

Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia

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ANNUAL SYNOD 1991

- 1 Within the Taree church building on 2 April 1991 at 7.04 pm. the Synod of Eastern Australia met and was constituted with worship, the moderator Rev. J.S.Graham presiding.
- 2 Reading from Habakkuk 3 and Ezekiel 37, Mr Graham spoke briefly, drawing our attention to the words of Habakkuk: 'Revive thy work in the midst of the years.' Humanly speaking, how can the dry bones live? But with our God, nothing is impossible!
- 3 The certified rolls of presbyteries were tendered, with apologies for inability to attend from those marked with an asterisk hereunder

Northern Presbytery

Armidale
Brisbane
Grafton

Ministers

W.P.Gadsby
Vacant
R.W.Murray

Elders

J.W.McKinnon*
R.Lawson
J.Kerridge

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Hastings	A.L.Tripovich	D.Caughey*
Lismore	Vacant	J.D.Ramsay
Maclean	K.MacLeod	R.L.Campbell
	S.N.Ramsay (ret'd)	

Central Presbytery

Hawkesbury-Nepean	H.Varnes *	A.Neil
Hunter-Barrington	J.A.Cromarty	B.Dunne
St Georges	J.McCallum	DKerr
Sydney South	Vacant	N. McPherson
Taree	Vacant	K.Longworth
	J.S.Graham, CWI	
	E.R.Lee (Ret'd)	

Southern Presbytery

Melbourne	R.Ward	J.Louden
	T.Leggott	
	W.M.Mackay	
	P.Hill	
Geelong	J.M.Cromarty	B.Webster
Hamilton	J.Pateman	D.McFarlane*
Ulverstone	Vacant	N.Triffett*

- 4 The Moderator welcomed the Rev. Dr J.C.Andrews, and it was resolved that he be associated with the Synod.
- 5 A welcome was extended to three brothers sitting in the court for the first time: Messrs. B.Dunne and R.Lawson, and Rev. P.Hill.
- 6 The Moderator also welcomed the two deputies of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, Mr John Eikelboom and Rev. Clarence Bouwman.
- 7 It was resolved that presbyteries having unfinished business be permitted to meet while Synod is not in session.

8 **NEW MODERATOR**

The Clerk reported that the Rev.J.A.McCallum, St Georges, was Moderator-elect, and it was resolved that this appointment be confirmed.
Mr Graham welcomed Mr McCallum to the chair and following praise and prayer the new Moderator delivered the

9 **1991 MODERATORIAL ADDRESS**

Following the reading of Scripture Mr McCallum addressed Synod basing his remarks on Mark chapter 6 verse 31. 'And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.'

Now, who was it to whom our Lord was specifically speaking? He was addressing the apostles, those who were to be founders of his church and he was recognizing something important about those who were preachers and ministers. That they were but men, men whose hearts would faint and fail, men who would become weary in well doing. They were men who would be labourers and not men at ease. And our Lord was emphasizing that he is interested in us, concerned with us and that his ministers must be close to him.

Then secondly, what precisely was Christ asking these disciples to do? To come away privately and commune with Christ and one another; to rest and be refreshed. And this was a command of our Lord. The moderator proceeded to apply this principle to the ministers and elders of our church. And he urged the brethren to consider the desirability of coming apart privately and resting. Don't be always preaching, don't be always visiting, there is the need for proper rest and communion with one another.

Then thirdly, when did he give these words? Our Lord spoke to the disciples as he was sending the disciples out to preach and heal and do mighty works. (vs.7-13)

He also spoke these words having heard of the beheading of John the Baptist. (vs.14-29) which news would have depressed and saddened the apostles. 'Come apart for a while and rest' he said.

Elijah's ministry was then cited as an instance illustrating the need to rest. He rested at God's command by the brook Cherith.

And finally it was asked, why does the Lord speak these words to the apostles? And the answer is in the word 'rest'. Ministers need to be built up in their spiritual lives. Ministers and

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preachers need to be ministered to. They need to minister to one another. They need to 'come apart and rest a while.' They must first commune with God before seeking to reach the world with the gospel.

It is the man who knows this profound communion with God who will do the most for men.

This is the message that the Lord has for harassed ministers. Keep the world out for a while, come apart and have a rest, have refreshment in the presence of God's people and from the Lord himself.

- 10 Notices of motion were read, and the session was closed with the benediction.

W. P. Gadsby
Clerk

John McCallum
Moderator

SESSION 2 WEDNESDAY 3 APRIL 1991, 9.00 am.

- 11 The sederunt was constituted with worship, led by the Moderator who spoke of the Scriptures as the basis for our *faith*, a faith that abides.
The minutes of sederunt 1 were read and confirmed.

12 EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY

It was noted that Mr Tom Peters of Winnaleah, Tas. had passed away during the year.

It was resolved that the Court express its sympathy with the family of Mr Tom Peters, and to all those in our Church who have been bereaved in the past year. Further, Synod resolved to communicate our deep sympathy with our brother Rev. Hugh Varnes upon the recent death of his father.

Mr S.N.Ramsay led in prayer.

13 THANKS TO MODERATORS

It was resolved that the thanks of the Court be conveyed to Mr Graham for his sermon, and to the incoming Moderator for his address.

14 ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The Clerk presented the Report which was received. It was resolved

1. That Correspondence Item 1 be received, and noted.
2. That Correspondence Item 2 be received and noted.
3. That Correspondence Item 3 be received and noted.
4. That Correspondence Item 4 be taken with the Inter-church Relations Committee Report.
5. That Correspondence Item 5 be taken with Law and Advisory Committee business.
6. That Correspondence Item 6 be taken with Finance Committee business.
7. That Correspondence Item 7 be taken with Law and Advisory Committee business.
8. That Correspondence Item 8 be taken with the Report of the Examiners of Central Presbytery records.
9. That Correspondence Items 9 and 11 be taken on Friday morning.
10. That Correspondence Item 10 be taken with 8:14 Foundation Committee business.
11. That Correspondence Item 12 be taken with Victorian Trustees business.
12. That Wednesday evening be devoted to a time of informal conference of Synod members.
13. That Sederunt 6 (Thursday evening) be devoted to reports, discussion and prayer about Church Extension and Mission work.
14. That Presbyteries and local courts provide information on records in their possession to the Archivist to enable completion of the listing.
15. That Synod request any individuals who may hold old minute books and papers of church courts to return them to the relevant church court or the Archivist, and recommend that important or rare documents be copied and the original or copy be lodged in the Archives.
16. Synod encourage congregations and Presbyteries to keep a photographic and written narrative of church life so as to preserve some record of the Lord's dealings for a future generation.

The Committee proposed

17. That Synod appoint the following Examiners of Records, to report during sederunt 7 (Friday morning):

Synod permanent record: Messrs A.L.Tripovich and J.Kerridge

Northern Presbytery: Messrs J.Pateman and D.E.Kerr

Central Presbytery: Messrs K.MacLeod and T.I.Leggott

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Southern Presbytery: Messrs S.N.Ramsay and A.Neil

It was moved and seconded on notice

That the Court appoint as examiners of records, 1 minister and 1 Commissioner. Hence appoint the following examiners, who will report during Sederunt 7:

Synod Permanent Records: Rev. S.N.Ramsay and Hunter Elder

Northern Presbytery: Rev. T.Leggott and Taree Elder

Central Presbytery: Rev. A.Tripovich and Geelong Elder.

Southern Presbytery: Rev. J.Graham and Grafton Elder

On being put to the vote the Committee's proposal was carried.

The Committee proposed

18. That Synod 1992 be held in Taree, and commence at 7.00pm on Tuesday, 21 April 1992 and conclude on Friday 24 April 1992 by 1.30pm.

It was moved and seconded on notice That recommendation 18 be deferred until a later sederunt and that consideration be given to extending Synod by at least one day.

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

It was resolved

That Synod Standing Orders I. Motions, Section 6 be amended to read:

When the recommendations of Standing Committees are in the hands of members as prescribed by Synod, any competent amendments, alternative proposals or additional motions relevant to the business of that Committee shall be given in writing to the Clerk not later than the session preceding that in which the business of that Committee is to be taken up by Synod, and shall be read to the court before the close of that session.

15 GENERAL TREASURER'S REPORT.

Mr McPherson presented the report. It was moved and seconded that the report be received.

It was moved and seconded on notice that the report be received with the deletion of the second paragraph other than its first sentence.

The first motion was carried. Mr Leggott and Mr Ward tendered simple dissents.

It was moved and seconded on notice that the Finance Committee in consultation with Trust Corporations examine and define the role of the parties appointed to invest Synod Funds under the terms of Act10 Synod 1985.

The motion was carried.

16 AUDITOR'S REPORT.

Mr McPherson presented the Auditor's report which was received.

An item of correspondence from the Auditor indicating his resignation from the position was read and received.

It was resolved that the sincere gratitude of the court be conveyed to Mr William Walker for his services as Synod Auditor over the past 15 years, and that the new Treasurer arrange a suitable token of our appreciation to be conveyed to Mr Walker.

17 ORDER OF THE DAY (FRCA Delegates).

It was resolved that Synod appoint an Order of the Day for Wednesday afternoon, following the confirmation of the minutes, for Synod to be addressed by a representative of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.

18 8:14 FOUNDATION

After considerable discussion the report was received.

It was resolved that Synod confirm the actions taken by the Committee in relation to the loan of \$60,000 to the Melbourne Congregation.

Simple dissents were tendered by Messrs. McCallum, Tripovich, Kerr and S.N.Ramsay.

19 CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 10

The correspondence was received. Central Presbytery was called to the bar. Mr Longworth presented the petition which sought permission to obtain a loan from the 8:14 Foundation of up to \$30,000 to fund the purchase of a new manse.

Notices of motion were read. The sederunt was closed with prayer.

W. P. Gadsby
Clerk

John McCallum
Moderator

SESSION 3 WEDNESDAY 3 APRIL 1991, 1.50 pm.

- 20 The sederunt was constituted with prayer. The minutes of sederunt 2 were read and confirmed.
- 21a **ORDER OF THE DAY** (see Article 17)
The Moderator invited Rev. Clarence Bouwman of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia to address the Synod. Mr Bouwman drew attention to some areas of practice in our church which in the estimation of the FRCA put barriers in the way of true unity in the faith. Greetings were formally conveyed to the PCEA on behalf of the FRCA.
The Moderator thanked Mr Bouwman for his address and assured him that matters raised would undoubtedly be taken up by our deputies for contact.
- 21b From Art.19
Synod again took up the matter of **Correspondence Item 10**. It was moved and seconded that the prayer of the petition of the Manning Deacons' Court be granted in the following terms: That the sum of up to \$30,000 be loaned to the Manning Deacons' Court for a period of one year with the request that the Deacons' Court consider the sale of portion of the other property of the congregation if necessary, to repay the loan within that period or soon thereafter. The motion was carried.
- 22 **FINANCE COMMITTEE**
The convener Mr Steel presented the report which was received.
It was resolved
1. That Synod record its thankfulness to God for adequate provision for the maintenance of the ministry during the past year.
 2. That Presbyteries remind Deacons' Courts of their responsibility in the management of Church Funds. Any action taken by them is to conform with Trustee Acts and Enabling Acts (Church Property Acts) within their State. In regard to the investment of funds, Deacons' Courts are required to:
 - a) exercise **ordinary business prudence**;
 - b) act **impartially**;
 - c) invest **only** in securities **authorised by Trustee Acts** within their State.The principles of **moderation** and **prudence** to be kept to the fore at all times.
 3. That adjustment of Minimum Stipend and Benefits (excluding Manse, Car and Telephone maintenance) for 1991/92 be at the full flow on of CPI increase and child allowances remain unaltered.
 4. That Presbyteries draw the attention of Deacons' Courts to the current exemptions from Fringe Benefits Tax for benefits provided by religious institutions to their employees, as outlined in Finance Committee Report Appendix 1.
 5. That the General Treasurer be authorised to transfer Synod's bank accounts to the National Australia Bank, Eastwood NSW branch and that signatories to accounts and other associated financial documents should be any two of W.P.Gadsby, J.G.Harris, D.E.Kerr, A.H.Steel and A.L.Tripovich.
- 23 **CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 6** (from Central Presbytery re rescission of Inflationary Proofing Legislation)
The correspondence was received.
Mr D.Kerr stated the overture. It was moved and seconded that the prayer of the overture be granted and that this Court rescind Act 15, Class II of Synod 1990. The motion was carried.
Mr Ward dissented and protested in the following terms: I dissent and Protest in my own name and the name of those who may adhere reserving all rights since the failure to recognize the effects of inflation on perpetual trusts is contrary to the prudential requirements of trust law.
- It was resolved that the Committee make further examination of the matter of Synod delegates' travel expenses, with particular reference to car running (as distinct from standing) costs, and the viability of linking the allowable costs with shared travel by motor vehicle where this is reasonable, and report on this issue to Synod 1992.
- It was resolved that to assist in accounting for Synod's finances, quarterly reporting in *The Presbyterian Banner* and in meeting Synod's deadline of despatching the Annual Accounts and Report to Synod members at least 50 days prior to the scheduled opening of Synod, the Treasurer be authorised to purchase a microcomputer, software and peripherals at a cost no

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greater than \$4000.

24 CHURCH EXTENSION AND SUPPLY COMMITTEE

The Convener Rev. J.A.Cromarty presented the report which was received.

It was resolved

1. That Synod place on record its gratitude to God for watching over and making provision for all aid-receiving charges.
2. That delegates be asked to convey the thanks of this Committee, Synod and the aid-receiving charges, to all the folk who have made contributions to support this particular work of the Lord.
3. That Armidale be granted \$10,800—this to be on a needs basis.
4. That Hamilton Charge be granted \$7,000 stipend relief—this to be on a needs basis.
5. That Ulverstone congregation receive stipend support of 50% from 1992.

The Committee proposed

6. That Synod note and confirm the action of the C.E. and Supply Committee authorising an interest free loan of \$5,000 to the Melbourne Deacons' Court.

It was moved and seconded on notice that in the light of information supplied in the Committee's Report, Synod note with concern the request from the Melbourne Deacons' Court 'made in the same terms as the request made to Synod 1990' and the Committee's response thereto; confirm the action on this occasion, and stress that such confirmation is not to set a precedent.

The Committee's recommendation became the finding of the court.

Notices of motion were read.

25 The sederunt was closed with prayer at 5.40 pm.

W. P. Gadsby
Clerk

John McCallum
Moderator

SESSION 4 THURSDAY 4 APRIL 1991, 9. 00AM.

26 The sederunt was constituted with worship, led by the Moderator, who spoke of the Christian grace of *hope*, the hope of glory yet to be revealed.

27 The minutes of sederunt 3 were read and confirmed.

28 MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Rev. T.I.Leggott presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received.

It was resolved that

1. Synod acknowledge the vital place of Christian Witness to Israel in our church life and recommends its missionaries and their work to the prayers of church members.
2. Synod gives thanks for the great measure of recovery experienced by Leone Tupua, and sends its heartfelt greetings to him, his family and the brethren of the Presbyterian Church of Fiji.
3. Synod prays for blessing on the testimony of the Free Church of Central India and the strengthening of its witness through the medical and health work, and through educational care.
4. Synod records its support of the work done in South Africa, especially in times of political and social stress and development, remembering the need for strengthening of leadership, and for the missionaries, especially Rev. David and Mrs Meg Miller as they learn to adapt to a new language and cultural patterns, and Rev. W.D.Graham, Moderator Designate of the Free Church of Scotland General Assembly, and Mrs Graham.
5. Synod expresses its appreciation to Rev. Pedro Arana of Peru for giving time to visit some of the congregations of this church. Synod seeks to support the work of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Peru and of St Andrew's College, Lima.
6. Synod encourages an understanding and prayerful concern for the aboriginal peoples of Australia and prays that the teaching of the Scriptures may lead them to Christ.
7. Synod expresses its appreciation to Mrs Margaret Hockett and Dr Helen Ramsay for their visits to Peru and India respectively, to John Greensill for the invaluable contribution he made on his visit to India and to John Kerridge for copying the Missionary Prayer Letter.
8. Synod approves the procedure in relation to missionaries of the PCEA offering for service in the Free Church of Scotland Missions as embodied in the Regulations of that Church adopted 1990, and quoted in the Committee's report.
9. Synod encourages the Missions Committee in its efforts to make provision for full-time workers so that approved offers for missionary service may have appropriate and immediately available provision.

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10. Synod asks Sessions to place before our people the challenge of Missions, and particularly the desirability of having suitable missionaries on the field.
11. Synod approves the budget for 1991 as set out in the Committee's report and note and approve the provisional budget for 1992.
12. Synod encourages each Deacons' Court to budget planned givings for Missions and to advise details to the Missions Committee to aid planning and budgeting.
13. Synod requests Deacons' Courts to remit funds for Missions at least quarterly so enabling Missions obligations to be met on a regular basis.
14. Synod applies the monies in credit with the J.A.Harman Memorial Fund, viz. \$1,540, to the training of native pastors in South Africa via Dumisani Bible School.
15. That this Synod continue its support for Dr Dennis Muldoon at The Agricultural College, Allahabad, India and forward to him \$1000 for the current year.

It was resolved that the Missions Committee be directed to provide to the editor of **The Presbyterian Banner**, at least every three months beginning with May 1991, an article detailing developments in missions of interest to PCEA members.

29 TRAINING OF MINISTRY COMMITTEE

The Convener, Rev. J.M.Cromarty, presented the report, drawing attention to the great need of labourers for the harvest, and our duty to pray the Lord of the harvest to send them out. It was resolved that the report be received.

Following discussion, it was resolved to meet in closed court to discuss matters relating to one section of the report. Synod met in open court. It was resolved

1. That Synod thank God for the addition of Rev. Peter Hill to the ranks of the ministry and pray God's blessing to be upon him as he labours in the work of the Gospel.
2. That Synod assures Dr Hanna of its prayerful support as he pursues his studies and continues to minister in Brisbane.
3. That Synod determine student allowances on the following basis:
 - i. Single student living allowance - up to 50% of minister's stipend per annum.
 - ii. Married student living allowance - up to 75% of minister's stipend per annum.
 - iii. That other allowances remain unchanged.
4. That Sessions seek out and encourage any men in whom they discern gifts for ministry.

30 It was moved on notice and seconded that

Whereas the Melbourne session has unanimously supported and encouraged Rev. Peter Hill in the opportunity recently provided him to complete full time in 1991 an MA (prelim.) course in Semitics at the University of Melbourne;
and whereas the principle of post-graduate courses is recognized in our regulations (and in past practice), subject to approval;
and whereas the Training of Ministry Committee have been fully informed of the position and have no objection in principle to financial assistance to Mr Hill;

Synod

- 1) resolve that assistance of \$10,000 from Training of Ministry funds to Mr Hill toward living costs and expenses be granted subject to him signing the Bond in usual form (5 years);
- 2) express assurance of prayer and good wishes to Mr Hill in his studies.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was carried

Mr Kerridge and Mr Tripovich registered simple dissent while Rev. J.M.Cromarty tendered dissent with reasons, with Mr Neil, Mr Kerr and Mr McCallum adhering:

Whilst not opposing in principle the support of Mr Hill from Synod funds, the Training of Ministry regulations make no provision for such a grant to an ordained minister. The amount requested is being taken from the funds of a committee, which funds were not given for this specific use. The Training of Ministry Committee of which I am convener was not in a position therefore to support a request for the grant to be taken from this Committee's funds.

It was resolved that a committee comprising Messrs. Ward, Leggott and Andrews be appointed



contents.html to answer the above reasons.

31 Notices of motion were read, and the session was closed with prayer at 12.31 pm.

W. P. Gadsby

John McCallum

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Clerk

Moderator

SESSION 5 THURSDAY 4 APRIL 1991, 1.30 p.m.

32 The session was constituted with prayer.

33 The minutes of sederunt 4 were read and confirmed.

34 YOUTH AND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

In the absence of the Convener, Mr A.Neil presented the report, which was received. It was resolved.

1. THAT the thanks of Synod be conveyed to Mrs. Irene Steel, Mrs. Sue Ramsay & Rev. Jim Cromarty, Editor of 'Fellowship' magazine.

2. THAT the importance of memorization work, essays and Search Work be again noted.

3. THAT representative elders note that the Committee is seeking responses regarding the Sabbath School Syllabus.

4. THAT warm support be pledged for the second Church-wide Family Conference and that Congregational papers not be overlooked.

5. THAT Synod agree to the payment of certain Family Rally expenses as was the case on the previous occasion.

35 CHURCH AND NATION REPORT

Rev. E.Lee presented Section I of the report which was received.

It was resolved that the report be printed in *The Presbyterian Banner*. It was resolved that Synod direct the Committee to consider the Australian Law Reform Commission Discussion Paper 46 on 'Multiculturalism and Family Law,' and make an appropriate submission on behalf of the PCEA before 1 May 1991.

Section II of the Report was presented and received. It was resolved

1. That the Editor be commended for his efficient and competent editing and production of the *Banner*.

2. That Synod record its thanks to all those who have been involved with the production and distribution of our church magazine in 1990.

3. That Synod write to the Federal Minister for Communications, objecting to Australia Post's proposal to abolish Category A Registered Publications, and its action of increasing postal charges far in excess of CPI.

Section III of the Report was presented and received. It was resolved that Synod rescind resolution 5, 1988 of the Publications Committee, and resolve that should there occur a surplus of income over cost in the distribution of the authorized history, *The Bush Still Burns*, such surplus shall be divided in the ratio of 1:4 between the Synod Publications Fund and the author.

Section IV of the Report was presented and received. It was resolved that Synod view with satisfaction the continuance of Psalmody Conferences and encourages our people to be in attendance where possible.

It was moved, seconded and carried on notice that Synod take note of the diversity of Psalm versions currently in use within the Church, and encourage Sessions to maintain close supervision of these.

Mr S. N. Ramsay dissented with reasons: This deliverance may be construed as Synod's approval of the current wide diversity of Metrical Psalms now in use by Congregations.

Messrs. Neil, Kerridge, Tripovich and Kerr adhered to the dissent with reasons.

Section V(A) of the Report was presented and received. Mr Tripovich presented Section V(B) of the Report which was received. Considerable discussion ensued.

It was resolved that this court hereby expresses its gratitude to the Lord for the diversity of spiritual gifts he has distributed to our Church, and particularly those exercised by spiritual women members. Synod encourages all church members to exercise their gifts, within the limits imposed by God's Word, for the building up of the body of Christ. Synod especially exhorts the men to repent of all unbiblical attitudes to women, and to encourage them to use fully their gifts in the service of Christ. Synod exhorts the women to beware of the propaganda of the feminist movement, and to cultivate the qualities commended by God's Word.

36 LAW AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

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The Convener, Rev. R. S. Ward presented the report which was received. The Committee proposed that

1. In the present circumstances of the church with small presbyteries and long distances, urgent but straightforward business (eg., appointment of an assessor to a session to make up a quorum) arising between presbytery meetings may be dealt with by correspondence to minimise expense and inconvenience. Motions should be put in writing, signed by mover and seconder, and forwarded to the clerk of presbytery with a clear and concise outline of the reasons for the measure. The clerk circulates the motion(s) to each member of presbytery for voting by return mail. If there are no negative votes, the business is proceeded with after a reasonable time has elapsed for responses to be received. In cases where a decision is made by telephone hook-up or the like, the exact text of the agreed decision is immediately circulated to all members by the clerk. If there are negative votes, the business shall not be proceeded with, but put on the agenda for the next ordinary meeting of presbytery, or, if necessary, an extraordinary meeting of presbytery called.

Motions placed before presbytery by correspondence are recorded in the minutes of the following meeting.

The Moderator ruled the motion out of order.

It was resolved that

2. Synod rescind item (g) in Act 4, Class 2, Synod 1990 (being amendment to Act 15, Class 2, Synod 1983) and replace with the following words:

Students are required to be in good standing as communicant members in a congregation convenient to their residence, and to give ample notice of any proposed change of address to their presbytery and to the Training of Ministry Committee. Students moving beyond the bounds of the presbytery to the bounds of another presbytery are to obtain a certificate of character and attainments so as to enable orderly transfer between presbyteries.

3. Synod adopt Chapter 4 (The Presbytery) of the new Practice, as printed in 1990 Synod reports and amended by Synod 1991, to replace the corresponding sections of the Free Church of Scotland Practice, 1964 edition, and to regulate procedure in church courts henceforth.

4. Synod adopt Chapter 5 (The Synod) of the new Practice, as bound with 1991 Synod reports to replace the corresponding sections of the Free Church of Scotland Practice, 1964 edition, and to regulate procedure in church courts henceforth.

5. Synod request presbyteries to consider carefully the draft of chapters 6 and 7 of the revised Church Practice, and request that presbyteries or individual members of presbyteries send suggestions, comments and criticisms to the Committee no later than the end of November 1991 with a view to any further adjustments being made before the enactment of the said chapters by Synod 1992.

6. Synod amend item 3.22b of the Church Practice as adopted by Synod 1989 to now read as follows:

b. Guidelines for insurance cover generally (including vehicles) were set by Synod 1982. In 1990 the Synod effected a group insurance scheme for all church and manse buildings and church-owned contents allowing St George's Congregation to opt out and make their own arrangements. The group policy is due on 2nd July each year, and each congregation contributes according to the insured value of its property.

c. Presbyterian ministers in the normal parish situation are not in a master-servant relationship and are not covered by Workers Compensation. In the eyes of the law they are self-employed and should make appropriate arrangements for protection against disability by accident and/or illness.

However, congregations should ensure that any other persons who are 'workers' for Workers Compensation purposes are duly insured under applicable State legislation.

7. Synod authorise the printing of the new Church Practice as approved to date, with corrections of typographical errors and the inclusion of an extended index, and commend same to the study of officebearers and church courts in particular.

37 **CORRESPONDENCE. ITEM 5** (Rescission of legislation concerning ministers' retirement age)

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The correspondence was read and received. Mr Lee and Mr Neil appeared in support of the overture.

It was moved and seconded that the prayer of the overture be granted in the following terms: that Act 21 Class 2 1986 be sent down to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act for report to Synod 1992.

It was further moved and seconded that the prayer of the overture be granted in the following terms: that in view of serious doubts concerning the lawfulness and validity of Synod's Act re: Retirement of Ministers from inducted service at age of 65 years, That Synod now rescind that Act as expressed by the Law & Advisory Committee in Proposal No. 4, Synod Minutes 1986 (p. 18, 19).

On being put to the vote the second motion become the finding of the Court.

The session was closed with prayer at 5.32 pm.

W. P. Gadsby
Clerk

John McCallum
Moderator

SESSION 6 THURSDAY 4 APRIL 1991, 7. 00 pm.

38 The session was constituted.

39 The minutes of session 5 were read and confirmed.

40 MISSIONS AND CHURCH EXTENSION EVENING.

The Moderator conveyed to the court recent news from Mrs. Margaret Hockett, serving in the Colegio San Andres, Lima, Peru.

He then invited the Rev. Trevor Leggott to introduce the first speaker. (Mr Leggott was 'standing in' for the Convener of the Missions Committee.) Mr Leggott introduced Dr Ramsay to the Moderator.

The Moderator invited Dr Helen Ramsay to address Synod. Dr Ramsay spoke of her visit to India and highlighted a number of matters which gave cause for praise and thanksgiving to God. Under God's hand the work is progressing.

Dr Ramsay informed Synod of plans in hand to return with a working party of seven or eight people including Miss Heather Beaton and Mr John Greensill, later in the year. She urged delegates to put this matter before our congregations. Expenses would be approximately \$2,000 per person.

Rev. Jim Cromarty, Convener of the Church Extension and Supply Committee addressed the gathering outlining some of the main points in the Committee's report to Synod. He then introduced Rev. John Graham of C.W.I. Mr Graham read from Psalm 126 and proceeded to address the gathered assembly on the work of C.W.I. in Sydney.

He reminded us of the group of ultra-orthodox Jews that he was privileged to minister to for a lengthy period. After the death of the wife of the leading Jew the studies were stopped. However, recently the studies have recommenced at the invitation of the leader. They are presently studying the Book of Romans in Chapter 7, and following a recent study the leader exclaimed 'It is alive.' The Bible is a living Word. John exhorted us all to pray earnestly for the work in which he is engaged, that God's ancient covenant people may be delivered from their spiritual blindness.

Mr Graham then briefly spoke on the preparation for and methodology of evangelism. We must be sent by God. We must be people given to prayer and the study of the Word. Then we must seek to have a team of people supporting us as we go out.

He exhorted us to have good tracts and Scripture portions and to seek to enter into verbal communication with those who are contacted. This was supported by some vivid illustrations of recent contacts in the street and households.

The Moderator then welcomed Rev. John Ross, Deputy Director of C.W.I.

Mr Ross spoke on the interconnection between revival and Jewish work. He then read from Psalm 72 and verse 16 'There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon and they of the city shall flourish like grain of the earth.'

Mr Ross reminded us of the smallness of the resources '...an handful of corn.' But how great the task is. He spoke of the great encouragements amongst Russian Jews. However there are so many Jews untouched, unreached by the gospel. The labourers are few. How slender are our resources.

But then v.16 speaks also of an alien environment '...upon the top of the mountains.' What a

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barren place, what a foreign place to plant a handful of corn. Amongst the Jewish people there is no place for the Lord Jesus. The work proceeds in an alien environment because of the state of the Jewish heart and the only means at our disposal is prayer and the powerful word of God.

But what an unexpected outcome. 'The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon.' The gospel shall be effective. 'And so all Israel shall be saved' declared the Apostle. The opportunities are great and we must continue in hope, for God as always will bless and prosper his Word.

The Moderator thanked the speakers for their interesting and encouraging words.

Mr Leggott and Mr J.A.Cromarty then led in prayer. Psalms 126 and 72:16-19 were sung.

- 41 Notices of motion were read.
- 42 As well, answers to reasons of dissent were submitted as follows.
1. The work of the Training of Ministry Committee is primarily concerned with students but is not confined to them.
 2. The larger part of the available Training of Ministry Committee funds have arisen from income from a bequest whose terms do not restrict the use of the income only to students for the ministry but allows its use specifically 'for training of Ministers' (extract from will 23/11/1964).
- 43 The Session was closed with prayer at 8.56 p.m.

W. P. Gadsby
Clerk

John McCallum
Moderator

SESSION 7 FRIDAY 5 APRIL 1991, 9.00 am.

- 44 The session was constituted with worship, led by the Moderator.
Reading from Colossians 3:1-14, Mr McCallum spoke of the greatest, abiding Christian grace of *love*.

The minutes of the previous session were read and confirmed.

- 45 **CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 7** (Amendments to NSW Property Act, 1918)
The correspondence was read and received. Mr D.Kerr stated the overture.
It was moved and seconded that the prayer of the overture be noted; and copies of these requested amendments be circulated to lower church courts in NSW for comment; those comments to be returned to the Law and Advisory Committee for collation and consideration by Synod 1993.
The motion was lost.

46 INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The Convener, Mr W.P.Gadsby, presented the report which was received.
It was resolved

1. That Synod write to the International Conference of Reformed Churches with the following comments on the Report of the ICRC Committee on Ecumenical Creeds:

(a) The PCEA does not normally make use of the creeds in its liturgy. Although the text of the 'Apostles' Creed' is to be found in printed collections of its subordinate standards, none of the 'ecumenical creeds' is formally part of the Church's constitution.

(b) The courts of the PCEA have considered the ICET text of the Apostles' Creed, and we support the text proposed by the ICRC Committee with the following amendments:

1. the non-use of capitalized pronouns in reference to deity (eg. 'His only son,' 'He descended,' 'He arose'). This usage violates the normal rules of English grammar, and is distracting to the reader;

2. the capitalization of 'son' in clause 2;

3. the substitution of the words 'conceived from the Holy Spirit' in clause 3, as more accurately reflecting the Latin *de*;

4. the addition of an explanatory note to clause 4c, 'he descended into hell,' along the lines of 'ie. continued in the state of the dead, and under the power of death till the third day.'

(c) We agree with the ICRC Committee in omitting the adjective 'Christian' in clause 9.

(d) We agree with the inclusion of the *filioque* clause in the Nicene Creed, as

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recommended by the ICRC Committee.

2. That Synod resolve to meet the cost of sending one delegate to the 1993 ICRC meeting.
 3. That Synod's fraternal greetings be sent to the Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia, with the request that contact between our two churches be revived.
 4. That Synod endorse the Committee's action of inviting representatives of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia to attend Synod, and direct that a similar invitation be extended to our brethren for Synod 1992.
 5. That Synod send fraternal greetings to the brethren of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia Synod, and instruct the ICR Committee to continue diligently to maintain contact with the FRCA.
 6. That Synod reply to the letter from the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia (received 19.07.90) in the terms of the letter drafted by a member of the ICR Committee, which was read to Synod.
 7. That Synod send fraternal greetings to our brethren of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.
 8. That Synod send fraternal greetings to our brethren of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand.
- 47 The Moderator invited Rev. Clarence Bouwman of the FRCA to respond to questions and comments by members of the Court. Mr Bouwman expressed the FRCA Deputies' appreciation of their fellowship with us.

48 PROVIDENT FUNDS COMMITTEE

The Convener Mr R.S.Ward presented the report which was received.

It was resolved

1. Synod request Deacons' Courts to note that the 1991 Super/LSL Levy is \$1,772, at least half (\$886) being payable by 30th June 1991 and the balance by 31st December 1991, vacant charges being allowed a rebate of 50% in respect of the levy due during the period of vacancy.
2. Synod note arrears for 1990 (Lismore \$852 and Manning \$852) and request the attention of the relevant Deacons' Courts.
3. Synod resolve that the basic rate of pension be increased from \$47 to \$50 (married) and from \$33 to \$35 (single) with effect from 1.07.1991.
4. The sum of \$6,788 be transferred to the Long Service Leave Fund from the Levy proceeds account.
5. Synod amend Provident Fund Regulations Section C as follows:

Add the following paragraph to C1:

Synod 1990 authorised the transfer of the trusteeship of the Fund to M.M.L.Superannuation Pty Ltd as trustee of the Mercantile Mutual Life Employer Sponsored Fund, administered in terms of a trust deed dated 28th April, 1988, and accordingly such transfer occurred effective 30th June 1990. This action was taken to avoid the costs of amending the original deed to comply with the Occupational Superannuation Standards Act 1987 and to facilitate administration.

Delete the paragraph under C5 beginning 'Contributions for the' and ending 'level of 8%'

Delete Section C8, renumber C9 to C8 and delete C10.

49 REPORTS OF EXAMINERS OF RECORDS

Synod Permanent Record. It was resolved that the permanent record be attested.

Northern Presbytery. It was resolved that the record be attested.

Central Presbytery. It was resolved that the record be attested.

Southern Presbytery. It was resolved that the record be attested.

50 CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 8 (Rescission of Synod 1990 directive item 57, 3 and 4)

The Administration Committee proposed that the correspondence be received and treated as a petition.

It was moved and seconded that Correspondence Item 8 be received and treated, as it is framed, as an overture.

The second motion became the finding of Synod on the casting vote of the Moderator.

Mr D.Kerr and Mr A.Neil stated the overture.

- 51 A notice of motion was read, and the session closed with prayer.

W.P.Gadsby

John McCallum

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Clerk

Moderator

SESSION 8 FRIDAY 5 APRIL 1991, 1.30pm.

- 52 The session was constituted.
- 53 It was resolved that Standing Orders be suspended to permit a motion to extend this meeting of Synod to no later than 5.00pm today. The motion was moved, seconded and carried.
- 54 Synod resumed consideration of **Correspondence Item 8** (see article 50 above).
It was moved and seconded that the prayer of the overture be granted in the following terms: that the decision of 1990, Item 57, 3 and 4, be rescinded.
It was further moved and seconded that the prayer of the overture be granted in the following terms: the words in Synod minutes 1990, page 15, clause 4(B) 'a person cited as a witness cannot be required to incriminate themselves' reflects the precise position of our church in matters of church discipline (*Practice*, 1964, p.172) and are incorrectly interpreted if regarded as in conflict with the accountability of each person before Almighty God to speak the truth.
Upon being put to the vote, the second motion became the finding of the Court.
Simple dissents were tendered by Messrs Varnes, Kerr, Tripovich and Neil.
- 55 CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 9** (petition from Central Presbytery re erection of Sydney Presbytery)
The correspondence was read and received.
- 56 CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 11** (re revision of Presbytery's boundaries)
The correspondence was read and received.
Mr W.P.Gadsby occupied the chair. The petitioners were called to the bar. Mr Kerr and Mr Neil appeared on behalf of the petitioners. It was moved and seconded that the petition be dismissed. The motion was carried. The decision was intimated to the petitioners. The Moderator resumed the chair.
- 57 NSW TRUST CORPORATION**
The report was presented by the Clerk Mr Gadsby. The report was received.
It was resolved that Synod again draw to the attention of Presbyteries and Deacons' Courts the matters of reporting bequests and legacies to The Trustees of the Synod of Eastern Australia, and of ensuring that leases be properly authorized and executed, as contained in the Trustees' 1991 report; and that Synod request these Courts to comply with the legislation of Synod in regard to these matters.
- 58 QUEENSLAND TRUST CORPORATION**
The Clerk Mr Gadsby presented the report which was received.
- 59 VICTORIAN TRUST CORPORATION**
Mr R.S.Ward presented the report which was received.
It was resolved
1. In accordance with the decision of Synod 1990, Synod endorse the addition in 1990 to bequest capital from bequest income of \$3,800 to the Nicolson Bequest (Missions), \$1,000 to the Ashman Bequest (Missions), approve the addition in respect of 1990 of \$2,500 to the Ashman Bequest (Training of Ministry), and approve the addition in 1991 of \$2,500 re Training of Ministry and approximately \$4,000 re Missions.
2. That \$2,600 of the interest earned be added to the Patterson Stipend Fund principal in respect of 1990, thereby raising the principal to \$42,700, and a further \$2,300 be added in 1991.
- 60 CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 12** (Overture from Hamilton Deacons' Court seeking permission to sell certain properties.)
The correspondence was read and received. Mr J.Pateman stated the overture. It was moved and seconded that the prayer of the overture be granted in the following terms: the sale of one or more of the four church buildings at not less than fair market value is approved subject to the approval of the Presbytery at the time of sale, and the proceeds to be held in trust for the Hamilton charge on the basis requested, and the income applied to the support of the ministry and witness of the Hamilton charge; and the Trustees for Victoria are authorized to sign and seal necessary documents accordingly.
The motion was carried.
Simple dissents were tendered by Messrs Varnes and Neil.

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- 61 APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR**
It was moved on notice, seconded and carried that Mr T.O.Higgins, FCPA, be appointed as Synod Auditor.
- 62 STANDING COMMITTEES**
It was resolved that the following revised Committee structure be adopted:
ADMINISTRATION AND ICR.
Clerk, Moderator, Moderator-elect, Assistant Clerk, Convener of Law and Advisory.
CHURCH EXTENSION AND SUPPLY
J.A.McCallum (C), J.A.Cromarty, J.S.Graham, Hunter elder, South Sydney elder.
CHURCH & NATION
A. Tripovich (C), S.N.Ramsay, K.MacLeod, Manning elder, Hastings elder.
FINANCE
A. Steel (C), N.McPherson, J.Gregor, R.Alford, N.Kerr, T.Higgins, Hawkesbury-Nepean elder, Sydney South elder.
8:14 FOUNDATION
Treasurer (C), Clerk of Synod, Moderator, plus 3 Presbytery representatives.
LAW & ADVISORY
R.S.Ward (C), W.P.Gadsby, W.M.Mackay, Brisbane elder, Hawkesbury-Nepean elder, St Georges elder.
MISSIONS
W.M.Mackay (C), R.S.Ward, P.Hill, T.Leggott, Geelong elder, Grafton elder (corresponding member). Advisers Drs Ramsay and Andrews.
PROVIDENT FUNDS
R.S.Ward (C), J.Pateman, J.Louden, N.Triffett, Geelong elder.
TRAINING OF MINISTRY
J.M.Cromarty (C), J.Pateman, W.M.Mackay, T.Leggott.
YOUTH & FELLOWSHIP
H.C.Varnes (C), J.A.Cromarty, J.S.Graham, I.Hamilton, G.Wyld, Hawkesbury-Nepean elder, Hunter elder.
- 63 MODERATOR 1992-93**
It was resolved that Rev. J.A.Cromarty be appointed Moderator-elect for 1992-93.
- 64 TIME AND PLACE OF SYNOD 1992** (ref. Art.14.18)
ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE PROPOSAL 18.
The Committee proposed that Synod 1992 be held in Taree, and commence at 7.00pm on Tuesday 21 April 1992 and conclude on Friday 24 April 1992 by 1.30pm.
It was moved on notice and seconded that Synod 1992 be held at Taree, and commence at 7.00pm on Saturday, 25 April 1992, that Monday 27 April be set aside as a day of conference and prayer and that Synod conclude on Friday 1 May by 1.30pm.
It was further moved on notice and seconded that Synod 1992 be held at Taree and commence at 7pm on Mon. 27 April and that Tuesday morning be set aside as a time of conference and prayer, and that Synod conclude on Fri. 1 May by 4pm.
On being put to the vote, the third proposal was preferred and became the finding of the Court.
- 65 THANKS TO MANNING CONGREGATION**
The Moderator expressed Synod's appreciation to the Manning Congregation, and especially the ladies, for their kind hospitality.
- 66 PRINCIPAL ACTS**
It was resolved that the Clerk be empowered to draw up a list of Principal Acts of Synod 1991, and include it with the minutes.
- 67 MINUTES**
The minutes of this final session were read and confirmed.
- 68 CLOSURE**
The Moderator briefly addressed the court, and Synod 1991 was closed with prayer.

W.P.Gadsby

John McCallum

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Clerk

Moderator

Acts of Synod 1991

Appended by the direction of Synod (see Article 66)

Class 1 (Barrier Act procedure)

None

Class 2 (Other)

Act	Article
1 Archiving of church records.....	14.15
2 Recording of church life for posterity.....	14.16
3 Amending Synod Standing Orders, I. Minutes, Section 6.....	14
4 Loan to Manning Deacons' Court from 8:14 Foundation.....	19
5 Direction to Deacons' Courts re management of trust funds.....	22.2
6 New Synod bank accounts and signatories.....	22.5
7 Rescission of Act 15, Class 2, 1990 re inflation proofing.....	23
8 Purchase of microcomputer for Synod accounts.....	23
9 Regulations re missionaries: adopting Free Church provisions re PCEA.....	28.8
10 Student allowances.....	29.3
11 Disposal of surplus from sale of authorized history.....	35(III)
12 Supervision by Sessions of alternative psalm versions.....	35(V)
13 Amendment of Act 4, Class 2, 1990 re Training of Ministry regulations.....	36.2
14 Adoption of new Church Practice, ch.4 'The Presbytery'.....	36.3
15 Adoption of new Church Practice, ch.5 'The Synod'.....	36.4
16 Amendment of Church Practice, ch.3.22b.....	36.6
17 Rescission of Act 21, Class 2, 1986 re ministers' retirement age.....	37
18 Delegate to be sent to 1993 International Conference of Reformed Churches.....	46.2
19 Amendment of Provident Funds regulations Section C.....	48.5
20 Authorization of sale of Hamilton Congregation church buildings.....	60
21 Appointment of new Synod Auditor: Mr T.O.Higgins, FCPA.....	61