

ANNUAL SYNOD 1989

SEDERUNT 1

1. Within the Taree Church building on Tuesday March 28, 1989 at 7.05 pm the Synod of Eastern Australia met and was constituted.

2. The Moderator, the Rev. P.J. Bloomfield led in worship preaching on the subject 'Should Christians Tithe?' He distinguished the legal requirement under the law of Moses from the heartfelt response of a man to the covenant blessings of the Lord - as for instance in the case of Abraham who paid tithes to Melchizedek, a type of Christ, before the law of Moses. He asserted that tithing as a godly principle of conduct has the endorsement of Scripture so that though there be no legal requirement, honouring God on the principle of a tithe as a minimum is a proper course. On a practical level, men are not called upon to rob men in order to pay God, nor to feel burdened to pay a tithe when on a low income, but care in budgeting and right priorities should enable the principle of the tithe to be put into effect. Mr Bloomfield closed with further pastoral and practical remarks.

3. The certified rolls of Southern and Central Presbyteries were tendered with apologies from those marked with an asterisk.

Charge	Ministers	Representative Elders
<u>Southern Presbytery</u>		
Geelong	J.M. Cromarty	J.R.B. Webster
Hamilton	J. Pateman	D. McFarlane*
Ulverstone		N.G. Triffett*
Melbourne	R.S. Ward	J.B.Louden
	T.I. Leggott	
	W.M. Mackay	
<u>Central Presbytery</u>		
Taree	E.R. Lee	K. Longworth
Hunter-Barrington	J.A. Cromarty	I. Miller
Hawkesbury-Nepean	H.C. Varnes	A. Neil
St Georges	J. McCallum*	A. Steel
Sydney South	J. Graham	N. A.McPherson
	S.N. Ramsay (Minister without charge)	

An apology was tendered on behalf of Rev. K. MacLeod (Clerk of Northern Presbytery) for his absence from this sederunt.

4. It was agreed that the certified roll of Northern Presbytery be included in the minutes when tendered by the Northern Presbytery Clerk.

5. The Moderator welcomed Rev. W. Graham and Mrs Graham (South Africa). It was resolved that Rev. W. Graham and Rev. Dr J.C. Andrews be associated with the Synod.

6. ELECTION OF MODERATOR

The Clerk reported that the Rev. W.P. Gadsby, Armidale was Moderator elect. It was resolved that the appointment be confirmed. The retiring Moderator welcomed Mr Gadsby to the chair.

7. 1989 MODERATORIAL ADDRESS

The Moderator read from John 17 and addressed the Synod on the subject: "What is the Church?" He indicated the richly variegated descriptions of the church in Scripture and indicated that simplistic answers that did not reckon with this needed to be guarded against. In particular, the church must not be defined in terms of invisibility as if the visible church may be depreciated. Drawing attention to the three marks of the church, Mr Gadsby made practical application to pursuing unity in the borders of the PCEA and to constructive interaction with other churches of the Lord. He noted the solemn obligation to pursue true unity, speaking the truth in love.

8. PERMISSION FOR PRESBYTERIES TO MEET.

It was resolved that Presbyteries having unfinished business be permitted to meet while Synod is not in session.

9. Notices of Motion for Sederunt 2 were read.

10. The sederunt was closed with prayer at 8.40pm.

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R.S. Ward
Clerk

W.P. Gadsby
Moderator

SEDERUNT 2 - Wednesday March 29, 1989. 9am.

11. The Sederunt was constituted, and the minutes of Sederunt 1 were confirmed.

12. The Roll of Northern Presbytery had been lodged was inserted as follows:

Charge	Minister	Representative Elder
Armidale	W.P. Gadsby	J.W. McKinnon
Brisbane	P.J. Bloomfield	W. Hanna*
Grafton	R.W. Murray	J. Kerridge
Hastings	A.L. Tripovich	K.A. Dawson*
Maclean	K. MacLeod	R.L. Campbell
Lismore		J.D. Ramsay

13. WELCOME

The Moderator extended a welcome to Mr Ian Miller to his first Synod and to Rev. T.I. Leggott to his first Synod as an ordained minister.

14. EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY

Synod noted with sorrow the sudden death of Rev. David Nibbs minister of the Ulverstone Congregation. The Rev. John Cromarty was asked to prepare a memorial minute for inclusion in the minutes of Synod. At the Moderator's request Rev. Dr J.C. Andrews led the Court in prayer commending the bereaved to the Lord's grace.

15. THANKS TO MODERATORS

It was resolved that the thanks of the Court be conveyed to the retiring Moderator for his sermon, and to the new Moderator for his address.

16. ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The Clerk presented the Report, which was received. Following discussion it was resolved

1. That the Court's thanks be conveyed to Mrs Beth McPherson for typing the minutes of Synod 1988.
2. That sederunt 4 (Wednesday evening) be devoted to reports, discussion and prayer about foreign missions.
3. That sederunt 7 (Thursday evening) be devoted to reports, discussion and prayer about church extension in Australia.
4. That correspondence item 1 be taken in conjunction with Law and Advisory proposed deliverance number 3.
5. That correspondence item 2 be taken following the business of this Committee.
6. That correspondence item 3 be taken in conjunction with Inter-church Relations business.
7. That Synod appoint the following Examiners of Records, to report during sederunt 8:

Synod Permanent Record: J.A. Cromarty and I. Miller

Northern Presbytery: J. Pateman

Central Presbytery : P.J. Bloomfield

Southern Presbytery: H.C. Varnes

An amendment was moved and seconded that Synod appoint the following Examiners of Records to report during sederunt 8:

Synod Permanent Record: J. A. Cromarty and I. Miller

Northern Presbytery: J. Pateman and W. Mackay

Central Presbytery: P. J. Bloomfield and Dr. W. Hanna

Southern Presbytery: H. C. Varnes and S. N. Ramsay.

The amendment was put against the recommendation and the amendment was eliminated. The recommendation became the finding of the court. The Committee proposed that Synod confirm the Committee structure as detailed in section 12 of the report.

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It was moved and seconded on notice, That Synod defer confirmation of Committee structure; That the Committee prepare and submit to a later Sederunt a revised structure affording as far as possible a more equitable distribution of ministerial personnel throughout the Committee structure. This second motion became the finding of the Court.

8. That Synod enact as follows:

Formation, Status, Oversight & Review of Congregations

a. The presbytery has a general responsibility and duty relative to the well-being of the church and its work, and of the congregations, and all congregational property, organisations and activities, within its jurisdiction, in consequence of which it exercises a general oversight of congregational affairs and of the interests of the church within its bounds, and sees that the law of the church and all lawful directives received from time to time from the Synod are obeyed within its bounds.

b. The presbytery has a special responsibility to all those residents within its bounds who are not connected with some other branch of the Christian Church and takes such steps as it deems necessary and practicable, including house to house visitation under the direction of sessions, to locate such persons and make Gospel ordinances available to them.

c. In sparsely populated areas within its bounds, or where the number of persons is too few to form an organised congregation, it is the duty of the presbytery to arrange for periodical visits or such other actions as will make the services and ordinances of the church available to such persons.

d. In areas within its bounds where rapid development, accompanied by increasing population, is apparent, it is the duty of presbytery, by the erection of new charges or preaching stations, or by the rearrangement of existing ones, to see that adequate provision is made for the religious needs of such areas, the mind of affected existing congregations being always obtained.

e. A number of persons in a locality wishing to be supplied with Christian ordinances may apply for the same to the presbytery within whose bounds they live. If the presbytery judge it expedient to grant their request, the presbytery establishes a preaching station and places it under a session. A presbytery may itself originate a preaching station. A preaching station may be raised to the status of a fully organised congregation by the presbytery when it is satisfied as to the stability of the membership roll and the viability of the work, and the Synod Clerk is advised by extract minute of the Presbytery resolution. However, in cases where the proposed sanctioned charge is not fully self-supporting both as to revenue and capital needs, the Presbytery must first obtain the consent of the Synod.

Simple dissents were tendered by H. Varnes and A. Tripovich.

Mr Kerridge dissented with reasons as follows: I dissent from the enactment of Synod regarding the proposal in the Supplementary Report on the following grounds 1) That I was not given information from the Moderator regarding what was the remit given to the Administration Committee by this Synod and therefore, depending on what the remit could be 2) The proposal is outwith the authority or function of the Administration Committee.

It was resolved

9. That Synod records and papers not required by the Clerk be suitably stored in the Wantirna Church building with Rev. R.S. Ward as Archivist, and that any court or individual desirous of so doing, be permitted to lodge historical material with the Archivist also. Synod requests Mr Ward to submit a list of material in the Archives to the next Synod and also requests Presbyteries and Sessions to furnish details of records they have to Mr Ward in order that what is lost or unlocated may be known and inquiries about records can be appropriately directed.

10. Synod approve the lodging of records of the Free Presbyterian Church of South Australia in the State Archives subject to provision for access to bona fide researchers.

Synod took up Correspondence Item 2.

11. It was moved and seconded that the correspondence be not received.

It was moved and seconded that the correspondence be received and consideration of it be deferred until the Northern Presbytery has had time to consider it.

The second motion became the finding of the Court.

17. GENERAL TREASURER'S AND AUDITOR'S REPORT

Mr McPherson presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received, together with the Auditor's Report, and that the thanks of Synod be conveyed to Mr McPherson, Mr D. McIntosh and the Auditor, Mr W. Walker.

18. 8:14 FOUNDATION

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Mr McPherson presented the report. The report was received.

19. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr Longworth presented the report. The Report was received.
It was resolved

1. That Synod record its thankfulness to God for all His blessings and for those who have willingly supported the work of our church in this past year.
2. That all matters relating to finance be based on the Calendar year and all budgets and requests for finance be from January to December in each year.

The Committee proposed:

3. That the Youth and Fellowship Committee be authorized to administer their own expense account in accordance with their approved budget, presenting an audited account to each Synod.
The proposal was defeated.

The Committee proposed:

4. That Banner Fund be closed and the amount of \$55.00 be transferred to the Editor of the Banner and incorporated in that balance sheet.
The proposal was defeated.

It was moved and seconded, That an amount of \$500 (as estimated by the Finance Committee) be forwarded to Prison Fellowship Victoria. The motion was carried after which Mr Campbell led in prayer.

Notices of motion were read for I.C.R. Committee business.

20. INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The Clerk presented the report. The report was received.

It was resolved

1. That Synod send fraternal greetings to the SPCA.

It was proposed

2. That Synod request the Inter-church Relations Committee to take up with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia the matter of their letter to the FRCA dated February 1988.

It was further moved and seconded, That Synod recognize the right of churches to correspond with one another and therefore NOT take up matters with the E.P.C. which were mentioned in letter from the E.P.C. to the F.R.C.A. as that letter does not directly concern us.

The sederunt was closed with prayer at 12.32 pm.

R.S. Ward
Clerk

W..P. Gadsby
Moderator

SEDERUNT 3 - Wednesday March 29, 1989 1.30 pm.

The sederunt was constituted and the minutes of Sederunt 2 were confirmed.

Inter-church Relations business was resumed.

After considerable discussion, on being put to the vote the Committee Proposal became the finding of the court.

It was resolved

3. That Southern Presbytery be requested to maintain contact with the RPCA, and that Presbytery keep the Inter-church Relations Committee fully briefed on developments.

4. That discussions with the FRCA be continued with a view to clarifying further the points of difference or confusion which have been raised.

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5. That Synod write to the Synodical Interim Committee of the Reformed Churches of Australia thanking them for the opportunity of sending a delegate to the 1988 Synod meeting.

The Committee proposed

6. That Synod approve in principle the draft rules for sister-church relationships as formulated by the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Liberated).

The proposal was defeated on the casting vote of the Moderator.

It was resolved

7. That Synod's fraternal greetings be conveyed annually by the Clerk of Synod to all our fellow members of the ICRC.

21. CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 3 was read. It was resolved to receive and note the correspondence.

22. YOUTH AND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

The Convener Mr Varnes presented the report. The report was received.

It was agreed

23. That Synod conveys its gratitude to Mrs A.H. Steel and Mrs J. Ramsay for their valuable contribution to the work of the Committee.

24. CHURCH EXTENSION AND SUPPLY COMMITTEE

The Convener Mr J.A. Cromarty presented the report. The report was received.

It was resolved

1. That Synod record its gratitude to God for His blessings upon our Church Extension labours.

2. That Synod representatives convey the thanks of this Court and the Aid Receiving Charges for their sacrificial giving to support their labours in the Lord's Name.

3. That Brisbane Charge be granted financial assistance as per Church Extension Charge - Stage 3 - this being approximately \$9500.00.

4. That Armidale Congregation be granted financial assistance as per Church Extension Charge - Stage 3 - this being approximately \$9500.00.

5. That Hamilton Charge receive Stipend Relief of up to \$3000.00. (This to be on a needs basis.)

6. That Ulverstone Charge receive Stipend relief of up to \$4000.00. (This to be on a need's basis.)

7. That Brisbane Charge be recognised as a fully sanctioned charge from Jan. 1st 1990.

8. That Synod receive with joy Central Presbytery's recognition of the Sydney South Preaching Station as a Fully Sanctioned Charge.

9. That the Law and Advisory Committee be requested to draw up regulations for the Church Extension and Supply Committee and submit such to Synod 1990.

25. MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The Convener Rev. W.M. Mackay presented the report. The report was received.

It was resolved

1. Synod expresses its appreciation and support of Rev. and Mrs John Graham in their work under the auspices of Christian Witness to Israel (Australia) and welcomes Miss Anna Sutherland to that work.

2. The Synod greets Leone Tupua and his family in Fiji and encourages them in their continuing witness.

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3. The Synod approves the visit of Rev. J.M. Cromarty and Rev. R.S. Ward to Fiji to give support and encouragement and help establish a co-ordinated supply strategy for a reformed church in Fiji.

4. The Synod declares its support for the development of the Free Church of Central India, for the medical work, and health projects and for the work of the school.

5. The Synod expresses its thanks to Sister Barbara Stone for the time given to visiting congregations on her recent visit.

6. The Synod expresses its profound sympathy with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Peru in a time of trial.

7. The Synod records its encouragement by news of land being made available to St Andrew's College by the Peruvian government.

8. The Synod thanks Marie-Christine Lux for her diligence in visiting congregations of the church and extends its prayerful support to her new sphere of service in the Central African Republic.

9. The Synod welcomes the interest shown by Mr J.P. Flynn in missionary teaching work and offers its support in finding a suitable place of service.

10. The Synod recognises the very significant influence of the Dumisani Bible School and welcomes Rev. and Mrs W.D. Graham on their first visit to Australia.

11. The Synod recommends the Missions Committee to present to next Synod a report on appropriate procedure for maintaining contact with the national churches grown from our mission work in India, Peru and South Africa, and for processing applications for acceptance as missionaries working with the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia or with the Free Church of Scotland.

12. The Synod approves the budget for 1989 and the provisional budget for 1990.

The sederunt was closed with prayer at 5.30 pm.

R.S. Ward
Clerk

W.P. Gadsby
Moderator

SEDERUNT 4. Wednesday March 29, 1989 7.00 pm.

26. The Sederunt was constituted and the Minutes of Sederunt 3 were confirmed.

27. MISSIONS EVENING

The Moderator, having extended a warm welcome to the assembled gathering, invited the Missions Committee Convener, the Rev. W.M. Mackay, to preside at the Missions Evening.

After singing Psalm 144:11-15 and the reading of John 3:22-36, Mr Mackay drew attention to several matters raised in the Missions Committee Report particularly the present difficult world situation and also the Mission opportunities nearer at home as well as on the fields in Peru, India and Southern Africa, and commended John 3:30 as a suitable motto for every missionary and also for us in the PCEA.

The Convener then introduced Miss Anna Sutherland and Mr and Mrs W.D. Graham to the Moderator.

Miss Sutherland then addressed the congregation and showed something of her burden for the work of Christian Witness to Israel (Australia). She spoke of the Missionary Task - to see people through the eyes of Christ and to communicate to them in their need; of the Missionary Treasure - the Word of God which is the good seed; and the Missionary Triumph - despite discouragements the assurance of God's blessing and signs of his power in the conversion of some.

Mrs Elizabeth Graham then addressed the gathering. She paid a glowing tribute to the life and labours of Mrs Lex Colville, who had done a remarkable work among the native women. After Mrs Colville had returned to Australia, the Bible School had been asked to train Bible Women to visit the sick and pray and minister to them. An important and influential work was being done and practical training courses

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had been provided, as well as helpful literature. She concluded by playing a recording bringing greetings in Xhosa from our sisters in Southern Africa.

The Rev. Bill Graham read Matthew 28:16-20, and addressed the gathering. He brought the warm greetings and sincere thanks of the Free Church in Southern Africa and of the Board of the Dumisani Bible School.

He spoke of the problems in Africa but of the opportunities for the Gospel. He emphasized that in Christ we see a new Africa: when you are one in Christ, the distinctions of colour fall away. Despite all the trouble God is working a work of grace. There are some 70 congregations or preaching places. The church now has 2nd or 3rd generations and there is some formalism and tendency to materialism, but by and large the church is a missionary-minded church. The Bible School has a calling to further the doctrinal depth of the church and this is recognized by the church itself. Of recent times there have been opportunities to have a positive input to the African independent churches which form the mass of grass roots Black Christianity in Southern Africa. Currently there are some 7,500 people doing basic courses through the Bible School, whose annual budget is presently about A\$36,000. A programme of full time training of students for the ministry is being developed. Our prayer and financial support is coveted. The African church can teach us much of the joy of Christian witness and service. The vision for the future is that God will use the church for His glory, and the College to equip teachers in the church, so that the mandate to teach all that Christ has commanded may be realized, and the knowledge of God be spread among the people as the waters cover the sea.

The Moderator thanked the speakers for their words and the encouragement they gave.

The Convener closed this part of the meeting with prayer.

28. Notices of Motion for Training of Ministry, Faith and Life, and Law and Advisory Committee were read, and the sederunt was closed with prayer at 8.50 pm.

R.S. Ward
Clerk

W.P. Gadsby
Moderator

SEDERUNT 5: Thursday March 30, 1989 9.00 am.

29. The sederunt was constituted, and the minutes of sederunt 4 were confirmed.

30. GREETINGS

The Moderator, on behalf of Synod, asked the Rev. W.D.Graham to convey the warm greetings of the Synod to the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland and to the General Assembly of the Free Church in Southern Africa.

31. CHURCH EXTENSION (unfinished business)

The Committee proposed

10. That Synod now discuss the problem of ministerial shortages, with a view to overcoming such difficulties within our Church.

The proposal became the finding of the Court, and discussion was held for about 35 minutes.

32. TRAINING OF MINISTRY

The Convener, the Rev. P.J.Bloomfield, presented the Report. The Report was received.

It was resolved:

1. That Mr Trevor Leggott be congratulated on being licensed, and that he be assured of our prayerful support for rich blessings in his new work in Melbourne.

2. That Synod note the application of Mr David Stewart as candidate for the ministry, and note the approval of both Central Presbytery, and the T. of Min. C'tee, and now grant him Provisional Recognition as a student for the ministry (as per Synod Regulations), the period of probation being a minimum of 1 year.

3. That Synod approve the T. of Min. C'tee meeting the tuition costs and book allowance for Mr Stewart in 1989 (estimated at \$1700).

33. FAITH AND LIFE COMMITTEE

The Convener, the Rev. R.W.Murray presented the report. During discussion, the Moderator vacated the chair to speak on matters related to The Presbyterian Banner of which he is Editor. Mr Bloomfield occupied the chair.

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The Report was received.

It was resolved:

1. That this Committee be renamed, Church and Nation Committee.

2. That the Synod express its deep appreciation to the Editor, Rev. W.P.Gadsby for his excellent work in editing the magazine, to Mrs Gadsby for typing, and to the Armidale young people for packaging and sorting copies in preparation for posting.

The Moderator Mr Gadsby resumed the chair.

34. LAW AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Convener Mr R.S.Ward presented the Report.

It was moved and seconded that the report be received.

35. A notice of motion was read.

The Sederunt closed with prayer at 12.30pm.

R.S. Ward
Clerk

W.P. Gadsby
Moderator

SEDERUNT 6: Thursday March 30, 1989 1.30pm.

36. The Sederunt was constituted and the minutes of Sederunt 5 were read and confirmed.

37. The Synod resumed Law and Advisory Committee business:

Mr Varnes was granted leave to amend his notice of motion. An amendment was moved and seconded that the report be received with the exclusion of the Appendix on pages 41 and 42.

Mr A. Steel presented a minority report. It was moved and seconded that the minority report be received.

Mr Varnes' amendment was put against the Committee report. The Committee report was preferred. It was resolved that the report be received.

The Synod further resolved to receive the minority report.

38. The Committee proposed

1. That Deacons' Courts note the Procurator's opinion bound in 1985 Reports pp.49-52, and the wording of the proposed Act in 1986 Reports; and that those Deacons' Courts with objections to proceeding as recommended by the Procurator be asked to advise the Law and Advisory Committee of the changes to the 1918 Act they desire while keeping to the basic 1918 Act as far as possible.

An amendment was moved and seconded that Deacons' Courts having objections to the proposed amendment to the NSW Property Act 1918 as bound with the 1986 Reports, be requested to advise the Law & Advisory Committee of the changes they desire, and report be made by the Committee to Synod 1990.

On being put to the vote the Committee proposal became the finding of the court.

It was resolved

2. That Synod now enact in terms of Section 3.20 of the draft revised Church Practice appended to this report.

Mr Varnes tendered dissent with reasons: I dissent because the right of the management of congregational property is in the hands of the Deacons' Court, and, to the Presbytery belongs the right of review.

Mr Tripovich, Mr Steel and Mr Neil adhered to the dissent with reasons.

39. CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 1 was read. It was resolved to receive the correspondence. Mr Varnes and Mr Neil appeared in support of the overture.

It was moved and seconded that the prayer of the overture be not granted on the grounds:

(1) that no effort was made to contact the Law and Advisory Committee to clarify any doubt as to the involvement of the Committee in the decisions intimated in the Convener's letter 28/12/1988;

(2) that the overture proceeds on the claim that consideration of the members had not occurred whereas such had occurred;

(3) that it appears evident that the overturists adopt the false premise that valid determinations of a Committee cannot be made without a face to face meeting in a manner the overturists themselves specify.

It was further moved and seconded that the prayer of the overture be granted in the following terms:

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Synod direct the Law and Advisory Committee to meet together on a number of occasions, as a full Committee, to consider in detail any submissions already made, and any further submissions, in the matter of the Draft Revised Church Practice, chps I, II, III.

On being put to the vote the first motion was preferred and became the finding of the court.

A simple dissent was tendered by A.Tripovich and G.A.Neil, and H.Varnes dissented with the reason: that the full Law and Advisory Committee has not, we believe, fairly and fully considered the submission on the proposed draft church practice forwarded by the Hawkesbury-Nepean Deacons' Court, and a number of unsatisfactory matters remain unaltered in the proposed draft.

40. It was resolved

3. Synod expresses its appreciation for the input of individuals and church courts to the revision of the Church Practice over the past seven years, and now substitutes Chapters 1 to 3 of the Practice as bound with Synod Reports 1989 for pages 1-9 and 13-18 of the Free Church of Scotland Practice (1964 edition), and to that extent varies the legislation of Synod 1978 (adopting the 1964 edition) and Synod 1983 (commending the draft revised practice published that year as 'a useful adjunct' to the Free Church of Scotland Practice).

G.A.Neil, H.Varnes and A.L.Tripovich dissented with the following reason:

There is yet room for much improvement in this Draft Practice, chapters 1, 2 & 3, before it be substituted for pages 1-9 and 13-18 of the Free Church of Scotland Practice (1964 Edition), a Practice time honoured and well proven.

41. It was resolved

4. That the Committee be thanked for preparing the Decision Book and that local courts, Presbyteries and Committees be requested to familiarise themselves with its contents.

5. That the Committee press on with Chapter 4 (The Presbytery) of the revision of the Church Practice, endeavouring to circulate a draft prior to September 30, 1989, in order that local courts and Presbyteries may give input and report be made to Synod 1990.

It was moved and seconded that the Law and Advisory Committee be instructed to compile details of variations in practice between the 'Blue Book,' the Draft Practice prepared by the Law & Advisory Committee, the Draft Amendments to the 'Blue Book' prepared by Central Presbytery and actual practice observed in congregations and church courts, and report be made by the Committee to Synod 1990 regarding variations.

The motion was defeated.

The sederunt closed with prayer at 5.30pm.

R.S. Ward
Clerk

W.P. Gadsby
Moderator

SEDERUNT 7: Thursday March 30th 1989 7pm

42. The Sederunt was constituted and the minutes of Sederunt 6 were read and confirmed.

43. It was moved and seconded that standing orders be suspended to allow a motion to be put by Mr Ward. Standing orders were suspended. Mr Ward moved that Synod conclude by 12 noon on March 31st, 1989. The motion was seconded and carried and became the finding of the court.

44. It was further moved and seconded that standing orders be suspended to allow a motion to be put by Mr S.N.Ramsay. The motion was defeated. Mr Lee tendered a simple dissent.

45. The Treasurer Mr McPherson indicated that the cost of this annual Synod meeting thus far was \$3,700.

46. CHURCH EXTENSION EVENING

The Convener Rev. J.A.Cromarty was invited to address the Synod and Congregation. He spoke of the encouragements being experienced in various centres and also urged the gathering to pray earnestly that young men would be raised up to pastor the flock of God.

Mr Cromarty then introduced Rev. John Graham and invited him to tell us something of the new work commenced at Sydney South. Mr Graham spoke of the early days in the life of the new congregation -

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the set backs and the encouragements. Two services are held each Lord's Day with an average attendance of about 35. The prayer meeting is a time of blessing and rich fellowship. The congregation has a membership already of 28 with others indicating a desire to join.

The enthusiasm of the young people in their desire to witness and spread the message of the gospel is especially encouraging.

Mr Gadsby was then invited to speak of the work at Armidale. He spoke of continuing stable work in the congregation, which is still the only distinctively Reformed witness in the town. Some possibility exists that a block of land may be available which would be suitable for a church building.

Mr Leggott was then invited to speak about the new work which had begun on February 5, 1989 at Narre Warren in the City of Berwick, east of Dandenong. Mr Leggott spoke of the careful preparation that had gone into the work before he and Pam arrived, and of the good hand of the Lord in his providence which has provided several local families already, with typical attendances of 20 thus far. The overall position is very encouraging. Pam is taking a full day of classes in RI at the local Primary School – a total of some 270 children, and this is proving a wonderful opportunity. A Sunday School is also in operation. He coveted the prayers of all, and indicated it was hoped to do a religious survey in the area soon, as it was planned to build a place of worship later in 1989.

Mr Ray Murray spoke of the opportunity that he has in Grafton schools in the teaching of Special Religious Education. In 1985 steps were taken to establish special religious education classes in the Grafton High Schools. Mr Murray is now employed full time in South Grafton High School teaching 640 children in years 7-10. He is a member of staff and thus is called upon to fulfil the usual functions of a regular teacher. Mr Murray has the liberty to prepare his own courses and has numerous opportunities to answer the children's basic questions about life and death. John Blanchard's book "Ultimate Questions" is being used as a basic study guide with some classes. The young people are hearing the Word of God and there are evidences in the school of a work of grace in the lives of some of the young people.

Mr Bloomfield, minister of the Brisbane Congregation, then addressed the gathering. It is with gratitude to God that the congregation is virtually self supporting and from 1st January 1990 the congregation will be recognised as a sanctioned charge. One to one evangelism is taking place and there is a deep desire to relate the gospel to lost men and women. In the last 6 years 16 people have become members of the congregation as a result of personal contact. The tape ministry has been a blessing to a number of people and people are urged to pray for the ongoing work of the gospel in Brisbane.

The Rev. John Cromarty spoke of the work of Prison Fellowship in Victoria, and in particular of his contacts over the past 6 or 7 months with one inmate and his desire that we pray for this man who has significant influence in the Geelong Gaol. He also referred to the blessings which had resulted from the ministry of Prof. Douglas MacMillan, in particular the conversion of the Session Clerk and his wife in a local Presbyterian congregation.

Thanks were conveyed to the speakers and to the Convener of the Church Extension & Supply Committee.

Notices of motion were read.

The sederunt closed with prayer at 9.10pm.

R.S. Ward
Clerk

W.P. Gadsby
Moderator

SEDERUNT 8: Friday 31st March 1989 9.00am

47. The sederunt was constituted and the minutes of sederunt 7 were read and confirmed.

48. Mr Cromarty read the memorial minute to the late Rev. David Nibbs.
It was agreed that a copy be sent to Mrs Nibbs.

David Nibbs will be remembered as a man of large stature and big heart, devoted to the Person and Cause of his Lord and Saviour.

Mr Nibbs was born in 1933, one of four sons of Gordon Nibbs, a Baptist pastor. He was ordained to the Baptist ministry in Tasmania in 1962, but found himself increasingly drawn to the Reformed faith when he was ministering to the growing Union Church at Dingley in Victoria. He applied to the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia for admission as a minister. After completing requisite studies, Mr Nibbs was admitted as a minister by the Synod on May 6, 1969. He served successively Geelong (inducted February 11, 1970), Grafton (inducted May 19, 1972) and Ulverstone (inducted February 11, 1982) where he died suddenly while reading the Scriptures in his study on October 5,

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1988.

Mr Nibbs was a warmly evangelical and evangelistic preacher who spoke with obviously deep feeling as he sought to instruct, encourage and comfort the Lord's people, and to press the claims of Christ upon the unsaved. He was a courteous, gracious and compassionate man, speaking without rancour even when strongly differing from his brethren. His concern for the unity of the church at large and his brethren in the ministry in particular was such that at times words failed him and his tears spoke a language stronger than words. His presence will be greatly missed. To his wife, Mavis, and the family we extend our Christian sympathy.

49. NSW TRUST CORPORATION

The Clerk presented the report. The Moderator vacated the chair and Mr Bloomfield occupied it. The report was received.

50. It was resolved that Synod request Presbyteries to ensure that leases be executed in accordance with the Property Act and the legislation of Synod. In the case of any existing leases not executed by the Trustees, the Trustees are authorised to acknowledge if otherwise in order, that the execution thereof by the relative Deacons' Courts, is in agreement with the provisions of the NSW Property Act 1918, Section 14 (The appointment of Agents).

The Moderator resumed the chair.

51. QUEENSLAND TRUST CORPORATION

The Clerk presented the report. The report was received.

It was resolved that Synod hereby appoints the Presbytery of the bounds its agent for approving the lease of congregational property in Queensland, provided that the Presbytery is satisfied as to:

- (a) why the lease is desired;
- (b) how the proceeds will be used;
- (c) the period of any one lease, which shall not exceed 12 months except in the case of investment property, where normal commercial terms shall apply; and
- (d) the rental received, that it represents a fair market value, with provision for regular review to that level.

The body, Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia, as incorporated under the (Qld.) Religious, Educational, and Charitable Institutions Act 1861-1967, is hereby authorized to execute such Presbytery-approved lease documents, and is directed to report on this to the ensuing annual meeting of the Synod of Eastern Australia.

52. TRUSTEES FOR VICTORIA OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA

The secretary (Mr Ward) presented the report. The report was received. It was resolved:

That congregations that may be in arrears in payment of Public Liability Insurance as arranged by Synod pay their premium promptly to the Synod Treasurer.

53. PROVIDENT FUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Convener Mr Ward presented the report. The report was received.

54. It was resolved that the Lismore Congregation be relieved of any requirement to pay the 1985 Provident Fund Levy.

55. It was further resolved

1. That Synod request that all arrears be paid promptly to the Synod Treasurer.
2. That the standard rate of pension be increased to \$36.75 pw (couple) and \$27 pw (single) with effect from July 1, 1989.
3. That the sum of \$1,700 advanced in 1987 to the Widows' and Retired Ministers' Fund be repaid to the Supplementary Benefits Fund free of interest.
4. That Synod record its appreciation for Mr W. Walker's assistance with the audit of the Superannuation Fund.
5. That any available surplus in the Levy proceeds account after arrears paid and obligations to the Supplementary Benefits Fund are met, be transferred to the LSL Fund.
6. That Section B1 (a) of the Regulations of the Provident Funds Committee be amended to read as follows:
 - a. An annual levy of 8.5% of the minimum stipend for the year to 30th June, such levy to apply to every vacant and settled sanctioned charge as a preference burden after stipend, and to be paid in two approximately equal half-yearly installments by the close of the calendar year. Aid to aid-receiving charges is to allow for the payment of the levy. With effect from 1st January 1989, a charge that is

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vacant for part or all of a year shall be entitled to a 50% reduction on the amount of levy pro rated for the duration of the vacancy unless it is receiving extended residential supply from a minister for whom contributions are being made to the Superannuation and/or Long Service Leave Funds in respect of that period of supply.

7. That Deacons' Courts note that the Super/LSL Levy for 1989 is \$1,584 (8.5% of \$18,642), which should be paid as follows: not less than \$792 by 30th June 1989 with the balance no later than 31st December 1989.

56. EXAMINERS OF RECORDS

Having heard the report of Examiners, it was resolved that the Synod Permanent Record, the Southern Presbytery minutes and the Northern Presbytery minutes be attested by the Moderator as being in order. It was resolved that the records of the Central Presbytery be attested subject to a satisfactory report from the examiner, Mr Bloomfield.

57. STANDING COMMITTEES

It was resolved that the committee structure as printed hereunder be adopted:

ADMIN & ICR: Clerk, Moderator, Moderator-elect, Assistant Clerk, Convener of Law & Advisory.

CHURCH EXTENSION & SUPPLY: J.A.Cromarty, I.Miller, J.S.Graham, J.A.McCallum, T.I.Leggott and P.J.Bloomfield as corresponding members.

CHURCH & NATION (including old Faith & Life, Publications and Psalmody): R.W.Murray, A.L.Tripovich, K.MacLeod, J.C.Andrews, R.L.Campbell, Lismore elder, Grafton elder, Editor of The Presbyterian Banner (ex officio), J.M.Cromarty (corresponding member).

FINANCE: K.Longworth, J.A.McCallum, N.A.McPherson, St Georges elder, Hawkesbury-Nepean elder.

8:14 FOUNDATION: Treasurer, Clerk, one nominee from each Presbytery.

LAW & ADVISORY: R.S.Ward, W.M.Mackay, W.P.Gadsby, R.W.Murray, St Georges elder, G.A.Neil.

MISSIONS: W.M.Mackay, R.S.Ward, J.M.Cromarty, T.I.Leggott, Geelong elder. Drs H.Ramsay and J.C.Andrews as advisers.

PROVIDENT FUNDS: R.S.Ward, J.B.Louden, N.Triffett, J.Pateman, Geelong elder.

TRAINING OF MINISTRY: P.J.Bloomfield, W.J.W.Hanna, J.A.Cromarty, W.J.McClean, W.P.Gadsby.

YOUTH & FELLOWSHIP: H.C.Varnes, A. Neil, J.S.Graham, D.Hamilton.

58. NOMINATION OF MODERATOR FOR 1990

It was resolved with acclamation that Rev J.S.Graham be appointed Moderator-elect.

59. TIME AND PLACE OF SYNOD 1990

It was resolved that Synod 1990 commence on Tuesday April 17, 1990 at 7pm and conclude on Friday April 20, 1990 by 1.30pm, and be held at Taree.

60. APPRECIATION TO MANNING CONGREGATION

Our gratitude to the congregation was ably expressed by Rev J.A.Cromarty and carried by acclamation.

61. REPORT FROM TREASURER

The Treasurer reported that Synod's decisions meant that we are committed to \$98,000 of expenditure and this would include \$40,000 from congregational givings, excluding contributions to Superannuation and Long Service Leave funds.

The anticipated result would be a using up of the available reserve in the Synod General Fund. Increased congregational givings would be needed.

62. ACTS OF SYNOD

It was resolved that the Clerks be empowered to draw up a list of Principal Acts of Synod and include same in the record.

63. The Court expressed its appreciation of the Moderator's efficient execution of his duties.

64. The minutes of the final sederunt were read and confirmed.

65. The Moderator briefly addressed the Court, and Synod 1989 was closed with the singing of Psalm 126, and with prayer.

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R.S.Ward
Clerk

W.P.Gadsby
Moderator

PRINCIPAL ACTS OF SYNOD 1989

The following Acts are included in the minutes by resolution of Synod (see Article 62).

Class 1 (Barrier Act procedure)

None.

Class 2 (Other)

Act	Article
1 Formation, Status, Oversight and Review of Congregations	16.8
2 Appointment of Archivist for PCEA historical material	16.9
3 Provision for archiving of Free Pres. Church of South Aust. records	16.10
4 Standardization on the calendar year for all PCEA financial matters	19.2
5 Annual fraternal greetings to be sent to fellow ICRC members	20.7
6 Reclassification of Brisbane Congregation to Fully Sanctioned Charge	24.7
7 Acknowledgment of Presbytery's recognition of Sydney South	24.8
8 Declaration of PCEA policy regarding Free Church of Central India	25.4
9 Faith and Life Committee renamed to Church and Nation Committee	33.1
10 Requiring Presbytery approval of major capital works	38.2
11 Adoption of chapters 1 to 3 of new Church Practice	40
12 Leasing of property in NSW (supplementary provisions)	50
13 Leasing of property in Queensland	51
14 Provident Fund Regulation B1 (a) amendment	55.6