

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

October 2nd to 8th, Fremantle WA.

DAY 1 & 2: Saturday & Sunday

Hi, my name is Jenny
A General Synod novice I,
To sum up days both one and two,
My best I will but try ...
The Sun shone down on Fremantle,
But inside I had to go
To represent my diocese
(Sydney, I'll have you know).
Now don't hold that against me,
My thoughts are all my own.
I'm here to rep. For those laity,
In my far off eastern home.
An Indigenous welcome was given,
In a lovely native tone;
(Fortunately translated,
so it's meaning could be known).
The Primate's speech swift followed
With a gift of an 'icon'
To those who've served so faithfully
But now are moving on.
Housekeeping was next in order
We had no time to lose,
To elect committees, chairs and met
The Bruce to follow Bruce.¹
A Synod can be confusing
The paper stack is LARGE.
Petitions, motions, questions
To carry them, I need a barge!

The business now well started,
With bills to be debated.
A dinner break and evening prayer,
Back to debates well sated.
Sunday morning we sallied forth,
To worship with our brethren
Here in Perth, and shared with them
In wine and bread unleavened.
The fastest Bills that I've seen passed,
Proceeded with positive vote,
For eager one and all were we
To get about our boat.²
The Rev'd Thomas Millamena
In St George's Cathedral old
Preached to us and then joined in,
Communion with the fold.
Across the road for fellowship
Within the Governor's house.
A chance for informal chatting with
Other reps and with their spouse.
The first two days seem quite laid back
But I know it's just a tease
To woo me into thinking that
The rest will be a breeze.
Debates will rage, p'hap tempers too
But I really, truly know
God placed me here, to do His work,
And for my God, I'm pro!

The Poetic Jennifer Flower is a part-time
Children's worker and nurse.

¹ Bruce McAteer succeeded Bruce Kaye as
General Secretary.

² The delegates were treated to a boat trip down
the Swan River to the Perth Cathedral, followed
by a reception at Government House.

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

DAY 3: Monday

Sandy Grant, Kurrajong

Day 3 of Synod began with a terrific Bible study. Rev Paul Barker, a Melbourne evangelical, preached from Ephesians 1. In an age (and a Synod) where there is great doubt over the allegedly mysterious nature of God's revelation, he struck the right note of confidence in the clarity and saving purpose of God's disclosure to us in Scripture.

Much of Monday's business focused on the critical issue of child protection. An enormous load of careful work lay behind the report and motions presented by the members of the National Child Protection Committee, headed by Sydney's Garth Blake. Our denomination owes them a debt of gratitude.

By the end of the day, the Synod had adopted a national Anglican approach via the adoption of

- a Safe Ministry Policy statement;
- a Safe Ministry Check for screening church workers;
- *Faithfulness in Service* as the code of conduct for clergy and others.

There was some discussion over whether these very comprehensive materials should be a mandated minimum standard or simply model guidelines. In debate, it was pointed out that our national denomination would only be as strong as the weakest diocese. Victims of abuse do not really care which diocese an abuser comes from, only that an abuser is Anglican. These considerations meant

that General Synod saw the need to adopt the above code as the mandated uniform national minimum rather than guidelines which could be varied (and therefore possibly watered down) across dioceses.

Importantly, the adoption of *Faithfulness in Service* included a clear statement that the standard of conduct expected from clergy and church workers was no sex outside of marriage. In the Committee's report, this was *explicitly* defined as prohibiting homosexual activity as well as adultery and fornication.

Another important motion on Monday addressed the issues of refugees. The Synod expressed its concern about the suffering of millions of displaced persons in the global community. One speaker suggested that the grudging advances in Australian government policy in the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers has come in no small measure due to the concerns of Anglican individual and agencies alongside other citizens troubled by this issue.

Synod also commended the work of Anglican defence force chaplains for the enormous spiritual help they have been to defence force personnel, especially in the tension between service to God and service to 'Caesar'.

Overall, however, the day belonged to those who had fought for genuine denominational progress following our failures in child protection. It was a powerful moment when we prayed in unison a prayer of repentance over this. May God grant us grace to live up the new standards we have set.

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

DAY 3: Monday

Wendy Colquhoun

Life at General Synod follows a different rhythm to the timetable that is my normal existence. Rising early is a little unexpected, as is an early morning walk near the foreshores of the Indian Ocean.

The venue for our meetings is a short stroll from our accommodation. Our first full business day, begins with a study of Ephesians 1:3-14 led by Paul Barker from Melbourne. It is salutary to be reminded of the Trinitarian foundation for unity and to be challenged to declare God's revelation. In small group discussion it is stimulating to consider the perspective of others on the seal of the Holy Spirit.

The President's Chaplain leads us in prayer and the business of Synod begins. Some pertinent questions are raised. Information is sought on the reasons for the termination of the Ordained Ministry Working Group, proposed consultations with growing churches on strategic issues and the provision of financial assistance to the Primate's diocese. It is encouraging to hear a new member challenge the Standing Committee on its strategic planning for youth ministry.

When Synod turned to Professional Standards and Child Protection in the Anglican Church of Australia, a documentary titled *The Choirmaster* is deeply disturbing. The insidious nature of sexual abuse and the church's failure to deal with it to protect fresh young lives is very troubling. A plethora of motions to address these problems is presented by Garth Blake.

The report of the Child Protection Committee is extremely detailed. Such a lot of time and energy has obviously been invested to make our churches safe places for everyone. The Synod's sense of frustration and inadequacy gathers momentum as the lawyers tease out the implications of two bills. One provides for the establishment of a Professional Standards Commission to examine safe ministry standards. The other provides for a national register of clergy and of lay persons who have been the subject of investigation by a Professional Standards Committee. It will require much diligence to implement these decisions at a national level. Peter Bolt's statement that a high level of local ownership is necessary to effectively apply processes that will increase the protection of children is pertinent. An apology to victims of abuse in the form of a prayer by the Synod is offered by Bishop Harrower.

I was privileged to speak with indigenous women at the dinner break. The differences between Torres Strait Islanders and mainland indigenous people becomes apparent. Aboriginal women as the nurturers enjoy leadership roles that are not open to Torres Strait women.

It is a demanding day, including debate about non-Anglican clergy becoming ministers in an Anglican church; the revision of the 1603 Canon concerning Holy Orders; discussion on Anglican chaplaincy in the Defence Force; and treatment of people in Detention Centres. A comfortable pillow to rest an overstimulated brain is a welcome provision of the diocese.

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

DAY 4: Tuesday

Lesley Ramsay



Tuesday was the day we were to debate the women bishops bill at 11am. Before that, a chance for more questions and motions. Zac Veron flagged a great one! It went something like this: As an example to the Australian church, this Synod moves that the next time Synod meets in 3 years time, we will divide ourselves into 23 groups under the leadership of the 23 bishops, and doorknock the local area with a gift of a New Testament and a friendly declaration of God's love for all people. As Zac read this out, there was audible shock and derision. Sounds like a great idea, doesn't it? Someone (**not** from Sydney) whispered to me at the break, "Maybe we could do it instead of the Sunday night booze-up."

The women bishops debate began with formal speeches for (2) and against (1) the bill. We then had 34(!) speeches from the floor – 20 for, 14 against. As highlights: Narelle Jarrett, who spoke of the wonderfully wide ministry of women in the NT, but not leadership; Mark Thompson, extolling God's goodness in creating us differently; and Martin Trotman, sharing the experiences of some extraordinary women in the Ministry Training Strategy at Armidale Uni.

Arguments for the proposal: the Bible (arguing that the 'trajectory' of the Bible leads us to full equality in ministry); experience (we have had women priests for many years, and isn't it wonderful?); and natural justice (women have waited so long– now is the time).

The debate was generally polite, where we listened to each other. You all know the outcome of the vote. There was obviously a lot of pain and anger felt by those men and women who hoped to see this pass. One got the impression that many women priests were looking to the episcopate for a sense of satisfaction and fulfilment. Many of us felt very sad that we had been the cause of much sorrow. This day at Synod revealed the intractable theological differences between evangelicals and the self-styled 'progressives'. There was palpable anger that the minority (1/3) could dictate to the majority (2/3). But that is our structure to protect the minority against hasty major change to a longstanding practice (of 2000 years!).

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

DAY 4: Tuesday

Ross Nicholson

As we walked back into the Drill Hall of Notre Dame University after lunch it struck me, 'We're not even half way through!'. General Synod was one of the most intense times I have ever experienced.

Before we got to major business of 'Women in the Episcopate' we would pick line by line through amendment after amendment with some of Australia's finest legal minds presenting compelling arguments for both sides. This is not sarcasm, but an indicator of the complexities of the decisions before us. I think the intensity of the Synod comes from having to concentrate at very high levels for extended times (by Friday however I did notice the most studied paper was not from the Standing Committee, but the Murdoch Press. On one occasion while reading a press article on the Synod I had to turn to my neighbour and ask "Did I just vote 'Yes' for something I shouldn't have?")

The surprise of General Synod was the positive atmosphere. I had heard reports of previous Synods where people were hissed when they presented arguments which weren't acceptable to others. I only noted two occasions when comments were not gracious and generous. In one of these the speaker subsequently apologised to the Synod for making a personal attack.

That courtesy set the scene for the 'Women in the Episcopate' debate. It

would probably be safe to say that very few delegates came to this debate with an open mind. Archbishop Peter Jensen opened the opposition debate with the argument that supporting women in the priesthood did not automatically entail supporting women bishops. The bishop is a focus of unity in a diocese in a way which is different to a priest in a parish. Because there were those who in good conscience could not accept Episcopal oversight from a women this would create division in a diocese.

Another stand out speech was given by Andrew McGowan from Melbourne who spoke in favour of women bishops. His argument followed a biblical discussion of the equality of men and women. He delivered a very cogent and compelling speech which carried the warning for me: the 'no' vote did not have a monopoly on good argument. It did remind me, however, that our presuppositions will determine the direction of the debate and, in particular, the authority that we give to the Bible versus human reason and cultural pressures.

While the day ended with some members thinking that their world had come to an end I was encouraged by one bishop in support of women in the episcopacy who reminded us that the bigger task was to bring people to the Lord Jesus Christ and get on with training people for that mission.

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

DAY 5: Wednesday



Zac Veron

The Thirteenth General Synod was the third consecutive General Synod to give mere lip service to what ought to be the mission of the Church: the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Each of the last three synods highlighted national attendance figures. Just like in the previous two Synods, at this Synod, passionate speeches were made, approving heads nodded, motherhood and apple pie motions were moved and passed, but in the end, the General Synod once again failed to come to grips with the numerical decline of our denomination nationwide.

Symptomatic of this was the way Resolution 15 from the previous Synod was treated. Resolution 15 requested the Standing Committee, when dealing with strategic issues, to arrange a consultation with all incumbents of Anglican parishes which have at least doubled in average weekly attendance in the 5 years between 1991 and 1996 or 1996 and 2001, as measured by the National Church Life Survey, in order that advice

may be offered to Standing Committee on strategic issues.

By the Wednesday of the Fremantle Synod it became apparent that not only was the above resolution effectively ignored, the Standing Committee paid next to no attention to strategic issues over the last three years. The Standing Committee in its written report admitted that it was unable to deal effectively with strategic issues because it was a ‘political’ body.

Yet despite this, on Thursday evening, the Synod held yet another talk-fest about our continued numerical decline and the need to grow, and then passed a motion which included a clause asking Standing Committee to lead us in strategic issues and church growth during the next three years.

Hello? That was one of several moments of déjà vu.

Wednesday ended well ... a relaxing mayoral reception at the Town Hall and a night out at the movies to see *Alien vs Predator*. The movie left a group wondering whether one line of dialogue had any bearing on the Synod:

“The enemy of my enemy, is my friend.”

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

DAY 6: Thursday

Barry Newman

Two matters dominated the proceedings on the Thursday of General Synod. One was the issue of homosexuality. The other was church growth. These labels however do not do justice to the many sub plots evident.

Homosexuality

Homosexuality was raised under the title of “Sexuality & Gender Relationships”. This was a way of making the issue seem less confronting. There were five motions. The first noted the relevant Lambeth conference resolution of 1998, promoted three publications: *Faithfulness in Fellowship* and a Study Guide to *Lost in Translation* and by implication, that text itself. The last aspect of the motion encouraged us to listen “as the Church develops a Christian response to the contemporary experience of human sexuality”. Sixteen people spoke. One amendment was to change “noting” the Lambeth resolution to “welcoming” it. Another amendment was to change “welcoming” the Study Guide to “noting” it. Both amendments were lost and the motion carried unamended. You could see the balance was to lie in favour of a soft approach to the issue rather than a more conservative one. An underlying debate on how one should handle Scripture got going but the mood was not to allow that debate to go to far. The issue bluntly put was: to what extent does the Bible speak somewhat independently of the reader?

That the reader was the determining factor in understanding scripture seemed to be the more acceptable position, although the six Sydney/Armidale speakers adopted a different position.

Bruce Kaye moved all five motions and in his speech supporting the second he referred to the need to listen to three voices: the Spirit, the Scriptures and the christian community. The motion was for the Synod not to condone the liturgical blessing of same sex relationships. There were 18 speeches. There were a number against the motion because it was seen to be too hurtful to the gay and lesbian community. One amendment referring to the biblical teaching on sexual relations was understandably lost. Another amendment that the view being expressed was simply a view “at this time” was lost after three stirring speeches against. The motion was carried unamended. The role of the Bible in handling this issue was again an underlying issue.

The third motion, similar to the second, referred to the Synod not condoning “the ordination of people in open committed same sex relationships”. After 10 speeches, the motion was carried unamended. An amendment that “open committed” be replaced with “any sexual” was narrowly defeated. There were strongly delivered speeches for and against. Arguments ranged from some such people have a great ministry, through the idea that the motion mistakenly presumes that there is a clear scriptural position and further that historically Christians have changed their minds on various sexual matters to

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

the claim that the Bible speaks plainly against such relationships.

The fourth motion welcoming “the initiative of the Federal Government in clarifying that marriage ... is a relationship between a man and a woman” began with a vigorous debate “that the motion not be put”. After six speeches this was not agreed to. A further 10 speeches followed. One minor and another more substantive amendment failed, but another, substituting “Parliament” for “Government” and replacing the characterising of marriage as simply a relationship with a statement referring to the union of a man and a woman for life, was somewhat surprisingly passed. Synod was becoming a little jaded by now and the pressure was increasingly on to wind up the debate. The fifth motion was dealt with on the following day. Another motion, in the same area, though dealing with the issues in a more conservative and more direct form was also referred to the next day but in the end was never debated.

Of the debate on homosexuality, in general, some would say much was lost, while others would say only a little was gained. Still others would say that the line was weakly held, while some were content, at this time, with keeping a moderate position on the books. Some believed that the most significant statements on these issues are to be found in the Bible. Others appear to have believed that the Bible speaks somewhat lamely, not being cognisant of our present knowledge and dispositions.

Church Growth

Was the second matter more important? Yes and No. If seen as more intimately connected with gospel proclamation, with homosexuality better approached as a matter to be understood under the gospel, then the answer is “Yes”. If the gospel was not really the underlying imperative for the discussion of “Mission & Attendance”, as it was named, then maybe the answer is “No”. If the gospel being proclaimed is not the true gospel neither issue will be correctly understood and both will take on secondary importance.

The motion dealing with “Mission & Attendance” was a lengthy one. By the time it was discussed, several foreshadowed amendments had been accepted by the mover. The subject was introduced by two presentations, an introduction to the motion by the mover, followed by an introduction to group discussion. Group discussion was followed by speeches to the motion, with the motion finally being put.

The first presentation outlined the falling numbers in Anglican churches and the failure to keep up with population growth. In a comparison between England and Australia in the 1990’s, 60% of the population in Australia was judged to be fringe or worse while the figure for England was 80%. The present was grim, the possible future more grim. In the second presentation the Synod was challenged to have a pioneering spirit while trusting in the Spirit. An analysis was made of Sunday worship, mission and community with the proposal that mission should be the

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

principal factor between community and worship, rather than peripheral to both as is now commonly the case. A grid was created for “Expressions of Church” with type of “Liturgy” plotted against “External Culture Affirming”. Within the grid were placed entities such as “alternative”, “youth”, “cell”, “café” and “community development”.

The mover spoke enthusiastically about the need to make radical changes. Encouraging the “Mixed Economy” and establishing “New Communities of Faith” were dominant ideas. The “Mixed Economy” referred to existing and fresh expressions of Church. “New Communities of Faith” being temporary and transitory outposts of the “real” church would need to be handled with care. Concern with mission could mean the development of multiple congregations and experimentation. Church planting needs to be embraced and would need to be creative in character. Boundaries should be rethought with a view to our being more cooperative.

Two brief speeches were made to introduce “Group Discussion”. In the first speech references were made to the sovereignty of God, the difficulty of evangelising in the secular Australian mission field, the necessity of passing on the gospel to the next generation, the importance of making new christians, the importance of addressing multicultural Australia, the importance of the laity, and churches as meetings not services. In the second speech, much briefer, the importance of being welcoming at our churches was stressed.

The Synod then formed itself into small groups and discussion ensued for about 20 minutes. Ideas were recorded and collected.

The motion itself highlighted the “alarming rate of decline” in numbers for the under 50 - age group in the Anglican Church. It asked Standing Committee and the Bishops’ Conference to undertake certain tasks and urged dioceses to more clearly proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ by undertaking certain responsibilities. It encouraged interested parties to share and together develop ideas. It requested the General Secretary to send to Diocesan Bishops summaries of the group discussions, and subsequent deliberations of the Standing Committee.

During debate mention was made of the absence of any reference to prayer and any direct call to evangelism. There were about 12 speeches in all. With a call to “let’s get on and do it”, the motion was passed.

A problem, barely stated, was the differing views on the nature of the gospel and much that that entails. For some it was obvious that changing strategies was the main issue. For others it was both that and also the question of for what purpose. It was significant that given the dominance of “church” in much that was said there was no mention of “market place” evangelism”. Sadly, very little of a gospel imperative was brought to the issue. One couldn’t be blamed for assuming that falling numbers may have been the dominant motive for the concern expressed.

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

The General Synod discussions on both the homosexuality and church growth issues highlighted the existence within the Synod of two dominant but different christian world views and two different languages being used in exposing those world views. Both appealed to God to about the same extent though he is understood differently. Crudely put and with much generalisation, Church, Anglican structures, priests and bishops, the Spirit, Jesus, the Lord, unity, community, the Eucharist, relationship, hurt, current world views, mission, and Bible together with other voices were more dominant words and concepts in one language. In the other language, the words and concepts of, the Bible by itself, the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ the Lord, God's sovereignty, minister, prayer, evangelism, local churches and laity seemed to come more to the fore. One warmed to Bible verses being quoted, the other one didn't. The amazing thing was that in almost all

instances the user of one language seemed to address the users of the other language, together with those of his/her own language group, as though there was simply one language! Did each person know what he or she was doing? More importantly but inextricably related, is the question of: does it matter which world view one has? It might be argued by holders of one world view it probably doesn't matter too much but it does matter. The proponents of the other view would however argue that it makes the world of difference. The latter would claim that one world view both harms the world and dishonours God. The former, perhaps perceived by some to be the more charitable, would claim that the latter do more harm to the church and have both a distorted view of the world, the church and God.

Let he who has ears to hear, hear and understand.

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

DAY 6: Thursday



Jane Tooher

My Thursday evening dinner companion kept asking me questions about what I did, which resulted in things coming out about what I believed. I knew that we differed on issues because of things he had said previously in the conversation. Yet he was concerned to affirm all I said.

When I recently read Jane Austen's, *Persuasion*, a particular paragraph stood out: "Mr Elliot was rational, discreet, polished, - but he was not open. There was never any burst of feeling, any warmth of indignation or delight, at the evil or good of others. This, to Anne, was a decided imperfection. Her early impressions were incurable. She prized the frank, the open-hearted, the eager character beyond all others. Warmth and enthusiasm did captivate her still. She felt that she could so much more depend upon the sincerity of those who sometimes looked or said a careless or a hasty thing, than those whose presence of mind never varied, whose tongue

never slipped. Mr Elliot was too generally agreeable."

I resonated with Anne's feelings, and felt them again in Fremantle. It just made sense at Synod that many people, who spoke publicly on issues, were emotional and not very agreeable. How could you expect anything different with issues that touch our very being, and issues that many believe God is saying something about? Issues such as child protection, sexual protocol, legal rights, women bishops, homosexuality and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord to the many lost in our world. When someone is frank, they are trustworthy to a degree. You may strongly disagree with them. You may be deeply saddened by the view they hold. But you know where they are coming from. In the public forum, in discussion groups, and at meal times, many said what they honestly believed, knowing that we did not hold the same views.

On the other hand, what was the value of the affirmation from my dinner companion? His desire to be nice made his words meaningless. We were not having a real conversation.

Saying what you believe to be right is exhausting, difficult, and lonely at times, and can leave you feeling weak. But should we not rejoice that someone is being honest, and that their words mean something? This is actually more loving than being 'nice'.

If my relationship with you is important to me, I will strive to be honest with you.

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

DAY 7: Thank God it's Friday



Laurie Scandrett

Finally it is Friday. It has been a long and very intense week and everyone is tired. But there is still one more major debate and much unfinished business to attempt to get through. Armon Hicks and I commence the day with our usual 50 km bike ride to Perth and then back through the northern suburbs. I use the time to draft, in my head, imaginary speeches on a variety of topics. We finish our last GS ride together with another hot breakfast and a couple of excellent coffees at a café on South Terrace in Fremantle. Three non-Sydney reps join us as we finish and we swap notes on the week. Eventually they head off to the 'experimental' eucharist and I head off to make my self presentable for the business session. GS is a lot about keeping up appearances. Most of the

women priests always wear their dog collars. A few of the bishops always dress in purple. To turn up to a business session in sweaty and colourful cycling gear would probably not have gone down well. On the way back to the hotel I stock up on a fresh supply of Minties. My weeklong strategy of bribing those from other Dioceses sitting near me appears to be progressing well. I dress for the day in my 'I survived Synod' tee shirt. Everone wants to know where they can get one.

GS assembled for the day's business after morning tea. We progressed through some Canons including the National Register under the new Professional Standards. We finally debated 'A Bill To Restrain Certain Consecrations', which is aimed at stopping a person acting as a Priest in one Church while at the same time acting as Bishop in another that was not in communion with the Anglican Church of Australia. Robert Tong's speech suggested that this was a very big stick to deal with what was in effect a pastoral problem in one Diocese. The mover wanted the Canon passed as an Ordinary Bill so that it can come into effect immediately. It did not receive the required 75% majority so it passed as a Special Bill and becomes only a Provisional Canon. It will now have to go around the Dioceses for comment before returning to GS in three years time when it can be considered again.

The major debate of the day was on Lay Presidency, introduced by Roger Herft of Newcastle. Peter Jensen gave an excellent summary of the theology of Lay Presidency and the Sydney position on it. He is followed by Andrew

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

McGowan of Trinity College Melbourne. The two positions are intractable. The debate continues with one Bishop getting upset that there is no legislation that he can help defeat, only a benign motion. Another Bishop moves, without previous warning, an amendment to the proposed motion, adding 'We do not condone ...'. It is obviously a set-up and we have been successfully ambushed.

A woman priest from Perth comes over and grabs some of my Minties. A few minutes later she does it again. She has a spring in her step and her body language is very positive. Something is up. Finally I run out of Minties. My surrounding colleagues from other Dioceses are obviously only 'fair weather friends' and they begin to turn on me. One of them is the Bishop who has moved the amendment to the Lay Presidency motion. Are we losing the strategic battle? At dinner we run out of the higher quality cabernet merlot. I have bought the second last bottle. Suddenly I am everyone's friend again. The bottle runs out. Friendship is so fleeting.

Finally we only have 45 minutes left. We have two Canons we have not yet commenced and two human sexuality motions to go. This is apart from all the motions moved by individual members that have not yet been considered, including one of mine. I have spent three days rewriting the speech five times. I am destined never to give it. Three members argue that we are all too tired to discuss human sexuality again and we should debate the Canons. These three have all previously spoken against the earlier human sexuality motions. The GS half-heartedly agrees. Suddenly another member seeks to move without notice

another long human sexuality motion, of a totally different slant to the ones we had just agreed not to discuss. Bruce Ballantine-Jones then gives one of the best speeches of the Synod, totally 'off the cuff'. He points out the hypocrisy of the situation and the GS does not grant leave for the new motion to be introduced. We discuss one of the Canons for 20 minutes and then call the whole thing off. Thank God it's Friday night and it is all over.

Laurie Scandrett

A survivor of seven General Synods

SOME RESULTS OF GENERAL SYNOD:

Professional Standards

- a series of measures adopted
- a code of clergy conduct
- a national register
- a professional standards commission set up
- a bill regarding Episcopal standards to be considered by the dioceses

Women Bishops

- bill to allow, defeated in house of clergy and laity

Homosexuality

- blessing of same-sex unions not condoned
- ordination of practicing homosexuals not condoned
- Australian parliament applauded for recent endorsement of marriage as being between a man and a woman

Lay Administration of Lord's Supper

- dioceses encouraged to discuss the issue and its implications
- amendment passed that GS does not condone the practice

Mission & Attendance

- dioceses encouraged to fresh initiatives and greater flexibility

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH RECORD

Special Report #1: 13TH General Synod

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The 'Paper' will be published in full several times per year. In addition, special reports, such as this one, will be posted from time to time.

The next 'full' version of the paper will be posted in early November 2004

The next special report will provide an analysis of the 'Eames' Commission Report, which is due for release on 18th October 2004.