME
- Oversee a women's ministries team that plans and implements a women's ministry program each year which encourages discipleship and outreach by and to women.

Pastoral support

- Provide support and encouragement for our current female leaders involved in ministry.
- Provide pastoral care for women who are struggling in the congregations.
- Model the discipleship of women to other female leaders.

Teaching and training

- Teach women to teach the bible in a variety of contexts; including one-to-one and small groups.
- Provide guidance and training for women to help them grow in ministry pathways. This may include training of future METRO trainees.

General

7.6 hours a week may look like;

- Attend a Sunday services on a regular basis taking pastoral opportunities over morning tea / supper following the service (1hr / week)
- A weekly one on one meeting (1.5hr / week – this may be meeting with two women fortnightly etc ...)
- A weekly women's bible study group 2hr / week
- Planning and prep (1.6hrs / week)
- Women's ministry event x 4 / year (=0.5 hrs / week)
- Report regularly to the Senior Pastor (1hr / month)
- Women's ministry team (1hr / month)

3. Qualifications

Character

- Evidences a committed, authentic and tested faith in the risen Lord Jesus as our only saviour and hope.
- An understanding of and agreement with the Westminster Confession of Faith read in the light of the declaratory statement of 1901.
- Godly character that provides good modelling to other women as well as appropriate discretion in execution of pastoral care.
- Enthusiasm for working alongside women who wish to grow in life and ministry.
- Approachable and warm personality, and determined to see people connected and cared for in the family of God.
- Maturity that enables pastoral care to a wide variety of life stages and circumstances.

Training and experience

- Theologically-minded and able to show evidence of handling and teaching the Bible faithfully.
- Completed or currently undertaking formal training in theology and ministry (eg METRO Equip, Christ College Ministry to Women Certificate (MTW) or PCV Women's Ministry Certificate - *yet to be formalised, a WMV guided women's ministry stream alongside the PCV Metro Equip*).
- Experience in ministry with a preference for relevant experience that fits with the main responsibilities as listed above.

Skills

- Organised and strong systems thinking skills
- Proven ability in establishing, training and leading teams and their leaders
- Ability to work independently and be self-sustaining in ministry.
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Good time management

4. Other Information

This position will be remunerated in accordance with STATE AWARD

This position is open to female applicants eager to work in a complementarian team environment. Suitability will be assessed based on the above qualifications.

For expressions of interest, please include your curriculum vitae, two referees (one of which is a person with whom you have worked alongside in ministry) and a cover letter addressing your suitability to conduct the main responsibilities as listed above.

Applications to be sent to Senior Minister NAME AND CONTACT

ORGANISATION REPORTS

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY UNION COOKBOOK COMMITTEE REPORT (Min 33)

1. Introduction

The PWMU Cookbook Committee, which is a joint committee of both the Uniting and Presbyterian Churches in Victoria, is presenting its report of activities since 2022, for the information of the General Assembly.

2. Executive Summary

The Committee has two scheduled face-to-face meeting each year, usually in March and November, with other meetings called as required. These meetings are usually held via online.

The committee was pleased to be able to support communities in Victoria that were affected by the floods in 2022, as well as those impacted by the bushfires around Ballarat earlier this year.

This year it is 120 years since the publication of the First Edition of the PWMU Cookbook – quite an achievement for a book that has never been out of print. Funds raised through royalties have supported many different ministry programs over the years; initially in the PCV through the PWMU. Since the formation of the Uniting Church these funds have been distributed 50/50 to both churches through the PWMU and Uniting Church Adult Fellowship Vic/Tas (UCAF) respectively.

The Committee is grateful for the support it receives from the PCV through the office of the Clerk of the Assembly.

3. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

3.1 Membership

The membership of the committee has been stable over the past two years. However, in February 2024 we farewelled Rev Swee Ann Koh, who had filled the position of Convener since 2017. With the position of Convener rotating between the two churches, we welcomed Rev Peter Phillips, representing the PCV, to this position following Swee Ann's retirement.

3.2 Sales and Royalties

Sales continue to do well, in the retail sector, as well as the committee and PWMU office.

We have continued with the Fund-raising project whereby congregations are able to purchase copies of the cookbook, at a special price from the committee; the proceeds of their sales are directed to mission projects they have identified they wish to support.

Royalty payments are received twice per year, and held by the Cookbook Committee until the account balance is over \$2000, at which time a distribution of a minimum of \$1000 is made to the UCAF and PWMU.

While for many years we have been able to keep the RRP under \$30, towards the end of 2023 it was necessary for the publishers to increase this price to \$32.95. This was due to the increase in the price of paper. However, an additional increase was avoided when the printing was moved overseas. We did raise our concerns about this with the publisher, and were advised that had they kept the printing in Victoria the price

increase would have been significantly more. The relocation of printing does make it difficult to print on demand. We need to be more alert to stock numbers, with the longer lead time for delivery.

The Committee is pleased that we have been able to maintain our price at \$25 per copy plus postage and handling for normal sales. At special events, we are able to offer the cookbook at \$20.

3.3 Relationship with Publisher

The committee continues to have a good relationship with the publisher, Hachette Australia. They are always helpful with suggestions and guiding the committee in ways to ensure the cookbook remains relevant in Australian Society.

3.4 Support for Communities affected by disasters

Projects and/or programs that are funded via the royalties received by the UCAF and PWMU are different.

PWMU mainly provides funds to theological students coming to Australia to study. While the UCAF uses the interest on funds invested to provide grants for mission projects that are submitted to the UCAF State Council, as well as a Theology Prize at the end of each year to an outstanding student at theological hall.

3.5 Sponsoring refreshments at Church Meetings

The committee enjoys being able to provide to the PCV Assembly and UCA Synod Meetings. These events are different, both in location and style of meeting and the bookstall held in conjunction with those.

We are especially pleased this year to being able to sponsor the afternoon tea where Rev Dr John Wilson is recognised, especially as he served for a period as Convenor of the Cookbook Committee.

This is something we look forward to and plan to continue into the future.

3.6 Celebrating 120 years of the PWMU Cookbook

When we first started thinking about the 120th Anniversary of the Cookbook a number of questions came to mind.

- How you celebrate such a humble book that has been in print since 1904?
- How many copies have been sold since 1904?
- How much has been received by the churches in royalties since 1904?
- Did we want one large occasion, or a number of smaller ones in different locations.
- Should they be interactive?
- Do we release a new edition? This question was the easiest to answer.
- Having had a major revision, including cover, released in 2021 we were able to agree with the publisher for a small review and a modified cover.

The committee knows how many editions there have been, and how many reprints, but the actual number of copies since 1904 is not easily obtained.

It took a little while to determine the total amount of royalties received since 1904. Records held by both the PWMU (1904-2022) and UCAF (1977-2023), and while

we have been able to get detailed information through two volunteers – Ros Brown (PWMU) and Lencie Harding (UCAF), there are some gaps so the total, while a fantastic amount, isn't exact. It is in the region of \$1.2m (in today's terms).

By now Assembly members might be aware that we are having a High Tea to celebrate this occasion (refer to the pamphlet accompanying this report).

3.7 Publicity

3.7.1 Social Media

Other than the PWMU and UCAF regular newsletters to their members that might include a recipe (reproduced with permission), the committee uses Facebook and Instagram for promoting the cookbook. This is often photos, with hints or maybe a clip with some historical interest. We do get some book sales through here. We often get asked to provide a recipe or replace a lost page of a certain edition. We can do this, and have arranged for permission from the publisher.

3.7.2 Fundraising for Congregations

This project enables congregations, UCAF groups or PWMU groups to raise funds for specific mission projects, by purchasing the book in bulk at a reduced price of \$15 per copy. They sell the book at a price of their choosing, but not more than the RRP of \$32.95. They retain the proceeds to fund their project.

The groups make application to the committee with details of the project and if we determine the project is appropriate, the purchase is able to proceed. Groups are required to send a report of the outcome of the project to the committee for our information/record.

Pamela Grant
SECRETARY

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY UNION (Min 30)

Changes

Office move to Box Hill North

PWMU has had a very eventful year, with just seven members serving on Council since the AGM in October. In late 2023 our office moved to 690 Elgar Road, next door to the Theological College in Box Hill North. Its proximity to the college, to the archives and archivist Michael Smith, and more recently the MDC, has already proved valuable in terms of connectivity, and being more visible. We were very happy at Hawthorn, and we thank Rev Graham Nicholson and the Board there. This move, however, was seen as a good opportunity to work more collaboratively with other PCV ministries, as was the case at Assembly Hall in previous years. We thank our husbands for their assistance in the move.

We invite PCV members and friends to visit our new office space, where you will find on display the PWMU centenary banner, the Korean treasure gifted to us by the Korean Government in 2022, in recognition of PWMU's contribution to Korean society, and our most recent gifts from the Busanjin Presbyterian Church, a plaque and a beautiful book on the life of Jesus, illustrated in Korean style. The latest books authored by Rev Dr Myong Duk Yang on behalf of the leadership of Busanjin PC have been added. Psalm 115:1 reads: '**Not to us, Lord**, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.'

New office manager

Not only are we in new office premises, but in April, a new office manager commenced. We treasure our previous office manager, Natalie Miller, who is now working with the MDC, and thank her for her expertise, resilience and cheerful manner. Our new office manager, Ruth Fok, has learnt the ropes quickly and is a welcome player in our team. I'd like to mention that we were glad to interview several wonderful applicants from linguistically diverse backgrounds, all members of Presbyterian churches, for the office manager's position. It was heartening to know there is such strength in younger members of our PCV churches. It was thanks to Alison Stanley that the transition was so smooth. Alison stepped in as interim office manager. Combining her honorary roles of secretary and newsletter editor, she was able to streamline our procedures.

Events

Country Rally in Hamilton

A highlight of 2024 was the PWMU Country Rally in Hamilton. About 60 souls were present, including women from Mt Gambier across the border, husbands, and women from other towns in Western Victoria. Some of us travelled from Melbourne and beyond. Hamilton PWMU, led by Isabel Schulz, were ideal hosts. They had set up an interesting historical display, which attracted the attention of the local press, who came to photograph the group. Our guest speakers expertly entertained and informed the rally, both in the church and in the hall. Both parties serve with Wycliffe Bible Translators. Jeanette Bennett spoke of her work in the front office at Kangaroo Ground and demonstrated that the need for bible translators still exists. New cross-cultural workers, R'jaye and Hayley Rojas, along with their five children, involved us in a quiz as they recounted their journey towards serving on the field in South East Asia. We were pleased to have the Moderator, Rev Ian Hutton and his wife Ann, present at this event, as well as other PWMU events.

Children's work

PWMU plays a role in encouraging the interest of children in mission partnership via both a Dayspring Children's event and a magazine, in the capable hands of Sue White.

Thanksgiving Event online

PWMU events and membership have changed due to modern-day circumstances. The Thanksgiving Event is online in August, which makes it more accessible to many of our members. Proceeds from 2023 were donated to the Sudanese ministries at Arua, Uganda, where Rhys and Rhondda Hall are still involved, even though they are based now in Castlemaine.

Melbourne East RA (Regional Association)

In October 2023 the Canterbury PWMU Branch hosted a meeting of the Melbourne East Regional Association (the only remaining RA) at which Eva and Laszlo Mihalyi were the speakers. Members from outside the RA also attended his highly engaging session.

Collaborations

PWMU continued to work alongside APWM and other PCV ministries.

- Members contributed to the Chasefu Theological College building project in Zambia. Both PCV ministers who were involved with training in Zambia in 2023 were guest speakers at our events: Rev Stephen Jones at our online Thanksgiving Event and Rev Graham Nicholson at our Annual Service.
- Our members continue to support the PSCJM mission at Flemington.
- We gave grants to four young people planning a mission trip to Niger, which was sadly cancelled due to political unrest. One of the four did in fact go, months later, and we have followed her stay with prayer and interest.
- The Orbus school in Malawi remains one of our interests, and we support Craig and Jayni Manners as they endure a serious health crisis.
- PWMU has given grants to two PCV members who are working in the Aboriginal space: Rev Don Elliott as he visits Ernabella to assist the local people to translate and understand Leviticus, and Mrs Shona Archer, who leads a writing project of biographies of Aboriginal missionaries, suitable for a youth readership.
- In February, a PWMU representative attended both the commissioning of Lauren Raiter at Scots Church Melbourne, and the recommissioning of Hannah Davies at Trinity Camberwell.
- Rev Ashley Saunders from Barnabas Aid addressed those present at our AGM in 2023.
- Our representatives on the APWM-Vic Committee play an active role.

Bursary Students

Gambella, Ethiopia

PWMU supported in prayer and finance, not just APWM workers, but a number of South Sudanese men at theological colleges in Ethiopia. These men from the Gambella refugee camps were recommended to us by Rev Motor Isaac Yat. In June, Simon Koang graduated with his Masters and Simon Dep with a bachelor's degree. One man remains at college, undertaking a Masters degree. The graduates are now serving the PCOSS (Presbyterian Church of South Sudan), mostly in the Gambella region. Some are involved in a grass roots bible school at Sobat.

Zambia

The circumstances of our bursary student from Zambia, Jairos Kuchulu, have been clarified. Thanks to online study options, he has been admitted to the Bachelor of Theology course at the PTC Melbourne, commencing his studies in mid-July 2024. We thank the staff at the Presbyterian Theological College for their timely assistance. Enrolment at our college should increase the effectiveness of communication between him and the PWMU.

Robyn Crocker and Gaye McKenzie have been our capable bursary liaisons, supported ably by Rosalie Fleming in her role as treasurer.

Korean links

Books by MD Yang

Beneficiaries of PWMU's work in bringing the gospel to Korea, have kept us busy. Rev Dr Myong Duk Yang has continued to write his series on Australian Missionaries in Korea. The books that were released over the last financial year were on Rev Gelson Engel and Miss Margaret Davies. There were even two Gelson Engel books, one being a graphic novel. PWMU was tasked with distributing these books to interested parties, including young people in Korean-speaking churches.

Busanjin PC

Dr Yang is linked with the first Presbyterian church established by Australian missionaries in Busan. This church, Busanjin PC, wanted to say thank you in a musical way, so requested we arrange a concert in January 2024, in Assembly Hall, Melbourne. About 20 of their young people plus their entourage, played superb music, drumming and orchestral, for the 40 or so PCV people able to attend. The ensemble also gave a concert in Ballarat.

The contact with Busanjin church continues as they reflect on their spiritual roots and honour those who brought them the gospel, and their successors. The leadership of the Busanjin church desires that our young people engage in a mission project together, to encourage both Victorian and Korean young people to be involved in mission. Council does not feel equipped to arrange a joint Korean-Victorian mission involving youth, so has brought this to the attention of various Presbyterian churches and bodies who may wish to respond to this opportunity.

Publications

The PWMU Newsletter goes from strength to strength, and the Devotions booklet provides spiritual depth to groups as they meet, thanks to Jayni Manners and the writers she approached. Four PWMU members serve on the PWMU Cookbook Committee, which provided afternoon tea for Assembly members in 2023 and donated cookbooks to flood victims in northern Victoria. 2024 marks 120 years for the PWMU Cookbook. An overprinted revised edition will be available for this occasion. The foreword for this is also contained in this White Book. Despite ongoing publishing complexities, it remains a sought-after recipe book.

Overview

PWMU has adapted to many changes, and continues to be a worthy organisation, playing its role in supporting cross-cultural workers both on the field, and on home ground. Our finances are healthy, so it's been our joy to pass on \$68,374 from donations and trusts to cross-cultural workers and bursary students.

PWMU State Council meets monthly, except in January, usually online, and a lengthy time of prayer is a vital component of each meeting. We commend the work of PWMU to your members for prayers and support. May the Lord Jesus, God Almighty, receive all the honour and glory. We thank Him for His love and faithfulness.

Roslyn Brown
PRESIDENT

SCHOOL REPORTS

BELGRAVE HEIGHTS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL (Min 61)

We celebrated the 40th anniversary of BHCS in 2023 and looking back at our school over this time we see that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has always provided for us and sustained whether through good seasons or difficult seasons. We give thanks for this.

The events for the 40th anniversary of BHCS have really highlighted to me the amazing legacy that has been handed down and entrusted to us by so many people before us - people who laboured hard and long from the founding of the school down to today to make BHCS what it is today. We certainly acknowledge our Lord's work through all this but the sacrifice and effort of those who have served before - on council, on staff and in the community - resonated with me and caused me to reflect on the great responsibility we have to be good stewards of what we have received. And to work to nurture and grow it, by God's grace, into the future. We are also mindful and grateful anew of the support that the Presbyterian Church of Victoria has provided to BHCS from inception to now.

In 2 Tim 1:14 Paul commands Timothy, who Paul had trained in the gospel to 'Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.'. Now this was given in the context of gospel ministry in general. But I think it can be applied to our school in the context of Christian education to guard the good deposit entrusted to us by those who have gone before at BHCS that the gospel ministry we exercise through BHCS can continue for the benefit of our community into the future.

In the past year there have been many notable developments in the school. We had our first Thailand mission trip, the new Junior School opened and the refurbishment of the old one completed. Progress has been made on the Senior Learning Centre (SLC) permit with us now at the stage of addressing items raised during the community consultation process, as well as getting extra BGA funding. The School has also prepared a new strategic plan for 2023-2026 and conducted a culture survey to ensure we recognise and build on the key elements of our school culture. The Yarra Ranges Council have built a slip lane to assist with traffic at the start and end of the school day. In 2023 we changed from a Junior (P-4), Middle (5-8) and Senior (9-12) school model to a Primary (P-6) and Secondary (7-12) model. School Council approved the construction of a number of projects in the school that were completed and opened in the second half of 2023 including the resurfaced secondary courts and installation of a roof over the courts; opening of a new outdoor play area for the primary school in the 'Wildspace'; and installation of new pathways around the drop off zone. In Feb 2024 we had to close the school for two days due to a power outage impacting many areas in Melbourne's Eastern and Outer Eastern suburbs.

Our school's Executive Leadership Team kicked off the year with theme for 2024 of 'Growing Stronger Together'. At the start of 2024 we had 146 active staff (plus 3 on extended leave) made up of 69 teaching staff, 73 general staff and 4 ELC staff. This equates to 57.05 FTE teaching staff, 43.41 general staff and 2.83 ELC staff.

For the student body, we had 785 students at 2024 Census Day in Prep-Year 12 as well as 52 children in kinder. This combined total of 837 is our highest ever enrolment. Our 2023 Year 12 results were encouraging and point to the hard work of the students and our staff – 65% of students received their first preference for tertiary studies, our

school achieved a median study score of 29 and our school dux achieved at ATAR of 97.80.

At a Council level, we welcomed David Martin (March 2023) and John Cho (Nov 2023) as new members, but also are bidding farewell to Sandra Aggromito (May 2024) and Andrew Edmonds (July 2024) who have been on the Council since Nov 2018 and Feb 2021 respectively. We thank them for their service. We have endeavoured to grow links with the PCV by hosting the outgoing Moderator, Rev Peter Phillips, at our Aug 2023 meeting, and had the incoming Moderator, Rev Ian Hutton at one of the 40th anniversary events. We also had two joint training days with St Andrews Christian College which was great in terms of learning more about our governance role while also creating links to another Christian school. Our Principal has been growing links beyond our school through attending a breakfast for Principals with Daniela De Martino, our local Member of the Legislative Assembly. He has also been appointed to the CSA State Alliance Leadership Team (SALT) which was formerly known as the State Council (Vic/Tas).

Council sub-committees have been hard at work and thanks is extended to the members of the standing Finance, Building, Governance and Risk sub-committees as well as the sub-committee reviewing aspects of remuneration. With an increase in governance and compliance requirements as well as to make our council meetings more efficient, active participation in the work of our sub-committees is increasingly important.

We continue to watch and pray for favourable outcomes from the Federal discussions on the Australian Law Reform Commission's Consultation Paper on Religious Educational Institutions and Anti-Discrimination Laws and the Religious Discrimination Bill which may impact independent schools.

The local Belgrave Heights Presbyterian Church continues to meet in our school building.

We also face external challenges from our society. Great wisdom is required to know how to show Jesus's love and also act in a way which does not compromise the faith we hold dear. As James 1:5 encourages us 'If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.' Again, we also gratefully acknowledge the support of the PCV through all these years. We look forward to the celebration activities being planned for this year, as well as continue to ask for support:

1. Advocating for the freedoms for us to provide a holistic, Christ-centred education through prayer to our heavenly Father and advocacy to the authorities he has appointed at a federal, state and local level; and
2. Facilitating and encouraging our sister PCV schools to continue to work together on navigating the best path forward and for mutual encouragement in the current environment.

Conclusion

We praise and thank God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ for his ongoing work in BHCS by the Holy Spirit. We greatly appreciate the hard work and dedication of all our School Council members over the past year as well as the BHCS management, teachers, other staff and volunteers who make BHCS such a special place. We also ask that you please keep us in your prayers, advocate for freedoms for us to provide

a distinctive, holistic Christ-centred education, and support us in working together with other PCV schools addressing our shared challenges.

Chris White
CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL



Presbyterian Ladies' College

MELBOURNE

Chair's Report to Members of Presbyterian Ladies' College Annual General Meeting 27 June 2024 (Min 58)

In accordance with Clause 8.3(c) 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 2024 as required by Clause 9.3 of the Constitution.

***"Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain.
Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain."
Psalm 127:1***

I take great pleasure in presenting this year's Chair's report to the 2024 Annual General Meeting of PLC. Again, it has been another fruitful year and there is much to give thanks to God for.

Academic Achievements, College Celebrations and Key Events

Consistent with the trend over the last few years, the College is achieving strong enrolments across all levels of the College, with waiting lists now for nearly all year levels. Even the Boarding House numbers, which suffered during the pandemic, is nearing full capacity. The reputation of PLC in Melbourne, across Australia and around the world is strong. Our culture of rigorous learning with a focus on student wellbeing, combined with a rich and varied extra-curricular program and an ongoing commitment to the promotion of the Christian Gospel and its values continue to be attractive to parents seeking a holistic education for their daughters to prepare them for a life of service and achievement in society.

The graduating class of 2023 did the College proud with another set of excellent VCE and IB results. The median ATAR (combined across both VCE and IB) was 93.55, with 95.3 of the cohort achieving an ATAR above 80. Our warmest congratulations go to the 'Class of 2023' for their outstanding achievements and we wish them the very best in their next phase of life after PLC. We trust that PLC has provided them with the strong foundations which they can use to pursue their interest and passion and wish them the very best of success in their future endeavors.

Along with all the usual events throughout the year, such as the annual House Concerts, Junior School musical and Senior School musical, and the annual Gala Concert, the College will be holding the PLC Foundation Winter Ball in August 2024 as a fundraiser for the Sports, Aquatic and Fitness Centre. We look forward to this evening of celebration, community building and support for the work of the College.

In February 2024, the entire PLC community was saddened to hear of the passing of our much loved and revered seventh Principal of the College, Miss Joan Montgomery AM OBE. She inspired generations of staff and students during and after her time as Principal from 1969 to 1985, and she has left a lasting legacy for PLC and the wider Australian education landscape. PLC held a thanksgiving service in her honour on 2nd March 2024, which gave many in the community an opportunity to celebrate and remember her life.

In May 2024, PLC Council made the decision to name the new Sports, Aquatic and Fitness Centre, the *Montgomery Centre* in her honour.

Senior Appointments and Farewells in 2023

Two key appointments occurred at the start of 2024. Late in 2023, the Head of the Early Learning Centre (ELC), Mrs Debra Hendren retired after 30 years of outstanding service to the College. She has been replaced by Mrs Eromie Dassanayake as the new Head of ELC at the start of Term 2, 2024. Likewise, Mrs Marina Johnson commenced as our new Director of Advancement in Term 2 and will lead the efforts of the College in maintaining and promoting a culture of philanthropy.

During the year, the Council farewelled Mrs Christine Hopper, who had been a member of Council 30 years. During this time, she has served in many roles, including as Vice Chair of the Council, and as Council's representative on the PLC Foundation. Despite her retirement, she continues to serve the College as Chair of Charles Pearson. Mr Wing Chang also retired from Council, and we valued his contribution on the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee as well as on the Sports, Aquatic and Fitness Centre Steering Committee. Finally, Dr Peter Yong resigned from Council in March 2024. Peter served on the Property and Planning Committee. Our sincere thanks go to all of them for their contribution to Council over their time of service.

In their places, we welcome the following new Council Members: Mrs Andrea Choi and Ms Tamara Kayser. The vacancy created by the resignation of Dr Peter Yong remains vacant currently as the Presbyterian Church of Victoria goes through its processes for this Group A appointment. Each new Council Member brings their unique set of skills, professional expertise and life experiences, but have in common with all the members of Council, a deep commitment to the mission and vision of the College. We look forward to their contribution to Council in the coming years.

Sports, Aquatic and Fitness Centre (The Montgomery Centre)

Work on the new Montgomery Centre continues apace and is currently on schedule and on budget. The structural work for the centre is near completion, as is the sealing and waterproofing of the Learn-to-Swim and 50 metre pools. All going well in God's providence, the centre will open in early 2025 and will provide the girls excellent opportunities for active participation in sport and other physical activities, contributing greatly to their learning and mental wellbeing.

Strategic Plan

The current Strategic Plan was launched in 2023 and is now in its implementation phase. Each of the strategies under the three pillars of learning, wellbeing and connection are being developed in greater detail with specific tasks and projects associated with each being formulated to advance the mission of the College.

The College is thankful to our Principal, Mrs Cheryl Penberthy and her Executive Team for leading this important work, with passion, commitment and creativity. I look forward to providing further details in coming years as these strategies are progressively rolled out.

Finances

The College continues to enjoy a sound financial position and the surplus generated over the last financial year allows the College to continue its investment program, both in capital as well as human and other resources. These surpluses are made possible by strong enrolments, careful management of operating expenses and capital project costs, and the ongoing generosity of the wider PLC community.

During the year, the State Government unexpectedly and without consultation, moved to impose payroll tax on independent schools (to commence on 1 July 2024). This has taken the sector by surprise and implemented without any appreciation of where schools like PLC have the financial capacity to absorb the additional financial burden, without compromising our ability to provide the highest standards of education at the expense of long-term financial viability. Sadly, the College has had no choice but to pass on this impost through higher fees for parents in the community, many of whom make financial sacrifices to send their daughters to our school.

We hope that the State government may yet reverse this unfair and unwise decision. However, we recognize God's hand of providence in all things and continue in thankfulness to Him for His provision.

The Council commends to the members of PLC the 2023 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.

State of Affairs on Council

College Council consists of up to 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.

This is my fourth year as Chair of Council, and I am continually thankful for the capable men and women who serve alongside me. They include the following office bearers:

- Deputy Chair – Mrs Kate Sampson
- Chair, Finance and Audit Committee – Ms Mui Chun Chew (with Mr Adrian Spencer as Deputy Chair)
- Chair, Property and Planning Committee – Mr Ben de Waard (with Mr Daniel Gregor as Deputy Chair)
- Chair, Group B Selection Committee – Mrs Kate Sampson
- Chair, Risk and Strategy Committee – Ms Debbie Barbour (with Rev Ben Johnson as Deputy Chair)

Together these office bearers also comprise the members of the Governance and Leadership Committee, while the Deputy Chair and Chair of Finance and Audit serve with me on the Remuneration Committee.

Mr Daniel Gregor continues to chair the SAFC Steering Committee to oversee the construction of the SAFC (now known as the Montgomery Centre). We have also established a Philanthropic Steering Committee to consider a 'refresh' of the College's philanthropic strategy. I am the Chair of this steering committee and am delighted to have Dr Deborah Seifert as the Deputy Chair, given her extensive experience in the philanthropic sector. Council members on this committee are also joined by representatives from the PLC Foundation Board and the Old Collegians' Association.

With the term of our Principal, Mrs Cherly Penberthy concluding in Term 3, 2025, a Principal Search Committee (chaired by myself) has also been established to begin the recruitment of PLC's next Principal.

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 selected Council Members, nominated by Council. It is chaired by Mrs Christine Hopper, who recently retired from Council.

The Council has also appointed Mrs Fiona Hare and Dr Deborah Seifert as its representatives on the Board of the PLC Foundation. Ms Diana Bevington continues as the PLC Foundation Board President. She is not a member of Council but I have been working closely with her as we work on the philanthropic culture and strategy of the College.

Conclusion

Many of the achievements in the College this year would not have been possible without the dedication and vision of our Principal, Mrs Cheryl Penberthy. She leads a strong and capable leadership team, and excellent teaching and non-teaching staff in the College. Together, they continue to navigate the College through exciting but challenging times. The Council thanks God for all of them as well as the wonderful community that we are as PLC. The College Council is committed to the mission of the College. May the name of Christ be honoured and God's good purpose be fulfilled as we steer and guide the College into the future.

Rev Mark Chew

Chair of Council, Presbyterian Ladies' College
1 June 2024

ST ANDREWS CHRISTIAN COLLEGE (Min 62)

Responding to Growth

St Andrews Christian College continues to have a strong reputation in the community of having a strong Christian distinctive which is reflected in its identity, culture and practice. Paired with our faith, the College has consistently been one of the highest performing schools in the state in NAPLAN and ATAR results and outcomes. The combination of strong faith foundations with excellent learning and teaching results in a strong demand for an education at St Andrews Christian College. With full classes and strong waiting lists, our focus now turns to seeking opportunities to extend the physical boundaries of our school to enable future enrolment growth. Additional to this, the College this year has celebrated the opening of our new Science, Technology and Administration wing. These facilities provide additional learning spaces for our Primary and Secondary students, as well as our administrative and executive staff having a dedicated reception area and offices. We thank those from the PCV that attended the official opening of the wing in June this year.

Strategically planning for our future

2024 marks the year of launching our new College strategic plan. After 12 months of consultation, prayer and planning we are proud to release our medium and long-term plans for the College. Our 4-year plan is centred on four strategic priorities; *Excellence in Learning & Teaching*, *Student Focussed Wellbeing*, *Building Christian Community* and *Empowered People*. Additional to our 4-year plan, our board worked to develop a long-term plan and direction for the College called *Towards 2040*. It is the combination of both plans that position the College to remain true to our mission and direct our focus on shaping our students in their formational years to be equipped for God's purpose for their lives during and beyond their school years.





Protecting our religious freedoms as a Christian school

As Christian schools, we continue to advocate and speak up for the need to be able to employ staff whom share the same Christian faith and demonstrate alignment with our statement of faith. We continue to be actively engaged in advocacy efforts around potential legislative changes that could compromise our ability to employ Christian staff at the College. The efforts of Mark Spencer, Director of Public Policy at Christian Schools Australia are to be commended and we are grateful for the significant amount of time he spends in the hallways and offices of Parliament in Canberra, expressing concerns about amendments to legislation and advocating for the needs of Christian Education. We are blessed at St Andrews Christian College to have families whom are very supportive of the strong Christian ethos and outworking of our faith at the College. Staff and families are encouraged to share their concerns with our local MP, and we were encouraged to have many of our staff, board members and families attend the *My Christian School* townhall event to show support for the need for freedom of choice for families to send their child to a faith-based school.

As a college, we continue to put God at the centre in all that we do, and our mission statement remains at the centre of why we exist. In all that we do, we seek to bring Glory to God.

Yours in Christ,

Nick Haines

Principal

St Andrews Christian College

SCOTCH COLLEGE (Min 63)

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 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.

Enrolments

There continues to be high demand for admission into the College at all entry points. At the start of 2023, there were 1454 boys enrolled in the Senior School, compared to the 1462 enrolments in 2022. Within the total enrolments, 160 (165 in 2022) are boarders, of whom 41 were new to the Hill community. Twelve indigenous students are members of the 2023 Scotch community, eight of whom reside on the Hill. The school roll at the start of 2023 included 15 full fee paying overseas students (14 in 2022), with new overseas students joining Scotch from Hong Kong, mainland China, Malaysia, Taiwan, Cambodia and Russia. 74 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 College's approach to enrolment will maintain a Senior School of approximately 1460 boys.

Chaplaincy

In both Senior and Junior Schools, the Chaplains continue to preach at their many assemblies and chapels each week to students and staff. Along with other staff, they teach Christian Education classes and work on developing curriculum at every Senior School level. The Chaplains run a broad range of activities and special events such as the Easter Breakfast, Faith Week, the Scotch Family carols service, sporting programs and camps. They work in the boarding houses after hours and they seek to pastorally care for students and staff.

Our annual Year 9 Retreats in Healesville are a great success. The retreats are informed by our Christian faith and ethos but uniquely adopted into the culture of each of the 12 Senior School houses through their respective Heads of House, Tutors, and Year 11 representative students. It has grown to become not just a helpful developmental and social experience for boys, but a formative influence on the culture of Scotch itself. The retreats are run by the Christian Education department, this year under the leadership of Mr Matthias Poi and Rev David Assender.

Since COVID, our student-led club 'Christian Movement' has grown from strength to strength, also under the leadership of Mr Matthais Poi. They run on Monday lunchtimes; running activities where students are trained in Christian leadership, give talks on biblical themes, and share their faith with other students. Two senior boys have put their faith in Christ recently from this student ministry. It is an enormous encouragement to us all.

The Rev Doug Campbell continues to meet with the parents' Chaplains Prayer Support Group, to pray for the school community and work out other ways to communicate the love of Christ to the wider Scotch community.

The chaplains are truly encouraged to see our Principal openly share his faith in Christ at every opportunity in the life of our school community. Dr Marsh, together with his leadership team and the Scotch Council have been working on developing a new strategic direction for our school. A direction where the Christian identity of the school will not just be referenced as our heritage but will be understood as a fundamental component of our vision for the future.

Academic

All at Scotch are very much aware that an education is about much more than a final set of examination results. In particular, we are guided by our emerging strategic vision to be a beacon for best practice in boys' education, dedicated to forming enlightened learners of good character, committed to shaping a better future.

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 2023 VCE results were most encouraging. There is little doubt that the marketplace is, thankfully, tightening 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 260, 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 89.85.

Five 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 39 students (30 boys) across the state achieved the maximum ATAR score of 99.95 in 2023. Whilst it is worth noting the performance of our scholarship boys who continue to perform strongly, 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, 11.8% of boys made the top 1% of the State; 30.6% the top 5%; 48.9% the top 10%; and 71.2% the top 20%. There were 21 highest possible subject scores of 50 (compared to 20 in 2022) across 19 boys and ten subjects. Based on Year 5 ability testing data, the mean value-added percentile for the Class of 2023 was 17.54%. 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, character education, timetable reform and programme and departmental

reviews will further improve teacher capacity in this area and continue to support high quality outcomes for future Year 12 cohorts.

The College has, in recent years worked hard to ensure that our most able boys are challenged at a level beyond comfort, including the introduction and ongoing development of a broad suite of academic Challenge Programmes at Years 7 – 9, a rigorous ‘reaccreditation’ process for Year 9 and 10 electives, the introduction of Enhancement Mathematics classes (‘top streams’) at Year 8 (from 2017) and Year 9 (from 2018) and ongoing development of our University Extension course in Mathematics by Head of Mathematics. Benefits of the Challenge Programmes, introduced in the core subject areas in Year 8 in 2016, have also begun to flow through to VCE level.

Campus

The school purchased a 70-hectare rural property at Mallacoota in late 2023 to extend the opportunities provided to our boys to learn and grow beyond the walls of the traditional classroom. Planning is underway to launch a flagship program in 2028 that aims to instil a sense of character, service, environmental stewardship and leadership skills in young minds. Importantly, it will provide a sacred place where boys experience, explore and cherish the gift of life.

The ‘Fairhaven’ experience at Mallacoota will form an important part of a sequential journey in a Scotch boy’s learning embracing outdoor education experience and will become an integral part in our strategic vision to inspire boys to shape a better future.

Teaching And Learning

The College continues to offer a rich teaching and learning program premised in 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. As with all schools, how we engage young people in this digitally saturated world and prepare them for the challenges of 21st Century life, remains a critical question that must be continually wrestled with.

With the arrival of our new principal, staff have been challenged to think about our work in teaching and learning and in particular, how we might review our curriculum to better cater for the needs of all boys. Importantly, alongside the work already completed on the growth of Scotch boys, we have commenced a focus on character education and will be working to incorporate character education into all aspects of a Scotch education.

In 2023, we have introduced a new Executive role to lead our teaching and learning within and outside the classroom. Furthermore, work has been completed on restructuring and reshaping teams to ensure all staff are supported and able to receive meaningful feedback. This work will continue over the next 18 months to ensure that all staff are supported and that clear lines of accountability exist for all within our community.

In 2024 we are due for re-registration. As such, the later part of 2023 has been devoted to reviewing our curriculum material to ensure all documentation is compliant and ready for review.

The second Annual Review following the School's re-accreditation in 2021 from the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) as a safe school took place at the end of last year (December 2023). The School's ACF consultant remains impressed with the work Scotch College has done over the past 12 months in regard to Safeguarding and the School's commitment to continuous improvement.

Co- Curricular

Our students have been involved in a diverse range of co-curricular activities between July 2023 – July 2024.

Sport

Sport continues to play an important role in the lives of our boys. We offer a comprehensive sport program at Scotch College with Summer, Winter and Spring APS sports and non-APS sports, such as rugby, cycling, gymnastics, and fencing. We have a comprehensive and well-resourced rowing program. We have a team competing in the APS skiing competition.

Over the holiday periods, the holiday timetables involve training camps in areas such as futsal, badminton, swimming, tennis, volleyball, badminton, table tennis, touch football, Rugby League, Hockey and football and Soccer, as well as trips to South Australia and Queensland for various sports, rowing camps throughout Victoria, a Ski trip to Whistler, Canada, a cricket trip to England and a golf trip to Scotland.

Our students in Year 7 and 8 complete a compulsory three seasons of sport, and Year 9-12 students complete two compulsory sports. Sports include two training sessions and one competition each week.

We have high levels of participation across the school and value sport and physical fitness and the attendant benefits of being involved in sport highly.

Our new state of the art high performance weights gym is in use and available for students before school, lunchtime and after school, to supplement sports training. We also have run club.

Scotch enjoyed a highly competitive 2023/24 summer sport season. In rowing this year, at the APS Head of the River on Saturday 23 March, our rowers were in action with the 2nd, 3rd and 4th VIII winning their A finals at Nagambie. While the 1st XVIII finished 4th overall, they enjoyed a highly successful season.

The sailing team finished 5th and 6th in the 1sts and 2nds crews at the Victorian State Championships. Both squads performed well into the finals but unfortunately bowed out at the preliminary final stage.

Following the final round in the Vic Interschool Cycling series at Kew Boulevard, our cyclists finished 5th overall in the school events, Interschool Series. Kew Teardrop Criterium (Round 6) Senior Male B Grade: Rohan Kelsey finished 13th, Ivan Luk 15th Senior Male D Grade: Jayden Wu finished 4th.

Swimming and Diving squads participated in the APS finals. We performed well overall finishing 3rd and 6th.

The Scotch Cricketers farewelled the outgoing TIC, Gary Peckham and wicket keeping coach, Dallas Lyons, at the end of season presentation. Both men have given great service to the Scotch Cricket program with a combined involvement of 55 years. Gary Peckham has amassed an impressive 34 years of service and fulfilled almost every role including premierships coach, junior coach, Director of Coaching and in more recent decades TIC. Dallas Lyons has also coached our firsts team and provided amazing technical assistance to wicketkeepers and batsmen for 21 years. Both Gary and Dallas remain at school but work commitments and injury have meant they have had to step back from their respective roles.

The Firsts Futsal team beat Wesley 5-3 in its final fixture to win its second premiership in the sport. The team were outright premiers winning 7 of 9 games and having only one loss and a draw. It is the sport's second overall premiership since the introduction of Futsal as an official APS premiership sport in 2017.

Scotch won the orienteering trophy and it has been three years since Scotch last won the Slade Orienteering Trophy, so this is a great achievement by all in the team. In the end Scotch gained 3058 points against Camberwell Grammar who received 1770 points for the season,

Representative sport

Seven boys were selected in their sports to be part of the APS Representative team to compete against the AGSV. One boy each were chosen to join cricket team, one was joining the tennis team, three were joining the table tennis team, and one in volleyball.

2024 winter sport season provided great enjoyment for our boys, as they took to the various fields, pitches and courts to represent the school. The boys have performed strongly with a week of competition to come.

Performing and Visual Arts

Scotch College provides opportunities for boys to involve themselves in the performing arts.

Drama

Many boys participate in the drama programme, which this year saw boys perform and stage produce a Year 8 play with Methodist Ladies College, The Wizard of Oz. This was a strong production by our Year 8 students in partnership with MLC, with wonderful, confident performances from the young cast, who also seemed to love

Our Year 9 and 10 students performed 'Dracula' with the Year 9 and 10 Strathcona students. It was a wonderful production and displayed a depth of talent at these year levels.

'Urinetown' the Senior Musical was a co-production between Scotch College and Lauriston Girls' School, performed to full audiences, and was a joyous, high standard production of this funny, satirical musical.

Visual Arts

The entrants for The Principals' Art Acquisition Award from Year 7-12 had their works displayed in the Lithgow Centre and professionally placed in a beautiful, printed catalogue; and many students and staff, have been wandering through the exhibition

in recent weeks, voting for the people's choice award and admiring the varied work. The theme was *Beauty in Life* and the idea clearly resonated deeply with our students, who captured moments of beauty in mixed media, photography, drawing, painting and ceramics. It is a brave student who exhibits a piece of art, as it reflects a personal part of themselves. I applaud all entrants who were courageous and willing to give it a go and I hope that they felt gratified by the many members of our community who viewed their works and admired their skills.

In addition, the visual arts department prioritises an artist in residence program and several excursion opportunities for our boys to work with practicing artists, visit museums and galleries to take part in art workshops and see work displayed and exhibited to further develop their artistic expression and appreciation.

Music

The Music department provides 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. The School was able to celebrate its foundation with a marvellous concert at Hamer Hall in the second half of 2023

The combined Schools' Orchestra Concert is an event hosted by Scotch which features student musicians from a range of schools in the area; our Music Captain and Vice-Captain led the organization of the event and conducted it in the evening.

The Autumn Concert Festival comprises three concerts presented during May, showcasing the Scotch College Music School Ensembles. The concerts were indeed a celebration of excellence, participation and joy in performance. There was a wide variety of ensembles involved, including concert bands, stage, big, swing, George Dreyfuss and show bands, string orchestra and ensembles, a variety of choirs, symphonic wind, intermediate and Symphony orchestra. The Violin Concerto, featuring three outstanding violin soloists, was indeed a highlight of the festival.

The Winter Music Concert was held on June 11, 2024. This is a key concert for Orchestras and larger ensembles. We enjoyed a full house and outstanding quality of performances.

24 Hour Hike

This is a significant event in the Scotch calendar. Led by Keith Oatley and volunteer staff members. The students left school on the afternoon of Thursday 7 March and spent 24 hours hiking in groups to raise money and to build resilience and character. 115 boys and 2 staff hiked on tracks in the Mt Disappointment State Forest centered around our Basecamp at Number One Camp, Clonbinane. 14 additional staff and 21 boys helped run the hike in supporting roles, including setting up and packing down, preparing and serving food, keeping track of the hikers and manning our camps. The average distance hiked was an impressive 64.4 km. The winners of the Andrew Kelso Award for greatest distance hiked with 107 km. The winners of the Roger Slade Award for greatest distance by a Year 9 student walked 80.5 km. Around \$52,000 has been pledged for the charity, Berry Street.

Concussion Programme

Dr David Munro PhD Concussion Trained Physiotherapist presented to staff and to families early in Term 2. Our Concussion Management protocol was developed in line with AIS and APS concussion procedures and best practice. It was presented to the staff in May and the management of concussion is now flowing through to Form Teachers (Year 7,8) and Heads of House (Year 9-12) as managers of the process of return to school, sport training and competitive sport, in line with medical advice (which is signed off through our compulsory documentation) and supported by our Health Centre.

Services Programme

The Services programme continues to be an integral aspect of the College's offering:

- Year 9 – 11 Cadets and Military Band, Pipes and Drums, Indigenous Partnership Program.
- Year 9 only - Adventurers, Outdoor Expeditions, Sport First Aid,
- Year 10 only - AFL Umpiring, Outdoor Leadership, Strength Training, Activities on offer: Fly Fishing, Gold, Martial Arts, Mountain Bike Riding, Scuba Riding, Sea kayaking, Surf Fitness and Yoga.
- Year 11 - The following service-Learning immersion programs are running:
 - Ballarat (special needs); Children and Family Support; Conservation; Environmental Action; Food Immersion; Helping Others; LEPP; Music.

Cadets

Most of our Year 9 group take part in Cadets, in addition to parading each Wednesday, the boys in Cadets attend two camps throughout the year, which are an extension of the work students complete in the Activities program during Term. In addition to the Pipe Band and Military Band, several cadets were involved in this year's ANZAC Day parade.

Tiwi College Year 10 Immersion Trip (week 2 Term 3)

A very successful trip was held, in which Year 10 students and four staff were warmly welcomed into the school and communities. The group embraced the culture and interactions with our Tiwi friends. We participated in welcome to country ceremonies, storytelling around campfires, sport programs with their girls and boys and in class support. Our boys also assisted in cleaning up their design and tech facility and assembling furniture for their classrooms.

Learning also took place through visits to culturally significant sites, fishing and hunting for mud crabs.

Community

Year 10 Respectful Relationships Day

The respectful relationships program is run in collaboration with MLC. A few students are trained as leaders, and then lead small groups. The day involves half the Scotch students attending MLC and half the MLC students attending Scotch College. There are also some sessions for all students with guest speakers and an additional parent webinar.

This program has evolved over time and is a cornerstone program in our pastoral care area. It is imperative that we have our students understand the legal ramifications around consent; that they engage with young women; that they have accurate factual knowledge and that they consider the ethical issues in relationships.

We are excited to collaborate with staff to evolve our program, to ensure we have a properly scoped, sequenced and embedded program for Scotch senior school students.

Year 9 and 10 Police Presenter

The Police Schools' Liaison Officer, presented to these year levels (separately) in Term 2, around managing their own and others' safety online and in real life.

The presentations are beneficial for students: it raises awareness of their legal rights and responsibilities, encourages help seeking when required, provokes discussions that can take place in tutor group, and minimizes potential harms in risk taking behaviour.

Year 10 Dealing with Conflict and Year 9 Procrastination

Year 9 and 10 students had workshop activities with Toolbox, an external organization. The workshops were age appropriate, and supported the social/emotional growth and development of students with hands-on role playing, workshop activities and support. This is the first time we have had this group with our students, and we will be gathering stakeholders to feedback to assess effectiveness and engagement and to build upon the program in future years.

Year 8 Elephant Ed

Sex education sessions were held by this external group, as part of a developing, scope and sequenced program. We have used Elephant Ed in the past, and they feature as part of the Respectful Relationships program at Year 10.

Future Pathways Programs

The key aim of Future Pathways at Scotch College is to engage each boy in building their understanding of self, the world of work and to consider how this will impact their future choices. We hope that this will enable them to create and maintain a fulfilling life, that incorporates work and their values, in the context of ongoing change and lifelong learning.

Our focus is on building the skills and understanding of self that boys need to create the future they want.

Our weekly newsletter gives boys and parents access to a myriad of opportunities, job spotlights, course updates, plus articles about wellbeing and navigating school and life at uni.

We have developed units of work with a Careers Focus for Years 7-12 to complete in Tutor groups, using materials from Study, Work, Grow designed to support boys in identifying strengths, interests and job ready skills. Our Year 11 mentoring program has expanded after the successful Pilot last year and we thank OSCA for their support in finding mentors from across the Scotch Family.

This is an excellent opportunity for nominated boys to gain one on one support and insight into the world of work, networking and begin to develop an understanding of employability skills. The program helps boys build their confidence and sense of direction as they head into their final year of schooling.

We have always worked closely with individual boys and their families in Years 10 -12, supporting their subject choices and future decisions beyond the gates; this work continues, and we hope to extend our touch points with these groups throughout the year. Year 10 and 11 are now completing compulsory personality and attributes profiling with the Morrisby report and the VIA strengths survey; this data has been incredibly helpful in effectively supporting students and personalising our work with them.

We have run orientation morning teas for all boys in Years 10 and 12. Our VET program has continued to expand with boys enrolled in everything from Digital Gaming to Aviation. With the introduction of the Certificate III Sport and Recreation on campus next year, the school can offer more students a VET pathway. The Inspire Series is bringing in guest speakers for Years 10 and 11 to cover areas such as personal branding, goal setting and leadership development. We have also had a number of evening guest presenters for boys and parents across a range of subjects including the creative industries, what it is like to be a doctor, applying to Harvard and ANU early entry. These new initiatives have been well received by families and boys.

The Careers Convention format for early Term 3 allowed us to combine a number of initiatives across three school days with the Courses Expo, Careers Panels and a Beyond the Gates talk being presented to boys with the support of OSCA and the YOB's.

Student Achievements

IMO The International Mathematical Olympiad is the most prestigious mathematics competition in the world. Each country sends a team of their six finest young mathematicians to compete. One year 10 students have been selected for the third time to represent Australia and is currently participating in the UK. The results will be determined shortly.

University Extension Mathematic

Two Scotch College students achieved 99 and 98 (out of 100), in the University of Melbourne Extension Mathematics course for Semester 1. This ranks them 1st and 2nd out of all the Year 12 students in the state who completed the subject.

APIO The Asia-Pacific Informatics Olympiad is one of the most demanding programming competitions in the world. Another Year 10 student was selected to represent Australia and achieved a Bronze medal for his performance.

UNSW ProgComp

This is one of the foremost programming competitions in Australia. Students compete in teams of up to three. A team of Scotch boys placed first in Victoria, and have been invited to compete in the national finals at UNSW.

Mathematics Journal Publication

A Year 12 student and his teacher Dr D Treeby have completed some original mathematical research that has recently been accepted for publication in *The American Mathematical Monthly*, the mostly widely read mathematics journal in the world. Edward and Dr Treeby discovered a novel extension of the so-called *Prouhet-Tarry-Escott problem*, showing that certain signed sums of powers of consecutive integers are arbitrarily close to zero.

Australian Mathematical Olympiad

This is the most prestigious mathematics competition at the national level.

Scotch was the only school in Australia to have a student achieve a perfect score. He also won gold. Another student also won gold, three students won silver, and six received bronze

Mathematical Olympiad Selection School

Seven students received an invitation go to the Mathematical Olympiad Selection School, they will be contesting a place in the team that represents Australia in the International Mathematical Olympiad. This represents the pinnacle level of achievement in mathematics for high school age students.

Australian Invitational Informatics Olympiad

This is the most prestigious programming competition at the national level.

Scotch was the only school in Australia to have two students achieve Gold. We also have three students who won bronze.

Informatics Olympiad Selection School

Four students were being invited to attend the Informatics Olympiad Selection School, they will be contesting a place in the team that represents Australia in the International Olympiad in Informatics.

Da Vince Decathlon

The Year 7 team were awarded first place (out of 19 competing teams) and won Scotch College a perpetual trophy and individual gold medals for themselves.

Each team of eight students competed in 10 categories (Code breaking, Creative Production, English, Ideation, Science, Art and Poetry, Cartography, Engineering, Mathematics and Legacy). Our boys earned first place in Cartography, Science, Math's and Legacy and second place for Code.

Student Voice

Our student leaders have been actively involved in the recognition of International Women's Day and IDAHOBIT (sexual diversity). The Prefects have delivered presentations in Assembly on various themes related to people they admire. They also played a game of netball against the Prefects from Lauriston.

Mother's Day

We celebrated with our Year 8 mother and son breakfast in the Boykett Room, with Vice Principal, Head of Senior School, Katrina Brennan as guest speaker. In addition, OSCA organized the annual Year 12 mother and son breakfast at Leonda. These were wonderful opportunities to celebrate the important women in our students' lives.

Evonne Goolagong Foundation

The Scotch Senior School were excited to welcome Evonne Goolagong and Roger Cawley to an assembly and hear from previous School Captain, Dion Whitfield, about the work of the Foundation. Our students donated money through our giving and casual clothes day.

Leadership

Over the past twelve months, the Principal has developed a new leadership structure designed to meet the evolving needs of the school. The Executive Team has been expanded to ten members who represent the dual priorities of educational excellence and sound business management. By integrating roles that focus on both academic

leadership and operational efficiency, we can ensure the school remains a nurturing place for students whilst meeting our governance obligations. The new structure also embraces a senior leadership team that work with the executive team to support our mission to provide a high-quality education within a well-managed and forward-thinking institution. The Executive Team led by our new Principal has been working extensively with Council to develop a formalised strategic plan that champions progress inspired by our Presbyterian and Scottish heritage. Our mission to be a beacon for boys' education, forming enlightened learners of good character, committed to shaping a better future.

Governance

The Principal transition process has required the School Council to remain focussed and united in order to maintain an environment where boys can continue to thrive despite significant change occurring in the organisation around them. It is very pleasing to report that Council has not only met the transition challenge but has been able to make considerable progress in planning for the future.

The strategic planning process was commenced in 2022 as the Principal transition process began to unfold and involved extensive stakeholder consultation with all branches of the Scotch community, including boys, parents, staff (both teaching and non-teaching), OSCA and the Foundation. This process has continued throughout 2023 to date and has enabled a comprehensive understanding of key considerations for future planning.

As Council formulates its strategic response to the key considerations it is giving thoughtful consideration to how we not only provide a first-class academic education, but form 'enlightened learners of good character committed to building a better future' and how we might advance learnings that appreciates beauty, pursues goodness and discerns truth'.

The Strategic plan is designed to provide greater clarity to all the School's stakeholders on the direction the Council is looking to take the school; and mark the beginning in our latest chapter of shared endeavors, to make Scotch an even better school, under our 10th Principal, Dr Scott Marsh.

It is hoped that the adoption of this approach will provide clarity and meaning to the plan when it is ultimately communicated to the School community at the start of 2025.

The members of Council continue to demonstrate a deep love and regard for the College 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.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I can report, with confidence that the College is currently in a strong position within the marketplace, with high demand for places. The College remains committed to improving and refining its programmes in addition to 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.

Together with the Council and Principal, I look forward to working with all the Scotch community in continuing to advance Scotch for the glory of god, for the good of our country and for the advancement of learning.

Mr Hamish Taddell
CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL

OTHER REPORTS

CLERK'S REPORT (Min 72)

The Clerk of Assembly is to report to the General Assembly:

1. on the state of the church records with any recommendations;
2. on the administration and adequacy of the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy;

The Clerks of Assembly are to report annually on the Conflict of Interest Policy (see regulation 6).

This is the first report of the current Clerk and there has been limited time since 1 July 2024 to review records and evaluate the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy. The Clerk has attempted to gain a clear and accurate snapshot of the current state of the matters above and reports as follows.

Church Records

The Clerk is to oversee annually a review of the records of all presbyteries, committees, boards and councils. The Clerk has attempted to locate and collate all prior reviews in the tables below. Gaps in the table do not necessarily mean no review was undertaken but rather that the Clerk has been unable to verify the review as he does not have access to the physical records dispersed throughout the state.

Presbytery Minutes

Below is a table that shows the current state of the annual presbytery minute book reviews. Assembly members will note several gaps in the table.

Presbytery	2022	2023	2024
Flinders	05/2022	26/07/2023	
Geelong	11/2022		27/08/2024
Gippsland	03/2022	15/05/2023	
Maroondah	18/10/2022		30/04/2024
Melbourne East	05/2022	15/05/2023	
Melbourne North	06/2022		
Melbourne West	05/2022	27/07/2023	
North East Victoria	06/2022	15/05/2023	
North Western Victoria	04/2022	25/07/2023	
South West Victoria	06/2022		27/08/2024
Western Victoria		16/10/2023	

In reviewing previous reviews, the Clerk observes that reviews have largely considered what is present in the minutes. Are meeting dates consistent, are confirmed minutes signed, are all pages present, are the minute numbers sequential, is each minute full and complete such that a future reader can understand what transpired.

There remains room to review what is not present in the minutes, that is to say what is absent. While this could be infinite in reality it is only necessary to look for evidence within the minutes demonstrating that certain obligations have been fulfilled, such as:

1. Have any five-year visitations occurred? (4.86)
2. Have all charges submitted their audited accounts and budgets? (4.81)
3. Have congregational records been reviewed? (4.96)

4. Have elder commissions been called for and sustained? (3.48.4)
5. Has 'special oversight' of appointment charges occurred? (4.63.1a)
6. Have cases of GMP non-contribution been inquired into? (4.84.3)

Processes

At times reviews have reminded presbyteries of steps that were either overlooked or not minuted. There are other times when a presbytery has performed an action that has prerequisites. It is not always the case that the minutes contain evidence that all the prerequisites have been met. It is helpful to minute each prerequisite having been met and on that basis proceed. This is particularly important for inductions or ordinations where the competency of the court's decision to proceed could be challenged because the necessary steps have been overlooked. Following the rules, step by step, will ensure the legitimacy of a minister or ministry is not challenged on procedural grounds.

Committee Minutes

Below is a table the shows the current state of the annual committee minute reviews. Assembly members will again note significant gaps in the table.³⁷

Committee	2021	2022	2023	2024
Archives				
Australian Presbyterian World Mission (Vic)				
Board of Investment and Finance				05/02/2024
Building and Property			09/2023	
Business				
Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act (2021)				
Church and Nation	YES			
Church Planting				08/02/2024
Clerkship				
Code and General Administration			16/07/2023	
Conciliation				
Defence Force Chaplaincy	YES			
Exit Students				
Health and Community Chaplaincy	YES			
Maintenance of the Ministry				05/02/2024
METRO	YES			
Ministry Development				
Presbyterian Youth and Children				
Safe Church				
Selection	18/11/2021			
Social Services				

³⁷ The Assessor Committee (which has not met in many years), the Ballot and Special Judicial Committees (that meet during Assembly) and any ad hoc committees have been excluded from this table.

Committee	2021	2022	2023	2024
State News				
Theological Education				
Women's Ministries Victoria	YES			

Boards and Councils

The process of determining which boards and councils to review is still being explored by the Clerk.

Other Records

While the minutes of meetings are significant records, there are other records of the church that require care and safekeeping such as 'The Formula' signed frequently in the life of the church, electoral registers, confirmation of edicts read etc. The Clerk is still acquainting himself with these other records of the church and is unable to provide an in-depth accounting of the state of these records. An up-to-date report of the state of the church's records will be submitted by the Clerk to the next General Assembly.

Living Documents

The Clerk has begun identifying all the documents that have an ongoing significant role in the life of the church including rules, regulations, policies, statements, codes, guidelines, frameworks, protocols, procedures, deeds, descriptions, memorandums, manuals, processes, and terms. At the time of writing more than 120 documents that have an ongoing role have been identified. Documents from the Presbyterian Church of Australia such as the Constitution, Procedure and Practice which includes the Code of Discipline and the National Safe Ministry Framework have not yet been considered.

With such a significant corpus it is easy to see how the uninitiated novice might get lost and be unaware of considerations located outside the Code. Being experienced and well acquainted does not change the voluminous amount there is to know and remember. After further deliberations the Clerk may make a recommendation to a future Assembly concerning the myriad documents that facilitate the life of the church within the modern context.

Minute Mediums

Currently across presbytery and assembly committees there are two prominent minute mediums. The first uses the Kalamazoo system. The second uses Collins Guard Book No. 903.

The Kalamazoo binders are no longer in production, but the paper is still available for purchase although the costs are increasing to the point where an alternative may become necessary. Kalamazoo pages (which are subject to Intellectual Property protection such that we cannot legally make our own) are now \$0.57 per A4 sheet. When 11 presbyteries and 24 plus committees all minute their respective meetings having a permanent record in the Kalamazoo format becomes a costly exercise.

Guard Books are specialised for archive purposes and have pages missing so that once minutes are pasted into the book the spine does not bulge. While a promising medium Collins has now discontinued production. The Clerk's Office has already secured all remaining Collins Guard Books in Australia. As only three Collins Guard Books remain it is no longer a viable medium for future minutes. These remaining Guard Books will be made available to those already using the medium on a first come

first served basis upon their current minute book being filled. SBS have started producing a replica of the Collins Guard Book retailing for ~\$99 for 300 pages, the quality of which has not yet been assessed.

Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy

Upon taking office the Clerk was unable to locate the register associated with the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality. After making enquiries it became clear that the register was to be created coordinate with the first record being entered. As there are no records there is no register. This means that since the introduction of the policy no individual has had need to enter a record in the Register.

The Clerk has also asked committee conveners if they were aware of their obligation under the policy to 'promote awareness of this Policy among the members of their committees' (Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy 2.b.ii). While some conveners were aware of the policy's existence only one knew of this obligation tucked away within one of its clauses.

As the Clerk has been overseeing the register (that has no records) for only a limited time, it would seem premature to provide an assessment of the adequacy of the policy at this time. Even so, it appears evident that ignorance is a significant issue that limits the usefulness of the policy.

Conflict of Interest Policy

The following brief report is based on the collective experience of the Assembly Clerks in their participation in the courts and committees of the church together with reflections on the reviews of both presbytery and assembly committee minutes.

It is pleasing to see that across the church the consideration of conflicts of interest has now become a regular part of a meeting's agenda. At the start of each meeting it is now minuted that the moderator, chairman or convener asked if there were any conflicts of interest as defined in the policy in respect of the agenda. Both courts and committees should record that following the question that either: 1) no declarations were forthcoming or 2) the declarations, how adjudged by the court or committee (actual, potential or perceived), and how, if necessary, the conflict was managed.

It appears to the Clerks that most members are very aware of conflicts that pertain to direct personal financial gain. The policy is broader in its view of conflict and in clause 4 it speaks of interests 'whether financial or other' where an individual 'could be influenced'.

The policy also speaks of managing 'potential' and 'perceived' conflicts of interest. It is always good to minute what type of interest the court identifies and how the interest is managed. Identifying and managing the interests demonstrates the meeting's desire to conduct itself in a way that is open, honest and above reproach. It is the aim of the policy to ensure that the church, and its various meetings, commends itself as a whole as having the highest standards of integrity and where possible transparency, for the good governance of PCV.

It is the view of the Clerks that some guidelines or examples may assist courts and committees to better understand the policy, interests (actual, potential and perceived) and some ways in which they might be managed.

The Future

While the Clerk is able to make 'any recommendations' concerning church records, the Clerk has only had nine weeks to observe the current state of play. The Clerk therefore anticipates submitting a more detailed and comprehensive report to the 2025 October General Assembly with recommendations on ways in which the work of the PCV might be more effective in respect to its documents and records.

Cameron B Garrett
CLERK OF ASSEMBLY

PAST MODERATOR'S REPORT (Min 25)

It has been a privilege and honour to fill the role as Moderator for the past 12 months representing the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. Duties have been wide ranging but GAV (BB 2023 min 26) lists a number of duties which the assembly requests of the moderator. These duties were in three main areas:

- i) visiting a number of allocated charges upon invitation,
- ii) visiting one or more mission field(s) where our Victorian APWM missionaries are serving and
- iii) attending assembly committees upon invitation.

After offering to visit the churches listed I received invitations from 13 of the 14 churches and at the time of writing I have visited ten of the 13 churches however health issues have meant that I have had to postpone arranged visits to a further three churches. The plan is to catch up on those visits as health allows.

The missions trip to visit Calvin and Ruth Mathys in PNG is arranged for September but I am uncertain health-wise (sciatica) as to whether we can travel. After months of planning and medical preparations on both sides we are disappointed that this health issue has arisen. Many are praying about this matter and we continue to trust God through it all.

The third assembly request to visit assembly committees was taken up by a few committees – particularly late last year, and I thank them for their warm welcome. It would be good if committees / conveners could add a Moderator's visit to their agendas to occur at some stage of the year.

As well as the activities defined by last year's assembly, the Moderator is involved in other visits and functions. It has been encouraging to be present at a number of services where candidates have been licensed or inducted/ordained and others inducted into charges. We have also had the privilege of being present at Government House for an Australia day function, a musical presentation from a visiting Korean delegation, delivering a brief Christmas message for Christian FM radio, the Church and Nation's Colloquium and the college dinner and college commencement and graduation service. There was a service at RAAF Williams, Point Cook in November for the unveiling of a memorial plaque in honour of Chaplain (SQNLDR) Peter Owen which I was able to attend.

Visiting Churches

Part of the role of the Moderator is to visit a number of congregations to encourage them and to bring them the greetings of the Assembly. It is important for congregations to be reminded that they are part of the larger state-wide church and that they have fellow churches – fellow brothers and sisters who are experiencing the same joys or difficulties. The state of Churches across the state (judging by the ones I have visited) varies greatly. Some are experiencing a time of growth, some a time of stability, some a time of contraction and struggles, some have full time pastors, others do not and are covered by visiting preachers. It was a special joy to visit/hear about one or two churches that I have known well from the past who are now experiencing a time of expansion and growth.

Commission for Christian Institutions

The Commission for Christian Institutions (CFCI) is a commission of this Assembly which is probably not on everyone's radar, but it has met regularly during the past 12 months. These meetings have primarily been about interviewing and appointing or otherwise, prospective new board members for our Christian institutions such as the various schools and Presbyterian Care Victoria Limited. It is always a pleasure to be able to appoint godly and wise appointees to these boards

School Visits

It has been a pleasure to visit some of our associated schools and colleges. My wife and I have visited Scotch College on two occasions, once for the Year 12 graduation in October 2023 and again to give a brief message at the Easter service in March 2024. It is always a privilege to proclaim the gospel, but a special privilege to do so to 700 plus Scotch boys. We received a very warm welcome from the principal and his wife on these occasions.

We attended a function celebrating 40 years of education at the Belgrave Heights Christian School. This milestone represents four decades of dedication, learning, and the nurturing of young minds, and it was a great joy to be present for the commemoration.

St Andrew's Christian College welcomed us for their senior and junior end of year functions in December 2023 as well as the official opening of their new Administration, Science and Technology Wing in June 2024. A modern well-equipped building to cater for their education needs. A great witness for the school is that they are always well organised for such events and so welcoming to their guests.

Presbyterian Ladies' College has indicated that they will be celebrating 150 years next year and have a number of functions organised with input from the church welcome.

Assessors

One role of the moderator is to find appropriate assessors for presbyteries which request them. The table below details the appointments that I have been involved with in the past 12 months. There may be other ongoing assessors appointed previously who are still serving in a presbytery.

Date Appointed	Name	Presbytery	Date Discharged
21/11/2023	Robert White	Melbourne North	16/04/2024
21/11/2023	Phillip Mercer	Melbourne North	16/04/2024
21/11/2023	Graham Nicholson	Melbourne North	16/04/2024
07/02/2024	Bruce Riding	North West Victoria	Ongoing
Previous	Darren Middleton	North East Victoria	23/03/2024
Previous	Luke McSeveny	North East Victoria	23/03/2024
17/04/2024	Don Elliot	North West Victoria	25/06/2024
17/04/2024	Neil Chambers	North West Victoria	25/06/2024
17/04/2024	David Schulz	North West Victoria	25/06/2024
29/05/2024	Russ Grinter	North East Victoria	Ongoing
29/05/2024	Robert White	North East Victoria	Ongoing
19/08/2024	Don Elliot	Maroondah	Ongoing
19/08/2024	Graham Nicholson	Maroondah	Ongoing

Finding willing assessors can be extremely difficult, so I express my sincere appreciation for those who have taken on these extra duties. Please consider serving as an assessor if requested in the future – it is a way of serving the wider church and our brothers and sisters who request assistance.

Response to Public Matters

There are times when the moderator is called upon to do something in a particular matter. In our polity it is very difficult for a moderator (or clerk or law agent or any other individual for that matter) to make any public statement. As an example, this past year a small country church had a serious public issue where it was being attacked and provoked on social media and eventually in printed media over a local issue. It quickly spread to the moderator and the church office. It struck me that the Presbyterian church is not equipped to respond quickly to such matters and there has been no real training on dealing with these types of issues. The presbytery has the power to respond but has a delay before it can meet, by which time the damage has been done. As I see the best that could be done is for two or three (eg Moderator, Clerk and Office Manager) be given some training and have resources made available so that they can assist with advice and resources.

As I conclude this report there are a number of people to thank. The Clerk's office has been particularly helpful. I have seen three clerks go through the office (one an Acting Clerk but no less competent) – a rare experience: Rev John Wilson as he resigned from the position, Rev Peter Phillips as he took on the role of Acting Clerk until a new clerk was appointed. The Rev Cameron Garrett was appointed as Clerk at the May Commission of Assembly and commenced the role of Clerk on 1 July 2024. They have all been very helpful to the Moderator. A huge thank you to Siew Teng Yap (ST) in the office for her obliging and expert assistance in so many things.

Thank you as well to my Chaplains Rev Luke McSeveny and Rev Gerald Vanderwert for their support and assistance. I had the joy of attending Gerald's retirement function after 36 years of ministry in the one church. It was a great evening testifying to the faithfulness of our great God and to the perseverance and faithfulness of Gerald and his wife Desma. Many blessings have flowed to the church from such a long and stable ministry.

Thank you to my wider family for their support and prayers throughout the year and the music at the commencement service in October 2023.

Finally thank you to my wife Ann for her ongoing support and encouragement in the role. Ann has always given wise advice and has been a great encouragement, especially to the wives of ministers as we moved around the state.

Ian C Hutton
PAST MODERATOR

PRIVACY OFFICER (Min 80)

Data and privacy breaches are increasingly common in this inter-connected and online landscape that all organisations operate in and have serious consequences – for example, this may include legal and reputational ramifications.

Privacy compliance is, therefore, an important and essential part of the operations of the PCV in the 21st century. I thank the Assembly for working to ensure that privacy compliance is maintained in the PCV.

Courts of the church, Assembly committees and PCV organisations which utilise file sharing cloud-based services, must have an access and management protocol. This protocol must state who needs to have access to files, for demonstrably legitimate reasons, in line with their role(s) and responsibilities. This protocol must also state who is responsible to manage the files and manage access to, and removal from access to, these files. The person responsible for management should review access on a quarterly basis to confirm that people who have finished up in their role no longer have access to the files.

In addition, the type of access needs to be considered for each individual – i.e. should that individual, by virtue of their role, be able to edit files or have read-only access.

Consider if the manager of the account should enable “track downloads” in the account settings (if this is feature of the service) and activate as considered necessary.

If, in the case of a complaint or Safe Church related matter being raised to the relevant body *about* one of the members of that body, it is essential to ensure that the subject of the complaint or matter *is not able to access any files relating to the complaint or matter*. Always open a new stand-alone folder for any such complaint or matter and re-invite authorised individuals only to access the file.

Members of the Assembly are requested to seriously consider their privacy security practices in the use of file sharing cloud-based services and take appropriate preventative action through adhering to this advice offered in this report. Thank you. For any concerns about data breaches within PCV presbyteries, sessions and organisations please contact the PCV Privacy Officer or visit www.safechurchpcv.org.au/privacy

Please take the time to ensure that the data collection, storage, use and disclosure practices of your charge/court of the church/committee/organisation, within the PCV, are compliant with the privacy requirements as described at www.safechurchpcv.org.au/privacy. Any questions or requests for training or support in the area of privacy may be directed to the Privacy Officer.

The Privacy Officer continues to provide:

1. Responses to privacy enquiries and complaints within the PCV.
2. Practical advice, information and resources, such as privacy-compliant forms, via the Privacy page at the Safe Church PCV website.
3. Relevant privacy legislative changes updates to the PCV via email communications to Presbyteries for distribution to Sessions.

4. Ongoing privacy training to new PCV employees and other PCV personnel, committees and organisations as requested.

In the case of a suspected privacy data breach, please always contact the Privacy Officer the PCV. The PCV must be prepared to conduct a quick assessment of a suspected data breach to determine whether it is likely to result in serious harm, and as a result require notification externally to the PCV.

All data breaches must be addressed according to the relevant process and requirements of the legislation. The Privacy Officer will work with Assembly members, PCV organisations, staff and authorised PCV personnel, to ensure this is undertaken accordingly.

Fiona Bligh
PCV PRIVACY OFFICER

TRUSTS CORPORATION REPORT

TRUSTS CORPORATION (Min 27)

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 (Victoria) 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

During the year our investment adviser, JB Were, shifted from a defensive tilt. They increased exposure to domestic and global share equities to respond to rallying markets. This has continued to benefit the capital base as markets have grown throughout 2024.

Overall, the current portfolio allocation is still within target range of the broader strategic asset allocation.

The investment committee has embarked on a comprehensive review of the current investment management offering. The focus being to consider how the current portfolios are being managed consistent with their perpetual nature and overall long-term growth and stewardship.

This process has seen the committee investigate the offerings of other peer providers along with a review of the incumbent, JB Were. The investment committee is due to report back to the Trusts Corporation later this year on its findings.

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 funds invested by the Trusts Corporation are comprised of the following amounts:

	\$ 2024	\$ 2023
Common Fund		
Balance of Trusts and Committee Funds	66,561,060	47,241,471
Income Suspense Account	3,885,147	4,277,974
Common Fund Reserve	46,783,739	40,062,115
Total Common Fund	117,229,946	103,934,045
 Separately Invested Funds	 33,883,997	 51,875,236
 Trusts Corporation Funds	 187,502	 -
Plus Payables	35,787	34,599
 Total Funds Invested	 151,337,233	 155,843,879

The Common Fund Investments have yielded income of \$4.0 million after operating costs (2023 \$3.2M) as well as capital gains of \$7.0M (2023 \$4.6M). This represents an overall return of 10.2% (2023 8.9%).

The annual interest rates paid on amounts invested in the Common Fund for the year ended 30 June 2024 were:

Common Fund interest rates paid on funds	
General Assembly, Committees and Trusts	9.0%
Sites Reserve funds	5.0%
Deposits in the Capital Fund	1.0%
Congregational general funds	4.0%

A total of \$4.7 million (2023 \$3.3M) was distributed to church committees, groups and congregations during the year.

Movement in Balance of Funds held

The movement of the balance of funds held by the Trusts Corporation is explained as follows:

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Common Fund Movements		
Income Suspense Account		
Investment Income	4,273,254	3,433,101
Distributions to Trusts and Committees	(4,666,052)	(3,274,233)
	(392,798)	158,867
Common Fund Reserve		
Capital Gains/(Losses)	6,982,949	4,664,170
Expenses	(261,325)	(234,979)
	6,721,624	4,429,192
Common Fund Movements		
Deposits/(Withdrawals) of Trust Funds	6,967,074	10,958,676
Total change in Common Fund balance	13,295,901	15,546,735
Separately Invested Funds		
Investment Income	949,095	2,431,183
Capital Gains/(Losses)	2,666,931	2,135,825
Deposits/(Withdrawals) of Trust Funds	(21,607,264)	771,822
Change in Separately Invested Funds	(17,991,238)	5,338,831
Total change in Funds	(4,695,337)	20,885,566
Trusts Corporation Funds	187,502	-
Trade and Other Payables	35,787	34,599
Total Funds Invested	151,337,233	155,843,879

For more detailed information concerning the funds managed by the Trusts Corporation please refer to the Annual Financial Report distributed with the Assembly papers.

SCPT Distribution

After consultation, the Church Planting and Ministry Development Committees have suggested an allocation of the \$3.775M special distribution as follows: \$2M to the Property Development Fund and \$1.775M to the Ministry Development Committee.

Bequests

The following bequest have been received during the year:

Estate of	Beneficial Purpose	Amount
Margaret Muir Stephens	PWMU for its general purposes	\$5,000
Marion Isabel Jennings	Presbyterian Church of Victoria	\$335,509

National Redress Scheme

Since last reporting to the General Assembly two new requests for information have been received and responded to. The decision of the regulator is pending.

Allan Trust

As previously advised the Trusts Corporation has been working to clarify the terms of the Allan Trust and how funds might be applied by the church to meet the terms of the will, especially in the context of whether the trust might be used to fund a PYC Youth Worker.

An opinion was sought from Michael Shand KC on the question. In his opinion:

‘The substantial intention of the testator was to give effect to the wider charitable purpose he nominated – **that the youth of Victoria may be trained in a systematic course of Christian religious teaching in the practical duties of life.** It was not limited to the detailed scheme.’

The advice encouraged the Trusts Corporation as a first step to document the respects in which it is now neither practicable nor possible to carry out the detailed arrangements stipulated by Mr Allan in his Will, consistent with his stated purposes. Then it is proposed to develop revised arrangements that can operate effectively in the present day and meet those purposes.

The Trusts Corporation engaged Mr Stephen Leslie of SJL Consulting to assist it in that process. Mr Leslie conducted a series of interviews with various persons within the church who have an interest in the matter including current and former members of the Presbyterian Youth and Children committee, former Youth Workers and others who are engaged in training and education.

The reasons why the detailed arrangements in the will are no longer practical were documented and a consideration of revised arrangements was undertaken.

Mr Shand’s opinion states:

‘... revised arrangements need not necessarily go into the level of detail expressed by Mr Allan in his Will. They may have some characteristics that reflect the original detailed arrangements. They must be responsive to the essential elements of his stated end and design. They–
(a) will be directed to the youth of Victoria;
(b) will promote a course of Christian religious teaching that is systematic; and
(c) will have a focus on the practical duties of life.’

When considering alternative arrangements, it became clear that the activities of the METRO committee are a much better fit with these essential elements than the activities of PYC or specifically funding its Youth Worker.

The Trusts Corporation approved the following revised arrangements which are attached as an appendix. The mechanism to implement this is a rearrangement of the funding of both the PYC and METRO committees.

The proposal and mechanism were explained to both the PYC and METRO committees who subsequently confirmed their support for the proposal.

The funding rearrangement is a swap of METRO General Funds via the General Assembly to PYC; and a transfer of the Allan Bequest from PYC to METRO. The balance of funds in each case are very similar, with the Allan Bequest being the larger of the two. While PYC would have a slightly lower balance of funds available for its purposes, they would only be constrained by the committee regulations which means more income will be available.

The steps required are:

1. The Assembly acknowledge and adopt the alternative arrangements for the application of the Allan Bequest funds.
2. The Assembly approve the transfer of the balance of General Fund of the METRO committee less \$30,000 to fund EquipMETRO which is not consistent with the Allan Bequest back to the General Assembly.
3. The Assembly then applies the former METRO funds (\$700K) to the PYC committee to funds its work.
4. The Allan Bequest funds are transferred to the METRO committee to be applied to funds its work to the extent that they are consistent with the alternative arrangements for the operation of the trust.

Note that s14 of the *Presbyterian Trust Act 1890*, for trust funds not subject to an express trust (METRO fund) empowers the General Assembly to from time to time direct how the funds are managed and dealt with; while those held subject to an express trust (the Allan Bequest) are to be held and dealt with by the corporate trustees (the Trusts Corporation).

14. All property becoming vested in the corporate body of trustees as hereinbefore mentioned or which shall in any manner be acquired by such corporate body shall, so far as the same is subjected to any express trust, be held managed and dealt with by such corporate body in conformity with such expressed trust and shall so far as the same is not subject to any express trust be held managed and dealt with in such manner as the General Assembly may from time to time direct, and such property shall be subject as to the management thereof to the rules or regulations of the General Assembly in force for the .time being which are applicable thereto.

The Trusts Corporation believes this proposal will provide a long term resolution to the challenges of administering the Allan Bequest which have been the subject of so much consideration over many years, and provide for greater ministry within the church.

John Walter
CHAIRMAN

THE ROBERT ALLAN TRUST

Revised Arrangements

In 1878, Mr. Robert Allan of Buninyong left a bequest to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, with the express purpose: *‘that the youth of Victoria may be trained in a systematic course of Christian religious teaching in the practical duties of life’*.

A detailed scheme of arrangement was attached to the will. The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation has documented the reasons why the detailed scheme of arrangement is no longer practical nor conducive to attaining the testator’s true end and design as stated above.

The advice of Senior Counsel³⁸ is:

As trustee of the Robert Allan Trust, the Trusts Corporation has a discretion in the manner of carrying out the stipulated true end and design and discharging their duty to honour the trusts under the Will. It is not restricted to the detailed provisions that prescribed the scheme. Those provisions are not controlling.

And in respect of any revised arrangements:

The revised arrangements will not necessarily go into the level of detail expressed by the testator in his Will. They may have some characteristics that reflect the original detailed arrangements. They must be responsive to the essential elements of his stated end and design. They–

- (a) will be directed to the youth of Victoria;
- (b) will promote a course of Christian religious teaching that is systematic; and
- (c) will have a focus on the practical duties of life.

Revised Arrangements

The METRO committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria oversees three training programs to encourage young people in equipping themselves for ministry through three strands:

- **Being like Jesus:** Personal Godliness
- **Thinking like Jesus:** Theological Reflection
- **Serving like Jesus:** Ministry Skills

It supports two strands of traineeships which are consistent with the terms of the trust:

1. **METRO** – two year, partly funded, full-time, church-based designed to give men and women a taste of local church ministry and theological study. Target: Young adults
2. **YouthMETRO** – a one year, part-time, church-based traineeship, focussed on preparing and growing youth leaders in local churches. Target: 16-20 year-olds

The Trusts Corporation approves the activities of the METRO committee in these areas as an appropriate application of the Allan Trust which is consistent with the true end and purpose of the will.

July 2024

³⁸ Michael Shand KC 22 September 2023

COMMUNICATIONS



COMMUNICATION 1 (Min 49)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

Moderator-General: Rev D Burke

Clerk: Rev L J F Hall

PO Box 510

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1 December 2023

Extract Minute – Overture (vi)

At Sydney, and within the Hurstville Presbyterian Church, the General Assembly of Australia met between 4-7 September 2023 and was constituted with prayer.

Among other things:

31. Overture (vi) – Standing Order 23:

Overture re: Standing Order 23 (questions in the Assembly) was tabled and received.

The overture was stated by Rev. Peter Phillips.

(1) Rev. Peter Phillips moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

(2) Rev. Peter Phillips moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Remit the overture and the following proposed new Standing Order 23 to state assemblies and presbyteries under the Barrier Act procedure with replies to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 December 2024, namely:

Questions

23. Relevant questions may be put by any member through the Moderator to:

- a) the convener for clarification of the report before the Assembly receives it;
- b) the convener after he and the seconder have spoken to the deliverance;
- c) the mover of a notice of motion or an amendment.

2. Grant interim authority, under Article 2.3, to the proposed change to Standing Order 23, so that it will read:

Questions

23. Relevant questions may be put by any member through the Moderator to:

- a) the convener for clarification of the report before the Assembly receives it;
- b) the convener after he and the seconder have spoken to the deliverance;
- c) the mover of a notice of motion or an amendment.

The motion was seconded and approved by not less than two thirds of those present and voting.

Extracted from the records of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia by me, Lesleigh Hall, Assembly Clerk, on Friday, 1 December 2023.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "L. Hall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "L" being large and stylized.

(Rev) Lesleigh Hall
Clerk of Assembly

Overture (vi) Code Committee *anent* Standing Order 23

To the venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia:

Whereas:

- A) The 2019 General Assembly received an overture from seven members of the Assembly seeking an amendment to Standing Order 23 (min. 92);
- B) Standing Order 23 is as follows:

Questions

23. Relevant questions may be put by any member through the Moderator to the Convener of a Committee when the report is before the Assembly, and also after the deliverance as a whole has been moved and seconded.

- C) The Assembly resolved to:
Remit the Overture to the Code Committee with a view to enacting, at the next meeting of the General Assembly, any amendment that may be recommended by that Committee;
- D) The Code Committee (April 2023) resolved to:
Adopt the wording of Standing Order 7.10, utilised by the Victorian State Assembly as the proposed amended wording of Standing Order 23 to be recommended to the 2023 General Assembly of Australia;
- E) Standing Order 7.10 utilised by the Victorian State Assembly is as follows:

‘Relevant questions may be put by any member through the moderator to:
 - a) the convener for clarification of the report before the Assembly receives it;
 - b) the convener after he and the seconder have spoken to the deliverance;
 - c) the mover of a notice of motion or an amendment.’
- F) Standing Order 104 provides that ‘Any proposal to amend or add to these Standing Orders shall be introduced to the General Assembly by overture only’.

Therefore the Code Committee overtures the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia to take the above premises into account and amend the Standing Orders by replacing the existing Standing Order 23 with the following new Standing Order 23:

Questions

23. Relevant questions may be put by any member through the Moderator to:

- a) the convener for clarification of the report before the Assembly receives it;
- b) the convener after he and the seconder have spoken to the deliverance;
- c) the mover of a notice of motion or an amendment.

Or do otherwise as the Assembly may deem fit.

Rev. P.W. Phillips and Rev. Dr J.P. Wilson were appointed to state the Overture.



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

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22 September 2023

Extract Minute – Overture (iv) – Deacon's Vows

At Sydney, and within the Hurstville Presbyterian Church, the General Assembly of Australia met between 4-7 September 2023 and was constituted with prayer.

Among other things:

32. Overture (iv) – Deacon's Vows

Overture re: GAA Deacons Vows was tabled and received.

The overture was stated by Rev. Dr John Wilson.

Questions were asked of the overture.

Rev. Dr John Wilson moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the overture.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Rev. Dr John Wilson moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Remit the overture and the following proposed new Deacons Vows to state assemblies and presbyteries under the Barrier Act procedure with replies to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 December 2024, namely:

Questions for the Deacons-Elect

- (i) Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only rule of faith and practice?
 - (ii) Do you own and accept the Westminster Confession of Faith, as amended by the General Assembly, and read in the light of the Declaratory Statement contained in the Basis of Union adopted by this Church on the 24th day of July, 1901, as an exhibition of the sense in which you understand the Holy Scriptures and as a confession of your faith?
 - (iii) Do you own and accept the purity of worship as practised in this Church?
 - (iv) Do you own and accept the Presbyterian form of government to be founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto?
 - (v) Do you adhere to the acceptance of the call of this Congregation to exercise among them the office of Deacon?
 - (vi) All these things you profess and promise, through grace, as you shall be answerable at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ?
2. Grant interim authority, under Article 2.3, to the proposed change of chapter 6.7 of the GAA Constitution, Procedure and Practice, so that it will read:

Questions for the Deacons-Elect:

- (i) Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only rule of faith and practice?
- (ii) Do you own and accept the Westminster Confession of Faith, as amended by the General Assembly, and read in the light of the Declaratory

Statement contained in the Basis of Union adopted by this Church on the 24th day of July, 1901, as an exhibition of the sense in which you understand the Holy Scriptures and as a confession of your faith?

- (iii) Do you own and accept the purity of worship as practiced in this Church?
- (iv) Do you own and accept the Presbyterian form of government to be founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto?
- (v) Do you adhere to the acceptance of the call of this Congregation to exercise among them the office of Deacon?
- (vi) All these things you profess and promise, through grace, as you shall be answerable at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Arising from the debate, Rev. Dr C. Clausning moved for an insertion of words, namely: "and do you engage firmly and constantly to adhere to the same" after "confession of your faith" in the second vow in both clauses.

The debate on overture (iv) was adjourned. (Min. 78)

78. Overture (iv): Deacon's Vows (Min. 32)

The debate was resumed at the point of Rev. Dr C. Clausning's proposed amendment arising from the debate.

Dr Clausning fell from his amendment in favour of two further amendments provided by notice.

Pursuant to notice, Rev. Dr C. Clausning moved for an insertion of words in vow (ii), in both the remit and the intended interim authority motion, namely:

"and do you engage firmly and constantly to adhere to the same" after "confession of your faith" in the second vow.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Pursuant to notice, Rev. Dr C. Clausning moved for an insertion of words in vow (iv), in both the remit and the intended interim authority motion, namely:

"and do you engage firmly and constantly to adhere to the same" after "confession of your faith" in the second vow.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The motion as amended was moved, as follows:

That the Assembly:

1. Remit the overture and the following proposed new Deacons Vows to state assemblies and presbyteries under the Barrier Act procedure with replies to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 December 2024, namely:

Questions for the Deacons-Elect

- (i) Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only rule of faith and practice?
- (ii) Do you own and accept the Westminster Confession of Faith, as amended by the General Assembly, and read in the light of the Declaratory Statement contained in the Basis of Union adopted by this Church on the 24th day of July, 1901, as an exhibition of the sense in which you understand the Holy Scriptures and as a confession of your faith, and do you engage firmly and constantly to adhere to the same?
- (iii) Do you own and accept the purity of worship as practised in this Church?
- (iv) Do you own and accept the Presbyterian form of government to be founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto, and do you engage firmly and constantly to adhere to the same?
- (v) Do you adhere to the acceptance of the call of this Congregation to exercise among them the office of Deacon?
- (vi) All these things you profess and promise, through grace, as you shall be answerable at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ?

2. Grant interim authority, under Article 2.3, to the proposed change of chapter 6.7 of the GAA Constitution, Procedure and Practice, so that it will read:

Questions for the Deacons-Elect:

- (i) Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only rule of faith and practice?
- (ii) Do you own and accept the Westminster Confession of Faith, as amended by the General Assembly, and read in the light of the Declaratory Statement contained in the Basis of Union adopted by this Church on the 24th day of July, 1901, as an exhibition of the sense in which you

- understand the Holy Scriptures and as a confession of your faith, and do you engage firmly and constantly to adhere to the same?
- (iii) Do you own and accept the purity of worship as practiced in this Church?
 - (iv) Do you own and accept the Presbyterian form of government to be founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto, and do you engage firmly and constantly to adhere to the same?
 - (v) Do you adhere to the acceptance of the call of this Congregation to exercise among them the office of Deacon?
 - (vi) All these things you profess and promise, through grace, as you shall be answerable at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ?

The motion was seconded and approved by not less than two thirds of those present and voting.

Extracted from the records of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia by me, Lesleigh Hall, Assembly Clerk, on Friday, 22 September 2023.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'LJ Hall', written in a cursive style.

(Rev) Lesleigh Hall
Clerk of Assembly

Overture (iv) GAV *anent* Questions for Deacons (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.

The Overture is to be stated by Rev. John Wilson



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

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1 December 2023

Extract Minute – Overture (vii)

At Sydney, and within the Hurstville Presbyterian Church, the General Assembly of Australia met between 4-7 September 2023 and was constituted with prayer.

Among other things:

51. Overture (vii): from: Code Committee (Celebration of the sacraments and Rule 4.2.2):

The Overture was laid on the table and received.

The overture was stated by Rev. Peter Phillips and Rev. Lesleigh Hall.

Questions were asked of the overturists.

The overture was sustained.

The Committee withdrew Overture (iii) Code Committee (Celebration of the sacraments Rule 4.2.2):

(1) Pursuant to notice, Rev. Peter Phillips moved:

That the Assembly:

Remit the overture and the following proposed amended Rule 4.2.2 to state assemblies and presbyteries under the Barrier Act procedure with replies to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 December 2024, namely:

Administration of the Sacraments by Elders and unordained pastoral ministry workers

Elders and unordained pastoral ministry workers may in specified circumstances be authorised by a Presbytery to administer the sacraments.

Before giving this authorisation, the Presbytery must be satisfied as to his having:

- a) an adequate understanding of the theology of the sacraments;
 - b) a proven record of service demonstrating his suitability to take on special responsibilities;
 - c) a satisfactory police record check;
 - d) a current Working with Children Check; and
 - e) completed all Safe Church requirements for a person in leadership;
- and then, in the case of an unordained pastoral ministry worker, Presbytery must also be satisfied as to:
- f) his accreditation in accordance with the rules and regulations of the relevant state church;
 - g) his satisfactory length of membership in the Presbyterian Church of Australia of not less than 12 months; and
 - h) his subscription to the Subordinate Standard of the church read in the light of the Declaratory Statement.

When this authorisation is to apply to ministry within a Charge, Presbytery must satisfy itself:

- i) that there exists a genuine pastoral connection with the Charge that includes the acceptable preaching of the Word to the congregation/s;
- j) that this will be applied only for such occasions fixed by the relevant Session and at the invitation of the Moderator or interim Moderator.

When this authorisation is to apply for ministry in connection with a Federal or State committee, the relevant Presbytery must satisfy itself that:

- k) the purpose for granting such authority is consistent with the designated ministry of that Committee.

When so authorised, those Elders and unordained pastoral ministry workers, when administering the Sacraments, shall use the forms in, or adopt a form congruent with, the most recent Book of Common Order as approved by the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

The Moderator (Interim Moderator) of the Charge or the relevant Committee shall be responsible for the manner in which the sacraments are administered and recorded.

The motion was seconded.

Arising out of the debate, Rev. John McClean moved an amendment to remove sections (c), (d) and (e).

The motion was seconded.

The motion was taken in two parts, namely:

- i) to remove clauses (c) and (d);
- ii) to remove clause (e).

Sub-clause (i) was approved, and clauses (c) and (d) were removed.

Sub-clause (ii) was disapproved.

Pursuant to notice, Mr Paul Cotton moved an amendment to clause (i) [but by amendment, now clause (g)] by adding the words “or teaching” after the word “preaching”, so that it would read:

- i) that there exists a genuine pastoral connection with the Charge that includes the acceptable preaching or teaching of the Word to the congregation/s;

The amendment was seconded and approved.

The amended version of Rule 4.2.2 to be remitted to the lower courts was approved as follows:

Administration of the Sacraments by Elders and unordained pastoral ministry workers

Elders and unordained pastoral ministry workers may in specified circumstances be authorised by a Presbytery to administer the sacraments.

Before giving this authorisation, the Presbytery must be satisfied as to his having:

- a) an adequate understanding of the theology of the sacraments;
 - b) a proven record of service demonstrating his suitability to take on special responsibilities; and
 - c) completed all Safe Church requirements for a person in leadership;
- and then, in the case of an unordained pastoral ministry worker, Presbytery must also be satisfied as to:
- d) his accreditation in accordance with the rules and regulations of the relevant state church;
 - e) his satisfactory length of membership in the Presbyterian Church of Australia of not less than 12 months; and
 - f) his subscription to the Subordinate Standard of the church read in the light of the Declaratory Statement.

When this authorisation is to apply to ministry within a Charge, Presbytery must satisfy itself:

- g) that there exists a genuine pastoral connection with the Charge that includes the acceptable preaching or teaching of the Word to the congregation/s;
- h) that this will be applied only for such occasions fixed by the relevant Session and at the invitation of the Moderator or interim Moderator.

When this authorisation is to apply for ministry in connection with a Federal or State committee, the relevant Presbytery must satisfy itself that:

- i) the purpose for granting such authority is consistent with the designated ministry of that Committee.

When so authorised, those Elders and unordained pastoral ministry workers, when administering the Sacraments, shall use the forms in, or adopt a form congruent with, the most recent Book of Common Order as approved by the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

The Moderator (Interim Moderator) of the Charge or the relevant Committee shall be responsible for the manner in which the sacraments are administered and recorded.

(2) Pursuant to notice, Rev. Peter Phillips moved:

That the Assembly:

Grant interim authority, under Article 2.3, to the proposed change to Rule 4.2.2, as amended. The motion was seconded and approved by not less than two thirds of those present and voting.

(3) Pursuant to notice, Rev. Peter Phillips moved:

That the Assembly:

Not sustain Overtures (i) and (v) as received by the 2019 General Assembly. The motion was seconded and approved.

(4) The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Dismiss Overtures (i) and (v) as received by the 2019 General Assembly. The motion was seconded and approved.

(5) Pursuant to notice, Rev. Peter Phillips moved:

That the Assembly:

Repeal the 2007 General Assembly's Declaration (Min. 94(2)). The motion was seconded and approved.

Extracted from the records of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia by me, Lesleigh Hall, Assembly Clerk, on Friday, 1 December 2023.

Yours sincerely in Christ,



(Rev) Lesleigh Hall
Clerk of Assembly

OVERTURE (vii) Code Committee concerning the Administration of the Sacraments by persons who have not been ordained

To the venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia:

Whereas:

A. The 2019 General Assembly received:

1. Overture (i) from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland asking the General Assembly to amend Rule 4.2.2 so that it would read:

4.2.2. Administration of the Sacraments by Elders, Home Missionaries and other authorised unordained ministry workers

Unordained ministry workers approved by relevant Federal and State Church bodies and Elders may be authorised by the Moderator or Interim Moderator of a Charge to administer the Sacraments.

The Moderator or Interim Moderator of the congregation shall be responsible to Presbytery for the manner in which the Sacraments are administered, and all such cases are to be duly reported to the Presbytery.

Moderators and Interim Moderators are counselled to exercise care so that only Elders, Home Missionaries, and other unordained ministry workers who meet the following criteria are appointed and given the right to administer the Sacraments:

- (a) an adequate understanding of the theology of the Sacraments.
- (b) a proven record of service demonstrating their suitability to take on special responsibilities.
- (c) a genuine pastoral connection with the congregation that includes the preaching of the Word to that congregation.

Elders, Home Missionaries, and unordained ministry workers, when administering the Sacraments, shall consult and use the forms in the most recently approved Book of Common Order of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Such persons authorised to administer the Sacraments under this provision shall not do so except on occasions fixed by the Kirk Session.

2. Overture (v) from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales asking the General Assembly to declare:

‘that in the rule 4.2 Aged care, Hospital and Prison chaplains, who are not ministers, appointed by the relevant State Assembly Committee be considered as Home Missionaries with their authorisation coming under the appropriate Committee through its convener. The relevant Committee must be satisfied that any chaplain authorised to administer the sacraments has an appropriate understanding of the sacraments and all occasions in which they are administered must be reported to the relevant committee through its Senior Chaplain’

- B. The General Assembly resolved to refer these overtures to the Code Committee requesting the committee to report to the next meeting of the General Assembly concerning the circumstances under which the sacraments may be dispensed by those other than a Minister of the Word lawfully ordained (WCF XXVII.iv as amended), in the light of BB 1914 Min 61, BB 1916 Min 71 and any subsequent decisions of the General Assembly.’ (BB 2019, Min 86)
- C. The Code Committee, having considered the matters raised by these overtures, resolved to Overture the General Assembly with an alternative proposal, which has been refined specifically to address concerns raised by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales.
- D. The situation with regard to the administration of the sacraments in the Presbyterian Church of Australia by persons who have not been ordained is represented in the following regulatory provisions:

Constitution, Procedure and Practice

4.2.2 Administration of the Sacraments by Home Missionaries and Elders¹

Home missionaries appointed by the relevant state home mission committee, and elders set apart by a presbytery to perform special pastoral work in either a home mission station, vacant charge, or an area requiring missionary activity to commence and develop a church, may be authorised by the ordained minister or interim moderator of the bounds to celebrate the sacraments.

The minister or interim moderator of the bounds shall be responsible to presbytery for the manner in which the sacraments are celebrated and all such cases are to be duly reported to the presbytery.

Presbyteries when authorising elders, and home mission committees when authorising home missionaries, are counselled to exercise care so that only elders or home missionaries who have an adequate understanding of the theology of the sacraments and who have proven themselves by service to be suitable to take special responsibilities are appointed and given the right to celebrate the sacraments.

In administering the sacraments elders and home missionaries shall consult and use the forms in the most recently approved book of common order of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Elders and home missionaries authorised to administer the sacraments under this provision shall not do so except in their sphere of work and on occasions fixed by the Kirk Session.

2007 Declaration by the General Assembly (BB 2007 min 94(2))

The General Assembly, having resolved to send the overture proposing rule 4.2.2 as above to state assemblies and presbyteries under Barrier Act procedure declared that: ‘in the proposed new rule 4.2.2. PIM Padres are considered as Home Missionaries with their authorisation and oversight coming under the PIM Committee through its Superintendent’ (BB 2007 Min. 94(2)). However, this declaration was not included with the above Overture when it was remitted, and the State Assemblies and the presbyteries were not fully informed.

¹ This rule was inserted in its present form by the 2010 GAA following Barrier Act procedure from the 2007 GAA.

- E. Rule 4.2.2 is inconsistent internally; in the first paragraph the authorisation is by 'the ordained minister or interim moderator of the bounds'; in paragraph three it is by presbyteries and home mission committees; furthermore, it is not clear in paragraph 1 to whom the 'ordained minister ... of the bounds' refers.
- F. The rules of the church place the administration of the sacraments under the oversight of Sessions (as acknowledged by rule 4.2.2 para. 5); it is the responsibility of Sessions to authorise baptism and admit persons to the Lord's Supper and fix the occasions on which the sacraments are to be administered. However, the 2007 GAA declaration places the administration of the sacraments under the oversight of a committee of the church: 'with their authorisation and oversight coming under the PIM Committee through its Superintendent'.
- G. In any administration of the sacraments in the context of a PIM patrol ministry it is not possible to fulfil the following requirements of 4.2.2:
 - i) 'The minister or interim moderator of the bounds shall be responsible to presbytery for the manner in which the sacraments are celebrated and all such cases are to be duly reported to the presbytery;' and
 - ii) Elders and home missionaries authorised to administer the sacraments under this provision shall not do so except in their sphere of work and on occasions fixed by the Kirk Session.
- H. The proposed declaration sought by Overture (v) suffers from all the issues raised by the 2007 declaration with regard to the administration of the sacraments; Home Missionaries work in charges, under the oversight of Sessions with authority under the rules of the church to authorise the administration of the sacraments; chaplains work in institutions under committees which do not have authority under the rules of the church to authorise the administration of the sacraments; furthermore, such authority cannot be granted by a declaration of the Assembly.
- I. The amended rule 4.2.2 proposed by Overture (i) provides for the administration of the sacraments in charges under the oversight of presbyteries and sessions in accordance with the rules of the church; however, it would in the opinion of the Code Committee be improved by some judicious editing, including provision for ministry in connection with a Federal or State committee.

Therefore, the Code Committee requests the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia to take the above premises into account and:

1. Not sustain Overtures (i) and (v) as received by the 2019 General Assembly.
2. Repeal the 2007 General Assembly's Declaration (Min. 94(2))
3. Amend existing Rule 4.2.2 so that it reads as follows:

4.2.2 Administration of the Sacraments by Elders and unordained pastoral ministry workers

Elders and unordained pastoral ministry workers may in specified circumstances be authorised by a Presbytery to administer the sacraments.

Before giving this authorisation, the Presbytery must be satisfied as to his having:

- a) an adequate understanding of the theology of the sacraments;

- b) a proven record of service demonstrating his suitability to take on special responsibilities;
- c) a satisfactory police record check;
- d) a current Working with Children Check; and
- e) completed all Safe Church requirements for a person in leadership;

and then, in the case of an unordained pastoral ministry worker, Presbytery must also be satisfied as to:

- f) his accreditation in accordance with the rules and regulations of the relevant state church;
- g) his satisfactory length of membership in the Presbyterian Church of Australia of not less than 12 months; and
- h) his subscription to the Subordinate Standard of the church read in the light of the Declaratory Statement.

When this authorisation is to apply to ministry within a Charge, Presbytery must satisfy itself:

- i) that there exists a genuine pastoral connection with the Charge that includes the acceptable preaching of the Word to the congregation/s;
- j) that this will be applied only for such occasions fixed by the relevant Session and at the invitation of the Moderator or interim Moderator.

When this authorisation is to apply for ministry in connection with a Federal or State committee, the relevant Presbytery must satisfy itself that:

- k) the purpose for granting such authority is consistent with the designated ministry of that Committee.

When so authorised, those Elders and unordained pastoral ministry workers, when administering the Sacraments, shall use the forms in, or adopt a form congruent with, the most recent Book of Common Order as approved by the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

The Moderator (Interim Moderator) of the Charge or the relevant Committee shall be responsible for the manner in which the sacraments are administered and recorded.

Or do otherwise as the assembly may deem fit.

The Rev. P.W. Phillips and L.J.F. Hall were appointed to state the Overture.



COMMUNICATION 4 (Min 50)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

Moderator-General: Rev D Burke

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4 June 2024

Clerks of State Assemblies Extract Minute – Welcome to Country:

At Sydney, and within the Hurstville Presbyterian Church, the General Assembly of Australia met between 4-7 September 2023 and was constituted with prayer.

Among other things:

101. Welcome to Country:

The Convener, Rev. Dr Peter Barnes, moved the deliverance as a whole, as follows:
That the Assembly:

1. Affirm that in spite of many mistakes and cruelties perpetrated since colonisation, yet much good, notably the proclamation of the gospel, has been accomplished for the benefit of the indigenous population.
2. Affirm that there is no consensus, even among Aboriginal people, as to the meaning and significance of Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country practices, and that the multiplicity of tribal traditions and boundaries of tribal areas make a consistent practice impossible.
3. Affirm that the wording of Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country practices almost invariably carries overtones of an indigenous spirituality inconsistent with Christian belief.
4. Affirm that, as Christians, we have to avoid wording that suggests final ownership of land is vested in people rather than with the Creator.
5. Declare that Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country practices are inappropriate for public worship where the call to worship centres on God.
6. Recognising that the past cannot be changed, encourage a positive desire to build bridges and to work prayerfully with Aboriginal people for reconciliation.
7. Since there is no universally recognised official wording, permit freedom for churches to adopt wording consistent with the Christian world view and to use an Acknowledgement of Country for occasions outside of public worship; with words such as (adapted from the Bush Church Aid Acknowledgement of Country):

We acknowledge the triune God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), the Creator of heaven and earth and His ownership of all things (Psalm 24:1).

We recognise that He gave stewardship of these lands upon which we meet to the indigenous occupants of the land (Acts 17:26).

We recognise that in His sovereignty, He has allowed other people groups to migrate to these shores.

We pray for civil peace for all people groups in order that the gospel of peace would be freely proclaimed (1 Tim. 2:1-2).

8. Advise GANSW that it may proceed with the implementation of its resolution recorded in GANSW BB 2019 Min. 89 (3), in consistency with the resolutions above.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Extracted from the records of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia by me, Lesleigh Hall, Assembly Clerk, on Tuesday, 4 June 2024.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'L Hall', written in a cursive style.

(Rev) Lesleigh Hall
Clerk of Assembly



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

Moderator-General: Rev D Burke

Clerk: Rev L J F Hall

PO Box 510

SPRING HILL Q 4004

(Mobile) 0412 990 110

Email: GAAclerk@pcnsw.org.au

4 June 2024

Clerks of State Assemblies Extract Minute – Code Committee

At Sydney, and within the Hurstville Presbyterian Church, the General Assembly of Australia met between 4-7 September 2023 and was constituted with prayer.

Among other things:

30. Code Committee:

The deliverance as a whole was moved:

That the Assembly:

6. Confirm that:
 - a) deacons, along with ministers and elders, hold office in accordance with the doctrine of the Church;
 - b) admission to the office of deacon, after proper election, is by means of ordination, which ordination is for life unless voided by resignation or deposition;
 - c) entry into the exercise of the office of deacon may be by induction, which induction is for life unless voided by resignation or deposition, or by appointment by the Session for a period of time before becoming eligible for reappointment for a further stated period.
7. Advise the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales of clause 6 above, noting that it is an additional response to Reference (ii) received by the 2019 Assembly.
9. a) Note that in relation to the eldership, the GAA 2019, *inter alia*, resolved to:
 - i. Require [State Assemblies] that in the making of any future changes, the functional distinction between ministers and elders must be respected and upheld (GAA 2019 Min 42 (10)).
 - ii. Declare that teaching is, and always has been, a vital part of an elder's duties and that all elders must be competent to teach according to their gifts (GAA 2019 Min 42 (11)).
 - iii. Declare that elders occupy a pastoral office to which belongs the spiritual oversight of the Church. Under the Chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, elders shepherd and serve the church by sharing in its government, teaching the word of God, praying with and for God's people, and modelling life in Christ, according to their gifts. (GAA 2019 Min 42 (12)).
- b) Amend this declaration to read as follows: "The Presbyterian Church of Australia:
 - i. holds that elders occupy a pastoral office to which belongs the spiritual oversight of the Church. Under the Chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, elders shepherd and serve the church by sharing in its government, teaching the word of God, praying with and for God's people, and modelling life in Christ, according to their gifts;

- ii. holds that teaching is, and always has been, a vital part of an elder's duties and that all elders must be competent to teach according to their gifts;
- iii. observes a functional distinction between ministers of the word and sacraments, and elders.
- c) Instruct the Code Committee to include the amended declaration [clause (9)(b)] at the most appropriate place in the *GAA Constitution, Procedure and Practice*.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Extracted from the records of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia by me, Lesleigh Hall, Assembly Clerk, on Tuesday, 4 June 2024.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'LJ Hall', written in a cursive style.

(Rev) Lesleigh Hall
Clerk of Assembly



COMMUNICATION 6 (Min 129)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

Moderator-General: Rev D Burke

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3 June 2024

Clerks of State Assemblies Extract Minute – Mission to Australia:

At Sydney, and within the Hurstville Presbyterian Church, the General Assembly of Australia met between 4-7 September 2023 and was constituted with prayer.

Among other things:

74. Mission to Australia Committee:

The report of the Mission to Australia Committee was laid on the table and received.

The Convener, Rev. Gary Ware, moved the deliverance as a whole as follows:

That the Assembly:

3. Request State Assemblies, where possible when revising their rules, to consider the adoption of common titles for various types of charges.
4. Request State Assemblies and Presbyteries to encourage ministry workers and their spouses to consider participation in Renewal Retreat Groups; and undertake intentional mentoring processes and professional supervision.
5. Request State Assemblies to move towards compliance with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse's Recommendation 16.45 as soon as is practicable, and report on their progress to the Code Committee

The motion was seconded and approved.

Extracted from the records of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia by me, Lesleigh Hall, Assembly Clerk, on Monday, 3 June 2024.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

(Rev) Lesleigh Hall
Clerk of Assembly



COMMUNICATION 7 (Min 130)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

Moderator-General: Rev D Burke

Clerk: Rev L J F Hall
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3 June 2024

Clerks of State Assemblies Extract Minute – College Committee:

At Sydney, and within the Hurstville Presbyterian Church, the General Assembly of Australia met between 4-7 September 2023 and was constituted with prayer.

Among other things:

95. College Committee:

The report of the College Committee was laid on the table and received.

The Convener, Rev. Dr Ian Smith submitted the deliverance.

Clauses 1-2 were approved.

Pursuant to notice, Rev. Peter Phillips moved for an additional clause, as follows:

That the Assembly:

3. Note that in receiving the report of the College Committee, the Assembly is not adopting, endorsing or commenting upon the veracity of the assertion in paragraph 6.3 of the Appendix to the report, 'The Condition and State of the Reprobate in Hell in the Westminster Confession', that an indisputable example of the liberty granted by clause 5 of the Declaratory Statement (the liberty of opinion clause) is creation 'in the space of six days' (Confession 4.1).

The motion was seconded and approved.

The Convener moved the deliverance as a whole, as follows:

That the Assembly:

1. Motion re. GAA reference on "The condition and state of the reprobate in hell"
 - a) Note Declaratory Statement clause 2, 'That the doctrine of God's eternal decree, including the doctrine of election to eternal life, is held as defined in the Confession of Faith, Chapter III, Section 1', and that the same sentence of the Confession that is said to contain the 'doctrine' of election to eternal life (3.3) also teaches foreordination 'to everlasting death'. This indicates that the Confession teaches a doctrine of everlasting death.
 - b) Note that the Confession speaks of 'everlasting death' (3.3), 'dishonour' (3.7), 'wrath' (3.7), 'all miseries...eternal' (6.6), 'everlasting damnation' (20.1), 'torments' (32.1), 'utter darkness' (32.1), 'judgement' (32.1), 'dishonour' (32.3), 'damnation' (33.2), 'eternal torments' (33.2), and 'everlasting destruction' (33.2), and the Declaratory Statement speaks of those who 'perish' and are 'lost' (clauses 2, 3). These are statements that define the doctrine of everlasting death.
 - c) Affirm that the Westminster Confession teaches the doctrine of the immortality of the soul (4.2, 32.1, 2), the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead (32.2), and the doctrine of eternal punishment as the everlasting torments of all the reprobate (3.3, 3.7, 6.6, 20.1, 32.3, 33.2).
 - d) Declare the doctrine of eternal torments is integral to the Westminster Confession, there is no liberty of opinion allowed within Declaratory Statement clause 5 for the doctrine of eternal punishment.

- e) Communicate these decisions to the Presbytery of Moreton Bay.
- f) Communicate these decisions to the State Assemblies, reminding them of the urgency of evangelism, prayer for the lost, and faithful Christian living in the light of the doctrine of eternal punishment, and requesting that they communicate the same to their Presbyteries.

- 3. Note that in receiving the report of the College Committee, the Assembly is not adopting, endorsing or commenting upon the veracity of the assertion in paragraph 6.3 of the Appendix to the report, 'The Condition and State of the Reprobate in Hell in the Westminster Confession', that an indisputable example of the liberty granted by clause 5 of the Declaratory Statement (the liberty of opinion clause) is creation 'in the space of six days' (Confession 4.1).

The motion was seconded and approved.

Extracted from the records of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia by me, Lesleigh Hall, Assembly Clerk, on Monday, 3 June 2024.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'LJ Hall', written in a cursive style.

(Rev) Lesleigh Hall
Clerk of Assembly



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

Moderator-General: Rev D Burke

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11 January 2024

Extract Minute – Women’s Ministries Committee:

At Sydney, and within the Hurstville Presbyterian Church, the General Assembly of Australia met between 4-7 September 2023 and was constituted with prayer.

Among other things:

94. Women’s Ministries Committee:

The report of the Women’s Ministries Committee was laid on the table and received.

The convener, Rev. James Snare, submitted the deliverance.

Clauses 1-4 were approved.

Pursuant to notice, Rev James Snare moved additional clauses 5-16.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The deliverance as a whole was moved, as follows:

That the Assembly:

1. Commend the following principles to ministers and elders, and encourage them to examine and clarify their understanding of the value and place of women in the Presbyterian Church of Australia.
 - a) The man and the woman were both created equally in the image and likeness of God to have dominion over creation (Genesis 1:26-27).
 - b) It was God’s design in creation for the man and the woman to have dominion together (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-23).
 - c) Through salvation history men have led in specific, exclusive leadership roles in the religious and political life of God’s people, and women have led in significant moments and ways.
 - d) Women and men are co-heirs of life in Christ (1 Peter 3:7).
 - e) Men and women are redeemed in Christ and are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise (Galatians 3:28-29).
 - f) They are daughters and sons of God (Romans 8:16) and sisters and brothers in Christ (James 2:15).
 - g) All parts of the body of Christ are to be honoured and all parts are to have equal concern for each other (1 Corinthians 12:24-26).
 - h) Women and men are co-workers. They are made to work in partnership in God’s service (Genesis 2:18).
 - i) The Lord Jesus gives gifts to women and men in the church to serve each other for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:4-11).
 - j) Men and women who make up every supporting ligament in the church, grow and build it up in love, as each part does its work. (Ephesians 4:16).
2. Recommend that all ministers and elders examine their ministry practice in line with the above principles, with respect to the roles that women can fulfil, including at Sunday Services and in Public Worship such as Bible reading, leading the congregation in prayer, song leading, sharing a testimony or word of encouragement, leading aspects of the

service (1 Corinthians 11 and 14), leadership roles outside of the office of eldership, and other ministry roles through the week.

3. Recommend that all Sessions consider how best to identify, train and set apart women of suitable character, commitment and training to help them with the pastoral care and decision-making processes that operate within their church.
4. Recommend that all Sessions consider how best, within their local context to engage with women in key decisions of the Church, including the following possibilities:
 - a) Session setting up a women's advisory group whom they liaise with on specific issues.
 - b) Session inviting key women of their church to its Session meetings for a discussion that would inform its decision making.
 - c) Session choosing to appoint some key women in their church to a 'co-worker' position and give them the privileges of an associate while Session sits.
 - d) Establish, and explain, what the formal and informal communication channels are between women in the congregation and the Session.
 - e) Prioritising a female staff worker in the early stages of growing a pastoral team.
 - f) Providing training for women in ministry and discipleship skills using programs such as Ministry Training for Women (Christ College), METRO Equip (PCV), M2W (QTC).
5. Recommend that all presbyteries establish a group of women of suitable character, commitment and training for possible inclusion when:
 - a) Establishing candidate committees;
 - b) Conducting special or ordinary church visitations;
 - c) Developing ministry strategy.
6. Encourage State Assemblies to encourage their committees to proactively include suitable women in their membership.
7. Encourage Assembly committees to proactively include suitable women in their membership.
8. Request the Code Committee to consider how to involve women in disciplinary matters.
9. Request the Code Committee to work with the committee to review the Standing Orders to investigate the possibility of women having the privileges of Associates in the meeting of the General Assembly.
10. Recommend that State Assemblies review their Standing Orders to investigate the possibility of women having the privileges of Associates in meetings of State Assemblies.
11. Request the committee to equip, assist and encourage ministers, elders, and presbyteries to implement the recommendations and encouragements of this Assembly.
12. Request sessions and presbyteries to inform the committee on how the above requests, recommendations and encouragements have been received and implemented.
13. Request the committee to report to the 2026 Assembly on how the recommendations have been received by men and women across the Presbyterian Church of Australia and implemented by ministers, elders, presbyteries, State and Federal Assemblies.
14. Request the Clerk when communicating the above decisions to include a copy of the committee's report.
15. Thank Mrs Ceale Orford for her 21 years of service on the committee and its previous iterations.
16. Reappoint the committee for a further term in accordance with Article 4.2 with the membership of the committee as follows: Rev. J. Snare (convener), Rev. B. Johnson, Mrs J. Smith with the power to co-opt.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Extracted from the records of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia by me, Lesleigh Hall, Assembly Clerk, on Thursday, 11 January 2024.

Yours sincerely in Christ,



(Rev) Lesleigh Hall
Clerk of Assembly

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES COMMITTEE*

On Men and Women in ministry and leadership in the Presbyterian Church of Australia

Origin and Development of this Paper

At the 2019 meeting of the Assembly, the Women's Ministry Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Australia was given the following brief:

- to present to the next Assembly a Women's Ministry Strategy to guide the activities and direction of women's ministry within the Presbyterian Church of Australia.²²
- to develop this Strategy in consultation with key stakeholders such as women's ministries groups within the Church, theological colleges, the Presbyterian Women's Association, ministers, elders, and youth ministries.
- to include in the Strategy a clear explanation and examples of "complementarian partnership in action".

This paper is our effort to fulfil this brief.

Given our commitment to upholding the scriptures as our supreme standard and the Westminster Confession of Faith as our subordinate standard, the committee has worked long and hard at discussing what the scriptures say about women, and by extension men, in leadership and ministry in our church. While a paper of this length cannot be an exhaustive consideration of the many debates that exist within this space, we have tried to at least reference the major issues that are most relevant for consideration without seeking to prove every point.

Furthermore, we have run two conferences over the last three years to engage with people across our denomination and heard from speakers outside of our denomination as well. In 2020, we also conducted a survey across ministers, elders, and congregants across the PCA in order to get a snapshot of how men and women are working together across our Presbyterian churches.

We have circulated this report to various stakeholders across the PCA including some ministers, elders, and the theological colleges of the PCA, as well as the existing state women's ministry committees and other men and women in a variety of positions and ministry activities. We wish to thank all those who provided valuable feedback that has sharpened and improved this paper.

Contents

Part one of this report is an explanation of the biblical and theological principles that the committee advocates for and has used in developing our recommendations.

Part two is a brief summary of some of the more salient observations that can be made from our 2020 survey.

Part three is the explanation of our strategy for women's ministry in the Presbyterian Church of Australia and our specific recommendations about what complementarian partnership in action looks like.

²² No definition was given by the Assembly regarding 'women's ministry'. The committee has worked with a general sense of the term where 'women's ministry' refers to ministries that primarily serve women, and the discipling and equipping of women in general.

Summary

Our summary findings across our biblical and theological investigations, our conferences, and our surveys can be summarised as follows.

God has created men and women to lead God's people together with qualified men in specific offices, and men and women in a variety of positions and ministries across the church. While there is a general sense of positivity regarding how men and women work together across the PCA, there is also a significant difference in the level of positivity between men and women. This is the same when it comes to the value placed upon women's ministries, and consultation by elders with women about church matters. Our recommendations therefore are grounded in the idea that complementarian partnership in action means that the best women's ministry will be done when men and women work well together. Therefore, our church courts at every level need to be more proactive in listening to women, inviting them into spaces where they can speak and serve, and be more proactive in seeking to equip women to lead and minister in our churches.

Part One – A biblical and theological framework for men and women working together in the Presbyterian Church of Australia

Abstract

Points 1- 5 consider the picture given to us of the created order in Genesis 1-2 and the consequences of the Fall on the relationship between men and women. Points 6 - 10 consider the pattern seen throughout scripture of men leading in specific, exclusive roles and women leading in other significant ways. Points 10 – 11 consider the asymmetry in the way that the New Testament speaks to men and women at different points. Taken together, this framework leads us to believe that the Bible affirms that men and women were called to lead together, that men have been given a privileged position of distinction in this leadership partnership, and that this expresses itself in the consistent pattern of men leading and speaking in specific, exclusive roles while women lead and speak significantly in other ways amongst God's people.

Framework

The following points make up the biblical and theological framework that the committee commends to the Assembly and that the committee has used in developing our women's ministry strategy.

1) Man and Woman were both created in the image and likeness of God to have dominion over creation.

In Genesis 1 and 2 we are told that both the man and woman are made in the image of God (1:27). We are also told that the reason that God made humankind in his image and according to his likeness was 'so that they may rule (וַיְרָדוּ)' or 'have dominion' (ESV) over all the living things in creation (1:26).²³ Furthermore, there is good reason to think that being made in God's image carries with it the idea of being God's representatives on the earth.²⁴ From the beginning then, men and women were to have dominion as God's representatives, in God's place, together. They were to be God's vice-regents on earth.²⁵

²³ This paper will refer to *radá* as 'have dominion' in order to distinguish it from *mashál* which we will refer to as 'rule'.

²⁴ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1 - 15*, Word Biblical Commentary 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2017); J. Richard Middleton, *The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005), 88.

²⁵ Wenham, *Genesis 1 - 15*.

2) It was God's design in creation for the Man and the Woman to have dominion together.

The continuous emphasis in Genesis 1 and 2 is on the necessity of the man and the woman having dominion together in creation. After the narrator declares in 1:27 that both the man and the woman were made in the image of God, he next records God's blessing and commands to them. God says to the man and the woman,

'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.' (Genesis 1:28)

The commands here to be fruitful, fill the earth, to increase in number and to subdue the earth are given to the man and the woman together. So too the man and the woman were both commanded to have dominion. Procreation is the man and woman's responsibility together. Having dominion over the living creatures of the earth was the man and woman's responsibility together.

The necessity of the man and the woman's togetherness for the fulfilment of their responsibilities as God's image bearers is emphasised even more in Genesis 2. After creating the man first, God places him "in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it" (Genesis 2:15). In Genesis 2:18, however, God declares 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him' (2:18). Three points need to be made here for understanding how the phrase, 'a helper suitable for him' should be understood.

First, it is important to have a clear understanding of what a 'suitable helper' is. The word translated here as 'helper' (עֵזֶר) does not contain an inherently diminutive or subordinating idea. The person who is most frequently described as being an עֵזֶר, or as the source of עֵזֶר, in scripture is God himself. Consider the following examples.

In Hosea 13:9, God uses this word to describe himself. He says to Israel,

You are destroyed, O Israel, because you are against me, against your helper.

In Psalm 115:9, the psalmist cries out,

O house of Israel, trust in the LORD—he is their help and shield.

In Deuteronomy 18:4 it says

"[Moses] said, "My father's God was my helper; he saved me from the sword of Pharaoh."

An עֵזֶר, or someone who provides עֵזֶר, is repeatedly portrayed in scripture as a rescuer and/or a saviour for a person or people in need. The word does not have within it the idea of a subordinate or, even one who is second in command. It is typically used in battle or conflict situations to describe the one who rescues or comes to the aid of another. So, to say that the man needed an עֵזֶר is to give the connotation that the man needed someone to rescue him from the trouble that he was in.

Secondly, the man did not need 'a helper', but a 'suitable helper' (עֵזֶר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ). The significance of this word 'suitable' (כְּנֶגְדּוֹ) is well expressed by the Healthy Complementarian paper of the PCNSW Special Committee on Elders and Deacons. It writes,

the phrase "fit for him" (ESV) or "suitable for him" (NIV) indicates her complementary difference from him. The phrase could be translated "like opposite him" (כְּנֶגְדּוֹ). It indicates again that the woman is "like" the man, in a fundamental way, while also different from him. The animals which God brings to the man share a kinship with the man (Gen 2:19–20)—they too were created on the

sixth day (Gen 1:24–31), and from the “ground” (Gen 2:7, 19; cf. 1:24)—but they [were] not sufficiently “like” the man to be the “helper” he needs (Gen 2:20). The LORD God, therefore, forms the woman from the man’s very substance, from one of his ribs, and brings her to the man (Gen 2:21–22). Adam’s exclamation—the first piece of poetry in the Bible—expresses his delight in the woman. She is “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” (Gen 2:23). She is like him in the fundamental sense that she shares his very substance. But she is also different from him. In a word-play that works as well in English as it does in Hebrew, he calls her “woman” (אִשָּׁה) because “she was taken out of man” (אִשָּׁה) (Gen 2:23). The man and the woman share fully the same humanity, but are also different from each other—even “opposite” to each other—in a good and necessary way. The woman is the man’s equal match, his complement.²⁶

In order to work and keep the garden, the man needed a suitable helper. A complement to him. Someone that was like himself, but different. The complementary nature of the man and the woman again emphasises the necessity of their togetherness.

Thirdly, the prepositional phrase ‘for him’ could suggest that God had given the man a responsibility, which the woman was to help him with. On one level, this is true and something that Paul affirms with his interpretation of this passage in 1 Corinthians 11. However, it must also be noted that while the man in Genesis 2 was given the responsibility to work and keep the garden, the responsibility of having dominion over creation was given to the man and woman together (1:28). By necessity, if the command in Genesis 1:28 was spoken to ‘them’, then that command must have been given after the command to the man to work and keep the garden. The smaller project was given to the man alone, and it was deemed not good for him to be alone. After the provision of a ‘suitable helper’, however, then the command was given for the man and woman to bring the whole earth under subjugation and to have dominion together.

There is no doubt that the need for procreation was an essential part of the woman’s creation. However, it would be improper to say that God had given the job of having dominion to the man, and the woman was his helper with this project by childbirth alone. Rather, Genesis 1 and 2 taken together communicate the man’s inability by himself to fulfil the responsibility God had given him to him alone, and that having dominion over all creation (including procreation) as something that the man and woman do together.

3) The man and the woman were created male and female.

Humanity was made in the image of God, and they were made male and female. There is no sense that the male or the female had to perform the role of male or female, or perform the role of man or woman. Rather, they are male and female, or man and woman, by virtue of God’s act of creation. There is nothing that the man or woman need to do in order to be the man or the woman. Similarly, it can be said there is nothing the male or the female need to do in order to be the male or the female. They are these things by virtue of God’s creative work alone.

Relatedly, it is worth observing that beyond their respective physiologies, there is no hard line provided in Scripture that distinguishes between maleness or femaleness. While the rest of Scripture may give a general shape to how men or women typically lived amongst God’s people, and communicates certain typical cultural expressions of these things, there is nothing in the creation account to define a man or a woman beyond their respective physiologies (which carries a direct link to the mutual work of procreation in sexual intimacy – Genesis 2:24).

²⁶ Special Committee for Elders and Deacons, ‘Healthy Complementarianism: A Discussion Paper for the Presbyterian Church in NSW and ACT’, July 2022, 11.

4) There is a primacy and particular distinction given to the man in creation.

As demonstrated above, the emphasis on Genesis 1 and 2 is on the responsibility and necessity of men and women having dominion together in God's creation. There is, however, a certain primacy and particular distinction that is given to the man in the narrative that has lasting significance for the New Testament's understanding of the Genesis accounts of creation.

First, in Genesis 1, 'man' (אָדָם) is the name used to describe humanity as a whole, and this is the name first given to 'the man' (אָדָם הָאֶחָד). The name given to humanity, is first owned by the man alone.

Second, while the primary purpose of the creation of the man before the woman in the Genesis account is to emphasise the necessity of the togetherness of the man and the woman, this still serves to centre the man in the narrative and also centres the man's relationship with God. For example, God speaks first to the man with regards to his responsibility in the garden, but also with regards to the giving of the law.

*And the LORD God commanded **the man**, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.'*

(Genesis 2:16-17)

God does also speak to the man and the woman together (1:28), but he spoke to the man first and therefore the man is given the privilege of prior relationship with God.

Third, when the woman and the man sin, despite Eve sinning first, God addresses the man first (3:8), suggesting a priority of leadership given to the man as the one who was created and received the law first.

Fourth, there is a speaking and governing responsibility that is given to the man which the woman does not perform. The man alone names the wild animals and birds of the sky. He also names the woman twice. First bestowing on her the name 'woman' 'for she was taken out of man' (2:24) and secondly when he names her 'Eve' the mother of all living things (3:20).

Fifth, although not in the Genesis text itself, in Romans and in 1 Corinthians, when Paul speaks of sin entering into the world, he speaks of the sin of 'one man' (Rom 5:10) and death reigning 'in Adam' (1 Corinthians 15:22) rather than speaking of sin of the woman or of 'humankind'. Furthermore, he develops a parallel between Adam as the original representative of humankind and Jesus the 'last Adam' (1 Corinthians 15:45, cf. Romans 5:18-19).

Sixth, while the meaning of the metaphor, 'the husband is the head of the wife' needs to be read carefully in 1 Corinthians 11:2, as does the idea that 'woman is the glory of man', both of these ideas are linked to the fact that the woman was created from the man and that the woman was created 'for man'. This suggests that this 'headship' of the husband is grounded in God's creation design.

Seventh, in 1 Timothy 2:11-15, when Paul declares, with eldership in view, that he does not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a man, he links this to Adam's creation before Eve. This suggests that the creation of Adam before Eve gives him a certain responsibility in their relationship together before the Fall – Genesis 3:16, 1 Timothy 2:14).

Taken together, these elements of the text suggest that while the man and the woman were both made equal in God's image, and created to have dominion together, there is a certain primacy and particular distinction given to the man as the first born in creation and that this carries unique responsibilities in his relationship to creation and the woman.

5) The consequences of sin spoken to the man and the woman respectively, affect one another in their shared relationship and responsibilities.

To the woman, God first says,

I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labour you will give birth to children.

While these words are spoken to the woman, the man is still impacted by this. Procreation, multiplication and child raising, as has been established in Genesis 1 and 2, is the joint responsibility of the man and the woman. While pregnancy and childbirth are the specific responsibilities given to the woman, the nature of the union between a husband and wife (2:24), and the fact that the command to multiply is given to both (1:28) of them, means that while the woman suffers severe physical pain, the man who is united to the woman will be impacted by this too. Whether it is in the difficulty that comes with dealing with a person in pain, or the extra sacrifice required to attempt to care for a person in such a situation, the consequences of sin for the woman, while primarily focused on her, is not limited to her. The woman suffers the direct consequences of their sin, but it affects the two of them together.

Next God says to the woman,

Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you. (Genesis 3:16)

Elsewhere in Scripture, the word ‘desire’ (תַּשׁוּקָה) is used positively (Song of Solomon 7:10) and negatively (Genesis 4:7). The context here in Genesis 3 clearly indicates that this desire is a negative one. While different reasonable arguments have been made about the specific negative nature of this desire, none have proved conclusive. Rather than attempting to define this desire too narrowly then, it is best to say that the woman, because of sin, will now desire her husband in an unhealthy and negative way.

Similarly, as a consequence of sin, God says that the woman’s husband will now rule (מָשַׁל) over her. This is a different word to ‘having dominion’ (רָדָה – sometimes translated as ‘rule’) over creation. While there is a strong case that the man possessed distinct leadership responsibilities in his relationship with the woman, now, in Genesis 3, it is said the man will “rule” over the woman in an unhealthy and negative way. Put another way, this ‘rule’ that is a result of the fall, is distinct from the responsibilities given to the man by virtue of his primacy in Genesis 1 and 2 which are never defined or described as ruling.²⁷

The way that the woman’s desire for her husband is set in poetic parallel with his rule over her suggests that these two negative and unhealthy consequences of sin will play out in a continuing interrelated manner. This represents a fundamental change in the nature of the relationship between the man and the woman. The picture given here is one where they are still ‘together’, but in a union that is marked by pain and a negative way of relating to one another instead of being united in shamelessness and peace (Genesis 2:24-25).²⁸

It should also be noted, in accordance with what has been said above, that while the Lord declares that the ground will be cursed because the man listened to his wife (Genesis 3:17) this is not just a curse upon ‘the man’s work’.

²⁷ Therefore, to say a husband should seek to ‘rule’ his wife today is to uphold a consequence of the fall, rather than a creational ordinance. It is better to speak of a husband having the first responsibility in leading by sacrifice and service. See more on this at points 10 and 11 below.

²⁸ It is worth noting here what will be explicitly looked at below in points 10 and 11. While the consequences of sin give a negative shape to the relationship between the man and the woman, the New Testament passages that speak to marriage give specific instructions on how a man and woman in marriage are to love each other in a way that goes against this negative sinful pattern. It is (clearly) not God’s prescription that a man and woman should seek to live out and uphold these consequences of sin.

Rather, it is a curse that affects both the man and the woman who were both given the responsibility of ruling over creation, and the work that the man needed a 'suitable helper' for. This is a curse on the joint responsibility that the man and the woman share together.

6) There is a pattern in Scripture where men are called to lead in specific, exclusive offices in the religious and political life of God's people in the Old Testament and this is distinct from the leadership of women.

While there are no instructions given in the Old Testament on how to be a man or how to be a woman (these are gifts given in creation – see point 3 above), there are many descriptions of the relationships between men and women through the Old Testament. There are passages that contain specific commands that relate to men and women's life in Israel based on their physiology, while others contain the description of certain roles which could be fulfilled by either a male or a female (husband/wife, father/mother, son/daughter, priest, king, etc), but not by the other. A brief consideration of these passages reveals that while most specific commands given to men or women alone relate to their physiological differences, there is also some clear boundary markers when it comes to specific roles amongst God's people.

The first observation of note is that in the time of the Patriarchs, there is a pattern of centring God's relationship with humanity through Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. While this centring is inverted at several points in order to spotlight narratives that centre women (Genesis 16:1-14; 21:8-21; 29:31-30:24), and women are constantly key parts of the narrative with their own character development, it is difficult to argue that the men are not at the centre of these histories. It is to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that the promises of God are given (Genesis 50:24) and God identifies himself to his people as 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob' (Exodus 3:6).

Moving into the Mosaic period, the religious and political life of Israel had a clear shape for men and women. Most succinctly, we can say that under the Mosaic Covenant, men are placed by God in specific offices in the nation and the temple, while women (and other men) lead in other but still significant ways in Israel's history. This fits well with the ideas that we have identified from Genesis 1-3. Men and women, as part of God's created order, lead and have dominion in creation together, but certain men have distinct responsibilities in the offices and roles that God places them in.

When God ordained who would lead in Israel as Kings and Priests, he chose men to do this. Similarly, the elders (זִקְנִים) of Israel through the Old Testament are consistently described as men. When the Lord called Moses to share leadership with others, he commanded Moses to gather "seventy men (שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ) of the elders of Israel. During the time of the Judges (Judges 8:14), when Gideon captured a young man of Sukkoth, the young man wrote down the names of the officials of Sukkoth, the elders of the town, 'seventy-seven men' (שִׁבְעִים וְשִׁבְעָה אִישׁ). In Ezekiel 8:11, the prophet speaks of 'seventy men' (שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ) of the elders of the House of Israel.

One passage that suggests that this pattern is not simply the norm for God's people, but that this is how it ought to be is Isaiah 3:12. Here, in the midst of a passage where God pronounces judgment on Jerusalem, it says,

Youths oppress my people, women rule (מְשִׁל) over them.

My people, your guides lead you astray; they turn you from the path. (Isaiah 3:12)

The prophet then continues on to speak of the judgment upon the elders and leaders of Jerusalem saying,

The LORD enters into judgment against the elders (זִקְנֵי) and leaders (שָׂרֵי) of his people.

There is then in this passage a clear sense that youths and women ‘ruling’ (קִשְׁלָה) is not the way things are meant to be. Similarly, the fact that this has happened means that the elders and leaders (זִקְנֵי - which refers specifically to the ‘princes’ of the city rather than people in leadership generally) have failed in their leadership responsibility.

While there is no doubt that the ancient world in general had a patriarchal shape to it, it was God who chose to order his people in this way. There was a plethora of ways in which God chose to make his people distinct from the world around him, and in many places, it seems that God’s instructions were designed to do just that.²⁹ However, God chose to order the political and religious life of Israel with men in these specific roles, while still having women active in Israel’s political and religious life. Most emphatically we see this in the way God uses both male prophets and leaders and female prophets and leaders to bring victory to God’s people.

All this taken together then suggests that the norm for God’s people in the Old Testament was to have roles which were exclusively given to certain men in the religious and political life of Israel.

7) While men held specific, exclusive leadership roles in the religious and political life of God’s people in the Old Testament, women also led consistently at significant moments and in significant ways.

There are many examples in scripture of women serving in many ways and depending on how leadership is defined, they could be included in a list of ways where women led in the life of Israel. If one includes the idea of leading by setting an example, the list is long indeed. However, in order to make the strongest case for the fact that women led people through the history of Israel, we will narrow our definition of leadership to influencing and guiding others. The list of examples where women did this include:

- Moses’ sister Miriam was called a leader of Israel alongside her brother Aaron (Micah 6:4). She was also called a prophetess (Exodus 15:20) and she led the people in the worship of God (Exodus 15:1-3).
- Deborah was a prophetess and judge speaking God’s word and leading (שֹׁפֵט – or ‘judging’) Israel (Judges 4:4).
- Huldah was a prophetess who declared God’s judgment on Israel. (2 Kings 22)
- Abigail spared David, the Lord’s anointed, from committing unnecessary bloodshed with wisdom and wit (1 Samuel 25).
- Women are recorded as speaking and leading God’s people in worship in song and dance (Psalm 68:11-12, 24-26; Jeremiah 31:11-13).
- The boy king Joash was saved by his aunt Jehosheba who defied her murderous step-mother Athaliah (2 Kings 11).

Again, and again, God called women to speak prophetically and to act to save Israel’s leaders and Israel itself. In summary it is good and right to recognise that women spoke and led in Israel’s history in significant, history shaping ways.

²⁹ It’s worth noting that despite the consequences of sin that God declared in Genesis 3, the cultural norm of ‘patriarchy’ and God’s placement of men in specific roles that aligned in some ways with the culture around them, God also provides in the law for the protection of women. Note in particular, Numbers 5:11-31, Numbers 27:1-11 and Deuteronomy 21:10-15. These laws stood apart from the patriarchal practices Israel’s neighbours.

8) The New Testament affirms the pattern of men in specific, exclusive leadership roles.

With the passing of the nation of Israel and the continuation of God's people as the body of Christ, there are no longer kings and priests as roles amongst God's people. In fact, all believers become part of the 'royal priesthood' (1 Peter 1:9). But while God's people do not have a king or priest, save the Lord Jesus himself, we do still see a pattern of men being chosen by God to fill specific leadership roles in the early church. Jesus chose twelve disciples who would become apostles and the leaders of the early church. Men are exclusively the authors of the New Testament records of Jesus' life, and it is only men who were chosen to write the letters and histories that would become part of the New Testament canon.

Similarly, the biblical authors consistently refer to those in the office of elder by using the Greek adjective *πρεσβύτερος*, both in Jewish and church contexts. While the feminine form is used in 1 Timothy 5:2 and the cognate noun *πρεσβυτιδας* at Titus 2:3, in both instances it refers to older women but not the office of eldership. The assumption of the biblical authors again and again is that those in the office of eldership will be men.

Some believe this was the product of the culture of the time, or that Jesus chose twelve men because it parallels with the twelve tribes of Israel that initially made-up God's people in the Old Testament (this second part is entirely true). However, in much the same way that God could have chosen to make his people distinct from the nations around them when it came to the roles that men and women played in the political and religious life of God's people, so too could God have chosen to construct things differently amongst his new covenant people. Jesus overturned cultural and religious assumptions all the time. Jesus was consistently a counter cultural force against the Jewish and Roman influences in his time. The early church leaders themselves navigated huge cultural and religious changes in the move from 1st century Judaism and the Greco-Roman world to a new Christian ethic.

Beyond these observations of continuance between the Old and the New Testament, there are several specific New Testament passages that point towards the exclusivity of men in the specific offices of the church.³⁰ Without exegeting them in full, passages such as 1 Timothy 2:8-3:7 and Titus 1 give good grounds for thinking that the New Testament authors saw men exclusively in the role of eldership.

Briefly, these passages both seem to assume that elders will be men as it says in both passages that elder is to be 'the husband of one woman' (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:6). Furthermore, given the wider encouragement that Paul gives to women as instructors in the faith (Acts 18:26), as co-workers in the gospel (Romans 16:3) and to speak God's word to the church (Luke 2:36, 1 Corinthians 11:5, Acts 21:9), it seems that Paul's declaration that he does 'not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man' must have a specific context for application, and given the proximity to eldership in 1 Timothy 3:1, it makes sense to connect these thoughts accordingly.³¹ It is with regards to eldership that Paul's personal prohibition on women teaching or assuming authority over a man is given (1 Timothy 2:11-12). Taken together, Paul's assumption that men will be elders, and the prohibition given with regards to women teaching and having authority in an eldership context, it is reasonable to conclude that eldership is a specific and exclusive office for qualified men.

³⁰ For an excellent discussion on the validity of 'offices' in the Scriptures and in the PCA, see Part 2.B of Special Committee for Elders and Deacons, 'Healthy Complementarianism: A Discussion Paper for the Presbyterian Church in NSW and ACT'.

³¹ While this paper holds to a position of the exclusivity of men in the office of eldership, the committee wants to recognise and appreciate the valuable gospel work that has been done by female elders across the PCA. The committee recognises that there are still active female elders in the PCA, and the committee commends the service that they have offered to God and his people. It is the hope of the committee that based on our theological reflections and the recommendations that we are making that women will continue to be able to serve and lead across the PCA and be more encouraged than ever to do so.

There is a further question regarding the role of deacon and whether this is an office of the church that is specific and exclusive to men. In Romans 16, Phoebe is referred to as *διάκονον* which the NIV translates as ‘deacon’ but it could also be translated more generically as ‘servant’. In 1 Timothy 3:11, the NIV is translated as, ‘In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.’ But it is rendered elsewhere, ‘Wives, too, must be worthy of respect, not slanderers, self-controlled, faithful in everything.’ (CSB) The first translation suggests that there were female deacons, the second suggests the verse is referring to the wives of elders.

The committee has not sought to make any specific judgment on this matter and recognises the variety of positions across the PCA. Whichever way these verses are understood, the arguments for eldership as specific to men is enough to demonstrate the basic principle that there is a continuation of the pattern of a specific, exclusive role for qualified men.

9) The New Testament affirms the pattern of women leading outside of specific offices amongst God’s people.

Clearly, Jesus and the early church welcomed women as leaders amongst God’s people as proclaimers and instructors of the gospel. As above, we will only include examples here of women influencing and guiding others.

In the gospels we are told that women engaged in theological discussion with Jesus (John 4:1-26, 11:1-44) which in one instance led to an incredible missionary work (John 4:39). It was women who were the first to witness his resurrection, the first to worship him after the resurrection (Matthew 28:6,9; Mark 16:5-6) and the first to proclaim that he had risen from the dead (Matthew 28:7, Mark 16:7).

After Jesus’ ascension, women were praying in the upper room with the other disciples and the Spirit fell on them at Pentecost just the same as on the men (Acts 2:3-4). These women declared the wonders of God alongside the men too. When Peter spoke the first sermon, he declared that the fulfillment of Joel 2:17-18 had come.

And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

Furthermore, the New Testament is full of spirit filled women and female prophets (Acts 21:9). It was women who made up the first church in Europe (Acts 16:14). One of those women was Lydia, a successful and wealthy businesswoman who was a patron to Paul and his missionary work and had the church in Philippi meet in her home. In Philippi, Paul also had Euodia and Syntyche, women he called his ‘true companions’ who laboured side by side with him in the gospel (Philippians 4:2-3). Of the 28 people that Paul greeted in his letter to the Romans in chapter 16, nine of them are women. Most prominent is Phoebe who delivered the letter and likely read it to the church in Rome. She is called *diakonos*, which is quite possibly meant to denote her as a female deacon, but even if not, she was also another wealthy patron who supported Paul. Similarly, Junia is specifically listed as being ‘outstanding among the apostles’ (NIV - *οἵτινές εἰσιν ἐπίσημοι ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις*) and honoured (along with Andronicus) as preceding Paul in their knowledge of Christ.³²

Paul identifies many more fellow female workers in this letter. He commends Prisca (or Priscilla) who acted with her husband Aquilla to host a church in their house. More than this though, Priscilla along with her husband, instructed Apollos in the way of God more accurately (Acts 18:26). As mentioned, we are told specifically of Philip’s daughters

³² Whether this phrase signifies that Junia herself was an apostle or ‘known to them’ is not clear. Regardless of whether one accepts Junia’s apostleship, she was clearly regarded as a leader amongst God’s people. .

in Acts 21:8-9 but we know it must have been standard practice for women to prophecy because Paul had to give specific instructions on how women should pray and prophecy in church (1 Corinthians 11). Again, and again, we see women across the New Testament proclaiming God's word, rescuing God's people, being successful businesswomen, working hard in the gospel, having deep understanding of theology, and speaking to and supporting God's people in a variety of ways. Married women, single women, women from different nations, all were commended for serving the Lord well as part of the church. To summarise again the consistent point, we have been making through this section, the pattern of scripture both in the Old and New Testaments seems to be qualified men in specific, exclusive leadership positions with women leading and serving in a huge variety of other ways.

10) The Scriptures speak about the relationship between men and women in asymmetric ways.

Given the fact that men and women are both made in the image of God and that they have equality in Christ, some argue that there is no grounding for a distinction in the types of roles men and women can perform. The consistent patterns that have been observed above, however, point to a different conclusion. It is possible for there to be equality in dignity and value in creation, and blessings in Christ, without there being sameness in all things.

To further support this point, it is worth observing the different ways that scripture speaks to men and women. While scripture speaks the same gospel and wisdom to men and women in the vast majority of things in creation, there are some ways that the Bible consistently speaks differently to men and women in family and church contexts. Consider the following examples:

Verses	To men	To women
Ephesians 5:(21)22-25	v.25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...	v.22 Wives, [submit] yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord.
1 Peter 3:1-7	v.7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives...	v.1 Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands...
Colossians 3:18-19	v.19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.	v.18 Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

Testament authors) wives are specifically told to submit to their husbands but not vice versa (however, as will be seen below Ephesians 5:21 cannot be ignored).

Verses	Of Men	Of Women
Ephesians 5:23-24	v.23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour.	v.24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.
1 Corinthians 11:3	v.3b ...and the head of every man is Christ...	v.3b ...and the head of the woman is man...

Verses	Of Men	Of Women
1 Corinthians 11:4-5	v.4 Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonours his head.	v.5 But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonours her head...
1 Corinthians 11:7	v.7a A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God;	v.7b but woman is the glory of man.
1 Corinthians 11:8-9	v.8a For man did not come from woman... v.9a ...neither was man created for woman...	v.8b but woman from man; v.8b but woman for man.

As is the case with the texts that reference submission above, it is also clear that there is an asymmetry with regards to the metaphor of husband/man being the ‘head’ of the woman/wife.

Taken together these verses demonstrate the appropriateness of speaking to men and women differently in the contexts of marriage and the church.

11) Despite this asymmetry, the Bible also actively subverts attempts to misuse or abuse this asymmetry.

We have argued above for the recognition of a certain sort of primacy and particular distinction given to men in the Genesis account that is affirmed by several New Testament texts, and we have also argued that there is a pattern of qualified men in specific, exclusive roles compared to the other leadership roles that men and women fulfil. Furthermore, we’ve argued that it is right and appropriate to recognise that scripture speaks to men and women differently regarding how to live and how to conduct themselves in marriage and the church.

However, the New Testament authors, while maintaining the primacy and particular distinction given to men in the creation account, encourage brothers and sisters in Christ to live out this reality in a way that actively seeks to undermine the effects of sin where men sinfully rule over women.

For example, in Ephesians 5:22, where women are told to,

‘[submit] yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church...’

It is not an accident that the verbal idea of submission comes from the previous verse where Paul writes to men and women alike, ‘Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ’ (ὕποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ - Ephesians 5:21). Mutual submission is the first idea that is introduced in Ephesians 5:21-33 before the specific exhortation to wives to submit to their husbands. The asymmetry is affirmed in the specific exhortation to wives, but it is framed in the bigger framework of brothers and sisters submitting to one another.

Similarly, Paul’s instructs husbands to,

...love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her... (Ephesians 5:25)

This leaves no room for men to attempt to use the privilege of primacy or distinctives given to them for abuse or dominance. Likewise, they are given no authority to demand submission from their wives. Rather, submission is something that the wife gives freely and voluntarily with the marriage covenant in recognition of the primacy and distinction given to him as the 'head' in marriage, and out of respect for the Lordship of Christ.

In 1 Peter 3:1, Peter exhorts,

'Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behaviour of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of their lives.'

Here Peter does not appeal to creation or the husband as the head of the wife as the reason for this. Rather, it is in the context of an unbelieving husband and the opportunity to potentially win that husband to Christ. It also fits within the broader context of 1 Peter 2:11-3:7, where Peter exhorts all Christians to be willing to submit to human authorities, even if they do not know God (1 Peter 2:13-14) or if they are harsh (1 Peter 3:18). In the context of this passage, for a woman to submit 'in the same way' is to follow the example of Christ (not the church, as in the Ephesians passage). Submission then is not a 'feminine virtue' in 1 Peter, but a Christian one, and follows the example of Christ.

As in the Ephesians passage, Peter affirms the asymmetry of the rest of scripture (wives 'submit', husbands 'be considerate'). But interestingly, in this passage the exhortation to the husband is to 'respect/show honour' (*ἀπονέμοντες τιμήν*) to his wife, which is like the exhortation for a wife to 'respect' (*φοβῆται*) her husband in Ephesians 5:33.

In 1 Corinthians 11, while Paul refers to the husband as the head of the wife, that woman is the glory of man, that woman came from man and that the woman was created for man, he also counters this with the words,

Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God (1 Corinthians 11:11-12).

Paul can see the potential for the misuse of the ideas that he is enunciating and seeks to cut off any attempt that man can act independently of woman, or that man can claim superiority over her given his dependence on her for life.

All in all, the passages where the asymmetry between men and women is most directly expressed, are also the passages that subvert easy readings of what this looks like or any attempt to misuse these passages by allowing men to dominate or sinfully rule over women.

In summary, we believe that the Bible affirms that men and women were called to lead together, that men have been given a privileged position of distinction and that this expresses itself in the consistent pattern of men leading and speaking in specific, exclusive roles while women lead and speak significantly in other ways amongst God's people. Today, God's people are best served, and live most aligned with God's original design, when men and women are both included in the leadership of the church, while still respecting the asymmetrical patterns described and affirmed in scripture.

Part Two – Observations from the 2021 WMPCA Survey on men and women working together in the Presbyterian Church of Australia

In 2020, the WMPCA conducted a survey across the PCA to get a snapshot of what women's ministry, and men and women together in ministry, looks like across the country. In total, 484 people (324 women, 162 men) responded to the survey which was advertised on social media and sent to sessions and presbyteries directly for distribution to their congregations. A full copy of the survey and graphs of the answers of the select questions in the survey are available upon request.

The following **positives** can be observed from the survey results.

- The vast majority of people either tend to agree, or strongly agree that:
 - women's ministries are valued by the elders of their local church.
 - women are encouraged to participate in the conduct of services.
 - men and women work well together in their local church.
- More than 50% of people believe older women are discipling younger women in their churches.
- The vast majority of people believe they understand the roles of elders in the church.
- Over 65% of women have clarity about what women can and cannot do in their local churches.
- The vast majority of men and women trust the elders in their local congregation

The following **negatives** can be observed from the survey results.

- Less than 50% of women believe that women:
 - are consulted by the elders regarding the direction of this church.
 - are encouraged to develop their theological training in their local church.
- More than 30% of women in our churches feel limited in what they can do in church.
- More than 50% of people in our churches cannot affirm the statement, 'Women who experience domestic violence, know who to talk to about it within the church'.
- More than 50% of people in our churches cannot affirm the statement, 'Women trust the elders in this church with issues specifically related to women (e.g. domestic violence, sexism)'.

Beyond these positives and negatives, it is worth noting that on several questions there were statistically significantly different responses given by men and women on the following statements (as established by a Likert analysis).

- Women's ministries are valued by the elders in this church.
- Women are encouraged to participate in the conduct of church services.
- Women are regularly involved in the conduct of church services.
- Women are consulted by the elders regarding the direction of this church.
- Women are encouraged to develop their theological training in this church.

- Mature Christian women disciple younger women within this church.
- There are clear pathways for women to get pastoral counselling in this church.
- The elders in this church regularly visit members (both men and women).

Further to this, there were significant differences between female congregation members vs male ministers on the following two statements:

- Men and women work well together in this church.
- Women trust the elders in this church with issues specifically related to women (e.g. domestic violence, sexism).

These statistically significant discrepancies between how men and women are seeing these issues suggest that there is a communication gap and significant difference of opinion on these issues that ministers and elders need to be aware of.

Part Three - A Strategy for Women's Ministry in the Presbyterian Church of Australia

Given all of the above, it is the belief of this committee, that the best 'women's ministry' strategy is for men and women to be encouraged across all our churches to lead together. While the office of eldership is for men alone, the leadership of men and women in the church needs to be pro-actively and creatively encouraged. We believe this is complementarian partnership in action as established by the above theological framework.

The committee's specific strategy for how men and women can lead together under a complementarian framework and participate in leadership across our church courts is reflected in the accompanying deliverance.

J. Snare
CONVENER

COMMUNICATION 9 (Min 105)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA PRESBYTERIAN INLAND MISSION

COMMUNICATION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

The Presbyterian Inland Mission's (PIM) vision is to see people living in the remote and sparsely populated areas of Australia become mature and faithful followers of Jesus.

As a ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Australia and in partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the PIM has been taking the good news of Jesus to the furthest regions of our country since our foundation in 1912 as the Australian Inland Mission.

The involvement of the PCV in the AIM/PIM has been and remains extremely important. We trust this will be so into the future by the grace of God.

Sincere Thanks

The PIM wishes to record its sincere thanks to all associated with the PCV for generous prayerful, pastoral, and financial support given repeatedly to the PIM, its Ministry Teams and ministries. It is gratifying to report that this support is increasing and widening. We pray it might grow further. Without it, humanly speaking there would be no PIM.

PIM currently pursues its gospel vision through the activities of New Dunesk (Ardlethan NSW) and our nationwide network of PIM Ministry Teams.

New Dunesk

New Dunesk (ND) is a place for God's people to be inspired, equipped, and sent out for Gospel ministry across Australia.

At the beautiful 243-hectare ND site, 2 km south of the NSW Riverina town of Ardlethan:

- PIM Training Workshops are offered, where practical teaching is given to help elders and church members from rural communities better serve their local churches.
- The New Dunesk Gap Year program for young people is run, offering practical farm and ministry skills at ND and in the surrounding community.
- The PIM Gospel Nomads Network is based - a community of people whose life stage allows them, with appropriate training and inspiration given at ND, to go forth to serve both church and community in a wide range of ways, focusing on evangelism and discipleship.

A great deal of work is being put into making ND as effective a springboard for far-reaching Gospel ministry as possible.

From July 2024, Alvin and Narelle Chai have been based at ND. Alvin is involved in a new season of ministry with PIM as ND Ministry Director to further advance PIM's commitment to intentional evangelism and discipleship in remote and sparsely populated areas.

PIM Ministry Teams

PIM Ministry Teams possess the skills to clearly articulate the Gospel message. They take every opportunity to help believers become mature followers of Jesus. These efforts are complemented by the extension of Christian pastoral care.

At the time of this Communication PIM has four Ministry Teams:

- Colin and Alison Morrow - Mungo Patrol, NSW/Victoria
- Noah and Neroli Vasiliades - Snowy Mountains Patrol, NSW/Victoria
- Doug and Marcia Walker - St George Area Patrol, Queensland
- Michael and Jemina McNair - Mt Magnet Presbyterian Church, Western Australia

The involvement of Elders and Communicants of the PCV is abundantly clear in this PIM roll call!

The PIM Ministry Teams are Christian believers who are all highly committed to the Gospel task they have taken up in remote and sparsely populated Australia. Please pray for them and take an interest in them as the Lord leads.

One PIM Patrol is currently vacant:

- The John Flynn Patrol, SA

Some new fields of ministry are being currently explored.

All PIM Ministry Teams seek to build an active team of supporters who pray, support, and give finances to such an extent that 100% of employment costs are raised. Please consider joining the support of a present or future PIM Ministry Team.

Circumstances since last GAA

At the last GAA it was reported that the PIM was facing significant financial and administrative challenges. Since then, the Committee has taken decisive steps to address debt levels and has put new leadership in place. There are signs that these changes are bearing fruit to the glory of God.

Prayer Requested

Brothers and sisters, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly, and be honoured (2 Thessalonians 3:1).

We would be delighted if each day more prayer was offered for the PIM.

Our PIM Prayer Bookmark can be used to that end, these will be available at the General Assembly.

Please contact me at any time on any PIM matter.

Stuart Bonnington, PIM Superintendent
superintendent@pim.org.au

0438 868 964, 0400 012 865 Albany, Western Australia

COMMUNICATION 10: [PRIVATE PAPER] (Min 73)

ST ANDREW'S FOUNDATION

Rev. Cameron Garrett
Clerk of the General Assembly
156 Collins Street,
MELBOURNE, VIC 3000

11 September 2024

Dear Cameron,

Re: Establishment of a Corporate Trustee

We refer to our previous correspondence to the then Acting Clerk (the Rev Peter Phillips) of 11 December 2023 regarding the St Andrew's Foundation Trustees' resolution to replace the current structure of individual trustees with a single corporate trustee entity of which those trustees are directors.

The purpose of this letter is to advise you that the St Andrew's Foundation Trustees will shortly be executing the relevant legal documentation to effect the change to a corporate trustee and to list the changes of particular interest to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (**PCV**). The corporate trustee will be known as St Andrew's Foundation Limited (**Trustee Company**).

Under the terms of the Trust Deed, the consent of PCV or the Uniting Church of Australia – Synod of Victoria and Tasmania (**UCA**) is not required for any proposed variation to the Trust Deed or other documents. However, we consider it prudent to advise you of these intended changes.

Legal basis for the change of structure

The St Andrew's Foundation was established in October 1997, following the closure of the St Andrew's Hospital, pursuant to a deed of trust. Seven individuals are currently Trustees of the Foundation, with three appointed by the PCV, three from UCA, and an Independent Chair appointed by the six church appointed Trustees.

The Foundation is registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (**ACNC**) and is endorsed with Deductible Gift Recipient status as a Public Ancillary Fund (**PuAF**). All PuAFs are required to have a corporate trustee entity as its trustee. However, PuAFs established prior to 1 January 2012, such as this Foundation, could continue to operate with individual trustees under a transitional provision.

Process

This process to change to a corporate trustee has been overseen by a working group within the Trustees, which includes both PCV and UCA representatives. One member of the working group is a commercial lawyer, and has provided her skill set to this task, but has not provided legal advice to the Foundation.

Executive Office

William Buck
Level 20
181 William Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Telephone
(03) 9824 8555

Facsimile
(03) 9824 8580

Email
Belinda Hudson
belinda.hudson@williambuck.com

The Trustees engaged the law firm Moores to provide advice in relation to this change of structure and to draft the required set of documents. Moores has prepared a new constitution for the new Trustee Company, a Deed of Resignation and Appointment to effect the change of trustee to the Trustee Company, and a Deed of Variation to update the existing Trust Deed.

In addition to the consequential amendments to the Trust Deed to reflect that there is now a single corporate trustee, Moores, on instruction, has also made a range of consequential amendments to the Trust Deed to ensure it aligns with the latest version of the *Public Ancillary Fund Guidelines 2022* (Cth).

This document set has undergone two rounds of comment and amendment between Moores and the working group, with close scrutiny from the Foundation working group across 2024. This review included an 18-page table of comment for Moores, to ensure the documents reflected the precise circumstances of the Foundation and to ensure the existing rights and obligations were retained.

Relevant changes affecting PCV's interests

We do not consider that any material changes in how the Foundation operates or its interactions with the PCV or UCA will arise as a result of the change of structure and associated set of documents. For your information, we highlight the following changes across the documents which we consider would be of particular interest:

1. **Composition:** The composition requirement for the trustees is unchanged – being seven trustees of which three are appointed by the PCV's General Assembly, three are appointed by the UCA, and one is independently appointed by the Trustees. This requirement has been reworded to refer to directors instead of trustees. This requirement is now located both in the Trust Deed and in the new Constitution for the Trustee Company.
2. **Purpose:** In the Trust Deed, minor amendments have been made to the clauses relating to the purpose of the Foundation and the purpose for which the Foundation may make grants and payments. The changes involve minor changes to clause 7 to ensure that it exactly matches the wording in clause 4 to avoid contradiction. Moores has advised us that these minor changes will not trigger a requirement to obtain the approval of the ATO Commissioner regarding the purpose of a trust, as required under clause 15.1(b) of the Trust Deed. For context, clause 7.1 contains the following statement:

.... the Trustee must consider applications from and provide grants and donations towards the hospitals, aged care facilities and community service programmes provided by the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and The Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania and in the event that the funds required to meet appropriate applications (as determined at the sole discretion of the Trustee) in any Financial Year are less than the funds available to the Trustee for such purposes, they may make grants to other public benevolent institutions in Australia having objects similar to those bodies or to the St Andrew's Hospital Objects.

3. **Term of Appointment:** Historically, the PCV appointments to the Foundation have been for an indefinite term. By comparison, the UCA appointments have been for a period of 3 years which can be renewed. The current trustees have considered it prudent that:
 - a. all terms are for 3 years, including for PCV appointees; and
 - b. the maximum tenure of a Director is nine years, unless the Board agrees to a further term (or terms) for a Director beyond this maximum tenure on the basis of it being in the best interests of the Foundation and the Company.

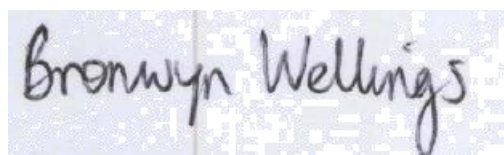
The Trustees consider that this term limitation is important for the good governance of the Foundation, including to ensure that fresh ideas and energy are brought to the Foundation over time.

4. **Director Vacancy:** A new mechanism has been added into the Trust Deed and Constitution in the event of a director vacancy of a PCV or UCA appointed position. The remaining directors may nominate a person to fill that role by written notice to the PCV or UCA as applicable. If that nominee is not rejected within 30 days (including by no response) by that Church, that nominee is deemed to be appointed as a director by the Church. This last resort option is essential to ensure that the Foundation is not forced to stop operations for more than 30 days in the event of a vacancy, which is otherwise required when there is a vacancy under the terms of the Trust Deed and Constitution. This deemed appointment is adapted from Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd's constitution. In practice, replacements have been found by each Church prior to the end of a current trustee's term so that there is no vacancy period.
5. **Discipline:** The new Constitution of the corporate trustee includes provisions relating to the discipline of its directors and members. One option is that the other directors can resolve to suspend or expel a director (as a member) from the Trustee Company by a resolution passed by no less than two-thirds of the remaining directors, provided at least 21 days prior notice is provided. We have also included an additional option that, rather than moving to suspend or expel a director, the Board can resolve, in the case of a Member appointed by PCV or UCA, to refer the decision to that Church.
6. **Winding Up:** The provisions relating to the winding up of the Trust have been preserved. This continues to be that the Trustee must pay or apply any assets of the Trust Fund remaining, after the satisfaction of all the Trust Fund's debts and liabilities, to one or more eligible entities that are connected with the PCV and/or UCA, as the Trustee decides, and if there are no such entities which meet the description of the above paragraph, to one or more or for eligible entities, as the Trustee decides.

Questions

The Foundation is happy to discuss any queries you may have, and to provide copies of any of the proposed documents upon request.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bronwyn Wellings". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The background of the signature is a light blue, textured rectangular area.

Bronwyn Wellings
Chair

cc. Mr. Iain Bramley
Dr. Bruce Ellis
Ms. Lauren Walley
Mr. Kenneth Marshman
Ms. Natalie Brown
Mr. Shawn Whelan
Mrs. Belinda Hudson
Mr. Geoff Cox

OVERTURES

OVERTURE 1: FROM PRESBYTERY OF NORTH WESTERN VICTORIA—(RULE 4.18.4) URGENT PRESBYTERY MEETINGS (Min 116)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) Rule 4.18.4 stating members of presbytery must have at least seven days' notice for an urgent meeting.
- b) Living in a fast-paced world, presbyteries may need to respond quickly.
- c) Delays in meeting may sometimes exacerbate problems which arise.
- d) Technology allows for instantaneous notice of a meeting to be given to members, and negotiation of an agreeable time to either meet in person or videoconference.
- e) Moderators of presbyteries being capable of determining whether a meeting is required immediately or whether a longer notice period is sufficient.

Now, therefore, the Presbytery of North Western Victoria 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 only, with replies to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May 2025, such that the rule reads (addition italicised):

1.18.4 At least seven days' notice of an urgent meeting is given to presbytery members by the moderator or, with his authority, by the clerk, *unless it is deemed time sensitive, in which case at least one days' notice may be given.*

And give this amended rule interim authority under Rule 5.47.1(b) or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

Signed: P Burns
 Clerk of Presbytery

Dated: 16 August 2024

Rev J Walz and Rev P Burns have been appointed to state the overture.

OVERTURE 2: FROM PRESBYTERY OF GIPPSLAND ANENT PASTORAL SUPERVISION (Min 117)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) The church's desire to keep all children safe from abuse;
- b) The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse making a recommendation that 'Consistent with Child Safe Standard 5, each religious institution should ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders, have professional supervision with a **trained professional** or **pastoral supervisor** who has a degree of independence from the institution within which the person is in ministry.' Recommendation 16.45
- c) The church not yet having adopted a formal process that responds to Recommendation 16.45

Now therefore the Presbytery of Gippsland humbly overtures the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and establish an ad hoc committee to answer:

1. Taking into consideration Scripture, Presbyterian teaching and polity, and Federal or State laws and regulations regarding professional supervision, what different formal processes could be implemented in response to Recommendation 16.45?
 - a) What are the advantages and disadvantages of each formal process identified?
 - b) What are the differences in complying with Recommendation 16.45 by using a trained professional versus pastoral supervisor?
 - c) Who, according to our polity, would be covered by the phrase 'all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders' within the recommendation?
 - d) What 'degree of independence' will be required to reasonably meet the recommendation's intent?
 - e) What are the costs (time, financial and other) associated with each process for:
 - i. the professional supervisors (trained profession or pastoral);
 - ii. those people in religious or pastoral ministry being supervised;
 - iii. congregations; and
 - iv. the PCV?
 - f) Who will be responsible for ensuring:
 - i. that 'all people in religious or pastoral ministry' are being professionally supervised?
 - ii. that supervisors have the appropriate training and qualifications?
 - iii. that the formal process adopted is producing the outcomes intended by the Royal Commission's recommendation?
2. Any other questions forwarded to the committee by members of the Assembly;

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

Signed: G Stephens
Clerk of Presbytery

Dated: 14 August 2024

Rev Heath Easton was appointed to state the overture.

OVERTURE 3: FROM PRESBYTERY OF NORTH EAST VICTORIA— (RULE 3.22) FREQUENCY OF PUBLIC WORSHIP (Min 119)

To the General Assembly of Victoria:

In the light of:

- a) The Risen Lord Jesus Himself set the pattern of meeting with His gathered disciples on the day of His resurrection, the first day of the week, which is called in the New Testament “the Lord’s Day” (Luke 24:1, 36-49, John 20:1, 19-24, 24-29, Revelation 1:10, see also Acts 20:7).
- b) The one day in seven, which was set apart in Creation (Genesis 2:1-3), and in the redemption from Egypt (Exodus 20:2, 8-11, Deuteronomy 5:6, 12-15), is now, in the New Covenant, changed from the seventh day of the week to the first day (Westminster Confession of Faith 21:7, see also Hebrews 4:1-11).
- c) The church in the first century gathered on the first day of the week to worship Jesus (The Didache 14:1, The First Apology of Justin Martyr chapter 67).
- d) One Christian duty on the Lord’s Day is to “[take] up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy” (Westminster Confession of Faith 21:8, see also Westminster Larger Catechism 116 & 117).
- e) On becoming members of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, members vow “to share regularly with [their] fellow Christians in worship on the Lord’s Day”.
- f) In the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Code Book, rule 3.22 states: ‘With the concurrence of the minister of the charge, session: fixes the times for regular public worship and of any special services of public worship it considers necessary.’ (Rule 3.22).
- g) There are congregations in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in which sessions have not fixed the time of public worship to be held on each Lord’s Day.
- h) The time of day when a congregation gathers for public worship is not commanded in the Scriptures, being a circumstance ‘concerning the worship of God, and government of the church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence’ (Westminster Confession of Faith 1:6).
- i) But the frequency of public worship being one day in seven is a matter expressly revealed in the Word of God and therefore cannot be a matter for liberty of opinion.
- j) Our loving heavenly Father, by adopting us, makes us part of His family with responsibilities to build up one another which cannot be carried out in isolation (1 Corinthians 14:12, 26, Ephesians 4:11-12, 16, 29, Colossians 3:15- 17, 1 Thessalonians 5:10-11, Jude 20).
- k) Christians need the encouragement of meeting together and the stimulation to

love and good works more and more, not less and less, and so should not neglect to meet together (Hebrews 10:23-25).

- I) Congregations that have abandoned less-frequent gathering for public worship have benefitted spiritually (and in other ways) from this change, finding Jesus' words to be true, that "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27, see Matthew 11:28-30, and also Westminster Larger Catechism 120 & 121).

Now therefore the Presbytery of North East Victoria humbly overtures the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit to the Presbyteries under the Barrier Act an amendment to rule 3.22.a so that it reads

- "a) fixes the regular times of public worship for each congregation at least once on each Lord's Day and of special services of public worship it considers necessary."

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

Signed: Rev. Stephen McDonald
 Clerk of the Presbytery

Dated: 13 August 2024

Extracted from the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Presbytery of North East Victoria on 13 August 2024 by me: Rev. Stephen McDonald, Clerk of the Presbytery of North East Victoria.

Rev Stephen McDonald and Rev Stuart Withers have been appointed to present the petition.

OVERTURE 4: FROM ADHOC DEACONS COMMITTEE—(RULE 3.38) QUALIFICATIONS FOR MANAGERS (Min 112)

To the General Assembly of Victoria:

In the light of:

- a) The PCV Code requires sessions to take into consideration the suitability of persons being elected to be managers:

3.38 Counting of votes and judgment of session

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.

- b) Having studied 1 Timothy 3 as part of its work, the ad hoc Committee for Deacons is of the opinion that there is a general principle in the Scriptures that those who take care of the material affairs of the church ought to have suitable godly character and convictions and that these requirements should be clearly grounded in the Scriptures.
- c) While the character required for elders and deacons are spelled out in passages such as 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, there are similar descriptions of the character and convictions of all mature Christians in Galatians 5:22-26, Titus 2:1-5 & 2 Peter 1:5-9.
- d) The PCV Code already refers to the Scriptures in defining the character qualifications of elders in rule 3.16.b.
- e) It is appropriate for the PCV Code to also refer directly to the Scriptures when requiring suitable character and convictions of managers.

Now therefore the ad hoc Committee for Deacons humbly overtures the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit to the Presbyteries under the Barrier Act an amendment to rule 3.38.b so that it reads:

- b) 'demonstrates mature Christian character and convictions (Gal 5:22-26, Tit 2:1-5, 2 Pet 1:5-9) and is otherwise suitable to hold the office of manager; and',

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

Signed: Rev Stephen McDonald
Secretary, ad hoc Committee for Deacons

Dated: 27 August 2024

Persons to state the overture are Revs Darren Middleton and Adam Humphries

OVERTURE 5: FROM ADHOC DEACONS COMMITTEE—(RULE 3.40) DIACONATE (Min 113)

To the General Assembly of Victoria:

In the light of:

- a) The decision of the General Assembly of Victoria in 2022 to:
‘Establish an ad hoc Committee on deacons to report on the biblical definition and function of deacons and the diaconate, including reference to Presbyterian standards, principles, and practice, to report to the 2023 General Assembly of Victoria and to make recommendations for the better functioning of this office.’(BB 2022 min 132)
- b) The decision of the General Assembly of Victoria in 2023 to affirm the following principles:
 - a) deacon is an office that is biblical, perpetual, spiritual, and practical;
 - b) deacons serve on behalf of the congregation and are primarily concerned with ministering to the physical and material needs of the congregation;
 - c) the office of deacon is not one of teaching or governance but has the necessary authority appropriate to the nature of the office;
 - d) the office of deacon is open to suitably qualified men and women.
(BB 2023 min 51)
- c) The recent decision of the General Assembly of Australia that deacons are now to be ordained rather than merely set apart by prayer and that while deacons are not required to defend the Westminster Confession of Faith read in the light of the Declaratory Statement, they are still required to own and accept it.
(General Assembly of Australia 2023 minutes 32 and 78)
- d) The present rules relating to the diaconate leave it to the session to determine whether there will be deacons in the charge under its jurisdiction:
‘A session may resolve to establish a diaconal ministry in a congregation under its jurisdiction and if so, it also determines how many deacons are to be elected.’ (Rule 3.40.3)
- e) In line with the Assembly’s endorsement of the principle that ‘deacon is an office that is biblical, perpetual, spiritual, and practical’, it should be the usual practice for each charge to have a diaconate, which would require a change to rule 3.40.3. Rule 3.40.1 should be revised to embody the principle about the perpetuity of the office of deacon.
- f) It is not intended that deacons would replace the congregation in serving one another, but that all of the congregation serve one another. So, a change to rule 3.40.2 expresses that while deacons serve on behalf of the congregation, they also serve with them.
- g) If there are not sufficient deacons (or are no deacons) in a congregation, difficulties may arise. So, as is the practice in other presbyterian and reformed denominations, the PCV Code could provide for the deacons (or, if there are none, the session) to enlist diaconal assistants. These members would not be required to meet all of the qualifications of deacons and would not be formally

set aside. An additional clause could be added as rule 3.40.12 to provide for diaconal assistants (renumbering rule 3.40.12 to 3.40.13).

- h) It is desirable to allow sessions greater flexibility to determine the length of service for deacons based on their own ministry contexts. So rule 3.40.9 could be revised to make a three-year term the minimum.
- i) There is a need to update rule 3.40.8 to bring it in to line with the recent decisions of the General Assembly of Australia which require deacons to be ordained and to answer the questions prescribed by the General Assembly of Australia affirmatively.
- j) For the better functioning of the office of deacon, there is a need to update rule 3.40.6 to require deacons to own the standards of the church, to hold a current Working with Children Check (or equivalent), and complete the relevant PCV Safe Church requirements.

Now therefore the ad hoc Committee on Deacons humbly overtures the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit to the Presbyteries under the Barrier Act such amendments to rule 3.40 so that it reads:

3.40 Diaconal ministry

- 3.40.1 The diaconate is an office of mercy, ~~with a ministry~~ **that is biblical, perpetual, spiritual and practical and** distinct from ~~that the office~~ of elders ~~or and the position~~ of managers.
- 3.40.2 The diaconate **serves with and on behalf of the congregation** ~~is to promoting~~, according to biblical guidelines and as resources permit, the material well-being first of the poor and needy within the local body of believers, secondly of other believers, and finally of all humanity.
- 3.40.3 A session ~~may resolve to establish~~ **es** a diaconal ministry ~~in a every congregation~~ under its jurisdiction and ~~if so, it also~~ determines how many deacons are to be elected.
- 3.40.4 Deacons are elected by communicants of the congregations in which they are to serve by a manner of election determined by the session.
- 3.40.5 Any person who has been a communicant of the congregation for at least one year, and is aged at least 21 years is eligible for election as a deacon in that congregation. A person who has served as a deacon in one congregation does not do so in another congregation unless so elected in that congregation.
- 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, **owns the standards of the Church and has shown** 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.
- 3.40.7 After this resolution the session must:
 - a) by formal motion declare elected those with whom it is satisfied, up to a number not exceeding the number required;
 - b) make public announcement of the names of the deacons-elect arranged in alphabetical order.

- 3.40.8 After such public announcement the persons elected, must, if they have not already done so, first complete a course of training set by the session and must then, after answering the questions prescribed by the General Assembly of Australia (see PCA 'Code', 6.7), be ~~set apart~~ **ordained** for their ministry by prayer during public worship. **If a deacon-elect has previously been ordained in a Presbyterian Church, whether in Australia or elsewhere, they are inducted on affirmatively answering the questions prescribed by the General Assembly of Australia;**
- 3.40.9 ~~A deacon serves for a three year term and is then eligible for re-election for the same term.~~
The Session must fix the term of a deacon's service, which is to be a minimum of three years, after which the deacon is then eligible for re-election. However, any term may be reduced by session:
- a) if the deacon resigns in writing addressed to it or ceases to be a communicant of the congregation; or
 - b) if it determines that the deacon has become mentally unsound; or
 - c) if it determines that the deacon has ceased to demonstrate a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and a giftedness for diaconal ministry within the life of the congregation.
- 3.40.10 Deacons must report on their activities to the session both regularly and also as required by session, and be available to assist elders as required.
- 3.40.11 Where there is more than one deacon, they must be formed into a diaconal care team for mutual prayer, support and communication. The meetings of this team are chaired by the minister or, if he is unable to do so, by an elder or deacon appointed by him.
- 3.40.12 **With the approval of the session, the deacons may enlist the assistance of other church members who are not deacons to help them carry out their work (or in the absence of any deacons, the session may do so). While these diaconal assistants need not meet all the qualifications of a deacon, it would be expected that they exhibit suitable godly character and giftedness.**
- 3.40.13 The ministry of diaconal care is funded by the board. If any employment agreement is entered into it should, if possible, be in a form approved by the Board of Investment and Finance.

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

Signed: Rev Stephen McDonald
Secretary, ad hoc Committee for Deacons

Dated: 27 August 2024

Persons to state the overture are Rev Darren Middleton and Adam Humphries

OVERTURE 6: FROM CODE AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE—CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS (RULE 4.31.2b) (Min 43)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) Candidates for the Ministry of Word and Sacraments as part of their course of training will be required to serve in congregational contexts.
- b) Serving in congregational contexts requiring the completion of the Safe Church Volunteer Process (VAP)
- c) A potential candidate not having served within a congregational context may not have completed the VAP prior to applying for candidature
- d) Concern expressed by the Safe Church Unit lest persons be appointed to a congregation who have never been through a Safe Church approval process.

Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit under Barrier Act to presbyteries with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025 the following change to rule, new subclause 4.31.2.b.ix that reads:

ix) his having completed the Safe Church Volunteer Approval process;

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

Signed: Cameron Garrett
 Clerk of Assembly

Dated: 5 September 2024

The Clerk was appointed to state the overture on behalf of the committee.

OVERTURE 7: FROM CODE AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE—(RULE 2.20) PURCHASING PROPERTY (Min 44)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

A. Purchase of a property.

- a) The Building and Property Committee has had requests for approval from Boards of Management for approval to purchase properties;
- b) The Code has a flowchart of church procedures – purchase of property, which states that congregations should apply to the Building and Property Committee, under Rule 2.20(d)(i) for approval prior to seeking the congregation's approval to purchase a property.
- c) This rule states that the Board must
 - a) 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;
 - iii. obtain from the Building and Property Committee:
 - iv. iii) in principle approval of the proposed works at the concept stage; and
 - v. iv) final approval of the completed plans and specifications of the proposed works; and
 - vi. v) approval of any variations to the approved plans and specifications proposed during the course of the works;

There is no mention in this rule about the purchase of a property.

- d) Historically, it is believed, that the committee has given approval for the purchase of properties and therefore for this to continue the code needs to be amended to include this requirement.

B. Limitation of advice able to be given by church architect.

- a) Rule 2.20(c) states that the Board of Management must obtain the advice of the church architect "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."
- b) When the church architect was appointed, he advised the Building and Property Committee that he was unable to undertake pre-purchase condition reports because of the high cost of insurance premiums as a result of litigation against persons carrying out pre-purchase condition reports.
- c) The church architect has advised the Committee that because of the potential litigation, condition reports are "padded" to provide additional protection.

- d) The Building and Property Committee has asked that Rule 2.20 be amended to include the words 'obtain a pre inspection report from a qualified inspector'.

Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit under Barrier Act to presbyteries with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025 the following change to rule 2.20 so that the rule reads:

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) **when purchasing an existing building for the use of the congregation, obtain:**
 - i) **a pre-purchase condition inspection report from a qualified inspector; and**
 - ii) **other reports as required by the committee in any particular case; and**
 - iii) **the prior approval of the Building and Property Committee of the proposed purchase;**
- f) 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;
- g) 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.
- h) fix and collect any charges for use of congregational buildings, where the session has approved this use.

Note: the ordinary revenue of a congregation is the income referred to in [rule 2.44.2\(a\) and \(b\)](#).

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

Signed: Cameron Garrett
 Clerk of Assembly

Dated: 5 September 2024

The Clerk was appointed to state the overture on behalf of the committee.

OVERTURE 8: FROM CODE AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE—(RULES 2.35A, 2.35.4, 3.6A, 3.40A, 3.40.9, 4.47A) HOLDING A WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK (Min 45)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) Various persons in the church requiring a Working With Children Check for appointment
- b) There being no explicit requirement within the rules of the church that a Working With Children Check be maintained while serving in the appointment
- c) The need for clarity in situations where a person ceases to hold a Working With Children Check
- d) The Safe Church Committee having endorsed both the need for such changes to the rules and the proposed rule changes

Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit under Barrier Act to presbyteries with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025 the following new rules 2.35A, 3.6A, 3.40A and 4.47A and amended rules 2.35.4 and 3.40.9, as follows:

2.35A Working With Children Check requirements – managers

- 2.35A.1 Every person serving on a board as a manager must hold a current Working With Children Check.
- 2.35A.2 Upon becoming aware that a manager does not hold a current Working With Children Check due to a failure to renew the Working With Children Check, the session must immediately suspend the person from the board until the person renews the Working With Children Check.
- 2.35A.3 Upon becoming aware that a manager has had his or her Working With Children Check refused or excluded, the session must immediately remove the person from the board.
- 2.35A.4 A manager who has had his or her Working With Children Check reinstated after a refusal or exclusion will be eligible for election to any board only after being cleared for service through the Safe Church screening processes.

2.35.4 Managers' term of office

A manager's term ceases if he or she is removed from the roll of communicants or adherents, is suspended from privileges by disciplinary process of a church court, or removed from the board by the operation of Rule 2.35A.3.

3.6A Working With Children Check requirements - elders

- 3.6A.1 Every elder who is a member of a session must hold a current Working With Children Check.

- 3.6A.2 Upon becoming aware that an elder does not hold a current Working With Children Check due to a failure to renew the Working With Children Check, the session must immediately suspend him from the session until he renews the Working With Children Check.
- 3.6A.3 Upon becoming aware that an elder has had his Working With Children Check refused or excluded, the session must immediately remove him from the session.
- 3.6A.4 An elder who has had his Working With Children Check reinstated after a refusal or exclusion will be eligible for election to any session only after having been cleared for service through the Safe Church screening processes.
- 3.6.2 An elder remains a member of the session which has inducted him while a communicant of a congregation under the jurisdiction of that session, or until he resigns, or he is deposed, or he is removed by the operation of rule 3.6A.3, or the law of the church otherwise deprives him of his status as an elder.

3.40A Working With Children Check requirements - deacons

- 3.40A.1 Every person serving as a deacon as provided for in rule 3.40 above must hold a current Working With Children Check.
- 3.40A.2 Upon becoming aware that a deacon does not hold a current Working With Children Check due to a failure to renew the Working With Children Check, the session must immediately suspend the person from the diaconate until the person renews the Working With Children Check.
- 3.40A.3 Upon becoming aware that a deacon has had his or her Working With Children Check refused or excluded, the session must immediately remove the person from the diaconate.
- 3.40A.4 A deacon who has had his or her Working With Children Check reinstated after a refusal or exclusion, will be eligible for election to any diaconate only after having been cleared for service through the Safe Church screening processes.
- 3.40.9 A deacon serves for a three-year term and is then eligible for re-election for the same term. However, any term may be reduced by session:
 - a) if the deacon resigns in writing addressed to it or ceases to be a communicant of the congregation; or
 - b) if it determines that the deacon has become mentally unsound; or
 - c) if it determines that the deacon has ceased to demonstrate a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and a giftedness for diaconal ministry within the life of the congregation; or
 - d) by the operation of rule 3.40A.3.

4.47A Working With Children Check requirements – persons in pastoral ministry

- 4.47A.1 Every:
 - a) minister inducted into a charge;
 - b) minister, licentiate, home missionary or candidate for the ministry appointed to a charge; and
 - c) other church worker appointed to a remunerated or volunteer pastoral and/or teaching role in a charge;

must hold a current Working With Children Check.

- 4.47A.2 Upon becoming aware that such a person does not hold a current Working With Children Check due to a failure to renew the Working With Children Check, the session or the presbytery as the case may require must immediately suspend the person from his or her office or role until the person renews the Working With Children Check.
- 4.47A.3 Upon becoming aware that such a person has had his or her Working With Children Check refused or excluded, the session or the presbytery as the case may require must immediately
- a) in the case of a minister inducted into a pastoral charge, sever the pastoral tie;
 - b) in the case of a minister, licentiate, home missionary or candidate for the ministry appointed to a pastoral charge, terminate his appointment;
 - c) in the case of any other church worker appointed to a remunerated or volunteer pastoral and/or teaching role in a charge, remove the person from his or her role.
- 4.47A.4 Such a person who has had his or her Working With Children Check reinstated after a refusal or exclusion, will be eligible for:
- a) induction into or appointment to any charge; or
 - b) appointment to a volunteer or remunerated pastoral and/or teaching role in any charge;
- only after having been cleared for service through the Safe Church screening processes.

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

Signed: Cameron Garrett
 Clerk of Assembly

Dated: 5 September 2024

The Clerk was appointed to state the overture on behalf of the committee.

OVERTURE 9: FROM CODE AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE—MEETING IN PRIVATE (RULE 6.10) (Min 46)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) The customary law of the church no longer being universally understood;
- b) Questions being asked of the Code Committee by members of the Assembly regarding what information received when the Assembly sits in private may be shared with members of the Assembly not present at the time;
- c) The advice of the Privacy Officer to the Code Committee that it is considered that the information shared in a court of the church when meeting in private cannot be shared with members of the court who were not present.
- d) A lack of explicit rules concerning to whom private matters are private

Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit under Barrier Act to presbyteries with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025 the following change to rule 6.10, the inclusion of new subclause 7 as follows:

6.10.7 When a court meets in private all information shared with the members of the court present, whether orally or in writing, is strictly private to those present and must not be divulged outside any subsequent meeting of the court to any member of court not present when the court sat in private or to any other person.

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

Signed: Cameron Garrett
 Clerk of Assembly

Dated: 5 September 2024

The Clerk was appointed to state the overture on behalf of the committee.

OVERTURE 10: FROM CODE AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE—ALLOWANCE NOMENCLATURE (RULE 4.68A AND 4.68B) (Min 120)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) A difference in meaning between our internal nomenclature and the technical definitions employed by the Australian Taxation Office.
- b) The terminology being a source of confusion and frustration.
- c) A simple solution, by which a minor change in our rules can alleviate future consternation.

Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit under Barrier Act to presbyteries with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025 the following changes to rules to rules 4.68A and 4.68B:

4.68A.2 The proposed Basis of Union must deal with:

- a) the choice of a name for the united congregation;
- b) the fusion of the uniting congregational communicant and adherent rolls into single communicant and adherent rolls of the united congregation;
- c) the choice of a building as the place of worship for the united congregation where that is called for;
- d) the fusion of the funds of the uniting congregations, having regard to any trusts with which any congregational funds may be impressed;
- e) the proposed allocation of any monies held in trust in sites reserve accounts for the uniting congregations;
- f) the proposed allocation of the property of the uniting congregations and the future use or disposal of any remaining property not needed by the united congregation;
- g) the placing of the united congregation under a session (rule 4.60.1);
- h) the bounds of the parish within which the united congregation will be situated;
- i) the provision of a manse or ~~a manse allowance~~ **an additional non-cash benefit** for any minister of the united congregation; and
- j) the provision of a minister or ministers for the united congregation.

4.68B.2 The proposed Basis of Linking must deal with:

- a) the choice of a name for the linked charge;
- b) the placing of the linked congregations under a session (rule 4.60.1);
- c) the bounds of the parish within which the linked congregations will be situated;
- d) the provision of a manse or ~~a manse allowance~~ **an additional non-cash benefit** for any minister or ministers of the linked congregations; and
- e) the provision of a minister or ministers for the linked congregations.

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

Signed: Cameron Garrett
 Clerk of Assembly

Dated: 5 September 2024

The Clerk was appointed to state the overture on behalf of the committee.

OVERTURE 11: FROM CODE AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE—CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS (RULES 2.13A, 2.14, 2.15, 2.45, 2.45A, 4.81) (Min 48)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) The current rules which are deficient in that they do not require congregations to:
 - i) approve the terms of settlement and/or other such payments and to approve a budget prior to the commencement of its financial year, or
 - ii) authorise Boards to adjust terms of settlement and to commence other such payments in line with decisions of the May Commission of Assembly each year,
thus leaving open the possibility that their Boards may be left in the invidious position of being required to make unauthorised payments and to expend unbudgeted moneys in order to comply with decisions of the Commission of Assembly;
- b) The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission's expectation that all charitable organisations adhere to good governance principles

Now therefore the Code and General Administration Committee humbly overtures the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and remit under Barrier Act to presbyteries with responses to be in the hands of the Clerk by 31 May 2025 the following change new or amended rules 2.13A, 2.14, 2.15, 2.45, 2.45A, 4.81 as follows:

2.13A Approval of budgets, terms of settlement etc.

2.13A.1 Every congregation (except in the case of linked congregations) prior to the commencement of the charge's financial year must:

- a) approve:
 - i) the proposed terms of settlement for its next financial year of any minister, licentiate or home missionary inducted into or appointed to the charge; and/or
 - ii) the proposed terms and conditions for its next financial year of any assistant to the minister and/or other church worker appointed to a remunerated pastoral and/or teaching role in the charge; or
 - iii) in the case of a vacancy in a pastoral charge, the proposed terms of settlement for its next financial year for the filling of the vacancy; and
- b) adopt an acceptable congregational budget for its next financial year;

2.13A.2 A congregation may as an alternative to rule 2.13A.1 grant its board authority to:

- a) deal with the matters specified in this rule, provided that where such approval is granted the board must report its actions to the next annual meeting of the congregation; and

- b) adopt a provisional budget for the charge's next financial year until the adoption of the congregational budget at the annual congregational meeting.
- 2.13.A.3 If a charge's financial year is other than 1 July – 30 June the congregation must grant the board authority in terms of rule 2.13A.2 so that the board can make timely adjustments to changed stipend and other payments from 1 July.
- 2.13A.4 The congregations of a linked charge meeting jointly prior to the commencement of the charge's financial year must:
 - a) approve:
 - i) the proposed terms of settlement for its next financial year of any minister, licentiate or home missionary inducted into or appointed to the charge; and/or
 - ii) the proposed terms and conditions for its next financial year of any assistant to the minister and/or other church worker appointed to a remunerated pastoral and/or teaching role in the charge; or
 - iii) in the case of a vacancy in a pastoral charge, the proposed terms of settlement for its next financial year for the filling of the vacancy;
 - b) adopt an acceptable federal board budget for the charge's next financial year.
- 2.13A.5 The congregations of a linked charge meeting jointly may as an alternative to rule 2.13A.4 grant their federal board authority to:
 - a) deal with the matters specified in this rule, provided that where such approval is granted the board must report its actions to the next annual joint meeting of the congregations; and
 - b) adopt a provisional budget for the charge's next financial year until the adoption of the congregational budget at the annual joint congregational meeting.
- 2.13.A.6 If a linked charge's financial year is other than 1 July – 30 June the congregations meeting jointly must grant their federal board authority in terms of rule 2.13A.5 so that the board can make timely adjustments to changed stipend and other payments from 1 July.

2.14 Annual congregational meetings

- 2.14.1 Every congregation must meet within four months of its annual reporting period to:
 - a) approve the annual report of its board;
 - b) adopt the annual audited financial statement of accounts submitted by its board;
 - c) where the congregation has granted its board authority to act under rule 2.13A.2 or 2.13A.3:
 - i) receive the board's report required by rule 2.13.A2(a); and
 - ii) adopt an acceptable budget for the current financial year;
 - d) appoint congregational auditors for the coming year (see rule 2.16);
 - e) determine the number of persons to be elected from and by the communicants and adherents of the congregation, termed 'managers', or in special circumstances determine for a limited time to delegate this right of determination to the session; and
 - f) consider any other matter referred to it by the session.

- 2.14.2 A written review by the session of the life and work of the congregation may be presented to this meeting. Reports of congregational organisations, with or without financial statements, may also be presented in whole or in part to this meeting as the session sees fit. But, unless the session has resolved to seek the mind of the congregation on any particular matter, no such review or report is received or adopted or formally dealt with by this meeting.
- 2.14.3 This meeting may resolve to refer to the session for consideration any complaints or recommendations concerning the report or financial statement of a congregational organisation.
- 2.14.4 The congregations of a linked charge must meet jointly within four months of the federal board's annual reporting period to:
- a) approve the annual report of the federal board;
 - b) adopt the annual audited financial statement of accounts submitted by the federal board;
 - c) where the congregations have granted their federal board authority to act under rule 2.13A.5 or rule 2.13A.6:
 - i) receive the board's report required by rule 2.13A.5(a).
 - ii) adopt an acceptable budget for the current financial year;
 - d) appoint federal board auditors for the coming year; and
 - e) consider any other matter referred to it by the session.

Note: A board must report on the congregation's property and its activities during the preceding year (see rule 2.45).

2.15 Annual submission of financial documents to presbytery

Every charge must submit annually to the presbytery:

- a) its audited financial statements;
- b) the terms of settlement for the charge's next financial year of any minister, licentiate or home missionary inducted into or appointed to the charge and/or the proposed terms and conditions for the charge's next financial year of any assistant to the minister and/or other church worker appointed to a remunerated pastoral and/or teaching role in the charge as congregation or congregations or the board or federal board; and
- c) the budget or budgets adopted.

2.45 Annual reporting by a congregational board

2.45.1 Except where there is a federal board or where the congregation has granted its board authority to act under rule 2.13A.2 or rule 2.13A.3, every congregational board must annually prepare, approve and submit to a congregational meeting to be held prior to the commencement of the charge's financial year:

- a) the terms of settlement it proposes for the charge's next financial year for any inducted or appointed minister, licentiate or home missionary in the form approved by the General Assembly; and/or
- b) the terms and conditions for the charge's next financial year for any appointed assistant to the minister or any other church worker appointed to a remunerated pastoral and/or teaching role; or

- c) in the case of a vacancy in a pastoral charge, the proposed terms of settlement for the charge's next financial year for the filling of the vacancy;
 - d) a proposed budget for the charge's next financial year.
- 2.45.2 Every congregational board must annually prepare, approve and submit to the annual congregational meeting:
- a) a report on the congregation's property and the board's activities during the preceding year;
 - b) a financial statement of its accounts, which is audited; and
 - c) where the congregation has granted its board authority to act under rule 2.13A.2 or rule 2.13A.3:
 - i) the report required by rule 2.13.2A(a); and
 - ii) a proposed budget for the charge's current financial year.

2.45A Annual reporting by a federal board

- 2.45A.1 Except where the congregations of a linked charge have granted their federal board authority to act under rule 2.13A.4 or rule 2.13A.6, every federal board must annually prepare, approve and submit to a joint congregational meeting to be held prior to the commencement of the charge's financial year:
- a)
 - i) the terms of settlement it proposes for the charge's next financial year for any inducted or appointed minister, or licentiate or home missionary in the form approved by the General Assembly; and/or
 - ii) the terms and conditions it proposes for the charge's next financial year for any appointed assistant to the minister or any other church worker appointed to a remunerated pastoral and/or teaching role; or
 - iii) in the case of a vacancy in a pastoral charge, the proposed terms of settlement for the charge's next financial year for the filling of the vacancy; and
 - iv) a proposed budget for the charge's next financial year
- 2.45A.2 Every federal board must annually prepare, approve and submit to the annual joint meeting of the congregations of the charge:
- a) a report on any congregational property used as a manse and the board's activities during the preceding year;
 - b) a financial statement of its accounts, which is audited;
 - c) where the congregations have granted the board authority to act under rule 2.13A.5 or rule 2.13A.6:
 - i) the report required by rule 2.13A5(a); and
 - ii) a proposed budget for the charge's current financial year.

4.81 Submission of financial documents to presbytery

- 4.81.1 A presbytery must ensure that every charge within its bounds submits to the presbytery annually; or when, in the opinion of the presbytery, any change in circumstances requires a review of the terms of settlement:
- a) its audited financial statement;
 - b) the terms of settlement of any minister, licentiate or home missionary inducted into or appointed to the charge approved by the congregation or congregations of the charge; and
 - c) the budget or budgets adopted.

4.81.2 The presbytery must consider the proposed terms of settlement in the light of all available information and either approve them or return them to the congregation for reconsideration.

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

Signed: Cameron Garrett
Clerk of Assembly

Dated: 5 September 2024

The Clerk was appointed to state the overture on behalf of the committee.

OVERTURE 12: FROM THE ARCHIVES AND THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEES—ELGAR RD PROPERTY (Min 121)

To the General Assembly of Victoria:

In the light of:

- a) The action taken by the Archives Committee, at the direction of the Assembly, to find and secure a permanent, fit-for-purpose location for the PCV Archives, resulting in the lease of 690 Elgar Rd, Box Hill North, a property adjacent to the Presbyterian Theological College (PTC) from Bolton Clarke which had been dormant since 2017 and so far has failed to be sold on the open market;
- b) The securing of a lease on this property favourable to the Archives Committee, most notably containing a clause that offers the PCV Trusts Corporation first right of purchase, with Bolton Clarke recently indicating their continued willingness to receive an off-market purchasing offer from the PCV;
- c) The great usefulness of the site not only for the PCV Archives but for several other institutions and committees of the PCV, including the Presbyterian Theological College, the Ministry Development Committee, the PWMU, as well as the Melbourne Evangelical Christian Counselling Centre (a service closely aligned with the PCV), all of whom have already invested considerably in the preparation and fit out of the existing facilities on the site;
- d) The great advantage of combining a property of this size with that of the PTC to secure for the PCV a land holding of almost 2 acres in Box Hill North, for the benefit not only of the Archives and the College, but also the wider ministries of the PCV;
- e) The opportunity afforded by such a purchase for a more suitable strategic plan for the PTC facilities, both because of the securing of library overflow in the short term and an expanded scope for redevelopment in the future, for the interests of the wider PCV as well as the PTC.

Now therefore we the Archives and Theological Education Committees humbly overture the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and

- i) declare its mind that the purchase of 690 Elgar Road Box Hill North for the utilisation of ministries of the PCV is a high priority;
- ii) declare that such purchase (above) is a matter of urgency given the nature of the lease with Bolton Clarke;
- iii) request the Board of Investment and Finance to consider ways in which funds might be applied to effect such purchase within the next two years, asking the Board to report back to the GAV at the 2025 May Commission, giving that Commission power to act on such purchase if thought appropriate. or do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

Signed: Rev Cameron Garrett

Rev Kevin Maxwell

Dated: *per* Archives Committee *per* Theological Education Committee
4 September 2024

Rev Dr John Wilson has been appointed to state the overture.

OVERTURE 13: FROM SEVEN MEMBERS—ASSEMBLY HALL (Min 122)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

In the light of:

- a) The determination of Justice Sifris that '[t]he PCV holds a 37% proprietary interest in the Assembly Hall and the Scots' Church Board of Management holds a 63% proprietary interest in the Assembly Hall' and 'This was the entire remedy for the identified breaches' being 'the sum of **\$11,402,419.64** (\$4.5m + \$6,902,419.64) used to acquire, develop and improve the Assembly Hall in breach of trust.' ([2018] VSC 200 at [4]; [2016] VSC 297 at [188]);
- b) The Assembly Hall being zoned for, and used for, religious purposes since its opening on 17 May 1915;
- c) The Assembly Hall being integral to the ongoing ministry of The Scots' congregation;
- d) The Assembly Hall being found by architects Lovell Chen to be of limited value in commercial potential and impeded by heritage requirements;
- e) The 37% interest in the Assembly Hall (hereafter referred to as 'the minority interest') being held by PCV Trusts Corporation as an investment;
- f) This investment not presently being able to make distributions for the beneficial purpose of home mission and church extension;
- g) The Scots' congregation being only able to adequately service a long-term interest free loan of no more than \$2.0M through income streams from the Assembly Hall, taking into account future maintenance requirements;
- h) differences in valuation methodology resulting in the following large divergence:
 - o 2016 (BIF) by JJJ \$14.4M
 - o 2016 (SCPT) State Revenue Office: Title Transfer \$28M
 - o 2019 (SCBOML) \$8.8M (excluding repairs)
 - o 2020 (Trust Corporation) by JJJ \$27.5M
 - o 2021 (Scots') by Urbis \$2.8M (excluding repairs) or \$7.5M (including repairs);
- i) The inability of the relevant parties to come to agreement in the past.

Now therefore we, seven members of the Assembly, humbly overture the General Assembly to:

A) Note the statement of Justice Sifris:

'I consider and indeed said on many occasions that this was a most unnecessary and undignified dispute. It is in fact shameful. The matter should never have come to Court, particularly given the identity of the litigants. I am almost minded to call for an inquiry into costs. No doubt millions of dollars could have been deployed for charitable purposes. What a waste of considerable time and money.'

Nobody can escape blame and it is not productive to assign degrees of blameworthiness. I can only yet again **encourage the parties to resolve all matters once and for all** and not burden the Court of Appeal with *matters that are best and only properly dealt with and resolved between the parties*, using the Court, if required, in its extensive supervisory jurisdiction. (emphasis added; [2018] VSC 200 at [62])

- B) Note the goal of the signatories to this overture is to seek Assembly approval and support to resolve the matters once and for all, and inter alia, to provide the terms of a proposal that can be put to and agreed between the parties to transfer the minority interest to Scots' Church at an agreed valuation, to be funded from:
 - a. \$500,000 cash contribution from Scots' Church BoM
 - b. \$2.0 million interest free loan from PCV to Scots' Church BoM
 - c. A grant from PCV for whatever amount is additionally required to meet the **final agreed value** as in the terms below
- C) Note that (as we seek to establish an agreed valuation) Justice Sifris awarded the minority interest in lieu of the \$4.21M not distributed to the PCV. With subsequent inflation this figure is now approximately \$5.35M (via Reserve Bank Australia statistics).
- D) Note that external repairs to the building may be required prior to the transaction as previously agreed, and may affect any final agreed valuation.
- E) Note that any grant made to Scots' Church to assist in formalising the purchase of the minority holding will return to the two beneficiary committees of The Presbyterian Church of Victoria through the PCV Trusts Corporation, along with the additional purchase funds.
- F) take the foregoing premises into consideration and as an act of grace:
 - a) Request PCV Trusts Corporation to favourably consider the proposed base value of \$5.35 million for the minority interest in the Assembly Hall, to which may be added pro-rata costs of façade repairs; noting the requested grant (below) from PCV funds will be needed to meet the **final agreed value**.
 - b) Offer a loan to Scots' Church on the following terms:
 - i. Principal: \$2.0M
 - ii. Period: 30 years
 - iii. Interest: 0% per annum
 - iv. Instalments: Quarterly
 - c) Offer **a grant to Scots' Church** for the difference between [the **final agreed value** in a) above] and [\$500,000 plus the amount of the loan in b) above], on the following terms:
 - i. The grant is for the purpose of purchasing the minority interest in Assembly Hall and may not be used for any other purpose.
 - ii. The grant monies will only be advanced when and if the sale subject to the below terms is approved.
 - iii. The grant will be paid back in full to the PCV in the event of any future sale of Assembly Hall (or part thereof on a pro rata basis)
(For example, the agreed price is \$6.5 million, with façade repairs completed. Scots' provides \$500,000 cash; a loan provides \$2.0 million, and a grant

supplies the additional \$4 million. After the transaction, all of these proceeds are divided between Ministry Development Committee and Church Planting Committee.)

- d) Offer to sell the minority interest in Assembly Hall to Scots' Church congregation for the **final agreed value** on the terms described above, noting additionally that in the event of any future sale of the Assembly Hall (or part thereof on a pro rata basis):
- i. The residual of the loan (in b) above) be paid immediately to the PCV
 - ii. The grant (in c) above) be paid back in full

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

Signed:	Cameron Garrett Gippsland	Philip Campbell Melbourne West	Neil Chambers Melbourne North
	David Martin Flinders	Toby McIntosh Western Victoria	John Huynh Melbourne East
	Graham Nicholson Melbourne East		

Dated: 17 September 2024

The Clerk and Rev Philip Campbell were appointed to state the overture.

PETITIONS

PETITION 1: PRESBYTERY OF MELBOURNE EAST—DISSOLUTION OF DEAF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (Min 95)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

This petition shows that:

- a) The Deaf Presbyterian Church (DPC) of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria was established as a 'Special Interest Congregation', with the status of a 'Home Mission Charge':
 - i. Prior to joining the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, it was an interdenominational fellowship that was established in 1963 (known as the Deaf Christian Fellowship).
 - ii. Since joining the PCV in November 2002, the congregation has been meeting at Surrey Hills Presbyterian Church.
 - iii. The DPC has been faithfully serving a congregation of about 20 people.
 - iv. Over those years, it has been difficult for the DPC to establish its own Board and manage all the administration and compliance tasks required of a congregation.
- b) Surrey Hills Presbyterian (SHP) has taken responsibility for the membership of the DPC and intends to support a ministry to the Deaf Community as part of its own ministry;
 - i. The last worship service of the DPC was held on 26 June 2023.
 - ii. The entire membership of DPC has been transferred to SHP.
 - iii. Rev Tony Salisbury continues to minister to the Deaf membership as a retired minister.

Now therefore the Presbytery of Melbourne East humbly petitions the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and to approve the dissolution of the Deaf Presbyterian Church according to Rule 4.69

or to do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

Signed: K. L. Childs
Clerk of Presbytery

Dated: 27 August 2024

Rev John Huynh and Elder Russell Walley have been appointed to present the petition.

PETITION 2: PRESBYTERY OF NORTH EAST VICTORIA— DISSOLUTION OF NUMURKAH AND TALLYGAROPNA (Min 134)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

This petition shows that:

The Numurkah and Tallygaroopna Congregations

- a) The Numurkah and Tallygaroopna congregations are congregations of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of North East Victoria.
- b) At the ordinary meeting of Presbytery on 11 April 2023, it was resolved to seek the minds of the Numurkah and Tallygaroopna congregations and the Session regarding the Presbytery's intention to dissolve both congregations (minute 23.04.41).
- c) The minds of the congregations were sought on 3 June 2023. The Session resolved to agree to the dissolution of the Numurkah congregation, but not the Tallygaroopna congregation. The Numurkah congregation resolved to ask for services to resume in Numurkah (which had not been held regularly for 3 years). Members of the Tallygaroopna congregation disagreed with the dissolution of the Tallygaroopna congregation, but were unable to form a quorum for a formal congregational meeting (minutes 23.06.20 & 21).
- d) At the ordinary meeting of Presbytery on 13 June 2023, the Presbytery resolved "to declare the Presbytery's intention to dissolve the Numurkah and Tallygaroopna congregations, direct the Session to cease services by 31st July 2023, and arrange for the pastoral care of the attendees and the issue of transfer certificates for communicants and letters of introduction for adherents of the congregations (PCV Code 4.69.1)." (minute 23.06.27).
- e) The last regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship was held at Numurkah on 20 October 2022.
- f) The last regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship was held at Tallygaroopna on 30 July 2023.
- g) At the ordinary meeting of Presbytery on 11 June 2024, the Session reported that there are no communicant or adherents remaining on the roll.
- h) The Presbytery intends to dissolve the Numurkah and Tallygaroopna congregations and reports this intention to the General Assembly (GAV Code 4.69.5).

Gospel Priorities in the Presbytery of North East Victoria

- i) The Presbytery is thankful that by God's grace the congregations within our Presbytery have enjoyed decades of faithful gospel preaching and teaching. Many ministers and elders have made contributions to this work.
- j) Nevertheless, since the turn of the century, church attendance across our Presbytery has fallen by 46.7%.

- k) Over the last seven years, the Presbytery has engaged in several opportunities for evaluation and review, including prayer and planning meetings, and renewed efforts at conducting five-yearly visitations.
- l) The Presbytery met on 13 August 2024 and resolved “that the Presbytery’s priorities for the Gospel work under our jurisdiction are the provision of a church site and building at Wodonga and the provision of a manse at Shepparton.” (minute 24.08.15)

Allocation of Proceeds

- m) The Presbytery expects that the sale of the manse at 56 Saxton Street, Numurkah, would realise approximately \$400,000 to \$450,000, the church and hall at 58-62 Saxton Street, Numurkah, would realise approximately \$330,000 to \$370,000, and the church with attached hall at 48 Victoria Street, Tallygaroopna, would realise approximately \$325,000 to \$350,000, respectively having been provided with valuations by First National Real Estate Numurkah.
- n) On 13 August 2024, the Presbytery resolved ‘that the Presbytery request that in the allocation of proceeds from the sales of the properties in Thoona, Tallygaroopna and Numurkah, the first \$900,000 be allocated to the provision of a church site and building at Wodonga, with the remainder to be allocated to the provision of a manse at Shepparton’. (minute 24.08.16)
- o) So, the Presbytery requests that the General Assembly authorise the sale of the properties at 56 Saxton Street, Numurkah (Volume 10882 Folio 894), 58-62 Saxton Street, Numurkah (Volume 10882 Folio 894), and 48 Victoria Street, Tallygaroopna (Volume 03346 Folio 025), for the purposes of providing \$900,000 a church site and building at Wodonga, with the remainder to be allocated to the provision of a manse at Shepparton.

Now therefore the Presbytery of North East Victoria humbly petitions the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and:

1. Agree to the dissolution of the Numurkah and Tallygaroopna congregations effective immediately; and
2. Authorise the sale of the properties at 56 Saxton Street, Numurkah (Volume 10882 Folio 894), 58-62 Saxton Street, Numurkah (Volume 10882 Folio 894), and 48 Victoria Street, Tallygaroopna (Volume 03346 Folio 025), and the application of the net proceeds of sale after accounting for costs of the sale, for the following purposes of providing \$900,000 a church site and building at Wodonga, with the remainder to be allocated to the provision of a manse at Shepparton.

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

Signed: Rev. Stephen McDonald
Clerk of the Presbytery
Dated: 13 August 2024

Extracted from the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Presbytery of North East Victoria on 13 August 2024 by me: Rev. Stephen McDonald, Clerk of the Presbytery of North East Victoria.

Rev Stephen McDonald and Rev Kalpan Vasa have been appointed to present the petition.

PETITION 3: PRESBYTERY OF NORTH EAST VICTORIA— DISSOLUTION OF THOONA (Min 135)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

This petition shows that:

The Thoona Congregation

- a) The Thoona congregation is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of North East Victoria.
- b) On 11 April 2023, the presbytery resolved ‘for the long-term health of the ministry and mission of the gospel in the Benalla Regional Parish, to form a special visitation committee... to consult with the Session, the minister, and all three congregations with a view to holding a final service at Thoona in 2023 and the later dissolution of the congregation (Rules 4.68 and 4.69).’ (minute 23.04.69).
- c) The special visitation committee sought the minds of the congregations of Thoona, Balmattum, and Benalla, with the Session, and with the minister on 12 August 2023. The congregations and the Session did not agree with the intention to dissolve the Thoona congregation.
- d) On 19 September 2023, the Benalla Regional Parish Special Visitation Report was adopted (minute 23.09.10U). It was resolved to inform the charge of the presbytery’s intention to dissolve the Thoona congregation and direct the Session to arrange for the final worship service at Thoona on or before 31 December 2023 (minute 23.09.16U).
- e) The last regularly authorised Presbyterian service of worship was held at Thoona on 31 December 2023.
- f) At the ordinary meeting of presbytery on 13 August 2024, it was reported that there are five members remaining on the Thoona roll who have yet to arrange a transfer or request a disjunction certificate.
- g) The presbytery intends to dissolve the Thoona congregation and reports this intention to the General Assembly (Rule 4.69.5).

Gospel Priorities in the Presbytery of North East Victoria

- h) The presbytery is thankful that by God’s grace the congregations within our presbytery have enjoyed decades of faithful gospel preaching and teaching. Many ministers and elders have made contributions to this work.
- i) Nevertheless, since the turn of the century, church attendance across our presbytery has fallen by 46.7%.
- j) Over the last seven years, the presbytery has engaged in several opportunities for evaluation and review, including prayer and planning meetings, and renewed efforts at conducting five-yearly visitations.

- k) The presbytery met on 13 August 2024 and resolved 'that the Presbytery's priorities for the Gospel work under our jurisdiction are the provision of a church site and building at Wodonga and the provision of a manse at Shepparton.' (minute 24.08.15)

Allocation of Proceeds

- l) The presbytery expects that the sale of the church and hall at 16 Johnston Street, Thoona, would realise approximately \$220,000, having been provided with a valuation by Nutrien Harcourts Wangaratta.
- m) On 13 August 2024, the presbytery resolved 'that the Presbytery request that in the allocation of proceeds from the sales of the properties in Thoona, Tallygaroopna and Numurkah, the first \$900,000 be allocated to the provision of a church site and building at Wodonga, with the remainder to be allocated to the provision of a manse at Shepparton.' (minute 24.08.16)
- n) So, the presbytery requests that the General Assembly authorise the sale of the property at 16 Johnston Street, Thoona (Volume 1439 Folio 287708) for the purposes of providing \$900,000 a church site and building at Wodonga, with the remainder to be allocated to the provision of a manse at Shepparton.

Now therefore the Presbytery of North East Victoria humbly petitions the General Assembly to take these premises into consideration and:

1. Agree to the dissolution of the Thoona congregation effective from 31 December 2024; and
2. Authorise the sale of the property at 16 Johnston Street, Thoona (Volume 1439 Folio 287708) and the application of the net proceeds of sale after accounting for costs of the sale, for the following purposes of providing \$900,000 a church site and building at Wodonga, with the remainder to be allocated to the provision of a manse at Shepparton.

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

Signed: Rev. Stephen McDonald
Clerk of the Presbytery

Dated: 13 August 2024

Extracted from the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Presbytery of North East Victoria on 20 August 2024 by me: Rev. Stephen McDonald, Clerk of the Presbytery of North East Victoria

Rev Stephen McDonald and Rev Kalpan Vasa have been appointed to present the petition.

PETITION 4: CONGREGATION OF MELTON—SALE OF MANSE (Min 136)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

This petition shows that:

- a) The Manse connected to the Melton Congregation is at 6 Asquith Place, Melton West, Victoria.
- b) This Manse does not meet the PCV Manse requirements.
- c) The Manse recently required major refurbishment and repairs and is currently leased under the Residential Tenancies Act.
- d) The Manse is not heritage listed and is some 50+ years old.
- e) At a Congregation Meeting held on 18 August 2024, the Congregation unanimously resolved to “sell the Manse with the aim of purchasing a more sustainable Church facility.”
- f) The Church’s financial position is in a precarious state at present.
- g) As at the 30 of June 2024, the Church had a cash balance of \$84,475. This was after a deficit for the year ended 30 June 2024 of some \$75,554, which included expenditure of some \$32,232 on the Manse renovations and refurbishment and a loss of rental from the Manse of some \$12,080.
- h) If things continue in this coming year, as per the approved budget, the cash balance as at 30 of June 2025 will be \$46,876. And if it continues into the following year, then the cash balance as at 30 of June 2026 will be \$9,276.
- i) The sale of the Manse could realise a minimum of \$650,000 and could be as high as \$800,000.
- j) A sustainable Church facility (a residence [being rented] similar to what the current Minister is living in) would cost around \$550,000 at present. This would mean that some \$200,000 plus could be invested into the PCV Common Fund and earn interest for the ongoing operations of the Church.
- k) The Congregation needs to concentrate on ministry in Melton. The Congregation are not landlords and the Manse property has caused much angst in the last six months. The Congregation needs to divest itself of it.
- l) The Presbytery of Melbourne West, at its meeting on 21 August 2024, resolved to approve this petition and urged the congregation to forward it to the General Assembly of Victoria.

Now therefore the Congregation of Melton humbly petitions the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and agree to the approval for the sale of the Melton property (Manse) mentioned in recital a), and direct the proceeds to:

- a) Depositing \$42,000 into the Church's operating bank account;
- b) Purchasing a new Church property/house; and
- c) The balance deposited into the PCV Common Fund and that the interest earned therefrom be paid directly to the Church operating bank account to fund ongoing ministry work in the Charge.

or to do otherwise as in their wisdom they may consider appropriate.

Signed: Dennis Wright
 Session Clerk – Melton Presbyterian Church

Dated: 21 August 2024

This petition will be presented on behalf of the congregation by Rev Dinesh Taunk and Session Clerk Dennis Wright.

PETITION 5: CONGREGATION OF WEST FOOTSCRAY—PURCHASE OF A NEW PROPERTY BY MEANS OF A PROPERTY EXCHANGE (Min 115)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

This petition shows that:

1. West Footscray Presbyterian Church, by God's grace, has grown significantly since a revitalizing work commenced in 2020 as an initiative of the Ministry Development Committee. Communicant membership is now 40, financial giving has increased significantly, the average Sunday attendance is 60, and over 40 people are involved in at least one of the mid-week Bible studies.
2. Of the small number of original attendees in 2020, none are presently attending. The buildings and infrastructure have required substantial maintenance, and prioritised capital works have been undertaken. A small 'not to manse standard' residence in Alma Street West Footscray remains in significant disrepair with professional advice confirming that renovating it is beyond our human and financial resources.
3. In line with the Session approved strategic plan, a 10-person working group consisting of a range of building and investment professionals was established to consider future options for the Alma Street property. They finally resolved to recommend a property exchange with a local developer, a concept approved by the Session, Board of managements and the congregation.
4. The congregation resolved the following unanimously according to minute 23/026;
 1. Approve the sale of the property Unit 1 Number 4 Alma Street, Lot/Plan 1/SP28211 West Footscray VIC for the purposes of a property exchange with Zargatt Development Pty Ltd, after all approvals have been granted from the Presbytery, the General Assembly of Victoria, and the Trust Corp / Board of Investment and Finance.
 2. Approve the in-principle purchase of a property via property exchange with Zargatt Development Pty Ltd, after all approvals have been granted from the Presbytery, the Church Architect, the PCV Property Committee, and the Trust Corp / Board of Investment and Finance.
 3. Approve the Board of Management to spend up to \$75,000 dollars to complete the property exchange.
 4. Appoint Peter Milford and Cornelis (Chris) Griffioen to represent the congregation, and to sign on behalf of the Trust Corporation.
 5. Declare that the Board of Management has a 24-month period following the granting of the in-principle approvals from the Trust Corporation to identify a property and enter in to contract, noting that a failure to do so will require new approvals from the congregation.
 6. Forward the proposal to the Presbytery for their action, requesting them to grade the application as urgent.
5. The property exchange proposal was discussed at a meeting of the Presbytery of Melbourne West on 23 Nov 23 who resolved the following according to minute 119/23

1. Approve the proposal for the sale of the property at Unit 1 Number 4 Alma Street, Lot/Plan 1/SP28211 West Footscray VIC by the West Footscray Presbyterian Church congregation for the purposes of a property exchange with Zargatt Development Pty Ltd and forward the proposal to the Trust Corp /Board of Investment and Finance for their approval and action.
 2. Approve in principle, the proposal for the purchase of a property by West Footscray Presbyterian Church via property exchange with Zargatt Development Pty Ltd and forward it to the Trust Corp / Board of Investment and Finance for in-principle approval.
 3. To grade the proposal as urgent.
 4. Note that the West Footscray Presbyterian Church, at a meeting of its congregation on 12 November 2023, appointed Peter Milford and Cornelius Griffioen to represent the congregation, and to sign on all needed documents relating to the property exchange on behalf of the Trust Corporation, and that the Trust Corp / Board of Investment and Finance be advised.
6. The Board of Investment and Finance have discussed the proposal at its meeting on 21 May 2024 in their correspondence dated 29 May 24 noted the following
1. they are comfortable that the risk has been well managed
 2. the BIF was prepared to approve the urgent sale,
 3. the sale is only half of the transaction. The proposed exchange requires an application of the proceeds of sale to effectively purchase the new property. Under its regulation 16, BIF is only authorised to approve an urgent sale. The General Assembly has not delegated its authority under the Model Trust Deed to approve the application of proceeds to any particular purpose.

Now therefore, the congregation of West Footscray Presbyterian Church humbly petitions the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and:

- 1) Consent to the sale of Unit 1 Number 4 Alma Street, Lot/Plan 1/SP28211 West Footscray (Vol 9815 Fol 738) in accordance with clause 5 of the Model Trust Deed.
- 2) Direct the proceeds of sale to be applied first to the purchase of a new property which may be transacted by way of a property exchange; and then for the ongoing building or maintenance works of the West Footscray congregation.

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

Signed: Rev Martin de Pyle
 Pastor - West Footscray Presbyterian Church

Dated: 23 July 2024

The names of persons appointed to present the petition are Rev Martin de Pyle and Mr Peter Milford.

PETITION 6: MORAG ZWARTZ—CHANGE OR SUPPRESSION (CONVERSION) RESPONSE (Min 71)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

This petition shows that:

PART I

The Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 and the VEOHRC

1. Claim or state that:

a) The intention of Parliament is

- i. to denounce and give statutory recognition to the serious harm caused by change or suppression practices; and
- ii. to affirm that a person's sexual orientation or gender identity is not broken and in need of fixing; and
- iii. to affirm that no sexual orientation or gender identity constitutes a disorder, disease, illness, deficiency or shortcoming; and
- iv. to affirm that change or suppression practices are deceptive and harmful both to the person subject to the change or suppression practices and to the community as a whole.

b) The Act includes:

- a broad definition of change or suppression practices
- civil (non-criminal) options for preventing and responding to change or suppression practices
- four new criminal offences for:
 - practices that cause injury or serious injury
 - **injury**: physical injury or harm to mental health, whether temporary or permanent
 - **serious injury**: an injury (including the cumulative effect of more than one injury) that endangers life or is substantial and protracted
 - taking someone outside Victoria for a change or suppression practice that causes injury
 - advertising a change or suppression practice.

c) Change or suppression practices are deeply harmful practices which seek to change or hide an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity, that these practices are not supported by medical research, and that there is no evidence that sexual orientation or gender identity can be changed or suppressed. Further, that such practices can include teachings, counselling, spiritual care activities or other psychological or medical interventions based on the ideology that there is something wrong or broken about people with diverse sexualities or gender identities (VEOHRC website)

d) Change or suppression practices cause harm. There is nothing wrong with being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, asexual or gender diverse. All of these are perfectly natural. Change or suppression practices delay people from being able to fully enjoy being who they are.' (VEOHRC website)

- e) It is against the law for someone to try to change or suppress - or get you to change or suppress - your sexual orientation or gender identity, even if you ask for help to do so. LGBTIQ Victorians should live their lives authentically with pride and dignity. No Victorian should be subjected to harmful practices that seek to change or suppress their sexual orientation or gender identity (VEOHRC on LGBTIQ rights)
2. Are introduced and supported by:
- a) Then premier Dan Andrews, who stated: "Let's be clear: there is absolutely nothing wrong with being who you are. And there's everything wrong with dangerous conversion practices that tell gay, bi and trans people they need to be 'cured'. This bigoted quackery destroys lives and perpetuates shame and stigma. Today we introduced legislation to ban it. For good." Andrews has voiced support throughout his career for same-sex marriage, the protection and expansion of LGBT rights, and the promotion of awareness and respect for transgender and transitioning people, particularly amongst young Victorians. On 24 May 2016, Andrews issued a formal apology on behalf of the Victorian Government, to the LGBT community, and specifically members of the community who had been charged with homosexual offences and crimes in the state prior to the decriminalisation of homosexuality in 1981.
 - b) The VEOHRC's Commissioner Ro Allen. Ro Allen, previously Rowena Allen, was Victoria's first Gender and Sexuality Commissioner and later Commissioner for LGBTIQ+ Communities ("We've had some great wins over those five years. We've had some great legislative reform.") She has described herself as afab, monosexual, transmasculine, non-binary, plus butch, and has recounted in public interviews her "horrific" experience as a 16yo lesbian, of an exorcism because of her sexuality. She is married to her wife (who has transitioned) and appears zealous in opposition to the beliefs of conservative Christians. Her stated goal is to focus on education and facilitation processes: "the focus on educative and facilitation functions reflects that the most effective way to prohibit and eliminate change or suppression practices is through long term cultural change. Without education and facilitation such practices are likely to be pushed underground." The Commissioner is zealous about educating those of us who hold to a biblical worldview and the sovereignty of God's Word toward an enlightened state of mind in which we can affirm and support the goals of the LGBTIQ movement.
 - c) The current Premier of Victoria Jacinta Allen, who confirmed that "bigoted practices that seek to change or suppress a person's sexual orientation or gender identity will be banned in Victoria for good".
 - d) The Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes, who also stated: "these are landmark reforms that reflect the values of Victorians as an inclusive and fair community. Bigoted and harmful change or suppression practices are not tolerated here - we're stamping them out for good. Anyone doing the wrong thing should and will be captured by these laws."
 - e) The minister for Equality Martin Foley, who has stated:

 'with these laws we're a step closer to a more equal Victoria where every person is able to live safely and with pride.'

'I am delighted to announce Ro Allen's appointment and am sure they will be a powerful advocate and agent for change on behalf of Victoria's LGBTI community.'

'The Andrews Labor Government is combating discrimination and homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia, which significantly affect the health and wellbeing of LGBTI Victorians.'

3. Impact the Church:

- a) By criminalising the biblical response of pastors and elders (or parents their own children) should anyone ask for guidance, advice or counsel over gender troubles.
- b) By deeming themselves sovereign over church life in their requirements and presuppositions, and by setting the act and its application through the VEOHRC against God and His Word - defiantly, openly, flagrantly and proudly. In addition, imposing on the church such a radical departure from its historic mode of operating as to intrude into every imaginable corner of its life. By this I mean impacting how, when and where we pray, teach, study, proclaim God's Word, and to whom.
- c) By making onerous demands for education and training and compliance not only on ministers and elders, but also on volunteers and the entire congregation.
- d) By intruding into the privacy of the one-to-one relationship that any minister, elder, counselor, parent or wise person in a church may have with a child or adult who seeks their help.
- e) By requiring the church to adopt words and concepts that do not have a biblical meaning or application, such as: sexual orientation, non-binary, gender-dysphoria, gender-confused, gender-diverse, live authentically, gender assigned at birth (afab and amab).
- f) By requiring the church to adopt new definitions for words and concepts that already have a biblical meaning or application, such as: diverse, authentic, proud, and safe.
- g) By requiring the church to elevate the ideology, concomitant with the language and concepts of the LGBTI+ theory, above the clear teaching of Scripture and by boldly contravening God's law in many places.
- h) By necessitating our use of the ideology-filled language of the state in terms such as gender confusion, sexual attraction, sexual orientation, gender dysphoria, gender identity and gender transition, and placing us in a position from which we must, then, acknowledge, deal with, address, affirm and manage these alleged but not biblically legitimate states of being.
- i) By forcing the church into the ludicrous and irrational - as well as hypocritical - position of upholding Scriptural teaching on sexuality while simultaneously

acknowledging unscriptural concepts and the legitimacy of LGBTI+/queer theory, trans theory and gender ideology.

- j) In that by accepting and affirming these unbiblical states of being we are coerced into a mindset of empathy and sympathy with a form of sin that is no more worthy of such particular empathy or sympathy than is an extra-marital affair or murder. Our thinking and our behaviour as Christians is subtly shifted. The consistent presentation of such states as uniquely tragic and imbued with full victim status has been a brilliantly effective device. Who would dare question the claim of gender dysphoria? And yet we would not hesitate to question the serial burglar or wife abuser.
 - k) By applying not just to the extreme case of a person wishing to change their gender and seek chemical and surgical interventions, but equally to the person - perhaps a traditionally married adult - who comes to us for help with unwanted homosexual leanings. It may even be argued that you are forbidden to discourage the sexual desires of someone toward a member of the opposite sex - married or single - in as much as this would suppress their sexual identity as a sexually active person.
 - l) By indicating that we who hold to the biblical teaching on sin, and in particular sexual sin and deviancy, are harmful and untrustworthy, bigoted and deceitful.
4. Harm the Church
- a) By presupposing an ulterior motive or criminal intention in conversations that may start out completely innocently but spontaneously turn to serious talk about gender or sexual identity.
 - b) By ensuring continued dependence upon legal minds and church trustees and church administrators in order to avoid breaching the act.
 - c) In that, as well as the existing dedication to the all-pervasive Safe Church training with its basic training, advanced training, refresher courses and updates thereof, there will be a further infringement upon the time and resources of church people to include a new round of change or suppression training.
 - d) Because compliance with the act will mean a questionably significant dedication of church time and finances, including legal expenses, and of individual time and mental energy, to satisfy the myriad aspects of compliance and risk management.
 - e) By forcing all people - especially church people, as they look to a higher moral authority - to be excessively cautious and anxious in all interactions with people in their church whom they do not know.
 - f) By ensuring that church people are preoccupied with state requirements and laws, and the fear of transgression, at the expense of a preoccupation with and devotion to God's law.
 - g) By distracting our attention from the Godly pursuits of fearless evangelism and outreach, and supplanting them with caution and timidity.

- h) By forcing the church to pay more heed to the godless ambitions of those who would manipulate our thoughts and actions through re-education than to our Saviour and his glorious providence.
 - i) Because in devouring a significant dedication of time and money they pose a serious threat to the historic levels of commitment and activity regarding the fundamentals of Christian worship, prayer and the study of God's Word.
 - j) By robbing church members of the God-granted freedom to live out their faith in their daily worship of the one true God with impunity.
 - k) Because of this law's astonishing extrajudicial overreach. This law has the capacity to ensnare you anywhere on the globe.
5. Point to serious repercussions for the church
- a) In that they facilitate the already insidious march of the state into the affairs of the church, to frighten us, to use up our resources in trying to comply, in placing a yoke on our necks that must be borne by every single person who sits on a church pew, whether in voluntary or paid work in the church, or neither.
 - b) Because the Act and the VEOHRC, and their concomitant publicity, in their language, use of words and phrases such as prohibit, denounce, suppress, eliminate, serious harm, living authentically and with pride, affirm, change and suppression practices are deceptive and harmful both to the person and to the community as a whole - in these words and phrases as well as in the explicit intent of the Act and the presuppositions of our threat to the public good, render us enemies of the state and potentially if not already, damaging to our society.
 - c) By their single-minded and indefatigable devotion to the role of education in facilitating their ideological mold. If we attempt to comply with the Act we will have no choice but to submit to this education (re-education, struggle-sessions, renunciation-sessions).
 - d) In as much as they are not content to legally constrain our actions, but in addition seek to probe our minds and our motives, to flush out our outdated and harmful beliefs about creation, the Creator, sex, our bodies, health, well-being, mental health, sin, repentance, change, restraint, and, yes, suppression. The intent of this law is that these beliefs are antagonistic to a happy and inclusive state and those who hold them must be re-educated or risk being charged with a criminal offence.
 - e) Because in the spirit of the Act's zealous concern to re-educate those with conservative views, and change the culture to accommodate its goals for society, the church is at risk of becoming yet another arm of government - helping it, cooperating with it, facilitating its godless goals - and thereby compromising its existing *raison d'être* and abandoning its founder. This makes the state and man's law our idols. Further, there is surely a possibility that hate laws will in time also be enacted to outlaw passages of Scripture being read in public, being deemed to be offensive or hateful or discriminatory.

Similarly, how long before we Christians are guilty under other laws, of subverting the education of children, or the Diversity Equity and Inclusion laws, or offending against climate emergency laws, work health and safety laws, misogyny laws, welcome to country laws?

PART II

This Petition also shows that the Code of Conduct for members of the church in the context of the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act is logically inconsistent and largely unattainable.

The numbering system below mirrors the proposed Code of Conduct advanced by the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act Committee to this Assembly.

1. In its Statement of Faith:

Firstly, by adopting the non-biblical, and, in the strict sense of biblical purity, dishonest language of the gender ideologues in its reference to same-sex attracted and gender confused. God's Word does not recognise these categories in the same way as it does not recognise the term gay Christian or serial adulterer in the church. In addition, there is a good reason for the fact that neither Jesus nor the apostles, in broad calls for repentance, singled out particular sins in this manner.

2. In its Purposes, because it establishes a list of Purposes that are contradictory and untenable:

- a) True boldness and courage would be to employ the language of Romans 1, which renders this first clause somewhat glib. Sinful conditions in relation to sexuality are there described as sinful desires, sexual impurity, degrading their bodies, shameful lusts, abandoning natural relations, inflamed with lust, indecent acts, evil, greed and depravity. As well as inventing ways of doing evil. Adopting the white-washed terms of the Act does not change their nature before God.
- b) To be faithful to the church's teaching would be to uphold Scripture, to which the "context" of a man-made and God-dishonouring law is irrelevant. Further, God's will for "human flourishing" in the area of sexuality is this: one man, one woman, procreation, and walking in faith and obedience to God. His Word has nothing to say about human flourishing in any sexual deviant context.
- c) There is no scriptural warrant for risk aversion or risk minimisation in ministering the Gospel. The Word of God is inherently offensive to the law breaker and there can be no strategy that avoids a 'plant', or spontaneous outrage, or endemic hostility, or a contrived test case. Further, while a reasoned defence is always our goal and our right, and while we know that true reason would support the laws of nature (God's law), there is little basis on which to expect a reasonable hearing.
- d) There is no biblical warrant to seek the protection of the church. This is a defensive position that suggests concern for the church's material assets and as such - if such were the case - not a response that the Bible encourages. Further, is "ill-advised conduct" a reference to the extreme behaviour that is

at the core of this law - physical restraint in exorcisms, crass accusations and condemnations with threats? If so, to my knowledge these are unknown in the PCV and unlikely to surface now. Is "ill-advised", then, a potential accusation against one who is guilty of that very boldness and courage (2a) in teaching the whole counsel of God - perhaps including advice or prayer to or for a person with sexual sin who has asked for counsel - but who happens to have the misfortune of being the subject of a complaint?

3. Because:

The definitions of gender confusion, gender identity, sexual attraction and sexual orientation are all relatively new concepts and merely euphemisms for sexual deviance or impurity, or idolatry of the self. As such the church has no need, and no warrant, to affirm their existence or to grant them particular consideration.

4. In as much as:

- a) Deviant sexual lust and confusion over sexual expression can not necessarily be described as trials and afflictions. They may in fact be wilful delusion and unacknowledged sin. Romans 1 reminds us that God has made himself and his divine nature plain to every man, and that we are without excuse in rejecting his standards. Further, it is a questionable assumption that persons who experience sexual impurity or confusion are, in truth, persons who have a saving faith in Christ, members of the Christian church, beloved by God as his children and rightfully loved members of a congregation. We do not make these self-consciously warm and embracing statements toward ex-paedophiles, violent abusers and murderers, or toward corrupt or fraudulent ex-prisoners who attach to our churches. (Just for the record, I have known such men while a visitor with Prison Fellowship. Most will never subsequently be truly embraced in a church.)
- c) The inclusion of this exhortation to treat all people at all times with respect, courtesy, compassion and thoughtful love is either uncomfortably saccharine or insultingly patronising. We should presume that the preaching in our churches is such that civil behaviour does not need mandating. As for compassion and thoughtful love, these can hardly be mandated, given that walking in the Spirit may mean there are times when our actions could be described as warning, teaching, correcting, rebuking, and may not be received as thoughtful love or compassion.
- d) The gospel commands of repentance and faith may indeed not be medical advice or therapy designed to change one's sexuality. But if we are honest they are - they must be - spiritual advice. Spiritual advice intended to alter or change a person's sinful lifestyle. Jesus' words "Go, and sin no more" echo down the centuries. There can be no such repentance and faith without real change. If the repenting individual suffers from sexual sin or delusion there must, as evidence of that repentance and faith, be changes in those areas.

5. Because:

- a) While setting an example by how we live is a worthy sentiment it is hardly worthy of being made into a set of rules. We should assume that all Christians subject to biblical preaching are committed to sexual purity and marital faithfulness. But to enshrine this in the command that every member of the

church MUST.... is surely an unrealistic overreach, given that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict us of private sins, not the church through an emphasis on education and training.

Conversely, setting an example of timidity and compromise with Godless laws ensures that we let ourselves down. We also let down our fellow clergy, our congregations, our families, our society, and, most critically, God.

- b) Avoid pornography by all means, but not because the church's code of conduct tells you to.
- c) Likewise reject hypocrisy about heterosexual and homosexual sins - though I am not convinced that heterosexual sin is more tolerated than homosexual sin, among church members.

However, far from reinforcing our preaching and teaching on sexual matters, I doubt that our current purity and example setting (who would question this?) has had much impact on our culture. Do we think those outside the church care much whether we don't commit adultery or admit to pornography use? We will inevitably be accused of hypocrisy however we live. More concerning for us is that the state thrust toward education and training as the answer to all society's ills has here infected the church. Though our society is increasingly enslaved by a growing number of sexual deviances we should not respond by becoming more didactic about sex and sexuality. We should not single these out for special mention. We should not let ourselves be derailed from preaching God and His ways. He must be our sole preoccupation. It is more God - a deeper knowledge of God and love for God - that we need, not reminders of proscribed sexual thoughts and activities.

6. Because:

- b) This is superfluous to 6 a). Preaching and teaching from God's word cannot address a category of behaviour that does not exist. The sins relating to so-called sexual attraction and gender uncertainty cannot be isolated out or separated from preaching and teaching on sex and marriage - 6 a) as they are merely aspects of adultery or sexual impurity or depravity.
- c) This appears to introduce yet another category - that of the above mentioned sins specifically in relation to a believer. But God's word speaks categorically, universally, to one and all people at all times. A believer is no more or less accountable to God, and no distinction should be made.
 - i. The addition of this clause reads as an attempt to minimise guilt, reassuring the sinner that homosexual desire or activity is really only one of many possible temptations, thereby subtly normalising it.

7. Because if the church wishes to assert that it does not accept a claim of breaking the Act the time to make that assertion is not after submitting to this law in principle, but before doing so. Furthermore, there is no reason to expect that there will ever be anything other than a loose definition of the Act. Decisions will inevitably be made in accordance with the clear presuppositions of the formulators and they will not favour the Christian position or defence.

8. Because:

- a) It is unreasonable to require of every church member that before witnessing to a same-sex attracted or gender confused person they must be well informed of the teaching of the church, of the Act itself, and of wise ways of proceeding. Such an onerous requirement is potentially a veiled curtailing of genuine spontaneous and even Spirit-led witness. A person could be well versed in the Bible's teaching but not the church's (ie this code) or not the Act. It could be argued that there is no biblical basis on which Christians must invest in knowledge, teaching or strategies to avoid censure by the evil powers of government. Further, "wise ways of presenting" is easily disputed, since even the most God-honouring and wise words can be found offensive and could lead to a complaint.
- b)
- i. Just what are the violence, coercion or secret shameful ways referred to, and is this a reference to known behaviour in the PCV? If not why is it necessary to invoke such caution and in doing so insult the members of the church by association with such behaviour?
 - ii. How is it possible to "make clear without necessarily using words"? Words are the closest we can get to clarity and it stretches the imagination to know how one could convey such nuanced warnings without using words - even with words. Not everyone has the capacity to channel Mr Bean.
- A With regard to not providing medical advice or therapy with the intention of altering or changing a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, does this nevertheless allow that one could be using spiritual advice or therapy to this end? A further question arises here. Why are we eager to assure people we do not aim or wish to alter or change their sexual orientation or gender identity? Are they wrong? Are they sinful? Living contrary to God's commands? If yes, we are not kind to them, and we are not honouring God ourselves, if we do not long to see them freed from their sexual sin and rebellion against God.
- B It is a strange and contradictory statement to assert that sexual behaviour and sexual expression is not the focus of Christian witness when there is no other area of Christian teaching in the PCV that I am aware of in which members are instructed so didactically and specifically about a particular category of sin. If indeed this subject of sexuality and all its deviances were not a focus, would there be a dedication to creating and instigating this very code of conduct?
- c) It is unreasonable to require this level of scrutiny of every church member with regard to any person who engages them in conversation about gender matters. Even a person with a psychology degree might not know whether his interlocutor was a sincere seeker after truth.
- i. A and B and
 - ii. These clauses demand even further perspicacity and discernment in as much as we now have the categories of believer, nonbeliever, and uncertain status, with whom to interact, and distinct instruction for each category. Again, this imposes an unrealistic burden on church people to know such details when even the enquirer may be neither totally sincere

nor insincere - or even aware himself, of his status in this regard. Is casual or spontaneous insincere? Is an off-hand question from a deep thinker insincere? I do not believe it is incumbent upon church members to determine such motives but rather to act openly and in good faith to any question or request. Further, the requirement to do so suggests a dependence on human canny and strategy to avoid detection and a possible complaint, rather than to "leave the outcome in the hands of God".

- d) Making a record during or after a conversation and keeping it indefinitely means that for every member, every conversation on this subject brings a burdensome expectation. It interferes with the joy of sharing God's truths, impedes the attentiveness toward the other person, diminishes the openness and trust in the exchange, introduces a note of pragmatism and casts a pall of managerialism over even an innocent discussion.

9. Because:

- a) There is no other counsel we could offer such people that would benefit them other than what God says. Are we to be constrained, when granted the wonderful privilege of witnessing to an unbeliever by the evil ideology of Dan Andrews and his Change or Suppression Act?
- b) The language of 9b is so convoluted as to render it without accessible or comprehensible meaning. The first part, addressing encounters with believers, is acceptable. The second part, with its proviso regarding the code, appears to cancel this and create an uncertain obligation.

Now therefore I, Morag Zwartz, humbly petition the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and:

- 1. formally and unconditionally declare, and inform the government, that the PCV cannot and will not comply with the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act on the basis that it:
 - a) intrudes into the autonomous functioning of the church in ways that disable it from operating true to its charter
 - b) ensures that the church cannot serve and honour the God to whom it owes primary allegiance and worship
 - c) imposes alien and repugnant religious systems and ideologies on the church, namely those of Humanism and Gnosticism
- 2. approach the GAA and recommend that the PCA adopt or sign the Nashville Statement from the Council for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood because:
 - a) there is credibility in historic declarations
 - b) there is wisdom in aligning with others
 - c) there is comfort in conformity with good tradition
 - d) churches across the globe are facing similar challenges

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

Signed: Morag Zwartz

Dated: 7 September 2024

PETITION 7: PRESBYTERY OF MAROONDAH—SEAT ON PRESBYTERY FOR REV K B LEE (Min 94)

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria

This petition shows that:

- a) Rev KB Lee is the current chaplain of Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes.
- b) The chaplain of Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes was formerly granted a seat on Presbytery under rule 4.2 (g).
- c) The chaplain of Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes is no longer appointed by the Health and Community Chaplaincy Committee (HCCC). This means the chaplain of Kirkbrae is no longer entitled to a seat on presbytery under rule 4.2 (g).
- d) The chaplain of Kirkbrae is required to oversee the special interest congregation of Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes as part of his contract with Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes.
- e) Historically, the chaplain of Kirkbrae has actively participated in the work of the Presbytery.
- f) Historically, the chaplain of Kirkbrae gave regular reports on the work and worship of the congregation meeting at Kirkbrae.
- g) This is a special circumstance where no rule under 4.2 a-j meets this particular situation.

Now therefore we the Presbytery of Maroondah, humbly petition the Assembly to take these premises into consideration and:

Grant Rev KB Lee a seat on the Presbytery of Maroondah under rule 4.2(k) while he continues to reside within the bounds of the presbytery.

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

Signed: Rev Jordan Born
Clerk of Presbytery

Dated: 12 September 2024

Rev Jordan Born has been appointed to present the petition.

Roll of Assembly (October 2024)

Presbytery of Flinders

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Aspendale	Brett Peatman	
Brighton (HMC)		
BayChurch	Paul Huynh	Ross McKinnon
Clarinda (HMC)		Michael Lee
Clarinda Nuer (HMC)		
Clayton	Michael Jensen Lam Paul Gak (Associate)	Arnis Putnins
Cranbourne	Peter Roberts	
Dandenong	Andrew Wong	Robert Paix
Dromana-Mornington	Matt Cole	
Embrace Melbourne (AC)	Paul Jang	
Frankston	Jared Keath	
New Life, Officer	David Martin	Sabyan Hardjo
Somerville (HMC)	Gary Wentworth	
Sorrento-Rye	Hui Lim	
South East Samoan	Kainano Opetai	
	Retired Ministers:	
	Peter Barclay	
	Ivan Barker	
	David Brown	
	Ken Brown	
	Frank Savage	
	Wally Zurrer	

Presbytery of Geelong

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bannockburn	Matthew Deroon	G (Bert) Stasse
Bellarine (AC)	Brett Cummins	Neil Mansfield
Geelong West	Luke McSeveny	Drew Chittenden
North Geelong	Darren Middleton	Richard Worth
The Leigh	Surendra Wesley	Jim Venters
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Andrew Bray	Ben Saunders
	John Cromarty	
	Allan Harman	
	Ian Hutton	
	Scott Kroeger	
	John Stasse	
	Grant Vayne	
	Robert White	

Presbytery of Gippsland

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bairnsdale	Gary Stephens	Roger McIvor
Drouin	Heath Easton Stephen Jones (Associate)	Alan York
Leongatha (HMC)	Stephen Denness	
Moe-Yarram	Stephen Deroon	John Ollis
Morwell		Neil Akers
Sale (HMC)		Daniel Johns
Warragul	Raymond Patchett	Tom Guilford
Clerk of Assembly	Cameron Garrett	
PTC Lecturer	Karl Hood	
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Robert Boan	Alan Solidium
	Michael Wharton	Stephen Weir

Presbytery of Maroondah

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Belgrave Heights	Mark Tonkin	
Blackburn (HMC)		Keith Ferres
Croydon	Cameron Griffiths	Roni Tobing
Doncaster (HMC)		Colin Flynn
Donvale	Gerald Vanderwert Jordan Born (Associate) Joel Mestry (Associate) Xien Yao (Associate)	Iain Bramley
Heathmont	Brian Harvey	Doug Fraser
Kirkbrae	Paul K B Lee	
Mt Evelyn (AC)	Miles Fagan	Bruce Timmins
Warburton (HMC)		
Woori Yallock	Tony Archer	Andre Dahmen
MDC Officer	Chris Siriweera	
PTC Lecturer	Jared Hood	
	Retired Ministers:	
	Tony Bird	
	Graham Bradbeer	
	Trevor Cox	
	Wally Gear	
	Grant Lawry	
	Peter Orchard	
	Andrew Slater	
	Willem Vandenberg	
	Andrew Venn	

Presbytery of Melbourne East

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Arabic	Karam Krayyem	Nageib Seedhom
Ashburton		
Auburn (Chalmers)	Nick Arundell	Caleb Schulz
Burwood Community	John Elnatan Billy Kurniawan (Assistant)	Frans Herjanto
Camberwell	Philip Mercer	Philip Barton
Canterbury	David Hann Dong Choi (Assistant)	Kevin Childs
Caulfield-Elwood	Phillip Chang	Haddon Chang
Gardenvale East (AC)		
Hawthorn	Graham Nicholson	John Singleton
Korean	Jae Kook Kim	Wonil Kim
Malvern	Marcus Campbell	
South Yarra		Ben Palmer
St Kilda	Luke Isham	Nate Raiter
Surrey Hills	John Huynh Oliver Blythe (Associate)	Russell Walley
Scotch Chaplains:	David Assender	
	Douglas Campbell	
PTC Lecturer	Ben Nelson	
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Alan Every	John Angelico
	Douglas Milne	Jim Hare
	Richard O'Brien	Ken McClimont
	Anthony Salisbury	
	Bob Thomas	

Presbytery of Melbourne North

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bundoora	Neil Chambers Clinton Le Page (Associate)	Andrew May
Donnybrook (CPC)	Ben Kelada	
Eltham	Don Elliott	Ian Courts
Epping	Nello Barbieri Brian Luong (Associate)	Neil Furlong
Heidelberg	Bagoes Seta	Tom Cunneen
Hume (AC)	Luke Brownley	Tony Ruggeri
Kangaroo Ground (HMC)		
Reservoir		Steve Harris
Coolaroo (Samoan)		
Valley (AC)	Richard Wilson	Luke Yelland
Whittlesea-Mernda	Botros Botrosdief	
PTC Principal	Peter Hastie	
PTC Lecturer	John Wilson	
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Simalu Cowley	Rob Herweynen
	Theo Fishwick	

Presbytery of Melbourne West

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Brimbank (AC)	Daniel Dixon	Ken Fuhrmeister
Clifton Hill-Essendon	Christopher Duke Bill Medley (Associate)	David Cutler
Darebin	Adam Humphries	Ken Koh
Gisborne	Wayne McArdle	Noel Johnston
Melbourne Scots'	Philip Campbell Justin Ang (Assistant)	Graeme Harris
Melton	Dinesh Taunk	Dennis Wright
Sunshine-Melbourne West Korean (AC)	Samuel Son	Jacky Lam
West Footscray (HMC)	Martin de Pyle	
Williamstown-Point Cook	Matthew Tegart	
Wyndham	Peter Greiner	Steven Letcher
	Retired Ministers:	
	John Cho	
	Philip Court	
	John Ellis	
	Walter Johnson	
	Len Pearce	
	Bruce Riding	

Presbytery of North East Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Benalla-Balmattum-Thoona	Stephen McDonald	Graeme Hayes
Broadford (AC)	Barry Porter	Ross Barnett
Numurkah-Tallygaroopna		
Seymour-Nagambie-Yea (HMC)		Bill Day
Shepparton-Stanhope-Kyabram	Kyung Ee	Philip Betts
Tatura-Rushworth	Kalpan Vasa	Gary Dunstan
Wangaratta-Myrtleford		
Wodonga (AC)	Stuart Withers	
Yarrawonga (HMC)		Malcolm Browning
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Neil Harvey	Ralph Kop
	Kevin Maxwell	
	Neil McDonald	
	Ian Touzel	

Presbytery of North Western Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bendigo	Philip Burns	Andrew Kerr
Bendigo East (Reforming)	Russ Grinter	Ryan Smith
Castlemaine (HMC)	Daryl Jackson	Richard McArdle
Eaglehawk (AC)	Jesse Walz	
Kerang/Swan Hill (AC)		
Rochester	Michael Riske	
Sunraysia (HMC)		Colin Morrow
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Keith Bell	Tony Zirngast
	Peter Phillips	
	John Sutherland	

Presbytery of South West Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Camperdown-Terang-Noorat		Tom Fleming
Colac		Geoff Cross
Hamilton	David Schulz Robert Koh (Associate)	Graeme Presser
Koroit-Port Fairy		
Portland	Rod Waterhouse	
Warrnambool	Ben Johnson Shady Mehanni (Associate)	Robert Prout
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Neil Benfell	Damien Craig
	Ian Leach	David Selman

Presbytery of Western Victoria (V11)

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Ararat-Skipton-Lismore (AC)		Stewart McKerrow
Ballarat North (AC)		
Ballarat South	Toby McIntosh	Keith Mitchell
Ballarat West	Robert Duncanson	Jeremy Peet
Horsham	Greg Matthews	Jonathan Starks
Kaniva-Nhill (HMC)		Bruce Meyer
	Retired Ministers:	
	John Brennan	
	Maurie Cropper	

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

Treasurer's Financial Report For the year ended 30 June 2024



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024
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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA - BOARD OF INVESTMENT AND FINANCE

MEMBERS:

Mr J Walter LL.B(Hons), MBA (Chairman)
Mr J Bligh B.Sc, B.Com
Mr E G de Zilwa B.Ec, LL.B, LL.M
Mr A L Foster LLB(Hons), BA
Mr M T Gibson B Surv(Hons), Grad Dip FP, CFP, SMSF SA
Mr D P Graham B.E(Hons), B.Sc
Rev B R Oakes B.Bus, M.Tax, B.Th. B.Min, MA(Min) - (to January 2024)
Mr R Walley B.Sc, AssocDipTh
Rev G D Wentworth B.Th (from October 2023)
Mr D Wright B.Bus, MIPA AFA

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 2024
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 2024, 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

Matthew Crouch

Partner

20 Albert Street, Blackburn.

Dated: 12 September 2024

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024
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 2024, 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 2024 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 11) 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 2024
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 2024
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



Matthew Crouch
Partner

20 Albert Street, Blackburn

Dated: 12 September 2024

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 61 are drawn up so as to present fairly the financial position of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria at 30 June 2024 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 twelfth day of September 2024.



J Walter
Chairman



D Wright
Board of Investment and Finance member

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Capital			
Accumulated Funds		31,385,077	31,051,698
Reserves	1.11	52,358,592	62,394,209
Total Church Funds	2	83,743,669	93,445,907
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash Assets	5.1	1,216,757	4,261,118
Committee book stocks		7,252	8,587
Prepayments		29,508	16,948
Receivables	4	409,611	918,756
Investments	1.10		
Common Fund		55,598,124	48,449,544
Separately Invested Funds		15,818,562	32,935,398
Total Current Assets		73,079,815	86,590,350
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	1,583,287	19,942,718
Common Fund - Perpetual Trust Funds		7,348,087	7,268,922
Secured Loans		6,182,566	7,165,213
Separately Invested Funds - Perpetual		1,114,070	1,047,794
Total Non-Current Assets		16,228,010	35,424,647
Total Assets		89,307,825	122,014,997
Current Liabilities			
Employee Benefits		16,614	10,692
Trade and Other Payables		1,198,987	1,025,065
Kirkbrae Ingoings		-	21,233,387
Provisions for Annual, Long Service and Study Leave		1,229,654	1,724,143
Trust Funds and Deposits		29,981	37,355
Total Current Liabilities		2,475,236	24,030,643
Non-Current Liabilities			
Loan PCV Common Fund		2,899,442	4,266,090
Provisions for Long Service and Study Leave		189,478	272,358
Total Non-Current Liabilities		3,088,919	4,538,448
Total Liabilities		5,564,156	28,569,090
Net Assets		83,743,669	93,445,907

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 11 to 19.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue			
Operating Revenue			
Assembly Rate		142,000	112,000
Bequests		335,509	5,045,781
Camp and Conference Income		89,575	129,708
Contributions, Donations and Levies		640,043	920,706
General Mission Programme		265,498	261,105
Grants and Subsidies Received		7,017,313	6,780,843
Interest and Investment Income		4,409,651	3,668,723
Insurance Settlement		-	34,625
Kirkbrae Fees, Ingoings and Meals		3,159,098	3,168,748
Lease Finance Income		771,047	512,693
Management Fees		199,547	170,070
Rental Income		100,449	81,958
Scots' Church Properties Trust		4,650,160	1,097,273
Tuition Fees and Bookshop Profit		704,220	620,150
Total Operating Revenue		22,484,110	22,604,383
Expenses			
Bursaries, Prizes and Tuition Fees		63,496	34,837
Camp Expenses		119,166	125,445
Contract Accounting and Audit Fees		91,868	217,050
Depreciation		995,133	1,036,736
Distributions, Grants and Subsidies		879,715	1,713,680
Education, Training and Library		189,558	204,712
Fees Chaplaincy and Consulting		30,501	54,918
General Assembly Expenses		134,182	105,418
Insurance Fire and General		162,910	148,822
Interest Paid		223,232	159,978
Kirkbrae Residents Expenses		903,000	685,218
Lease Finance Expense		771,047	512,693
Legal Fees and Settlements		2,919,129	211,432
Loss/(Profit) on sale of assets		(15,032)	180,151
Office Expenses		520,427	470,142
Personnel Related Costs		10,119,001	8,957,726
Property Expenses and Improvements		1,259,696	1,183,558
Total Expenses		19,367,029	16,002,515
Other Expenses			
Net Realised and Unrealised Loss/(Gain) on Investments		(2,127,330)	(1,061,291)
Total Other Expenses		(2,127,330)	(1,061,291)
Surplus/(Deficit) before Sites Reserve		5,244,410	7,663,159

Consolidated Statement of Income and Expenditure and Other Comprehensive Income is continued on the following page

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024 (continued)

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Sites Reserve			
Revenue			
Interest and Investment Income		983,369	843,287
Net Realised and Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments		515,811	738,880
Proceeds of sale of property		2,441,974	4,387,150
Total Sites Reserve Revenue		3,941,155	5,969,317
Expenses			
Donation to Property Development Fund		331,399	84,846
Ministry expenses incurred by congregations		913,699	778,566
Property improvements and expenses		2,903,614	1,362,731
Total Sites Reserve Expenses		4,148,712	2,226,142
Surplus/(Deficit) from Sites Reserve		(207,557)	3,743,175
Surplus from ordinary activities		5,036,853	11,406,334
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-
Total Comprehensive Income	5.2	5,036,853	11,406,334

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 11 to 19.

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	Retained Earnings \$	Sites Reserve \$	Other Reserves \$	Total \$
Balance at 30 June 2022		24,729,370	22,123,727	35,186,476	82,039,573
Surplus/(Deficit) attributable to beneficiaries		3,864,510	3,743,175	3,798,649	11,406,334
Transfers to/(from) Reserves		2,457,818	(2,457,818)	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2023	2	31,051,698	23,409,084	38,985,125	93,445,907
Surplus/(Deficit) attributable to beneficiaries		333,379	(207,557)	4,911,031	5,036,853
Transfer of Kirkbrae Assets and Liabilities to PC\		-	-	(14,739,091)	(14,739,091)
Balance at 30 June 2024	2	31,385,077	23,201,527	29,157,065	83,743,669

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash receipts from operations		21,701,322	24,534,358
Cash payments from operations		(24,273,464)	(16,762,511)
Net cash generated from / (used in) operating activities	5.2	(2,572,142)	7,771,846
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest Received		5,292,217	1,993,152
Dividends Received		694,052	(117,783)
(Increase)/Decrease in Trust funds and deposits		(7,374)	(2,037)
Payments for investment securities and term deposits		(13,059,627)	(22,711,276)
Payments for property, plant and equipment		(349,104)	(391,795)
Proceeds from sale of investment securities and term deposits		24,437,089	6,857,785
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		(34,153)	54,650
Transfer of Kirkbrae		(14,739,092)	-
Net cash provided /(used) by investing activities		2,234,008	(14,317,304)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Interest paid		(223,232)	(159,978)
Net decrease in Capital Fund and Retirement Housing loans		(1,366,648)	2,578,265
Net increase/(decrease) in residents loans and ingoings		(1,116,347)	4,078,310
Net cash provided/(used) by financing activities		(2,706,227)	6,496,596
Net decrease in cash held		(3,044,361)	(48,862)
Cash at the beginning of the year		4,261,118	4,309,980
Cash at the end of the year	5.1	1,216,757	4,261,118

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 11 to 19.

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

1. Statement of Material Accounting Policies

The material policies which have been adopted in the presentation of these financial statements are:

1.1 Basis of Preparation

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 61, 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 pages 7 to 19.

The Consolidated Financial Statements, together with these notes have been prepared from the audited books and records for the year ended 30 June 2024 of the following entities:

Presbyterian Church of Victoria
Sites Reserve

All inter-entity balances and transactions have been eliminated.

On 16 June 2020 the Presbyterian Church of Victoria took the decision to incorporate a new entity Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd (PCVL) which has now assumed the oversight of Kirkbrae. All assets and liabilities in connection with Kirkbrae were transferred to PCVL on 7 June 2024.

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.

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

1.4 Revenue

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 and Levies

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.

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.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

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.

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.

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

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 2024 has been based on

- average RAD balance for the year, and

- Interest rate equal to the Maximum Permissible Interest Rate (MPIR) of 8.34% applicable at 30 June 2024 and 7.46% at 30 June 2023, averaging to 7.90% for the year, which are the Government set interest rate used to calculate the Daily Accommodation Payment to applicable residents.

At 7 June 2024, the organisation's Statement of Income and Expenditure and Other Comprehensive Income presented Income of \$771,047 and an additional Finance cost (i.e. interest expense) of \$771,047, with \$nil impact to net result for the period. The accounting treatment for residential aged care accommodation 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.

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

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.

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 2024 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$2,127,330 (2023 gains of \$1,061,291), and a net gain in Sites Reserve of \$515,811 (2023 gains of \$738,880).

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.

The policy was updated this year to transfer the balances of all Specific and Perpetual trusts to a Reserve to better reflect the nature of these funds which have restrictions as to their application.

The policy was updated this year to show the funds held to meet unforeseen employment liabilities in a reserve account rather than as a liability in the Financial Position.

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.

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

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. Residents have a choice of paying their accommodation cost as a refundable lump sum or as a daily payment. Daily payments are recognised as income.

Annual prudential compliance statements are lodged with the Department of Health within the required time frame. The accommodation bond liability is recognised when a resident moves into a facility. 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.

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.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
2. Accumulated Funds and Reserves		
Balance at beginning	93,445,907	82,039,573
Surplus from ordinary activities	5,036,853	11,406,334
Transfer of Kirkbrae Assets and Liabilities to PCVL	(14,739,092)	-
Consolidated Church Funds	83,743,669	93,445,907
Represented by:		
Committee and General Assembly General Funds	31,385,077	31,051,698
Reserved Funds - Specific and Perpetual Trust balances	29,157,065	24,670,788
Asset Revaluation Reserves		
Land and Buildings - Kirkbrae Properties	-	3,276,956
Sites Reserve	23,201,527	23,409,084
Total Reserves	52,358,592	51,356,828
Total Accumulated Funds and Reserves	83,743,669	82,408,526
3. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Land and Buildings at cost	2,274,416	30,819,587
Accumulated Depreciation	(962,146)	(11,298,952)
Accumulated Impairment Loss	-	(176,770)
	1,312,270	19,343,865
Plant and Equipment at cost	181,623	1,546,869
Accumulated Depreciation	(101,791)	(1,418,463)
	79,832	128,406
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at cost	555,107	2,002,763
Accumulated Depreciation	(434,313)	(1,575,545)
	120,794	427,217
Motor Vehicles at cost	149,223	203,808
Accumulated Depreciation	(78,832)	(160,579)
	70,391	43,229
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	1,583,287	19,942,718
4. Receivables		
Dividends Receivable	190,449	553,631
Franking Credits Receivable	85,431	111,525
Sundry Debtors and Kirkbrae Resident Receivables	133,731	253,601
	409,611	918,756

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	2024 \$	2023 \$
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	1,216,757	4,261,118
5.2 Reconciliation of operating result to net cash provided by operating activities		
Total Comprehensive Income	5,036,853	11,406,334
Add/(less) items classified as investing/financing activities		
Interest paid	223,232	159,978
Interest/dividends received	(5,602,019)	(2,333,956)
Add/(less) non-cash items:		
Depreciation and amortisation of assets	995,133	1,036,736
Retentions claimed	(593,712)	(593,712)
Net losses/(gains) on sale of property, plant and equipment and investments	(15,032)	(25,109)
Net unrealised losses/(gains) on revaluation of Investments	(2,327,715)	(1,839,046)
Net impairment on Assembly Hall investment	-	-
Net impairment on Kirkbrae Assets	-	-
Net cash (used in) operating activities before change in assets and liabilities	(2,283,260)	7,811,226
Change in assets and liabilities during the financial year		
Decrease/(increase) in sundry debtors	107,310	13,873
Decrease/(increase) in bookstore stock and Kirkbrae inventory	1,334	(840)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors and accruals	179,844	(48,311)
Increase/(decrease) in amounts set aside for provisions	(577,369)	(4,101)
Net cash generated from/(used in) operating activities	(2,572,142)	7,771,846

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

6. 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 has now assumed the oversight of Kirkbrae. All assets and liabilities in connection with Kirkbrae were transferred to PCVL on 7 June 2024.

7. Contingent Liability

Legal Costs and Settlements includes an amount in the prior year to settle a claim made in the Supreme Court of Victoria in relation to historical institutional sexual abuse. Settlement of the final claim was agreed after 30 June 2024. The settlement will be funded from funds reserved to meet costs in relation to these claims.

8. Subsequent Events

The third and final claim in relation to historical institutional sexual abuse was settled following mediation after year end.

There were no other matters or circumstances that have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the result of those operations or the state of affairs of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in future financial years.

9. 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 2024. The Board of Investment and Finance members receive no remuneration or other benefit for their services as trustees. The Kirkbrae assets and liabilities were transferred to PCVL on 7 June 2024 for nil compensation in accordance with the resolution of the General Assembly.

A member of the Board of Investment and Finance is a partner of a firm which provided legal services to the Trusts Corporation

50,951	11,266

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
General Funds		6,705,597	5,891,964
Reserved Funds		31,277,416	28,678,383
Reserve - Employment Liabilities		24,000	12,000
Total General Assembly Funds	1	38,007,013	34,582,347
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank and on Hand		372,155	394,090
Dividends Receivable		124,888	131,865
Franking Credits Receivable		24,936	27,905
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		120,359	23,046
		642,338	576,905
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		10,229,415	9,935,047
Specific Purposes	2	13,855,585	10,965,288
Separately Invested Funds	3	8,757,146	7,981,762
Total Investments		32,842,146	28,882,097
Total Current Assets		33,484,484	29,459,002
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Secured Loans	4	6,182,566	7,249,213
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		2,482,119	2,482,119
Total Investments		8,664,685	9,731,333
Property, Plant and Equipment	5	69,126	15,842
Total Non-Current Assets		8,733,811	9,747,175
Total Assets		42,218,295	39,206,177
Current Liabilities			
Capital Fund Deposits by Congregations		27,077	36,816
Sundry Creditors and Accruals	7	1,146,192	206,685
Provision for Legal Fees and Settlements			
Provision for Annual Leave		55,445	59,409
Provision for Long Service Leave		73,746	49,404
Total Current Liabilities		1,302,460	352,314
Non-Current Liabilities			
Loan from Common Fund		2,899,442	4,266,090
Provision for Long Service Leave		9,380	5,427
Total Non Current Liabilities		2,908,822	4,271,516
Total Liabilities		4,211,282	4,623,830
Net Assets		38,007,013	34,582,347

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 22 to 24.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	General \$	Specific \$	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue					
Archive Fees		2,100	-	2,100	781
Assembly Rate		142,000	-	142,000	112,000
Bequests, Donations, Gifts & Levies		341,194	237,972	579,166	4,647,599
Insurance Settlement		-	-	-	34,625
Interest and Investment Income		714,812	1,645,578	2,360,391	1,477,680
Management Fees Received		199,547	-	199,547	170,070
Rental Income		17,241	-	17,241	3,608
Scots' Church Properties Trust	6	80,000	3,800,000	3,880,000	83,902
Sundry Income		10,475	-	10,475	7,998
Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments	3	-	617,541	617,541	527,788
Total Revenue		1,507,369	6,301,091	7,808,461	7,066,051
Expenses					
Accounting and Audit Fees		27,580	-	27,580	25,884
Depreciation		15,189	-	15,189	6,419
Distributions, Grants and Subsidies		3,840	313,281	317,121	267,794
Education and Training		1,485	-	1,485	1,431
General Assembly Expenses		46,406	87,776	134,182	105,418
Insurance and Risk Management		10,049	2,771	12,821	8,325
Interest Paid		-	222,992	222,992	157,971
Legal Fees and Settlements	9	134,913	2,625,876	2,760,789	155,493
Office Expenses		25,703	-	25,703	21,743
Personnel Related Costs		720,246	-	720,246	665,900
Property Expenses and Improvements		141,887	-	141,887	99,317
Total Expenses		1,127,299	3,252,696	4,379,995	1,515,694
Surplus from ordinary activities		380,070	3,048,395	3,428,465	5,550,358
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		380,070	3,048,395	3,428,465	5,550,358

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 22 to 24.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
1. General Assembly Funds			
Balance at beginning		34,582,347	25,067,184
Surplus from ordinary activities		3,428,465	5,550,358
Transfers from Sites Reserve	1.1	-	2,457,818
Transfer from/(to) Maintenance of Ministry Funds	1.2	(3,800)	964,521
Transfer of CM Wilson Fund to General Assembly	1.2	-	42,466
Transfer from Long Service Leave Fund	1.3	-	500,000
Accumulated Funds		38,007,013	34,582,347
Represented by:			
General Funds		6,705,597	5,891,964
Reserved Funds - Specific and Perpetual Trust balances		31,277,416	28,678,383
Reserve - Employment Liabilities		24,000	12,000
Total Accumulated Funds and Reserves		38,007,013	34,582,347
1.1 Transfers from Sites Reserve			
In September 2021 the General Assembly approved the transfer of funds up to \$5 million various Sites Reserve accounts to provide funding for contingent liabilities. A sum of \$2,457,818 was transferred for this purpose in the prior year.			
1.2 Transfers from Maintenance of Ministry General Funds and CM Wilson Fund			
In May 2022, the General Assembly approved the transfer of \$850,000 from the General Funds of the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee back to the General Assembly.			
The amount transferred in the prior year was adjusted to account for payables which were due at the balance date.			
1.3 Transfers from Long Service Leave Fund			
In September 2022, the General Assembly approved the transfer of \$500,000 from the PCV Ministers Long Service Leave Fund to the General Assembly to assist in meeting anticipated liabilities of the church.			
2. Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes			
Beneficiary Funds		150,891	292,200
Capital Fund		1,599,113	1,582,857
General Assembly of Australia		248,498	282,852
Insurance Fund		129,606	118,569
Moderator's and Visiting Missionary Expenses		271,292	280,998
Balfour Memorial Trust		582,537	532,930
Simon Fraser Trust		1,101,141	1,010,193
Pres-AID Appeals		151,297	156,782
Designated Purposes		3,447,378	4,936,629
National Redress Scheme		1,840,322	1,771,278
Scots Church Property Trust		4,003,714	-
Pensioners Reserve Account		329,796	-
		13,855,585	10,965,288

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
3. Separately Invested Funds			
Beneficiary Funds		2,882,328	2,588,259
Ministers Retirement Housing		5,874,818	5,393,504
		<u>8,757,146</u>	<u>7,981,762</u>
Investments have been revalued to market value as at 30 June 2024 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$617,541 (2023 gains of \$527,788). These funds are designated for Specific Purposes.			
4. Secured Loans			
Ministers' Retirement Housing Fund		3,283,124	2,983,124
Capital Fund		2,899,442	4,266,090
		<u>6,182,566</u>	<u>7,249,213</u>
5. Property, Plant and Equipment			
Plant and Equipment at Cost		32,889	-
Accumulated Depreciation		(3,941)	-
		<u>28,948</u>	<u>-</u>
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment		122,664	87,081
Accumulated Depreciation		(82,487)	(71,239)
		<u>40,178</u>	<u>15,842</u>
Total Property, Plant and Equipment		<u>69,126</u>	<u>15,842</u>

6. Scots' Church Properties Trust

Income Distributions from the Scots' Church Properties Trust are accounted for on a cash basis. The distribution this year includes an abnormal amount of \$3,775,00 which is the commission paid on an up front rental payment arising from the renegotiation by the Scot's Church Property Trust of the lease for the George's Building.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA**GENERAL ASSEMBLY****NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
7. Sundry Creditors and Accruals		
Accounting and Audit Fees	13,360	23,480
Employee Benefits	428	4,060
PAYG Tax and Fringe Benefits Tax	65,226	55,013
Trade and Other Payables	1,067,178	124,132
	<u>1,146,192</u>	<u>206,685</u>
8. Archives & Historic Records		
Income		
Archive Fees	<u>2,100</u>	<u>781</u>
Expenses		
Office Expenses and Rent	39,292	4,208
Personnel Related Costs	42,948	38,979
Storage and Retrieval Costs	<u>13,036</u>	<u>10,578</u>
Total Expenses	<u>95,276</u>	<u>53,766</u>
(Deficit) from ordinary activities	<u>(93,176)</u>	<u>(52,985)</u>

9. Contingent Liability

Legal Costs and Settlements includes an amount in the prior year to settle a claim made in the Supreme Court of Victoria in relation to historical institutional sexual abuse. Settlement of the final claim was agreed after 30 June 2024. The settlement will be funded from funds reserved to meet costs in relation to these claims.

10. Subsequent Events

The third and final claim in relation to historical institutional sexual abuse was settled following mediation after year end.

There were no other matters or circumstances that have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the result of those operations or the state of affairs of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in future financial years.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

AUSTRALIAN PRESBYTERIAN WORLD MISSION (VIC) COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
General Funds		366,500	323,309
Reserved Funds		577,436	573,413
Total Committee Funds	1	943,936	896,722
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		88	30
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		365,200	294,143
Specific Purposes	2	203,314	199,291
Total Current Assets		568,602	493,464
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		374,122	374,122
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	22,241	29,536
Total Non-Current Assets		396,363	403,658
Total Assets		964,965	897,122
Current Liabilities			
Sundry Creditors		21,029	400
Total Liabilities		21,029	400
Net Assets		943,936	896,722

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	General \$	Specific \$	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue					
Donations and Appeals		240	60,069	60,309	46,913
General Mission Programme		53,000	-	53,000	56,920
Interest and Investment Income		58,824	24,073	82,897	71,096
Total Revenue		112,063	84,142	196,205	174,929
Expenses					
Depreciation		7,295	-	7,295	10,578
Distributions, Grants and Subsidies		57,501	57,307	114,808	115,428
Motor Vehicle Expenses		9,014	-	9,014	7,685
Office Expenses		2,875	-	2,875	1,874
Personnel Related Costs		15,000	-	15,000	15,153
Total Expenses		91,684	57,307	148,991	150,717
Surplus from ordinary activities		20,379	26,835	47,214	24,211
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		20,379	26,835	47,214	24,211

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 26.

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 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	896,722	872,511
Surplus from ordinary activities	47,214	24,211
Committee Funds	943,936	896,722
Represented by:		
General Funds	366,500	323,309
Reserved Funds - Specific and Perpetual Trust balances	577,436	573,413
Total Accumulated Funds and Reserves	943,936	896,722
2. Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes		
Dayspring (Transport in Vanuatu)	4,094	4,094
Dehra Dun Presbyterian Theological College	6,542	4,579
Overseas Missionary work	81,291	79,272
Overseas Missionary work within Australia	111,387	111,345
	203,314	199,291
3. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Motor Vehicles	70,523	70,523
Accumulated Depreciation	(48,282)	(40,987)
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	22,241	29,536

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CHURCH AND NATION COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Committee Funds	1	387,934	368,699
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		338	-
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		388,439	368,699
Total Current Assets		388,777	368,699
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	2	-	-
Total Non-Current Assets		-	-
Total Assets		388,777	368,699
Current Liabilities			
Annual Leave Provision		692	-
Total Current Liabilities		692	-
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provision for Long Service Leave		150	-
Total Non Current Liabilities		150	-
Total Liabilities		842	-
Net Assets		387,934	368,699

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 28.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

CHURCH AND NATION COMMITTEE

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Revenue		
Donations	-	7,800
Interest and Investment Income	34,092	28,500
Total Revenue	34,092	36,300
Expenses		
Personnel Related Costs	10,372	11,896
Other Expenses	4,485	7,816
Total Expenses	14,857	19,712
Surplus from ordinary activities	19,235	16,588
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income	19,235	16,588

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	368,699	352,111
Surplus from ordinary activities	19,235	16,588
Committee Funds	387,934	368,699
2. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at cost	3,549	3,549
Accumulated Depreciation	(3,549)	(3,549)
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	-	-

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
CHURCH PLANTING COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Reserved Funds		723,035	221,212
Total Committee Funds	1	723,035	221,212
Represented by:			
Current Assets:			
Cash at Bank and on Hand		649	2
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		1,109	1,106
		<u>1,758</u>	<u>1,108</u>
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
Specific Purposes - Home Mission and Church Extension		183,360	58,745
Specific Purposes - Property Development		548,140	169,357
		<u>731,500</u>	<u>228,103</u>
Total Investments		731,500	228,103
Total Current Assets		733,257	229,211
Total Assets		733,257	229,211
Current Liabilities			
Annual Leave Provision		8,593	7,309
Employee Benefits		649	2
Sundry Creditors		980	688
		<u>10,222</u>	<u>7,998</u>
Total Current Liabilities		10,222	7,998
Total Liabilities		10,222	7,998
Net Assets		723,035	221,212

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 30.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

CHURCH PLANTING COMMITTEE

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	General	Property Development Fund	2024	2023
		\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue					
Donations		-	359,877	359,877	134,691
Interest and Investment Income		14,603	18,905	33,508	31,546
Rental Income		21,438	-	21,438	20,815
Scots Church Property Trust	3	231,048	-	231,048	304,011
Total Revenue		267,089	378,782	645,871	491,064
Expenses					
Conference & Events Expenses		1,544	-	1,544	-
Education and Training		-	-	-	599
Grants	2	85,270	-	85,270	881,400
Interest		-	-	-	4,007
Personnel Related Costs		57,235	-	57,235	76,942
Total Expenses		144,049	-	144,049	962,948
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities		123,040	378,782	501,822	(471,885)
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		123,040	378,782	501,822	(471,885)

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
1. Reserved Funds			
Balance at beginning		221,212	693,097
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities		501,822	(471,885)
Reserved Funds		723,035	221,212
2. Grants			
Operating grant re Embrace congregation		12,870	-
Operating grant re Donnybrook congregation		72,400	53,400
Grant to Darebin PC for Property Purchase		-	828,000
		85,270	881,400
3. Scots' Church Properties Trust			

Income Distributions from the Scots' Church Properties Trust are accounted for on a cash basis.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
HEALTH AND COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
General Funds		1,422,438	1,295,038
Reserved Funds		1,843,115	1,792,725
Total Committee Funds	1	3,265,554	3,087,763
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank and on Hand		190,746	144,746
Dividends Receivable		24,616	23,304
Franking Credits Receivable		4,067	4,373
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		3,862	2,987
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		1,213,496	1,151,584
Specific Purposes	2	577,366	613,085
Separately Invested Funds			
Specific Purposes	2	151,680	131,847
Total Investments		1,942,542	1,896,515
Total Current Assets		2,165,833	2,071,926
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Separately Invested Funds - Perpetual Funds	2	1,114,070	1,047,794
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	1,319	135
Total Non-Current Assets		1,115,389	1,047,929
Total Assets		3,281,221	3,119,855
Current Liabilities			
Accrued Annual Leave		9,942	19,463
Provision for Long Service Leave		445	10,547
Sundry Creditors and Accruals		1,322	2,081
Total Current Liabilities		11,709	32,092
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provision for Long Service Leave		3,959	-
Total Non Current Liabilities		3,959	-
Total Liabilities		15,668	32,092
Net Assets		3,265,554	3,087,763

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 33.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	General \$	Specific \$	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue					
Conference & Events and Other Income		20,977	1,728	22,705	22,806
Donations and Levies		30,999	-	30,999	38,893
Grants and Subsidies Received		-	23,264	23,264	22,367
Interest and Investment Income		105,721	104,749	210,470	189,902
Unrealised Gain on Investments	2	-	85,790	85,790	77,224
Total Revenue		157,698	215,530	373,228	351,193
Expenses					
Chaplaincy & Pastoral Support		29,185	1,250	30,435	49,154
Conference & Events Expenses		26,339	-	26,339	21,884
Depreciation		75	-	75	263
Insurance Professional Indemnity		731	-	731	725
Office Expenses		6,011	535	6,546	3,831
Personnel Related Costs		42,468	88,843	131,311	154,415
Total Expenses		104,810	90,628	195,438	230,271
Surplus from ordinary activities		52,888	124,902	177,790	120,921
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		52,888	124,902	177,790	120,921

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 33.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
HEALTH AND COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	3,087,763	2,966,842
Surplus from ordinary activities	177,790	120,921
Committee Funds	3,265,554	3,087,763
Represented by:		
General Funds	1,422,438	1,295,038
Reserved Funds - Specific and Perpetual Trust balances	1,843,115	1,792,725
Total Accumulated Funds and Reserves	3,265,554	3,087,763
2. Total Investments - Specific Purposes		
Specific Purposes		
Common Fund at Call		
Children or Other Social Service	572,818	578,433
Children's Hospital Chaplaincy	4,548	34,651
	577,366	613,085
Separately Invested Funds		
Children's Hospital Chaplaincy	151,680	131,847
	729,045	744,932
Perpetual Funds		
Separately Invested Funds		
Children's Hospital Chaplaincy	1,114,070	1,047,794
Total Investments - Specific Purposes	1,843,115	1,792,725
Separately Invested Funds have been revalued to market value as at 30 June 2024 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$85,790 (2023 gains of \$77,224). These funds are designated for Specific Purposes.		
3. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment	5,560	4,302
Accumulated Depreciation	(4,242)	(4,167)
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	1,319	135

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE - LONG SERVICE LEAVE FUND
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Committee Funds		20,329	27,891
Total Committee Funds	1	20,329	27,891
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
Long Service Leave Funds		1,030,669	1,026,022
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		-	380
Total Investments		1,030,669	1,026,402
Total Current Assets		1,030,669	1,026,402
Total Assets		1,030,669	1,026,402
Current Liabilities			
Provision for Long Service Leave Benefits		876,010	811,562
Sundry Creditors		-	28,396
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provision for Long Service Leave Benefits		134,330	158,553
Total Liabilities		1,010,340	998,511
Net Assets		20,329	27,891

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 35.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

MAINTENANCE OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE - LONG SERVICE LEAVE FUND

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Revenue		
Interest and Investment Income	92,158	126,746
Long Service Leave Levy	93,084	50,231
Total Revenue	185,242	176,977
Expenses		
Grants	196,604	123,651
Interest Subsidy on Ministers' Car Loans	-	1,751
Other Expenses	-	4,805
Total Expenses	196,604	130,207
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	(11,362)	46,770
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income	(11,362)	46,770

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	27,891	1,488,107
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	(11,362)	46,770
Funds Transferred from/(to) General Assembly	3,800	(1,006,986)
Transfer to Sinking Fund	-	(500,000)
Committee Funds	20,329	27,891

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
METRO COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Committee Funds	1	727,810	710,442
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		728,270	710,359
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		23	83
Total Assets		728,292	710,442
Current Liabilities			
Sundry Creditors and Accruals		482	-
Total Liabilities		482	-
Net Assets		727,810	710,442

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue		
Donations	3,600	1,200
Interest and Investment Income	63,984	56,506
Youth Metro Income	-	3,001
Total Revenue	67,584	60,708
Expenses		
Grants paid	38,680	44,617
Office Expenses	9,931	8,803
Personnel Related Expenses	1,605	6,665
Total Expenses	50,216	60,085
Surplus from ordinary activities	17,368	622
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income	17,368	622

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
1. Committee Funds			
Balance at beginning		710,442	709,820
Surplus from ordinary activities		17,368	622
Committee Funds		727,810	710,442

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Reserved Funds		1,891,682	1,842,352
Total Committee Funds	1	1,891,682	1,842,352
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank and on Hand		119	274
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		10,277	3,095
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
Specific Purposes	2	1,636,076	1,644,605
Total Current Assets		1,646,473	1,647,975
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		198,818	198,818
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	74,133	12,895
Total Non-Current Assets		272,951	211,713
Total Assets		1,919,423	1,859,687
Current Liabilities			
Creditors and Accrued Expenses		510	538
Employee Benefits		119	274
Provisions	4	26,552	16,522
Total Current Liabilities		27,182	17,335
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provision for Long Service Leave		560	-
Total Liabilities		27,741	17,335
Net Assets		1,891,682	1,842,352

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 39.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	SCPT \$	Other Specific \$	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue					
Conference & Events Income		-	-	-	1,197
Interest and Investment Income		18,534	158,342	176,876	153,705
Donations		-	480	480	480
Rental Income		50,022	-	50,022	48,569
Scots Church Property Trust	5	539,112	-	539,112	709,360
Profit/(Loss) on Sale of Asset		15,032	-	15,032	-
Total Revenue		622,700	158,822	781,522	913,310
Expenses					
Conference & Events Expenses		-	-	-	4,263
Depreciation		8,177	-	8,177	7,381
Distributions, Grants and Subsidies		285,212	129,769	414,980	332,011
Education and Training		619	-	619	4,339
Interest		968	-	968	7,654
Office Expenses		9,697	-	9,697	12,694
Personnel Related Costs		200,196	95,055	295,251	243,407
Property Expenses and Improvements		2,500	-	2,500	2,500
Total Expenses		507,369	224,824	732,193	614,250
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities		115,331	(66,001)	49,330	299,060
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		115,331	(66,001)	49,330	299,060

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 39.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
1. Reserved Funds			
Balance at beginning		1,842,352	1,543,292
Surplus from ordinary activities		49,330	299,060
Reserved Funds		1,891,682	1,842,352
2. Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes			
Home Mission and Church Extension		120,189	62,717
Church extension in Victoria		14,555	11,024
Evangelism		1,332,406	1,337,395
Home Missionaries Beneficiary Fund		126,947	192,300
Home Missionary Workers		41,979	41,170
		1,636,076	1,644,605
3. Property, Plant and Equipment			
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment		39,675	14,680
Accumulated Depreciation		(13,692)	(11,764)
		25,982	2,916
Motor Vehicle		49,388	39,981
Accumulated Depreciation		(1,238)	(30,002)
		48,150	9,979
Total Property, Plant and Equipment		74,133	12,895
4. Provisions			
Provision for Annual Leave		18,159	8,732
Provision for Long Service Leave		8,393	7,790
		26,552	16,522
5. Scots' Church Properties Trust			

Income Distributions from the Scots' Church Properties Trust are accounted for on a cash basis.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH AND CHILDREN COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
General Funds		850,380	787,174
Reserved Funds		1,316,388	1,283,485
Total Committee Funds	1	2,166,767	2,070,659
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		842,371	771,569
Specific Purposes	2	752,036	719,134
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		1,605	3,002
Total Current Assets		1,596,012	1,493,705
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		564,351	564,351
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	7,106	15,043
Total Non-Current Assets		571,457	579,394
Total Assets		2,167,469	2,073,099
Current Liabilities			
Sundry Creditors and Accruals		701	2,440
Total Liabilities		701	2,440
Net Assets		2,166,767	2,070,659

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 42.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH AND CHILDREN COMMITTEE

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	General \$	Specific \$	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue					
Camp Fees and Sale of Merchandise	4	57,898	-	57,898	94,973
Conference & Events Income		1,368	-	1,368	817
Donations and Gifts		2,018	-	2,018	2,300
Interest and Investment Income		120,093	67,367	187,460	158,613
Profit/(Loss) on Sale of Asset		-	-	-	150
Total Revenue		181,378	67,367	248,745	256,854
Expenses					
Bursaries and Prizes		-	-	-	145
Depreciation		7,937	-	7,937	7,725
Education, Training and Seminars		-	-	-	202
Expenditure re Camps and Cost of Merch	4	85,477	-	85,477	96,074
Insurance		6,231	-	6,231	6,425
Legal Fees		-	33,984	33,984	-
Office Expenses		9,402	-	9,402	12,677
Personnel Related Costs		9,606	-	9,606	36,029
Total Expenses		118,652	33,984	152,636	159,278
Surplus from ordinary activities		62,726	33,383	96,108	97,576
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		62,726	33,383	96,108	97,576

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 42.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH AND CHILDREN COMMITTEE
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

		2024	2023
		\$	\$
1. Committee Funds			
Balance at beginning	1.1	2,070,659	1,973,083
Surplus from ordinary activities		96,108	97,576
Committee Funds		2,166,767	2,070,659
Represented by:			
General Funds		850,380	787,174
Reserved Funds - Specific and Perpetual Trust balances		1,316,388	1,283,485
Total Accumulated Funds and Reserves		2,166,767	2,070,659
2. Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes			
Sunday School work and scholarships in the terms of the Allan Bequest		752,036	719,134
3. Property, Plant and Equipment			
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at cost		59,422	59,422
Accumulated Depreciation		(52,316)	(44,379)
Total Property, Plant and Equipment		7,106	15,043
4. Camp Activities			
Income from Camp Fees and Merchandise Sales		57,898	94,973
Expenses from Camp Fees and Merchandise Sales		(85,477)	(96,074)
Loss on Camp Activities		(27,578)	(1,101)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Committee Funds	1	<u>137,354</u>	<u>152,753</u>
Represented by:			
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		158,417	180,413
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		<u>3,234</u>	<u>962</u>
Total Current Assets		<u>161,651</u>	<u>181,375</u>
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	2	<u>2,789</u>	<u>1,184</u>
Total Assets		<u>164,440</u>	<u>182,559</u>
Current Liabilities			
Provision for Annual Leave		13,190	10,696
Provision for Long Service Leave		12,398	9,870
Sundry Creditors		<u>-</u>	<u>9,240</u>
Total Current Liabilities		<u>25,589</u>	<u>29,807</u>
Provision for Long Service Leave		<u>1,498</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Non Current Liabilities		<u>1,498</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>27,086</u>	<u>29,807</u>
Net Assets		<u>137,354</u>	<u>152,753</u>

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 44.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Revenue		
General Mission Program	169,999	146,826
Interest and Investment Income	19,203	14,237
Total Revenue	189,201	161,063
Expenses		
Depreciation	1,238	913
Consultants Fees - Investigations	56,590	14,324
Personnel related expenses	136,652	108,150
Office expenses	10,120	9,896
Total Expenses	204,600	133,282
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	(15,398)	27,780
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income	(15,398)	27,780

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	152,753	124,972
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	(15,398)	27,780
Committee Funds	137,354	152,753
2. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture Fittings and Equipment at Cost	8,747	5,904
Accumulated Depreciation	(5,958)	(4,720)
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	2,789	1,184

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
SOCIAL SERVICES
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Committee Funds			
Reserves		672,055	11,670,680
Asset Revaluation Reserve		-	3,276,956
Total Committee Funds	1	672,055	14,947,637
Represented by			
Current Assets			
Cash Assets		-	3,314,463
Dividends Receivable		-	237,071
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments	2	-	207,393
Investments			
Common Fund at Call - Specific Purposes	3	582,905	544,149
Separately Invested Funds	4	-	14,921,018
Total Investments		582,905	15,465,168
Total Current Assets		582,905	19,224,094
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		89,150	89,150
Property, Plant and Equipment	5	-	18,415,531
Total Non-Current Assets		89,150	18,504,681
Total Assets		672,055	37,728,775
Current Liabilities			
Kirkbrae Ingoings	8	-	21,317,387
Provision for Annual and Long Service Leave			586,669
Trade and Other Payables	7	-	777,804
Total Current Liabilities		-	22,681,860
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provision for Long Service Leave		-	99,279
Total Non-Current Liabilities		-	99,279
Total Liabilities		-	22,781,139
Net Assets		672,055	14,947,637

Notes to and forming part of these accounts are set out on pages 47 to 50.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

SOCIAL SERVICES

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	Kirkbrae to 7 June 2024 \$	Other \$	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue					
Donations		53,817	-	53,817	1,425
Grants and Subsidies Received		6,946,859	-	6,946,859	6,758,476
Interest and Investment Income		143,021	58,811	201,832	503,459
Lease Finance re Residential Accommodation Deposits	8	771,047	-	771,047	268,846
Kirkbrae Fees, Ingoings and Meals		3,159,098		3,159,098	3,168,748
Net Realised and Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments	6	1,456,562	-	1,456,562	490,872
Sundry Income		36,182		36,182	1,323
Total Revenue		12,566,586	58,811	12,625,397	11,193,149
Expenses					
Accounting and Audit Fees		56,771	-	56,771	184,012
Depreciation		882,994	-	882,994	934,215
Distributions, Grants & Subsidies		-	20,055	20,055	33,624
Education and Training		4,751	-	4,751	18,882
Fees, Chaplaincy and Consulting		66	-	66	959
Insurances		121,001	-	121,001	110,468
Kirkbrae Residents Expenses		903,000	-	903,000	685,218
Legal Fees		67,766	-	67,766	41,616
Lease Finance re Residential Accommodation Deposits	8	771,047	-	771,047	268,846
Net Loss/(Profit) on Sale of Assets		-	-	-	180,301
Office Expenses		403,256	-	403,256	355,883
Personnel Related Costs		7,842,866	-	7,842,866	6,855,557
Property Expenses and Improvements		1,088,314	-	1,088,314	1,090,068
Total Expenses		12,141,832	20,055	12,161,887	10,759,649
Surplus from ordinary activities		424,754	38,756	463,510	433,500
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		424,754	38,756	463,510	433,500

Notes to and forming part of these accounts are set out on pages 47 to 50.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
SOCIAL SERVICES
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
1. Committee Funds			
Balance at beginning		14,947,637	11,237,181
Asset Revaluation Reserve		-	3,276,956
Surplus from ordinary activities		463,510	433,500
Transfer of Kirkbrae Assets and Liabilities to Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd.	1.1	(14,739,092)	-
Reserves		<u>672,055</u>	<u>14,947,637</u>

1.1 Kirkbrae Assets and Liabilities at 7 June 2024

On 16 June 2020 the Presbyterian Church of Victoria took the decision to incorporate a new entity Presbyterian Care Victoria Ltd (PCVL) which has now assumed the oversight of Kirkbrae. All assets and liabilities in connection with Kirkbrae were transferred to PCVL on 7 June 2024.

	7 June 2024 \$
Current Assets	
Cash Assets	746,759
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments	88,389
Investments	
Separately Invested Funds	17,594,716
Total Investments	<u>17,594,716</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>18,429,864</u>
Non-Current Assets	
Property, Plant and Equipment	17,762,589
Total Non-Current Assets	<u>17,762,589</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>36,192,453</u></u>
Current Liabilities	
Kirkbrae Ingoings	19,518,303
Provision for Annual and Long Service Leave	812,583
Trade and Other Payables	1,041,801
Total Current Liabilities	<u>21,372,687</u>
Non-Current Liabilities	
Provision for Long Service Leave	80,674
Total Non-Current Liabilities	<u>80,674</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>21,453,361</u>
Net Assets	<u><u>14,739,092</u></u>

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
SOCIAL SERVICES
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
2. Sundry Debtors and Prepayments			
Sundry Debtors and Resident Receivables		-	207,393
3. Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes			
Brocklesby Trust - Protestant Women in Need		923	3,599
Douglas Family Trust - Poor & needy in Australia		19,733	21,505
Poor of Melbourne		36,754	38,299
Residential Care for Children		525,496	480,746
		<u>582,905</u>	<u>544,149</u>
4. Separately Invested Funds			
Investments and Shares		-	14,921,018
Dividends Receivables		-	237,071
Short Term Cash		-	1,782,749
		<u>-</u>	<u>16,940,838</u>
Investments have been revalued to market value as at 7 June 2024 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$1,228,069 (2023 gains of \$490,872).			
5. Property, Plant and Equipment			
Land and Buildings at Cost	5.1	-	28,545,171
Accumulated Depreciation		-	(10,394,113)
Impairment on Land & Buildings		-	(176,770)
		<u>-</u>	<u>17,974,288</u>
Plant and Equipment at Cost		-	1,454,379
Accumulated Depreciation		-	(1,328,251)
		<u>-</u>	<u>126,128</u>
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at Cost		-	1,482,341
Accumulated Depreciation		-	(1,170,941)
		<u>-</u>	<u>311,400</u>
Motor Vehicles at Cost		-	63,993
Accumulated Depreciation		-	(60,278)
		<u>-</u>	<u>3,715</u>
Total Property, Plant and Equipment		<u>-</u>	<u>18,415,531</u>
5.1	In accordance with the requirements of the Retirement Village Act a caveat is recorded over part of the land.		

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
SOCIAL SERVICES
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
6. Ingoings and Bonds - Hostel, Nursing Home and Independent Living Units		-	21,317,387

Residents are assessed on their ability to pay an ingoing 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.

Resident agreements were transferred to PCVL under Deed of Assignment on 7th June 2024.

7. Trade and Other Payables

Creditors and Accruals	-	777,804

8. 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.

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 straightline basis over the lease term.

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
SOCIAL SERVICES
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

8. 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 2024. has been based on

- average RAD balance for the year, and

- Interest rate equal to the Maximum Permissible Interest Rate (MPIR) of 8.34% applicable at 30 June 2024 and 7.46% at 30 June 2023, averaging to 7.90% for the year, which are the Government set interest rate used to calculate the Daily Accommodation Payment to applicable residents.

At 7 June 2024, the organisation's Statement of Income and Expenditure and Other Comprehensive Income presented Income of \$771,047 and an additional Finance cost (i.e. interest expense) of \$771,047, with \$nil impact to net result for the period. The accounting treatment for residential aged care accommodation arrangements where residents have elected to pay a DAP has not changed upon adopting AASB 16.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
STATE NEWS COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Committee Funds	1	82,872	79,453
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		-	378
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		86,514	79,106
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	2	-	-
Total Assets		86,514	79,483
Current Liabilities			
Sundry Creditors		3,642	30
Total Liabilities		3,642	30
Net Assets		82,872	79,453

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue		
Contributions from PIM and APWM	900	600
General Mission Programme	7,500	13,312
Interest and Investment Income	7,356	6,031
Total Revenue	15,756	19,943
Expenses		
Printing and Postage	12,338	11,051
Total Expenses	12,338	11,051
Surplus from ordinary activities	3,419	8,892
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income	3,419	8,892

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 52.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA**STATE NEWS COMMITTEE****STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024****NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	79,453	70,561
Surplus from ordinary activities	3,419	8,892
Committee Funds	82,872	79,453
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	-	-

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
General Funds		4,372,310	4,307,706
Reserved Funds		7,109,721	6,703,937
Committee Funds	1	11,482,031	11,011,643
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank and on Hand		16,018	6,991
Franking Credits Receivable		34,640	46,018
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		22,223	52,165
PTC Media Stock		7,252	8,587
Investments			
Common Fund at Call - General Purposes		3,116,654	2,923,188
Common Fund at Call - Specific Purposes	2	3,470,195	2,158,352
Separately Invested Funds	2.1	-	985,224
Total Current Assets		6,666,982	6,180,524
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund - Perpetual Funds		3,639,527	3,560,362
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	1,405,998	1,451,592
Total Non-Current Assets		5,045,525	5,011,954
Total Assets		11,712,507	11,192,478
Current Liabilities	4	191,473	171,735
Non Current Liabilities	5	39,002	9,100
Total Liabilities		230,475	180,835
Net Assets		11,482,031	11,011,643

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 55 to 57.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	General \$	Specific \$	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue					
Bequests	6	-	-	-	1,019,818
Bookshop Sales	7	13,426	-	13,426	14,238
Donations and Levies		5,283	108,818	114,100	80,912
General Mission Program		-	30,000	30,000	39,154
Grants		23,595	-	23,595	-
Interest and Investment Income		383,164	553,551	936,716	859,922
Ministers' Conference & Events		14,320	-	14,320	15,205
Tuition Fees	8	814,380	-	814,380	742,365
Rental Income		83,208	-	83,208	78,350
Total Revenue		1,337,376	692,369	2,029,745	2,849,963
Expenses					
Audit Fees		7,517	-	7,517	7,154
Bookshop Cost of Sales	7	11,572	-	11,572	15,092
Bursaries, Grants and Prizes	8.1	-	239,486	239,486	181,960
Depreciation		71,844	-	71,844	69,052
Education, Training and Library, Fees		182,467	-	182,467	179,109
Insurances		11,407	10,232	21,639	22,879
Office Expenses		24,638	-	24,638	22,478
Personnel Related Costs		738,618	130,556	869,174	762,900
Property Expenses and Improvements		56,457	41,998	98,455	61,058
Unrealised Loss on Investments	2.1	-	32,563	32,563	34,594
Total Expenses		1,104,521	454,836	1,559,357	1,356,275
Surplus from ordinary activities		232,855	237,533	470,388	1,493,688
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		232,855	237,533	470,388	1,493,688

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 55 to 57.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

		2024 \$	2023 \$
1. Committee Funds			
Balance at beginning		11,011,643	9,517,956
Surplus from ordinary activities		470,388	1,493,688
Transfer from General Fund to Bursary Fund	1.1	150,000	-
Transfer to Bursary Fund	1.1	(150,000)	-
Committee Funds		<u>11,482,031</u>	<u>11,011,643</u>
Represented by:			
General Funds		4,372,310	4,307,706
Reserved Funds - Specific and Perpetual Trust balances		7,109,721	6,703,937
Total Accumulated Funds and Reserves		<u>11,482,031</u>	<u>11,011,643</u>
1.1 Transfers from the General Fund			
In May 2024, Commission of Assembly approved the transfer of \$150,000, from Theological Education Committee (TEC) General Fund to the Bursary Fund.			
2. Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes			
Fernside Trust - Manse Allowance		12,278	41,961
Bursaries & Scholarships		800,519	627,659
Diaconal Funds		249,339	238,754
Memorial Lecture		46,565	42,374
Needy Students		301,918	273,994
Overseas Students		70,804	65,488
Prizes		163,919	156,668
Theological College Building Fund		1,311,418	271,886
Theological College Building Fund - Library Appeal		513,433	439,567
Total Common Fund at Call Specific Purposes		<u>3,470,195</u>	<u>2,158,352</u>
Separately Invested Fund Specific Purposes			
Theological College Building Fund	2.1	-	985,224
Total Separately Invested Fund Specific Purposes		<u>-</u>	<u>985,224</u>
2.1	These funds are designated for Specific Purposes. In October 2023, all shares were sold via JBWere for a total of \$952,661 and invested within Common Fund Portfolio. Separately Invested Funds have been revalued to market value on the date of transfer resulting in net realised and unrealised losses of \$32,563 (2023 losses of \$34,594).		

The bequest made in the prior year from the Jennings estate was made in kind through a transfer of a portfolio of Australian Equities. The Trusts Corporation liquidated the portfolio and invested the proceeds in the Common Fund under the authority of S14A(1) of the *Presbyterian Trusts Act 1890*.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
3. Property, Plant and Equipment			
Land and Buildings at cost		2,274,416	2,274,416
Accumulated Depreciation		(962,146)	(904,839)
		<u>1,312,270</u>	<u>1,369,577</u>
Plant and Equipment at Cost		148,734	92,490
Accumulated Depreciation		(97,850)	(90,212)
		<u>50,884</u>	<u>2,278</u>
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at Cost		312,568	342,562
Accumulated Depreciation		(269,724)	(262,825)
		<u>42,844</u>	<u>79,737</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>1,405,998</u>	<u>1,451,592</u>
4. Current Liabilities			
Accrued Audit Fees		4,250	6,900
Bonds Received		1,210	3,266
Employee Benefits		15,418	6,356
GST Collected on Sale		157	559
Sundry Payables and Accruals		2,904	540
Provision for Annual Leave		62,005	31,124
Provision for Long Service Leave		39,797	39,482
Provision for Study Leave		47,384	70,949
Sundry Creditors		18,349	12,559
		<u>191,473</u>	<u>171,735</u>
5. Non-Current Liabilities			
Provision for Long Service Leave		4,398	1,949
Provision for Study Leave		34,604	7,151
		<u>39,002</u>	<u>9,100</u>
6. Bequests			
Marion Isabel Jennings	for the Theological College Building Fund	-	1,019,818
		<u>-</u>	<u>1,019,818</u>
7. Bookshop Trading Result			
Sales		13,426	14,238
Cost of Sales		(11,572)	(15,092)
		<u>1,854</u>	<u>(854)</u>

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
8. Tuition Fees			
Tuition Fees received in cash		638,390	595,097
Tuition Fees funded from specific trusts	8.1	175,990	147,268
		<u>814,380</u>	<u>742,365</u>
8.1 Bursaries, Grants and Prizes includes an amount of \$175,990 (2023 \$147,268) which is an internal allocation of funds from specific trusts for scholarships.			

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
WOMEN'S MINISTRY VICTORIA
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Committee Funds	1	<u>33,769</u>	<u>37,249</u>
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Investments			
Common Fund at Call			
General Purposes		37,715	39,041
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments		<u>121</u>	<u>138</u>
Total Current Assets		<u>37,836</u>	<u>39,180</u>
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	2	<u>576</u>	<u>960</u>
Total Assets		<u>38,412</u>	<u>40,140</u>
Current Liabilities			
Provision for Annual Leave		3,454	1,136
Sundry Creditors and Accruals		<u>440</u>	<u>1,755</u>
Total Current Liabilities		<u>3,894</u>	<u>2,891</u>
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provision for Long Service Leave		748	-
Total Non Current Liabilities		<u>748</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>4,643</u>	<u>2,891</u>
Net Assets		<u>33,769</u>	<u>37,249</u>

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 59.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

WOMEN'S MINISTRY VICTORIA

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue			
Conference & Events Income		7,603	6,912
Donations		14,540	21,940
General Mission Programme		5,000	4,894
Interest and Investment Income		3,436	2,186
Total Revenue		30,579	35,933
Expenses			
Advertising		383	472
Conference & Events Expenses		5,807	3,223
Depreciation		384	190
Education, Training & Seminars		234	150
Insurance		487	-
Telephone & Internet		363	162
Travel & Accommodation		331	462
Website-Maintenance & Support		359	299
Personnel related expenses		25,711	15,898
Total Expenses		34,059	20,856
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities		(3,480)	15,076
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		(3,480)	15,076

**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024 \$	2023 \$
1. Committee Funds		
Balance at beginning	37,249	22,173
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	(3,480)	15,076
Committee Funds	33,769	37,249
2. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture & Equipment	1,150	1,150
Accumulated Depreciation	(574)	(190)
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	576	960

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

SITES RESERVE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Church Funds	2	23,201,527	23,409,084
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Investments			
Cash at Bank and on Hand	3	637,070	400,552
Dividends Receivable	3	40,945	161,390
Common Fund at Call		15,591,988	13,898,366
Investments and Securities	3	6,909,736	8,915,546
Sundry Debtors: Franking Credits		21,789	33,229
Total Assets		23,201,527	23,409,084
Total Liabilities		-	-
Net Assets		23,201,527	23,409,084

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

		2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue			
Interest and Investment Income		983,369	843,287
Net Realised and Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments		515,811	738,880
Proceeds from sale of property	4	2,441,974	4,387,150
Total Revenue		3,941,155	5,969,317
Expenses			
Donation to Property Development Fund		331,399	84,846
Ministry expenses incurred by congregations		913,699	778,566
Property improvements and expenses		2,903,614	1,362,731
Total Expenses		4,148,712	2,226,142
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities		(207,557)	3,743,175
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		(207,557)	3,743,175

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 61.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA**SITES RESERVE****NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024****1. Sites Reserve Funds**

Properties are held by the Church under the terms of the Model Trusts Deeds. Sites Reserve funds

	Note	2024	2023
		\$	\$
2. Church Funds			
Balance at beginning		23,409,084	22,123,727
Less: Transfers to General Assembly	2.1	-	(2,457,818)
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities		<u>(207,557)</u>	<u>3,743,175</u>
Committee Funds		<u>23,201,527</u>	<u>23,409,084</u>

2.1 Transfers to General Assembly

In September 2021 the General Assembly approved the transfer of funds up to \$5

3. Separately Invested Funds

Cash Assets	637,070	400,552
Dividends Receivable	40,945	161,390
Investments and Securities	<u>6,909,736</u>	<u>8,915,546</u>
Total Separately Invested Funds	<u>7,587,751</u>	<u>9,477,489</u>

4. Proceeds from Sale of Property

Batesford No.2	-	770,046
Castlemaine	-	2,067,956
Cheltenham	-	65,125
Hawthorn	1,213,578	-
Koo Wee Rup	-	566,681
Nelson	223,920	-
Scarsdale	-	290,614
Scotsburn	257,858	-
The Leigh	-	626,728
Woodford No.2	<u>746,618</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Proceeds from Sale of Property	<u>2,441,974</u>	<u>4,387,150</u>

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION

**Financial Report
For the year ended 30 June 2024**



THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024
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THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION

MEMBERS:

Mr J Walter LL.B(Hons), MBA (Chairman)
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
Mr D Graham B.E(Hons), B.Sc
Rev B R Oakes B.Bus, M.Tax, B.Th. B.Min, MA(Min) - (to January 2024)
Mr R Walley B.Sc, AssocDipTh (from 19 June 2023)
Rev G D Wentworth B.Th (from October 2023)
Mr D Wright B.Bus, MIPA AFA

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 2024
ABN 80385562965**

**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 2024, 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

Matthew Crouch

Partner

20 Albert Street, Blackburn.

Dated: 12 September 2024

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024
ABN 80385562965**

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 2024, 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 2024 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 2024
ABN 80385562965**

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.



**SAWARD
DAWSON**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024
ABN 80385562965**

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


Matthew Crouch
Partner

20 Albert Street, Blackburn

Dated: 12 September 2024

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA 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 28 are drawn up so as to present fairly the financial position of The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation at 30 June 2024 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 twelfth day of September 2024.



Mr J Walter LL.B(Hons), MBA
Chairman



Mr D Wright B.Bus, MIPA AFA
Trusts Corporation Member

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Trust Funds and Reserves			
Income Suspense Account		3,885,147	4,277,944
Common Fund Reserve		46,783,739	40,062,115
Retained Earnings		187,502	-
Total Church Funds	2	50,856,388	44,340,059
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash Assets	5(i)	10,357,822	8,607,042
Receivables	4	1,616,189	1,943,637
Investments			
Cash on Term Deposit		891,746	1,995,000
Investments and Securities		125,315,431	128,768,873
Total Current Assets		138,181,187	141,314,552
Non-Current Assets			
Investments			
Advances to Ministers		42,768	46,130
Mortgages and Loans		2,938,278	4,308,197
Property at cost - Assembly Hall		10,175,000	10,175,000
Total Investments		13,156,045	14,529,327
Property, Plant and Equipment	3	-	-
Total Non-Current Assets		13,156,045	14,529,327
Total Assets		151,337,233	155,843,879
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables		35,787	34,599
Trust Funds and Deposits		91,066,752	102,258,165
Total Current Liabilities		91,102,540	102,292,764
Non-Current Liabilities			
Trust Funds and Deposits - Perpetual		9,378,305	9,211,056
Total Non-Current Liabilities		9,378,305	9,211,056
Total Liabilities		100,480,845	111,503,820
Net Assets		50,856,388	44,340,059

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 11 to 15.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue			
Bequests	7	340,509	5,045,781
Commissions		267,502	83,902
Interest and Investment Income		5,222,349	4,788,499
Total Revenue		<u>5,830,360</u>	<u>9,918,182</u>
Other Income			
Net Realised and Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments	1	<u>9,649,880</u>	<u>6,799,996</u>
Total Revenue and Other Income		<u><u>15,480,240</u></u>	<u><u>16,718,178</u></u>
Expenses			
Audit and Review Fees		41,370	37,393
Grants		80,000	83,902
Insurance Fire and General		9,032	9,401
Income Credited to Beneficial Trusts		8,622,586	11,811,238
Legal Fees and Costs		-	10,095
Management Fees		199,547	170,070
Office Expenses		10,539	7,432
Personnel Related Costs		837	587
Total Expenses		<u>8,963,911</u>	<u>12,130,119</u>
Surplus from ordinary activities	5(ii)	<u><u>6,516,329</u></u>	<u><u>4,588,059</u></u>
Other Comprehensive Income		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Comprehensive Income		<u><u>6,516,329</u></u>	<u><u>4,588,059</u></u>

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 11 to 15.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	Income Suspense Account	Common Fund Reserve \$	PCV Trusts Corporation	Separately Invested Funds \$	Total \$
Balance at 30 June 2022		4,119,077	35,632,923	0	0	39,752,000
Surplus/(Deficit) attributable to beneficial trusts		3,433,101	(234,979)	-	2,431,183	5,629,306
Realised and Unrealised gains/(losses)		-	4,664,170	-	2,135,825	6,799,996
Surplus credited to beneficial trusts		(3,274,233)	-	-	(4,567,009)	(7,841,242)
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	2	158,867	4,429,192	-	-	4,588,059
Balance at 30 June 2023	2	4,277,944	40,062,115	-	-	44,340,059
Surplus/(Deficit) attributable to beneficial trusts		4,273,254	(261,325)	187,502	949,095	5,148,526
Realised and Unrealised gains/(losses)		-	6,982,949	-	2,666,931	9,649,880
(Surplus)/Deficit credited to beneficial trusts		(4,666,052)	-	-	(3,616,026)	(8,282,078)
Surplus/(Deficit) from ordinary activities	2	(392,798)	6,721,624	187,502	-	6,516,329
Balance at 30 June 2024	2	3,885,147	46,783,739	187,502	-	50,856,388

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash receipts from operations		608,011	5,129,683
Cash payments from operations		(340,136)	(537,646)
Net cash provided from/(used in) operating activities	5(ii)	267,874	4,592,037
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest and Investment Income Received		5,549,797	4,988,382
Decrease in Trust funds and deposits		(11,024,164)	15,787,519
Payments for investment securities and term deposits		(11,335,636)	(17,038,066)
Proceeds from sale of investment securities and term deposits		26,912,133	4,716,733
Decrease in advances to Ministers		3,362	553
Net cash provided by investing activities		10,105,492	8,455,121
Cash flows from financing activities			
Interest paid and investment distributions		(8,622,586)	(11,811,238)
Net cash provided by financing activities		(8,622,586)	(11,811,238)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		1,750,780	1,235,920
Cash at the beginning of the year		8,607,042	7,371,122
Cash at the end of the year	5(i)	10,357,822	8,607,042

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 11 to 15.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

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 28, 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 2024 of the following activities:

The Presbyterian Church of Victoria Trusts Corporation
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 2024**

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Revenue

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).

Bequests Revenue

Bequests are recognised when received.

Commissions Revenue

Commissions are recognised when received.

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 2024**

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 2024 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$9,649,880 (2023 gains of \$6,799,996).

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 2024

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.

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
2. Accumulated Funds and Reserves		
Balance at beginning	44,340,059	39,752,000
Surplus from ordinary activities	6,516,329	4,588,059
Consolidated Funds	50,856,388	44,340,059
Represented by:		
Income Suspense Account	3,885,147	4,277,944
Common Fund Reserve	46,783,739	40,062,115
	50,668,886	44,340,059
3. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at cost	10,327	10,327
Accumulated Depreciation	(10,327)	(10,327)
	-	-
4. Receivables		
Dividends Receivable	1,124,345	1,407,356
Franking Credits Receivable	469,695	522,095
Sundry Debtors	22,148	14,186
	1,616,189	1,943,637

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	2024 \$	2023 \$
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	8,505,891	2,884,085
Cash on Short Term Deposit	1,851,931	5,722,957
	<u>10,357,822</u>	<u>8,607,042</u>
5(ii) Reconciliation of operating result to net cash provided by operating activities		
Surplus from ordinary activities	6,516,329	4,588,059
Add/(less) items classified as investing/financing activities		
Interest paid	8,282,078	6,765,457
Bequest credited to trusts for beneficial purposes	340,509	5,045,781
Interest/dividends received	(5,222,349)	(4,788,499)
Add/(less) non-cash items:		
Net Realised and Unrealised (Gains)/Losses on Investments	(9,649,880)	(6,799,996)
Net cash (used in) operating activities before change in assets and liabilities	266,686	4,810,803
Change in assets and liabilities during the financial year		
Increase/(decrease) in creditors and accruals	1,189	(218,765)
Net cash provided from/(used in) operating activities	<u>267,874</u>	<u>4,592,037</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 2024. The Trusts Corporation members receive no remuneration or other benefit for their services as trustees.		
A member of the Trusts Corporation is a partner of a firm which provided legal services to the Trusts Corporation	50,951	11,266
7. Bequests		
Margaret Isabel Jean Ward for the general purposes of the Tallangatta and District Presbyterian Church	-	25,963
Marion Isabel Jennings for the Theological College Building Fund	-	1,019,818
Marion Isabel Jennings for the Presbyterian Church of Victoria	335,509	4,000,000
Margaret Muir Stevens for the PWMU	5,000	-
	<u>340,509</u>	<u>5,045,781</u>

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Trust Funds and Reserves			
Accumulated funds	2	187,502	-
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank and on Hand		187,502	-
Total Current Assets		187,502	-
Net Assets		187,502	-

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue			
Bequests	3	340,509	5,045,781
Commission from Scots Church Properties Trust	1	267,502	83,902
Total Revenue		608,011	5,129,683
Expenses			
Grant to General Assembly		80,000	83,902
Income credited to trusts for beneficial purposes		340,509	5,045,781
Total Expenses		420,509	5,129,683
Surplus from ordinary activities		187,502	-
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		187,502	-

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on page 17.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

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.

The Trusts Corporation has resolved to pass \$80,000 of the income to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

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.

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
2. Accumulated Funds		
Balance at beginning	-	-
Surplus from ordinary activities	187,502	-
Accumulated Funds	187,502	-
3. Bequests		
Margaret Isabel Jean Ward for the general purposes of the Tallangatta and District Presbyterian Church	-	25,963
Marion Isabel Jennings for the Theological College Building Fund	-	1,019,818
Marion Isabel Jennings for the Presbyterian Church of Victoria	335,509	4,000,000
Margaret Muir Stevens for the PWMU	5,000	-
	340,509	5,045,781

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
COMMON FUND
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2024**

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Trust Funds and Reserves			
Income Suspense Account	2	3,885,147	4,277,944
Common Fund Reserve	2	46,783,739	40,062,115
Total Trust Funds		50,668,886	44,340,059
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash Assets		8,649,754	5,738,583
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments	3	1,249,519	1,191,570
Investments and Securities			
Cash held on Term Deposit	4	-	1,750,000
Investments and Securities	5	104,385,414	90,934,163
Total Investments		104,385,414	92,684,163
Total Current Assets		114,284,688	99,614,317
Non-Current Assets			
Investments and Securities			
Mortgages and Loans	6	2,938,278	4,308,197
Ministers' Car Loans	7	42,768	46,130
Total Investments		2,981,045	4,354,327
Property, Plant and Equipment	8	-	-
Total Non-Current Assets		2,981,045	4,354,327
Total Assets		117,265,733	103,968,644
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables		35,787	34,599
Trust Funds General and Specific	9	58,600,412	51,712,503
Total Current Liabilities		58,636,199	51,747,101
Non-Current Liabilities			
Trust Funds Perpetual	9	7,960,648	7,881,483
Total Non-Current Liabilities		7,960,648	7,881,483
Total Liabilities		66,596,847	59,628,584
Net Assets		50,668,886	44,340,059

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 20 to 24.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
COMMON FUND
INCOME SUSPENSE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

		2024	2023
		\$	\$
Revenue			
Interest and Investment Income and Fees		4,273,254	3,433,101
Total Revenue		4,273,254	3,433,101
Income Suspense carried forward from prior year	2	4,277,944	4,119,077
Distribution to Beneficiaries		(4,666,052)	(3,274,233)
Income Suspense	2	3,885,147	4,277,944

The rate of interest applied to the average monthly fund balances for distribution purposes were:

	%	%
Perpetual, Specific and General Trust Funds	9.00	8.00
Sites Reserve	5.00	4.00
Congregation Deposits	4.00	1.60

**STATEMENT OF MOVEMENT IN COMMON FUND RESERVE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

Expenses

Accounting and Audit Fees		41,370	37,393
Insurance - Management Liability & Fidelity		9,032	9,401
Legal Fees and Costs		-	10,095
Management Fees Paid	10	199,547	170,070
Office Expenses		10,539	7,432
Travel and meeting costs		837	587
Total Expenses		261,325	234,979
Net Realised and Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments	1	6,982,949	4,664,170
Accumulated Funds at beginning of the year		40,062,115	35,632,923
Common Fund Reserve	2	46,783,739	40,062,115

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 20 to 24.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
COMMON FUND
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

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 2024 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 2024.

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 2024 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$6,982,949 (2023 gains of \$4,664,170). 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 2024**

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.

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.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
COMMON FUND
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

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.

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Common Fund Reserve and Income Suspense Account		
Common Fund Reserve at beginning	40,062,115	35,632,923
Net Realised and Unrealised Gains/(Losses) on Investments	6,982,949	4,664,170
Less Expenses	(261,325)	(234,979)
Common Fund Reserve	<u>46,783,739</u>	<u>40,062,115</u>
Income Suspense Account at beginning	4,277,944	4,119,077
Distributed during year	(4,666,052)	(3,274,233)
Interest and Investment Income	<u>4,273,254</u>	<u>3,433,101</u>
Income Suspense Account	<u>3,885,147</u>	<u>4,277,944</u>

3. Sundry Debtors and Prepayments

Dividends due from Public Companies and Unit Trusts	890,866	809,373
Franking credits on dividends	336,505	368,012
Goods and Services Tax refund	<u>22,148</u>	<u>14,186</u>
	<u>1,249,519</u>	<u>1,191,570</u>

4. Cash held on Term Deposit

Current		
NAB	<u>-</u>	<u>1,750,000</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>1,750,000</u>

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
COMMON FUND
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
5. Investments and Securities		
Government Bonds	769,735	2,953,819
Credit	35,683,407	30,189,415
Real Assets	11,788,217	10,121,895
Australian Equities	26,817,973	22,776,406
International Equities	22,799,603	19,831,984
Uncorrelated Strategies	6,526,478	5,060,644
	104,385,414	90,934,163
6. Mortgages and Loans		
Loan to Presbyterian Church of Victoria Capital Fund	2,899,442	4,266,090
Other secured loans	38,836	42,108
	2,938,278	4,308,197
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	46,130	46,682
Add New Advances - Ministers	24,960	25,000
Interest and Administration Charges	2,164	2,232
	73,254	73,915
Less Interest subsidy - Maintenance of the Ministry	(1,532)	(1,751)
Less Repayments - Ministers	(28,954)	(26,034)
	42,768	46,130
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)
	-	-

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA TRUSTS CORPORATION
COMMON FUND
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
9. Trust Funds		
General Assembly	26,567,119	23,364,988
Assembly Committees		
Australian Presbyterian World Mission (Vic)	942,636	867,556
Church and Nation	388,439	368,699
Church Planting	731,500	228,103
Health and Community Chaplaincy	1,790,862	1,764,669
Ministry Development	1,834,894	1,843,423
Maintenance of the Ministry	1,030,669	1,068,488
Metro	728,270	710,359
Presbyterian Youth and Children	2,158,759	2,055,054
Safe Church	158,417	180,413
Social Services	672,055	633,299
State News	86,514	79,106
Theological Education	10,226,376	8,641,901
Women's Ministry Victoria	37,715	39,041
Total Assembly Committees	20,787,105	18,480,112
Other		
Congregations	2,978,177	3,190,793
Sites Reserve	15,591,988	13,898,366
Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union	636,671	659,727
Total Trust Funds	66,561,060	59,593,986
Consisting of:		
Trust Funds General and Specific	58,600,412	51,712,503
Trust Funds Perpetual	7,960,648	7,881,483
Total Trust Funds	66,561,060	59,593,986
10. Management Fees Paid		
Common Fund Reserve	199,547	170,070

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 2024**

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Accumulated Funds and Reserves	2	-	-
Represented by:			
Current Assets			
Cash Assets		1,520,566	2,868,459
Dividends Receivable		233,480	597,983
Franking Credits Receivable		133,190	154,084
Investments and Securities			
Term Deposits		891,746	245,000
Government Bonds		-	1,427,987
Credit		4,345,211	10,722,751
Real Assets		2,656,943	3,665,990
Australian Equities		6,718,858	10,793,107
International Equities		5,663,243	8,450,525
Uncorrelated Strategies		1,545,761	2,774,350
Total Investments		21,821,762	38,079,710
Total Current Assets		23,708,997	41,700,236
Non-Current Assets			
Property at cost - Assembly Hall	4	10,175,000	10,175,000
Total Non-Current Assets		10,175,000	10,175,000
Total Assets		33,883,997	51,875,236
Current Liabilities			
Trust Funds General and Specific	3	32,333,151	50,391,579
Undistributed Income		133,190	154,084
Total Current Liabilities		32,466,341	50,545,662
Non-Current Liabilities			
Trust Funds Perpetual	3	1,417,657	1,329,573
Total Non-Current Liabilities		1,417,657	1,329,573
Total Liabilities		33,883,997	51,875,236
Net Assets		-	-

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 27 to 28.

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 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue			
Bequests TEC Building Fund		-	1,075,785
Interest and Investment Income and Fees		949,095	1,355,398
Net Realised and Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investments	1	2,666,931	2,135,825
Total Revenue		3,616,026	4,567,009
Expenses			
Income/(Loss) Credited to Beneficiaries		3,616,026	4,567,009
Total Expenses		3,616,026	4,567,009
Surplus from ordinary activities		-	-
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		-	-

Notes to and forming part of these financial statements are set out on pages 27 to 28.

**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 2024**

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 2024 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 2024 resulting in net realised and unrealised gains of \$2,666,931 (2023 gains of \$2,135,825). 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 2024**

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
2. Accumulated Funds			
Balance at beginning		-	-
Surplus from ordinary activities		-	-
Accumulated Funds		-	-
3. Trust Funds			
Congregations		5,249,540	4,291,553
General Assembly			
Sites Reserve		7,587,751	9,477,489
Donaldson Trust		3,051,102	2,741,454
Ministers Retirement Housing		6,202,359	5,761,903
Health and Community Chaplaincy		1,481,112	1,347,691
Home Missions and Church Extension	4.1	10,175,000	10,175,000
Social Services		3,945	16,940,838
Theological College Building Fund		-	985,224
Total Trust Funds		33,750,808	51,721,152
Statement of Movement in Trust Fund Balances			
Trust funds at beginning		51,721,152	46,182,755
Deposits received		2,982,273	4,546,392
Income earned		3,616,026	4,567,009
Less Franking Credits Receivable		(133,190)	(154,084)
Payments to or on behalf of beneficiaries		(24,435,453)	(3,420,919)
Total Trust Funds		33,750,808	51,721,152
Consisting of:			
Trust Funds General and Specific		32,333,151	50,391,579
Trust Funds Perpetual		1,417,657	1,329,573
Total Trust Funds		33,750,808	51,721,152

4. Property at cost - Assembly Hall

The Trusts Corporation holds a 37% interest in Assembly Hall at 156 Collins Street Melbourne as an investment for the purposes of home mission and church extension in Victoria.

- 4.1** 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 for the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
URGENT MEETING OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
NOVEMBER 2024**

PROCEEDINGS OF THE URGENT MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

Via Zoom on Friday 29 November 2024 at 2:30pm

1. Constitution

The Moderator, Rev Ian Hutton, constituted the Assembly with a devotion on the theme of thankfulness based on Luke 17:11-19 and 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, as amended, be the Roll of this Urgent Meeting of the General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

3. Approval of Moderator's action

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

In accordance with Code 5.38(c), approve the Moderator's action in convening this Urgent Meeting of the General Assembly.

The motion was seconded and approved.

4. Apologies

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

Sustain the apologies that have been submitted to the Deputy Clerk for absence from this Urgent Meeting of the General Assembly and record their names in the minutes.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The following apologies were sustained:

Ministers: Justin Ang, Keith Bell, Jordan Born, Marcus Campbell, Martin de Pyle, Christopher Duke, Jared Hood, John Huynh, Robert Koh, Wayne McArdle, Philip Mercer, Douglas Milne, Ben Nelson, Bagoes Seta, Ian Touzel, John Wilson, Andrew Wong.

Elders: John Angelico, Philip Barton, Tom Fleming, Roger McIvor, Sabyan Hardjo.

5. Business Committee

The report of the Business Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clauses 1-9 were approved.

Clause 10 was approved.

The Convener, Rev Brett Cummins, moved the proposed deliverance as a whole:

That the Assembly:

1. Determine the hours of meeting to be 2:30pm to the finish of business.
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

- Overturists stating the overture
 - Respondents to appeals
 - Question time (including 20 mins for total deliverance questions)
 - 5 minutes for:
 - Appellants in reply
 - Movers of substantive motions and amendments
 - All other speakers.
 - 3. Appoint a Ballot Committee for the Assembly consisting of:
 - Rev Adam Humphries (Convener), Stephen Jones, Luke McSeveny, Stuart Withers, Elder Doug Fraser
 and determine that this committee be held to be thanked and discharged at the dissolution of the Assembly.
 - 4. 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.
 - 5. Permit the General Manager to be present in the Assembly including when meeting in private, and to answer any financial management questions.
 - 6. 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.
 - 7. 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.
 - 8. Permit the Law Agent to be present in the 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. Appoint the Moderator and the Clerks of Assembly to a special commission to scrutinise the minutes of this Assembly, 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 Assembly, unless a later determination be made by this Assembly.
 - 10. Approve the Order of Business.
- The motion was seconded and approved.

6. Conflict of Interest Declarations

The Moderator asked for declarations by members of the court of any Conflict of Interest as defined by the PCV Conflict of Interest Policy in relation to the business of this Commission. None were forthcoming

7. Board of Investment and Finance

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

8. Safe Church Committee

Mrs Louise Griffiths, Acting Convener, Safe Church Committee, spoke to the Safe Church Committee's report.

The report of the Safe Church Committee was received.

The proposed deliverance was taken clause by clause.

Clause 1 was approved.

Clause 2 was moved and seconded.

The Clerk sought leave to move his proposed amendment in an amended form.

Leave was granted.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly

Amend clause 2 of the proposed deliverance by the subtraction and addition of words so that the clause will read:

2. Approve a variation of budget for the Safe Church Committee 2024/2025 to allow for the recruitment, onboarding and employment of up to 1.4 FTE Safe Church Facilitators, and or other transitional arrangements as may be necessary with these additional expenses to be funded from committee reserves.

The amendment was seconded and approved.

Clause 2 as amended was approved.

Rev David Brown moved:

That the Assembly approve the proposed deliverance as a whole as amended:

1. Thank God for the provision of Mrs Fiona Bligh over the last ten years and for her commitment, guidance, and assistance in her role as Safe Church Facilitator for the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.
2. Approve a variation of budget for the Safe Church Committee 2024/2025 to allow for the recruitment, onboarding and employment of up to 1.4 FTE Safe Church Facilitators, and or other transitional arrangements as may be necessary with these additional expenses to be funded from committee reserves.

The motion was seconded and approved.

9. Resignation of Mrs Fiona Bligh, Safe Church Facilitator – thanks of the Assembly

The Clerk sought leave to move his proposed motion in an amended form.

Leave was granted.

The Clerk moved:

That the Assembly:

1. Note the resignation of Mrs Fiona Bligh, Safe Church Facilitator, and her final day of service being Friday, 6 December 2024.
2. Thank Mrs Fiona Bligh for her exceptional work and dedication in her role as Safe Church Facilitator. Her ability to expertly navigate the evolving state and federal laws and regulations relating to child safety has been invaluable to the PCV. Mrs Bligh's unwavering commitment, professionalism, competence and compassion, have ensured that the ongoing proclamation of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is done with the utmost care for those who are most vulnerable in our church.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The vote was unanimous.

The Moderator expressed appreciation of Mrs Bligh's service as Safe Church Facilitator and thanked her for her work for the church in this role, making special mention of her compassion for survivors of abuse.

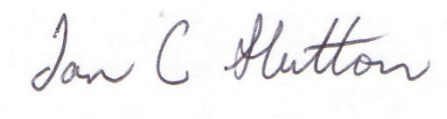
10. Dissolution

The business of the Assembly now being concluded, the Moderator closed the meeting with prayer and the benediction.

CLERKS
C B Garrett
P W Phillips
P J Burns

Certificate

I certify that the minutes of this General Assembly, having been carefully scrutinised, are hereby confirmed in terms of minute 5.9 thereof.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Ian C Hutton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'I' and 'H'.

Rev Ian C Hutton
Moderator

BY ORDER OF THE MODERATOR (Min 3)

Members of the General Assembly

In response to a request dated 20th Nov 2024 from Rev Brett Cummins on behalf of the Safe Church Committee and nine other persons entitled to be members of the General Assembly and representing more than three presbyteries, in accordance with Code rule 5.38, I hereby give notice of an Urgent Meeting of the General Assembly to be held via Zoom, Friday 29th November 2024 at 2.30pm, to receive a report from the Safe Church Committee with a request for a budget variance and any other reports necessary to consider the request of the Safe Church Committee, including but not limited to a report from the Board of Investment and Finance.

In Christ's service

Rev Ian Hutton
Moderator
Presbyterian Church of Victoria

BOARD OF INVESTMENT AND FINANCE (Min 7)

The Board of Investment and Finance (BIF) has been advised by the Safe Church Committee that it would seek a variation of budget in order to engage a new Safe Church Facilitator and additional staff. As the budgetary increase is in excess of 10% the BIF does not have authority to approve such a variation under its regulations.

Business Committee regulation 3e requires the BIF's assurance that it has been advised and is in a position to guide the Assembly concerning the proposed expenditure. The BIF has been so advised and at its meeting of 12 November 2024 following the reception of correspondence from the Safe Church Committee resolved as follows:

Min 318/24 SCU Budget Increase for Two New Roles

It was agreed under the terms of BIF regulation 9(b)(ii)1 to recommend to the General Assembly the approval of a variation in the Safe Church Committee budget to allow hire of a full time Safe Church Facilitator up to \$120,000.00 as well as a part-time assistant up to 0.6 FTE, and associated recruitment costs. Noting that this increase is beyond the 10% BIF is authorised to approve, a report will be provided to the General Assembly.

The BIF also draws the attention of the Assembly and the Safe Church Committee members to rule 5.32 and BIF regulation 8 concerning the appointment of committee staff.

John Walter
CHAIRMAN

BUSINESS COMMITTEE (Min 5)

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 those papers that seem competent and respectful.

Outline of business

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

1. Devotions and Constitution
2. Roll
3. Approval of Moderator's convening (code 5.38c)
4. Apologies
5. Associations
6. Business Committee
7. Conflicts of Interest
8. Board of Investment and Finance
9. Safe Church Committee
10. Dissolution

Brett Cummins
CONVENER

SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE (Min 8)

At the recent General Assembly of Victoria, the Safe Church Committee advised the Assembly that they would be seeking to employ an additional Safe Church staff member, to be employed two days a week, in order to assist the Safe Church Facilitator in the provision of advice and support pertaining to the safety of children and vulnerable people in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (PCV).

This need has arisen for several reasons:

1. Since the employment of the PCV's first Safe Church Facilitator over ten years ago, there have been ongoing, significant changes in our obligations regarding the administration of safety for children and vulnerable people as a religious organisation. This has required regular reviews and refinement of our compliance measures to remain faithful in our duty to care for and protect children and vulnerable people in the PCV.
2. The National Redress Scheme, which commenced in 2018, and other legal claims received by the PCV, have resulted in additional workload for the Safe Church Facilitator, who is responsible for searching through archival records to provide factual information pertaining to such claims. This is time consuming work which requires great attention to detail and consultation with the PCV Law Agent.
3. The updated Victorian Child Safe Standards, introduced in July 2023, have placed increased pressure upon our Safe Church Facilitator to ensure that every aspect of the PCV is demonstrating ongoing compliance and commitment to these standards.
4. The PCV's insurer's requirements regarding the PCV's sexual abuse insurance policy, have significantly increased in recent years, and again this has placed increased pressure on this position.
5. The Safe Church Facilitator is employed by the Safe Church Committee on behalf of the General Assembly of Victoria. For many years, the convener of the Safe Church Committee was suitably qualified and available to respond to urgent Safe Church matters enabling the Safe Church Facilitator to take her annual leave. With the departure of this long-standing convener, the Safe Church Committee convener role is being filled by faithful Christian people who do not have the expertise nor the available time to attend to urgent Safe Church matters. This has meant that the Safe Church Facilitator has not been able to take annual leave since late 2023. A second worker would be able to respond to urgent matters as they arise, enabling the Safe Church Facilitator to take leave, in accordance with legal workplace entitlements.

In summary, a second worker is essential so that the Safe Church Facilitator is supported to ensure that all aspects of the role are met and to ensure that sick leave, personal leave, and annual leave entitlements can be taken as provided for by Victorian workplace law.

The Safe Church Committee has also been advised by Mrs Fiona Bligh that she will be resigning from the role of Safe Church Facilitator, effective from 6 December 2024. The departure of Mrs Bligh from this role will be a huge loss to the PCV. Fiona has

worked long and hard to establish the policies, procedures, and training packages that we now implement as standard practice within the PCV. Her development of readily available resources and her rapid response to phone and email enquiries and her availability to attend Session and Presbytery meetings across the state has been invaluable.

A workplace task analysis, undertaken by Mr Stephen Leslie in 2021, recommended that based upon the tasks Fiona performs in her role, she has not been compensated adequately. It is also noted that Fiona was employed in a part-time role (0.8 FTE) and the analysis by Mr Leslie recommended that the role should be full-time which has also become clear to the committee. Considering inflation and the ever-increasing demands of this role, it would not be unreasonable to put in place an increased remuneration package to reflect the increased demands of the role in the past three years. As the committee looks to employ highly knowledgeable and experienced persons to fill the role of Safe Church Facilitator and an assistant, the committee hopes to assist the PCV to:

- a) continue to protect all the children and vulnerable people in the care of the PCV and;
- b) benefit from a reduced likelihood that the PCV be subject to litigation as a result of failure to protect the children entrusted to its care.

Louise Griffiths
ACTING CONVENER

Roll of Assembly (GAV Nov 2024)

Presbytery of Flinders

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Aspendale	Brett Peatman	
Brighton (HMC)		
BayChurch	Paul Huynh	Ross McKinnon
Clarinda (HMC)		Michael Lee
Clarinda Nuer (HMC)		
Clayton	Michael Jensen	Arnis Putnins
	Lam Paul Gak (Associate)	
Cranbourne	Peter Roberts	
Dandenong	Andrew Wong	Robert Paix
Dromana-Mornington	Matt Cole	
Embrace Melbourne (AC)	Paul Jang	
Frankston	Jared Keath	
New Life, Officer	David Martin	Sabyan Hardjo
Somerville (HMC)	Gary Wentworth	
Sorrento-Rye	Hui Lim	
South East Samoan	Kainano Opetaiia	
	Retired Ministers:	
	Peter Barclay	
	Ivan Barker	
	David Brown	
	Ken Brown	
	Frank Savage	
	Wally Zurrer	

Presbytery of Geelong

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bannockburn	Matthew Deroon	G (Bert) Stasse
Bellarine (AC)	Brett Cummins	Neil Mansfield
Geelong West	Luke McSevery	Drew Chittenden
North Geelong	Darren Middleton	Ben Duncanson
The Leigh	Surendra Wesley	Jim Venters
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Andrew Bray	Ben Saunders
	John Cromarty	
	Allan Harman	
	Ian Hutton	
	Scott Kroeger	
	John Stasse	
	Grant Vayne	
	Robert White	

Presbytery of Gippsland

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bairnsdale	Gary Stephens	Roger McIvor
Drouin	Heath Easton	Alan York
	Stephen Jones (Associate)	
Leongatha (HMC)	Stephen Denness	
Moe-Yarram	Stephen Deroon	John Ollis
Morwell		Neil Akers
Sale (HMC)		Daniel Johns
Warragul	Raymond Patchett	Tom Guilford
Clerk of Assembly	Cameron Garrett	
PTC Lecturer	Karl Hood	
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Robert Boan	Alan Solidium
	Michael Wharton	Stephen Weir

Presbytery of Maroondah

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Belgrave Heights (AC)	Mark Tonkin	
Blackburn (HMC)		Keith Ferres
Croydon	Cameron Griffiths	Roni Tobing
Doncaster (HMC)		Colin Flynn
Donvale	Gerald Vanderwert	Iain Bramley
	Jordan Born (Associate)	
	Joel Mestry (Associate)	
	Xien Yao (Associate)	
Heathmont	Brian Harvey	Doug Fraser
Kirkbrae (HMC)		
Mt Evelyn	Miles Fagan	Bruce Timmins
Warburton (HMC)		
Woori Yallock	Tony Archer	Andre Dahmen
Kirkbrae Chaplain	Paul K B Lee	
MDC Officer	Chris Siriweera	
PTC Lecturer	Jared Hood	
	Retired Ministers:	
	Tony Bird	
	Graham Bradbeer	
	Trevor Cox	
	Wally Gear	
	Grant Lawry	
	Peter Orchard	
	Andrew Slater	
	Willem Vandenberg	
	Andrew Venn	

Presbytery of Melbourne East

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Arabic	Karam Krayyem	Nageib Seedhom
Ashburton		
Auburn (Chalmers)	Nick Arundell	Caleb Schulz
Burwood Community	John Elnatan	Frans Herjanto
	Billy Kurniawan (Assistant)	
Camberwell	Philip Mercer	Philip Barton
Canterbury	David Hann	Kevin Childs
	Dong Choi (Assistant)	
Caulfield-Elwood	Phillip Chang	Haddon Chang
Gardenvale East (AC)		
Hawthorn	Graham Nicholson	John Singleton
Korean	Jae Kook Kim	Wonil Kim
Malvern	Marcus Campbell	
South Yarra		Ben Palmer
St Kilda	Luke Isham	
Surrey Hills	John Huynh	Russell Walley
	Oliver Blythe (Associate)	
Scotch Chaplains:	David Assender	
	Douglas Campbell	
PTC Lecturer	Ben Nelson	
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Alan Every	John Angelico
	Douglas Milne	Jim Hare
	Richard O'Brien	Ken McClimont
	Anthony Salisbury	
	Bob Thomas	

Presbytery of Melbourne North

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bundoora	Neil Chambers	Andrew May
	Clinton Le Page (Associate)	
Donnybrook, Fresh Start (CPC)	Ben Kelada	
Eltham	Don Elliott	Ian Courts
Epping	Nello Barbieri	Neil Furlong
	Brian Luong (Associate)	
Heidelberg	Bagoes Seta	David Yeo
Hume (AC)	Luke Brownley	Tony Ruggeri
Kangaroo Ground (HMC)		
Reservoir		Steve Harris
Coolaroo (Samoan)		
Valley (AC)	Richard Wilson	Luke Yelland
Whittlesea-Mernda	Botros Botrosdief	
PTC Principal	Peter Hastie	
PTC Lecturer	John Wilson	
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Simalu Cowley	
	Theo Fishwick	

Presbytery of Melbourne West

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Brimbank (AC)	Daniel Dixon	Ken Fuhrmeister
Clifton Hill-Essendon	Christopher Duke	David Cutler
	Bill Medley (Associate)	
Darebin	Adam Humphries	Ken Koh
Gisborne	Wayne McArdle	Noel Johnston
Melbourne Scots'	Philip Campbell	Graeme Harris
	Justin Ang (Assistant)	
Melton	Dinesh Taunk	Dennis Wright
Sunshine-Melbourne West Korean (AC)	Samuel Son	Jacky Lam
West Footscray (HMC)	Martin de Pyle	
Williamstown-Point Cook	Matthew Tegart	
Wyndham	Peter Greiner	Steven Letcher
	Retired Ministers:	
	John Cho	
	Philip Court	
	John Ellis	
	Walter Johnson	
	Len Pearce	
	Bruce Riding	

Presbytery of North East Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Benalla-Balmattum-Thoona	Stephen McDonald	Graeme Hayes
Broadford (AC)	Barry Porter	Ross Barnett
Seymour-Nagambie-Yea (HMC)		Bill Day
Shepparton-Stanhope-Kyabram	Kyung Ee	Philip Betts
Tatura-Rushworth	Kalpan Vasa	Gary Dunstan
Wangaratta-Myrtleford		
Wodonga (AC)	Stuart Withers	
Yarrawonga (HMC)		Malcolm Browning
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Neil Harvey	Ralph Kop
	Kevin Maxwell	
	Neil McDonald	
	Ian Touzel	

Presbytery of North Western Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Bendigo	Philip Burns	Andrew Kerr
Bendigo East (Reforming)	Russ Grinter	Ryan Smith
Castlemaine (HMC)	Daryl Jackson	Richard McArdle
Eaglehawk (AC)	Jesse Walz	
Kerang-Swan Hill (AC)		
Rochester	Michael Riske	
Sunraysia (HMC)		Colin Morrow
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Keith Bell	Tony Zirngast
	Peter Phillips	
	John Sutherland	

Presbytery of South West Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Camperdown-Terang-Noorat		Tom Fleming
Colac		Geoff Cross
Hamilton	David Schulz	Graeme Presser
	Robert Koh (Associate)	
Koroit-Port Fairy		
Portland	Rod Waterhouse	
Warrnambool	Ben Johnson	Robert Prout
	Shady Mehanni (Associate)	
	Retired Ministers:	Parity:
	Neil Benfell	Damien Craig
	Ian Leach	David Selman

Presbytery of Western Victoria

Charges	Ministers	Elders
Ararat-Skipton-Lismore (AC)		Stewart McKerrow
Ballarat North (AC)		
Ballarat South (Ebenezer St John's)	Toby McIntosh	~~Keith Mitchell~~
Ballarat West	Robert Duncanson	Jeremy Peet
Horsham	Greg Matthews	Jonathan Starks
Kaniva-Nhill (HMC)		Bruce Meyer
	Retired Ministers:	
	John Brennan	
	Maurie Cropper	

ASSEMBLY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES 2024 – 2025

Archives Committee

[5 Members plus *ex officio* the Assembly Clerk (convener) and the PCV Archivist]

RT 2025: Rev J Wilson [2032], Mrs C Palmer [2032].

RT 2026: Rev B Nelson [2032].

RT 2027: Vacant, Mrs F Bligh [2032].

Convener: Rev C Garrett.

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 Committee (Victoria)

[12 Members - 10 nominated by GAV, 2 nominated by PWMU, all appointed by the Assembly]

RT 2025: Rev J Mestry [2028], Miss M Price [2031], Mrs W Moody [2025], Mrs D Brownley [2031].

RT 2026: Rev R Waterhouse [2026], Rev K Bell [2031], Mr C Griffioen [2033].

RT 2027: Mrs L Ellis [2025], Rev M Campbell [2031], Rev D Schulz [2026].

PWMU: Miss R Crocker [2032], Mrs R Brown [2033].

Convener: Rev D Schulz [2026].

Ballot Committee

[Appointed by each Assembly or Commission]

Board of Investment and Finance

[10 Members]

RT 2025: Mr M Gibson [2030], Mr D Wright [2030].

RT 2026: Mr R Walley [2032], Mr J Bligh [2026].

RT 2027: Rev G Wentworth [2032], Mr A Foster [2027].

RT 2028: Mr E De Zilwa [2028], Mr D Graham [2028].

RT 2029: Mr J Walter [2029], Vacant.

Chairman: [Appointed annually by the board]

Building and Property Committee

[3 Members]

RT 2025: Mr C Weir [2033].

RT 2026: Mr P Thomas [2031].

RT 2027: Mr R Kop [2027].

Convener: Mr R Kop [2026].

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 2025: Vacant.

RT 2026: Mr R Herweynen [2031], Vacant.

RT 2027: Rev B Cummins [2030].

Convener: Rev B Cummins [2027].

Change/Suppression of Conversion Practices Committee

[4 members, including convener, plus *ex officio* the Moderator, the Assembly Clerk, the Convener of the Church and Nation Committee]

RT 2025: Rev D Elliott [2031].

RT 2026: Rev D Middleton [2033].

RT 2027: Rev W McArdle [2031], Rev P Phillips [2031].

Convener: Rev P Phillips [2030].

Church & Nation Committee

[10 Members]

RT 2025: Rev M Jensen [2030], Rev C Duke [2025], Mrs J McHardy [2027].

RT 2026: Assoc Prof B Saunders [2031], Mr P Stanton [2029], Vacant.

RT 2027: Rev T Archer [2033], Vacant, Vacant, Mr I Waller [2029].

Convener: Rev C Duke [2025].

Church Planting Committee

[7 Members]

RT 2025: Mrs A Grinter [2031], Vacant.

RT 2026: Mrs T Kelada [2031], Rev L McSeveny [2030], Vacant.

RT 2027: Rev P Campbell [2031], Rev B Porter [2033].

Convener: Rev P Campbell [2031].

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 2025: Rev P Mercer [2032].

RT 2026: Rev B Peatman [2028], Mr K Childs [2028].

RT 2027: Rev R White [2028].

Convener: Rev P Mercer [2026].

Code and General Administration Committee

[3 Members, plus *ex officio* the Clerks of Assembly (Clerk is Convener), Business Convener, Procurator, Law Agent, Chairman of Trusts Corporation (or a minister or elder in his place)]

RT 2025: Rev P Burns [2032].

RT 2026: Vacant.

RT 2027: Mr D Wright [2032].

Convener: Rev C Garrett.

Conciliation Committee

[6 Members: 3 Ministers and 3 Elders, from at least four presbyteries]

RT 2025: Mr P Jellis [2032], Mr A Kerr [2033].

RT 2026: Vacant, Vacant.

RT 2027: Rev Dr K Hood [2029], Rev D Martin [2029].

Convener: Rev P Mercer.

Defence Force Chaplaincy Committee

[3 Members, *ex officio* all ADF Chaplains serving in Victoria]

RT 2025: Rev P Lee [2031].

RT 2026: Mr C Perry [2030].

RT 2027: Rev B Porter [2033].

Convener: Rev M Tegart [2031].

Exit Student Committee

[Membership *ex officio*]

Convener: MDC Convener (or MDC appointed representative)

Health & Community Chaplaincy Committee

[10 Members]

RT 2025: Mrs R O'Brien [2026], Mrs C LePage [2031], Vacant.

RT 2026: Mrs L Campbell [2030], Mrs G Dickinson [2033], Rev D Dixon [2026].

RT 2027: Mrs J Martin [2028], Rev Dr K Hood [2027], Dr J Neil [2031], Vacant.

Convener: Rev D Dixon [2026].

Maintenance of the Ministry Committee

[5 Members]

RT 2025: Vacant, Mr C Morrow [2031].

RT 2026: Vacant.

RT 2027: Mr A Putnins [2031], Rev G Wentworth [2032].

Convener: Mr C Morrow [2029].

METRO Committee

[8 Members]

RT 2025: Rev C LePage [2030], Vacant.

RT 2026: Rev T McIntosh [2032], Mr A May [2027], Rev L Brownley [2026].

RT 2027: Mrs J Arundell [2030], Mr A Liew [2032], Mr S Denness [2030].

Convener: Rev C LePage [2029].

Ministry Development Committee

[7 Members]

RT 2025: Rev S Withers [2025], Mr I Bramley [2027].

RT 2026: Rev D Middleton [2029], Mr R Kop [2029], Rev G Stephens [2030].

RT 2027: Rev O Blythe [2033], Rev R Grinter [2031].

Convener: Rev S Withers [2025].

Presbyterian Youth and Children's Committee

[7 Members]

RT 2025: Rev S Jones [2033], Mr I Jones [2030].

RT 2026: Mr N Atrill [2032], Rev B Seta [2030], Miss E Roberts [2032].

RT 2027: Rev C Griffiths [2027], Mrs M Denness [2031].

Convener: Rev S Jones [2029].

Safe Church Committee

[6 Members]

RT 2025: Rev D Brown [2032], Rev B Cummins [2032].

RT 2026: Mrs H Thomas [2031], Mrs L Griffiths [2030].

RT 2027: Mr G Hui [2026], Dr R Fethers [2033].

Convener: Rev D Brown [2031].

Selection Committee

[Nominated by the Code and General Administration Committee]

Social Services Committee

[7 Members]

RT 2025: Mr D Conradi [2025], Mrs C Cunneen [2031].

RT 2026: Mrs J Pilgrim [2028], Vacant, Vacant.

RT 2027: Rev W McArdle [2030], Rev S Wesley [2031].

Convener: Mrs J Pilgrim [2028].

State News Committee

[5 Members: At least 2 Ministers]

RT 2025: Mr P Betts [2029], Mr A Zirngast [2032].

RT 2026: Mr R Paix [2031], Vacant.

RT 2027: Rev S McDonald [2027].

Convener: Rev S McDonald [2026].

Theological Education Committee

[10 Members, *ex officio* the College Principal and another member of faculty]

RT 2025: Rev R White [2028], Mrs J McHardy [2026], Vacant.

RT 2026: Rev J Born [2030], Rev G Nicholson [2025], Rev D Martin [2032].

RT 2027: Mr D Wright [2025], Rev K Maxwell [2026], Rev D Hann [2032], Vacant.

Convener: Rev K Maxwell [2026].

Women's Ministries Victoria Committee

[7 Members, at least two of whom are members of the assembly]

RT 2025: Mrs S McDonald [2030], Rev R Grinter [2029].

RT 2026: Mrs C Otten [2031], Rev B Johnson [2029], Mrs S T Yap [2029].

RT 2027: Mrs N Horman [2031], Mrs A Ludas [2032].

Convener: Rev B Johnson [2027].

AD HOC COMMITTEES

ad hoc committee Deacons (GAV2022 min 132)

Rev D Middleton (Convener), Rev Prof Douglas Milne, Rev Dr J Hood, Rev A Humphries, Rev J Born, Rev S McDonald

ad hoc committee PTC Library Fund (GAV2018 min 96.9)

Rev Prof A Harman (convener), Rev C Siriweera, Rev G Lawry, Rev D Brown, Rev N Benfell, Rev R White, Mr M Duke, Mr R Walley, Mr D Selman

ad hoc committee New Entity (GAV2022 min 32.4,5)

Immediate Past Moderator (Convener), Clerk, Law Agent, BIF Convener, three members appointed by BIF, plus three members of Assembly

ad hoc committee Code of Conduct (GAV2024 min 75.5)

The Clerk (Convener), Law Agent, Dr Rosemary Fethers, Rev Peter Phillips

ad hoc committee Supervision of Ministers - Royal Commission

Recommendation 16.45 (GAV2024 min 117.1)

Rev C Garrett (Convener), Rev D Elliott, Mrs L Griffiths, Rev I Hutton, Mrs M Jones, Rev G Stephens

GAV COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

Appeals Commission

[Moderator, a past-moderator (not the immediate-past), presbytery clerks and parity members]

Flinders: Rev B Peatman (clerk), Mr A Putnins (parity)

Geelong: Rev R White (clerk), Mr B Stasse (parity)

Gippsland: Rev G Stephens (clerk), Mr T Guilford (parity)

Maroondah: Rev M Tonkin (alt), Mr C Flynn (parity)

Melbourne East: Mr K Childs (clerk), Rev B Nelson (parity)

Melbourne North: Rev C LePage (alt), Mr T Cunneen (parity)

Melbourne West: Rev A Humphries (alt), Mr D Wright (parity)

North East Victoria: Rev K Ee (alt), Mr G Dunstan (parity)

North Western Victoria: Rev R Grinter (alt), Mr R Smith (parity)

South West Victoria: Rev I Leach (clerk), Mr T Fleming (parity)

Western Victoria: Rev R Duncanson (clerk), Mr S McKerrow (parity)

Past-Moderator: Vacancy.

Chairman: Moderator

Commission for Church Institutions

Moderator (chairman), Clerks of Assembly, Rev J Cho, Rev P Hastie, Rev P Mercer, Rev G Nicholson, Rev L Isham, Rev Prof A Harman and elders Mr T Guilford, Dr J Hare, Mr D Wright and Mr T Zirngast, Mr J Angelico and Mr B Palmer

GAV PANEL

Panel of Discipline Assessors

[12 members, appointed by the Code and General Administration Committee; nominations permitted from presbyteries]

Rev R Waterhouse, Rev K Brown, Rev R White, Rev G Stephens, Rev P Court, Rev P Orchard, Rev T Fishwick, Rev I Leach, Rev G Nicholson, Rev K Bell, Vacant, Vacant.

GAA APPOINTMENTS

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, Rev P Hastie

Ministers Alternate: Rev P Court, Rev B Harvey, Vacant

Elders: Mr P Betts, Mr C Morrow, Mr D Wright

Elders Alternate: Mr T Guilford, Mr S Harris, Vacant

ex officio: Rev C Garrett, Rev Dr A Harman, Rev Dr C R Thomas, Rev Dr J P Wilson

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 S Wesley

PWMU Cookbook Committee

[3 PCV, 1 PWMU + Convener (alternates between PCV & UCA Victoria/Tasmania)]

PWMU: Mrs R Brown

GAV: Mr J Angelico, Mrs D Cutler, Mrs G McKenzie

Convener: Rev P Phillips (PCV)

St Andrew's Foundation (ABN 26 539 374 087)

Mr I Bramley, Dr B Ellis, Mrs L Walley.