

DIOCESE OF ONTARIO

SYNOD COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting Held on

Tuesday February 24, 2026

At St. Paul's Anglican Church and vis TEAMS

PRESENT: Bishop William Cliff, Chair; Ven. Jane Humphreys, DEO; Very Rev Douglas Michael, Dean; Bill Clarke, Helen Cluett, Laurie Dempsey, Sharon Dunlop, Sue Orgill, Bram Pearce, Michael Read, Cathy Seymour, Anne Striker, Susan Withers, Brad Beale, Don Aitchison, Michael Read, Joyce Williams

REGRETS: Rebecca Michael, Margaret Johnston Jones, Matthew Wright, Alec Pierson, Jon Lavelle, Angela Kelman, Brad O'Neil

1. **Call to Order** by Bishop Cliff at 6:00 pm

2. Opening Devotions

Bill Clarke

February 22 was scouting's World Thinking Day. AD Clarke shared Baden Powell's reflections on leading prayer services.

3. Agenda Review and Adoption

The Agenda was accepted as presented.

4. Chair's Remarks

Bishop Cliff

The Bishop spoke about the many shifts in the office and how well staff are coping.

The Diocese will be making Microsoft 365 Exchange email accounts available to parishes. It will improve security and communication. The cost is \$5 per account per month. It will be rolling out in the next few months.

The Bishop has been out and about, most recently St Mary Magdalene in Napanee.

The Bishop will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of his consecration on March 1 at St. George's Cathedral.

He will be in Toronto next week to work on the Pension Fund.

5. Approval of the Minutes of January 27, 2026

Motion: by Sue Orgill and Sue Withers be it Resolved that the minutes of January 27, 2026 be received as presented.

CARRIED

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

Jane Humphreys

6.1 The Bishop appoints Archdeacon Bill Clarke as Diocesan representative to Alongside Hope.

7. Financial Report

Joyce Williams

Acting Financial Officer Joyce Williams reported that the audit is going well. The office is getting caught up on “green sheets” and going through an inventory of what parishes need and when. Bishop Cliff thanked Joyce and Laura for their work keeping things together.

8. Property Report

Jane Humphreys

Archdeacon Humphreys reported on the status of several cemeteries, indicating that she has established a good working relationship with the new BAO Registrar. The cemetery at St. John’s Waupoos is ready for transfer. St. Paul’s, Sandhurst has a memorandum of understanding that town will look after cemetery while congregation continues to worship. St. Alban’s Adolphustown wanted survey to sever property; BAO has now allowed the survey to go ahead. Lords Mills church is being demolished; people have come forward to form a cemetery board to administer the cemetery.

9. New Business

9.1 St. Paul’s Brockville/Anglican Foundation

Jane Humphreys

St. Paul’s conducted a strategic plan in 2024-25 resulting in new vision, mission and 3 parish priorities: growing our faith and spiritually, building relationships and partnerships with the wider community, strengthening our financial base. The “Welcoming our Neighbours” initiative looks to provide accessible washrooms in Phase 1 and an upgraded accessibility ramp in Phase 2.

MOTION: by Bram Pearce and Laurie Dempsey, be it resolved that this Synod Council supports the request of St. Paul’s Brockville to apply for an Anglican Foundation Category B grant in the amount of \$15,000 to renovate current washrooms to complete Phase 1 of their “Welcoming Our Neighbours” project.

CARRIED

10. Faith and Formation (Report attached)

Bram Pierce

Bram Pierce is the recently appointed Director of Faith Formation. Making his first report to Council, Bram talked about evangelism noting if we want to survive, we must take practice of evangelism seriously. A lot of us find it difficult to do evangelism. It is the practice of bearing witness to the good news of God in Christ. It is not coercion, argument or recruitment; it is experience of faith, hospitality and relationship. Bram is building an online and physical library of resources and engaging clergy and parishes through conversation, clericus meetings, parish visits and workshop.

11. Diocesan Ministries

Jane Humphreys

11.1 DOORS: Currently is prepping sponsor profiles for new refugees. We don't know yet the number of available confirmed spaces for this year. Of concern is the situation in Pakistan and Cuba. Coordinator Mimi Merrill will be attending a forum which is seeking to shift current public opinion about refugees to something more favourable.

11.2 Green Group: Archdeacon Jane will be the link to this group, which is looking for new members. The annual conference will be held in the fall of 2026. The priorities for this year are privatization of water, the energy demands of AI technology and the amalgamation of the conservation authorities.

12. Other Business:

The Bishop looking for 2 individuals to appoint to Council (replacing Tony Ashworth and Marilyn Benn) and would appreciate suggestions.

13. Online Meeting Evaluation

Please take a minute to complete the form; it does help with planning these meetings.

14. Adjournment on motion of Sue Orgill @ 6:57 p.m.

Next Meeting: April 28, 6:00 p.m. @ Christ Church, Kingston, 990 Sydenham Road

William Cliff, Chair

Jane Kirkpatrick, Lay Secretary