



THE DIOCESAN SYNOD OF FREDERICTON

168 CHURCH STREET, FREDERICTON NB E3B 4C9

(506) 459 1801 [o] synod@anglican.nb.ca

Approved 26 February 2026

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DIOCESAN COUNCIL

29 November 2025

Camp Medley

Pre-meeting circulation

- Agenda
- Draft Minutes (27 September 2025)
- Christ Church Cathedral presentation report
- Officer and Committee Reports
 - Finance Committee Report
 - Anglican Foundation Canada Grant application
 - Treasurer's Report
 - October 2025, Comparative Income Statement
 - October 2025, Shared Ministry and Employment Assessment
 - PH&N October 2025, Performance Report
 - 2026 Diocesan Synod of Fredericton Budget
 - Human Resources Committee Report
 - Nominating Committee Report
 - Director of Mission and Ministry Report
 - Mission Activity – Lower West Saint John

Members Attending

David Bell, Harold Boomer, Michael Briggs, Terence Chandra, Perry Cooper, David Edwards, Trevor Fotheringham, Geoffrey Hall, Brent Ham, Margaret Holder, Bonnie Hunt, Cheryl Jacobs, Jim Knight, Gerald Laskey, Chase McLean, Laura McNulty, Robert Montgomery, Tony Munn (via Zoom), Neil Osiowy, Julian Pillay, Maria Shepherdson, Philip Shepherdson, Nancy Stephens, Caleb Twinamatsiko (morning session).

Member Regrets

Connor DeMerchant, Joanna DiProse and Leo Martin sent regrets. Peggy Boucher, John Matheson and Rob Marsh were absent.

Guests Attending

Shawn Branch (Director of Mission and Ministry), Gisele McKnight (Communications Officer), Richard Crowe (Lay Chair, Bishop and Chapter, Christ Church Cathedral), Heather Hughes and Debora Kantor (Hope House Maternity Home).

Welcome and Worship

1. David Edwards, diocesan bishop and chair, welcomed everyone and began the day at 10:00 am by acknowledging that the diocese conducts its activities on the traditional and unceded territory of the Wabanaki people, which includes the Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik, and Peskotomuhkati nations, giving thanks for the land itself, for our Indigenous siblings, and for the opportunity to gather as we seek God's guidance for the work before us..

Archbishop David then presided over a Eucharist service with assistance from Rob Montgomery who led the music, Harold Boomer reading the gospel lesson, Maria Shepherdson leading the intercessions and Neil Osiowy with the administration of the chalice. He spoke on the passage of the day, Luke 21:34-36, and our need to be alert.

Call to Order

2. The chair, called the business meeting to order at 10:45 am.
3. Regrets were noted from Connor DeMerchant, Joanna DiProse and Leo Martin.
4. The chair welcomed Maria Shepherdson, the new Archdeacon of Woodstock. The chair also announced that Donna Beek would begin as bishop's secretary on Monday, December 1.

Approval of the Agenda

5. The chair asked for approval of the agenda.

MOTION 1: C Jacobs / H Boomer

That Diocesan Council approve the agenda as presented.

Carried.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

6. The chair asked if there were any changes required to the minutes of the last Diocesan Council meeting (27 September 2025). There being no required changes, he asked for a motion to approve.

MOTION 2: C Jacobs / G Laskey

That Diocesan Council approve the minutes of the last meeting, September 27, 2025.

Carried.

Correspondence

7. During his report later in the meeting, Philip Shepherdson noted that confirmation had been received from the Anglican Foundation of Canada that Threshold Ministries was being awarded a grant of \$15,000. Synod had forwarded their application within our annual quota.

Business Arising

8. Synod Commons: Cheryl Jacobs noted that the Synod Commons had gotten off to a good start this Fall with a fair attendance in October and November. Director of Mission and Ministry Shawn Branch will speak with Cleo Cyr on December 2 about parish outreach initiatives. The Commons will continue in the new year twice a month (1st and 3rd Tuesdays, starting January 20 with the schedule of topics still to be announced.
9. Diocese of Ho School project: Cheryl Jacobs indicated the synod office is ready to accept donations towards this project. Laura McNulty noted that her parish had determined to move their fundraising efforts previously allocated to the Mejia Honduras ministry to the Ho project and challenged other parishes to do likewise.
10. Camp Medley pool update: Cheryl also updated the membership that the contract with Goguen architecture for the pool design phase had been signed and work has started.

New Business

11. Date of Diocesan Synod session: Secretary Cheryl Jacobs proposed a date for the next regular session of Diocesan Synod, which would make it approximately two years from the previous session.

MOTION 3: C Jacobs / P Shepherdson

That Diocesan Council set the date of Diocesan Synod as November 7, 2026.

Carried.

12. **Director of Mission and Ministry Report.** As the meeting was ahead of the scheduled time for the next presentation, Shawn Branch was moved up in the agenda. He spoke to his report, particularly noting that the recent discernment weekend hosted by both this and the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island went well.

Shawn also referenced the interim report of the Rev. Rick Cunningham who is a bi-vocational deacon currently researching the needs of the lower west side of Saint John. This research is in the early stages. Noting there is very little Christian presence in this part of Saint John, Rick is trying to cultivate relationships and explore cautious church planting. Shawn highlighted that there is a lack of city transit to that area. Archbishop David noted that Stats Canada has reported high poverty levels in this area and that there is no supermarket. Various members offered ideas for helping the people there but Shawn noted that it is important not to rush on with solutions but to think more long-term.

13. Hope House Maternity Home Presentation. Gerry Laskey introduced Heather Hughes and Debora Kantor who had been invited to share an initiative of the NB Right to Life Association. They introduced the campaign for establishing Hope House, a Christian-based residential facility for six to ten expectant mothers who have no other support or safe place to live. Campaign materials were distributed and are attached here as appendices. Some questions followed.

Lunch

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 for lunch provided by Director of Camp Medley John Galbraith. The meeting resumed at 12:40 pm.

14. Christ Church Cathedral Presentation

Archbishop David read his preamble to the Christ Church Cathedral report. He ended with the suggestion that there be a special synod session after Easter to discuss this one topic.

As chair, Archbishop David welcomed Richard Crowe, Lay Chair of the Cathedral Chapter, to the meeting and opened the topic for discussion. The following is a synopsis of the discussion:

- What is the likelihood that the Fredericton Cathedral Foundation can raise the funds required? If the Foundation finds itself unable to raise the funds, the Cathedral property devolves back to bishop's ownership. If this approach is approved, the first item for the Foundation will be to select a fundraiser and ask them to read the market again - providing a decision point.
- Given the escalating building costs, has a contingency amount been included. Yes, but further, 52% of the estimate is for masonry work and that is difficult to estimate as well as it being a challenge to find skilled labour these days, and masonry materials pricing is not as likely to escalate as for other materials.
- Where does the section of the property that sits between the river and Queen St. fit into this? Noting that once it had been used for the bishop of the day to moor a boat, could it be used for mooring houseboats? The City has indicated they would purchase that section, offering in the range of \$200,000. Richard noted that the Foundation has no appetite for portioning off and selling that section and would want to leave the property intact in the case of the Foundation dissolving.
- Could more be done on the portion of the property on which the Cathedral sits? Options have been explored but the City seems hesitant to allow other development there.
- Is there yet a sense of what other types of uses of the Cathedral might occur once owned by the Foundation? It is expected that there would primarily be arts-related or event space rentals. The Foundation does not want to make assumptions and will talk to the community. They do want to avoid competition with other venues nearby. It is not expected the rental uses would cover the cost of maintaining the building, so in addition to raising funds for the repairs, an endowment fund would need to be established to provide for its long-term maintenance.
- Would the Synod have some control of the types of uses? The rules for type of event would be written into the occupancy agreement.
- Does the building remain a cathedral? Would the cathedra stay there? This is the

current plan and the building would be accessible when needed by the congregation and bishop.

- Have other cathedral churches done this? Not in Canada, though there are examples of other churches who have done something similar. There are also a couple of examples where a cathedral has been saved through development around the building, however, the City is not interested in the development of any high-rise buildings at that end of the city. Archbishop David noted he had been given advice that there should be an alternate place for the congregation to meet outside of worship times.
- Will the interior of the Cathedral be changed? That is a question for down the road.
- Did the \$6 million figure (the amount likely to be raised just from Anglicans in the diocese) include a grant from the Synod? Unsure, but if the project went that route, the synod would need to become financially involved.

The chair then asked members to break into small groups to further discuss the question of a special synod session on this issue. Following that discussion, most agreed with taking this question to a special session. There were some further comments and questions from members:

- There was more discussion around the possibility of the Foundation not being given the section on the river side of Queen Street.
- It was noted that a resolution at the 139th Synod session impelled the Council to keep the whole diocese informed. The archbishop noted that there would be Greater Chapters held in advance of the special synod session, and that he would suggest these be open to all Anglicans.
- It was asked why a special synod session was necessary when the Foundation route seems the only viable option. The archbishop suggested there might still be another option not yet thought of, but also, the status quo is still an option.
- What is the asset (Cathedral and property) worth? Richard Crowe commented that most would see it as a liability because of the cost to repair or demolish the building.
- There was some discussion on whether the importance of the Cathedral, as the “Mother Church” of the diocese, had been lost. This was followed by some comments as to whether it ever had that importance in this diocese which tends toward congregationalism. This led to further discussion on whether the cathedra could be moved elsewhere either permanently or on a rotating basis.
- Should Council make a recommendation to this special synod to focus the issue? What happens, however, if Synod members say no to the one recommendation?
- Should the special synod be held sooner? It is unlikely that Synod staff could make this happen before Lent. This is an important process, and members deserve properly

organized meetings.

- Are there unencumbered funds in the DCIF and potential for parish contributions? Not to the extent required.
- Could the repairs be phased? Yes, to some extent, but a large portion of the cost is that of the staging to complete the work, so the current estimate assumes it is only put up once.

It was agreed that a special session of Diocesan Synod would be called after Easter, with open Greater Chapters open to all Anglicans to take place in advance in each archdeaconry. The Secretary will consider these questions and comments in the preparation for the Greater Chapters and synod session.

Reports

15. The chair asked for a motion to receive all reports as circulated.

MOTION 4: T Fotheringham / B Hunt

That Diocesan Council receive all reports as presented.

Carried.

16. **Finance Committee Report.** Jim Knight, Chair of the Finance Committee, provided a synopsis of the committee report.
17. Anglican Foundation of Canada grant application: Jim reported that the Finance Committee recommends a grant application to the Anglican Foundation of Canada be made on behalf of Camp Brookwood for \$15,000 for infrastructure upgrades and he moved this for approval by Council. Gerry Laskey asked for clarification that the \$15,000 grant listed for Camp Brookwood in the proposed budget is in addition to the AFC request, and this was confirmed as true.

MOTION 5: J Knight / D Bell

That the Diocesan Council approve a grant application to the Anglican Foundation of Canada by Camp Brookwood (\$15,000).

Carried.

18. **Treasurer's Reports.** Philip Shepherdson presented the highlights of his report along with the October statements included in the package. Philip is anticipating a year end position better than budget and hoping to break even (compared to a budget deficit of \$217k) due to stronger investment returns.
19. The treasurer presented the 2026 Shared Ministry Budget, outlining the major changes from the previous budget, and asked for its approval. In his explanations, Philip noted that just under one third of diocesan revenue comes from parishes, while investment income makes up the rest. Parish assessments were issued about a month before and there had only been two requests for shared ministry relief to that point. The DCIF includes reasonably healthy unrealized capital gains which provide some protection for

market losses. The budget projects a deficit, but Philip is confident further increased investment returns will help to reduce the deficit. Philip also briefly highlighted the premium increases in the Medavie/Blue Cross program as listed in his report.

MOTION 6: P Shepherdson / C McLean

That Diocesan Council approve the Diocesan Synod of Fredericton Budget for 2026 as presented

Carried.

20. **Human Resources Committee Report.** Michael Briggs, chair of the Human Resources Committee, commended his report to members.
21. **Nominating Committee Report.** Trevor Fotheringham, chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that a cleric's seat on the Council Executive Committee had become vacant with the retirement of the Rev. David Peer. The only nomination/volunteer was the Ven. Maria Shepherdson, who was then appointed by acclamation.

Rolling Meeting Schedule

22. The date of the next meeting was discussed in terms of avoiding the national executive officers conference, yet to be scheduled, and holding it prior to the planned Greater Chapter meetings. [Post meeting update: The conference has been scheduled for early March, and the Greater Chapters will be during the following weeks in March, so it is proposed that the next meeting of Diocesan Council be held February 26.]

2026 Thursday, February 26, 7pm–9pm (virtual) Saturday, May 30, 10am–3pm (in person) Saturday, September 26, 10am–3pm (in person) Friday, November 27- Saturday November 28, (in person, overnight retreat)
--

Adjournment

23. David Edwards asked for a motion to adjourn at approximately 3:00 pm.

MOTION 7: M Briggs

That Diocesan Council adjourn this meeting.

24. After adjourning Archbishop David led the members of Diocesan Council in prayer and the Grace.

Respectfully submitted,

The Most Rev David Edwards
Archbishop and Chair

Cheryl Jacobs
Secretary of Synod