

The Synod of Eastern Australia



To meet at the
Wauchope Church Facilities
Hastings Congregation
Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia

7th – 9th May 2013

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 2013

Time	Tuesday 7 th May	Time	Wednesday 8 th May	Thursday 9 th May
	Synod to Commence with Session 1 at 4.30pm	9.00am	SESSION 3 Devotions and Prayer Law and Advisory Training of Ministry Church and Nation	SESSION 6 Devotions and Prayer Superannuation Finance Trust Corporations Reports of Examiners of Records. Appointment of Moderator-elect Time and Place of Next Synod Closure of Synod
		M/Tea 10.30am		
		12.30pm	Lunch	Lunch
4.30pm	SESSION 1 Constitution of Synod Retiring Moderator's Sermon. Thanks to Retiring Moderator Presbytery Rolls. Welcomes (New members, guests, associations as required). Administration	2.00pm	SESSION 4 Media (Banner Website Archives) Youth and Fellowship Missions Inter-Church Relations Delegates from Other Churches	Synod Closes at the end of Session 6 at 12.30pm Lunch to follow before delegates depart
6.00pm	Dinner	6.00pm	Dinner	
7.00pm	SESSION 2 Election of Moderator for 2012/2013	7.00pm	SESSION 5 Missions Speakers	
7.30pm	Moderator's address. Thanks to Moderator. Presbytery Reports			
8.30pm	Close	8.30pm	Close	

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

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

Ministerial Movements:

Rev Dr Rowland Ward retired from inducted service on 30th June 2012 and his name has been added to the Roll of Resigned or Retired Ministers.

Rev Sam Tamata retired on 9th October 2012 and his name has been added to the Roll of Resigned or Retired Ministers.

Rev Jan Andries Scheepers was inducted to the charge at Ulverstone on 7th December 2012.

Timetable:

This year follows a similar format as last year, but with a commencement time of 4.30pm. There is no correspondence to deal with, and some from the South will be driving from Newcastle after arriving by plane at 1.30pm, so 4.30pm should give all time to arrive.

Congregational Statistics: See the table appended to this report.

Expression of Sympathy: We are not aware of the death of any former member of the Synod.

Committees:

The suggested Committee structure remains similar to the previous year with the following changes: D Kerridge to oversee website, TW Yoa to Church and Nation, S Bajema to convene Superannuation, RS Ward to convene Training of Ministry, I Hamilton added to Superannuation.

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 and Banner), D.Kerridge (Website), R.S.Ward (Archives), T.W.Yoa.

Youth and Fellowship: A.A.Miranda (Convener), J.D.Klazinga, G.Hamilton, , S.Carswell, T. Reeve.

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

Superannuation: S.Bajema (Convener), D.J.Ramsay, J.Audet.

Missions: J.D. Klazinga (Convener), D.P.Smith, T.I.Leggott, D.K.Muldoon, I.Conley, J.Greensill.

Training of Ministry: RS Ward (Convener), J.A.McCallum, A.A.Miranda, D.Manly, M.G.Smith.

Proposed Deliverances:

1. That the Committee Structure as noted in the report be adopted.
2. That the following examiners of records be appointed:

Northern Presbytery	Rev. R Ward and Hawkesbury Nepean elder.
Central Presbytery	Rev. A Miranda and Brisbane elder.
Southern Presbytery	Rev. G Ball and Geelong elder.

CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS AS AT 31.12.2012

	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 classes/ pupils	Youth midweek participants	
	11	+	-	12	11	12	>4	4-11	12-18	19-64	65+	Total				
Congregation elders/deacons																
Brisbane 4/1	36			36	50	50	4	13	7	26	9	59	0	4/19	0	
Northern R-5/3	50	-	2	48	60	60	4	11	3	23	36	78	0	2/9	0	
Armidale 2/0	5	-	5	0	12	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	
Hastings 5/1	36	2	1	37	42	42	3	4	2	26	13	48	0	2/4	0	
North P 16/5	127	2	8	121	164	152	11	28	12	75	58	185	0	8/32	0	
Manning 4/5	57	-	2	55	58	56	1	1	2	26	33	63	0	0	*	
Hunter 4/4	44	1	3	42	52	54	4	8	4	22	26	64	0	3/10	0	
St Geo's 4/3	55	1	5	51	65	60	4	5	1	42	24	76	1	2/4	0	
Mt Druitt 2/1	45	-	1	44	45	53	6	14	6	21	9	56	0	2/14	18	
Syd Sth 1/0	11	-	-	11	15	16	-	3	1	12	3	19	0	1/3	0	
Cent P 15/13	212	2	11	203	235	239	15	31	14	123	95	278	1	12/40	18	
Knox-3/0	32	2	2	32	52	44	3	13	1	27	14	58	0	1/6	0	
All Nation 1/0	63	-	6	57	123	110	1	39	15	74	1	130	0	2/35	10	
Narre W-1/1	36	2	-	38	49	56	1	3	5	28	15	52	0	2/7	0	
Carrum D 1/0	11	4	-	15	18	16	0	0	2	9	7	18	0	0	0	
Geelong-2/0	22	-	2	20	20	16	1	0	1	7	17	26	0	0	0	
Ulverst-1/1	21	5	2	24	30	34	1	5	6	17	17	46	0	2/8	20	
South P-9/2	185	13	12	186	292	276	7	60	30	162	71	330	0	7/56	30	
TOTALS 40/21	524	17	31	510	691	667	33	119	56	360	224	793	1	27/12 8	94	

- 34 are attending midweek groups on the Manning. The minister advises that “youth” on the Manning is considered to include those 55 and over!
- Deaths reported were 2 on each of Northern Rivers, Manning, 1 on each of Hastings, in Hunter and St George's – total 7, (in 2011 - 5; in 2010 – 6).

There was a 2.7% drop in overall membership in 2012, although given that rolls are not always regularly revised not much can be drawn from this except that overall we are not advancing, and Northern Presbytery in particular reports half the members of 30 years ago, when total PCEA membership was reported as 630.

There is a slight lift in numbers of elders and deacons although perhaps some are elderly, but the need for extra men is obvious in Southern Presbytery.

An interesting question is the source of new members of recent times apart from the obvious cases in Mt Druitt (Tongans) and All Nations (Southern Sudanese). Another is where those who leave us go. In the last 3 years there are 79 of these (excluding the deceased). The question of our outreach endeavours needs urgent consideration.

NORTHERN PRESBYTERY REPORT

BRISBANE: The Year of Our Lord 2012 was another year in which we could testify to the faithfulness of the Lord and his ongoing providential care. “Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting you are God.” (Ps. 90:1,2)

Two services each Lord’s Day were regularly held, at 10am and 5pm, with most being led by Pastor Klazinga. When he was unable to do so, Dr Wes Hanna would lead the morning services, while various elders and visiting ministers led in the afternoon. It was common to have visitors worshipping with us, including some who came regularly. On most Sundays a fellowship lunch would follow the morning service and Sunday School time. The Lord’s Supper was celebrated regularly once every two months. In 2012 we began to have extra Thanksgiving collections for Synodical causes on Lord’s Supper Sundays.

During 2012, membership remained fairly steady. Once again, there were no deaths in the congregation. On 18th March we had two young children baptized: Sarah and Robert Arklay, daughter and son of Aileen and Chris Arklay.

The congregation continues to be served by the Session consisting of four elders and the pastor. The Session sought to meet more regularly, with a special focus on prayer for the congregation.

The level of weekly offerings remains relatively good, considering the size of the congregation. Some of our savings had to be dipped into in order to cover costs, particularly the purchase of a new van for the pastor. Once again we would note the outstanding contribution made by the small group of retired people in Rockhampton who worship regularly with us via phone.

Four Sunday School classes continue to be held each week during the school year after the morning service. The pastor also continues to lead a course on the Westminster Confession held at the same time for youth beyond the Sunday School years. Two fortnightly Bible Studies led by the pastor met on alternate weeks.

The Annual Brisbane Congregation Family Camp was held at Lennox Head in November. The speaker was Rev. David Kerridge. He led a number of studies, and the Sunday services, focusing on the theme: “Wisdom – A Life-long Love Affair.” Attendance was down again slightly from the previous year, but there continued to be members from other PCEA congregations attending, and a good spirit of fellowship prevailed.

HASTINGS: We are thankful to the Lord that He has upheld us as a congregation for another year. We rejoice in the addition of two new members in the Congregation and the induction of a Deacon, Mr Neil McKinnon. We also held the funeral of Mrs Joy Scott, a devoted servant of the Lord, a faithful member of the Congregation and a great encourager to all.

A Christianity Explored course was run early in 2012, with 4 regular attenders plus occasional visitors for one or two sessions from within and without the Congregation. It proved to be a blessing for all. A Discipleship Explored Course followed for the young people in the church. We hope to repeat the Christianity Explored course this year with local advertising in the paper, as well as personal invitations.

Prior to the Synod being held in Wauchope for the first time in 2012, we were able to renovate the Church Hall, hopefully making it ready for another 50 years of service. The Port Macquarie Hall is being used by an inter-denominational group for Sunday afternoon meetings. An investment property at 9 Bindi Close was completed and, by the Lord’s providence, is currently occupied by tenants. The Minister and family have their own property.

The highlight of the year was hosting the 2012 Synod. We felt that there was a mutual blessing in having delegates come from various congregations of the PCEA and enjoy fellowship.

Services in Wauchope continue at 10am and 4pm, with an Adult Bible Class and Sunday School following the morning service. The Adult Class is studying the Confession and many interesting discussions have arisen. Kindee services are held fortnightly at 7pm. There has been some interest from people who attend monthly services in other churches in nearby localities to come along occasionally to join with us at Kindee. This has been a great encouragement. There is a mid-week Prayer meeting in Wauchope attended by a faithful group.

We give thanks to the Lord too for the generosity of the Congregation. Offerings have increased to average above \$1,000 for the year, and very generous donations have supplemented this.

We pray therefore that the Lord will bless us with growth, firstly Spiritual and also numerical as we look to the future here.

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

The Northern Presbytery received and accepted the resignation of the Rev. R.W. Murray at its February meeting in 2012 and the Rev. Dr. Wes Hanna was appointed interim moderator. The Congregation was declared vacant at the services on 4th March. However, the interim moderator invited Mr. Murray to supply the congregation. We are very grateful that he has continued to do this throughout the remainder of 2012 in the capable and zealous manner which we have all come to expect of him and that he has also agreed to continue into 2013. At the first meeting of Session following Mr. Murray's retirement, the Session unanimously passed a motion which said, *inter alia*, that "The Session wishes to recognise the long and faithful service Mr. Murray has given to the cause of Christ both in Australia and overseas and, especially his service as minister of the Grafton congregation and then as minister of the Northern Rivers Congregation. His ministry has been marked by a clear presentation of the Gospel, concern for the spiritual and physical welfare of the congregation and clear leadership in the church courts."

During the year, the congregation enjoyed a visit from the Rev. Andre Scheepers and Mrs. Scheepers and a call was extended to him to be the minister of the Congregation. In the Lord's will, Mr. Scheepers decided to decline this call. Following on this, an invitation was extended to the Rev. Richard MacDonald of Scotland to visit the congregation in January and February 2013 with a view to a call.

We have 2 services each Lord's Day – Grafton at 9 am, Maclean at 11am, 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 on Wednesday has about 14 attending regularly. The telephone service is continuing and is appreciated by members on the Sunshine Coast, Evans Head and Ballina. Some 9-10 people receive the service this way each Lord's Day.

The Sunday School continues in Grafton and Maclean with 3 attending in Grafton and 5 in Maclean, with 3 able teachers: Roberta Murray, Wendy McLaren and John Greensill. The numbers in the Sunday School have been reasonably steady during the year. We continue to be grateful to parents and grandparents for their support through the year.

During 2012 two of our members have passed away. Another has passed away since the beginning of 2013. Many of our members are either retired or are near retirement. Their continued faithfulness is a testimony to the faithfulness of God. At the other end of the scale we are grateful for a number of young families attending in Grafton and Maclean. The Roll now stands at 47 and our total Church community at about 78.

Congregational givings during 2011 averaged \$951 per week. There is considerable income from property [Manse rental] and investment, and the Deacons' Court is mindful of its responsibility to be a good steward of these resources. The sum of \$5000 previously allocated for the work in India has now been sent. We continue to make the Manse in Maclean available without charge to the Lower Clarence

Christian Education Board for the operation of an Op-Shop which ensures a regular contribution of \$10,000 to the work of Special Religious Education in the High Schools in Grafton and Maclean. With an annual income in excess of \$60,000 – and the provision of a shed on Manse grounds for their work, they have insisted that the Church should benefit from the income generated, and return to the Congregation some \$5,000 per year. This money is available for assistance to other congregations or worthy causes. The sum of \$1000 has been donated to the Gideons. The Church Hall at Maclean continues to serve a number of groups in the community as well as the needs of the congregation. The Church and Hall in Lismore continues to be used by the child minding centre – Caring.

The Bethesda Retirement Units are operated by a management committee under the supervision of the Deacons' Court. All units have been occupied throughout the year and there is a waiting list. We are grateful for the financial position, with more than sufficient funds to cover any foreseeable demand in the future. Mrs. Audry Russell is our latest resident, replacing Mrs Mary McPherson, the last of the original residents, who is now in Mareeba Nursing home. Three residents, non members, have attended our services at times.

CENTRAL PRESBYTERY REPORT

MANNING: The regular Lord's Day services have been maintained. The morning service now begins at 10 am. The service is preceded by a time of prayer led by one of the deacons (Bruno Bouchet). During the year the minister has preached through the books of Numbers, Joshua, Amos, and Hosea and began a series on the book of Revelation as well as occasional messages. The morning service is well attended; the attendance at the 4 pm afternoon service could however be improved. Many of our members are ageing and are no longer able to attend two services as once they did. There are three regular midweek meetings which are well supported.

During the year we were approached by the Director of AIM with a proposal to utilise the Tinonee church building as the office and headquarters of the AIM. The Deacons Court are delighted to see the building which had been seldom used now being used in the Lord's service. It will be good to see life and light around the building once again. An added benefit of this arrangement is that we now have Trevor and Pamela Leggott (who have relocated to Wherrol Flat, near Wingham) worshipping with us in the congregation.

Our connections with AIM have been strengthened further when recently our elder Neil Robinson and his wife Wilma announced their desire to move to Moree to assist in the AIM mission work there. Neil and Wilma will be greatly missed in the congregation, among the many things they did latterly in the congregation was to organise regular Friendship Outings. These occasions have proved popular with members and visitors from outside the congregation and an opportunity to build relationships. A couple of these trips incorporated visits to our neighbours in the Hunter and the Hastings congregations. We are grateful that these meetings will be continued under the leadership of a team of members.

We are thankful for the spirit of unity and good will that exists in the congregation. We are not complacent. We cannot speak of conversions or of spiritual enquires from outside the congregation. 'Shew us your mercy O Lord and grant us your salvation.' (Ps. 85: 7).

HUNTER BARRINGTON: The Rev Sam Tamata who ministered to the congregation for the past fourteen years, retired on 9 October 2012. We will miss his ministry, but pray for Sam and Muriel as they continue to worship with us.

Lord's Day Worship Services continue to be conducted weekly at Raymond Terrace (am) and Cardiff (am & pm). Mr Tso conducts the Worship services with occasional relief for Mr Tso having been provided by our Interim Moderator Rev Ball and a few suitably gifted members. Mr Kerridge has recommenced the conduct of a second morning Service at Raymond Terrace. The focus is upon our

Confession of Faith. Weekly live telephone broadcasts of Worship services to the sick and/or aged continue to be appreciated.

Prayer Meetings/Bible studies have been held regularly on alternate weeks at Raymond Terrace and Cardiff. This year meetings have been conducted by Mr Tso in the Cardiff and Raymond Terrace areas. Both groups are studying 1 Timothy. Prayer for local & worldwide mission and our sister PCEA congregations is a priority.

Ladies Bible studies have been conducted fortnightly at Raymond Terrace and Cardiff. Mrs Tso is currently leading a series of studies based on the Book of Acts. An All Age Sunday School has been conducted at Cardiff each week during the school Term. Psalms tunes, the Shorter Catechism and the Scriptures have been taught faithfully each week to the children. Adult participants have been studying the Westminster Confession of Faith. Mr Miller has been conducting this study. A crèche is conducted on Sunday mornings at Raymond Terrace to provide for the children. Instruction in the Scriptures is an integral part of the activity.

Prayerful consideration is being given to continuing outreach activities in the Raymond Terrace and Newcastle areas. Holiday Kids' Clubs have been conducted in the Raymond Terrace & Cardiff areas. There are plans to conduct regular Kids' Club meetings in each location. Mr Tso, a University Chaplain, has been exploring opportunities for evangelism to Newcastle University students. Our prayer is that our Lord would open doors of opportunity for them.

Tokens of God's favour to His people on the Hunter Barrington abound such as:

- a continuing faithful and challenging preaching & teaching ministry,
- an increasing desire to study God's word, and
- a genuine desire to take the gospel to the local community.

ST GEORGES: St Georges continues to provide an important witness in the heart of the City of Sydney and as such the gospel is heard by many travellers who visit the city on business or holidays. In addition there is a committed core of worshippers coming from all over the greater Sydney area, some travelling up to 50 km to attend services.

The time and number of the weekly Worship services, Bible Class, Sabbath School and Psalmody Practice has not changed in the past twelve months. Attendance at services has been stable at approximately 55 am, 40 pm, and 25 mid week. A group of approximately twelve people joined our morning service for the last quarter. The Communicant members roll stands at 50, down 3 on 2011. We have two Sabbath School classes with 4 children attending as two families with children left us at the beginning of 2012.

The congregation continues in good spirits generally, and thankful that we are still able to gather for public worship in St Georges.

HAWKESBURY NEPEAN: Worship services are conducted each Lord's day at 11am and 6pm. The minister has been preaching through Romans and Isaiah. Morning worship is preceded by a Bible class and a devotion in Tongan. There are two Sunday school classes with a total of 14. The prayer meeting on Tuesday evening is attended by 3-4 people. Most members attend regularly and the Lord brings others from time to time.

On 31 March we enjoyed a church picnic on the dairy farm of Mr. Tom Reeve's family. This was well attended and was a great time of fellowship and an interesting experience for all. During the year we had a working bee which members and helpers finished painting the inside of the hall and also repaired the fascia boards on the manse. A new church sign was also made and erected. The roof of the heritage church building is in need of repainting. The buildings are well used by the congregation; another group uses the hall on Sunday afternoons.

Outreach to the young people of the district continues with a Lighthouse club (12-16 attend) and a Youth club on Friday afternoon and evening respectively- attendance at the latter has grown to 5-6. Ministry to the elderly and terminally ill in two nursing homes continues.

In March a Christian worker from India spoke about his ministry among the slum dwellers in New Delhi, India. At another meeting a lady who had visited Israel gave an illustrated talk on that visit. During the year the minister made contact with the IPC church in Kenya. Rev Dr J. Mwanthi from this church spoke at a mission's night in November.

SYDNEY SOUTH: The congregation meets in the community hall at Bexley North. Worship services are at 9am and Sunday school at 9.30am. An additional family has started attending. A prayer meeting held each fortnight is regularly attended by six members. Two members are in nursing homes and unable to attend; one celebrated her 100th birthday.

SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY REPORT

In line with Act 13 of Synod 1986 the following Report is furnished covering congregational and other work within the bounds. The Presbytery met 7 times in 2012 (5 in 2011).

PEOPLE: As at year end there were six serving ministers (including Mr Kumnick), and one active retired minister within the bounds. This is the highest number of ministers we have had for over 140 years. In addition we have a student whose studies are nearly completed. Membership at the six centres totalled 186 compared with 144 ten years ago, 117 in 1992 and 105 in 1982. These figures however do not show the ups and downs over the years nor the impact of closing of work at Winnaleah (1979) and Hamilton (2007). There is a real need for more office-bearers. During the year Mr Isaac John from the Sudanese community was ordained to the eldership at All Nations. The leadership training programme begun several years ago is expected to be renewed later in 2013.

FACILITIES: We are blessed with modern facilities including 5 church buildings and 2 manses as follows:

Ulverstone: Church of 160m², built 1977; basic but adequate at the moment. No manse but manse fund of some \$214,000 largely invested in equities, and rent of a manse for the minister is paid by congregation.

Knox: Knox Church of 245m² built 1987 & 20 car spaces; land area 1441m²; adequate at present. Adjoining manse of 207m² & double garage built 1987/91 on land 725m² currently occupied by the Miranda family. Three residential units near Knox Church built 2007, managed by real estate agent; land area 979m².

All Nations , Mulgrave is a building of about 272m², built by Independent Baptists 1972, virtually rebuilt in 1997, purchased 2008, extended and refurbished 2009 to now total about 407m²; & 29 asphalt car parks & room for 15 more cars on grass; land area 2835m², all but 870m² being a power line easement.

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.

Geelong: Church of 316m² built 1991 on land 4,267m² purchased 1990 with manse of 280m² & detached double steel garage; built ca. 1968 refurbished 2005/6; parking for 15+ vehicles.

Only on the Geelong site is there some potential for further development but it is problematic given the location of the existing church and manse.

FINANCES: Each congregation has a minister and currently none receives financial aid from Synod. This is a particularly encouraging situation for which we are thankful to the Lord. Ulverstone was always an aid-receiving congregation from the time it became part of the PCEA in 1965 but reached self-support last year and was able to call its current minister. Narre Warren resolved to manage without the modest aid it had been receiving and has succeeded to date. Knox after a disappointing

experience with the initial contractor completed the conversion of the Glen Huntly church into five 2BR units and all were readily sold at or very near the asking price. The surplus on the development was about \$450,000 plus whatever is recovered from the initial builder for penalties as well as rectification and completion works in terms of the original contract. In line with the precedent in funding property for Narre Warren some 23 years ago, Knox Deacons' Court has allocated the provisional sum of \$350,000 towards property for the Carrum Downs congregation. Negotiations concerning a suitable piece of land are in train, although we may not have sufficient funds to enable construction. The All Nations congregation is dependent on Knox for finance and it is hoped good progress will occur this year.

ECUMENICAL RELATIONS: Positive relations exist with the Southern Presbyterian Church, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Presbyterian Church. The induction at Ulverstone in December brought representatives of the first two of these churches to the service. It would be good to see an actual union with the PCEA occurring in the next 5 or 10 years so giving a more adequate Presbyterian structure to Reformed work in Tasmania, and a more credible and united witness to the truths we hold dear.

ACTIVITIES: Each congregation is seeking to advance the cause of Christ according to its situation and capacity.

Ulverstone: Ulverstone was greatly blessed by the supply ministry of Rev André Scheepers and delighted to have him inducted in December 2012. There is a very positive attitude in the congregation, offerings have more than doubled and provide full support. Mid-week meetings in three centres are in operation. The minister is active in outreach. The local elder and deacon are effective.

Knox: The transition to Rev Andres Miranda as Dr Ward's successor has proceeded smoothly. Knox proceeds steadily with some visitors and some spiritual improvement. The mid-week Ladies Bible Study and the weekly prayer meeting are also maintained. At his retirement 30 June 2012 Dr Ward undertook to continue to supervise the Glen Huntly church conversion and this was satisfactorily completed, and all loans repaid in February 2013.

All Nations: The English service is supported by the Boehret, Ward and Yoa families plus several local people. Dr Ward has taken a majority of services since his retirement. Mr Yoa takes the Sudanese service and two midweek meetings – one for Ladies and the other for younger folk. The expectation is that Mr Boehret will have the balance of 2013 at All Nations.

Narre Warren: Narre Warren reports there is much to be thankful for with a good response to the ministry and some new visitors. A mid-week meeting is held twice a month, as well as a Ladies' Bible Study. The congregation has become self-supporting.

Carrum Downs: Although Mr Kumnick has felt the impact of less than robust health the congregation has had encouragements in the past year with two new members by transfer from St George's Sydney and two professions of faith by young men. Since the end of the year a further eight folk who have been in the USA for some years have commenced attending. Negotiations with a view to purchase of suitable property are in progress.

Geelong: The congregation though small is in good heart but ageing. Mr Smith has submitted his resignation so as to retire to Scotland upon his attaining the age of 65 in July 2013. Mr Bajema is the designated Interim-Moderator during the vacancy.

FUTURE STRATEGY: In 2013 we seek to 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. We are certainly 100% dependent on his blessing on our endeavours.

LAW & ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

1. Sexual Misconduct (refer p.55 of 2008 printing of Church Handbook)

The Procedure approved in 2004/05 did not pass under the Barrier Act then, nor in 2008 when certain legislation was approved as sufficiently meeting the Barrier Act requirements, and therefore is not binding except in so far as it incorporates existing material passed under the Barrier Act. There was a reason for the 2008 omission: it was thought that there were some questions of practicality and legality that needed to be addressed, while the procedure might well be adjusted to embrace at least non-sexual child abuse as well. A small amendment in D4 was made by Synod 2012.

While no submissions were received arising from the 2012 Report, we have had the opportunity of reading submissions to the Enquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations [<http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/fcdc/article/1789>] set up in April 2012 by the Victorian government. This Committee also made a Submission.

Our existing legislation is not quite clear. On the one hand it seems to require mandatory reporting to the Police; on the other it seems to allow investigations by the Church which might be prejudicial to Police investigations. Given that the major focus of the legislation is child sexual assault, with rape of an adult of lesser incidence and perhaps more easily dealt with, we have redrafted the legislation to make procedure more clear. Given the passing of the Act concerning Interviewing Women, Children and Vulnerable Adults last year, much of Section B and C of the original Act as well as its Appendix I can be deleted.

A preamble to the Guidelines for Church Workers is also appropriate.

Position of Trust Corporations: The establishing of a Royal Commission into Child Abuse announced on 12/11/2012 is most welcome given the massive nature of the problem in the Roman Catholic Church and across the community. However, criticism of the legal immunity enjoyed by the Roman Catholic Property Trust and the RCC at large needs to be given context. We, like the RCC, have incorporated for the purpose of holding the property of the Church, but the Church itself is not incorporated but consists of all the members and their children. In the purpose of God the Church has its origin in God's call and election, but in the eyes of man it is simply a voluntary society which has chosen to use the charitable trusts law for the holding of property by a corporate trustee. The Property Trust and its members cannot be held liable for wrongs of people over whom it had no responsibility of supervision or direction, and therefore cannot be sued for these wrongs. Nor does it appear that the unincorporated body of the Church can be sued. Rather, responsibility, if any, rests with those persons or entities having direct supervision of the offender, and these often may have limited assets. We note that in 2007 the Court of Appeal in the Supreme Court of New South Wales in the case of Trustees of the Roman Catholic Church v. Ellis and Another [NSWCA 117] upheld the positions just outlined. While the law on the point has not been tested outside New South Wales, there is no reason to think the law is not correctly stated for other States. The High Court refused an appeal in the Ellis case since it regarded the legal principles as settled. The problem is that it appears the RCC has frequently used the so-called Ellis defence to force victims to accept miserly compensation even when they were well aware or should have been well aware of criminal acts by priests. The RCC has engaged in conduct that may be legal but does not appear to match the ethical standards expected of a professedly Christian body. Presumably this reflects the desire to limit financial payments to the extremely large number of victims. A legislated change in the legal situation is possible given comments at the Victorian enquiry. We currently carry insurance but it carries a known offenders exclusion as well as other guidelines as advised to congregations.

2. Procedure upon intended resignation or retirement of a minister

Section 4.55 of our Handbook details the procedure but needs rewording to gather together various aspects in a more helpful way. It is proposed the existing four paragraphs be reworded as follows:

4.55 a. A minister who wishes to retire due to reaching the age at which eligible Australian residents would qualify for the Age Pension (for those born from 1 January 1957 this is currently 67), or on grounds of ill-health, or to otherwise cease his ministry for reasons not affecting his ministerial character, must tender his resignation to the presbytery under whose jurisdiction he is placed. If the intention has been announced to the congregation, and if the officebearers (elders and deacons) certify to the Presbytery in writing that after suitable inquiry there are no bad or prejudicial reports or rumours concerning the beliefs and behaviour of the minister, the Presbytery enters the certification in its minutes and may proceed at once to deal with and accept the resignation, recording the grounds of its action. If accepted, the Presbytery resolves that the minister's name be placed on the Register of Ministers without Charge or the Roll of Resigned/Retired Ministers as the case may be and advises the Synod Clerk. An Interim-Moderator is appointed if the resignation creates a vacancy. If not already prepared a suitable minute is drawn up and entered into the record of Presbytery. The minister is entitled to a certificate of status and an extract of minutes. The Convener of Synod's Superannuation Committee is advised. Seats on Presbytery are regulated as per Handbook 4.2, so retired ministers or ministers without charge do not ordinarily have a seat but are customarily associated with the Presbytery so as to be able to participate but without a vote.

b. Where there is no certification from the officebearers, or if there are bad or prejudicial reports or rumours, the Presbytery arranges for an appropriate visitation to take the mind of the congregation and to investigate any bad or prejudicial reports or rumours. It makes careful enquiry and records its finding in the minutes. Permission to resign a charge cannot be granted to a minister against whom a judicial process has begun or against whom bad or prejudicial reports or rumours prevails unless there are admissions and the resignation is accompanied by relevant disciplinary action. In other respects the procedure in the previous paragraph is followed where applicable.

c. In the case of a minister who wishes to resign because of a change of opinion relative to the doctrines or government of the PCEA such as disqualifies him from continuing in its ministry, the Presbytery first meets with him to discuss his position to ensure there are no misunderstandings of the position of the PCEA and to remove any groundless scruples that may exist. If the resignation is indeed appropriate, his resignation is accepted and the Presbytery declares him no longer a minister of the PCEA and advises the Clerk of Synod and the Clerks of the other Presbyteries and the Convener of Synod's Superannuation Committee forthwith. His name is removed from the list of marriage celebrants.

d. A minister who resigns his charge but continues to reside in the area and attend the congregation of which he was minister needs to exercise special care in his involvement with the congregation so as not to undermine the authority of the new minister and the elders in their care of it. He is eligible for election as a ruling elder in that congregation of which he is a member. If that is his old congregation it is generally prudent that induction as an elder not occur until the new minister is well established. Similarly, the former minister may act as Interim-Moderator in the vacancy following his retirement even though not a presbytery member, although it may be thought advisable that another person is appointed.

3. Training of Students for the Ministry

There appears to be an omission in our regulations that should be corrected. The normal course requires *inter alia*, "the successful completion of a 3 year course at a recognized University or like institution, and the successful completion of a three year theological college course at the Free Church of Scotland College, Edinburgh or an alternative Synod approved College where a comparable standard is maintained."

Disregarding the modification in 2010 by the FCS of the worship position, our standard implies familiarity with the principles of a church such as ours which holds "the principles of the Free Church of Scotland in 1843 following the Disruption" [Act 2, Class 1, Synod 1952]. We have generally acted on this by requiring the theological course to be supplemented by studies in the distinctive principles of the PCEA and the history of the PCEA, particularly as it bears on our attitude to the Confession of

Faith. Pastoral Care in theory and practice is not always found in College course and needs to be covered. However, these matters are not explicit in our regulations. It would therefore be appropriate to add to the end of 3 (ii) in Act 16 of Synod 1983 (as amended) the following words: "The Training of Ministry Committee prescribe additional written work on the history and distinctive principles of the PCEA, and ensure Pastoral Care in theory and practice is included in his College course (by supplement if necessary). The local Session are to provide a satisfactory report on the student's involvement with the congregation before certifying completion of the course." [The Training of Ministry Committee was consulted in regard to this proposal.]

4. Additions to 4.50 (licensing trials) and 4.53 (Vacancy) in the Handbook

Small additions are recommended by the Committee as helpful. See proposed deliverance 5.

5. Vacancy

A small addition at 4.53 (vacancy) is recommended. See proposed deliverance 6a.

We do not have a note re appropriate procedure in respect of residential supply by persons other than ministers of the PCEA. See proposed deliverance 6b.

It has also been suggested that there are cases where the harmony and financial viability of a vacant congregation are such that a separate presbytery meeting to determine this can be dispensed with same travel time and costs. See proposed deliverance 7.

6. Government legislation which may affect the Church

a. The *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission* [ACNC] was established 1/11/2012 and began operation on 3/12/2012. Existing income tax exempt bodies (such as our congregations) will be automatically registered and from 1 July 2013 will be required to lodge an annual report in prescribed form. The ACNC website [acnc.gov.au] states:

"Basic religious charities [which covers our congregations] have to submit an annual information statement each year, but they are not required to:

- provide annual financial reports to us (even if they are medium or large registered charities)
- comply with any governance standards and, if sending funds or engaging in activities overseas, external conduct standards. These standards are expected to apply from 1 July 2013."

If we retain our financial year as the calendar year, request to do so is made on a prescribed form available on the website, and the return for the year 2013 is due by 30 June 2014. It is understood that limited financial information is required - assets/liabilities and income/expenditure but probably not detailed accounts (although this may change in the future). We assume congregations have implemented the requirement of Synod 2012 that a fair value of assets and liabilities appear in the financial accounts. See proposed deliverance 8, formulated after consultation with the Convener of the Finance Committee.

It appears that charities may have to lodge copies of their constitution at some point. Ours is a common law constitution not readily digested into written form. Accordingly, the Statement on (not of) the constitution prepared by Mr Bradshaw in 1979 to enable incorporation in Queensland, suitably updated, will be appropriate. This is reproduced as an Appendix, and see proposed deliverance 9.

b. *Occupational Health and Safety laws in Australia* are being harmonised with the introduction of new model Work and Health Safety Laws. The laws commenced in NSW, ACT, NT and Queensland on 1 January 2012, and in Tasmania on 1 January 2013, but will not be enacted in their current form in Victoria because of the cost burden on small business. Important bits of the new laws are:

- Employers and Directors can be held criminally negligent
- Workplace is extended to include the safety of any workers working overseas
- 'Employee' is now changed to 'worker' which includes volunteers and is likely to capture missions staff.
- It is a risk based legislation, which will likely put greater obligation on organisations

Deacons Courts should periodically check the Church property carefully to locate any hazards such as broken steps or defective guide rails, cracked or broken electrical fittings, fix them and minute the result. Voluntary workers should be supervised in such a way that the very young, the unskilled or the elderly are not left to do hazardous tasks. Incident report should be made at the time (sample form has been provided to all congregations by the Convener). A useful site is: <http://safeworkaustralia.gov.au>

7. Amendment of the Victorian Property Act

The Free Presbyterian Church Property Amendment Bill passed the Legislative Assembly on 13/9/2012 and the Legislative Council on 15/11/2012 and became law on 21/11/2012. The Act is now termed *Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia Property Act 1953*. The immediate practical effect is to enable funds held by the Victorian Trustees under the Act to be invested as a Common Fund while always preserving the original trust purposes. We now have an up-to-date Act that should serve our Church well for generations to come.

The discussion in Committee and with the Trustees re the NSW Property Act indicates we should revert to the appointment of five trustees including those who hold the office of Synod Clerk and Synod Treasurer.

8. Amendment of the NSW Property Act

As stated last year we were waiting on the passing of the legislation in Victoria before looking further at the NSW Act, which we have done now as directed in conjunction with the three trustees.

1. It is recognised by all that amendment is needed.

(a) There is the unfortunate limitation of \$300 per year from property income that can be applied to a minister's stipend. [This was not in the draft submitted to Parliament in 1918 but was inserted at the suggestion of some well meaning person in Parliament who presumably wanted to ensure ministers were looked after, but the stipend then was £250pa.] This limitation leaves one having to invest in shares (which many are reluctant to do) or to retain funds in cash (which are whittled away by inflation). The church presently is increasingly reliant on investment income in congregations so the matter is quite urgent.

(b) There is the need to have power to operate a Common Fund for investment monies as without this there is no legal basis for putting bequests together for the purpose of making up a suitable investment amount even though one keeps proper track of each bequest amount.

(c) The powers in the NSW Act are limited to dealing in property (thus, for example, no power to execute a student bond) and even then are limited. Bradshaw stated: 'For instance, if land was sold and it was desired to invest the proceeds so as to endow a congregation, it is extremely dubious whether the necessary power exists.'

(d) The Act does not give civil recognition to our Presbyterian polity but leaves key decisions to the Synod making it easier for our polity to be ignored if a faction gained control of the Synod. Rights of presbyteries, sessions, deacons, courts and congregations are substantially ignored in the 1918 Act.

(e) There is the question of increasing the maximum number of trustees. Presently the three officeholders are required to sign which can be inconvenient given the wider geographical spread of the church since 1918, while the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission is clearly looking to see that there is adequate governance of bodies like ours.

2. There have been two approaches to amendment but largely seeking the same thing

(a) One is to retain Section 1 and Sections 16-17 of the 1918 Act with amendments, and insert new clauses that follow the general pattern/order in Victoria. The new provisions would incorporate the old to the extent they are not amended so there would be no break, just a fuller and more orderly arrangement that covers the intricacies. This is the version drafted for us by the late F. M. Bradshaw, MA, LL.M. (b) The other is to retain a few extra sections of the 1918 Act (2, 3 & 4, 6 & 13), with any amendments to them thought appropriate, to retain and amend sections 5, 7, 9 & 11 and insert new sections including borrowing much from the Victorian Act per Central Presbytery's recommendations. The general effect is similar to the Bradshaw version but it is bitsy. The intricacies of this area of law led to Committee in consultation with the NSW trustees to conclude in the Clerk's words that we should "defer to opinion given by a legal expert in a very

specific field” – thus keeping the Bradshaw template but making careful amendment at certain points to meet particular requests and necessary updating (including adding the clauses recently inserted in the Victorian Act as well as a variation of trusts clause).

In addition, if we present something along the lines just mentioned we are likely to receive more sympathetic treatment from Government. The argument that we are aiming at uniform wording, so far as convenient, with that passed in 1953 and 2012 in Victoria, is compelling and there is less to do in any adjustment of wording to meet drafting requirements. We certainly do not want to take more of the time of government than necessary in dealing with a relatively straightforward issue, nor do we want to be put in a position of incurring legal expense. [Although it is not our wish, it should be borne in mind that the Parliamentary Draftsman may insist on a total repeal of the old Act as a simpler measure. So long as the operation, scope and legal affect of the proposed amendment is unaffected we would have to accept this but we would seek to keep the important words in the preamble.]

Further, if the Acts are fairly parallel in structure and content there is less likelihood that we ourselves will be confused in matters related to the trusts in future years. Bradshaw himself has stated that the Victorian Act ‘provides a satisfactory basis for a system of uniform trusts wherever the Church functions.’ For it must be remembered we are not a federal church like the Presbyterian Church of Australia, which is a union of various state churches retaining their identity, and perhaps being very jealous of that identity and distinctiveness, but we are one church throughout Australia.

3. Conclusion

After extensive and at times robust discussion we have a proposal that has the unanimous support of the Committee and the NSW Trustees.

1. We've kept the original name ‘The Trustees of the Synod of Eastern Australia’ not changed to ‘The Trustees for NSW of...’ (so no change is needed to title deed registrations).
2. We've gone for five named trustees rather than the three office-holders (one of whom changes each year), particularly given the increasing stress on governance by the Australian Charities & Not-for Profit Commission and the need to report names of those responsible for the entity, but the principle of Proverbs 11:14 (‘in the multitude of counselors is safety’) is the Biblical one. The provision is as in the Victorian Act.
3. The draft requires trustees to be ministers, elders or deacons (in Victoria they must be PCEA members but Synod has only ever appointed ministers or elders).
4. The draft raises the quorum for meetings to three and the exercise of power to three (see 3 (7) (8). (In Victoria it is two unless Synod increases it.) However, documents only need be executed by at least two (as in Victoria), see 3 (5), rather than all three as at present.
5. The phrase ‘constitution of the church and its laws from time to time’ throughout replaces Victoria’s phrase ‘constitution and laws of the church for the time being’ which for some is more clear in expressing the fact that there are unalterable things in our constitution.
6. In Section 6 (3) (a) the wording has been expanded to be more comprehensive.
7. In Section 6 (4) & (7) the wording has been clarified to protect Presbyterian procedure.
8. A schedule of property has not been inserted nor is it necessary to do so.
9. We've added Sections 11 to 13 in line with the recent additions to the Victorian Act.
10. We've added Section 14 (variation of trusts) which is a normal provision in NSW law but not available in Victoria.

It will be seen that the discussions in Committee and with the Trustees have taken account of the points raised by others. Given the consensus we can present a document both legally competent and comprehensive to the NSW Parliament for any final drafting if Synod approves. The amended Act will ensure, if accepted, that we will be free of debate on these issues for generations to come. Our church will be able to maintain an exemplary relation to Caesar and make the best use of her financial resources. In these legal issues it is easy to be confused or for misunderstandings to arise as we have seen from time to time. We trust the draft attached can be cordially accepted and that we can proceed with an amendment with the same unanimity that characterised the recent changes in Victoria.

Finally, we could note for the record that the NSW Trustees currently have no mortgages on the properties held by them (which are all on unencumbered freehold title), no disputes are current on any church assets, no claim has ever been made nor is any claim pending or known against the church at large or the NSW Trustees for sexual abuse, and no one is adversely affected by the proposed amendment (the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland being specifically distinguished [in Sec. 5 (5)] and safeguarded against any confusion because of the popular use of 'Free Presbyterian' within some of congregations).

9. Handbook/Decision Book

The electronic version was updated and placed on the website on 16/5/2012. In the following 9 months 715 downloads of the Handbook and 532 of the Decision Book occurred.

We will update the electronic version following this Synod and produce a limited number of hardcopies available for purchase at cost. It is 5 years since the last was produced, but there have been quite a number of changes.

PROPOSED DELIVERANCES:

1. Synod add the following preamble to Act of Synod 2004 (Guidelines for Church Workers), and order a copy of the Guidelines thus amended be pasted in the front of Presbytery, Session and Deacons' Court Minute books:

At least once year an affirmative answer to the following questions shall be given by all Session members and all members of Presbyteries and duly minuted in Session and Presbytery records: *Ministers and elders are reminded of their obligation to keep watch over the flock of God and in particular to the care of the young and the vulnerable. Are you familiar with the Guidelines for Church Workers passed by Synod? Are you faithfully keeping to them? Are you aware of your obligations under State and Church law concerning the reporting of suspected or actual cases of child abuse or child pornography?*

2. The Synod transmit the following Overture to Presbyteries under the provisions of the Barrier Act and meantime enact the same as an Interim Act:

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

(repealing Act 6 Class 2 Synod 2004 as amended)

A. Introduction

1. Sexual assaults against children are almost always pre-meditated, involving predatory acts of grooming, manipulation, self-gratification and exploitation, and occur widely across the various socio-economic areas. Child sexual assault is generally perpetrated by a male in the vast majority of cases and is more likely to be perpetrated by someone known to the child or their family (research varies but commonly finds between 85% and 95% of the time). Of those offenders known to the child most commonly the offender is not living with the child (approx 70%). Child sexual assaults involve shame, silence and secrecy and for these reasons often are not reported for many years.

2. While mindful of the possibility of baseless allegations the Church does not condone or tolerate any acts of sexual misconduct, whether directed toward children or adults and will seek to prevent their occurrence. (Refer also to Guidelines for Church Workers, Synod 2004 as amended 2013 which is to be inserted at the front of each minute book of each Congregation.)

3. At least once year the an affirmative answer to the following questions shall be given by all Session members and all members of Presbyteries and duly minuted in Session and Presbytery records: *Ministers and elders are reminded of their obligation to keep watch over the flock of*

God and in particular to the care of the young and the vulnerable. Are you familiar with the Guidelines for Church Workers passed by Synod? Are you faithfully keeping to them? Are you aware of your obligations under State and Church law concerning the reporting of suspected or actual cases of child abuse or child pornography?

B. Basic Principles

1. In the event of a disclosure or allegation that there is reasonable ground to suspect a child has been, or is being harmed the matter must be reported to the Police. In addition, any particular requirements of Federal or State law must be followed.

Generally, reasonable grounds are a belief that a child may be in need of protection based on situations where:

- A child states that they have been sexually assaulted or abused.
- A child states that they know someone who has been sexually assaulted or abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves).
- A relative, friend, acquaintance or sibling of the child, states that the child has been sexually assaulted or abused.
- Professional observations of the child's behaviour or development lead the professional to form a belief that the child has been sexually assaulted or abused.
- Signs of sexual assault or abuse lead to a belief the child may have been abused.

At this stage allegations of child sexual assault when the alleged victim is still under 18 years of age, must not be investigated further by the church and neither the child/young person or the accused should be questioned by the church. The matter involves criminal behaviour and, like other criminal offences, must first be investigated by the Police as soon as possible.

2. Where the victim is now an adult, the Church encourages the offence to be reported to the Police but where adult victims do not wish to proceed or be identified because of the victim's fear of not being believed, or being not comfortable with, or trusting of, authority figures, or because of a sense of isolation by their own fear, shame and self-persecution, an alternative process of reporting to the Police in a non-confronting way without having to give a detailed statement *and/or* which will facilitate the passing on of information regarding alleged offenders and offences to police should be used, subject to any applicable State legislation.

3. Whether or not the offence is admitted at the time the offence comes to notice, the alleged offender is suspended from church privileges as an interim measure until Police investigations (if applicable) are completed. If no admissions are made the suspension is not disciplinary but for good order pending establishing the facts one way or another. Any Police investigation has priority. If clear admissions are made they should be secured in writing, and the church court may proceed with appropriate discipline in accordance with the Handbook of Practice and Procedure. If sexual abuse is involved the Session refers to the Presbytery before final sentence (cf. *Handbook* 7.26).

4. The accused person must have no further contact with the person making the accusations until the investigations have been completed. This is especially important if the offence alleged is one involving a minor or minors. In such a case, the accused person must have no further official contact with, or control of, any minors.

5. It is possible that charges arising from the Police investigation may not be proved to the satisfaction of the civil court. Nevertheless, the standards of conduct required by the Word of God are to be maintained by the Church. Irrespective of any other action that may be taken, the Church reserves the right to exercise its own powers of discipline over adherents, members and office-bearers, according to the *Handbook of Practice and Procedure*.

a. Allegations against a minister or licentiate must be dealt with by his Presbytery. The allegation should go immediately to the Clerk of Presbytery, (or to the Moderator if the Clerk is the one accused) who will inform the other members of the Presbytery and arrange with

them to conduct a preliminary investigation into the matter, with Police investigation having priority as in 1 above.

b. Allegations against other office-bearers, members and adherents are dealt with by the local session in the first place. The allegation can be taken to any elder, who must immediately inform the remainder of the session which will arrange to conduct a preliminary investigation, with Police investigation having priority as in 1 above. If the Session concludes that a *prima facie* case exists against the accused person, it should deal with him or her with a view to confession, but, if the allegation involves the sexual abuse of a child, then, whether or not the person confesses, the matter must be referred to the Presbytery of the bounds in terms of section 7.26 of the *Handbook of Practice and Procedure*.

5. The Law and Advisory Committee shall ensure Sessions and Presbyteries are kept up to date with the legal requirements in their State with regard to offences of child abuse, and shall assist in the clarification of procedure or securing of legal advice as may be necessary.

3. Synod approve the revision of Section 4.55 in the Handbook as stated in the report.

4. Synod resolve that there be added to the end of 3 (ii) in Act 16 of Synod 1983 (as amended) the following words: 'The Training of Ministry Committee prescribe additional written work on the history and distinctive principles of the PCEA, and ensure Pastoral Care in theory and practice is included in his College course (by supplement if necessary). The local Session are to provide a satisfactory report on the student's involvement with the congregation before certifying completion of the course.'

5. a) That the beginning of paragraph 5 of Act 6 1975 as amended and recorded at 4.50 in the Handbook be amended to read: 'All students shall be examined thoroughly by the presbytery on the following subjects. In view of the importance of the matter and to ensure thorough consideration without undue pressure on the presbytery or the candidate it is strongly recommended that the examination be spread over more than one sitting/meeting of the presbytery. If a public meeting to licence the student is planned it should not be arranged until the examination is concluded.'

5. b) That in paragraph 5 of Act 6 1975 as amended and recorded at 4.50 (f) in the Handbook the sentence 'The Presbytery must be assured of the student's ability to preach the Gospel and normally a sermon preached in the hearing of the Presbytery is to be included as part of the examination.' be replaced by the following. 'The Presbytery must be assured of the student's ability to conduct public worship appropriately, preach the Gospel with clarity and commitment, and exercise pastoral care with a loving and faithful attitude. To that end members of Presbytery as far as practical should take opportunity to attend a service or services conducted by the student and/or to otherwise inform themselves of his competence in these areas. In addition, the Presbytery normally prescribes a sermon on a specified passage to be preached in the hearing of the Presbytery.'

6. a) Synod approve the addition of the following words at the end of the first paragraph under 4.53 in the Handbook: 'To assist the congregation as it enters the vacancy it may be desirable that a presbyterial visitation be held.'

6. b) The following section 2.42 is added to the Handbook of Practice and Procedure and also replaces the last sentence of the first paragraph of 4.53.

2.42 SUPPLY DURING VACANCY

The Interim Moderator (cf. 4.53) is responsible to the Presbytery during a vacancy and particularly for the pulpit. A person proposed for residential supply who is not a minister in good standing of the PCEA must be first approved by the Presbytery as a person of knowledge and capacity who is sufficiently familiar with the position of the PCEA and able to work in harmony with it, and the terms of occupancy of a church residence must be so arranged by the Presbytery so as to ensure the church will not be prejudiced by overstaying when the period of supply ends.

7. When a Presbytery has satisfactory information from the Interim-Moderator as to the harmony of a congregation and its financial viability it may proceed to meet with the congregation in accord with Handbook 4.61 without a separate meeting to consider the request for moderation as in 4.60, but records its satisfaction on harmony and financial viability in its minutes.

8. That a group submission consisting of applications from all entities be prepared at this Synod seeking to retain the calendar year as the accounting period for the purposes of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission on the grounds that: “(a) the denomination’s long-standing financial year end date is 31st December; (b) the Church’s Synod (governing body) meets in April or May each year. This allows completion of financial reports and auditing, in a less busy period in the Accountancy profession, in time for presentation to the Church’s Synod.”

9. Synod authorize the use where appropriate of the Statement on the Constitution as follows:
[here take in the words in Appendix 1]

10. Synod record its thanks to the Parliament of Victoria for granting the amendments to the Property Act requested, and for remitting the costs normally applying to a private Bill.

11. Synod approve the proposed amendment of *The Synod of Eastern Australia Property Act* (NSW 1918) as set out in the Committee Report, and authorize the Law & Advisory Committee in consultation with the NSW Trustees to take into consideration any minor adjustments that may be notified to the Committee by Central or Northern presbyteries by 30 September 2013, and to submit the proposed amendment to the New South Wales Parliament with a view to enactment in the terms requested or with such variations in form as the Parliamentary Draftsman requires but that still provide for the operation, scope and legal effect requested.

12. Synod resolve in regard to the appointment of five trustees under the *Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia Property Act* (Victoria, 1953) and the proposed amendment of *The Synod of Eastern Australia Property Act* (NSW, 1918):

(i) the persons from time to time holding the office of Clerk of Synod and of Treasurer of Synod shall by virtue of their appointment be trustees and the provision for substitutes for these officeholders in Act 7 Synod 2009 and Act 7 Synod 2008 shall continue to apply with the necessary changes.

(ii) the other trustees will be ministers, elders or deacons of some experience and capacity for the task and shall hold office at the pleasure of Synod in accordance with Section 3 (11). However, they shall in any case cease to be trustees, *inter alia*, at midnight on 30 June following their completion of five years service, but are eligible for reappointment for further periods of up to five years at a time. As a general rule any appointment will cease at midnight on 30 June occurring after the person’s attainment of the age of 75.

13. Synod appoint the following five persons to be the initial trustees in terms of Section 4 of the proposed amendment of *The Synod of Eastern Australia Property Act* (NSW 1918), and from the rising of this Synod these five persons to be the trustees pursuant to the *Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia Property Act* (Victoria 1953):

Alex Henry Steel (Treasurer) (/ /1941)
Rowland Skipsey Ward (28/12/1945)
Trevor Ian Leggott (Clerk) (22/3/1949)
Ron Lawson (23/10/1950)
David John Kerridge (19/7/1970)

14. Pursuant to Sections 3 (7) and (8) of the *Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia Property Act* (Victoria 1953):

(i) Synod appoint that the quorum for a meeting of trustees shall be three not two. Such meetings may be held by electronic means and must be suitably documented.

(ii) Pursuant to Section 3 (5) the affixing of the common seal shall be attested by two persons.

(iii) The attestation clause for the affixing of the common seal shall be in the form: 'The Common Seal of the Trustees for Victoria of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia was hereto affixed in accordance with the provisions of the *Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia Property Act* (Victoria, 1953), Section 3.'

15. That on the commencement of the amended *Synod of Eastern Australia Property Act* (NSW 1918) the following changes in Synod legislation shall become operative:

(i) rules for the application of the seal of the NSW trustees precisely parallel in requirement to those under the Victorian legislation (Act of Synod 1954) shall come into force. The sealing clause shall be in similar form to that for the Victorian Trustees, two trustees being sufficient to attest the seal.

(ii) Existing legislation on mortgage/sale procedure in NSW (Synod 1984) and leasing procedure in NSW (Synod 1988) shall be considered adjusted so as to maintain the identical provisions but relate them to the amended 1918 Act.

(iii) Meetings of the trustees may be held by electronic means and must be suitably documented.

APPENDIX 1

STATEMENT ON THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA

[The constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia is of common law type and cannot readily be digested into a single document.]

1. The religious denomination known as the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia, founded in Sydney on 10 October 1846, holds the same principles and adheres to the same standards of doctrine, worship, discipline and government as did the religious denomination in Scotland known as the Free Church of Scotland in the year 1843 following the event in Scottish history known as the Disruption. The supreme governing body subject to its constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia is known as the Synod of Eastern Australia.

2. The basic doctrinal standard of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia is the Westminster Confession of Faith as explained by the Acts of the Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1647, and of the Synod of Eastern Australia in 1952, together with the Formula and Questions set out by the Synod of Eastern Australia in 1952 and 2008.

3. The other standards of the Church are as follow:

Church Government

Second Book of Discipline 1578

Westminster Form of Presbyterial Church Government 1645

Worship

Directory for Public Worship 1645

Directory for Family Worship 1647

Catechisms

Larger 1648

Shorter 1648

These standards are to be understood in the light of the Acts passed by the Assembly of the Church of Scotland when they were adopted.

4. The by-laws governing procedure in Church courts are set out in the Handbook of Practice and Procedure of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia first published in 1992 and revised from time to time, and accessible by download from www.pcea.org.au

5. Church property is held by one of three corporate trustee bodies: The Trustees of the Synod of Eastern Australia (pursuant to an Act of NSW Parliament 1918); The Trustees for Victoria of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (pursuant to Act 5691, Victoria 1953; or under the name Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia in terms of the Queensland *Religious Educational and Charitable Institutions Act* (Register of Patents No. 35 Page 9).

This Statement on the Constitution was approved by the Synod on / / 2013

APPENDIX 2

PROPOSED NSW PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT

The Legislature of New South Wales enacts:

Long Title

An Act to amend *The Synod of Eastern Australia Property Act 1918* to provide for the more efficient management of church property; and for other purposes.

Citation

1. (1) This Act is *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 by it.

Repeals

2. (1) Sections 2, 2A, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 of the principal Act are hereby repealed.

Amendments and Interpretation

- (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 inserting in lieu thereof the words “the persons named in section four of this Act and their successors”.
 - (b) by omitting from section sixteen the definitions therein contained and by inserting in lieu thereof 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:-

The appointed day

‘The appointed day’ means the day this Act receives assent.

The body corporate

‘The body corporate’ means The Trustees of the Synod of Eastern Australia as constituted and regulated by this Act.

The Church

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

Congregation

‘Congregation’ means a number of persons organised in connection with the Church under the supervision of a session and recognised according to the constitution of the Church and its laws from time to time 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.

Presbytery of the bounds

‘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

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

The rules

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

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

‘Trustees’ (except as provided in sub-sections (2) and (3) of section five of this Act means the persons who are for the time being the members of the body corporate.

Operation of Act and effect of repeals

(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;

The body corporate

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.

Powers of body corporate

(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;
- (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.

Number of trustees

- (3) The number of Trustees shall not be more than five.

Common Seal

- (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.

Affixing of Seal

- (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.

Evidence of execution of documents

- (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.

Exercise by Trustees of powers of body corporate

- (7) The Trustees or any three 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.

Quorum

- (8) At a meeting of the Trustees three shall form a quorum unless a greater number be prescribed by the rules and in such case such greater number.

Records to be kept

- (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.

- (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 after the appointed day 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.

Ceasing to be trustee

- (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 minister, elder or deacon 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 after the appointed day 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.

Appointment of trustees by Synod

- (13) Subject to this section the power of appointing Trustees shall be vested in Synod.

Officers of body corporate

- (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.

Initial trustees

4. The trustees who shall hold office from the appointed day in accordance with sub-section (10) of the last preceding section are hereby declared to be: (5 names to be inserted)

Trevor Ian Leggott

Alex Henry Steel

*

*

*

(to be inserted)

Vesting of property

5. (1) On the appointed day all interests in property being interests held immediately before the day of assent 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.

Discretionary and future trusts

- (2) Where property is held on trust immediately before the day of assent 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 day of assent 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.

Vesting of gifts, devises, bequests etc.

- (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 day of assent (irrespective of whether if contained in any will or other instrument such will or other

instrument was made or executed before or after the day of assent) 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 day of assent 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.

Vesting of property brought into New South Wales

- (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 day of assent that property shall vest in or be held in trust for the like purposes of the body corporate.

Not to affect Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

- (5) 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.

Trusts on which property is held

- 6.** (1) Any interest in property which at any time vests or has vested in the body corporate under the last preceding section or otherwise, if immediately before the day of assent 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 -

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.

Certain trust purposes specified

- (2) 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 other religious or educational purposes, 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.

Powers of body corporate to be exercised in aid of trusts declared

- (3) 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 of the Church and its laws from time to time 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.

Restriction on selling or mortgaging real property of congregations

- (4) 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 deacons' court, the presbytery of the bounds and the Synod, in each case expressed by resolution adopted in accordance with the constitution of the Church and its laws from time to time.

Synod may make regulations regarding property

- (5) 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.

Bank accounts etc.

- (6) 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 of the Church and its laws from time to time manage its own affairs and open and operate such bank accounts as are deemed expedient without reference to the body corporate.

Congregation may give surplus income to Synod

- (7) If at any time in the opinion of a congregation and the deacons' court thereof expressed by resolution adopted in accordance with the constitution of the Church and its laws from time to time 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 and the deacons' court thereof may with the consent of the session and 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.

Synod &c may transfer real property to congregations

- (8) 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.

Amalgamation and division of congregations

- (9) 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.

Dissolution of a congregation

- (10) 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.

Amalgamation and division of presbyteries and alteration of their bounds

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

No right of possession after ceasing to be a minister

7. No right of possession of any property held by the body corporate for some or all of the purposes of a congregation of the Church which is acquired by any person while minister of that congregation shall confer any right of possession or ownership on that person in respect of that property after he has ceased to be minister of that congregation.

Limitation of liability

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.

Right of reimbursement

- (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.

Protection of mortgagees purchasers etc.

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.

Other protection not excluded

- (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 Notices etc.

All communications and notices to the body corporate may be addressed to the Clerk of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia, 608 Wherrol Flat Road, Wherrol Flat, NSW 2430 or at any premises specified by the Synod from time to time for that purpose by a notice signed by the Clerk of the Synod and published in the Government Gazette.

11 Body corporate may apply for probate or act as executor or trustee

- (1) The body corporate may—
 - (a) apply for and obtain, or join in applying for and obtaining, probate of the will or letters of administration of the estate of a deceased person if the Church has a beneficial interest, whether vested or contingent, in the estate of that person; or
 - (b) accept appointment and act as trustee or co-trustee of any trust if the trust property is not vested in the body corporate under this Act and—
 - (i) the trust was created wholly or partly for the benefit of the Church; or
 - (ii) the purpose or one of the purposes for which the trust was created relates to the Church.

(2) The body corporate may do all things necessary to exercise its powers and functions as executor, administrator or trustee under this section.

(3) Any person, if authorised by the body corporate for the purpose, may on behalf of the body corporate swear an affidavit, make a declaration or statement, execute a document, give security or do any other thing that is required to be done by a person applying for or granted probate or letters of administration or administering a trust.

(4) The body corporate may—

(a) renounce executorship;

(b) decline to act as administrator of an estate;

(c) retire or decline to act as trustee of property, other than property vested in the body corporate under this Act.

(5) Any commission earned by the body corporate as an executor, administrator or trustee under this section belongs to the body corporate and must be used and applied by the body corporate for any object specified or approved by the Synod.

12A Power to pool money held in trust for investment

(1) Subject to the provisions of the relevant trust instrument, the body corporate may from time to time invest as one fund any money it holds in trust for different purposes, or any part of that money.

(2) The body corporate must distribute any income arising from the investment of the fund referred to in subsection (1) rateably among the several purposes for which the money invested is held in trust.

(3) The body corporate must ensure that any loss arising from the investment of the fund referred to in subsection (1) is borne rateably among the several purposes for which the money invested is held in trust.

12B Advances of money held in trust

(1) The body corporate may make advances from the fund referred to in section 12(1) for any activity, service, institution or interest of the Church.

(2) Money advanced under subsection (1) is taken to be an investment of that money and must bear interest at a rate fixed by the body corporate.

(3) If the body corporate makes an advance under subsection (1), the sum advanced and the interest charged on the sum are taken to be a charge on the assets held by the body corporate for the activity, service, institution or interest of the Church in respect of which the advance was made.

13 Use of property under schemes of co-operation

(1) With the permission of the Synod, the body corporate may enter into a scheme of co-operation.

(2) Subject to any express trust or a condition specified under subsection (5), the body corporate may permit property that is vested in the body corporate to be used, managed or administered in accordance with a scheme of co-operation.

(3) Subject to any express trust or a condition specified under subsection (5), the body corporate may give or take a security or charge over property in respect of which contributions are made or received under a scheme of co-operation.

(4) For the purposes of subsections (2) and (3), property is not to be taken as subject to an express trust that prevents the property being used, managed or administered in accordance with a scheme of co-operation or being subject to a security or charge merely

because the property was directed to be held for worship within or for the purposes of the Church.

(5) The Synod may specify conditions for a scheme of co-operation, including but not limited to conditions with respect to—

(a) making contributions for the acquisition, construction, alteration, maintenance or repair of property vested in or held on behalf of the body corporate or a co-operating church or its congregation;

(b) giving or taking securities or charges over property in respect of which contributions are made or received under the scheme.

(6) If, under a scheme of co-operation, any proceeds result from the sale or mortgage of or any other dealing with property vested in the body corporate, the body corporate must apply the proceeds in a manner determined by the Synod.

(7) In this section—

co-operating church means the church of another denomination with which the Church has entered into or is involved in a scheme of co-operation;

scheme of co-operation means a scheme entered into by the Church that—

(a) is entered into with or involves a church of another denomination or involves an activity of a church of another denomination; and

(b) involves the use or administration of property vested in the body corporate that is specified in the scheme.

14. Variation of trusts

- (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 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.

TRAINING OF MINISTRY COMMITTEE

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

The Committee has again had a busy year, and since this reflects work with candidates for the ministry, it is a reason for thanksgiving to the Lord.

1. Mr Robin Tso, BTh. In our report to Synod 2012, the Committee declared itself satisfied with Mr Tso's course of studies and recommended that Synod accept Mr Tso as a candidate for the ministry, with this proviso, that before he is taken on Trials for License, he present to the Presbytery a Certificate from the Training of Ministry Committee that he has satisfactorily completed an essay [5000 words] in Australian Church History set by the Committee, and any other work the Committee may deem necessary.

The Church History essay, set after Synod in May, was received on 27 September 2012 and an additional essay on "The Priority of Preaching in the Role of a Minister" was then set. The Committee declared they were satisfied and wrote to Central Presbytery indicating that on 13 November 2012.

We understand that in February 2013 Central Presbytery took Mr Tso on Trials for License and that these trials were sustained.

2. Mr Denver Boehret, BEng, MDiv. Mr Boehret completed his studies at the Presbyterian Theological College, Melbourne in late 2012, and graduated MDiv in February 2013 with outstanding grades, particularly in Hebrew and Greek. We congratulate him on his achievement.

In October 2012 the Committee were alerted to a need for financial assistance. This need arose in part from the loss of AusStudy aid for the last semester of his studies. In light of the fact that Mr Boehret has sought to finance his studies through a loan from the church rather than a grant, and recognising his changed financial circumstances, the Committee agreed to a grant of \$15,000 to allow him to complete this year of study and to aid in transitioning to some other form of support for his family in the coming months. This grant was subject to signing a Student Bond and was to be paid in 3 monthly instalments of \$5,000 (starting early November 2012). A proposed deliverance seeks the approval of Synod for this action.

A requested report covering both first and second semesters was received 13 December 2012. And an essay on "Purity of Worship in the PCEA" was received 16 February 2013 and has now been accepted by the Committee.

In our last report we intimated that Mr Boehret had been requested to submit an essay on "The Priority of Preaching in the Role of a Minister". We did not find the work submitted wholly satisfactory and in March 2012 requested that the essay be further developed, giving suggestions of areas in which that might usefully be done. A new essay was received on 29 November dealing with one of the suggested areas. Again the Committee was not wholly satisfied, but also concerned, since we made it clear that our aim was "to help you think through issues you will definitely face in your ministry."

Rather than re-visit the theme in another essay we instead asked for the full script of a sermon on 2 Corinthians 8:9. We indicated that this should be a sermon as it would be preached to an ordinary congregation of people. Again we had some concerns with what was submitted.

On 24 February 2013, at a meeting of Southern Presbytery it was agreed that Mr Boehret would receive a month's hands-on mentoring under Revd Sjirk Bayema. That month was underway as this report was finalised. It is the intention of the Committee to request a sermon script and/or other work from Mr Boehret on completion of this month of mentoring.

Proposed Deliverance:

Synod approves the decision of the Committee to grant \$15,000 to Mr Denver Boehret to allow him to complete his year of study and to aid in transitioning to some other form of support for his family in the following months.

CHURCH AND NATION COMMITTEE

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

This committee did not meet but communicated by email during the year. A number of issues relating to Christians living in our secular society were identified and a brief outline of Biblical teaching formulated.

The committee also formulated brief statements on the issues of homosexual marriage and abortion which, if approved by Synod, will be sent in a letter to the Prime Minister and Opposition Leader in the Federal Parliament.

Yoga: Yoga classes are widely conducted across our Western cities. We find advertisements saying 'Our place is a sanctuary from the pressures of everyday life. Let us help you unwind, reflect, and transform your mind, body, and soul in tranquillity'. We say 'Western' city because Yoga is an Eastern religion. It was not known in the West until just over a hundred years ago. Yoga is one of six schools of Hindu philosophy. The word 'Yoga' comes from the root 'yug' meaning to unite or yoke. What is being united? The yogi is being united with god, which in this case is the true self. It is a way to the realization that god is within you.

The particular form of yoga practiced in the West is Hatha Yoga. This is one of seven branches of Yoga. It focuses on physical purification to rebalance mind and body. Various 'asanas' are performed to release bad energy and focus good energy. The philosophy is that control of the body brings control of the mind. The aim of yoga is to control the body and the mind in order to change ones state of consciousness and transcend space and time. The aim is to empty the mind so the soul can escape the bondage of nature.

Yoga is promoted as exercise to relax the mind, not as a religion. Transcendental Meditation (TM), another form of yoga (Raja Yoga) in which a mantra is given to assist meditation, is also promoted as scientific therapy rather than a religion. Yet Vishal Mangalwadi, an Indian Christian, writes (in 'The World of Gurus') of TM 'That it empties the mind and the mantra given is often the name of a demon'.

Dr Steve Kumar (in 'Christianity for Skeptics') writes of yoga 'The danger of a mystical experience should not be overlooked'. He quotes a former yoga master as saying 'I advanced in the occult sphere so fast that I soon became the youngest guru in the western hemisphere, and one of the most advanced and powerful. Twice a week I taught yoga on television. Hatha-Yoga sounds like a nice, simple set of exercises; everyone thinks it is just like gymnastics. I want to warn that it is just the beginning of a devilish trap. After I became an instructor in Hatha-Yoga, my guru showed me that the only thing these exercises do is open your appetite for the occult. They are like marijuana; they usually lead you on to a drug that is worse and stronger, binding you so completely that only Christ can deliver you.'

Yoga is not just a simple exercise program to help you de-stress and get balance back in your life. It is about emptying your mind. When Jesus drove out a demon, he warned that it returns with more wicked spirits if that mind remains empty (Luke 11:26). The Bible never speaks about emptying your mind, and certainly not through physical exercises. We are told to meditate on things that are true not false, things that are noble, pure and lovely (Philippians 4:8). We are told to set our minds on things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God (Colossians 3:1-2), not to focus on the inner self, hoping to realize that we are god.

Christians and the right to protest: Our Lord Jesus Christ, the king of kings, laid down the principle of rendering unto Caesar what is Caesar's (Matt. 22:21). We are to give obedience to the civil authorities because they are set over us by God Himself. The apostle Paul makes this plain in Romans 13, verses 1 to 7 (see also 1 Peter 2:13). In the light of this clear injunction that we are not to resist the authorities since they are God's ministers, does this disqualify a Christian from any right to protest? Such a question is particularly important to answer now as we increasingly move from a society more

or less founded in Christendom to a materialistic, secular one that seeks to keep Christianity out of the “public square” (i.e. public life and debate).

The Fifth Commandment states that we are to honour our parents (Exodus 20:12). Now this would seem far removed from any discussion of the Christian’s right to protest. However, as we will see, this principle laid down in the summary of God’s Moral Law, found in the “ten words” (Decalogue) of the Ten Commandments, extends to more than just family relations, since God’s word and command forms a complete guide to life (Ps. 119:96). Those who formulated the Westminster Confession and Catechisms applied this principle in their answer to Q.99 of the Larger Catechism, section 6: “That one sin or duty, all of the same kind are forbidden or commanded; together with all the causes, means, occasions, and appearances thereof, and provocations thereunto.” What this means when we come to the Fifth Commandment is that “father” and “mother” is extended to require honour to all who are placed over us. The answer to Q.124 of the Larger Catechism enlarges the Law for us: “By father and mother, in the fifth commandment are meant, not only natural parents, but all superior in age and gifts, and especially such as, by God’s ordinance, are over us in place of authority, whether in family, church, or commonwealth.” Thus, according to the answer to Q.128 which follows, we sin by “neglect of the duties required toward them; envying at, contempt of, and rebellion against, their persons and places, in their lawful counsels, commands and corrections; cursing, mocking, and all refractory [i.e. stubborn, or rebellious] and scandalous carriage, as proves a shame and dishonour to them and their government.” This would seem to remove completely all right to protest, or to speak a word against our governments – local, State and Federal.

As citizens of a democracy, we hold the right to vote, we hold the right to sign petitions, we can stand in the street, holding up placards and chant our protest. Those who would belong to trade unions ultimately make their case collectively by industrial action. But can the Christian engage in protest when the Biblical principal of obedience would seem to demand our silence and acquiescence? The right to protest does exist for the Christian, but we must identify what is the concern of our protest. If we look back to Peter and Paul we see both men engaging in protest. Peter, in Acts 4, was preaching Christ and was imprisoned by the rulers in Jerusalem, then strictly warned not to speak about Jesus ever again. Peter openly defied their directive and continued to preach the Gospel. Paul, in Acts 16, when he was arrested and beaten for preaching Christ in Philippi, refused the command from the magistrates to leave when they found out he was a Roman, but passively protested in the prison-house until they came personally and begged him to leave, and even then he went back to Lydia’s house and encouraged the brethren there before going.

These two cases highlight the limits within which a Christian has a right to protest. The first guiding principle we need to consider, as Peter said to those who tried to silence the Truth, is that we are to obey God rather than men. This basic truth needs to inform all our interaction with those who govern us. When a law, or instruction from our employers or parliaments commands us to disobey God’s law then we are to directly disobey it. The Westminster Confession of Faith repeatedly talks of obedience to all lawful commands. It also speaks of liberty of conscience regarding matters of faith and life (WCF Ch 21.6): no-one can intrude upon our obedience to God, whether from inside the Church or from the civil government. From the early church onwards, Christians have stood up for this principle, even to the point of death. It was in part the foundation on which the Free Church of Scotland was built in the Disruption of 1843 when civil authorities tried to impose their will upon Christ’s Church. In all things where a lawful directive exists we are to obey it, but when the directive contravenes what God has told us to do, then we must protest and disobey such a command.

As a church we must be careful to keep the roles of Church and State separate but mutually beneficial. As the Westminster Divines stated in Ch. 31 section 5, the church’s role is to rule in ecclesiastical affairs (and the civil government is not to intrude upon that), but the civil government must be allowed to rule without church interference. This is the “Establishment Principle.” We have a collective role to petition and advise government, but not to determine how they govern.

Secondly, the right to protest could arguably be said to exist where the rule of those in government is tyrannical, unjust, or immoral. Whilst Peter and Paul instructed Christians to submit to those in authority when those same ones in authority were pagan Roman emperors, some of whom openly

persecuted Christians, those in authority hold their office under God. Just as the children have a duty to their fathers to obey them, so do the fathers have a duty to the children. Scripture tells parents not to provoke their children to wrath (Eph. 6:4), and the Larger Catechism extends this to the duty of those in authority towards the ones they govern (LC Q.130). The parent, employer or government dishonours themselves, and lessens their authority by “unjust, indiscreet, rigorous [harsh], or remiss behaviour. Paul was right in calling the high priest Ananias a “white-washed wall” since he held his authority at the behest of the Romans and not from God, and Ananias was abusing his power. The prophets of the Old Testament berated the kings of Judah and Israel for their idolatry, immorality and tyranny, and the elders and princes for their treatment of the poor (Is 3:14; Amos 5:11-12). The people of Israel rebelled against Rehoboam in 1 Kings 12 v. 13 for his harsh rule which caused the division of God’s people. The “Long Parliament” at Westminster, by which the Westminster Assembly was convened, held its power by resistance to Charles I’s tyranny. We could thus extend the right to protest, the right to be heard, into the public arena regarding matters which concern justice to the poor, sexual immorality, abortion, corruption and such things.

Protest is right and just when it concerns the glory of God, and the cause of Christ in the world (John 2:17). To a lesser extent we can still have a voice in the public square on issues which flow from God’s truth revealed to us in matters of morality, justice and governance. But above all, the Gospel must be our protest against the world, diffusing to them the fragrance of Christ which is to some the stench of death, to others the aroma of eternal life. We must stand as salt and light in this world, as lamps on a hill shining out by faith, word and life, and from that, by God’s grace, we shall not be moved!

Statement on Homosexual Marriage: Nature is biased toward heterosexual relationships since only through the relationship of a male and a female can children be produced. The extensive breakdown of heterosexual marriage in our day is not a reason to broaden the definition of marriage but to provide every encouragement to stable and caring heterosexual relationships which provide the most natural and appropriate context for the upbringing of children. It is to demean this very basic aspect of marriage to grant the status of 'marriage' to a homosexual relationship which can never have equal standing with heterosexual marriage. To grant this status is likely to give rise to anti-discrimination claims against those holding the traditional view if it is maintained in our public schools, and if it is not maintained, and equal time insisted on for the notion of homosexual marriage, then it will easily add gender identity confusion at a vulnerable stage in young people’s lives. The public school system is thus likely to be further eroded by people opting out, not because they hate homosexuals but because they believe homosexuality to be wrong.

Homosexual rights activists want the right to practice certain behaviours, and there is strong pressure brought to bear on young people to adopt this lifestyle. Many homosexuals are not monogamous and look for the excitement of numerous encounters. They are not wanting to register their relationship as a marriage. Others, perhaps those in long-standing relationships, may wish to do so, although the numbers are so small that one suspects the motive of activists is for an acceptance of homosexuality as an activity protected from any criticism. In the present state of our society it may not be inappropriate to provide a means of recognizing such relationships by means of a civil union, however repugnant such recognition may be to many. It is true, of course, that a certain element in society has been abusive and violent toward homosexuals, something that is not right. On the other hand while Australians are generally a tolerant people, they do not wish homosexual conduct to be thrust in their face, and opposition to it silenced through the aggressive and intolerant conduct of homosexual activists.

Of course having children is not the only basis for marriage. People may not be able to have children because of some disability but companionship and love remain vital constituents of the marriage relationship. Companionship and platonic love exist legitimately between people of the same sex, and no law is needed to recognize this obvious and valuable reality of human experience. Introducing sex into the equation is another thing altogether. As those standing in the line of orthodox Christian faith we do not believe homosexual practice to be right, and consider that the Bible on any fair interpretation supports this viewpoint, as does the historic position of other major religions. Sexual activity should be within the confines of marriage. True Christians do not hate homosexuals anymore

than they hate adulterers, and they resent the general smear of homophobia so commonly applied to those who affirm their opposition to homosexual practice.

It is of course true that same-sex attraction and homosexual practice need to be distinguished: the former is not in itself sinful but the latter is. Given our conviction that the law in a society of sinners should be working to protect the vulnerable, and further public good, we are saddened by trends in this society that encourage departures from the light of nature and the law of God. We do not want to be judgmental in respect of those outside the church although we believe homosexual practice is sinful. However, like other sins it may be repented of and salvation found in Jesus Christ (1 Cor 6:9-11). In union with faithful Christians of every age we cannot cease to maintain and proclaim that message of hope to those who repent and turn to Christ. As regards those within the community of faith who experience temptation to sexual impurity and lust, we offer support and understanding and point to the promise of 1 Corinthians 10:13.

We thank the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition for their stand against the recognition of homosexual marriage, and urge that more be done in a positive way to promote healthy marriages. In this connection we consider that some of the material in our media, including the ABC, is very clearly not conducive to positive family and societal values, and deserves the attention of the relevant department.

Statement on abortion: The members meeting as the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia are greatly disturbed at the murder of over 90,000 unborn children in Australia this past year (a conservative estimate because statistics are not available). We are particularly disturbed at the increasing number of late-term abortions carried out in Victoria (410 post 20 weeks in 2009). We recognise that abortion law is a State matter, but the Federal Government can legislate to provide education, counselling and finance aimed at reducing this tragic loss of life in our nation. When does life begin? Does it begin at birth? Clearly this is not the case because with medical technology we can now see an unborn child alive in his/her mother's womb. Babies born up to 23 weeks gestation can live. An unborn baby is, of course, attached to the mother and is dependent on her, but it is a separate human being which has the right to live. It is not the right of the mother or anyone else to destroy that life.

As human beings we are fearfully and wonderfully made, as the Bible states (Psalm 139:14). The growth and development of a child from an embryo, into a foetus, and then an independent child, is a biological marvel about which our knowledge continues to increase. Yet the question remains of just when along this continuum life begins. Human life begins at conception and this life must be protected by the laws of our just and civilised society.

We prayerfully and respectfully request you, as a leading law-maker in Australia, to ensure that the human rights of the unborn child are upheld, along with those of the mother. We also request that you endeavour to curtail the tragic loss of life that is occurring through the murder of unborn children in our nation.

Proposed deliverances:

1. Synod welcomes the brief expositions of Scripture relating to some ethical issues and requests that they be published in 'The Presbyterian Banner'.
2. Synod approve the statements on same sex marriage and abortion as formulated and recommend they be sent to the Prime Minister and Opposition Leader of the Federal Parliament.

MEDIA COMMITTEE

Report on ‘The Presbyterian Banner’: We may thankfully report that the Lord has blessed the work of ‘The Presbyterian Banner again this past year of 2012. We have been able to support ourselves through the subscriptions and donations of God’s people. In looking at the figures below it will be noted there is an increase in expense from last year whilst a decrease in subscriptions. This is due to the additional publication of the Moderator’s Addresses from last year’s Synod and a variation in the time we received subscriptions (i.e. in 2010 we received more subscriptions for 2011 than in 2011 we received them for 2012).

Please note also that a number of free copies are mailed to State and Theological Libraries around the nation at our own expense.

I warmly thank our team involved here, from the contributors to the proof-reader to the printing, packaging and then the posting (any faults in the grammar and spelling are the editor’s!). There are a number of hands involved in this process and I’m thankful the Lord has spared us to continue on in this work for Him.

The subscriptions have increased by about 15, with 150 copies per month being presently printed.

There has also been an encouraging downloading of the magazine in its on-line version, and the number of complimentary electronic issues sent out by the editor has continued to increase in number.

There are those ministers regularly contributing articles – I note here again my brothers Rowland Ward, George Ball, & Jim Klazinga. I would use this opportunity again to encourage our other colleagues to contribute at least one item a year. This may be a helpful article or local news – there are several congregations who have not yet in my time as editor passed on news and/or photographs for our magazine (this is over three years now!). We’re sure there are things happening in your churches and would love to know what they are so that we can be encouraged and in prayer for you. And this is what we need to keep very much in mind – it is our magazine. The more we support it – prayerfully, financially, contributing articles and news – the more this will become so. This is an opportunity to show how serious we are to be united and involved churches in Australia.

And what a helpful thing it is that when we have visitors to our church that we can give them a complimentary copy of *The Presbyterian Banner*? There they can see and read of the heart in our churches – the glorious proclamation of the unchanging and ever-powerful Word of God.

May God continue to bless this vital ministry amongst us.

Financial Statement for year ended 31-12-12

RECEIPTS		(2011)
Balance 31-12-11	1800.56	1576.37
Subscriptions	2655.00	3310.00
Bank Interest	44.97	73.33
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	4500.53	4959.70
PAYMENTS		
Printing	3051.50	2637.39
Postage	493.00	503.35
Bank Fees	15.60	18.40
Mailing Labels	29.87	
Balance 31-12-12	910.56	1800.56
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$4500.53	\$4959.70

S. Bajema (Editor)

WEBSITE

As anticipated in last year's report, this year has seen a major rebuilding of the website. This has involved the installing of Joomla 2.5 and then reconfiguring the contents of the old site to comply with the requirements of both Joomla—the underlying software platform—and of the new template which determines the 'look' of web pages. This work was carried out over the Spring and Summer months and the new site was then moved into use in January.

Ongoing maintenance and development has also continued throughout this past year. Maintenance of the sub-sites of congregations which have chosen to remain as part of the main site (www.pcea.org.au) have been carried out as required.

In addition to digital editions of *The Presbyterian Banner* and current editions of the Handbook and Decision book, ebooks have recently been made available for download. *Short Statements on issues of ongoing significance* brings together material which has been presented to Synod in Committee reports over recent years. It is available in three ebook formats: pdf, epub and mobi.

The website continues to be the main way we make the church (the PCEA), and the message we have been entrusted with, known to a wider world. For many people the website is the first port of call for any enquiry they have regarding us. For others their enquiry is more general but search engines highlight material on our site which may be relevant. To gain fullest benefit from the website will require a greater interest and fuller involvement of many more people within the church than is presently the case. This greater involvement is something that the software platform we use makes readily possible.

Proposed Deliverance:

Synod appoints Revd David Kerridge as webmaster responsible for the church website (www.pcea.org.au) with effect from the end of this Synod meeting.

M G Smith (Webmaster)

YOUTH AND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Members: A. Miranda (convener), T. Reeve, J. Klazinga, S. Carswell

During the remainder of 2012 and the beginning of 2013, the committee was able to organise church-oriented activities and achieve positive results through a close relationship via email correspondence.

Family Camp

Our first item for discussion and planning was the 2013 Family Camp. The feedback has been very positive and the enthusiasm for getting involved in gatherings like this remains consistent. The main speaker for the camp was the Rev. Rudi Schwartz of Wee Waa Presbyterian Church NSW. Theme and Keynote Speaker: The theme for this year was "The Acts of God in Salvation" focusing on the doctrines of Justification, Adoption, Sanctification and the Perseverance of the saints. The four studies drew out the theological importance of these truths and emphasised the commitment of God to glorify his people. The church is a community of people called out of the world; called to faith in Christ and helped by the Spirit to endure until the end. Each study was also followed by a time of discussion in small groups.

Camp report Stanwell Tops 8-11 January 2013 (Stewart Carswell)

It was a sweltering day that started this year's PCEA family camp in the beautiful bush surrounds at Stanwell Tops. We started the drive from Brisbane and broke the trip at Wauchope where we were able spend a few days catching up with friends in the congregation. It was a pleasant enough drive from Wauchope with temperatures peaking at 41 C. The car's air conditioning was obviously working overtime because when we emerged from the cool the heat hit us like an oven. The kids quickly unpacked the car, found their rooms and made for the pool. The rest of the campers - nearly 60 in total - arrived during the afternoon with quite a number frequenting the pool. Other campers came from as far as Melbourne and Ulverstone, with the rest from Newcastle, Wauchope and Sydney. The speaker for the camp was Rev Rudi Schwartz from the Wee Waa Presbyterian Church and the theme was the works of God in salvation. Rudi was able to deliver four excellent studies focussing on covenant theology, justification, adoption, sanctification and perseverance. Rudi was an engaging speaker and presented these wonderful truths in humility giving all glory to God for His work in the salvation of His people. The discussion groups after each study very detailed and beneficial and the hour set aside just didn't seem enough. The daily psalm singing (and teaching) lead by Sonya Hamilton was excellent - it was lovely to hear the psalms sung in 4-part harmony. Devotions held each morning and evening were inspirational and searching. David Bosenquet (Dapto PRC) and Rowland Ward (Knox, PCEA) gave informative talks on mission work in Kenya and the Mukti Mission (India) respectively.

The food was excellent - except for the beef skewers, I'm not sure what the chef was hoping they would be like but all I can say is that he has ruined his opportunity to be on Masterchef - and the accommodation with ensuite rooms was a delight - like being at home but with no housework. The activities ranged from bush walks, table tennis, cricket, volleyball and, of course, the pool. The concert afternoon showcased yet again the diverse talents of the campers from singing, poetry, singing, flautist and did I mention singing. Concert-goers were treated to an historic spectacle for the title of PCEA table-tennis champion 2013. Ian Hamilton battled bravely but was no match for his much better and much younger opponent - Shaun Hamilton.

Apart from the excellent studies the camp was highlighted by fellowship - spending time away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life with a group of like-minded Christian friends. The "Family" camp lived up to its name with three generations of families represented and we thank God for His faithfulness and covenant mercy. Each camper left on the final day refreshed by the Spirit, with thankfulness to God for the wonderful truths expounded.

Many thanks should indeed go to the Youth and Fellowship committee, especially Glenn Hamilton, for yet another excellent camp. I would encourage as many people as possible to set aside the time and money needed for the next camp, and make the effort as you will not be disappointed.

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Essays

Essays prizes were given to 23 children. The work submitted shows an excellent level of reflective engagement with the set essay questions and creative ability from the little ones to capture through drawings the main point of the biblical passage being studied. Personal letters of congratulations were sent to all participants commending them for the diligent work, clear articulation and eagerness to keep growing the faith through deeper study of the Bible. The names of children and youths who submitted essays are provided below:

Infants: Liam Viljoen, Jonathan Hickey, Tahnee Carswell, Belinda Hamilton, Eleanor Hanna, Becky Hamilton, Steven Hamilton

Junior: Harrison Carswell, Isaac Klazinga, Caleb Klazinga, Irene Klazinga, Simone Hamilton, Aimee Carswell, Jessie Carswell, Harrison Carswell, Grieta Bosveld, Anna Bosveld, Joshua Ryan, Niklavs Bosveld, Michael Hanna

Senior: Naomi Klazinga, Andrew Hamilton, Shaun Hamilton

Prescribed Youth Work 2013

Metrical Psalms 1st Certificate 2nd Certificate

Infants (7yrs) Psalm 23/121 Psalm 67/100

Junior (8 to 12 yrs) Psalm 19:7-14 Psalm 31:19-24

Senior (13 to 17yrs) Psalm 27:1-6 Psalm 138

Scripture Memory

1st Certificate (Junior) 1Peter 1:3-9

2nd Certificate (Senior) Philippians 4:1-13

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 20:1-17

Psalm Tunes

Please choose appropriate Psalm from preferred book

Junior

Crasselius /Ballerma /Farrant/ Tallis

Senior

Saxony LM /Richmond/Old 44th/ Mainzer

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 Questions

Infants (7)

Read Psalm 139. What does this Psalm say about God? Look up verses 7 to 10 and write down all the places where God is? Can God see us before we are born? You can find the answer in verses 13 to 15.

Junior (8 to 12, up to 400 words)

Read Psalm 73:25-28. How would you describe what going on here? According to verses 25, 26, and 28 what can Christians do to have strong desires for God?

Synod Reports 2013

Senior (13 to 17, 1000 words)

Read Jeremiah 2:1-13. In your opinion what is the main theme in this section? What do we learn from this passage about sin and God? Verse 13 is very important so don't miss it in your reflection.

Birthday Roll

Mrs. Margaret Kinder's commitment to encourage the children in the covenant community through birthday cards is a great contribution to their spiritual growth and the sense of belonging in the PCEA. A note of appreciation on behalf of Synod, was sent to her on 1 June 2012.

Search Work

Mrs Irene Steel continues as coordinator of this program. The program provides every year spiritual stimulation and fun ways for children to grow their knowledge of the things of God.

Proposed Deliverances:

1. Synod thank all Sunday-school teachers and youth leaders for their incalculable service to God by teaching the children the truths of the gospel.
2. Synod thank Mrs Margaret Kinder and Mrs Irene Steel for their commitment to enrich the lives of children with the encouragement of Scripture.
3. Synod thanks God for moments of refreshing fellowship and growth during family camps.
4. Synod commits to pray for the continual spiritual development of our children and youth and for them to find their identity in relationship with Christ and glad involvement in their local churches.

MISSIONS COMMITTEE

J. Klazinga (Convener), I. Conley, J. Greensill, D. Muldoon, T. Leggott, D.P. Smith.

MISSION FIELD REPORTS

Contents:

1. Australian Indigenous Ministries
2. Mukti Missions
3. Dumisani Theological Institute
4. Taleem (discipleship) Centre
5. Dr Dickson
6. Lakhnadon
7. Colegio San Andrés
8. Moyobamba
9. Lima Evangelical Seminary
10. Fundación Universitaria Seminario Bíblico de Colombia
11. CWI Australia

1. Australian Indigenous Ministries (reported by Rev. Trevor Leggott)

The year has seen a heavier than usual workload since the AIM Field Director Rev Cliff Letcher was granted compassionate leave from November 2011 because of his wife's illness. Cliff remains on leave at the time of writing. As well as the usual remit of the General Director I have taken on extra member care responsibilities and this has meant more travelling than usual. I am extremely thankful to the Chairman of the AIM Council, Mr John Keane, who, since retirement from secular work, has been a great help by being willing to assist wherever possible and practical.

AIM ministry in the NT has seen a tremendous spiritual revival take place mainly amongst the Alyawarra people of the Barkly Tablelands. Our missionaries are being hard-pressed to keep up with requests for ministry and the provision of Bibles and study material. What a joy it is for our workers to see smiling faces come up to them seeking to know more of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a real challenge to build good foundations on this revival by providing the right kind of resources to disciple these folk to spiritual maturity.

Whilst there has been great blessing in some places like the Barkly, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Borroloola, there are others where things are very tough. Our good friends Harold and Kaye Dalywaters at Elliott have been going through a particularly rough patch and we hope and pray that the return of Raymond and Thelma Dixon to Elliott might be a good encouragement to them. Phil and Cathy Stuart at Alice Springs have been very discouraged by the social degradation in the town and the apparent lack of interest in the things of God. Phil has been through a particularly depressing time and has taken time out over the recent holiday period for some much needed relief and refreshment, this compounded with wife Cathy having needed treatment for melanoma earlier in the year.

In Queensland it has been good to see some of the local churches appointing elders to leadership roles such that missionaries provide bible teaching resources and training rather than taking on pastoral roles. The whole Moses family at Cherbourg has been a great blessing to the community and they desire to have them remain in their midst.

One of the bigger time consuming exercises lies in trying to work with the Department of Immigration to have our much valued overseas workers on Religious Worker visas convert to permanent residency. It seems that regulations are in a state of continual change and processes seem almost impossible to follow.

In NSW the AIM Fraternal has grown in number, strength and activity. Under the guidance of Stephen Bignall the churches are beginning to flourish with a number of indigenous pastors taking up the challenge of ministering to their own. These men all work in secular employment to sustain their families, but have great commitment to see their churches grow. New extension work is planned to recommence ministry to indigenous groups in Gulargambone and Wellington. Most recently it has

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been a great blessing to see Ike Gordon, a well known and respected local indigenous Christian man, take up ministry at Walgett.

Bob Quinn has been appointed Director of Training for the Eastern States after Amos Leana returned to PNG. Bob is busy developing a network of contacts for the theological Education by Extension program. As well as existing AIM work in Western NSW new contacts are being followed up at Karuah, Taree, Coffs Harbour, Grafton, Maclean and Fingal.

Most recently Neil and Wilma Robinson, from the Manning congregation, took up short-term service with the AIM group ministering mainly to young indigenous people at Moree.

Early in 2013 Stephen Bignall was appointed Acting Field Director and this has been, and will be, a great help to the overall function of the mission. Stephen brings good pastoral skills and well-measured Christian maturity to the many issues that are faced on the ground.

Toward the end of 2012 AIM took up the offer of relocating the office to the Tinonee PCEA church building. At the present time we are still settling in but everything is up and running.

Whilst this ministry is sometimes wearisome and has its discouragements, there are also wonderful tokens of God's grace at work in the lives of his people as He build His church in their midst. Pamela and I remain thankful to the Lord for his sustaining grace and mercy.

I pray that the PCEA might know the same sustaining grace and mercy as it reaches out in mission with the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a very needy people in our own backyard.

2. Mukti Mission – India (reported by Rev. Peter Smith)

In India, like many other places in the world, it's a constant challenge to provide the daily necessities of life. The cost of food, fuel, education and other basic necessities is always rising. With this in mind the Missions Committee decided to support five Mukti girls approximately three years ago. This support is ongoing and provides a safe home where the girls are part of a family and receive healthy food, clothes, education, shelter and a loving family. The girls' need these things to realise their potential, so that they can go back into the community confident, equipped and ready to be the 'salt and light' God intended them to be.

Currently the committee financially supports Mariya Bansode, Sanjokta Mekhia, Shetal Pandharbale, Varsha Ohal and Varsha Shishupal. Each of the girls receives correspondence and is prayed for by a PCEA congregation, or at least the Sunday school children. This is absolutely wonderful! Accordingly, the committee would urge the delegates of Synod 2013 to get on their knees and encourage your congregation to do the same. Pray fervently for the women, children and staff of Mukti. Uphold Lorraine Francis and the Board, and pray that Satan will never get a foothold in all the wide-ranging aspects that Mukti undertakes.

The Mukti website is well worth a good look, being full of very interesting information. Mukti was founded in 1889, where it is known as Pandita Ramabai Mukti Mission, after its founder Pandita Ramabai; The Marathi word 'mukti' means freedom, liberation and salvation. Amongst many other amazing achievements, Pandita Ramabai commenced the translation of the Bible into Marathi in 1904. The first edition of the New Testament was published in 1913 – 100 years ago! In 1922, only days after completing the full translation of God's Word, Ramabai passed away to be with her Lord. Her translation was from the original Hebrew and Greek! In 1924, Ramabai's translation of the complete Bible was printed at the Mukti Printing Press.

Many Projects are underway at Mukti, not only because numbers are increasing but also due to the old infrastructure that desperately needs modernization. Australians primarily fund the following two projects.

Junior College

The Junior College at Mukti is almost completed! It is hoped that it will be ready for the commencement of the new school year in July. Some new council regulations meant that car parking for bikes had to be provided, which added to the cost. This college will provide for girls wanting to study in years 11 and 12. Through enabling them to do this, the incidence of child marriage will be reduced, which is a real blessing.

Stop The Block

It is important for the health and wellbeing of all the children and women at Mukti that the issues of sewerage disposal were immediately addressed. At the end of last year a group of 4 Aussie men; 2 civil engineers, a sanitation consultant and an architect, all volunteered at Mukti and developed the drawings and plan for the way forward to address the sanitation and drainage issues. Work has commenced on this now, making for a healthier environment.

3. Dumisani Theological Institute – South Africa (reported by Rev. Peter Smith)

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, Dumisani seeks 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 denominations and independent churches. Through its missiology programme, Dumisani also trains men and women for global, cross-cultural mission.

Dumisani Community

Dumisani aims at academic excellence, by teaching students how to understand and communicate the gospel in today's Africa, but it also seeks to be a Christian community characterised by worship, love and fellowship. Thus creating an environment in which shared Biblical values can thrive and Christians grow together in grace as well as understanding and knowledge.

As a Christian Institute, DTI desire to hear and obey Christ's call to support one another by praying together, worshipping together, working together and enjoying one another's company as a gift from God. They believe that such honest fellowship and open community can provide the bond to hold together South Africa's colourful mix of cultures and people.

Staff

After various changes in the past years, the staff contingent has stabilized, with the inclusion of Jack and Nancy Whytock from Canada. Jack and Nancy are no strangers to Dumisani and they will join the staff for three months in the first semester and for another three months in the second semester. Mrs Hlalanathi Mathiso, their long-standing receptionist, has returned from maternity leave, after the birth of a beautiful baby girl, Unakho.

Students

DTI is extremely excited by the new intake of students, which God has brought to it this year. There are a number of young and enthusiastic students who have made a very positive start. The enrolment for 2013 stands at 58, with the majority studying on a part-time basis. Besides the usual course demands, please pray in particular for the students who are studying Greek and Hebrew this year. Language learning can be somewhat challenging!

Sunday School Training Workshops

Dumisani had the privilege of hosting another training workshop for Sunday School teachers and ministry leaders that took place on 23 February. The presenters were Jenny Wilson, Susanne Goosen, Tembani Zani and Wayne Grätz. These workshops have attracted participants from King William's Town, its surrounding districts and larger centres such as East London.

The theme for this workshop was 'Discipleship' and comprised of more than sixty participants. No doubt, it would have been encouraging to see so many faces. DTI trust that the training received will produce much fruit, to the glory of God. The next workshop is scheduled for 28 July 2013. (Material from the DTI Website & March Newsletter)

The Way Ahead ... may be tough; ... is unknown by us; ... may bring fruit which we can only dream of now; ... is known by God. We have experienced significant challenges in Dumisani over the past few years. We have known times of great provision and we have also known times where resources of every kind were scarce. Yet we remain confident that the ministry of Dumisani during more than thirty years has been used by God for the benefit of his church in the Eastern Cape of South Africa and beyond. We would like to thank all the denominations, congregations and individuals throughout the world who have prayed with us and supported us (in all kinds of ways) through every situation. Rev. Dr Alistair I. Wilson

4. Taleem (discipleship) Centre - Maharajgang, Bihar, India (by Rev Dr Dennis Muldoon)

In rented premises in this village poor children from Muslim homes come for physical, intellectual and spiritual nourishment. Most are young girls who are starved of such nourishments and may be in danger of entering the flesh trade that is rife in this area. This part of India is caught up in a violent class struggle, making it dangerous to travel. Yet Dr Rahmat visits regularly to direct and encourage the work. He does so under the threat of a fatwa.

In this Taleem centre over 80 girls and boys are taught Maths, English and Urdu and the Bible. There are 8 staff and 5 volunteers. The girls have to be chaperoned to and from school each day. The children are given a nutritious meal at the centre. This has become costly because of high inflation in the country. Numbers are limited by the amount of funds. This centre is now in a fifth year of operation through funds from the PCEA. Dr Rahmat has provided audited accounts for the year to May 2012 (available on request). These show that about one third of the funds go to food for the children, one third for teacher salaries and the remainder on rent, repairs, materials and administration.

One man conducts worship each Lord's Day for the handful of believers. Dr Rahmat writes of people repenting and being released from demon possession, as well as alcohol and drug addictions. Planned baptisms had to be postponed due to threats. Pray for Rahamat's safety as he travels. Some of his family were glad to be able to visit the Free Church in Scotland recently. Pray for secondary leadership in the group. We hope that Dr Rahmat will be able to visit Australia and share personally of this strategic ministry.

5. Dr Dickson – New Delhi, India (reported by Rev Dr Dennis Muldoon)

Here are some words of testimony from Dr Dickson about his Animal Wellness Centre. Who is my neighbour?

"Panch rupeya de dho sahib" is the pleading voice of 10 year old lad who visits Animal Wellness Centre regularly with great expectation. He is Irfan, one among the many who does all menial jobs in the nearby dairies. He needs Rs.5/- (10c) daily to buy some peanuts. He suffers from the chronic illness-poverty. The parents struggle a lot to survive because of low wages and high inflation. They are nicknamed as "Ghobar kanne log" (borne to eat dung). Most of the children in the neighbourhood are denied education; those who are offered education lose their interest in studies as they find it difficult. They drop out and become labourers like their parents. Some of them learn all bad habits in the younger age and become a big threat to the fast growing-world class city New Delhi. Though the Government has launched various welfare programmes in order to reach out to make them a proper citizen, and other NGOs strive hard towards Child Care, the ratio of need and help is still inappropriate. It is an irony! We claim that 'India shines' but still having millions of kids who are deprived of basic amenities like food and shelter. Animal



Wellness Centre, offers help to the underprivileged who walk in just to sit under a roof to be listened to, to be considered as human beings. Besides listening to their sad stories, we offer books and note books. They get excited to touch a pencil, scrubber and the note book. Seeing their kids walk in confidently & walk out cheerfully, their parents too come. It is a different challenge for an Animal Wellness Centre but God's plans are always to give hope & future (Jer.29:11) Uphold me in this different mission. You also take part in this.

In addition to this clinic, Dr Dickson conducts animal husbandry training programs for EFICOR, a Christian relief and development organisation supported by TEAR Australia. In August he went to three villages in Bihar where flood victims are being helped. He met and encouraged the local missionaries from GEMS ministries. At the time of preparing this report he has just returned from a training programme among Korku tribal people in M.P. state. There is no church among them, but FMPB missionaries are working. He is scheduled to go to Orissa in March. Pray for safety in travel. He had his luggage stolen last trip. Clearly PCEA's support for Dr Dickson is being well used in the Lord's work.

6. Lakhnadon - Central India (reported by Mr. John Greensill)

An encouraging report of the Presbyterian Free Church was included in the March edition of the Banner. Mention was made in the report of a new certificate in theology course that commenced in November 2012. The course started with 12 students & 3 ministers of the PFC attending. In later correspondence received, the second seminar was held in late February, with another 3 students enrolling. There is a hesitancy to increase numbers above this, as this is manageable. Interestingly, all enrolled students are from a non Christian background. They have accepted Christ & are involved in ministry in their villages.

The medical work through Lakhnadon Christian Hospital continues with a new medical superintendent. Dr Paneer Selvam took over responsibility from Dr Shalom Patole in February. The work in the hospital could perhaps be best summarised from the first page of Dr Patole's newsletter below.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings from Lakhnadon Christian Hospital in the matchless Name of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We at LCH greatly value your support and would like to send you a quarterly/ bi monthly newsletter (depending on the logistics), to inform you about our work, so that your prayers for us can continue and to improve accountability towards the resources, you have bestowed on us, through your love for the Lord and concern for your fellow beings.

I was given the great challenge and privilege to take over the hospital from my predecessor, Dr. Heman Prasad, and the Lord has given me sustaining grace and wisdom to see LCH through the challenge. It has been a difficult past 3 months. Due to frequent change in personnel, the patient numbers have come down. However, at the same time, we have seen the poorest of the poor come to our hospital and partake of its facilities. We would like to thank God for giving us the great honour of being able to minister this poor and neglected bunch of God's children and address their physical as well as spiritual needs. We are not currently concerned with the difficulties we face from a hostile government and local people, as we realise this is our lot for being identified as Christians and trying to be salt and light of the earth.

Reasons for Thanksgiving: Mr. Atul Sahu, an 18 year old boy was admitted after a road traffic accident with severe head trauma causing multiple contusions in his brain. He was referred from a higher centre as they could not stay in the hospital, due to dwindling finances. At LCH we were pessimistic about his chances when he came to us in a vegetative state. However, daily, we prayed for him as individuals and as a hospital in our morning prayers. We told his family the gospel. And almost like a miracle, he started to get better. He regained consciousness, motor function and now with some help can even walk. However, what is even more gladdening is that his parents have now professed faith in Christ (though we are still not convinced that they have arrived at a saving knowledge of Christ). After discharge, the LCH team even went to their house and preached the gospel to the

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neighbours and friends, and thanks to what they had seen in Atul's life, they listened with interest. The seed has been planted. Let's hope that it grows and bears fruit.

7. Colegio San Andrés – Peru (reported by Mr. Ian Conley)

Control of the school has now passed to a local board with appropriate indemnification. As from 1 Feb 2013 Snr Jesus Guzman (Jesus is pronounced Hay-sus in Spanish) has taken over from Clive Bailey as principal. Snr Guzman's appointment was an internal promotion. Rev Donnie Smith, the Rector of the Lima Evangelical Seminar, is the Chairman of the school board. The Baileys are planning to return to the UK in late March 2013.

The total enrolment in 2013 is expected to be close to 800 students. This is a further increase on last year's intake of 751 and is a matter of thanks reflecting well on the Leadership of the school. It also contributes significantly to the financial viability of the school and allows flexibility in managing the staffing and building maintenance budgets. Likewise the academic and spiritual results achieved by the final year 2012 students are very satisfying to all associated with the school. The 2013 final year is regarded as a "challenge".

The two scholarships provided from the McSwan bequest have assisted students and families who would not otherwise be able to attend San Andres. Again for this academic year additional funds have been donated by PCEA members to assist with scholarships. These scholarships help not only the students involved but also assist in lifting the profile of the school.

The judgement in the long running court case is now (early 2013) over due. There is no indication of when this will be handed down.

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 3-6 months. Young (and sometimes not so young) people from mainly Scotland have contributed to the school in this way.

8. Moyobamba – Peru (reported by Mr. Ian Conley)

The work has continued under local leadership, and the church remains very missionary minded. The seeded work in Lluylluvucha, a suburb of Moyobamba, is continuing to grow with the new congregation commencing to build on a block the church owns. The outreach program and succession and expansion planning continues in sending students to the Lima Evangelical Seminary. There is outreach and church planting in surrounding centres close to Moyobamba as well as in Tarapoto, Arequipa and in San Lorenzo which is situated in the Loreto Province to the north of Moyobamba.

Rev David MacPherson (Aberdeen Scotland) retains a keen interest in the Peruvian work. 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. The possibility of linking with the Evangelical Seminary in Lima, which has government go ahead for consolidating university status, seems the most logical and streamlined approach to this project at this stage. The planning team is working on the feasibility of a multi site multi faculty institution with the Moyobamba site being one of the sites. As in Australia the granting of University status is an involved and lengthy process.

It is hoped that the Annie Soper School will get to 300 students early in first term. The Chair of the School Board, Pilar Urquieta Landa, reports that the school has had difficulty in finding suitable high school teachers as at the moment the school has to share staff with other local schools. There is a need for maintenance and upgrading of the abolitions facilities as well as the auditorium and some of the building rooves. The two scholarships provided under the McSwan bequest for needy students are of great benefit as the school continues to offer, as do many schools in Australia, discounts for siblings attending and hardship cases. The opportunity for volunteer assistance at the school remains.

9. Lima Evangelical Seminary – Peru (reported by Mr. Ian Conley)

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. As noted above the Seminary now has tertiary status subject to the completion of the formal application and recognition process which is still ongoing.

10. Fundación Universitaria Seminario Bíblico – Colombia (reported by Mr. Ian Conley)
(Previously Medellín Bible Seminary)

(This summary is largely taken from a Jan. issue of the Knox News) Dr Manuel Reaño remains on the staff of this institution but is no longer the Rector due to health issues. As well as lecturing he has a broader ministry running men’s Bible teaching retreats and conferences. He and his wife Patricia run retreats for couples called “Lovers and Adversaries”. Patricia also provides family therapy in a poor area.

11. Christian Witness to Israel – Australia (reported by Rev. Jim Klazinga)

(From the CWI website, <http://www.cwi.org.au/>) “Christian Witness to Israel in Australia has one main goal, to tell the Jewish people the good news about Jesus the Messiah. We are also especially concerned that they should know that genuine Christians love the Jewish people and will not tolerate anti-Semitism. CWI staff are from both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds. Our ministry focuses on Australia but it is also our desire to see Australian Christians sent out to reach Jewish communities worldwide. We value your interest and support.”

Rev. Bruce Christian from CWI has offered to come speak to Synod 2013 during our Missions Evening. We look forward to hearing from him.

PROPOSED DELIVERANCES:

- 1) That Synod express its ongoing commitment to missions by encouraging the congregations to give generously and continue praying for the mission works we support.
- 2) That Synod allow Rev. Trevor Leggott’s superannuation contribution to be paid from the Synod Superannuation Support Fund.
- 3) That Synod adopt the Missions Committee Budget 2013 – 2014 and expresses its general agreement with the estimates for the aforementioned period.

MISSIONS BUDGET 2013

General Funds	Budget	2012	Actual	2012	Budget 2013		Estimate 2014	
Balance 1 Jan		27365		27365		21280		10699
(Miss Gen, DAA, Fiji, Aim, Leggott)								
Income Investments	19000		18056		19000		19000	
Giving Miss General	7000		5864		6000		6000	
Support AIM (Note 1)	7000		16727		12000		12000	
From Frontiers Subs	600		498		500		500	
Needed Special Appeal	(Note 2)				0		14000	
Income	33600	33600	41145	41145	37500	37500	51500	51500
Expenditure								
Fiji Expenses	681		0		681		0	
CWI	3000		3000		3000		3000	
AIM (TIL Salary, Super Levy) (Note 3)	42000		41924		40950		45000	
Visiting Missionary	1000		0		1000		1000	
Dumisani	1500		1500		1500		1500	
Admin: Postage, 'ph etc	500		270		400		400	
Frontiers, Banners	600		535		550		550	
Rounding			1					
Total Expenditure	49281	49281	47230	47230	48081	48081	51450	51450
Closing Balance		11684		21280		10699		10749
IC 12 March 2013								

Notes:

1. Made up of Individuals \$6600 & Congregations \$10127

2. Special appeal if needed to make up the deficit with sufficient funds to get to May @ 45% of stipend.

3. Even if the yearly numbers balance there may well be periods of insufficient funds to meet monthly salary requirements.

Account Balances 1 Jan 2013	
DAA Bequest	20598
Missions General	2
Missions Support Fiji	681
Missions Support Leggott/AIM	0
Total	21280
IC 12 March 2013	

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Malcolm McSwan Missions Relief Fund									
MRF Working Account	Budget	2012	Actual	2012	Budget 2013	Estimate 2014			
Balance 1 Jan 2012		40903		40903	5647			5047	
Income Investments	18000		17941		18000		18000		
Other			30		0		0		
Transfer from Equities Ac					35000		36000		
Income	18000	18000	17971	17971	53000	53000	54000	54000	
Expenditure									
Lakhnadon Christian Hospital	10000		10000		10000		10000		
Lakhnadon Mission School	1500		1500		1500		1500		
Chhapara Christian Health Centre	2500		2500		2500		2500		
Chhapara Mission School	2000		2000		2000		2000		
San Andres Scholarships	6500		6500		6500		6500		
Annie Soper Scholarships	2200		2200		2200		2200		
AIM (TIL Part Salary, Super levy)	14000		13987		14300		14500		
Fees and Charges	400		240		300		300		
Dr Dickson Allahabad	2500		2500		2500		2500		
Taleen Centre (Dr Japla Hussein)	10000		10000		10000		10000		
Mukti child sponsorships	1800		1800		1800		1800		
Total Expenditure	53400	53400	53227	53227	53600	53600	53800	53800	
Closing Balance		5503		5647		5047		5247	
Equities Account									
Equities Account	Budget	2012	Actual	2012	Budget 2013	Estimate 2014			
Balance 1 Jan 2012		225801		225801	260012			225012	
Income Revaluation of shares & Managed Funds	0		34211		0		0		
Income (Retained Investment Income)	0	0	0		0		0		
Total			34211	34211	0	0	0	0	
Expenditure									
Transfer to McSwan Working Account	0		0		35000		36000		
Revaluation	0		0		0		0		
Total	0	0	0	0	35000	35000	36000	36000	
Closing Balance 31 Dec 2012		225801		260012		225012		189012	
Total Funds Held McSwan Missions Relief Fund		231304		265659		230059		194259	
Net Movement from pervious year		-35400		-1045		-35600		-35800	
IC 11 March 2013									

INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

CHURCHES WITH WHOM WE HAVE FRATERNAL RELATIONS.

There has been a drought of information from the various churches. We hope that the drought might be mitigated somewhat as your delegates (G. D. Ball and R. S. Ward) are booked to attend the next International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) to be held in Cardiff, Wales, from August 28th – September 4 this year, and hosted by the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of England and Wales. It is always a great opportunity to meet face to face delegates from other churches. A major item on the agenda will be to receive and examine a report recommending changes to the constitution and regulations of the ICRC. This is the first review since the first constitution was approved in 1985. The review does not touch on the doctrinal basis of the Conference and is chiefly concerned to address practical issues which experience has shown need clearer regulation.

Free Church of Scotland. (FCS). 1954 and 2005.

The impression we get, especially since the change in the worship position, is that this is a church not at ease with itself. Some have embraced the changes with gusto while others have remained as before. Even one prominent advocate for the adoption of the new position is reportedly taken aback by the result. The secularisation of Scotland continues apace. An invitation has been received inviting us to send a delegate to their annual Assembly 20-24th May.

The Reformed Churches of New Zealand. (RCNZ). 2002.

We look forward to welcoming Pieter van der Wel (elder and stated Clerk of RCNZ Synod) as the fraternal delegate from the RCNC who will bring greetings.

Reformed Churches (Liberated) the Netherlands. (BBK). 1999.

This is the body which was instrumental in the formation of the ICRC in 1982. They are still very much in the driving seat and a major financial supporter. Their committee on Relations with Churches Abroad produce a free quarterly magazine *Lux Mundi*. Issues for the last 10 years are available to download from the internet: <http://www.bbk.gkv.nl/lux-mundi-nrs-issues/729/>

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. (OPC). 2007.

Greetings have been received and an also invitation to send a delegate(s) to their next General Assembly which is planned to meet from June 5-11, 2013 at St. Mary's College, Moraga, California (about 20 miles east of San Francisco).

The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia. (RPCA). 2004.

There will be no representative this year – but greetings are anticipated.

The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland. (RPCI). 2006.

Greetings have been received.

The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. (RPCNA). 2008.

Nothing to report

The Presbyterian Free Church of India. (PFCI). 2010.

A very useful, informative and encouraging article by Pradeep Kumar appeared in the March 2013 The Presbyterian Banner.

CHURCHES WITH WHOM WE HAVE CONTACT.

The Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia. (PRCA).

Nothing to report since last year.

The Southern Presbyterian Church of Australia. (SPCA).

The SPC have two full time ministers in Tasmania: Re. Terreth Klaver in Launceston and Ian Smith in Hobart. There is quite a bit of positive interaction between the PCEA and SP in Tasmania. An invitation to send a delegate to this Synod was sent by the Convener.

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia. (EPCA).

The EPC have a congregation in Brisbane currently vacant; a preaching station in Cohuna (Vic); a congregation in Londonderry (Sydney); and two congregations in Tasmania; in Launceston where Mark Shand is minister and in Winnaleah where David Torlach is minister. We have had our differences with the EPC in the past but following the apology received a few years ago for certain matters, there appears to be a sense of need to unite on common fronts especially in light of the liberal state of many of the churches in Tasmania.

The Christian Reformed Churches of Australia. (CRCA).

Nothing to report.

PROPOSED DELIVERANCES:

1. The Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia meeting in Wauchope 2013 expresses its sorrow at the divisions between the Reformed and Presbyterian churches in Australia and resolves as the Lord enables us to do all that we practically can to maintain and promote brotherly relations.
2. The Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia gives thanks to God for the churches with whom we have formal fraternal relations and for those churches with whom we have contact and resolves to pray for the Lord's blessing upon their work and witness.
3. The Synod gives thanks to God for the good relationships with the Southern Presbyterian Church and the Evangelical Church, and encourage the Southern Presbytery to continue to strengthen ties in the hope that greater unity may come in due time.
4. The Synod Clerk is authorised to provide credentials to our delegates, Rev. Dr. R. S. Ward and Rev. G. D. Ball, to the ICRC in Cardiff.

SUPERANNUATION COMMITTEE

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

A: SUPERANNUATION FUND

Mr Murray requested in writing that church contributions after his attainment of age 70 on 7/10/2011 be foregone and he intended to draw his benefit in full at a convenient time. His retirement after just under 40 years of PCEA service was effective 29/2/2012. Dr Ward retired effective 30/6/2012 having given somewhat over 36 years service. Mr Tamata retired 9/10/2012, his most recent period of service being nearly 14 years. Mr Scheepers commenced residential supply 15/2/2012 and was inducted 7/12/2012. The average age of the 11 members currently serving as at 31/12/2012 was about 55.8 years, with an average of 10.05 years of service with the PCEA (last year 13.6 years).

1. Membership

Name	Service from	Total service at 31.12.11	Year 70
J.A.McCallum	28.06.1985	28.50	2012
M.G.Smith	16.06.2006	06.54	2018
T.I.Leggott	11.03.1989	23.80	2019
D.K.Muldoon	29.11.2002	10.09	2022
J.A.Scheepers	15.02.2012	00.88	2024
G.D.Ball	01.12.1997	15.08	2025
S. Bajema	17.01.2009	03.97	2028
T.W.Yoa	09.05.2006	06.64	2029
D.P.Smith	16.11.2001	09.83 w/c	2029
J.D.Klazinga	20.05.2010	02.61	2034
D.J.Kerridge	25.11.2010	02.08	2040
A.A.Miranda	01.12.2009	03.08	2042

Unless otherwise indicated the 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% rising to 9.25% on 1 July 2013 (see Table later in this report). Congregations which employ a preacher 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.

2. Church Contributions to Superannuation

2.1 Superannuation Levy on congregations

No change is proposed in the % of levy this year: the base rate remains at 14%. It is likely a return to the earlier 15% will be needed in the next year or two.

2.2 Superannuation Support Fund & Levy proceeds account

a. The Capital/quasi capital SSF stands at \$171,858.56 at 31/12/2012, with the part of the fund in equities increasing during the year. Accumulated SSF income of \$25,000 has been added to quasi capital since year end. The fund arises from specific legacies and forfeited benefits under earlier no longer existing provisions. The income in 2010 was \$9,891 and in 2011 \$10,610 and in 2012 \$12,103. In 2013 a lesser figure is likely given falling interest rates. The intention is to support the levy proceeds account from time to time given that contributions to ministers will not be fully covered by the levy.

b. It was anticipated in last years Report that there would be a deficit on the levy proceeds account of about \$3,000 in 2012. The actual figure was \$3,496 and was met from the Superannuation Support Fund.

3. Contributions to ministers' accounts

The current position is that for the first three years of service the contribution is 10% of minimum stipend, rising to 12% after the end of the quarter in which a man attains three years service, and to 18% after the end of the quarter in which he attains 5 years service, reducing to 5% from the end of the

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quarter a member attains 70 years of age and to nil from age 75. To continue to contribute generously after this age mistakes the purpose of Superannuation and burdens God's people.

Beginning on 1 July 2013, new laws mean the Superannuation Guarantee will gradually increase from its current level of 9%, and the 70 age cap will be abolished. The change summarises as follows:

1	Year starting on 1 July 2013	9.25
2	Year starting on 1 July 2014	9.5
3	Year starting on 1 July 2015	10
4	Year starting on 1 July 2016	10.5
5	Year starting on 1 July 2017	11
6	Year starting on 1 July 2018	11.5
7	Year starting on or after 1 July 2019	12

The effect will be that from the year beginning 1 July 1916 the existing 10% we pay for the first three years will begin to rise, while effective 1 July 2013 we will have to increase our contribution for serving ministers 70 to 75 years of age from 5% to 9.25%.

4. Superannuation Review

The performance of other funds were considered during the year but see no reason to change from HESTA as the default fund. It remains assessed as one of the best funds overall. Members are free to make investment choice within the default fund. The Committee is not privy to such choice nor does it wish to be so.

4.1 Default Fund

All but one of our members have chosen HESTA, our default fund, for their contributions. The default for HESTA is their Core Fund.

4.2 Performance

The return on the default settings for Hesta was 10.1% for 2009/10, 10% for 2010/11 and 1.3% for 2011-12. The prospects for a positive return in 2012-13 appear good if the stockmarket improvement holds. The Core Fund return to 31/1/2013 was 9.9%.

The Government proposal for a "MySuper" low cost account will not have great bearing on the HESTA Fund as it already is a low cost fund.

4.3 Outlook

At the date of preparation of this report the outlook remains uncertain but likely to be steady if subdued. We said in the 2009 Report that several years will probably need to elapse before there is a sustained recovery in the world economy.

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

No changes are required.

D. COMMITTEE

The Convener has acted as such since being appointed by Synod 1978 and with the completion of 35 years in the job he now seeks definitely to retire but is prepared to give any assistance needed to his successor who, to follow the spirit of the civil law, should be a member of the Fund. Mr Bajema is recommended.

PROPOSED DELIVERANCES

1. Deacons' Court should note the levy for self-supporting charges is \$1,705 per quarter that is 14% of the estimated minimum stipend for 2013 (\$48,700). For aid-receiving charges with PCEA ordained supply it is 10% (\$1,217 per quarter) and for vacant charges without a supply minister 5% (\$609 per quarter).
2. 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.
3. 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.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

(Incorporating General Treasurer's Report)

Committee members: AH Steel (Convener), J Audet, T Buck, DE Kerr, DJ Ramsay

Business attended to by the committee included:

1. Ministers' Minimum Stipend

Level and Basis of Review of Minimum Stipend –

After taking into account rates paid by other Presbyterian churches in NSW and Victoria, the continuing increases in average weekly earnings and CPI the committee recommends the current level (\$921 per week) and basis of review of the minimum stipend be continued.

2. Stipend Relief

A request for Stipend Relief of \$7,750 was received from Central Presbytery on behalf of Hawkesbury-Nepean Deacons' Court.

3. The Capital Assistance Fund

Total funds of \$116,968 excluding \$7,300 held on deposit, increased by \$3,275 net for year ending 31/12/12 from interest received, share dividends and revaluations and the annual \$50 rent from St Georges Deacons' Court. No donations were received.

Loan(s) –

The loan of \$110,000 granted to Knox Deacons' Court as part of the \$550,000 funding by Synod for redevelopment of the Glen Huntly church/hall complex was due to be repaid by 31/12/12. All five units in the complex were completed and sold during November 2012, however settlements were not effected until February 2013 when the loan was repaid. (*Also see Knox Deacons' Court Loan following*)

4. Knox Deacons' Court Loan

The \$440,000 loan from other Synod funds was also repaid in February 2013.

5. Estimates (Major Working Funds Receipts/Payments)

Estimates have been made for the major working funds to 31/12/13 – See Appendix "A"

PROPOSED DELIVERANCES

1. We record our thanks to God for temporal blessings granted for another year.
2. Adjustment of the Minimum Stipend, Cash and Non-cash components (Excluding Manse, Car and Telephone) for 2013/2014 be made on 1st January and 1st July in line with the movement in the *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia (Full-time adult ordinary time earnings)* as published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. In the event of a negative movement in any six monthly review period, no adjustment be made.
3. Stipend relief of \$7,750 be granted to Hawkesbury-Nepean Deacons' Court on a strictly needs basis.

GENERAL TREASURER

1. Financial Needs

All financial needs of the Synod were adequately provided for during 2012 with total funds increasing by \$53,424 (5%) to \$1,240,104 after allowing for \$260,032 held on behalf of others - congregations etc.

Net increases occurred in:

Capital Funds	\$ 40,586
Working Funds	\$ 12,838

Net Increase in Funds	\$ 53,424
	=====

The main contributing factor to the net increase in funds was the increase in the value of Equity investments as at 31/12/12 (Refer Balance Sheet Notes 1 & 2 for details).

2. Contributions to Synod Funds and Other Missions etc. by Congregations

Contributions of \$25,209 by congregations to Synod Funds during 2012 increased by \$7,701 (44%). Givings of \$27,104 to other Specified Missions was also up by \$4,599 (20%). Refer to the Congregational Contributions Summary at back of the Financial Statements and Note 5 on page 5 for further detail, noting in particular the increased givings to *Missions Support (Leggott – AIM)* from \$7,251 in 2011 to \$16,727 in 2012.

3. Synod General Working Funds

Working funds of \$2,507 as at 31/12/12 increased by \$539. This was achieved mainly by the receipt of an anonymous donation of \$1,000. In addition \$1,980 is held in anticipation of up to \$2,000 being required to meet expenses of a delegate to the ICRC conference in Wales in August 2013.

5. Books of Account Audit

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

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

Nil

FINANCE COMMITTEE - APPENDIX "A"

BUDGET - SYNOD MAJOR WORKING FUNDS
for twelve months ending 31/12/13

Fund	Balance as at 31/12/2012	Estimated Income Int/Divnds to 12/13	Estimated Givings & Other	Estimated Expenditure to 12/13	Estimated Surplus (Deficit)	Estimated Balance 31/12/13	Estimated Deficit Balances 31/12/13
Capital Assistance Fund	116,968	3,800	50	0	3,850	120,818	
Church Extension	865	50	300	0	350	1,215	
Stipend Relief	10,558	2,000	0	7,750	-5,750	4,808	
Missions - General Missions - (Legg/AIM)	2 0	18,600 0	6,000 12,000	7,131 43,100	17,469 -31,100	17,471 -31,100	-31,100
Missions - (DAABeq)	21,278	900	0	0	900	22,178	
Miss Relief (Equities)	260,012	0	0	0	0	260,012	
Miss Rel (Working Fnd)	5,647	18,000	0	53,700	-35,700	-30,053	-30,053
Training of Ministry	106,200	10,000	900	5,200	5,700	111,900	
Youth & Fellowship	8,850	1,500	600	1,700	400	9,250	
General Funds	2,507	1,200	500	3,500	-1,800	707	

Notes:

1. The estimated deficit in Missions (Leg/AIM) as at 31/12/13 can be covered by:

Missions General	17,471
Missions (DA Anderson Bequest)	22,178
	<u>39,649</u>
Less: Missions (Leggott/AIM)	<u>-31,100</u>
Net Estimated balance of Missions Wkg Funds as at 31/12/13 \$	<u><u>8,549</u></u>

2. A Sale of equity investments of say \$35,000 will cover the estimated deficit of \$30.053 in Missions Relief (Working Funds)

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 2012.

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 2012:

13/6/12 - Uplifted Certificate of Title 3/38286 – Sale of Wingham Manse property.

17/8/12 – Lodged Certificate of Title 3/1167842 - House Crosslands (Wauchope)

Common Seal Applications

Applications during 2012 were:

No.	Date Executed	Document Executed
231	09/05/12	Contract to purchase 9 Bindi Close, Crosslands (Wauchope)
232	13/06/12	Transfer – Sale Wingham Manse Folio ID 3/38286

Proposed Amendment to the Synod of Eastern Australia Property Act 1918

Trustees, together with the Law and Advisory Committee took up consideration of the NSW Property Act, following the remit of Synod Minutes 11.19 (3):“The Law & Advisory Committee, together with the Trustees of The Synod of Eastern Australia, considered the suggested draft amendment, taking into account responses received from Presbyteries, and submit a fresh draft amendment to Synod 2012.”

It is pleasing to report that, after considerable correspondence and deliberation, the Law and Advisory Committee is able to present a proposal that has the unanimous support of the Committee and the NSW Trustees.

Investments: Specified Capital Funds - Review of Results as at 31/12/12 –

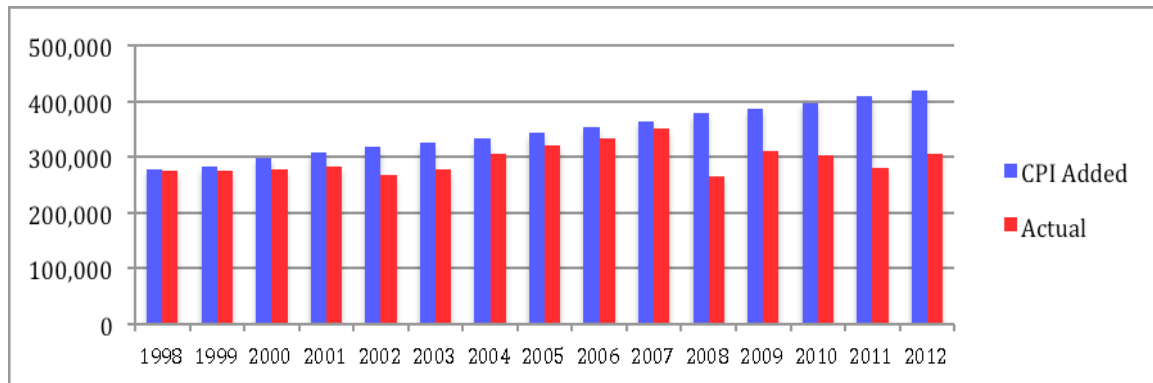
Actual as at 31/12/12		Asset Class	Investment Strategy	
Amount	Percentage		Benchmark	Range
102,553	34%	Cash (Banks)	5%	5% - 10%
139,556	46%	Cong Loans	30%	20% - 40%
0	0%	Debentures	15%	10% - 25%
63,705	20%	Shares/Units	50%	40% - 60%
305,814	100%		100%	

The closure of a Managed Fund, the inability to arrange suitable 1st registered mortgage investments and funding of a Congregational loan has meant investments are currently falling outside of our Investment Strategy.

Return:

Growth –

Total investments increased by \$25,206 (8.98)% against a Target of 2.2% (CPI) . The ASX All Ordinaries Index rose by approximately 12.00%



Some increase in “Actual” values was achieved in 2012, nevertheless, we have not been able to maintain “Real Value” (keep up with inflation) for the past few years because of the need to reduce our holding in equities and the general downturn in the markets. As at 31/12/12 the *Actual* value of Specified Capital Funds was 27% behind the calculated value with *CPI Added*.

Income – Income of \$16,328 represented a return of 5.82% against a Target of 4.48% (Average Official Cash Interest Rate of 3.48% Plus 1.00%).

Overall return – Growth 8.98% Income 5.82% = 14.8% overall return on investments totalling \$280,608 as at 31/12/11.

Summary –

Diversification - Because of changes in suitable investment mediums/our funding needs etc. a review is appropriate.

Investment Strategy Objectives – achieved in both *Growth and Income*.

Proposed Deliverances –

Nil.

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 2012.

Proposed Deliverances: Nil.

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

Members: Moderator (Sjirk Bajema), Clerk (TI Leggott) and Treasurer (AH Steel) - Secretary

All business requiring attention was transacted via email and included:

Bequests – Property Holdings - Deeds/Bonds and Common Seal

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

A RPA mortgage was executed over residential property at 10 Bentley Street Wantirna and the title deed surrendered to the Bendigo Bank as security for a \$400,000 loan to assist in the redevelopment of the church and hall complex situated 185 Grange Road, Glen Huntly. This property was converted to five residential units which were all sold on completion, settlement being effected in February 2013. The title deed has since been returned.

A Student Bond Agreement signed by Denver Boehret was lodged with the National Australia Bank, Eastwood for safe keeping on 25/10/12. No other changes occurred during the year.

Common Seal

Common Seal applications during 2012:

No.	Date Executed	Executed by	Document Executed	On behalf of
93/96	4.4.12	AHS/TIL	Letter of Offer - Bendigo Bank - Loan \$400,000	Knox
97	4.4.12	AHS/TIL	Disbursement Authority - Bendigo Bank - Loan \$400,000	Knox
98/99	4.4.12	AHS/TIL	Mortgage of Land to Bendigo Bsnk – 10 Bentley St Wantirna	Knox
100	25.10.12	SB/AS/TL	Student Bond - Denver D Boehret	Synod (ToM)

Investments – Specified Capital Funds (Bequests)

Diversification

Actual as at 31/12/12		Asset Class	Investment Strategy	
Amount	Percentage		Benchmark	Range
3,316	1%	Cash (Banks)	5%	5% - 10%
180,000	44%	Cong Loan	30%	20% - 40%
0	0%	Debentures	15%	10% - 25%
221,875	55%	Shares/Units	50%	40% - 60%
405,191	100%		100%	

Amount held in *Cash (Banks)* is outside the Investment Strategy Benchmark but is not of concern. The amount in *Cong Loan* (Congregation Loan) represents part funding of a loan for \$550,000 to Knox Deacons' Court granted by Synod 2011. Loan was repaid in 2013.

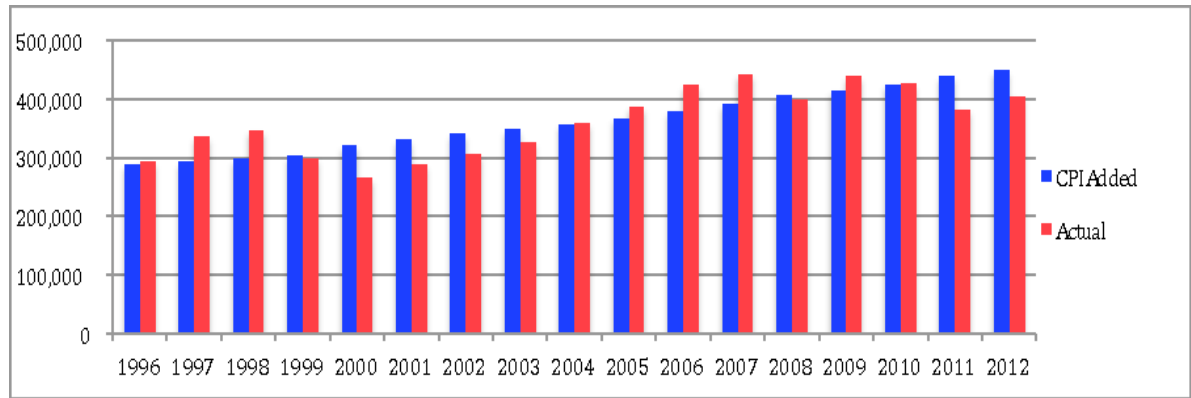
Investments are considered to be adequately *Diversified* in the current volatility of equity markets.

Return for twelve months ending 31/12/12 –

Growth

Total investments increased by \$22,439 (5.86%) against a Target of 2.2% (CPI). While this was a positive result nevertheless it was restrained by our holding in equities in the energy sector, as the stock market All Ordinaries Index increased by 12%.

Specified Capital Funds



“Real Value” of Specified Capital Funds ie. keeping up with annual inflation (CPI). was not maintained as the “Actual” value of \$405,191 fell short by 9.67% (\$43,388) However, this was a slight improvement on 2011 which fell short by 12.8%

Income – Income of \$25,180 represented a return of 6.58% against a Target of 4.48% (Average Official Cash Interest Rate of 3.48% Plus 1.00%).

Overall return – Growth 5.86% Income 6.58% = 12.44% increase.

Summary

Our Investment Strategy Objective was achieved in both Growth and Income

Proposed Deliverances –

Nil.