



THE DIOCESAN SYNOD OF FREDERICTON

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Approved 30 May 2026

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DIOCESAN COUNCIL

26 February 2026

Videoconference

Pre-meeting circulation

- Agenda
- Draft Minutes (29 November 2025)
- Officer and Committee Reports
 - Finance Committee Report
 - Treasurer's Report
 - December 2025 and January 2026 Comparative Income Statements
 - December 2025 and January 2026 Shared Ministry and Employment Assessments
 - December 2025 and January 2026 PH&N Performance Reports
 - Constitutions and Canons: Introduction to proposed amendments and enactment:
 - Regulation 4-4 Safe Church
 - Policy B-3 Misconduct
 - Policy B-6 Police Record Check
 - Policy B-4 Privacy
 - Human Resources Committee Report
 - Director of Mission and Ministry Report

Members Attending

David Bell, Harold Boomer, Michael Briggs, Terence Chandra, Perry Cooper, Connor DeMerchant, Joanna DiProse, David Edwards, Trevor Fotheringham, Geoffrey Hall, Brent Ham, Bonnie Hunt, Cheryl Jacobs, Jim Knight, Gerald Laskey, Leo Martin, John Matheson, Rob Marsh, Chase McLean, Laura McNulty, Robert Montgomery, Tony Munn, Neil Osiowy, Julian Pillay, Maria Shepherdson, Philip Shepherdson, Nancy Stephens, Caleb Twinamatsiko.

Member Regrets

Margaret Holder sent regrets. Peggy Boucher was absent.

Guests Attending

Shawn Branch (Director of Mission and Ministry), Gisele McKnight (Communications Officer).

Welcome and Worship

1. David Edwards, diocesan bishop and chair, welcomed everyone and began the meeting at 7:00 pm 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 an Evening Prayer service with assistance from Laura McNulty providing responses, Harold Boomer reading the lesson, and Michael Briggs leading the intercessions.

Call to Order

2. Regrets were noted from Margaret Holder.

Approval of the Agenda

3. The chair asked for approval of the agenda.

MOTION 1: C Jacobs / T Munn

That Diocesan Council approve the agenda as presented.

Carried.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

4. The chair received no responses regarding changes to the minutes of the last Diocesan Council meeting (29 November 2025).

MOTION 2: C Jacobs / C McLean

That Diocesan Council approve the minutes of the 29 November 2025 meeting.

Carried.

Correspondence

5. None.

Business Arising

6. At the last meeting, Council approved an application to the Anglican Foundation of Canada for a \$15,000 grant for infrastructure work at Camp Brookwood. The Treasurer received word that Camp Brookwood was awarded \$12,000.
7. Secretary of Synod Cheryl Jacobs reported that plans for the April 18 special synod session and the corresponding open Greater Chapter meetings in March are well underway. All members of Council were encouraged to attend their archdeaconry Greater Chapter meeting.
8. Synod Commons: Cheryl also noted that the March 3 Synod Commons will feature representatives from the Canadian Bible Society who wish to first, acknowledge the support of the synod and some specific parishes; and also update us on their initiatives

in the province and Maritimes. Council members are encouraged to join in and spread the word.

New Business

9. None.

Reports

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

MOTION 3: P Shepherdson / H Boomer

That Diocesan Council receive all reports as presented.

Carried.

11. **Finance Committee Report.** Jim Knight, Chair of the Finance Committee, offered his report, indicating there was not much further to comment on. There were no questions.
12. **Treasurer's Reports.** Philip Shepherdson presented the highlights of his report along with the December and January statements included in the package. He is expecting the synod to be in significantly positive territory in the 2025 financial report, after receiving \$2 million in dividends and income rather than the expected \$1 million in December. He also noted the DCIF portfolio is very healthy in terms of unrealized gains, and as a result, parishes were given a 1.5% bonus at the end of 2025. The review of the 2025 finances is expected to take place in late March or early April and Philip is hoping to have the 2025 results for Council to approve at the end of May.
13. Actual results for 2026 are tracking ahead of our budget but some of this is a result of delayed expenses. Parish assessments and employment assessments are broadly in line. It usually takes a month or two for the shortfalls to settle down, primarily due to timing of receiving cheques. The synod has received some of the payments for 2025 arrears with respect to the Parish of the Six Saints assessment realignment after their amalgamation. After the question was asked, Philip also noted that the lines for the former parishes forming the Six Saints will be consolidated in the next report.
14. **Constitution and Canons.** Chancellor David Bell presented his introductory document regarding proposed amendments to and enactment of legislation pertaining to Safe Church. He noted he was bringing a number of motions, the most important of which are the motions to bring into force the regulation and misconduct policy that were already approved. Prior to presenting those motions he presented some minor amendments to the regulation and misconduct policy.
15. **Amendments to Regulation 4-4 Safe Church:** The chancellor noted there are two additions: in section 2.2, the "16 years of age and older" clause per the case brought to the previous meeting of young teenagers who get employed by a parish in the summer or otherwise (also noting that those employed as contractors are not required to take the training), and in section 8.1, the previously omitted "the Cathedral Bishop and

Chapter”. David then referred to the crossed-out content, including definitions now reflected in associated policies and references to policies not yet ready.

Much discussion followed regarding the “16 years of age and older” clause. Typically, all camp staff, some of which are under 16, undertake Safe Church training, but it has often been reported that the younger staff did not understand it, so something else is required. It was noted that the provincial law allows children as young as 14 to take summer jobs with their parents’ permission, and that no one under 16 can be asked for a criminal record check. It was also noted that summer work grants do not allow for youth under 15 to be employed. With the approval of the mover and seconder a friendly amendment was made to remove the “16 years of age and older” clause, and synod staff will be asked to develop training specific to young camp counsellors.

MOTION 4: D Bell / C Jacobs

That the proposed amendments to the revised Safe Church Regulation (Regulation 4-4), other than the proposed amendment to section 2.2, be approved.

Carried.

16. Amendments to Policy B-3 Misconduct

David Bell noted that this policy had been approved by the Council last year after looking at it three times. The only additional minor change is to bring the definition of volunteer to be in line with the Safe Church regulation.

Gerry Laskey requested that the chancellor again enlighten the Council regarding the burden of proof of “clear and convincing evidence” as used in section 4(5). The chancellor explained that this is an intermediate level of proof between the civil and the criminal burdens, that a person might be found guilty not merely on a 51% basis, but not as strong as “beyond a reasonable doubt”. He also noted that this terminology is used by the General Synod in Canada and in The Episcopal Church.

MOTION 5: D Bell / C Jacobs

That the proposed amendments to the revised Misconduct Policy (Policy B-3) be approved.

Carried.

17. Enactment of Regulation 4-4 and Policy B-3

Chancellor Bell indicated that Ben Bourque, Diocesan Safe Church Officer, advises that he will be ready to launch revised training modules reflecting the amended regulation and misconduct policy by the end of May. He also noted that should this prove optimistic or be overtaken by unforeseen circumstances, the Council’s May meeting would have the option of changing the coming-into-force date.

MOTION 6: D Bell / C Jacobs

That the revised Safe Church Regulation (Regulation 4-4) replace Part 1: Diocesan Safe Church Regulation and come into force on 1 June 2026.

Carried.

MOTION 7: D Bell / C Jacobs

That the revised Misconduct Policy (Policy B-3) come into force on 1 June 2026.

Carried.

18. Amendment to Policy B-6 Police Record Check

Cheryl Jacobs summarized the proposed changes: the policy name would be changed to **Criminal** Record Check to align with the more widely used term now; definitions have been added in line with other policies; the renewal requirement has been changed from three years to five years; and, the policy now seeks to differentiate between (1) those required to have a Vulnerable Sector Check (a check by police for a criminal record, as well as any pardon for sexual offences), that is, clergy, lay staff and those in volunteer positions likely to have authority over, or work with, vulnerable persons, and (2) leaving the decision with parishes whether to request a regular criminal record check for parish volunteers (for example, the parish treasurer). She noted that if Council approves the amendments, the proposed changes become effective immediately.

There was discussion on the renewal time frame. Rob Montgomery commented it feels like we are being less strict while acknowledging that checks are out of date as soon as they are completed. Julian Pillay and Nancy Stephens asked about what effect enacting this change does for current check report renewals. Cheryl suggested that if current check reports had not hit the three-year date, they would now be good for a further two years. Mike Briggs noted that schoolteachers only need to get a check done once, and Archbishop David noted that existing teachers were grandfathered in when checks became required and thus, such a teacher may have never had one done.

There was also a discussion on section 7. Maria Shepherdson and Gerry Laskey asked what grounds constitute a pardon, in particular, does it include one who has done their prison time and are pardons granted in the case of sexual offences with minors. David Edwards noted he had helped parishioners get pardons but was not aware of what the limits are. Harold Boomer noted he has experience with people getting pardons through work, and he believes there are only certain crimes that one can get a pardon for, such as DUI, speeding, hunting out of season; that is, minor things that would allow a person to get bonded for work. The chancellor noted he could not answer the questions regarding pardons. There was the suggestion to remove section 7. Cheryl noted that main point of section 7 is to be able to refuse a cleric or layperson from service if they have a criminal record, and so it should not be removed, but perhaps the pardon clause could be removed from that section.

With the approval of the mover and seconder the motion was changed to add the additional amendment of removing the “for which a pardon has not been granted” clause in section 7. The Secretary offered to get a legal opinion on whether the clause needs to be there and was asked to provide the Council with more information on pardons at the next meeting.

MOTION 8: D Bell / C Jacobs

That the Police Record Check Policy (Policy B-6) be approved per the proposed amendments and, additionally, to remove the pardon clause from section 7.

Carried.

19. Amendment to Policy B-4 Privacy

Cheryl Jacobs summarized the proposed changes: a definition for “Anglican Corporations” has been added for use rather than repeatedly listing all the variations; the former Appendix 2, Persons Authorized to Receive Personal Information, has been incorporated into the main body as section 20; and, the only pertinent part of the former Appendix 3, Archives Records Access Requirements, has been incorporated into the main body as section 21, that is, access to archived parish registers would be subject to the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick privacy policy, rather than trying to define that policy in this one. She noted that if Council approves the amendments, the proposed changes become effective immediately. Cheryl also gave a brief description of the Anglican Registers Project online access to digitized vestry book records.

There was discussion on avoiding people, especially children, randomly being in photos or video recordings. It is a good policy to have parents complete annual waivers for children and ensure that any children or other adults that do not wish to be photographed or in a video are not. Mike Briggs noted that when dealing with school children, the school will have a waiver policy. Maria Shepherdson noted that in the case of those fleeing relationships of intimate partner abuse, the church photographer knows who might be in this situation. During distribution of communion, the videographer switches to another part of the space and not on the communion rail.

MOTION 9: D Bell / C Jacobs

That the Privacy Policy (Policy B-4) be approved as amended.

Carried

20. **Human Resources Committee Report.** Michael Briggs, chair of the Human Resources Committee, offered to answer any questions, but there were none.
21. **Director of Mission and Ministry Report.** Shawn Branch asked if there were questions on his report, but there were none.
22. **Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser.** Cheryl reminded all about this walk taking place on Saturday to raise funds for local charities involved in solving hunger and homelessness

and encouraged all to support a local team if so led. Gerry Laskey noted that their local group did not get organized this and last year for the Miramichi walk.

23. Gerry Laskey asked about informational material in advance of the Greater Chapter meetings. Archbishop David and Cheryl noted that a paper he has written has just been published on the session webpage.

Meeting Schedule

24. Archbishop David noted the that the date of the next meeting is May 30 at Camp Medley.

2026
Saturday, May 30, 10am–3pm (in person, Camp Medley)
Saturday, September 26, 10am–3pm (in person)
Friday, November 27- Saturday November 28, (in person, overnight, Villa Madonna)

Adjournment

25. David Edwards asked for a motion to adjourn at approximately 8:40 pm.

MOTION 10: R Marsh

That Diocesan Council adjourn this meeting.

26. After adjourning Archbishop David led the members of Diocesan Council in prayer and the Grace and then thanked all for their participation.

Respectfully submitted,

The Most Rev David Edwards
Archbishop and Chair

Cheryl Jacobs
Secretary of Synod