

Synod Summary – September 2026

DATE: 2 October 2026

ATTENTION: Rectors, Synod representatives, wardens and parish councillors

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Synod at a glance

The First Session of the 54th Synod met in the Wesley Theatre, 220 Pitt Street Sydney, on 14, 15, 16, 21 and 22 September 2026.

The Synod made 58 resolutions, passed 3 ordinances, and filled 256 positions on boards, councils, and committees. This circular outlines the key features of the Synod's proceedings with respect to **parishes**.

The full proceedings of the Synod (including reports received, questions and answers, and resolutions) are available on the [Synod website](#).

Presidential Address

The full text of [Archbishop Raffel's Presidential Address](#), as well as the [video](#), is available on the Sydney Anglicans website.

Mission Hour

Bishop Malcolm Richards led Mission Hour. The presentation included a focus on ministry partnerships with the Anglican Church in Mozambique, and ministry in Nepal and Madagascar.

Synod's key decisions

A key focus of the Synod this year was **attendance, mission, and youth in the Diocese**. Synod received an update on attendance across the Diocese and gave thanks to God for growth seen across our churches. By resolution 18/26, the Synod called for sustained prayer among all parts of the diocesan fellowship for the conversion of the lost. In particular, rectors were urged to record the names of those who profess faith in Christ for the first time and share the total number of those people each year (anonymised) with the Special Five-Year Focus Monitoring Committee via the Registrar.

By resolution 29/26, the Synod also encouraged parishes to pursue a strong ministry with children and youth that features (among other things) relational discipleship, engagement with parents, leadership development, intergenerational relationships, partnerships with schools, collaboration and planning.

The Synod considered the **administrative and compliance demands** faced by rectors, wardens and parish councils. By resolution 31/26, the Synod committed itself, and requested the Standing Committee and diocesan boards and committees to undertake, to –

- (a) give careful consideration before imposing or recommending any new requirements on parishes, and
- (b) not initiate or promote any additional compulsory requirement concerning parish governance or the ministry practice of rectors, other than in certain circumstances, until Synod in 2028.

By resolution 16/26, the Synod determined the **Property Receipts Levy rates** to apply to parishes from 2027. Further information about the calculation of the Property Receipts Levy and the Property Income Worksheet, which is to be submitted with the Parish Financial Statements, may be found on the [Parish Admin website](#) (login required).

The Synod also passed resolution 58/26, acknowledging the importance of **lay ministry screening and lay authorities**. Holding a Lay Authority is part of the Diocese's wider system of screening and accountability. The Synod encouraged the Standing Committee, Registrar, and Director of Safe Ministry to continue work they are undertaking to clarify and strengthen existing processes and communication.

The Attachment to this circular sets out all the resolutions passed by the Synod at its recent session.

Ordinances

The Synod passed three ordinances, summarised below. The first two are relevant to parishes.

The **Parental Leave Ordinance 2016 Amendment Ordinance 2026** amended the *Parental Leave Ordinance 2016 (the Ordinance)* to make minor improvements. The Ordinance contains a model policy that parishes may adopt regarding parental leave for parish clergy. The model policy is largely unchanged as a result of the Synod's review, but the theological rationale that undergirds it has been strengthened. Parishes are encouraged to consider the principles for clergy parental leave outlined in paragraphs 24 – 38 of the [Explanatory Statement](#).

The **Ordinance Procedure Ordinance 1973 Amendment Ordinance 2026** amended the *Ordinance Procedure Ordinance 1973* to clarify the procedures to be followed by the Standing Committee when exercising ordinance-making powers on behalf of the Synod.

The Synod also passed the **General Synod – Constitution Alteration (Title of the Primate) Canon 1989 Assenting Ordinance 2026**. The effect of this ordinance is to assent to a Canon to amend the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia, to provide that the title of “Archbishop” be conferred on a Primate who is not also a metropolitan. The title confers no rights, powers or jurisdiction.

Actions for parishes and Synod members

The Synod passed a number of resolutions that included calls to action for parishes and Synod members. Each of these are provided in summary form below (extracted to show how they relate to parishes) and should be read in the context of the complete resolution. The full terms of all the resolutions passed by the Synod at its recent session are provided in the Attachment.

Adequacy of clergy superannuation contribution rates: By resolution 1/26, among other things, the Synod encouraged all clergy to plan early to provide for their housing in retirement and seek personal financial advice in this area.

Safe Ministry Training for Synod Members: By resolution 2/26, among other things, the Synod encouraged all members of the 54th Synod, who have not already done so, to consider completing Safe Ministry Training.

Sports Sunday 2026: By resolution 5/26, among other things, the Synod encouraged parishes to consider utilising Sports Sunday, Sunday September 20th, to raise awareness and inform the prayers of parishioners about sports ministry in their local areas.

Establishment of the Australian Anglican Chaplains Network: By resolution 6/26, among other things, the Synod encouraged Anglican Chaplains to be involved in a new Australian Anglican Chaplains Network (see www.anglican.chaplaincy.com.au).

Regional ministry: By resolution 7/26, among other things, the Synod encouraged Sydney clergy and parishes to consider how they might contribute to the spread of the gospel in regional and remote Australia.

NSW Rally Against Abortion Up To Birth: By resolution 13/26, among other things, the Synod encouraged its members to keep standing up for the lives of mothers and their unborn children.

A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth: 2026 ‘Baseline Update’: By resolution 18/26, among other things, the Synod urged all Rectors to record the names of all those who professed faith in Christ for the first time during a year, in order that the church might rejoice with the angels in heaven, those new saints be nurtured and prayed for, and anonymised data shared with the Special Five-Year Focus Monitoring Committee [via the Registrar].

Marking DV Sunday: By resolution 19/26, among other things, the Synod –

- (a) encouraged churches and congregational members to pray for marriages, families, victim-survivors, and churches,

- (b) urged churches and congregations to continue building awareness and understanding of domestic abuse,
- (c) encouraged clergy to undertake training that equips them to respond appropriately to disclosures of abuse within their congregations,
- (d) commended the *Diocesan Domestic Abuse and Good Practice Guidelines* and other Safe Ministry resources that help church leaders and members understand, support, and care for people experiencing abuse, and
- (e) encouraged every church to set apart time in its Sunday services on 22 or 29 November 2026 to address domestic abuse, making use of resources developed by the Diocesan Domestic Abuse Monitoring Committee for services on 22 or 29 November 2026, or to otherwise ensure this critical issue continues to be addressed in our congregations.

GAFCON V 2028 Assembly in Athens, Greece: By resolution 22/26, among other things, the Synod –

- (a) encouraged bishops, clergy and lay people from the Diocese of Sydney to consider attending the GAFCON V 2028 Assembly to be held in Athens, Greece from 23 – 28 April 2028 and sharing in this worldwide gathering of faithful Anglicans, and
- (b) encouraged individuals, parishes and organisations throughout the Diocese to support GAFCON V financially, particularly by contributing towards bursaries to enable Anglicans from less-resourced parts of the world to gather in Athens in 2028.

Encouragement for Youth and Children’s Ministry: By resolution 29/26, among other things, the Synod encouraged all parishes to work towards a ministry with children and youth that contains certain features [refer to full motion in the Attachment].

Roman Catholic Eucharistic Congress 2028: By resolution 30/26, among other things, the Synod commended to clergy and interested church members the Reformation Day conference at St Andrew’s Cathedral on 31 October 2026 from 9.00am to 12.30pm which will address issues of modern Roman Catholicism.

Love for our Jewish Neighbours: By resolution 37/26, among other things, the Synod –

- (a) encouraged all Sydney Anglicans to guard against any form of racism in our lives or in our churches, and
- (b) welcomed an initiative of the Archbishop’s Office by which Sydney Anglicans will be invited to gather and pray for Jewish people in the Diocese and for ministry amongst them (3 April and 16 October 2027).

225th anniversary of the parishes of St Philip’s Sydney and St John’s Parramatta: By resolution 42/26, among other things, the Synod –

- (a) welcomed the intention of St Philip’s, Church Hill and St John’s Regional Cathedral, Parramatta to partner together, and with other willing churches, in marking the 225th anniversary (in July 2027) of Governor Philip Gidley King’s proclamation establishing the first two parishes in the colony of New South Wales, St Philip’s Sydney and St John’s Parramatta, and
- (b) invited churches across the Diocese, from east to west, to consider whether this anniversary might provide opportunities in their own communities to connect with those interested in the integral role of the Gospel with Sydney’s history and heritage.

Response to the motion regarding a special five-year focus: By resolution 43/26, among other things, the Synod encouraged any Rectors who might be feeling anxious, discouraged, or tempted to ungodly pride concerning the implementation of a special five-year focus on attendance, mission and youth to

consult with their Regional Bishop in considering a response that is heartfelt in its earnestness to reach the lost yet rests in the assurance that the ultimate work is our Heavenly Father's.

Awareness and inclusion of those with neurodivergence and invisible disabilities: By resolution 46/26, among other things, the Synod –

- (a) called upon parishes, schools and agencies of this Diocese to embrace and affirm the gifts of neurodivergent people, recognise the particular challenges they may face and to actively work to remove barriers to the participation of neurodivergent people in every aspect of the life of the Church, including worship, ministry, governance and leadership,
- (b) encouraged clergy and lay leaders who are comfortable doing so to speak openly about their lived experience of neurodivergence and invisible disability, helping people to better understand disability and neurodivergence within the life and leadership of the Church, and
- (c) commended to our wide Diocesan family the following (not exhaustive) list of resources –
 - (i) The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program (<https://hdsunflower.com>)
 - (ii) An Extraordinary Normal: Faith, Family and Neurodivergence (<https://substack.com/@anextraordinarynormal>),
 - (iii) *Autism and the Church: Bible Theology, and Community*. Grant Macaskill (<https://www.baylorpress.com/9781481311250/autism-and-the-church/>),
 - (iv) Unwin, K, & van Ommen, AL (2024). Autistic and Non-Autistic Experience of the Sensory Aspects of the Church Service. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 52(4), 410-425. (<https://doi.org/10.1177/00916471241266810>), and
 - (v) The Rev Bec Baines, Youthworks' Accessibility Ministry Advisor made freely available to the Diocese.

Prayer

Matters for prayer in parishes

Following are extracts from resolutions calling for further prayer from parishes.

9/26 Religious Freedom Advocacy

Synod **encouraged ongoing prayer** for all those engaged in defending religious freedom that they would have wisdom, courage and strength as they continue to do so.

18/26 A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth: 2026 'Baseline Update'

Synod **called for sustained prayer** from among all parishes, diocesan organisations, committees, teams and members, that our heavenly Father might choose to save people into the fellowship of our churches and organisations, that our churches might grow by at least five percent each year through conversion growth.

19/26 Marking DV Sunday

Synod, in response to ongoing concern about the presence of domestic abuse in our churches, **encouraged churches and congregational members to pray** for marriages, families, victim-survivors, and churches.

37/26 Love for our Jewish Neighbours

Synod, in love for Jewish Australians **committed to praying** for the wellbeing of our Jewish neighbours, for repentance among those who harbour antisemitic hatred, and for the work of reconciliation in both Jew and Gentile through the cross by which hostility is put to death (Ephesians 2:16).

Matters which were prayed for at the Synod

Synod members also prayed for many matters during the session. These included –

- 1/26 Adequacy of clergy superannuation contribution rates
- 15/26 Moore Theological College's 170th Anniversary
- 21/26 Evangelism and Ministry Partnerships
- 23/26 Global Anglican Communion
- 25/26 The Prayer Book Society NSW
- 26/26 Anglican Trailblazer
- 27/26 200th Anniversary of the St Anne's Historic Church Building
- 28/26 Anglicare's 170th anniversary
- 32/26 Indigenous Stream of The Well Training
- 34/26 Australian Church Record Centenary
- 35/26 Forthcoming Gafcon Australia and New Zealand Conference in Melbourne
- 42/26 225th anniversary of the parishes of St Philip's Sydney and St John's Parramatta
- 43/26 Response to the motion regarding a special five-year focus
- 45/26 Austral Anglican Church Plant
- 48/26 Domestic and Family Violence

Further resolutions of interest to parishes

In addition to those already outlined in this circular, the following resolutions may be of particular interest to rectors, wardens and parish councillors –

Parish classifications

- 8/26 Riverstone: Classification as a Parish
- 39/26 Denham Court: Classification as a Parish

Retirements

- 49/26 Retirement of The Rev Chris Chardon
- 50/26 Retirement of The Rev Dr James Collins
- 51/26 Retirement of Canon Bruce Morrison
- 52/26 Retirement of The Rev Joseph Thiem
- 53/26 Retirement of The Rev Geoffrey Thompson
- 54/26 Retirement of Canon Peter Yeats
- 55/26 Bishop Peter Hayward
- 56/26 Archdeacon Kara Hartley
- 57/26 Mr Russell Powell

Other matters

- 3/26 The Rev Jonathan Squire
- 11/26 Anglican Super
- 20/26 Guidance for parishes undertaking property projects
- 24/26 Social Issues Committee – awareness of activities
- 27/26 200th Anniversary of the St Anne's Historic Church Building
- 33/26 Inspection of parish properties
- 42/26 225th anniversary of the parishes of St Philip's Sydney and St John's Parramatta
- 45/26 Austral Anglican Church Plant

Resolutions of the 2026 Synod

1/26 Adequacy of clergy superannuation contribution rates

Synod, noting the report '11/22 Adequacy of clergy superannuation contribution rates', notes that –

- (i) a key Biblical principle driving all of our decisions in the area of clergy remuneration is the desire that they be provided with sufficient support to leave them and their families neither in a position of poverty nor riches,
- (ii) the stipend and allowances generally provide well for our clergy,
- (iii) the clergy superannuation contribution of 17% of minimum stipend is in most circumstances currently sufficient,
- (iv) the sufficiency of superannuation includes the important caveat that the ministry worker owns a home,
- (v) the lived reality is that most clergy would not be able to afford Sydney property without assistance from extended family, an inheritance, a spouse working throughout their ministry, or a housing allowance paid towards a mortgage throughout their ministry,
- (vi) many clergy will not have some of these means for assistance or will make sacrificial decisions not to pursue these means, and
- (vii) in that light, there is an important safety net of Anglicare providing financial assistance under its Advantaged Entry Discount Policy for clergy entering Anglicare's independent living villages in retirement of which ministry workers should be aware,

and therefore –

- (a) gives thanks to God for the sacrifices many in gospel ministry make to forgo opportunities they might otherwise have had for greater earthly security because they seek after heavenly treasures,
- (b) requests the Standing Committee to consider updating and circulating the May 2022 report 'Superannuation, Stipends, and Preparing for Retirement' in light of the most recent circumstances,
- (c) encourages all clergy to plan early to provide for their housing in retirement, and seek personal financial advice in this area, and
- (d) encourages Anglicare to continue to provide financial assistance under its Advantaged Entry Discount Policy for clergy entering Anglicare's independent living villages in retirement and, if necessary, consider ways to expand the availability of this provision.

(The Rev Ben Gray 14/09/2026)

2/26 Safe Ministry Training for Synod Members

Synod, noting the report '25/25 Safe Ministry Training for all Synod Members' –

- (a) agrees not to amend its ordinances at this time in order to require that all Synod members complete accredited training in accordance with Part 5 of the *Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020*, and
- (b) nonetheless encourages all members of the 54th Synod, who have not already done so, to consider completing Safe Ministry Training.

(Mrs Briony Bounds 14/09/2026)

3/26 The Rev Jonathan Squire

Synod gives thanks to God for the appointment of the Rev Jonathan Squire as the next Bishop of the Wollongong Region.

Hailing from Armidale, he began as a Student Minister then Assistant Minister with a church plant in Harrington Park (then part of the Parish of Narellan) in the South West greenfields in 2002. In 2006,

Harrington Park Anglican Church became part of the Parish of South Creek (as it was known then, but later was renamed Camden Valley). Jonathan was appointed Curate-in-charge in 2006, and then Rector in 2011. As a parish without a building, Jonathan planted congregations in schools and a warehouse unit. He will remain Rector at Camden Valley until he begins his new role in January 2027, following his consecration on 20 November 2026. Jonathan was appointed Mission Area Leader of the Macarthur Mission Area and has served for many years on the school councils of Thomas Hassall Anglican College, Oran Park Anglican College and Leppington Anglican College (Inaugural Chair).

Synod assures Jonathan and his wife, Jenny, of our prayers as they leave their church of over 20 years, and begin life and ministry in the Wollongong region.

(Bishop Chris Edwards 14/09/2026)

4/26 Dinner for Women of Synod

Synod notes that Anglican Deaconess Ministries will host a dinner for women on Monday 21 September 2026 at the ADM Office, Level 1, St Andrew's House, providing an opportunity to meet women from different parts of the Diocese, spend time sharing and praying, and hear from some experienced Synod members about how they take what happens at Synod back to their own parishes.

(Mrs Emma Argall 14/09/2026)

5/26 Sports Sunday 2026

Synod notes that Sports Sunday, an international moment to pray for the ministry of Chaplaincy occurring in all sports, is Sunday September 20th and encourages Parishes to consider utilising the date to raise awareness and inform the prayers of parishioners about sports ministry in their local areas.

(The Rev Dr Richard Wenden 14/09/2026)

6/26 Establishment of the Australian Anglican Chaplains Network

Synod –

(a) notes the following resolution was passed without dissent at the recent General Synod –

‘General Synod:

1. requests the Standing Committee to facilitate the formation of a General Synod Network to be known as the Australian Anglican Chaplains Network pursuant to the Strategic Issues, Commissions, Task Forces and Networks Canon 1998;
2. determines that the purposes of the Network are:
 - a) to foster fellowship and collaboration among Anglican chaplains serving throughout Australia;
 - b) to promote excellence in Anglican chaplaincy across all recognised ministries, including but not limited to hospitals, prisons, schools, universities, emergency services, aged care, racing, sport, industry, airports, ports, welfare agencies, and other community ministries;
 - c) to encourage the exchange of information, research, training resources and examples of best practice;
 - d) to facilitate cooperation between dioceses, commissions, agencies and chaplaincy organisations;
 - e) to identify emerging issues affecting Anglican chaplaincy and communicate those matters to the Standing Committee of General Synod;
 - f) to encourage the planting and development of Anglican chaplaincies where opportunities arise;

- g) to support theological reflection on chaplaincy within the ministry of the Anglican Church of Australia.
- 3. requests the Standing Committee to appoint an initial Convenor following consultation with dioceses and recognised Anglican chaplaincy organisations.
- 4. encourages every diocese to nominate representatives engaged in chaplaincy ministries to participate in the Network.'
- (b) encourages Anglican Chaplains to be involved, noting contact can be made via www.anglican.chaplaincy.com.au, and
- (c) asks our Standing Committee to nominate representatives as per point (4) of the General Synod motion.

(Mr James Flavin 14/09/2026)

7/26 Regional ministry

Synod –

- (a) notes that at the recent General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia, several regional dioceses including North Queensland, Rockhampton and Tasmania expressed their challenges to sustain and grow ministry,
- (b) notes that Bush Church Aid (**BCA**) invites experienced clergy from the Diocese of Sydney to consider regional ministry through BCA, and
- (c) encourages Sydney clergy and parishes to consider how they might contribute to the spread of the gospel in regional and remote Australia.

(Canon Tim Swan 14/09/2026)

8/26 Riverstone: Classification as a Parish

Synod assents to the classification of Riverstone as a parish with effect from 1 January 2027.

(The Rev Daniel Walmsley 14/09/2026)

9/26 Religious Freedom Advocacy

Synod, noting the report 'Religious Freedom Advocacy' –

- (a) affirms the need for the Sydney Diocese of the Anglican Church to continue to engage with government (both federal and state) in all matters affecting religious freedom including those which –
 - (i) are a threat to free speech generally and religious teaching, preaching and evangelism in particular,
 - (ii) impact Word based ministries including prayer and pastoral conversations in parishes, schools and other contexts,
 - (iii) undermine the ability of Christians to keep the law on account of their conscience and of religious bodies to operate in accordance with their doctrines, tenets and beliefs, and
 - (iv) undermine God's good design for our world and Christians' ability to teach and raise their children in accordance with this good design,
- (b) notes that –
 - (i) this engagement may be directly with government ministers or departments, through inquiries or interacting with policy proposals, and through formal submission processes responding to draft legislation,
 - (ii) Bishop Michael Stead as the Diocesan spokesperson on religious freedom and as Chair of Freedom for Faith has had, and continues to have, a significant role in engaging on these issues,

- (iii) opponents to religious freedom are well resourced and active in drafting submissions and appearing at Inquiries directly opposing Christians' right to think, teach and preach in accordance with God's Word; and in making complaints to regulatory bodies regarding the same,
 - (iv) the volume of Inquiries and legislation impacting religious freedom has exponentially increased over the past three years,
 - (v) such engagement, when done well, (especially the drafting of formal submissions) requires significant time and financial resources and to date has been unfunded by the Diocese,
- (c) agrees that funding should be included in the next triennial Synod budget for the legal and administrative support required in order to support this work, and
- (d) encourages ongoing prayer for all those engaged in defending religious freedom that they would have wisdom, courage and strength as they continue to do so.

(Dean Sandy Grant 14/09/2026)

10/26 Statement of Funding Principles and Priorities 2028-2030

Synod approves the 'Statement of Funding Principles and Priorities 2028-2030'.

(Bishop Michael Stead 14/09/2026)

11/26 Anglican Super

Synod notes the transition project being undertaken by Anglican Super to transfer the Fund's administration from Mercer to MLC, and assures the Anglican National Superannuation Board of its prayers for a smooth and successful transition.

(Mr James Flavin 15/09/2026)

12/26 Say No to Commercial Surrogacy

Synod –

- (a) notes that the Australian Law Reform Commission's (**ALRC**) Review of Surrogacy Laws (Discussion Paper 89) promotes proposals that, if accepted would move Australian law away from a purely altruistic model of surrogacy as currently legislated,
- (b) notes that under the *Surrogacy Act 2010 (NSW)*, commercial surrogacy is illegal in NSW,
- (c) informs the NSW State Parliament that it –
 - (i) affirms that all people, including unborn children in surrogacy arrangements, are made in the image of God, and that their rights must be upheld,
 - (ii) holds the formation of family and the welcoming of children in the highest regard, honours the social significance of gestational and maternal care, and recognises with compassion the pain of infertility,
 - (iii) affirms that children are a gift to be received, not a right to be claimed or a good to be provided, and that no universal right to parenthood has been established in law,
 - (iv) believes children have a natural interest, wherever possible, in knowing their biological and gestational origins and, where in their best interests, being raised by their own biological parents,
 - (v) deplores the commodification of children and the exploitation of vulnerable women, whether in Australia or overseas, and calls on the Commonwealth Parliament to enhance legislated safeguards for this purpose, and
 - (vi) opposes absolutely the legalisation of commercial surrogacy – whether in name or effect – and calls on the State Parliament to definitively reject any recommendation to that effect,
- (d) notes that the ALRC's final report is due to the Commonwealth Attorney-General on September 11, 2026 and thereafter to be tabled in Parliament within 15 sitting days, and

- (e) respectfully requests the Archbishop to write to the NSW Premier, the NSW Attorney General and the Leader of the NSW Opposition, calling on them to reject any proposal or recommendation by the ALRC to repeal the *Surrogacy Act 2010 (NSW)* or take any action which would thereby make commercial surrogacy legal in NSW.

(Archdeacon Kara Hartley 15/09/2026)

13/26 NSW Rally Against Abortion Up To Birth

Synod –

- (a) notes the opportunity to support the lives of mothers and children in Dr Joanna Howe's NSW Rally Against Abortion Up To Birth, during the dinner break of the first Tuesday of Synod, 15 September 2026, 6.00 – 7.00pm, outside NSW Parliament House (a five-minute walk), and
- (b) encourages its members to keep standing up for the lives of mothers and their unborn children.

(The Rev Andrew Barry 15/09/2026)

14/26 Dinner for younger members of Synod

Synod notes that there will be a dinner for its younger members on Tuesday 15 September 2026 for the purposes of encouragement and nourishment.

The dinner group will meet at the Pitt St entrance of the Wesley Theatre at the conclusion of the evening session, with the intention of dining in Centrepont Westfield food court.

All Synod members feeling their youth places them in a minority, or otherwise feeling the weight of their inexperience, are warmly invited to attend.

(Mr Tristan Anlezark 14/09/2026)

15/26 Moore Theological College's 170th Anniversary

Synod gives thanks to God for –

- (a) his goodness shown in the 170 year ministry of Moore Theological College,
- (b) Thomas Moore, the original benefactor of the College, and Bishop Frederic Barker who established the College on a clear evangelical foundation,
- (c) thousands of graduates (men and women) who have been faithful in taking the gospel of Jesus to the length and breadth of the diocese, around Australia and across the world,
- (d) the strong and vital link between the College and the Diocese evidenced in prayer, financial support, and sending a steady stream of godly and gifted men and women to train at the College,
- (e) the provision of all the College's needs in building and other infrastructure in Newtown, Croydon Park, and North Parramatta,
- (f) generous benefactors, skilled and committed governors, and prayer supporters of the College throughout its history,
- (g) the thirteen principals of the College, and the gifted, godly and ministry-minded faculty alongside whom they have worked to provide the very best and Christ-honouring theological education possible,
- (h) the scholarship and research of the faculty and those such as the Annual Lecturers who resource both our students and the Christian community generally,
- (i) the vision and impact of T C Hammond's creation of a course for men and women who want to grow in their knowledge of Scripture and theology in order to continue their ministry in the home, the workplace, and local congregation, the PTC (originally SPTC),
- (j) the partnership of the College with mission agencies such as CMS through whom the riches God has given us might be shared with the world,

- (k) the four centres of the College (the Priscilla and Aquila Centre, the Centre for Christian Living, the Centre of Ministry Development, and the Centre for Global Mission), each of which provide resources for the Diocese and the wider Christian community outside of the College, and
- (l) the recognition of the College by the Federal Government with the granting of the status of an Australian University College.

Aware that all of this is a result of God's mercy and grace over such a long period, Synod continues to commend the College to God, with the prayer that faithfulness to God's word and effectiveness in appropriate training of ministers of the gospel might characterise the College until the day the Lord Jesus returns.

(The Rev Dr Mark Thompson 15/09/2026)

16/26 Property Receipts Levy rates

Synod authorises, for the purposes of the *Property Receipts Levy Ordinance 2018*, the following amendments to the rates for net property income –

- (a) net property income greater than \$200,000 but less than \$400,000 – amended from 35% to 40% and
- (b) net property income equal to or greater than \$400,000 – amended from 40% to 60%,

and requests Standing Committee to establish clear procedures via which affected parishes might seek individual variations to this levy where particular history or circumstances might otherwise produce an anomalous or unreasonable result.

(Bishop Michael Stead 15/09/2026)

17/26 Conversion Practices Ban Act 2024

Synod –

- (a) Notes the commitments made by NSW Labor MPs and candidates in the lead-up to the 2023 NSW Election. The Hon Chris Minns MP, as Opposition Leader, stated –

'Taking offense at the teachings of a religious leader will not be banned. Expressing a religious belief through sermon will not be banned. And an individual, of their own consent, seeking guidance through prayer will not be banned either.'

at forums across the State, ALP MPs and candidates delivered similar commitments.

- (b) Notes that the *Conversion Practices Ban Act* was passed in 2024, empowering Antidiscrimination NSW to implement much of the Act. Antidiscrimination NSW has subsequently released a website explaining their interpretation of the Act. That website states –

'...praying with or over a particular person in an attempt to try to change or suppress that person's sexuality or gender is unlawful. It is not unlawful for a person to seek counsel or guidance from within their faith. Counsel and guidance, including prayer, can still be given as long as it is not an attempt to change or suppress the person's sexuality or gender identity.'

And –

'...telling a person who is same-sex attracted they must be celibate or never marry, in circumstances where a heterosexual person would not be given the same guidance, could be regarded as suppressing a person's sexuality and may be unlawful, depending on the circumstances.'

<https://antidiscrimination.nsw.gov.au/discrimination/conversion-practices/frequently-asked-questions.html>

This advice is in clear contradiction to the promises made by the incoming Labor Government prior to the election.

(For more details, see <https://freedomforfaith.org.au/articles/nsw-cp/>)

- (c) Calls on the NSW Government to correct the *Conversion Practices Ban Act 2024*, or the implementation thereof, so that their pre-election promises are acquitted in full, including in the implementation through Antidiscrimination NSW.

(Bishop Michael Stead 15/09/2026)

18/26 A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth: 2026 ‘Baseline Update’

Synod, noting the report, ‘13/25 A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth: 2026 “Baseline update”’ –

- (a) thanks God for giving growth across our churches, as seen in increased attendance across the Diocese,
- (b) praises God that early figures indicate that 13% of churches have achieved at least five percent growth in 2025 through conversion of the lost through faith in Jesus, as measured by the proxy of ‘confirmations plus adult baptisms’,
- (c) calls for sustained prayer from among all parishes, diocesan organisations, committees, teams and members, that our heavenly Father might choose to save people into the fellowship of our churches and organisations, that our churches might grow by at least five percent each year through conversion growth,
- (d) urges all Rectors to record the names of all those who professed faith in Christ for the first time during a year, in order that the church might rejoice with the angels in heaven, those new saints be nurtured and prayed for, and anonymised data shared with the Special Five-Year Focus Monitoring Committee,
- (e) asks the Registrar to record the Rector’s estimate of the number of people aged under 18, and 18 years or older, who professed faith in Christ for the first time in their parish each year,
- (f) notes, for the avoidance of doubt, that attendance-related data supplied to the Registrar will be shared with the Special Five-Year Focus Monitoring Committee, and
- (g) asks that the 2026 parish National Church Life Survey data also be shared with the Special Five-Year Focus Monitoring Committee.

(Canon Craig Roberts 15/09/2026)

19/26 Marking DV Sunday

Synod, in response to ongoing concern about the presence of domestic abuse in our churches –

- (a) encourages churches and congregational members to pray for marriages, families, victim-survivors, and churches,
- (b) urges churches and congregations to continue building awareness and understanding of domestic abuse,
- (c) encourages clergy to undertake training that equips them to respond appropriately to disclosures of abuse within their congregations,
- (d) commends the *Diocesan Domestic Abuse and Good Practice Guidelines* and other Safe Ministry resources that help church leaders and members understand, support, and care for people experiencing abuse,
- (e) recognises that a number of Sydney parishes have, for several years, marked the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women in November, and
- (f) encourages every church to set apart time in its Sunday services on 22 or 29 November 2026 to address domestic abuse, making use of resources developed by the Diocesan Domestic Abuse Monitoring Committee for services on 22 or 29 November 2026, or to otherwise ensure this critical issue continues to be addressed in our congregations.

(The Rev Mark Tough 16/09/2026)

20/26 Guidance for parishes undertaking property projects

Synod –

- (a) gives thanks for the assistance Sydney Anglican Property (**SAP**) gives to parishes undertaking property projects, and notes the growth in the support SAP is asked to provide,
- (b) notes that the approvals, resolutions and supporting documents required of a parish undertaking a major property project are not readily available to parishes in a single consolidated written form,
- (c) notes that SAP may have already commenced work on a document of this kind, and
- (d) requests the Standing Committee to ask SAP to prepare and publish to parishes, by 27 September 2027, a process map for parish property projects setting out –
 - (i) the approvals required at each stage of a project, in sequence, and the body responsible for each (perhaps as a flowchart),
 - (ii) the supporting material each body requires,
 - (iii) the meeting dates and agenda closing dates of each body, published annually, and
 - (iv) the expenditure thresholds and the current financial and procurement parameters applying to parish-led projects.

(The Rev Mike Begbie 16/09/2026)

21/26 Evangelism and Ministry Partnerships

Synod –

- (a) gives thanks to God for the Standing Committee's decision to approve the formation of Evangelism and Ministry Partnerships (**EMP**) as a single entity from 1 January 2027,
- (b) prays for work of the Interim Head of EMP (Canon Phillip Colgan), the Provisional Board, and the staff of the predecessor organisations, Evangelism and New Churches, Ministry Training & Development, and Anglican Media, during this time of transition, and
- (c) prays that the future ministry of EMP will greatly strengthen gospel ministry across the Diocese for the glory of Jesus.

(Bishop Michael Stead 16/09/2026)

22/26 GAFCON V 2028 Assembly in Athens, Greece

Synod –

- (a) welcomes plans for the GAFCON V 2028 Assembly to be held in Athens, Greece from 23 – 28 April 2028, and which will bring together an estimated 3,000 faithful Anglicans from across the world for Bible teaching, fellowship, prayer and encouragement in global mission,
- (b) recognises the particular importance of GAFCON V as it will be the first global Assembly since the formation of the Global Anglican Communion, and as such will be an opportunity to strengthen its fellowship, shared identity and commitment to the faithful proclamation of Christ to the nations,
- (c) gives thanks for the significant contribution of individuals, parishes and organisations in the Diocese of Sydney to previous GAFCON Assemblies in providing bursaries to enable Anglicans from less-resourced parts of the world to attend,
- (d) encourages bishops, clergy and lay people from the Diocese of Sydney to consider attending GAFCON V and sharing in this worldwide gathering of faithful Anglicans, and
- (e) encourages individuals, parishes and organisations throughout the Diocese to support GAFCON V financially, particularly by contributing towards bursaries to enable Anglicans from less-resourced parts of the world to gather in Athens in 2028.

(Dr Laurie Scandrett 16/09/2026)

23/26 Global Anglican Communion

Synod –

- (a) welcomes the Abuja Affirmation of 6 March 2026, building upon the Martyrs' Day Statement written here in Sydney on 16 October 2025 declaring that 'the future has arrived', and gives thanks to God for the reordering of the Anglican Communion as the Global Anglican Communion, founded on the person and work of Jesus Christ and the authority of his word, with the Jerusalem Declaration as its shared confession,
- (b) recognises the Diocese of Sydney's joyful partnership with the Global Anglican Communion, in light of its longstanding commitment to the Jerusalem Declaration and practice of principled disengagement from the Canterbury Instruments of Communion, while affirming that the Diocese remains constitutionally a part of the Anglican Church of Australia, with the rights and obligations arising from that relationship,
- (c) gives thanks for the Diocese's longstanding partnership with Gafcon from its beginnings leading up to Jerusalem 2008, including the leadership of former Archbishop Peter Jensen as founding General Secretary and former Archbishop Glenn Davies as a current member of the Global Anglican Council,
- (d) gives thanks for Archbishop Kanishka Raffel's participation with other members of this Synod at the G26 Conference in Abuja, Nigeria, and his continuing leadership as a member of the Global Anglican Council, and
- (e) prays that God will strengthen all faithful Anglicans, whether remaining as witnesses within existing structures or belonging to dioceses or provinces recognised or authenticated by Gafcon or the Global Anglican Council, to proclaim Christ faithfully to the nations, knowing that they are not alone.

(Canon Jodie McNeill 16/09/2026)

24/26 Social Issues Committee – awareness of activities

Synod notes that since September last year, the Social Issues Committee (**SIC**) has published briefings for Sydney Anglicans and other interested Christians addressing 'The Just War tradition in a conflicted world', and 'Christian Ethics, Ministry and Artificial Intelligence', and has also made submissions on behalf of the Diocese opposing the legalisation of commercial surrogacy (these resources may be found by Googling 'Sydney Anglicans Social Issues Committee resources'); in addition, with its goodwill, the SIC's Chair has advocated to parliamentary leaders in favour of sports bet reforms, in favour of the prohibition of sex-selective abortion, and against legalisation of Voluntary Assisted Dying by telehealth.

(Dean Sandy Grant 16/09/2026)

25/26 The Prayer Book Society NSW

Synod –

- (a) gives thanks to Almighty God for –
 - (i) the recovery of the Biblical gospel at the English Reformation and the enduring legacy of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, whose theological labours decisively shaped the Book of Common Prayer (1662), and
 - (ii) 45 years of the ministry by the Prayer Book Society NSW, particularly for the many years of faithful leadership of the Rev Martin Robinson, and the renewal of the society during the past 18 months,
- (b) welcomes the report of the Diocesan Doctrine Commission 'Authentic Anglicanism' including its affirmation that 'Authentic Anglicanism has a liturgical disposition' and that the Biblical doctrine and principles of the Book of Common Prayer (1662) continue significantly to shape authentic Anglican gatherings, and
- (c) earnestly prays –
 - (i) for the Rev Dr Mark Earney as he leads the Executive and General Committee of the Prayer Book Society NSW into a new season of ministry,

- (ii) that the Society's occasional events would be well attended and spiritually edifying, and
- (iii) that our Lord would mightily use the ministry of the Prayer Book Society NSW to foster this authentically Anglican liturgical disposition, so that within the missional flexibility envisaged by the Prayer Book itself, contemporary Anglican believers might increasingly pray, hear God's word, and receive the sacraments according to the Biblical doctrine and principles of our beloved Book of Common Prayer (1662).

(The Rev David Morgan 16/09/2026)

26/26 Anglican Trailblazer

Synod –

- (a) warmly welcomes the publication of *Anglican Trailblazer*, a biography of Bishop Frederic Barker by Dr Grant Maple,
- (b) notes with appreciation its recent launch by Bishop Peter Jensen at an Anglican Historical Society event,
- (c) gives thanks to God for the faithful gospel ministry of Frederic and Jane Barker, and for the lasting fruit of their service in advancing the work of Christ in the Diocese of Sydney, and
- (d) grants leave for discount order forms for the book to be tabled and made available to Synod members outside the Theatre.

(Mr Wesley Fairhall 16/09/2026)

27/26 200th Anniversary of the St Anne's Historic Church Building

Synod, noting that August 2026 marks the 200th anniversary of the historic St Anne's Church building at Ryde –

- (a) gives thanks to Almighty God for his faithfulness to generations of his people who have gathered, worshipped, served and proclaimed Christ in that place,
- (b) rejoices in the enduring witness of the gospel in Ryde over these two centuries, and
- (c) prays that, for generations to come, that good news of Jesus be shared to the city of Ryde and beyond.

(The Rev Andrew Levy 16/09/2026)

28/26 Anglicare's 170th anniversary

Synod –

- (a) gives joyful thanks to God for His faithfulness over the past 170 years, through which countless faithful Christian workers and supporters of Anglicare Sydney have sought to serve people in need, enrich lives, and share the love of Jesus,
- (b) gives thanks for the vision, faith and generosity of those who first established the Church Society in 1856, laying the foundations for a ministry that has grown through the Home Mission Society and Anglican Retirement Villages that enables Anglicare Sydney to continue its ministry and mission today,
- (c) gives thanks for the ministry of Christian care provided over many prior generations to older people, children, families, individuals experiencing vulnerability, and those on the margins of society, in partnership with local parishes across the Diocese,
- (d) rejoices in the partnership between Anglicare Sydney and parishes across the Sydney, Armidale and Bathurst dioceses through ministries such as the Mobile Community Pantry and gives thanks to God for ten years of connecting local churches with their local communities through practical care, meaningful relationship and faithful Gospel witness,
- (e) gives thanks for the ministry of foster carers and Foster Circle church partners, and calls for continued prayer, support, and consideration of becoming a foster carer or supporting foster carers,

- (f) acknowledges the commitment of those who have served, committing their prayer, time and resources to promote the Word and to care for their neighbours as Christ commanded,
- (g) commits in prayer the work and ongoing mission of Anglicare Sydney to God, asking that He pour out His spirit and grant wisdom upon the leadership, chaplains, staff and volunteers who serve today, and for those who will serve in the future, and
- (h) prays that God would use Anglicare Sydney to proclaim the hope of the Gospel through word and deed, strengthen local parish mission, and demonstrate the transforming love of Christ for generations to come.

(Mr Simon Miller 16/09/2026)

29/26 Encouragement for Youth and Children's Ministry

Synod, noting the report '59/25 Regional Funding for Youth and Children's Ministry' –

- (a) affirms the need to strengthen sustainable children's and youth ministry in high-growth areas and parishes with only a part-time, or no, children's or youth minister, and
- (b) encourages all parishes to work towards a ministry with children and youth that contains the following features –
 - (i) committing to teach the Bible to young people through relational discipleship,
 - (ii) intentionally partnering with and resourcing Christian parents as primary disciplers of their own children within our congregations,
 - (iii) intentionally engaging with and resourcing non-Christian parents of young people connected to congregations and ministry programs,
 - (iv) sharing about significant youth and children's ministry moments in adult congregations (e.g. celebrate youth and children's ministry wins and pray about struggles),
 - (v) integrating young people alongside adults in congregational ministry (in appropriate ways),
 - (vi) increasing the active participation of young people serving within age-specific ministries rather than perpetuating passive consumption models which exacerbate disconnection,
 - (vii) including regular items on Parish council agendas addressing ministry to young people, together with giving young people a voice to speak into decisions regarding them,
 - (viii) creatively providing opportunities for forging safe relationships between generations to create opportunities for 'Paul-Timothy' relationships,
 - (ix) planning to actively reach young people within the local parish with the gospel,
 - (x) pursuing a meaningful connection with local Anglican schools through appropriate partnerships, regular visitations, strong relationships with principals, chaplains and staff, and opportunities for engagement with school communities,
 - (xi) pursuing a meaningful connection with local schools within the parish, primarily through a healthy SRE program in state schools as well as Volunteer Student Activities such as lunchtime groups, breakfast clubs and participation in P&C,
 - (xii) seeking out collaborative consultations (that seek to bring ministry to young people towards the centre of parish life and leadership strategy),
 - (xiii) recruiting and empowering people of all ages to serve in ministry to young people in all levels of church life, and
 - (xiv) ensuring appropriate policies and safeguards are in place to care for and support those engaged in ministry to young people and ensure they are compliant to diocesan codes.

(Canon Craig Roberts 16/09/2026)

30/26 Roman Catholic Eucharistic Congress 2028

Synod, considering –

- (i) the plans for Pope Leo XIV to attend a Eucharistic Congress in Sydney in Spring 2028,
- (ii) that the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-Nine Articles are our constitutionally authorised standards of worship and doctrine, and

- (iii) that the following Articles (among others) deny Roman Catholic doctrine: Article VI, XIV, XIX, XXII, XXV, XXVIII, XXXI, and XXXII,
- (a) requests the Archbishop to establish a working group to provide pastoral guidelines to diocesan leaders being asked to partner with Roman Catholic leaders under a shared Christian banner, and to ministries and ministers in the Diocese, including schools, churches, theological colleges, SRE coordinators and teachers, Anglicare and all other affiliated ministries, that are asked to provide services or facilities to, or participate in any way with, the Roman Catholic Eucharistic Congress in 2028, and
- (b) commends to clergy and interested church members the Reformation Day conference at St Andrew's Cathedral on 31 October 2026 from 9.00am to 12.30pm which will address issues of modern Roman Catholicism.

(The Rev Dr Stephen Shead 16/09/2026)

31/26 Decreasing load on rectors, wardens and parish councils

Synod –

- (a) recognises –
 - (i) the importance of appropriate standards of governance, accountability and safe ministry in our parishes, including compliance with legal obligations,
 - (ii) the importance of appropriate pastoral support, accountability and development for clergy and other ministry workers,
 - (iii) that Christian reflection on governance, employment practices, accountability and ministry development should begin with, and be shaped by, a biblical and theological understanding of the nature of the church, Christian ministry and those who serve within it,
 - (iv) the findings of Synod report 64/23 Attendance Patterns and Mission in the Diocese (noted by resolution 47/24) that, while the essential work of Christian ministry remains preaching and prayer, the administrative and compliance complexity of parish ministry has increased substantially in recent years, adding to the workload borne particularly by rectors, wardens and Parish Councils, and the recommendation of that report that Synod, the episcopal team, regional councils and parishes consider what can be done to ease the senior minister's burden in addressing administrative overhead and compliance complexity,
 - (v) that in July 2025 the Standing Committee agreed, as an action in furtherance of the special five-year focus on attendance, mission and youth to which this Synod has committed, that Sydney Anglican Services and Sydney Anglican Property review what can be done to ease the senior minister's burden in addressing administrative overhead and compliance complexity, in furtherance of the stated goal of 'addressing administrative and regulatory burden for rectors and wardens' (report '13/25 A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth', action A.7), and
 - (vi) that further increases in this burden risk diverting limited time, energy and attention from shepherding the flock of God, prayer and the ministry of the word, and leading our churches in the mission of seeing the lost saved and disciples growing to maturity,
- (b) commits itself, and requests the Standing Committee, the Archbishop-in-Council and other relevant diocesan boards and committees likewise to undertake, to –
 - (i) give explicit consideration, before imposing or recommending any new requirement upon parishes, rectors, wardens or parish councils, to whether –
 - (A) the proposal is consistent with a biblical and theological understanding of the church and Christian ministry,
 - (B) the requirement is imposed by law, or is a standard the Diocese proposes to adopt beyond what the law requires and, if the latter, the reasons for doing so,
 - (C) it is necessary and proportionate to the issue it seeks to address,
 - (D) there is an administrative, compliance, financial and/or time burden, including the cumulative burden of adding it to existing requirements, and
 - (E) that burden could be reduced by removing, simplifying or consolidating an existing requirement, and
 - (ii) not initiate or promote, before the conclusion of the third session of the 54th Synod, any additional compulsory requirement concerning parish governance or the ministry practice

of rectors, beyond those in force or already approved as at the conclusion of this session, except where it is determined that the requirement:

- (A) is necessary to comply with the law,
- (B) is necessary for the safety of children or vulnerable people, or on balance reduces or simplifies the requirements applying to parishes, rectors, wardens or Parish Councils, and
- (c) requests that any report or bill to the Synod proposing a new requirement of the kind referred to in paragraph (b) include a short statement addressing the matters in paragraph (b)(i).

(Canon Phillip Colgan 16/09/2026)

32/26 Indigenous Stream of The Well Training

Synod gives thanks to God for the Indigenous stream of The Well Training, which is planned to commence in 2027, and prays that God will raise up future leaders of Indigenous ministries throughout Australia.

(The Rev Michael Duckett 16/09/2026)

33/26 Inspection of parish properties

Synod requests Sydney Anglican Property to consider the employment or appointment of a suitably qualified person(s) or organisation(s) periodically to inspect parish properties held in trust by the Anglican Church Property Trust, particularly those subject to heritage orders, and advise on preventative maintenance and rectification of building code deficiencies.

(Mr David Minty 16/09/2026)

34/26 Australian Church Record Centenary

Synod –

- (a) notes that the publication first established in Sydney in 1880 adopted the name The Australian Church Record in 1926, and celebrates the centenary of ministry under that name,
- (b) gives thanks to God for the ministry of the Australian Church Record as ‘an independent theological voice promoting and defending Reformed Evangelical Anglicanism’, and for its encouragement of gospel ministry through initiatives such as Reformation Rallies, publications supporting evangelical Anglicanism, and seed funding for St Matthias Press in 1988,
- (c) remembers with gratitude those who have contributed to and shaped its ministry, including Mervyn Archdall, George Chambers, H S Begbie, S H Denman, Digges la Touche, D J and D B Knox, R B and D W B Robinson, T C Hammond, Marcus Loane, Allan Blanch, and Bruce Ballantine-Jones, together with its many other and more recent editors, directors, writers and supporters, and
- (d) prays that God will sustain the Australian Church Record in its commitment to the Holy Scriptures, the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the strengthening of Reformed Evangelical Anglicanism in Sydney, throughout Australia, and beyond.

(The Rev Dr Mark Earngey 16/09/2026)

35/26 Forthcoming Gafcon Australia and New Zealand Conference in Melbourne

Synod –

- (a) notes that the Gafcon Australia and New Zealand Conference will be held in Melbourne from 9–12 November 2026, and that over 200 people are already registered for the Conference;
- (b) welcomes the recent announcement that the Most Rev Dr Laurent Mbanda, Archbishop and Primate of Rwanda and Chairman of the Global Anglican Council, will now be the keynote speaker at the Conference,

- (c) notes that that the Most Rev Dr Laurent Mbanda, together with his wife Chantal, will be visiting Sydney for three days after the Conference, and during which visit he will be preaching at St Andrew's Cathedral on Sunday 15 November,
- (d) gives thanks to God for Archbishop Mbanda's continuing leadership within the Global Anglican Council, and for his generosity in travelling to Australia to serve the Conference alongside the Rev Canon David Short and other Anglican men and women from across Australia and New Zealand who will be speaking and presenting, and
- (e) gives thanks for the ministry of Gafcon Australia, including the contribution of many from the Diocese of Sydney, and prays that the Conference will encourage and strengthen faithful Anglicans across Australia and New Zealand, particularly those in Dioceses where the church leadership does not support the faithful proclamation of Christ according to the Scriptures, at this significant moment in the reordering of the Anglican Communion as the Global Anglican Communion.

(Mrs Stacey Chapman 16/09/2026)

36/26 Advanced care directives

Synod requests the Social Issues Committee to create a document providing guidance for Anglicans in completing 'End-of-Life choices' in accordance with their Christian faith.

(Mr Bernard Tola 21/09/2026)

37/26 Love for our Jewish Neighbours

Synod, in love for Jewish Australians –

- (a) affirms the teaching of Scripture that God has not rejected the Jewish people 'whom he foreknew', that 'as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs', and that 'God's gifts and his call are irrevocable' (Romans 11:1-2, 28-29),
- (b) rejects antisemitism in all its forms and receives with humility the apostolic warning to Gentiles not to 'consider yourself to be superior' (Romans 11:18),
- (c) laments the tragic events at Bondi in December 2025 and the presence of antisemitism in our nation, and encourages all Sydney Anglicans to guard against any form of racism in our lives or in our churches,
- (d) prays that God would grant wisdom to those preparing the final report of the Royal Commission into Antisemitism and Social Cohesion,
- (e) affirms that the greatest need of every Jewish person in our nation is to find hope in Jesus their Messiah,
- (f) commits to praying for the wellbeing of our Jewish neighbours, for repentance among those who harbour antisemitic hatred, and for the work of reconciliation in both Jew and Gentile through the cross by which hostility is put to death (Ephesians 2:16), and
- (g) welcomes an initiative of the Archbishop's Office by which Sydney Anglicans will be invited to gather and pray for Jewish people in the Diocese and for ministry amongst them (3 April and 16 October 2027).

(The Rev Andrew Bruce 21/09/2026)

38/26 Immigration, Nationhood and the Gospel

Synod, noting the increasing intensity of debate about immigration and national identity globally and in Australia, affirms –

- (a) the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government to wisely determine immigration numbers and composition for the purpose of establishing peace and good order for the welfare of the Australian people,
- (b) that Christians are called to seek the common good, including the good of the earthly nation that God has placed them in,

- (c) God's sovereign care for all people and nations and his particular heart for the vulnerable and dispossessed,
- (d) that Christian identity must ultimately prioritise the reality of belonging to the Kingdom of God, our true citizenship being in heaven, from where we await our coming Saviour,
- (e) that all the kingdoms of this world will ultimately pass away and be placed under Christ's rule, and that he has purchased a people for himself by his blood from every nation, tribe and tongue and called them to be a renewed, holy nation,
- (f) that the reality of our heavenly citizenship as members of God's multi ethnic people, and our ultimate loyalty to the Lord Jesus, must lead to a priority of love for our Christian brothers and sisters who may come from different ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds; and for our neighbours regardless of their ethnic, racial or cultural backgrounds, desiring their earthly good and that they too would be part of God's new people,

and therefore requests that the Social Issues Committee prepare a paper to assist Sydney Anglicans to think wisely and theologically about immigration and nationhood, and the way that the Gospel proclamation that Jesus is Lord should shape Christian thinking, including the ways Scripture uses the experience and memory of being foreigners to shape the identity and conduct of God's people.

(Mr Chaneg Torres 21/09/2026)

39/26 Denham Court: Classification as a Parish

Synod assents to the classification of Denham Court as a parish with effect from 1 January 2027.

(The Rev Richard Mills 21/09/2026)

40/26 Financial support for theological training

Synod –

- (a) notes the Archbishop's call in his 2024 Presidential Address for every parish to be prayerful about sending or supporting at least one suitable person to train for full-time ministry at Moore Theological College or Youthworks College within three years, and his encouragement that such persons be supported in prayer, fellowship and finance,
- (b) notes resolution 57/25, which encouraged parishes to actively identify, encourage and support potential candidates for theological training and ordination,
- (c) requests the Standing Committee, in consultation with Ministry Training & Development, Moore Theological College and Youthworks College, to consider –
 - (i) how the financial support available to persons undertaking full-time theological training with a view to ministry in the Diocese has changed over time, including the role of standard and material bursaries, FEE-HELP and other forms of support,
 - (ii) the financial circumstances typically faced by persons considering such training, including tuition, living costs and foregone income,
 - (iii) the extent to which current arrangements provide appropriate financial support for persons undertaking or considering such training, and
 - (iv) whether any changes to existing support arrangements for Anglican candidates, including the use of diocesan funding mechanisms and material bursaries, should be considered, and
- (d) requests the Standing Committee to report its findings and any recommendations to the next ordinary session of Synod.

(Mr Josiah Yu 21/09/2026)

41/26 Provision of clergy workers

Synod –

- (a) notes that Synod has invited the Diocesan fellowship to seek five percent conversion growth in each of the next five years, and that sustaining growth on that scale over the longer term depends in part on an adequate supply of ordained ministers,
- (b) requests the Standing Committee to consider suitable means to research the pipeline of ordained ministry in the Diocese, considering presbyters and deacons separately, including –
 - (i) current numbers and the age profile of those serving in parish ministry,
 - (ii) ordinands and expected ordinations,
 - (iii) departures from parish ministry other than by retirement,
 - (iv) projected retirements, and
 - (v) whether the resulting supply is sufficient to support the special five-year focus and the growth it envisages, and
- (c) requests the Standing Committee report to the next session of this Synod.

(The Rev Mike Leite 21/09/2026)

42/26 225th anniversary of the parishes of St Philip's Sydney and St John's Parramatta

Synod, noting that 23 July 2027 will mark the 225th anniversary of Governor Philip Gidley King's proclamation establishing the first two parishes in the colony of New South Wales, St Philip's Sydney and St John's Parramatta –

- (a) gives thanks to Almighty God for the proclamation of 23 July 1802, which established the parishes of St Philip's in Sydney and St John's in Parramatta, encompassing between them much of the area now served by the Diocese of Sydney,
- (b) gives thanks to God for the many churches subsequently planted across Sydney and beyond, and for generations of faithful Christian witness and gospel ministry in the communities they now serve,
- (c) recognises with thanksgiving that the Christian gospel was present from the earliest years of the colony and that the proclamation of these parishes reflects the place of Christian faith and ministry in the early life of the nation,
- (d) welcomes the intention of St Philip's, Church Hill and St John's Regional Cathedral, Parramatta to partner together, and with other willing churches, in marking this anniversary in July 2027,
- (e) invites churches across the Diocese, from east to west, to consider whether this anniversary might provide opportunities in their own communities to connect with those interested in the integral role of the Gospel with Sydney's history and heritage, and
- (f) prays that the commemoration of this anniversary (over the weekend of July 24th and 25th) will give thanks to God for his faithfulness in the past and open fresh opportunities for the good news of Jesus Christ to be shared in Sydney today.

(The Rev Justin Moffatt 21/09/2026)

43/26 Response to the motion regarding a special five-year focus

Synod, following the passage of M7 (A Special Five-Year Focus – Attendance, Mission & Youth: 2026 'Baseline Update'), and with much joyful anticipation of many more souls being brought from death to life in the coming 5 years –

- (a) Encourages any Rectors who might be feeling anxious, discouraged, or tempted to ungodly pride concerning the implementation of M7 to consult with their Regional Bishop in considering a response that is heartfelt in its earnestness to reach the lost yet rests in the assurance that the ultimate work is our Heavenly Father's.
- (b) Expresses our loving and prayerful support for such Rectors as they seek to respond to anxiety, discouragement and ungodly pride in ways that are honouring to God.

- (c) Prays that the Lord will deeply unite our diocesan fellowship in longing to see the lost saved, trusting entirely in Christ's power to do so by his Spirit, while taking responsibility to be faithful with the means of ministry he has entrusted to us, all for the glory of God.

(The Rev David Morgan 21/09/2026)

44/26 Diocesan governance policy and term limits

Synod, noting that—

- (i) Synod has expressed a general view as to good governance in the Diocesan Governance Policy ('the Policy'),
- (ii) under the Policy a retiring member of a Level C or D organisation ordinarily should only be eligible for election for a further term where that election would not in the normal course result in the member being a member for more than 12 consecutive years,
- (iii) footnote 31 contemplates service of a Level C or D organisation beyond 12 consecutive years only in exceptional circumstances, and then only with the prior approval of a three-quarters majority of the governing body and the prior approval of the Standing Committee,
- (iv) Synod is itself a Diocesan Appointor for the purposes of the Policy when it elects a member of a governing body,
- (v) the Policy provides that, where particular qualifications, skills and experience are specified for the position being filled, a nominator may not nominate unless satisfied, after consultation with the chair, that the nominee has them, and must advise the outcome of that consultation to the Appointor, and
- (vi) footnote 27 expressly contemplates that the requirement in the Policy for provision of evidence of a nominee's Christian faith and character in Synod elections will require amendment of the *Synod Elections Ordinance 2000*, including as to the content and manner of making a nomination and the provision of a précis,
- (vii) nothing in the Policy precludes Synod, as a Diocesan Appointor, from requiring that such information be provided to it before it elects, and
- (viii) the *Synod Elections Ordinance 2000* was amended in 2025 to implement the requirements of footnote 27 of the Policy, but that a précis is only required to be supplied to the Synod in the case of a contested election,

agrees that –

- (a) where a person is nominated for election by Synod as a member of the governing body of an organisation to which section C of Appendix 2 applies (with the exception of the Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney), and either the nominee's term already exceeds, or the election would in the normal course result in a term exceeding, the limits in paragraph C(i) or C(ii), it would be in keeping with the principles of good governance expressed in the Policy for the Synod to receive, in writing and before the election, a statement of the nominator's opinion as to the fit between –
 - (i) the nominee's particular qualifications, skills and experience, and
 - (ii) the present strategic needs of the organisation,
- (b) it would be in keeping with the principles of good governance expressed in the Policy for such a statement to be provided whether or not the election is contested, and irrespective of whether the organisation has adopted the principles of the Policy by ordinance or in its constitution,

and therefore requests that –

- (c) the Standing Committee consider, and report to the next ordinary session of Synod on, whether the *Synod Elections Ordinance 2000*, or any other ordinance, should be amended to give effect to the intent of paragraphs (a) and (b) above, such as by treating any such elections as if they were contested, and if so bring a bill for an ordinance accordingly.

(The Rev Michael Paget 21/09/2026)

45/26 Austral Anglican Church Plant

Synod –

- (a) gives thanks for the partnership of churches, organisations and individuals in praying, supporting, planning and preparing for Austral Anglican Church, a new church plant to be launched in February 2027 in a greenfield area of Southwest Sydney, and
- (b) prays for the Rev Mick Bullen, his wife Kathryn and their family, as well as the core planting team from Grace Anglican Church Camden Valley along with other local Anglican churches, asking God to provide everything needed for the church to be established and grown, such that Christ would be proclaimed clearly, and many people from this large and rapidly growing population would be saved and grown to maturity in Christ.

(The Rev Jonathan Squire 21/09/2026)

46/26 Awareness and inclusion of those with neurodivergence and invisible disabilities

Synod –

- (a) affirms that all people are created in the image of God and that experiences of disability do not negate this essential truth,
- (b) affirms that the experience of neurodivergence and invisible disability is no bar to the God-given dignity of those individuals, nor of the Spirit's work in giving a variety of gifts including those particular to that experience,
- (c) calls upon parishes, schools and agencies of this Diocese to embrace and affirm the gifts of neurodivergent people, recognise the particular challenges they may face and to actively work to remove barriers to the participation of neurodivergent people in every aspect of the life of the Church, including worship, ministry, governance and leadership,
- (d) encourages clergy and lay leaders who are comfortable doing so to speak openly about their lived experience of neurodivergence and invisible disability, helping people to better understand disability and neurodivergence within the life and leadership of the Church, and
- (e) commends to our wide Diocesan family the following (not exhaustive) list of resources –
 - (i) The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program (<https://hdsunflower.com>)
 - (ii) An Extraordinary Normal: Faith, Family and Neurodivergence (<https://substack.com/@anextraordinarynormal>),
 - (iii) Autism and the Church: Bible Theology, and Community. Grant Macaskill (<https://www.baylorpress.com/9781481311250/autism-and-the-church/>),
 - (iv) Unwin, K, & van Ommen, AL (2024). Autistic and Non-Autistic Experience of the Sensory Aspects of the Church Service. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 52(4), 410-425. (<https://doi.org/10.1177/00916471241266810>), and
 - (v) The Rev Bec Baines, Youthworks' Accessibility Ministry Advisor made freely available to the Diocese.

(The Rev David Ould 22/09/2026)

47/26 Encouragement to Anglican schools to partner with parishes

Synod encourages all Anglican schools in the Diocese to support the wider mission of the gospel by encouraging staff to partner with local parishes in teaching Special Religious Education in ways that are consistent with s83c of the NSW Education Act, as well as possible other forms of partnership (such as praying for the churches, promoting Youthworks camps, actively linking students to local Anglican youth groups, and keeping Friday evenings and Sundays free of school activities, among others).

(The Rev Dr Andrew Katay 22/09/2026)

48/26 Domestic and Family Violence

Synod, grieved by the recent occurrences of domestic violence in Sydney and surrounding regions –

- (a) expresses its sorrow for all who have suffered, especially women and children affected by such violence,
- (b) prays that God would bring comfort, protection and justice for victims, wisdom for those who care for them, and repentance for perpetrators,
- (c) prays that the authorities would act justly to hold offenders accountable, and
- (d) prays for the spread of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, that relationships in our homes and communities would be marked by love, faithfulness, gentleness and mutual care,

and asks Archdeacon Hartley to lead the Synod in prayer for this matter.

(Professor Bernard Stewart AM 22/09/2026)

49/26 Retirement of The Rev Chris Chardon

Synod, noting that the Rev Chris Chardon will retire from full-time ministry in June 2027, gives thanks to God for the faithful ministry of Chris and his wife Lyndel since 1984.

Before commencing his studies at Moore College, Chris served as a Youth Minister in the parishes of Earlwood and Turramurra. He was ordained in the Diocese of Sydney in 1994 and served as Assistant Minister at Panania from 1994 to 1997. He then served as Rector of Concord West with Concord North from 1997 to 2018, before continuing as Rector of Concord West from 2018.

Over nearly three decades in the Concord area, Chris has devoted himself to loving and caring for Christ's flock and to proclaiming the gospel in his local community. Through his long and faithful ministry at Concord West, he has served generations of people and provided steadfast pastoral leadership to the parish.

Synod gives thanks to God for Chris's faithful service to Christ and his people, and for the partnership and support of Lyndel throughout his ministry. They are much loved and will be greatly missed.

Synod prays for God's continued blessing on Chris and Lyndel in their life and ministry together.

(Bishop Michael Stead 22/09/2026)

50/26 Retirement of The Rev Dr James Collins

Synod gives thanks to God for the long and varied ministry of the Rev Dr James Collins, who will retire from full-time ministry in October 2026 after almost four decades of ordained ministry.

James was ordained in the Diocese of Perth in 1987 and served in a number of parishes and ministries in Western Australia before moving to Tasmania. His early ministry included service in Gosnells, Scarborough, Morawa and Perenjori, Mosman Park and City Beach, as well as a period as Chaplain at Curtin University.

In Tasmania, James served the parishes of the Channel and Cygnet, New Norfolk, St Helens, Hamilton, Break O'Day and Brighton. During these years he also served as a Ministry Development Officer and contributed to parish consultation and coordination in the Southern Midlands. His ministry has therefore extended beyond the care of individual congregations to the encouragement, development and support of others engaged in Christian ministry.

Since coming to Sydney, James has served as Rector of Burwood since 2011 where he has both built up the congregation and restored the church building at St Paul's Burwood. Synod expresses its gratitude to God for James's faithful service over these many years and for the many people and communities who have been blessed through his ministry.

As James retires in October, Synod prays that God will give him and his wife Helen joy and refreshment in the years ahead, and that the Lord will continue to use the gifts and experience James has developed through a lifetime of Christian service for the glory of Christ.

(Bishop Michael Stead 22/09/2026)

51/26 Retirement of Canon Bruce Morrison

Synod gives thanks to God for the ministry of Canon Bruce Morrison. Bruce served at Richmond, Cataract with Ambarvale, and Seven Hills before being appointed Senior Canon of St John's Cathedral, Parramatta, in 2004.

Under Bruce's leadership, St John's has navigated the rapidly changing nature of the local community. It has sought to provide for future ministry by making the most of its property, and there are now 11 congregations meeting across all ages and drawing people from a rich variety of backgrounds and languages, as they pursue their vision to see the city of Parramatta transformed by the hope of Jesus.

We also acknowledge that, under his careful guidance and encouragement, many men and women have been trained in ministry and now serve throughout the Diocese and further afield.

We thank God for his wife, Michele, for her unwavering support of Bruce through his years of ministry, and for her deep desire, alongside him, that the gospel to be known as widely as possible.

Synod wishes them every blessing in their retirement and asks that the Lord may give them many opportunities to enjoy family, God's creation and new opportunities for Christian fellowship and service.

(Bishop Gary Koo 22/09/2026)

52/26 Retirement of The Rev Joseph Thiem

Synod gives thanks to God for the ministry of the Rev Joseph Thiem in the Diocese over 36 years. Joseph came into the Diocese in 1990 and served as an Assistant Minister at Marrickville. In 1997 he took up the challenge and accepted the role of Curate in Charge of the Provisional Parish of Lidcombe. Under Joseph's leadership the church grew and became a full parish in 2008. He remained there until being appointed Rector of Cabramatta in 2022, which became a full parish in 2025. In his decades in the Diocese, Joseph has not only served faithfully in parish ministry, but has been involved in the wider work of Chinese ministry.

Synod wishes Joseph and his wife, Vivian, a happy retirement and assures them of our prayers as they seek new avenues to serve the work of the gospel.

(Bishop Peter Lin 22/09/2026)

53/26 Retirement of The Rev Geoffrey Thompson

Synod, noting the approaching retirement of the Rev Geoff Thompson in November, thanks God for his ministry in the parishes of Figtree and Nowra during the last 16 years.

Geoff was an assistant minister in the parish of Figtree from 2010 to 2015, before becoming the rector in Nowra early in 2015. He has led the parish through some significant changes and challenges, and leaves behind a thriving church that gathers three congregations in the main church on Sundays, while supporting a midweek 'Open House' ministry, a branch church in Nerriga and a joint ministry in Greenwell Point. The parish has also had a long history of cooperative partnership with the Shoalhaven Aboriginal Community Church (**ShACC**) that continues even after ShACC has obtained its own home.

In all these ministries Geoff has demonstrated a tireless enthusiasm to serve the church, challenging himself and his fellow believers to work at what's best for the gospel, in every circumstance. His memorable 'Jesus in lockdown' display showed how his creative gifts could turn even a pandemic into

an evangelistic opportunity that caught the eye of the community – but even more, it was just one instance of his desire to reach the lost while encouraging the faithful.

Geoff and Anne are deeply loved in the parish and will be greatly missed, but their great gift to the church is how well they have prepared the parish for the next chapter of their ministry to Nowra and the broader area.

Synod prays for Geoff and Anne in retirement, knowing that whether resting or working, they will continue faithfully serving the Lord.

(Archdeacon Anthony Douglas 22/09/2026)

54/26 Retirement of Canon Peter Yeats

Synod gives thanks to God for the ministry of Canon Peter Yeats, whose retirement from full-time ministry in May 2027 brings to a close a remarkable journey of service to Christ and his church across several continents and many different settings.

Peter began ordained ministry in the Diocese of Newcastle in England in 1987. From the outset his ministry took him beyond the parish setting. He served as Assistant Curate at St Paul's Whitley Bay before moving to Papua New Guinea, where he served as Chaplain at Martyrs' Memorial School and subsequently as a lecturer at Newton Theological College.

Peter's ministry then took him to Hong Kong, where he served as Chaplain of St John's Cathedral and as Priest-in-Charge of Emmanuel Church, Pokfulam. He subsequently served as Port Chaplain with the Mission to Seafarers in Kobe, Japan. In these varied ministries Peter had the opportunity to minister among people of many cultures and circumstances, bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to schools, theological students, congregations, cathedral communities and seafarers.

Returning to Australia, Peter served in the Diocese of Ballarat as Rector of Beaufort and Skipton and had a range of diocesan responsibilities, including as Vicar General, Archdeacon and Ministry Development Officer. He was appointed Canon Emeritus of Ballarat Cathedral in 2011. He then served in South Australia as Parish Priest of Modbury and Archdeacon of Gawler before returning to Sydney.

In the Diocese of Sydney, Peter has served as Rector of Birchgrove (formerly known as Balmain). Through these years he has given himself generously to the people of Birchgrove and the wider community, bringing to his ministry the rich experience of a lifetime of service across different cultures, traditions and contexts.

Synod gives thanks to God for Peter's faithful and wide-ranging ministry, for the many people who have been encouraged and strengthened through his service, and for the distinctive contribution he has made to the life of the church in each place in which he has served.

As Peter approaches retirement in May 2027, Synod prays that the Lord will grant him a rich sense of fulfilment and thanksgiving for the years of ministry now completed, and that he and his wife Karolina will know God's continued grace and blessing in the years ahead.

(Bishop Michael Stead 22/09/2026)

55/26 Bishop Peter Hayward

Synod gives thanks to God for the ministry of Bishop Peter Hayward. With his wife Julie, he planted Glenmore Park Anglican Church while serving as an assistant minister in the parish of Penrith. Leaving the strong and growing Glenmore Park congregation, they then moved to Spokane to spend five years establishing the fledgling church of Christ the Redeemer.

The Haywards returned to the Diocese as Peter took up the role of rector at Beverly Hills in 2001, before being appointed as Bishop of Wollongong in 2010. Peter served on two regional councils, two cathedral chapters, and innumerable committees, including a run of 22 years as part of Standing Committee. Unsurprisingly, he has continued to champion the planting of new churches, in the greenfields of the

southwest, in the brownfields of the Wollongong Region, amongst indigenous communities, and in outreach to marginalised people throughout our Diocese. In all of this he has been marked by graciousness, wisdom, foresight and kindness, partnered by Julie's warm, faithful and self-giving investment in relationships with women in the region.

As each successive chapter of ministry has been longer than those before, Synod prays for fruitful opportunities for growing God's kingdom for many years to come.

(Bishop Chris Edwards 22/09/2026)

56/26 Archdeacon Kara Hartley

Synod gives grateful thanks to God for the significant and wide-ranging ministry of the Ven Kara Hartley as the Archdeacon for Women's Ministry over the last 14 years.

Kara was appointed to the role in 2012 by Archbishop Peter Jensen, and has served alongside three Archbishops. She is the third woman to have held the role, and the longest serving, since its establishment in 1993 by Archbishop Harry Goodhew with the aim of advancing the ministries of women in the diocese.

Synod is deeply appreciative of the way Kara has done exactly this as she has been involved in supporting, encouraging, recruiting and training women for ministry, as she has ministered to the women in our churches through the teaching and preaching of the scriptures, and as she has advocated for women and been a voice for women in the Synod, General Synod, Standing Committee and on innumerable boards and committees. Most notably, she has served on the Diocesan Doctrine Commission, as an Ordination Chaplain, on the governing Board of Moore College, on the Domestic Violence Taskforce and as co-chair of the Domestic Violence Monitoring Committee.

In all of this, Kara has served with zeal for the Lord's name, and with gracious kindness that truly sees others and reaches out to them in compassion. She has consistently advocated for and modelled a ministry of men and women contending side by side for the gospel. She has loved others with the love of Christ.

Synod thanks God for His work in her and through her, and prays for her continued ministry to women and men as she serves at Moore College.

(Bishop Peter Lin 22/09/2026)

57/26 Mr Russell Powell

Synod gives thanks to God for Mr Russell Powell's 19 years of service at the helm of Anglican Media and acknowledges his retirement as the Anglican Media CEO at the end of 2026. Russell commenced as the Archbishop's Media Officer in December 2007 and has served three different Archbishops in that role. He will continue to work as the Media Advisor to Archbishop Raffle on a part-time basis in 2027. Since 2010 Russell has been the CEO of Anglican Media and over the past 16 years in that role he has led his staff team with great care, provided thoughtful and experienced leadership in media and communications for the benefit of the whole diocese, has maintained and developed media and communication platforms wisely with limited resources, and has overseen a considered embrace of new technologies and opportunities. Russell has played a key role in the proclamation of the gospel in our Diocese, as well as in telling the stories of God's work in our churches, organisations and schools.

We praise God for his humble, faithful, and mature service of Christ.

(Canon Phillip Colgan 22/09/2026)

58/26 Strengthening Lay Ministry Screening and Lay Authorities

Synod, noting information provided in answer to questions concerning the process and timing of granting Lay Authorities –

- (a) affirms the Diocese's commitment to the physical, emotional and spiritual welfare and safety of all people, particularly within its own community, and the importance of the careful screening of church workers as part of creating and maintaining churches that are safe for children and vulnerable people, and
- (b) commends the year-on-year reduction in the time taken to issue Lay Authorities, and the assistance given to parishes in ensuring that relevant persons are appropriately screened and, where required, hold a Lay Authority, and
- (c) recognises the importance of a clear, coherent and widely understood system of screening for safe ministry to children, and the role of Lay Authorities within that system, and
- (d) notes that the Registrar and Director of Safe Ministry, in consultation with other relevant diocesan officers, are undertaking a review of forms, webpages, explanatory material and routine communications concerning Lay Authority and Safe Ministry screening and requests that, as part of that review, consideration be given to ensuring that all such communications –
 - (i) clearly distinguish the Safe Ministry Check applicable to voluntary ministry to children from the Safe Ministry Check undertaken in connection with clergy licences and Lay Authorities, and
 - (ii) state clearly that a person must not commence ministry as a Lay Minister, or commence paid ministry to children, until the screening required by the *Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020* has been completed, and
 - (iii) describe what action should be taken where a person has commenced ministry and may require, but does not hold, a Lay Authority, and
 - (iv) make clear that, where required, holding a Lay Authority is an essential component of the Diocese's wider system of screening and accountability for safe ministry to children, and
 - (v) use the expression "holds a Lay Authority" where the intended meaning is that a person holds an authority conferred by the Archbishop, rather than the potentially ambiguous word "authorised", and
- (e) requests the Registrar and Director of Safe Ministry consider establishing a process for regularly sending each incumbent a current list of persons recorded as holding a Lay Authority in connection with their parish, with a request that the incumbent compare that list with their current staff team and take appropriate action where a staff member who may require a Lay Authority does not hold one, and
- (f) requests Standing Committee, in its review of the *Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015*, to consider amendments to assist Rectors and parish staff to determine readily whether a Lay Authority is required, and
- (g) requests Standing Committee to review the *Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020* and consider such amendments as may be necessary to address any ambiguity in, or inconsistency between, the terms of that Ordinance and the Diocese's intended arrangements for the screening of lay church workers engaged in paid ministry to children, and
- (h) requests Standing Committee, through its Stipends and Allowances Committee, to review the terminology used in the Remuneration Guidelines to ensure that it is consistent with the definition of "Lay Minister" in the *Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015*.

(The Rev Christopher Braga 22/09/2026)