

# **Part 3 - Reports**

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# Diocesan Council Synod Report 2025

## **APRIL 14, 2023**

- 2022 financial statements complete.
- PWRDF highlights presented, including Hurricane Fiona Response and Resiliency Fund.

## **JUNE 16, 17, 2023**

- The results of the 2022 audit were presented.
- The council discussed Synod and ideas to explore bringing fresh ideas
- The motions for the 3 canons, 11, 20 and 35 were discussed with the plan a go forward.
- A motion was made to educate around affirming congregations with the intent to develop guidelines for parishes.

## **SEPTEMBER 15, 2023** zoom

- The working groups for canons 11, 20 and 35 as well as the affirming committee were formed and working
- Comments from Synod attendees were reviewed.
- The option to donate mileage reimbursement to the the Diocesan Environment Network was added to the expense claim form.

## **NOVEMBER 24, 25, 2023** in person

- The Parity Project was presented, with the decision to implement it as presented
- The Cost of Living Adjustment for clergy and stipends were passed.
- The budget was accepted as presented

## **FEBRUARY 9, 2024** zoom

- Diocesan Council endorsed the suspension of 1.1.21 to have the opportunity to widen the parameters.
- Policy 2.1.6 Family Leave was brought to meet Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island employment standards
- HRVSST was renamed People and Policy VSST
- HR policy 2.1.17 Sexual Misconduct was edited to add information.

## **APRIL 5, 2024** zoom

- The motion to accept HR Policy 2.1.12 vacation was carried.
- The motion to accept HR Policy 2.2.1 Leaves of Absences and Continuation of Benefits was carried.

- The motion to accept HR Policy 2.1.XX Technology and acceptable internet use was carried.
- The Region of Fort Sackville was renamed Rivers to Trails

#### **JUNE 7, 8 2024**

- The audited financial statements were approved as presented.
- Creating Missional Communities VSST was suspended pending a review and reimagining.
- The Chancellor to begin the process to ask the two legislatures to amend the Anglican Church Act 1967 to allow amalgamation of a parish with the Diocesan Synod of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

#### **SEPTEMBER 13, 2024**

- The work of the canon 35 working group was presented and was commended to the Canons and Constitutions committee.
- Policy 2.1.25, calculation of cost of living increases adopted
- COLA increase of 2.3% applicable to stipend and housing for the purpose of 2025 budgeting adopted.
- Policy 2.1.118 Remuneration for contractual part time appointments of Clergy adopted.
- Policy 2.1.29 Remuneration of Parish Incumbent, Pastoral Administrators, and Sunday Supply adopted.

#### **NOVEMBER 1, 2 2024**

- Canon 11 working group presented their report.
- The Resources Center presented a report with go forward ideas
- Say Yes to Kids presentation with an appeal for applications
- The 2025 budget was presented and carried.
- Policy 2.1.21 Personal Loans was updated to remove “full time”
- Policy 2.1.20 Clergy Car Loans was adopted with edits of the change to “may offer” and the removal of “full time”
- Policy 2.1.22 Professional Development Leaves. Removal of “full time” and additional information in parish and diocese responsibilities 8 adopted.
- Canon 20 working group presentation followed by discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Purcell

Executive Secretary of Synod

# Director of Mission and Ministry Development 2025 Report to Diocesan Synod

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April 2023 to April 2025

## DMMD - New Role

In the spring of 2024, Bishop Sandra Fyfe designated a new role of Director of Mission and Ministry Development, and appointed me. It is a revision and broadening of the previous position of Parish Vitality Coordinator (formalized in the spring of 2015). This refreshed post reflects the evolution of efforts to support congregations *to create and sustain Christ-centred, mission-minded, ministering communities of faith.*



As before, the DMMD supports the Diocesan Bishop and the Diocese by nurturing healthy congregations, supporting faith formation, and leadership development, to facilitate greater capacity to flourish in ministry.

The Director's main responsibilities include supporting parish leaders in discipleship growth, mission action plans (strategic planning), lay leadership training, shared ministry arrangements, stewardship, and mission-focused initiatives. The Director consults, collaborates, evaluates and helps shape the future direction of the Diocese's ministry efforts to respond to God's missional call in our neighbourhoods. This includes leading the Missional Program Team of Vocations Coordinator, Interim Formation Director, Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator and Refugee Sponsorship Coordinator. The Director of Mission and Ministry is also a member of the Diocesan Leadership Team.



## Some Reflections on Mission and Ministry Development

Our efforts to faithfully respond to this missional call of God are informed by our *Baptismal Covenant* (vows) and the *Marks of Mission*, as identified by the Lambeth Conference in 1988. Both these central statements as Anglicans, describe how we live in Christ, and actively walk in the ‘Way of Love’.



### BAPTISMAL PROMISES

- Do you believe in God the Father, in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and God the Holy Spirit?
- Will you continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
- Will you persevere in resisting evil and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
- Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ?
- Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself?
- Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
- Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God’s creation and respect, sustain, and renew the life of the earth?

### FIVE MARKS OF MISSION (Anglican Communion)

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom (TELL)
2. To teach, baptize and nurture new believers (TEACH)
3. To respond to human need by loving service (TEND)
4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation (TRANSFORM)
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth (TREASURE)



Considering the present state of our churches today, in order to *build capacity* within our local congregations to carry out this baptismal and missional call, we require **a renewed emphasis on discipleship and leadership development**. The Holy Spirit is stirring hearts and wills within many more of our parishioners to consider ministry leadership in new ways. For example, it is evident there is a hunger and commitment by our lay leaders for equipping and supports to step up to greater levels of pastoral care, worship leadership, mission-edged initiatives, funerals and a variety of outreach ministries. Diocesan Vocations Coordinator, Rev. Carl Fraser, will report on the increasing number of people stepping forward as inquirers for official discernment. The number of those discerning a call to the Vocational Diaconate, as Associate Parish Priests and now (excitingly) as pioneering community priests, is truly encouraging.

Our greatest challenge in our congregations is the **discipleship** or **faith formation** aspects of our ministries. In the last several years, we have witnessed a growing demand for adult Christian education and the practice of spiritual disciplines. For example, the number of people taking *Education for Ministry*, courses at Atlantic School of Theology and other institutions, and participation levels in initiatives related to prayer and devotions.

Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator, Allie Colp, and her team also see interest by young people and their families in discovering aspects of authentic Christian living.

**If we are to continue to respond to the call of God to our neighbourhoods to the spiritual, social, emotional and social justice needs, we require our parishioners to have a deep, maturing faith life.** In fact, two respected instruments (Natural Church Development and The Healthy Churches Handbook) that are utilized to measure congregational health indicate that *‘passionate spirituality’* or being *‘energized by faith’* are absolutely essential to flourishing churches.

As we reorganize and prioritize our missional program teams and task groups both discipleship/Christian formation and leadership development will be central to our work.



## **DISCIPLESHIP (Faith Formation)**

There are a variety of approaches to nurturing disciples and supporting parishioners to embrace their baptismal identity (maturing in Christ). Faith formation during Sunday worship gatherings is excellent, but a few minutes once a week is not sufficient. We can encourage people to grow through individual and group studies, exploring prayer practices and spiritual disciplines, videos and movies, books, blogs, and teaching moments during acts of service and outreach.

### **REVIVE:**

In the last few years, the *Revive* program, published by Forward Movement Press (Episcopal Church) and written by Rev. Dr. Dawn Davis (originally from Dartmouth, NS), has been popular and embraced by several congregations.



Revive is a discipleship program to help active lay leaders grow in confidence as spiritual leaders. There are three 6-part modules: prayer, scripture and ministry. Our Diocesan Resource Centre has copies to lend. For info, visit: <https://revive.forwardmovement.org/>



## CONTEMPLATIVE COMMUNITY

Last fall several passionate pray-ers began gathering on Zoom to explore ways to promote, teach and host contemplative prayer practices. The group of about 10 people share resources and discuss avenues of silent devotion.

A 30-minute **Lenten Contemplative Prayer** Zoom gathering is led by Gillian Power and Joe Young on Thursday mornings. They have 12 to 15 regular participants.

Heather Carter, our Diocesan representative of the **Anglican Fellowship of Prayer** has created a list of in-person and online prayer times being hosted across the Diocese. She is also working on posting links to prayer resources on our website. Visit the AFP page:

<https://www.nspeidiocese.ca/ministries/anglican-fellowship-of-prayer>



### **Soul Food? Zoom Series**

We hosted a Zoom series in late 2023 and early 2024 to provide opportunities to discover fresh approaches for faith formation and ways to support spiritually-curious people. The **SOUL FOOD?** program offered 45-minute learning sessions on Zoom, with a short presentation, followed by open group sharing.

Topics explored: Spiritual Café (online community for the ‘spiritual but not religious’), Soak Your Soles (hosting hand and foot pampering in the community), Daily Scripture Reading, Anglican Prayer Beads, Starting a Meditation Group, Fasting as a Spiritual Discipline, facilitating transformational Small Groups, developing a Rule of Life and more.

## DISCIPLESHIP RESOURCE

### **Centered: A Christian Discipleship Experience**

– from The Episcopal Church

Centered is a discipleship series guiding small gathered communities to get deeply rooted in love with God and one another, so that we all may grow to look, act, and love more like Jesus. The experience includes an initial three-session training for group facilitators, followed by nine core sessions during which church members, neighbours, and friends gather to share a meal and grateful prayer; view two short films, discuss questions about God, belonging, and living a meaningful life; and support for each other in committing to intentionally follow Jesus and his Way of Love.



Visit the website: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love/centered/>



## **RETREAT: Pathways to Peace**

Jesus says, "Come away with me. Let us go alone to a quiet place and rest for a while".  
(Mark 6:31)

There are many pathways to a rewarding life of prayer. Our Diocesan RETREAT, from **June 6 to June 8, 2025**, features a deep dive on spiritual disciplines, especially the quieter approaches to listening prayer.

***Pathways to Peace***, is hosted on the beautifully landscaped campus of **Acadia University in Wolfville, N.S.** It is a three-day oasis of quiet and prayer practices. Specially designed for laity, clergy are warmly invited too. (Clergy Retreat is June 9 – June 13 in PEI.)



Short talks, by a variety of voices, feature how to pray, and exercises of creative approaches to prayer. Explore rich traditions such as Benedictine Spirituality, Ignatian Spirituality, and the wisdom of Julian of Norwich and Hildegard of Bingen. There will be guided meditations, and devotions using music, water, art, movement and scripture reflection. If weather permits, 'wild worship' will be offered in an outdoor setting. There will be plenty of time for silence and walking.



Attending a retreat can provide spiritual renewal through dedicated time for prayer and reflection. For a hardworking person, a weekend like this can be a valuable opportunity to recharge, gain clarity, and find a sense of balance amidst a busy life. This is a gift for those who give so much to others.

Registration fee includes five meals (Friday dinner to Sunday breakfast), two nights' accommodations, free parking, retreat program and materials.

**Early Registration: \$160 / person until April 28.**

**Late Registration is \$180, closing May 20.**

**Ticket options include single, private rooms. There are also double rooms.**

**Staying off-site - \$110**

Task group members: Alice Galpin-Nicholson, Heather Carter, Betty Armstrong, Dawn Purcell, Ted Johnston, Rev. David Puxley and the DMMD.

*Come away to a quiet place, slow down, be open to the Spirit and listen.*

For details, visit our Diocesan website: <http://www.nspeidiocese.ca>



**REGISTER:** Use the QR Code and your Smartphone or this link:

<https://dnspeidatabase.elvanto.eu/form/196dfa29-7cb9-4851-9476-78608dbe42ec>



## LEADERSHIP



# THE CONNECTORS

*Listen. Learn. Experiment. Connect.*

### **Missional Leadership Learning Cohort (MLC):**

The Connectors is a group of eager pioneering-type people who gather monthly for 10, two-day sessions (residential retreats and Zoom). This is a skill-building environment for faithful Anglicans who want to reach out to others, but are not sure how. Participants foster connections in missional ministry. They make connections between themselves and God (prayerful discernment), between themselves and one another (peer support) and between the congregation and the community (leadership development). Most importantly, these pioneer ministers learn how to compassionately and respectfully connect with new people in their neighbourhoods, serving them with the love of God.

This missional learning cohort functions as a supportive network of peers, who mutually encourage, challenge and deepen one another, while being held accountable to missional goals. Participants explore a fresh focus on prayer, missional listening, servant leadership, how to start new faith communities, nurturing disciples and encouraging other leaders. Through action-reflection projects they partake in mission-related opportunities in their respective communities.

The *MLC Advisory Task Group* oversees this initiative: Rev. John Ferguson, Alice Galpin-Nicholson, Mike MacKenzie, Rev. Debbie Fice, Bishop Ron Cutler (*retired*), Kim Lively and the DMMD.

### **The Connectors FIVE (2023-2024)**

- |                     |                                     |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ○ Amanda Donovan    | - St. Paul's, Charlottetown         |
| ○ Sue Duncan        | - St. John's, Westphal              |
| ○ Linda Chapman     | - St. Thomas, Fall River            |
| ○ Judy Dow Clarke   | - St. James', Armdale               |
| ○ Paul Fevens       | - St. Peter's, Eastern Passage      |
| ○ Michael Hobson    | - Ch. of St. Andrew, Cole Harbour   |
| ○ Ken MacIntosh     | - The Collieries                    |
| ○ Michelle Stone    | - St. James', Stewiacke             |
| ○ Naniya Trevors    | - St. Margaret of Scotland, Halifax |
| ○ Jennifer Webber   | - St. James', Mahone Bay            |
| ○ Margaret Williams | - St. Luke's, Dartmouth             |



### **The Connectors SIX (2024-2025)**

- |                      |                                  |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| ○ Louise Christie    | - Parish of French Village       |
| ○ Heather Colohan    | - Parish of French Village       |
| ○ Mary MacDonald     | - The Collieries/Glace Bay       |
| ○ Beverley Middleton | - St. Bee's Westville/ACPC       |
| ○ Peter Hough        | - Christ Ch., Berwick, NS        |
| ○ Laura Bregante     | - Eastern Passage & Cow Bay      |
| ○ Ian Wissler        | - St. Barnabas', Blue Rocks      |
| ○ Leanne Brister     | - Parish of New London, PE       |
| ○ Larry MacKinnon    | - St. John the Evan. Crapaud, PE |



## The Connectors SEVEN (2025-2026)

- |                      |                                       |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ○ Nathan Boudreau    | - Parish of Three Harbours/Antigonish |
| ○ Patrick Donahoe    | - St. Luke's, Dartmouth               |
| ○ Jon Hall           | - Windsor/Parish of Avon Valley       |
| ○ Leona Hunt         | - St. John's, Truro                   |
| ○ Cheryl Kewley      | - Holy Trinity, Bridgewater           |
| ○ Shawn LePage       | - Christ Church, Dartmouth            |
| ○ Tammy Hodge Orovec | - St. Mark's, Halifax                 |
| ○ Reta Roy           | - Holy Trinity, Bridgewater           |
| ○ Andrena Teed       | - Parish of Clements                  |



Facilitators: Kim Lively, Ron Cutler, Lisa Vaughn

### Curious about being a participant for The Connectors?

Watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Dqo6660UOW>

### Are you clergy and wondering who might be a suitable applicant?

### What missional initiatives are emerging?

Watch this video: <https://youtu.be/Wd0wsdLZnS4>

Applications for The Connectors EIGHT will be received in early 2026.



### GUIDING LIGHT: Ministry Training

In autumn of 2023, we launched a new initiative, GUIDING LIGHT, to equip parish leaders, especially the laity, when ministering with families at the time of death.

One of the most impactful ministries we have as Anglicans in our Diocese is funeral ministry. Parish lay leaders, especially Licensed Lay Ministers, Vocational Deacons, and others, are called to share in this pastoral office. The Spirit is

leading our Diocese to embrace more fully the ministry of *all* the baptized in this area.

Ten full-day regional workshops were held and facilitated by Rev. Debra Burleson, former AST Formation Director, and the DMMD. More than 200 people attended across the Diocese.

Some topics explored: Wakes/visitations, funeral planning with next of kin, burial options, words of remembrance (eulogies), and homilies. Participants practiced with several role-plays too.

### WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAID...

- *"My confidence has improved. I feel so much better having a knowledge of questions we should/should not ask ... a positive part of the process for the bereaved at such a difficult time."*

- *“The role playing helped to create a better understanding and comfort level with the steps involved in officiating.”*
- *“I didn’t realise that an LLM could actually officiate at a funeral. I just had it fixed in my little mind that we were limited to Morning and Evening prayer, but I am humbled and consider this to be a great honour, to be able to play such a part in the life, and death, of a fellow human being and bring comfort to those in mourning.”*
- *“That the structure of the Anglican approach to funerals and our ‘sure and certain hope’ can be very helpful to families who are grieving the loss of a loved one and also that there are many ways in which a lay minister can be of service.”*
- *“I appreciated having the manual, and going through the break-out sessions with role plays was very useful.”*
- *“I have lots of checklists, dos and don’ts, things that help make it easier.”*

Each participant received a **handbook** binder with templates and guidelines.

**Interested in the GUIDING LIGHT printed resources?** E-mail: [missiondirector@nspeidiocese.ca](mailto:missiondirector@nspeidiocese.ca)

**GUIDING LIGHT training opportunities continued with several Zoom teaching sessions. Each was recorded and available via YouTube:**



#### PRAYERS AT THE TIME OF DEATH and VISITATION PRAYERS

Practical and liturgical supports for those who are dying, plus services for the wake/at the funeral home.

Presenter: The Rev'd. Laurie Omstead, former hospital chaplain, priest and interim Formation accompaniment at AST. Watch the video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_SwP1FphSY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_SwP1FphSY)



#### GREEN BURIALS – What they are, and the practicalities of officiating at a funeral for someone who has chosen a Green Burial option.

Presenter: Louisa Horne, Epilog Transition Services CIC, Halifax.

Watch the video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KcKPDfU\\_SHw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KcKPDfU_SHw)



#### PASTORAL VISITING – a two-part series

Pastoral Visiting - active listening, best practices, confidentiality, etc.

Presenter: Rev. David Puxley, Holy Trinity-Emmanuel, Dartmouth, and Hospital Chaplain.

Part 1 - Basic principles of pastoral visiting

Watch the video: <https://youtu.be/GoNE80oNZts>

Part 2 - Pastoral visiting discussion and scenarios about active listening, the safe and effective use of self.

Watch the video: <https://youtu.be/pViEBoPUfpg>

- ✚ DEMENTIA: Ministering to individuals and their caregivers  
Presenter: Rev. David Puxley, Holy Trinity-Emmanuel, Dartmouth, and Hospital Chaplain.  
Watch the video: <https://youtu.be/IjRFoCwa67Y>



- ✚ GRIEF: A deep, intense dive into an emotion that dominates our world. Grief is often complicated and also very complex. Learn how grief impacts our lives as people with a calling to the spiritual health of our communities, and in the lives of those with whom we minister.  
Presenter: Rev. Dr. Canon Jody Clarke, Professor of Pastoral Studies, Atlantic School of Theology, Halifax.  
Watch the video: <https://youtu.be/ECrocwt30H0>

- ✚ FUNERAL FOLLOW-UP & MISSION. Simple and low-cost approaches to continue to minister to those who mourn.  
Presenter: Rev. Canon Lisa Vaughn  
Watch the video: <https://youtu.be/WF03T4KNk9A>

*COMING SOON!* Home Communion ministry training program.

### **SPRING/SUMMER BOOK CLUB - "Why Gather?"**

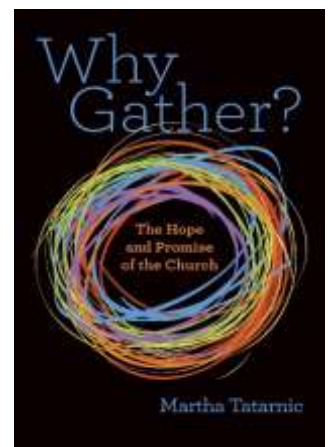


A relaxed gathering on Zoom was hosted over 12 weeks in the late spring and summer of 2023. A group of 15 people explored a Canadian Anglican missional book. **Why Gather?: The Hope and Promise of the Church**, by *Martha Tatarnic*, Rector of St. George's Anglican Church, St. Catharines, ON (published 2022).

revealing how God shows up, who the church really is, and why the church matters as a response to our hurting world.  
Check it out:

<https://marthatatarnic.ca/why-gather-the-hope-and-promise-of-the-church/>

Our Diocese also co-sponsored Martha Tatarnic's visit to Prince Edward Island that same year. **Why Bother? Why Gather?**, was a free workshop hosted by the Diocesan Church Society at St. Paul's, Charlottetown on May 6, 2023. Her presentation was livestreamed on St. Paul's Facebook and YouTube sites.





## **VITAL CHURCH MARITIMES Conferences**

**Three days of exploring mission, sharing stories and best practices for innovative ministry.** Participants learned, discussed and dreamt about how to be bold, risk-taking, and prayerfully discerning leaders. VCM sparked new energy and ideas for mission, including how to start faith gatherings, *Fresh Expressions*.



VCM 2024 was our final conference after running for 10 years. Here is a list of all the VCM events:

- 2024 – David Robinson – Congregational Development expert with 30+ years experience, deep dive in all things mission
- 2023 - Dawn Davis, Huron College - formation, spiritual disciplines, changing times
- 2022 - Linda Nicholls, Primate - discipleship
- 2020 - (entirely on Zoom) - Tasha Carrothers, Diocese of New West - change theory
- 2019 - Jeff Potter, Maple, ON - engaging with new people, mission basics, church planting
- 2018 - Susan Brown Snook, Canon Missioner, Oklahoma (now Bishop, San Diego) - Baptismal call, mission
- 2017 - Phil Potter, Canon, CofE - Mixed economy Church, Fresh Expressions (FX)
- 2016 - Judy Paulsen, professor Wycliffe College, ON – Inviting, integrating newcomers
- 2015 - Cameron Harder, Lutheran - rural congregations, Appreciative Inquiry, asset mapping
- 2014 - Michael Moynagh, Oxford Univ. - Mission basics, mixed economy churches, FX

Additional guests over the years also included: Shawn Branch, John Bowen, David Edwards (now Archbishop), Susan Graham Walker, Stephen Doucet-Campbell, Tammy Giffen, Greg Jones, and many local parish and clergy leaders, along with several notable Atlantic School of Theology and Acadia Divinity College faculty members.

All of the VCM 2024 resources and video recordings of the talks are available on our Diocesan webpage: <https://www.nspeidiocese.ca/pages/vital-church-maritimes-2024-conference>





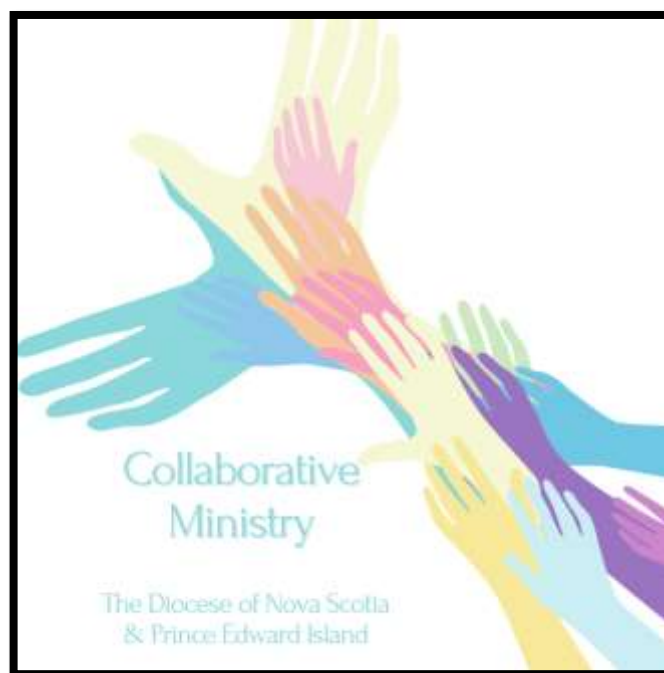
## Congregational & Regional Activities

Over the past two years, there has been a growing need for the Director of Mission and Ministry Development to assist and consult with local leaders about transitions, redevelopments, partnerships and mission action planning. There was intentional work done with at least 39 parishes and seven of the ten regions.

### CMAs & ESMs

When we graciously share and work smarter for the benefit of the common good, we can make space for the Spirit to bring clarity, diversity and mutual strength to engage in ministry – both inside our congregations and most importantly, missionally!

We have a **Collaborative Ministry Arrangement (CMA)** proposal that offers a sample design of four neighbouring Anglican parishes. The model is an invitation to be at the growing edge of change and embracing present realities. By coordinating and sharing leaders, it is poised to create an increased capacity to flourish with existing ministries and expanding missional opportunities. **This parish arrangement creates an effective and larger interdisciplinary team of leaders – lay and clergy, paid and unpaid - while all are stable and engaged in vibrant congregational life.** A CMA involves a pooling of clergy and lay leadership resources, talents, expertise, and some finances (personnel). Its intention is to maintain the integrity and piety of each worshipping community while widening the care, outreach, discipleship, and missional spirit of a multi-parish region (and beyond!).



Curiosity is sparking in a few areas of our Diocese about this team leadership model. Several conversations are happening to consider this collaborative partnership proposal.

In 2023, we established our first **Ecumenical Shared Ministry** arrangement (ESM) with Trinity Anglican and Rivers of Grace United in the Digby area. Since then the Parish of Tangier and Sheet Harbour Pastoral Charge are seeking to hire and share a full-time minister for their area.



Ecumenical sharing means there is potential for both faith communities to be strengthened. With the support of denominational staff and other expertise, there are other ESM conversations happening. Aspects being explored are sharing of worship space and possible property redevelopment.

*The Anglican Parish of Digby and United Church's Rivers of Grace Pastoral Charge, Digby – formally entered into a covenant ESM on Sept. 10, 2023. Both parishes (including their respective congregations in Sandy Cove) are sharing a full-time rector/minister.*

*Anglican priest, Rev. Paul Jennings, along with his wife, retired United Church minister, Rev. Elisabeth Bachem, join with other parish leaders in this new season of ministry together.*



### **What is an Ecumenical Shared Ministry (ESM)?**

It is people worshipping and serving God in a unified way while still maintaining their denominational identity and connections. It is any combination of denominations sharing a program, mission, ministry or building.

### **What does ecumenical shared ministries look like?**

These can take many forms:

- Sharing programs and/or staff.
- Sharing a building only, and otherwise maintain their own denominational ministry and services.
- Several denominations may have one ordained minister and alternate the distinctive forms of worship of the participating denominations.
- Sometimes several denominations share and maintain church buildings in a number of locations and rotate services.

### **Ecumenical Shared Ministries Handbook © 2011**

Ecumenical Shared Ministries Task Force - The Anglican Church of Canada, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and The United Church of Canada:

<https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Ecumenical-Shared-Ministries-Handbook-2019.pdf>

## REIMAGINING OF VSSTs AND TASK GROUPS

Foundational elements are being identified for a full review and organizational re-imagining of (adult) program-related Vision Strategy Support Teams. We know we cannot (nor are we called to) attempt to do everything. We are carefully considering how to shape these groups to make wise decisions about priorities and commitments to nurturing people in faith and preparing them well to lead effectively.



Consultant, Dr. Wendy Carroll, a professor in the Department of Management at the Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary's University, Halifax (PhD, CPHR), provided guidance to Vocations Coordinator, Rev. Carl Fraser and I earlier this year. Besides being a faithful Anglican in our Diocese, her expertise is in developing effective organizations.

Work has begun in a fulsome review and reimagining of the mandate, priorities, structure and terms of reference for the **Creating Missional Communities Vision Strategy Support Team (VSST)**, along with the growing, expanding responsibilities of **Discernment and Formation** (vocations).

The Creating Missional Communities Team will likely include task groups actively working on:

- (a) **Discipleship** – holistic faith formation
- (b) **Lay leaders** – spiritual support, equipping
- (c) **Congregational Development** – partnerships, evaluating health
- (d) **Stewarding** – buildings, property, giving
- (e) **Missional Leadership Cohort Advisory Group** (The Connectors)
- (f) **Retreat planning task group**
- (g) **A visionary/exploratory group** - discerning present and future trends.

In tandem with this reimagining of Diocesan-led ministries, are plans to resurrect the work of the **Mission Outreach and Social Justice VSST (MOST)**. Presently the Refugee Sponsorship Task Group and the Diocesan Environmental Network (DEN) are two active working groups. We sense a calling to attend to other social justice ministries involving people from the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour), disabilities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.



Grounding and informing all of this redesign work are our Baptismal promises, the lived commitment to Christ, the Marks of Mission and our shared values (i.e. practicing grace, radical honesty, inclusion and belonging for all, our ability to do hard things, etc.).



## Other DMMD work - Diocese, Province, Region, National Church:

- ❖ Continuing Education for the Newly Ordained.
- ❖ Good news stories & features – Facebook, Diocesan Times, Net News, etc.
- ❖ Canon 35 Task Group
- ❖ Maritime Ecumenical Network – congregational & missional consultants NS/PEI/NB
- ❖ Task Group on Discipleship and Evangelism, Anglican Church of Canada
- ❖ Pastoral Liturgical Conversations about Baptism, Anglican Church of Canada
- ❖ Missional Imagination Conference – online, 2025
- ❖ Flourishing Congregations Institute, Calgary, AB – Chair of Partnership Council

Respectfully submitted by Lisa <><

**The Rev. Canon Lisa G. Vaughn,**  
**Director of Mission and Ministry Development**  
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[Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/DirectorMMD](https://www.facebook.com/DirectorMMD)

**“Mission is both the announcement  
and the demonstration  
of the reign of God through Christ.”**  
*– Michael Frost, missiologist*



# Anglican Foundation of Canada

## Representative Report for the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

Cynthia Pilichos

March 2025



The Anglican Foundation of Canada is a tremendous resource for Anglican individuals, groups, parishes, dioceses, and the national church itself. Its financial success benefits from sound fiscal management, but it is the **annual membership fees** of Anglican individuals, groups, parishes, and dioceses that are the basis of AFC's financial strength.

It is never too late to ensure your annual membership is paid:

<https://www.anglicanfoundation.org/> or a **cheque payable** to the **Anglican Foundation of Canada, membership** in the **memo line**, mailed to the **Anglican Foundation of Canada, 80 Hayden Street, Toronto, ON M4Y 3G2**.

### Anglican Foundation Grants:

The following link provides an excellent recorded webinar to learn about the many funding opportunities at AFC and makes a good program feature for a Parish or Regional Council meeting:

[https://vimeo.com/804331814?autoplay=1&muted=1&stream\\_id=Y2xpcHN8NTE4MDAyNDB8aWQ6ZGVzY3xbXQ%3D%3D](https://vimeo.com/804331814?autoplay=1&muted=1&stream_id=Y2xpcHN8NTE4MDAyNDB8aWQ6ZGVzY3xbXQ%3D%3D)

### The AFC Grants Process – Regular Cycle

The Anglican Foundation of Canada grants process is well laid out

<https://www.anglicanfoundation.org/apply/>

1. There are **quarterly application windows**, with deadlines on **Jan 1, Apr 1, Jul 1, and Oct 1** each year.
2. There are **3 categories of grants**: **Category A** (up to \$5,000 no matching funds needed), **Category B** (up to \$15,000 and no more than 50% - matching funds required), and **Category C** (up to \$50,000, with match discretionary). A Category C grant, however, replaces the eligibility for Category A & B grants in a calendar year, so is not usually feasible or likely in a diocese such as ours.
3. **Funding impact zones**: Applicant organizations select between the following funding impact zones, and the submission requirements vary based on the zone: **Diverse Infrastructure, Community Ministries, Leadership & Education, Indigenous Ministries, and Sacred Music & Liturgical Arts**.



4. **Diocesan grants quota:** Each diocese is eligible to submit a total of 4 Category A or Category B applications per calendar year, with a maximum of 3 applications for Diverse Infrastructure.

## Diocesan Approval Process for an Anglican Foundation Grant Application

Regular cycle Anglican Foundation grant applications have to be approved by Diocesan Council, but are reviewed first by a small committee that makes recommendations to Diocesan Council. This means that the grant application has to be submitted well in advance of Diocesan Council meeting dates. AFC Grant applications are submitted to the **Executive Secretary of Synod** ([execsecsynod@nspeidiocese.ca](mailto:execsecsynod@nspeidiocese.ca)), Dawn Purcell, who **regularly posts the requisite deadline dates for submission on the Anglican Net News**. If the grant application is approved by Diocesan Council, the application is forwarded to the Foundation by the diocese, with the Diocesan Council motion of approval and the bishop's letter of support.

## Request for Proposal

Every spring, AFC announces the **theme** for the annual **Request for Proposal (RFP)**, with **applications accepted between September 1 and October 1**. RFP grants are separate from the 4 allocated to a diocese in a calendar year and do not need to be approved by Diocesan Council, but do require a letter of support from the bishop. For the **RFP 2025**, grants will be available for both local and regional projects that foster collaboration between Anglican organizations and external community partners: **Community Ministry Partnerships**. Eligibility criteria and application details: [www.anglicanfoundation.org/apply/2025rfp](http://www.anglicanfoundation.org/apply/2025rfp)

## *Imagine More with Say Yes! to Kids*

That is what the Anglican Foundation did – **Imagine More!** - when **Say Yes! to Kids** was first launched (2021). AFC's **Say Yes! to Kids** P2P (Peer-to-Peer) fundraising initiative is a special Anglican Foundation campaign in the spring of the year (April – June) that invites your participation. You learn so much and receive such incredible support in every way from the Foundation, that it is truly a not-to-be missed opportunity. It is the most successful P2P fundraiser in the Anglican Church of Canada. And, there is a great liturgical resource for **Say Yes! to Kids Sunday**. Here is the link for a helpful FAQ about **Say Yes! to Kids**.

<https://www.anglicanfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/SYTK-FAQs-sheet.pdf>

**Needs Ideas for a Project?** Email the Diocese's Youth & Family Ministry Coordinator, Allie Colp, [youthandfamily@nspeidiocese.ca](mailto:youthandfamily@nspeidiocese.ca) or Michelle Hauser, AFC's Development and Communication Officer, [mhauser@anglicanfoundation.org](mailto:mhauser@anglicanfoundation.org) or Cynthia Pilichos, AFC Representative for our Diocese, [cjp2320@gmail.com](mailto:cjp2320@gmail.com) Start thinking of possibilities for **SYTK 2026!**

Individuals, groups, parishes, and the diocese itself in NS & PEI benefit greatly from the Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC) in all the categories in which funding is available. AFC is a valuable resource in the Anglican Church of Canada and is worthy of our support.

## **Diocesan Environment Network (DEN) Report to Synod 2025**

DEN encourages churches and parishes of the diocese to make the Fifth Mark of Mission ('To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth') a living testament to our faith and works with and builds relationships with ecumenical and environmental groups in the provinces we serve as part of our missional ministry.

**Communication:** Critical to supporting parishes and the broader community.

Enews: Carole Aylard continues to produce the DEN Enews every Tuesday morning. Please contact [endionspei@gmail.com](mailto:endionspei@gmail.com) to subscribe. Deadline for submissions: Friday of each week.

Webpage: <https://www.nspeidiocese.ca/ministries/diocesan-environment-network>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/101542159983749>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@environmentnetwork3432/videos> Please hit SUBSCRIBE

### **Season of Creation (Sept. 1st to Oct. 4th) DEN:**

- encourages parishes to recognize Season of Creation (SOC) by sharing information through social media, our Enews, the Diocesan Times, and directs parishes to the SOC website.
- offers guest preachers and presentations to parishes during SOC (or any time during the year).
- encourages parishes to share their SOC activities with DEN, inspiring other parishes.
- Feast of the Creator: In recognition of the 1700<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Council of Nicaea anniversary and the adoption of the Nicene Creed, recognizing God, creator of heaven and earth, I was invited to an international ecumenical seminar that resulted in a joint effort to establish a feast day celebrating the Feast of the Creator. A motion related to the new feast day has been submitted to this Synod and to the upcoming General Synod.

<https://www.oikoumene.org/news/feast-of-creation-seminar-explores-and-inspires-toward-global-ecological-transformation>

### **Greener Churches**

DEN:

- encourages Synod planning committees to reduce use of plastics and waste and Synod delegates to bring reusable water bottles and travel mugs.
- encourages parish priests, lay leaders and parishioners to green their church buildings and engage in local environmental issues.
- gathers and distributes resources that promote and encourage ecological action.
- has compiled a list of people who are knowledgeable about energy reduction and willing to share information with parishes
- compiles a list of parishes undertaking energy reduction and other green projects who are willing to share their experiences and inspire other parishes. E.g. The Parish of French Village and its green burial and land conservation project.

Electric Vehicle charging: DEN is one of the 2024-2025 Low Carbon Communities grant recipients. The grant will be directed towards bringing Electric Vehicle charging to Nova Scotia's faith-based communities. The project funding will directly support outreach and engagement

initiatives to 30+ diverse faith communities, their congregations and councils, to generate awareness about EV charging opportunities at places of worship, information brochures and digital resources to engage community members and offer information sessions on the benefits, concerns, and logistics of EV chargers. If you would like to have your parish assessed as an EV charging station location as part of your missional ministry, please contact Rev Marian [endionspei@gmail.com](mailto:endionspei@gmail.com) or call 902-483-6866

**Healthy Coastline Research:** The principal objective of our missional project, Healthy Coastline Research on the Eastern Shore of Nova Scotia is based on living out the 5th Mark of Mission: increasing awareness of ecosystem protection, safeguarding the *"integrity of creation and sustaining and renewing the earth's life"* and as outreach, engaging the broader community. The project follows the theory and techniques of citizen science, in which local communities with basic training can support the gathering and organizing scientific data. Citizen science monitoring aimed to increase the general sense of safeguarding the ecosystem integrity and preparedness of local communities for extreme climate-related events (Hurricanes, flooding, wildfires, etc.).

This project engages in data collection for research that will contribute to healthy coastlines, engage and empower people so they can have a positive impact on climate change, and build stronger relations between the church and the communities we serve.

Citizen scientists, receive hands-on training to monitor coastal health and strengthen their community's preparedness for climate-related challenges. This initiative has created a powerful new reason for gathering in faith and action, engaging not only local parishes, but the wider community, inspiring participation in coastal stewardship that will extend across Nova Scotia and PEI for years to come.

We would like to thank the Anglican Foundation, Alongside Hope formerly known as PWRDF, our diocese and the Joan Feynman Foundation for Phase 1 funding. Phase 2 is funded and supported by Dalhousie University.

**Spiritual Leadership:** Den offers spiritual leadership such as Praying with the DEN Community on Monday Evenings, led by The Rev. Barr Heuther and recommends Lenten resources. Thanks to Blane Finney and his Cathedral placement, people connected to DEN were able to participate in the Lenten series Blane offered for Lent 2024. DEN also offers pastoral care to environmental activists and others impacted by climate change.

**Hope & Inspiration Gallery of the Arts** - Inspired by a Drag Queen Story Time this past winter, DEN has been updating the Hope & Inspiration Gallery of the Arts, adding three poets and a performer, to the group. The arts express ideas and projects dreams we cannot accomplish in other ways. Recognizing that the climate crisis is the most significant crisis of our time, the arts can inspire us to reconsider our relationship with creation and point the way to a different,

more sustainable world. It is our hope the artists will help connect and reconnect you with the beauty of the earth, and that the artists will inspire you to care for God's creation.

**Family & Youth:** Claudia Zinck is a regular contributor to the DEN Enews and a resource for parishes interested in engaging young families in the 5<sup>th</sup> Mark of Mission.

**Gardening:** Thanks to Claudia Zinck her leadership for the Seed Project and all the packages of seeds she has distributed throughout the diocese.

**Advocacy and Education on Issues Impacting God's Creation:** Eva Evans and Jesse Hamilton continue with leadership on advocacy issues. DEN has supported and stood with various environmental groups at rallies, submitting letters about issues affecting Anglicans and others within Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. DEN has been represented at gatherings at Thinker's Lodge, at a gathering of "Thinkers" focusing on climate change, nuclear crises and food insecurity. I was on a panel at the high school when the student body discusses nuclear energy and bombs and have been invited to speak at Rural Roots to the Holy in Sackville NB in June.

**Ecumenical/Interfaith:** DEN is actively involved in Kairos Halifax, For the Love of Creation, and the Spiritual Coalition on Climate Action in Nova Scotia (SCOCNS)

Thanks to: Bishop Sandra for her support, to all the people who contributed to DEN this past three years, too many to name, to all the parishes and Anglicans in our diocese and others connected to DEN who are making a difference. Thank you all for your involvement and support.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev Marian Lucas-Jefferies

# Anglicans Powering Potential Report for Synod 2025

## November 2023 - March 2025



**Who We Are:** Anglicans Powering Potential (APP) is a diverse gender inclusive/gender expansive advocacy and action network dedicated to *enhancing capacity for creative ministry*.

**APP Coordinating Team:** Marjorie Davis, Patrick Donahoe, Connie English, and Cynthia Pilichos (Report Author)

### How We Have Impact:

*“[It is] . . . our relationship with God [that] drives our intuition and hunger for social justice . . .”*

(Heath S., Richard Rohr’s Daily Meditations from the Center for Action and Contemplation – Feb. 6/25).

As an advocacy and action network inspired by our baptismal covenant *to strive for justice and peace among all people, respect[ing] the dignity of every human being*, we are drawn to this baptismal covenant’s complementary Anglican Communion’s 4<sup>th</sup> Mark of Mission: *to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind, and to pursue peace and reconciliation*. As noted in the above Heath S. quotation about *our relationship with God driv[ing] our intuition and hunger for social justice*, it is especially the social justice of **gender equity**, with a very specific focus on the many manifestations of **Gender-Based Violence**, that fuels the advocacy and action of APP.

As a successor organization to the former Anglican Church Women Diocesan Board, we are privileged to be able to draw on key foundational pillars of that Board to inspire our advocacy and action. A sound base of fiscal stewardship, including some endowed funds, fundraising ability, partnership-building capacity, and a missional focus are the **legacy building blocks for the ministry of Anglicans Powering Potential**. With the evolution from the Anglican Church Women Diocesan Board to Anglicans Powering Potential, we feel that our loving, seeking God has called us from a familiar and comfortable space in order to move us forward into a deeper relationship with him and with our neighbour.

Being drawn from a space of familiarity and comfort, we drew enormous strength and reassurance from this prayer in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship Book that Bishop Sandra shared with us:



*“O, God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us.”*

Yes, it is God’s hand leading us and his love supporting us, and the “us” includes many, many partners in our advocacy and action ministry. **Anglicans Powering Potential have been, are, and will be partnering with the following, in alphabetical order:**

- Anglican Foundation of Canada, particularly *Say Yes! to Kids* and RFP
- Atlantic School of Theology – the Anglican postulants and Formation Director
- Be the Peace Institute
- Brigadoon Village
- Bryony House
- Can’t Buy My Silence
- The Cathedral Church of All Saints
- The Community Roots Day Camp of the Diocese of NS & PEI
- The Daughter Project Canada
- Empowerment for Hope
- Gender-based Violence Working Group, Nova Scotia
- Mission, Outreach and Social Justice VSST, Diocese of NS & PEI
- Mothers’ Union, Diocese of NS & PEI
- NSTAY of the YWCA, Halifax
- Priority Kids
- St. Luke’s Anglican Church, Dartmouth & Hubbards
- Universalist Unitarian Church, Halifax
- World Interfaith Harmony Week organizer.

**Advocacy and Action that APP has been, is, and will be involved in:**

- Organizing and facilitating *Lunch & Learn* and other workshops
- Attending and organizing/facilitating planning meetings
- Supporting and/or attending panel discussions, conferences, and various learning events
- Writing: *Anglican Net News*, *Cathedral Happenings*, *Touchstones for Change*, Facebook, *The Diocesan Times*, letters to the media, etc.
- Presenting at meetings and gatherings
- Awarding bursaries, project funds, and other financial support
- Preparing material for Synod 2025, including the Endorsement text of the Faith Pledge regarding the misuse of Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs)
- Connecting in person, via e-mail, or on the phone to continue to build partnerships
- Assessing, revising, and restructuring features of the network to better support the Purpose of *Enhancing capacity for creative ministry*, in line with the 4<sup>th</sup> Mark of Mission

***Why? "We are not simply to bandage the wounds of the victims beneath the wheels of injustice; we are to drive a spike in the wheel itself"***

Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator  
Report to Diocesan Synod

March 28, 2025

**Priorities** – The seven priorities identified in my job description have defined the areas of priority in my work since starting in this ministry in September 2015.

- To engage and equip leaders in youth, family, and children's ministry in parishes, regions, and at the diocesan level
- Developing, researching and securing resources to encourage and enhance youth, family and children's ministries.
- Participating in the ongoing work of the Youth and Family Ministry VSST and national youth ministry bodies and initiatives such as Stronger Together and the youth initiative of Alongside Hope to maintain and/or develop connections and relationships within this diocese and to other dioceses.
- Sharing information and stories about youth, family, and children's ministry to encourage and empower leaders in those ministries.
- Organizing, with teams of clergy and lay leaders, diocesan youth events such as Encounter, our Diocesan Youth Conference (DYC), and our participation in other events like the Canadian Lutheran Anglican Youth (CLAY) Gathering and ensuring that all SafeR church requirements are met for those events.

In addition to these priorities, I have also taken on the work of **SafeR Church Coordinator** for the Diocese, which includes keeping clergy criminal records checks and vulnerable sector checks up to date, coordinating training for clergy and lay leaders, responsibility for the Diocesan SafeR Church Plan, and supporting parishes as they work on their SafeR Church Plans.

**Summary of Activities/Initiatives since Last Synod**

As some of you may recall, I was not present at the last meeting of Synod, so I'd like to thank Leah Marshall for her ministry and presence in the Youth and Family Ministry program as she covered my parental leave.

I returned from leave in March of 2024, and things have been non-stop ever since! Here are the highlights:

- Our longstanding Diocesan Youth Conference has continued, now with a new name – **Diocesan Youth Camp**. The program won't change with the new name, but rather changing the name is really an acknowledgement of shifts and changes that have been made through the years. In 2023 our theme was *Shelter from the Storm: You are Enough*, which was held at Camp Mockingee, and in 2024 the theme was *We Choose Joy*, held at Malagash Bible Camp. In both years of the program, youth and leaders from across the diocese gathered for a weekend of outdoor fun and faith formation.
  - DYC is for youth in grades 7 to 12 and is held each fall at a camp facility somewhere in the diocese. Adult leaders and youth leaders-in-training provide leadership and supervision for the weekend.
- The Community Roots Day Camp Program has continued to flourish over the past two years, with 6 weeks of camp in various communities in 2023 and 8 weeks of camp in

2024. We are still fine-tuning the plan for this summer, but we will have at least 7 camps again this summer.

- The Community Roots Day Camp Program is a travelling day camp program with two primary goals: providing fun and engaging faith-based day camps for kids in communities throughout the diocese and building local capacity for leadership in children's and family ministry so that ministry can continue there beyond one week of camp.
- Our Welcoming Families Task group has continued to seek ways to support leaders in parish who intentionally work to Welcome Families into their church communities. The most recent expression of this has been monthly chats with those leaders, providing opportunity to gather in an online community of leaders, share ideas, challenges, and support one another.
- I've also worked closely with an excellent team of folks on the Youth at Synod Program this year, trying to find new ways to engage young people in this part of the life of the church.

At the local level, I have supported a number of parishes in refocussing or seeking new vision for existing Sunday School programs, youth groups, and family ministries. It feels like a very hopeful time for youth and family ministry throughout the diocese, as many parishes are imagining what might be possible for the future, rather than trying to recreate what existed in the past.

It's important to note that none of these ministries – at the diocesan or local level – would be possible without the countless dedicated volunteers and thousands of hours of time and care that they share. Their efforts touch the lives of so many people, and our parishes and wider communities are so much richer for it.

## **Plans for the Future**

The main plan for the future is to continue focussing on those seven priorities and sustaining and revitalizing ongoing ministries and seeking opportunities for new initiatives and new ways to connect with youth, children, and families. One area that I am discerning how to improve on is providing opportunities for youth to develop leadership skills and to have more of a voice in shaping what the youth and family ministry program looks like in our diocese.

I also look forward to connecting and working with parishes and regions to find ways to deepen their engagement with youth and families in their communities and am always willing to meet with people interested in having those conversations.

Respectfully submitted,  
Allie Colp  
[youthandfamily@nspeidiocese.ca](mailto:youthandfamily@nspeidiocese.ca)

# Vocations

## 2025 Report to Diocesan Synod

April 2023 to April 2025

### VOCATIONS COORDINATOR - Revised Position

There has been a great deal of transition in the last several years for this important role in our Diocese. A growing demand in those who are sensing some serious call to ministry has meant the workload for the Vocations Coordinator is shifting and expanding.



From the spring of 2023 to March 31, 2024, The Rev'd Cathy Pharo was a part-time Interim Vocations Coordinator. In early 2024, we completed an audit for the position and a revised full-time position description. The Rev'd. Carl Fraser was hired and started October 1, 2024, in this role.

The Vocations Coordinator oversees the discernment, education, and formation of individuals exploring ministry in the Diocese—whether as Stipendiary Priests, Associate Parish Priests, Vocational Deacons, or specialized Lay Ministers. He guides candidates through the vocational process, offering structure, support, and regular evaluation. Key duties include coordinating Discernment Weekends, interviewing inquirers, assisting with spiritual direction, supporting parish discernment, and facilitating appropriate placements and mentoring. The Coordinator also ensures continuing education and liaises with theological institutions like the Atlantic School of Theology (AST), Halifax, and others.

Interim Formation Director, The Rev'd. Laurie Omstead, oversaw the Anglican Formation program (part-time) for our stipendiary priest-track postulants at AST for the regular school terms the last two years. There are others who facilitate vocations-related groups, like mentoring, assessments, etc.

Several aspects of discernment and vocations processes are being actively reimagined to adapt to our changing missional and congregational needs, to respond to particular calls and contexts of discerners, and to identify and create efficiencies.

Here is a snapshot of some numbers related to the growth and expansion of the vocations program:

- Postulants for Master of Divinity priest/rector - 4
- Discerners as Master of Divinity priest/rector - 2 or 3
  
- Postulants for Associate Parish Priests (CAPP) - 12
- Discerners as Associate Parish Priests (CAPP) - 8
  
- Postulants for Vocational Deacon - 2
- Discerners as Vocational Deacons - 5
  
- Others who are discerning, but not sure about their specific calling - 14

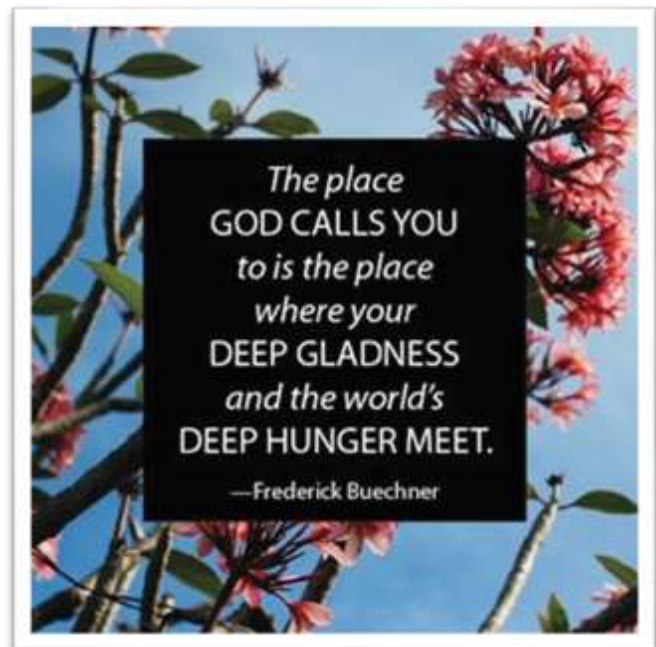
*\* Postulant = accepted by the Bishop as a candidate for ordination, and is in the process of being formed and trained.*

*Associate Parish Priests and Vocational Deacons are non-stipendiary.*

**To contact our Vocations Coordinator, Rev. Carl Fraser**

**E-mail: [vocations@nspeidiocese.ca](mailto:vocations@nspeidiocese.ca)**

**Office: 902-406-8998**



Respectfully submitted by Lisa <><

The Rev. Canon Lisa G. Vaughn,  
Director of Mission and Ministry Development

## **ALONGSIDE HOPE**

(Formerly known as The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund)

Diocesan Representative's Report to the 152 Session of Synod

May 23-25, 2025

### **What is Alongside Hope?**

Alongside Hope, formerly known as the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF), is the relief and development agency of the Anglican Church of Canada. It has its genesis in our Diocese when it was created after the Springhill mining disaster of 1958. For over sixty five years, Alongside Hope has been providing aid for both relief and development projects here in Canada but also throughout the world.

### **Why did PWRDF change its name?**

The name of PWRDF was officially changed to Alongside Hope on March 1, 2025. The decision to change the name was made by the Board two years ago after many years of discussion.

In 2022, the board selected a Task Team of staff, board members and volunteers from across Canada. This team gathered on Zoom with the goal of identifying a compelling name – a name that better reflects its work and one that would sustain the work into the future. In these and other discussions with stakeholders and staff, one dominant theme emerged: partnership.

Alongside Hope conveys the concept of partnership in a simple and uplifting way.

- It is easy to understand and to pronounce.
- It requires no lengthy or clumsy acronym.
- It de-emphasizes the colonial, top-down approach of giving and emphasizes a more collaborative approach.
- It is a name that will carry us forward into the future.

### **Alongside Hope's Work and Impact:**

Although the name has changed, the work remains the same. Alongside Hope supports projects in Canada and around the world in collaboration with local partners who understand the cultural, social, economic and political contexts of the communities and people they serve. This knowledge is invaluable for designing and implementing programs that respond to the specific challenges community members encounter. In Canada, volunteers are key to engaging Anglicans about the humanitarian relief and development work (health, empowering women and girls, food security and climate change, and Indigenous programs) our partners are doing.

The work that Alongside Hope supports is very broad ranging including:



Health and Healing – Improving well-being and care for all;

Creation Care – Restoring biodiversity through action, training and advocacy;

Resilient Livelihoods – transforming livelihoods through equal opportunities for work;

Indigenous partnerships – joining in right relationships with Indigenous people;

Humanitarian Response – providing short and long term relief for those affected by natural and human made disasters;

Supporting Refugees –accompanying refugees and displaced persons at home and abroad.

Public Engagement – Inspiring Canadians to learn about Alongside Hope’s partners and programs

Alongside Hope partners with local organizations to foster a more holistic and inclusive approach to development and humanitarian efforts. This ensures that projects are effective, sustainable and respectful of the communities and people they aim to assist. Local partners have established relationships of trust within their communities.

This trust is essential for effective communication, engagement and successful project implementation. Local partners understand values and sensitivities, which is crucial for ensuring that programs are culturally appropriate and respectful. By involving local partners and community members, they become empowered to take ownership of development initiatives. This participatory approach ensures the voices of community members are heard.

PWRDF is also a member of the Canadian FoodGrains Bank. Donations can be directed to CFGB through PWRDF where they are matched 4:1 by the federal Government.

Much more information and detail on the works of Alongside Hope is available on its website at [www.alongsidehope.org](http://www.alongsidehope.org). You can also subscribe to its monthly newsletter at <https://alongsidehope.org/subscribe/>.

As Alongside Hope strives for full and complete transparency relating to financial matters the website also includes audited financial reports.

### **Local Context:**

In my report to the 151st Session of Synod (2023), I indicated that the Diocese had been gifted a sum of \$50,000 from Alongside Hope which was raised through an appeal following Hurricane Fiona. Since then, this funding has been used to create the Hurricane Fiona Resilience Response Fund which provided financial support to parishes and communities to be better prepared to deal with future extreme weather events. The Fund has since supported a wide range of projects submitted by parishes and communities. The projects involved a variety of activities such installing emergency equipment, improving connectivity, producing a Kids Climate Action Toolkit, climate cafes and training for first responders to provide psychological support and counselling. Much has been accomplished with a relatively modest sum.

Our annual gathering of Alongside Hope Parish Representatives and supporters of Alongside Hope was held in May, 2024 at Christ Church in Dartmouth. The session featured very interesting presentations given by Bishop Sandra, Janice Biehn of Alongside Hope and Tim Bernard, Executive Director of the Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre who reported on the project to repatriate Mi'kmaq artifacts currently housed in the Museum of the North American Indian in Washington D.C.

Our Diocese has consistently been a great supporter of Alongside Hope. The generosity of parishes and parishioners speaks to our commitment to live out our baptismal covenant to strive for justice and peace and respect the dignity of every human being.

I also want to acknowledge the network of volunteer Parish Representatives in the Diocese. They do a tremendous amount of very creative work around organizing parish events, ordering resources and educating Anglicans about the work of Alongside Hope at the parish level. Thank you for all you do.

Lastly, and on a personal note, I have resigned as Diocesan Representative effective January 31, 2025. After seventeen years in this ministry, I have decided to step aside to allow room and space for new ideas and energy. I am grateful for the support I have received from our Bishops, staff of Alongside Hope and all the dedicated parish representatives and supporters I have had the privilege to work with over the years.

Godspeed.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Pharo  
Diocesan Representative (ret'd)

April 11, 2025

# Report to Synod- Refugee Sponsorship Program

**Submitted by: Sarah Cooper, Refugee Sponsorship Coordinator**

**April 2025**

## Acronyms to know

SAH: Sponsorship Agreement Holder. The Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island is a Sponsorship Agreement Holder

IRCC: Immigration Refugees Citizenship Canada

## Introduction

This report covers the time between March 2023 and March 2025. We have been busy since Synod 2023. As with any outreach mission, we have faced challenges but also enjoyed many successes. One major success was marking twenty-five years of refugee sponsorship in 2024! We have now officially been a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) since 1999. This is a huge accomplishment and one that would not have happened without the on-going support of Diocesan Council and our volunteers.



## The Refugee Sponsorship Task Group

Our Task Group meets at least 4 times a year and continues to provide important direction. The current members of the Task Group are:

- Sarah Cooper, Refugee Sponsorship Coordinator, Cathedral Church of All Saints
- The Right Reverend Sandra Fyfe, Bishop of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island
- Ian Gillis, St. Stephen's Church Chester
- Marie Kettle, Parish of French Village
- The Right Reverend Sue Moxley, Retired Bishop of the Diocese of NS and PEI
- Gillian Power, Parish of St. Timothy's

The Task Group is very grateful to the Diocese for their support of our work. In mid 2023, we said goodbye to Deacon Ray Carter who moved on to focus on the many other outreach projects leads at the Cathedral Church of All Saints. He is still involved in refugee sponsorship there and we thank him for the time he spent with the Task Group. We then welcomed Gillian Power, parishioner at St. Timothy's Hatchett Lake, who has just completed a sponsorship and is waiting for another family to arrive. Jill brings a lot of wisdom to our group and has been a great addition to our team.

One of the missions of the Refugee Sponsorship Task Group is to increase awareness and the possibilities of private refugee sponsorship by Anglican Churches and affiliated groups in the Anglican Diocese of Nova Scotia and PEI. This year we are pleased to report that we have a record number of Anglican parishes involved in sponsorships, representing over half of our allocated 2025 spaces.

## In the news

These past few months have been difficult for the private sponsorship community. As many of you are likely aware, IRCC (Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada) announced a significant decrease in immigration levels for this year. In addition, they have also put a pause on Groups of Five and Community Sponsorship applications for refugee sponsorship. The latter does not affect us directly, but because this stream is no longer available to sponsors, we are certainly receiving increased demand for spots which unfortunately, we are unable to meet.

It has also been an extremely difficult past couple of years on the world stage. With wars and conflicts raging in many countries, there follows mass migration and an urgent need for resettlement. At the end of this report, I have offered answers to some of the frequently asked questions we get around refugee issues.



## Our numbers

While current world conditions have caused some slowing down of arrivals and the cutbacks in IRCC have caused even further delays in applications processing, we still have submissions and arrivals to report. We had a record number of arrivals in 2023, just after our last Synod and into the summer, and then a slowing down over the months that followed. We have been keeping up with application submissions although regretfully, this year, we have lost spots we were hoping and expecting to get. This has been difficult to say the least. We are hoping to participate in a special program specifically for Sudanese refugees. We will know if we have gotten any spots with that stream sometime this spring.

### 2023

**Number of submissions:** 37 people

**Number of arrivals:** 41 people

**Countries represented:** Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Venezuela



### 2024

**Number of submissions:** 43 people

**Number of arrivals:** 38 people

**Countries represented:** Afghanistan, Cuba, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria

### 2025

**Number of submissions:** We are hoping to submit for at least 33 people

**Number of Arrivals:** So far only 5 but we have a family who is supposed to come within a month or so, no arrival date yet

**Countries represented:** Afghanistan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, South Sudan, Syria

**Number of people waiting overseas as of April 2025:** 101

Countries represented: Afghanistan, Cuba, Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Yemen

**Number of Anglican parishes participating in some way in refugee sponsorship from 2023-2025 (some of these parishes have done more than one sponsorship):** 8



## Refugee Sponsorship Activities- meetings, conferences, presentations, etc.



The following is a snapshot of some of the main activities we have been engaged in over the past two years:

### Walk with Refugees (photo above)

We participated in the Walk with Refugees on 23 June 2024 organized by the Halifax Immigration Partnership. The rain held off and the turnout was great. We had good representation from the Diocese, including people from the parishes of St. Timothy's Hatchett Lake, St. James Halifax, and the Cathedral Church of All Saints. Thank you to everyone who joined us. Stay tuned for more information on this year's activities...

### Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) Conference

November 2023- Calgary

October 2024- Toronto

SAHs from all over Canada come together in person to meet about various issues, listen to presentations offered by Immigration officials and others, and strategize how to advocate for newly arrived newcomers and refugees overseas

### PWRDF/Alongside Hope Meeting Days

PWRDF Day usually precedes the SAH Conference- offers an opportunity for Anglican SAHs across Canada to get together and talk about issues facing our SAHs in an Anglican context. It

always proves to be a fruitful day with lots of great discussion and time for fellowship. Led by Suzanne Rumsey, Public Engagement Coordinator, Alongside Hope

### **Peer-to-Peer Circle Group- Atlantic & Central**

We represent 8 SAHs in Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland. We meet online once a month to discuss on-going challenges and share best practices. I am a facilitator for this group. The Peer-to-Peer Circle Groups was an initiative of the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP) and lasted from May 2024 to February 2025. Unfortunately, funding cuts led to its termination, but our group has chosen to continue meeting because we have found our time together so useful.

### **Webinars and SAH Online Meetings**

These meetings include topics such as allocations methodology, prioritisation of issues to discuss with IRCC, visa office-specific challenges, country-specific crises (IRCC's response to the war in Sudan, for example). I attend these sessions often at least twice a month.

### **Atlantic SAH Roundtables**

Atlantic SAH Roundtables take place 3-4 times a year both in-person and virtually and offer an opportunity for SAHs in the Atlantic provinces to discuss issues specific to our region. Led by Refugee Sponsorship Training Program staff. The most recent meeting was hosted here at the Diocese.

### **Refugee Sponsorship Task Group**

We meet approximately 5 times a year online to discuss updates in the program, problem-solve particular challenges, review our selection process, and address any issues as they arise. We also communicate by email on a regular basis.

### **Training sessions for sponsors**

We present mandatory meetings throughout the year for sponsors to talk about responsibilities associated with sponsorship. Recently we partnered with the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax and the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program to offer a joint training session at the Cathedral Church of All Saints. It was very well-attended, and participants asked a lot of great questions.



## Presentations

Refugee Sponsorship in the Anglican Church of Canada- Online Consultation- January 2024

- Attended and presented at a virtual meeting with Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Bishops, Metropolitans, and Anglican sponsorship representatives across Canada

Alongside Hope (PWRDF)

- Presentation for Annual Diocesan Gathering at Christ Church, Dartmouth- May 2024

Refugee Sunday

- Presentation to the congregation at the Cathedral Church of All Saints, Halifax to mark Refugee Sunday at the 9:30 and 11:00 morning services- June 2024

Atlantic School of Theology

- Presentation on refugee sponsorship in Anglican parishes and beyond for the Atlantic School of Theology's *Community Thursday* series- October 2024

Refugee Sponsorship in Rural Areas, Hosted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM)- December 2024

- Participated and presented in an online webinar, along with Task Group member Ian Gillis and Antigoniash SAH Syrian Antigoniash Families Embrace (SAFE) on the benefits and challenges of settlement in rural areas. IOM staff from all over the world attended this webinar and asked great questions about farming opportunities, environmental issues, and small business start-ups.

## Other updates



- Now that we are collecting 100% of the funds up front required to support newcomers during their first year, we have transitioned to administering monthly payments by direct deposit. This has been a great success and a very smooth transition thanks to our Financial Controller Lawrence Roche who initiated the system, Tammy Cummins, our Payroll & Benefits Administrator who initially set up each newcomer on direct deposit, and Narisha Mohammed- Bejai, our Accounting Assistant, who helped us switch to our current telpay system. The monthly payments mean that we have a paper trail if IRCC should ask us to show proof of financial support to the newcomer(s).



- In 2024, IRCC implemented a new application submission process. We are now required to submit all new applications through the online Permanent Resident Portal. While the transition was not easy and there are still some challenges for many SAHs across Canada, I am pleased and relieved to say that to date all our applications submitted via the portal have been accepted the first time!



- Thanks to the hard work of Executive Administrator Jana Gauthier, we have been able to shift the electronic and hard copy refugee files onto the Diocese database. This allows for increased security and a much easier way to track progress from the application submission to the end of the first year in Canada and beyond. It is a relief not to have to enter a multitude of data and notes into an excel document any longer!

## Thank you!

I would like to extend big thank you to Diocesan Council, the parishes, individuals, volunteers, colleagues, newcomers, and families who make this job so meaningful. It is a very rewarding to see newcomers coming into our office and interacting with Diocesan staff, to see volunteers from different parishes make friends with new arrivals, and to hear lovely stories of people being invited to share in a coffee ceremony or to attend weddings, dinners, and holiday celebrations. There are certainly days when the work is sad and difficult, but the many moments of relief, joy, and family reunification I've had the privilege to share, make it all worthwhile.

I leave you with this quote from Dr. Chris Tilling, Senior New Testament Lecturer at St. Mellitus College:

*The Bible is a story about refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants. God's people in the Old Testament are in a sense defined as refugees as the stories of Abraham, Exodus, and Exile tell us. Christians, too, we're all in a sense migrants because our citizenship is in heaven. And this story climaxes in Jesus who was himself a refugee. Matthew tells us that Jesus fled from Herod to Egypt. God himself, the gospels tell us, became a refugee for us. So each of these children and families we have seen in the news, whatever their religion, represent Jesus Christ to us. The parable of the Good Samaritan means the question isn't if these migrants or refugees are our neighbours; the question Jesus asks us is will we be their neighbours?*

Retrieved from:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HSA8QuCEPiw&ab\\_channel=Tearfund](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HSA8QuCEPiw&ab_channel=Tearfund)

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Cooper', with a stylized, cursive script.

Sarah Cooper

Refugee Sponsorship Coordinator



## FAQs About Refugee Sponsorship



### **Are we sponsoring Palestinian refugees from Gaza?**

**Answer:** While we have had several requests from Palestinians overseas, we have not yet had requests from potential sponsors in Nova Scotia or PEI for spaces for Palestinians affected by the current crisis in Gaza. This is not unusual; to be considered a refugee, a person must be outside their country of origin. Many Palestinians are still in their country and therefore do not qualify. If they leave to other countries, we may have more opportunities to sponsor them. It will also depend on what connections they already have here.

### **Are we sponsoring refugees from Ukraine?**

**Answer:** It is very rare that we would sponsor a Ukrainian refugee. The Ukrainians who have come to Nova Scotia and PEI are coming through a special immigration stream and not through private sponsorship.

### **Can we still sponsor Syrians now the regime has changed?**

**Answer:** For now, yes. We have been given little direction from IRCC about Syrian sponsorships. We know we can still submit applications for Syrians as long as they meet the definition of refugee (outside their country of origin, fleeing persecution, cannot stay in their country of asylum, and cannot return to their country of origin). We now need to provide stronger arguments as to why a particular applicant could not return to Syria, but so far this has not been an issue. Syria is still very volatile and lacking in basic infrastructure post-conflict. We have had one family choose to cancel their application and return to Syria, but otherwise everyone else waiting for resettlement remains on our list and we are continuing to submit applications for Syrians, but with a bit more scrutiny. It remains to be seen how long this arrangement will last.

**I heard that IRCC paused the refugee program. Does that affect us?**

**Answer:** The pause of the Group of Five and Community Sponsorship program does not impact us directly. We are seeing increased demand for private sponsorship because of it, but the Privately Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Program has not been paused or closed.

**What can we do as a parish/individual to advocate for the rights of refugees in this current political climate?**

**Answer:** Help spread positivity about refugees. Refugees, the vast majority of whom (like the ones we sponsor) arrive as Permanent Residents to Canada, often find work within a short period of time, and are eager to settle here and contribute to Canadian life. They are hard-working and come for a better future for their children. There *are* refugees who come to Canada irregularly. They are also deserving of our support and care. They are seeking shelter and safety the same way generations of people have even before Jesus' time. Jesus himself was a refugee, fleeing persecution from Herod.

You can find always write to your MP to remind them of our humanitarian responsibility to care for others. You can also visit Canadian Council for Refugees website to find out more about supporting refugees and newcomers in your community and challenging the myths many people hold about refugee resettlement. Canadian Council for Refugees: <https://ccrweb.ca/en>

**What can I do if my parish is interested in working with the Diocese to sponsor a refugee or refugee family? And are there ways we can help without taking on a whole sponsorship?**

**Answer:** Yes, there are many ways you and your parish can support refugee sponsorships! For more information, please contact Sarah Cooper, Refugee Sponsorship Coordinator, at [anglicanrefugees@nspeidiocese.ca](mailto:anglicanrefugees@nspeidiocese.ca) to discuss your options.

# Financial Management and Development (FMD) VSST Report

To Synod 2025

## Introduction

The mandate of the FMD VSST includes monitoring the Diocese's financial health, supporting Diocesan Council and VSSTs, and providing input into financial policies. This report covers the financial activity for the years 2023 and 2024, providing updates for Synod 2025.

Our context has shifted since the last report. While the pandemic's direct impact lessened, parishes faced varied financial recoveries. In addition, the Diocesan finance office gained stability with the hiring of a new Financial Controller and Accounting Assistant. This new context offered new opportunities for the FMD VSST to explore areas such as allotment reform, improved data analysis from parochial returns, sustainable budget development, and enhanced financial guidance for parishes.

## Diocesan Financial Health

The Diocese remains in a stable financial position with net assets of approximately \$30 million. Our total revenues are generally around \$2.2 million, with allotment revenue being the largest single source at \$1.6 million. Expenses were well-managed across key ministry and administration areas to remain within budget.

## Investment Performance

The Consolidated Trust Fund delivered strong performance over the past two years. Overseen by the Investment Liaison Task Group and managed by Jarislowsky Fraser (JF), the portfolio generated total returns of 16.6% in 2023 and 15.1% in 2024. The Task Group meets in person with JF twice yearly to review performance against objectives outlined in the Diocesan Investment Policy Statement.

These strong returns boosted the investment income distributed to support Diocesan operations. This income stream enabled the Diocese to achieve break-even financial results during a period of rising costs and stable allotment revenue.

Recognizing this positive performance, Diocesan Council approved an increase to the annual payout rate for 2025 distributions, raising it from 4.0% to 5.0% of the fund's market value. This decision aims to provide enhanced operational funding while remaining prudent and consistent with the long-term capital preservation goals of the Investment Policy.

## Parish Revenue Growth

Average parish revenue has increased by 7% to 9% since 2020. This steady growth reflects the resilience, faith, and generosity of our communities during a time of significant change. As pandemic restrictions lifted, parishioners gradually returned to worship and fellowship in person. Many parishes introduced or enhanced digital giving options—such as e-transfers and PAR—making it easier for members to give

regularly and conveniently. Many parishes initiated or expanded space rentals (for meetings, daycares, special events) that provided additional sources of revenue.

## **Update on Key Initiatives & Operations**

### Missional Allotment

Building on development work over recent years, the Missional Allotment system provides exemptions designed to recognize ministry costs and encourage missional outreach. To further support parishes, particularly smaller congregations and multi-point charges, two new options are available for the 2025 allotment calculation year:

1. **Small Parish Option:** Parishes reporting gross income from all sources of less than \$70,000 may choose to calculate their allotment simply as 15% of that gross income, providing an alternative to the detailed calculation above.
2. **Multi-Point Parish Mileage:** Multi-point parishes may elect a specific exemption for clergy travel costs. This exemption will be the *lesser* of \$1,000 or the parish's actual eligible clergy mileage expenses for the year. This option serves as an alternative to the standard calculation method for travel found in Canon 16.4(1)(h).

### Parochial Return Redesign

To ease the administrative burden on parishes, we revised the format of the parochial return to align its structure and data requirements with Canada Revenue Agency's T3010 Charity Return. Our goal was to enable parishes to prepare both reports more efficiently from their financial statements.

### Faithful Ventures Social Enterprise Workshops

The "Faithful Ventures" initiative, a six-workshop series on launching social enterprises hosted by the Parish of St. Luke's in Dartmouth, concluded successfully in March 2024. Supported by FMD, the series drew 20 participants eager to explore innovative community ministries.

The success of Faithful Ventures has also led to knowledge-sharing opportunities beyond our Diocese. An initial meeting with administrators from the Diocese of Sheffield in February 2024 generated interest in the program, leading to a further meetings to discuss our approach and what we learned.

### From Fiona to Inflation: Why Insurance Costs Are Rising

Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island have experienced a significant increase in the frequency and severity of extreme weather events that have increased the risk profile of properties in our region. In addition, inflation has driven up the cost of labour, materials, and equipment needed for rebuilding and repairs. Insurance companies have re-evaluated replacement cost estimates, which increases the values we must insure and, consequently, the premiums. Older and heritage buildings, like many of our churches, tend to be more expensive to repair and restore, further increasing premiums.

While many of these factors are beyond our control, understanding them allows us to better evaluate our insurance needs, risk management practices, and potential mitigation strategies.

### Funding Parish Environmental Action

Acknowledging the environmental impact of travel required for diocesan ministry (about 22 metric tonnes of CO2 emissions annually), we updated to the mileage claim form. This revision introduces a simple, optional way for individuals to contribute to positive environmental action within the Diocese.

Claimants have the option to donate a specified amount of their mileage reimbursement to the Diocesan Environmental Network (DEN). These funds will not be used for DEN's operations but will instead support parish-based environmental projects. DEN will prioritize funding initiatives with clear, measurable outcomes, allowing the impact of these donations to be tracked and shared. This creates a direct link between offsetting travel impacts and fostering tangible creation care in our local church settings.

### Parity Project: Addressing Clergy Compensation

In light of the challenges of recruiting and retaining clergy in our current economic environment, the Diocese is in the second year of its five-year Parity Project. This strategic initiative aims to achieve greater parity between our clergy compensation packages and those offered by similar dioceses and denominations.

The lengthy education and formation process for ordination represents a significant personal investment by our clergy. The Parity Project honours this investment and encourages future clergy by ensuring compensation is fair and sustainable. This commitment is essential for maintaining vibrant leadership across our diocese, though it requires careful financial management by both parishes and the Diocese over the project's term.

### **Emerging Financial Issues and Future Outlook**

The FMD has identified several key financial issues requiring attention and strategic thinking over the next two years:

#### Managing Reliance on Investment Returns

Strong investment performance was essential for balancing budgets in 2023 and 2024, especially with flat allotment revenue. This reliance is now our baseline, exposing us to financial risk should market returns decline. The recent decision to increase the annual payout rate to 5.0% further underscores this reliance. *A key challenge will be developing budgets that account for this volatility and ensure commitments can be met even in less favourable market conditions.*

#### Clergy Compensation and Housing Sustainability

The high cost of living and housing crisis in Nova Scotia significantly impacts our ability to attract, retain, and adequately support clergy. While the Diocese is now in the second year of its five-year Parity Project aimed at addressing compensation levels, *ongoing attention is needed to ensure stipends and housing allowances remain sufficient and sustainable for both clergy well-being and parish affordability.*

#### Adapting Stewardship to Changing Giving Patterns



The shift away from traditional pledging and fundraising models appears to be accelerating post-pandemic. *A key focus must be developing effective stewardship education and methods that align with current giving trends and engage diverse demographics in supporting ministry.*

#### Sustainable Funding for New Ministry Initiatives

The push towards missional activities (reflected in programs like Connectors, Vital Church Maritimes, and Engage) requires resources. As pilot projects demonstrate success, the question of their long-term, stable funding becomes critical. *We must explore sustainable funding models for new initiatives that do not unduly burden existing revenue streams.*

#### **Conclusion and Acknowledgements**

As we reflect on the past year's financial activity and oversight, I want to thank the many individuals who have contributed their time, expertise, and dedication to the financial health of our Diocese. I am deeply grateful to those who served the Finance Committee for their thoughtful guidance, diligence, and collaborative spirit throughout the year. Their commitment to good governance and stewardship has been instrumental in helping the Diocese navigate both opportunities and challenges:

Anthony Chapman, Team Lead	Rev. Matthew Sponagle	Rev. Andrew Mortimer
Rev. Arran Thorpe	Rev. Nicole Uzans	Derek Hounsell
Sarah Jane Rayne	Jack Marshall	Ted Johnson

I must also thank Tammy Cummins and Narisha Mohammed-Bejai for their day-to-day dedication, professionalism, and attention to detail. Their behind-the-scenes work ensures not only the smooth functioning of accounting department but also builds trust and accountability across the Diocese.

I also want to extend a sincere thank-you to all parish treasurers and wardens. Your efforts at the parish level are a vital part of our shared financial stewardship. I recognize and appreciate the countless hours you dedicate to budgeting, reporting, compliance, and communication within your parishes and regions.

Lawrence Roche, CPA, CA

Financial Controller

[FinancialController@nspeidiocese.ca](mailto:FinancialController@nspeidiocese.ca)

## **Diocesan Archives Report to Synod, May 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

Since the last Synod in 2023 the Diocesan Archives has remained focused on the processing and preservation of parish records deposited at the archives, including newly deposited records and previously accessioned materials from across the Diocese, cleaning, describing, rehousing, and entering each item into the Archives' database

### **Archivist and Archives Committee**

- Lorraine Slopek retired from her position as Diocesan Archivist in July 2023. Soren Himmelman was hired as the new Diocesan Archivist in June 2023, training with Lorraine Slopek for four weeks to familiarize himself with the operations of the Archives.
- Rev. Glen Kent resigned from his position as the Archives Committee Chair in September 2024 with Rev. Taunya Dawson being voted in as the new Chair of the Committee in February 2025.
- New members of the Archives Committee:
  - Following the resignations of Rev. Glen Kent and Rev. Tom Kerr, Archdeacon Tom Henderson and Glenn Taylor (St. Peter's, Birch Cove) were appointed to the Committee.

### **Regular Archives Work**

- Since the last Synod in 2023, the Archives has responded to approximately 280 requests from parishes, Diocesan staff, and researchers from outside the Diocese.

- The Archives has received approximately 25 linear meters of material from parishes, the Diocesan Offices and other groups within the Diocese.
- The Archives has also hosted 10 in-person visits from researchers, both from within and outside the Diocese.

### **Conferences**

- The Archivist attended the Anglican Diocesan Archivists Meeting virtually on November 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, held at Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, presenting a report of work done in the Archives as well as discussing some of the challenges facing Diocesan Archives across Canada.
- The Diocesan Archives were asked to speak at the Genealogical Association of Nova Scotia's annual conference on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024. This request was accepted, and the Archivist presented on the items we have in our collections that may be useful to genealogists and the processes for locating information in the records of the Anglican Church.
- The Archivist attended the annual Council of Nova Scotia Archives Conference on May 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, held in-person at the Nova Scotia Archives in Halifax. As part of this conference, the Diocesan Archives received an Emergency Kit containing supplies that may be used to assist in cleaning up in the event of a flood or other natural disaster that could pose a risk to the Archives' collections.

### **Special Projects**

- On June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, a letter was sent to Parish wardens, clergy, and treasurers requesting that copies of any documents relating to Parish properties be submitted to the Archives

with the intention of these records being digitized and stored in one location, ensuring that they are easily accessible in the future to Diocesan staff and Parish leadership. It was requested that these documents be sent in by September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. The Archivist was approved for 100 hours in addition to their regularly scheduled hours to assist in the completion of this project. Digitization of these documents, both those submitted by the Parishes, and those already in the records of the Archives and Registrar, is ongoing.

Diocesan Archives Committee:

Soren Himmelman, Diocesan Archivist

The Rev'd Taunya J. Dawson, Chair, Diocesan Archives Committee (Priest-In-Charge, Parish of Falkland)

Rosemary Barbour (Senior Archivist, Preservation Services, Nova Scotia Archives)

The Rev'd Tom Henderson, (Parish of Avon Valley)

Glenn Taylor (Parish of St. Peter's, Birch Cove)

## **The Diocesan Times Report for Diocesan Synod**

Submitted by The Rev. Matthew Sponagle

Chair, Diocesan Times Management Board

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### **I. Priorities**

- Reconvening the Diocesan Times Management Board.
  - Searching for a new editor and an interim editor following the retirement of Paul Sherwood.
  - Surveying readership and non-readers to better meet the communication needs of the diocesan church.
  - Providing ongoing coverage of news and stories from around the diocese.
  - Retaining existing contributors and encouraging new ones.
  - Increasing financial support through donor sponsorship.
  - Expanding revenue through increased advertising.
  - Creating a plan for electronic publishing should the Anglican Journal cease printing.
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### **II. Summary of Activities and Initiatives Since Synod 2023**

- Finance reports concerning arrears, expenses and revenues were not being received during period of finance office staff changes. This has now returned to operations as normal.
- Resignations of Board members led to decreased capacity for fulfilling our mandate.
- The Chair had previously announced intention to step down from the board, but agreed to assist the editor with succession planning as his retirement approached.
- Three new Board members were recruited over 2023 and into 2024, but attempts to arrange meetings were unsuccessful.
- A letter of resignation was received from the editor, announcing his departure after the December 2024 edition.
- With assistance from Synod office staff, meetings and reporting resumed in the autumn of 2024.
- Jennifer Anandanayagam agreed to serve as interim editor until the June 2025 edition, with Paul Sherwood subcontracted by Jennifer to provide support.



- Plans for the Diocesan Times website were put on hold following the leave of national church office staff.
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### **III. Plans for the Future**

- Conducting a survey to better understand how *The Diocesan Times* can effectively meet the communication needs of parishioners in our diocese. The survey is to be launched in the April 2025 edition of the Diocesan Times and sent out electronically via the NetNews for feedback from a larger response group. We hope to gather results over the Spring and release the results over the summer of 2025.
  - Continuing to monitor and participate in decisions made at the national level concerning *The Anglican Journal*.
  - Conducting a search for a new editor in the spring and summer, with the goal of appointing someone for the September 2025 edition.
  - Monitoring General Synod decisions regarding the future of the print edition of *The Anglican Journal* and assessing its impact on *The Diocesan Times*.
  - Updating plan for electronic publishing including revisiting financial impact of such a transition on readership, budget, advertising
  - Preparing the new editor for possible transition to electronic publishing should print edition of Anglican Journal cease.
  - Reviewing survey results to improve reader experience.
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### **IV. Additional Information for Synod Members**

- We are actively seeking new members for the Management Board to represent a diverse range of readers and regions within the diocese. Those with experience in publishing, journalism, advertising, social media, and writing would provide helpful input as board members. If interested, please reach contact the Rev. Matthew Sponagle [mattspon@hotmail.com](mailto:mattspon@hotmail.com), or our interim editor Jennifer Anandanayagam at [diocesantimes@gmail.com](mailto:diocesantimes@gmail.com).

## **Diocesan Licensed Lay Ministers Report to Synod**

Licensed Lay Ministers play a vital role in the spiritual life of our diocese. The office encompasses several lay ministries, including reading, serving, teaching, preaching, and leading. As stated in the *Handbook of Standards and Regulations*: “The office of Licensed Lay Minister is intended to be an opportunity for ministry in the Spirit in which an individual can respond to the call to be helpful in building up the Body of Christ. It must be recognized, however, that this ministry is more than solely liturgical. It may involve other areas such as pastoral care, Christian education, social action, and parish administration.” (*Handbook*, p. 1)

All Licensed Lay Ministers—both those in training and those fully licensed—are members of the Licensed Lay Ministers' Association. The Association supports its members through a biannual newsletter, *Diakonia*, and an annual conference that offers opportunities for continuing education.

The 2025 conference is scheduled for the weekend of September 26–28 at the Debert Hospitality Centre. Our annual meeting will take place at Holy Trinity/Emmanuel Church in Dartmouth on Saturday, June 7. Further details can be found on our website: <https://nspeilayministers.ca>

The Association is blessed with dedicated leadership. Barb Bergeron serves as President, Maxine Simpkin as Vice President, Sherryll Murphy as Secretary, and Joanne MacDonald as Treasurer. Each diocesan region is supported by an Area Representative. Past President David Harrison continues to serve as our webmaster.

The Board of Standards is currently engaged in revising the training syllabus to ensure it remains relevant and comprehensive.

This marks my final report to Synod as Warden of Licensed Lay Ministers. It has been both an honour and a joy to serve in this role over the past nineteen years. The laity are increasingly at the forefront of the Church's mission and future. May God richly bless all who serve in the Body of Christ.

**In faithful service,**

Archdeacon Thomas W. Henderson  
Warden, Diocesan Licensed Lay Ministers

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