

## 36/12 Review of the Department of Evangelism and New Churches

(A report from the Standing Committee.)

### Purpose

1. To report in relation to Synod resolution 36/12 by which Synod requested redrafted amendments to the Department of Evangelism and New Churches Ordinance 2010 that would increase effective consultation while maintaining simplicity of process and harmony of relationships between all affected parties.

### Recommendations

2. The Standing Committee recommends that the Synod establish the following guidelines by resolution –

“Synod establishes the following guidelines with respect to the planting of new fellowships by the Department of Evangelism and New Churches (“ENC”) –

- (a) Before establishing a new fellowship, ENC should discuss the proposal with the Parish Council, Minister, Mission Area Leader, Regional Council and Regional Bishop of the parish in which the fellowship is proposed to be situated.
- (b) In the context of this discussion, a representative of ENC (preferably the proposed new fellowship leader) should present a ministry plan for the new fellowship. It is not necessary that this ministry plan be agreed to by the parties present (although this is preferable) but ENC must consider any feedback given.
- (c) All parties should encourage and maintain communication and a spirit of partnership in relation to their ministry activities.”

### Background

3. The Department of Evangelism (New Churches) Reconstitution Ordinance 2010 required the Standing Committee to review the Department of Evangelism and New Churches Ordinance 2010 (the “Ordinance”) and report to Synod in 2012 about the outcome of its review.

4. As part of this review a bill to amend the Ordinance (the “Bill”) was presented to the 2012 session of Synod. The Bill proposed amendments to clause 15 to provide that a new fellowship is not to be planted in any parish unless the Board of the Department of Evangelism and New Churches (“ENC”) has presented a ministry plan to the parish council and the Regional Bishop of the parish within which the new fellowship would be situated, and the Regional Bishop has given written approval to the Board for the new fellowship to be planted in the parish.

5. The motion that the Bill pass as an ordinance of the Synod was not carried. Immediately thereafter, Synod passed resolution 36/12 as follows –

“Synod, in light of the 38/11 Review of the Department of Evangelism and New Churches report –

- (a) requests the ENC to consult widely with the parish council, minister, mission area leader, regional council and bishop of the area in which any new fellowship is proposed to be planted, and
- (b) requests Standing Committee to bring to the next ordinary session of Synod a redrafted amendment to the Department of Evangelism and New Churches Ordinance 2010 that would increase effective consultation while maintaining simplicity of process and harmony of relationships between all affected parties.”

### Planting New Fellowship and Consultation

6. Under the Ordinance the Board of ENC (the Board) has the following purposes –

- (a) To advance the evangelistic purposes of the Diocese, including through the planting of new congregations and fellowships in the Diocese.
- (b) The Board may, subject to the provisions of the Ordinance, fulfil its purposes by such means as the Board considers expedient including by –
  - (i) resourcing churches and parishes to evangelise. This may include the planting of new congregations in the Diocese, and
  - (ii) identifying and training, supporting and appointing suitably gifted persons to evangelise. This may include the planting and leading of new fellowships in the Diocese.

7. The Board has been working to establish new fellowships and congregations throughout the Diocese. At the time of the writing of this report, there are 6 fellowships with Memoranda of Understanding with ENC.

8. There are another 13 congregations with links to ENC. Some of these were in existence before the Ordinance was inaugurated. There are also 3 people currently preparing for church planting at Moore College.

9. The Board can plant new fellowships in any parish in the Diocese but the Ordinance states that it is intended fellowships be planted and operate with the goodwill and encouragement of the Regional Bishop, and the minister of the parish in which a fellowship would meet or operate.

10. Through its Director, the ENC Board meets regularly with the Bishops and Archdeacons to consider new possibilities of church planting and acknowledges that these meetings should take place regularly. The Board considers that regular contact and discussion with leaders of the Diocese and local church workers is integral to its ministry.

11. The ENC Board and its Director desire to encourage the planting of new congregations and fellowships, and to do this with the co-operation of local parishes and organisations. It is not a haven for church splits.

12. The Board has published a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) on its website about the planting of new fellowships that sets out its aims and strategies for church planting and the establishment of fellowships.

13. The church fellowship leader must be a qualified person, either ordained or lay, who has been appointed by the Board and licensed by the Archbishop on the application of the Director of ENC. Licensing follows the same policies as for the other ministries in the Diocese, including a requirement that the leader has completed at least one year at Moore Theological College before being accepted as a candidate for ordination.

14. It is the Board's intention that a new fellowship grow and become a Recognised Church in the Diocese. If the fellowship does not desire this then there is no compulsion on the fellowship to do so and the fellowship will continue to operate as a ministry of ENC until such time as it becomes independent of the Diocese.

#### **The way forward**

15. The Standing Committee considers that the Board requires a degree of flexibility to encourage parishes in planting new congregations and even more flexibility is required for the establishment of new fellowships. It is not therefore proposed that the Ordinance further regulate a consultation process for the planting of new fellowships. However it is recommended that the Synod establish some guidelines by resolution for the planting and operation of new fellowships. It is hoped that this will "increase effective consultation while maintaining simplicity of process and harmony of relationships between all affected parties", as envisaged in resolution 36/12.

16. The Standing Committee also encourages all parishes to consider the FAQ's on the ENC web site when they are considering new congregations and working with proposed new fellowships, and the ENC continue to make information available about its church planting activities via its website.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee

MALCOLM PURVIS AND JANETTE THAMBYRAJAH

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