

LITURGY COMMISSION

1. PURPOSE

According to Canon 19, 1998 section 11, the Liturgy Commission's role is

To examine questions of liturgy referred to it by the Primate, the Standing Committee or the General Synod, and to report thereon to the referring party and Standing Committee, and

To advise the Primate, the Standing Committee or the General Synod, on matters relating to the creative nurture and renewal of the liturgical life of this church.

The Liturgy Commission also has a role under recent amendments to the Canon Concerning Services, involving recommendations for longer-term authorisation of liturgical texts in a process also involving the Doctrine Commission and the Bishops.

In fulfilling these purposes, the Commission produces trial-use texts and liturgical guidelines in various areas of liturgical need.

2. MEMBERSHIP 2017 - PRESENT

The members of the Commission are as follows, with Diocese at February 2021. Membership has been stable since the 2017 meeting of General Synod.

Chair: The Right Reverend Garry Weatherill, Bishop of Ballarat
Secretary: The Reverend Dr Elizabeth Smith, Diocese of Perth
The Reverend Dr Rhys Bezzant, Diocese of Melbourne
The Very Reverend Chris Chataway, Diocese of Perth
The Reverend Dane Courtney, Diocese of Tasmania
The Reverend Jasmine Dow, Diocese of Brisbane
The Very Reverend Richard Humphrey, Diocese of Tasmania
The Reverend Dr Colleen O'Reilly, Diocese of Melbourne
The Right Reverend Dr Richard Treloar, Diocese of Gippsland

3. MEETINGS

The Commission met in Melbourne from 30th October to 1st November 2017, from 2nd to 3rd May 2018, and from 20th to 22nd November 2018. A meeting was scheduled in November 2019 but not held, as the dates were overtaken by an extraordinary meeting of the bishops.

A short Zoom meeting was held over two dates, 27th October 2020 and 5th November 2020. With members in three different time zones over the summer months, coordination is difficult and reinforced for us the importance of face-to-face meetings.

4. WORK

General Synod in 2017 requested the Commission to produce resources to meet the liturgical needs of changing contexts of mission. It also legislated a new, "dispersed" authorisation process that may be used for long-term authorisation of liturgical resources that have proved valuable through the "trial use" process.

The long-standing Lent, Holy Week and Easter resources have been referred by the Commission to the Doctrine Commission in the first use of the new authorisation process.

A referral from the Archbishop of Sydney was received, relating to the resources in Sydney's publication "Common Prayer." The Liturgy Commission developed a list of criteria which it would use in examining resources submitted for its consideration. It then considered the Sydney resources carefully and in detail, and the Chair has communicated its opinions to the Archbishop of Sydney.

Limited work on new texts has been possible. However, a draft order in accessible English for Holy Baptism in Holy Communion was developed, and has been used in pilot form by Commission members. It was also sent to the Bishops for study and comment. Feedback, generally positive, was received and a second draft has been formatted in the light of that feedback.

Some progress has been made on commissioning a new translation of the Psalter, and funding will be sought to take this project further.

Some preliminary work has been done by Commission members on accessible English orders for Marriage and Funerals, Services of the Word and Commissionings for ministry.

The Commission has regular meetings with Bob Andersen of Broughton Publishing, to discuss our questions and concerns about the publication of APBA and subscriptions to e-pray. We continue to request that the text of APBA be made available in digital form free of charge to parishes.

5. LITURGICAL NETWORKING

Commission members continue to develop relationships of collegiality and consultation on matters liturgical, within and beyond the Anglican family.

With financial support from General Synod Standing Committee, three members (Dane Courtney, Chris Chataway and Elizabeth Smith) attended the January 2019 meeting in Hong Kong of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation (IALC), a Network of the Anglican Communion. Important work on liturgical formation was done, as well as the development of new texts on the theme of Unity, at the request of the Primates. Those texts are currently with the Primates, but we hope that they will become available for general Australian use in due course. A short virtual meeting of the IALC was held via Zoom over two sessions in May 2021, and was attended by three members (Chris Chataway, Dane Courtney and Elizabeth Smith).

One member (Elizabeth Smith) attended the 2019 Congress of Societas Liturgica (SL) in Durham in August 2019, on the theme of sacramentality. Another member (Dane Courtney) attended the virtual Congress of Societas Liturgica held in July 2021 on the theme of Liturgy and the Arts.

One member (Colleen O'Reilly) attends the meetings of the Australian Consultation On Liturgy (ACOL), a local ecumenical liturgical conversation.

One member (Jasmine Dow) liaises with NATSIAC and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community liturgical questions and conversations. Funding will be sought to enable additional face-to-face meeting time with NATSIAC and Liturgy Commission members.

One member (Garry Weatherill) has been invited by the Secretary of IALC to work with Bishop Stephen Platten (former chair of CoE Liturgical Commission) and Bishop Kitoh Pakuui (former

chair of ACNZAP) to develop guidelines for liturgical formation for the episcopate, to build on the work done in lay and clerical liturgical formation begun in Hong Kong in 2019.

The Commission's Secretary, Elizabeth Smith, was honoured in June 2020 for her local and international liturgical contributions and her hymnody by being made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM).

Commission member Colleen O'Reilly was awarded an AM in January 2021 for her contribution to the ACA, including as a member of the Commission, for the last 14 years.

6. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The Commission will continue to work on the projects it has already begun, especially the Liturgical Psalter, the mission-sensitive, accessible-English orders, and the use of the alternative authorisation process for liturgical resources under the Canon Concerning Services.

The Commission is reflecting on the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on the gathering of the Church for worship, including the administration of Holy Communion in one kind only, the use of live-streaming or recorded or Zoom technology to make liturgical events accessible when church buildings are required to be closed or have reduced seating capacity.