

## THE FORTY-NINTH SYDNEY SYNOD MEETS

### **SYDNEY SYNOD MET IN OCTOBER (FIVE DAYS OVER TWO WEEKS) IN THE WESLEY THEATRE, PITT STREET SYDNEY.**

Approximately 800 Sydney Anglicans were eligible to participate. These included the Rector (or Senior Minister) of each parish in the Diocese and two lay representatives from a full parish and one from a Provisional parish. Also some representatives from certain Diocesan organizations. Not all were present at any one time. It is a public gathering and interested people may sit in the public gallery.

Many first time representatives were present, this being the first Session of the Synod, which is held over a three year period.

**Elections were held for Diocesan Committees**, including the Standing Committee of the Synod (approx. 55 members) which meets each month and deals with the ongoing business of the Diocese.

There were 51 Boards and Committees for which elections were held. Interestingly 43 were not contested – the exact number of nominations were received for the number of places available. Only four, including the Standing Committee, were contested, although the majority of Synod members would be eligible and many qualified for positions on the Committees. This is indicative of a reluctance on the part of some members to nominate for election, believing the composition of Committees is tightly controlled. The voting pattern for the four contested Committees illustrates this, with the votes for those elected all being clustered together at the top, and significantly less votes for the few not elected.

([www.sds.asn.au/assets/Documents/synod/Synod2011/Elections.Synod2011](http://www.sds.asn.au/assets/Documents/synod/Synod2011/Elections.Synod2011))

### **ARCHBISHOP PETER JENSEN gave his Presidential Address at the beginning of Synod.**

First he spoke of Elijah and the ‘sound of sheer silence’.

He went on to refer to some individual parish projects where members of a particular church bore witness to the work of God in their lives.

He talked of the Diocesan Mission (10th year), saying “*active participation in our churches is more than holding its own*”.

### **‘What is our national gospel vision?’**

Archbishop Jensen spoke of ‘the serious spiritual malaise in our culture’, referring to a study that indicated ‘more than a quarter of young people aged between 16-24 years have a mental disorder’.

The Archbishop dealt with the matters concerning the life of the Diocese, and in particular the much awaited Report on ‘the Archbishop’s Strategic Commission on Structure, Funding and Governance’.

### **THE NATIONAL CHURCH**

**Dr Jensen** asked “**What is our national gospel vision?**

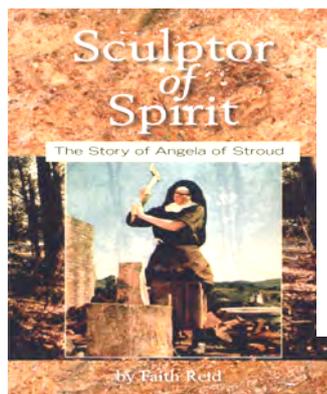
and then said “*We are a connected national movement, not just a local one. And that imposes both opportunities and responsibilities*”, “*The National Church*

*existed before it had a Constitution and is a reality with or without the Constitution.*” He noted “**we have reached a more than usual difficult point in our relationship, especially within the Standing Committee of General Synod.**”

The Archbishop concluded:

*“with assurance imprinted in our hearts by the Spirit of God, we see that God has not ceased from the work of bringing in his kingdom and it is for us simply to be assured by his Word, to rest in his Word, to consult, to believe and to obey the Word and to pray that this great Word will capture the lost in all the world for Christ.”*

**ON THE MATTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORLD WIDE ANGLICAN COMMUNION, THE SYNOD OPPOSED THE ADOPTION OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION COVENANT.**



### **The Life of Angela of Stroud**

Book orders:

<http://www.labyrinthstudios.com.au/>

Or ST LUKE'S BOOKSHOP,  
ENMORE

# SYNOD - A NOVICE'S PERSPECTIVE

TO SAY THAT THE PROSPECT OF ATTENDING MY FIRST SYDNEY DIOCESAN SYNOD, ON BEHALF OF OUR PARISH, WAS DAUNTING WAS AN UNDERSTATEMENT.

The pre-synod briefing in the Chapter House proved very useful because there I heard many of the questions I had regarding the future directions of the Diocese voiced by others. My concern was the at times almost flippant manner in which these questions, particularly relating to finances, were being explained away. However, there was a sense from those present that this was not going to be tolerated and I wondered how this would play out in the Synod proceedings.

In actual fact, with regard to the financial issues, the tone of the motions, which were eventually brought forward, was far different to what the briefing would have suggested. To my mind, the mood of the briefing I attended had certainly shaped the final outcomes, indicating an acceptance of the pain being experienced financially in many parishes.

Most motions at Synod are passed on the voices, sometimes, sadly, on what I would call, for want of a better expression, party lines. However, when true debate took place, it was lively, highly articulate and often passionate. There were a number of impressive younger representatives who spoke, giving the feeling that the future of this diocese will not necessarily reflect today's views and values.

It was also encouraging to hear the reports of the parishes that had been provisional and have now moved from their provisional status. Seeing the different ways they were responding to the needs of different groups in each of their varied situations was a reminder for all that **diversity is not something to be feared but something that should be embraced.**

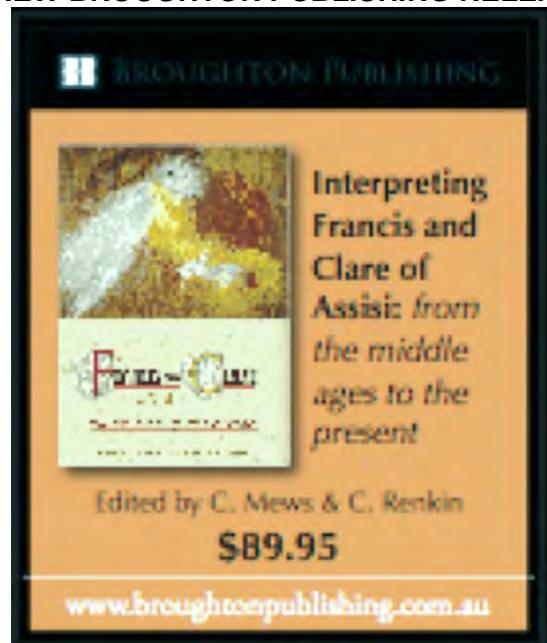
For me, the most crucial vote of the Synod was that regarding **the Relinquishment of Orders**. Briefly this motion appeared to be driven purely by a Diocesan desire to save money. Other arguments were raised but, quite frankly, I could not see how the motion was going to be of any benefit. I am still not sure it will lead to a reduction in the number of cases going to a tribunal either. The real issue is that it has led to **this Diocese unilaterally breaking from the procedures put in place by the national church for the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults**. The debate was vigorous and impassioned but in the end, **with only 14 votes separating, an amendment, which would have postponed a decision on the change, was**

**lost and the original motion was finally passed.** I'm sure we will hear more on this issue.

An unexpected benefit of Synod was that it provided a chance to draw aside and consider the place of our parish in the wider Sydney Anglican setting and to think about how we contribute to its diversity so that more people can find a place where they can worship and find supportive ministry which meets their needs.

*Judith Laurence*  
St Paul's Burwood

## A NEW BROUGHTON PUBLISHING RELEASE



## ANGLICANS TOGETHER INC.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT: The Rev'd Philip Bradford

VICE PRESIDENT: Ms Susan Hooke

TREASURER: Ms Tricia Blombery

SECRETARY: Ms Mandy Tibbey

PUBLIC OFFICER: Mr Alan Melrose

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Wesley Fairhall, the Rev'd Geoff Glassock and the Rev'd Mark Harding (elected), Ms Moya Holle and Ms Carolyn Laws (co-opted).

## ST LUKE'S BOOKSHOP, ENMORE

For information ring: 02 9798 3589

Or email: [jmwinton@tpg.com](mailto:jmwinton@tpg.com).

## **SYNOD SAVED THE BEST FOR LAST**

**Bishop Robert Forsyth's motion with the rather dubious title *Common Prayer: Resources for Gospel-Shaped Gatherings*. The Archbishop's Liturgical Panel, under the guidance of *Bishop Robert* has produced a 'development version' of various services, including the Eucharist (or The Lord's Supper as it is there referred), Baptism, Marriage, Funerals, and a number of prayers. It contains material from *The Book of Common Prayer, An Australian Prayer Book, A Prayer Book for Australia* and other identifiable sources. The revisions are sensitive and traditional forms have been followed. Why? You ask. **If you attend a church with a liturgical background, you may not be aware that many Anglican churches now do their own thing and write their own services.** Many young graduates of Moore College are unfamiliar with liturgy in any shape or form.**

***Many young graduates of Moore College are unfamiliar with liturgy in any shape or form***

Although the debate on this motion brought grizzles from predictable sources, **the great joy was the comments of some young speakers making such comments as 'we don't know much/anything about liturgy but we like what we see in this book'.** Read for yourself on the website [www.commonprayer.org.au](http://www.commonprayer.org.au). This is not yet a complete work; there are many conceded gaps to be filled. **If you have any comments or suggestions you can make them on the website before the end of March 2012. It is intended to bring the book back to Synod 2012 for approval.**

## **THE IMPROVING BUT COULD DO BETTER**

**The Final Report of the Archbishop's Strategic Commission on Structure, 'Funding and Governance' was tabled.**

**Some of the recommendations appear sensible, others do not.** Many of the reforms suggested by members of Synod, in particular relating to timely access to reports and the election procedures and qualifications (or lack of) of candidates were ignored. Interestingly, tabled with the Report were responses from the GAB/SDS, the Australian Church Property Trust and St Andrew's Cathedral School (collectively referred to here as 'entities'). These entities are vitally affected by the recommendations. Not one of them was happy with the report. (These documents are too long to review in detail here but they are available on the SDS Website under SYNOD THIS YEAR.)

What is appalling is how little dialogue there was between the Commission and these entities. The motion before Synod of the Chairman of the Commission, **Mr Peter Kell**, on what should happen next simply proposed the **Report to be referred back**

**to Standing Committee to consider possible ways of implementing the recommendations.** This bland motion was successfully amended to require Standing Committee to consider the responses of the entities. I tried to move an amendment that it should not simply be referred back to Standing Committee but to a Committee of people with experience, including representatives of the entities, established to consider how best to deal with the issues and to report back to Synod. This amendment was not accepted by the movers but, we did manage a compromise. I withdrew the motion and **Mr Kell gave an undertaking to Synod that the points raised would be followed.** An interesting public negotiation! In addition, there was a similar motion from St Clement's, Mosman equally determined to see a thorough review. **At least the reform process has started.**

## **THE FAIR AND THE REASONABLE**

**Gracious motions were passed celebrating the lives of Dr Patricia Brennan and Steve McKerihan and giving thanks for the work of retired Deaconess Margaret Rodgers and the Venerable Narelle Jarrett.**

We now have two regional cathedrals, one at Parramatta and one at Wollongong. Four provisional parishes have been reclassified as parishes.

## **THE NOT GOOD, IN FACT, THE BAD**

**It is disturbing to observe the continuing friction between the Sydney Standing Committee and that of General Synod.** Time and again complaints were made about the unreasonable attitude of General Synod, such as - how much money they were trying to get from Sydney - the Primate does not need a research assistant - proposals from Sydney are always rejected - we are attacked just because we are Sydney. Some of these arguments may be justified but most of them sounded like schoolyard squabbles.

Sydney must accept that it is not always right on everything. Bearing in mind that Sydney holds 27% of the positions on General Synod, one would have thought that some issues could be resolved.

It should not be thought that there are not some good, intelligent people at the higher levels of this Diocese but sadly their views are often overruled.

Largely as a result of this attitude, a sensible request by **Mr Garth Blake SC** to defer the passing of an **Ordinance on the Relinquishment of Holy Orders**, narrowly failed. Sydney's ordinance is to operate in place of a Canon of General Synod. **Garth Blake** was concerned that Sydney's ordinance did not contain

adequate protection for children and vulnerable adults and requested Standing Committee to consult with the Safe Ministry Board and the Professional Standards Commission of General Synod and report back to Synod next year. But, no, press on,' we're Sydney'.

### **THE INTERESTING**

**The Parish Relationship's Ordinance** was passed reducing from 4 to 2 years the period a new minister must have been in his parish before a licensing review can be held in a case of a serious breakdown between a parish and its new minister. Those supporting the amendment argued that new ministers needed to show great self-awareness and sensitivity in handling of any change and their goal should never be to drive so much change that a significant proportion of the congregation are alienated, and indeed driven away. These arguments were roundly rejected by those opposing.

Frequently change is essential and the damage it causes is just part of the process. Where radical change is called for, four years is needed to create the upheaval and allow things to settle. The ordinance was passed.

### **THE FUTURE**

**Parish Costs Recoveries.** As promised last year, the levy was for one year only. But in these straightened times, the parishes are to be requested to increase their giving. Synod was presented with an exposure draft for consideration for next year's debate

at the beginning of a funding triennium. This draft establishes Funding Principles prioritising requirements.

**It also proposes that parishes pay for more of the 'ongoing essentials'. In addition to the current costs paid by parishes, they will also be required to pay the Diocese's membership and affiliation costs to General and Provincial Synods and the NSWCC, a contribution to the cost of Diocesan Archives and support for the Parish accounting system (SAPAS).**

The projected increase will be 5.14% as against last year's levy of 5.73%. One of our concerns was to ensure that careful consideration was given to the allocation of funds. To this end we succeeded.

Yes, succeeded in having an amendment to the proposed principles to require a procedure to be adopted by any organisation seeking funds to provide a detailed proposal of purpose, timing and a review of their existing reserves.

This exposure draft needs to be given careful consideration over the next 12 months. We must be ready to put well considered opinion to next Synod.

*Susan Hooke, St Peter's Cremorne*  
welcome support from *Lyn Bannerman, CCSL*

---

---

### **Blackbird**

Erskineville to Hurlstone Park  
a vertebrae of rail  
the sill of a carriage window  
place for my arm to rest

in middle track  
a bright-eyed bird hopping  
ebony and charcoal blunt  
bold in a streak

of oneness, omen  
of forsooth and forsaken  
either summer or winter  
chuffs wings  
to flap a straight path  
my picaresque dreaming  
gleams the laughter of soul  
bleating death and—  
carrion's torment  
becomes a raven.



### **Pelican**

across the pond floated  
unconscionable task  
a flatulent beak in front  
to own the waters  
of its gliding  
webbed stern wheel legs  
pushing from the edge  
a fish or a frog  
returned sailing to deep waters  
of small pondage, a lake  
a carnivorous meal for  
a cavernous delight

### **Tarts**

lazily sunning on  
Newtown's hotel awnings,  
slumming pigeons  
wait for the crumbs  
of a fattening meal

© Noel Jeffs SSF

# SYDNEY SYNOD 2011 - REFLECTIONS

## **HAVING NOW ATTENDED MY FIRST SYNOD IN THE DIOCESE OF SYDNEY, I SHARE A FEW TENTATIVE REFLECTIONS ON THIS EXPERIENCE.**

I say that these reflections are tentative for no other reason than the Diocese and the Synod are complex entities and I don't pretend to understand anything other than a very little of the workings of either.

**As this was the first Session of this particular Synod (each Synod consists of three Sessions) there were many new Representatives present, including those from St. Paul's, Burwood.** Given the weighty nature of many of the discussions at Synod one might have thought that it would have been better to have had seasoned veterans in attendance. However, notwithstanding the fresh faces at Synod, there was no sense in which the matters before Synod were not discussed fully and with due consideration.

**Most everyone reading these reflections will be aware of the significant financial losses incurred by the Diocese as a result of the Global Financial Crisis. As a result of these huge losses, the Diocese has needed to re-structure itself and to face the question of how to adequately fund the operational costs of running the Diocese. The Archbishop's Commission who were charged with devising some strategies about how the Diocese might cope with these financial losses made various recommendations to the Synod based on their research over the past year.**

As a newcomer to Synod, along with so many others, it was interesting to see the operational structure of the Diocese laid out before us in such a comprehensive way. Synod was looking at the whole and not just at one aspect alone and the Synod handled this discussion well and, given the complexity of the discussion, has not allowed itself to be rushed into making decisions prematurely.

I will not go into the details of these various options because there is such a measure of fluidity in the possible outcomes that any speculation about what might actually happen is fraught with difficulties.

However, a couple of things are clear:

**Firstly, the Archbishop sees the Diocese as being a Diocese and not just a collection of unrelated congregations** and this sense of our shared identity of being a part of this Diocese was manifest in Synod by way of the desire to work together for a good outcome for the long-term future of the Diocese. This might

mean that Parishes bear some of the burden of funding the operational costs of the Diocese.

**Secondly**, as mentioned above, Synod has expressed an opinion that it needs much more information about the various options presented to it before it is in any way able to make a sensible decision. There will be no 'fire-sale' of property to make up for these financial losses.

**..the Archbishop spoke cogently of the benefits of belonging to a national Church.**

Much discussion took place at Synod on the relationship between the Diocese and the national Church. In his

Presidential Address, the Archbishop spoke cogently of the benefits of belonging to a national Church. However, **the most vitriolic speech made at Synod** was one that, although ostensibly concerned with the relationship between the Diocese and the national Church, **was really an attack on a person who is not a member of Synod and who lives in another Diocese.** The Archbishop rightly asked the speaker to restrict their comment to the motion before Synod and not to make personal comments.

Interestingly, although the motion in question was passed, the behaviour of this speaker made a very strong impression on the members of Synod and I would like to conclude my reflections by further reflecting on this situation.

**It seems to me, as a newcomer to the Diocese, that it is by no means as monochrome as one might expect or as one has been led to believe.** For certain, there is a powerful power-bloc that has exercised great control within the Diocese. However, given that the losses referred to above were made when this group had control of the Diocese there is now less than whole-hearted support for this group. Further to this, as is evidenced by the inappropriate remarks made by the speaker referred to above, there is a new generation emerging in the Diocese who have experienced other forms of Evangelical Anglicanism and who do not wish to be defined by others within the Diocese. That is, the 'old-school' is being replaced by the 'new-school' of Evangelical Anglicans who, wanting to remain true to their Evangelical roots, are not bound or defined by the aggressive and vitriolic behaviour witnessed at this low-point of Synod.

I take great heart that this 'new-school' are somewhat mellower in their approach to others and are much more open to learning about the riches of how others have, in their way, loved God and their neighbour. And for this I thank God.

*The Reverend Dr. James Collins*  
Rector, St. Paul's, Burwood

# SPIRITUALITY FOR EVERYDAY LIVING

*This was the theme for the Anglicans Together Weekend Away, held 28-30 October 2011 at the beautiful bushland site of the Tops Conference Centre, Stanwell Tops, where about 30 of us gathered for refreshment and invigoration in the faith.*

**The Rev'd Dr Erica Mathieson**, (below) Rector of Holy Cross Anglican parish in Canberra (a co-operating



parish with a Uniting Church parish on the same site) gave the main addresses. She drew on the wisdom of a number of the mystics, spiritual teachers and saints as well as reflecting on the “ups and downs” of the everyday realities we all face, encouraging us to place ourselves so that we are most open to the leading of God, through prayer, worship, bible study, kindness, compassion, service, thankfulness and joy. We need to “feed” what we

with us and to recognise God’s feeding of us and of others.

We worked in discussion groups to reflect on Erica’s presentations and valued the contributions that came from people of various parishes *including St James’ King St, St Luke’s Enmore, St Albans Epping, All Saints’ Hunters Hill, St Paul’s South Coogee, St Mark’s South Hurstville, St Basil’s Artarmon, St George’s Paddington and others.*

**The Rev'd Andrew Bowyer**, part-time assistant priest at St James’ King St, now undertaking a Masters of Philosophy on Hegel’s theory of religion at Sydney university and residing at St Paul’s College, led us through a fascinating consideration of the story of Ruth. Ruth’s famous words to her mother in law Naomi are:



*Andrew Bowyer      ‘Tricia Blombery*

**“Where you go, I will go,  
Where you lodge, I will lodge,  
Your people shall be my people  
And your God my God...”**

This remains one of the most unconditional commitments in the bible, echoing the covenant love between God and humanity and reminding many of the unconditionality of marriage vows.

**Three workshop options were offered: Bridget McKern and Gillian Hunt**, both poets and writers from St Marks South Hurstville, led a workshop where we walked the labyrinth, a spiritual exercise dating back to the middle ages.

**Bridget and Gillian had hired a labyrinth from the Uniting Church, based on one at Chartres Cathedral in France.**



*Bridget McKern, Geoff Oddie, Stuart Grigg, Trish Shibaoka, Alan and Joy Martin*

Such a walk makes one conscious of the twists and turns of life and the need for patience and an awareness of God’s fidelity. We enjoyed Taize sung prayers and reflection as part of the workshop.



*Joy Martin walking the finger labyrinth. Alan watching*

**Another workshop, “Christian meditation”, was led by Richard Cogswell, a St James’, King St parishioner and District Court judge.** The Christian Mediation network exists in many parts of the world, including Sydney. Richard has been active for many years in organising meditation groups at St James, available at various times of day, all welcome (See St James’ website for details). Meditation and an awareness of God in

stillness, at the heart of all that is, can be very sustaining for many, in the midst of a busy world, providing heart-rest and depth to each day.



*Geoff Oddie*

A third workshop, on “worship” was led by the **Rev’d Dr Stephen Burns**, a priest of the Church of England, worshipping at All Saints’ Hunters Hill with his wife **Judith** (also a priest in England and presently working with Housing NSW in policy) and son, **Dominic**. Stephen is a Research Fellow in Charles Sturt University’s Public and Contextual Theology Strategic Research Centre, based at the United Theological College of the Uniting Church in Parramatta. He works in the areas of liturgical and pastoral theology is also an advisor to the Uniting Church in Australia’s Assembly Working Group on Worship and book reviews editor of the *Australian Journal of Liturgy*. Stephen encouraged participants to adventure into more creative liturgy.



*Judith Atkinson Pauline Newell*

*Geoff Oddy, Bridget McKern, Stuart Grigg & Trish Shibaoka*



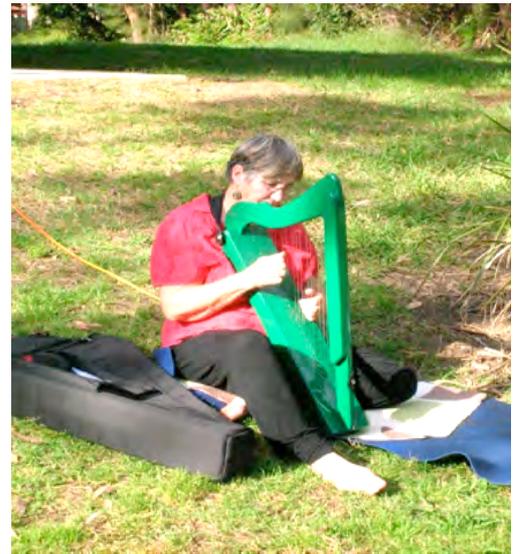
On the Saturday evening, after the presentation of several thoughtful poems and stories, and singing, the highlight of the talent night was dancing and singing to squeeze box and fiddle music from **the Rev’d Sue and George Emeleus**, of St George’s Paddington.



*Sue & George Emeleus*

**Morning and Evening Prayer and a beautiful Eucharist brought us into “sacred space” and capped each day.**

**The lovely bushland trails and nearby beach gave food to the soul in God’s glorious creation.**



*Sue Emeleus playing her harp*

**Many thanks to all the presenters**, to my friend and co-chair of the Committee, **Tricia Blombery**, who worked tirelessly, and to other members of the committee **Fr Geoff Glasscock, Stephen Burns and Robert Head and Chris Roper** representing our partner, the St James’ Institute and all our friends who willingly pitched in to make a happy and successful weekend.

**Mandy Tibbey.**  
Co-Chair, Weekend sub-Committee

# MY FIRST SYNOD – A Journey of Discovery

**AT MY CHURCH AGM IN FEBRUARY THIS YEAR MY NAME WAS PUT FORWARD AS A SUITABLE CANDIDATE FOR SYNOD REPRESENTATIVE.**

There was consensus amongst my fellow parishioners that I should accept the nomination and represent my Parish at Synod. Having no real idea what I was doing, I agreed and was duly elected a Synod Representative for the next three years.

**Having now attended my first Synod, I can see that I have for the past decade been on a journey of discovery and that**

**participation in Synod was a necessary part of that journey.**

**My journey only began ten years ago because I was not born and raised as an Anglican.**

**I come from a very strict Roman Catholic family.**

**As I seemed familiar with the basics and am fairly good at looking like I know what I am doing, when I started attending an Anglican church no one sat me down and explained how the Anglican Church differed in practical terms from my previous religious experiences. I knew of the historical differences and technical issues like transfiguration but on the surface it looked very similar. But the Anglican Church is really different. Synod taught me just how different.**

Despite many attempts to modernise the Roman Catholic Church and ‘involve the people’, that organisation has been singularly unable to escape the fact that power is exercised by the clergy, not the laity. The Anglican Church is the opposite. It is the ultimate democracy, where each congregant has the right to elect a representative, who in turn has the right to vote for or against each and every proposal considered by the Diocese. This to me was revelatory.

In preparation for my first Synod I asked a variety of people what Synod was about and what it was like. Their answers led me to expect a series of long nights of tedious speeches and boring procedure interspersed with occasional flashes of frustration at being no more than a rubber stamp for some bigwig’s agenda. But I was very wrong.

**Synod is about money and it is about power. These are not bad things. They are not inherently evil. They are a fact of life.** The Anglican Church of Australia provides many services to the Australian community – churches, schools, charities and outreach. To do this the Church also continuously consumes goods and services provided by others – paper, electricity, garbage collection. The list on each side of the equation is probably endless. The point is, we

collect money and we disburse money as part of the necessary functions of our organisation. And when that happens, it has to be done according to some rules. Synod makes those rules, and amends them from time to time to keep them current and relevant.

The recent global financial crisis has presented a particular challenge to our Diocese and our Synod has had to respond to that. Whether it does so well or otherwise is not the point: the point is that each member of each parish has a voice, through his or her Synod Representative, in the decision-making process

that shapes how we as a Diocese do what we want to do.

Exercising the power of voting at Synod is a heavy

responsibility. Every decision made at Synod has the capacity to impact upon the parishes of our Diocese and, trite as it may seem, one voice can make the difference.

**That fact was amply demonstrated for me when a proposed Ordinance was being discussed at Synod and the numbers were so close that we had to stand and be counted – a truly proverbial experience. The vote was close: 238-218. The Ordinance became law in this Diocese, but if just twenty people had decided to vote the other way, or been unavailable to attend Synod that night, the legislation would not have been passed. I will never forget the feeling, whilst standing waiting to be counted, that I was participating in a fundamental aspect of the Anglican Church: that it is a church of people. It certainly would never have happened in the Roman Catholic Church.**

My fellow parishioners think that I am quite pragmatic in terms of getting things done within my parish. Compared to the beliefs of many people, I am a realist. I like to contemplate possible future issues and consider how I would deal with them or respond to them. I like to be prepared. I thought that I would attend my first Synod and observe the proceedings, get the lay of the land before I considered jumping into the process more fully. I thought that my power as a Synod Representative was really only nominal. But in this I was wrong.

**I was surprised by the length and breadth of issues considered by Synod: everything from authorising versions of particular services to management arrangements for multi-million dollar asset portfolios.** I was even more surprised by the fact that my vote actually counted and that it could, given particular circumstances, make a real difference. The extent of the power of one vote in more than 500 may

## **RISING SEA LEVELS ARE THE REALITY**

**Archbishop Winston Halapua** returned to New Zealand from three days in the stricken Pacific Island nation of Tuvalu. As far as he's concerned, rising sea levels are no longer abstract theory. They're real. They're fact. Now.

**Archbishop Winston** has talked this past week with Tuvaluan people who are critically short of drinking water – **their wells are contaminated by salt water.** He's seen kids roaming – because their schools have no fresh water and are therefore shut. He's seen the hospital which has been on the brink of running out of water.

He's seen the breadfruit, banana and coconut trees – on which the islanders depend for food – withering and dying because their roots are being poisoned by salt water.

**Dr Halapua**, who was born in Tonga is a trained sociologist and says that because of the particular vulnerability of low-lying island states such as **Kiribati, Tokelau, Tonga and Tuvalu** – which, at its highest point, is less than 5m above sea level.

He's been following the debate about climate change for 10 years.

"For me, to go to Tuvalu – that's all the information that I need. For me, seeing is believing.

"What I have seen is the reality of sea rising."

For the three days Archbishop Winston was in Tuvalu, his guide was **Tofinga Falani**, the Acting President of *Te Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu*, the Christian Church of Tuvalu, to which maybe 90 percent of the country's 11,000 citizens belong.

According to Dr Halapua, there's probably no-one better placed in Tuvalu to gauge how the people of the various islands and atolls in the country are coping with the crisis.

**Tofinga Falani** and **Archbishop Winston** are agreed about what the number one plea to the wider church should be. "We need to pray," says Archbishop Winston.

**"We need to say very clearly to the church that *this is something way beyond us.*"**

**"We need to pray that we will be empowered to speak clearly to our elected agents in government who make decisions about climate change."**

Tuvalu's present plight has been brought on by drought. **It rained in Tuvalu last Thursday for about three minutes** – and that's the first rain they've seen during their rainy season. There's no more forecast for the next three months, either.

There are, as far as **Archbishop Halapua** knows, very few – if any – Anglicans living on Tuvalu. But that doesn't mean he didn't need to go there.

Tuvalu falls within the boundaries of the Diocese of Polynesia – and as such, Archbishop Winston says he has a responsibility before God to the people of Tuvalu.

"When I talked to **Tofinga Falani**" says Archbishop Winston, "it was as though I'd come from Heaven. He literally said to me: 'How humbling it was to see an Archbishop come over to us at a time of crisis.'"

"Then I asked him, as a Pacific Islander to another Pacific Islander: 'What do you need?'

**"He said to me: 'Winston: I'm ashamed to ask for anything.'**

**'I can't name it – because this is our people.'**

**'But you have seen what you have seen.'**

**"This reluctance to ask... is the humility of Pacific Islanders. Another Pacific Islander can sense that."**

"I have shared with him what I intend to do.

"I told him I will appeal to the wider church for immediate help. But that is only a tiny part of the story." "The bigger story is this."

**"PLEASE DO SOMETHING ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE."**

Archbishop Winston says there are four ways people in the wider Anglican communion can help Tuvalu.

• **"Pray** - Pray first for rain for Tuvalu.

Then pray that the issues of climate change and rising sea levels are tackled.

• **"Donate.**\* Donate to the Anglican Missions Board.

Wellington NZ. Earmark your donation 'Tuvalu Appeal' – and the AMB will forward any money it receives to our ecumenical partners, the Church of Tuvalu, so that people there may have enough water to drink and food to eat.

• **"Respond** to appeals by other agencies to help the people of Tuvalu.

• **"Become more aware of the causes of climate change, and of its impact on marginalised people."**

\*[office@angmissions.org.nz](mailto:office@angmissions.org.nz) .

\*\*\*\*\*

(Continued from page 8)

seem insignificant in theory but when I was standing in the Synod, waiting to be counted, it was a very tangible thing.

**Lastly, I was quite amazed by the tone and manner of Synod.** There were many people present, some of whom had quite disparate views. Nevertheless, speakers and questioners were given their allotted time and their opinions were treated with respect. There was no rabble-raising, no chaos, no open discord. Some would say that this is the hand of God at work. It may be, I don't know.

**What I do know is that I have a great deal more respect for the Church and its processes than I did before attending Synod. And that can only be a good thing.**

*Katherine Oldfield*  
St Luke's, Enmore

# THE AUTHORISED VERSION @ 400

THIS YEAR, THE 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AUTHORISED (OR KING JAMES) VERSION OF THE BIBLE, HAS BEEN MARKED BY MANY EVENTS.

**HOWEVER, ON OCCASIONS, I THOUGHT THE AUTHORISED VERSION (AV) ITSELF WAS NOT ADEQUATELY COVERED.**

A large number of books have been published for the Anniversary (more than 20 on my own shelves and I'd happily send anyone a list). For the general reader I'd recommend *BIBLE* by *Gordon Campbell* or *BOOK OF BOOKS* by *Lord Mervyn Bragg*. For the scholar there is *THE LEGACY OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE* by evangelical *Leland Ryken*.

This Anniversary reminds me of a number of areas which should be considered more carefully by Anglicans, including those at the extremes, who sit too lightly to the Scriptures or who tend to identify the Scriptures with the 'Word' or 'the Revelation of God'. Whether one reads the Scriptures in their original languages or, more likely, in one of the innumerable translations and paraphrases, **there are basic things to which we should pay more attention.** They include:

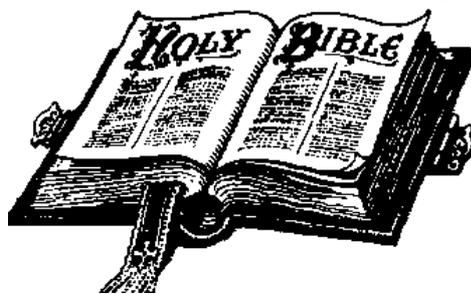
(1) **The history of the development of the Canons of the Bible** (plural – there is no one agreed Christian Canon) should be better known, with help, e.g. of writers such as the evangelical **F.F. Bruce's 'The Canon'**.

(2) **Gaining awareness of how the Scriptures have evolved.** We do not have the original texts, but a multitude of later manuscripts of books and bits of books. Scholars do work to get close to the original Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic may have been and to what may have been added later. (For the NT, one standard work is *The Text of the New Testament* 4th ed. by *Bruce Metzger* and *Bart Ehrman*) Sometimes there can be no certainty. The Hebrew especially is often ambiguous or obscure (Greek far less because of the wealth of contemporary Greek writings). Thus, Bishop John Robinson commended the clarity of the Good News Version of Ecclesiastes 12 (a chapter amazingly absent from the Three Year Lectionary). Bishop Donald Robinson pointed out to me that the Hebrew is not at all clear, and the AV translation reflects that fact. (The **GNV** and the **Contemporary English Version** have their uses but they are generally inferior textually and of course linguistically to the AV.)

(3) **Considering translation with translations.** I am puzzled when those who claim to be "Bible Christians" in "Bible churches" are content to stay with, or to base teaching upon often misleading paraphrases such as *The Living Bible* or *The Message* - let alone the

'ocker' variety. Although based on the inferior manuscripts (the *Textus Receptus*), the Authorised Version is, in fact, often more accurate than some modern translations. I am puzzled also when some turn the Bible almost into an idol, or when one hears Biblically shallow sermons (not only from evangelicals) showing little evidence of deep study of a passage and particularly for the Gospels, lack of consideration of any parallel passages.

(4) **The examination of assumptions regarding the Scriptures** - such as the assumption that the (Protestant) canon is 'the Word of God'. The **Apocrypha** is in fact, part of all the Reformation Bibles including the AV. **Archbishop Cranmer** included more than 100 passages from the Apocrypha in his Book of Common Prayer lectionary - but few from the Revelation). In the Biblical books themselves, nowhere does 'the Word of the Lord' refer to the Scriptures! A great, moderate evangelical Anglican and Biblical scholar, **C.F.D. Moule**, wrote that "*precious in the extreme, the Bible is yet not the 'Word' of God: that name belongs to Christ*" - or I should say, *belongs centrally to Jesus although referring more profoundly to the voice of God in all the world. In the BCP a lesson never ends with "This is/Hear the Word of the Lord"*.



**EVEN IF WE ONLY WANT TO BE BETTER EDUCATED, I THINK WE SHOULD READ THE AUTHORISED VERSION REGULARLY, ACCORDING TO SOME SENSIBLE PLAN.**

For this reason, the Authorised Version is still my choice for daily Matins and Evensong. The AV's English is not always clear and beautiful but much of it is. I believe the AV should be included in English and Religious Studies in our schools. It is far more "accessible" than Shakespeare's plays. Indeed **Tyndale's** translations, the font and origin of much of the felicity of the Authorised Version, also remains very readable (best in **Daniell's** modern spelling editions.)

Priest sociologist, **David Martin**, writes - "*I think it very important that passages of the Authorized Version and the Book of Common Prayer be known by heart...*"

*The core of religious knowledge is not knowledge about X and Y; it is an act of appropriation... knowing things by heart and therefore having them in the heart... And, of course, the texts which pupils make their own have to be **intrinsically memorable**... It is really to corrupt the minds of the young to fill them with some ridiculous liturgical jingle or some broken-backed vulgarization of Scripture. The jingles and vulgarizations may be very well as additional aids or first approximations to the sense of passage. They should not be the things which inform the memory and shape the spirit."*

Here it should be added that, **our culture has often become inoculated against Bible Reading** (despite Bible sales). Many will never pick up a Bible but at least schools would be helped if we had a **good, mainly Authorised Version 'shorter Bible'** of the kind often published in the past but later pushed aside by those who insist on the full text. My own '*Jubilee Junction*' provided something simpler with 50 Bible stories, some little known, most (but not all) Authorised Version, and 50 of my hymns. A new edition, '*Death of a Dragon and 49 other Jewish Stories*' (without the hymns) I hope can be published - a small attempt to help overcome the resistance to Bible reading.

**The Authorised Version of the Psalms is surpassed by Coverdale's Book of Common Prayer version.** I use my own '*In Heart and Mind*' with its 97 BCP psalms spread over the month, with unobtrusive notes and explanations, again a more manageable daily diet.

The Church of England (SPCK) Lectionary states that the Authorised Version should be used at Book of Common Payer services (with Coverdale for the psalms). I think this should certainly be so with at least all the great and most beautiful AV passages. Sometimes this can help listeners to appreciate the *metaphorically true* character of e.g. the Nativity Stories - modern versions often encouraging a literal interpretation, misunderstanding - and unbelief! For some passages, however (many in the Epistles), the **Revised Standard Version** is better. Sadly, the RSV Common Bible is out of print though accessible online. For 'contemporary' services the AV again is sometimes appropriate, but most now choose the **New Revised Standard Version** or a newer edition of **NIV** (the latter better for public reading than the **English Standard Version** but less accurate than the ESV. RSV or NRSV).

We should be familiar with the Authorised Version, and the reading of it will improve our appreciation of good English language and literature. However, for **studying the Bible** a 'parallel' edition helps greatly, with versions printed side by side, and a New Testament Greek text or at least an interlinear guide. For any serious study, a '**study Bible**' is recommended, such as

the **Oxford RSV and NRSV Study Bibles**, with their notes on alternative readings, obscurities in the Hebrew etc - apparatus missing e.g. from Bishop Tom Wright's new and unmelodious NT translation.

**For some knowledge of the historic Jesus and his world**, upon which all theological edifices should be built, I recommend the very readable Jewish scholar,

**Geza Vermes** ('*THE AUTHENTIC GOSPEL OF JESU'S* and '*THE CHANGING FACES OF JESUS*').

Anyone teaching the Gospels should cope with, not

uncritically, '*JESUS OF NAZARETH: AN INDEPENDENT HISTORIAN'S ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND TEACHING*' by **Maurice Casey**, a rare Aramaic scholar. Here there are conclusions challenging both the 'liberal' consensus and the 'conservative'. Such works are too airily dismissed, but they encourage what **James Barr** calls an "*escaping from fundamentalism*" and help provide *sound* foundations for all who want to be truly '**Bible Christians**'- and **Bible Lovers**.

*John Bunyan*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **350TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1662 BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER - 2012**

**BCP @ 2012 - 3 Volumes** (56 pages ea)

by **John Bunyan**

**Volume 1 - Celebrating BCP** - '*A Map for the Minister*' is a guide for the Officiants at Matins and Evensong and the Celebrants at the Holy Communion, (especially for those unfamiliar with these Services, and those seeking a deeper knowledge of them).

**Volume 2 - 'Morning Prayer Matters'** contains a wide range of information about Matins, its Lessons, Psalmody, and Music, encouraging more use of this Service, with its own distinctive spirituality - a Service complementing the Holy Communion, for some on the "fringe" of the Church and enquirers, as well as for regular church-goers.

**Volume 3 - 'Prayer Book Principles and Patterns'** includes Church teaching, simple guide-lines related to the Church Year and the Church Calendar, notes about customs and ceremonies, a small Prayer Book dictionary, and large bibliography.

Available from **John Bunyan**: [bunyanj@tpg.com.au](mailto:bunyanj@tpg.com.au);  
tele 02.46272.586 (each \$10 plus postage)

### **AT NEWSLETTER**

**published by Anglicans Together Inc**

Opinions expressed are those of the contributors.

Editor: *Moya Holle*, PO Box 429, Glebe NSW 2037

# Sydney Anglicans and the Threat to World Anglicanism

by Muriel Porter Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Farnham, UK.

Reviewed by **Christopher Roper**, Acting Director of the St James' Institute \*

The reader cannot fail to know where **Muriel Porter** stands in her new book, *Sydney Anglicans and the Threat to World Anglicanism*. The use of the word 'threat' in the title rather gives it away. The thesis of the book is that, what she calls, "the Sydney Experiment" is a real threat to the Australian Anglican Church and indeed the Anglican Communion throughout the world.

She sees the current time as a time of crisis in the relationship between Sydney Diocese and the rest of the Church in Australia and beyond. This has prompted her to update her earlier book, *The New Puritans: the Rise of Fundamentalism in the Anglican Church*, with further material, particularly in regard to the more recent developments concerning lay administration of Communion and the financial losses suffered by the Diocese in recent times.

The book is a critique of Sydney Diocese. It seems fairly clear that what predominantly drives her to develop this critique is the Diocese's longstanding position in regard to the role of women in the Church, particularly ordination to the priesthood and the episcopacy. But she also has chapters on lay and diaconal presidency at Communion and the gay issue, what some Sydney churchmen call "the presenting issue". Underlying these issues are questions of how Scripture should be read, the nature of its authority, and what the Church *is*, and of course is not. The theme of fundamentalism runs through these issues.

The "threat to World Anglicanism" perspective is taken up in her discussion of the involvement of the Diocese in the Anglican Communion generally, in GAFCON and the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (FCA), and its interaction with bodies such as Reform in England and individuals, such as **David Short**, in Canada.

For her the threat aspect is acutely seen in the recent decision of the Sydney Synod to treat the recent decision of the Appellate Tribunal that lay and diaconal presidency was unconstitutional as merely 'advisory' and, as she says, able to be ignored. She says that if the Tribunal can be ignored "then the constitution itself is being ignored" and this leads her to say (and perhaps prompts the writing of the book) "it is a throwing down of the gauntlet that cannot be ignored".

**Muriel Porter** knows a lot about Sydney Anglicans and indeed she is originally from Sydney although for many years she has lived in Melbourne. She can outline, what we can presume to be, facts such as those about the Diocese's Ministry Training Strategy, church planting outside the Diocese, the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students and Matthias Media. As a member of the Standing Committee of General Synod

she has access to considerable information, and the book is worth reading if only to gain access to that information.

For this reviewer perhaps the most interesting section was that on the Diocese's financial problems, not to gloat but to know just what happened. In particular, I had not realized that, in fact, the Diocese faced a 'double whammy' when the loss incurred by selling securities in 2008 at the bottom of the market (securities which had been bought largely using borrowed money) was followed in 2010 by further bad news that the income available to the Diocese to fund its various activities, which till then had relied on it, would be substantially reduced. A major factor was the loss of revenue from St Andrew's House. Read the book for more details.

**Muriel Porter** could not, of course, make such trenchant criticisms without a reaction from within the Diocese. **Dr Mark Thompson** from Moore College has placed, what **Andrew McGowan** of Trinity College calls, a "feisty rejoinder" on the ABC's Religion and Ethics website. Thompson sees the book as polemical and flawed. [www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2011/08/31/3306439.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2011/08/31/3306439.htm). He argues that in order to pursue this argument she casts the decisions of Sydney synods, archbishops and Moore College as "aberrant, un-Anglican and ultimately a misuse of Scripture". Naturally, this is hurtful to him and other Sydney Anglicans. One must read the book to form one's own view. He concludes by saying "What she casts as a threat many others around the world would welcome as a beacon of hope". This reviewer cannot but disagree.

**Andrew McGowan**, the Warden of Trinity College in Melbourne, responds to **Mark Thompson's** post but limits himself to one incident raised by Thompson, as an instance of Sydney Diocese being often attacked on the floor of Synod where McGowan initiated at General Synod that a motion put by a representative of the Diocese be avoided. Others posts on the ABC's site [www.abc.net.au/religion](http://www.abc.net.au/religion) (click on **Opinion**) are by **Michael Jensen**, **Peter Kurti** and **Bruce Kaye**.

**Dr Thompson** says it makes factual errors but, even if it does at times, it is filled with information which is enlightening. And it places the presenting issues into deeper contexts which is also enlightening.

**Porter concludes with the hope that "in time a more reasonable generous, kindly form of Anglicanism may re-emerge in Sydney."**

\* Views expressed are those of the reviewer, and not necessarily those of St James' Church or the St James' Institute