

The Synod of Eastern Australia



Minutes

**Of the 161st Annual Meeting
Held at Cardiff NSW
12th May to 15th May 2008**

Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia

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Note: These copies appear without signatures of the Clerk and Moderator. The original confirmed minutes are signed and included in the permanent record.

08.1 OPENING

Within the Cardiff Church building of the Hunter/Barrington congregation, on Monday, 12th May, 2008, at 4.00pm, the Synod of Eastern Australia met and was constituted with worship, conducted by the Moderator, the Rev Dr RS Ward.

08.2 MODERATOR'S SERMON

Mr Ward read from John 4:1-26. He then preached a sermon entitled "Worship in Spirit and in Truth," referring to the character of worship in the context of the words of Jesus in John 4:24: "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

08.3 WELCOMES

The Moderator welcomed members and guests to the meeting of Synod, and made special mention of those attending for the first time.

08.4 ROLLS OF PRESBYTERIES

The Certified Rolls of Presbyteries were tendered, with apologies for non-attendance from those marked † hereunder.

Northern Presbytery	Ministers	Commissioned Elders
Armidale	DP Smith	K Dawson
Brisbane	Vacant	J Greensill
Hastings	AL Tripovich	W McKinnon†
Northern Rivers	RW Murray	R Campbell
	Residential Supply (Brisbane): W.J.W. Hanna†	

Central Presbytery		
Hawkesbury/Nepean	DK Muldoon	AH Reeve
Hunter/Barrington	SR Tamata	I Miller
Manning	GD Ball	C Alley
St. George's	JA McCallum	AH Steel (Treasurer)
	Synod Appointment: T.I. Leggott (Seconded to A.I.M.)	

Southern Presbytery		
Geelong	MG Smith	D Manly†
Knox	RS Ward	J Dekter
Knox	TW Yoa	
Narre Warren	Vacant	JB Louden
Ulverstone	Vacant	ID Hamilton

Synod Appointment: ER Lee† (retired)

Mr Manly was unable to attend because of illness. Mr Dawson would need to be excused from Tuesday evening. Mr Reeve would not be able to attend until Tuesday morning.

08.5 VISITORS FROM OTHER CHURCHES

The Moderator welcomed Rev Reinier Noppers as a delegate from the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. It was resolved that Mr Noppers be associated with the court. Mr Ball reported that he expected Rev Garry de Vries from the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia to attend on Tuesday, and Rev Alan Harman from Presbyterian Church of Australia, to attend on Tuesday in the morning.

08.6 THANKS

It was resolved that the retiring Moderator be thanked for his services during the year and for his sermon, and that it be published in *The Presbyterian Banner*. Several members made comment on the content of the sermon and discussion continued for some time.

08.7 CLOSURE OF SESSION

Notices of motion were called for. There were no notices of motion. The session was closed with praise and prayer at 5.30 pm.

TI Leggott
Clerk

RS Ward
Moderator

SESSION 2

MONDAY 12TH MAY 2008

7.00PM

The session was opened with praise and prayer at 7.00pm.

08.8 MINUTES

The minutes of Session 1 were read and confirmed.

08.9 ELECTION OF NEW MODERATOR

The Clerk reported that the Rev Dr DK Muldoon was Moderator-elect. It was moved and seconded that this appointment be confirmed. The motion was carried and Mr Muldoon took the chair.

08.10 MODERATOR'S ADDRESS

After praise the Moderator read from Jonah 1:1-3 and Ch3-4 and addressed the Synod on the subject of "The Sovereignty of God in Mission." The Moderator led the court in prayer.

08.11 THANKS

A number spoke in appreciation of the address. It was resolved that the Moderator be thanked for his address, and that it be published in "*The Presbyterian Banner*".

08.12 ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The Clerk presented the Administration Committee's Report. It was resolved that the report be received. It was resolved as follows:

1. That the Timetable proposed by the Administration Committee be approved.
2. That Synod express its sympathy for all those connected with this church who have been bereaved since the last annual meeting of Synod, and particularly the family of the late Jim Simpson, former member of Synod in 1971-72, 1977-79, and from 1999-2007.

Mr Ball led the court in prayer for those who have been bereaved during the previous year, and particularly remembering Mr Jim Simpson.

3. That Correspondence Items 1 be received and considered with Inter-Church Relations Committee business.
4. That Correspondence Item 2 be received and considered with Training of Ministry business.
5. That Correspondence Items 3 be received and considered with the Southern Presbytery Report.
6. That Act 1 Class 2 Synod 1983 as amended in Section 6 by adding the words 'together with correspondence' so that it reads:

The Clerk of Synod shall arrange for Committee Reports and Recommendations, together with correspondence, to be printed, and he distributes them so that they are in the hands of members not later than 21 days before the opening of Synod, extra copies being produced for binding with the minutes in due course. Correspondence with the potential to impugn the character or reputation of any person is not to be circulated to persons other than Synod members prior to Synod considering the same.

7. The Synod Standing Orders (Synod 1978 as amended 1984 & 1991) be amended by the insertion of the following clause 7 in section 1 (Motions):
 7. To ensure careful consideration and wise decision making, copies of correspondence for transmission to Synod shall be supplied with the Reports. Any non-procedural proposal that arises from late correspondence or on the floor of the Synod that is not already anticipated in the prayer of an overture or petition regularly before the Synod, or the subject of a notice of motion in terms of clause 6 of this Act, shall be held over until the next session and, if contentious or of complexity, referred to a representative ad hoc committee for report to the next or later session, before being debated.
8. That Presbyteries and Committees be permitted to meet when Synod is not in session.
9. That the following examiners of records be appointed:

Northern Presbytery	Rev. S.R Tamata and St Georges Elder.
Central Presbytery	Rev. R.S Ward and Brisbane elder.
Southern Presbytery	Rev. R.W Murray and Hunter elder.

08.13 CLOSURE OF SESSION

Notices of motion were presented. The session was closed with praise and prayer at 8.30pm.

TI Leggott
Clerk

DK Muldoon
Moderator

The session was opened with praise and prayer at 9.00am. The moderator read from Daniel 9, commenting on prayer life of Daniel. A welcome was also extended to Rev Professor Alan Harman. The moderator welcomed Mr Campbell and Mr Reeve to the Synod. The minutes of Session 2 were read and confirmed.

08.14 LAW AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Convener, Mr Ward presented the report.

08.15 NOTICE OF MOTION

Mr Murray presented his notice of motion: That the Law and Advisory Committee Report be received with the exception of the final paragraph (4. Alternative Questions and Formula, and the supporting Proposed Deliverance 5.

On being put to the vote the Law and Advisory Committee Report was preferred to the Notice of Motion. It was resolved that the Law and Advisory Committee Report be received.

08.16 ORDER OF THE DAY: VISIT FROM PROFESSOR ALLAN HARMAN

Mr Ward was asked to introduce Rev Dr Allan Harman who brought a greeting on behalf of Rev Robert Benn, Moderator General of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. Mr Harman shared his perspectives on the current focus of the Reformed Faith in Australia. Mr Harman indicated that he would pass some relevant important documents to the PCEA for holding in our archives. Mr Harman further spoke of his firm belief of the critical importance of the Dumisani Theological Institute, and made the suggestion that it would be an excellent idea to establish the College library as a memorial to the late Dr Campbell Andrews.

The moderator expressed the thanks of the court to Rev Harman for his greeting and for his gift to the church archives, and for his suggestion regarding the Dumisani Theological Institute.

08.17 LAW AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Synod continued with questions relating to the report. Mr Ward presented the deliverances. It was resolved that:

1. Synod request any who frame proposals for Synod's consideration to take care to make provision for specifying previous enactments that are varied or rescinded by such proposals.
2. Synod approve the amendment of Act 11 Class 2, Synod 1990 as described in the Report and included as Appendix A to the Report.
3. Synod notes that those matters in the edition of the Handbook of Practice and Procedure (approved by Synod 29 April 1992) of an obligatory character as standing rules for the church at large, its presbyteries or congregations, together with those of like character marked with an asterisk in Part 1 of the 2008 Report, have sufficiently met the requirements of the 'Act Anent the Method of Passing Acts of General Concern to the Church, and for Preventing of Innovations' (commonly called the Barrier Act), and pass from the matter.

4. Synod notes the proposed new edition of the Handbook and Decision book, approves the production of 70 copies at the expense of Synod General Fund with four being supplied to each charge at the expense of Synod, and additional copies to those desiring them at \$20 each.

08.18 CLOSURE OF SESSION

Notices of motion were presented. The session concluded with prayer at 12.35pm.

TI Leggott
Clerk

DK Muldoon
Moderator

SESSION 4

TUESDAY 13TH MAY 2008

2.00PM

The session was opened with prayer and praise at 2.00pm. The minutes of session 3 were read and confirmed.

08.19 ORDER OF THE DAY:

INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS: VISITORS FROM OTHER CHURCHES.

Rev GD Ball, Convener, introduced Rev Reinier Noppers from the Reformed Churches of New Zealand (RCNZ), and the moderator invited Mr Noppers to address the Synod. Mr Noppers brought a greeting from the RCNZ and spoke about the situation in New Zealand. Like the PCEA there was a critical need for additional ministers for the church. There were encouraging signs with local evangelism and overseas mission, and relations with other churches were developing. The church had investigated the current appropriateness of different versions of Scripture and well as hymnody and church forms.

Mr Ball introduced Rev Garry de Vries, local minister of the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia. Mr de Vries brought a welcome from the CRCA, noting the value of fellowship with the PCEA along with others of the Reformed Faith. Within the CRCA Synod there had been a recent refocus on the priesthood of all believers, with a desire for developing discipleship and mission.

The Clerk read from a recently received letter from the Clerk of Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia. It was resolved that the letter be received and that a suitable response be made by the Convener of the Inter-Church Relations Committee.

The Moderator invited Mr Leggott to lead the court in prayer.

08.20 LAW AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Synod took up further consideration of proposed deliverance 5. After considerable discussion the convener presented the deliverance. It was resolved that:

5. Synod approves the 'Act Allowing Optional Alternative Questions & Formula while not reducing commitments in terms of Act of Synod 1952' as set out in Appendix

Note: In the Questions: The Committee accepted the suggestion that 'but' in the last sentence on page 10 and 'generally' in the paragraph headed 'Deacons' be deleted.

Mr Steel tendered dissent with the following reasons: The Optional Alternative Questions & Formula are at variance with the existing Questions & Formula and reduce commitments in terms of the Act of Synod 1952. They do not include a commitment to *Purity of Worship* presently authorised in practised in the Church. Further, *Barrier Act Procedure* should apply as the resolution involves the alteration of an existing law where the change affects the church generally and is designed to have permanent force.

Mr Murray and Mr Tripovich adhered to the dissent with reasons. Mr Hamilton tendered a simple dissent.

08.21 CHURCH AND NATION, YOUTH & FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

The Convener the Rev Dr DK Muldoon, being moderator, vacated the chair to present the report. Mr Ward took the chair. Mr Muldoon presented the report.

Mr Murray spoke briefly on the report of the Presbyterian Banner.

Mr MG Smith gave an update report on the PCEA web site.

Mr Muldoon concluded the presentation of the report. It was resolved that the report be received. It was further resolved that:

1. Synod thank Mrs Margaret Kinder for sending birthday greetings to children in the PCEA, and Mrs Irene Steel for setting and assessing Search Work questions.
2. Synod thank all Sunday School teachers and youth leaders for their dedicated work in teaching young people the Word of God.
3. Synod thank Rev Ray Murray and all engaged in the production and distribution of *The Presbyterian Banner*, - Susan Scott, Roberta Murray, John McPhee, and Ross Campbell - and all who have provided material for this publication.
4. Synod thank Rev Gavin Smith for managing the website www.pcea.org.au, and James Ramsay for his assistance.
5. Synod convey to the Prime Minister, the Honourable Mr Kevin Rudd, our concern for the spiritual welfare of our nation, our interest in the measures the Government is implementing to address national and international issues, remind him that Governments as well as individuals are accountable to God for their conduct, and assure him of our prayer that the Lord our God would guide him and his Government in all their decisions.

Mr Muldoon returned to the moderator's chair.

08.22 NOTICE OF MOTION

Mr Murray presented his Notice of Motion regarding the establishment of a new Synod Committee: “That a new Committee, named the “Communications, Publications, and Resource Committee” (CPR Committee), be formed, taking in it IT, TPB, Website, and Archives, thus separating the TPB and Website from the Church and Nation Committee, and embracing the Archivist and Archival Matters. The Committee will have the following scope and remit:

IT – Assisting and aiding Churches with Website production and administration, Internet broadcast services, MP3 and other voice material, video and telephone services, and powerpoint equipment and presentation.

TPB – Oversight of Production, Policy, and General Management including the appointment of the Editor, Editors and Editorial Committee (subject to Synod approval).

Website – Oversight of Production, Policy, and General Management including the appointment of Webmaster, and Technical assistants.

Archival – Oversight of Archival material, and the appointment of Archivist.

E- Books, Resources, and Other Publications.

It was resolved that the proposal be referred to a Committee consisting of Messrs Murray, MG Smith, Ward and Leggott, to report to a future session of Synod.

08.23 INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS

The Convener Rev GD Ball presented the Committee’s report. It was resolved that the report be received.

08.24 CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 1: EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The correspondence is referred to in the report and there is a related proposed deliverance.

08.25 INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS

Mr Ball continued and presented the proposed deliverances. It was resolved:

1. That we record with gratitude the decision of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church at their General Assembly in 2007 to establish corresponding relations with the PCEA.
2. That Synod note and confirm that the ICR Convener was authorised by Synod 1997 to send fraternal greetings at the appropriate time to those churches with whom we have fraternal relations.
3. That Synod receive the letter from the Clerk of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, and that the Clerk convey the thanks of Synod to the EPC Presbytery.
4. That Synod send Christian greetings to the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia expressing our desire to have fraternal relations with them.
5. (a). The Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (PCEA) recognises in the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA) a church whose principles

and practices are similar to our own. It requires adherence from its office bearers to the Westminster Confession of Faith and practices purity of worship as we do. We have benefited in recent years from the ministry of Rev. George D. Ball (formerly of the RPCI), who completed part of his training with the RPCNA. Another of our ministers, Rev. Dr. Rowland S. Ward, a number of whose publications are circulated within the RPCNA, was warmly welcomed as a visitor to your meeting of Synod in 2007. We have entered into formal relations with the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia (RPCA) in 2004 in terms of our Fraternal Relations Act 1993, and similarly with the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland (RPCI) in 2006. Both the RPCNA and the PCEA are members of the ICRC. The Synod, therefore, desires to establish a relationship with the RPCNA in terms of our Fraternal Relations Act (1993), in the hope that we may be able to deepen and further strengthen the bond of fellowship between us to the glory of God. Accordingly, the Synod of the PCEA would welcome recognition by the RPCNA in a corresponding Act.

(b). Synod affirms that we are also prepared to specifically provide for mutual eligibility in similar terms to what we have with the Free Church of Scotland (2005), the Reformed Churches of New Zealand (2006) and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (2007), so that ministers, subject to the constitutional requirements of each church may move in a Presbyterian way between denominations. Mutual Eligibility is designed to implement the thinking of the Westminster Fathers as reflected in the Form of Presbyterian Church Government 1645, in its provisions for receiving ministers from other Reformed Churches, and to formalise it in an orderly way.

(c). The Synod of the PCEA acknowledges and is satisfied that RPCNA Presbyteries may issue Calls to eligible PCEA ministers and probationers, and likewise affirms the right of the PCEA Presbyteries to process Calls to eligible RPCNA men. Mutual eligibility does not impinge on the right and responsibility of the relevant RPCNA or PCEA Presbyteries to require that every incoming minister is familiar with the history, doctrine and practice of the church he is entering, so that he is able to subscribe heartily and intelligently to the formula of subscription. Mutual eligibility does not remove the requirement to produce full and satisfactory presbyterial certificates of character and attainment, including clearance under any relevant child protection legislation. When a PCEA congregation calls a minister, a meeting with the PCEA Presbytery may take place after the Call is issued and before it is accepted. This ought to ensure that the minister may assess more clearly whether he should accept the call, and know, should he accept it, that he would be admitted. This Act may be cited as the Mutual Eligibility Act (Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America) 2008.

6. That Synod appoint Rev T Leggott to represent the PCEA at the Synod of the RCNZ to be held in Hastings NZ from 6-12th September 2008.

08.26 CLOSURE OF SESSION

Notices of motion were called for and the session was closed with prayer at 5.20 p.m.

TI Leggott
Clerk

DK Muldoon
Moderator

The session was opened with prayer and praise at 7.00pm. The minutes of session 4 were read and confirmed.

08.27 MISSIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Convener Rev DP Smith presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received. After discussion, it was resolved:

1. That Synod express its continued prayerful support and interest in the work of Rev Trevor Leggott in his ministry with Australian Indigenous Ministries.
2. That Synod confirm the secondment of the Rev Trevor Leggott to serve as General Director of Australian Indigenous Ministries for a further three years from the 1/1/2009
3. That Synod delegates direct their congregations attention to the prayerful and financial support needed for Rev. Trevor Leggott in his ministry with Australian Indigenous Ministries
4. That Synod encourage congregational members to consider volunteering to help as native English speakers in either San Andres or the Annie Soper School.
5. That Synod adopt the budget for 2008 and express general agreement with the estimates for 2009.

08.28 TRAINING OF MINISTRY

The Convener Rev MG Smith presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received. The Convener presented the proposed deliverance. It was resolved that:

1. Synod exhort the church to continue to ask the Lord of the harvest and Head of the church to send out more workers both for our situation and for the wider work of God's kingdom.

08.29 CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 2: OVERTURE FROM SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY

Synod took up consideration of Correspondence Item 2, an overture from Southern Presbytery regarding Mr David Kerridge. Mr Ward stated the overture:

WHEREAS Presbytery has not at this time had enough time to assess the progress of David Kerridge in the light of certain issues raised with him since his acceptance as a student by this Presbytery on 25 July 2007, but is optimistic that he will satisfy Presbytery on these matters, THEREFORE Presbytery overtures the Synod of Eastern Australia to authorise Presbytery in Synod's name to admit him as a regular student for the ministry at such time as Presbytery judge fit.

It was resolved to meet into closed court. After discussion it was resolved that the Prayer of the Overture be granted in the terms requested. It was resolved to meet in open court.

08.30 CLOSURE OF SESSION

Notices of motion were called for and the session was closed with prayer at 8.30pm.

TI Leggott
Clerk

DK Muldoon
Moderator

The session was opened with praise and prayer. The Moderator read from Nehemiah 1-2:4 and commented on the prayer of Nehemiah. Synod engaged in a time of prayer. The minutes of Session 5 were read and confirmed.

08.31 PRESBYTERY REPORTS

Mr Murray presented the report for Northern Presbytery. Mr Muldoon presented the report for Central Presbytery. Mr Ward presented the report for Southern Presbytery. It was resolved that the reports be received.

08.32 CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 3: OVERTURE FROM SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY

Synod took up consideration of Correspondence Item 3, an Overture from Knox Congregation approved and transmitted to Synod by Southern Presbytery. Mr Ward stated the overture: ***OVERTURE FROM KNOX CONGREGATION***

WHEREAS there is need for additional facilities for the work proposed to be centred on Springvale (there being a manse but no adequate meeting place);

AND WHEREAS there is also the need to anticipate 10 or 15 years ahead with a view to securing sites in developing areas;

AND WHEREAS the congregation has significant debt-free income-producing assets and anticipates a reasonable surplus each year such as would support borrowings, and also has the capacity to realise existing assets in an orderly way to meet liabilities;

AND WHEREAS the time and cost of obtaining necessary Synod approval for borrowing is best avoided by a prudent provision enabling efficient action in the event of favourable opportunities;

NOW THEREFORE the Knox Deacons' Court overtures the Southern Presbytery to permit the overturing of Synod to grant approval for the borrowing of up to \$300,000 from external sources, to fund additional facilities for the extension of the work, subject to written demonstration of the capacity to service any loan being submitted to and approved by Southern Presbytery along with extract minutes approving the proposal from the Congregation and Deacons' Court, the security being the property acquired or existing property, other than the church;

OR to do otherwise for this object as in their wisdom they deem best.

After discussion it was resolved to defer further consideration to a later session.

08.33 FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Convener, Mr A Steel, presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received. After questions and explanation it was resolved that:

1. We record our thanks to God for the sufficiency of temporal provisions for the church since last Synod.
2. Adjustment of Minimum Stipend – Cash and Non-cash components (Excluding Manse, Car and Telephone) for 2008/2009 be made on 1st January and 1st July in line with the movement in the *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia (Full-time adult ordinary time earnings)* as published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. In the event of a negative movement in any six monthly review period, no adjustment be made.
3. Stipend Assistance for 2008/2009 be granted to the following Deacons' Courts, on a strictly needs basis: \$ 21,000 - Armidale, \$ 21,000 - Hawkesbury-Nepean \$ 10,000 - Narre Warren .

08.34 NOTICE OF MOTION - FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr Steel presented an additional motion from the Finance Committee. It was resolved that:

That Synod 1982: Act 12, Class 2 (Pulpit Supply) be amended as follows:

“2. That the **recommended** minimum rate **of stipend** payable for pulpit supply:-

a. for Ministers, Probationers or Students who have other sources of income be 10% of the weekly minimum stipend per service, plus travelling allowance.

b. for short term supply and limited Pastoral work (e.g., by retired Ministers or Missionaries) be 50% Minimum stipend per week plus accommodation and travelling expenses if necessary.

c. for residential supply and full Pastoral work by a **PCEA** Minister, the minimum stipend plus **usual church superannuation contribution, four weeks annual leave**, accommodation and travelling expenses.

d. for residential supply and Pastoral work by Probationers, or other supply, be ~~90%~~ **80%** Minimum stipend, **plus superannuation guarantee contribution, four weeks annual leave**, accommodation and travelling allowance.

e. for resident supply and Pastoral work by a Student with no other source of income be ~~married 85% minimum stipend; single, 60% minimum stipend, plus accommodation and travelling expenses if necessary.~~ **50% minimum stipend plus superannuation guarantee contribution, four weeks annual leave and accommodation and agreed expenses of working the charge if necessary, with an additional figure related to his marital and income situation and the pastoral load.**

3. The provisions of (2) above apply to ministers, probationers, students and missionaries of the PCEA, but may be negotiated as local circumstances dictate. In regard to supply by others the figures are not obligatory but may be varied according to local circumstances as determined by Deacons' Courts.”

(Note: Additions in “bold” type, deletions “ruled through”.)

08.35 GENERAL TREASURER'S REPORT

The General Treasurer, Mr AH Steel, presented his report. It was resolved that the report be received. The thanks of the court were conveyed to the General Treasurer Mr AH Steel for his efficient and thorough work during the year. The thanks were conveyed by acclamation. The Treasurer presented the proposed deliverance. It was resolved that:

1. Authorised signatories to operate Synod's bank account(s) be any two of GD Ball, DE Kerr, TI Leggott, JA McCallum, AH Steel and AL Tripovich.

08.36 SUPERANNUATION COMMITTEE

The Convener Rev Dr Ward presented the report. It was resolved that the report be received. The convener presented the proposed deliveries and it was resolved that:

1. Synod note the levy for 2008 of \$1,564 per quarter payable by the end of February, May, August and November with concessions as stated in the report.
2. Synod approve the immediate addition from the Super Support income account of \$8,526.39 to the amount treated as capital in the SSF, and the transfer of any excess above \$175,513 in the Superannuation Support Fund (capital and income) as at 31/12/08 to the Levy proceeds account.
3. Subject to the financial position continuing in a satisfactory state, Synod approve the reduction of the 2009 Levy to 14.5%.
4. Synod remind fund members of the advisability of seeking professional advice in regard to both choice of Fund and investments within any particular fund, and the effects of recent changes in Government legislation, so that it meets their particular needs, as this is their responsibility and not that of the church.
5. Synod request Sessions and Deacons' Courts to keep a close eye on ministers' leave entitlements to ensure ministers do not suffer burn out through failure to take it, and that Presbyteries keep this in mind in the annual examination of records.

08.37 NSW TRUST CORPORATION

The Clerk presented the report on behalf of the Trustees. It was resolved that the report be received. The Clerk presented the proposed deliverances. It was resolved that:

1. Substitute Members of the Body Corporate in NSW: Pursuant to Section 14 of the Synod of Eastern Australia Property 1918 Act the Synod resolves that in the event of any of the Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer of Synod being unavailable for necessary decisions and/or execution of documents, the immediate past Moderator or, failing him, the one next preceding him who is able and willing to act, shall be the Moderator for the purpose of the Property Act, the Convener of Law and Advisory Committee shall be the Clerk, or failing him a person nominated by that Committee; and the Convener of Finance Committee shall be the Treasurer, or failing him a person nominated by the Finance Committee; and such substituted person or persons shall be entitled to make decisions and execute documents as if the holder of the office of Moderator, Clerk or Treasurer, as the case may be. A record shall be kept of any substitution and report made to the ensuing Synod.
2. Deed Box Audit: Synod directs that, commencing in 2009, and every three years thereafter, that the Clerk of Synod and the General Treasurer carry out a joint inspection to verify the content of the Deed Box, and that the Clerk make report of their findings to the following meeting of Synod.

08.38 QUEENSLAND TRUST CORPORATION

The Clerk presented the report on behalf of the Trustees. It was resolved that the report be received. There were no proposed deliverances.

SESSION 8**WEDNESDAY 14TH MAY 2008****7.00PM**

The session was opened with praise and prayer at 7.00pm. Visitors were welcomed to the meeting. It was resolved that the reading of the minutes of Session 6&7 be deferred until the next session.

08.43 MISSIONS EVENING

The Convener of the Missions Committee Rev DP Smith introduced Rev Dr Alistair and Mrs Jenny Wilson and invited them to address the Synod. Alistair and Jenny gave a very interesting and informative introduction to the lifestyle and cultural perspectives in the Eastern Cape of South Africa.

Alistair proceeded with an introduction to the staffing, layout and function of the Dumisani Theological Institute, together with the vision for the future with things like the staff development, and financial and resource needs.

After answering a number of questions Alistair and Jenny were thanked for their very interesting presentation. In giving thanks the Convener of the Missions Committee, Peter Smith, gave indication of a gift from Missions funds and congregational collections of approximately \$7000 for the library at Dumisani.

The moderator thanked Alistair and Jenny for their stimulating and informative evening.

08.44 CLOSURE OF SESSION

The session was closed with prayer at 8.30pm.

TI Leggott
Clerk

DK Muldoon
Moderator

The session was opened with praise and prayer and the Moderator read from Jonah 2, commenting on Jonah's urgent prayer to a God of Grace. The minutes of sessions 6, 7 and 8 were read and confirmed.

08.45 REPORTS OF EXAMINERS OF RECORDS

The minutes of the Northern Presbytery for 2007-2008 were reported to be in order. The minutes of Central Presbytery for 2007-2008 were reported to be in order. The minutes of Southern Presbytery for 2007-2008 were reported to be in order. It was resolved that the Presbytery records be attested.

08.46 CORRESPONDENCE ITEM 3: OVERTURE FROM SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY

Synod took up further consideration of this overture. It was resolved that the Prayer of the Overture be granted in the following terms:

Should it be impracticable for Deacons' Courts to apply to the annual Synod for financial assistance and/or approval to mortgage congregational property, apart from places of worship, to enable them to purchase additional property for extension work in the charge, such application/approval to mortgage congregational property, is to be made to the Clerk of Synod in terms of the existing *Capital Assistance Fund* procedure.

In these instances the Synod Administration Committee is authorised to make a determination on the request to mortgage congregational property after receiving recommendation or otherwise from the Synod Finance Committee and advice of Presbytery's approval.

08.47 REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED UNDER MINUTE 8:22 NOTICE OF MOTION

The Committee proposed that the motion be passed from and presented an alternative: It was resolved that:

With a view to Synod 2009 disjoining Publications and Website from the Church and Nation/ Youth and Fellowship Committee and forming a Media and Resources Committee including Church Archives, Synod appoint an ad hoc Committee to progress this matter for the consideration of Synod 2009, the Committee to consist of RW Murray (Convener), MG Smith, RS Ward and J Dekter.

08.48 MODERATOR-ELECT FOR SYNOD 2009

The Clerk gave summary of those who had been elected over more recent years. The Moderator called for nominations for Moderator for 2009. It was resolved that the Rev John McCallum be appointed Moderator-elect for Synod 2009.

08.49 INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS: VISITOR FROM THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Rev GD Ball, Convener, introduced Rev Dr Alistair Wilson to the Moderator who invited him to address the Synod. Mr Wilson brought the greetings of the Free Church of Scotland, indicating that there were many similarities with ministry in both Scotland and Australia. Mr Wilson spoke of the challenges of numerical decline, with many young people moving away

to the cities for study and work. There was indication of concern with a number of aging ministers with relatively fewer numbers of students in training. There were both challenges and opportunities. New emphasis was taking place with outreach and evangelism, and the use of modern technology to provide teaching and preaching in isolated areas. The Free Church was also keen to maintain and extend its wider interest in mutual fellowship with other like-minded churches and areas of mission endeavour.

The moderator thanked Mr Wilson for his greeting and information. Mr Steel led the court in prayer.

08.50 TREASURER'S REPORT RE COSTS INCURRED BY SYNOD 2008.

The General Treasurer Mr AH Steel gave an indication of costs incurred by Synod 2008.

08.51 TIME AND PLACE OF SYNOD 2009

It was resolved that Synod 2009 be hosted by the Knox Church in Melbourne in the first half of May 2009, with the dates being determined by the Administration Committee and notice given by the end of December 2008.

08.52 PRINCIPAL ACTS

It was resolved that the Clerk would draw up a list of the Principal Acts of Synod 2008, and include it with the Minutes.

08.53 THANKS

It was resolved that the thanks of the court be conveyed to the Moderator for his leading of the Synod and for his devotional messages.

It was resolved that Synod extend its thanks to the Clerk for his work both during Synod and throughout the year. The motion was carried by acclamation.

It was resolved that the thanks of the court be conveyed to the Hunter/Barrington congregation for hosting the Synod and for their hospitality.

08.54 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of this closing Session 9 were read and confirmed.

08.55 CLOSURE OF SYNOD 2008

Synod 2008 was closed with closing remarks from the Moderator, the singing of Psalm 121, prayer and the benediction at 10.45am.

TI Leggott
Clerk

DK Muldoon
Moderator

ACTS OF SYNOD 2008
Appended by the Direction of Synod (08.52)

Class 1 (Barrier Act Procedure)

Reference

Nil

Class 2 (Others)

No	Act	Reference
1	Correspondence to Synod Included in Reports	08.12.6
2	Non-procedural Proposals Presented on the Floor of Synod	08.12.7
3	Stipend Assistance Regulations	08.17.2 and Appendix A in Reports
4	Handbook of Practice and Procedure Barrier Act Compliance	08.17.3
5	Act Allowing Alternative Questions & Formula	08.20.5 and Appendix B in Reports
5	Mutual Eligibility Act (Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America) 2008	08.25.5
6	Modification to Pulpit Supply Financial Arrangements amending Act12 Class 2, 1982	08.34
7	Act Concerning Substitute Members of Body Corporate in NSW	08.37.1
8	Deed Box Audit 2009 & each 3 years thereafter	08.37.2
9	Act Concerning Approval to Mortgage Property	08.46