

# Way Forward Detailed Framework SUMMARY



This is a summary of the Way Forward Detailed Framework, which can be found at [www.lca.org.au/wayforward/detailed-framework](http://www.lca.org.au/wayforward/detailed-framework) or [download it here](#).

1. Impasse: Despite more than three decades of theological study and debate within the Lutheran Church of Australia and New Zealand (LCANZ)<sup>1</sup>, we remain divided on whether or not the Scriptures permit the ordination of women. There remain two widely held views on ordination within the Church.
2. Towards a way forward: At the 2023 in-person sessions of the 2021-23 Convention of General Synod, delegates voted by a strong majority to direct General Church Board and College of Bishops (GCB-CoB) to find a way for us to operate as 'one church with two different practices of ordination' and to report back with a detailed framework to the 2024 General Pastors Conference and General Synod. The Way Forward project appointed by GCB-CoB has diligently worked through the theological, constitutional and governance requirements to allow this directive to be accomplished.
3. The framework: The Way Forward Detailed Framework (Framework) offers an approach whereby both practices of ordination can exist within the LCA. The Framework has five key parts:
  - Part A: The Church makes the commitment to maintain its identity and form.
  - Part B: The Church changes its teaching to allow for the ordination of women and men.
  - Part C: The Church makes a commitment to pastors and pastoral ministry candidates that they will continue to be received and welcomed by the whole church in a respectful environment.
  - Part D: The Church makes a commitment to congregations and parishes that they may call a pastor who best aligns with their ministry plans.
  - Part E: The Church introduces a tenure-based provision for nomination for the roles of bishop and assistant bishop.
4. Implementation: The Framework offers practical solutions and steps to implement the changes required to introduce the ordination of women in the LCA. Attention is given to what changes might be required by congregations, parishes and District and Churchwide agencies. The Framework also articulates the many areas of church life in which no changes are required. Fundamental principles of the implementation processes include respect for all pastors and people of the Church, and a churchwide program of pastoral care.
5. Proposals: The Framework includes the proposals to be put to General Synod 2024 developed in response to the resolution of the 2021-23 General Synod.
6. Commitments of the Church: In working through all these issues, the Church commits to respectful dialogue and pastoral care in the gatherings of the Church. In particular, the Church commits to continued study of the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, acknowledging that the divergent views of the role and service of women in the Church are upheld by faithful sisters and brothers in Christ. Moreover, the Church will always provide for concerns of conscience when providing for the official public worship gatherings in the life of the Church.

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<sup>1</sup> The Lutheran Church of Australia and the Lutheran Church of New Zealand are commonly referred to as the Lutheran Church of Australia and New Zealand ('LCANZ' or 'Church'). To align with the Constitution, however, further references to the Church in this document will be 'LCA'.