



ORDINATION  
way forward  
one church, two practices

# Resolution: 2021-23 General Synod

RESOLVED: That General Synod direct the LCANZ General Church Board and the College of Bishops to:

- a) **Work through the theological, constitutional, and governance requirements to operate as one church with two different practices of ordination and establish a detailed framework through which this could be accomplished**, such as one or more existing LCANZ Districts becoming Districts that teach and practice the ordination of both women and men to the office of the public ministry or by establishing a non-geographical LCANZ 'District' that does so.
- b) Submit the fruit of this work in the form of a proposal that should be discussed by the LCANZ General Pastors Conference for Convention of General Synod 2024.
- c) **It is the expectation of this General Convention of Synod that both women and men will be ordained** in a District of the LCANZ during the 2024-2027 synodical period.



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# How is this different?

1. General Synod (by a strong majority) called out the impasse/division on ordination. The resolution is effectively 'agreement to disagree'. That hasn't been done before.
2. The resolution says that Synod expects that women will be ordained in the 2024-2027 synodical term. That has never been ceded before.
3. The Way Forward proposal is not an 'all or nothing' approach – it is 'both and'.



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# Next ...

## **May 2024**

- Webinar (14 May) – questions received in advance (by 10 May)
- Feedback closes (21 May)

## **June 2024**

- Framework is finalised; proposal approved for Book for Reports

## **July – September 2024**

- Prayer and Preparation Phase  
– face-to-face gatherings across the church

## **4-7 October 2024**

- Convention of General Synod



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# The Way Forward Framework

The key components of the Framework to enable the two practices of ordination are:

1. Changing the teaching of male-only ordination
2. Providing a pastoral-theological place in the LCANZ ('Conference'), whose members uphold male-only ordination



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# 1. Changing the teaching

1. The Church maintains TA VI:1-10 from the 1966 Theses of Agreement as the basis of its teaching on the Office of the Ministry.
2. The Church amends the Theses of Agreement by the removal of TA VI:11 (the paragraph which prohibits women from serving as pastors).
3. The Church adopts a statement to this effect (proposed wording is in the Framework).



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## 2. Providing a pastoral-theological place ('Conference')

... for members to uphold male-only ordination.

Some foundational principles of the Conference are:

1. The Conference is a community of the LCANZ, accountable to the General Church Board and College of Bishops.
2. The Objects of the Conference are aligned with the Objects of the Church (as expressed in Constitution Article 3).
3. Conference members **adhere to the changed public teaching of the LCANZ on the ordination of men and women** (maintaining TA VI:1-10 and the removal of TA VI:11).
4. The Conference's membership consists of congregations ... and individual members (pastors and lay people) of congregations.



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# Foundational principles

1. Divergent views on whether a pastor can be a woman are not divisive of church fellowship (TA 1:4e).
2. There are common candidacy requirements and call procedures for male and female pastors. Congregations are able to call the most suitable person, whether they are male or female.
3. Male and female pastors are equally eligible to be elected or appointed into any position of the church, including leadership roles such as bishop, with common candidacy requirements for both men and women.
4. The church does not change its churchwide, district, zone, parish, congregational or auxiliary structures.
5. The Framework is consistent with the church's membership model, where congregations are members of the church and individuals are members of a congregation.



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# Discuss (10 minutes)

1. What elements of the framework give you hope?
2. If this framework were approved by General Synod in its current form, how might it affect your congregation? What would remain the same? What would be different?
3. What pastoral care concerns do you have?



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# Discuss (10 minutes)

To assist the Way Forward team to refine the framework:

1. Where are the sticking points / deal breakers that might cause delegates to vote against it?
2. How could these be remedied?
3. What aspects of the framework need to be made clearer?  
(or added / deleted / amended)



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# Things you can do

1. Attend the webinar 14 May (questions in advance – by 10 May) – **and encourage your delegate to attend.**
2. Send us your questions, and suggestions for improvement by 21 May **wayforward2024@lca.org.au**
3. Use the bulletin inserts and PowerPoint slides ([www.lca.org.au/wayforward/resources](http://www.lca.org.au/wayforward/resources)) to promote awareness in your communities
4. **Encourage your delegate** to lead engagement sessions in your communities. Assist her/him as you are able.
5. During the Prayer & Preparation Phase (July – September), offer to help your District organisers plan and run the face-to-face engagements.
6. Make use of the Prayer resources, every Sunday if you can.
7. Tell us what assistance/resources you need from us.



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# Info and Resources

[www.lca.org.au/wayforward  
/principles-engagement  
/resources  
/framework](http://www.lca.org.au/wayforward/principles-engagement/resources/framework)

Sign up to Way Forward News  
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