

Congregational Voting Procedures

Proposed by South Canterbury Presbytery

Recommendation

That Presbytery of South Canterbury recommend to Assembly that changes to the Congregational Voting Procedures enabling absentee and/or postal voting to be included for occasional and specified resolutions of the Congregation.

Proposal

- 1 This proposal for legislation is brought by South Canterbury Presbytery.
- 2 The proposal is that Congregational Voting Procedures be clarified to make provision for absentee and/or postal voting for occasional specified resolutions of the Congregation.
- 3 The reasons for the proposal are:
 - a) Under the present Book of Order regulations there is no reference to either absentee and/or postal voting – therefore while it is possible for a congregation to make such a determination in the ordering of their own affairs, should such circumstances and occasion be considered appropriate, it should be made clear in the Book of Order that such options are available.
 - b) While chapter 5.9(4) specifically states “Congregation present at a duly called meeting of the congregation”, this refers specifically to “dissolving and/or amalgamations” of congregations.
 - c) Worship habits and participation in congregational life have changed considerably over recent decades: e.g. regular attendance at worship; work situations no longer 9-5, Monday-Friday; family relationships changed with more efficient transport systems and methods of communication; sporting and other community activities providing involvement opportunities. The result is that it is very difficult to make a satisfactory arrangement for a congregational meeting with everyone present. Our prevailing culture automatically means – not present, not voting!
 - d) We believe that the above clarification and acceptance of absentee and/or postal voting would better take into account the prevailing cultural situation, changing communication possibilities, and altered congregational participation in such a way as to enhance the ongoing mission and ministry of God’s Kingdom.