



Uniting Church in Australia  
Presbytery of Western Australia

# **Minutes of the WA Presbytery Meeting held at All Saints Floreat Uniting Church on 19 November 2022**

## **1. Constitution**

On Saturday 19 November 2022 at 9.00 am, the Presbytery of Western Australia met at All Saints Uniting Church, Floreat, with the Chairperson, Alison Xamon, presiding.

There were 31 ministerial and 55 lay members present, with 3 attending via Zoom. 25 apologies were submitted.

## **2. Welcome and Opening Prayer**

The Chairperson, Alison Xamon, welcomed the members to this meeting, opening in prayer.

## **3. Welcome to Country**

Len Yarran from the UAICC welcomed the members to Noongar land.

## **4. Opening worship**

Rev Chris Crause led the Opening worship focusing on Ecclesiastes 3. Chris spoke about there being a time for everything, and that change is to be welcomed as a part of life.

## **5. Meeting arrangements**

The Secretary, Rev Bev Fabb, presented Proposal 1 about the arrangements for this meeting. She noted especially the recent death of Ben Tanner who was a Lay Preacher representative to Presbytery.

*The Presbytery agreed by consensus to*

### ***1. To amend the Roll of Presbytery attached to the Minutes of the Presbytery meeting on 18 June 2022 as follows:***

#### ***1.1 Ministers in Active Service***

- ***Add Rev Mark Bell – Willetton (Received by induction)***
- ***Add Rev David Jackson- Midwest WA Disaster Relief Chaplaincy (Received by induction)***
- ***Change Rev Alan Jeffrey – placement changed from Presbytery Minister-Mission to UCIC, Ross Memorial (Received by induction)***
- ***Change Rev Stephen van Schalkwyk – placement changed from Wagin to Baylife (Received by induction)***
- ***Remove Rev Jae Bom Park – resigned from placement at Korean Uniting Church and awaiting placement***
- ***Remove Rev Margaret Tyrer – retired from placement at St Aidan's Claremont***
- ***Remove Rev Dr David Ferguson– resigned from Presbytery Officer and transferred to Queensland Synod***

- ***Remove Rev Margaret Beach– resigned from placement at St Peter Emmaus***

## **1.2 Ministers Co-opted**

- ***Remove Rev Frances Hadfield (Deacon)- supply at Willetton has ended***
- ***Add Rev Raymond Clee- commenced supply at St Peter Emmaus***

## **1.3 Pastors**

- ***Add Ps Paul Whitfield- chaplain at Penrhos College (received by commissioning)***
- ***Remove Ps Dr Elaine Ledgerwood– concluded in Pastor position with CEDAL***
- ***Remove Ps Karen Sloan– resigned from Pastor position at Wembley***

## **1.4 Lay Preacher Representatives**

- ***Remove Ben Tanner- died 12 November***

## **1.5 Congregational Lay Representatives**

- ***Mary Elton to replace Sue Vernon- lay rep for Margaret River (by election)***
- ***Add Avril McIntosh– lay rep for Maylands- Mt Lawley (by election)***
- ***Add Brian Gluestein- lay rep for Mt Pleasant (by election)***
- ***Janine McDonald to replace Alison McCubbin- lay rep for UCIC (by election)***
- ***Iliapi Taoi to replace Margherita Wells- lay rep for Wanneroo Crossways (by election)***
- ***Add Shelby Robison- lay rep for Cannington (by election)***
- ***Gwyn Thornton to replace Jill Clements as lay rep for Dongara (by election)***
- ***Remove Cameron Harries- no longer lay rep for Billabong***

## **1.6 Co-opted Lay Members**

- ***Add Dr Elaine Ledgerwood – candidate for MOD (awaiting placement and in supply at St Aidan's Claremont)***

***Members of the Presbytery should note that the approval of these appointments (apart from once off alternates) will confer membership of Presbytery to the person until the next AGM.***

- 2. Adopt the Order of Business for this meeting.***
- 3. Appoint Rev Cathie Lambert and Rev Hollis Wilson as Chaplains for this meeting of the Presbytery.***
- 4. Appoint Rev Dr Ian Tozer as Acting Returning Officer, and Mary Riley and Heather Hamblin as scrutineers for this meeting of the Presbytery.***



5. ***Authorise the Presbytery Standing Committee to confirm the minutes of this meeting of the Presbytery.***
6. ***Authorise the Presbytery Standing Committee to act on all matters that are the responsibility of the Presbytery including those excluded items in Presbytery Rule 3.1.2 if a public health warning in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic leads to the cancellation of any future meeting of the Presbytery.***

## **6. Chairperson's report**

The past chairperson, Bob Hunt, took the chair.

Alison Xamon invited questions. In response to a question about access to the theological library being re-located to Wollaston College, she indicated that this was a matter still being negotiated. It was acknowledged that most of this library was owned by the Uniting Church.

The report was received.

The chairperson, Alison Xamon, resumed the chair.

## **7. Pastoral Relations Committee report**

Rev Ivan Clark, Chair of PRC answered questions.

Questions were asked about the process for extensions beyond 10 years. It was noted that this matter would be dealt with later under Proposal 4.

It was asked why it took so long for exit students to find placements. Ivan responded saying that it was important to find a good match for both congregation and minister. There is no guarantee of placement at the end of formation. It was a process of discernment to find an appropriate placement.

The report was received.

## **8. Commission for Education for Discipleship and Leadership (CEDAL) report**

Rev Clare Pickering, the Chair of CEDAL invited questions but none were asked.

The report was received.

## **9. Thrive Mission Committee report**

Rev Greg Ross, Chair of Thrive presented this report.

He noted that there was a confusion about who had responsibility for property matters. OHS issues in relation to property were a Synod responsibility. Every congregation is however responsible to make sure buildings are accessible.

A question was asked why the detailed NCLS data was not yet available to congregations. Greg reported that there had been an administrative problem and the data should be available in the next week.

A question was asked about the need for regional engagement. Greg responded that Thrive would work with the Rural and Remote Ministry Network to build relationships.

The value of the work of Rev Rob Douglas was acknowledged, particularly his work in producing videos about mission planning.

Thrive are working on the development of a 25-year Property Strategic Mission Plan.

It was noted that House Spec reports on properties would happen early next year and that it was hoped that there would be better liaison with congregations about this. Congregations were asked to let Synod Property Services know if they had rectified problems identified in early inspections.

The report was received.

#### **10. Candidates for Ministries Committee report**

Rev Bev Fabb, Chair of CMC, presented the report.

She answered a question about the progress of candidates for ordination.

The report was received.

#### **11. Rural and Remote Ministry Network report**

Yuko Tonai-Moore, the Convenor of the Network, was available to answer questions but none were asked.

The report was received.

#### **12. Multicultural Network report**

Rev Dr Katalina Tahaafe-Williams, the Convenor of the Network, was available to answer questions but none were asked.

The report was received.

#### **13. Uniting Generations Network report**

Ps Julie Ridden presented on behalf of the Network.

A question was asked about why a name change was being considered. Julie responded that the current name did not make clear what work the Network does. The main aim is an Intergenerational ministry, with a focus on children, youth, young adults and families. Other Synods are also changing names of their similar networks.

Julie drew attention to a sheet asking for congregations to update their contact names for people working with children and youth ministry. This was distributed.

The report was received.

#### **14. Congregational Selfies**

A video was shown with news of new mission developments in St Andrews and Wagin congregations.



## **15. Mic Minute**

It was noted that

- The Byford Carols service was celebrating 30 years this year.
- Star St congregation and Rob Douglas had copies of the Bible Society booklet, The Three Wise Camels for anyone who wanted them
- Floreat congregation is selling Christmas cakes for Harry Perkins Institute. Either purchase today or place an order.
- Merredin congregation will be celebrating its 101<sup>st</sup> anniversary on 29 January 2023.
- Mandurah Musketeers need more laptops or PC's to refurbish. These are distributed to children who need them.
- CARAD is seeking donations to assist in providing support to refugees and asylum seekers.

## **16. Adoption of Presbytery Budget 2023**

Pastor Marilyn Price, the Treasurer of Presbytery, presented Proposal 2. She indicated that a lot of work had been done on this since August this year by the Finance Working Group and had been approved by the November PSC meeting for presentation to this meeting for adoption.

The largest source of income was from Mission and Service contributions from congregations and grants from the Synod. She noted that Mission and Service income had dropped this year, and that Synod was in financial difficulty due to Redress payments. Income in the budget from Trust Funds had been approved by Property Trust, but this was only accessed if needed. Event income aimed at breaking even, although some events needed to be subsidized.

There had been an overall drop in income and expenditure by about \$200,000 from 2022 to 2023.

The largest expense was staff costs. Staffing has been reduced by 2 FTE due to lower income. The other large expense was candidate costs, but this had been kept as low as possible. Operational costs had been cut and money available for grants to congregations and ministers was less. CEDAL is the largest expense but now the Synod is accepting that it has a responsibility under the Regulations to fund the theological college.

A question was asked about how congregations were levied for Mission and Service. Marilyn explained that this was not a levy, but a suggested contribution. All Church Councils have been provided with the formula to work out a minimum contribution, but if this was not known she would send it out again.

It was noted that while CEDAL is the largest cost centre in the Presbytery, it is reducing staff and as a result the educational programmes of CEDAL were under threat.

Marilyn was thanked for her presentation, especially for the full disclosure of figures and the transparency of the Presbytery budget.

It was noted that with a large increase in ministerial stipends and allowances coming next year, and congregational insurance costs also increasing, congregations may not be able to contribute as much to Mission and Service as they previously had done.

A request was made for better promotion of Mission and Service in congregations. They need to understand what the money is used for and how it benefits them. Congregations need to see this not as levy but as a way of supporting the church and other congregations.

A suggestion was made that we should be promoting more bequests and gifts to the Uniting Church.

***The Presbytery resolved by consensus to adopt the 2023 Presbytery budget as presented.***

## **17. Appreciation to Treasurer**

Rev Lorraine Stokes moved a proposal of appreciation to Pastor Marilyn Price who was retiring from the position of Presbytery Treasurer.

The following proposal was passed by acclamation

***The Presbytery of WA offers its thanks for the tireless efforts, Pastor Marilyn Price has given to the position of Presbytery Treasurer from October 2018 to November 2022.***

## **18. Table group discussion**

Table groups were invited to consider the following questions:

- What changes are needed within your congregation?
- What changes are needed within the Presbytery?
- What changes are needed in the relationship between the congregations and the Presbytery?

## **19. Ministry Milestones**

The ministry of the following people was recognized.

10 years- Rev Luke Williams, Rev Ruth Vertigan & Pastor John Tomkins

20 years- Rev Lorraine Stokes & Community Minister Uto Fotu

30 years- Rev Mitch Fialkowski, Rev Alan Jeffrey & Rev Elizabeth Sanderson

35 years- Rev Mervyn Anderson

40 years- Rev Mike Fawcett, Rev Dr Sonny Rajamoney, Rev Vijay Paul & Rev Dr Ian Tozer

45 years- Rev John Edwards

50 years- Rev Brian Carey, Rev Derek Hope & Rev Brian Richards

55 years- Rev Geoff Blyth & Rev Phillip Sindle

60 years- Rev Dr Geoff Hadley



## **20. Elections Committee**

Rev Dr Ian Tozer, the Acting Returning Officer introduced the election for vacant positions on PSC, PRC and Secretary of Presbytery and ballot papers were distributed.

## **21. Mic Minute**

It was noted that

- There are currently 5 Bush Chaplains in WA offering pastoral, spiritual and emotional care to people living on the edge. More Outback volunteers are needed.
- Some good news on Covenanting was shared. Two people from Mt Pleasant will be helping with repairs to the Congress property and Coobelup and Floreat have given a retiring offering for this. Help has been given to a family whose home was burnt down.
- The centenary of the Nedlands Church is coming up soon.
- Messy Churches are operating in several congregations. These provide intergenerational activities and can be done successfully even by a small congregation.
- The Princess Margaret Hospital for children was opened due to gifts from Christian churches and Jewish synagogues. It is amazing what can happen when people give generously to others.

## **22. Thrive Video**

A video of the work of Thrive in developing a 25-year Strategic Property Plan was shown. A report of this project will come to the March meeting of Presbytery.

## **23. Book Launch**

The launch of the book *Pray without Ceasing* was postponed to the March meeting as the author is in isolation due to COVID

## **24. Feedback from Table Groups**

Alison Xamon, the Chair, summarized the feedback from table discussions as follows

- Many comments about buildings- how do we make them more welcoming and useful to the community, cost of maintaining buildings, problems in dealing with councils.
- We want to create culture of welcome but are not sure how to do that
- How do we get out into the community, rather than expecting community to come to us
- We need more intergenerational ministry
- We need new and innovative types of ministry.
- Why do we have worship on Sunday mornings- is another time better?
- We need greater collaboration with other churches



- Link rural and metropolitan congregations
- There is still not a good understanding of what Presbytery is doing and how it relates to congregations.
- Presbytery communiques are helpful in communication
- Congregations should be making times to hear feedback from the Presbytery meeting.
- Congregations need to know more about the work of Presbytery if we are to encourage giving.
- Awareness that the volunteers on Presbytery committees are already carrying a heavy load and we must be careful not to overload them.
- Spend more time at Presbytery meetings in group discussion and prayer time.
- Concerns about linking of Life and Witness Consultations, Mission Plans and Placements
- Presbytery needs more staff
- Concerns about Synod in relation to rising insurance costs and costs of Redress

Other comments made by members included

- People have Christian faith but don't want to be part of a church.
- Our music should be better musically and theologically
- Keeping congregational websites up to date is vital- have your Sunday worship time upfront as top priority
- Presbytery does not have enough money to employ more staff, so we need more volunteers.
- Participating in a Life and Witness review is a good way to start as a volunteer in the church and learn more about the wider church. Offer- don't wait to be asked.
- Smaller congregations need support with their website and setting up online worship
- Congregations need to look for opportunities to collaborate with local councils.
- We need to share resources between congregations.
- Many people are unclear how things work in the church and who to contact about particular issues. We are relationally poor which leads to tension, frustration, and disappointment. Our processes and lines of communication are not clear. We need clear statements about who to contact about particular matters. We need to proactively develop clear processes.
- Listen to people who are now outside the church - listen to the voices of dissent who ask the hard questions.
- Rev Rob Douglas is holding Welcoming Workshops to help congregations develop new ways of welcoming newcomers.
- Is the church organizational or relational? Do we name structures and titles or

people?

It was noted that the feedback from table groups would be collated and distributed to all Presbytery committees for response and action.

## **25. Report on Act2 Project**

Yuko Tonai-Moore and Mark Brisbane introduced the Act 2 Project which had been set up by the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly. To find out more about this project visit the Act 2 website, participate in virtual drop ins, and stay tuned for discussion at the next Presbytery meeting.

There are four main areas of focus

- Strengthen local communities of faith and discipleship
- Explore our national identity shaped by the Basis of Union
- Review our governance structures to better reflect our contemporary context
- Develop our theological culture and explore a framework for theological education.

Act 2 is currently in the exploration phase and needs to hear all voices. There will be further opportunity for input next year with proposals to come to the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

## **26. Proposal 4- Extensions beyond 10 years**

Rev Ivan Clark and Rev Luke Williams presented this proposal. They explained that the Regulations were written at a time when Presbyteries were smaller and there were stronger connections between congregations. Now that we are one Presbytery and congregations have little understanding of what is going on in other places, can we trust our committees to do this work on behalf of the Presbytery?

The process being suggested means that confidential information would not need to be shared with the whole Presbytery, and allowed more time for consultation between the minister, the congregation and the Presbytery. It was acknowledged that the process we have been using has in the past been harmful to both ministers and congregations.

Rev Ken Devereux suggested some amendments to the process which were accepted by the movers of the proposal.

A question was asked about how the needs of the whole church can be taken into account in this process. It was noted that the Regulations require consultation with Placements about this matter and this could provide opportunity for the needs of the whole church to be taken into account.

It was clarified that Thrive and PRC would meet separately but the process did allow for much more interaction between the two and perhaps a joint meeting.

A question was asked about step 10 in the flow chart to indicate what the role of Presbytery was at this stage. It was agreed to change the wording of this point to clarify this.

***The Presbytery agreed by consensus to***

- 1. Affirm the need to approach extensions of Ministers beyond 10 years with prayerful consideration of:***

***a. The mission of God exercised in and through the congregation/placement and***



***the Minister's willingness to set goals and undertake continuing education to lead others in this mission***

***b. The needs and personal well-being of the Minister and their family***

***c. The short-medium term pastoral and spiritual needs of the congregation***

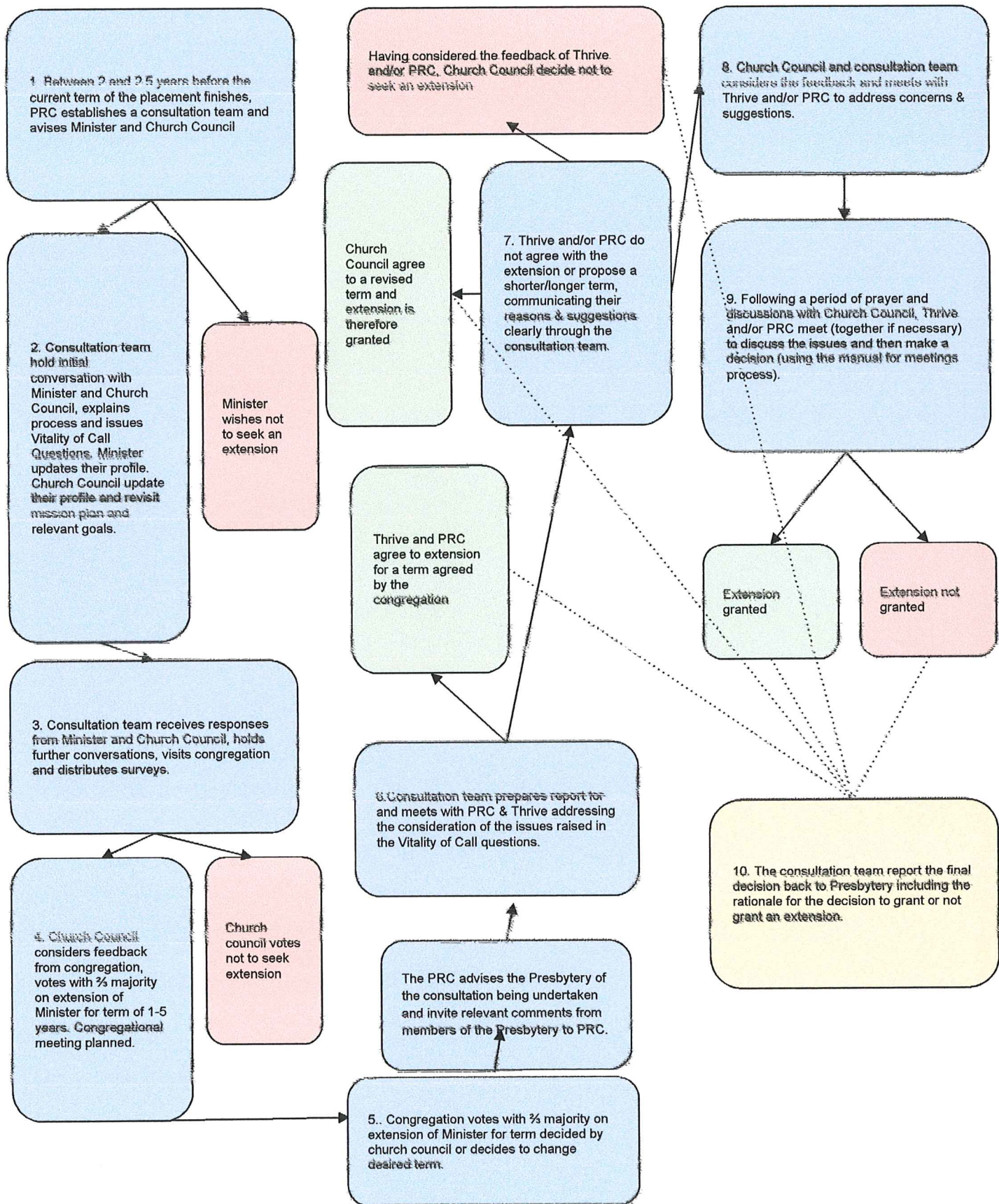
***d. The fruitfulness of the Minister in bringing positive change and missional growth during their time so far in this placement***

***e. The consultation with the placements commission (as per Regulation 2.6.8(d)(iii)).***

- 2. Recognize the difficulties associated with three bodies of congregation, church council and the Presbytery of WA due to the Presbytery's geographical expanse, working together to prayerfully discerning God's will for ministerial extensions across missiological and ecclesiological diversity and the operational limitations of Presbytery as the only one within the Synod of WA.***
- 3. In light of the 1 and 2 above, delegate the responsibility of the Presbytery as per Regulation 2.6.8(a)(ii) to the Thrive and Pastoral Relations (PRC) committees, requiring affirmation from both of these committees, along with congregation and church council, to approve an extension.***
- 4. Agree to the Flowchart for Ministerial Extensions below as the process by which the extension approval process is conducted.***
- 5. Review this delegation of power after 3 ministerial extensions where the discernment of the Presbytery has progressed through Thrive Committee and PRC (i.e. The process moves past step 5 in the flowchart)***



## Flowchart for Ministerial Extensions





## **27. Proposal 5- Dates for Presbytery Meetings 2023**

Rev Bev Fabb moved this proposal which was agreed to by consensus

*That the Presbytery of WA meet in 2023 on*

- **Saturday 18 March**
- **Saturday 17 June**
- **and Saturday 18 November.**

## **28. Notices**

Rev Bev Fabb drew the attention of the meeting to the following

- The position of Treasurer is now vacant and we are calling for nominations from the Presbytery in the hope that this position can be filled at the March meeting. Marilyn Price has been authorized by PSC to oversee the completion of the 2022 financial reports, but we need a new Treasurer to provide oversight of Presbytery finances from early next year onwards.
- The term of office of the current Chair expires in June 2023. PSC has set up a Nominating Committee for this position with Sue Whitworth as the Chair and two other members to be appointed at the December PSC meeting. Members of Presbytery will be asked to bring appropriate nominations to this committee, and they will bring one or more names to the March meeting for election.
- Members of Presbytery were asked to complete their evaluation forms and hand them in as they left.

## **29. Declaration of Ballots**

Rev Dr Ian Tozer, the Acting Returning Officer reported that

- Sue Strutt had been elected to PSC until AGM 2024
- Rev Luke Williams, Chris Bundell and Trevor Thomas had been elected to PRC until AGM 2024
- Rev Bev Fabb had been elected as Secretary until AGM 2023.

## **30. Closing Reflections**

The Chair, Alison Xamon, made the following expressions of thanks on behalf of the Presbytery:

- All Saints Floreat for hosting the meeting and providing hospitality, especially Marie Yuncken, the contact person for the congregation.
- Marilyn Price and Bev Fabb for staffing the registration desk
- Len Yarran- for Welcome to Country
- Chris Crause- for opening worship

- Amanda Badenhorst- for behind the scenes organizing and provision of cupcakes for lunch, printing of materials, power point presentations.
- Bruce Wilson for his role as timekeeper.
- All the Chairs of Committees and Convenors of Networks for their dedicated work to the ministry of the Presbytery
- Rob Douglas for the Congregational Selfies and Thrive video.
- Marilyn Price for her dedicated work as Treasurer and development of 2023 budget
- Doug Burtenshaw for playing the piano and Steve for leading prayer for Ministry Milestones
- Ian Tozer for welcoming invited guests, acting Returning Officer and Closing Worship.
- Mary Riley and Heather Hamblin for being Scrutineers
- Cathie Lambert and Hollis Wilson - chaplains.
- Yuko, Mark and Katalina for presentation on Acts 2
- Members of PSC for their hard work on behalf of the Presbytery.

### **31. Closing Worship**

Rev Dr Ian Tozer led the meeting in closing worship with a focus on living in God's time.

### **32. Closure of the meeting**

The meeting was then closed with the singing of the hymn May the feet of God walk with you.

Confirmed by the Presbytery Standing Committee

On 6 December 2022 as a true and correct record



**Alison Xamon**

**Chairperson**

**2022**