

2024 DIOCESAN SYNOD COUNCIL

Regional Representatives

- Canon Patricia Davis Brock
- The Reverend Jody Szöke Brock
- The Reverend Deacon Rod McDowell (*alternate*) Brock
- Mrs. Anne Gould Greater Wellington
- Dr. Thomas Littlewood Greater Wellington
- The Reverend Canon Paul Walker (*alternate*) Greater Wellington
- Ms. Bev Groombridge Hamilton-Haldimand
- Mrs. Susan Little Hamilton-Haldimand
- Mr. Neil Bell (*alternate*) Hamilton-Haldimand
- Mr. Byron Nicolson Lincoln
- The Reverend Rob Towler Lincoln
- Mrs. Jodey Porter (*alternate*) Lincoln
- Ms. Amy Collard Trafalgar
- Mr. Winston Tinglin Trafalgar
- The Reverend Deacon Janice Whiteley (*alternate*) Trafalgar

Regional Archdeacons

- The Venerable Terry Holub Brock
- The Venerable Peter Scott Greater Wellington
- The Venerable Terry DeForest Hamilton-Haldimand
- The Venerable Sheila Van Zandwyk Lincoln
- The Venerable Jeff Ward Trafalgar

Financial Advisory Committee

- The Reverend Dr. Eleanor Clitheroe

Canterbury Hills

- Ms. Sharon White

Episcopal Appointees

- Canon Terry Charters
- Ms. Gillian Hendry
- Ms. Darrah Smith
- The Reverend Monica Romig Green

Officers

- The Right Reverend Dr. Susan Bell, Diocesan Bishop
- Canon Greg Tweney, Chancellor
- Ms. Kemi Okwelum, Treasurer & Director of Finance (*through January 28*)
- Canon Joanna (Jody) Beck, Interim Treasurer (*from January 29 through June 23*)
- Ms. Christine Morrow, Treasurer & Director of Finance (*from June 24*)
- The Venerable William (Bill) Mous, Executive Officer & Secretary of Synod
- The Very Reverend Dr. Tim Dobbin, Rector of Christ's Church Cathedral & Dean of Niagara

REPORT OF THE DIOCESAN SYNOD COUNCIL

This report summarizes the actions of Synod Council from November of 2023 through October of 2024. The requirement for at least six meetings to be held, as set out in Canon 1.9 (9), was met with eight (8) meetings duly convened during this period.

Election and Appointments

- Appointed the following as signing officers: the Right Reverend Dr. Susan Bell, diocesan bishop; the Venerable Bill Mous, executive officer and secretary of synod; Ms. Kemi Okwelum, treasurer and director of finance; and Ms. Jane Wyse, executive assistant to the bishop.
- Approved the election of the following directors to serve on the board of 2498317 Ontario Inc, the corporation established to oversee diocesan development projects, for the year 2024 or until their successors are duly elected: the Right Reverend Dr. Susan Bell, Ms. Kemi Okwelum, the Venerable Bill Mous, and Canon Terry Charters.
- Oversaw the appointment of a new diocesan treasurer, including:
 - Appointing Canon Jody Beck, as interim treasurer, effective January 29, 2024.
 - Designating Canon Jody Beck to be added as a signing officer, replacing Ms. Kemi Okwelum, effective January 29, for those purposes outlined in Canon 1.9(7).
 - Appointing Ms. Christine Morrow, as Treasurer and Director of Finance of The Synod of the Diocese of Niagara, effective June 24, 2024.
 - Designating Ms. Christine Morrow to be added as a signing officer, replacing Canon Jody Beck, effective June 24, 2024, for those purposes outlined in Canon 1.9(7).
- Elected Dr. Thomas Littlewood, Canon Patricia Davis, Mr. Winston Tinglin and the Reverend Rob Towler to the Synod Council Coordinating Team.
- Elected the Reverend David Montgomery to the Financial Advisory Committee, for a two-year term.
- Elected the Reverend Rob Duncan to the Investment Advisory Committee, for a two-year term.
- Elected Ms. Ann Harvey Hope and Ms. Kelly Twerdy to the Audit Committee, for a two-year term.
- Appointed Canon Terry Charters, as a diocesan representative, to the Cathedral Place Property Management Committee, for a two-year term.
- Elected the Reverend Rob Towler, Mrs. Susan Little, the Venerable Jeff Ward to the Synod Council Nominations Committee, for a one-year term.
- Appointed Mr. Winston Tinglin, the Venerable Peter Scott, the Reverend Dr. Eleanor Clitheroe and Mrs. Anne Gould to the Missional Budget Planning Committee, for a one-year term.
- Acting as the General Membership of the Anglican Church Ministries Foundation, Niagara:
 - Elected Mr. Tony Denning and the Reverend Cheryl Barker to the foundation's Board of Directors, for a three-year term.
 - Elected Mr. Tony Denning to the office of president and Mrs. Jodey Porter to the office of vice president of the foundation, to serve until the next annual general meeting.

Policy Matters

- Approved the updated terms of reference for the Audit Committee, effective December 12, 2023.
- Approved the updated regulations for holding vestry meetings, entitled "Vestry Meeting Regulations During a Time of Pandemic."
- Approved the procedures and regulations proposed by the Nominations Committee for the election of delegates to General Synod 2025.
- Approved the revisions to the Diocese of Niagara Safe Church Policy, effective October 15, 2024.

Parish Matters

- Granted approval for the incumbent and churchwardens of St. Paul's, Westdale to enter into a 10-year agreement with Sun Seeds Early Learning Centre Ltd. for the use of the parish's main hall, Murray Creal Hall, and main kitchen, with the option for three five-year renewals, to operate a licensed daycare.
- Authorized the Church of the Ascension, Hamilton to hold its annual vestry meeting not later than March 3, 2024.
- Approved the amended constitution of All Saints Lutheran Anglican Church, Guelph.
- Approved the proposed five-year license agreement between St. James, Dundas and St. James Co-op Nursery School for the use of the church's lower-level main space.

Property Matters

- Approved a four-year license agreement between St. James and St. Brendan's, Port Colborne, the Synod of the Diocese of Niagara, and the City of Port Colborne for the use of a portion of the Guild Hall and Parkette property.
- Approved the amended and restated lease agreement for the use of diocesan property by Canterbury Hills Conference Centre.
- Approved an assignment agreement with Canterbury Hills Conference Centre for its rights pertaining to the use of Hamilton Conservation Authority property.
- Authorized the bishop and the executive officer and secretary of synod to grant consent to Canterbury Hills Conference Centre to sublease its camp property to Adventureworks! Associates Inc.
- Approved the parish of St. John's, Burlington entering into an agreement for a permanent easement on its property located at 2464 Dundas Street West, in favour of the Region of Halton for the purposes of for the construction of a culvert as part of a road-widening project.
- Approved the parish of St. Andrew's, Grimsby to submit a rezoning application for 152 Main Street, Grimsby to be designated institutional land to accommodate the expansion of the Grimsby Co-Operative Preschool.

Financial Matters

- Approved the Canon 2.10 regulations, to determine the base amounts for the annual contributions of the congregation Christ's Church Cathedral, to the diocese, for the three-year period commencing on January 1, 2024.

- Affirmed the bishop's recommendation not to proceed with the campaign as proposed by the Steier Group, at this time.
- Approved, on the recommendation of the Financial Advisory Committee, the request of St. John's, Jordan for a loan from the rectory fund, in the amount of \$25,000.
- Approved the 2023 audited consolidated financial statements of The Synod of the Diocese of Niagara.
- Acting as the General Membership of the Anglican Church Ministries Foundation, Niagara:
 - Received and accepted the foundation's 2023 audited financial statements.
 - Appointed KPMG as the auditors of the foundation for the fiscal year 2024.
- Approved the submission of an application for an Anglican Foundation grant, in the amount of \$15,000, by Ecumenical Campus Ministry (ECM) at the University of Guelph to support their student leadership project.
- Approved the submission of an application for an Anglican Foundation grant, in the amount of \$15,000, by St. Luke's, Palermo for the repair of three stained-glass windows and a concrete walkway and commended the parish for its efforts to preserve the heritage of its historic church building.
- Approved the request of St. Cuthbert's, Oakville for a loan from the rectory fund, in the amount of \$70,000 for the replacement of their flat roof.
- Approved a mandatory 3.7% cost of living adjustment in 2025 to the current clergy minimum stipend grid and to licensed lay workers' stipends, in addition to the year of service increase – averaging at 0.6% in later years – factored into the grid.
- Recommended a 3.7% cost of living adjustment for all housing allowances for clergy and licensed lay workers in 2025.
- Recommended a 3.7% cost of living adjustment plus a recommended 0.6% year of service increase, in 2025, to clergy stipends for those clergy and licensed lay workers currently being paid at rates that exceed the minimum stipend grid.
- Recommended an increase of 4.3% to the annual compensation of non-licensed lay employees, effective January 1, 2025.
- Directed the Human Resources for Ministry Committee to undertake a systemic review of diocesan housing allowances to ensure they are continuing to reflect market conditions and their intended purpose as a significant part of the total compensation package for clergy and licensed lay workers.
- Approved the Diocese of Niagara Cemetery Trust Investment Policy Statement.
- Commended the 2025 diocesan budget for approval by the Synod of the Diocese of Niagara.

Respectfully submitted,

The Venerable Bill Mous, Executive Officer & Secretary of Synod
 Ms. Hannah Keller, Administrative Assistant