

The Synod of Eastern Australia



To meet at the
Knox Church Facilities
Melbourne Congregation
Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia

3rd - 6th May 2010

Standing Committee Reports

“Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.”

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TIMETABLE FOR SYNOD 2010

	Monday 3 May	Tuesday 4 May	Wednesday 5 May	Thursday 6 May
9.00am M/Tea 10.30am		<p style="text-align: center;">SESSION 3</p> <p>Devotions and Prayer.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Administration</p> <p>Law and Advisory</p> <p>Presbytery Reports</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SESSION 6</p> <p>Devotions and Prayer.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Superannuation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Finance</p> <p>General Treasurer</p> <p>Trust Corporations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sessions 6 & 7 to be held at All Nations Mulgrave (Bus from Motel)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SESSION 9</p>
12.30pm		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
2.00pm A/Tea 3.30pm	<p style="text-align: center;">SYNOD TO COMMENCE AT 4.30PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SESSION 1</p> <p>Constitution of Synod. Retiring Moderator's Sermon. Presbytery Rolls. Welcomes (New members, guests, associations as required). Thanks to Retiring Moderator for his sermon.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SESSION 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Missions</p> <p>Inter-Church Relations</p> <p>Delegates from Other Churches</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SESSION 7</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Rev Dr Peter Adam Principal of Ridley College, Melbourne</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reports of Examiners of Records.</p> <p>Appt Moderator-elect</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Time/Place of Next Synod</p> <p>Presbyteries and Committees to meet if necessary.</p>	
6.00pm	Evening Meal	Evening Meal	Evening Meal	
7.00pm 8.30pm	<p style="text-align: center;">SESSION 2</p> <p>Election of Moderator for 2010/2011.</p> <p>Administration business as required.</p> <p>Moderator's address.</p> <p>Thanks to Moderator.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Close</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SESSION 5</p> <p>Training of Ministry</p> <p>Church and Nation</p> <p>Youth & Fellowship</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Banner</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Close</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SESSION 8</p> <p>Missions Evening</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Closure of Synod</p>	

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Members: Clerk (Convener), Moderator, Moderator-elect, Convener of Law and Advisory Committee, Convener of Inter Church Relations Committee.

Ministerial Movements

Rev Andres Miranda was received by Southern Presbytery as a minister on 31/10/2009. He accepted a full time appointment with Knox as from 1/12/2009.

Timetable

The timetable proposed for this Synod is set to commence at 4.30pm although previously notified as 4.00pm, this to allow a little extra time for some delegates to get to Knox from the airport. Wednesday Sessions 6 and 7 have been set to be held at All Nations Mulgrave. A bus will transport delegates to and from Knox. Wednesday afternoon has been set aside for guest speaker Rev Dr Peter Adam, Principal of Ridley College, Melbourne. Following from experience last year, and taking account of the business received, it is considered that Synod could conclude with the close of the Missions Night on Wednesday evening. Although the nominal close time is no later than 12.30pm Thursday 6th May, it is noted a number of commissioners have flights booked before that time, and so we trust that business can be completed by Wednesday evening.

Correspondence

	<u>Date received</u>	<u>From</u>
1.	22.02.10	Overture from Northern Presbytery Re Alternative Questions and Formula
2.	24.02.10	Overture from Southern Presbytery Re Retirement Age of Ministers

Congregational Statistics: See the table appended to this report.

Procedural Deliverance: Permission for Presbyteries and Committees to meet whilst Synod is not in session is already provided for in the Handbook 4.18 so there is no need to refer to it in this report year by year.

Expressions of Sympathy: The Committee is aware of the homecall of Mr Keith Longworth during the past year. He became an elder of the Manning Congregation in 1975 and served as commissioner to Synod 1987-98.

Committees: The committee structure was readjusted last year and that structure seems to be working well. The Editor of the Banner indicated his desire to hand over that responsibility toward the end of 2009. The Administration Committee, in consultation with the Church and Nation and Media Committee, sought a replacement and Rev Sjirk Bajema was appointed temporarily. Given Mr Miller's state of health, Mr Miranda has replaced him on Youth and Fellowship. Terry Buck, a younger man with significant management skills, replaces John Loudon on Finance.

We have not yet received suggestions for an Assistant Treasurer but perhaps steps at this Synod could assist in attracting a suitable person so that succession planning can be in place. Our present Treasurer has now attained 20 years in the position (appointed with effect from 5 April 1991). It is thought that the Treasurer, particularly if he had a suitable assistant, could carry out the remit of the Finance Committee without a separate Finance Committee. The Treasurer would simply expand his present report to accommodate financial requests.

If this was so we see scope for a Strategy and Development Committee to take positive steps to bring before our people the opportunity of giving by bequest or one-off giving to church extension, and liaising with Presbyteries to that end. While Presbyteries might value leadership in this area from such

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a Committee it remains that there must be the desire to go forward at the Presbytery and Congregation level. Synod may care to discuss this idea under Presbytery Reports.

Administration, Inter-Church Relations, Law and Advisory

Clerk (Convener Administration), Moderator, Moderator-elect, R.S.Ward (Convener Law & Advisory)
G.D.Ball (Convener Inter-Church Relations).

Church and Nation, Media

D.K.Muldoon (Convener Church and Nation), S Bajema (Convener Media, Banner), M.G.Smith (Website), R.S.Ward (Archives), D.Kerridge

Youth and Fellowship

G.Hamilton (Convener), D.P. Smith, A.A.Miranda, S.Carswell, Tom Reeve

Finance

A.H.Steel (Convener), D.J.Ramsay, T. Buck, D.E.Kerr, J.Audet.

Superannuation

R.S.Ward (Convener), D.J.Ramsay, S.Bajema, J.Audet.

Missions

D.P.Smith (Convener), T.I.Leggott, D.K.Muldoon, I.Conley, J.Greensill, F.N.Robinson.

Training of Ministry

M.G.Smith (Convener), J.A.McCallum, R.W.Murray, T.W.Yoa, D.Manly.

Proposed Deliverances

1. That Synod expresses its sympathy to the family of Mr Keith Longworth, and all those connected with this church, who have been bereaved since the last annual meeting of Synod.
2. That Correspondence Item 1 be received and considered following the Law and Advisory Report
3. That Correspondence Item 2 be received and considered following the Law and Advisory Report.
4. That Committee Structure as noted in the report be adopted.
5. That the following examiners of records be appointed:

Northern Presbytery	Rev. D Muldoon and St George elder.
Central Presbytery	Rev. R. S Ward and Geelong elder.
Southern Presbytery	Rev. J. McCallum and Brisbane elder.

CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS AS AT 31.12.2009

Congregation & no. of elders	Communicants				Typical Attendance of different persons each LD		CHURCH COMMUNITY BY AGE Total attendance if everyone present who worships at least once a month plus the housebound but not including visitors passing through.						Baptisms	Sunday School	Youth midweek
	08	+	-	09	08	09	>4	4-11	12-18	19-64	65+	Total			
Brisbane-4	36	2	0	38	40	48	4	6	5	33	10	58	1	3/10	0
Northern R-4	*54	2	3	53	60	63	4	10	3	26	39	82	0	2/11	0
Armidale-2	12	2	3	11	55	50	3	11	12	23	3	52	0	4/17	14
Hastings-4	*34	0	1	33	38	39	1	4	2	23	17	45	0	2/5	0
North. P-14	136	6	7	135	193	200	12	31	22	105	69	239	1	11/43	14
Manning-5	56	7	3	60	63	60	0	0	0	29	43	72	0	3/9	35
Hunter-2	50	1	5	46	70	58	6	6	4	22	28	66	1	4/13	0
St George's -4	62	1	1	62	98	65	3	13	8	45	22	91	1	3/10	0
Mt Druitt-2	22	2	2	22	21	23	2	5	3	11	2	23	3	1/4	14
Sydney Sth-2	11	0	0	11	11	15	0	2	3	7	2	14	0	1/2	0
Central P-15	201	11	11	201	263	221	11	26	18	114	97	284	6	12/28	49
Knox-AN-3	42	8	6	44	68	86	17	20	7	58	12	114	1	2/12	7
Nuer	-	-	-	-	200	200	10	35	30	150	5	230	0	3/63	16
Narre W-1	36	3	8	31	42	47	1	9	1	28	17	56	4	2/7	0
Geelong-3	27	0	4	23	27	24	1	0	2	14	20	37	0	0	0
Ulverstone-2	22	4	1	25	35	40	4	7	9	19	14	53	1	2/11	22
Southern P-9	127	15	19	123	372	398	33	71	49	269	68	490	6	9/93	45
TOTALS -38	464	32	37	459	828	819	56	128	89	488	234	995		32/164	108

* = corrected from last year

1. The age structure of the community shows 29% (25% in 2008) over 65 in NP, 34% in CP (same as 2008) and (excluding the Sudanese) 24% (30% in 2008) in SP. For Australia as a whole the proportion of the population 65 and over at 30/6/2009 was 13.3%.
2. Deaths reported were 3 on Northern Rivers, 1 in Armidale, 1 in Manning, 2 in Hunter, 1 in Ulverstone, a total of 8 (9 in 2008, 11 in 2007, 10 in 2006, 14 in 2005).
3. Reported typical attendance shows an increase in NP & SP and a decrease in CP. Overall there is a decrease of 8 persons the church community (excl Sudanese), and 1 in membership. The Australian population increased by 2.1% in the year to 30/6/2009.
4. It is also of interest that about 1 in 6 members joined 2007-09. They total 78 persons (NP 12, CP 27, SP 39). On the other hand 102 members left other than by death in 2007-09.
5. While the figures may fluctuate as rolls are sometimes purged irregularly the trend is clear: we are not reaching the young and we are ageing. Ten years ago NP had 178 members, CP 211 and SP 141 a total of 530.
6. Still, apart from sharp falls in a couple of congregations, the actual attendance has a slight upward trend.

LAW & ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Dr R.S.Ward (Convener 2007), Clerk, Moderator, Moderator elect, ICR Convener,

Two items came to this Committee from Southern Presbytery, and one matter in our remit is raised again with fresh significance as we seek to have a succession plan for the position of Synod Treasurer. Some cosmetic adjustments to the Handbook conclude our Report.

1. New legislation

The first item from Southern Presbytery 20/2/2010 was that 'Presbytery approach the Law and Advisory Committee with the recommendation that L&A routinely review legislation adopted by sister churches with a view to adapting such legislation as seems relevant and valuable, to the Australian situation, and then bringing it to Synod.'

Response: We have no problem with this because it is in fact what has often happened before. However, we add the proviso that the Committee should pass suggestions for amended or new legislation to the relevant Committee in the first instance.

2. Conflict of Interest

The second item was an overture proposed by Rev M.G. Smith, which, with adjustment, was accepted by Southern Presbytery 20/2/2010. It reads:

'WHEREAS God has been pleased to place the oversight of his church in the hands of church courts;

AND WHEREAS that oversight should not only be according to good order, but be seen to be according to good order;

AND WHEREAS the members of church courts have been saved by the grace of Almighty God, yet they remain sinful human beings;

AND WHEREAS from time to time church courts deal with matters in which a member, or members, of that court have, or may seem to have, a conflict of interest;

AND WHEREAS it is commonly recognised that conflicts of interest can occur in financial matters; but members of church courts may also be affected by other matters, such as matters involving family members;

AND WHEREAS the Scriptures clearly warn against showing partiality in our dealings with others (Deut 1.17; Deut 16.19; Prov 24.23; 1 Tim 5.21; etc.).

NOW THEREFORE the Southern Presbytery resolves to draw the attention of the Law and Advisory Committee to this matter with the request that the Committee remind church courts that all members are obliged to act with impartiality as servants of Christ, and that where there is or is perceived to be a real or possible conflict of interest whether in financial matters or by virtue of marriage or family relationship, or anything else, that interest should be (1) declared before consideration of the business, (2) noted in the minutes and (3) the person should withdraw from the meeting unless the court resolves that the conflict is not an obstacle to him participating in the matter, or a specific provision allows him to remain and participate. The lawfulness of such a resolution may be taken under review in the examination of records if not previously the subject of appeal or complaint. A person or court failing to declare a conflict of interest or breaching the conflict of interest principle is subject to discipline appropriate to the case.

If the court would be without a quorum due to a member or members excusing themselves, then consideration of the matter should be deferred until suitable arrangements can be made to resolve the quorum issue. If the conflict of interest affects the moderator of the court then he should arrange for another minister to be present to moderate the meeting of the court in his absence. If the conflict of interest is anticipated, then these arrangements may be made in advance.'

Response: We think the overture spells out what is generally understood to be sound practice and so we do not propose specific legislation.

3. PCEA Property Acts of State Parliaments

When this Committee was established in 1964 its remit was (1) to draft a new Church Practice [this languished for years but was revived in 1982 and completed without recorded dissent in 1992 although there was significant debate at times]; and (2) to secure an update of the 1918 NSW Property Act in terms similar to that secured in Victoria in 1953 to facilitate the union of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria with the PCEA.

F. Maxwell Bradshaw MA, LL.M, who drafted the 1953 Act, drafted the amendment to the 1918 Act. He noted the major problematical aspects of the 1918 Act to be its failure to provide indemnity to the trustees for acts done in good faith [corrected at Synod's request by Parliamentary enactment in 2004]; its failure to enshrine in law our Presbyterian polity, its limitation of the application of investment income to supplement ministers' stipend to £150 (\$300) [this due to interference with the Synod-approved wording by an MP who was a legal advisor to the PCNSW!], and the limited powers of the body corporate [Mr Bradshaw wrote: 'For instance, if land were sold and it was desired to invest the proceeds so as to endow a congregation, it is extremely dubious whether the necessary power exists.']

In addition, both Victorian and NSW Acts needed updating (1) to allow for the pooling or blending of different trusts monies in one. This is done at the moment for very sensible reasons but lacks statutory authority and without that is really a breach of trust law; (2) to allow for the Synod to vary trusts under specific conditions where the trust is unable to be carried out [without such a provision application to the Supreme Court is required which is hideously expensive]. One could also (3) provide for a scheme of co-operation which would allow trust property to be used co-operatively with another church on terms approved by Synod. This third point, approved by Synod 1995, may not seem so vital, although we have in the past owned property co-operatively and currently Anna Bay is a case in point. [Clauses covering all these three points were included in the proposal by St George's in 1994/5, but the overall scheme in the St George's document found no favour outside the Sydney area.] Sections, 10, 11 & 12 in the proposed amendment respectively cover the three points.

Mr Bradshaw's draft was approved by Synod 1988 by 19-3, but became mired in what appear to be largely misunderstanding of legal issues when, for reasons apparently due to NSW state political advice at the time, the draft went to sessions and deacons' courts and not just presbyteries. Again approved in 1992 by a majority of presbyteries and most recently by Synod in 1996, Synod 1997 (97.29) discharged the remit to the Committee for three years unless urgent circumstances forced themselves upon the church. However, it is thought that now, 13 years later (!), may be an appropriate time to obtain the long desired amendments. This would place the administration of funds on a uniform footing which is rock solid from a legal point of view and also enable the work of the Treasurer to be simplified. Should we not be in a position at any stage to obtain a Treasurer from within the church, a professional firm could be employed to do all or some of the work without legal difficulties.

There is no legal necessity to send the proposed amended act to presbyteries under the Barrier Act if the Synod is generally agreed, since the main body of the proposed amendment for NSW is just the same as the Victorian Act which did pass under the Barrier Act, and the proposed clauses for both NSW and Victoria allowing operation of a common fund and variation of trusts under limited conditions are of an administrative nature like the indemnity for trustees approved by simple Synod resolution in 2004. Further, Mr Bradshaw has recorded: "It should be stated at the outset that the Bill does not affect the constitution or laws of the Church in any way whatsoever, except in so far as it would remove certain legislative hindrances at present operating which restrict at certain points effect being given to the constitutional principles maintained by the church."

To obtain a change in the Act of Parliament it is sufficient that we can honestly say we have good agreement.

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We suggest that the proposed amendment for NSW (see Appendix) be remitted to Presbyteries, and if widely supported we can legislate next year and also make the smaller amendment to the Victorian Act already included in the NSW draft (Sections 10, 11 & 12) ie blending of trust funds, variation of trusts, co-operative use of property). The text is in the Appendix.

4. Handbook update

It is too early for a hardcopy update to the Handbook and Decision Book. However, it was noted in reading the Handbook that it would be wise to include in a couple more places matter related to the membership of the minister already noted in 4.2 so that it is not overlooked. We can of course readily update the copy on the website and this is desirable given the availability of the website to the public.

Add at end of 2.13

Ministers are members of the congregation they serve or to which they are attached, but jurisdiction over them belongs to their Presbytery (see Act of Synod 2007.14).

Add paragraph at end of 7.37

As by decision of Synod 2007.14 a minister is a member of a congregation with jurisdiction over him in his Presbytery, discipline appropriate to a man as a minister may not necessarily affect his status as a member; in particular, the deposition of a minister does not remove him from membership of the church unless the deposition is accompanied by excommunication.

PROPOSED DELIVERANCES

1. Synod remit the following overture to Presbyteries for their consideration and approval or otherwise. The voting is to be recorded and the result given by extract minute to the Clerk of Synod by 31 December 2010.

WHEREAS it is desirable that church property be held on uniform trusts as far as practicable to avoid confusion and to simplify administration,

AND WHEREAS the late F. Maxwell Bradshaw, MA, LL.M., our honorary Procurator (legal advisor) 1942-92, was advisor on trust law to the Victorian Government for many years and author of the standard text *The Law of Charitable Trusts in Australia* (Butterworths, 1983), and prepared the *Free Presbyterian Church Property Act 1953* of the Victorian Parliament which enabled union of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria with the PCEA in 1953;

AND WHEREAS Mr Bradshaw stated that ‘the proposed amendment [of the 1918 Act] does not affect the constitution or laws of the Church in any way whatsoever, except in so far as it would remove certain legislative hindrances at present operating which restrict at certain points effect being given to the constitutional principles maintained by the church’, such as restriction on the use of investment income for stipend beyond the first \$300, lack of statutory recognition of our Presbyterian system of government);

AND WHEREAS Mr Bradshaw urged the amendment of the 1918 Act of Parliament covering property in New South Wales so that it be as far as possible in line with the Victorian Act, and drafted the amendment for us;

AND WHEREAS subsequent discussions have shown good unanimity at Synod level and at small points it has been adjusted accordingly as for instance retaining the existing title “The Trustees of the Synod of Eastern Australia;”

SYNOD, before approving the text of the amendment to the 1918 legislation, pass same to presbyteries for their approval or otherwise, inviting any comments presbyteries may feel appropriate.

2. Synod note and approve the additions to the Handbook noted in the Report, and note that the copy of the Handbook/Decision Book on the website will be updated with Synod decisions from time to time.

APPENDIX TO LAW & ADVISORY REPORT 2010

The Legislature of New South Wales

An Act to amend

The Synod of Eastern Australia Property Act of 1918

as amended 2004

WHEREAS at the time of the passing of the Synod of Eastern Australia Property Act of 1918, hereinafter called the principal Act, the religious denomination known as the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia of which the supreme governing body subject to its constitution is the Synod of Eastern Australia was made up of congregations all of which were then situated in New South Wales: and whereas there are now congregations of the said religious denomination in the States of Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria as well as in New South Wales and an Act has been passed by the Parliament of Victoria to make provision for the vesting holding and management of property of the said religious denomination in that State: and whereas it is expedient that the provisions for the vesting holding and management of property of the said religious denomination wherever such property may be situated should as far as practicable be the same; and whereas it is expedient that certain changes be made in the existing provisions for the vesting holding and management of the said property in New South Wales: and whereas in the year One thousand nine hundred and thirteen the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia agreed to co-operate with a religious denomination in the State of Victoria known as the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria by means of an unincorporated association known as the Assembly of the Free Presbyterian Church of Australia: and whereas in the year One thousand nine hundred and fifty-three all the congregations of the said Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria were received into the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia: Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of New South Wales in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1. (1) This Act may be cited as the "Synod of Eastern Australia Property (Amendment) Act, 20**
- (2) The principal Act, as amended by this Act, may be cited as the "Synod of Eastern Australia Property Act, 1918-20**
- (3) This Act shall be incorporated with and form part of the principal Act so far as the principal Act is repealed or amended thereby.
2. (1) Sections two to fourteen inclusive of the principal Act as amended 2004 are hereby repealed.
- (2) The principal Act is amended:
 - (a) by omitting from section one the words "The Moderator and the Clerk and the Treasurer of the Synod of Eastern Australia and their successors in office" and by inserting in lieu thereof the words "The persons named in section four of the Synod of Eastern Australia Property (Amendment) Act 20** and their successors";
 - (b) by omitting from section one the words "The Trustees of the Synod of Eastern Australia" and by inserting in lieu thereof the words "The Trustees for New South Wales of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia"; and
 - (c) by inserting the following words after the words "In this Act" therein:

"and the Synod of Eastern Australia Property (Amendment) Act, 20** unless inconsistent with the context or subject matter:

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‘The appointed day’ means the first day of January Two thousand and **

‘The Church’ means the religious denomination known as the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia.

‘Congregation’ means a number of persons organised in connection with the Church under the supervision of a session and recognised according to the constitution and laws of the Church for the time being as a congregation, irrespective of whether public worship in connection therewith is conducted in one or more places and whether for some of the purposes thereof such persons are organised having regard to the place at which they are accustomed or might be expected to attend public worship.

‘The presbytery of the bounds’ means with respect to any congregation the presbytery of the Church for the time being entrusted by the Synod with the superintendence of that congregation.

‘Property’ includes all real and personal property whether legal or equitable, choses in action, money and securities for money.

‘The rules’ means rules from time to time made by the Synod.

‘The Synod’ means the Synod of Eastern Australia, and, if any General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia shall hereafter be formed, such General Assembly.

‘Trustees’ (except as provided in sub-sections (2) and (3) of section five of The Synod of Eastern Australia Property (Amendment) Act 20**) means the persons who are for the time being the members of the body corporate.

- (3) Except as in this Act expressly or by necessary implication provided:
 - (a) all persons things and circumstances appointed or created by or under any repealed or amended section of the principal Act or continuing under any such section immediately before the commencement of this Act shall under and subject to this Act continue to have the same status operation and effect as they respectively would have had if such sections had not been so repealed or amended;
 - (b) in particular and without affecting the generality of the foregoing paragraph, such repeal or amendment shall not disturb the continuity of status operation or effect of any contract agreement assignment vesting conveyance transfer certificate of title liability or right made effected issued granted given fixed accrued or acquired or existing by or under any of such sections before the commencement of this Act;
3. (1) Without derogating from but in addition to what is contained in section one of the principal Act, the body corporate shall be constituted and regulated as provided in this Act.
- (2) The body corporate may subject to this Act from time to time:
 - (a) take purchase receive hold and enjoy real and personal property of any description whatsoever and also sell grant exchange convey demise reserve or grant easements over or otherwise dispose of or deal with either absolutely or by way of mortgage charge lien or other encumbrance any of the property real or personal which may at any time belong to or be vested in the body corporate;

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- (b) sell any real or personal property for the time being vested in it or any interest therein by public auction or private contract at such price and upon such terms as to payment of purchase money and on such conditions and subject to such restrictive covenants and generally in such manner as is thought fit and convey transfer or assign the same to the purchaser or purchasers thereof or as he or they directs or direct and the property so conveyed transferred or assigned shall thereupon be absolutely freed and discharged from the trusts affecting the same;
 - (c) construct erect maintain repair alter add to destroy or replace any buildings fixtures chattels plant or equipment or permit the same to be done with respect to any such buildings fixtures chattels plant or equipment;
 - (d) borrow or secure the payment of any sum or sums of money and for that purpose mortgage or charge any real or personal property for the time being vested in it;
 - (e) insure any buildings or other property or persons against all such risks liabilities and eventualities as may seem advisable;
 - (f) draw make accept indorse execute discount and issue promissory notes bills of exchange and other negotiable transferable or mercantile instruments;
 - (g) lend money to such persons and on such terms as may be thought fit and guarantee the performance of any contract;
 - (h) do all such other matters and things as are incidental to a body corporate.
- (3) The number of Trustees shall not be more than five.
- (4) The Trustees shall have the custody of the Common Seal of the body corporate and the form of such seal and all other matters relating thereto shall from time to time be determined by the Synod.
- (5) The common seal of the body corporate shall not be affixed to any document except as provided by the rules or as specifically directed or authorised by the Synod, and the affixing of the seal shall be attested by at least two of the Trustees and such attestation shall be sufficient evidence of authority to affix the seal.
- (6) The production of a document which purports to be executed in accordance with the requirements of the last preceding sub-section shall in all cases be *prima facie* evidence, and in favour of the Crown, the Registrar-General and every person who deals for value with the body corporate be conclusive evidence, that such document was executed in accordance with the requirements of the said sub-section.
- (7) The Trustees or any two thereof, unless a greater number be prescribed in the rules, and in such case such greater number, may exercise any power conferred by this Act on the Trustees or the body corporate.
- (8) At a meeting of the Trustees two shall form a quorum unless a greater number be prescribed by the rules and in such case such greater number.
- (9) Particulars of the exercise of any power conferred by this Act on the Trustees or the body corporate and in particular of the affixing of the common seal shall at the time thereof be entered by the Trustees in a book or books to be kept for that purpose and the form of such particulars may be prescribed by the rules.

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- (10) The five persons declared by this Act to be Trustees shall from the appointed day hold office as such in lieu of the trustees hitherto appointed under section one of the principal Act until the first meeting of the Synod during the year Two thousand and ** when they shall retire and Trustees shall thereupon be appointed by the Synod the retiring Trustees being eligible for re-election, but save as aforesaid every Trustee shall hold office until his office is vacated pursuant to the next succeeding sub-section.
 - (11) If any Trustee dies or resigns by writing under his hand addressed and delivered or sent by post to the Clerk for the time being of the Synod or ceases to be a member of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia or becomes bankrupt or compounds with his creditors or is convicted of any indictable offence or any offence for which he is sentenced to be imprisoned or has his office of Trustee declared vacant by a resolution duly passed by the Synod his office shall become vacant and the continuing or surviving Trustees may act notwithstanding vacancies from any cause and any act of the Trustees shall not be rendered invalid by reason of the incapacity of any of the members.
 - (12) If at the first meeting of the Synod during the year Two thousand and ** the Synod fails to appoint Trustees as provided in sub-section (10) of this section then the five persons declared by this Act to be Trustees shall continue to act as Trustees as though they were Trustees duly appointed by the Synod.
 - (13) Subject to this section the power of appointing Trustees shall be vested in Synod.
 - (14) The Synod may from time to time appoint one or more persons (irrespective of whether those persons are Trustees) to be treasurer or treasurers of the body corporate or to hold such other office or offices in connection therewith as the Synod may designate and may define the duties of any such treasurer or other officer and may revoke any such appointment.
4. The trustees who shall hold office from the appointed date in accordance with sub-section (10) of the last preceding section are hereby declared to be: (5 names to be inserted)
- * * * * *
5. (1) On the appointed day all interests in property being interests held immediately before the appointed day by or in trust for some or all the purposes of:
- (a) the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia or the Synod or any presbytery thereof; or
 - (b) the Free Presbyterian Church of Australia or the Assembly thereof; or
 - (c) any session, deacons' court, congregation, committee, organisation or fund in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia or the Free Presbyterian Church of Australia shall (to the extent that such interests may not have already vested in the body corporate pursuant to the provisions of the principal Act) by virtue of this Act take effect as if held by or in trust for the like purpose of the body corporate.
- (2) Where property is held on trust immediately before the appointed day and the terms of the trust instrument authorise the trustees immediately or in the future or require the trustees at some time or in circumstances which will occur after the appointed day to apply any part of the capital or income of the trust property for any of the bodies specified in the last preceding sub-section or for some or all of the purposes thereof or for the purpose of any fund which by the said sub-section is vested in the body corporate the trust instrument shall be construed as authorising or, as the case may be, requiring the trustees to apply the trust property to the like extent and at the like times for the purpose of making payments whether of capital or income or to be applied as capital or income to the body corporate.

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- (3) Whereby any gift devise bequest or declaration of trust, whether contained in any will or other instrument or made otherwise, coming into operation after the appointed day (irrespective of whether if contained in any will or other instrument such will or other instrument was made or executed before or after the appointed day) any interest in property is given or expressed to be given to or in trust for some or all the purposes of:
- (a) the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia or the Synod or any presbytery thereof; or
 - (b) the Free Presbyterian Church of Australia or the Assembly thereof; or
 - (c) any session, deacons' court, congregation, committee, organisation or fund in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia or the Free Presbyterian Church of Australia -

that interest in property shall by virtue of this Act take effect as if given to or in trust for the purposes of the body corporate, and where by the terms of any trust instrument coming into operation after the appointed day trustees are authorised to apply any part of the capital or income of trust property held in trust by them for any of the bodies specified in this sub-section or for some or all of the purposes thereof or for the purpose of any fund which by this section is vested in or held in trust for the body corporate such trust instrument shall be construed as authorising the said trustees to apply the trust property to the like extent and at the like times for the purpose of making payments whether of capital or income or to be applied as capital or income to the body corporate.

- (4) Upon any property of or held in trust for some or all of the purposes of any of the bodies specified in the last preceding sub-section or for the purpose of any fund vested in or held in trust for the body corporate pursuant to this section coming into New South Wales after the appointed day that property shall vest in or be held in trust for the like purposes of the body corporate.
6. (1) The body corporate shall hold the real property set forth in the Schedule to this Act in trust respectively for the congregations of the Church as stated therein.
- (2) Any interest in property other than the real property set forth in the Schedule to this Act which at any time vests or has vested in the body corporate under the last preceding section or otherwise, if immediately before the appointed day or at any time thereafter held by or given, devised, bequeathed, bought, purchased, otherwise acquired or held in trust for some or all the purposes of:
- (a) (i) the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia or the Synod or any presbytery thereof; or
 - (ii) the Free Presbyterian Church of Australia, or the Assembly thereof; or
 - (iii) any committee, organisation or fund in connection with the said Synod or the said Assembly

shall be held by the body corporate in trust for the same or the corresponding purposes of or in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia;

- (b) a congregation howsoever described, or the session or deacons' court thereof, or any committee, organisation or fund in connection with that congregation -

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shall be held by the body corporate in trust for the same purposes of or in connection with that congregation as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia.

- (3) Without limiting the generality of the last preceding sub-section, any property to which that sub-section applies, so long as it is put to no use inconsistent with the trusts on which that property is held by the body corporate, may, according to the nature of that property, be used-
 - (a) as or to acquire a site for a church, manse, Sabbath school, day school, church hall, or a caretaker's, church officer's or beadle's residence, or accommodation for the poor, aged or sick, or to construct, erect maintain repair, alter, add to, destroy or replace any such buildings; or
 - (b) in payment of all stipends, salaries, wages and other outgoings whatsoever for some or all of the purposes of the Church, a presbytery or a congregation, as the case may be; or
 - (c) for the endowment of the Church, a presbytery, or a congregation, as the case may be, by leasing any lands or buildings thereon or licensing for reward their use, by acquiring any lands or constructing, erecting, maintaining, repairing, altering, adding to, destroying or replacing any building for such purpose and by otherwise investing any moneys with or without security.
- (4) The powers conferred on the body corporate by section three of this Act shall be exercised in aid of the trusts declared in this section, and, with respect to any property to which this section applies, the body corporate shall comply with all lawful directions given by any court of the Church which under the constitution and laws of the Church for the time being shall have immediate control over such property, but subject nevertheless to the provisions of this Act the terms of any special trust and the superintendence which in any particular case may under the said constitution and laws of the Church be exercised by any other court of the Church.
- (5) Nothing in this section shall authorise any direction to the body corporate to sell or mortgage or agree to sell or mortgage any real property held in trust for a congregation of the Church without the prior consent of the congregation, the presbytery of the bounds and the Synod, in each case expressed by resolution adopted in accordance with the constitution and laws of the Church for the time being.
- (6) The Synod may from time to time make regulations for the management, leasing, mortgaging, sale, investment and disposition of any of the property held by the body corporate, and may repeal all or any of the said regulations, but nothing in this sub-section shall authorise the investment of moneys held on any special trust in any investment other than such as are authorised for the investment of the trust funds under the relevant trust instrument or any Act now or hereafter in force:

Provided that all capital funds which are vested in the body corporate upon trusts whereby only the income is available to be applied or expended for the purpose of the trust shall as regards this sub-section be deemed to be special trusts.
- (7) The Synod, any presbytery having superintendence over any congregation of the Church in New South Wales, any congregation as aforesaid, or the session or deacons' court, or any committee or organisation thereof may subject to the constitution and laws of the Church for the time being manage its own affairs and open and operate such bank accounts (including accounts in savings banks) as are deemed expedient without reference to the body corporate.

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- (8) If at any time in the opinion of a congregation or the deacons' court thereof expressed by resolution adopted in accordance with the constitution and laws of the Church for the time being the whole or any part of the income of any property held in trust for the purposes of that congregation constitutes a surplus over and above what is required for the said purposes, the congregation or the deacons' court thereof may with the consent of the presbytery of the bounds appropriate so much of that surplus income either in the form of a lump sum or periodical payments as the congregation or the deacons' court may determine to be held in trust for the purposes of the Synod and, in so far as any appropriation provides for periodical payments, may by resolution terminate such appropriation.
- (9) The Synod, with respect to real property held in trust for the purposes of the Church generally or of the Synod, and any presbytery, with respect to real property held in trust for the purposes of that presbytery, may by resolution declare that such property be held in trust for a congregation of the Church designated in that resolution, and thereupon or from such date as is specified in the said resolution the said property shall be held by the body corporate for the purposes of that congregation.
- (10) On any congregation to which this section applies being from time to time amalgamated with any other congregation or divided into more than one congregation, all interests in property held in trust for purposes of or in connection with that congregation shall be held in trust for the same purposes of or in connection with such amalgamated congregation or, in such proportions as the presbytery of the bounds shall consider a fair distribution, for such divided congregations as the case may be.
- (11) If with respect to a congregation of the Church the presbytery of the bounds -
 - (a) is satisfied that public worship has ceased to be conducted in connection with that congregation and is opinion that it is expedient that such congregation be dissolved; and
 - (b) has taken such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to bring to the notice of the members and adherents of that congregation that the presbytery is of opinion as aforesaid and to give the said members and adherents opportunity to object to the dissolution of the congregation; and
 - (c) after due consideration of such objections as may be submitted resolves that the congregation be dissolved -

upon the Synod being satisfied that the presbytery of the bounds has complied with the requirements of this sub-section and resolving to confirm the decision of that presbytery, all interests in property at the time of the said resolution of the Synod held in trust for the purposes of that congregation shall thereafter be held in trust for the purposes of the Synod, but any interest in property held on any special trust for the purposes of that congregation and any interest in property held for the purposes of the session or deacons' court, or any organisation or fund of the congregation shall thereafter be held for corresponding purposes in connection with such other congregation of the Church as the Synod may designate irrespective of whether such other congregation is or is not situate in New South Wales.

- (12) On any presbytery for which capital or other funds are held in trust and which is entrusted with superintendence over congregations of the Church in New South Wales being from time to time amalgamated with any other presbytery or divided into more than one presbytery, or having its bounds altered so as to embrace a greater or smaller number of congregations or different congregations, any funds held in trust for that presbytery shall be held in trust for the amalgamated presbytery, or in such proportions as the Synod shall

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consider a fair distribution, for such divided presbyteries or for the presbyteries affected by any aforesaid alteration of bounds, as the case may be.

7. Nothing in this Act shall have any application to property held in trust for or devised bequeathed or given to any congregation committee organisation activity or fund at Grafton or elsewhere in New South Wales of or in connection with the religious denomination known as the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.
8.
 - (1) No Trustee shall except in the case of bad faith be liable or accountable for any acts matters or things done or omitted to be done by such Trustee in or about or in connection with the carrying out of the rights powers or authorities conferred by this Act.
 - (2) Every Trustee shall be entitled to be reimbursed out of the funds vested in the body corporate in respect of all costs charges and expenses of and incidental to the trusts herein declared.
9.
 - (1) The receipt in writing of the Trustees or the body corporate or of any person or persons authorised by them or it in writing to receive the same for the mortgage moneys raised on any property mortgaged by the body corporate or for the purchase money of any property sold under this Act or for any other moneys payable to the Trustees or the body corporate shall exonerate the mortgagee the purchaser and any other person paying such moneys as aforesaid from seeing to the application of the same and from all liability as to the misapplication or non-application thereof and from inquiring into the propriety or necessity of any mortgage sale lease or other dealing whatsoever.
 - (2) This section shall be read in aid of and not in derogation from any other protection afforded to any such mortgagee purchaser or person by any other Act now or hereafter in force.
10.
 - (1) Where the body corporate hold money on trust for different purposes or activities it shall be lawful for the body corporate from time to time to invest the money or any part or parts thereof as one fund and to distribute income arising there from rateably among the several purposes for which the money so invested is held and any loss arising from any such investment shall likewise be borne rateably.
 - (2) The body corporate may make advances out of the money referred to in sub-section (1) for any purpose of or relating to the Church.
 - (3) Any sum advanced under sub-section (2) shall be deemed an investment of the money and shall bear interest at a rate fixed by the body corporate in accordance with the rules and the sum advanced and the interest thereon shall be deemed to be a charge on the assets of the Church.
11.
 - (1) Subject to sub-section (2), in every case where by reason of circumstances subsequent to the creation of the trusts, including trusts declared under this section, to which any property vested in the body corporate is for the time being subject, it has in the opinion of Synod become impossible or impracticable to carry out or observe the trusts, it shall be lawful for the Synod by resolution to declare that opinion, and by the same or any subsequent resolution to declare other trusts for or for the use, benefit or purpose of the Church instead of the first-mentioned trusts, and the first-mentioned trusts shall thereupon by force of the resolution cease and determine, and the property shall thereupon be held upon the other trusts accordingly.
 - (2) The property shall be dealt with for the same purposes as nearly as may be as the purposes for which the property was immediately before the resolution held unless the Synod by resolution declares that by reason of circumstances subsequent to the creation of the first mentioned trusts it is, in the opinion of the Synod, impossible or impracticable

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to deal with or apply the property or some part thereof for the same or like purposes, in which case the property or that part thereof may be dealt with or applied for the use and benefit of the Church for such other purposes as may be declared by resolution of the Synod.

- 12.** (1) In this section, 'scheme of co-operation' means a scheme entered into by the body corporate with the permission of Synod:
- (a) with or involving a church of another denomination or any activity of such a church, and
 - (b) involving the body corporate.
- (2) The body corporate may permit property to be used and managed for the purposes of a scheme of co-operation on such terms and conditions as the Synod determines.
- (3) Any proceeds derived by the body corporate from such a scheme of co-operation are to be applied in the manner decided by Synod.
- (4) Conditions that the Synod may determine under this section include:
- (a) conditions with respect to the making of monetary contributions towards the acquisition, construction, alteration, maintenance or repair of property vested in or held on behalf of a co-operating church or congregation, and
 - (b) the giving or taking of security over any property.
- (5) Property may be used in accordance with a scheme of arrangement except to the extent that the property is subject to an express trust expressly forbidding its use in that manner.
- (6) Property is not to be regarded as property that is subject to an express trust expressly forbidding its use under a scheme of co-operation merely because it is held on trust for worship within or for the purposes of, the Church.
- 13.** Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Act numbered Vic 36 of 1872, known as the St George's Presbyterian Church Act, assented to on 9 August 1872, continues in force.
- 14.** All communications and notices to the body corporate may be addressed to it at the premises known as * or to such other place as may from time to time be substituted by notice signed by the Clerk of the Synod for the time being and published in the Government Gazette.

SCHEDULE [refer Section 6 (1)]

Here would appear the current real estate holdings of each congregation

NORTHERN PRESBYTERY REPORT

ARMIDALE: 2009 was a year of consolidation, monetary wise. Due to the generosity of the charges in the Northern Presbytery and the subsequent church wide appeal, Armidale is now in a better financial position. The giving has increased by *a little more than 20 percent for which we give much thanks to the LORD*. At the same time the Bethany rooms had full occupancy over the University calendar. Currently, it appears that the LORD in his grace has once more filled the Bethany rooms.

Despite losing three members in 2009, one through death, we rejoiced to see two young men welcomed into full communicant membership. *Another was added to the membership roll on the 7th February 2010. The church now has two men who are willing and well capable of preaching in the Minister's absence.*

We continue to have a very multicultural gathering on the Lord's Day for Worship. There is also a greater commitment to the church, evidenced in the increased giving. An evening service was commenced late in the year. This has been a great encouragement to those attending. On the other hand, some families cannot see how the Armidale congregation will survive. However, we continue to pray that our gracious and loving Father in heaven will revive us through the Holy Spirit and that he *will* build his Church, including the small chapter here in Armidale.

Worship services have been generally well attended and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was observed five times. The Sunday adult Bible studies, the Sunday school, youth group, Ladies Bible study and Prayer meeting generally have increased attendance; the exception being the Sunday school. Four evangelistic efforts were undertaken in 2009. The orientation Day at UNE, an open picnic near Inverell, a movie night screening the latest Pilgrims Progress film and carols were again held early in December. Some folk from outside the church attended these events.

We thank God for His blessings, care and love shown to us. Our desire remains constant: that God's name will be glorified; that He *will* build His church; that we will hearken to His Word; and that we will be faithful, loyal ambassadors for Him.

BRISBANE: About the middle of the year, the interim moderator was given the name of the Rev. Jim Klazinga of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. Mr. Klazinga was approached and he and his wife, Julie, accepted an invitation to visit Brisbane. This visit resulted in a call to him to be the minister of the Brisbane Congregation, the which call he has accepted. The time since then has been occupied with the procedures needed to gain visas for the Kalzinga family to come to Australia. The application for visas has not yet been approved. We trust that, in the Lord's will, this approval will follow in due course.

During the vacancy only one service is being held each Lord's Day, with a fellowship lunch following the service and Sunday School. This is followed by a time of prayer and Psalm singing for those who wish to stay. Bible studies are being conducted by the elders. During 2009, two members have joined the congregation by confession of faith.

The level of weekly offerings remains good and the congregation has continued to accumulate some funds which will now be used to settle the new minister. The Sunday School continues each week. The "Playtime" Mothers' and Children's group continued during 2009, but has now ceased. The congregation would like to record its thanks to Mrs Christina Carswell and other personnel who have committed their time to this venture from its inception. The Annual Family Camp was held at Lennox Head in December. The guest speaker was the Rev. Sjirk Bajema, whose studies were greatly appreciated.

HASTINGS RIVER: The morning worship service continues as usual and a service is held at Kindee every second Lord's Day in the evening and is encouraging. The prayer meeting now held on Sabbath afternoon is much better attended than the former night meeting.

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The minister has announced his retirement, to take effect as at the end of June 2010 and the congregation is prayerful and hopeful that settlement of another minister will be effected as soon as possible following retirement.

On Saturday, 27th of June, 2009, the congregation at Kindee celebrated the 70th anniversary of the church building. A large display of photographs and documents reminded us of earlier days at Kindee.

We hope and pray that many, in the gracious providence of God, will continue to benefit from the preaching of the Word of God for many years to come.

NORTHERN RIVERS: We thank God for his continuing care for us as a congregation and the privilege we have to have fellowship with and serve Him.

We have 2 services each Lord's day - Grafton at 9 am, Maclean at 11 am, with a combined attendance of 50 to 60 for the two services. Approximately 15 – 17 attend the Grafton Service, and approximately 40-43 the service in Maclean. The morning Bible Study has about 14 attending regularly. During the anniversary year of John Calvin's birth, we made a special effort to focus attention on the Reformation, and the Institutes of the Christian Religion. A booklet was prepared to introduce the Institutes to those who had not read them. The telephone service continues to be appreciated. The Sunday School continues in Grafton and Maclean with 3 attending in Grafton and 8 in Maclean. Our membership now stands at 53, with three long standing members lost through death, and two added by Disjunction Certificate. There is a total Church Community of 82.

The giving in the congregation was maintained in 2009 and we have a considerable income from property [Manse Rental] and Investment. The Deacon' Court is mindful of its responsibility to be a good steward of these resources. During last year we were able, with other Congregations, to assist Armidale, and we have allocated a considerable amount to Mission work. We have also made the Manse in Maclean available without charge to the Lower Clarence Christian Education Board for the operation of an Op - shop. In return, the Board has agreed to contribute at least \$10,000 per year to the work of Special Religious Education in the Clarence Valley High Schools. So far the Op Shop had been very productive, and an Annual income of \$60,000 is expected. The Church Hall at Maclean continues to serve a number of groups in the community as well as the needs of the congregation. The Bethesda Retirement Units are all occupied. Funds are in hand to cover all foreseeable demands.

We continue to look to the Lord to bless our work during 2010.

CENTRAL PRESBYTERY REPORT

MANNING: We acknowledge God's faithfulness over another year, despite the changes that time inevitably makes. We lost two senior members through death – the most recent Mr. Keith Longworth on 23rd February 2010, a faithful elder for many years. Keith was a member of Central Presbytery from 1986 to 1997. Two names have been removed from the roll of membership and one family left to attend another local church. The Lord in His mercy has however given us a number of new members which has been a great encouragement.

There have been some changes too in the meetings of the church. It was decided to conclude the evening service in Tinonee at the end of 2009, and encourage the few who did attend to support the Taree afternoon service. The Lighthouse Club in Tinonee also concluded but the Taree Kid's Club and Sunday-School continue. There are a number of Bible study groups and a KYB meeting during the week. A meeting for the younger men and for the younger women began during the year. The minister, along with an adherent of the congregation, continues to conduct door to door visitation in the area. Along with other local churches we are supporting efforts to secure a full time Religious Education teacher who, it is hoped, will service the two High Schools in the town. We see this as providing a strategic gospel witness among the young people.

The Taree church hall has been considerably improved during the year with the installation of a new kitchen, the floor polished and the area brightened with a coat of paint. The Tinonee building is awaiting repairs. Consideration is being given to the sale of the Wingham property. The needs and the challenges remain the same. We are an ageing congregation and unless the Lord brings in new people into the membership we will continue to decline numerically. A number of our elders are struggling with different health issues. We need spiritually qualified men who will be able to replace them.

HUNTER BARRINGTON: Worship services continue in the two main centres of Raymond Terrace and Cardiff. Services at Anna Bay have been suspended indefinitely. Services have been held in Barrington twice a month. The telephone link for the services in Cardiff and Raymond Terrace continue for the sick and housebound. All age Bible and Sunday school continues at Cardiff apart from school holidays. Sunday school for pre-school and kindergarten aged children is also held at Raymond Terrace during school term time. Prayer meetings are held alternate weeks in Cardiff and Raymond Terrace as usual. Ladies' Bible study continues on the first and third weeks of the month in both Raymond Terrace and Cardiff. The studies have been centred this past year on Women of the Old and New Testaments. The Question and Answer fellowship meetings have continued in Cardiff but not in Raymond Terrace due to difficulties of supply for Cardiff on the appropriate dates. The two young families that joined us in Raymond Terrace have now returned to their previous residences, having completed their studies and tour of duty respectively. However we are heartened that recently others have joined us and we trust that they will remain.

A new venture this year has been the start of a monthly service in Cardiff for members of the Fijian community in the Newcastle area. This has been well attended and seems set to be a regular feature of outreach to these families. The congregation marks with sadness the loss of two regular and faithful members during the past year. Due to the illness of elder Ian Miller the Presbytery has appointed assessors elders.

ST GEORGES: During 2009 the witness in the centre of Sydney CBD has been maintained with two services on the Lord's Day and a mid-week meeting held in the church on Wednesday evenings. A weekly Bible Class, Sabbath School and Psalmody practice have also been held in the church. Average attendance at the Lord's Day services fell during the latter part of 2009 by 28% to 65 (am) and 50 (pm), whilst the mid week meeting remained at 38. A weekly Bible Class, and Psalmody practice are held and ten children from five families attend the Sabbath-School. The drop in attendances at church services is attributed to some fewer overseas visitors and infrequent attendance by some family members. Communicant membership remained stable at 61 with one addition by profession of faith and one removal by disjunction certificate.

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Congregational members often find it difficult to park with the seemingly ever increasing clearways and road closures because of events through the city streets. Nevertheless, the congregation continues to be in good spirits generally, and thankful that we are still able to gather for public worship in St Georges. Our prayer is that the Lord would bless this witness in the great city of Sydney.

HAWKESBURY NEPEAN: Morning (11am) and evening (6pm) worship services continue, with attendance of twelve adults and three children. One family moved way from the area in search of work. Two worshippers were received into membership. A Bible class is held before the morning service. A weekly prayer meeting (Tuesday) is conducted in the church hall. At this we are studying the Larger Catechism. A Lighthouse club is held every Friday during school term with average attendance of fourteen children. A Youth club for high school children continues. These activities are promoted in the local newspaper at the beginning of term and on the church website. Kurrajong nursing home is visited each fortnight for ministry and the sick are visited on a regular basis by church members.

A successful working bee was held to carry out repairs to the hall. The members continue in a spirit of unity and faithfulness. The Presbytery conducted a special visitation in November 2009. A Christian group from the Pacific Islands meets to worship in the church hall each week.

SYDNEY SOUTH: Worship is conducted at 9am each Lord's Day with eleven adults and five children/youth attending. The deacon of the congregation was inducted as an elder in September 2009. There is a Sunday school for children of the congregation at 9.30am. A prayer meeting is held fortnightly with six attending. The congregation enjoys a fellowship lunch after the Lord's Supper which is held four times a year. The annual church picnic was held in March. The Presbytery conducted a special visitation in December 2009. The congregation appreciated the visit of Rev Shyam Babu.

SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY REPORT

This report has been drawn from the records of Southern Presbytery by the Clerk and relates to the year 2009.

SPIRITUAL LIFE: Although Geelong is still stabilising, and we aim to see greater commitment in the Sudanese work now it has a more suitable meeting place, we have to say that the overall situation within the Presbytery is one of significant encouragement. Actual attendance (excluding the Sudanese work) has risen by 7% or 26 persons. Relationships in the congregations appear positive and there is good interaction in the three Melbourne centres with a number of successful functions held at Mulgrave during the year. Actual communicant membership is about the same as 10 years ago but the church community is up by about 60 persons despite the disappearance of Hamilton and some reduction in Geelong. New officebearers in 2009 were Andres Miranda (inducted to the eldership at Knox 29/3), Terry Buck (ordained to the eldership at Narre Warren 13/9) and Reg Mashado (ordained as deacon at Narre Warren 13/9). At the end of the year J.R. Bruce Webster, elder at Geelong since 1973, moved to Perth to be with relatives, although at the moment he is still on the roll.

The Presbytery met 5 times in 2009 (7 in 2008), and works very harmoniously. Presbytery has agreed to hold an annual training day for existing and prospective elders and deacons. Rev Andres Miranda satisfied the Presbytery and completed the assignments of the Training of Ministry Committee, and was received as a minister on 31/10/2009. He accepted a full time appointment with Knox as from 1/12/2009 and has major responsibility for the English service at All Nations. His and his family's contribution to the life and work is much valued. We expect Mr Kerridge to be ordained in 2010.

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FINANCES: Only Knox is fully self-supporting on a normal stipend basis although even here future viability with three ministers requires greater income given there are three ministers but only one manse thus requiring significant rental payments (\$36,000pa). Ulverstone has not drawn assistance but in a mutual arrangement less than the minimum stipend is paid to Mr Kerridge at this stage. Geelong is still drawing on reserves, but finances have improved somewhat. Knox saw ordinary givings rise 25%, Narre Warren 18% and Ulverstone 15%, so these are good figures. The Sudanese givings continued at a fairly disappointing level much as the previous year. Steps are being taken to address this.

INFRASTRUCTURE: We are blessed with modern debt-free facilities throughout the Presbytery. The situation is summarised as follows:

Ulverstone: Church of 160m², built 1977; basic but adequate. No manse but manse fund largely invested in equities, and rent of a manse for Mr Kerridge is paid by congregation.

Knox: Knox Church of 245m² built 1987 & 20 car spaces; land area 1441m²; adequate at present. Adjoining manse of 207m² & DLUG built 1987/91 on land 725m² currently occupied by Yoa family. Three residential units near Knox Church built 2007, managed by real estate agent; land area 979m². All Nations Church of 272m², built 1972, thoroughly renovated 1997, purchased 2008, extended and refurbished 2009 to now total 413m²; & 29 asphalt car parks & room for 15 cars on grass; Glen Huntly former childcare centre/church 530m² built 1922/1932/1960, purchased 1990, no parking on site; land area 905m² current permit (22/12/2009) for residential conversion to 5 two-bedroom units.

Geelong: Church of 316m² built 1991 on land 4,267m² purchased 1990 with manse of 280m² & detached garage built ca. 1968 refurbished 1995/6; parking for 15+ vehicles.

Narre Warren: Church of 267m² built 1990 & 29 car spaces; land area 1901m². No manse but manse fund largely in equities, and suitable non-cash benefit to cover Mr Bajema's provision of accommodation is paid.

STRATEGY: We take the view one should move forward and expect the Lord to answer our prayers in his own way and time. One finds he often surprises us with his bounty. A pattern of visitation by a minister and elder is becoming general, as well as visits when required for other purposes. We want to build on what we have and see congregations reaching out in a loving way. Given the unfortunate measure of fragmentation in psalm-singing Reformed churches we are doing what we can to foster better relations.

With additional labourers we can envisage further extension in Melbourne, but the funding of particularly capital needs is a question. Knox, Narre Warren and All Nations churches have limited potential to extend the buildings, but facilities are OK for now. Geelong has land but the location of the existing buildings on the site make exploiting its potential problematical. The only current asset that has obvious possibility is Glen Huntly, now vacant due to the Child Care centre not exercising their option by 31/12/2008 and our refusal to grant an extension which requested some months later. Presbytery has approved the plans of Knox to retain the building but convert to residential use so as to release funds to replace the income lost (requiring \$1million), to provide for two manses or allowances in lieu (say \$1million) with the balance (\$500,000+) to fund further extension. It is hoped that this can be completed in 2010 as currently Knox is without the income of \$50,000pa formerly derived from the property. Thereafter we will need to look to generous one-off gifts or bequests to fund the additional parishes at \$1-2million apiece that we would like to see established in several strategic locations.

MISSIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Members 2010

D.P. Smith (Convener), I Conley, J Greensill, D Muldoon, N Robinson and T Leggott

Contents of Report:

1. Committee Activities
2. Mission Field Reports
3. Malcolm McSwann Mission Relief Fund
4. Prayer Calender
5. Finance Aspects
6. Proposed Deliverances

Committee Activities

The committee met formally on the 16th February 2010. Additionally, communication, dialogue and discussions have been carried out by telephone and email throughout the ecclesiastical year.

Mission Field Reports

AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS MINISTRIES – Rev Trevor Leggott reports:

Part of my job description notes that my responsibility is to “Give initiative, guidance and direction to the overall work of AIM,” and to “recruit new personnel.” It has been a real blessing to see some of the planning that has been done in the past few years beginning to bare fruit.

We are building team ministries in the Northern Territory with missionaries focussing on providing Bible teaching support, whilst encouraging Aboriginal leaders to take more responsibility for the oversight of local ministry. It has been very pleasing to see new personnel Phil and Cathy Stuart now based in Alice Springs to commence what is a very challenging work. Phil is an ordained minister of the Westminster Presbyterian Church and, although quite young, comes with a good understanding of aboriginal issues and much practical experience.

An important aspect of ministry in Aboriginal communities is to have Christians taking up government appointments or secular jobs in areas of health and education etc. Many such jobs provide ideal opportunities for developing relationships through a Christian witness that has a powerful influence amongst the local people. AIM has couples working as TEAM Partners (Tentmakers Encouraging Aboriginal Ministry) in education and health. We have a couple preparing for service where the husband is expected to serve in hospital and prison chaplaincy, with his wife working as a high school teacher.

AIM is working in partnership with Wycliffe Bible Translators, The Bible League and Scripture Union to develop a long-called-for and much needed Aboriginal English translation of the Scriptures. This will be a long term commitment and AIM has a number of its personnel involved. We have an inquiry from a young man, currently finishing studies at a Canadian reformed seminary, and married to an aboriginal girl, who has expressed interest in taking on ministry with AIM, particularly in translation work.

During the year I have been really encouraged to see much progress in setting up the leadership training program using training the Theological Education by Extension (TEE) model with AIM working in partnership with the Aborigines Evangelical Fellowship through their Bimbadeen College. With two very experienced workers in Amos Leana and Bob Quinn, courses have been written and a series of seminars planned for commencing studies early in 2010. Bob Quinn is the brother-in-law of Tom Reeve and has aboriginal heritage, and also comes well equipped with many years of mission experience using the course materials in PNG.

It has been quite humbling to see how the Lord has provided and heard our prayers. At the close of 2009 I received an application from an Australian man currently serving as pastor in England, and who is exploring the possibility of returning to Australia to take up ministry in a Bible teaching role with

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AIM in western NSW. Such a man would be ideally suited to help implement the TEE program in NSW.

In early December I travelled to PNG with some of our aboriginal leaders to visit the Christian Leaders Training College at Banz near Mt Hagen in the West Highland Province. The dual purpose for the visit was first to attend the Langham Partnership Preaching Seminar being run at the college, with 120 attendees from all over PNG and a number from Pacific Islands. The aim Langham, sponsored by a foundation established under John Stott Ministries, is to improve the level of Biblical preaching. There was a week of solid lecturing, group sessions and personal reflection, focusing on the “how tos” of Biblical study, sermon development and practical application. Plans are in progress to hold a similar seminar at Bimbadeen during 2010.

The second aim of our visit was to formalize a relationship between CLTC and AIM so that an appropriate Leadership Training Program might be developed for use across Australia. AIM and CLTC have entered into a memorandum of understanding with AIM having full access to use and modify course material to suit local needs.

I remain deeply appreciative of the support I receive as a missionary of the PCEA, and the encouragement I receive from many to continue with this ministry. It was a privilege for Pamela and I to escort Rowland and Anna Ward to visit many of our AIM centres in July. I’m sure a first hand experience gave Rowland and Anna a new perspective on ministry of the Gospel in outback Australia.

I often tell our workers the simple truism: that if our Sovereign God calls us to a particular ministry, then he will not leave us lacking the resources to do the job. On one of our promotional leaflets I have a photo of two young happy Aboriginal boys under the words of Jesus: “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full”.

CHRISTIAN WITNESS TO ISRAEL – Rev Paul Morris reports:

General: We have pressed on in the work of witnessing to Jewish people and all whom we encounter, and there have been times of blessing. However, we long for greater things. Most Jews in Australia are spiritually complacent.

The promotional DVD was mailed to the PCA churches in NSW and we also had an advertisement for the work and for workers in the PCA magazine for 9 months. Some new interest was stimulated. We hope to mail more DVDs to Sydney Anglicans early in 2010.

2009 was a year of trial in terms of health issues. Paul was diagnosed with prostate cancer early in 2009 but we are grateful to God that it appears to have been dealt with by surgery. KayChan's parents were both seriously ill, which was a cause of considerable anxiety for him. They are both on the way to a good recovery.

2009 was also difficult in terms of the consequences of the world financial crisis. Our income has not kept up with expenditure. We are grateful to the Lord that giving increased in the last few months of 2009 and early 2010 so the deficit has not been as bad as expected. Some major decisions have been made to reduce expenditure in the future.

KayChan Park:

- Interest in Korean churches has grown as KayChan has spoken in many congregations.
- KayChan has travelled abroad twice in his pastoral role to GMS missionaries.
- Plans have been developed for Paul and KayChan to visit Korea in 2010 to speak to seminary students of the need for more to engage in Jewish mission. Our vision for this has increased.
- KayChan has met many Israelis at the book table and by street tracting in Hall Street near Bondi Beach.
- The Park family have moved from Bronte to the mission house in Bexley to reduce expenditure. Their son, Sar, starts at university soon, and their daughter has started year 10.

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A visit to Sydney in May by the new pastor of KayChan's sending church, with his wife and the head of mission at the church was a great blessing. They very much appreciated what they saw of the work and met a number of Jewish people themselves. There had been doubts expressed by some church elders, as if Australia does not need missionaries. Those doubts were decently buried.

Outreach: The Friday book table witness in Bondi Junction has gone on regularly. We are grateful to God for many opportunities to speak of Jesus and to give away free literature. We have seen little of the anti-missionary Rabbi but he arrives from time to time and keeps us on our toes.

Paul has started using a new type of street tract which is easy to reproduce on a photocopier. The idea is to go to smaller strips of shops in Jewish areas on a more regular basis. So far the take rate has been good and some have stopped to talk.

We tried to assist Connect 09, the Anglican church's special outreach programme for 2009, by producing for churches in Jewish neighbourhoods a letter for Jewish neighbours, and promoting Paul's new 10-part study series for their use. Some admired what we had produced but we cannot say much interest was shown, except by Christ Church, St Ives, where Paul led a Passover meal and seminars on witnessing. This will continue into 2010 as we partner with them to reach their Jewish neighbours. This link-up has been a special encouragement.

Our monthly meeting in the Sydney CBD (CBFChavurah) has been discontinued as only 2 or 3 were coming and sometimes none came. We plan to continue working with CBF through an annual training course and an evangelistic Passover meal held in a city club.

A number of churches have heard a lecture from Paul on witness to Jews as part of their programme to equip people for witness to all people.

JEF Day: The 2 events in 2009 were very poorly attended so we have now discontinued this meeting. It seems there is little need among Jewish Christians in Sydney for such a meeting. New believers can be helped on a one-to-one basis.

IJEF (International Jewish Evangelical Fellowship): The conference planned in 2009 did not take place due to lack of support and I have been involved with the committee in discussing if IJEF has a future. I have made some proposals but no decision has yet been made.

LCJE Australia: 2009 saw the first LCJE conference in Australia. It was a good time of fellowship and learning from each other. Paul gave a paper on the background and history of CWI in Australia.

Office work: For most of 2009 we have had assistance from Hugh Varnes with Paul also doing many of the regular tasks. We have recently appointed a secretary for one day a week who should be able to handle all the office tasks.

Web Site: We are grateful to the Lord for the provision of a part-time web site administrator who will be able to do all routine tasks and upload new resources information.

Deputation: Paul and KayChan planned to stay in Sydney for 2009 and concentrate on churches nearer at hand.

Annual Edersheim Lecture: In 2009, the 500th anniversary of Calvin's birth, the lecture was given by Dr Peter Barnes on Calvin and the Jews and was very well received. For 2010 we plan one on the development from the Westminster Assembly to CWI.

Melbourne Developments: The visit of Grace Lan from Taiwan was valuable but not what we had hoped. The purpose of her coming was to consider working in Melbourne but her pastor is not now sympathetic. We plan that Grace will bring a group of Christians here every 2 years so they can be better informed about Jewish evangelism.

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Church Denominations and Mission to Jews: I spoke at the CRC Synod in May 2009 and was well received. They passed a resolution which encourages churches to give an annual gift to CWI. My hope is that it will also open doors when I seek deputation opportunities in their churches.

Support and Finances: We are very grateful to the PCEA and individual congregations for its strong financial support to our ministry. Others have begun to give in a more committed way. However, many of our new individual supporters have yet to become regular donors.

CWI Australia - Looking ahead: As I write (February 2010) we are in the middle of some serious deliberations on the future direction of the work here. May the Lord establish the thoughts of our hearts according to His will.

DUMISANI THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE – The Convener reports:

The Dumisani Theological Institute (DTI) over the years has seen much change for the benefit of students and the Free Church of South Africa. The current principal, Dr Alistair Wilson, has really put DTI on the world stage and Christians all around the globe know of this vital work. The DTI web-site abounds with information, photographs and links, for example to 'The Unreached People of the Day.' The web-site states, "Dumisani is conscious of being a very small part of God's international work. There are still many people yet to be reached with the Good News of Christ."

DTI is the major provider of evangelical and Reformed university accredited theological education in South Africa's Eastern Cape. But perhaps a little history is in order. The founders of Dumisani were Bill and Elizabeth Graham, who were then missionaries with the Free Church of Scotland. Dumisani Theological Institute and Bible School began in 1979 as the Dimbaza Reformed Bible School. The main emphasis then was on lay training and the provision of basic literature in English and Xhosa. In 1985 the work moved to King William's Town. In 1991 Diploma classes were started for men studying for the ministry and in 1997 the link with what is now North-West University was forged.

Bill and Elizabeth fondly reminisce on their time spent in South Africa. "We feel a great sense of gratitude to God that we were in at the beginning of this work and we rejoice to see how it has developed. As we look back we thank God for all the good people who have helped Dimbaza/Dumisani through the years.

It was great when the Bible School opened in Dimbaza in February 1979. The Correspondence Courses got underway as well as the conferences we held both in Dimbaza and out in the various Districts. Getting literature translated, printed and distributed was always a busy time. During those early years the Correspondence Courses went out to many hundreds of people all over the country and the Bible Reading Notes as well. We are sure they helped a lot of people during the very troubled times through which the country passed at the time.

While it was sad leaving Dimbaza, we were sure it was better to move into King William's Town when we did. So since we had a new base we needed a new name. Dumisani was opened, continuing the same work but also developing into what it has become today – a Theological College for which we give thanks to the Lord."

Ministry: Much has changed in King William's Town. The ministry of DTI, particularly in Missiology, now has global significance. As the web-site states, 'Ministry in modern South Africa, both in the cities and the rural areas calls for patience, compassion, sensitivity, Biblical authenticity and Christian integrity, very often in the face of great human need. Just as Christ ministered to human need in all its aspects, so too at Dumisani we seek to educate and equip the men and women whose work for Christ will, under God's blessing, make a significant difference to the lives of men and women and young people of all backgrounds.

The Dumisani BTh degree and the Advanced Ministry Studies course are approved training courses for the ministry of a number of South African churches. Through its Missiology programme, it is also

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Dumisani's privilege to train men and women for global, cross-cultural mission. According to Operation World

"there has been massive growth of global vision and a huge multiplication of South African mission involvement by all communities after the ending of South Africa's diplomatic isolation in 1993. Innovative strategies for sending and support have been developed. In 1993 there were 650 South Africans serving abroad. That number had reached 1,870 in 1999."

Faculty: The exciting news faculty wise is that Rev. Victor Nkatha LL.B, BTh starts as a junior lecture this semester. Victor is Dumisani's first Xhosa full-time member of the teaching staff. He indeed, would be grateful for prayer as he adjusts from a student to a lecturer with all the new demands. He will be involved in lecturing and in the exciting possibilities for promoting Christian Education (Sunday Schools) in the churches in the area. One meeting of this nature has already been conducted. Normal attendance is around 60, however, 115 attended. Victor led the devotions, preaching around the story of the Good Samaritan. Mrs Jenny Wilson commented afterward that Victor 'has settled in well and already we are convinced that we have got the right man for the job.'

The face of Dumisani, however, is always on the move and two primary lecturers are approaching retirement in the next few years. The Rev. Norman Reid, who has taught at Dumisani for over a decade, plans to retire in 2011 and return to Ireland. Dr. John Ross also will reach retirement age in 2012 and at the same time come to the end of his four year contract with Dumisani. Both lecturers teach a range of subjects including Systematic Theology and Church History; two core subjects in any degree level theological course.

DTI therefore, would value greatly our support in prayer, asking that God's providence will bring the Dumisani Board of Governors into contact with those who will take their place, so that a smooth transition may be effected.

Students: The Wilson's most recent newsletters commented, 'Since being back college has got off to a good start. We have had a big intake of students with new faces studying at each level. There is a lovely atmosphere around the college as staff and students play their part in working together as the family of Christ and learning to follow Christ's example of being the servant of all. Housing has been a big issue this year amongst the students. It always is an issue, but the problem of finding decent affordable housing in the area seems to be getting worse. We have converted a couple of small classrooms and the old print room to give temporary accommodation to some staff/students.'

General: Obviously, divine guidance in matters such as the above is very much needed. But this is just one of many types of needs that are faced each day at Dumisani. In a wonderful way, the providence of our gracious Lord means that there are many opportunities to help and in so doing, show God's love and kindness. Pray that Alistair in conjunction with his staff will have the time and resources to demonstrate God's matchless grace in these situations whether they be big or small.

Along these lines, the missions committee sent funding to DTI last year to address, in part, some of the genuine cases of need. One newsletter spoke of the reality of such need. 'Many South Africans struggle economically and this includes Dumisani students, some of whom find it difficult to find sufficient funds to pay rent, food bills and course fees. Pray that their ability to study will not be eroded by financial anxiety, but that God will meet their needs.' As it turned out the PCEA funding was indeed useful as the following extract from Mrs Jenny Wilson reveals.

The money that the church family in Australia sent came in very useful in a number of ways and we are extremely grateful to you all for it. It has enabled us to buy glasses for two children who were struggling at school and eventually were identified as having poor eye sight. Neither family would have been able to purchase glasses. We also used some of the money to place a girl in a school for children with learning difficulties for a year as her school had said that they could no longer teach her. I am now teaching her at Dumisani and she is part student and part helper. She is learning quickly and is showing great initiative. We also used some money to help one of our students whose husband died in a road accident and she was not able to feed her family without his income. Her situation has now been resolved. We also used some of the money to make up regular food parcels for

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people who we met in extreme poverty. We never like to hand out money, but do hand out food which contains a selection of food stuffs for immediate use and some for longer term use. We also bought fleece fabric and taught some girls how to weave the fabric together to make double thick blankets for the winter. The idea is that they sell them, use some of the money to buy more fabric and the rest they keep for themselves. And finally we put a young lad through a training programme to be a security guard so that he would be more able to find work.

The small amount really achieved quite a lot for some at Dumisani and the wider community. Hence, the committee intend to continue this funding as it contributes to real needs of real people. Please pray that the recipients may see the blessing of the Lord's hand as they receive this help and be drawn to Christ.

From the Principal's Desk: 'We are encouraged to have a good number of new students joining us on various courses along with many students who continue their studies for another year. Please pray for our college community, students and staff alike, that it might be an expression of what the Lord can do in the lives of a group of human beings. I would like to take this opportunity to thank warmly all those who have prayed for Dumisani, who have provided financial support, who have helped this ministry throughout the years. We deeply appreciate your involvement with us. We recognise that 2010 is going to be a demanding year for many people in the current economic circumstances but we ask those who are able to provide whatever support they can. Ultimately, of course, "our help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth" (Ps 121:2). Please pray with us that he will meet all our needs (Phil 4:19) and enable Dumisani Theological Institute to continue to serve the South African church to the glory of God.'

Dr. Alistair I. Wilson

INDIA – Dr Dennis Muldoon reports:

'India is home to by far the biggest number of hungry people in the world. According to an FAO report India accounted for 252m of the 873m under-nourished people all over the globe in the period 2004-2006'. Food prices have escalated in India over the past year- lentils by 81%, sugar by 64%, rice by 39% and onions by 50%. "I boil two potatoes in the morning in two cups of water and gradually use the mashed pieces and the water with rice to feed my children" said a tribal woman in North India.

Dr Rahmat sent me clippings from a national newspaper. With the help of PCEA he is able to give one meal a day to 20-25 children attending a school and discipleship centre in the Siwan district of Bihar. The Presbyterian Free Church in the state of Madhya Pradesh also ministers in poor rural communities. Members of this church are involved in helping these communities in the areas of health and nutrition.

Presbyterian Free Church: A highlight of this past year for many PCEA churches was the visit of leaders of the PFC in India. Rev Shyam Babu and Bro Pradeep Kumar flew into Sydney on October 23, 2009 and spent two weeks visiting PCEA churches. They told about the growth in the congregations, with worship groups coming up in villages surrounding the centres at Chhapara and Lakhnadon. Mr Vinay Das, a church elder at Chhapara, led outreach work into 158 villages. In 30 villages there has been a response to the gospel with about 300 new believers. In December a seekers camp was held with about half of these believers attending. The church has commissioned ten missionaries to continue this outreach work into the villages of the district. The churches in Chhapara and Lakhnadon are growing in membership and new elders have been appointed. The establishment of a church in Raipur city has not gone ahead due to lack of resources. The field indeed is white unto harvest.

Lakhnadon Christian Hospital: The Medical Superintendent, Dr Adarsh Benn, and his wife continue in the medical ministry of this hospital. The lack of a surgeon severely limits the medical work. Nevertheless, the staff of this 33 bed rural hospital is kept busy treating patients with malaria, TB, diarrhoea and other diseases and injuries. Their maternity ward was kept busy with 400 births recorded – many of these were by Caesarean Section because normal births occur in the village. The following highlights are taken from the annual report of the hospital.

- 5 Village Medical Camps at Chhapara and Lakhnadon Block organized.

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- More than 180 General Major Surgeries done.
- More than 400 Deliveries conducted.
- More than 19,000 OPD patients received treatment.
- More than 2,000 Patients hospitalised for treatment.
- More than 31,000 Lab Tests Done.

Spandana and Chhapara Community Health and Development Projects: These projects work in 160 villages with a population of 89,456. They are funded by the Free Church of Scotland, De Verre Nasten (DVN) Netherlands, as well as the PCEA. They deliver primary health care including – immunization and mother and child care. Awareness of HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria is given along with general hygiene information. A watershed project is planned for 2010. The gospel is brought to these villages in evening ministry programs.

Mission Schools: Chhapara Mission School has 950 students from grades nursery to 12. There are 40 dedicated Christian teachers. Most classes are Hindi medium but an English medium stream has been started. The school is run in two shifts because of the high number of students. There is a need for new classrooms. Mr Michael John Kumar continues to give faithful Christian leadership. Mr Pradeep Kumar teaches in this school. This Christian school is a major school in the region, with many children from non-Christian homes attending. The PCEA provides funds for some scholarships to needy students.

Lakhnadon Mission School, started by Rev Shyam Babu, has 450 students. The PCEA provides scholarship funds to this school.

Dr Dickson – New Delhi: Dr Dickson is a veterinary doctor who works in rural development in North India. In 2008 Dr Muldoon visited dairies on the outskirts of Delhi with Dr Dickson. He saw the opportunity to work amongst these people using his vet skills. He has recently opened an Animal Wellness Clinic in this slum area of the city. He writes ‘it is a huge step of faith as I was mostly in teaching for the past 14 years’. He continues conducting training courses in animal health for various non-government organisations. He is also networking Christian vets and encouraging them to go into the poor rural communities

Dr Tigi Verghis – Siliguri: Dr Verghis continues to work in rural development in the state of West Bengal in India. The PCEA supported Dr Verghis when he commenced his training in agronomy and rural development some twenty years ago. It is encouraging to see this investment yielding great interest for the kingdom of God. A missionary with Interserve (India), Dr Verghis cooperates with local churches in training farmers, particularly in the Darjeeling Hills. A number of these are Reformed Presbyterian churches.

Taleem (Discipleship) Centre: Dr Rahmat Hussain is an elder in the Covenant Reformed Church in North India. With prayer and support from the PCEA he opened a centre at Maharajgang, Siwan district in Bihar in January 2009 (The Free Church of Scotland supports another centre). Some 20-25 children from the poor Muslim community attend this centre daily to receive instruction in language, maths and Bible, and are also given a meal. In the evening adults come for literacy classes. On Sundays the centre is used for Christian worship with 9-12 people attending. A number of teachers have been trained and new believers taken to Dehra Dun where Rahmat is based, for further discipleship. In February 2010 Rahmat wrote, ‘we have four people ready for baptism and three parents want their children baptised. Rahmat makes regular visits to this centre and is excited at the way these poor, despised people are listening to the gospel.

The tragic death of Rahmat’s wife in March 2009 was a great loss to him and a threat to this work. But the Lord Jesus has won the victory against Satan, and in the Lord’s strength Rahmat has continued this strategic ministry to Muslims. He has also suffered from physical attack while preaching in nearby towns. Rahmat has supplied photographs and some details of how the funds are spent – mainly rent, teacher salaries and food for the children.

SOUTH AMERICA – Mr Ian Conley reports:

Peru:

Colegio San Andres: It is with rejoicing that the I report that the enrolments at San Andres are running ahead of the five year plan by two years. The numbers are now approaching 600 and may reach there by the time term starts on 1 March 2010. This is a real answer to prayer and reflects the competency and commitment of the Principal and his leadership team. Likewise the academic results achieved by the final year students are very satisfying to all associated with the school.

The two scholarships provided from the McSwan bequest have assisted students and families who would not otherwise be able to attend San Andres. In 2009 addition funds were forwarded by private donors through the PCEA for another scholarship. These scholarships help not only the students involved but also assist in lifting the profile of the school.

A cloud remains with the possibility of legal action in the Peruvian courts following the death of two students in Scotland in 2008. While this possibility remains the transfer of the school to a local Board can not go ahead. It is a matter of prayer that this matter be resolved quickly.

At the school extensive covering for the play areas and refurbishment is being carried out over the end of year break. The extra enrolments enable the carrying out of repairs, improvements and upgrading from local funding. The possibility for short term volunteer assistance in teaching English or possibly other areas of needed expertise remain. These are self funded opportunities that need a commitment of at least three to six months. Young people from mainly Scotland have contributed to the school in this way. The principal's daughter, Catriona, is currently rendering such assistance to the school.

Moyobamba: In the absence of Rev David MacPherson the work has continued under local leadership. It is still a very missionary minded church with outreach church planting in surrounding centres close to Moyobamba as well as in Arequipa and in the Loreto Province to the north with Pastor Dario. A new relatively fast river boat service has made this work more accessible. The work in Lluylluvucha, a suburb of Moyobamba, now has an allocated Pastor and the church has the aim of transferring part of the membership to that area to provide the seed for a new congregation. The church continues to fund its own students at the Lima Evangelical Seminary.

David MacPherson retains a keen interest in the Peruvian work and plans to return to Perú for some weeks mid 2010 to further the work there. David and Dr Apolos Landa plus others from the Moyobamba congregation continue planning and negotiating for the establishment of a Christian University in the Moyobamba area on land that the Church owns. Currently short courses in conjunction with other universities are being arranged and agricultural and forestry enterprises are being set up on the land to provide an income.

Enrolment in The Annie Soper School is expected to be above 300 again this year. The two scholarships provided under the MacSwan bequest for needy students are of great benefit. Mr Arturo Solis has been appointed as Headmaster. Mr Solis has previously served as Head of Science and Deputy Headmaster.

In addition to the volunteers from Scotland and the USA an arrangement between a Dutch university teaching faculty and Annie Soper to provide trainee teaching places appears to be assisting both parties and it is likely to continue.

Lima Evangelical Seminary: The Rev Donnie Smith continues in the leadership post of Rector of the Seminary. This seminary remains the leading institution for theological training in Perú and as such is of strategic importance. Like the Bible Seminary in Medellin the economic climate has reduced funding assistance for the Seminaries and particularly scholarships. It is a matter for prayer that the previous level of funding be restored quickly.

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Colombia:

Bible Seminary Medellin: Dr Manuel Reaño continues to head up the Seminary as Principal. Dr Reaño and his family are likely to take well earned leave in the UK and Spain in the middle of this year. Also helping in the Seminary is Rev David Ford who has worked in both Perú and Scotland. Financial constraints continue to affect the Seminary, students and prospective students. Colombia is more stable than it was some years ago but safety issues remain.

Malcolm McSwann Mission Relief Fund (MMMRF): There were no extra disbursements from this fund in 2009.

Prayer Notes: The Convener continues to compile and distribute the prayer Notes bi-monthly and from all reports the information is well received by our congregations and overseas recipients. It is an excellent means in providing for informed prayer and therefore delegates are urged to recommend its use amongst their congregations and at their weekly prayer meetings.

Finance Aspects: Following are the items reflected in the missions' budget for 2010, which is tabled at the end of this report.

1. MMMRF funding for Rev Trevor Leggott: Mr Leggott furnished the Committee with a report indicating that 25% of his work time was spent on the relief of need amongst indigenous Australians during 2009. This is reflected in the budget for 2010, with 25% of his support coming from the MMMRF.
2. India:
 - a. The Chhapara Mission School: The Committee recommend that the Chhapara Mission School receive \$2,000, as per last year, from the MMMRF for scholarships and resources.
 - b. The Lakhnadon Mission School: The Committee recommend that the Lakhnadon Mission School receive \$1,500 from the MMMRF for scholarships and resources.
 - c. The Committee recommend continuing the support of the important medical work in India. Lakhnadon Christian Hospital: \$10,000, Chhapara Christian Health Centre: \$10,000 from the MMMRF.
 - d. The Committee recommend that Dr P. Dickson continue to receive support of \$2500 from the MMMRF.
 - e. The committee recommend sponsorship for five children in the Pandita Ramabai Mukti Mission India from the MMMRF to the amount of \$1,800. This sponsorship to be administered through Mukti Australia.
3. CWI: The Committee continues to be greatly encouraged by the work of Paul Morris and KayChan Park. Therefore, the Missions committee recommend that CWI Australia receive a grant of \$6,000 from Missions General Funds.
4. South America:
 - a. The Committee recommend continuing the provision of funds, \$6,500 from the MMMRF, to provide scholarships for needy students at Colegio San Andres, Lima, Peru.
 - b. The Committee also recommend that the Annie Soper School in Moyobamba receive \$2,200 which will provide scholarships for two needy children.
5. Dumisani Theological Institute:
 - a. The Committee recommend that \$1,500 be granted from Missions General Funds to support the vital role of reformed teaching by the Institute.

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- b. The Committee also recommend that DTI receive \$2,200 from the MMMRF to assist in relief of needy individuals and families in poverty. Mrs Jenny Wilson to be responsible for administrating this funding.

Proposed Deliverances:

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 delegates direct their congregations attention to the prayerful and financial support needed for Rev. Trevor Leggott in his ministry with Australian Indigenous Ministries
3. That Synod encourage congregational members to consider volunteering to help as native English speakers in either San Andres or the Annie Soper School.
4. That Synod adopt the budget for 2010 and express general agreement with the estimates for 2011.

INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

G.D.Ball (Convener 2006), Clerk, Moderator, Moderator Elect, Convener Law and Advisory.

1. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES (ICRC).

The seventh meeting of the ICRC was held in Christchurch, New Zealand from 15 to 22nd October 2009. The Reformed Churches of New Zealand were the excellent hosts while Rev. Bruce Hoyt efficiently filled the role as chairman and kept the Conference on track. The Conference was shared between two venues – the Holiday Inn in the centre of the city and the evening meetings in the Bishopdale Church. Your committee was represented by the Convener and Rev. Dr. Rowland Ward.

One of the highlights of the Conference was the evening papers on the Conference theme: ‘The Vitality of the Reformed faith.’ These included, ‘Facing the Challenge of the Charismatic Movement’ by Dr. George Knight III (OPC); ‘Facing the Challenge of Individualism in the Church’ by Dr. Nelson Kloosterman (URCNA); ‘Facing the Challenge of Islam’ by Rev. Frank van Dalen (ARPC) and ‘Facing the Challenges in the Asia-Pacific Context’ by Dr. Mohan Chacko (RPCI). There was opportunity to reflect and discuss the issues raised in these papers in discussion groups the following morning.

Five new churches were admitted into membership, including the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing); the Heritage Reformed Congregations; The Independent Reformed Church of Korea; the Reformed Churches of Brazil and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of India. There are at present 30 member churches while a further four have applied for membership.

Since Rev. John Goris (RCNZ) was retiring from the Missions Committee after 12 years service, Rev. Peter Smith was nominated and approved as a replacement committee member representing the Asia Pacific region. The Missions committee is due to meet in the Netherlands on May 26-27, 2010. Peter is planning to be present at this meeting and hopes also to include a visit to the Free Church Assembly in Edinburgh at the same time.

The work of the ICRC will be on-going in the intervening years before its next scheduled meeting in Wales in 2013 (DV), by way of the mandate of its Missions Committee, regional conferences and also through the work of a Constitutional Review Committee. This Review Committee will seek to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the ICRC which is now 25 years old, and bring proposals for possible improvements to the next conference.

A major benefit of a meeting of the ICRC is simply being there and having opportunity both formally and informally to meet others from the churches with whom we have close contact as well as get to know other ‘new faces.’

2. CHURCHES WITH WHOM WE HAVE FRATERNAL RELATIONS.

2:1 While at the ICRC there was opportunity to meet with the representatives of the Free Church of Scotland; the Reformed Churches of New Zealand; the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland; the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (Liberated). The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America was not represented. We were blessed with the visit of Rev. Kenneth Ferguson who along with his wife Nan, agreed to visit Australia as they travelled home from the ICRC. Unfortunately Victoria and Tasmania could not be included in the itinerary.

2:2 Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia. Contact with the RPCA is largely through the Southern Presbytery. At a meeting of the Southern Presbytery on 20/2/2010 it was resolved that:- Presbytery write to the ICR Committee suggesting the Committee recommend to Synod that we offer the RPCA Mutual Eligibility in similar terms to that which we have with the FCS, RCNZ and the OPC. It was further resolved that Mr. Bajema represent the PCEA at the coming RP Presbytery meeting with Mr. Smith as substitute.

In anticipation of Synod’s favourable response to this proposal the Convener has made contact with the RP Presbytery but doesn’t expect an official reply until after their meeting of Presbytery on 7-8th May 2010.

3. CHURCHES WITH WHOM WE HAVE CONTACT.

3:1 Southern Presbyterian Church of Australia (Tasmania). We note the cordial relations that exist between the Southern Presbytery and the SPCA. Most of our ministers were able to meet with the two serving SPC minister during the Banner of Truth Conference in Sydney in March 2010. It is also expected that members of the Southern Presbytery will have an informal meeting in Tasmania in June. The Ulverstone congregation has also received the benefit of assistance from time to time from the ministers of the SPCA.

3:2 Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia. Following the apology received by the Southern Presbytery and Synod in 2008, the Presbytery had some correspondence with the EPCA including appreciation of the apology. It was also suggested that it might be advantageous if they issued a fresh statement on their distinctive position on the attitude of God to the non-elect without the polemical context in which it was originally discussed e.g. 'Universalism and the Reformed Churches.' (Issued in 1970 and still on the EPC website). It is of course entirely up to the EPC to act as they see fit, but promoting better understanding can only be for the glory of God and the good of His people. It is of interest to note that Mr. Ian Morgan died on 8/1/10. He was the driving force behind much of the early theological writing of the EPCA, but was latterly a member of the Presbyterian Church in Tasmania.

3:3 Australia Free Church. Officially organised under this name in 1988 and associated with Rev. E.S.Turnbull - who was removed from the PCEA ministry on 2/11/79 because of his position on the KJV. Two elders, John Nelson (St. Kilda) and John Cunningham (Hamilton) were subsequently disciplined for their behaviour in this matter. In 2002 they were ordained ministers in the AFC. There is a congregation in Chadstone (Melbourne) under John Nelson and the former EPC congregation (but now AFC) in Rockhampton (Qld) under Matthew Winzer. There are also a few folk in Hamilton and the total following is about 60. Dr. Ward was passing the Chadstone building on 8/1/2010 when he discovered a meeting of Presbytery in progress. He was invited to speak to the assembled meeting. As a result a letter from the AFC was sent to the Southern Presbytery indicating regret for actions and expressions which may have caused hurt and expressed willingness to meet with Presbytery.

Such a meeting was arranged as part of the Presbytery meeting on 20/2/10. Messrs. Turnbull, Cunningham and Nelson appeared. It was understood that the issue for consideration was not the doctrinal difference but the conduct in particular of Messrs. Nelson and Cunningham. Following discussion at which Mr. Cunningham spoke at some length and Mr. Nelson spoke more briefly, they fully acknowledged that they had acted in wrong ways. Mr. Turnbull offered no such apology but affirmed that he considered he had been dealt with unjustly. The three men withdrew and Presbytery deliberated. The conclusions of the Presbytery were:

1. Presbytery receives the expression of apology and regret from the AFC Presbytery with thankfulness, and appreciate the opportunity to meet with those available from the AFC today, namely, Messrs. Turnbull, Nelson and Cunningham.
2. In regard to the circumstances of Mr. Nelson's ordination as an elder without the requisite notice and also his absenting himself from the St. Kilda congregation while a process of discipline was in operation, Presbytery expresses satisfaction with what has been stated by him at this meeting by way of apology and regret, declare the end of discipline applied by this Presbytery on 27/6/1980 has been served and recognise that he now belongs to another denomination.
3. In regard to Mr. Cunningham's disregard of the lawful directives of this Presbytery on numerous occasions, Presbytery expresses satisfaction with what has been stated by him at this meeting by way of apology and regret, declare the end of the discipline applied by this Presbytery to him on 18/3/1988 in directing his removal as an elder if he did not comply within 30 days has been served, and recognise that he now belongs to another denomination.
4. In respect of Rev. E.S.Turnbull the Presbytery note that he continues to maintain the doctrinal position concerning the KJV which led to his removal from the PCEA ministry on 2/11/1979, and that he now belongs to another denomination.

Mr. Nelson expressed their appreciation for the way they had been received and their matter heard and dealt with. Although this is a Presbytery, matter it is reported because of the impact which the events of 1979 have had on the wider church. We can be thankful for this development despite the doctrinal differences which remain unresolved at this time.

3:4 Christian Reformed Churches of Australia. At its meeting on 20/2/2010 Southern Presbytery recorded the following self-explanatory minute.

‘Mr. Bajema noted trends of recent years that appeared to indicate a significant slippage from the robust Reformed position. It was resolved that we write to the ICR Committee requesting that when they send an invitation to the CRCA to send a delegate we ask them to address concerns that there appears to be significant slippage from the Reformed position.

It was further resolved that Mr. Bajema together with any other available members of Presbytery be appointed to attend and observe the Conference organised by the Box Hill and Macarthur CRC sessions at Box Hill Reformed Church (10am – 9.30 pm Saturday April 24 and Monday April 26, 9am – 3 pm) with a view to report at Synod, it being understood that their attendance is not to be construed as interference in another church’s internal affairs.’

Given our historical relationship with the CRCA, particularly in its early years in the 1950’s, it is particularly appropriate that we should understand what is happening with a view to speaking wisely and helpfully, while not interfering inappropriately in the internal matters of another church of Reformed heritage.

3:5 Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia. We anticipate being able to report on the response of the PRCA regarding our desire to have fraternal relations with them at Synod.

3:6 Presbyterian Free Church (India). The mission work of the Free Church of Scotland in India became independent over 20 years ago. The church was then named the Free Church of Central India, but has recently been renamed the Presbyterian Free church. There are four established churches which operate in the city of Jabalpur and in the towns of Chhapara and Lakhnadon in the Seoni District of Madhya Pradesh. We were informed and enriched by the visits of Rev. Shyam Babu and Mr. Pradeep Kumar who were able to speak in many of our congregations on their way home from the ICRC. Their itinerary was organised by the Missions Convener. It would be appropriate in view of our long standing relationship with them to formally offer Fraternal Relations in terms of our Act of Synod 1993.

PROPOSED DELIVERANCES:

1. Synod thank Rev. Peter Smith for his willingness to serve as a member of the Missions Committee of the ICRC; and that Mr. Smith’s travelling expenses be covered by Synod funds to the extent that they are not reimbursed by the ICRC.
2. Synod appoint Rev. Peter Smith to be our representative to attend the Free Church of Scotland Assembly in May 2010 and bring greetings.
3. The Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (PCEA) recognises in the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia (RPCA) a church whose worship and doctrines are similar to its own, with adherence to the Westminster Confession of Faith a major requirement for office bearers. The Synod notes the long and cordial relationship between the PCEA and the RPCA formalised in 2004 at the request of the RPCA. The Synod wishes to establish a relationship of mutual eligibility with the RPCA to deepen and further strengthen the bond of fellowship between us. By this the Synod of the PCEA understands and is satisfied that the RPCA Presbytery may issue calls to ministers of the PCEA, and likewise affirms the right of the PCEA Presbyteries to process calls to RPCA ministers. In neither case does this mutual eligibility impinge on the right and responsibility of the relevant RPCA or PCEA Presbytery to require full and satisfactory Presbyterian certificates of character and attainment before admission. This may include clearance under any relevant child protection

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legislation, and assurance that any incoming minister is familiar with the history, doctrine and practice of the church so that he is able to subscribe to the formula of subscription intelligently and heartily and participate harmoniously and constructively in the life of the church. Where an RPCA minister is called by a PCEA congregation such a meeting with the Presbytery may take place after a call is issued and before it is accepted, in order that the called minister may assess more closely 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 Australia) 2010.

4. Synod recognises the long association which the PCEA has had with the Presbyterian Free Church (formerly the Free Church of Central India) and offers fraternal relations in terms of our Act of Synod 1993.
5. Synod notes with thankfulness the recent developments concerning members of the Australian Free Church and the Southern Presbytery.

CHURCH AND NATION COMMITTEE

D.K.Muldoon (Convener), S Bajema, M.G.Smith, R.S.Ward, D.Kerridge

'Earthquakes everywhere' is the title of a 'blog' or 'ministers message' the convener posted on a church website (www.pceasydney.org.au) in October 2009. This was a comment on earthquakes that hit Samoa and other places at that time. It was made in response to reports and questions raised in the media. Each month a comment from a Biblical perspective on some item in the media is posted on this website. Other titles for this past year include 'angels and demons', 'death', 'depression', 'collapse of civilisation', 'doctors doctor the data' and 'human disorders'. We do not know who if anyone reads these, but they are out there in cyber space. People in the church have expressed appreciation from time to time. Our prayer is that these comments will help some think along more Biblical lines when evaluating what they read in the media, and for others will lead them to actually read what God has spoken in the Bible.

The editor of The Presbyterian Banner (TPB) published one or two of these 'blogs' in 2009. In other 'blogs' in TPB (April 2009) Dr Wes Hanna wrote about Charles Darwin and his famous book 'Origin of the Species'. It was encouraging to read an erudite evaluation of this book from a Biblical perspective. The editor of TPB brought to our attention issues in religious education on the schools of our nation (TPB February 2009). Attempts are being made to undermine teaching of the Bible in public schools. We must pray that the children of our nation will not be denied the opportunity to hear the gospel in their school.

D.K. Muldoon

TRAINING OF MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Members: M G Smith (Convener), J A McCallum, R W Murray, T W Yoa, and D P T Manly.

The committee did not meet during the year. We have, however, dealt with a number of items of business.

1. Revd Andres Miranda BA, DipTh.

Synod 2009 agreed the procedure by which Mr Miranda could be declared a minister of the PCEA. This Committee set essay questions relating to our history and distinctive position to be completed by Mr Miranda. Most of the Committee were involved in assessing these essays. After some interaction with Mr Miranda the Committee declared that it was satisfied and certified this to the Southern Presbytery.

Mr Miranda has subsequently signed the Formula of Subscription (both versions) before the Southern Presbytery and has been declared a minister of the PCEA and available for call.

2. Enquiries from prospective student/minister.

The convener responded to some enquiries; however, those enquiring have not pursued the matter.

3. Responsibilities of the Committee.

The Act describing the responsibilities of the Committee was passed some time ago. New ways in which some of these responsibilities might be fulfilled are now available. With this in mind, the opportunity is being taken to update the wording.

Proposed Deliverance

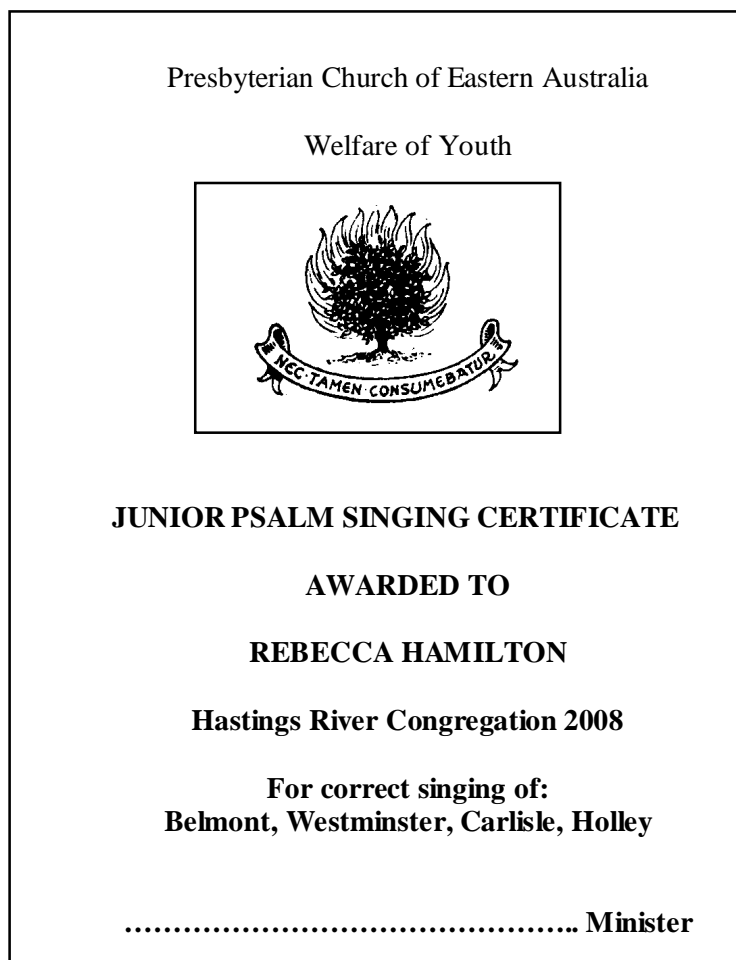
1. Synod gives thanks to God for answering prayer in regard to the provision of students/applicants for the ministry. Synod exhorts the church to continue to ask the Lord of the harvest and Head of the church to send out more workers both for our situation and for the wider work of God's kingdom.
2. Synod varies the wording of ACT ANENT RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRAINING OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE [Act 14, Class 2 Synod 1983], paragraph c as follows:
After "to be conducted by correspondence and/or lectures" add these words: "and/or through use of the internet and/or through use of digital media".

Paragraph c therefore now reads: "To prepare and implement, with the approval of Synod, a course of training in biblical subjects, theology and church history, suited for elders and other interested persons, to be conducted by correspondence and/or lectures and/or through use of the internet and/or through use of digital media, certificates to be issued upon successful completion of each section."

YOUTH AND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Members: *G.D. Hamilton (convener), T. Reeve, P. Smith, S. Carswell, I. Miller.*
Committee business was conducted via email during the year.

Memory Work: In 2009 our Sunday Schools reported as having presented 112 certificates (2008- 82) across 5 congregations. Many congregations are evidently producing their own certificates, which is encouraged, however, it would be appreciated if statistics could be sent through to the convener for reporting purposes. The convener has electronic certificate templates available thanks to time spent in design by Mr. Doug Hamilton, an example of which is provided below.



These certificates can then be printed on different coloured presentation paper ready for issuing. They are available as a Word document and are set up for A5 paper size. It is encouraging to see the children being taught the Scriptures, the Catechism and Psalm singing. We acknowledge those who are so faithfully teaching the children in our congregations.

Essays: Essay prizes were given to 17 children, 5 more than in 2008. This included 5 infant entries, 6 junior entries and 6 senior entries. It is encouraging to see the young people reading their Bible and writing very interesting answers to the set questions. They were surely blessed of the Lord in doing this work. It was agreed by the committee to provide book vouchers to the value of \$20, \$25 and \$30 respectively for the different age groups. We encourage more of the children in the church to put pen to paper and write an essay.

Birthday Roll: Mrs. Margaret Kinder sent out birthday cards to 149 children. Of the 139 in 2008, 18 reached the age of 12 years. Please notify Margaret of any children who could be receiving greetings from the church family on their birthday. The cards are sent with prayer for the child and their family. Please note that 7 cards were returned and if you are aware of any changes to addresses within your

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congregation who receive birthday cards please forward this information onto Margaret. Margaret reports that she has been printing the cards and is now getting a little ahead with them.

Breakdown is as follows:

Manning	19
St. Georges	9
Knox/Glenhuntly	24
Armidale	9
Hunter/Barrington	13
Hawkesbury/Nepean	3
Brisbane	15
Ulverstone	7
Hastings	8
Sydney South	0
Geelong	0
Northern Rivers	10
Narre Warren	7

Total cards sent this year 149.

Expenses for 2009 up to and including 31st December:

149 Stamps at .55cents each	= \$81.95
150 Blank Cards (\$10 for 50)	= \$30.00
150 Envelopes at (\$4 for 50)	= \$12.00
Estimated printer ink	= \$34.00
Total	= \$157.95.

Search Work: Mrs Irene Steel continued as coordinator of this program. 13 children were presented with book awards in 2009 (15 in 2008). An encouragement received recently which highlights the benefit of doing the search work was that while conducting Family Worship and reading from Matthew 3 and afterwards asking the children questions about the passage I asked how John's baptism was different from Christ's. My son Andrew promptly replied without looking at his Bible the difference almost word for word from scripture. I was very impressed and asked how he knew this. He replied he had just answered the same question from the Search Work!

Irene provided the following report: In 2009, 13 children did the questions, from 5 different congregations which is encouraging. So many times it looks as if the Search Work is going to die, but as some children drop off the list, others take their place. I now have 10 years worth of questions on a disk, which means that I no longer have any need to write more questions, which makes the work load fairly light.

Churchwide Family Camp 2011: A preliminary flyer has been sent out to congregations relating the time and place DV of the next PCEA wide family camp. A deposit has been paid to secure The Tops conference centre at Stanwell Tops just south of Sydney for the 3rd January to 7th January 2011. Rev. Iain Smith from the SPC of Hobart was invited and has agreed to be the main speaker. He provided a short autobiography to the convener and gave permission for it to be included in this report: *'I was raised in a Christian family in the Isle of Lewis on the Scottish west coast. Sadly, as an adult I took the broad road until the Lord brought me to mercy and forgiveness in Christ when I was thirty seven. During that time I worked in the construction industry until I began a business as a butcher in the early 80s. I resumed church attendance due to the persistent witnessing of a friend in 1986 and was converted soon after. I entered the Free Church College in 1990. I ministered in Glasgow for nine years prior to arriving in Hobart in 2003. Mary and I have been married for almost 37 years and have two grown up sons.'*

Not too much variation to the standard program of previous camps is proposed at this time. CWI have been booked in for the Missionary night. We hope to have application forms available by around August.

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The committee notes the significant costs involved with holding a Family Camp at a conference centre (after subsidies were provided last camp there was a shortfall of approximately \$2500 which was provided from the Working Funds) and would like to exhort Deacons Courts of the church to include the Youth and Fellowship Committee Working Funds as a worthwhile special collection to seek financial support from their congregation. If supported this would enable the committee to offer larger subsidies to those attending family camps and also provide for prizes for essays, search work, birthday cards etc. An alternative if a Deacons' Court cannot see their way clear to take up a retiring collection(s) is that they may wish to make a donation from Court funds.

Brisbane Camp: The Brisbane congregation organised the 2009 PCEA Brisbane Family Camp at Camp Drew at Lennox Head over the weekend of 27-29 November. Mr Stewart Carswell provided the following report. Some of us approached the 2009 PCEA Brisbane Family Camp (27-29 November) with slight trepidation knowing that our stalwart Master Chef had left us for a holiday to the balmy Scottish Winter (which proved to be the coldest for 50 years). Our advice is that they should have shared in our joy and fellowship at the Annual Camp at Lennox Head where the weather was a pleasant 30^oC and campers could venture to the nearby surfing beach or the pristine tea tree lake, walk through the tranquil surrounds or just enjoy the time to renew friendships and make new ones. As always, it was a good time to share with those from other congregations and we acknowledge the special efforts made by the Daniels family (Sydney), the Hilberts and Hamilton families (Wauchope) and the Carswell and Busch families (Rockhampton) in travelling many hours to the camp.

Sjirk Bajema (Narre Warren) spoke on The Church and its Communion with Christ from the Westminster Confession of Faith (Chapters 25-26) 'Of The Church' and 'Of The Communion Of The Saints'. Two insightful studies on Saturday involved clear explanations of each topic, some modern day examples and applications which resulted in lively discussion groups. The talks are available on the Narre Warren website and should be beneficial for all those who were unable to attend the camp.

Fiona Lenane coordinated the children's program and was supported by many eager helpers in their studies on Ruth. The children were able to show their craft and handiwork at the Saturday evening concert. On Sunday morning the melodic voices from Wauchope, Maclean, Sydney, Rockhampton and Brisbane all united in an hour of Psalmody that preceded morning Worship. Favourites from the '1650 Psalter' and the newer 'Sing Psalms' versions were enjoyed by all.

Realising the great benefit of a weekend of fellowship and Bible study, and in thanks to God for His great mercy, the congregation gave generously to the New Believers Camp in India (which Pradeep Kumar spoke of during his visit). The fellowship, studies, food and activities were greatly enjoyed by all with many promising to return next year. Thank you to all who contributed to the success of the camp. We trust, Lord willing, that we see many of you again and new faces for the 2010 camp (26-28 November).

Set Work for Youth in 2010: The committee decided to implement some changes in the Prescribed Work. Firstly, introducing the concept of a 1st certificate and 2nd certificate to the scripture memory work, the hope is that those that complete the first certificate early in the year will proceed to learn the second even if it is not in their designated age group. Secondly, a reintroduction of the Books of the Bible certificate to recognize the usefulness of this ability. Thirdly, a new certificate awarded for the memory of The Ten Commandments.

Metrical Psalms	1st certificate	2nd certificate
Infants (< 7 yrs)	Psalm 23/121	Psalm 67/100
Junior (8-12 yrs)	Psalm 122	Psalm 1
Senior (13-17 yrs)	Psalm 139: 1-10	Psalm 143 (2 nd Ver.): 6-8

Scripture Memory

1 st certificate (Junior)	Proverbs 3: 5-12
2 nd certificate (Senior)	Romans 5: 1-11

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The Ten Commandments

Exodus 20: 1-17

Psalm Tunes

Please choose appropriate Psalm from preferred book
(sol fa copies available from convener)

Junior

Duke Street
Retreat
Sheffield
St. Andrew

Senior

Leuchars
Farningham
Felix
Before the Throne

Catechism

Section 1: 1-10
Section 2: 11-22
Section 3: 23-38
Section 4: 39-62
Section 5: 63-88
Section 6: 89-107
Section 7: 1-107 word perfect

Books of the Bible

Correct repetition of the Books of the Bible in order.

Essays

Infants (<7)

Q. Illustrate Noah's ark, animals and a rainbow and explain what the rainbow means
(Genesis 9: 13-17).

Junior (8-12) (up to 400 words)

Q. Select an Old Testament Bible character and describe their life and relationship with God. You may wish to include an illustration.

Senior (13-17) (1000 words)

Q. Explain what is meant by 'Seek the kingdom of God' (Luke 12:22-34) and describe what this passage is teaching and how it applies to us.

Prescribed Work Ten Year Plan: Work commenced on a ten year plan for prescribed work.

Acknowledgment is given to the work completed on this by previous Youth and Fellowship Committees. It was decided to initiate the plan with the Scripture Memory section. Below is the proposed plan.

Year	1st certificate (Junior)	2nd certificate (Senior)
20 _ 0	Proverbs 3:5-12	Romans 5:1-11
20 _ 1	John 14:1-7	1 John 4:7-16
20 _ 2	Ephesians 6:10-18	Isaiah 53
20 _ 3	James 1:19-27	Romans 8:28-39
20 _ 4	Romans 12:9-18	Philippians 4:4-13
20 _ 5	Hebrews 11:1-10	1 Corinthians 13:1-13
20 _ 6	John 10:7-15	John 15:1-14
20 _ 7	Mathew 5:3-16	1 John 1:5-2:6
20 _ 8	Revelation 21:1-7	Isaiah 55
20 _ 9	1 Thessalonians 5:15-24	James 4:6-17

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Youth and Fellowship Budget for 2010: The budget for 2010 is provided below. More allowance has been provided for the essay and search work prizes to recognise increased numbers and cost of books/vouchers.

Brisbane family camp	200
Search work prizes	300
Birthday cards	200
Essay prizes	400
PCEA Family camp 2011	<u>400 (deposit)</u>
TOTAL	<u>1500</u>

Proposed Deliverances:

1. Synod thank all Sunday School teachers and youth leaders for their dedicated work in teaching the young people.
2. Synod thank Mrs Margaret Kinder for sending birthday greetings to children.
3. Synod thank Mrs Irene Steel for setting and assessing Search Work questions and awarding prizes to the children.
4. Synod exhort Deacons Courts of the church to include the Youth and Fellowship Committee Working Funds as a worthwhile special collection to seek financial support from their congregation.
5. Synod request that certificate statistics be sent through to the convener for reporting purposes.

THE PRESBYTERIAN BANNER

(from the Editor)

Introduction: Having just taken over the reigns of The Presbyterian Banner I would like to thank the Rev. Ray Murray and his team for their faithful service over the past three or so years. This ministry is very much a labour of love and that has been clearly evident in their service. You would already have noticed the stylistic changes to The Presbyterian Banner and we hope these help to continue to make our denominational magazine increasingly of use both in hard copy and electronic format versions. There is nothing quite like placing the magazine in the hands of every family which is part of your congregation. We are in the process of bringing a local production team on board in the Melbourne area and plan to take over the practical details following the time of Synod 2010. I would urge that all our ministers, gifted elders and members to contribute whatever they would believe is appropriate for our regular denominational publication. It is our Banner and the more our folk contribute to it the more it will be used and shared. This also very much applies to local church news.

Present Situation: As reported last year [2009], if we take into account the presence of the magazine in its pdf form on the web [hits], direct e-mail distribution, subscribers, complimentary copies, and congregational distribution, our “readership” averages about 470 per month. The number of printed copies produced during 2009 was 95 and the number of packages sent by post 32.

We would like to thank those contributors and correspondents who have supported the magazine during 2009. Wes Hanna, Dennis Muldoon, Sjirk Bajema, and Peter Carswell, among others, have been most faithful in this area. We would also thank our very competent team in the Northern Rivers for their help – Roberta Murray for proof reading and packaging, John McPhee for looking after the finances; and Ross Campbell for handling the Postage. And, of course, we also thank our faithful readers for their encouragement and support.

The Balance Sheet for 2009 is available below. We finished the year with a credit balance of \$1,518.51. However, when outstanding subscriptions from two Synod Committees are taken into account, this brings the balance up to approximately \$1,748.51. With these paid in 2010 the opening balance for 2010 will stand at approximately \$3,900. We estimate that Production and Postage in 2010 will cost in the vicinity of \$3,000 leaving a balance of about \$900 at the end of the year. [Note: This assumes the colour copy is continued]

The Future: If the magazine develops as it is presently it is likely to involve either a subscription increase next year or the alternative proposal I would like to lay before Synod of a bi-monthly production. I would propose this particularly in the light of the general lack of material we have from within our denomination at this time.

2009

RECEIPTS

Balance 31/12/2008 cf	\$1,790.55
Subscriptions	\$1,241.00
Interest	<u>\$ 8.96</u>
Total	<u>\$3,040.51</u>

PAYMENTS

Printing	\$1,053.00
Postage/Labels	<u>\$469.00</u>
	<u>\$1,522.00</u>
Balance, 31/12/2009	<u>\$1,518.51</u>

SUPERANNUATION COMMITTEE

RS Ward (Convener 1978), Messrs S Bajema, J Audet, D Ramsay

A: SUPERANNUATION FUND

Mr Miranda was added upon his commencement of full time supply 1/12/2009. Mr Kerridge (b.1970) currently has contributions made through another fund. The average age of the 12 current members is about 56.9 years, with an average of 13.7 years of service as at 31/12/08 with the PCEA.

1. Membership

Name	Service from	Total service at 31.12.09	Year 70
S.R.Tamata	16.10.1998	11.12	2011
R.W.Murray	11.12.1968	37.57	2011
J.A.McCallum	28.06.1985	25.50	2012
R.S.Ward	20.03.1976	33.78	2015
M.G.Smith	16.06.2006	03.54	2018
T.I.Leggott	11.03.1989	20.80	2019
D.K.Muldoon	29.11.2002	07.09	2022
G.D.Ball	01.12.1997	12.08	2025
S. Bajema	17.01.2009	00.97	2028
T.W.Yoa	09.05.2006	03.64	2029
D.P.Smith	16.11.2001	08.12	2030
A.A.Miranda	01.12.2009	00.08	2042

Note: Mr Murray's service excludes a one year absence in Scotland 1975/76. Other commencement dates are ordination or induction except Mr Ball whose service as an ordained minister began 1/12/97, and Mr Yoa from date of admission by Synod. The Superannuation Guarantee levy is 9% from 1/7/2002. Congregations which employ a preacher aged under 70 on a supply basis where earnings are \$450 per month or more are liable for this levy and should contact the Committee for advice/assistance.

Superannuation Review

The Committee indicated a review was anticipated and Synod 2009 on the motion of Mr Steel decided:

The Superannuation Committee undertake a thorough overall review of the current Synod "Superannuation System". The review to include:

1. *The current level of contribution made by the church for the various categories of ministers, to Superannuation and/or Retirement Benefits. Particularly the case of ministers who are aged 70 years or greater so that there is some continuing contribution made for their retirement until it is effected.*
2. *The current level of Superannuation Levy placed on the various categories of sanctioned charges, by the Synod. Particularly the case of congregations which are not required to make Superannuation contributions on behalf of their inducted ministers or full time Supply ministers.*

Submissions were received on this subject from Mr Steel and Mr Doug Hamilton. In a detailed submission Mr Steel argued for

- a. a standard contribution to age 70 (not tiered 10% and 18% as at present) comprised of SG 9% plus additional contribution;
- b. self-supporting congregations with inducted ministers to pay the total contribution due their ministers ie 18%;
- c. aid-receiving congregations to pay a lesser amount (eg. 11.75%) with the balance made up from interest on the Support Fund (currently about \$8,000pa);
- d. vacant congregations to pay nothing except for SG contributions (currently 9%) for supply to age 70;
- e. supply ministers also inducted ministers over 70 to receive the SG 9% to age 75;
- f. inducted ministers from 75 to receive credit for the amount in excess of SG that may be being contributed for others, to be accumulated outside Super and paid on actual retirement the amount in excess of the SG

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- g. the levy proceeds account would become a clearing account as there would be no difference between income and outgo.
- h. A number of examples were given suggesting viability at much the same level of contribution by aid-receiving congregations as at present but a higher contribution by self-supporting congregations and no contribution by vacant congregations.

In this plan the pooling principle is largely given up, there is some uncertainty as to the funding of the extra employer contribution (since it depends on fluctuating income), and no provision is made for a source of funding under (f) or for the impact of inflation over time. On the worked example given by Mr Steel, self-supporting congregations would pay 18% or \$7,715pa, aid receiving 11.75% or \$5,036pa leaving \$8,000 to be paid by the Super Support Fund. The plus would be that all inducted ministers receive 18% from year 1 and vacant congregations would contribute nothing, the negative that all settled congregations pay more. Mr Hamilton's submission was brief and related largely to disparity between contribution by congregations and to members.

To better gauge church opinion the Committee sought reaction from Southern Presbytery on key points at its meeting 31/10/2009:

'The Committee would appreciate input on the following:

- a. The principle of vacant congregation making some levy contribution.
- b. The principle of the church contributing to Superannuation for ministers after they attain 70 years when there is no legal obligation to do so.
- c. The principle of the church putting aside an amount as a retiring figure in respect of service after age 75 when contribution to Super is legally prohibited.
- d. The provision of a fully vested 10% Super contribution for ministers for the first five years inducted service rising to a higher figure (currently 18% thereafter). [The legal minimum is 9%.]

The Presbytery expressed its mind as follows:

- a. The principle is pooling (with inevitable inequalities from time to time) OR each congregation meets the cost on an individual basis (which means hardship for weaker congregations.) The Presbytery believed pooling was both Scriptural (the strong helping the weak) and reasonable.
- b. Superannuation is a retirement provision and cannot be expected that additions be made when a man has entered into the time of normal retirement.
- c. As (b) with the further point that the letter as well as the spirit of the law should be observed.
- d. While any arrangement could be criticised the measure seemed fair.

The issues will be considered under the appropriate headings as below.

2. Church Contributions to Superannuation

1. Superannuation Levy on congregations

The Superannuation Committee funds are sound but the levy arrangement has become a bit complex as we sought to ease the burden on aid-receiving congregations by ad hoc discounts so reducing their need to draw from the more needy Stipend funds. The current levy is 14.5%. Currently aid-receiving congregations get a reduction of 20% (effectively paying 11.6%), vacant congregations with full time stipended supply for which they are paying 9% Superannuation Guarantee get a discount of 80% (effectively paying 11.9%), vacant congregations or congregations not required to make a contribution for their inducted or full time supply minister pay 40% (effectively paying 5.8%).

We think these arrangements could be simplified in the following way.

- a. All congregations pay an annual levy of 5% of minimum stipend for the first minister (or only 1.0% if aid-receiving) and 2.0% for any additional minister in the same charge,
- b. In addition, each congregation with an inducted or supply minister pays 9% SG for each of its ministers but not beyond the end of the quarter following attainment of the age of 70 years. An

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ordained PCEA minister eligible for call giving full time residential supply receives SG based on minimum stipend; all others receive SG based on actual earnings so long as they meet the legal threshold (currently \$450 per month).

This proposal preserves the pooling principle in all normal cases. This generally commends itself and has been the principle of the fund since its foundation over 40 years ago. It needs to be appreciated that over much of a minister's period of service the contribution for Super for him may be at a higher rate than the levy on his congregation and it is proper that vacant congregations contribute to the common pool. Under this proposal the burden on congregations is slightly less in every case: for non aid-receiving congregations 14% (not 14.5%) [or 18% under Mr Steel's proposal]; for aid-receiving with PCEA ordained supply 10% (not 11.6%), or an extra minister 11.0% (not 11.9); and for vacant charges without a supply minister 5% (not 5.8%).

While not precluding further adjustment in the future this method is clearer and more logical. We anticipate a small deficit in the levy account in 2010, which will be made up by transfer from the Superannuation Support Fund as required.

2. *Superannuation Support Fund*

The Capital/quasi capital stands at \$164,094 at 31/12/09 (slightly less than as at 31/12/07) after the balance at 31/12/2008 of \$12,912.08 was added. Income received and accumulated working funds at year-end were \$9,891. The fund arises from specific legacies and forfeited benefits under earlier no longer existing provisions. The intention is to support the levy proceeds account from time to time given that contributions to ministers may be at a higher level than the levy. An adjustment to enable a shortfall in the levy account to be met is allowed for in the revised regulations.

3. *Contributions to ministers' accounts*

The current position is that for the first five years of service the contribution is 10% of minimum stipend rising to 18% thereafter. The current Superannuation law says that you do not have to pay super contributions for those 70 years of age and older, while self-employed persons cannot contribute beyond age 75. Synod 2009 agreed that we reduce Superannuation contributions for ministers from the end of the quarter in which they attain 70 years to 5% of minimum stipend only and to nil from their attainment of age 75. Our present generous contribution assumes a man will be reasonably provided for by normal retirement age. To continue to contribute generously mistakes the purpose of Superannuation.

We propose no changes to these arrangements, but would like to hope that the current benefits can be increased in the future.

3. The Superannuation Funds

1. *Default Fund*

All but one of our members have chosen HESTA, our default fund, for their contributions. One retains membership of the ING Fund and another has retirement account arrangements with a major bank.

2. *Performance*

Results for the year are sent direct to members by ING or HESTA. The return on the default settings for each Fund compare as follows, with ING's being assisted by half being Capital Guaranteed.:

	ING	HESTA
1 year to 30/6/09	- 8.68	-12.3
5 years to 30/6/09	+3.16	+ 4.6

For the 6 months to 31/12/09 results were ING +7.81% HESTA +10.3%
HESTA outperformed the approximately equivalent ING Managed Growth option (-12.3% to -17.37%) 08/09.

3. *Outlook*

At the date of preparation of this report the outlook remains uncertain. We said last year that several years will probably need to elapse before there is a sustained recovery in the world economy.

4. Legal change

As from 1/7/2009 salary sacrificed to superannuation must be shown on PAYG taxation group certificates as Reportable Employer Superannuation Contributions (RESC). These amounts will be assessed as income for certain government benefits etc.

B. Long Service Leave/Annual Leave

We remind Synod members of the provision by Synod 2003 of an extra week of annual leave (5 weeks in all), which must be taken, or the provision of LSL at a week a year at the local level up to age 70. It is increasingly normal in the general community not to allow annual leave to accumulate beyond two years. We commend this as very appropriate.

C. Regulations

The appropriate changes in B1 (levy), B2 (history abbreviated), B2d (SSF), C1 (history), C7 (RESC) and some minor cosmetic adjustments to take account of the current Superannuation environment have been made, and the result is attached as an Appendix to this Report.

PROPOSED DELIVERANCES:

1. Synod approve the changes to the Superannuation Levy set out in the Report, viz: All congregations pay an annual levy of 5% of minimum stipend for the first minister (or 1.0% if aid-receiving) and 2.0% for any additional minister in the same charge,
In addition, each congregation with an inducted or supply minister pays 9% SG for each of its ministers but not beyond the end of the quarter following attainment of the age of 70 years. An ordained PCEA minister eligible for call giving full time residential supply receives SG based on minimum stipend; all others receive SG based on actual earnings so long as they meet the legal threshold (currently \$450 per month).
2. Synod agrees the Levy changes apply from 1/1/2010, and for 2010 are to be calculated on the minimum stipend as at 1/1/2010 (\$42,861), so that self-supporting congregations pay \$1500 per quarter (9% + 5%) and others \$1071 per quarter (9%+1%), or \$1179 per quarter (9%+2%) and vacant congregations \$536 per quarter (5%) as the case may be.
3. 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.
4. 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 to ensure outstanding entitlement is minuted at least once a year.
5. The Synod approve the amended Regulations attached to the Report.

SUPERANNUATION COMMITTEE

[formerly Provident Funds Committee]

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA

REGULATIONS AS ADOPTED BY SYNOD 2010

[Superseding previous regulations except in so far as they are incorporated herein.]

SECTION A - GENERAL RULES

1. The Superannuation Committee is appointed by the Synod to administer specific funds in accordance with all applicable Synod regulations. Synod 1997 resolved that it is to be composed of four persons, two of whom are to be members of the Retirement Fund.
2. The Committee is to keep proper records of its proceedings. The Committee is to continue to monitor relative performance and legislative changes with a view to appropriate recommendation to Synod from time to time.
3. The Committee is to report to each ordinary Synod on the state of its funds and in such a form that the adequacy or otherwise to meet immediate and projected liabilities may be readily seen.
4. In view of the need to avoid inadequately considered alterations to the rules governing the Committee and its funds, suggested changes are to be considered by the Committee and its opinion given prior to changes being made.

SECTION B - THE FUNDS ADMINISTERED

1. Superannuation Levy Fund

With effect from 1 January 2010 all congregations pay an annual levy of 5% of minimum stipend for the first minister (1.0% if aid-receiving) and 2.0% for any additional minister in the same charge. In addition, each congregation with an inducted or supply minister pays 9% Superannuation Guarantee SG for each of its ministers but not beyond the end of the quarter following attainment of the age of 70 years. An ordained PCEA minister eligible for call giving full time residential supply receives SG based on minimum stipend; all others receive SG based on actual earnings so long as they meet the legal threshold (currently \$450 per month).

2. Superannuation Support Fund [SSF]

Source of Funds

- a. gifts whether capital or otherwise
- b. investment income
- c. other sources as Synod may determine

Regulations adopted by Synod 2005 show the source of funds to that time. As at 31/12/2009 there was capital/quasi capital of \$164,094 and working funds of \$9,891.

How funds applied

d. while seeking to at least maintain the value of the Fund the fund can also be drawn on to supplement contributions made to members of the Superannuation Fund so as to reduce the levy otherwise payable by congregations, as determined by Synod from time to time on recommendation of the Superannuation Committee. A shortfall in the levy proceeds account may be covered by a transfer from SSF authorised by the Committee.

- d. by transfer of SSF income to what for the time being is treated as SSF capital, upon the direction of the Committee to the Synod Treasurer.

SECTION C - THE RETIREMENT FUND

HISTORICAL PREAMBLE

1. The history of PCEA retirement/superannuation provision since 1853 is given in some detail in the Regulations adopted by Synod 2005. The genesis of the present scheme is in 1967. With effect 1/7/1992 the Government implemented the Superannuation Guarantee (SG) system at a level of 3% which was progressively raised to 9% with effect 1/7/2002. The church has always been ahead of the SG scheme. Synod 2005 approved as its default fund the Health Employees Superannuation Trust Australia [HESTA] Core Pool, and allowed members the choice both of Fund and Investment permitted under the Government legislation effective 1/7/2005.

WHEN MEMBERSHIP EFFECTIVE

2. Eligibility for Superannuation is determined by commencement of service and subject to any government minimum threshold on earnings. Benefits in excess of SG provided for by the Church Scheme requires a man to be an ordained minister of the PCEA giving full time residential supply or being inducted to a charge.

BENEFIT

3. Superannuation provides a benefit in the form of a lump sum. The benefit for each member is the net sum resulting from the investment of the amounts contributed to each member's account plus any insurance benefit applicable, less relevant taxes, fees and charges. An annual statement is issued to each member by the Fund and the explanatory material indicates the Government rules on accessing benefits as they exist from time to time. In general, the benefit cannot be obtained until permanent retirement from the work force unless over 65.

INSURANCE

4. Within Superannuation there are insurance provisions with options, and it is usually cheaper to purchase insurance in this way. There is provision for Disability cover in the HESTA Fund. The responsibility for selecting cover suited to his needs rests with the member. Deacons' Courts are encouraged to discuss with the minister of the charge disability/income protection insurance bearing in mind that such an inducted minister is not a worker within the meaning of 'Workcover' and the like legislation (see Synod Reports 1995, p.53).

CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS

5. In respect of entrants into the fund after May 2005, the contribution for the first five years of service will be 10% of the minimum stipend/non-cash benefits figure, and thereafter is 18%. From the beginning of the quarter following a member's attainment of age 70 the church contribution reduces to 5% and ceases entirely upon the member's attainment of age 75.

MISSIONARIES/STUDENTS

6. Contributions for missionaries are made from Missions Funds; contributions sufficient to cover any Superannuation Guarantee Levy or the like for students employed in supply work are made from the funds of the congregation or preaching station concerned.

SALARY SACRIFICE & PERSONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

7. Under current law it is possible for Deacons' Courts, by arrangement with the minister, to make additional Salary Sacrifice contributions. As from 1/7/2009 salary sacrificed to superannuation must be shown on PAYG taxation group certificates as Reportable Employer Superannuation Contributions (RESC). These amounts will be assessed as income for certain government benefits etc. No liability shall attach to the Convener, the Committee, the Synod Treasurer or the Synod to pay additional contributions at times other than when standard contributions are usually paid (currently shortly prior to the end of each quarter).

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A member may also make Personal contributions from his after tax income, and may do so by direct remittance to the Fund.

INVESTMENT CHOICE

8. With effect 1/7/2005 the Church's default Fund is the HESTA Core Pool, and unless otherwise directed the Committee will contribute to this fund. An individual may choose a different Fund or investment choice as permitted by Government regulations, but (i) he must note the Synod's strong recommendation that he should obtain competent professional advice; (ii) any decision he takes is his own responsibility; (iii) no liability is accepted by the Committee or the Church to him or his family or dependents for the investment performance of the fund or investment medium he chooses; and (iv) no request for assistance from the Committee to make up any real or perceived lack of performance can be entertained. Persons relying on access to the lump sum on retirement to meet a mortgage or other liability are urged to consider the appropriateness of a conservative investment choice in the period up to retirement.

SECTION D - ANNUAL LEAVE PROVISIONS/LONG SERVICE LEAVE

1. Synod 2003 wound up the previous Long Service Leave Fund and ruled that with effect from 1.01.2003 the terms of ministerial settlement include a week of paid annual leave in addition to the presently required four weeks per year in respect of every minister. This additional week applies to service from the point the minister completes five years ministerial service until he reaches his 70th birthday. This additional week must be taken when due or within twelve months thereafter or it is forfeited, and it cannot be cashed out except for amounts due at the time of death or retirement.

2. At the written request of a minister to his Deacons' Court the terms in D1 above shall be varied so that the Congregation assumes responsibility for providing Long Service Leave at the rate of one week per year in lieu of the extra week of annual leave in 1. If this option is taken, the Long Service Leave cannot be accumulated beyond 10 years, and cannot be cashed out except for amount due at the time of death or retirement. So long as a person completes 5 years service within the PCEA, the LSL accumulates from the beginning of his services until he reaches his 70th birthday. In the event of transfer from one congregation to another the liability for LSL is to be adjusted between the congregations concerned. LSL liability (if any) is to be noted on Congregational Annual Accounts.

3. Synod 2002 and subsequently reminded ministers that the four weeks annual leave provided is a valuable part of the benefit provided to ensure active and effective ministry, and should not be accumulated without extremely good cause. Sessions and Deacons' Courts are reminded to keep a close eye on this matter so as to limit risk of ministerial burnout or unreasonable stress on the manse family, and to regularly minute accumulated entitlements, and Presbyteries are to make this part of their annual examination of records.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Committee members: AH Steel (Convener), J Audet, DE Kerr, JB Loudon, DJ Ramsay

Business attended to by the committee included:

1. Ministers' Minimum Stipend/Benefits

Current Level and Basis of Review of Minimum Stipend –

Synod 2009 resolved “ the Minimum Stipend – Cash and Non-cash components, (Excluding Manse, Car and Telephone) for 2009/2010 be \$822 per week (\$42,861 pa.) ie. to remain unchanged from the last review on 1/1/09. The six monthly reviews due on 1/7/09 and 1/1/10 to be suspended and the situation to reviewed and recommendation made to Synod 2010.”

This resolution will benefit aid-receiving congregations by \$1,700 less in Stipend payments over the full twelve month period to 30/6/10 plus respective increases in superannuation levies that would have flowed from the two six monthly increases of 3.00% and 2.40% in the *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia (Full-time adult ordinary time earnings)*.

After taking into account rates paid by some other Presbyterian churches, the improving economic climate in this country, the effect low inflation and interest rates have on self funded church members' income streams etc. the committee recommends the continuance of the suspension of six monthly reviews due on 1/7/10 and 1/1/11. Nevertheless, whilst endeavouring to ensure “the labourer is worthy of his hire” especially in aid-receiving congregations, the committee also wishes to remind all of our responsibility in returning to the Lord that portion that is due to Him – if all tithed then there would be no lack. Mal 3:10

2. Stipend Relief

Assistance Sought -

All three Presbyteries have sought Stipend Relief on behalf of congregations within their bounds for 2010/11:

\$ 21,400 – Armidale (up to 50% of Minimum Stipend - \$42,861 as at 1/1/10)
\$ 14,000 - Hawkesbury-Nepean
\$ 20,000 - Narre Warren
\$ 5,000 - Ulverstone

\$ 60,400 Total (2009 \$72,400)
=====

As at 31/12/09 there were no working funds in the Synod *Stipend/Church Extensions* accounts – a deficit of \$38,970 for year ending 31/12/09 had to be met by transfer from Synod *General Funds*. It is expected that \$15,400 will still be drawn before 30/4/10. Most of this amount will have to be provided again from Synod General Funds. The General Treasurer has advised he estimates there will only be \$44,600 available to meet the requests of \$60,400 submitted to Synod 2010.

Church wide appeal for Stipend Relief funds –

In terms of Synod resolution (Mins 09.25) the General Treasurer recommended an appeal be made to local church courts and through *The Presbyterian Banner* for Stipend Relief funds so that Synod may be able to fully provide assistance sought for period 1/5/10 to 30/4/11.

The Committee therefore despatched a suitably worded appeal to local church courts and *The Presbyterian Banner* in March 2010.

Basis of Payment –

The Synod Clerk, after inviting suggestions from the Administration Committee members and the General Treasurer suggested regulations need to be established for the payment of Stipend Relief to aid-receiving congregations.

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It is therefore recommended that stipend relief be always granted on a strictly needs basis and subject to the availability of funds at the time of the request. Requests to be made at least on a quarterly basis from 1st May annually.

Should there be insufficient Synod funds in hand, at the time of the annual Synod, to meet requests for stipend relief from congregations, the amount allocated to each congregation shall be equal to the percentage of their assistance sought when applied to the total of stipend relief applied for by all congregations.

Actual amounts approved for individual congregations are to be set aside in Synod's books of account so as to ensure funds are in hand to meet requests if and when made by the individual congregations.

Where Synod is unable to provide the full amount of aid requested and funds are received for stipend relief after it has approved allocations for assistance sought by congregations, such funds are to be allocated to the respective congregations in the same proportion as the approved allocations were made. Aid-receiving congregations may then take up additional funds to bring total aid received up to the limit approved by Synod.

Any undrawn funds previously set aside for congregations remaining as at 30th April each year are to be transferred to the main Synod Stipend Relief account.

The effect of these proposals for requests for Stipend Relief from Synod 2010 will be:

Congregation	Stipend Relief sought from 1/5/10 to 30/4/11	Percentage of total Stipend Relief sought	Proportional Stipend Relief Available on estimates
Armidale	21,400	35%	15,610
Hawkesbury - Nepean	14,000	24%	10,704
Narre Warren	20,000	33%	14,718
Ulverstone	5,000	8%	3,568
	\$ 60,400	100%	\$ 44,600

3. The Capital Assistance Fund

Balance -

Fund balance as at -	31/12/09	31/12/08
	-----	-----
Loan – Hunter-Barrington Congregation	0	5,400
Working Funds	107,634	87,605
	-----	-----
Total Funds -	\$ 107,634	\$ 93,005
	=====	=====

Total funds of \$107,643, excluding \$7,300 held on deposit, increased by \$14,628 (16%) for year ending 31/12/09 from interest received, share dividends and revaluations and the annual \$50 rent from St Georges Deacons' Court. No donations were received.

Loan(s) –

No loans existed as at 31/12/09. The remaining outstanding balance of \$5,400 owing by the Hunter-Barrington Congregation as at 31/12/08 was repaid in June. A loan of \$15,000 repayable over 48 months was granted to them on 13/6/06. This loan was repaid twelve months ahead of the agreed term.

4. Estimates (Major Working Fund Receipts/Payments)

Estimates have been made for the major working funds to 31/12/10. A projection for General Funds to 30/4/11 is also included. (Appendix 1).

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PROPOSED DELIVERANCES

1. We record our thanks to God for sufficiency in the provision of the ministry for another year.

2. The Minimum Stipend – Cash and Non-cash components, (Excluding Manse, Car and Telephone) for 2010/2011 be \$822 per week (\$42,861 pa.) ie. to remain unchanged from the last review on 1/1/09. The six monthly reviews due on 1/7/10 and 1/1/11 to be suspended and the situation to be reviewed and recommendation made to Synod 2011.

3. Stipend Assistance for 2010/2011 (1/5/10 to 30/4/11) to the following Deacons' Courts, be approved up to the following limits:

- \$ 21,400 – Armidale (up to 50% of Minimum Stipend - \$42,861 as at 1/1/09)
- \$ 14,000 - Hawkesbury-Nepean
- \$ 20,000 - Narre Warren
- \$ 5,000 - Ulverstone

\$ 60,400 Total

=====
As it is estimated there will be insufficient Synod funds available to fully provide the amount of aid requested, Synod approves allocations hereunder in terms of *Proposed Deliverance 4*:

- \$ 15,610– (35%) Armidale
 - \$ 10,704 - (24%) Hawkesbury-Nepean
 - \$ 14,718 - (33%) Narre Warren
 - \$ 3,568 - (08%) Ulverstone
- \$ 44,600 (100%) Estimated funds available

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4. a) Stipend relief be always granted on a strictly needs basis and subject to the availability of funds at the time of the request. Requests to be made at least on a quarterly basis from 1st May annually.
- b) Should there be insufficient Synod funds in hand, at the time of the annual Synod, to meet requests for stipend relief from congregations, the amount allocated to each congregation shall be equal to the percentage of their assistance sought when applied to the total of stipend relief applied for by all congregations.
- c) Actual amounts approved for individual congregations are to be set aside in Synod's books of account so as to ensure funds are in hand to meet requests if and when made by individual congregations.
- d) Where Synod is unable to provide the full amount of aid requested and funds are received for stipend relief after it has approved allocations for assistance sought by congregations, such funds are to be allocated to the respective congregations in the same proportion as the approved allocations were made. Aid-receiving congregations may then take up additional funds to bring total aid received up to the limit approved by Synod.
- e) Any undrawn funds previously set aside for congregations remaining as at 30th April each year are to be transferred to the main Synod Stipend Relief account

FINANCE COMMITTEE - APPENDIX 1

BUDGET - MAJOR WORKING FUNDS

for twelve months ending 31/12/2010

(Synod General & Chr/Extn - Stipend Funds to 30/4/11)

Fund	Balance as at 31/12/2009	Estimated Income Int/Divnds to 12/10	Estimated Givings	Estimated Expenditure to 12/10	Estimated Surplus (Deficit)	Estimated Balance 31/12/10	T'fer needed from Gen Funds
Capital Assistance Fund	107,634	8,000	0	0	8,000	115,634	Nil
Church Extension	0	500	0	0	500	500	Nil
Chr/Extn - Stipend	0	3,000	0	60,400	-57,400	-57,400	-57,400
Missions - General	0	17,500	8,800	9,900	16,400	16,400	Nil
Missions - (Legg/AIM)	0	0	6,000	38,500	-32,500	-32,500	Nil
Missions - (DAABeq)	56,707	3,500	0	0	3,500	60,207	Nil
Missions Relief	396,971	37,000	0	67,833	-30,833	366,138	Nil
Training of Ministry	119,389	17,000	0	200	16,800	136,189	Nil
Youth & Fellowship	10,216	1,500	0	1,500	0	10,216	Nil
General Funds	60,882	2,000	0	7,000	-5,000	55,882	

Total Estimated Transfers from General Funds -57,400
 General Funds - Estimated balance 31/12/2010 55,882

(including Ramsay, Harris & McKinnon bequests)

Estimated Balance of Synod General Working Funds as at 31/12/10 \$ -1,518

Estimates from 31/12/10 to 30/04/11:

Fund	Estimated Balance as at 31.12.10	Estimated Income Int/Divnds to 30/4/11	Estimated Givings	Estimated Expenditure to 30/4/11	Estimated Surplus (Deficit) 30/4/11	
Chr/Extn - Stipend	Nil	1,100	?	15,400	-14,300	-14,300

Estimated Balance of Synod General Working Funds as at 30/4/11 \$ -15,818

Notes:

1. Estimated givings have NOT been made for *Chr/Extn - Stipend*. Givings for 2009 were \$3,407.
2. The estimated shortfall of \$32,500 in *Missions (Legg/AIM)* can be covered by transfers from *Missions General* and *Missions - (DAABeq)*.
3. Estimated deficit of \$14,300 in *Chr/Extn - Stipend* from 31/12/09 to 30/4/11 takes into account the \$60,400 Stipend Relief sought from Synod 2010.

GENERAL TREASURER

1. Financial Needs

The financial needs of the Synod were adequately provided for during 2009. Total funds increased by \$127,420 (10%) to \$1,418,089 after allowing for \$268,071 held on behalf of congregations (Davis Memorial Bequest), ministers' superannuation levies etc.

Net increases occurred in:

Capital Funds	\$ 78,206
Working Funds	\$ 49,214

Net Increase in Funds	\$127,420
	=====

The major contributing factor to the net increase was an increase of \$190,632 in the value of share investments as at 31/12/09 however, this was offset by stipend relief payments amounting to \$47,000, *Missions* donations and other expenses.

For details of increases and decreases refer to the Notes in Synod's Financial Statements.

2. Contributions to Synod and Congregational Funds

Contributions of \$16,930 by congregations to Synod Funds during 2009 increased by \$2,569 (18%). In addition, \$15,000 was received for on forwarding to individual congregations, \$2,000 in response to an appeal by Armidale congregation and a most generous anonymous donation of \$13,000 for Brisbane (\$5,000) and Northern Rivers (\$8,000) congregations. Refer to the Congregational Contributions Summary at back of the Financial Statements for further detail.

3. Synod General Working Funds

A deficit of \$2,012 was recorded in Income and Expenses for the year ending 31/12/09. This was mainly caused by less interest received and increased ICRC expenses.

Additionally, it was necessary to apply \$38,969 of *Synod's General Working Funds* received in recent years from bequests, to the deficit in *Stipend Relief*. I seek confirmation of the disbursement of these funds. Refer to Note 12 of the Balance Sheet for further detail of *Synod's General Working Funds*.

It appears most likely that all of the balance of *Synod General Working Funds* as at 31/12/09 will be required in the coming year to meet normal running expenses and an expected deficit in *Stipend Relief Funds*. In terms of Synod resolution (Mins 09.25) I therefore recommended to the Synod Finance Committee a church wide appeal be made as reported by their Committee.

4. Synod banking accounts

As from 1st October 2009 the National Australia Bank discontinued the option of initiating overseas telegraphic transfers via faxed applications downloaded from the internet. The alternate was to manually complete and lodge applications with a branch of the bank, utilise their *NAB Connect* facility or their normal *Internet Banking* facility. As the first two options, for various reasons, were not considered the most suited to our needs, after consultation with the Synod Administration Committee, arrangements were made, as a temporary measure, to use their normal *Internet Banking* facility. I have since been using this to make overseas telegraphic transfers as well as local transfers where possible. Evidence of all transfers made has been provided via email to the Synod Clerk after the event for review purposes. I now seek confirmation of such.

Synod Reports 2010

Whilst this arrangement is of great assistance to me in effecting transfers and payments, nevertheless it lessens control over Synod's assets as it only requires one person to effect disbursement of funds. I therefore made enquiries at other banks to determine if their internet banking facilities included provision to transact online from accounts requiring more than one to sign when disbursing funds. At the time of writing, the most suitable option appears to be provided by Bendigo Bank. I therefore propose to bring forward a request to Synod 2010 to commence banking arrangements with them, or another bank, in addition to the National Australia Bank. Such request will include an amended list of persons authorised to operate bank accounts as transacting online from accounts requiring more than one to sign will necessitate use of the internet by at least two persons.

5. Books of Account Audit

A satisfactory audit report has been obtained from Partlett, Chave & Rowland, Chartered Accountants of Caringbah and is included in the published Financial Statements.

PROPOSED DELIVERANCES:

1. Synod confirm the charging of the deficit of \$38,969 as at 31/12/09 in *Stipend Relief Working Funds* to *Synod General Working Funds*
2. Synod confirm the use of the National Australia Bank internet banking facility by the General Treasurer since 1st October 2009.

QUEENSLAND TRUST CORPORATION
'PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA'
Members: Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer

Deed Box and Common Seal: The title deeds of the Church Property at Kalinga are held in the Locked Deed Box of the Trustees of the Synod of Eastern Australia with the National Australia Bank Ltd, 163 Rowe Street Eastwood NSW. The Common Seal is held by the Clerk of Synod. There were no applications of the Common Seal in 2009.

Proposed Deliverances: Nil.

NSW TRUST CORPORATION
‘THE TRUSTEES OF THE SYNOD OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA’

Members: Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer

Bequests

No new bequests were received by Synod during 2009, however, the Hunter-Barrington Deacons’ Court provided certified copies of correspondence verifying they had received a most generous bequest of \$301,995.84 from the Estate of the late Jean McQueen. The bequest being made to the “Hunter-Barrington Congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (to be used in the Raymond terrace section of the Congregation)”.

Deed Box

The Locked Deed Box of the Trustees of the Synod of Eastern Australia is lodged with the National Australia Bank Ltd, 163 Rowe Street, Eastwood NSW. The following deeds were uplifted from/lodged in the box during 2009:

- Uplifted Conveyance No. 390 Book 90 Raymond Terrace church
- Lodged Certificate of Title Identifier 2/16/758871 Raymond Terrace Church
- Uplifted Conveyance No.375 Book 62 St Georges Church
- Lodged Certificate of Title Identifier 3/1134880 St Georges Church

The title deeds for the Raymond Terrace and St Georges churches were converted from Old System Title to Torrens Title by the NSW Department of Lands and the obsolete documents were sent to the respective Deacons’ Courts.

Audit of Deed Box

On 3rd September 2009, in terms of Synod resolution (08.37.2), the Clerk and Treasurer of Synod carried out a joint inspection of the contents of the Deed Box held by the National Australia Bank, Eastwood. It was verified that the contents were in accordance with Trust Corporation records.

Common Seal Applications

No Common Seal applications were made during 2009.

Investments: Review of Results as at 31/12/09 -

Diversification - Specified Capital Funds:

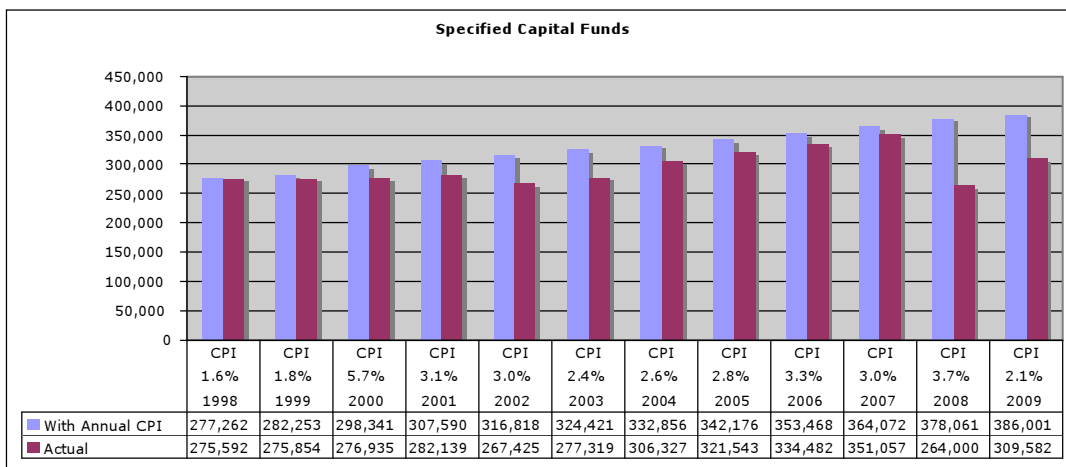
Actual 31/12/09 Amount	as at Percentage	Asset Class	Investment	
			Strategy Benchmark	Range
76,348	25%	Cash (Banks)	5%	5% - 10%
0	0%	Mortgage	30%	20% - 40%
0	0%	Debentures	15%	10% - 25%
233,234	75%	Shares/Units	50%	40% - 60%
309,582	100%		100%	

Additional funds are currently held in *Cash (Banks)* because of the inability to arrange suitable 1st registered mortgage investments and bank owned finance companies ceasing to offer debentures to investors. *Shares/Units* are also outside *Strategy Benchmark/Range* as a result of the sale of some shares and steep increase in values in some others.

Return on Investments:

Growth –

Total investments increased by \$45,581 (2008 decreased by \$87,057) representing growth of 17.27% against a Target of 2.1% (CPI). This was caused by the significant “bounce back” in investments held in equities.



The total value of Specified Capital Funds “Actual” (\$309,582) fell short of the total of Capital Funds “with Annual CPI” added (386,001) by 19% (\$76,409). This is a significant improvement on 2008 when the difference dropped to 30% (\$114,061).

Income – Income of \$19,008 (2008 was \$25,392) represented a return of 7.20% against a Target of 4.28% (Average Official Cash Interest Rate of 3.28% Plus 1.00%).

Overall return – Growth 17.27% Income 7.20% = 24.47% (2008 was negative 17.56%) overall return on investments totalling \$264,000 as at 31/12/08.

Summary -

Investments are considered to be adequately *Diversified* in the current economic climate.

Our *Investment Strategy Objective* was achieved in both *Growth and Income*.

However, our goal to maintain “real value” ie. to “keep up with inflation” is still not being achieved, but 33% of the drop suffered in 2008 was regained in 2009.

Proposed Deliverances: Nil.

**THE TRUSTEES FOR VICTORIA
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA**

Members: Moderator (JA McCallum), Clerk (TI Leggott) and Treasurer (AH Steel) - Secretary

Administration

Synod 2009 resolved the trustees be “.....the Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer for the time being of the Synod of Eastern Australia....” As a consequence the Secretary conveyed thanks to the former members of the Body Corporate who have given long and valued service - JRB Webster (1966), JB Louden (1985), WJW Hanna (1994), DJ Ramsay (2002). All business requiring attention was transacted via email. Matters requiring the Trust Corporation’s attention included:

Bequests

No new bequests were received by Synod or reported to the Secretary by congregations during 2009.

PROPERTY HOLDINGS

Purchase of a church property by Knox Congregation at 91 Tiverton Drive, Mulgrave was settled in February 2009. Extensions to the building were completed during the year.

Sale of a house property by Knox Congregation at 24 Edmond Street, Springvale was effected in May 2009.

Deeds/Bonds and Common Seal

Title Deeds/Student Bonds Custody

Changes to deeds and bonds held in *Safe Custody* at the National Australia Bank, Eastwood during 2009 were:

- lodgement of Certificate of Title for 91 Tiverton Road, Mulgrave.
- lodgement of student Bond – DJ Kerridge.
- withdrawal of four obsolete student Bonds for destruction.
- withdrawal of Certificate of Title for 24 Edmond Street, Springvale.

Audit of Safe Custody Envelope

On 3rd September 2009 the Clerk and Treasurer of Synod carried out a joint inspection of the contents of the Safe Custody Envelope held by the National Australia Bank, Eastwood. It was verified that the contents were in accordance with Trust Corporation records.

Common Seal

As a consequence of the change in Trust Corporation’s membership (see above), the duplicates of the Common Seal and Attestation Clause (rubber stamps) are now held by the Clerk of Synod.

The Common Seal was applied to the following documents during 2009:

No.	Date Executed	Executed by	Document Executed	On behalf of
86	30.4.09	JBL/DJR	T'fer of Land Vol 07130 Folio 942 Sale, 24 EdmondSt, Springvale	Knox
87-89	28.5.09	AHS/JAM	Agreement - Monash City Council re Encroachment - Mulgrave Chr	Knox
90	18.6.09	AHS/JAM	Sigma Pharmaceuticals - Direct Credit of Payments	Ulverstone

**Investments – Specified Capital Funds (Bequests)
Diversification**

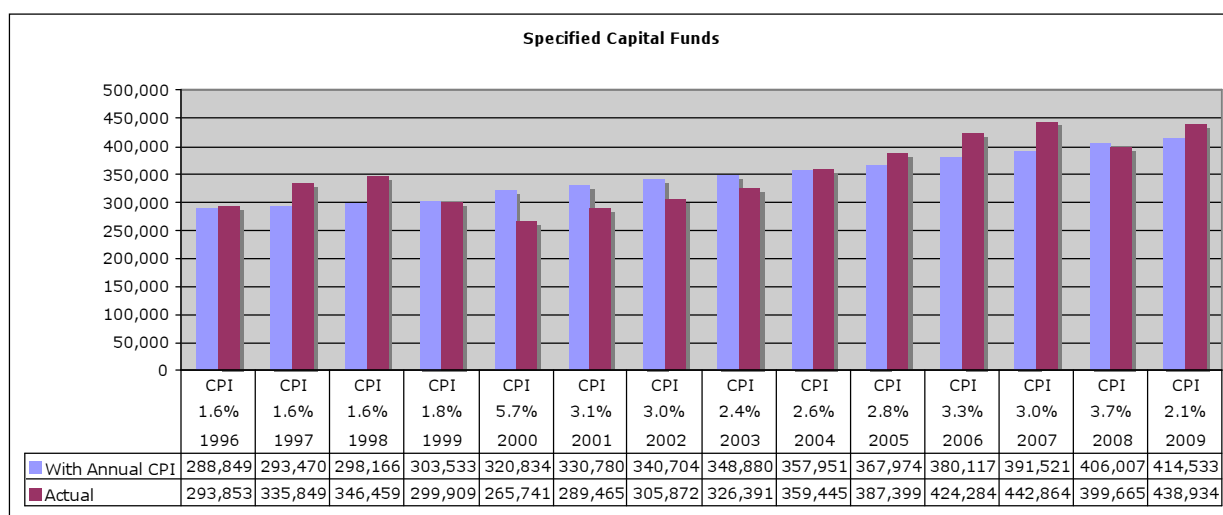
Actual as at 31/12/09 Amount Percentage		Asset Class	Investment	
			Strategy Benchmark	Range
183,316	42%	Cash (Banks)	5%	5% - 10%
0	0%	Mortgage	30%	20% - 40%
0	0%	Debentures	15%	10% - 25%
255,618	58%	Shares/Units	50%	40% - 60%
438,934	100%		100%	

While investments in *shares/units* were within the Strategy Range *Cash (Banks)* at 42% was well above the Benchmark range of 5% - 10%. This situation arose because of the inability to arrange suitable 1st registered mortgage investments and bank owned finance companies ceasing to offer debentures to investors.

RETURN FOR TWELVE MONTHS ENDING 31/12/09 -

Growth

Total investments increased by \$39,269 (2008 decreased by \$43,199) representing growth of 9.83% against a Target of 2.1% (CPI). This was caused by the significant “bounce back” in investments held in equities.



The total value of Specified Capital Funds (“Actual” \$438,934) returned to being in excess of “Real Value” by 5.8% (\$24,401) ie. appreciating by at least the rate of annual inflation (CPI).

Income – Income of \$26,527 (2008 was \$33,517) represented a return of 6.64% against a Target of 4.28% (Average Official Cash Interest Rate of 3.28% Plus 1.00%).

Overall return –Growth 9.83% Income 6.64% = 16.47% (2008 was negative 2.61%) overall return on investments totalling \$399,664 as at 31/12/08.

Summary

Investments are considered to be adequately *Diversified* in the current economic climate.

Our *Investment Strategy Objective* was achieved in both *Growth and Income*

Proposed Deliverances: Nil.

CORRESPONDENCE Item 1
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA
Northern Presbytery

Clerk: Rev. R.W.Murray, 33 Tallowood Street, South Grafton, 2460
Phone 02 6643 4272; E-mail: raymurray@compuserve.com

22nd February, 2010.

The Clerk,
Synod of Eastern Australia,
Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia.

Dear Mr. Leggott,

OVERTURE

At a duly constituted meeting of the Northern Presbytery at 33 Tallowood Street, South Grafton, at 1.00 pm on Friday, the 19th February, 2010,

Inter alia,

7. Business Arising

[From Presbytery Meeting dated 18th September, 2009 re 7.4. Overture to Synod anent Alternative Questions and Formula. The Clerk reported that the Overture of Presbytery to Synod 2009 was unsuccessful. It was moved, seconded and carried that the Presbytery, at its next meeting, consider an Overture to Synod in the following terms: "That for further assurance of where the ministry stands, directs that where a minister or student for the ministry is to be inducted to office or licensed using the 2008 Questions and Formula, such person shall also subscribe the Formula of 1952."]

2. Overture to Synod anent Alternative Questions and Formula. It was moved, seconded and carried unanimously that the Northern Presbytery Overture the Synod of Eastern Australia in the following terms:

To the Synod of Eastern Australia:

[1] Whereas when the vote was taken at the 2009 meeting of Synod between an Overture from the Northern Presbytery requesting the Synod of Eastern Australia to rescind the "Act allowing optional alternative questions and formula while not reducing commitments in terms of the Act of Synod 1952"; delay any attempt to introduce a new form of Subscription until such a time as greater unity of mind can be secured on the matter; and effect the change under Barrier Act procedure," and a motion from Mr. Ward, "That the prayer of the Overture be granted in the following terms: Synod is satisfied that the position of the church is safeguarded by the terms of the 2008 Act, notes the advantage to the church of the clear statements on church-state principles in it, and, for further assurance of where the ministry stands, directs that where a minister or student for the ministry is to be inducted to office or licensed using the 2008 Questions and Formula, such person shall also subscribe the Formula of 1952" the result was equal, the moderator abstained from voting, and there was no change in the decision of 2008.

[2] And Whereas from this vote it was evident that the majority of the Synod of 2009 were in favour of at least some change in the existing legislation of 2008 entitled "Act Allowing Optional Alternative Questions and Formula while not reducing commitments in terms of the Act of Synod 1952;"

[3] And whereas the Northern Presbytery recognizes that a change in the direction of the second motion, while not meeting all its desires relating to this matter, is more satisfactory than the retention of the 2008 Act in its present form;

Synod Reports 2010

[4] And whereas the Northern Presbytery believes that the adoption of the second motion would promote harmony and consistency in the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia'

Now therefore the Northern Presbytery respectfully Overtures the Synod of Eastern Australia to direct, for further assurance of where the ministry stands, "that where a minister or student for the ministry is to be inducted to office or licensed using the 2008 Questions and Formula, such person shall also subscribe the Formula of 1952." or do otherwise for this object as it, in its wisdom, may seem best, Mr. Peter Smith and Mr. Ray Murray to appear in support of the Overture.

Extracted from the Records of the Northern Presbytery,
the 22nd day of February, 2010,

I append herewith the Overture from the Northern Presbytery.

Yours sincerely,

R.W.Murray - Clerk of Presbytery.

OVERTURE

To the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia,

Whereas,

[1] When the vote was taken at the 2009 meeting of Synod between an Overture from the Northern Presbytery requesting the Synod of Eastern Australia to rescind the "Act allowing optional alternative questions and formula while not reducing commitments in terms of the Act of Synod 1952"; delay any attempt to introduce a new form of Subscription until such a time as greater unity of mind can be secured on the matter; and effect the change under Barrier Act procedure," and a motion from Mr. Ward, "That the prayer of the Overture be granted in the following terms: Synod is satisfied that the position of the church is safeguarded by the terms of the 2008 Act, notes the advantage to the church of the clear statements on church-state principles in it, and, for further assurance of where the ministry stands, directs that where a minister or student for the ministry is to be inducted to office or licensed using the 2008 Questions and Formula, such person shall also subscribe the Formula of 1952" the result was equal, the moderator abstained from voting, and there was no change in the decision of 2008.

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[3] And whereas the Northern Presbytery recognizes that a change in the direction of the second motion, while not meeting all its desires relating to this matter, is more satisfactory than the retention of the 2008 Act in its present form;

[4] And whereas the Northern Presbytery believes that the adoption of the second motion would promote harmony and consistency in the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia'

Now therefore the Northern Presbytery respectfully Overtures the Synod of Eastern Australia to direct, for further assurance of where the ministry stands, "that where a minister or student for the ministry is to be inducted to office or licensed using the 2008 Questions and Formula, such person shall also subscribe the Formula of 1952." or do otherwise for this object as it, in its wisdom, may seem best, Mr. Peter Smith and Mr. Ray Murray to appear in support of the Overture.



CORRESPONDENCE Item 2
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA
SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY

Clerk: Rev Dr Rowland S. Ward, BA, BTh (Hons), ThD
26 Roxburgh Road, Wantirna 3152
Tel: 9720 4871 Int + 613 9720 4871
rowland.ward@gmail.com

24 February 2010

Clerk,

Synod of Eastern Australia

At a duly constituted meeting of Southern Presbytery on 20/2/2010 the following overture to Synod 2010 was agreed to, and Dr Ward and Mr Bajema were appointed to state the same:

WHEREAS a minister is ordained for life unless removed by disciplinary process,
AND WHEREAS tenure of a particular congregation may be limited without breaching this principle;
AND WHEREAS the above positions are illustrated in the retirement of the Old Testament priests at age 50 (Numbers 8:24-25), and can also be seen in the appointment of men to particular tasks for a specified time which may or may not be extended;
AND WHEREAS it is respectful both to a minister who is advanced in years (and perhaps feeling unreasonable pressure to remain) and to the congregation in which he serves (who may find their minister's age and infirmity render him not able adequately to fulfil the duties of his office) to set a mandatory retirement date from tenure of a particular charge, but without precluding the minister from such other service as may be appropriate to his personal circumstances including as stated supply;
AND WHEREAS retirement provision for ministers through Superannuation is much more satisfactory than in earlier times (cf. Second Book of Discipline VII.17)
AND WHEREAS it was clearly the mind of Synod 1984 that normally ministers retire from inducted service at age 65 except with the express concurrence of the congregation and presbytery of the bounds but this rule was rescinded in 1991 purportedly because it should have passed under the Barrier Act and had not;
AND WHEREAS a fixed rule avoids the difficulty and delicacy of negotiation in those cases where a respected minister may be unable to appreciate he has reached the point where he should resign his charge.
AND WHEREAS a mandatory retirement age from tenure of a particular charge is the practice in the Free Church of Scotland since 1989, and is common in other churches of Reformed character;

NOW THEREFORE the Southern Presbytery humbly overtures the Synod of Eastern Australia appointed to meet at Melbourne 3/5/2010 to take these premises into consideration and to enact,

‘Synod decides that, in line with the law of the Free Church of Scotland since 1989, ministers inducted to charges or appointed to full time positions are obliged to retire by the 30th September following attainment of their 70th birthday.

Nothing in this Act precludes a man retired under this provision from such other service as may be appropriate to his personal circumstances including as stated supply, nor the customary position of a minister being permitted to retire with the consent of Presbytery upon attaining 65 years, or earlier if adequate medical grounds are shown.

This Act applies to all existing and future ministers but shall not apply to any existing minister of the PCEA who registers dissent against it applying to him at the time it is made by Synod or who, not being present at the Synod, within seven days thereafter lodges his dissent in writing with the Clerk of Synod who is to forthwith report the same to the Clerks of Presbyteries and to Synod 2011 as part of the Administration Committee Report.

This Act may be cited as ‘Act Concerning Retirement Age of Ministers from Inducted Service.’

OR to do otherwise for this object as Synod may deem best.

Extracted from the Records of Southern Presbytery by

Rowland S. Ward, Clerk

(The overture is attached)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA

SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY

*Clerk: Rev Dr Rowland S. Ward, BA, BTh (Hons), ThD
26 Roxburgh Road, Wantirna 3152
Tel: 9720 4871 Int + 613 9720 4871
rowland.ward@gmail.com*

**OVERTURE OF SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY
TO THE SYNOD OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA
2010**

WHEREAS a minister is ordained for life unless removed by disciplinary process,
AND **WHEREAS** tenure of a particular congregation may be limited without breaching this principle;
AND **WHEREAS** the above positions are illustrated in the retirement of the Old Testament priests at age 50 (Numbers 8:24-25), and can also be seen in the appointment of men to particular tasks for a specified time which may or may not be extended;
AND **WHEREAS** it is respectful both to a minister who is advanced in years (and perhaps feeling unreasonable pressure to remain) and to the congregation in which he serves (who may find their minister's age and infirmity render him not able adequately to fulfil the duties of his office) to set a mandatory retirement date from tenure of a particular charge, but without precluding the minister from such other service as may be appropriate to his personal circumstances including as stated supply;
AND **WHEREAS** retirement provision for ministers through Superannuation is much more satisfactory than in earlier times (cf. Second Book of Discipline VII.17)
AND **WHEREAS** it was clearly the mind of Synod 1984 that normally ministers retire from inducted service at age 65 except with the express concurrence of the congregation and presbytery of the bounds but this rule was rescinded in 1991 purportedly because it should have passed under the Barrier Act and had not;
AND **WHEREAS** a fixed rule avoids the difficulty and delicacy of negotiation in those cases where a respected minister may be unable to appreciate he has reached the point where he should resign his charge.
AND **WHEREAS** a mandatory retirement age from tenure of a particular charge is the practice in the Free Church of Scotland since 1989, and is common in other churches of Reformed character;

NOW THEREFORE the Southern Presbytery humbly overtures the Synod of Eastern Australia appointed to meet at Melbourne 3/5/2010 to take these premises into consideration and to enact,

‘Synod decides that, in line with the law of the Free Church of Scotland since 1989, ministers inducted to charges or appointed to full time positions are obliged to retire by the 30th September following attainment of their 70th birthday.

Nothing in this Act precludes a man retired under this provision from such other service as may be appropriate to his personal circumstances including as stated supply, nor the customary position of a minister being permitted to retire with the consent of Presbytery upon attaining 65 years, or earlier if adequate medical grounds are shown.

This Act applies to all existing and future ministers but shall not apply to any existing minister of the PCEA who registers dissent against it applying to him at the time it is made by Synod or who, not being present at the Synod, within seven days thereafter lodges his dissent in writing with the Clerk of Synod who is to forthwith report the same to the Clerks of Presbyteries and to Synod 2011 as part of the Administration Committee Report.

This Act may be cited as ‘Act Concerning Retirement Age Of Ministers From Inducted Service.’

OR to do otherwise for this object as Synod may deem best.

(Supporting extract minute of Southern Presbytery 20/2/2010 lodged with Clerk of Synod.)