

## Standing Committee Report

The year of 2020 has been a year where the Standing Committee has had to deal with the issues that arose from the Pandemic. I give thanks to God for the members of our Standing Committee who give of their time and experience and who have had to govern our Diocese under some very challenging and unprecedented circumstances.

The members of Standing Committee are: The Very Rev'd Lawrence Kimberley, the Rev'd Dr Meg Harvey, the Rev'd Dr. Thomas Brauer, the Rev'd Tony Kippax, Mrs Kirsty May, Ms Moka Ritchie, Mr Byron Behm and Mr David Prosser. Some will be completing their term in office at the 2021 Synod but have the option of standing for election again for a further three years, if they wish to do so.

The Diocesan Manager Mr Edwin Boyce is an ex officio member and attends the monthly meetings of Standing Committee and Mrs Heather Fraser has had the task of recording the minutes of the monthly meetings, some of which had to take place via Zoom. Standing Committee meetings are now held by Zoom on alternate months, saving time for most of our members and reducing the carbon footprint of the Diocese.

The pandemic brought with it challenges beyond health issues. It was pleasing to see how we, as a Diocese, rose to face the challenges of lock downs. We found ways of worshiping together beyond the walls of our churches. Some of those ways have been perpetuated past the lock down and are reaching beyond, not only our Diocesan borders but beyond our national ones as well. As Jesus said, "Go into all the world and make disciples."

The Standing Committee was concerned about the economic impact the pandemic would have on our parishes, and rightly so. Thankfully, many of our parishes were assisted financially by the COVID -19 Wage Subsidy and I am grateful for the work done at the parish level and at the Anglican Centre to bring these subsidies to fruition. Parishes were also helped by parishioners moving to direct giving instead of weekly giving at church. This form of direct giving has continued and is of ongoing assistance to the financial health of our parishes. Standing Committee supported an appeal to parishes and parishioners to give to a Pandemic Support Fund. In the latter part of the year there were distributions from this fund to parishes whose income was greatly impacted by the effects of the pandemic. Our thanks go out to all those who contributed to this fund.

However, Standing Committee continues to be faced with applications from parishes to draw down on invested capital as they continue to meet increasing general operating costs and building maintenance costs. Sixty-eight (68) percent of matters that were dealt with by Standing Committee in 2020 related to property and funds. Such matters must, of course, be decided upon with the mission, ministry and regeneration of the Diocese firmly in mind and as the number one priority.

COVID has taught us new terminology; Zoom, social distancing, MIQ, QR codes, self-isolation, quarantine, bubbles, and a team of five million. We do things differently, wear masks, wash hands more often, cough and sneeze into our arms. What hasn't changed is the love God has for us and for the world in which we live.

Beyond COVID matters, Standing Committee, and our Diocesan staff, have to deal with more and more compliance issues such as healthy homes requirements, privacy regulations, tenancy laws, health and safety, accounting reporting standards and the outcomes of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into abuse in care.

Again, I thank all of our Standing Committee members for their wise counsel and governance in these difficult times.

+Peter Carrell

