

**RECORD OF THE MINUTES OF SYNOD OF THE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA  
TAREE, NSW, 1981**

**SEDERUNT 1.**

At Taree Church on Saturday, 9th May at 7 p.m. Synod met and was constituted.

In the absence of Rev. R.W. Murray, Rev. A.R. Beaton conducted public worship as Retiring Moderator. Basing his message on Deut. 1:19-46; 2:1, he referred to the Kadesh Barnea experience of the people of Israel when they came to the border of the Promised Land but refused to enter and were condemned to wander another 40 years in the desert. A parallel was drawn between Israel and ourselves today, and the point made, that "as we face the 1980s an awesome responsibility rests upon us to decide whether we are to continue to be embroiled in barren controversy, or whether we can shake ourselves free of it to take the Church forward. The land lies before us with great challenges in each congregation, with tremendous opportunities in the area of Church Extension, with a unique possibility on the mission field. Let us be careful that we do not neglect, or refuse, to go forward."

The Roll certified by Clerks of Presbyteries was presented and allowed to stand as follows:

Northern Presbytery

Ministers

Dr J.C. Andrews

Mr A.R. Beaton

Mr W.P. Gadsby

Mr D.R. Nibbs

Mr D.E. Nicholds

Mr A.L. Tripovich

Elders

Mr G.R. Anderson

Mr A.L. Bosanquet

Mr R. Campbell

Mr K.A. Dawson

Dr W.J.W. Hanna

Mr M.S. Moore

Central Presbytery

Mr J.A. Webster

Mr A.D. McIntosh

Mr S.N. Ramsay

Mr E.R. Lee

Mr. B. Dole

Mr K. Kerr

Mr C. Barnes

Mr C.P. King

Mr J.A. Cromarty

Southern Presbytery

Mr J.M. Cromarty

Mr R.S. Ward

Dr A.M. Harman

Mr J.R.B. Webster

Mr P. Bloomfield

Mr J.C. Cunningham

Mr N.G. Triffett.

The Clerk reported that Mr E.R. Lee of Taree was Moderator Elect. Mr Lee having been duly elected was welcomed to the chair and addressed the Court on the subject:

**Christian Unity: Comments on Ephesians 4 vs 1 to 16.**

Unity among the brethren was of great concern to Paul. The references in his letters show his concern. Unity is not an option but an absolute necessity. It is not to be confused with ecumenicity or uniformity. The unity of the Spirit is analogous to the coherence between members of the human body. The passage deals with:

1. The maintenance of unity: verses 1 to 3. Unity is maintained by the exercise of humility, meekness, longsuffering and loving forbearance. Divisions exist because of their absence.

2. The rationale of unity: verses 4 and 5. The reason for unity is the common ground that all believers have. One Church, One Spirit, One Hope, One Lord, One Baptism, One God and Father. Divisions are contradictory.

3. The dynamics of unity: verses 11 to 16. The unity envisaged is not static but dynamic. In true unity there is:

I. Diversity - the various gifts of Christ to his Church.

II. Activity - the work of Pastors and Teachers and the mutual ministry of believers.

III. Progress to a goal. The goal is the oneness of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. As each member plays his part so the Body advances to maturity and becomes the fulness of Christ.

The message of Paul is especially relevant and challenging at this time.

It was moved, seconded and agreed that standing orders be suspended to the extent that on Monday morning amendments, alternative proposals etc. may be given in relating to Committee reports to be dealt with in later Sessions that day.

It was further moved, seconded and carried that Presbyteries having urgent business be granted permission to meet outside Synod's normal meeting hours during this Synod.

Synod adjourned to meet at 9 a.m. on Monday morning at the Taree Church.

The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

Edwin R. Lee  
Moderator

## **SEDERUNT 2.**

At Taree on Monday, 11th May 1981 at 9a.m., Synod met and was constituted.  
The Minutes of the previous Sederunt were read and confirmed.

It was noted that the Minutes of the final Sederunt of the Pro Re Nata meeting October 12 to 13th 1979 had not been confirmed. The Clerk sought leave to read from the printed copy of the Minutes so that they should be confirmed. Leave was granted.

It was resolved that the Minutes be confirmed subject to the following adjustments:

1. Word "against" in 4th line of p.6 deleted and "at the close of the last sederunt" added.
2. Word "rules" in line 21 of p.6 be replaced by "ruled".
3. After paragraph 10 of p.8 Insert "The Moderator (Mr Murray) obtained leave to vacate the chair in order to move a motion".
4. After the words "A Protest was tendered" add "by Mr Dole read by him and signed by him and others in the presence of Synod".
5. On p.9 after line 1 insert "The Protest was altered and resubmitted as follows".

Mr Tripovich tendered simple dissent.

Mr King adhered to the Protest of 13th October, 1979.

The thanks of the Court to the Retiring Moderator for his sermon and to the Moderator for his address was moved, seconded and carried and conveyed by the Clerk.

It was moved, seconded and carried that the sympathy of the Court be extended to Mr John Cromarty and Mr James Cromarty on the loss of their father, to Mr Neil McPherson on his bereavement.

The sympathy of the Court was also conveyed to the families of the late Charles Mackechnie and J. Robinson, former members of this Court.

The sympathy of the Court was also conveyed to all those who had been bereaved within our church in the past year.

Rev. J.A. Webster led the Court in prayer commending those bereaved to the grace of God.

The following examiners of records were appointed:

Northern Presbytery: Mr Barnes, Mr King  
Central Presbytery: Mr Bruce Webster, Mr Ward  
Southern Presbytery: Dr Hanna, Mr Gadsby  
Permanent Record: Mr Dole, Mr Kerr.

### **Report: Administration Committee:**

The Assistant Clerk, Mr Cromarty, presented the report. The report was received. The recommendations as recorded hereunder were adopted:

#### 1. Time Schedule of Meetings

9.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.  
12.30 p.m. - 1.30 p.m. Lunch  
1.30 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.  
5.30 p.m. - 7.30 p.m. Tea  
7.00 p.m. - 9.00 p.m.

Synod to conclude 5.00 p.m. Friday, 15th May, 1981.

An amendment was moved and seconded, That in view of the large work load before this Synod the evening session be extended to 10 p.m. each night.

On being put to the vote the recommendation became the finding of the Court.

2. It was agreed that those reports duplicated and circulated to members, together with the report of the Training of Ministry Committee be dealt with in accordance with the order of business.

3. Reports not circulated before the opening of Synod to be dealt with after the close of all other business - if time permits - unless otherwise determined by Synod.

4. The Committee draws Synod's attention to the fact that the Conveners of the following Committees have not submitted their reports on time:

1. Church Extension
2. Church Principles
3. Inter Church Relations
4. Welfare of Youth
5. Fellowship.

An amendment was moved and seconded That the name of Church Principles be withdrawn from the list of Reports not submitted on time - because the Report of that committee submitted to Synod '79 has not yet been dealt with and no other report has since been called for.

On being put to the vote the recommendation became the finding of the Court.

It was resolved that examination of records (Item 22) be dealt with on Thursday afternoon.

5. The timetable as appended hereunder was agreed to with the following exceptions:

Monday morning:	Administration Committee Report Correspondence
Monday afternoon:	Religion and Morals Finance and Property
Monday evening:	Missions Report (Any spare time: Correspondence)
Tuesday morning:	Publications Psalmody and Psalter Revision Provident Funds
Tuesday afternoon:	Law & Advisory Correspondence
Tuesday evening:	Missions Night Church Extension.

It was resolved that after the Publication Committee Report on Tuesday the Administration Committee bring a second report re balance of outstanding correspondence that is to be presented so that Synod may allocate same at its discretion.

It was further resolved That Synod take up consideration of the Church Extension Report prior to the Missions/Church Extension Evening, the Administration Committee to fix the exact time.

It was moved and seconded that Item 17 be transmitted to the Synod.

Synod adjourned to meet here at 1.30 p.m.  
The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

Edwin R. Lee  
Moderator

### **SEDERUNT 3.**

At Taree on Monday, 11th May 1981 at 1.30 p.m. Synod met and was constituted.  
The minutes of the previous Sederunt were read and confirmed.

The Clerk read proposed amendments to Reports to be dealt with later today.

The Court resumed discussion of the motion before it at the conclusion of the last Sederunt.

On being put to the vote the motion was carried. Mr John Cromarty tendered a simple dissent.

It was moved and seconded that, at future Synod meetings, reports from Committees not submitted on time be not considered by the Synod.

The motion was not carried.

The Moderator called upon the Convener of the **Religion and Morals Committee** to present the report.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. The report be received.
2. That earnest endeavours be made to heal the breaches that exist in our denomination.
3. That two hours of Synod time be devoted to prayer for the unity of our denomination.

An amendment was moved and seconded That two hours of Synod time be devoted to prayer for the unity of our denomination. This prayer time to be held in closed court.

The recommendation became the finding of the Court.

It was resolved that after/during this time of prayer opportunity be afforded to members to offer practical suggestions as to how our denominational breach might be healed.

4. That all Christians be encouraged to take actions to prevent a further decline in the moral standards of our community.

An amendment was moved and seconded that officebearers, members and adherents are urged to be active as citizens by supporting organizations and individuals in campaigns when such are compatible with our beliefs and practices.

The recommendation became the finding of the Court.

5. That additional efforts be made to reach the lost of our society.

It was resolved that the recommendations be adopted and the thanks of the Synod was conveyed to the Committee and especially the Convener.

It was resolved That the Committee be thanked for providing copies of material supporting a positive view of effective and collective action against immorality.

It was moved, seconded and carried That the Committee be asked to give attention to the wider aspects of contemporary education and its influence upon content and treatment especially in the subject areas of English, History, Social Science, General Studies and Science.

It was moved, seconded and carried That the Committee consider issuing lists of books and other material which treat social and moral issues from a constructive Scriptural viewpoint, with recommendations for use with specific age groups.

#### GENERAL TREASURER

The General Treasurer presented his report. The report was received and the Financial Statement was adopted.

A vote of thanks was extended to the General Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer and the Auditor.

#### FINANCE AND PROPEPTY

The Convener of the Finance and Property Committee presented his report. The report was received.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Synod confirm the Committee's submission to Presbyteries in June, 1980 recommending that the minimum stipend be increased by 8% (\$12.00) per week.

2a. That the minimum stipend (currently \$168.00 per week) be increased with the first payment after 1st January and 1st July each year, by the full average percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index as published by the Bureau of Statistics. The amount of increase to be advised to Deacons Courts by the General Treasurer.

2b. Child allowance to remain at the present rate for the time being.

An amendment to 2(a) was moved and seconded: That the minimum stipend (currently \$168.00 per week) be increased by 13.6% and thereafter by the same percentage in the C.P.I. which is passed on to workers by the industrial courts. The amount of increase to be advised to the Deacons Court by the General Treasurer.

A further amendment to 2(a) was moved and seconded: That the minimum stipend be increased automatically upon the determination of the National Wage Judgment. The increases to be added be the extra amount payable to a person receiving the male average weekly earning and not the minimum stipend base.

The recommendation 2(a) became the finding of the Court.

It was moved and seconded re 2(b) above, that the practice of payment of child allowance to ministers be discontinued.

The Recommendation became the finding of the Court.

The Moderator welcomed three members who sat in Synod for the first time: Mr C. Barnes, Mr R. Campbell and Mr J. Cunningham.

Synod adjourned to meet here at 7 p.m. The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

Edwin R. Lee  
Moderator

## **SEDERUNT 4.**

At Taree on Monday, 11th May 1981 at 7 p.m. Synod met and was constituted.  
The minutes of the previous sederunt were read and confirmed.

It was resolved that Mr Ward write the report of Synod for Our Banner.

The Synod resumed consideration of recommendations of the Finance and Property Committee.

3. That annual congregational contributions to the General Fund for administrative costs be set at \$150 for aid-receiving congregations and \$200 for self-supporting congregations.

4. That the following honorariums be paid: Clerk \$30; General Treasurer \$30; Moderator \$15; Assistant Clerk \$15; Assistant General Treasurer \$15; Banner Editor \$60; Assistant Editor \$30.

5. That travelling expenses of Synod delegates be paid at the usual rate Economy Class rail travel, or First Class with sleeper for those requiring to travel overnight, or air fare for Tasmanian delegates.

6. That warm appreciation be expressed to the Manning River Congregation for the accommodation and catering provided for members of Synod.

7. That stipend relief of the following amounts be paid for 1981/82 Grafton \$1500; Richmond-Brunswick \$1400.

7(a) It was moved, seconded and carried That an amount of \$4500 be budgeted for stipend assistance to the Ulverstone congregation for the period to 30/6/1982 and that this be available strictly on a needs basis on request to the Finance, Committee with the approval of Presbytery.

### **MISSIONS**

The Convener of the Missions Committee presented his report. The report was received, together with reports from Mrs Colville and Dr Helen Ramsay.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS.**

1. That representatives of congregations express the thanks of Synod to our people for their prayerful and financial support of foreign missions.

2. That greetings and a copy of Synod Minutes be sent to Dr Ramsay and the Foreign Missions Board of the Free Church of Scotland.

3. That Synod resolve that a 75% majority vote be required to approve the commencement of a missionary work for which this Church will assume major responsibility.

Mr Tamata was invited to address the Court.

4. That Synod resolve to initiate a missionary work in Suva, Fiji under the direction of Mr S. Tamata.

Synod agreed that we record the fact that there was a 96% vote in favour of recommendation 4.

The Clerk read proposed amendments to be dealt with in relation to recommendations of Committees.

Synod adjourned to meet here on Tuesday morning 12th May at 9 a.m.

The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

Edwin R. Lee  
Moderator

### **SEDERUNT 5.**

At Taree on Tuesday, 12th May 1981 at 9 a.m. Synod met and was constituted.

The minutes of the previous Sederunt were read and confirmed.

Rev. John Graham, minister of the Free Church of Scotland and C.W.I. missionary was formally welcomed and associated with the Court.

The Convener of the Administration Committee tendered a supplementary report relating to Correspondence Nos. 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36 and 37, which report read as follows:

### **ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE - SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT**

1. Report on remainder of correspondence in the light of the Procurator's advice.

Correspondence Nos, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35.

The Procurator's opinion has been obtained. In the light of the contents of Petition 30 which implicate the various petitioners, the following question was put to the Procurator: "Is it consistent with our Church practice to receive a Petition/s from a person/persons who have rejected the decision of Synod concerning Mr Turnbull and have formed themselves into a rival congregation to the St Kilda congregation under the ministry of Mr Turnbull?"

ANSWER OF PROCURATOR: "They have branded themselves as schismatics and have repudiated the authority of the Court. They are not entitled to approach the Court. One cannot repudiate and at the same time seek benefits".

In the light of the foregoing the Committee is not at liberty to transmit the Correspondence numbered above.

#### 2. Correspondence 36 and 37.

On Saturday afternoon, prior to obtaining the Procurator's advice, the Committee dealt with two Petitions from Mr Mark Simpson.

Petition 36:

Re Southern Presbytery decision of 22.2.80. That it be not transmitted as accompanying documents show that the Petitioner had appealed against the decision and fell from that appeal in that he did not submit reasons as prescribed in the Practice.

Petition 37:

That as the Session dealt with him as directed by Presbytery as a 'fugitive from discipline', the Session was not bound to summon him to appear, but merely to remove his name from the roll, and thus this Petition is not transmitted.

Mr Simpson intimated his desire to appeal against these findings.

3. The Administration Committee asks for a suspension of standing orders in order to complete Missions Recommendations and Finance and Property Recommendations. This to be followed by Church Extension Report and Recommendations.

Synod to resume Correspondence until 5.30 p.m.

The evening Sederunt to be devoted to Missions and Church Extension.

#### 4. WEDNESDAY TIMETABLE.

Morning: Publications. Psalmody. Psalter Revision. Provident Funds.

Afternoon: Law and Advisory. Correspondence.

The report was received.

The Moderator indicated to the Court that an apology had been received from Professor A.M. Harman.

It was moved and seconded

1. That the action of the Committee in declining to transmit correspondence items 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35 be endorsed.
2. A second motion was moved and seconded that the correspondence Items 27-35 not including 31 be transmitted.

The Moderator ruled to disallow a further amendment.

It was moved and seconded that the Moderator's ruling be set aside.

It was moved and seconded that the motion be put. On being put to the vote it was resolved that the motion be put.

The Court upheld the Moderator's ruling.

Dissent with reasons from Mr Kerr: Dissent on the grounds that the amendment was submitted when called for by the Moderator.

Adhering to Mr Kerr's dissent with reasons, Mr King, Mr Cunningham., Mr Anderson.

Simple Dissent Mr Tripovich, Mr Bosanquet and Mr Nibbs.

Debate resumed on the two motions before the Court.

The first motion became the finding of the Court.

Simple dissents were tendered by Mr Tripovich, Mr King, Mr McIntosh, Mr Anderson.

Mr Dole dissented with reasons: I dissent from the decision of this Court for the following reasons. 1. The Administration Committee without authority, pre-judged the parties of these cases, by describing them to the Procurator as 'a rival congregation'. 2. That such pre-judging has invalidated the Procurator's opinion given thereon. 3. That failing competent grounds the Administration Committee has improperly withheld documents rightfully the property of Synod. 4. That such action gives impression of a disregard by Synod to heal the breach which many members and officebearers are desirous of healing.

Mr Bosanquet and Mr Barnes adhered to the dissent with reasons.

Mr Kerr dissented with reasons: Dissent on the ground that failure to transmit the correspondence indicates a failure to display a spirit of tolerance and understanding.

Mr Nibbs adhered to the dissent with reasons.

Mr Cunningham dissented with reasons: Dissent - Injustice without compassion.

It was moved, seconded, and carried That as the character of the Court and the Administration Committee have been impugned a Committee of Dr Hanna and Rev. Peter Gadsby be appointed to answer reasons.

In response to enquiry, the Moderator ruled that, in the light of the Procurator's advice, no appeal against the decision not to transmit Items 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35 would be allowed.

Simple dissents were entered by Mr Tripovich, Mr Bosanquet, Mr Dole, Mr Barnes and Mr Kerr.

Synod adjourned to meet here at 1.30 p.m. The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

Edwin R. Lee  
Moderator

**SEDERUNT 6.**

At Taree on Tuesday, 12th May 1981 at 1.30 p.m. Synod met and was constituted. The minutes of the previous Sederunt were read and confirmed.

The Court resumed consideration of the Supplementary Report of the **Administration Committee**, and took up the appeal by Mr Mark Simpson against the Committee declining to transmit Item 36. Mr Nibbs took the chair. Mr Ward was appointed Clerk pro tem.

Parties were called to the Bar and heard for their interests and questions were addressed to them. Parties were dismissed from the Bar and the Court deliberated.

It was moved and seconded that Correspondence Item 36 be transmitted to the Synod.

The Motion became the finding of Court.

Messrs James Cromarty, R. Ward, J.R.B. Webster and P. Bloomfield placed simple dissents.

Parties were called to the Bar and the decision intimated to them. Mr Simpson acquiesced. The Committee acquiesced except Rev. John Cromarty who placed his simple dissent. Parties were dismissed from the bar.

It was agreed to resume **Missions Committee** Recommendations.

5a. That the immediate aim of the witness in Fiji will be the commencement of a literature ministry with an Evangelical and Reformed emphasis, if possible in conjunction with a Christian Bookshop and Reading Room.

5b. That the ultimate aim will be the establishment of a self-supporting, selfgoverning and self-propagating Church consistent with the doctrine, worship, discipline and government of the P.C.E.A.

6. That Mr Tamata remain in Australia until September, 1982. That the greater part of this time be spent supplying the Brisbane Congregation.

The following amendment to Rec. 6 was moved and seconded: That Mr Tamata remain in Australia until at least September, 1982. That the greater part of this time be spent supplying in the Southern Presbytery.

The recommendation became the finding of the Court.

7. That the Missions Committee be requested to present the Fiji Project to the Church at large and Presbyteries, Sessions and Deacons Courts be requested to stimulate interest and a sense of responsibility in the project.

8. That in the event of Mission income to Synod 1982 not reaching 75% of the total budget estimate, that the Fiji Project be reviewed by Synod 1982.

9. That the Missions Committee be instructed to prepare draft regulations governing missionaries of the Church, to be modelled, as near as practicable, on the Revised Regulations of the Free Church of Scotland, and present these to Synod 1982.

10. That our existing commitment to Dr Ramsay continue (i.e. we endeavour to pay fares, salary and accommodation during furlough). That this be reviewed during Dr Ramsay's next furlough. That 1,680 pounds sterling be forwarded to the Free Church of Scotland for salary and accommodation allowance to Dr Ramsay during her recent furlough.

11. That we continue to support C.W.I. work in Australia. That we contribute \$1,500 for that work this year.

12. That when considering applications for missionary service in the future, our commitment to the Fijian field be given priority; and that if applicants are to labour in Mission Fields of the Free Church of Scotland, they be referred to the Foreign Missions Board of the Free Church,

13. That we welcome Rev. John Graham and family to Australia. That we note that the Federal Relations Act renders him eligible for a seat on our Church Courts and, accordingly, grant him a seat on the Presbytery within which he is residing and working.

An amendment was moved: Delete all words after "Australia".

The recommendation was adopted.

Simple dissents Mr King, Mr Cunningham.

Dissent with reason from Mr Kerr. Dissent on ground that by granting a seat the basis of representation of congregations is upset.

14. That Tuesday evening be devoted to a Missionary/Church Extension Meeting and that Rev. Graham, the President of 'Compassion' and Mr Tamata be invited to address Synod.

15. That Synod express its appreciation to the Manning Congregation for its wholehearted co-operation in the placement and support of Mr Tamata during these months.

16. That Synod take note of Mrs Colville's 25 years of service in Africa and request the Missions Committee to arrange a suitable expression of our appreciation to her for her labour of love during these years.

17. That the reports of our Missionaries, together with the Committee's Reports and adopted Recommendations be duplicated and forwarded to each congregation.

18. That donations of \$275 to Jabalpur Appeal, \$169 to Indian Mission and \$48.00 to Peruvian Mission be forwarded to Foreign Missions Board of The Free Church of Scotland.

Synod adjourned to meet at 7 p.m.

The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

Edwin R. Lee  
Moderator

### **SEDERUNT 7.**

At Taree on Tuesday, 12th May 1981 at 7 p.m. Synod met and was constituted.

The Court agreed to take Church Extension business.

### **CHURCH EXTENSION**

The Convener presented his report which was received.

Recommendations 1-8 were adopted.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Synod acknowledges its gratitude to God for the Church Extension work which has been done in his name during 1979/80/81.
2. That Synod instructs all delegates to convey to our people the Synod's appreciation for their support of Church Extension, and its encouragement for continuing effort in 1981/82.
3. That Synod notes with satisfaction that the work in Armidale and Brisbane is continuing, despite setbacks owing to ministerial movements.
4. That Synod directs the Church Extension Committee to continue to withhold subsidy payments from Brisbane Congregation until it is satisfied that such subsidy should be resumed following the placement of a minister within the charge.
5. That Synod directs Presbyteries to furnish the Convener of the Church Extension Committee with reports of extension work within their bounds, to be in the Convener's hands no later than 45 days before Synod 1982.
6. That the amount of the Robinson bequest continue to be accounted within the Church Extension Fund for the time being, and be available to defray temporarily any deficit which may arise in that Fund from time to time.
7. That Synod authorises the Committee to make reports and publish appeals for funds from time to time through the pages of Our Banner.
8. That Synod resolves now to take up the matter of the Overture from the Northern Presbytery anent reclassification of Armidale to Stage 3 status.

Accordingly the Synod took up the matter of reclassification of Armidale to Stage 3 status.

It was moved and seconded that the prayer of the overture that Synod "re-classify the Armidale Congregation to Stage 3 Sanctioned Charge Status" be granted. Carried.

The Moderator invited the Conveners of the Church Extension and Missions Committees to introduce speakers.

Dr Hanna from Brisbane and Mr Dawson from Armidale spoke briefly of the work within their respective congregations.

Mr Beaton, prior to introducing guest speakers spoke briefly concerning some of the Synod resolutions re Missions. Amongst other things he informed Synod of a bequest of over \$100,000, the interest from which is to be used solely for Missions work.

Mr Beaton introduced Mr L. McCowan, President of Compassion, Australia.

Mr McCowan delivered a most informative address, informing Synod of the Multifaceted work of Compassion.

Rev. John Graham spoke of his work among the Jewish people and highlighted the various groups within Judaism - Orthodox, Reformed and Conservative and spoke of their attitudes to the Messiah.

Rev. Sam Tamata addressed Synod speaking of the prospects of service in Fiji. He challenged all present to rethink and reapply the biblical teaching of dynamic of faith as it applies to ourselves as individuals and as a church.

Synod adjourned to meet here at 9 a.m. on Wednesday 13th at 9 a.m.  
The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

Edwin R. Lee  
Moderator

### **SEDERUNT 8.**

At Taree on Wednesday, 13th May 1981 at 9 a.m. Synod met and was constituted.  
The minutes of the previous Sederunt were read and confirmed.

Synod resumed **Missions** Recommendations.

19. That the presbytery within whose bounds Rev. Tamata be labouring, be authorised to ordain him for missionary work in Fiji and he be given a seat on that Presbytery.

It was resolved that the recommendations as passed be adopted, and the thanks of the Synod were conveyed to the Convener.

Answers to dissents lodged against Synod's endorsement of the **Administration Committee's** decision not to transmit correspondence items 27-30 and 32-35:

1. In endorsing the Committee's action, Synod has sought to exercise wisdom and justice in dealing with those who have expressly repudiated its authority.

2. Failure to do so would indeed have promoted very serious division in the Church since it would have been tantamount to endorsing the schismatical actions of the signatories of Correspondence Item 30.

3. Even if it were agreed that the use by the Committee of the expression 'a rival congregation' were prejudicial to the parties concerned, this would not invalidate the Procurator's advice since the whole content of Correspondence Item 30 was read to him, and formed the basis for that advice.

4. It is self-evident, however, that the expression "a rival congregation" does accurately describe those who style themselves, in the terms of Correspondence Item 30, "Minister, Elders, members and adherents of the St Kilda Congregation" when the said Minister was no longer a Minister of this Church, and the said persons by their own admission "have continued to meet with our Minister and office-bearers at another place..."

5. The Synod has not failed to display a spirit of tolerance, compassion and understanding in this matter, but is always ready to receive representations from those who approach it in a spirit of meekness, with due respect for its authority under Christ, and in conformity with the laws of the Church.

The Court resumed consideration of the Supplementary Report of the Administration Committee and took up the Appeal by Mr Mark Simpson against the Committee declining to transmit Item 37. Mr Nibbs took the chair. Mr Ward was appointed Clerk pro tem. Parties were called to the Bar and heard for their interests and questions were addressed to them. Parties were removed from the Bar.

It was moved and seconded That the appeal be upheld and Item 37 transmitted to Synod.

The motion became the finding of the Court.

Parties were called to the Bar and the decision intimated to them. Mr Simpson acquiesced. The Committee acquiesced except Rev. John Cromarty who placed his simple dissent.

Parties were dismissed from the Bar.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Synod took up Correspondence Item 3.

An overture from Northern Presbytery to review the whole matter of financial aid to needy congregations with a view to their setting criteria for the downgrading of the status of congregations which over a long period of time continue not to meet their financial commitments.

It was moved and seconded that the prayer of the overture be granted and that the matter be referred to the Finance Committee for its consideration; their finding to be brought to Synod 1982.

On being put to the vote it was resolved that the prayer of the overture be not granted.

Correspondence Item 4.

An overture from Northern Presbytery to clarify the question of the legitimate use of monies received from the sale of church property, Mr Nibbs to appear in support.

It was moved and seconded that the prayer of the overture be granted.

An amendment was moved and seconded That the prayer of the overture be granted in terms of Section 8 of the Property Act, 1918 and, with the consent of the Grafton congregation and the Northern Presbytery, the Synod authorize the use of the monies from the sale of the Brushgrove property for the purposes of the Grafton congregation.

On being put to the vote the amendment became the finding of the Court.

It was moved and seconded That items of correspondence already transmitted be received excluding Items 36, 37.

An amendment was moved and seconded That items of correspondence be considered for reception consecutively, and if received, be dealt with in conjunction with reception.

On being put to the vote the amendment became the finding of the Court.

Correspondence embracing Items 1-6 was formally received.

Correspondence 7 was taken up.

Mr Ward appeared on behalf of the Presbytery and stated the case.

This correspondence was received.

It was moved and seconded That the prayer of the following Overture be granted.

Synod take notice of the example of the Free Church of Scotland in establishing through their Church Extension Committee a Cassette Ministry, and take steps to establish such a ministry in our own denomination.

Synod adjourned to meet here at 1.30 p.m.

The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

A.R. Beaton  
Moderator Pro Tem

### **SEDERUNT 9.**

At Taree on Wednesday, 13th May 1981 at 1.30 p.m. Synod met and was constituted.

The Minutes of the previous Sederunt were read and confirmed.

The motion anent Correspondence 7 was withdrawn by permission.

Item 8. The following Overture, That Synod institute and co-ordinate an Outreach Mission so that interested young Christian members of our church will be encouraged to assist during vacation periods in the outreach of local congregations under the supervision of the local Session or Minister was received, and Mr Ward appeared in support thereof, and moved that Synod grant the prayer of the overture in the following terms: Synod endorse all rightly organized efforts at outreach throughout our church.

An amendment was moved and seconded that we pass from this item.

The amendment became the finding of the Court.

It was agreed that we take up Item 9 Correspondence at the time of the Law and Advisory Committee Report.

It was resolved that Synod defer consideration of Correspondence Item 10 until after the time of conference and prayer, and after hearing the report of the Law and Advisory Committee.

It was resolved that consideration of Item 11 be deferred until the time of consideration of Inter Church Relations Report.

The Court took up the business of Item 12.

The following reference was sustained We, the Northern Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia, do hereby refer to the Synod of Eastern Australia for investigation and clarification the whole matter of the validity or otherwise of Roman Catholic "baptism", believing that the consideration and disposal of this question is necessary for the good of the Church and the glory of God.

Mr Tripovich appeared in support of the reference. It was moved and seconded that Presbyteries take up the matter of the validity of R.C. baptism and send their reports to the Church Principles Committee for a report to next Synod.

It was moved and seconded that we pass from the matter.

The first motion became the finding of the Court.

Item 13. It was resolved that Correspondence Item 13 in the form of an overture be received. The overture is as follows:

Whereas recommendation thirteen of the Training of Ministry Report, for 1972 is in conflict with a thorough exercise of presbyterial oversight, and

Whereas the said recommendation in restricting the provisions available in Act 6, 1975, discriminates unfavourably against students training overseas, and

Whereas the said recommendation is in conflict with the spirit and provisions of the Federal Relations Act 1952 of the Free Church of Scotland,

Therefore Presbytery humbly overtures Synod to repeal Recommendation thirteen of the Training of Ministry Report for 1972 or to do otherwise as in their wisdom may seem fit.

Mr Barnes appeared on behalf of the Central Presbytery.

It was moved and seconded that the prayer of the overture be granted.

The motion was lost.

It was resolved to meet in closed Court.

Synod resumed in open Court.

It was resolved to meet here at 7 p.m.

The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

Edwin R. Lee  
Moderator

#### **SEDERUNT 10.**

At Taree on Wednesday 13th May, 1981 at 7 p.m. Synod met and was constituted.

The Minutes of the previous Sederunt were read and confirmed.

Synod met in closed court.

Synod resumed in open court, and adjourned to meet here at 9 a.m. on Thursday, 14th May.

The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

Edwin R. Lee  
Moderator

#### **SEDERUNT 11.**

At Taree on Thursday, 14th May at 9 a.m. Synod met and was constituted.

The Minutes of the previous Sederunt were read and confirmed.

Synod met in closed court, and resumed in open court.

It was moved seconded and carried That we, the Ministers and Elders of the Synod of Eastern Australia, earnestly desiring and prayerfully seeking harmony and unity within our Church, conscious of our vows of adherence to the whole doctrine of the Westminster Confession of Faith in terms of the Formula of subscription, and having obtained competent advice assuring us that within

the Constitution of this Church office-bearers are not bound to hold to any particular Greek or Hebrew text as the best, or to any particular English translation as the best, but that on these questions there is liberty of conscience, affirm our intention to work together for the cause of Jesus Christ, respecting members' rights to their own opinions on these questions, and together to seek to come to a better understanding of the matter of texts and versions of God's holy Word.

Nothing in this affirmation shall be taken to mean that the Church is unable to gain access to the Providentially preserved pure text of Scripture, or to suggest that a translation may be equated with the original, inerrant text.

It was moved seconded and carried unanimously That we Ministers and Elders of the Synod of Eastern Australia acknowledge our responsibility in having contributed to the divisions in our Church, thus causing hurt to the body of Christ.

Synod adjourned to meet here at 1.15 p.m.  
The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

Edwin R. Lee  
Moderator

### **SEDERUNT 12**

At Taree on Thursday, 14th May 1981 at 1.15 p.m. Synod met and was constituted.  
The Minutes of the forenoon Sederunt were read and confirmed.

It was moved and seconded that the former Minister and office-bearers of St Kilda congregation be furnished with copies of Synod's statement of unity. Carried.

It was resolved That we now meet in private to discuss the wider unity of the church.

Synod resumed in open court.

It was resolved That Synod agrees to the following statement, and agrees to convey it immediately to the former Minister of St Kilda and his people

'We re-affirm that we are always ready to receive representations from those who approach the Synod in a spirit of meekness, with the respect due for its authority under Christ, and in conformity with the laws of the Church and proper Presbyterian procedure.

Synod also expects and requires that lower courts will display similar readiness and draws to the attention of them all the statement of unity agreed upon this day.'

It was moved seconded and carried That we do not receive the petitions from Mr Mark Simpson but encourage him to approach the St Kilda Session.

### **PUBLICATIONS**

Synod took up business of the Publications Committee.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the report be received.
2. That the cost of Our Banner be \$7 per annum if sent in bulk and \$8 if sent privately.

3. That thanks be expressed to the Editor, the Assistant Editor, to the Circulation Manager (Mr Robert Muldoon), to Mrs McIntosh for Search Work, to all helpers who prepare Our Banner for despatch, and to all contributors of articles in the past year.

4. That the Church Principles Committee be asked to fulfil the Recommendation (5) of Synod 1979.

5. That the Committee purchase 300 copies of the booklet "Thomas Chalmers" by W.M. Mackay and distribute them among our congregations to be sold at cost price. (approx. 50 cents).

Recommendations 1-5 were adopted.

Mr Ward and Mr Triffett were appointed Editor and Assistant-Editor of "Our Banner".

Thanks of Synod was conveyed to the Convener.

### **PSALMODY**

Synod took up the business of the Psalmody Committee.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the report be received.

2. That congregations be encouraged to have appropriate booklets available for giving to visitors attending public worship - booklets such as "The Singing of Psalms in Worship" by G.I. Williamson.

3. That sessions again be encouraged to avail themselves of the literature and cassettes cited in Recommendation 2 of this committee's report in 1979.

4. That elders and members of our church be encouraged to deposit copies of study papers relating to exclusive psalmody with our committee.

5. That the Psalter revision committee be encouraged to press on in its attempts to supplement our 1650 Psalter with other accurate translations and appropriate tunes.

6. That Synod now change the name of this committee to "Worship Committee".

Recommendations 1-5 only were adopted and the thanks of the Synod was conveyed to the Convener.

Synod adjourned to meet here at 7.15 p.m.

The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

Edwin R. Lee  
Moderator

### **SEDERUNT 13.**

At Taree on Thursday, 14th May 1981 at 7.15 p.m. Synod met and was constituted.  
The Minutes of the afternoon Sederunt were read and confirmed.

The Convener presented the Report of the **Psalter Revision Committee**.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the report be received.
2. That the Committee be reappointed with power to consult with other qualified persons on textual and musical aspects, and to seek suggestions and/or cooperation from them as individuals or as representatives of their denominations.
3. That the Committee produce an inexpensive but attractive format a selection of alternative versions with music after reviewing same and seeking wider comment from other informed persons and taking into account the comments of congregations noted at Synod 1979, and that this booklet be made available to those requiring it at a moderate charge, and to be used where judged for edification, its value and use to be reviewed by Synod in three years time in the light of experience.
4. That the Committee's appointment be continued for a period of 5 years with a view to report being made as to progress and possibilities towards a fresh translation of the whole Psalter which would have acceptance beyond our own denomination as well as within it.

The Recommendations were adopted and thanks conveyed to the Convener.

### **TRAINING OF MINISTRY**

The Convener pro tem, Dr Hanna, presented the Report on Training of Ministry.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the report be received.
2. That Synod record its gratitude to God for the continued progress of our students.
3. That Synod
  - (a) note with satisfaction Mr Hugh Varnes' progress in his studies at the Free Church College,
  - (b) assure him of its continued interest and prayer, and
  - (c) grant him the normal Living Allowance and Book Allowance for the remainder of his course in 1981.
4. That Synod
  - (a) note with satisfaction Mr Peter Bloomfield's completion of his second and third years at the Reformed Theological College,
  - (b) assure him of its continued interest and prayer,
  - (c) grant him the normal Living Allowance and Book Allowance for 1981, and
  - (d) authorize payment of his class fees.
5. That Synod note that Mr J. Cunningham is no longer a student for the ministry of this Church.
6. That Synod recognise the need for funds for Training of Ministry and
  - (a) authorise that appeals be placed in "Our Banner" from time to time on behalf of the Fund, and
  - (b) ask our ministers to stress to our people the importance of ministerial training and the support of students.
7. That Synod instruct the Clerk to write to Mr J. Tripovich to remind him of his obligation to repay monies advanced by the Church, and to urge him to make greater efforts to do this.
8. That Synod note the offer of the St Georges Deacons' Court regarding fare for Mr Varnes and that the Convener be asked to discuss with the St Georges Deacons' Court the reimbursement for Mr Varnes' fare.

9. That Synod record its thanks to the erstwhile Convener, Rev. R.W. Murray, and assure him of its appreciation of his work in this area.

10. That Rev. W.P. Gadsby be appointed Convener of the Committee to replace Rev. R.W. Murray.

The Recommendations were adopted and thanks conveyed to the Convener.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Synod met in closed court, and resumed in open court.

It was moved and seconded that Item of Correspondence from Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia be not received.

An amendment was moved and seconded that we receive it and pass from it.

The motion was carried.

Synod adjourned to meet here on Friday, 15th May at 9 a.m.  
The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

A. Beaton  
Moderator Pro Tem

### **SEDERUNT 14.**

At Taree on Friday, 15th May at 9. 15 a.m. Synod met and was constituted.

The Moderator addressed the Court, basing his remarks on Psalm 85 verses 8 and 9. God's revealed will for his Church, and our responsibility in that Church.

A vote of thanks was conveyed to the Moderator by the Clerk.

### **INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS**

The Convener presented the Report of the Inter-Church Relations Committee. The report was received.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That in view of the deteriorating situation within G.K.N. and the little progress made at R.E.S. 1980, that our membership with R.E.S. be discontinued.

2. That R.E.S. be informed of Synod's decision, and fees outstanding be paid.

3. That Synod continue the remit for discussions with the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Recommendations 1-3 were adopted.

Mr Ward presented his Report on conference with deputies from the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, in terms of Synod's direction 1979.

It was resolved That we receive and note the report from Mr Ward and advise the Free Reformed Churches of Australia that we would welcome correspondence from them concerning fraternal relations.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

Item 38. Overture from Southern Presbytery seeking appointment of a Trustee to replace Mr J.G. Simpson.

It was moved and seconded that the prayer of the Overture be granted in the following terms: That Rev R.S. Ward be appointed an additional trustee in terms of the Property Act of the State of Victoria 1953.

Further correspondence was dealt with as follows:

Item 18 was received and passed to the Inter-Church Relations Committee.

Item 19, Item 20 and 21 - Greetings from other Churches were received, to be reciprocated.

Item 23 from Trustees Executors was received and tabled.

Item 24 was received and passed to the Training of Ministry Committee.

Item 25 and Item 26 were fallen from.

Synod resumed consideration of **Finance and Property Committee**.

8. Because of sharply escalating costs, the regular meeting of the Synod be held biennially.

An amendment was moved and seconded That annual meetings of Synod be limited to three days length, thus ensuring that business is dealt with expeditiously and that justice is not delayed as it would be if meetings were held biennially and justice denied to parties who feel aggrieved by decisions or actions of lower courts.

The recommendation was preferred, and on being put to the vote was defeated.

9. That the remit relating to a statement of benefits to be paid to ministers be continued.

The recommendation was not approved.

The Convener presented the **Trustees' Report**.

The Report was received.

It was moved and seconded That the proceeds of the sale of the Winnaleah Manse be transferred to the trust of the Ulverstone Congregation, the principal to be available for capital expenditure, subject to the approval of Southern Presbytery, and the interest to be employed for the work of the Ulverstone Congregation.

Mr T. Peters of Winnaleah was invited to address Synod.

Synod adjourned to meet here at 1.45 p.m.

The Sederunt closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

Edwin R. Lee  
Moderator

**SEDERUNT 15.**

At Taree on Friday, 15th May 1981 at 1.45 p.m. Synod met and was constituted.  
The Minutes of the forenoon Sederunt were read and confirmed.

Debate resumed on the motion before the Court upon adjournment, anent sale of Winnaleah property. The motion was carried.

The **Treasurer** reported that the Minimum Stipend stands as follows:

From 1.1.81 \$175 weekly

From 1.7.81 \$183 weekly.

### **EXAMINATION OF RECORDS**

Examiners of Records gave in report.

Records of Northern Presbytery, Southern Presbytery and Central Presbytery were approved for attestation by the Moderator.

Examiners of Permanent Record reported that the examination was not complete, the Scroll minutes being required in Queensland for purposes of our Church's Incorporation.

The Report was received.

### **PROVIDENT FUNDS**

The Convener presented the Provident Funds Report.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Report be received.
2. That the sum of \$269.25 be transferred from General Fund.
3. That the congregational levy for 1981 be \$842.
4. That the action of the Committee in regard to Mr Bradbeer be ratified.

Simple dissents were tendered by Mr King and Mr Barnes.

5. That the whole of the accumulated Wales benefit for Mr Turnbull be paid to him upon his request.
6. That after transferring the appropriate amount to Wales Superannuation the available balance be credited to the LSL Fund.
7. That the action of the Committee in regard to Mr Murray be ratified.

Mr King dissented.

8. That accumulated LSL to Mr Ward be granted from the fund.

Mr King dissented for the reason that regulations were ignored.

9. That Section A of the Revised Regulations be adopted.

It was moved and seconded That copies of a report by the Synod's General Treasurer on the proposed changes to Regulations covering Provident Funds be circulated and that time be given to delegates to consider this report before proceeding to Rec's 9 to 13 incl.

The amendment was lost and the recommendation 9 approved.

10. That Section B of the Revised Regulations be adopted.

11. That Section C of the Revised Regulations be adopted.

12. That Section D of the Revised Regulations be adopted.

13. That there be added to Section C 5 the words: Unless a contrary ruling is given by Synod on a specific case the maximum allocation to the Retirement Fund for married males entering the scheme after May 1981 is 10% and not 15% as previously, and pro rata for single men and women.

14. That legislation of previous Synods affecting Retirement Fund and Long Service Leave Fund be rescinded.

15. That Rev. R.S. Ward be appointed an additional Trustee of the Retirement Fund of the P.C.E.A.

Recommendations 1-15 were adopted and the thanks of Synod was conveyed to the Committee and especially the Convener.

Synod took up the business of the **Law and Advisory Committee**.  
The report was received.

It was resolved That in the event of there being no Recommendations accompanying the Report of the Law and Advisory Committee, that opportunity be given for motions relevant to that report.

It was unanimously resolved That we circulate to all office bearers a copy of our accord of 14/5/1981 together with the Law & Advisory Committee Report.

The thanks of the Synod was expressed to the Convener.

**Southern Presbytery overture** was admitted as special business and read as follows:

Recognizing the measure of unity achieved at this Synod and desiring to further the spirit of reconciliation in a manner consistent with truth and charity, Presbytery overture the Synod as follows:

1. Presbytery considers that there are obvious advantages in additional members being appointed to this Court in the event of difficulties in resolving problems concerning Mr Turnbull and his people, and therefore request Synod to appoint Dr J.C. Andrews and Rev. E.R. Lee in regard to this matter, such special assessors' appointment by Synod to be effective upon the passing of an appropriate resolution to that effect by the Presbytery.

2. Presbytery also notes its concern that provision be made for the expenses of special assessors and request that Presbytery be authorized to open a special fund to receive contributions for that purpose should it be necessary, and to write to all deacons courts throughout the church accordingly.

The overture was received.

It was moved seconded and carried that the prayer of the overture be granted in the terms requested.

**COMMITTEES** were appointed as follows:

Finance and Property: N. McPherson (Conv.), A.P. Webster, A. Steel, J.A. Cromarty.

Provident: R. Ward (Conv.), Ulverstone and Geelong Elders.

Missions and Church Extension: A.R. Beaton (Conv.), E.R. Lee (Conv.), Lismore and Brisbane Elders.

Publications: N. Triffett (Conv.), R. Ward, J.M. Cromarty, Geelong Elder.

Welfare of Youth and Fellowship: D. Nicholds (Conv.), D. Nibbs (Conv.), Grafton and Maclean Elders.

Psalmody: A. Tripovich (Conv.), Hastings and Lismore Elders.

Church Principles: J.A. Cromarty (Conv.), J.M. Cromarty, P. Bloomfield, G. Barnes.

Inter-Church Relations: E. Dole (Conv.), St Georges and Hunter Elders.

Religion and Morals: C. Barnes (Conv.), A.D. McIntosh, Maclean and Armidale Elders.

Training of Ministry: P. Gadsby (Conv.), Dr Andrews, Dr Hanna, J.D. Ramsay.

Administration: Moderator, Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Moderator elect, Conv. Law and Advisory.

Law and Advisory: S.N. Ramsay, B. Dole, St Georges Elder.

It was resolved: That Mr R.S. Ward be designated Moderator-Elect.

It was moved, seconded and carried: The time and place of Synod 1982 be left to the discretion of the Moderator, Moderator-elect and Clerk.

A warm vote of thanks was expressed to the ladies and Deacons' Court of the Congregation.

A similar vote of thanks was extended to those who produce the reports.

The minutes of this Sederunt were read and confirmed.

Psalm 72:17-19 was sung and the Annual Synod 1981 closed with prayer.

S.N. Ramsay  
Clerk

Edwin R. Lee  
Moderator