

# Nominations for Assembly Council Membership and Profiles of Candidates for Election

(3 persons to be elected by Assembly, from 5 nominees)

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The following pages provide background information for those nominated (as they will appear on Ballot Papers). Profiles prepared by nominees.

# The Assembly Council



**The Constitution of the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT describes how affiliated local Baptist churches and affiliated groups work together to fulfil the objects of the Association. Under the Lordship of Christ, final Governance of the Association is vested with Assembly, which appoints the Assembly Council.**

The Assembly Council is the council appointed under section 10 of the Constitution as the Executive Committee under the Incorporation Act and it is empowered to implement Assembly decisions and to conduct the Association's affairs between Assemblies.

The 12-member Assembly Council comprises:

- 9 persons elected by Assembly,
- the Chair of Morling College Council, and
- 2 persons appointed by Assembly Council at its discretion.

The Director of Ministries, Principal of Morling College, Honorary Legal Advisor and the Secretary to the Assembly Council attend meetings of the council, but are not entitled to vote.

There are 3 vacancies to be filled at this Annual Assembly for Assembly Council. 2 members have completed their 3-year term and there is one further vacancy due to the resignation of a member mid-term.

The Assembly Council members who are retiring, neither of whom are seeking re-election, are:

- Rev Andrew Hall
- Rev Jonny Lam

5 candidates have been nominated and there are 3 positions to be filled, so as per Section 8.4(y) of the Constitution:

- a. Assembly members can vote for up to 5 candidates, should they choose to do so,
- b. the 3 candidates with the highest number of votes will be appointed, provided they achieve a greater than 50% majority, and
- c. in the event that not enough candidates achieve 50% of the vote to fill the vacant positions, the unfilled positions will remain vacant.

Section 10 of the Constitution describes the role, membership, powers and duties of the Assembly Council. Clause P of Schedule A of the Guidelines for Conduct of Assembly Meetings in the Constitution requires that the election of Assembly Council members is to take place by ballot at the Assembly meeting.

# Candidates for Assembly Council



Nominee:

**Rev Andrew Darnell**

Church Membership:

**Wingham Baptist Church**

I currently serve in a small regional church, at Wingham Baptist and have been the sole pastor for approaching 5 years which gives me a different perspective to city-based churches. My desire to join the Assembly council flows from my desire to serve the Association of Baptist Churches and help them realise the vision God has given them.

My life has exposed me to many different situations, such as divorce, previous mental health battles and other struggles which are now history but set me up to see situations from different perspectives to most, which serves the people around me well.

I have led teams of people in the service station industry along with transport before being called into ministry. I have good experience in leading and speaking up for voices that may not have a chance otherwise.

I have a mindset that is very practical focused and an ability to take the theory and applying that in everyday life.

I also enjoy exploring the various options in front of me and pursuing the big picture as a team. I do this by keeping an open mind, listening well and asking questions to understand other points of view. I am also able to assist people, individually or in groups, be it small or large to help them understand what is being suggested and think through the implications of that.

My willingness to “wrestle” with tough situations and not take the easy way out serves me well as I am always people centered and wanting them to grow and achieve the best for God’s glory. I am married with one 7 year old son, with two adult children from my previous marriage.



Nominee:

**Dr Edwina Murphy**

Church Membership:

**Blakehurst Baptist**

I'm the Deputy Dean and Director of Research at the Australian College of Theology. Before that, I was on faculty at Morling College for 14 years, lecturing in Christianity in History and Baptist Distinctives. In the more distant past, I was an evangelism intern and associate pastor, although I haven't given up preaching.

I've served on a range of denominational, educational and scholarly boards, committees and taskforces. I've also worked in family businesses in various capacities over the years and I still have a forklift licence.

I believe that as we grow together as disciples of Jesus, grounded in Scripture and empowered by the Spirit, we will demonstrate that what God has done and continues to do is really good news. I believe God generously gives wisdom to those who ask. And I believe God is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine.

I've been married to Peter for 30 years and we have two children, Joel and Lara, who are both at university.

I've attended Baptist churches my whole life. Whilst I didn't seek nomination, I've accepted it because I believe in listening to God together and I want to be open to serving him in this way.

# Candidates for Assembly Council



Nominee:

**Rev Dr Megan Powell du Toit**

Church Membership:

**Thornleigh Community Baptist Church**

I have been an accredited minister with the Baptist Churches of NSW and the ACT since 2003. I did my Bachelor of Ministry (honours) through Morling College from 1998-2002, and have recently submitted my PhD thesis, also through Morling. My thesis was on Baptist theologian Stanley Grenz and tensions within evangelicalism.

When I was in pastoral ministry, I served at Epping as student observer (1998), Gordon as student pastor (1999-2000), Homebush-Strathfield as student pastor (2001), Beverly Hills Chinese as associate pastor (2003- 2013), and Gordon (again) as associate pastor (2013-2015). I also worked as an adjunct lecturer and tutor at Morling between 2003-2016. I have also served on various denominational committees, including the Discipline Sub Committee, the Affirmation Panel, and the Pastoral Advisory Taskforce.

Since 2016 I have worked for the Australian College of Theology in policy, publishing, and research. I am currently Publishing Manager, as well as editor of the academic Journal Colloquium. I partner with Rev Dr Michael Jensen in The WADR Project, an evangelical project seeking to foster gracious, respectful conversation. The project puts out our podcast, With All Due Respect, through the Undeceptions Network.

I would bring to the committee many years of experience in pastoral ministry, theological education, and denominational service. As shown by my doctoral work and The WADR Project, I have a deep interest in fostering constructive relationships across difference for the sake of the gospel, and hope that serving on Assembly Council would bring that to our association. I've been married to Anton for 27 years, and we have 3 young adult children.



Nominee:

## **Dr Catherine Casey**

Church Membership:

## **Paramatta Baptist Church**

Catherine and her husband Gavin, with the support of Parramatta Baptist Church, have church-planted and lead Parramatta City Church. This church plant is a multi-cultural community of faith, with a missional focus in the heart of Parramatta. Catherine also has ministry experience in large Baptist churches, leading children's ministry and as a Young Adult Staff Worker. She is currently part of the Safe Churches Team for Parramatta Baptist Church.

Professionally, Catherine is a General Practitioner, having worked in general practice, youth mental health and recently providing telehealth for rural and remote communities. Catherine is passionate about general practice training in NSW and ACT. Catherine has developed skills in organisational leadership at senior management level within general practice training, including strategic development, stakeholder engagement, staff wellbeing, risk management and leading through major change and transition.

As a leader and part of a team, Catherine has a strong relational, community-oriented focus, modelling authenticity and transparency to build trust within the team, creating a safe space for everyone to contribute towards reaching shared goals. Catherine is passionate about the health and wellbeing of her team and organisation, bringing a strong sense of purpose and motivation in aligning all functions of the team to achieve the desired outcome.

# Candidates for Assembly Council



Nominee:

**Matthew Warren Kennedy**

Church Membership:

**Parkes Baptist Church**

## **Relevant ministry experience or areas of service:**

I have been involved with various churches over the years in different ministry leadership roles, but since 01/06/2015 I have been employed as a Pastor/Minister of the Parkes Baptist Church in Country NSW. Initially as an Associate Pastor, now as the Senior Pastor. I am also currently the President of the Parkes Ministers Association.

## **Relevant expertise for Assembly Council:**

I am a Bible-believing follower of Jesus Christ. I have the spiritual gifts of leadership, evangelism, encouragement, pastoral care, administration and preaching/teaching. I have a strong faith in the Lord and a passion to see His church grow in numbers and maturity. After over seventeen years in the finance industry, from a secular point of view. I am an experienced professional who majors in organisational-based leadership roles.

From business management/compliance/team-leadership/business improvement & innovation. I stand firmly on the pillars of honesty, transparency and clear communication. I look to motivate and bring the vision of an organisation to life. I'm experienced also in organisational troubleshooting, revitalising and helping organisations see and reach their true potential.

## **Reason for Acceptation Nomination for Assembly Council:**

I have the desire to help our Baptist Association, find the will of God and navigate the way forward for all our associated churches successfully as an organisation. We have many members in rural parts of our association, and I believe we need to have a stronger, rural ministry voice in AC. So I hope to be that representative voice. Giving the AC a more balanced view and understanding of our associated rural church's stand on various matters that affect both them and our association.

# Nominations for Morling College Council Membership and Profiles of Candidates for Election

(3 persons to be elected by assembly, from 4 nominees)

Person	Church	Profile
William Leslie Peirson	Macquarie Baptist Church	Page 22
Helen Blanch	Riverstone Baptist Church	Page 23
Dr Sylvia Collinson	Carlingford Baptist Church	Page 24
Rev Dr Graeme Chatfield	Thornleigh Community Baptist Church	Page 25

The following pages provide background information for those nominated (randomised order). Profiles as prepared by nominees.



**The Morling College Council is the governing body responsible for decision-making in relation to the conduct of Morling College, as the theological college of the Baptist Association.**



The 13-member Morling College Council comprises:

- 10 persons elected by Assembly
- the Chair of Morling College Academic Board
- a person with academic expertise appointed by the Morling College Council at its discretion
- a person selected by the Assembly Council of the Baptist Churches of Western Australia

The Council is responsible for offering training as determined by the Association; the training of persons accepted by the Association for training for Baptist ministry; the training of cross-cultural ministry workers and other spheres of Christian service; the promotion of the Christian faith consistent with the basic doctrines, statement of belief, position statements and values of the Association and offering courses accredited by relevant government authorities and supportive of national goals for higher education.

The Principal of the College, the Director of Ministries, the Honorary Legal Advisor and the Secretary to the Morling College Council attend meetings of the council, but are not entitled to vote.

There are 3 vacancies to be filled at this year's Annual Assembly for Morling College Council. Three members are completing their term. Of these, 1 member, Dr Helen Blanch, has consented to renomination.

4 candidates have been nominated and there are 3 positions to be filled, so as per Section 8.4(y) of the Constitution:

- d. Assembly members can vote for up to 4 candidates, should they choose to do so,
- e. the 3 candidates with the highest number of votes will be appointed, provided they achieve a greater than 50% majority, and
- f. in the event that not enough candidates achieve 50% of the vote to fill the vacant positions, the unfilled positions will remain vacant.

The following nominee profiles have been supplied by each nominee and are presented here in randomised order.

# Candidates for Morling College Council



Nominee:

**William Leslie Peirson**

Church Membership:

**Macquarie Baptist Church**

Dr. Peirson led youth and small groups ministry for over 40 years. His present professional role is Master and CEO of New College and New College Postgraduate Village: open enrolment, Anglican-affiliated, residential colleges at the University of New South Wales. In that role he supervises the Centre for Christian Apologetics, Scholarship and Education and is supervising editor of the journal CASE Quarterly. He is an Adjunct Professor at the University of New South Wales within the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering.

He has worked in the university sector for 40 years and held senior administrative, teaching and research roles at the University of New South Wales and New College for over 20 years. Within these roles he has been responsible for strategic planning and organisational direction for over 15 years. As CEO of New College, he is responsible for the future development of the colleges, their communities and missional direction.

Dr. Peirson is married to Ruth and they have been members of MBC since 2009. Ruth and Bill have three adult daughters who grew up in Macquarie Baptist Church.

My reason for accepting nomination is to support the absolutely crucial role that our theological colleges have in underpinning mission in Australia and in modern society more broadly if that is what our good Lord and the Baptist Assembly want me to do over the next three years.



Nominee:

**Helen Blanch**

Church Membership:

**Riverstone Baptist Church**

Helen Blanch is the Christian Education Executive with The Excellence Centre, the Professional Development Centre of the Pacific Group of Christian Schools. She is an educator at heart and her teaching experience has been in public education and in Christian Education since 1987. Helen has been a School Principal and leader in various capacities including the New Hope International Education and Leadership Director. She currently serves on the Morling College Board.

Her calling is to equip Christian teachers to be effective teachers and leaders in the context of Christ-centred learning communities both in Australia and developing countries.

Helen is passionate about inspiring and equipping teachers to be deeply immersed in the Biblical story so they may embrace and practice a Gospel-shaped education that meaningfully engages with young people in their cultural context.

She is an elder at Riverstone Baptist Church. Helen is married with one daughter and four grandsons.

# Candidates for Morling College Council



Nominee:

**Dr Sylvia Collinson**

Church Membership:

**Carlingford Baptist Church**

Christian Education Advisor  
(4.5 years, Carlingford Baptist)

Lecturer, Vice-Principal,  
Acting Principal  
(15 years, Bible College of South  
Australia)

Visiting lecturer  
(7 years, Vose Theological College)

Dean of Students, Part-time Lecturer  
(9 years, Morling College)

Associate Pastor with my husband,  
until he passed away  
(2 years Erina Baptist)

Volunteer with Scripture Union NSW  
camps & family missions, SUSA vice-  
chair, SUWA chair, SUAustralia chair,  
SUInternational on the International  
team of Bible Guide writers (1997-  
2018), Bible teacher SU International  
conference Malaysia 2013.

I am an elder at Carlingford Baptist and  
for the past 9 years have organized  
8 English Conversation Classes each  
week at the church as part of our  
multicultural outreach.

I am passionate about educating men  
and women to be able to understand,  
articulate and pass on their faith to  
others in a way that uses their spiritual  
gifts and is relevant in today's world,  
whether that be in their own culture  
or cross-culturally. I love relating to  
younger people eager to learn and  
keen to follow God's direction in their  
lives.



Nominee:

**Rev Dr Graeme Chatfield**

Church Membership:

**Thornleigh Community Baptist Church**

1993 - 2007 Part-time then full-time-  
Lecturer in Church History and Baptist  
Distinctives, Morling College

2007- 2021 Associate Dean, Director  
of Research, Australian College of  
Theology

2007- 2016 Professor of Church  
History and Historical Theology  
through TCMII, Austria, Poland,  
Russia,Ukraine

2012-2016 Board Member TCMII

2015 - Established TCMAustralasia  
to work with Baptists in Zambia and  
Zimbabwe. 2022 Formally associated  
with Baptist Mission Australia

2021- Member of Baptist World  
Alliance Heritage and Identity  
Commission

1983-1989, 1993-95 Pastoral ministries  
at Macquarie Baptist, South Windsor  
Baptist, Frenchs Forest Baptist

2007-2008 Interim ministries at  
Parramatta Baptist and Bowral Baptist

Expertise in higher education policy,  
corporate governance. Assessment

and analysis of current situation,  
especially of the place of Baptists in  
Australia and the world context.

I believe my accumulated knowledge  
of theological education, both local  
and international, will be of great  
benefit to the Morling College Council.  
In particular, I believe it is important  
that Morling College, the Baptist  
Theological College of NSW and ACT  
Churches, continues to be at the heart  
of Morling Inc.

# Nominations for Baptist Churches of New South Wales Property Trust and Profile of Candidates for Election

(2 persons to be elected by assembly, from 2 nominees)

Person	Church	Profile
Michael Justin Williams	Northside Baptist Church	Page 30
Judith Carpenter	Ashfield Baptist Church	Page 31

The following pages provide background information for the nominated parties. Profiles are prepared by nominees.

**The Baptist Churches of New South Wales Property Trust is an incorporated body created by the Baptist Churches of New South Wales Property Trust Act 1984.**



Seven members are elected by the Baptist Assembly for three year terms on a rotational basis. The members of the Property Trust are required to obey the directions of the local congregation, provided those directions do not contravene the Act or the general law of the land.

The Act requires that a member of the Property Trust will be a member of a Baptist Church affiliated with the Association. At a personal level members of the trust are involved in the ministry of a local Baptist church and have a firsthand understanding of congregational life. They know that church property matters are often complex and that local leaders sometimes require help to properly process transactions. As servants of our churches they will adhere to the Basic Doctrines, Statement of Beliefs and Objects and Values of the Association.

In order to fulfill its role the Property Trust should ideally comprise members who have various business disciplines, including accounting, legal, real estate, banking, management, etc. In the past its members have included a Minister. A member of the Trust cannot be a person who is or becomes an employee of the Trust, the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT or of any committee, council or agency of the Association of Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT.

The Property Trust meets up to six times a year in Sydney. In addition 2-3 members meet most weeks to sign documents submitted by churches for their property transactions. Country members are paid traveling expenses to attend, or may attend meetings by teleconference.

At each Annual Assembly, an election of members of the Trust shall be held to fill the offices of the members of the Trust, which become vacant at the end of that Assembly.

2 trust members, Judith Carpenter and Mike Williams, will retire by rotation having completed their 3-year term. They are eligible for, and have consented to, renomination.

There are 2 vacancies to be filled at this year's Annual Assembly. A simple majority is required in order to be elected.

The following nominee profiles have been supplied by each nominee and are presented here in randomised order.

# Candidates for Property Trust



Nominee:

**Michael Justin Williams**

Church Membership:

**Northside Baptist Church**

## **Relevant ministry experience or areas of service**

I have been attending Northside Baptist Church for approximately 15 years. My primary ministry involvement over this time has been playing drums in a worship setting, while I am also a member of the church's property advisory group.

## **Relevant expertise for Property Trust (eg: legal, finance, property, other)**

I have spent my professional career working in property development – primarily large scale residential development. This has included 11 years working for Landcom, the NSW State Government owned development corporation, and subsequently over 7 years working in my current role as Head of Strategy & Acquisitions for a privately owned residential development company, Legacy Property.

I have comprehensive end to end experience in the development process, including detailed knowledge of legal and financial structuring for property acquisition and development.

## **Other Relevant Personal information**

I am married to Kristen and we have two children – Mark (nearly 5yo) and Phoebe (2.5yo).

## **Reason for Accepting Nomination for Property Trust**

I continue to enjoy my involvement in the Trust and believe that I have provided a useful contribution during my membership. I have found that my experience translates very well to the functions of the Property Trust, particularly those matters involving more complex development proposals, and serving on the Trust provides an opportunity to use my professional expertise in a ministry setting.





Nominee:

**Judith Carpenter**

Church Membership:

**Ashfield Baptist Church**

Served on BaptistCare Board from 2002 to 2019, the last three as Chair and in this capacity dealt with significant property and governance issues. Currently Chair of Lifecare SA (aged care provider) currently dealing with development and property issues including valuations etc.

An Elder of Ashfield Baptist Church; happy to serve the wider Baptist community as part of the NSW Property Trust.

# Morling Council Principal Nomination

## Recommendation

The Morling College Council is pleased to bring to the Assembly of the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT the following recommendation:

*The Morling College Council seeks the approval of the Assembly to appoint Rev. Dr. Tim MacBride to the role of Principal of Morling College to commence a 5-year term from July 2023.*

In preparation for the Assembly please prayerfully consider the recommendation and the ongoing ministry of Morling College.

### Process

The Morling College Council has been on a journey of discernment towards bringing this recommendation which included the Principal role being advertised through an external consultant nationally and internationally with an application close date of September 25th, 2022.

### Panel

A selection panel made up of strong leaders in education, governance, and ministry was established to assess the applications for the Principal position. The panel, confirmed following the May 2022 Assembly, was made up of Ange Gratsounas as chair, Brian Powell, Helen Blanch, Karen Siggins, Alan Rice, and Steve Bartlett, each bringing a wealth of experience and insight to the task.

### The Selection Process

Once all applications for the position were received, the panel individually reviewed the applicants using an agreed template. The panel met on October 12th, 2022, to consider the applications as a group. During this meeting, the panel decided to interview a shortlist of applicants. The first interviews with the candidates took place on November 5th, 2022.

Subsequently, the panel narrowed down the shortlist to a final group of applicants and agreed to conduct second interviews. At this stage reference checks were completed with the three referees provided by each applicant. The second interviews took place on November 23rd, 2022, and the panel met to finalise a recommendation on November 30th, 2022.



The preferred application was presented to the Morling College Council in December 2022 who unanimously supported the recommendation.

### **Basis of Recommendation**

Rev. Dr. MacBride has strong academic theological qualifications along with the following sought-after skills and qualities that Morling College Council believes make him a desirable nominee for the Principal position:

- **Communicator**

Rev. Dr. MacBride is an excellent communicator with an open and consultative leadership style. He has good network relationships with the Assembly Council and churches across NSW & the ACT.

- **Contemporary**

Rev. Dr. MacBride is culturally aware and contemporary in outlook, as well as being a strategic thinker, innovator, and visionary. He has a substantial capacity to enthuse and engage the younger generations.

- **Considered**

Rev. Dr. MacBride has a thorough understanding of higher education processes and the regulation of accreditation. He is considered in his approach to the standards of quality teaching, student protection and research requirements of TEQSA.

In a recent letter to Steve Bartlett (Director of Ministries BUNSW-ACT) the Dean of the Perth Morling Campus and the Director of Ministries BUWA strongly supported the appointment of Rev. Dr. MacBride, stating:

*“...we affirm that the Perth Campus of Morling College and the Director of Ministries of The Baptist Union of Western Australia Inc. fully supports the nomination of Tim MacBride as Principal of the College and encourages the Assembly to accept and approve this nomination.”*

# Morling Council Principal Nomination

## Constitutional Requirements

Under the Baptist Association of NSW & ACT Constitution, the appointment and reappointment of the full time Principal of Morling College will be by Assembly upon the recommendation of Morling College Council, with the person being accountable to that Council. Normally, the Principal of Morling College will be appointed for 5 years and will be eligible for re-appointment.

The Morling College Council will have the right to determine the terms of appointment of the Principal of Morling College and in that process: have the person sign a declaration that they subscribe to the basic doctrines, objects and values; provide a statement as to their response to the statement of beliefs, such declaration and response being made available to Assembly; regularly review the Principal's performance; and hold the right of suspension and dismissal of the Principal. Rev. Dr. MacBride fully subscribes to the basic doctrines, objects and values of the Baptist Association of NSW and ACT and strongly supports the Association's Statement of Beliefs.

The Principal of Morling College shall be a person who has academic qualifications in theological studies and recognised expertise relevant to the duties and responsibilities of the position.



Nominee:

**Rev Dr Tim MacBride**

Age:

**50**

Church Membership:

**Menai Baptist Church**

Rev Dr MacBride has been a committed follower of Jesus since the age of five and joined the Baptist denomination at the age of 18. Having led youth groups, home groups, and church music teams, he was called into pastoral ministry in his mid-twenties and was ordained in 2003.

For 12 years Rev Dr MacBride was on the pastoral staff at Narwee Baptist Church, with various roles and responsibilities including teaching, creative ministries, and young adult ministries.

Since 2008, Rev Dr MacBride has been a member of the Morling faculty, lecturing in New Testament and Preaching, and in 2019 became the Dean of Bible & Theology. He had previously studied at Morling, completing a Bachelor of Theology, Master of Theology, and Doctor of Theology.

Rev Dr MacBride has served on several boards, including the Inaburra School Board (2015-2021), The Academic Board of Morling College (2019-), and the Academic Board and Coursework Committee of the Australian College of Theology (2012-2014 & 2019-, respectively). Rev Dr MacBride has also authored a variety of publications, including:

*Preaching the New Testament as Rhetoric: The Promise of Rhetorical Criticism for Expository Preaching* (Wipf & Stock, 2014).

*Catching the Wave: Preaching the New Testament as Rhetoric* (IVP, 2016).

“Preaching Paul’s Epistles to Australians,” in Hussey, *Preaching with an Accent* (Morling Press, 2019).

*To Aliens and Exiles: Preaching the New Testament as Minority-Group Rhetoric in a Post-Christendom World* (Cascade, 2020).

“The preacher as tour guide: Becoming better curators of the biblical text,” *St Mark’s Review* 258 (2021).

“Imitators of the Lord in Severe Suffering,” in Schmutzer, *Divine Suffering* (Pickwick, 2023).

“Persuasion in Preaching: A Social-Psychological Analysis of the Sermon to the Hebrews” in McKay and van der Zwan, *Showcasing the Psyche in the Bible* (Sheffield Phoenix, 2023).

“In (Partial) Defence of the Monologue Sermon,” *IJPT* (2023, forthcoming).

Prior to his pastoral ministry, Rev Dr MacBride worked in marketing and management information at the global container shipping line, P&O Nedlloyd.

Rev Dr MacBride is married to Samantha, and they have two adult sons. Samantha and Tim currently attend Menai Baptist Church after spending many happy and joyful and productive years at Narwee Baptist Church.