

# The Synod of Eastern Australia

PRO RE NATA SYNOD, 9TH JANUARY, 2024  
HELD BY VIDEO CONFERENCE

## Minutes of *pro re nata* Synod 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024

### 24.1 Constitute

By video link (Google Meet), on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7:00pm, the Synod of Eastern Australia met for a *pro re nata* meeting at the call of the Moderator, Rev. Andres Miranda.

The Moderator opened the meeting with prayer, a reading from and meditation on Mark 12:28-31.

### 24.2 Rolls of Presbyteries

The Certified Rolls of Presbyteries were received. Apologies for non-attendance were received from those marked ~ below.

#### Northern Presbytery

Brisbane	JD Klazinga	S Carswell~
Northern Rivers	DJ Kerridge	J Greensill
Hastings	J Forbes	G Hamilton

#### Central Presbytery

Manning	[Vacant]	TI Leggott
Hunter	R Tso	AH Steel
St George's	[Vacant]	D McIntosh
Sydney West	DK Muldoon	T Reeve

#### Southern Presbytery

Knox	[Vacant]	[none]
Geelong	[Vacant]	D Ramsay
Narre Warren	A Miranda	T Buck~
All Nations	[Vacant]	[none]
Ulverstone	[Vacant]	I Hamilton

Synod appointment to Southern Presbytery  
GD Ball

### 24.3 Action of the Moderator

The action of the Moderator, as advised to all delegates by email circular on 25<sup>th</sup> December, 2023 and by phone, in calling the meeting to [1] Deliberate on the appointment of a new General Treasurer due to Mr John Audet's resignation as a member of the PCEA; [2] To receive the report of certification of the Training of Ministry Committee regarding Mr Zachary Dotson was moved, seconded and carried.

## **24.4 Correspondence (see Appendix)**

### **1. Disjunction Certificate from Knox Session granted to Mr John Audet**

It was moved, seconded and carried that the certificate be received. It was noted that a General Treasurer needed to be appointed in light of this correspondence.

A notice of motion from Mr Tso (received by email 4/1/24) was presented, viz:

#### **Finance**

1. Synod appoints Mr Alex Steel as the General Treasurer, and Dr Donald Ramsay as the Assistant Treasurer, and that they take up the roles with immediate effect.

After asking the brothers whether they could take on these roles, the motion was seconded and put to the vote. It was carried.

2. Synod approves payments for accounting software and other technology expenses associated with the Treasurers' duties.

The motion was seconded and put to the vote. It was carried.

3. Synod appoints Mr Alex Steel as the Convener of the Finance Committee, with immediate effect.

The motion was seconded and put the vote. It was carried.

4. Synod approves authorised signatories to operate Synod's bank account(s), including Bendigo Bank e-banking, be David J Kerridge (Clerk), Alex H Steel (Treasurer), and Donald Ramsay (Assistant Treasurer), with any two to sign.

The motion was seconded and put the vote. It was carried.

A vote of thanks for Mr John Audet's work was moved and seconded. It was carried.

#### **Archivist**

1. Synod appoints Rev David Kerridge as the Archivist and approves payments for the relocation of the archive.

The motion was seconded and discussed.

Mr Reeve moved a counter motion that this matter be deferred to consideration at Synod. The motion was seconded. Mr Reeve's motion was preferred and became the finding of the court.

**2. Report from Training of Ministry Committee Convener re certification of Mr Zachary Dotson**

It was agreed that the Synod move into closed court. It was moved and seconded that the report be received. Considerable discussion ensued. Mr Leggott had to leave the meeting at 8:17pm. The proposed deliverance was seconded and put to the vote:

1. Synod note the report of the Training of Ministry Committee certifying academic requirements for Mr Zachary Dotson's additional training have been met.

The proposed deliverance was carried.

**3. Extract Minute re Mr Zachary Dotson from Southern Presbytery**

It was moved, seconded and carried that the extract minute be received and noted.

It was agreed that the Synod move out of closed court.

**24.5 Moderator's Expression of Thanks**

The Moderator expressed his thanks to the Hunter Congregation in hosting the *pro re nata* meeting.

**24.8 Minutes read and confirmed.**

The Minutes were read. It was moved, seconded and carried that the Minutes be confirmed.

**24.9 Close**

The meeting closed with prayer at 9:21pm

DJ Kerridge  
Clerk

A Miranda  
Moderator

Appendix



**Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia**

KNOX CONGREGATION  
358 Mountain Highway, Wantirna Vic 3152  
ABN 83 731 316 991

**Session Clerk**  
Mr Terry Buck


**Treasurer**  
Dr Donald Ramsay

**Interim Moderator**  
Rev. George Ball  
0403 349 663

**DISJUNCTION CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that John Audet was admitted a member in full communion of this congregation by transfer from the Narre Warren PCEA on 27 May 2023 and now leaves the congregation in good standing.

19 December 2023

  
Dr Donald Ramsay  
Session Clerk *pro tem*

## Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia

### SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY



**Presbytery Clerk**  
Dr Donald Ramsay

14-20 McPherson Road  
Waurin Ponds, VIC 3216  
dramsay@pcea.org.au  
Mobile: 0435 180 664

#### EXTRACT MINUTE

The Southern Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia met for ordinary business on Tuesday 12 December 2023 via video conference. Having been duly constituted with prayer, the Southern Presbytery resolved *inter alia*:

Presbytery agreed to receive the certification report on Mr Dotson from the Training of Ministry Committee and the Candidate Placement Scheme evaluation for his time in Northern Rivers PCEA.

**MOTION - IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:**

Presbytery supports the training of Ministry Committee's recommendations and agrees to an additional placement for Mr Dotson at Carrum Downs for his enrichment and experience of an urban charge. It was agreed that Mr Dotson will be under the supervision of Rev. George Ball during his placement at Carrum Downs and that this placement is not an assessment requirement for certification.

**MOTION - IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:**

Presbytery takes Mr Dotson on trials for licensing to preach the gospel at the next ordinary meeting of Southern Presbytery on 20 March 2024 at Carrum Downs. It was agreed that the Moderator and Clerk select a text for Mr Dotson to preach on and that members prepare specific questions for Mr Dotson to answer during his examination, in accordance with the recommendations prescribed by Synod.

*Extracted from the unconfirmed minutes of Southern Presbytery by the Clerk on 19 December 2023.*

Dr Donald Ramsay  
Clerk of Southern Presbytery



## PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA

Synod of Eastern Australia

### Training of Ministry Convener

Rev. David Kerridge,  
36 Bruce Drive,  
Gulmarrad, NSW 2463  
Phone: 02 6645 1694  
Mobile: 0411 023344  
Email: dkerridge@pcea.org.au

5<sup>th</sup> January, 2023

Clerk of Synod,

### Report of Training of Ministry Committee concerning certification of Mr Zachary Dotson

**[The following report is substantially equivalent to the letter sent to Southern Presbytery 12/12/23]**

At an online meeting of the Training of Ministry Committee at 7:07pm, on 11/12/23, the Committee discussed Mr Zachary Dotson's completion of essays set by the Committee and gave feedback on the recent placement in the Northern Rivers Congregation with a view to certifying his completion of all additional work (See Handbook 4.49a para. 4, and CPS requirements, pg. 116).

At that meeting the Committee agreed that, while two out of the three essays were completed to a very high standard, the third pastoral reflection did not sufficiently address the question asked. Despite this, it was agreed that no further *academic* work be required of Mr Dotson.

The Northern Rivers placement addressed the fundamental areas of assessment required by the Candidate Placement Scheme (CPS): mentoring, introduction to and interaction with the wider church and engaging in the practical and pastoral work of ministry. As per CPS requirement to advise all Evaluators (pg. 117 Handbook), the mentor's report was reviewed by the Committee and circulated to Southern Presbytery and Ulverstone Session. Candidate feedback on the placement was still outstanding due to the fact of Zach's illness at the end of the placement and subsequent leave by Convener. It was received and circulated to all evaluators on 4/1/24.

Whilst the Committee agreed that no further work be required to assess Mr Dotson's candidacy, the Committee proposed that a second placement take place for an agreed time in March 2024 for "enrichment and experience of an urban charge" (3 to 5 weeks was suggested, definitely not the nominal 8 weeks). Carrum Downs was suggested as the location, thus taking the opportunity to have Rev. George Ball as mentor while he is expected to be resident there. This was subject to the proposed additional placement being mutually agreed by Ulverstone Session, Southern Presbytery, and the Committee (again, see CPS requirements, pg. 116 Handbook). Ulverstone Session has since met (2/1/24) and declared their reticence to support the placement (Extract Minute sent to Convener 3/1/24)

1

Subject to the candidate's own 2023 CPS feedback report being considered and notwithstanding any proposed (but not yet agreed) second "enrichment" placement, all conditions of the candidate's additional training have been met. Given the remit of the Committee to have oversight of the academic training of a candidate and acquiesce to the Presbytery as having spiritual and pastoral care, as well as continued presbyterial jurisdiction, over him, the Committee intend to certify to Synod that Mr Zach Dotson has completed all academic work necessary under its purview (section 4.49a). We hope the information we can provide at Synod time of our assessments will aid the Southern Presbytery as they move towards the next step: trials for licensing Mr Dotson.

Having interacted with Zach since the beginning of his candidacy and observing his character and interactions with our own congregation for 8 weeks in the CPS placement here, I am of the strong opinion that he will make a faithful and diligent Minister in the PCEA.

I am happy to provide any further information or clarification that is necessary.

[Proposed deliverance

1. Synod note the report of the Training of Ministry Committee certifying academic requirements for Mr Zachary Dotson's additional training have been met.]

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Kerridge', written in a cursive style.

Rev. David Kerridge  
Convener, PCEA Synod Training of Ministry Committee