

# The Role of the Synod Representatives

Updated 13 February 2020

Synod representatives play an important role in the mission of our church. They do this by representing the parish at Sydney Diocesan Synod.

## What is the role of the synod and its representatives?

The Synod is the annual gathering of representatives of the churches of the Sydney Diocese. It has five main functions, to which parish representatives participate and contribute. These are –

1. to elect persons to diocesan bodies (such as schools and organisations)
2. to make ordinances (the legislation that governs the Diocese)
3. to pass resolutions and make policies
4. to receive reports from diocesan organisations and taskforces
5. to provide a time for diocesan-wide fellowship

At present there are 809 members of the Synod. The membership is broadly divided into clergy and lay representatives. Usually clergy and laity vote on matters together. Sometimes, on important matters, clergy and laity vote separately when there is a need for both to agree on a matter.

## What are the qualifications required to be a Synod Representative?

In order to be elected as a lay representative for a parish, a person must not be a member of the clergy, and must be –

- 18 years of age or older; and
- a communicant member of the Anglican Church of Australia (baptised and regularly participate in the Lord's Supper at an Anglican church).

Synod Representatives are required to make the following declaration before or within seven days of being elected:

*I make the following declaration:*

*I declare I am a communicant member of the Anglican Church of Australia and not a member of any other Church.*

## What is the time commitment required?

The Sydney Synod runs during the afternoons and evenings over five days (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Monday, Tuesday) each October. There are a number of papers to read in preparation for these sessions which also require hours of reading.

## How do I nominate someone?

If you are interested in nominating a person as a Synod Representative or you would like to offer yourself for this ministry, we recommend you first speak to our current rector, Toby Neal, to gauge the suitability of this person for the role. Once you have done so, you must make your nomination online two weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting at

[www.vinechurch.com.au/agm](http://www.vinechurch.com.au/agm)

## Who should I consider nominating?

There are a number of questions you should ask before you nominate a person:

- Does this person have a deep love for Jesus and are they living a godly life?
- Does this person demonstrate a consistent commitment to church life and ministry?
- Does this person honour God given leadership and do they seek the unity of the church?
- Does this person bring particular gifts, which would benefit our representation as a church at synod?
- Does this person have the capacity (time and energy) for this role?
- Have I spoken with the current rector to understand whether this person would be a helpful addition to the team?

## Who can nominate someone as parish nominator?

You may nominate a person as a Synod Representative if you:

- are a parishioner of Vine Church for a minimum of three months; and
- have regularly attended Sunday services (during 3 months in the past 12 months); and
- declare yourself to be a member of the Anglican Church of Australia (baptised and regularly participate in the Lord's Supper at an Anglican church); and
- have received verbal or written consent from the person; and
- will be at the general meeting at which the person is to be elected.

## Frequently asked questions

### What church ordinance does the role of parish nominator fall under?

The [Synod Membership Ordinance 1995](#).

### How many people are required to be synod representatives?

Each parish is entitled to have three representatives at Synod, being the minister and two elected lay persons.

### How long is the term of office for Synod Representatives?

Synod operates on a three year term, with an 'ordinary' session each year and opportunity for 'special' sessions to be held in addition to the ordinary sessions (e.g. election of a new archbishop). The Synod three-year term commences with the 1st ordinary session which commences every third year in 2020, 2023, 2026.

Lay representatives are elected at the parish annual general meeting in the same year as the 1st ordinary session of a Synod, and are elected for a term of three years.

If a lay representative resigns during that three year term, the parish at a general meeting may elect another lay representative for the balance of the original term.

### What if I am not able to be present for a particular session at Synod?

If the minister or a lay representative cannot attend a particular session of the Synod, they may [appoint an alternate](#) for that session.

*Further information on the matters covered in this document can be found on the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat website at [www.sds.asn.au](http://www.sds.asn.au).*