Bathurst Diocese

SHARING JESUS FOR LIFE

THIRD SESSION

OF THE

51st SYNOD

18 – 19 SEPTEMBER 2026

HOLY TRINITY PARISH & COMMUNITY CENTRE, KELSO

MINUTES

DAY 1 – FRIDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

WELCOME, REFLECTION & PRAYER

The Synod commenced meeting at 7:00pm with a welcome by the Synod chaplain, the Reverend Bec Choi and an acknowledgement of country. The Rev'd Kevin Simington led the Synod in a devotion from John 6:22-27 on *Keeping the main thing the main thing*. The chaplain then led the Synod in prayer.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

7:18-7:51pm The President, Bishop Mark Calder, addressed the Synod on the new chapter the Diocese will be entering, the challenges it still faces, and concluded with a charge to continue to love Jesus, share Jesus, hear Jesus, protect the vulnerable, hold everything lightly, and look to God. The bishop gave heartfelt thanks to those whom God has used over the years to bless him in remarkable and significant ways.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The President warmly welcomed all Synod members, and especially those present for the first time, and gave a few explanatory remarks regarding the operation of Synod, along with some instructions for members, and urged members to actively participate in its processes.

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.

CARRIED

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.

CARRIED

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.

CARRIED

M4 Reports

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

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

CARRIED

NOTICES OF MOTIONS (NOT SUBMITTED PRIOR TO SYNOD)

There were no notices of motions.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS (NOT SUBMITTED PRIOR TO SYNOD)

There were no notices of questions.

FINANCE MOTIONS

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.

CARRIED

M6 Synod Management Fund Budget Estimates for 2027

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

Synod adopts the 2027 Synod Management Fund Budget Estimates.

CARRIED

M7 Schedule of Synod Contributions for 2027

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

Synod adopts the 2027 Schedule of Synod Contributions.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT OF DAY 1

The Synod adjourned at 8:40pm

DAY 2 – SATURDAY 19 SEPTEMBER

PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY

The Synod resumed at 8:32am with prayer and a Bible reading and reflection by Kevin Simington from Mark 1:29-39, in which he encouraged us to keep proclaiming Jesus as our central focus.

COMMISSIONING OF DIOCESAN CANONS

Bishop Mark, with Dean James Hodson, commissioned Archdeacons Tim St Quintin, James Daymond and Steve Cimarosti, and the Rev'd Phil Howes as canons of All Saints Cathedral, Bathurst.

ELECTIONS

There were no nominations for the Anglican Property Trust and no other elections were held.

THE REV'D KEVIN SIMINGTON

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.

CARRIED BY ACCLAMATION

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES AND GENERAL SYNOD CANONS

M8 Consideration of the General Synod offences and special tribunal canons

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

Synod 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.

CARRIED

Synod agrees to consider the ordinance.

CARRIED

Synod passes the ordinance.

CARRIED

M9 Consideration of General Synod constitutional amendment canons

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

Synod 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.

CARRIED

Synod agrees to consider the ordinance.

CARRIED

Synod passes the ordinance.

CARRIED

M10 Consideration of the Records and Archives Ordinance 2026

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

Synod grants leave for the introduction of the Records and Archives Ordinance 2026.

CARRIED

Synod agrees to consider the ordinance.

CARRIED

Synod passes the ordinance.

CARRIED

REDRESS MATTERS

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-in-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.

CARRIED

DIOCESAN CHURCH REVITALISATION PROJECT UPDATE

The Rev'd Mick George provided an update on the Diocesan Church Revitalisation Project currently being undertaken in the Parish of Canowindra.

Synod then adjourned for Morning tea at 10:00am and resumed at 10:30am.

QUESTIONS OF WHICH NOTICE HAD BEEN GIVEN

Q1 Prior sale/bequest proceeds held in trust

Archdeacon Steve Cimarosti asked the following question:

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?

To which the President replied:

The Diocese is very conscious of the need to balance its obligations to survivors of abuse with the responsibility to steward funds and assets that have been given or entrusted for parish ministry.

As explained in the FAQs already circulated to Synod members, the Diocese is not proposing to break trusts or simply appropriate funds held for particular parish or ministry purposes to pay redress liabilities. Legal advice recently obtained from Prolegis Lawyers confirms that there are significant legal restrictions on how trust funds may be used. In particular, the advice concludes that parish local funds, including funds held in the Anglican Managed Investments Fund (AMIF) from parish bequests and property sales, are generally held on trust for parish purposes and are not ordinarily available to meet diocesan historic liabilities.

The legal advice states that parish funds invested through AMIF are generally the trust property of the relevant parish and that such funds would not normally be available to respond to diocesan historic abuse liabilities. The advice notes only a remote possibility that a court could require the exercise of statutory powers to vary trust arrangements in exceptional circumstances, particularly if diocesan assets available for those liabilities were otherwise exhausted. Prolegis Lawyers also advises that assets held for the general purposes of the Diocese would be expected to be called upon before parish trust funds.

The FAQs further explain that the Diocese's current approach is to establish a Redress Funding Task Force to consider what assets and funding sources can lawfully and responsibly contribute towards meeting redress obligations. The Task Force will weigh redress commitments against the need to sustain ongoing ministry and will develop recommendations for Bishop-in-Council and the Anglican Property Trust.

Accordingly, while no responsible organisation can give an absolute guarantee about every future circumstance, the Diocese's present position is that it seeks to retain parish funds held in trust for parish purposes wherever possible, and there is no proposal to simply divert parish bequests or parish sale proceeds held in AMIF to meet redress liabilities. The work of the Redress Funding Task Force, together with ongoing legal and actuarial review, is directed towards meeting our obligations to survivors while respecting the legal status of parish trust funds and preserving ministry wherever reasonably possible.

With reference to the supplementary question:

The FAQs advise that the Diocese has already paid approximately $2.22 million through the National Redress Scheme and approximately $6.87 million in civil claims, representing a total of approximately $9.1 million paid to date in redress and abuse claims.

In relation to transparency regarding past contributions, the FAQs do not presently provide a breakdown of how those payments have been funded. However, the Registrar will provide Synod members with a breakdown of contributions to redress by parish in the near future so that members can better understand the contributions that have already been made across the Diocese.

It is also important to note the response to FAQ Q20, which states that 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. Equally, decisions regarding future funding arrangements will not be based on whether a parish has contributed more or less towards redress funding in the past, whether measured in aggregate terms or on a per-capita basis. Rather, the Diocese's response to redress obligations is being considered across the Diocese as a whole.

Accordingly, any information provided regarding past parish contributions is intended to promote transparency and understanding, rather than to establish a basis upon which future decisions will be made concerning particular parishes or properties.

Q2 and Q3 Safe ministry declarations

Merilyn Nevell asked the following questions:

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?

To which the President replied:

No. When a person signs a Safe Ministry declaration and agrees to abide by Faithfulness in Service, they are not making an absolute guarantee that they will never make a mistake or never be the subject of an allegation. Rather, they are acknowledging the standards of conduct expected of church workers and undertaking to conduct themselves in accordance with those standards.

Faithfulness in Service is the national Code of Conduct of the Anglican Church of Australia. It sets out the standards of personal behaviour and pastoral practice expected of bishops, clergy and church workers (including volunteers) across the Church. Like codes of conduct used by employers, charities, schools and other organisations, its purpose is to clearly communicate expected standards of behaviour, provide guidance for ministry, and establish a framework for accountability. The adoption of a code of conduct is also consistent with the NSW Child Safe Standards, which require organisations to clearly communicate behavioural expectations for workers and volunteers.

The existence of a code of conduct does not imply that church workers are expected to be perfect. Rather, it ensures that those serving in ministry understand the standards expected of them and the boundaries within which they are to exercise their ministry.

Importantly, Faithfulness in Service is not itself the instrument that determines whether a complaint is upheld. In the Diocese, complaints are dealt with under the Ministry Standards Ordinance (MSO), which establishes the process for receiving, assessing and determining allegations of misconduct. While there is a relationship between the standards described in Faithfulness in Service and the definitions of misconduct in the MSO, it is the MSO that governs how complaints are investigated and decided.

The MSO contains a number of important safeguards to ensure that allegations are assessed fairly and consistently, including:

- The ability of the Director and Ministry Standards Committee to dismiss complaints that are vexatious, trivial, misconceived or lacking substance.
- A requirement that all processes be conducted in accordance with the principles of natural justice, including giving the person who is the subject of the complaint a reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegations.
- Independent external investigation of disputed matters where serious consequences, such as a person's paid position or ministry, may be at risk.
- Application of the civil standard of proof, requiring findings to be established on the balance of probabilities based on the available evidence.

Accordingly, signing a Safe Ministry declaration is not a statement of perfection or a surrender of personal rights. It is a commitment to uphold the Anglican Church's agreed standards of conduct, together with a complaints process that includes procedural fairness and protections for all parties involved.

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?

To which the President replied:

The declaration in Form D should be understood as part of the Diocese's safe ministry and risk management processes. It is intended to help identify and appropriately manage known risks to the safety and wellbeing of children, vulnerable people, church members and volunteers. It is not a statement that a person has never sinned, made mistakes, or engaged in wrongdoing at some point in the past.

As Christians, we believe that God forgives sin through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ when a person genuinely repents and turns to him. Repentance and forgiveness are therefore central to the Christian faith and to the life of the Church.

At the same time, some past actions can have ongoing practical consequences that need to be considered when assessing a person's suitability for particular ministry roles or responsibilities. The Church has legal and moral obligations to provide a safe environment for those in its care. These obligations arise from child safety legislation, work health and safety requirements, criminal laws relating to the protection of vulnerable people, and the requirements of our insurers. Consequently, certain past conduct may need to be considered and, where necessary, appropriate safeguards put in place.

Past wrongdoing does not automatically prevent a person from signing the declaration or from participating in ministry. In practice, very few people are entirely excluded from all forms of ministry. Rather, disclosed information assists the Diocese in determining whether a person can safely serve in a particular role, whether safeguards should apply, or whether another area of ministry may be more appropriate.

Importantly, a positive answer to a question in a Safe Ministry Check or Declaration does not automatically disqualify a person from ministry. Each matter is considered on its own facts and circumstances, and individuals are encouraged to provide additional information so that a fair and informed assessment can be made.

To reinforce this point, the Diocese intends to include on the front of Form D the same explanatory statements that already appear on the Form B Safe Ministry Declaration which is used for volunteers undertaking ministry that involves direct, regular and not incidental contact with children.

These statements reflect the purpose of the process. The Safe Ministry Declaration is not intended to deny the reality of repentance and forgiveness, nor to impose a standard of personal perfection. Rather, it is a practical safeguarding measure that seeks to balance the Church's commitment to grace and restoration with its responsibility to provide a safe environment for all people.

Q4 Encouragement to parishes without clergy

Dianne Phillis asked the following question:

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?

To which the President replied:

A report on smaller parishes and future ministry in smaller towns was recently prepared by the Archdeacons for the August meeting of Bishop-in-Council, following their discussions with the Bishop.

While I'm unable to disclose the details, where Anglican services are no longer possible, plans have been discussed for the ongoing pastoral care of Anglicans, and for facilitating their fellowship and, where possible, worship with other trusted Christians who similarly love God's word and seek to promote the gospel.

Q5 Provincial Synod Report

Mike Middleton asked the following question:

Would it be appropriate for the Synod papers to include a report on the most recent Provincial Synod, including the names of the Diocese of Bathurst representatives and a summary of any matters relevant to this Diocese? In particular, were there any resolutions, developments or anticipated responses arising from Provincial Synod that should be recorded for the information of Synod and the Diocese?

To which the President replied:

Yes. Provincial Synod meets every five years, with the most recent Synod held in Sydney on 6 May 2025. The Diocese of Bathurst was represented by the Bishop, Archdeacon Andrew Thornhill and Mr Glenn Murray. Our bishop preached at the opening service. Andrew was elected to the Provincial Standing Committee.

Matters considered included school chaplaincy and SRE, support for ICCOREIS, disaster recovery, the possible formation of a Provincial Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council, and opportunities for dioceses to share administrative services. Provincial Synod also recorded its thanks to our former Chancellor, the Hon Peter Young AO KC, for his remarkable 41 years of service to Provincial Synod.

There were no resolutions requiring a particular response from the Diocese of Bathurst. The full Summary of Proceedings is available on the NSW Provincial Synod website: 2025 Summary of Proceedings.

If the questioner would like to ensure that a report on Provincial Synod is included in future Synod papers, I suggest that he bring a motion to next year's Synod to that effect.

Q6 Work Health and Safety Reporting

Mike Middleton asked the following question:

Should the Synod papers include an annual report on diocesan and parish Work Health and Safety (WHS) matters? If so, could such a report provide an overview of key WHS initiatives, compliance activities and any significant matters arising during the year?

To which the President replied:

The Diocese agrees that Work Health and Safety is an important matter and that Synod should be informed of significant initiatives and developments in this area.

During 2025 and 2026, the Diocese undertook its most comprehensive property and safety review to date through a diocesan-wide property condition assessment program. The Anglican Property Trust engaged Australis in August 2025 to assess both the condition and insurance value of diocesan and parish properties. Inspections commenced in September 2025 and were completed in February 2026, with reports subsequently issued covering 161 buildings and other assets across the Diocese.

The assessment process identified a total of 341 risks and defects requiring varying levels of attention, comprising:

- 10 items requiring immediate attention;
- 18 high-priority defects;
- 193 medium-priority defects;
- 85 low-priority defects; and
- 35 matters noted for monitoring purposes.

Parishes were provided with detailed reports and summary spreadsheets and asked to develop plans to address identified issues according to their level of priority. Timeframes were established for responding to immediate, high, medium and low-priority defects, with assistance available from Anglican Property Trust trustees where required.

The Diocese also developed and published a substantial suite of WHS resources through the Anglican Property Trust website. These include guidance regarding WHS responsibilities, a parish WHS policy template, incident reporting procedures, emergency preparedness resources, annual inspection forms and other practical tools to assist parishes in meeting their obligations. Churchwardens received specific training and guidance during the June 2026 Churchwardens' Briefing, including advice that churchwardens may be regarded as officers for WHS purposes and guidance drawn from the Diocese's insurers, legal advisers and resources used in other Anglican dioceses.

The Diocese's current focus has been on establishing practical systems and obtaining reliable baseline information. Because the property condition assessment program has already provided a detailed review of diocesan property risks, parishes will not be required to undertake another comparable review in the immediate future. Instead, from 2027 each parish will be required to complete:

- an Annual Parish Property Maintenance Inspection Form; and
- an Annual Parish WHS Inspection Form,

as part of the annual return process. These forms will assist parishes to identify hazards, monitor compliance, maintain records and support ongoing risk management and continuous improvement.

Accordingly, there would be merit in providing periodic reporting to Synod on significant WHS matters. The information collected through the annual inspection process will be reported to the Anglican Property Trust and will assist the Trust in monitoring compliance across the Diocese. Once this reporting framework is established and meaningful trend data becomes available, the Anglican Property Trust will give serious consideration to providing a dedicated WHS report as part of future Synod papers.

Q7: Code of Conduct Commitments

Mike Middleton asked the following question:

With reference to Book 1, Motion 14 - Wording of Code of Conduct Commitments, to whom do the current Code of Conduct commitments apply? Do these commitments apply only to members of Bishop-in-Council, or are they intended to apply more broadly to clergy, licensed lay ministers, church officers, employees, volunteers and other ministry workers within the Diocese?

To which the President replied:

As explained in the responses already provided concerning Faithfulness in Service and Safe Ministry declarations, the Diocese's Code of Conduct commitments reflect standards of conduct that apply more broadly across the Diocese to clergy, licensed lay ministers, church officers, employees, volunteers and other ministry workers.

Faithfulness in Service is the Anglican Church of Australia's national code of conduct for church workers, and the Diocese's safe ministry and governance framework is built on the expectation that all those serving in ministry will conduct themselves in accordance with those standards.

Q8: Sessions of Synod

Mike Middleton asked the following question:

With reference to Book 1, Bishop-in-Council Report (p.9); Anglican Property Trust Report (p.14), several reports refer to the "Second Ordinary Session of the 51st Synod", while the current meeting is described as the "Third Session of the 51st Synod". Could an explanation be provided of the meaning of a "session" of Synod, including:

- how sessions relate to the term of a Synod;
- how many sessions may occur during the life of a Synod; and
- why multiple annual meetings can occur within the same numbered Synod?

To which the President replied:

A Synod is convened for a three-year period. Accordingly, Synod representatives are elected at parish Annual Parish Meetings every three years to serve for that three-year term.

The word 'session' refers to a gathering of the Synod as it meets each year.

So, the 51st Synod commenced in 2024. It met for its First Ordinary Session in 2024, its Second Ordinary Session in 2025, and is meeting for its Third Session in 2026.

These are therefore not three different Synods, but three sessions of the same 51st Synod.

A Synod must meet at least once each calendar year and may meet more often if summoned by the Bishop.

Q9: Workers Compensation Insurance

Mike Middleton asked the following question:

With reference to Book 2 - Financial Statements:

1. What is included within the Workers Compensation insurance expenditure reported in the financial statements?
2. Does the Diocese arrange Workers Compensation insurance centrally on behalf of parishes, with costs recovered from parishes, or is Workers Compensation the responsibility of individual parishes?
3. The financial statements refer to insurance recoveries. Could the nature of these recoveries be explained, including any lessons learned or changes made as a result of the matter?
4. Do Registry staff employment expenses include Workers Compensation costs?
5. Under Registry Office insurance expenses, what classes of insurance are included (for example, Workers Compensation, public liability, professional indemnity or other insurance policies)?

To which the President replied:

1. The Workers Compensation insurance expenditure comprises both the centrally arranged Workers Compensation premiums paid through the Synod Management Fund and the Registry's own Workers Compensation costs of $5,114. The accounts show Workers Compensation insurance costs for parish based staff of $31,553 with corresponding recoveries from parishes of $32,269.
2. The Diocese arranges Workers Compensation insurance centrally. The premiums are initially paid through the Synod Management Fund and then recovered from the parishes in which staff are based. This is reflected in the separate Workers Compensation insurance cost and recovery entries in the account.
3. The insurance recoveries are not claim recoveries. Rather, they represent the recovery of insurance premiums charged to parishes. The reported General Insurance cost of approximately $441,000 includes a one-off contribution of approximately $36,000 towards the diocesan property condition assessment and insurance valuation project. Excluding that one-off cost, insurance premium recoveries from parishes exceeded insurance costs by approximately $12,000 in 2025. That surplus is being returned to parishes through reductions in insurance charges during 2026.
4. Yes. Registry staff employment expenses include a separate Workers Compensation insurance expense of $5,114, in addition to wages, superannuation and leave-related cost.
5. The Registry Office insurance expense of $18,364 does not include Workers Compensation, which is disclosed separately under Registry Staff expenses. The Registry Office insurance expense includes the Diocese's share of public liability, management liability, professional indemnity, motor vehicle and property insurance, together with the full cost of business travel and transit insurance. These policies cover Registry operations and diocesan bodies including Bishop-in-Council and the Anglican Property Trust.

QUESTIONS OF WHICH NOTICE HAD NOT BEEN GIVEN

No questions without notice were received.

MOTIONS OF WHICH NOTICE HAD BEEN GIVEN

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.

CARRIED WITH ACCLAMATION

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.

CARRIED

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.

CARRIED

MOTIONS OF WHICH NOTICE HAD NOT BEEN GIVEN

Synod gave leave for the following motion to be proposed without notice.

M16 Motion concerning the retirement of Bishop Mark Calder

Mover: *Archdeacon Andrew Thornhill*
Seconder: *Ray Haigh*

Synod expresses its deep gratitude to God for the ministry of Bishop Mark over the past nearly 7 years.

We are grateful for Mark's diligent, godly and servant-hearted leadership; for his far-reaching expertise, and far-reaching and regular travels across our diocese.

We are grateful for Mark's clear, instructive, and transformative preaching; which continues to reach hundreds across our diocese and beyond with the incredible news of God's grace to all people through His Son Jesus.

We are grateful for new clergy and laity; and for re-energised, re-equipped clergy and laity.

We are grateful for Mark's pastoral care of clergy and laity in our churches; taking time to get to know us, and showing deep interest in and affection for us and for our labour in the Lord.

We are grateful for Mark's love of liturgy, and for his faithful leading and sharing of liturgical worship with depth, warmth, passion and creativity.

We are grateful for those in Mark's extensive ministry network; many of whom have helped us, prayerfully and financially supported us, and ministered to us.

Most of all, we are grateful for Mark's love of our Lord Jesus, for always pointing us to Jesus, as together we share Jesus for life across the Central West.

Synod also acknowledges the significant ministry of Susan Calder during Mark's episcopacy, and the significant impact on Susan and Mark's other immediate family: Philip & Sydney, Theodore; Emily & Anthony with McKenzie, Charlie and Sadie; and Michael & Rachael, with Hudson and Thomas.

It is also pertinent that today Synod formally recognises Mark's 38 plus years of ordained ministry; first made deacon in February 1988 and later that year, priest, both in the Diocese of Sydney.

Mark's years of licensed ministry evidence stability, flexibility, and variety. After curacy and training periods at the parishes of Lalor Park and Kings Langley, and then at St Thomas' North Sydney, Mark served as Rector at St Andrew's Roseville for 18 years. Our diocesan Chancellor – Mr Adrian Adhern – is one of many who came to Christ or grew in their faith during Mark's ministry in that parish.

In 2009, Mark and his family relocated to Noosa in the diocese of Brisbane where they spent the next decade faithfully serving in a very different context, but with the same gospel faithfulness that again bore much gospel fruit: to the glory of God. While at Noosa, Mark also served as Sunshine Coast Area Dean, Priest-in-Charge of the parish of Cooroora, and diocesan clergy representative at General Synod.

In His sovereignty and perfect plans, God used these ministries to uniquely and necessarily prepare Mark for his episcopacy. As it has and should be said: Mark Calder has truly been God's man for God's time; not only as our Bishop, but throughout his vocational ministry.

Synod commits to continuing to pray for Mark, Susan, and their family in this time of transition; and are excited to see and hear of God's continued work in and through them, as they embark on a new season of ministry.

CARRIED BY STANDING OVATION

M17 Motion of thanks for the running of Synod

Mover: *Archdeacon Tim St Quintin*
Seconder: *The Rev'd Joshua Taylor*

That this Synod records its sincere thanks to all who contributed to the smooth and effective conduct of Synod, especially to the Registrar, Warwick Baines, and Louise Hickey, for their extensive administrative work before and during Synod; to Kath Thornhill for her careful preparation of the Synod materials; to the Rev'd Bec Choi for her prayerful and gracious service as Synod Chaplain; to Adrian Ahern for his helpful assistance as Chancellor; to Kath Thornhill and the Rev'd Bob Cameron for serving as secretaries to the Synod; and to the parish of Holy Trinity Kelso for their generous hospitality in hosting Synod.

CARRIED WITH ACCLAMATION

PRAYER

11:53am The session of Synod concluded with prayers led by the Reverends Bec Choi and Andy Martin, and the Grace said together by all.

ADJOURNMENT OF SYNOD

11:57am The synod adjourned without setting another day for meeting.

We certify that, to the best of our recollection, these minutes are a correct record of the Synod's proceedings.

Clerical Secretary of Synod

Lay Secretary of Synod

Signed by the Administrator of the Diocese (during the vacancy of the See)

on 23rd October 2026