



LUTHERAN
CHURCH
OF AUSTRALIA

NEW SOUTH WALES DISTRICT

LCA NSW District 38th Convention of Synod

6-8 March 2020

St Pauls College, Walla Walla



Walking together
IN MISSION

Proposals

Be it resolved: That the LCA New South Wales District grant \$1,000,000 to St Paul's College Walla Walla, in the form of reducing the debt owing to the District, incurred for the construction of the Teaching and Learning Hub, on the condition that the repayment term for the remaining loan be reduced to ten years.

Proposal to LCA NSW District Synod from the District Church Council.

District Loan:

In August 2018, the District Church Council resolved to lend St Paul's College up to \$2.25 million towards the building a new Teaching and Learning Hub. The balance of the estimated \$2.75 million construction cost was to be funded by a grant from the Commonwealth's Block Grant Authority (BGA). The loan was to include an interest-free period until the end of 2020, followed by a three-year interest-only period and a fifteen-year amortisation period.

Subsequent to the DCC's resolution, St Paul's College discovered that it needed an additional \$135,000 to comply with Fire Orders, and \$90,000 to replace capital items such as farm equipment, computers, and washing machines. Fortunately, the BGA determined to make a grant of \$750,000 towards the Hub (rather than the \$500,000 for which St Paul's College had budgeted), thus a portion of the DCC loan was redirected to cover these new items. The August 2018 DCC allocation was therefore split into several separate loans totalling approximately \$2.225 million.

Background:

In 2017, after years of relatively little investment in new facilities, the St Paul's College Board and Principal Don Walkley developed a facilities master plan. Only by upgrading its campus could St Paul's College retain and attract enrolments, especially when faced with the more contemporary facilities of competing colleges in Albury and Wagga Wagga. The first step of the plan was to build a flexible learning facility capable of being used as classrooms, seminar rooms, or a single learning theatre; the "Flexi" was completed in 2018.

The next step of the plan has been to replace the Lieschke Building — a 1950s building comprised of four Army-surplus demountables — with a new Teaching and Learning Hub. The Hub includes a communal learning space (that will also serve as a library) and several smaller tutorial-style teaching spaces. In order to reduce design cost, the building draws heavily from the plans for the Flexi, which also helps give the campus a more integrated look and feel.

The DCC loan approval was made after a comprehensive financial review conducted by LEVNT (Lutheran Education Victoria, New South Wales, and Tasmania), and reviewed by the District's Finance Advisory Committee (FAC). The review found that the loan would meet guidelines relating to the capacity of St Paul's College to service additional debt of \$2.5 million. (The College also has borrowings outstanding from the LLL of approximately \$1.5 million.)

Rationale:

The need for the new facility was indisputable, and borrowing the entire building cost (less the BGA grant) was within the College's capacity to repay. But only just. From the perspective of St Paul's College, converting a portion of the loan to a grant would significantly reduce the financial pressure of undertaking this project. Noting the sensitivity of enrolments to the state of the rural economy, this would increase the College's latitude in, for example, providing fee concessions to drought-affected families. Furthermore, it would allow the College to take the next step of its master plan sooner, and from a more solid financial foundation.

From the perspective of the District, St Paul's College Walla Walla is one of our three key mission and ministry assets (with Lutheran Aged Care Albury and Warrambui Retreat & Conference Centre). With a history dating longer than seventy years, St Paul's College is fully woven into the fabric of the Lutheran Riverina. In our role as stewards, both the FAC and DCC believe that we need to preserve this asset, and that investing equity is a responsible move. Not only does it benefit our College through reduced debt service, but it also signifies the District's commitment to the College, the Riverina, and the greater Lutheran Church.

Be it resolved: That Sections 1.2 of the NSW District By-Laws Part B be amended as follows (words to be removed – ~~strike through~~; words to be added – underlined):

1.2 Representation at Convention

- 1.2.1 Each congregation shall be entitled to one delegate for every one hundred communicant members or part thereof but with a maximum of three delegates for any one congregation.
- 1.2.2 Delegates shall be voting members (male or female) of the congregation they represent.
- 1.2.3 Congregations shall forward in writing the names and addresses of their delegates to the Secretary of the District.
- 1.2.4 When an elected lay delegate cannot attend a Convention and the Congregation cannot find a substitute from its midst, the Congregation may appoint an Active Communicant Member of another Congregation (not otherwise a District Delegate) to act as the alternate for its elected lay delegate at such Convention, provided such appointment is approved by the Bishop.
- 1.2.4 (a) If a lay delegate for reasonable cause cannot continue to attend a Convention, he/she may request that an Active Communicant Member (not otherwise a District Delegate) be appointed as his/her alternate by the Bishop for the remainder of the Convention.
- 1.2.4 (b) In each case the lay delegate shall upon the appointment of the alternate cease to be a District Delegate until the conclusion of the Convention.
- 1.2.5 An alternate shall have authority to represent only one (1) lay delegate at any one time.
- 1.2.6 The quorum at convention shall consist of one half plus one of the ~~persons entitled to vote at that convention~~ elected lay delegates, DCC members and members of the Ministry on active call.
- 1.2.7 Members of the Lutheran Church of Australia who are not delegates may take part in discussions at conventions but do not have the right to vote. Other visitors may attend but may speak only with the permission of the Chairman.

Proposal to LCA NSW District Synod from the District Church Council.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Under the current constitution of the District, Section VII 2(b) provides that “[t]he Synod shall consist of all members of the Ministry of the District”; and Section VII 3(b), “the members of the Ministry shall serve for such time as their names are recorded on the Roll of Pastors.” The Roll of Pastors comprises all pastors residing within the District: 27 pastors and SMPs on active call, and 20 retired pastors and SMPs (“pastors emeriti”). For scale, the number of lay delegates at the last Convention of Synod was 56.

In recent years, two or three pastors emeriti typically attend the Convention of Synod and exercise their right to vote; the proposed amendment does not impact this. However, the entire contingent of pastors emeriti have figured into the number of attendees required for the Convention to be quorate. While this has not been an issue with respect to general conventions of Synod, it may pose a problem with respect to special conventions of Synod. Thus the proposed amendment determines quorum solely by reference to the number of congregations and active pastors.

Inclusion of ACT in the name of the District

Be it resolved: that the Lutheran Church of Australia New South Wales District register a trade name, as determined by the District Church Council, which includes the Australian Capital Territory, and that the Lutheran Church of Australia New South Wales District conduct its activities under this trade name.

Proposal to LCA NSW District Synod from Good Shepherd Community Church¹, Tuggeranong, ACT

Rationale:

Including the Australian Capital Territory either in full or abbreviated form in the name of the District would:

1. Reflect the reality that the District encompasses two Australian jurisdictions, thereby bringing the trade name of the District in line with:
 - a. Other multi-jurisdictional LCA Districts, which in our view provides the strongest precedent for the proposal in the interest of consistency:
 - i. LCA Victoria | Tasmania District²
 - ii. LCA South Australia / Northern Territory³
 - b. Other organisations that operate a district or equivalent entity across both New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory as one organisation. Precedents are wide-ranging, but to limit examples to church or parachurch organisations, a sample includes:
 - i. Synod of NSW & ACT, Uniting Church in Australia⁴
 - ii. NSW/Act Division, The Salvation Army⁵
 - iii. Anglicare NSW South | NSW West | ACT⁶
 - iv. Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT⁷
2. Recognise and value the role of Canberra's Lutheran community alongside the role of the Lutheran community across New South Wales, especially given that:
 - a. 2600 people identify as Lutheran in Canberra.⁸
 - b. There are six Lutheran congregations in Canberra⁹ (eight in the Canberra region¹⁰).
 - c. Canberra forms a significant metropolitan church cluster.

¹ Good Shepherd Community Church is 'The Church of the Good Shepherd, Tuggeranong Lutheran Parish.'

² <https://www.vic.lca.org.au/>

³ <https://www.sant.lca.org.au/>

⁴ <https://nswact.uca.org.au/>

⁵ <https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/locations/new-south-wales/nhqs/nsw-act-divisional-headquarters/>

⁶ <https://www.anglicare.com.au/>

⁷ <https://nswactbaptists.org.au/>

⁸ Lutheran Church of Australia, *Walking Together in Mission: A Map for the Journey: 2019 to 2022*, NSW District Review and Planning for Future Ministry (Sydney: LCA NSW, March 2019): 5.

⁹ In alphabetic order by name: Good Shepherd TUGGERANONG; Holy Cross BELCONNEN; Holy Trinity Finnish TURNER; Immanuel WODEN; St Peter Estonian, REID; St Peter's Memorial REID.

¹⁰ LCA, *Walking Together*, 5. This reported figure for Canberra region includes the nearby New South Wales congregations of St John the Baptist QUEANBEYAN and Trinity COOMA.