

Proposal to Change the Parish of Smithfield to a Provisional Parish

(A report from the Georges River Regional Council)

Initiation of Proposal

1. A proposal was made by the minister and churchwardens of the parish of Smithfield (the "Parish") under clause under clause 4 (1)(c) of the Parishes Ordinance 1979 (the "Ordinance").

Details of Meeting

2. A meeting of the Georges River Regional Council was held on 17 August 1999 to consider the proposal under clause 5 of the Ordinance.

3. The Georges River Regional Council has certified that all procedural requirements under clauses 4 and 6 of the Ordinance have been complied with.

Proposal

4. The proposal is to change the Parish to a provisional parish.

Parish Information

5. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 1996 census, the total population in the Parish has increased by 1.6% since 1991. However the nominal Anglican population, now 3,132 persons, has decreased by 2.5%. Those claiming to be Anglican now comprise 11.1% of the population as against the national average of 22.1%.

6. Country of birth data shows only 50% of the population in Australia born in Australian against the national average of 74.5%. Major non-English speaking groups are the Vietnamese (5.6%), Italian (5.1%), Maltese (2.1%), Chilean (2.1%).

7. The Sunday service attendance details are as follows -

Average Attendance	8.45 am	10.15 am Family Church	6.30 pm	Total
1993	47		32	79
1994	42		26	68
1995	39		27	66
1996	41		25	66
1997	55		34	89
1998	40	49	20	109
Up to 1/6/99	39	39	22	100

8. Some members of the 8.45 am service became founding members of the 10.15 am Family Church (which commenced in April 1998) as a means of outreach, and as an alternative to Sunday School.

Particulars of Church Trust Property

9. Details of property held by the Property Trust upon trust for the Parish are as follows -

Property	Replacement Value	Condition
Church Contents	\$450,000 \$15,000	Good (for its age) Good
Hall Contents	\$85,000 \$425,000	Good Good
Rectory Contents	\$150,000 \$5,000	Good Good

10. There are no debts outstanding on these properties.

Summary of Receipts and Payments

11. A summary of the receipts and payments over the past 3 years and budget for 1999 are as follows -

	1996	1997	1998	Budget 1999
Receipts	\$	\$	\$	\$
Offertories	43,589	49,072	55,280	59,055
Interest	180	68	1	1
Surplice Fees	1,459	810	1,231	1,350
Winter Appeal	-	-	500	-
Other	10,410	4,576	1,077	600
Totals	55,638	54,526	58,089	61,006

	1996	1997	1998	Budget 1999
Payments	\$	\$	\$	\$
Stipend and allowances	36,836	39,768	41,063	42,156
Parish Recovery Costs	8,450	4,975	6,069	8,535
Missions	1,882	2,507	2,261	2,615
Stationery	1,866	2,474	2,617	2,750
Repairs	947	60	1,035	500
Improvements to Property	8,715	-	-	-
Winter Appeal	-	-	500	-
Poor relief	170	-	-	-
Other	5,013	5,674	4,229	4,450
Totals	63,879	55,458	58,134	61,006
Surplus/Deficit	(8,241)	(632)	(45)	0

Staffing

12. The staffing for 1999 comprises a full time rector and one part time catechist who is supported from non-Parish funds by individual sponsorship.

Ministry

13. The Parish's ministry at present, and goals for the future are -

- 3 Sunday services
- 2 Bible Study groups which meet on Tuesday night and Wednesday morning
- 1 training class in pastoral care on Sunday
- Friday night singing group
- 9 SRE classes in 3 local schools (Smithfield PS; Smithfield West PS; and William Stimson PS)
- Outreach activities include: each member in the process of preparing a personal testimony and learning to share it
- "Operational Gabriel" which is centred around prayer for a specific group of unchurched friends
- "Event" evangelism (ie Men's and Ladies' breakfasts at the local RSL with guest speakers; guest services; Family Church aimed at members making friends with baptism enquirers; and plans in the making for the opening of a community activity centre on a weekly basis and St James Travel Club - a monthly bus tour from Smithfield with Christian guides sharing testimonies, songs etc as a bridge building exercise into the community).

14. The Parish has a general Vision Statement which is being aimed at by the activities outlined above. The aim is to -

- (a) Grow in our love for, and in our knowledge of - God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- (b) Grow in love for, and in unity with His people.
- (c) Grow in commitment to His mission.

Reasons for Change in Status

15. The reasons the Parish is seeking a change in status are as follows-

- (a) The changing nature of the Parish presents huge challenges as can be seen by the 1996 Census figures.
- (b) The aging nature of the congregation and its associated financial changes present an on-going difficulty in everyday running costs.
- (c) The efforts to revitalise the congregation through outreach to the next generation will always take time to bear fruit in generous giving.
- (d) The Parish is falling further into debt and is not meeting its Parish Recovery Costs.
- (e) This debt itself distracts the Parish and drains much of the energies from the ministries that the Parish would rather be pouring those energies into.

Recommendation

16. The Georges River Regional Council has provisionally reclassified Smithfield as a provisional parish as from 1 January 1999 and recommends that the Synod confirm this reclassification.

For and on behalf of the Georges River Regional Council.

GEOFF HUARD
Archdeacon of Georges River

14 September 1999