



# Anglican Diocese of Grafton Registry Update

Edition 11 – October 2017

**For distribution to: Rectors, Locums, Assistant Clergy, Churchwardens, Parish Councillors, Parish Secretaries and Treasurers.**

This is the eleventh edition of the Registry Update and as usual it contains important information on a variety of topics. These Registry Updates are not only important for reading at the time of receiving but also worthwhile for putting aside for future reference. If you are missing copies from your collection, please contact the Registry and the missing copy can be sent to you.

Please ensure that all those in the above distribution list receive each Registry Update as there is usually information contained in the Registry Update that affects their role. A copy of this Update will also be sent directly to **chaplains, business managers of diocesan organisations and members of diocesan councils and committees.**

The information contained in this Registry Update is not confidential or private, so please feel free to share it with others who would benefit from knowing.

## **SYNOD**

This year the Synod for the Diocese of Grafton was held on Friday 16<sup>th</sup>, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June at Christ Church Cathedral and the Clarence Valley Jockey Club in Grafton.

The outcomes of the synod included:

- Elections to Bishop-in-Council, Corporate Trustees, Presentation Board, Cathedral Chapter, Board of Enquiry and Panel of Triers as well as representatives to both General Synod and Provincial Synod;
- Amendments to the Diocesan Governance Ordinance 2008 and the Professional Standards Ordinance 2004; and
- Motions passed by the synod.

Updated versions of the two ordinances amended by the synod can be found on the Diocese's website.

Details of those elected and the motions passed by the synod have been widely circulated in a 27 June 2017 letter from the Registrar. If you missed out on this correspondence or require another copy, please contact the Registry at [admin@graftondiocese.org.au](mailto:admin@graftondiocese.org.au)

## **NEW PROCEDURE - RECORDS**

The September meeting of Bishop-in-Council approved a new procedure: REG-003 Retention of Records

The new procedure provides clarity on the types of records to be retained, where they are to be stored and how long they have to be kept. Parish leaders are encouraged to obtain a copy of this procedure and review the local practice.

You can get a copy of REG-003 Retention of Records on the Diocesan website at:  
<http://www.graftondiocese.org.au/diocesan-procedures>

Chapter 21 of the Diocesan Governance Ordinance 2008 was also modified to correspond with the new procedure. The updated ordinance can be found on the Diocesan website.

## **KEEPING TRACK OF ANNUAL LEAVE**

For all employees on the Diocesan Payroll, it is important that the Payroll Officer receives signed forms when leave entitlements are used.

When this system breaks down, leave entitlements accumulate and eventually there is a difficult situation when the clergy person or the employee finishes at the parish with a large pay-out of leave entitlements.

Churchwardens are responsible to ensure that forms are submitted in a timely fashion. The risk of not doing so is a large cost to the parish and bitterness at the time when faithful service should be celebrated.

## **HONORARIUM PAYMENTS**

In recent months, there have been some questions posed on the payment of an honorarium.

If a parish is considering using an honorarium in lieu of placing a person on the Diocesan Payroll or setting up a fee-for-service arrangement, care should be taken. An honorarium cannot be regarded as a way of making a regular small payment for work in a way that avoids the obligations of the payroll system.

The Australian Taxation Office has published specific advice relating to honorariums for volunteers in NFP organisations. The link to this advice is <https://www.ato.gov.au/Non-profit/Your-workers/Volunteers/Paying-volunteers/Honorariums/>

Some key points from the ATO's advice:

- Honorariums are typically smaller amounts of money
- It should not be for a service that is connected with the person's usual income producing activities.
  - For example, not for a clergy person conducting pastoral visiting or worship services or for a cleaner doing cleaning work;
  - But rather, for volunteered work outside of a person's usual work such as for an engineer assisting by establishing the parish's website.

Sometimes the use of honorariums may also be interpreted as a way of illegitimately avoiding other obligations such as the requirements of an Industrial Award.

Insurance arrangements can be complicated by using honorariums. The insurance cover for injury to volunteers and for injury to workers is separate and the policies are held with different insurance companies. An incorrect use of an honorarium could create a dispute over whether the injured person is a worker or a volunteer and lead to a situation where the injured person is not adequately covered by insurance.

It is recommended that the use of honorariums is restricted to those circumstances that clearly fit within the ATO guidelines. It is strongly preferred that employment arrangements are through the central payroll with a letter of appointment clearly setting out the person's working arrangements and remuneration.

## **2018 BUDGETS AND STIPENDS**

This is the time of the year when diligent Parish Councils are preparing a budget for the coming year. At this time of year the Registry receives phone calls requesting information on the new rate of stipends but, unfortunately, the Registry is unable to provide that figure until early December.

Clergy stipends change on 1 January of each year depending on the annual change in the Wage Price Index (WPI) measured by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. This stipend change relies on the publication of the September Quarter statistics which are usually published in mid-November of each year.

To help those preparing their budgets now, you could base your estimates on the June Quarter 2017 WPI which was 1.9% over the previous 12 months.

## **AGM REPORTING**

The Corporate Trustees of the Diocese of Grafton have a legal responsibility for real property across the Diocese and the various trust funds. It is for this reason that real property and trusts are reported in the Corporate Trustees' audited financial statements and not in the financial statements of each parish.

The Trustees have considered the issue of the transparency of this information and have decided that while the formal reporting should not change, it would be appropriate for parish members to be informed of the real property and trust funds that benefit their parish.

The Corporate Trustees request that when parish financial reports are presented at the Parish AGM, they include a note outlining the real property and trusts that benefit the parish. While these are "off balance sheet" items, the improved transparency is considered positive.

## **PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS – CORRESPONDENCE**

Earlier this year, a parish sought guidance on the matter of correspondence in Parish Council meetings. What correspondence should be presented to a Parish Council meeting? Should it be all correspondence received by the parish and its officers or should the list be much more selective?

Long gone are the days when all correspondence would arrive as a letter in the parish mail box delivered by a postman (yes, it would have been a man in that era) and all outward correspondence would be sent in the same manner.

In such times, it would be relatively straightforward to present a list of mail (inward and outward) for the ratification of the meeting.

In the current era, post box mail would be only a small portion of correspondence that would now include emails and could feasibly include instant messaging (SMS, Messenger, WhatsApp, etc.) and comments received on the parish website, Facebook page and other media. Furthermore, the messages are not just received by 'the parish' but also by specific parish officers in either a personal or an organisational capacity. Adding advertising and spam to this mix, it is easy to see that only a selection of correspondence can (and should) be reported.

While specific guidance on this issue is hard to find, the common view is that the meeting should be advised of "major correspondence" (Institute of Directors in New Zealand).

On this basis, it is advised that Parish Council meetings should be advised of "major correspondence" inward and outward whether posted, hand delivered or sent electronically including correspondence:

- from the Bishop or Registrar intended for the Parish, Churchwardens or Parish Council;
- from the ATO, ACNC or other regulator or agency to the parish;
- from the local government or a government agency to the parish (excepting general advertising and invoices for usual fees and charges);
- foreshadowing legal action that implicates the parish;
- identifying an actual or potential regulatory non-compliance by the parish;
- conveying petitions or complaints from members or non-members concerning the parish, its officers and/or its members; and
- relating to projects and special agenda items of the Parish Council

## **COPYRIGHT LICENCE RENEWAL**

The time is almost here for us to renew Copyright Licences. Close to the end of this month Darrin Johnstone will be sending out a request for information relevant for the licence renewal.

Please look out for this correspondence and ensure a prompt response is made within the month of November. Without your response we cannot ensure that your parish has the rights to use CCLI licensed material.

## **PARISH WEBSITES**

Earlier this year, I went on annual leave and, once again, Jan and I had the unfortunate experience of using service time information on a parish website that was later discovered to be out-of-date. We thought that we were arriving 5 minutes before the start of the Sunday morning service but it turned out that the service was just finishing and our 30 minute each way trip was wasted.

It was small consolation to know that our bad experience was not in the Diocese of Grafton but I am fully aware that the potential exists here too.

Please check your website, Facebook page and noticeboard to make sure that they each have current and correct information, particularly regarding your service times and contact details.

## **REGISTRY STAFF CHANGES**

It is with sadness that we farewelled Julie White as Diocesan Accountant on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October. Julie had decided not to seek an extension beyond her current term of employment as she realised that she now wants to do other things in her life. The regular drive between her home in Coffs Harbour and the office in Grafton was also wearing her down.

In the approximately 3 years that Julie has been with the Diocese of Grafton she has been instrumental in substantially improving the financial accounts which has led to greater confidence in both the numbers and the advice emanating from the Registry. Julie has also led an improved customer service approach which has been widely appreciated.

After a process of recruitment, I am pleased to announce that Mr Terry Luce will join the Registry of the Diocese of Grafton on 30<sup>th</sup> October as Diocesan Accountant. Terry is a CPA qualified accountant with lengthy experience.

We will be looking to Terry Luce to continue the improvements commenced by Julie White.

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

### Bishop-in-Council

16<sup>th</sup> November 2017  
1<sup>st</sup> February 2018  
22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018  
3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018

19<sup>th</sup> July 2018  
6<sup>th</sup> September 2018  
8<sup>th</sup> November 2018

### Corporate Trustees

19<sup>th</sup> October 2017  
7<sup>th</sup> December 2017  
15<sup>th</sup> February 2018  
12<sup>th</sup> April 2018  
17<sup>th</sup> May 2018

5<sup>th</sup> July 2018  
16<sup>th</sup> August 2018  
18<sup>th</sup> October 2018  
13<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Buildings and Property Committee

25<sup>th</sup> October 2017

22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017

13<sup>th</sup> December 2017

31<sup>st</sup> January 2018

21<sup>st</sup> February 2018

21<sup>st</sup> March 2018

18<sup>th</sup> April 2018

30<sup>th</sup> May 2018

25<sup>th</sup> July 2018

22<sup>nd</sup> August 2018

19<sup>th</sup> September 2018

24<sup>th</sup> October 2018

21<sup>st</sup> November 2018

12<sup>th</sup> December 2018

If you have any submission to a meeting of Bishop-in-Council, the Corporate Trustees or the Buildings and Property Committee, please provide these to the Registrar at least 10 days prior to a meeting to ensure that your submission can be included in the business of that meeting.

North Coast Anglican

17 November 2017 is the deadline for items for the final edition of the North Coast Anglican for 2017.

Contributions for the North Coast Anglican can be sent to [nca@graftondiocese.org.au](mailto:nca@graftondiocese.org.au)

Where there are more contributions than space permits, the NCA will typically use those contributions that have the greatest news value and interest across the diocese and are supported by a good quality photograph.

Grafton Public Holidays

Grafton has a half-day Public Holiday on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> November for the Jacaranda Festival. This means that the Bishop's Registry will be closed from 1pm on that day.

Registry Christmas Closure

The Bishop's Registry will close on the afternoon of Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December for the Christmas-New Year period and re-open at 9am Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

Synod

The 2018 Synod of the Diocese of Grafton will be held on 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> June in Grafton.

The 2<sup>nd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> June are reserved for pre-synod meetings in various locations around the diocese. Details will be communicated when the program has been finalised.

Yours in Christ's service,



**Chris Nelson**  
**Registrar/General Manager**  
**Anglican Diocese of Grafton**