Bathurst Diocese

SHARING JESUS FOR LIFE

THIRD SESSION

OF THE

51ST SYNOD

18 – 19 SEPTEMBER 2026

BOOK 1

BUSINESS PAPERS

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ORDER OF BUSINESS

FOR FRIDAY 18 SEPTEMBER and SATURDAY 19 SEPTEMBER
HOLY TRINITY PARISH AND COMMUNITY CENTRE, KELSO

PROPOSED SYNOD TIMETABLE

Friday 18 September

6.30pm	Gather and registration
7.00pm	Prayers and Bible study
7.20pm	President's address
7.50pm	Election of Chair and Deputy Chair of Committees Formal motions Notices of motions and questions
8.00pm	Finance motions
8.45pm	Adjournment

Saturday 19 September

8.30am	Prayers and Bible study Voting for filling APT vacancies as required
8.45am	**Order of the day** – M12 – the Rev'd Kevin Simington
8.50am	Consideration of ordinances and General Synod Canons **Order of the day** – M11 – redress matters
10.15am	Morning tea
10.45am	Election for members of APT closes Diocesan Church Revitalisation Project update (8-minute presentation plus 7 minutes for questions)
11.00am	Questions answered and all remaining motions considered
11.40am	**Order of the day –** retirement of the bishop
12.00pm	Adjournment of Synod
12.00pm	Lunch
1.30pm	Service of Praise, Prayer and Proclamation and farewell at All Saint's Cathedral

MOTIONS

FORMAL MOTIONS

M1 Order of Business

Mover: *Dr Warwick Baines*
Seconder: *Mark Galbraith*

Synod adopts the Order of Business recommended by the Steering Committee, as tabled.

M2 Further motion concerning the order of business

Mover: *The Rev'd Bob Cameron*
Seconder: *Archdeacon Andrew Thornhill*

Synod:

1. grants leave for a motion without notice concerning the retirement of Bishop Mark Calder to be moved by the Venerable Andrew Thornhill and seconded by Mr Ray Haigh as the final item of business before the closing prayer and adjournment of Synod;
2. determines that speeches on that motion, other than those of Archdeacon Thornhill and Mr Haigh, be limited to one minute each; and
3. agrees that the consideration of this motion be made an order of the day at 11.40am, Saturday 19 September.

M3 Chair of Committees

Mover: *The Rev'd Bob Cameron*
Seconder: *Archdeacon Andrew Thornhill*

Synod agrees to the appointment of the Rev'd Ben Mackay as Chair of Committees.

M4 Reports

Mover: *Archdeacon Andrew Thornhill*
Seconder: *Lisa Milton*

Synod moves that the reports, as included in Synod Book 1, be tabled and received.

MOTIONS BROUGHT AT THE REQUEST OF BIC

M5 Finance and accounts for 2025

Mover: *Dr Warwick Baines*
Seconder: *Mark Galbraith*

Synod receives the audited financial statements and accounts for the Synod Management Fund, the Anglican Property Trust and Anglican Managed Investment Fund, and the Endowment of the See for the year ended 31 December 2025.

M6 Synod Management Fund Budget Estimates for 2027

Mover: *Dr Warwick Baines*
Seconder: *Mark Galbraith*

Synod adopts the 2027 Synod Management Fund Budget Estimates.

M7 Schedule of Synod Contributions for 2027

Mover: *Dr Warwick Baines*
Seconder: *Mark Galbraith*

Synod adopts the 2027 Schedule of Synod Contributions.

M8 Consideration of General Synod constitutional amendment canons

Mover: *Adrian Ahern*
Seconder: *Jane Francis*

Synod:

1. grants leave for the introduction of the General Synod – Offences Amendment Canon 2026, Special Tribunal Canon 2026 and Special Tribunal Canon 2007 (Amendment) Canon 2026 Adopting Ordinance 2026;
2. agrees to consider the same;
3. passes the same.

M9 Consideration of the General Synod offences and special tribunal canons

Mover: *Adrian Ahern*
Seconder: *Jane Francis*

Synod:

1. grants leave for the introduction of the General Synod - Constitution Amendment (Provincial Composition) Canon 2026, Constitution Amendment (Provincial Constitutions) Canon 2026, Constitution Amendment (First Nations Bishops) Canon 2026, and Constitution Amendment (Defence Force Representation in General Synod) Canon 2026 Assenting Ordinance 2026;
2. agrees to consider the same;
3. passes the same.

M10 Consideration of the Records and Archives Ordinance 2026

Mover: *Dr Warwick Baines*
Seconder: *Adrian Ahern*

Synod:

1. grants leave for the introduction of the Records and Archives Ordinance 2026;
2. agrees to consider the same;
3. passes the same.

M11 Redress matters

Mover: *Archdeacon Andrew Thornhill*
Seconder: *Sandra White*

That this Synod:

1. receives the information pack (Appendix 2 of Book 1) concerning the Diocese's anticipated future redress liabilities;
2. acknowledges with sorrow the profound harm suffered by survivors of abuse and affirms the Diocese's commitment to meet its redress obligations as required by law, faithfully, compassionately and responsibly;
3. endorses the principles of justice, stewardship, transparency and mission to guide the Diocese in responding to its redress obligations;
4. supports the establishment and work of the Redress Funding Task Force in advising Bishop and Council and the Anglican Property Trust on meeting those obligations; and
5. commits the work ahead to God in prayer, asking for wisdom, compassion, courage and provision.

MOTIONS OF WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

M12 Thanks to the Reverend Kevin Simington

Mover: *Archdeacon Andrew Thornhill*
Seconder: *The Rev'd Ben Mackay*

Synod wishes to express its deep gratitude to the Reverend Kevin Simington for his vibrant, insightful, generous and encouraging ministry during his time with us as diocesan ministry consultant. During his time with us over the past several years, Kevin - together with his wife Sandy - has faithfully served our Diocese in parish locum ministry, preaching, training, ordinand discernment and other parish ministry support and care.

This ministry has been effective despite their geographical distance, and other challenging life circumstances. Synod is grateful to God for this ministry and commends Kevin and Sandy to Him to continue to sustain and encourage them in their ministry.

M13 Thanks for the Ministry of the Dean, the Very Rev'd James Hodson, on his retirement

Mover: *Sue West*
Seconder: *Jane Francis*

Synod gives thanks for the ministry of the Very Rev'd James Hodson in this Diocese as he retires as the Dean of the Cathedral. We acknowledge his faithful service in Bathurst for sixteen years, beginning at St Barnabas South Bathurst, where he nurtured and led that parish for several years, including the period following the fire that destroyed the church building in 2014, and then as Dean of All Saints Cathedral from 2017.

James' deep understanding and appreciation of traditional Anglican liturgy, clear and strong biblical preaching and pastoral care of the congregation, along with those in need and the marginalised, has been greatly appreciated. He has also served the Diocese in numerous ways, including as a chaplain at Orange Anglican Grammar School and All Saints College and member of the Anglican Schools Commission, as Ministry Development Officer of the Diocese, and as a member of the Bishop's Leadership Team and a member of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia.

We ask God's blessings upon James, Fran and Ellen as they move to the Central Coast and a new season of life and ministry there and pray for their continued growth in knowledge of the Lord Jesus.

M14 Wording of Code of Conduct commitments

Mover: *Merilyn Nevell*
Seconder: *Michelle Menz*

Synod requests Bishop in Council to review the wording of the Code of Conduct commitments, particularly where a person is required to state "I will not" engage in a particular conduct, and to consider whether the wording should instead recognise that a person is undertaking to do their best to comply with the required standards.

M15 Anglican Women of Australia (AWA), Bathurst Diocese

Mover: *Archdeacon Tim St Quintin*
Seconder: *Janice Keys*

That this Synod:

1. gives thanks to God for the valuable ministry of the Anglican Women of Australia (AWA) across the Diocese of Bathurst over 59 years;
2. rejoices that there continue to be active branches of AWA supporting the ministry of their local parishes and commends those who continue to serve in this way;
3. encourages existing branches to explore ways of working together and encouraging one another in the purposes of the AWA;
4. resolves that the Diocesan body of the AWA be closed;
5. directs that any funds held by the diocesan AWA body, after all current commitments and obligations have been met, be transferred to the Diocese to be applied for the purpose of supporting women's ministry conferences within the Diocese; and
6. notes that the closure of the diocesan body does not preclude parish branches of AWA from continuing to operate as parish ministries under the oversight of their parish councils.

QUESTIONS

OF WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

Q1 Prior sale/bequest proceeds held in trust

Submitted by: *Archdeacon Steve Cimarosti*

Noting:

1. the recent actuarial report on potential redress liability across the Diocese,
2. the need for the Diocese to fundraise significant amounts for a shortfall in estimated redress; and,
3. the current Diocesan requirement for parishes to direct parish bequests and property sale proceeds to the Diocesan Anglican Managed Investment Fund (AMIF);

Does the Diocese have a plan, or is it working towards a plan, to ensure that funds already held in trust for parish use from bequests and/or sale proceeds are retained as much as possible, whilst also meeting our obligations to survivors of abuse?

Also, given that some parishes have already sold property to contribute to redress in the past, will the Diocese provide some transparency regarding what has already been contributed in these efforts?

Q2 and Q3 Safe ministry declarations

Submitted by: *Merilyn Nevell*

QUESTION 2

When a person signs a Safe Ministry declaration and agrees to abide by Faithfulness in Service, are they making an absolute commitment never to act wrongly? If an allegation is subsequently made against them, what protections are in place to ensure the matter is fairly assessed?

QUESTION 3

How should the declaration in Form D concerning past conduct be understood? In particular, does past wrongdoing prevent a person from signing the declaration, and how are repentance and forgiveness taken into account?

Q4 Encouragement to parishes without clergy

Submitted by: *Dianne Phillis*

What is being done to encourage people who identify as Anglican to gather for worship and fellowship with other Christians in towns and areas where Anglican services are no longer held regularly?

LIST OF SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES

SUMMONED BY THE BISHOP TO THE THIRD ORDINARY SESSION OF THE 51st SYNOD UNDER THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF BATHURST ADMINISTRATION ORDINANCE.

Current members of synod as at 3 September 2026

The current parish clergy and parish lay representatives are:

Parish	Clergy rep	Lay Synod rep 1	Lay Synod rep 2
Bathurst	James Hodson	Jane Francis	Sue West
Blayney	Bob Cameron	Joy Ritchie	Sue Lane
Bourke / Brewarrina	*vacant*	Cec Dorrington	Graham Randall
Canowindra	Michael George	Kirstin Stevenson	Ross Burnett
Cobar	James Daymond	Graham Watt	*vacant*
Coolah-Dunedoo	*vacant*	Allyson Roberts	*vacant*
Coonabarabran	*vacant*	Merilyn Nevell	Michelle Menz
Coonamble	Jim Kapetangiannis	Lois Cain	*vacant*
Condobolin	*vacant*	Sue Thomas	Jan Lewis
Cowra	Ben Connelly	Peter Jansen	Liz Jansen
Cudal-Molong	Robert Nichols	*vacant*	*vacant*
Cudgegong Valley	Timothy St Quintin	Carolyn Wagstaffe	Janice Keys
Cumnock	*vacant*	Colin Cartwright	Ken Turner
Dubbo	Andrew Thornhill	Dianne Phillis	Bruce Henderson
Forbes	Roger Phelps	Janet Mullette	Keith Mullette
Gilgandra	Stuart Border	Madeline Foran	Roger Whale
Grenfell	Steven Wockner	Elizabeth Lotherington	Ronald Booth
Kelso	James Boardman	Diane Fraser	Julie Flynn
Narromine	Luke Merriman	Anthony Walsh	Ray Haigh
Nyngan	*vacant*	William Marr	*vacant*
Oberon	Jonathan Lush	Barry Lang	Darren Reed
Orange	Andrew Martin	Mike Middleton	Rod Wykes
Orange East	Ben Mackay	Anni Gallagher	Helen Balcomb
Parkes / Peak Hill	Steve Cimarosti	Norma Garment	Jemima Woolley
Trundle	*vacant*	Cranley Gowing	Graham Coombs
Warren	*vacant*	Michael Job	*vacant*
Wellington	Carl Palmer	Jennie Palmer	*vacant*
West Wyalong	David Hayman	Marie Seckold	Susan Haines

Other current members of synod are:

Official members	Appointed clergy (clause 318)	Appointed lay persons (clause 319)
Mark Calder (clause 316)	Phil Howes	Doug Milton
Warwick Baines (clause 316)	Rebecca Choi	Levi Kowalczyk
Adrian Ahern (clause 316)	Joshua Taylor	Wendy Murray
John Power (clause 317a)	Justin Baker	Kath Thornhill
Andrew Trafford (clause 317a)	Robert Yemm	Steve White
Andrew Boog (clause 317b)	Xanthe Yemm	James White
Mark Galbraith (clause 403)		
Glenn Murray (clause 403)		
Lisa Milton (clause 403)		
Sandra White (clause 403)		
Eliot Harper (clause 403)		
Sally Phelps (clause 403)		

REPORTS

BISHOP-IN-COUNCIL REPORT TO SYNOD

Bishop in Council reports on its work since the September 2025 sitting of the Synod and of the exercise in that period of delegated powers conferred on it.

1 - Meetings

Bishop-in-Council met formally on 7 occasions since the Second Ordinary Session of the 51st Synod:

21 October 2025	(via Zoom)
16 December 2025	(via Zoom)
17 February 2026	(via Zoom)
21 April 2026	(via Zoom)
16 June 2026	(via Zoom)
4 August 2026	(via Zoom)
29 August 2026	(Dubbo)

Key points from two additional meetings, held on 1 November 2025 (Dubbo) and 18 November 2025 (via Zoom), solely focused on strategic planning are recorded in this report but they have not been included in meeting and attendance statistics.

2 – Members and Meeting Attendance

Members	Position	Number of meetings	Number attended
Bishop Mark Calder	Chair	7	6
Dean James Hodson	Dean	7	5
Archdeacon Andrew Thornhill	Diocesan Archdeacon	7	7
Archdeacon Tim St Quintin	Regional Archdeacon	7	7
Archdeacon James Daymond	Regional Archdeacon	7	7
Archdeacon Steve Cimarosti	Regional Archdeacon	1	0
The Rev'd Bob Cameron	Elected Clergy Member	7	6
The Rev'd Bec Choi	Elected Clergy Member	7	6
The Rev'd Phil Howes	Elected Clergy Member	7	5
The Rev'd Sally Phelps	Appointed Clergy Member	7	5
Ms Jane Francis	Elected Lay Member	7	7
Mr Mark Galbraith	Elected Lay Member	7	6
Mr Ray Haigh	Elected Lay Member	7	7
Mrs Lisa Milton	Elected Lay Member	7	6
Mr Glenn Murray	Elected Lay Member	7	6
Mr John Power	Elected Lay Member	7	7
Mr Eliot Harper	Appointed Lay Member	7	6
Mrs Sandra White	Appointed Lay Member	7	6

With the exception of the below, elected and appointed members began their term at the conclusion of the First Ordinary Session of the 51st Synod on 21 September 2024:

- Mrs Sandra White was appointed to fill the lay member vacancy on 17 December 2024.
- Archdeacon Thornhill was appointed Diocesan Archdeacon from 1 July 2025.
- Archdeacon James Daymond was appointed a Regional Archdeacon from 1 July 2025, thereby creating a vacancy for an elected clergy member.
- The Rev'd Bec Choi was elected on 19 August 2025 to fill the elected clergy vacancy.
- Archdeacon Steve Cimarosti was appointed a Regional Archdeacon from 22 August 2026.

3 – Ordinances Passed since the Last Report to Synod

To date, Bishop-in-Council has passed the following Ordinances under powers delegated by Synod and copies are included in this report at Appendix 1 of Book 1:

No.	Title
4/2025	Ordinance for Sale of Church Trust Properties in the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst October 2025
1/2026	Anglicare Ordinance 1998 Repeal Ordinance 2026
2/2026	Ordinance for Sale of Church Trust Properties in the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst June 2026
3/2026	Ministry Standards Ordinance 2025 Amendment Ordinance 2026
4/2026	Parishes Ordinance 2023 Amendment Ordinance 2026

4 – Key Points from Bishop in Council Meetings

21 OCTOBER 2025

- Gave thanks for the ministry of Bishop Stuart and Mrs Janie Robinson and acknowledged their service in the Diocese.
- Approved arrangements for a diocesan-wide property inspection and insurance valuation project covering all diocesan properties.
- Approved a subsidy arrangement to significantly reduce the cost of the inspection project to parishes.
- Passed an ordinance authorising the sale of Barton Cemetery near Wellington.
- Considered strategies to improve Safe Ministry compliance across the Diocese.
- Noted that all parishes had now been transitioned to Xero accounting software.

1 AND 18 NOVEMBER 2025 (STRATEGIC PLANNING DAY AND FOLLOW-UP)

- Participated in a diocesan strategic planning day facilitated by the Rev'd Ed Vaughan, considering the relationship between the Diocese and its parishes, opportunities for stronger churches to encourage and support one another, and the challenges facing smaller parishes without clergy.
- Followed up this work through a dedicated Zoom meeting on 18 November 2025, including discussion groups focused on flourishing, developing and struggling parishes and the role of the Diocese in supporting them.

- Developed the diocesan purpose statement, later adopted by Bishop-in-Council, affirming that the Diocese exists to inspire and equip its parishes to 'Share Jesus for Life'.
- Helped shape the emphasis on disciple-making and growing disciples that became a major theme of the diocesan conference, clergy gatherings and ministry development during 2026.
- Led to ongoing consideration of ministry sustainability, parish support and future ministry models in smaller and more vulnerable parishes throughout the Diocese

16 DECEMBER 2025

- Approved updated clergy remuneration, travel and housing arrangements following recommendations from the Stipends and Clergy Welfare Committee.
- Received advanced notice from Bishop Mark Calder of his intention to submit his resignation as Bishop on 19 March 2026, effective 19 September 2026.
- Approved 2026 parish insurance recoveries.
- Noted continued improvement in diocesan Safe Ministry compliance.
- Considered outcomes from the diocesan strategic planning process and identified priorities for future diocesan support of parishes.
- Approved diocesan participation in the 2026 National Church Life Survey.

17 FEBRUARY 2026

- Reviewed 2025 financial results ahead of the annual audit process.
- Commenced a review of several diocesan ordinances including the Anglican Managed Investments Fund Ordinance, Cathedral Ordinance and the Records and Archives Ordinance.
- Considered the growing redress funding challenge following discussion of Anglican Property Trust reports and anticipated actuarial assessments.
- Adopted a new Archives and Records Management Policy and accompanying parish resources.
- Approved new cyber security, incident response and invoice fraud policies for diocesan operations.
- Considered diocesan feedback on proposals concerning the future structure of the Anglican Church of Australia.

21 APRIL 2026

- Considered the draft actuarial assessment of redress liabilities, estimating a net diocesan liability of approximately $15.4 million.
- Noted continued improvement in Safe Ministry compliance across the Diocese.
- Endorsed diocesan feedback on proposed national changes to Faithfulness in Service and Safe Ministry Training Benchmarks.
- Adopted the diocesan purpose statement: "The Diocese exists to inspire and equip our parishes to Share Jesus for Life".
- Refocused diocesan strategic planning around disciple-making, leadership development and support for struggling parishes.
- Commenced planning for the Bishop's farewell and episcopal transition.

16 JUNE 2026

- Approved the 2025 audited financial statements for the Synod Management Fund and Endowment of the See.
- Repealed the Anglicare Ordinance 1998 and continued review of key diocesan ordinances.
- Passed an ordinance authorising the sale of St Matthew's Church, Eugowra.
- Received Finity Consulting's final actuarial report estimating future net redress liabilities of approximately $15.4 million and commenced development of a diocesan response strategy.
- Received advice from the Diocese of Tasmania regarding its experience in funding historical abuse liabilities and property sale programs.
- Reconstituted the diocesan Audit Committee and expanded the Ministry Standards Committee.
- Approved a diocesan Domain Registration and Management Policy.
- Approved the 2026 Synod timetable and associated preparations for the forthcoming episcopal transition.

4 AUGUST 2026

- Considered the Diocese's response to the Finity actuarial assessment and endorsed establishment of a Redress Funding Task Force.
- Endorsed a diocesan communication strategy regarding future redress funding.
- Passed the Ministry Standards Ordinance 2025 Amendment Ordinance 2026.
- Endorsed the Records and Archives Ordinance 2026 for presentation to Synod.
- Considered amendments to the Parishes Ordinance 2023 concerning licensed lay ministry and parish governance.
- Approved arrangements associated with the Bishop's retirement and relocation.

29 AUGUST 2026

- Commended the 2027 Synod Contributions Schedule and 2027 Synod Management Fund Budget to Synod for approval.
- Passed the Parishes Ordinance 2023 Amendment Ordinance 2026 and endorsed the Records and Archives Ordinance 2026 for consideration by Synod.
- Approved an Employee Assistance Program for clergy and staff, increased support available under the Clergy Removal Fund, adopted a new Removal and Relocation Policy, and recommended 2027 clergy remuneration increases.
- Received the Chair's final report and gave thanks for Bishop Mark Calder's leadership of the Diocese over the previous seven years.
- Noted significant improvements in diocesan Safe Ministry compliance, which exceeded 75% during 2026.
- Received an encouraging report on the Canowindra Revitalisation Project, noting substantial growth in attendance, ministry activity and parish finances.
- Considered General Synod outcomes and recommended that ordinances be brought to Synod to assent to four Constitution Amendment Canons and adopt updated Offences and Special Tribunal Canons.

- Confirmed the appointment of Dr Warwick Baines as Public Officer of the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst Synod Management Fund.
- Approved an acting allowance for any member of clergy appointed Administrator during a vacancy in the See and approved the change of name of the Parish of Cudal-Molong to the Anglican Parish of Molong or Molong Anglican Parish.

Dr Warwick Baines
Registrar and Bishop-in-Council Secretary

ANGLICAN PROPERTY TRUST AND ANGLICAN MANAGED INVESTMENTS FUND REPORT TO SYNOD

Anglican Property Trust and the Anglican Managed Investments Fund reports on its work since the September 2025 sitting of the Synod and of the exercise in that period of delegated powers conferred on it.

1 - MEETINGS

Anglican Property Trust met on 6 occasions since the Second Ordinary Session of the 51st Synod:

8 September 2025	(via Zoom)
3 December 2025	(via Zoom)
11 February 2026	(via Zoom)
1 April 2026	(via Zoom)
3 June 2026	(via Zoom)
5 August 2026	(via Zoom)

2 – MEMBERS AND MEETING ATTENDANCE

Members	Position	Number of meetings	Number attended
Bishop Mark Calder	Chair	6	6
The Ven Andrew Thornhill*	Diocesan Archdeacon	1	1
The Rev'd James Boardman	Elected Clergy Member	6	5
The Rev'd Ben Mackay	Elected Clergy Member	6	4
Mr Stephen Holland	Elected Lay Member	6	5
Mrs Jennie Palmer	Elected Lay Member	6	6
Mr John Power	Elected Lay Member	6	4
Mr Andrew Trafford	Elected Lay Member	6	4

* Appointed by the Bishop in June 2026 pursuant to the Church Trust Property Ordinance and attended his first meeting on 5 August 2026.

With the exception of Stephen Holland, whose term expires in September 2030, the terms for all other elected trustees expire at the beginning of the First Ordinary Session of the 53rd Synod in September 2027.

3 – KEY POINTS FROM ANGLICAN PROPERTY TRUST AND ANGLICAN MANAGEMENT FUND MEETINGS

8 SEPTEMBER 2025

- Estimated redress liability of known cases was $2.219 million, exceeding funds set aside for redress.
- Approved engagement of Finity Consulting to estimate future redress liabilities and ProLegis to advise on protection of parish AMIF deposits.
- Increased diocesan support for the Australis property inspection and valuation project.

- Approved a number of leasing and property management matters, including the Dubbo Rectory lease and Cudal MOU.
- Continued work identifying surplus properties that may assist future redress funding needs.

3 DECEMBER 2025

- Estimated redress liability reduced to $1.575 million following settlement of significant matters.
- Received progress reports from Finity Consulting and ProLegis.
- Oversaw continued delivery of the Australis property inspection project.
- Approved purchase of land and construction planning for a new rectory at Molong.
- Recommended reduced insurance recoveries for parishes in 2026.

11 FEBRUARY 2026

- AMIF paid a total annual return of 4.70% to deposit holders for the year ended 31 December 2025.
- Approved investment adjustments recommended by the Investment Sub-Committee.
- Monitored progress of the Australis inspections and Molong Rectory project.
- Continued work on development opportunities for diocesan property.

1 APRIL 2026

- Received Finity Consulting's draft actuarial assessment estimating future net redress liabilities at approximately $15.4 million.
- Completed the diocesan property capitalisation project, adding approximately $30.9 million of property assets to the balance sheet, subject to audit review.
- Received final Australis inspection reports for diocesan properties and commenced parish support and follow-up processes.
- Considered future options for Brewarrina properties and approved progression of the Eugowra church sale proposal.
- Appointed Mr Stephen Holland to the School Building Fund Committee.

3 JUNE 2026

- Approved the audited 2025 financial statements of the AMIF and APT.
- Established a formal redress reserve within equity and received Finity's final report estimating future redress liabilities of approximately $15.4 million.
- Commenced planning for a diocesan strategy to address future redress liabilities.
- Renewed the appointment of investment adviser Stuart Cole for a further 12 months.
- Received updates on the Australis project, Molong Rectory construction and property development opportunities.

5 AUGUST 2026

- Welcomed Archdeacon Andrew Thornhill as a trustee and commenced succession planning discussions ahead of 2027 elections.
- Approved payment of 2.35% interest on AMIF deposits for the six months to 30 June 2026.
- Considered the Diocese's response to the Finity actuarial report and endorsed establishment of a Redress Funding Task Force together with a diocesan communication strategy.
- Received updates on property development initiatives and implementation of the Australis property inspection recommendations.
- Noted commencement of construction of the new Molong Rectory and progress on property sale matters including Eugowra and Brewarrina.
- Approved a number of leasing, licensing and insurance valuation matters.

Dr Warwick Baines
Registrar and Anglican Property Trust Secretary

GENERAL SYNOD (GS19) REPORT TO SYNOD

The 19th General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia met in Melbourne from 9 -14 August, with two hundred and twenty-five representatives and 16 guests of Synod in attendance. The Bathurst Diocese was represented by Bishop Mark Calder, Rev'd Phil Howes and Jane Francis.

Apart from the bills to be considered, around 30 motions were brought before Synod. Some dealt with administrative matters, but beyond that they reflected a diverse range of issues and concerns, highlighting the complex environment in which the Anglican Church exists today.

Salvation Exclusively in Jesus: Synod affirmed the biblical and apostolic conviction that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of all those who come to him. While some remarked that this went "without saying", saying it sends a message of unity in a time of confusion and doubt.

Synod asked that the Primate convey to the Federal Government the need to enact, in full, the recommendations about **Gambling** arising from the report of the late senator Peta Murphy, and Synod's opposition to all forms of **Commercial Surrogacy**.

Evangelism in the National Church – HOPE25. Synod gave thanks for HOPE25 and noted its wide reach, highlighted through two-minute video presentation from each diocese.

Youth and Children's Ministry – Around 80% of churchgoers come to Christ when less than 18 years of age. Synod called for proactive steps to see children and youth are reached with the good news of Jesus and discipled to maturity.

Defence Force – Synod gave thanks for the blessed opportunity to have Christian chaplains ministering to our Defence Force personnel in a time of growing secularism and a dangerous security environment, and for the extension of the Veterans' Chaplaincy pilot program for those returning to civilian life.

Societal issues were also reflected in motions around climate change and stewardship over Gods creation, lamenting the continuing presence of domestic and family violence, and Antisemitism and its impact on social cohesion.

Reflections on GS19. GS19 was a time of fellowship and encouragement for Anglican church in Australia, across a broad range of churchmanship. **What will General Synod look like in 2030?** It is likely there will be more 'existential' questions as the diocesan landscape changes and the Church is called on to develop strategies to assist dioceses in distress due to the impact of redress claims, and to determine what good stewardship looks like in a time of financial constraints should statutory assessments need to increase.

Jane Francis
Lay representative

DIRECTOR OF ORDINANDS' REPORT TO SYNOD

"To God be the glory, great things He has done!"

This famous line from 19th century US mission worker, poet and composer Fanny Crosby, from one of the 8,000 plus hymns she wrote.

Strikingly Crosby was blind from an early age, yet this didn't prevent her from becoming the most prolific and influential American hymn writer, along with her significant mission and aid work among impoverished neighbourhoods in New York City.

This well-known, much-loved hymn exhorts us to give gratitude and praise to God for His gift of the Lord Jesus: our rescuer and redeemer.

This ultimate great work of God is at the heart of the mission of our Diocese: sharing Jesus for life. To assist in this mission, we need suitably qualified and assessed people. And to God be the glory for the great things He continues to do for us in meeting this great need.

Enquiries about serving in our Diocese continue to trickle in; typically, through word of mouth in response to Bishop Mark's very active social media presence and extensive networking, and as people are learning about the great need for Gospel ministry workers in our Diocese.

Immediately following last year's synod, we rejoiced at meeting Robert and Xanthe Yemm who commenced initially as stipendiary lay ministry workers at the Cathedral early in 2026, sharing this BCA-supported training role and also commencing discernment and formation as to ordination. It was a joy to recently see them both made Deacons during August's ordination service.

Around the same time, Robbie Nicholls – together with his wife Jemima and their young family – expressed an interest to serve with us at the Parish of Cudal-Molong. Robbie – who was born and grew up in the Central-West - was then made deacon in Sydney where he was serving at the time, before commencing at Molong in early March. Robbie was ordained as Priest by Bishop Mark, last month.

In late November, Holy Trinity Orange announced the appointment of Mr Ben Feather as Children's and Youth Minister, overseeing this rapidly growing and developing ministry.
At this time it was also announced that Dr James White would be serving as half-time lay stipendiary minister at Coolah-Dunedoo, with his wife Miriam to serve 2 days per week providing administration support to the parish.

"To God be the glory, great things He has done!"

The George family commenced at Canowindra at the end of January: the Rev'd Mick as Senior Pastor, his wife Tammy as Community Pastor, and their daughter Mischa as Youth Pastor. In their kindness in response to God's gracious kindness to them, they generously do not draw a ministry stipend and have committed to two years of parish revitalisation ministry. It is important to acknowledge the acceptance, patience and willingness to do things differently for the sake of the Gospel, from those who gather and serve in that parish.

Another experienced Gospel worker joined the ministry at Parkes in early February: the Rev'd Steve Cimarosti joining our Diocese, together with his wife Louise and their young family, from the Parish of Warialda in the Diocese of Armidale. Steve was recently commissioned as Archdeacon for the south-west region, and we're so grateful for the way his ministry under God has commenced in Parkes.

During the first half of the year, we also rejoiced at the commissioning services of the Rev'd Ben Mackay at Orange East, and the Rev'd Stuart Border at Gilgandra. We continue to commit Ben, along with his wife Bron and their family, and Stuart to God in prayer as they continue to serve Him and their respective parishes.

"To God be the glory, great things He has done!"

Bishop Mark preached at chapel at Moore Theological College ("MTC") in May, and as part of our ongoing partnership with them we will again be hosting a mission team in the early months of 2027. It is worth noting that while we may not always see immediate fruit from these activities, this partnership remains an important part of our ministry recruitment strategy. Recently Bishop Mark and I commenced discussions with a former student of MTC who is now several years into ordained parish ministry in Sydney, and is now exploring ministry with us, having remembered with fondness and conviction Bishop Mark's plea during a previous visit to college to come and join in the work this side of the mountains!

"To God be the glory, great things He has done!"

Most recently we rejoiced with the many gathered at All Saints Cathedral to witness and participate in the setting aside of Robert and Xanthe Yemm, Justin Baker and Jim Kapetangiannis to the diaconate; and Jim along with the Rev'd Robbie Nichols who were both ordained as priests in God's church. Justin's part-time stipendiary ministry in Dubbo, and Jim's ministry in Coonamble will continue and develop further with these ordinations.

It was especially encouraging to see so many clergy colleagues from within and outside the Diocese attend and take part in this service; along with many diocesan laity, and other friends and family who travelled far to support and encourage these people.

"To God be the glory, great things He has done!"

Conscious that we enter a new season of ministry in our Diocese with Bishop Mark's departure, I wish to again acknowledge and thank those Mark assembled as the diocesan ordination panel, for their dedication, insight, and wisdom: Dr Sho Howes, Mrs Lisa Milton, and the Rev'd's Kevin Simington and Bob Cameron.

And please continue to pray that God will continue to show us His goodness in raising up and bringing to us suitable Gospel workers to serve with us in sharing Jesus for life across the central west.

"To God be the glory, great things He has done!"

Archdeacon Andrew Thornhill
Director of Ordinands

NORTH WESTERN ARCHDEACONRY REPORT TO SYNOD

I was commissioned on 14 June 2025 and commenced work in the role on 1 July 2025. I have been wanting to encourage the Archdeaconry to be united in prayer, encouragement, and training. Secondly, to be united in mission so as to SHARE JESUS FOR LIFE. Thirdly, to be united in administration.

We have begun to meet for prayer, encouragement, and training. However, more work needs to be done in this area so that we fall into a regular pattern of meeting – timetabling became a problem, but we will sort this out. A WhatsApp group chat has been set-up to aid efficient communication between parish leaders. One video address by me was also distributed throughout the Archdeaconry to encourage unity.

In regard to being united in mission, we have implemented Operation: Lend-a-Hand where one parish lends a hand to another parish in need. Four such arrangements have come into being (Dubbo-Coonabarabran, Gilgandra-Coonamble, Narromine-Warren, and Cobar-Nyngan). This covers 8 of the 10 parishes in the Archdeaconry. Some of these arrangements have been long-standing already but were just further encouraged. This is so that we are able to help each other along in ministry whether that be in providing a church service or other ministry support – whatever is going to work.

It was also great to arrange for people from outside of our Diocese to come and serve for a short-term mission at Warren. The Rev'd Dr Phil Marshall and his wife, Lyn, came and served in Warren in May. Phil and Lyn also serve as BCA Nomads. This short-term period of service brought blessing to many.

Photo: Nerida George, Lyn Marshall, Shirley Todhunter, Phil Marshall at Warren

I have also been working on Operation: Help From Above which is about conveying student ministers from Moore College to come and conduct/assist with services in parishes that are in great need. The idea is that the student ministers would be flown in once a month by Outback Patrol to three locations on Saturday morning and returned to Sydney by Sunday evening ready to go on for lectures the next day. The beauty of this operation is that it provides further ministry assistance to parishes in need and also opens the eyes of students to bush ministry opportunities. This plan is yet to take-off, so I ask you to pray earnestly for its success.

Visiting incumbents was a highlight in May this year, with another round of visits to take place in October.

Attending to administrative matters in each of the parishes has also been undertaken, with the great assistance of Graham Watt, Administrative Assistant for me in the Archdeaconry. Graham is a BCA Nomad and also serves as the Special Church Warden and Treasurer at Cobar. Graham and I meet monthly to work through an agenda of issues in the Archdeaconry. I am so grateful for his (voluntary) service of the Lord!

Archdeacon James Daymond
North Western Archdeaconry

DIOCESAN EVENTS REPORT TO SYNOD

DIOCESAN CONFERENCE 2026 – THE CHURCH I'D LIKE TO JOIN GROWS DISCIPLES

More than 240 people, representing at least 20 of our 28 parishes, gathered at Macquarie Anglican Grammar School in Dubbo on Saturday 21 March for our 2026 Diocesan Conference. Our theme was **"The Church I'd Like to Join GROWS Disciples."**

Building on previous conferences and particularly last year's emphasis on making disciples, this year we turned our attention to helping those who are Christians grow towards maturity in Christ – not simply acquiring more information but increasingly being transformed into the likeness of Jesus.

Kevin Simington opened the day by asking, *What is a disciple?* Drawing on the background of discipleship in Jesus' day, Kevin described a disciple as a lifelong follower of Jesus who is growing in commitment, obedience, sacrificial service and Christlikeness. He reminded us that discipleship is not some higher level of Christianity for a select few: it is the calling of every Christian.

Our main Bible teaching came from Nigel Fortescue in two sessions. Nigel first reminded us how essential **teaching** is to the task of making disciples – Jesus commissioned his followers not simply to make disciples, but to teach them to obey everything he had commanded. His second talk took us further, showing that the goal of such teaching is **maturity** – helping people grow up in Christ. Together, the two talks provided a strong biblical framework for the day.

In the afternoon, Jo Watts spoke about growing disciples from childhood, particularly emphasising the primary responsibility and privilege of parents in teaching and discipling their children. Mick George shared from his own context, including the encouragement of seeing young people who first connected through anti-bullying training subsequently become involved in youth group.

Kevin concluded with a very practical challenge: **our churches need to develop their Bible study ministry**. If every parish simply had one more Bible study group than it currently has – one where there are none, two where there is presently one, and so on – we would take a significant step forward in helping people grow as disciples. It is in these smaller groups, opening God's word together, praying and sharing life, that much of the real work of Christian growth takes place.

We were also enormously grateful that Nigel's church, Christ Church St Ives, sent a wonderful team of workers to lead the children's and youth ministry for the day – including a crèche. This enabled parents with children of all ages to participate fully in the conference, while their children and young people were themselves being well cared for and encouraged.

The conference was very well received, and it has been encouraging to see the theme continuing, with Phil Howes subsequently working with clergy on developing and growing Bible study group ministry in our parishes.

Our thanks go to everyone who contributed to such an encouraging day and to all who worked behind the scenes, especially Warwick Baines and Louise Hickey.

Bishop Mark Calder
Convenor

CLERGY AND LAY WORKERS RETREAT 2026

Around 32 clergy and lay workers gathered at St Clement's, Galong, from 27–30 July for our annual retreat. This year's theme was "Grace and Grit – The long road of country ministry."

The retreat began on Monday afternoon with Kevin Simington speaking on "What I wish I knew from the start." Kevin was both very funny and deeply encouraging, and his reflections provided a wonderful way to begin our time together and set the tone for the days ahead.

Our retreat leader was Canon Greg Harris, who drew extensively on his experience with the Bush Church Aid Society. Greg reminded us that ministry in rural and regional Australia is often slow, costly and relational. His reflections from passages including Job 38, Luke 15, Acts 20, 1 Thessalonians 2, Luke 9, 1 Timothy 4, Hebrews 12 and Colossians 1 continually brought us back to the theme of grace and grit. God's grace is always with us; at the same time, ministry calls for grit – determination, perseverance and a willingness to keep going.

Greg's ministry among us was both Biblical and wonderfully encouraging. One priest subsequently reported that the retreat had enabled him to continue in ministry with a renewed understanding and acceptance that rural and regional ministry really is slow, costly and relational.

There was a very good balance between teaching, gathered prayer and worship, silence, fellowship and rest. The periods of silence and personal reflection each morning were embraced and greatly appreciated. Afternoons provided genuine downtime, with people heading off for walks, playing games or simply enjoying one another's company. We also appreciated celebrating Holy Communion in two quite different styles – traditional on Tuesday and contemporary on Wednesday.

Emily Moman gave us helpful insight into developing teams for ministry. Rather than simply filling gaps on rosters, she encouraged us to think about creating genuine teams, developing among those who serve a sense of ownership and belonging, together with opportunities for training and discipleship.

Everyone came away greatly encouraged and thankful for the opportunity to stop, reflect, pray and enjoy fellowship together. Particular thanks go to Phil Howes for organising the retreat, and to Greg, Kevin and Emily for their significant contributions.

Bishop Mark Calder

DIOCESAN CAMP

The camp continues to grow. This year we reached capacity with just under 200 attending from the breadth of the Diocese. Held from August 7th-9th at Ridgecrest, we had the full benefit of The Bridge Church caring for us this year with children's and youth teams as per previous years but also this year our speaker, The Rev'd Paul Dale delivering four talks to our hearts from Titus. There were numerous lay and ordained people from across our Diocese contributing so well in music, book reviews, Bible testimonies and leading sessions. Apart from great preaching, the relaxed time for fellowship and mutual encouragement is widely enjoyed. Special thanks to Josh Taylor for bringing together diocesan musicians and to Louise Hickey for once again going above and beyond in administrative tasks with good will.

The Rev'd Phil Howes
Convenor

CHAPLAIN TO LLMS REPORT TO SYNOD

Licenced Lay Ministers fill an important and vital role in churches across the Diocese. In some parishes they serve alongside ordained ministers; in other parishes which do not have any serving clergy, LLMs carry the responsibility of overseeing church services and other ministry. We give thanks to God for all who serve Christ's church in this way.

At the time of writing this report there were 79 people holding the bishop's licence as lay ministers in the Diocese of Bathurst. Of those:

- 44 had their licences renewed in 2026; and
- 21 were newly licensed since the last time Synod met (September 2025).

Of those who were serving as LLMs at the time of the last session of the Synod, nine did not renew their licence when it expired this year; in four of those cases it was because they were ordained as clergy in this diocese!

We have continued our quarterly online training sessions, which give opportunity for LLMs to develop existing skills and new ones, as well as providing mutual encouragement and support. Some of the matters covered over the four sessions were:

- **November 2025**
  Preparing Christmas services
  Choosing music for church services
- **February 2026**
  A time of informal fellowship, including opportunity to ask questions about ministry and a time of prayer
- **May 2026**
  A structured discussion (following the diocesan conference) on how the goal of making disciples shapes the various roles and tasks of the LLM
- **August 2026**
  An extended Bible devotion led by Bishop Mark, following which he shared some personal reflections on faith, life and ministry

The sessions continue to be well attended, and a number of LLMs have expressed their gratitude for this ministry.

As part of the LLM renewal process, I conducted several 'minister's reviews' of LLMs in parishes where there are no parish clergy. It was a privilege to meet some of our faithful LLMs, and I was greatly encouraged through these discussions. God has been good to us in raising up so many brothers and sisters with a heart for the gospel and for his people.

I urge members of Synod to pray for their own LLMs, as well as those who serve in other places, and perhaps from time to time to check in with them and ask them how their ministry is going. They will value the encouragement, and you might just be encouraged too!

The Rev'd Bob Cameron
Chaplain to LLMs

CLERGY SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT REPORT TO SYNOD

Given the distances we face in our Diocese, the benefits of face-to-face time in fellowship among the clergy cannot be minimised. Our Bishop has again organised two wonderfully refreshing times for us to gather together to share fellowship and also be well equipped.

The clergy retreat was again a special time with the Rev'd Greg Harris (BCA National Director) sharing reassuring wisdom from God's word on the theme of "Grace and Grit along the long road of country ministry". We also gained helpful insight into ministry teams – moving beyond mere rosters - from Emily Moman. The Rev'd James Daymond coordinated a collection of video clips that the clergy enjoyed recording, giving thanks to Bishop Mark for all the ways he has lovingly taught and nurtured us as our bishop.

On the afternoon of the synod weekend, as our second clergy gathering for the year, the Rev'd Kevin Simington has again been engaged to bring the Bible study and share well considered gleanings from his wide-ranging experiences in ministry over many years.

It has again been encouraging to hear of the many and varied ways that clergy supervision has been of helped the clergy in leading and coordinating ministry. This is not only of benefit to the clergy, but to each parish, beyond being an administrative requirement.

Zoom forums on a range of topics again are being held at various times throughout the year. Three of these are looking at discipleship in small groups, one to one meet ups and with growing teens in faith as well as missionary support and the local church and finally a look at AI and ministry. Where possible, people with expertise in these areas are utilised for their insight.

I look forward to there being new possibilities and consistency in this area in 2027.

The Rev'd Phil Howes
Clergy Support & Development

ORDINANCE REVIEW PANEL REPORT TO SYNOD

The Ordinance Review Panel has only met twice since the last session of Synod. The primary focus of those two meetings has been a substantial review and re-write of Chapter 11 of the *Parishes Ordinance 2023* – the chapter that governs the appointment and ministry of licenced lay ministers in the Diocese.

The reasons for this review were at least twofold: 1) the process of appointment was unwieldy and no longer facilitated the timely development and appointment of LLMs; and 2) the chapter as it stood did not reflect current practice 'on the ground'. (An ordinance is only useful in so far as it supports ministry as it actually is, not as it once was.)

An amending ordinance was first brought to Bishop-in-Council at its meeting on 4 August, and then again on 29 August in a slightly revised form, which was duly passed. The amending ordinance includes the entire text of the revised chapter 11 and can be found in the report of Bishop-in-Council to the Synod.

An additional matter of discussion at both the panel and Bishop-in-Council was the detection of a significant number of typographical errors in the *Parishes Ordinance*. As these are 'editorial' rather than substantive changes they will be attended to before the next edition of the ordinance is published on the diocesan website.

There are a variety of recommendations that have been made to the Panel which have yet to be considered, and a further review of the *Administration Ordinance 2023* is warranted. Bishop-in-Council has also noted that the *Bathurst Cathedral Ordinance 2005-2012* is in need of review, so the work of the Panel is likely to continue for some time yet.

The Rev'd Bob Cameron
Chair of Ordinance Review Panel

BELIEVE REPORT TO SYNOD

Ordinary people sharing about our extraordinary God!

After much prayer and consideration, the Cursillo Movement in the Bathurst Diocese was brought to an end as an active ministry. A wonderful event celebrating 40 years of Cursillo in the Bathurst Diocese was held in Parkes, with much thanks and fellowship.

Also, after much discussion and prayer, a new ministry opportunity has emerged from our Cursillo heritage, to be known as "BELIEVE."

Under the guidance and authority of Bishop Mark, the Believe committee has formed and produced a program that utilises lay people and clergy within our Diocese to deliver a Bible focused, testimony-based sharing and fellowship opportunity that a Believe Team brings to your parish! It is designed to run Friday night through until Saturday afternoon, incorporating six testimony talks and group discussion that both encourages and challenges participants to come closer to and go deeper with Jesus Christ. We explore how people do life with Jesus and the impact of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The program aims at sharing Jesus for life by authentic Christians, promoting prayer, reading God's Word and being involved in home study groups.

The Believe committee pray that this program may rekindle the flame of faith and discipleship in Jesus throughout our Diocese. We ask that you would pray for this ministry and consider having a Believe Program take place in your Parish.

The Believe Handbook, detailing the whole program, is available from the Diocesan Office. For more information, please contact Erika Chesworth (0407988747) or Stuart Border (0447229050).

The Rev'd Stuart Border
Member of the Believe committee

APPENDIX 1

ORDINANCES PASSED SINCE THE LAST REPORT TO SYNOD

No.	Title
4/2025	Ordinance for Sale of Church Trust Properties in the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst October 2025
1/2026	Anglicare Ordinance 1998 Repeal Ordinance 2026
2/2026	Ordinance for Sale of Church Trust Properties in the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst June 2026
3/2026	Ministry Standards Ordinance 2025 Amendment Ordinance 2026
4/2026	Parishes Ordinance 2023 Amendment Ordinance 2026

An Ordinance for the Sale of the Church Trust Properties in the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst October 2025

AN ORDINANCE to authorise and direct the sale of certain lands and associated assets and property of Church Trust Property in the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst in order to satisfy the obligations of the Diocese of Bathurst with respect to matters of redress and to provide for the disposition of the proceeds thereof.

PREAMBLE

Declare that section 26 of the Anglican Church Trust Property Act 1917 empowers Bishop in Council to direct that Church Trust Property be sold or otherwise dealt with to honour the obligations of the Diocese of Bathurst to settle claims of redress, regardless of the terms of trusts on which such property is held.

Declare that there is available Church Trust Property, both real and personal, which can be utilised to honour the obligations arising from these claims.

Declare that the current Bishop in Council members take such action, by ordinance or otherwise, to settle claims of redress limited to Church Trust Property.

AND WHEREAS the pieces or parcels of land and property described in the schedule hereto attached are vested in the Anglican Property Trust Diocese of Bathurst.

AND WHEREAS it has become and is inexpedient to carry out or observe the particular trust or trusts upon which the portion or portions of land comprising the schedule hereto was or were granted or conveyed and is or are held and it is expedient to vary the same

AND WHEREAS Bishop in Council has been empowered pursuant to sections 40, 32 and 26 and other provisions of the Anglican Church of Australia Trust Property Act 1917 to act for the Synod during the recess of the Synod, to manage the property of the Diocese and to vary inexpedient trusts and in the name of the Synod to enact appropriate ordinances.

NOW BISHOP IN COUNCIL ON BEHALF OF THE SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF BATHURST ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

DECLARATION OF OPINION

1. It has become and is inexpedient and impossible to carry out or observe the particular trust or trusts upon which the portion or portions of land and property listed in the schedule hereto was or were granted or conveyed and is or are held; and

2. It has become inexpedient and impossible to carry out the trusts upon which the said land is held, and it is expedient to vary the same.

POWER TO SELL

3. It shall be lawful under and by virtue of the powers aforesaid to sell the said piece or pieces of land and property described in the Schedule hereto attached or any one or more of them, or any part or parts thereof or any improvements thereon by public auction or by private contract and for such sum or sums and upon such terms and conditions as may be determined by the Anglican Property Trust Diocese of Bathurst and the Bishop-in-Council Diocese of Bathurst.

HOW SALE TO BE CARRIED OUT

4. The Anglican Property Trust Diocese of Bathurst is hereby authorised and directed to execute and do all necessary deeds, conveyances, transfers, assurances, and other instruments, acts and things for giving full and complete effect to the provisions of this Ordinance according to its true intent and meaning.

DISPOSITION OF PROCEEDS

5. The monies arising from any such sale shall be paid to the Anglican Church Property Trust and after provision has been made for costs and charges relating thereto shall be held or applied by the said trust in the manner following: that is to say to pay matters of redress both secured and unsecured upon the said piece or pieces of land and property described in the Schedule hereto attached and following upon the satisfaction of such debts to pay any surplus remaining in the manner determined by Bishop in Council Diocese of Bathurst.

SHORT TITLE

6. This ordinance may be cited for all purposes as “An Ordinance for the Sale of Church Trust Properties in the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst October 2025”.

LAPSING OF ORDINANCE

7. This Ordinance shall lapse on 21 October 2028 unless by that date contracts for sale have been entered into for the sale of the lands and properties in the Schedule.

SCHEDULE

8. All that parcel of land and property known as Barton Cemetery comprising Lot 102, DP 606457, Local Government Area of Dubbo Regional, Parish of Nanima, County of Bligh, New South Wales.

I CERTIFY that the above Ordinance was passed by the Bishop in Council of the Diocese of Bathurst this 21st day of October 2025.

.....
Registrar

I ASSENT to this Ordinance

.....
Bishop of Bathurst Date 21 October 2025

Anglicare Ordinance 1998
Repeal Ordinance 2026

AN ORDINANCE to repeal the Anglicare Ordinance 1998

WHEREAS the Anglicare Ordinance 1988 is no longer required due to our Anglicare Operations having been transferred to Anglicare Sydney by mutual agreement.

NOW THE BISHOP IN COUNCTIL ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

That the Anglicare Ordinance 1998 is hereby repealed and shall have no force from this date in the Diocese of Bathurst

This Ordinance may be cited as the ANGLICARE ORDINANCE 1998 REPEAL ORDINANCE 2026.

I CERTIFY that this Ordinance was passed by the Bishop in Council of the Diocese of Bathurst this 16th day of June 2026.

……
Registrar

I ASSENT to this Ordinance

……
Bishop of Bathurst Date 16 June 2026

An Ordinance for the Sale of the Church Trust Properties in the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst April 2026

AN ORDINANCE to authorise and direct the sale of certain lands and associated assets and property of Church Trust Property in the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst in order to satisfy the obligations of the Diocese of Bathurst with respect to matters of redress and to provide for the disposition of the proceeds thereof.

PREAMBLE

Declare that section 26 of the Anglican Church Trust Property Act 1917 empowers Bishop in Council to direct that Church Trust Property be sold or otherwise dealt with to honour the obligations of the Diocese of Bathurst to settle claims of redress, regardless of the terms of trusts on which such property is held.

Declare that there is available Church Trust Property, both real and personal, which can be utilised to honour the obligations arising from these claims.

Declare that the current Bishop in Council members take such action, by ordinance or otherwise, to settle claims of redress limited to Church Trust Property.

AND WHEREAS the pieces or parcels of land and property described in the schedule hereto attached are vested in the Anglican Property Trust Diocese of Bathurst.

AND WHEREAS it has become and is inexpedient to carry out or observe the particular trust or trusts upon which the portion or portions of land comprising the schedule hereto was or were granted or conveyed and is or are held and it is expedient to vary the same

AND WHEREAS Bishop in Council has been empowered pursuant to sections 40, 32 and 26 and other provisions of the Anglican Church of Australia Trust Property Act 1917 to act for the Synod during the recess of the Synod, to manage the property of the Diocese and to vary inexpedient trusts and in the name of the Synod to enact appropriate ordinances.

NOW BISHOP IN COUNCIL ON BEHALF OF THE SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF BATHURST ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

DECLARATION OF OPINION

1. It has become and is inexpedient and impossible to carry out or observe the particular trust or trusts upon which the portion or portions of land and property listed in the schedule hereto was or were granted or conveyed and is or are held; and

2. It has become inexpedient and impossible to carry out the trusts upon which the said land is held, and it is expedient to vary the same.

POWER TO SELL

3. It shall be lawful under and by virtue of the powers aforesaid to sell the said piece or pieces of land and property described in the Schedule hereto attached or any one or more of them, or any part or parts thereof or any improvements thereon by public auction or by private contract and for such sum or sums and upon such terms and conditions as may be determined by the Anglican Property Trust Diocese of Bathurst and the Bishop-in-Council Diocese of Bathurst.

HOW SALE TO BE CARRIED OUT

4. The Anglican Property Trust Diocese of Bathurst is hereby authorised and directed to execute and do all necessary deeds, conveyances, transfers, assurances, and other instruments, acts and things for giving full and complete effect to the provisions of this Ordinance according to its true intent and meaning.

DISPOSITION OF PROCEEDS

5. The monies arising from any such sale shall be paid to the Anglican Church Property Trust and after provision has been made for costs and charges relating thereto shall be held or applied by the said trust in the manner following: that is to say to pay matters of redress both secured and unsecured upon the said piece or pieces of land and property described in the Schedule hereto attached and following upon the satisfaction of such debts to pay any surplus remaining in the manner determined by Bishop in Council Diocese of Bathurst.

SHORT TITLE

6. This ordinance may be cited for all purposes as “An Ordinance for the Sale of Church Trust Properties in the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst April 2026”.

LAPSING OF ORDINANCE

7. This Ordinance shall lapse on 21 April 2029 unless by that date contracts for sale have been entered into for the sale of the lands and properties in the Schedule.

SCHEDULE

8. All that parcel of land and property comprising Camp Street, Eugowra, Lot 1, Section 18A, DP 758396 Local Government Area of Cabonne, Parish of Eugowra, County of Ashburnham, New South Wales.

I CERTIFY that the above Ordinance was passed by the Bishop in Council of the Diocese of Bathurst this 16th day of June 2026.

.....
Registrar

I ASSENT to this Ordinance

.....
Bishop of Bathurst Date 16 June 2026

Ministry Standards Ordinance 2025 Amendment Ordinance 2026

AN ORDINANCE to amend the MINISTRY STANDARDS ORDINANCE 2025

WHEREAS the Ministry Standards Committee has recommended amendments to the MINISTRY STANDARDS ORDINANCE 2025;

AND WHEREAS the committee's advice is as follows:

The rationale for these insertions is to allow the MSC to receive and act on information regarding misconduct findings by former or current employer/s of church workers.

The recommendation stems from a recent MSO matter where the MSC could not receive information regarding an adverse employment finding of Reportable Conduct - Sexual Misconduct involving a current church worker. This 'gap' in the current MSO leaves the Diocese exposed to legal, insurance, and reputation risks.

NOW THE BISHOP IN COUNCIL ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

1. That in clause 6.2 the following words be inserted as 6 2 (c)

   when and if the respondent is alleged to have committed, participated in, or engaged in ministry misconduct as defined by the ordinance, and has been the subject of a final adverse finding with respect to that alleged ministry misconduct by any court, professional body, employer, regulatory body, or similar in any jurisdiction."

2. That in clause 79 a new subsection (f) is added; that (f) and (g) become (g) and (h) respectively; and the words to be inserted at (f) are to be as follows:

   (f) has received an adverse finding from an employer or similar employment body on account of conduct involving misconduct

3. That in clause 79, the newly numbered (g) to now read as follows

   (g) a certificate, reasons for judgement or other record from the court, tribunal, commission, employer or similar employment body (as the case may be) shall be conclusive evidence that the respondent engaged in the misconduct concerned

4. That in clause 102 section (1) to now read as follows
   Any findings of misconduct made by an equivalent body or a court, tribunal, commission of inquiry, an employer or similar employment body, that have not been overturned on appeal, may be treated as conclusive by a person performing functions under this Ordinance.

This Ordinance may be cited as the MINISTRY STANDARDS ORDINANCE 2025 AMENDMENT ORDINANCE 2026.

I certify that the above Ordinance was passed by the Bishop-in-Council of the Diocese of Bathurst this 4th day of August 2026.

……
Registrar

I ASSENT to this Ordinance

……
Bishop of Bathurst Date 4 August 2026

Parishes Ordinance 2023 Amendment Ordinance 2026

An Ordinance to amend the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst Parishes Ordinance 2023.

THE SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF BATHURST HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

1. NAME

This Ordinance may be cited as the *Parishes Ordinance 2023 Amendment Ordinance 2026* of the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst.

2. AMENDMENTS

The *Parishes Ordinance 2023* is amended as follows:

Delete the matter "The Bishop may appoint a person to be a Licensed Lay Minister within a Parish, a Special Ministry, a Region or a District" and all the matters thereafter through to and including "acting as thurifer, crucifer, server or acolyte during a worship service" and insert the matter as follows:

“The Bishop may appoint a person to be a Licensed Lay Minister within a Parish, a Special Ministry, or the Diocese.

11.3 Functions of licensed lay ministers

The function of a Licensed Lay Minister is to exercise a ministry of service and encouragement and to work alongside the Parish Priest of the Parish or Special Ministry in that priest’s ministry of Word, Sacrament, Pastoral Care and Pastoral Oversight.

11.4 Qualification of licensed lay ministers

(1) A Licensed Lay Minister must:

(a) show evidence of Christian maturity;

(b) be a communicant member of the Anglican Church; and

(c) have demonstrated leadership within the Church.

(2) If a Licensed Lay Minister is to hold a licence to preach he or she must, in addition to the requirements of subsection (1), have completed study in theology and scripture which have been approved by the Bishop.

(3) Age shall not of itself be a determinant in the consideration of a person as a Licensed Lay Minister, other than that they must be at least eighteen years of age.

11.5 Renewal of licence

The renewal of any Lay Minster’s Licence upon expiry of its term is subject to written review by the Parish Priest to the Bishop, with the general form of that review to be set out in the Bishop’s Regulations concerning Licensed Lay Ministry.

11.6 Effect of appointment of a Parish Priest

Following the appointment of a Parish Priest to a Parish or Special Ministry, that Parish Priest shall, within nine months of the appointment taking effect, make written recommendation to the Bishop concerning the continuation or termination of every relevant Lay Ministry Licence, with any recommended continuation being only for the remaining period of that licence up to the date of its scheduled expiry.

PART 2 – APPOINTMENT OF LICENCED LAY MINSTERS

11.7 Nomination of a person as a Licenced Lay Minister of a Parish

(1) The Parish Priest shall consult with the Bishop prior to nominating a person proposed to be appointed as a Licensed Lay Minister.

(2) The Parish Priest must then nominate to Parish Council the name of a person proposed to be appointed as a Licensed Lay Minister and the nomination must be approved by a two thirds majority of the Council.

(3) If the Parish Council approves the nomination, the name of the person proposed to be nominated must be advertised by whatever means the parish normally communicates with members, with advice that any objections should be communicated to either the Parish Priest or the Bishop.

(4) After a period of two weeks from the time the proposed nomination has been advertised, if the Bishop is satisfied that there have been no objections or that any objections raised have been properly addressed and do not constitute grounds for rejecting the nomination, an application to appoint the person so nominated may proceed.

(5) Any person proposed to be licenced as a Lay Minister must meet all safe ministry and training requirements along with any other requirements, as determined by Bishop-in-Council.

(6) Once an application has met all requirements the Bishop shall issue a licence to serve as a lay minister, and shall advise the Parish Priest accordingly.

11.8 Nomination of a person as a Licenced Lay Minister other than of a Parish

The nomination of a person proposed to be appointed as a licenced lay minister to a role other than within a parish shall be submitted directly to the Bishop, and shall be at the discretion of the Bishop, except that section 11.7(5) shall still apply and the bishop shall still consult with that person's Parish Priest before making any appointment, and advise the Parish Priest of any appointment so made.

11.9 Term of appointment of a person as a Licenced Lay Minister

(1) The term of appointment of a licenced lay minister shall normally be three years, and may be renewed on application, subject to the agreement of the Parish Priest and the approval of the Bishop.

(2) A licence for lay ministry remains current up until its specified expiry date, notwithstanding any vacancy of the See, unless it is revoked under the terms of this ordinance.

(3) A licence for lay ministry remains current upon the appointment of a new Bishop unless it is revoked by that Bishop under the terms of the licence.

PART 3 – PROTOCOLS, DUTIES AND OVERSIGHT

11.10 Compliance with Diocesan Protocols

(1) All persons nominated to the Bishop for appointment as a Licensed Lay Minister must, as a condition of the approval of their nomination, comply with all protocols and Ordinances of the Diocese together with the conditions of any relevant legislation as to sexual abuse and misconduct and child sexual abuse.

(2) All persons nominated to the Bishop for appointment as a Licensed Lay Minister must, as a condition of the approval of their nomination, consent to and sign all documents necessary to allow the Diocese to conduct a police check of their criminal antecedents, and comply with any other requirements as advised by the Bishop's Registrar.

11.11 Duties of Licensed Lay Ministers

A Licensed Lay Minister may exercise such ministries as accord with his or her gifts and training, subject always to the oversight of the Parish Priest or other person supervising their ministry, and to the terms of the Licence. These ministries may include the following:

(1) Worship and Liturgical Ministry

(a) leading public worship, including Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer, using the prescribed forms;

(b) subject to the approval of the Parish Priest, or in his or her absence the Regional Archdeacon, conducting funerals.

(2) Pastoral and Teaching Ministry

(a) undertaking pastoral visitation on behalf of the Church, including ministry to the sick, elderly, hospitalised and bereaved;

(b) preparing, or assisting in the preparation of, parents and candidates for baptism, admission to Holy Communion and confirmation;

(c) providing pastoral support and encouragement to leaders and members of the Parish community.

(3) Parish Leadership

(a) under the oversight of the Parish Priest, exercising pastoral responsibility for a branch church within the Parish or Region;

(b) performing such other ministries as may from time to time be agreed with the Parish Priest and approved by the Bishop.

(4) Ministries Requiring Specific Episcopal Endorsement

The following ministries may be exercised only where expressly authorised by endorsement in the Bishop's Licence:

(a) preaching sermons (other than as permitted under section 11.19(f);

(b) conducting baptisms (except in cases of emergency or extremity, when baptism may be administered with the approval of the Parish Priest or the Regional Archdeacon);

(c) conducting services of Extended Holy Communion, but not pronouncing the Absolution or Blessing, nor offering the Prayer of Consecration;

(5) Ministry During a Vacancy
During a vacancy in the incumbency of a Parish, a Licensed Lay Minister may, at the request of the Regional Archdeacon or the Bishop, exercise any of the above ministries and work in association with the Churchwardens and Parish Council to ensure the continuity of ministry within the Parish.

11.12 Oversight of Licensed Lay Ministers

(1) In the exercise of their ministry, a Licensed Lay Minister is subject always to the oversight and direction of the Bishop.

(2) A Licensed Lay Minister is subject also to the oversight and direction of:

(a) in the case of a Lay Minister licensed to a Parish, the Parish Priest of that Parish and such other assisting clergy as are licensed to that Parish;

(b) in the case of a Lay Minister licensed to a Special Ministry, the director of that Special Ministry; and

(c) in the case of a Lay Minister licensed to the Diocese, the Bishop or a Regional Archdeacon, unless some other arrangement is approved by the Bishop and expressed in the terms of the Licence.

(3) A Licensed Lay Minister must meet at least four times per year with the person providing oversight of their ministry to discuss the ministry and for mutual support, prayer and encouragement.

PART 4 – OTHER

11.13 Term of appointment and resignation

(1) A licence as a Licensed Lay Minister is for a term of three years, unless a shorter period is expressed in the terms of the licence.

(2) A Licensed Lay Minister may resign their licence at any time in writing directed to the Bishop.

11.14 Revocation of licence

(1) The Bishop may revoke the licence of a person as a Licensed Lay Minister at any time, in writing directed to the Lay Minister.

(2) The Bishop must notify the Parish Priest or other person providing oversight of the Licensed Lay Minister and any person providing oversight with regard to lay ministry in the Diocese of the revocation of the licence of the Lay Minister.

11.15 Suspension of licence

(1) The Bishop may suspend the licence of a Licensed Lay Minister in writing directed to the Lay Minster pending an investigation by the Diocesan Professional Standards Committee.

(2) The Bishop must notify the Parish Priest or other person exercising supervision over the Licensed Lay Minister and any person exercising oversight with regard to lay ministry in the Diocese of the suspension of the licence of the Lay Minister.

(3) The reinstatement of a licence at the conclusion of an investigation by the Diocesan Ministry Standards Committee is at the absolute discretion of the Bishop.

11.16 Commissioning of licensed lay ministers

(1) A Licensed Lay Minister of a Parish is to be commissioned by his or her Parish Priest at a regular Sunday church service, except that the Parish Priest may make other arrangements if considered more appropriate.

(2) Where a Licensed Lay Minister will exercise a ministry in a Special Ministry or the Diocese, the Bishop may arrange a commissioning service as he or she considers appropriate to the particular circumstances.

(3) Each Licensed Lay Minister must, at the time they are issued with a licence, be provided with the following documents:

(a) their licence, duly executed by the Bishop;

(b) a copy of this Ordinance; and

(c) a copy of the Licensed Lay Ministry Regulations, where any such regulations are in place.

11.17 Attendance at conferences

(1) All Licensed Lay Ministers must attend one conference per year and participate in such training as is approved by the Bishop, or a person appointed by the Bishop to provide oversight with regard to lay ministry in the Diocese. If a Lay Minister does not meet this requirement, he or she may be asked by the Bishop to show cause why his or her licence should not be revoked.

(2) All Licensed Lay Ministers whose licence includes an authority to preach must attend such training as directed by the Bishop. If a Lay Minister does not do so he or she may be asked by the Bishop to show cause why his or her authority to preach should not be revoked.

11.18 Vestments

As a symbol of their particular ministry and office when leading or assisting at worship services Licensed Lay Ministers may wear an alb or a cassock and surplice.

11.19 Exercise of lay ministry without a licence

(1) Nothing in this Ordinance is to be interpreted as excluding members of the Church from exercising their own ministries in the Church for which no licence is required.

(2) A licence is not required for any ministry not contained within section 11.11 and in particular for the following ministries:

(a) reading the scriptures;

(b) leading the prayers;

(c) assisting with the distribution of the elements of Holy Communion;

(d) giving a personal testimony;

(e) leading a service of worship up to four times, or more with the approval of the Bishop, for the purpose of discerning their suitability for licenced lay ministry;

(f) preaching a sermon up to four times, or more with the approval of the Bishop, for the purpose of discerning their suitability for preaching ministry; or

(g) acting as thurifer, crucifer, server or acolyte during a worship service."

I certify that the above Ordinance was passed by the Bishop-in-Council of the Diocese of Bathurst this 29th day of August 2026.

.....
Registrar

I ASSENT to this Ordinance

.....
Bishop of Bathurst Date 29 August 2026

APPENDIX 2

REDRESS INFORMATION PACK

Pastoral Letter concerning redress

Summary of the Finity report

Frequently asked questions

Redress Funding Task Force – Terms of reference

Bathurst Diocese
SHARING JESUS FOR LIFE

The Right Reverend Mark Calder
The Bishop's Registry
11 Church Street (PO Box 23)
Bathurst NSW 2795

20 August 2026

PASTORAL LETTER TO THE DIOCESE CONCERNING REDRESS

Dear brothers and sisters,

This is a pastoral letter I did not wish to write in the closing weeks of my episcopacy, but it concerns a matter of great importance for our Diocese which will have an ongoing impact over the coming years.

Bishop-in-Council has recently received an actuarial report to determine more accurately our exposure to redress claims in the years ahead. The report estimates that, after allowing for insurance recoveries, our liability through to 2045 may be approximately **$15.4 million**.

While that figure stretches over the next twenty years, the estimated costs in the immediate future are significant:

- **2027:** approximately **$1.7 million**
- **2028:** approximately **$1.8 million**
- **2029:** approximately **$1.7 million**

Our current reserve set aside for redress is **$585,000**.

This means we are now in the very sobering position of needing to sell further property over the coming years, including property currently being used for ministry.

Friends, this is a hard reality to face. But so too is the shame of some clergy, teachers and lay leaders of the past. Horrific things were done by people who were trusted. The money paid to victims of sexual and physical abuse can never undo the harm they have suffered. It is, however, an acknowledgement of the terrible wrong that was done and an attempt to provide some practical help to people whose lives have, in many cases, been profoundly affected by that abuse. We must have Jesus' compassion for those who continue to live with that pain.

p: 02 6331 1722
e: bishop@bathurstanglican.org.au

THE WAY FORWARD

Bishop-in-Council is in the process of establishing a task force to reconsider the criteria circulated in 2023 which set out the circumstances under which it was advisable to sell property. Those criteria asked questions such as whether a property was an essential tool for disciple-making ministry, whether it was being used regularly and by a significant number of people, whether the ministry there could be sustained with the resources available, and whether the cost of maintaining the property was justified by the ministry taking place there. These criteria will now need to be updated and applied more rigorously.

No decisions will be made without consultation, but it will be necessary to sell property even where there is church or community opposition. It is also possible that some parishes may need to be wound up and all property sold. Some decisions made will be painful, including for those in our community who do not attend church but have significant historic connections. I fully acknowledge that it is humbling and upsetting that this issue remains an ongoing challenge for us. We will need grace, understanding and compassion as we respond.

It may well be that some parishes choose to come forward in the coming months and indicate a willingness to part with property within their parish. That would greatly assist the task force and Bishop-in-Council. It may also be that some property or other assets we have long regarded as almost sacrosanct will need to be sold. Together, across the Diocese, we will make sacrifices into the future for the sake of those injured in the past and for the glory of God.

As we respond to this challenge, Bishop-in-Council has adopted four guiding principles:

a. **Justice -** We acknowledge the profound harm suffered by survivors of abuse and reaffirm our commitment to providing redress faithfully (as required by law), compassionately and responsibly.

b. **Stewardship -** The Diocese should seek to manage the resources entrusted to it wisely, recognising both present ministry and future obligations.

c. **Transparency -** The Diocese should communicate honestly, pastorally and in a timely manner throughout this process.

d. **Mission -** While meeting our redress obligations, we should seek wherever possible to preserve and strengthen the ongoing task of ***Sharing Jesus for Life*** throughout the Diocese.

p: 02 6331 1722
e: bishop@bathurstanglican.org.au

In all of this, two things will be important to hold onto.

FIRST, GOD IS STILL ON THE THRONE. He is still for us. He uses all things to make us more like Jesus. But from the ashes, new things grow, and he will continue making us the people and the church he would have us be. We can and should trust him, even though the way ahead is uncertain and hard.

SECOND, WE MUST MAINTAIN OUR PASSION AND STRATEGY TO *SHARE JESUS FOR LIFE*. Nothing I have written need stop us from sharing the good news of Jesus with others. That work can continue with little or no physical resources. Our passion to proclaim Christ comes from our hearts, not our buildings—valuable though they are.

Let me remind you of the well-known words of Proverbs 3:5–6:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.

Please join me in committing all this to the Lord, and seeking his wisdom, guidance and blessing.

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Mark Calder

** Any media enquires arising from our position becoming public, ought to be directed to me preferably by email: bishop@bathurstanglican.org.au*

Redress Reponse

SUMMARY OF THE FINITY REPORT

In 2026, Bishop-in-Council engaged **Finity Consulting**, an independent firm of actuaries, to assess the Diocese's likely future financial liability arising from historical abuse claims. An actuary is a specialist who uses data and statistical modelling to estimate future financial costs. The purpose of the report was to help the Diocese understand its likely future obligations and plan responsibly for meeting them.

Finity reviewed the Diocese's history of abuse claims, including civil claims and payments made under the National Redress Scheme. It also examined historical records relating to Anglican schools, residential homes and parish ministries, together with information about insurance recoveries and the experience of similar claims elsewhere in Australia.

Based on that information, Finity estimates that the Diocese's future liability for historical abuse claims may be approximately **$15.4 million** through to 2045. The report also estimates that the largest costs are likely to occur in the next few years before gradually reducing over time.

The report explains that claims relating to historical abuse often emerge many decades after the abuse occurred. For that reason, although many institutions where abuse took place have long since closed or changed, further claims are still expected to arise in the years ahead. Finity has therefore included an estimate of future claims that have not yet been reported.

Like all actuarial assessments, the report is not a prediction of exactly what will happen. Rather, it represents Finity's best professional estimate based on the information available at the end of 2025 and on accepted actuarial methods. The actual cost may prove to be lower or higher depending on the number of future claims, their resolution, and the insurance recoveries ultimately received.

Bishop-in-Council commissioned this report so that decisions about the Diocese's future could be made on the basis of independent professional advice rather than assumption. While the report does not tell the Diocese what decisions to make, it provides the clearest independent assessment yet of the financial obligations the Diocese is likely to face in the years ahead.

A full copy of the report by Finity Consulting is available on request from the Registrar, registrar@bathurstanglican.org.au.

Redress Reponse

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

UNDERSTANDING THE FINITY REPORT

1. Why was this report commissioned?

So the Diocese could better understand its likely future financial obligations for redress and plan responsibly for them.

2. What is an actuary?

An actuary is a specialist who estimates future financial costs and risks. Their job is to make the best estimate possible using available evidence.

3. What information did Finity use?

Finity examined the Diocese's past abuse claims, National Redress Scheme applications, historical records, insurance arrangements and other available information to estimate future costs.

4. Why couldn't Finity tell us the exact amount?

Because nobody knows exactly how many future claims will be made or what each claim will cost. The report is an informed estimate, not a guarantee.

5. Why does the report talk about "assumptions"?

Every estimate about the future requires assumptions. Finity explains the assumptions it used so that its work is transparent and can be understood or reviewed.

6. What does "liability" mean?

It simply means money the Diocese is expected to be legally responsible for paying in the future.

7. What does "insurance recoveries" mean?

Some future payments are expected to be partly reimbursed by our insurance policies. The report estimates what those repayments may be. The remaining amount is what the Diocese is expected to pay itself.

8. Why are claims still being made after so many years?

Many survivors do not disclose abuse immediately. Some take decades before they are ready to come forward. This is common across Australia and is reflected in Finity's modelling.

9. Why does the report refer to schools, hostels and parish ministries?

Historical claims connected with all of these ministries were included in the assessment, because this is where the Diocese may have responsibility.

10. Does the report tell the Diocese what to do?

No. The report simply estimates future financial obligations so the Diocese can make informed decisions.

UNDERSTANDING THE $15.4 MILLION

11. Does the $15.4 million have to be paid now?

No. The estimate covers the period through to 2045. Costs are expected to arise over many years, not all at once, but $7.6 million of that estimated amount is expected to arise in the next five years.

12. Could the final amount be different?

Yes. It could be lower or higher than the estimate, depending on how many future claims are made, how they are resolved, and what insurance payments are received. The Diocese plans to commission an annual update on the estimated liability to ensure that we are making the most informed decisions.

13. Does the $15.4 million mostly relate to claims we already know about?

No. The majority of the estimated $15.4 million relates to claims which have not yet been made. The estimated liability arising from claims currently known to the Diocese is approximately $1.3 million. Finity's work seeks to estimate the additional claims which may arise over the period to 2045.

14. How much has the Diocese already paid in redress and abuse claims?

To date, the Diocese has paid approximately $2.22 million through the National Redress Scheme and approximately $6.87 million in civil claims – a total of approximately $9.1 million.

15. How does our situation compare with other Anglican dioceses?

It is difficult to make direct comparisons because dioceses vary greatly in size, history and circumstances. However, our situation is not unique. Some dioceses face significantly greater liabilities, while others face less. The Diocese of Tasmania, for example, has publicly reported an estimated liability of approximately $60 million.

REDRESS AND OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

16. What is the difference between the National Redress Scheme and a civil claim?

The National Redress Scheme was established following the Royal Commission and provides redress for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse. Payments are capped at $150,000. Civil claims are pursued separately through the legal system, may relate to sexual or physical abuse, and are not subject to the same cap.

17. Can someone receive a National Redress Scheme payment and then make a civil claim for the same abuse?

Essentially, no. A person may reject an offer under the National Redress Scheme and pursue a civil claim instead. However, accepting an offer under the Scheme generally releases the institution from further civil liability for the same abuse.

18. Why is the Diocese required to make these payments?

Apart from our moral responsibility to acknowledge and respond to the profound harm suffered by survivors, the Diocese has legal obligations arising through the National Redress Scheme and civil law. Meeting those obligations is not optional.

HOW WILL THE DIOCESE MEET THE COST?

19. Will property be sold immediately to raise the whole $15.4 million?

No. The Diocese does not want to sell more property than proves necessary. However, our present redress reserve is not sufficient to meet anticipated liabilities in the coming years, so some property sales will need to proceed. The Diocese intends to remain sufficiently ahead of expected claims to meet its obligations without unnecessarily selling assets. The annual actuarial update will help guide this process.

20. Will a parish be expected to bear the cost because abuse occurred in that parish?

No. Redress is a whole-of-Diocese responsibility. Property will not be targeted simply because abuse occurred in a particular parish or because an offender ministered there. Indeed, a significant part of our historical exposure relates to former diocesan schools, hostels and residential institutions rather than parish ministry.

21. Are parish investment funds also going to be taken to pay redress?

The Diocese is not proposing to break trusts or simply appropriate funds held for particular parish or ministry purposes. Legal advice confirms that there are significant restrictions on how trust funds may be used. The Task Force will consider what assets and funding sources can lawfully and responsibly contribute towards meeting the Diocese's obligations.

22. What about properties which generate income for parish ministry?

The contribution a property makes to sustaining ministry will be an important consideration. However, the Redress Funding Task Force will need to consider all diocesan property and other assets and weigh their contribution to ministry against the Diocese's redress obligations. No particular category of property can simply be assumed to be exempt from consideration.

23. Who will decide which properties are sold?

The Redress Funding Task Force will develop recommendations for Bishop-in-Council and the Anglican Property Trust. Affected parishes and other stakeholders will be consulted as appropriate. Ultimately, decisions concerning property sales will be made through the Diocese's existing governance processes.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

24. What is the Diocese planning to do in response to this report?

Bishop-in-Council (BiC) and the Anglican Property Trust (APT) are establishing a Redress Funding Task Force to develop recommendations on how these obligations can be met. The Task Force will consider diocesan property and other assets, potential funding sources, the timing and priority of any asset sales, the balance between redress commitments and ongoing parish ministry, and will consult with affected parishes and stakeholders. Its recommendations will be provided to Bishop-in-Council and the Anglican Property Trust for consideration.

25. What happens to ministry if a church building is sold?

The sale of a church building does not necessarily mean the end of Christian ministry in that community. Ministry may continue in another church building, a community facility, through an arrangement with another denomination, or in some other form. The priority will be to preserve and strengthen ministry wherever reasonably possible, rather than simply to preserve buildings.

Redress Reponse

REDRESS FUNDING TASK FORCE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Task Force is established by Bishop-in-Council and the Anglican Property Trust to develop recommendations for a short and long-term property strategy that will enable the Diocese to meet its redress obligations while seeking, wherever possible, to preserve and strengthen the ongoing task of ***SHARING JESUS FOR LIFE*** across the Diocese.

The Task Force will:

- review and recommend principles for evaluating diocesan property and other assets;
- recommend the timing and priority of property and asset sales;
- consider the appropriate distribution of proceeds from property sales between redress and parish ministry;
- identify and assess other assets and sources of funding that may make a significant contribution towards meeting redress obligations;
- consult with affected parishes and other stakeholders as appropriate, and develop a transparent and pastoral consultation process;
- obtain legal, financial, trust and other specialist advice as required; and
- report its recommendations to Bishop-in-Council and the Anglican Property Trust for consideration.

Expertise considered desirable within the task force:

- legal
- financial
- real estate
- pastoral
- strategic and entrepreneurial