

## BISHOP-IN-COUNCIL



Anglican Diocese of  
Canberra & Goulburn

# SYNOD REPORT 2024







# FOREWORD BY THE BISHOP

As I write these words our Diocese, together with the rest of the Anglican Church of Australia, has just completed **Hope25**, a season of engaging our communities with the lasting hope Jesus offers to an uncertain world.

We are still collating the stories of what God has done through this time of mission but already there is much reason for rejoicing. However, in Luke 10 Jesus gives His followers an even more profound reason for joy – *“do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”* Before we are people who work for God, we are sisters and brothers who receive from God. Grace underpins everything.

In the year under-covered by this report Bishop-in-Council began reviews of several aspects of our common life, including our ministry to young people, our safe ministry and professional standards regimes and our recognition and affirmation of the ministry of women. Such examination of our common life reflects the call to steward well all the gifts of grace that God has given us for His service.

As Diocesan Bishop I am profoundly grateful for all who serve our Diocese through its governance. I look forward to serving alongside those elected and appointed to Bishop-in-Council as together we grow into the likeness of Christ.

**The Right Reverend Dr Mark Short**  
*Bishop - Diocese of Canberra & Goulburn*

Cover images (left to right, top to bottom):

**1** Bishop Mark's Consecration 2019. **2** An image of two girls reading by Ben White on Unsplash. **3** Hope25 congregation at St Mary in the Valley 2024. **4** St Paul's, Reid ACT. **5** Bishop Vanessa Bennett Consecration 2024. **6** Stained glass window. **7** Hope25 congregation at St Paul's, Adelong NSW 2025; **8** The Great Cross at St Mark's National Theological Centre, Barton ACT; **9** Synod 2024.



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# BACKGROUND

This Synod report outlines the work undertaken by Bishop-in-Council during the 2024 calendar year.

Bishop-in-Council is responsible to Synod as its Standing Committee and advances the mission of the Diocese. The functions and role of Bishop-in-Council are outlined in Part 8 of the Governance of the Diocese Ordinance 2000 as follows:

Bishop-in-Council is responsible to Synod:

- (a) for establishing strategies and goals for the mission and ministry of this Church in the Diocese and for the execution of those strategies and the attainment of those goals;
- (b) for the nurturing and oversight, in consultation with the Bishop, of the well-being of ministry units;
- (c) for the effective, efficient and economical management of the property and financial resources of the Diocese for the purposes of carrying out and sustaining the mission and ministry of this Church in the Diocese; and
- (d) for the supervision of the affairs of Diocesan agencies.

## Authority & Independence of Committees

Bishop-in-Council is the Standing Committee of Synod and, in that capacity, exercises the powers and functions of the Synod as it delegates to the Council by ordinance.

Bishop-in-Council has the authority to appoint task groups or committees as necessary to assist it in the discharge of its functions. Bishop-in-Council shall make appropriate provision for the terms of reference, membership of, and procedure to be followed by, any task groups or committees and give such powers or functions to them as it considers appropriate.

## Relationship between the Bishop & Bishop-in-Council

The Bishop presides at the meetings of Bishop-in-Council and a decision of Bishop-in-Council does not take effect unless the Bishop agrees to the decision.

For further details please refer to the Governance of the Diocese Ordinance 2000.



# GOVERNANCE

## Membership

As specified in the Governance of the Diocese Ordinance 2000, the members of Bishop-in-Council are:

- a) the Bishop;
- b) ex officio members:
  - (i) The Assistant Bishop/s;
  - (ii) The Dean;
  - (iii) The Archdeacons;
  - (iv) The Registrar;
  - (v) The Chancellor; and
  - (vi) The Chair of the Finance Committee.
  - (vii) the General Manager of Anglican Diocesan Services
- c) four (4) clerical and ten (10) lay members elected by the Synod;
- d) two (2) clerical and four (4) lay members appointed by the Bishop; and
- e) those persons who are members of the Council by virtue of being appointed a member of Ministry Executive.

The appointed members and the elected members hold office from the date of their appointment or election until the last day of the first session of the next Synod. Section 66 of the Ordinance specifies the procedures for the filling of vacancies that may occur.

In 2024, there were a number of membership changes on Bishop-in-Council. In March, Bishop Carol Wagner relinquished her role upon her retirement and Archdeacon Tom Henderson-Brooks also resigned from his position as Diocesan Archdeacon, effective from July after a period of Long Service Leave. Venerable Paul Cohen resigned as Archdeacon of North Canberra in September, and Venerable Steve Clarke relinquished his role as Archdeacon of the South Coast, Monaro & Alpine upon his retirement in October. In October, Mr Trevor Ament resigned as Registrar and subsequently as an Ex-Officio Member of BiC. Ms Emma Body was appointed as Acting Registrar until Mr Michael Simon was appointed as Registrar in February 2025.

In January 2024, The Venerable Joy Harris was appointed as Archdeacon for Goulburn and the Southern Tablelands, and The Venerable Emma Street commenced as Archdeacon for Chaplaincy in July. In August, The Right Reverend Vanessa Bennett was consecrated and installed as Assistant Bishop, and The Very Reverend Gavin Krebs was installed as The Dean. Venerable Kim Hoey was also appointed as Archdeacon Diaconate in September.

Bishop-in-Council wishes to place on record its thanks and appreciation to those members who completed their terms of service in 2024.

## Meetings

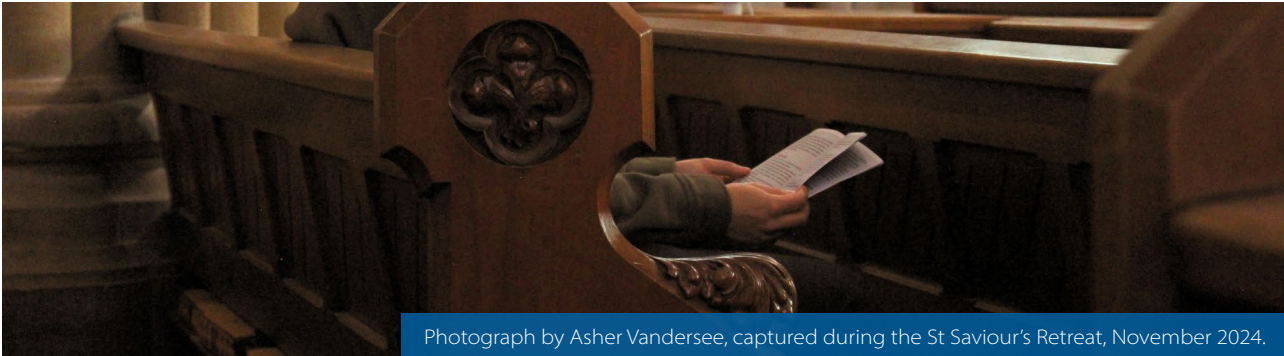
**Meetings of Bishop-in-Council are held every second month on a Friday.** In 2024, six (6) regular meetings, one (1) special meeting, four (4) electronic votes and a planning day were held. Meetings were conducted in person and/or via video conference. The table on the following pages, outlines the number of meetings each member attended in 2024 (excluding electronic votes).



Meeting Dates	16 Feb	12 Apr	14 Jun	16 Aug	18 Oct	06 Dec
<b>The Right Reverend Dr Mark Short</b> Chair / Bishop	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>The Right Reverend Carol Wagner</b> Assistant Bishop	A	A	~	~	~	~
<b>The Right Reverend Vanessa Bennett</b> Assistant Bishop	~	~	~	~	●	●
<b>The Very Reverend Gavin Krebs</b> The Dean	~	~	~	●	●	●
<b>Ex Officio Members</b>						
<b>The Venerable Tom Henderson-Brooks</b> Archdeacon (Diocese–Chaplaincy & Mission) <i>Collated September 2024   Resigned effective July 2024</i>	●	LOA	LOA	~	~	~
<b>The Venerable Paul Cohen</b> Archdeacon (North Canberra) <i>Collated September 2018   Resigned September 2024</i>	⊙	●	A	●	~	~
<b>The Venerable Steve Clarke</b> Archdeacon (South Coast, Monaro & Alpine) <i>Collated September 2022   Resigned effective September 2024</i>	A	A	A	A	~	~
<b>The Venerable Jonathan Holt</b> Archdeacon (South Canberra inc. Queanbeyan)	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>The Venerable Dr Neil Percival</b> <sup>OAM</sup> Archdeacon (Young & North West)	A	●	⊙	●	⊙	●
<b>The Venerable Dr Grant Bell</b> Archdeacon (Wagga Wagga & South West)	●	●	⊙	●	●	⊙
<b>The Venerable Joy Harris</b> Archdeacon (Goulburn & Southern Tablelands) <i>Collated January 2024</i>	A	●	⊙	A	●	●
<b>The Venerable Andrew Taylor</b> Archdeacon (North Canberra) <i>Collated September 2024</i>	●	●	●	●	A	●
<b>The Venerable Emma Street</b> Archdeacon (Chaplaincy) <i>Collated September 2024</i>	~	~	~	⊙	⊙	⊙
<b>The Venerable Kim Hoey</b> Archdeacon (Diaconate) <i>Collated September 2024</i>	~	~	~	~	●	●
<b>Hon. Richard Refshauge SC AM</b> The Chancellor	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>Mr Tim McGhie</b> Chair of the Finance Committee	A	●	●	●	⊙	●
<b>Mr Trevor Ament</b> Registrar / General Manager <i>Resigned October 2024</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>Ms Emma Body</b> Acting Registrar <i>Effective October 2024</i>	~	~	~	~	~	●

Meeting Dates	16 Feb	12 Apr	14 Jun	16 Aug	18 Oct	06 Dec
<b>Clerical Members Appointed by the Bishop</b>						
<b>The Reverend Heather Millard</b>	A	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	A
<b>The Reverend Sally Cullen</b>	●	⊙	⊙	●	⊙	⊙
<b>Lay Members Appointed by the Bishop</b>						
<b>Mr Mark Le Couteur</b>	●	⊙	A	⊙	⊙	⊙
<b>Ms Sandra Wells</b>	●	⊙	⊙	●	A	●
<b>Mr Jeff Buckpitt</b>	●	●	●	●	A	●
<b>Clerical Members Elected by Synod</b>						
<b>The Reverend David McLennan</b>	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>The Reverend Dr Wayne Brighton</b>	A	●	●	●	●	A
<b>The Reverend Paul Davey</b>	⊙	⊙	A	⊙	●	●
<b>Lay Members Elected by Synod</b>						
<b>Dr Sally Burt</b>	●	⊙	A	⊙	A	●
<b>Ms Belinda Moss</b>	●	⊙	⊙	●	●	A
<b>Mr Wayne Harris</b>	LOA	LOA	LOA	⊙	A	⊙
<b>Mr Paul Osborne</b>	A	⊙	A	A	⊙	⊙
<b>Mrs Margaret Wheelwright</b>	●	●	⊙	●	●	A
<b>Ms Julie Mitchell</b>	●	A	●	●	●	A
<b>Ms Tara Fryar</b>	●		A	⊙		
<b>Mr Stephen Jagers</b>	⊙	●	⊙	⊙	●	A
<b>Ms Robyn Wall</b>	●	A	●	●	●	●
<b>Mr David Holmesby</b>	●	●	●	●	A	⊙

**KEY**      Attended ●      Apology A  
Attended Online ⊙      N/A ~



Photograph by Asher Vandersee, captured during the St Saviour's Retreat, November 2024.





# COMMITTEES

## Ministry Executive

Ministry Executive was established by Synod to enhance the capacity of Bishop-in-Council to effectively plan and implement decisions concerning the mission and ministry of the Church in the Diocese, and the strategic application of Diocesan resources relating to that mission and ministry. The Governance of the Diocese Ordinance 2000 outlines the functions and role of Ministry Executive.

Members are appointed by the Bishop on the advice of Bishop-in-Council. The period of appointment of an appointed member expires on the last day of the first session of the next Synod following his or her appointment, unless terminated sooner.

During 2024, a total of six (6) regular meetings were held. The table below outlines membership attendance (excluding electronic votes) during 2024.

MEETING DATES	02 Feb	04 Apr	30 May	01 Aug	03 Oct	07 Nov
The Right Reverend Dr Mark Short Chair / Bishop	●	●	●	●	●	A
The Right Reverend Vanessa Bennett Assistant Bishop	~	~	~	~	Observer	●
The Venerable Dr Neil Percival OAM	●	●	A	●	⊙	●
Hon. Richard Refshauge SC AM	●	●	A	●	●	●
Mr Wayne Harris	●	Leave of Absence	Leave of Absence	●	A	●
Mr Mark Le Couteur	●	●	⊙	●	⊙	●
Mrs Margaret Wheelwright	●	●	⊙	●	A	●
Mr Tim McGhie	●	A	⊙	●	⊙	●
The Venerable Tom Henderson-Brooks	●	Leave of Absence	Leave of Absence	~	~	~
Ms Robyn Wall	●	●	●	●	A	●
Mr Trevor Ament Registrar (Secretary)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Ms Emma Body Acting Registrar (Secretary)	~	~	~	~	~	●

KEY

Attended

●

Apologies

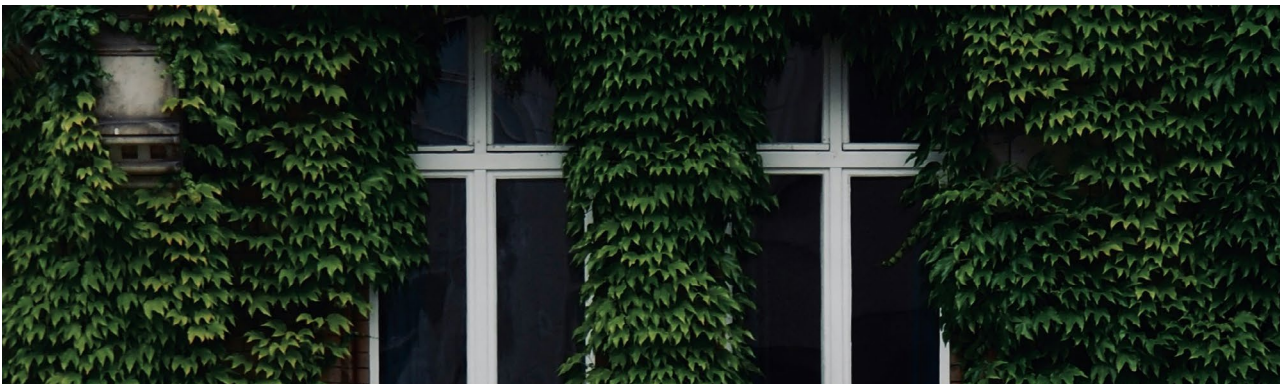
A

Attended Online

⊙

N/A

~



## Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is established under the Finance and Annual Reports Ordinance 2003.

The role of the Finance Committee is to advise the Bishop-in-Council on the financial affairs and policies of the Diocese. In particular the Finance Committee:

- Evaluates proposals by Diocesan Organisations to borrow money;
- Advises Bishop-in-Council in respect to all matters relating to debt commitments in the Diocese, particularly changing terms of existing debt or new/ additional debt;
- Reviews the Diocesan budget;
- Assesses financial risk exposures for the Diocese and develops appropriate strategies to manage these;
- Reviews financial controls and systems in the Anglican Diocesan Services (ADS); and
- Provides advice on matters referred to it by Bishop-in-Council, including matters relating to the financial affairs and policies of Diocesan Organisations.

The Finance Committee is accountable to Bishop-in-Council and has the authority to request any information it requires from any Diocesan Organisation to assist it with providing appropriate advice to Bishop-in-Council.

The Finance Committee has provided a separate report to Synod.

## Anglican Schools Commission

As a committee of Bishop-in-Council the Anglican Schools Commission of the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn (ASCCG) functions closely with it to provide timely, accurate and relevant reports concerning the financial, educational and missional performance of the schools.

The ASCCG has provided a separate report to Synod.

## Audit & Risk Management Committee

The Audit & Risk Management Committee is established under the Finance and Annual Reports Ordinance 2003 (Ordinance). The functions of the Committee are to determine whether the Diocese has appropriate controls in place which are working effectively to support good governance, compliance with legislation and other regulatory obligations.

The Audit & Risk Management Committee remains in abeyance due to difficulties in populating the membership of the Committee. Further consideration is being given to the need for this Committee in its current form given that oversight of audit functions rests with the Diocesan Finance Committee; and the day-to-day risk management functions and oversight, are now managed by the ADS Risk & Compliance Directorate which is fully staffed and working on a full-time basis and reports to the ADS Board.





## Property Development Commission

The Property Development Commission (PDC) was formally established by Bishop-in-Council in April 2016 under the provisions of the Diocesan Property Development Ordinance 2016.

The role of the PDC is to assist Bishop-in-Council to be good stewards of God's historic provision to the Diocese. As a Committee of Bishop-in-Council it assists in assessing and prioritising the possible developments that have the potential to assist with the delivery of the missional objectives of the Diocese.

The development and re-development of Diocesan assets has been a central component of the vision for the Diocese to release capital funds and generate income streams for the Diocese to:

1. ensure the Diocese is in a position to meet historic Professional Standards claims; and
2. generate income streams for the deployment of clergy across our Diocese.

The missional purpose for these developments is to ensure the Diocese is in a position to meet financial obligations both now and into the future. The PDC will enable wise and effective decisions to be made concerning the land and capital entrusted to the Diocese.

**The PDC has provided a separate report to Synod.**

## Public Issues Commission

As a committee of Bishop-in-Council, the Public Issues Commission (PIC) has, as its purpose, to address the fourth and fifth marks of mission of the Anglican Communion, namely:

- To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

**The PIC has provided a separate report to Synod.**



# PASTORAL CARE & OVERSIGHT

The Bishop of the Diocese is elected by the Synod and is the spiritual, pastoral and executive head of the Diocese with wide-ranging legal and administrative responsibilities.

The Bishop's roles include:

- oversight;
- leadership;
- vision;
- preservation of unity;
- pastoral care to the clergy and laity;
- being the final decision-maker for professional standards and much more;
- teaching and defending the faith;
- preaching;
- mission and outreach;
- nurturer of the poor and needy;
- proclamation of the gospel; and
- hospitality.

The Bishop is supported in these diverse responsibilities by the Assistant Bishop/Vicar General, Dean of the Cathedral, Archdeacons, senior clergy and staff of the Bishop's office.

The Bishop works closely with the Diocesan Registrar, the Chancellor and staff of ADS in relation to all aspects of Diocesan administration.

The Bishop's Office and ADS are located in Canberra. Senior Clergy Leadership meetings are held every second month on the same Friday as Bishop-in-Council.

In specialist matters the Bishop consults with the relevant Ministry units, Bishop-in-Council, the Legal Committee and appropriate Diocesan agencies. The Bishop is in regular communication with clergy and lay leaders of the Diocese through the monthly letter, Ad Clerum, and in contact with the wider Diocesan family through the Diocesan website ([www.anglicancg.org.au](http://www.anglicancg.org.au)), Anglican News, Pastoral Letters, parish visits and attendance at other functions.

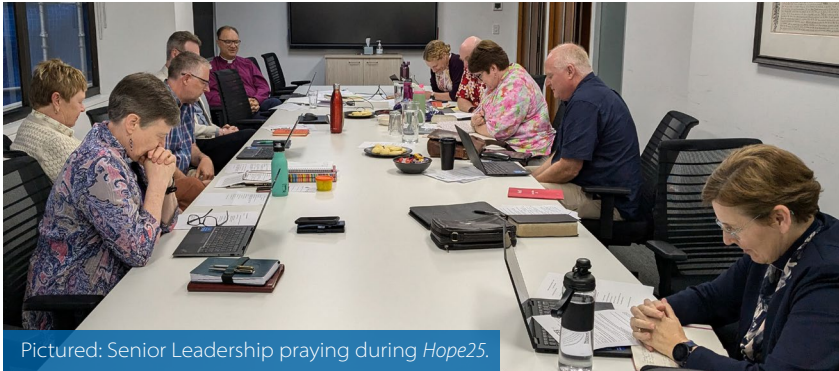
The Bishop is the President of Synod, the Chair of Bishop-in-Council and Chair of the Property Trust, Ministry Executive and the ADS Board. No ordinance of Synod can come into force without the Bishop's assent. The Bishop is called to be an agent of change, as well as being the chief pastor and defender of the faith in the Diocese.





Bishop's Office

The following tables outline the positions held within the Bishop's Office and the Archdeacons during 2024.



Pictured: Senior Leadership praying during Hope25.

TITLE	NAME
Diocesan Bishop	 The Right Reverend Dr Mark Short
Assistant Bishop / Vicar General Director for Ordination and Ministry Training & Development	 The Right Reverend Vanessa Bennett
Executive Officer to the Diocesan Bishop	 Ms Alison Payne
Executive Assistant to the Assistant Bishop and Diocesan Archdeacon	 Ms Polly Baker
ARCHDEACONRY	
Chaplaincy	 The Venerable Emma Street <i>Collated September 2024</i>
South Canberra (inc. Queanbeyan)	 The Venerable Jonathan Holt <i>Collated March 2023</i>
Goulburn & Southern Tablelands	 The Venerable Joy Harris <i>Collated February 2024</i>
Young & North West	 The Venerable Dr Neil Percival OAM <i>Collated May 2020</i>
Diaconate	 The Venerable Kim Hoey <i>Collated September 2024</i>
North Canberra	 The Venerable Andrew Taylor <i>Collated September 2024</i>
South Coast, Monaro & Alpine Region	Vacant
Wagga Wagga & South West	Vacant

Registrar



Registrar  
Michael Simon

The key functions of the Registrar can be broken down into the following three areas:

1. **To aid and facilitate the Bishop's ministry and mission** including but not limited to, registering and recording all licences, faculties and other official documents granted or made by the Bishop; arranging all necessary documents and certificates to be prepared, sighted and signed for Ordinations by the Bishop; and to perform the duties ordinarily performed by the Registrar of a Diocese at Ordinations.
2. **To perform functions with respect to the administration of the Diocese** including but not limited to, managing the Diocesan Registry Office in consultation with the Bishop; implementing decisions of Synod, Bishop-in-Council and the Property Trust (other than decisions within the pastoral responsibilities of the Bishop); and to register and arrange for the publication of notice for Ordinances passed by Synod or Bishop-in-Council.
3. **To perform functions in relation to Synod, Bishop-in-Council and the Property Trust** including but not limited to, acting as the Secretary to Bishop-in-Council and the Property Trust; to be the custodian and (where required) to circulate documentation in relation to Synod; to supervise and record the results of Synod elections; to set the agenda, in consultation with the Bishop, and associated documentation for Bishop-in-Council and the Property Trust; to prepare, take custody and distribute minutes of Bishop-in-Council and the Property Trust; to have custody for the common seal of the Property Trust; reporting to Bishop-in-Council and Synod; and other functions as determined by Synod.

The Registrar is also responsible for other administrative functions including the co-ordination of the annual Synod; Parish returns; Clergy relocations and general administration (including the production of the administrative circular).



Anglican Diocesan Services (ADS)

The ADS provides corporate services to the Diocese and commenced operations on 1 July 2013. The ADS model consolidates core administrative functions within a single-shared services entity to provide a framework that enables continuous service improvements to all agencies within the Diocese and drives efficiency benefits from the consolidation of the identified shared services.

**This enables the Diocese and its partner agencies to better focus on their core business and mission. Please refer to the ADS Annual Report for further details.**

Professional Standards Unit



Professional Standards Director  
Peter Barnett

For further details on Professional Standards, please refer to [page 26](#).

Legal Committee



The Chancellor for the Diocese  
Honourable Richard Refshauge  
SC AM

The Legal Committee is responsible for the drafting of Ordinances, the drawing up of legal documents and general advice on legal matters/questions. Please refer to [page 27](#) for further details on the Legal Committee.



# MISSION & MINISTRY INITIATIVES



During 2024, ministry and mission initiatives continued to be progressed using the framework of the Bishop's six (6) priority areas for guiding and challenging our Diocese to engage a world of difference with the love and truth of Jesus.

Bishop Mark has illustrated this as follows:

*Engaging a World of Difference with the Love and Truth of Jesus*

Every Christian believer and community is called to serve the purposes of God in their own generation (cf Acts 13:36), commending the unchanging gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in an ever-changing world.

One of the defining characteristics of our generation is difference.

First there is the *difference of diversity*. As globalisation facilitates the movement of people, capital and ideas across boundaries it brings the diversity of human experience and worldviews to our neighbourhoods, workplaces and social media feeds. This diversity has many dimensions – cultural, economic, religious and ideological.

Second, there is the *difference of disagreement*. In the absence of a shared narrative that gives meaning and direction to human life we struggle to reach agreement on matters of profound personal and public significance. Sometimes this disagreement gives rise to distancing and incomprehension, at other times it fuels polarisation and tribalism.

Confronted by such a world, Christians may find themselves drawn to either *isolation* or *assimilation*. The first approach retreats from the world; the second uncritically adopts its values or mode of relating. A third way is that of engagement – encounter with the world that is intentional, mutual and faithful.

Such engagement is explicitly Jesus-centred. It arises from and reflects a conviction that Christ is central to God's plans for humanity and the entire created order.

It is holistic – expressed in words of truth and deeds of love.

It is multi-dimensional – reflecting the breadth of God's purposes through:

- Gracious and patient **witness**
- Safe and sustainable **ministry**
- Compassionate and skilled **service**
- Creative and informed **advocacy**
- Just and generous **stewardship**
- Inspiring and empowered **worship**



The three (3) themes include:

1. how we might **see** what matters to God, encountering the world's needs with an open-ness to mercy (Luke 10:25-27);
2. how we might **hear** what matters to God, encountering the world's questions with an open-ness to conversation and witness (Luke 8:26-40); and
3. how we might **feel** what matters to God, encountering Jesus in Scripture and the shared life of discipleship (Luke 24:13-35).

The six (6) priority areas can be seen below.





**Bishop-in-Council Governance & Strategic Planning**

In recent years Bishop-in-Council has undertaken significant work to further refine and clarify some of its governance processes. An updated Bishop-in-Council charter and induction document has been approved and implemented along with other associated governance documents (i.e. Diocesan Induction Booklet) and processes in alignment with Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC) guidelines. The continued development of the Diocesan enterprise risk register has also been an area of focus, to assist Bishop-in-Council in its oversight responsibilities.

In June 2025 Bishop-in-Council held a Strategic Planning Day facilitated by Mr Lloyd Irwin from Partners in Ministry. Drawing on a consideration of external challenges and opportunities and informed by a number of motions passed by the 2024 Synod, Bishop-in-Council identified the following five key objectives for 2025-2030, noting that these are not intended to be an exhaustive statement of all that we will or must do as Diocese, but rather a focus for particular attention and accountability:

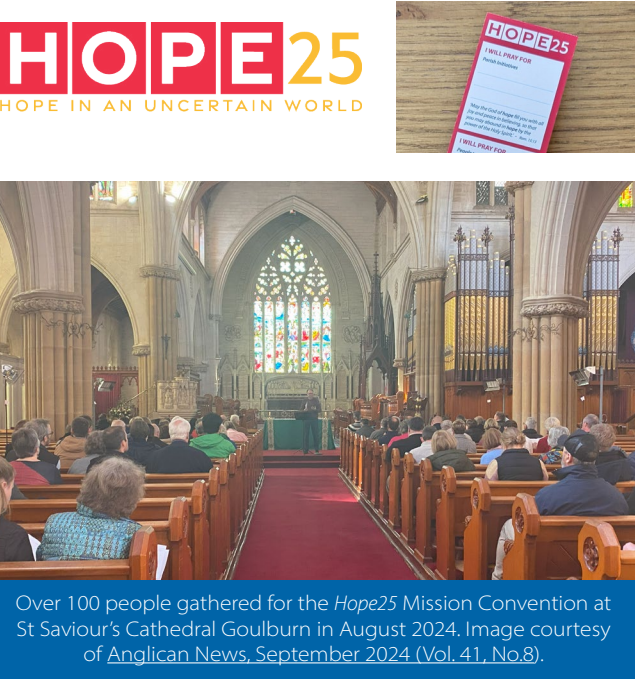
- Put parishes at the centre of Diocesan strategy
- Create a pipeline of theologically competent and confident clergy and laity for service in rural and city contexts
- An active children's and youth ministry in every Parish
- Be a Diocese that is bold for Jesus
- See a greater number of competent Anglicans desiring to serve on Diocesan boards and committees

This work will be further developed using an OGSM (Objectives, Goals, Strategies and Measures) framework with BiC and Synod receiving regular updates on progress.

**Ministry Growth & Renewal**

As a Diocese we continue to be blessed by the faithful and dedicated service of people across our Diocese (both lay and ordained) who contribute significantly to our shared mission and ministry of engaging local communities with the love and truth of Jesus. We give thanks to God for His provision and pray that He will continue to raise up new generations of faithful servants and disciples across our diverse mission and ministry fields.

Between Easter and Pentecost many ministry units and agencies participated in **Hope25** – a national initiative that saw Australian Anglican parishes and communities engage in an intentional season of sharing the hope that Jesus offers to an uncertain world. The Reverend Luke Midenas was engaged part-time as our Diocesan Hope25 officer. He worked in collaboration with the ADS Visual Communications & Brand Designer to produce and distribute a number of resources including *Hope25* themed book marks, banners and corflutes. The display in the Cathedral gives some exciting insights into what God did during time; at the time of writing we were awaiting results from a national survey that will give us further insights into what we might learn from this experience.



Over 100 people gathered for the *Hope25* Mission Convention at St Saviour's Cathedral Goulburn in August 2024. Image courtesy of Anglican News, September 2024 (Vol. 41, No.8).



Image courtesy of Anglican News, May 2025 (Vol. 42, No. 04).


During 2024 and 2025 Bishop-in-Council approved a number of measures intended to give Parishes greater flexibility and resources to undertake God's mission in their particular context. These included approving the merger of the former Parishes of Charnwood and Ginninderra to form the new Parish of Hope Ginninderra and noting the subsequent formation of a Ministry District incorporating this Parish and the Parish of Holt. Bishop-in-Council also approved changes in Trust arrangements to allow The Reverend Anna Krebs to be appointed Rector of the Parish of West Goulburn. It also received reports on progress being made in developing new structures for ministry in the Upper Lachlan Shire under the leadership of Archdeacon Joy Harris.

Bishop-in-Council also received updates from a number of bodies established as a result of Synod resolutions in 2023 and 2024. These included the Women in Leadership Commission, the Synergy Youth and Children's Review, the Professional Standards Taskforce and the Taskforce for Participation of People with Disability in the Life of the Church. Reports from these various bodies and, where appropriate, associated motions will be considered by Synod during its meeting.



Enoch (Inoke) Tagivakatini baptism at the foot of The Great Cross, St Mark's National Theological Centre, on Easter Sunday, April 2025. Image courtesy of Anglican News, June 2025 (Vol. 42, No. 05).

**THE PELICAN FOUNDATION**

 During 2024, the Pelican Foundation provided grants to enable a number of ministries to be supported around the Diocese.

**Please read what God has been doing in the Pelican Foundation Annual Report to Synod.**

**EXPLORATORY MINISTRIES UNIT (EMU)**

The EMU Council, under the leadership of Archdeacon Jonathan Holt, has continued to progress its work over 2024–25 in overseeing those ministries within the EMU as well as exploring options for the development of new exploratory ministries.

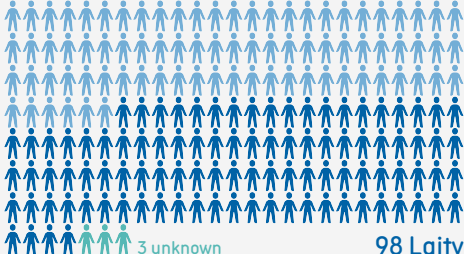
**The EMU Council has provided a separate report to Synod.**



In June 2025, a survey was distributed to all Bishop-in-Council members and the Registrar's Network. The infographics below present the key findings and insights gathered.

## 182 respondents


81 Clergy



3 unknown

98 Laity

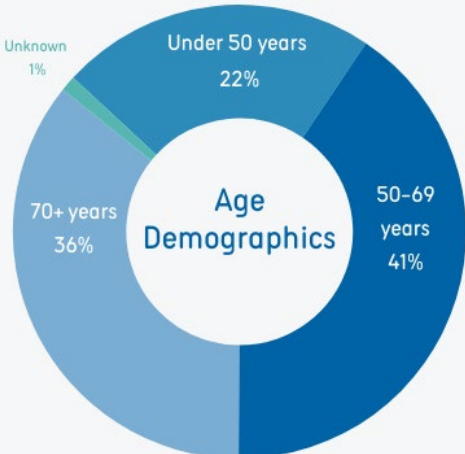
97 in live in Canberra



1 unknown

84 live outside of Canberra

### Age Demographics



Age Group	Percentage
Unknown	1%
Under 50 years	22%
50-69 years	41%
70+ years	36%

Option	Description	Number of Preferences
47	Synod commences on <b>Thursday evening online</b> for preliminary information. <b>In person Synod</b> commences at <b>12 noon on Friday</b> and concludes by <b>4pm on Saturday</b> .	47
59	Commence Synod on <b>Friday morning at 11am</b> and finish on <b>Saturday by 4pm</b> . Note: under this model less time would be allocated to the verbal presentation of reports	59
56	Continue with the current model; Synod commences at <b>2.30pm on Friday</b> and concludes by <b>4pm on Sunday</b> .	56
19	<b>Other Suggestions</b>	19

**Other Suggestions**

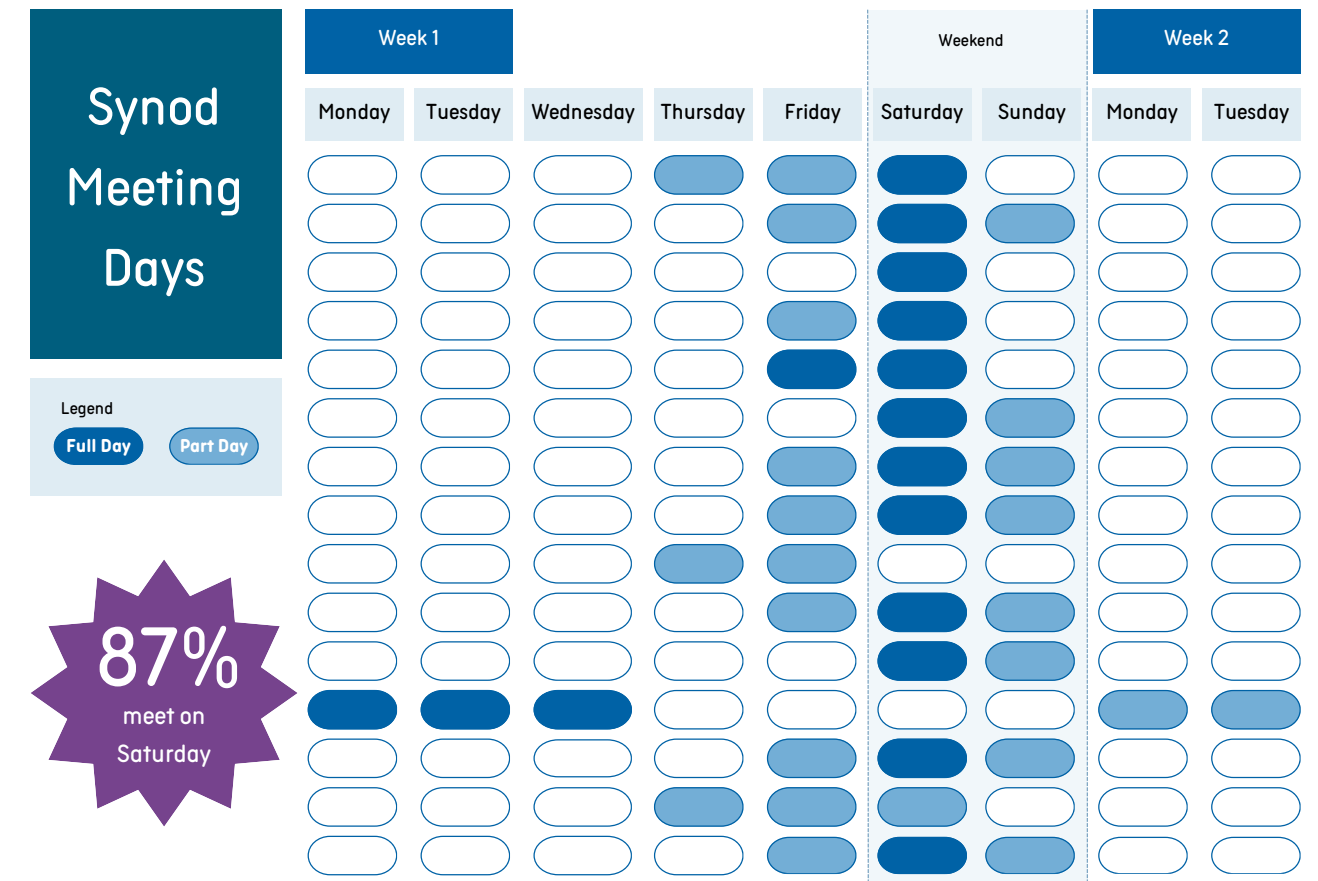
- Monday & Tuesday or Tuesday & Wednesday
- Wednesday evening online. In-person 12pm Thursday to 4pm Saturday
- 11am Thursday to 2pm Saturday
- Thursday evening to Saturday
- 9am Friday to 3pm Saturday
- 2:30pm Friday to 4pm Saturday
- 4pm or 6pm Friday to 4pm Saturday
- Friday online only and in-person to 4pm Saturday
- 11am Friday to 4pm Sunday
- Friday evening to 4pm Sunday
- 9am to 5pm Saturday only
- 10am Saturday to 3pm Sunday
- Saturday & Sunday

**Additional Commentary**

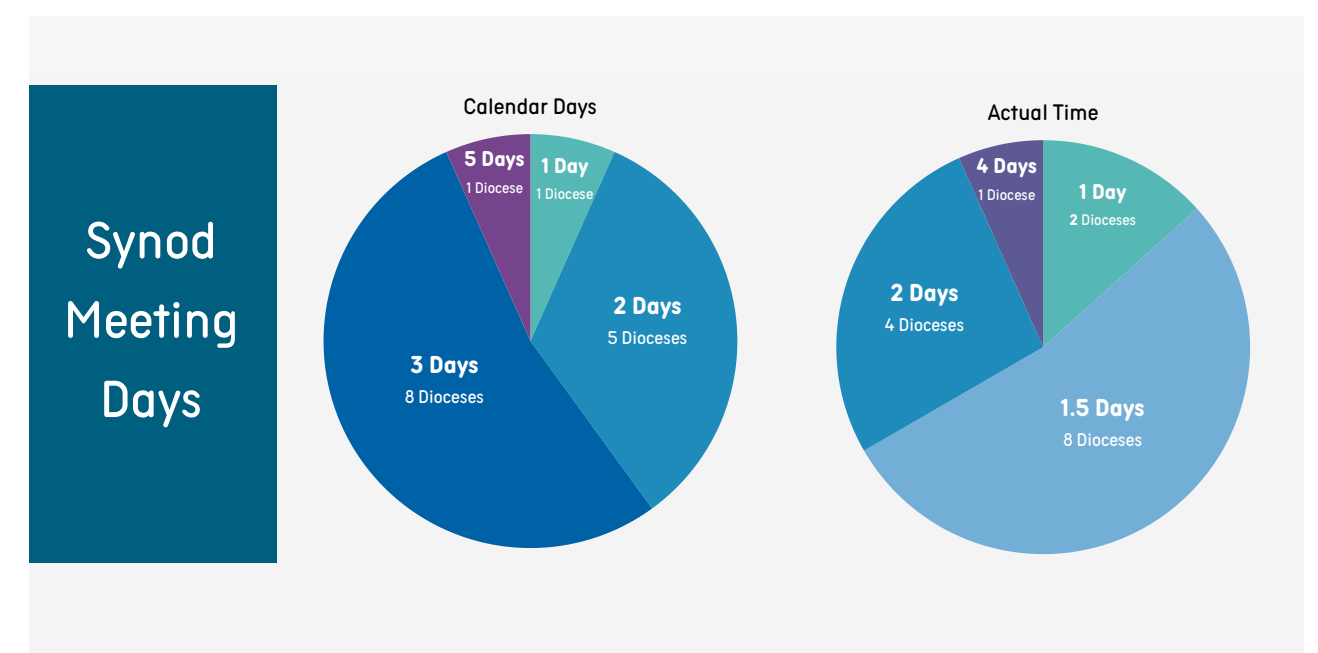
- Pre-recorded presentations** rather than verbal
- Reports** delivered **online prior** to Synod
- Less verbal presentations** during Synod
- Online Saturday session** for **report** presentations, briefing and Q&A session 2 weeks **before** Synod

There was some preference for Synod to be held outside 'normal working hours', with others advocating no Synod on a Sunday.

To better understand Synod practices across Australia, a survey was distributed to the Anglican Registrars' Network. Fifteen respondents provided valuable insights into how their dioceses structure and schedule Synod meetings—including which days of the week they typically convene.

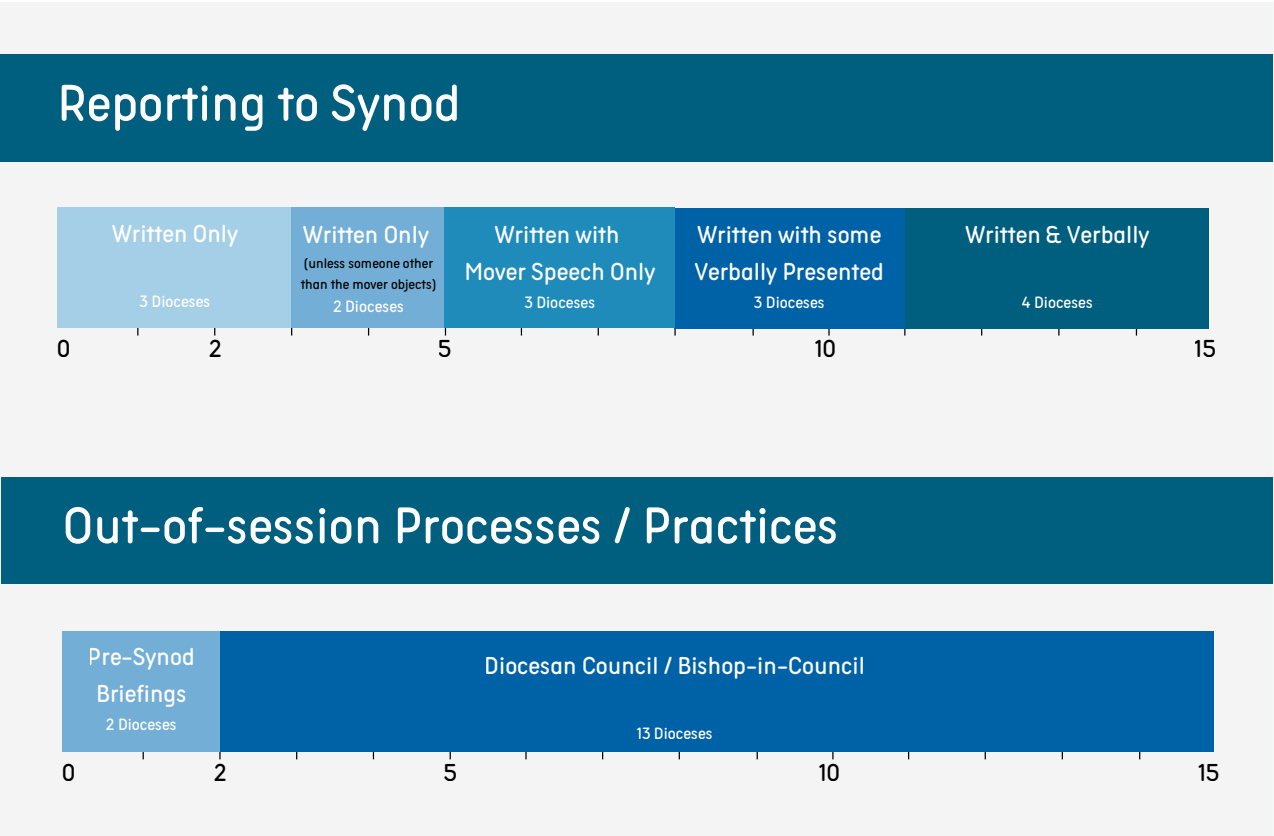


From these responses, we were able to identify both the *calendar* time (the total number of days allocated for Synod) and the *actual* meeting time (the hours spent in formal session).





The survey also explored how dioceses report to Synod, and whether they have additional processes outside of designated Synod days to address issues commonly raised during Synod.



Clergy in the Diocese

During 2024, seven (7) new Deacons were ordained in February and four (4) new Priests in November. In 2025 three (3) new Deacons were ordained with two (2) Deacons to be Priested in November.

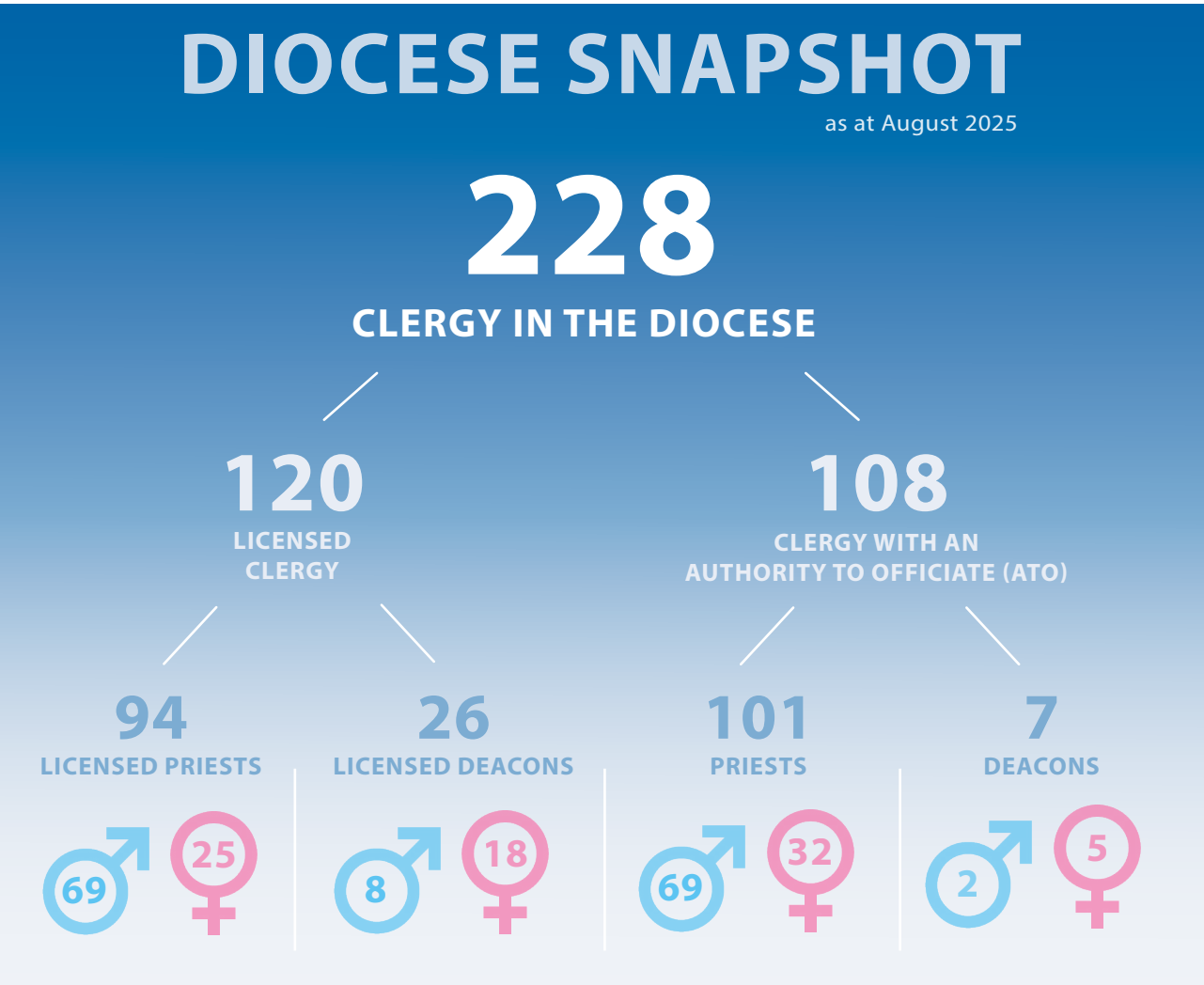
There are currently 17 people engaged in the ordination discernment process (6 women, 11 men). Fourteen (14) of these people are currently undertaking the formation program at St Mark’s National Theological Centre.



The seven Deacons ordained in February 2024 at St Saviour’s Cathedral.



The four Priests ordained in November 2024 at St Saviour’s Cathedral.





Challenges & Progress

During 2024 and 2025 substantial progress was made in addressing challenges that were outlined in more detail in last year’s Bishop-in-Council Report.

ANGLICARE



As noted in last year’s Report Mr Trevor Ament was appointed as Interim CEO of Anglicare effective from February 2024, as part of a response to significant financial and governance challenges. Mr Ament was confirmed as permanent Anglicare CEO in October 2024. Mr Mark Brandon-Baker also agreed to serve as Chair of the Anglicare Board. Mark has previously served the Diocese through governance roles with Canberra Grammar School and the Anglican Investment and Development Fund. He and Trevor have worked together to renew and expand the membership of the Anglicare Board so that includes a broad range of skills including finance, legal, health and risk expertise.

As outlined in the Anglicare Annual Report, steady progress is being made on returning Anglicare’s operations to a sustainable position although there is still some way to go.

ST MARK’S NATIONAL THEOLOGICAL CENTRE



As noted last year, St Mark’s has experienced significant financial challenges relating to meeting budgeted enrolment figures.

By January 2025 St Mark’s finances had stabilised sufficiently to allow the appointment of Dr Jacqueline Service as St Mark’s new Director. Dr Service in the first woman to serve as St Mark’s Director and is working closely with the Diocese to pursue initiatives that will increase the number of women engaging in theological study and ministry.

During 2024, St Mark’s was assisted by Mr Matt Busby Andrews to implement a number of initiatives to increase its online presence and engagement around the theme of preparation for service. These initiatives bore fruit with enrolments in the first semester of 2024 being 18% higher than a year earlier. This is particularly significant given the overall decline in student numbers across the Australian theological education sector as a whole.

In December 2023, Bishop-in-Council implemented the St Mark’s Special Measures Ordinance to increase the operational and administrative oversight of St Mark’s and assist in developing a business plan to restore St Mark’s operations to a sustainable position. This has also included the provision of additional support via the ADS in terms of finance, HR, risk and compliance and property management assistance. Much of this assistance has been delivered through Mr Andrew Guile in his role as Administrator. There has also been ongoing engagement with Charles Sturt University (CSU) and other parties, particularly Anglican Schools, in relation to pursuing partnerships for the delivery of theological education.

During 2024, Dr Michael Gladwin served as Acting Director, succeeded briefly by The Reverend Dr Geoff Broughton.

*Please pray that these initiatives will continue to generate positive outcomes given the vital role that St Mark’s plays in the delivery of theological education and training in the Diocese.*



SCHOOLS & EDUCATION

As outlined last year, The Anglican School Googong has encountered significant financial challenges. During 2024 enrolment numbers stabilized and there was increased community engagement under the leadership of Principal Dr Clayton Massey.

In November 2024, Mr Andy Gordon was appointed foundation principal of Stromlo Forest Anglican College. Mr Gordon previously served as Interim Principal at Radford College; he is a committed Christian who worships at Gungahlin Anglican Church. At the time of writing construction of the school was running on schedule for Stage One to open for the commencement of the 2026 School Year. There has been a high level of interest evidenced by online enquiries, attendance at open days and other public briefings. The Parish of Weston Molonglo has advertised for a church planter to work alongside Mr Gordon in engaging the community with a view to planting a congregation on the School campus sometime in 2027.

St Luke’s Early Learning Centre Chapman opened in January 2024. While enrolment growth has been slower than expected the Centre is now at over 80 per cent of capacity. The appointment of Ms Kate Prior as Chaplain to the Centre has strengthened relationships



St Luke’s Early Learning Community, Chapman

between St Luke’s and the wider Diocese, particularly the Parish of Arawang where she and her family worship.

The construction of St Luke’s ELC at Deakin is almost completed, with the opening scheduled for January 2026. ADS has engaged external assistance in the marketing and opening of this new ELC to ensure it commences with a good level of enrolments.

There has been close engagement with Curtin Parish in relation to using the Deakin ELC for a new congregation. This new ‘Deakin’ congregation is currently meeting at Barton using facilities at St Mark’s/Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture.

During 2025 the Diocese prepared and lodged a submission to acquire and operate Brindabella Christian College. The submission was well received by the Administrators but was not successful; Bishop Mark subsequently wrote to the successful operator (Christian Community Ministries) to assure them of our prayers as they contribute to the broader landscape of Christian education.

*Please continue to pray for TASG and all our Anglican Schools.*





# PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

**Our Diocese is committed to holistic Safe Church Ministry.**

**This means: we commit to our pastoral, duty of care, legal and insurance obligations; with the goal that all ministries are spiritually, emotionally and physically safe; based on the premise that Diocesan parishes and ministries should be person-valuing and respectful places free from abuse and harm, for ministry to God’s glory.**

The Professional Standards Ordinance 2004 (PSO) was enacted by the Bishop-in-Council in 2004. The objective of the PSO is to establish a code of good practice for Church workers and processes for responding effectively and fairly to complaints made by people who have been aggrieved by the actions of a Church worker, which are not in conformity with the code.

The PSO provides for the appointment of:

- (a) Professional Standards Director;
- (c) Professional Standards Committee;
- (d) Professional Standards Board; and
- (e) Professional Standards Reference Group.

Bishop-in-Council continues to work diligently to ensure that Diocesan policies and practices are aligned with the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and with what is rightly demanded by our communities. Our Professional Standards and Safe Ministry Unit staff continue to serve us well and are to be commended for their work. The Diocese is committed to the ongoing review of its policies and practices in the areas of Professional Standards and Safe Ministry. In view of feedback received from clergy and ministry units over 2023-24,

further work will be undertaken over 2024-25 to review and clarify certain aspects of this to enhance operability whilst also ensuring the compliance now required due to the changes in legislation. This review is being conducted separately to the Professional Standards and Safe Ministry Offices and is being led by Mrs Anne McNaughton.

**Please refer to the Professional Standards and ADS Reports to Synod** for further information regarding the work and activities undertaken in relation to Professional Standards and Safe Ministry during 2024–25.

## National Redress Scheme

Since the commencement of the National Redress Scheme in 2019 up to August 2025, there has been a total of 42 Requests for Information (RFIs) received, with 11 submitted between January 1 and August 8, 2025.

Applicants are generally given up to six (6) months to accept, decline or ask for a review of a redress offer.

**Further details regarding the NRS are contained in the Professional Standards Synod Report.**



# LEGAL COMMITTEE

The Legal Committee is established as a Committee of Bishop-in-Council under s71 of the Governance of the Diocese Ordinance 2000. The current members are listed below.

Currently, the position of ADS Legal Manager remains vacant.

The Committee has resumed meeting in person, with occasional email consideration of matters.

While the Chancellor does provide advice regularly to the Bishop, he also provides advice to Diocesan Agencies and has provided advice to many members the Diocese from time to time on request, especially about the somewhat arcane structure and procedures of the Diocese. The Chancellor is, however, very ably assisted by the members of the Legal Committee, who freely and generously give of their very significant legal expertise to address some of the complicated issues that arise in the activities of the Diocese. They all work in a voluntary capacity.

The Legal Committee does not provide formal legal advice. It will advise when such advice needs to be sought. The Diocese and its agencies obtain legal advice and work, including representation in legal proceedings from external law firms. Such representation in court proceedings has generally related to claims arising out of alleged abuse when the victim survivors seek compensation.

Matters of particular consideration this year have included the administration of the now closed Diocesan Superannuation Fund, some issues about use of parish premises and the re-structure of Diocesan Schools.

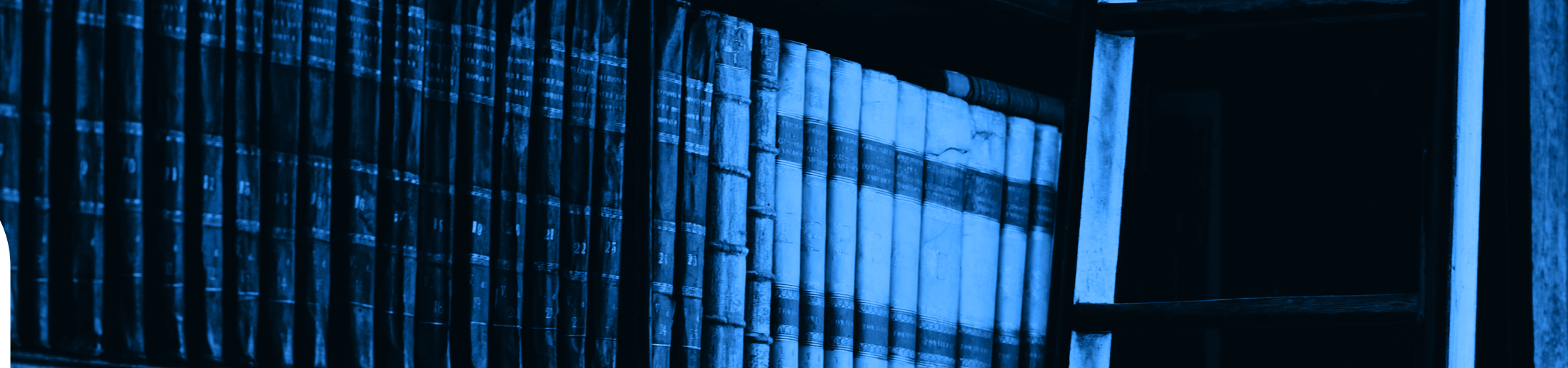
The Diocese is well-served by the generous assistance provided by the Legal Committee.

Members	Title
Ms Anne McNaughton	Chair
Hon. Richard Refshauge SC AM	The Chancellor
Mr Tony Beal	Member





# 2024–25 ORDINANCES



Name of Ordinance	Date Passed
Bega Parish (Church House) Land Sale Amendment Ordinance 2024	16 February 2024
QDAC (Karabar Preschool) Leasing Ordinance 2024	16 February 2024
Parish of Wagga Wagga (Ashmont) Leasing Ordinance 2024	12 April 2024
South Coast Schools (Special Measures) Ordinance 2024	12 April 2024
Sapphire Coast Anglican Parish (St John's Eden) Sale and Devt. Further Provisions Ordinance 2024	12 April 2024
Parish of Wagga Wagga (Church St) Leasing Ordinance 2024	12 April 2024
Sapphire Coast Anglican Parish (St Paul' Towamba) Licensing Ordinance 2024	14 June 2024
South Coast Schools (Special Measures) Ordinance 2024	12 April 2024
Sapphire Coast Anglican Parish (St John's Eden) Sale and Devt. Further Provisions Ordinance 2024	12 April 2024
Parish of Wagga Wagga (Church St) Leasing Ordinance 2024	12 April 2024
Sapphire Coast Anglican Parish (St Paul' Towamba) Licensing Ordinance 2024	14 June 2024
Parish of Gundagai (St James South Gundagai) Sale Ordinance 2024	16 August 2024
Parish of Junee (McGledes Hill Wantabadgery) Sale Ordinance 2024	16 August 2024
Governance of the Diocese Ordinance Amendment Ordinance 2024	7 September 2024
Parochial Property Ordinance Amendment Ordinance 2024	7 September 2024
Finance and Annual Reports Ordinance Amendment Ordinance 2024	7 September 2024
Anglican Church Property Trust Ordinance Amendment Ordinance 2024	7 September 2024
Synod (Delegation of Functions) Ordinance Amendment Ordinance 2024	7 September 2024
Anglican Diocesan Services Financing Ordinance 2024	1 October 2024
Anglicare Financing Ordinance 2024	1 October 2024
Burgmann Anglican School Financing Ordinance 2024	1 October 2024
Sapphire Coast Anglican College Financing Ordinance 2024	1 October 2024
St Peter's Anglican College Financing Ordinance 2024	1 October 2024

Name of Ordinance	Date Passed
The Anglican School Googong Financing Ordinance 2024	1 October 2024
The Riverina Anglican College Financing Ordinance 2024	1 October 2024
ACPT-AIDF Financing Ordinance 2024	1 October 2024
Parish of St Philip's Church O'Connor Licensing Ordinance 2024-repealed 6 Dec 2024	18 October 2024
Parish of Taralga (Rector) Leasing Ordinance 2024	18 October 2024
Radford College Financing Ordinance 2024	18 October 2024
Women in Leadership Commission Ordinance 2024	18 October 2024
Registrar (Interim Arrangements) Ordinance 2024	18 October 2024
Anglicare (43-49 Currajong St, Parkes) Land Sale Ordinance 2024	6 December 2024
Parish of Bodalla-Narooma Land Sale Ordinance 2024	6 December 2024
Parish of St Philip's Church O'Connor Leasing Ordinance 2024	6 December 2024
Stromlo Forest Anglican College Incorporation Ordinance 2024	6 December 2024
Stromlo Forest Anglican College Amendment Ordinance 2024	6 December 2024
Parish of Cobargo (Quaama) Sale Ordinance 2025 amended	21 February 2025
Superannuation Fund Macquarie Ordinance 2025	21 February 2025
Googong Early Learning Centre Ordinance 2025	21 February 2025
Cartwright Mission District (Dalton Hall ) Land Sale Ordinance 2025 amended	21 February 2025
Stromlo Forest Amendment Ordinance 2025	11 April 2025
Stromlo Forest Incorporation Ordinance 2025	11 April 2025
Embracing Ministries Ordinance 2025	11 April 2025
Stromlo Forest Anglican College Ordinance 2023 amendment (No2) Ordinance 2025	20 June 2025
Parish of West Goulburn Land Sale Trust Proceeds Ordinance 2025	20 June 2025





Level 4, 221 London Circuit, Canberra ACT 2600  
GPO Box 1981, Canberra ACT 2601

(02) 6245 7101  
[www.anglicancg.org.au](http://www.anglicancg.org.au)