**GENERAL SECRETARY’S REPORT**

**TO THE GENERAL SYNOD / TE HĪNOTA WHĀNUI 2022**

This period has been a most unusual one, with the experience of COVID19 and a series of lockdowns, travel restrictions, and a shift to almost exclusively meeting and working virtually, and often remotely from home. All credit to all who have pivoted to this new mode so well and so willingly.

I would acknowledge again with deep gratitude those with whom I work most closely and who offer the regular support for the work I undertake on behalf of our church. Firstly, the Archbishops and the General Synod Standing Committee, who are a committed and hard-working group. Noting particularly in this period the death of Archbishop Fereimi Cama (may he rest in peace). Secondly, the provincial staff ‘team’ based in the General Synod Office (GSO) at TUIA and around the Church, especially Marissa Alix, Vanda Breslin, the Rev’d Jacynthia Murphy at TUIA. And thirdly, the many members of GSTHW and its various Commissions, Councils, Boards, Committees, and Small Working Groups, who offer so much voluntarily to the mission and administration of this Church. Thank you.

The wider three Tikanga staff group, for whom I carry some oversight responsibilities alongside their respective ministry bodies, has had only a couple of changes over the past two years, being Kristy Boardman starting as Social Justice Unit Manager, just weeks after the first Covid lockdown in 2020, and then the Rev’d Chaans Tumataroa-Clarke starting as Youth Commissioner later in 2020. Paula Jakeman, as noted in my 2020 report, finished up with Te Kotahitanga early in 2020, but then assisted the GSO until mid-year, finishing before the Zoom GSTHW in July.

Unchanged positions other than the GSO above include the Anglican Taonga Magazine Editor Julanne Clarke-Morris, Aleshia Lawson with the Youth Commission, and Ceridwyn Parr with CAWS.

This team is a highly skilled and motivated group who often work away alone in their own spheres but who offer support and collegiality to one another as they serve this Church.

Some key highlights of the past two years for the General Secretary have been, firstly, adapting to the changed and changing work and minstry environment brought about by COVID19, particularly the regular Zoom meetings of Bishops and also of Registrar Managers; secondly, the steep learning curve of switching to a postponed virtual, Zoom-based GSTHW in July 2020; and thirdly, the establishment and development of the provincial complaints and discipline office of the Ministry Standards Commission.

Much of the work of General Secretary involves routine ‘office work’ and many ‘meetings’, as we seek to serve the many Commissions, Councils, Boards, Committees, and Small Working Groups of the GSTHW and the GSSC. This administrative support work, and the regular accounting, personnel, and payroll oversight responsibilities are key elements of my role and the office team in our day-to-day, week-to-week, and month-to-month routines. I acknowledge the work of the General Synod Office staff, DAC, TML, and the GCTB in supporting much of this task. Also, the work of the Employment Subcommittee, and the Order Paper Committee of the GSSC. As can be seen from the range and detail of reports to this General Synod / te Hīnota Whānui the past two years have again seen some significant work, both ongoing and some new initiatives, despite restrictions, by these many and varied bodies.

I commend their various reports to you for further detail and acknowledge the commitment, effort and time that go into achieving their various outcomes.

Key publications handled by the General Secretary and Office included the annual Lectionary (2020 and 2021) through the Liturgical Commission, biennial Clerical Directory (2021), and the Proceedings for GSTHW (2020) - though this latter was delayed into 2021 as we waited to see if a further ‘’special GSTHW’’ could be held. We have not published in hard copy a biennial update to the printed Canons (2020) as apart from the New Title D there were few changes, and they are all available online. We are though working on a full set revision and reprinting of the whole Canons folder and will pick up 2020 changes in any 2022 printing.

We printed, and then reprinted, the updated revised edition of A New Zealand Prayer book – He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa (2020, and reprint 2021), and have sold out copies a second time.

The General Synod and Online Prayer Book websites are under our oversight, and we do all we can to keep information up to date and add new resources as time and resources allow. The Prayer Book website is highly visited from around the world, while the GSTHW website is old and being reviewed for replacement/ updating as part of a wider communications restructure.

In the past two years, the usual regular Registrars Conferences have been adversely affected. The usual biennial Australasian Anglican Registrars Conference, which was to be hosted in Waiapu with Te Pīhopatanga o Aotearoa, had to be postponed and then cancelled. It is, as I write, unlikely that it will meet in 2022, which would have been in Australia, so maybe deferred to 2023, or even out to 2024.

Our own annual Registrars Conference was planned for Tauranga, and postponed once, then cancelled due to lockdowns. A single day Zoom engagement did happen for some essential business.

A two-day conference in early 2021 was hosted by Wellington and Te Upoko o Te Ika, though just as another Covid lockdown was starting so involved some in person in Wellington, while Aucklanders and some others zoomed in for sessions. These are valuable professional development, networking, and collaborative opportunities, and have been added to by regular Zooms since Covid begun.

This GSTHW sees me over 12 years in this role and I am as always much indebted to all those who share in this work with me, and I continue to enjoy the role, both its’ joys and its challenges.

***Michael Hughes***

**General Secretary**

March 2022