



Anglican Diocese of Grafton Registry Update

Edition 6 - December 2015

Dear Rectors, Churchwardens, Parish Councillors and Treasurers,

This sixth edition of the Registry Update contains important information on a variety of topics, please ensure that your Rector (or Priest-in-Charge or Locum), Churchwardens, Parish Councillors and Treasurer receive each Registry Update so that they can take any necessary actions. (Note: 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.

CLERGY STIPENDS AND SUPERANNUATION

New Stipend levels

At the 8 October 2015 meeting of Bishop-in-Council, a series of resolutions regarding clergy stipends and superannuation were passed. As a result, the following schedule of clergy stipends will be effective from **1 January 2016**.

| Clergy role | Current annual stipend | Current monthly stipend | New annual stipend from 1 January 2016 | New monthly stipend from 1 January 2016 |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|
| Rector ¹ | \$59,203 | \$4,933.58 | \$62,104.70 | \$5,175.39 |
| Priest Associate ² | \$58,611 | \$4,884.25 | \$61,491.60 | \$5,124.30 |
| Assistant Priest ³ or Deacon ⁴ | \$55,947 | \$4,662.25 | \$58,732.80 | \$4,894.40 |

(Notes: ¹ includes Priests-in-Charge and Locums; ² typically a senior priest in a challenging role; ³ typically a priest in a curacy or training stage; ⁴ Stipendiary deacons only)

Changes to Superannuation

From 1 January 2016 the rate of superannuation for clergy will increase from 10.0% to 10.5%, however, from that date, superannuation payments will only be calculated on the stipend and will no longer be applied to any allowances. (Please note that the new level of stipend included some compensation for that change.)

No longer "Minimum" stipend

The Bishop-in-Council has decided that for parish clergy positions in the table above there will be no flexibility given to parishes to remunerate their clergy higher than the advertised levels. This would mean Rectors and Priests-in-Charge are to receive the same stipend regardless of whether the parish in which they serve is large or small, wealthy or financially constrained.

Future changes to Stipend

The Wage Price Index (WPI) statistic provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics will guide future increases in clergy stipend. The stipend will change on 1 January of each year depending on the annual change in the WPI reported in the previous September Quarter. The September Quarter statistic is usually published in mid-November of each year.

Future changes to Superannuation

The level of superannuation at 10.5% is set 1% above the current Superannuation Guarantee (SG) rate of 9.5%. Bishop-in-Council has resolved to maintain the level of clergy superannuation at 1% above the SG rate.

Motor vehicle allowance

Motor vehicle and travelling allowances remain as previously advised. These rates are currently being reviewed so a change during 2016 is possible.

LONG SERVICE LEAVE

The Anglican Church of Australia Long Service Leave Fund has recently advised each diocese of the revised rates for benefits from the fund and contributions to the fund. The table below shows how benefits and contributions will change.

| | Rate applicable from 1 January 2015 | Rate applicable from 1 January 2016 |
|---|--|--|
| Contribution per participating clergyperson | \$1,460 | \$1,500 |
| Notional stipend for benefit calculation | \$69,435 | \$71,457 |
| Rate of Supplementary/ Sabbatical Allowance | 80% | 75% |

Similar to other payroll costs, the Registry is moving from a lump sum invoicing of Long Service Leave Fund contributions to a system where a twelfth of the annual contribution (i.e. \$125) will be collected from parishes and other participating organisations each month as part of the payroll process. This new practice will commence in January 2016.

LAY STAFF

It is usual for parishes to use cash accounting rather than accrual accounting to track their financial situation. Cash accounting is generally appropriate because parish finances are generally not so complex as to demand accrual accounting.

One area where cash accounting can create difficulties is where there is an accumulating liability such as employee entitlements. Where parishes are aware of accumulating liabilities they need to consider how best to manage that liability, whether by setting aside a provision (sometimes in its own bank account) or by understanding the liability and ensuring that there is always enough cash to cover the liability.

Employment entitlements are one area where a parish can get caught with an accumulating liability. Fortunately parishes do not need to set aside funds to cover clergy long service leave as that payment is handled by the Anglican Church of Australia Long Service Leave Fund; however, parishes will need to be able to cover clergy annual leave especially where another clergyperson is paid to cover for the absence.

For paid lay ministers and other paid lay workers, parishes will need to consider both long service leave and annual leave entitlements and ensure that there are sufficient funds to cover those expenses when they arise.

In the case of casual lay workers, some parishes may feel that they do not have any obligation for long service leave and other benefits. Where a casual employee has been working on a regular pattern for an extended period, the Fair Work Commission may consider them to be

akin to permanent employees and entitled to benefits such as long service leave and termination pay.

Parish Treasurers are encouraged to review the status of accumulating liabilities such as employment entitlements and advise Churchwardens of the effect on the parish's financial status.

SUPERANNUATION PROCESSING

Many would be aware that the Registry collects superannuation contributions for each person on the centralised payroll and those contributions are remitted to the superannuation fund that was nominated by the clergyperson or employee.

It has been the standard practice of the Registry to pay contributions into superannuation funds at the end of the following month. For example, this meant that superannuation that was part of the September payroll was paid into superannuation funds by the end of October.

Although that practice complies with the superannuation legislation, it has been decided to change the practice and remit to the superannuation funds in the same month as the entitlement is earned. This has been made possible by the move to a monthly payroll and joining a Superannuation Clearing House.

Those on the centralised payroll may notice two payments into their superannuation fund in November 2015. One of those would have been for their October payroll and the other for their November payroll.

NORTH COAST ANGLICAN

With the move of The Reverend Peter Richards to the Diocese of Perth, the Diocese of Grafton is now without an editor for the North Coast Anglican.

The Diocese of Grafton is in discussions with the Diocese of Newcastle regarding regular assistance with our diocesan newspaper. Unfortunately, these arrangements will not be finalised in time for the December edition of the North Coast Anglican; so, there will not be a December edition.

Contributors to the North Coast Anglican can continue to send their articles and photos to nca@graftondiocese.org.au and these will be stored and reviewed when the North Coast Anglican is revived in 2016.

AGM PREPARATION

As you prepare for your parish AGM for 2016, please take time to review the Diocesan Governance Ordinance 2008 as changes made in the 2015 Synod affect both the business and the elections at your AGM.

PARISH OFFICER TRAINING

In October, there were five sessions of Parish Officer Training held at various centres across the Diocese. The attendance at each of those sessions was good and feedback shows that many people regardless of their experience found the sessions to be very worthwhile.

Mindful that some new parish officers will be elected in parish AGMs in 2016, Saturday 12th March and Saturday 9th April have been set aside for further parish officer training sessions if the demand exists. Locations have not been chosen for those extra sessions.

PRIVACY POLICY

On 8 October 2015, the Bishop-in-Council approved a Privacy Policy that is applicable to all parishes and diocesan organisations, except where that organisation already has a Privacy Policy.

The Privacy Policy can be found on the Anglican Diocese of Grafton website http://media.wix.com/ugd/7307b4_0090f51dccc940528febeb156271e154.pdf

Please familiarise yourself with the Privacy Policy. If your parish/organisation didn't already have a Privacy Policy, please refer to the diocesan policy.

If your parish/organisation already has a Privacy Policy, you should review whether you should retain your existing policy or adopt the diocesan policy.

ATO SCAM WARNING

The following message from the Australian Taxation Office is worth sharing.

Don't fall for phony tax debt scam

The ATO is again warning the public to be aware of an aggressive phone scam circulating where fraudsters are intimidating people into paying a fake tax debt over the phone by threatening jail or arrest.

Second Commissioner Geoff Leeper has said that the ATO is very concerned about taxpayer privacy and is reminding people of the key differences between a scam of this nature and a genuine call from the ATO.

"We make thousands of outbound calls to taxpayers a week, but there are some key differences to a legitimate call from the ATO and a call from a potential scammer" said Mr Leeper.

"We would never cold call you about a debt; we would never threaten jail or arrest, and our staff certainly wouldn't behave in an aggressive manner. If you're not sure, hang up and call us back on 13 28 69," said Mr Leeper.

Things to remember

- The ATO would never cold call you about a debt. If you have a debt you will receive a letter or SMS to remind you that a payment is due in the first instance.
- The ATO would never threaten jail or arrest.
- If you receive a call from the ATO and are concerned about its legitimacy, ask for the caller's name and phone them back through the ATO's switchboard on 13 28 69.

Mr Leeper also said that scammers pretending to be from the ATO are generally more common during tax time and encouraged people to be vigilant and to protect their personal information.

If people think they may have fallen victim to a phone scam, contact the ATO on 13 28 69.

For more information and examples of recent scams visit the ATO website or SCAMwatch.

CHRISTMAS ARRANGEMENTS AND OFFICE CLOSURE

Registry

The Bishop's Registry will be closed for a number of days over the Christmas and New Year period. The Registry Office will close during the afternoon of Wednesday 23rd December and re-open at 9am on Monday 4th January 2016.

The Registry staff of Chris, Kaytrina, Maree, Julie, Darrin and Jenny have appreciated working with the church family over this past year and wish you all well for the Christmas Season.

Anglican Funds Grafton Diocese

The Anglican Funds Grafton Diocese (AFGD) office will be closed over the Christmas/New Year period from 3pm Wednesday 23rd December 2015 and will re-open on Monday 4th January 2016 at 9am.

Clients can contact Blaine or Annette up until close of business on Wednesday 23rd December 2015 to schedule transactions during the period of office closure on their behalf. Clients who have access to their account(s) via 'AFGD Online' will be able to process transactions online during this period of office closure. Please note however, that any transactions processed via 'AFGD Online' on National Public Holidays (25th December 2015, 28th December 2015 and 1st January 2016) will not be processed until the next business day.

If you have an urgent enquiry during the period of office closure please contact the Fund Manager Blaine Fitzgerald on 0488 724 480.

From the team at AFGD we wish all our valued clients a safe and restful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Insurance matters

Unfortunately, it often happens that emergencies and incidents occur during the Christmas Season. If an emergency does occur, you should take the normal steps of:

- Ensuring injured people have the appropriate treatment;
- Making the site or area safe so that the chance of further injury or damage is minimised; and
- Record details of the incident and any injury or damage and send the report to Julie White at the Registry (financemanager@graftondiocese.org.au) whether or not you believe it to be covered by insurance.

If you have an insurance emergency and you need to speak with someone while the office is closed, you can call the Registrar on 0407 217 630.

IMPORTANT DATES

Bishop-in-Council

28th January 2016

3rd March 2016

4th May 2016

18th August 2016

13th October 2016

8th December 2016

Corporate Trustees

14th January 2016

17th March 2016

19th May 2016

14th July 2016

15th September 2016

24th November 2016

Property Board

16th December 2015 (new date)
20th January 2016
17th February 2016
16th March 2016
20th April 2016
18th May 2016

20th July 2016
24th August 2016
21st September 2016
19th October 2016
16th November 2016
14th December 2016

If you have any submission to a meeting of Bishop-in-Council, the Corporate Trustees or the Property Board, 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.

Synod

The next Synod of the Diocese of Grafton will be held on 17th, 18th and 19th June 2016 in Grafton. The opening session of synod on Friday 17th June will be held in Christ Church Cathedral Grafton with Saturday and Sunday sessions held at the South Grafton Ex-Servicemen's Club in Wharf Street, South Grafton.

Synod representatives may wish to start making accommodation bookings to avoid the inconvenience and disappointment of having their desired accommodation booked out.

In the lead up to the 2016 Synod, three pre-synod meetings are being planned. At those meetings which can be attended by any interested member of the Anglican Church, we will not only be previewing the expected synod business but also a chance to share and hear views on some of the more sensitive issues. At this stage, each of the pre-synod meetings is expected to be held from 9am to 12 noon with the Bishop, Ministry Development Officer and Registrar in attendance.

Pre-synod meetings are planned for:

Saturday 28th May 2016 – venue in northern area of diocese to be determined

Saturday 4th June 2016 – venue in southern area of diocese to be determined

Saturday 11th June 2016 – venue in central area of diocese to be determined

Yours in Christ's service,



Chris Nelson
Registrar/General Manager
Anglican Diocese of Grafton