

Proposal to Change the Parish of Birrong to a Provisional Parish

(A report from the Standing Committee.)

Initiation of Proposal

1. The proposal was made to the Archbishop by the Churchwardens of St Matthew's Birrong.
2. The requirements of the Parishes Ordinance have been complied with.

Details of the Meeting

3. A meeting of the Permanent Investigation Committee was held on 5 June 1996 to consider the proposal under clause 5 of the Ordinance when the following persons were present -

Permanent Investigation Committee: Archdeacon R.T. Platt (Chairman), Canon L.F. Bartlett, Mr W.G.S. Gotley, Archdeacon G.R. Huard, the Rev P.J. Tasker.

Promoters: The Rev R. Weaver, the Rev I. Wood, Mrs J. Jacka, Mrs M. Green, Mr W. Godfrey and Mr E. Horton

In attendance: K.R. Bowden (Secretary).

The Proposal

4. The proposal is to change the Parish to a Provisional Parish from 1 January 1996. The Parish Council by resolution has consented to the Standing Committee provisionally changing the status of the Parish to a Provisional Parish under clause 8(2) of the Ordinance.
5. The Parish of Birrong was created from the territory of the Parish of Regents Park with Birrong on 1 January 1996. The remaining territory was formed into the Assisted Provisional Parish of Regents Park. St Luke's Church, Regents Park is being developed as a centre for a Vietnamese speaking congregation.
6. The parish gave its former rectory and a \$1,000 maintenance fund to the Vietnamese congregation.
7. Since 1 January 1996 the Rev Ross Weaver (Minister of Yagoona) has been the acting Minister of Birrong. Mr Weaver has given his consent to this proposal.

Parish Information

8. The parish has not been able to pay its 1996 assessments for April and May and owes a total of \$1,690.
9. At the 1991 Census there were 3,325 persons claiming adherence to the Anglican Church of Australia which represented 21.5% of the population. This is a decline from 25.1% of the population recorded in the 1986 Census. Non Christian religions are increasing by a similar proportion. 6.8% of the population was born in Vietnam amongst a total of 27.9% born in non-English speaking countries.

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10. The NCLS age profile of the St Matthew's congregation indicates that 58% are over 60 years as against 29% in the local community.

11. Many persons who formerly attended St Luke's at Regents Park have moved to St Matthews Birrong. There are 2 morning services at St Matthews but once a month they are replaced with a family service. Average attendances have been -

Year	St Matthew's 8am	St Luke's 10am	Monthly Family Services
1993	18	45	75
1994	20	42	61
1995	19	37	57
In 1996 all services are held at St Matthew's Birrong			
Year	St Matthew's 8am	St Matthew's 10am	Monthly Family Services
1996	21	33	48

12. The parish conducts a monthly coffee morning for first contacts with average attendance of 20, Bible studies on Wednesday and Friday mornings, a friendship centre, a women's fellowship, a ministry group and 4 pupils attend an English as a Second Language course. The parish has a combined Girls Brigade with Yagoona with 30 girls attending. Families associated with the Girls Brigade now attend St Mark's Yagoona.

13. The assistant minister at St Matthew's, the Rev I. Wood, has been engaged by Bankstown Grammar School as a teacher for a half day each week. The salary for this position is paid into the parish receipts.

14. A summary of the financial position of St Matthews Birrong over the last 3 years and until May 6 in 1996 is given below -

	1993	1994	1995	1996 YTD
April				
<i>Receipts</i>	\$	\$	\$	\$
Offertories	17,521	19,988	17,979	12,621
Bankstown Grammar School	-	-	-	875
Investments Redeemed	-	-	-	1,187
Parish Quota paid back	1,401	-	1,956	-
Other receipts	1,102	62	170	212
Total Receipts	<u>20,024</u>	<u>20,050</u>	<u>20,105</u>	<u>14,895</u>

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<i>Payments</i>				
Parish Quota	17,352	17,400	16,500	-
Stipends and Allowances	-	-	-	11,484
Assessments	-	-	-	1,219
Rent	-	-	-	3,780
Missions	2,152	2,478	1,798	-
Other payments	321	82	312	3,783
Total Payments	<u>19,825</u>	<u>19,960</u>	<u>18,610</u>	<u>20,266</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>199</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>1,495</u>	<u>(5,371)</u>

Note: Offertories are averaging \$750 per week in 1996 compared with \$346 per week in 1995.

15. The following details have been supplied concerning real estate held by the Church Property Trust upon trust for the parish -

<i>Address</i>	<i>Value of Land & Improvements</i>	<i>Condition of Buildings</i>
	\$	
St Matthew's Church	200,000	Good
St Matthew's Parish Hall	225,000	Good
2 toilet blocks	5,000	Fair

16. The parish does not have a rectory and rents a house for the assistant minister.

17. Archdeacon Huard supports the proposal and advises that it is part of the overall strategy plan for ministry in this part of the Georges River Region. The Committee encouraged Archdeacon Huard to pursue the possibility of amalgamating Birrong with another parochial unit.

Action and Recommendation

18. The Standing Committee provisionally changed the Parish of Birrong to a provisional parish from 1 January 1996 and recommends that the Synod assent to this change of status.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee

K.R. BOWDEN
Assistant Diocesan Secretary

3 September 1996