

ACTS OF SYNOD 1997

Class 1 (Barrier Act Procedure)

No	Act	Reference
	Nil	

Class 2 (Others)

No	Act	Reference
1	<i>A Witness for Christ</i>	97.50
2	Aborigines Inland Mission - Rev T.I. Leggott seconded	97.42.9
3	Direction to Trustees for Victoria regarding an investment	97.17.4
4	<i>For Those Considering Ministry</i> – guidelines	97.59.6-7
5	Housing of Archives	97.48
6	NSW Property (Amendment) Act	97.29
7	PCEA Homepage	97.36.4
8	Pension Increase	97.21.4
9	<i>Presbyterian Banner/Fellowship Magazine</i>	97.36.3
10	Reception of Mr D.P. Smith as student for the ministry	97.60
11	Retirement Fund Provisions	97.21.2-3
12	Seat on Presbytery - Rev T.I. Leggott	97.45
13	Special Religious Education	97.30
14	Stipend Relief - Armidale and Ulverstone	97.13.3
15	Training - Mr Leone Tupua	97.59.9
16	Ulverstone loan - rate of repayment	97.19

CLASS 1 – ACTS WHICH HAVE PASSED THE BARRIER ACT

Nil

CLASS 2 – ACTS OF SYNOD OF GENERAL INTEREST TO THE CHURCH

ACT 1 – A Witness for Christ

Monday 21st April 1997

Minutes 97.50

Synod endorse the publication “A Witness for Christ” (ISBN 0-949670-28-6) as fulfilling the decisions of Synod about preparing a commemorative booklet.

Synod express its appreciation to the Rev. Dr. Rowland Ward with regard to “A Witness for Christ,”

- a. for the research done in selecting material for publication,
- b. for his diligence in bringing together items that represent so many facets of the life of the church throughout its 150 years.

Synod accept the offer of Dr. Ward to continue the distribution of the book on behalf of the Publications Committee.

Synod direct that a slip be inserted in unsold copies (and made available to previous purchasers, if possible), the slip to indicate that:

1. the Rev. Edwin Lee, M.A. was a joint editor of the book
2. the book is a publication of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia at the direction of Synod
3. the publishers apologise for the omission of these details from the original printing.

ACT 2 – Aborigines Inland Mission - Rev T.I. Leggott seconded

Monday 21st April 1997

Minutes 97.42.9

Synod agrees to the appointment of Rev Trevor Leggott as a missionary of the Church, seconded to labour as the Administrative Secretary of the Aborigines Inland Mission of Australia, such appointment for an initial period of three years.

ACT 3 – Direction to Trustees for Victoria regarding an investment

Thursday 17th April 1997

Minutes 97.17.4

Synod direct the Trustees for Victoria to reinvest the \$27,000, part of the C.M. Patterson bequest for Stipend Fund, currently held in a commercial unit property at 4/12 Floriston Road, Boronia, Vic., in better quality assets generating consistent reasonable returns, the terms of Synod 1985 Act 10, as amended by Synod 1992 article 41, to apply at all times.

ACT 4 – *For Those Considering Ministry* - guidelines

Tuesday 22nd April 1997

Minutes 97.59.6-7

Synod approve the guidelines “For Those Considering Ministry.”

The wording of the guidelines as printed in the report, as follows:

FOR THOSE CONSIDERING MINISTRY

1. What are the qualities required?

- A. A devotion to Christ and his word.
- B. A zeal for the extension of God’s kingdom.
- C. A love for our fellow human beings and a desire to see them saved.
- D. An ability to preach the word of God plainly, meaningfully, passionately.
- E. Humility.
- F. Self discipline.
- G. Perseverance in the face of obstacles.
- H. Constant prayerfulness.
- I. Some organisational ability.
- J. A sensitivity toward the feelings of others.
- K. A good measure of tact and understanding in dealing with people and their problems.
- L. An ability to listen to and heed the counsel of brethren.

- M. If married, a wife who has a heart for God and who will encourage and strengthen her husband's hand in the ministry of the gospel.
 - N. A commitment to study throughout his ministry.
- (These should be prayerfully and objectively assessed in the light of such passages as 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 2)

2. What is the procedure to follow?

- A. Speak with your local minister and session and take careful note of their advice.
- B. Read carefully Section 4.46 - 4.49 (Handbook of Practice and Procedure) as well as pages 18 – 19 (Decision Book). Obtainable from your minister.
- C. Request an "Application for Studentship" from the Convener of the Training of Ministry Committee.
- D. Complete the application and apply to your local Presbytery for interview and assessment. Take with you a letter of reference from your local Minister/Session.
- E. If the Presbytery views the application favourably it will communicate with the Training of Ministry Committee seeking its concurrence.
- F. If both Presbytery and Training of Ministry Committee are in favour of reception, the Presbytery shall admit the applicant to provisional recognition which must be confirmed by Synod.
- G. No course of study is to be pursued without the approval of the Training of Ministry Committee.
- H. No student allowances will be paid until the signing of the Bond Agreement. (Decision Book pg. 19 Section 9)

3. What support is provided?

- A. The assurance of prayer, counsel, encouragement and oversight from the session and Presbytery and Synod.
- B. The regular monitoring of your study by the Training of Ministry Committee.
- C. Financial Support is available in terms of Decision Book (page 19 Sect. 7-10).

4. What is the preparation needed?

- A. A steady growth in Christian maturity.
- B. The satisfactory completion of the approved course of study.
- C. A positive report from the local session and Training of Ministry Committee.
- D. Application to Presbytery to be taken on Trials for Licensing.

5. What comprises licensing? (Handbook pg. 21-22)

- A. An oral examination before the Presbytery in set areas of study.
 - 1) Hebrew (unless exemption has been granted)
 - 2) Greek.
 - 3) New Testament.
 - 4) Old Testament.
 - 5) Systematic Theology (Westminster Confession of Faith)
 - 6) Church History.
 - 7) Apologetics.
 - 8) Practical Theology.
 - 9) Church Principles.

- 10) Ordination vows and formula.
- B. Preaching a sermon on a set text or passage of Scripture.
- C. If Presbytery's judgment is favourable a licence to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments is granted upon subscription to the questions prescribed by Act of Synod and the signing of the Formula.

6. What then?

The licentiate is now eligible for a call.

7. What are the duties of the minister?

- A. Preaching the gospel.
- B. Giving oneself to constant study and prayer.
- C. Teaching and training the members of the congregation so that they may grow in the Christian faith.
- D. Guiding adherents into a clear understanding of the gospel and of the necessity of gospel obedience.
- E. Providing Christian counselling to all age groups and in a wide variety of circumstances.
- F. Visiting the sick and lonely.
- G. Keeping aware of the spiritual and temporal needs of all members and adherents, and together with elders and deacons ministering to their needs.
- H. Being willing to render assistance at all times.
- I. Being competent in chairing meetings, having a measure of organisational ability and a thorough understanding of the rules and regulations of the church.
- J. Functioning at all times with sensitivity and tact.
- K. Making use of the variety of areas in the media, at public meetings etc, to declare the truth of God to the world at large.

ACT 5 – Housing of Archives

Monday 21st April 1997

Minutes 97.48

The Archivist (Rev. Dr. R.S. Ward) presented a short verbal report. It was resolved that arrangements be made by the Archivist to accept the kind offer of the Ferguson Memorial Library of the P.C.A. in the State of New South Wales, to house Synod Minutes 1864-1955 on extended loan, access to be available to the ministers of the Church and *bona fide* researchers.

ACT 6 – NSW Property (Amendment) Act

Friday 18th April 1997

Minutes 97.29

Synod took up the matter of the Barrier Act returns, concerning the matter of an amended Property Act for New South Wales. It was moved and seconded that the returns be noted, the matter be passed from and the remit to the Law and Advisory Committee be discharged for three years unless urgent circumstances force the subject on the attention of the Church.

ACT 7 – PCEA Homepage

Saturday 19th April 1997

Minutes 97.36.4

That Synod consider the nature and content of the publicised “P.C.E.A. Home Page,” and whether this new medium in the name of the P.C.E.A. should be brought under the supervision of an appropriate committee which would report on what is being communicated on the Internet each year.

Mr. Matthew Winzer be thanked for his initiative in establishing the P.C.E.A. Home Page and that, with his concurrence, it be recognised as our official home-page with supervision by the Publications Committee.

It was further resolved that our people be reminded that those who speak in the name of the P.C.E.A. should request authorisation from the P.C.E.A. and that, in particular, our people be reminded of the Synod Regulations with regard to the use of the P.C.E.A. logo by individuals. (Act 7 Synod 1995 - 95.46)

ACT 8 – Pension Increase

Friday 18th April 1997

Minutes 97.21.4

That the basic rate of the weekly pension be increased from \$59.00 to \$60.20 (married) and from \$41.60 to \$42.50 (single) with effect from 1/07/1997.

ACT 9 – *Presbyterian Banner/Fellowship Magazine*

Saturday 19th April 1997

Minutes 97.36.3

The *Fellowship* magazine be amalgamated with *The Presbyterian Banner*, to the extent of four pages, without necessarily increasing the present size of the *Banner*, and that each continue under the care of the present editors, and to come into effect in 1998.

ACT 10 – Reception of Mr D.P. Smith as student for the ministry

Tuesday 22nd April 1997

Minutes 97.60

Synod assures Mr. Peter Smith of its continued interest and prayers and agrees to the payment of all allowances and fees as determined by the committee, to be confirmed by Synod 1998.

ACT 11 – Retirement Fund Provisions

Friday 19th April 1997

Minutes 97.21.2-3

Synod resolve that in respect to service on and after 1/7/1997 there be allocated annually from the Supplementary Benefits Fund to each ordained minister's account in the Retirement Fund an amount equal to 2.1% of minimum stipend, such amount being additional to the allocation from Levy proceeds, currently 8.9%.

In regard to the Retirement Fund, Synod resolve as follows:

- a. individual member choice as to the investment of church contributions is not authorised.
- b. as from 1/04/1997, 50% of church contributions are to be directed to Managed Growth and the balance to Capital Guarantee.
- c. the life insurance and permanent disability provisions remain as at present except that the insurance cut out at age 65.
- d. In respect of the accumulation from church contributions, 25% of the accumulation at or about 1/04/1997 is to be switched without fee from Capital Guaranteed to Managed Growth, each member to provide a written authority as requested by the Committee.
- e. members making personal contributions may specify the investment medium.
- f. Any personal contributions under foreshadowed Government legislation that members wish to make are to be remitted in a manner to be determined by the Committee, and for ease of administration it is anticipated that Deacons' Courts will deduct same from stipend otherwise payable and remit to the Synod Treasurer, although such personal contributions will form part of the minister's taxable income.
- g. Deacons' Court's are encouraged to discuss with the minister of the charge disability/income protection insurance bearing in mind that such a minister is not a worker within the meaning of Workcover and the like legislation.
- h. the Committee is to continue to monitor relative performance and legislative changes with a view to appropriate recommendation to Synod from time to time.
- i. the Committee is to be composed of four persons, two of whom are to be members of the Retirement Fund.

ACT 12 – Seat on Presbytery - Rev T.I. Leggott

Monday 21st April 1997

Minutes 97.45

consequent upon the Rev. Trevor Leggott's appointment as a Missionary and his secondment to the A.I.M., he be granted a seat on the Central Presbytery.

ACT 13 – Special Religious Education

Friday 18th April 1997

Minutes 97.30

Synod adopt the following rules for the authorisation of members of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia to act as volunteer (unpaid) teachers of Special Religious Education in schools.

Rules For the Authorisation Of Volunteers To Teach Special Religious Education In Schools

1. The person concerned must be a member in good standing of a congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia and must be certified as such by the Minister or Session Clerk of that congregation.
2. He or she must be willing to attend such training sessions as are prescribed by the local Co-ordinator of Special Religious Education.
3. He or she must be prepared to teach the prescribed curriculum of Special Religious Education.
4. He or she must complete the Statutory Declaration set out below:

Volunteer's Statutory Declaration

I, hereby solemnly and sincerely declare that:

1. I have never been convicted of any criminal offence which involves:
 - a. an act of violence towards another person,
 - b. sexual assault, or
 - c. any offence against a minor person.

2. I understand that spot checks may be made to verify the above and hereby give my permission for any police checks which may be necessary and, for identification purposes, I advise that my date of birth is

3. I understand that, should I fail to meet my commitments as set out above, I could be asked to withdraw from the ministry of Special Religious Education in schools.

4. If there be any charges in regard to the above I will notify the minister of my congregation.
I make this declaration conscientiously believing it to be true and in accordance with the provisions of the Oaths Act of 1990.

Signature: Date:

Witness:
(Justice of the Peace or Solicitor - Name in Full)

Signature: Date:

ACT 14 – Stipend Relief - Armidale and Ulverstone

Thursday 17th April 1997

Minutes 97.13.3

Stipend relief for 1997/98 be granted to Armidale congregation up to 50 % of Stipend on a needs basis and the Ulverstone congregation up to \$10,000 also on a needs basis.

ACT 15 – Training - Mr Leone Tupua

Tuesday 22nd April 1997

Minutes 97.59.9

Synod appoint the Training of Ministry Committee to supervise Mr. Leone Tupua's training and that necessary costs for fees and text books be met from the funds of that Committee, this decision to be reviewed by the next ensuing Synod.

ACT 16 – Ulverstone loan - rate of repayment

Friday 19th April 1997

Minutes 97.19

Repayment terms for the outstanding balance on the 8:14 Foundation loan to the Ulverstone Deacons' Court continue at \$1,000 p.a. That, when able, repayment be accelerated and the loan reviewed in the year 2000.