



1976-2026

Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf  
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*Celebrating 50 years*

2-6 February 2026

# A year of Jubilee



Synod 2026 began on 2 February with an uplifting Opening Eucharist at St Christopher's Cathedral.

As the Diocese marks its 50th Anniversary, the 2026 Synod theme was *A year of Jubilee*—found in Leviticus 25 and fulfilled in the ministry of our Lord Jesus (Luke 4.18-19). *Read Bishop Sean's [Presidential Address](#) here.*

The service included the licensing of two clergy—Canon Walter Brownridge, to be Dean of St Paul's Cathedral in Nicosia and Canon to the Ordinary, and the Reverend Navina Thompson, to be parish priest of St Helena Larnaca—as well as the collation and installation at St Christopher's Cathedral of four Honorary Canons—Louise Bougourd, the Reverend Dr Michael Mbona, the Reverend Prem Mitra and the Reverend Gill Nisbet; and two Honorary Provincial Canons—the Reverend Dr Don Binder and the Venerable Fuad Dagher.

The Synod Speaker was Martha Jarvis, Anglican Communion Permanent Representative to the United Nations. Martha's talks were a central component of Synod 2026, skilfully combining wide experience and deep insight to offer truly special perspectives on a world in transition and the role of the Church in it. *(contd p2)*



In his Opening Address Bishop Sean said: “Leviticus calls on his people to sound the trumpet to hallow the fiftieth year, and to proclaim a year of Jubilee. This year our Jubilee celebrations hallow the fiftieth year of this unique Diocese, and express our deepest gratitude to God for bringing our improbable diocese through impossible circumstances ‘safe thus far’.

“Some parishes have already begun to plan special Golden Anniversary services.... How the trumpet is sounded in your context is entirely up to you—but I hope that you will share your story through our Diocesan Facebook page and website, so that throughout the year we can see a rolling celebration of gratitude and praise to God.”

The Province and its Dioceses were born on the Feast of the Epiphany in 1976. “I find much in the journey of the Magi that describes the life and ministry of this Diocese,” said Bishop Sean. “The Magi travelled from afar: so have the people of this Diocese. The Magi represent God’s plan to call and save the Gentile world: this Diocese presents and reveals Christ to the nations of the world. The Magi brought gifts to the Christ-child: we bring our gifts to serve Christ in the churches of the diocese. The Magi were drawn by a star: we are called to ‘shine like the stars’ and ‘let the light of Christ shine before people, that they may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven’. We are an Epiphany Diocese and Epiphany people.”

The Opening Eucharist also included a Diocesan Jubilee Hymn, written by the Reverend Canon Chris Butt.

In the evening, Synod participants were honoured to be joined by His Excellency Osama bin Saleh Alalawi, Minister of Social Development, and other special guests for a Jubilee Gala Dinner at the Gulf Hotel, generously hosted by *This is Bahrain*.

Welcoming guests, Bishop Sean spoke of the encouragement Synod members would take from their time in Bahrain—gratitude for its hospitality, and a newfound awareness of the mutual tolerance showcased in the Kingdom.

The British Ambassador to Bahrain, HE Alastair Long, reflected on the significance not just of this 50th Anniversary Synod but also of Bishop Sean’s Consecration and Installation two years ago at St Christopher’s Cathedral, Manama—an event that he said His Majesty King Charles had been pleased to learn more of, particularly given his respect for the Kingdom of Bahrain’s continued and longstanding commitment to interfaith dialogue.

Betsy Mathieson of *This is Bahrain* in turn presented a thought-provoking picture of the history and lived reality of that religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence, under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. Paying tribute to the female priests of the Diocese present, along with Bishop Moira Astin from the Diocese of Exeter, Ms Mathieson noted, too, the historic appointment of the Most Reverend Sarah Mullally as the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury. And she celebrated the remarkable reach and work of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf.

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Synod participants gathered on Tuesday morning for a service of Eucharist led by the Venerable Mark Derry, with Bishop of Thika the Right Reverend Julius Wanyoike preaching.

The first Synod session opened with the lighting of a candle and the Synod prayer, in a main conference hall decorated with floral arrangements in the colours of the Diocese—a wonderfully thoughtful gesture by Synod supporters, This Is Bahrain.

Synod Speaker Martha Jarvis gave an opening address on 'The Cry of Jubilee'. Referencing Matthew 6:12—And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors—she reflected on what Jubilee might offer a changing world order.

"The Cry of Jubilee is twofold," said Martha. "It is the cry of pain of those experiencing injustice, and it is the cry of joy of all—powerful and oppressed alike—who experience the freedom of knowing God is more powerful than any of our possessions and systems."

Her thought-provoking contextualisation of her own wide-ranging experiences and reflections on texts biblical and secular provided a framework for discussion groups to dig deeper into several proposed questions:

- How is global change affecting your parish?
- Where do you hear the cries of injustice and the cries of joy?
- What gifts does your parish have? How do they help you respond?
- What could this diocese offer to a world crying for Jubilee?

Synod business began with the Bishop's Report, followed by updates from the Reverend Canon Don Binder on the wider Province and the Middle East Council of Churches, from Archdeacon Fuad Dagher on the Diocese of Jerusalem, as from Provincial Synod lay member Bassam Dawany.

An extended session on the work of the Bishop's Task Force and motions relating to existing and proposed structures of the Diocese and its archdeaconries concluded with a presentation from vice-chair Manisha Cornelius on the recent parish survey.

At the conclusion of Synod business for the day, guests and representatives received a Golden Anniversary commemorative gift—a tile handcrafted in the Holy Land by Balian of Jerusalem, featuring the Lord's Prayer in Arabic.

Bishop Sean was himself moved to receive from the Most Reverend Aldo Berardi, Apostolic Vicar of Northern Arabia, an arrangement of flowers beautiful in themselves—and still more so for a message conveying Bishop Aldo's congratulations to Bishop Sean and the Diocese on its Golden Jubilee "of Anglican witness and pastoral presence". (See photo p42.)

"This anniversary," wrote Bishop Aldo, "offers a moment of thanksgiving to Almighty God and a renewed invitation to continue proclaiming the Gospel through works of mercy, dialogue and peacebuilding.

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“We look forward to continuing this spirit of collaboration in practical service to the community.”

Just before sunset, Synod participants gathered at a small harbour to board dhows and motorboats for an Interfaith Service at Sea, against the backdrop of the setting sun—an event special in ways that most had rarely experienced.

Prayers were offered for those who work at sea, for all the sea provides and for those whose lives have been lost at sea, including in the Al Dana dhow tragedy. These prayers were led by Bishop Sean; Mission to Seafarers Regional Director the Reverend John Attenborough; chairman of the Bahrain International Seafarers Society Captain Ali Haji Hassan Alghawas; honoured representatives of the Bohra community and the Hindu, Sikh and Baha’i communities; Elis Jones of St Christopher’s Cathedral and Awali Church; Royal Navy Chaplain the Reverend Newton Ndlovu; and Pastor Blaine. The service was supported by the generosity of Oak Group Holdings.

The day was brought to a close with Compline.

A retreat led by the Reverend Franklin Isaac on Wednesday evening provided an opportunity for peaceful reflection in the beautiful gardens of Princess Sabeeka Park, before the Synod Chrism Eucharist at Awali Church. Bishop Sean presided at the service, which included the renewal of clergy vows, with Bishop of Crediton the Right Reverend Moira Astin preaching.

The day began with Morning Prayer in the hotel chapel, led by the Reverend George Vidiakin,

followed by a second address by Synod Speaker Martha Jarvis.

Drawing on 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12, Martha invited reflection on what the Church had to say at a time of global transition: about all nations coming together in Revelation; of all people finding a place in the body of Christ; and of the body “feeling what the other parts feel”.

Exploring these themes, Martha referred to international, ecumenical interventions to resolve conflict in South Sudan and the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo; and to initiatives such as the Communion Forest and Lungs of the Earth. She also encouraged participants to read the [Nairobi-Cairo Proposals](#), which aim to help Anglican churches navigate difference and divisions, upholding the call of all Christians to sustain the unity of the Church. Participants then broke into workshop groups.

Synod business got under way with reports from Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor Linda Balfe, and on Diocesan programmes—St Mark Famagusta and Christ Church Aden, including a written report from Mansour Yousuf, director of the Ras Morbat Eye Clinic, sharing something of the challenges faced—and exceptional service offered—by its staff amidst continued violence, power shortages and deep economic uncertainty in Yemen.

Henry Ikediego, St Mark’s lay representative, described the ongoing difficulties and joys of its student congregation—a moving testament to their faith that inspired a generous donation from St Barnabas Limassol to help support the work of the Church in Famagusta.

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There was also a report on the Ministry programme, with DDM the Reverend Kent Middleton outlining important changes to Diocesan processes of discernment and training, including a new, yet closer relationship with Queen's College, Newfoundland.

The afternoon session focused on the Diocesan budget, as well as reports from SFC and news from Companion Diocese of Exeter, presented by the Right Reverend Moira Astin, Bishop of Crediton.

The afternoon Chrism Eucharist at Awali was followed by dinner at the Bapco Club, a wonderful event generously sponsored by Bapco Energies and an opportunity to thank the people of St Christopher's Cathedral and the staff of Mathias Middle East for all their help in organising Synod in Bahrain.

The day ended with Compline at the hotel chapel, led by the Reverend Navina Thompson.

The last day of Synod business on Thursday began with a Morning Eucharist led by the Reverend Prem Mitra, with the Reverend Canon Walter Brownridge preaching.

Synod Speaker Martha Jarvis then delivered her final address, on 'The Cry of Love'.

"Truth and mercy have met together. Justice and peace have kissed."

Martha reflected first on Psalm 85: 10, before inviting Synod members to join her in considering John 4—The Woman at the Well; Host and Guest—The Power of Presence; An Unloving Status Quo—The Power of Gentleness; and An Ordinary Day—the

Power of Freedom.

Meetings of the Houses of Clergy and Laity were followed by reports from the Reverend Franklin Isaac of Mission to Seafarers Bahrain; the Reverend Canon Chris Butt, chair of the UK Friends; Michael Cole, chair of the Foundation; and the Worldwide Mothers' Union, presented by its president Kathleen Snow—who undertook a 10-kilometre run around Bahrain's Old Fort on the day, to mark the 150th anniversary of the Mothers' Union. (To sponsor Kathleen click [here](#))

Synod was also pleased to hear news from Companion Diocese of Thika, presented by Bishop Julius Wanyoike, as well as a video from Bishop Jay Magness of the US Friends. An update on the work of the Constitutional Review Committee was presented by the Reverend Kent Middleton.

In the afternoon, a discussion with a representative of the UN International Organisation for Migration provided an opportunity to learn more about the work and challenges facing the IOM and the people and governments it works with in the region.

Bishop Sean closed Synod business with a reflection on his favourite Psalm: Ps131.

*O Lord, my heart is not lifted up;  
my eyes are not raised too high;  
I do not occupy myself with things  
too great and too marvellous for me.*

(contd p22)





# Bishop's report to Synod

*Bishop Sean shared with Synod an overview of his ministry over the past year, undertaken with the support of the clergy and lay people of its parishes*

This Synod marks exactly two years since my election as your Bishop, and 20 months since my consecration. These months have been dedicated to prayerful listening to God, to the clergy and people of the Diocese, and being present in and learning about the differing contexts of our parishes.

At last year's Synod the establishment of the Bishop's Task Force demonstrated a clear desire for renewal and reform in the Diocese. Much work has been done through this group and others to ensure that the priorities, structures and procedures of the Diocese are being made fit for purpose in our unique operational context, ready to meet the challenges of the next half century of ministry and witness.

As part of my own commitment to accountability, I wish to share with you this brief overview of my ministry in the last year.

My time has centred on visiting parishes, clergy recruitment, addressing gaps in administration and policy, and working with others to lead processes of reform and renewal. At times it has felt as though so many disparate matters have simultaneously needed attention, the expression of trying to both fly and fix an aircraft at the same time has come to mind! But a sense of common purpose and shared determination amongst so many of the clergy and lay people of our Diocese has encouraged me, as I hope I might encourage others.

## DIOCESAN LIFE

- **PRAYER**

During the summer of 2025 Zoom Evening Prayer services were led by members of the clergy and authorized laity. This welcome initiative prompted a decision to hold monthly zoom services over the course of the coming year—our Year of Jubilee.

- **PARISH VISITS**

I am committed to visiting every parish of the Diocese at least once a year, to strengthen the pastoral relationship between bishop, clergy and people. In 2025, I was pleased to visit all except the Ras Morbat Clinic in Yemen, having unfortunately failed to secure a visa to visit the country.

*Please note that parishes that would like an episcopal visit on a specific date in the year should convey this request as soon as possible to the Bishop's PA.*

- **ECUMENICAL, INTERFAITH & DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS**

During every visit to a parish, I meet with available rulers, church leaders, leaders of other faiths and ambassadors to represent the Diocese and its work, and to promote dialogue and good relationships.

- **MISSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Together with local clergy and religious authorities, opportunities to create new churches/ worshipping communities are being identified and developed. One such area is Erbil in Northern Iraq. Others are being considered. We have also been granted land for a new church to be built in Muscat, Oman.

- **CONFIRMATIONS**

67 people were confirmed in 2025

- **ORDINATIONS**

The Revd Christine Mbona to the priesthood  
The Revd Maria Evangelou to the Diaconate  
The Revd Lesley Carr to the Distinctive Diaconate  
The Revd Robert Jones to the Distinctive Diaconate

- **LICENSING OF NEW PRIESTS**

The Revd David Jarratt to Abu Dhabi  
The Very Revd Walter Brownridge  
The Revd Navina Thompson

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- **APPOINTMENTS**

Archdeacon in the Gulf: The Ven Mark Derry  
Archdeacon in Cyprus: The Ven Paul Carr  
Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor: Linda Balfe  
Diocesan Chancellor: Canon Andrew Khoo  
(concurrently the Chancellor of the Diocese of West Malaysia)  
Diocesan Director of Ministry: The Revd Kent Middleton  
Chaplain to PtO clergy in the Gulf: The Revd Patrick Salvage  
Chaplain to retired and PtO clergy in Cyprus: The Revd Andrew Burt  
Warden of Readers in the Gulf: The Reverend Kent Middleton  
Warden of Readers in Cyprus: The Revd Ken Gabbadon  
Retreats Facilitator: The Revd Deborah Moorgas  
Community Outreach Officer (Cyprus): The Revd Maria Evangelou

- **CANONS**

The Revd Gill Nisbet as an Honorary Canon of St Christopher's Cathedral  
The Revd Dr Michael Mbona as an Honorary Canon of St Christopher's Cathedral  
The Revd Prem Mitra as an Honorary Canon of St Christopher's Cathedral  
Louise Bougourd as an Honorary Lay Canon of St Christopher's Cathedral  
The Venerable Fuad Dagher as an Honorary Provincial Canon of St Christopher's Cathedral  
The Revd Dr Don Binder as an Honorary Provincial Canon of St Christopher's Cathedral

- **SUPPORT TO PARISHES IN VACANCY**

Together with the Archdeacons, I have been involved in supporting parishes during vacancies and through each stage of recruitment to fill those vacancies.

These include:

Oman, Larnaca, Deryneia, Nicosia, Canterbury Group and Bahrain, and—to come—Limassol and Kyrenia

- **COMMUNICATIONS**

Working with the Diocesan Office staff there have been efforts to provide timely, helpful

correspondence with parishes and with the Houses of Laity and Clergy.

Informative and hope-filled stories parish life and personal journeys have been shared through Diocesan channels to the public.

Other output produced from the Diocesan office includes an annual report on the Ras Morbat Clinic in Yemen, scene@Synod, and editing and communications support for the Foundation and the US and UK Friends

## OFFICE OF THE BISHOP (CENTRAL DIOCESAN ADMINISTRATION) OFFICE REVIEW

An independent audit of the Office of the Bishop, including its Information and Communication Technology (ICT) capabilities was commissioned. Audit recommendations have been put into place, including a reorganisation of staff office hours to ensure substantial overlap; updated technology and more secure procedures; improved record keeping; and regular staff meetings with the Bishop.

During the course of 2026, it is hoped that a Human Resource consultant could review and update our personnel policies and procedures.

- **CLERGY LICENCES AND PTOs**

Standardising criteria for the issuing of clergy licences/PTOs (work in progress).

- **DATA MANAGEMENT**

Updating data for all licensed and PTO clergy  
Updating of parish information to include constitutions, fabric etc.

## LEGAL MATTERS AND POLICIES

- In addition to the work of the Bishop's Task Force, which I chair, and the Constitutional Review Committee of which I am an ex officio member, there is ongoing work to update diocesan policies.

- A particular and concerning "gap" in our administration is that of people to oversee human

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# Report

## Bishop's Task Force

*An extended session on the work of the Bishop's Task Force considered proposed new Diocesan structures and processes that were met with the near-unanimous support of Synod (see final pages for Synod Motions)*

### Archdeaconries in the Gulf

Bishop Sean presented Synod with a BTF proposal to divide the Archdeaconry of the Gulf into two Archdeaconries:

1. An Archdeaconry of Northern Arabia consisting of Diocesan parishes in the countries of Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait and Qatar, and the area of the central territories of the Arabian Peninsula.
2. An Archdeaconry of Southern Arabia consisting of the parishes of the countries of the UAE, Oman and Yemen.

The current Archdeacon in the Gulf would initially serve as the Archdeacon in North Arabia, with the Bishop to appoint in due course an Archdeacon in Southern Arabia. The proposed new Diocesan structure would require significant constitutional amendment, including but not limited to:

- redefining the Diocese as consisting of three Archdeaconries
- adjusting stipulated representation in the House of Laity
- adjusting the composition of Standing and Finance Committee

Such changes would also need to take into consideration and be aligned with any possible constitutional changes to both the status and role of Cathedrals, and the creation of Archdeaconry Councils (*see below and right*).

### Cathedrals and Deans

Following a review of the role of Cathedral Deans, BTF presented the following proposals to Synod:

1. That a church may be designated a Cathedral by recommendation of the Bishop and with the support of the church in question and a majority of Synod, where such a Cathedral is deemed to have a strategic location, to be able to fulfil its role as a centre of liturgical excellence, theological teaching and civic engagement.
2. That a Cathedral can be returned to the status of Parish Church by writ of the Bishop with the majority support of Synod, and after consultation with the Dean and Cathedral Council.
3. That a candidate for Dean will be required to have a minimum of 10 years in Holy Orders.
4. That a Dean is, in the first instance, the parish priest of the Cathedral parish.
5. That Deans will rank as the most senior priests of the Diocese.
6. That Deans will alternate each Synodical year as the Vicar General of the Diocese, representing the Bishop in Administrative and Pastoral matters as directed or required through episcopal vacancy, sabbatical or incapacity.
7. That Deans will be members of the Standing and Finance Committee.
8. That each Cathedral of the Diocese will have a College of Honorary Canons.
9. That Honorary Canons—selected for their modelling of exceptional ministry and service in or for the Diocese or for their potential to contribute to the ongoing mission of the Diocese and Cathedral—will be appointed by the Bishop, after consultation with the relevant Dean and other parties, to retire at the age of 70—when, at the discretion of the Bishop, the title of Canon Emeritus may sometimes be awarded. Their role might include promoting the Cathedral locally and internationally, fundraising, developing Cathedral-to-Cathedral links with companion Dioceses or contacts in the Anglican Communion, and supporting the liturgical and teaching charism of the Cathedral.
10. The Chair of the College of Canons will be the Dean of the Cathedral, and the College will meet at least annually. The College of Canons will act in an advisory and supportive role to the Dean and Cathedral, with authority for decision-making reserved entirely for the Cathedral Council. The Bishop may attend meetings of the College of Canons.
11. Honorary Canons can be removed by the Bishop, after consultation, for past or present behaviour that brings the Diocese into disrepute.

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## Archdeaconry Forums and Councils

In order to enhance transparency and communication with, and make better use of the additional skillsets available amongst lay and clergy members of the Diocese, BTF made two recommendations, presented by the Reverend George Vidiakin:

1. The formation of Archdeaconry Forums, to offer input on Diocesan and parish issues between and in support of meetings of Synod.
2. The formation of Archdeaconry Councils, to assist in the governance of that Archdeaconry with particular regard to HR and legal issues.

## Young Adults Council

“Young people—aged 18-35—are underrepresented within Diocesan structures,” said Archdeacon Mark, “and are an underutilised source of energy and skills in our mission and worship.”

BTF therefore proposed that an elected Diocesan Young Adults Council be established, giving voice to younger people: rallying enthusiasm for new ways of interacting across the Diocese and encouraging the better sharing of resources and ideas between parishes.

## Parish Survey

BTF vice-chair Manisha Cornelius (right) presented a report on the BTF Parish Survey findings: a structured analysis of data offering “the most comprehensive snapshot of parishes in the fifty years of the Diocese”.

The report highlighted parish patterns of worship, ministry, demographics, governance and facilities, identifying strengths, challenges and areas for strategic focus—findings intended to inform Synod deliberation, support the equitable treatment of parishes, and guide future planning in line with the Diocesan Vision and Mission.



### Bishop's Task Force members

Chair: The Right Reverend Sean Semple  
Vice-chair: Manisha Cornelius  
Louise Bougourd  
The Venerable Paul Carr  
The Venerable Mark Derry  
Deborah Graham  
The Reverend Dr David Jarratt  
Christiana Nwandu  
The Reverend George Vidiakin  
Secretary: Dr Helen Perry

Bishop in Cyprus and the Gulf  
House of Laity, Christ Church Jebel Ali  
SFC; House of Laity, St Luke Ras Al Khaimah  
Archdeacon in Cyprus; Anglican Church of Paphos  
Archdeacon in the Gulf; Church of the Epiphany, Doha  
House of Laity Co-chair; St Helena Larnaca  
St Andrew Abu Dhabi  
House of Laity Co-chair; Church of the Epiphany, Doha  
House of Clergy Chair, Christ Church Ayia Napa  
Diocesan Administration

# Report

## Safeguarding



*Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor Linda Balfe  
reported to Synod on Diocesan Safeguarding Policy,  
resources, training and personnel*

### 1. Safeguarding Policy

The Diocesan Safeguarding Policy was updated by Synod in September 2025, following consultation with a member of the Anglican Communion Safe Church Commission, to make clear the connection between abuse and power, which was not previously referenced. May I please remind parishes that Parish Safeguarding Policies should also be reviewed regularly.

### 2. Safeguarding - Diocesan website resources

A dedicated, regularly updated Safeguarding area has been set up on the Diocesan website (accessible from the home page), containing policies, guidelines and a variety of resources.

### 3. Safeguarding training

#### a. Clergy Safeguarding training

All clergy are required to complete the Church of England 'Basic Awareness' and 'Foundation' online safeguarding courses prior to taking our own 'Leadership' level clergy training. This is a requirement for CoE clergy and it is important that we operate in line with international standards, keeping abreast of new developments in this fast-moving area. It also benefits us greatly to make use of these high-quality resources that are available to us.

Three Safeguarding training sessions for clergy (including PTOs, locums and ordinands) took place

via Zoom in October and November. The next sessions for clergy due to retrain will take place in February 2026.

#### b. Safeguarding Training for Parish Safeguarding Officers

There is currently no specific training for PSOs—either produced by this Diocese or available externally. PSO training based on our new clergy training will be delivered to Diocesan PSOs in February 2026.

#### c. Safeguarding Training for Parishes

The Diocese has recommended that all church officials and volunteers at parish level should take Church of England 'Basic Awareness' and 'Foundation' online Safeguarding courses.

These courses enable individuals to train in their own time and work well for the majority. However, some parishes with an older age profile have found that access for some is hindered by technical constraints or lack of computer confidence.

To overcome this, we have produced a Power Point presentation that can be used with a group. The presentation covers all of the material from the two online courses, and was piloted at St Paul's Cathedral, Nicosia in November 2025—with 25+ people attending, including from guest congregations. This presentation is now available for all parishes to use.

*(contd p11)*

*The meaning of the word  
'Safeguarding' can be  
unclear—especially in translation.*

*Safeguarding is about  
protecting the vulnerable—a  
phrase that works  
in Tamil, in Arabic—and  
in English*



(contd from p10)

#### 4. Safeguarding Advisory Panel

The Safeguarding Advisory Panel (SAP) is made up of PSOs from each parish along with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer. Meetings of the SAP were held in May (14 PSOs from 11 parishes) and October (16 PSOs from 13 parishes) 2025. Going forward, the Panel will meet three times a year, with the next planned for February 2026.

Diocesan PSOs continue to show a strong level of engagement and commitment to promoting Safeguarding in their parishes. They are keen to contribute ideas, share expertise and work together in a collegiate manner across the Diocese.

#### 5. External support and contacts

The Diocese is extremely grateful for the guidance and practical support it has received in developing our Safeguarding work. Particular thanks go to the Rt Revd Dr Jo Bailey Wells (Anglican Communion); Mandy Marshall, Dr Kim Barker and Garth Blake (Anglican Communion Safe Church Commission); Willma King (CoE National Safeguarding Team); the Rt Revd Dr Mike Harrison (Bishop of Exeter); Costa Nassaris (Head of Safeguarding, Diocese of Exeter); and the Revd Canon Dr Peniel Rajkumar (Theologian and Director of Global Mission, USPG).

## Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs)

*The Diocese is immensely grateful to its team of PSOs for the invaluable work they are doing.*

*Two parishes currently have a vacancy for PSO; in three parishes the priest is the PSO.*

*Given the huge demands on a priest's time and his or her wider pastoral responsibility, it would be advantageous if someone else were to take on the role of PSO, where possible.*

St Andrew **Abu Dhabi** - Angeline Rani

Christ Church **Ayia Napa** - Vacant

St George **Baghdad** - Sinan Hanna

St Christopher's Cathedral & Awali Church **Bahrain** -

James Adams, Jennifer John

Canterbury Group - Jennifer Cuttino

St John **Deryneia** - Vacant

Epiphany **Doha** - Shammi Michael,

Jesse George, Nicola Saraja

Holy Trinity **Dubai** - Prem Mitra

St Mark **Famagusta** - Lynette Oruc

Christ Church, **Jebel Ali** - Kaine Teme, Ankin Nam

St Paul **Kuwait** - Raphael Kayode

St Andrew, **Kyrenia** - Linda Balfe

St Helena **Larnaca** - Marina Peters

St Barnabas **Limassol** - Charles Dodd

St John **Muscat** - Peter Hawksworth

St Paul's Cathedral, **Nicosia** - Margaret Charalambides

Ayia Kyriaki, St Stephen, and St Luke **Paphos** -

Chris Hoskins, Ann Bailey

St Luke **Ras Al Khaimah** - Kent Middleton

St Martin **Sharjah** - Drew Schmotzer

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# Reports

## From Jerusalem



*The Reverend Dr Don Binder, Canon pastor at St George's Cathedral and Chaplain to Archbishop Hosam Naoum, shared news from the Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East Council of Churches; the Venerable Canon Fuad Dagher reported on the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East*

Joined by Provincial Secretary Archdeacon Canon Fuad Dagher and Bassam Dawany, Provincial Synod representative from Jerusalem, Canon Don brought greetings from Archbishop Hosam who, he said, wished to convey “the bonds of affection between our dioceses, particularly since the consecration and installation of Bishop Sean”.

“I was very privileged to be a personal and up-close participant in that, when my wife and I welcomed Bishop Sean and Jenny to Jerusalem just before Holy Week,” said Canon Don. “They were there with us through Holy Week and Easter, which corresponded this past year with the Orthodox Easter. We will always treasure in our hearts dinner that first night at an outside restaurant overlooking the Kidron Valley, watching the sun set over Jerusalem and the lights of the Old City—very special moments of getting to know each other better and to see that holy place just come to life, in some foretaste of the glory that eventually it will have.

“And of course, later that week, participating in all of the wonderful liturgies of Holy Week, not only with our own cathedral but also ecumenically; the palm procession down the Mount of Olives into St Anne's. I escorted Bishop Sean to, for most outsiders, a once-in-a-lifetime experience that is the Orthodox Holy Fire ceremony on Holy Saturday, where the Holy Fire springs forth from the tomb, the empty tomb with the patriarch inside.

“Bishop Sean will also have had a sense of some of the difficulties experienced with the local authorities in terms of participation in that ceremony, which has become more and more restrictive over the past four years. So he got the good, the bad and the ugly on that experience.

“Later in the year we welcomed Bishop Sean and a few of your clergy back for a retreat, and Archdeacon Paul to our own Synod in October. And then, on Epiphany Sunday, we had the honour of installing Bishop Sean as an Episcopal Honorary Canon in our cathedral at St George's, when I personally escorted him to his stall to be seated.

“I was very, very pleased to do that, and also, of course, to experience yesterday for Archdeacon Fuad and myself the great honour of being similarly installed at your own Cathedral of St Christopher. By happy accident or God's providence, in the Arab culture in which I am now embedded, when your first son is born you obtain a nickname—Abu and the name of your son. So my nickname is Abu Christopher, because my oldest son's name is Christopher. So now that I have been installed as an honorary canon of St Christopher's Cathedral, I am twice Abu Christopher—a double blessing.

“With respect to the context of ministry that we've been working in in Jerusalem over the past year, many of you follow me on Facebook. I wish I did not have to post 90% of what I post, because the last more than two years have probably been the worst context for the Diocese of Jerusalem since 1948.

“We have all seen the devastation. We experienced it firsthand because of our hospital in Gaza. You might recall at this time last year we were in the midst of a ceasefire, which was not perfect, but it was holding pretty well, until it was abruptly, permanently violated by Israel in an early-morning bombing raid in March, in the midst of families gathering for their pre-dawn breakfasts in the month of Ramadan, killing, in various parts of the Gaza Strip several hundred people, including scores of women and children. I consider that, personally, one of the worst days of my life, because we witnessed, especially through the eyes of our hospital, the casualties of that day—a totally preventable thing, when a ceasefire was in effect. And it only went downhill from there.

“We had the joys of Palm Sunday later in the day, but I woke up to news from our hospital administrator that we had been bombed overnight on what not only was the morning of Passover, but that year also Palm Sunday. Our emergency room was completely wiped out by IDF missiles and, as a result, indirectly, the deaths of two children reliant on life-saving serums and infusions.

*(contd p13)*

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(contd from p12)

“We issued a statement even before we had our service, and it was an angry statement. The fact that you would violate such a holy day for both of our faiths by attacking, of all things, a Christian hospital that is trying to save lives in the midst of a war. It is horrible.

“All told, through the course of two years we had, depending how you count them, eight attacks on our hospital by the IDF, resulting in damage to our buildings, many casualties, including four reporters who were taken out by a drone strike in one fell swoop, and we have great difficulty in maintaining the ministry because of that. You can imagine the staff, having to bear up under all of those hardships.

“Now, and particularly ironically with the start of the current ceasefire in October, we have had an increase of settler attacks in the West Bank. One in particular was widely noted in the press because it was against the Christian village of Taiba. Archbishop Hosam and myself were out of the country at the time, but Patriarchs Pizzaballa and Theophilos jointly went up to visit Taiba to hold a press conference and to pray with the people, who are experiencing hardships from settlers who are increasingly becoming aggressive, confiscating land, burning olive trees, attacking people trying to harvest their olives during the season in October and November—things many of you will have seen, if not on the international news then via my feed.

“Despite all this, we have pressed forward. When our emergency room was bombed, they brought in two MASH-like tents so that they could open the emergency department there. Indeed, when Holy Family Church was bombed in July, the casualties from that church, which is near our hospital, were treated in those emergency-room tents. We are also experiencing increased restrictions on getting in medical supplies and equipment, even with a ceasefire.

“An interesting story: Archbishop Hosam and I, along with our medical director, went into Gaza three days before the war started—so October 4, St Francis

Day. Part of the reason we went was take Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich, who happened to be in the country for the Anglican-Roman Catholic inter-ecumenical dialogue conference, and wanted to see the hospital.

“And I remember quite distinctly as we were going in, Bishop Graham asking Archbishop Hosam about fundraising for the hospital.

Archbishop Hosam, almost prophetically, said, ‘Well, we haven’t had a war in a very long time, and so the donations are really down, and it’s kind of hurting in terms of running the hospital.’

“Well, we all know what happened three days later and the aftermath. The only silver lining I can detect from all of that is the fact that, because of increased media exposure to the suffering that’s going on, donations have gone through the roof and we’re incredibly grateful for that. But of course, I would gladly go back to the situation before the war and give back all those donations. Nevertheless, we are incredibly

grateful to people from around the world, including the parishes of this Diocese, in both the Gulf and Cyprus, for supporting our work at Ahli hospital—and indeed our ministries throughout the Diocese of Jerusalem, which have all been heavily affected because of the dearth of pilgrims.

“St George’s College in Jerusalem, for instance, has now been closed for two-and-a-half years, and a lack of pilgrims and tourists has badly hurt the economy, especially in Bethlehem. And that trickles down to us in that people can’t pay for treatment, say in St Luke’s Hospital in Nablus; can’t pay tuition in our Diocesan schools. And it has ripple effects into Jordan, and of course Lebanon is a whole other story—they’ve had hardships all along.

“So all of those donations we are putting to very, very good work in Gaza and throughout our Diocese. And we greatly appreciate your prayers and support—part of the bonds of affection and fellowship and ministry that we have with you in Cyprus and the Gulf. We are incredibly grateful for that.

(see bottom of p14 for Canon Don’s report on the MECC)

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# Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East



*The Venerable Canon Fuad, Archdeacon for Israel and Palestine in the Diocese of Jerusalem and Provincial Secretary, conveyed greetings of peace from Archbishop Hosam and the people of the Diocese of Jerusalem, updating Synod on news from the Province*

“The life of our Province continues within a complex and often challenging context,” he said. “Yet across its dioceses, we witness faithfulness, resilience and shared commitment to the gospel of reconciliation, service and hope, and the collaboration and mutual support among dioceses remain vital and deeply encouraging.

“We thank the King Hamad Centre for the warm welcome extended to the meeting of Provincial Standing Committee in Bahrain in September—a great blessing and a sign of solidarity and support from the work of the Diocese of Jerusalem and the wider Province.

“Discussion focused on ministry priorities, financial stewardship, pastoral challenges across the region, and preparation for the forthcoming Provincial Clergy and Spouses meeting, to be held 16-19 November in Paphos, Cyprus—following the success of the previous meeting held in Jordan in 2022.

“The Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf continues to play an important role within the Province, particularly through its wide-ranging pastoral ministry, regional engagement and faithful witness in diverse contexts. Clergy and laity alike are to be commended for their dedication amid demanding circumstances: as a Province, we remain aware of the ongoing challenges of pastoral pressures, financial stability and the need to support and form leadership at all levels.

“I wish to express sincere thanks to the Council, to Bishop Sean and to Archbishop Hosam, for their support and for their dedicated ministries to the separate dioceses, as well as the Province. And of course, we carry in our hearts the Diocese of Iran. I urge each and every one of us to keep in our prayers Iran and the work of the church, with all the challenges they face there. I hope, *Inshallah*, in the near future we will find, with the help of both Archbishop Hosam and Bishop Sean, a new leadership for our dear brothers and sisters in the Diocese of Iran.

“I wish also to express sincere thanks to the clergy and people of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf for your continued partnership in our Provincial life. May God grant us wisdom, unity and courage as we continue to serve Christ together.”

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*(contd from p13)*

## MECC

“We are involved with the Middle East Council of Churches as one of the families—the Protestant family, with the Lutherans. The Council is based in Beirut, in the Diocese of Jerusalem, and Archbishop Hosam has been involved in work on reforming some of the committees.

“A moment of jubilation came about two months ago in Beirut, when the MECC was involved in coordinating with the Roman Catholic Church there the visit of Pope Leo.

“Archdeacon Fuad, Archdeacon Imad, Archbishop Hosam and myself were there amongst the ecumenical and interfaith group of about 500 that met with the Pope in downtown Beirut, in the main square, and the mood in the city was as joyous as I

have ever seen it. Like us in Jerusalem, they have been under incredible pressure, even before the war started—the financial situation, the port blowing up, then the war with Israel through Hezbollah. They have experienced incredible hardships, and the Pope’s visit was one of those moments of jubilation where they literally rolled out the red carpet everywhere. There were posters of Pope Leo smiling down upon the city, at every street corner. People came out in droves whenever he was to drive through an area, and we were blessed to be part of that moment of joy—one of the few that we’ve had in our part of the Middle East over the past two years.

“We thank the MECC for working to arrange the visit, and Pope Leo for coming and counting Lebanon as the place for his first official visit out of the Vatican as Pope.”

# Ministry programme

*Diocesan Director of Ministry the Reverend Kent Middleton outlined a revised  
Diocesan Ministry programme*



The Diocesan Ministry Programme offers a process of academic, spiritual, pastoral and practical formation and training for those who:

- wish to fulfil a specific role in their local church
- are preparing for lay or ordained public licensed ministry
- are already in ministry

The programme comprises two parts:

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## Local Ministry Recognition

*For individuals who express a desire to fulfil a specific role in their local Church, with the support of the Parish Priest and Church Council*

Two possible roles would be considered: Lay Worship Leader or Pastoral Care Assistant.

A six-week series of webinars will be offered for each, with the Lay Worship Leader programme expected to be offered from summer 2026, and the Pastoral Care Assistant programme ready in fourth quarter of 2026.

These webinars will play an important part in standardising training, offered across the Diocese at the same time, with the same training given to all.

Those who have attended previous Lay Worship Leader workshops would be required to complete the new six-week webinar programme. All will be required to complete Diocesan Safeguarding training.

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## Licensed Ministry

*For those who are in a formal process of formation and training leading to lay or ordained licensed ministry*

Progression for those in the formal process of formation and training begins with the Fellowship of Vocation—a one-year programme for all those contemplating public licensed ministry, whether lay or ordained. The Fellowship gathers virtually throughout the year, giving candidates the opportunity to hear guest speakers, to lead an opening act of worship and to engage in discussions on a prescribed book.

There are currently 12 candidates in the programme, from parishes in Doha, Kuwait, Jebel Ali, the Canterbury Group and Cyprus. It is hoped that these candidates will be ready to attend a Selection Conference at Church of the Epiphany in Doha from 7–10 October 2026.

On receiving a positive outcome from the Selection Conference, candidates are then placed in formation and training, either as Lay Ministers-in-Training or Ordinands.

These two training pathways have specific requirements: academic study, annual portfolios, webinar programmes and Safeguarding training. The minimum academic requirements are diploma level for Lay Ministers and bachelor level for Ordained Ministers. Portfolios create an opportunity for involvement in parish life, not only in public worship but also in teaching, pastoral care and fellowship.

There is currently one Lay Minister-in-Training at St Andrew Abu Dhabi, and four ordinands from St Andrew Abu Dhabi, Church of the Epiphany (Doha), St George Baghdad and St Mark Famagusta. We continue to strengthen our relationship with Queen's College in Canada, and from September 2026 our students will be enrolled on courses offered, taught and facilitated by the College itself.

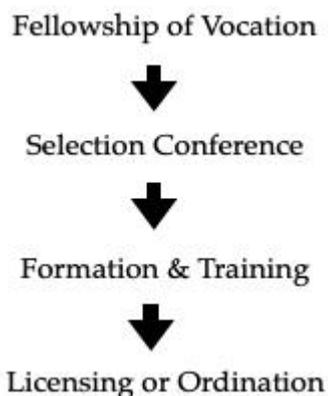
Decisions regarding licensing or ordination are always made in consultation with the respective Parish Priest and Church Council.

### *What happens after Licensing or Ordination?*

Licensed Lay Ministers are fully part of the Lay Minister Community, looked after by their chaplain, the Reverend Ken Gabbadon. This community gathers frequently, via Zoom, to encourage support of one another, provide a sense of belonging to something greater, and to receive ministerial development input.

Lay Minister licenses are renewed every three years. Dates of renewal have now been aligned so that all come together from across the Diocese for a Renewal

*(contd p16)*





(contd from p15)

Service—held in March 2025 with the next to be held in March 2028.

There are currently eight LLMs: three in the Gulf Archdeaconry and five in the Cyprus Archdeaconry.

The newly ordained (Distinctive Deacon, Transitional Deacon, Priest) enter Initial Ministerial Development, focusing on practical, supervised training within the parish, under the guidance of the Parish Priest and in line with the structure provided by a Working Agreement. After an evaluation process the Bishop, in consultation with the Parish Priest and Church Council, has the final decision as to when an individual can be ‘signed off’ from IMD.

There are currently four individuals in IMD: Reverends Maria Evangelou (Transitional Deacon, St Paul’s Cathedral, Nicosia), Christine Mbona (Priest, St Paul Kuwait), Lesley Carr (Distinctive Deacon, Paphos Churches) and Rob Jones (Distinctive Deacon, St Christopher’s Cathedral, Bahrain)

All self-supporting clergy (Licensed and PtO) are welcome to join the SSM community, looked after by their chaplain, the Reverend Patrick Salvage. This community also gathers frequently online, to encourage support of and pray for one another; to share ideas and learn from one another.

Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) is facilitated by the Reverend George Vidiakin, with the

goal of offering one CMD session per quarter for lay and ordained ministers, whether separately or together.

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## Vocations Sunday

This year, the Fourth Sunday of Easter (Good Shepherd Sunday) is to be Vocations Sunday—an opportunity to pray for and encourage vocations within our Diocese. Resources will be distributed to parish for use on the day.

“Across our parishes, we have seen signs of faithful perseverance, quiet growth, and renewed commitment,” said Revd Kent. “We give thanks for the clergy, lay ministers, staff and volunteers whose dedication continues to sustain and enliven our common life.

“The challenges before us remain real, yet they are met with hope grounded not in our own strength but in God’s faithfulness.

“As we look ahead, we do so prayerfully, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, committed to collaboration and attentive to the needs of the communities we are called to serve. May our shared ministry continue to reflect the love of Christ, for the building up of God’s Church and the flourishing of God’s world.”

## Mission to Seafarers



*The Reverend Dr Franklin Isaac shared news about the Mission and its work in Bahrain—part of the wider organisational region covering Jordan, Dubai, Egypt, Cyprus, India and Sri Lanka*

MtS in Bahrain works closely with the Bahrain International Seafarer Society, formed in 1982.

“Its current head, Captain Ali, who took part in the Synod Interfaith Service at Sea, is a very active 78 years old,” said Revd Franklin, “and still extensively involved in the work of Mission to Seafarers.”

Revd Franklin described three areas of MtS work for seafarers: onboard ship; out and about in Bahrain; and outside Bahrain.

“As soon as a vessel reaches port in Bahrain, I can visit the seafarers onboard. I always take copies of the MtS magazine—which is also available electronically—where they can get up-to-date information about fellow seafarers, the MtS organisation, and the maritime industry. I also take my Wi-Fi modem and often leave it with them for an hour or two, and they might use that opportunity to chat with their loved ones.

“I also spend time with them individually, wherever possible—in their mess room or visiting room, or even in the gangway: time to talk with them, and to listen, and sometimes to offer a prayer.

“Outside the ship, we are able to bring seafarers to our centre in the port, or we might secure a shore pass, enabling seafarers to visit beyond the port without a visa—whether to KFC, McDonalds or indeed the Roman Catholic Cathedral.

“The MtS centre was built by the Bahraini government and is maintained by the port terminal. Facilities include indoor games like billiards and table tennis, a small shop, TV room, music equipment and a gym. We used to welcome seafarers with a soft drink and snacks but last year, we decided to welcome them with ice-cream. This winter we decided to offer hot drinks, so we bought a coffee machine making cappuccinos and so on. However it seems the demand for ice-cream remains year-round. Their happiness is our happiness! Seafarers visiting the centre also receive a gift package of essentials—toothpaste, toothbrush, sponsored T-shirts.”

Another important MtS role is to help resolve complex situations faced by seafarers.

A man from India whose wife was pregnant in hospital during heightened tensions between Israel and Iran, was one of a group of seafarers whose families did not want them to risk a journey to the region. But the seafarers could not persuade their company to let them “sign off” in Dubai. MtS Bahrain was able to contact regional headquarters to seek the help of MtS clergy in Dubai and Arabic-speaking colleagues in Jordan, communicate with clergy in India and get in contact with families to offer emotional support, and open channels of negotiation with the maritime company and agent. A group of six seafarers were finally signed off in Dubai.

The work of Mission to Seafarers requires a team working together to update, support and advise one another—including via a dedicated WhatsApp group and twice-monthly meetings of chaplains, to “share our burdens, share our experiences, share our challenges and pray for each other and for the seafarers”.

Revd Franklin emphasised that MtS was not just about serving seafarers: it was about learning from them. Most striking, he said, is the support and care seafarers show for one another.

“There are always seafarers who ask for extra gift bags—for friends on board, on duty, unable to join the excursion. There are the friendships—between Ukrainian and Russian seafarers, for example, worried about the way their two countries are moving. Two guys who have been very good friends for the past four years shared their story, and ended saying, ‘Peace be with you’. We followed with a prayer in the title of ‘Peace be with you’.”

Chaplains in Revd Franklin’s position also experience humbling insights into some of the intensely stressful situations in which seafarers work.

“Sometimes when seafarers visit the centre, I notice they speak loudly, play loud music, sing and, many times, they dance. Sometimes I join them—and then one day they told me why they were dancing. ‘Father,

*(contd p25)*

*“Our next port is  
in the US,  
where we will have to  
stay in the port,  
in the vessel.  
No other human faces  
for 42 days”*

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## American Friends of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf



*Bishop James (Jay) Magness, chair of the American Friends of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, sent a video report to Synod*



James Magness

[CLICK TO VIEW VIDEO](#)

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## Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf Foundation



*Foundation chair Michael Cole updated Synod on its work to support the Diocese*

Michael began by thanking his fellow Trustees, including Canon Angela Murray, who was also at Synod, and by paying tribute to his predecessor, James Brennan, who died last year. “James and his family were loyal supporters of the Church of Epiphany in Doha and the Diocese. He will be remembered as a cheerful, polite and warm-hearted gentleman. May he rest in peace.

The Foundation made a grant to the Diocese of GBP20k in 2025, which it intended to do again this year. The Foundation had also extended a loan to the Diocese, which was to be repaid by December 2029.

Along with the UK Friends of the Diocese, “the Foundation were very pleased to cover the cost of refreshments following two church services held in London to mark the Jubilee—the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Diocese,” said Michael.

The Foundation works closely with the Diocese, including receiving and transferring to it donations received and any UK Gift Aid claimed. Until June 2025, the Foundation also paid UK clergy pensions on behalf of the Diocese.

“The Foundation is very proud to support the Diocese and we are always seeking new ideas to raise additional funds, including through our Appeal, which we launched in 2021 and keep regularly updated.”



# UK Friends of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf



*The Reverend Canon Chris Butt, chair of the Association of the UK Friends of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, updated Synod on its activities*

Canon Chris began by highlighting what it means to be a Friend of the Diocese—“how friendships, forged by serving in this Diocese, continue to enrich our lives”: meeting old US Navy friends in Washington, DC; a visit from Erin Grayson, part of the Exploring Faith group in 2012 and now a Presbyterian minister in Seattle; catching up with the parents of children confirmed in St Christopher’s Bahrain—“I have a memory of them determined to get through the barricades for worship during the Arab Spring”; meeting for meals in London with Navy Chaplain Christina Mauntel, and then with Mark and Priscilla Fox—“Mark was Vice Admiral in command of NAVCENT and the 5th Fleet in Bahrain—all regular members of the Cathedral community”.

Chris shared news, too, of the wedding of Tryphaena, daughter of former MtS Bahrain Chaplain the Reverend Stephen Thanapaul and Jasmine, in Tuticorin, India, where Stephen now serves with MtS. “As well as a wonderful wedding, Stephen gave his friends from Bahrain a tour of the MtS ministry to families in coastal villages.”

In the Autumn, Chris provided locum support to St Paul’s Cathedral in Nicosia “a hugely enriching experience giving new insights into the impact of Cyprus’ history of occupation”.

In December, Chris “had the honour of representing Bishop Sean and the Diocese” at the funeral of Bishop Harry Moore, second Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf.

“The UK Association of Friends really exists because of the precious nature of those relationships,” said Chris. “For some of the Friends, that relationship is with a particular chaplaincy, with contemporaries or a chaplain in the Diocese; for others, especially those who have experienced this annual Synod, there is a wider vision and understanding of belonging to the Diocesan family. But all of us with experience of living, working and worshipping in different places find it valuable to connect with those who can relate to those special experiences, and it continues to inform our prayers for you.

“As well as our personal prayers for the Diocese, there is the opportunity to meet together to intercede for the Diocese. Bishop Sean continues to encourage us in this: on a number of occasions, he has said that it is the sustaining prayer from the Friends, that he really values most.”

*“May God  
bless  
your ministry  
and your  
Golden Jubilee  
year”*

In addition to celebrating the Eucharist and interceding for the Diocese at in-person gatherings of the Friends, there is also a Friends Zoom Prayer Gathering using a PowerPoint presentation of photos and guided prayer requests.

“It was special recently to have the Revd Stephen Thanapaul join us from India, with other Friends from Paphos and Kyrenia as well as several from around different parts of the UK.

The three regular in-person meetings of the Friends held this year were a Spring Gathering, organised by Ian Calder in St Mary de Crypt, Gloucester with Bishop Michael as the celebrant at the Eucharist; a Summer AGM in London at All Hallows-by-the-Tower, with the Revd Charlie Lloyd-Evans, formerly of St Thomas Al Ain, preaching; and an Autumn meeting in York at the Bar Convent, also attended by the Secretary of the American Friends of the Diocese, the Revd Canon Dr Bill and Edie Schwartz, visiting the UK immediately following locum ministry at St Paul’s in Nicosia. Their experience in this Diocese is unparalleled, and 30 people came to the gathering and Bill preached at the Eucharist.

In the coming year the UK Friends have been invited by Bishop Mike Harrison to Exeter—a welcome chance to further strengthen relationships with our Link Dioceses. Chris concluded by encouraging parishes to connect those moving to the UK. “Some of our most enthusiastic members are serving in the National Health Service, originally from the Indian subcontinent. It may help them make the transition and it is important, as for any organisation, that we continually draw people in.”

*(Find out more about the Friends via the Diocesan [website](#))*

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# St Mark Famagusta Student Chaplaincy



*Synod lay representative Henry Ikediego has been attending St Mark Famagusta for 14 years, serving as administrator for the past five years*

St Mark's is uniquely positioned as a student-oriented chaplaincy, close to a major university and "a vital spiritual hub for the student population in Famagusta, North Cyprus", Henry told Synod.

Indeed, around 90% of the congregation are students—a vibrant multinational community from Burundi, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, Nigeria and the United Kingdom, committed to discipleship, mission and global ambassadorship. But it is also experiencing a pressing need for pastoral stability.

"Our foundational vision is to see that, as much as God grants us the grace, all know the only true God and Jesus Christ. Because of the transient nature of the community, our mission is specifically tailored to intentional discipleship. We do not just see ourselves as students temporarily in a particular place: we see ourselves as future ambassadors. We equip each other to carry the gospel back to our home nations or wherever we settle, as the Lord helps us."

On Sundays, St Mark's offers praise and Services of the Word—and, where possible, services of Holy Communion. Mid-week gatherings include prayer meetings on Tuesdays and Friday Bible study. Easter and Christmas are further opportunities for joyous celebration. St Mark's also organises leadership training and community activities, as well as promoting partnership.

"We strongly believe in unity of the body and actively engage with Anglican networks," said Henry. "We are working to strengthen our relationship with Christ Church Ayia Napa, St Andrew Kyrenia/Girne, also in North Cyprus, and St Mary's in Wotton, Norfolk, in the UK.

"We participate in combined services with other churches in the local community and engage in community outreach in Famagusta municipality."

The congregation of St Mark's is resilient, but it has been without a regular priest since 2020. Henry has done exceptional work to fill that gap as best he can, with the support of Anglican priests on the island and his fellow worshippers.

"But," he says, "as a congregation of young people the lack of a stable and long-term spiritual father or mother figure is deeply felt. Our young people need significant guidance in life, and frequent changes makes it difficult to settle and grow."

Henry thanked fellow Synod rep Lynette Oruc, "who has been our mother figure", as well as Mrs Takshila and her family; the Reverend Ken Gabbadon, "who has been a father figure to us"; the Reverend George Vidiakin; and "our dear Bishop Sean, always looking out for us.

"We are profoundly grateful for the support of Bishop Sean and the Diocese, and there is a renewed sense of hope within St Mark's. We are ready to grow but we seek a strong partnership that prioritises a stable presence to anchor this young and dynamic congregation.

Bishop Sean acknowledged and invited Synod to thank the anonymous donor who had made it possible for Henry to attend Synod and share his report, and "the faithfulness, the dedication, the passion for the Gospel that exists in Famagusta".

And he noted not just the financial challenges faced by St Mark's but also the physical, political challenge of crossing between the two sides of the island.

"I want to commend all those who are doing their level best, over and above ministry to their congregations in the south of the island, to support brother Henry. And Henry, in his role as lay caretaker to this congregation for many, many years, has been their lay preacher, their pastor, their administrator. He has done it all.

"Now an Ordinand in formal formation and training, please remember Henry in your prayers as he works towards fulfilling his calling."

Lynette gave thanks for her nine years at St Mark's, as she prepares to return to England. "I've taken on the role of mum with great joy. It's been fantastic. The students made me welcome from the very first day. And while I will be going back to England, I can't let them go—and discussions are underway with the wonderfully lively and progressive fellowship I return to in England, St Mary's in Wotton, a little country town in Norfolk, for us to link in some way, in prayer and support for St Mark's. They will always be my children."

*Synod representatives from St Barnabas Limassol generously gifted €1,000 in financial support to St Mark's. Please contact the Office of the Bishop to learn more about the work of St Mark's Famagusta.*



## Yemen



*Bishop Sean shared a report from Mansour Yousuf—Director of the Ras Morbat Eye Clinic, located in the grounds of Christ Church Aden*



*“Many patients cannot afford private medical care, making the clinic’s work still more vital”*

Ras Morbat Eye Clinic is a long-established charitable ophthalmology clinic located in the Ras Morbat area of Tawahi, Aden, within the compound of Christ Church. Founded in 1996, the clinic operates under the auspices of the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, in cooperation with local health authorities.

The clinic offers affordable, high-quality eye care to all, regardless of religion, background or ability to pay, serving the poor families, internally displaced, the elderly and those affected by the ongoing conflict and economic crisis in Yemen.

Ophthalmic services include eye examinations; diagnosis and treatment of common eye diseases such as cataracts, glaucoma and infections; low-cost provision of medications and prescription glasses; minor and major eye procedures and surgeries; post-operative follow-up; and long-term patient care.

The clinic functions against a backdrop of political instability, insecurity, power shortages, inflation and poverty.

Many patients cannot afford private medical care, making the clinic's work still more vital.

Despite limited resources, Ras Morbat Eye Clinic treats hundreds of patients each month and restores sight and dignity to many who would otherwise go without care. The clinic also serves as a visible sign of the Church's continuing presence and witness in Yemen, offering practical hope in very difficult circumstances.

The clinic faces significant ongoing challenges, including rising costs of medical supplies and equipment; unstable electricity supply and fuel shortages; security concerns, affecting staff and patients alike; and dependence on external donations to sustain services

And yet Ras Morbat Eye Clinic continues to provide a vital ministry of healing and service in Aden.

We are deeply grateful to the Diocese, Synod members, and all our supporters whose commitment enables this work to continue.

Your continued support makes a tangible difference in the lives of many vulnerable people in Yemen.

*To find out more about Ras Morbat or to make donation, click [here](#)*



(contd from p5)

Expressing his gratitude to *This is Bahrain*—an organisation that helped “make tangible the wise and peaceful vision of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa”—Bishop Sean said: “I cannot image a more generous welcome than we have experienced.

“Something ‘too great and too marvellous’ has happened during this Synod for me to adequately name or express, but I think we all know that we have been part of something transformative that has exceeded hopes and banished fears.”

Evening Prayer, led by the Reverend Dr David Jarratt, was followed after dinner with Compline, led by the Reverend MD Johnson.

On the final day of Synod, members had the great joy of taking part in Friday Morning Service at St

Christopher’s Cathedral—a particularly special service, as the congregation came together to bid a fond farewell to locum priest the Reverend Robert Penrith and his wife, Gay; and special for Synod members, too, for the opportunity to share once more in worship together before departing for parishes across Cyprus and the Gulf, filled with the promise of this Diocesan Year of Jubilee.

Along with the people of Synod attending the service at St Christopher’s came a spoon, and a pot filled with sand from the parishes of the Diocese: a pot to be stirred, not in the usual sense, but in a spirit of unity. For grains of sand blended can never each be returned to their respective jam jars.



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(contd from p7)

- resource management and policy for a Diocese spread over ten jurisdictions. This complex area is currently managed by the Bishop, Archdeacons and the Office of the Bishop, but this is neither sustainable nor adequate.

## MINISTRY

- A review and updating of the structure and delivery of our Vocational and Ministry programmes has been undertaken in consultation with the Diocesan Director of Ministry.

## PROVINCE

### • MEETINGS/CONFERENCES

In September 2025 a meeting of the Provincial Synod was held in Bahrain. There are ongoing discussions for the appointment of a Bishop in Iran, and much work has been done to update signatories on Provincial bank accounts.

A Provincial Clergy and Spouses conference is scheduled for late 2026.

Discussions are underway with a view to clergy from the Diocese of Jerusalem and the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf “swapping churches” for a week, to experience ministry in different contexts.

To strengthen our bonds of fellowship and mission with the Diocese of Jerusalem, the Venerable Fuad Dagher and the Revd Dr Don Binder will be made Provincial Canons of St Christopher’s Cathedral, Bahrain.

I was deeply honoured to be made an Episcopal Canon of the Cathedral of St George, Jerusalem during a service to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Province and its Dioceses.

## LINK DIOCESES

With two new bishops in our three-way link, there has been the opportunity to renew and strengthen our relationship with the Dioceses of Exeter and Thika. These links offer opportunities for mutual support, learning and solidarity.

### • DIOCESE OF EXETER

Bishop Mike Harrison came to Cyprus in September 2025 and visited most of the parishes

on the island. The potential for Cyprus to be a pilgrimage destination for clergy and people of the Diocese of Exeter is being explored. Bishop Mike will be joining me to visit several of our parishes in the Gulf in May 2026.

Bishop of Crediton the Rt Revd Moira Astin is representing the link at Synod and we are delighted to have her with us.

The Diocese of Exeter has been extremely generous in sharing safeguarding material and training opportunities with us. Discussions are underway to offer peer-to-peer support for clergy. There is also the possibility that clergy and laity visits between the two dioceses could be arranged.

### • DIOCESE OF THIKA

Bishop Julius Wanyoike is no stranger to our Synod and we are very happy to have him with us in Bahrain. I will be attending the Synod of the Diocese of Thika in April and this will be a wonderful opportunity to spend time with the people of that Diocese and explore how our relationship can be of mutual benefit to our dioceses.

In our Jubilee Year it is a great joy to bring Synod to the Kingdom of Bahrain, which models peaceful coexistence and interfaith dialogue. It is a place that naturally has a particular resonance in terms of my own vocation, following my Consecration at St Christopher’s Cathedral in 2024.

I continue to take great joy in my role as shepherd to the churches and people of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf. It is an extraordinary Diocese, as I find myself saying repeatedly to people in other parts of the world who somehow still do not know of our presence and ministry here. I am committed to doing more to tell our story—or rather the story of God’s faithfulness and light that has shone through the lives and ministries of his Anglican people in our region.

As the second-largest Anglican diocese in the world in terms of geography, we operate on limited resources and minimal funding. But whatever is offered in faith and generosity of heart, God blesses and makes adequate for the needs of the world.

May our Lord continue to bless, preserve and protect the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf in this Jubilee year and into the future.

(contd from p17)



our next port is in the US, where we will have to stay in the port, in the vessel. No other human faces—only that sea, for 42 days. So this is like stress medicine: the way we are shouting, dancing, will help to carry us, give us some strength for those days.’

MtS holds fundraising events that are also opportunities to increase public awareness about the work and lives of seafarers—ice-skating, horse racing, sponsored marathons are just some of the ways MtS has promoted its work on behalf of seafarers.

“It is also very important for children to be aware of our mission,” said Fr Franklin. “And here I’d like to mention the support of Revd Rob Jones who coordinates a programme at St Christopher’s School, where the children draw pictures and buy gifts to fill a pack as Christmas presents for the seafarers. This is so appreciated.”

# Financial report

## 2026 Diocesan budget

The 2026 Diocesan budget was presented to Synod on behalf of SFC, in terms of both minimum and ideal numbers—the latter giving greater scope for mission and growth, including proposed new project funding for church planting: an aspirational budget warmly supported by Synod

### TOTAL PROPOSED EXPENSES

	2026 Minimum Budget (£)	2026 IDEAL Budget (£)	2025 Actuals (subject to final Audit)	2025 Budget
Bishop & Central Administration	335	335	307	335
Programmes	45	130	17	45
Supported Parishes	75	75	55	75
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>455</b>

2026 BUDGET

### EXPECTED INCOME

	2026 Plan (£)	2025 Actuals (subject to final Audit)
JMECA	35	39
Episcopal Church GFO	50	58
Diocese of Cyprus & the Gulf Foundation	23	24
Other Donations	15	12
Loan repayment Grant (Datar)	15	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>148</b>

2026 BUDGET

### BISHOP & ADMINISTRATION

	2026 Minimum Budget (£)	2026 IDEAL Budget (£)	2025 Actuals (subject to final Audit)	2025 Budget
Bishop	80	80	81	80
Archdeacons	-	-	8	8
Office	160	160	159	162
Meetings	30	30	23	20
Travel	30	30	26	30
Provincial Contribution	10	10	10	10
Loan Repayment	25	25		25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>335</b>

2026 BUDGET

### PROGRAMMES

	2026 Minimum Planned Budget (£)	2026 IDEAL Budget (£)	2025 Actuals (£) (subject to final Audit)	2025 Budget
Ministry Programme	15	15	13	15
Project Funding	30	25	4	30
Church Planting		30		
Building Start-up Fund		50		
Office Consultant		10		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>45</b>

2026 BUDGET

### SUPPORTED PARISHES

	2026 Minimum Plan (£)	2026 IDEAL Plan (£)	2025 Actuals (£) (subject to final Audit)	2025 Budget
Christ Church Aden	65	65	51	65
St. Mark's Famagusta	10	10	4	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>75</b>

2026 BUDGET

### 2026 REQUIRED SUPPORT

	Expenses (MIN)	Expenses (IDEAL)	LESS Donor Income	Requested Support (MIN)	Requested Support (IDEAL)	10% of Parish Income less Depreciation
Bishop & Bishop's Office	335	335	138	197	197	
Programmes	45	130	0	45	130	
Supported Parishes	75	75	10	65	65	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>533</b>

2026 BUDGET

# 2025 Diocesan accounts

Diocesan Finance Officer Evangelia Georgakaki presented for Synod approval  
 2025 Diocesan accounts — issued in the name of the Anglican Church Cyprus Ltd (ACCL)

## STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES

€ '000	Actual 2025	Budget 2025	Actual 2024
> Parish Contributions	280	290	200
> Other Revenue	167	171	292
<b>&gt;&gt;TOTAL</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>492</b>
> Direct Expenses	(221)	(268)	(313)
> Admin Expenses	(179)	(183)	(182)
> Net Other Cash Items	(1)	0	11
> Net Finance income/(exp.)	(9)		8
<b>&gt;&gt;Surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>

ACCL - 2025



## BREAKDOWN OF OTHER REVENUE

€ '000	Actual 2025	Budget 2025	Actual 2024
JMECA	39	35	40
GFO	58	65	133
For Aden	25	25	13
Foundation	24	20	40
St Helena's	-	-	17
JEMT Cyprus	11	11	15
American Friends	3	-	-
Other	7	15	34
<b>&gt;&gt;Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>292</b>

ACCL - 2025



## BREAKDOWN OF DIRECT EXPENSES

€ '000	Actual 2025	Budget 2025	Actual 2024
Bishop	82	80	82
Archdeacons	8	8	90
Synod/Meetings	23	20	19
Travel	26	30	25
Province	10	10	10
<b>&gt;&gt;Total</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>226</b>

ACCL - 2025



## 2025 CASH POSITION

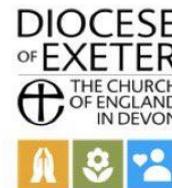
€ '000		Actual 2025
Cash		365
Receivables	Contributions, Foundation	52
<b>LESS</b>		
Designated Funds	Reserve Fund, Contingency Fund, TEC Donation	(116)
Payables	Other Creditors, Loan, Accruals	(225)
<b>Uncommitted Cash</b>		<b>76</b>

ACCL - 2025



# Reports from link dioceses

## Exeter



*Bishop of Crediton the Right Reverend Moira Astin, from Companion Diocese of Exeter, shared reflections with Synod*

I have a particular interest in Christianity in Britain. Christianity came to Britain in the second century, and we have evidence in Exeter. Some people say, well, it must be after 312, when Constantine decided that being a Christian was okay. But why? Could it be earlier?

We have these ancient stones, which are carved and although there's been some debate about other things, these are utterly accepted as evidence of Christianity. Devon's got a handful of them—as does the neighbouring county of Cornwall or, as Bishop Moira referred to it, “the other part of Devon”. (As she quite reasonably explained, “Exeter Cathedral charter curses on anybody who splits the land beyond the Tamar from the land of Devon.”) “So, it is a really ancient Christian land and our challenge is to remind the people of their roots. England has gone through a tough patch for the last 60-70 years, but we've got to a point now where people are beginning to realise that the assumption that the only things that matter are the things you can touch and hold misses out a whole amount of human experience.

“I tend to say humans are like frogs, because a frog could spend its whole life in the water, have its babies in the water, but would miss what it was like to jump.

“Human beings can live a life which is purely physical, but they'd miss what it's like for their spirits to soar.

“I had a sense as a teenager that I was called to be a missionary, and in my early 20s, I realised I was called to be a missionary to England. And that's what I aim to still do, mainly by encouraging others.”



The Diocese of Exeter has 595 churches and has just reached agreement to build another one, setting aside 2.5 million pounds to do so. “We are going to have to sell some family silver. But, by God's grace, those old Christians gave and we're still using some of their legacy to get through this patch so that, by God's grace, the church will grow again, and we won't need to sell all their legacy.”

Exeter has about 220 paid clergy, 400 retired clergy, three bishops, four archdeacons and up to 23,000 worshippers.

The ten-year vision of the Diocese is summed up in three words: pray, grow, serve—to grow in prayer, to

have more people worshipping God—because why wouldn't God want that—and the more people you have worshipping God, the better able you are to serve”.

Bishop Moira conceded that this was in fact the vision of the last ten years. But she said, “It's working” (with the added advantage that the mug it's printed on remains relevant).

“The church commissioners who manage what I call the dead Christians' money in England have given us the promise of 10 million pounds for the next three years to invest in mission”—much of it going to Plymouth—while Devon's many church schools, “also a gift from the dead Christians”, continue to be used “by living people, to the glory of God”, making possible work alongside them to form Christian communities worshipping in them, led by youngsters—a source of joy to the people of the Diocese.

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# Thika



*The Right Reverend Julius Wanyoike, Bishop of Thika, shared news of worship and work in Companion Diocese of Thika, in Kenya*



Bishop Julius brought greetings and love from his wife, Esther, and the Diocese of Thika, saying “we are grateful to God for this partnership of dioceses”.

Thika is in the middle of its Decade Ministry Strategy, focusing on teaching and proclaiming Jesus Christ as Messiah in church and at home. The Strategy plots a journey to 2032, when Bishop Julius will retire, laying the foundation for “inspiring generations for Christ” (Ps145: 4).

Regular meetings of clergy in each of the five archdeaconries are an “opportunity for clergy to break barriers and bring kingdoms down. Clergy in a parish can feel ‘this is my turf,’” said Bishop Julius. “So it is important for us to meet and share ideas, with clergy each presenting and critiquing plans for the parish.”

The past year focused on discipleship, spiritual formation, nurturing gifts and talents, pastoral care, community, impact, leadership and resource mobilisation at the level of “cell groups” in every parish.

Cell groups are large, with gatherings for worship centring on lay members but also attended by licensed ministers. Despite—or perhaps because of—their size, cell groups are “a place where believers find warmth”.

Another focus over the past year has been church growth and planting churches—buying land and, until a church is built, starting meetings of congregations in tents. “This is the great exodus from the comfortable sanctuary. Getting into the wilderness and under a tent.” Congregations can be over 200

people, with the goal of planting three congregations a year.

“We thank God for the kind of religious tolerance and freedom we have. Open-air preaching is one way in which we plant a church: we begin with an open-air campaign, and then we tell members ‘We have a place that we are letting; come so that we can worship together.’

And we thank God for the resources the people have drawn on. Where we have built a church, they are putting in seats.”

Thika also runs programmes on financial literacy, providing food to the needy and financial empowerment—including providing resources to church members so that they can produce and sell eggs. There is also work to recognise social impact: showing appreciation to police officers and soldiers serving over Christmas, unable to return to their families, by giving them meat and flour.

“Colonel Joseph prayed with the soldiers, giving them flour, and I provided the meat—a goat.”

An environmental conservation programme aims to plant 15 million trees, with planting held after every service. “We do so religiously,” said Bishop Julius.

Sector ministry for women, children and teens this year included a Mothers’ Union conference, with 6,000 attending. At the same time, a Men’s Ministry strategy focuses on spirituality, leadership and empowerment, reaching out to men “irrespective of whether they are of our churches”.

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# Reflections on The Cry:

## The Cry of Jubilee, The Cry of the Body and The Cry of Now



*Synod Speaker Martha Jarvis,  
Anglican Communion Permanent Representative  
to the United Nations,  
shared three reflections over the course of Synod*

### The Cry of Jubilee

*Martha's opening talk took as its starting point the UN climate change negotiations—COP29—in Azerbaijan, where an event was organised around the issue of debt, with speakers from the three Abrahamic traditions: Rabbi Yonatan, a rabbi based in Jerusalem who works on sustainability; Dr Iqbal, vice-president of the Islamic Development Bank; and Archbishop Julio Murray, former archbishop of Panama and Anglican Communion then-lead on climate change (see image top left, next page).*

*"The representative from the Islamic Development Bank spoke in really interesting ways about how Islam prohibits usury—so, the extreme form of interest—but also, in many cases, prohibits interest full stop, and about how the Islamic Development Bank, was having its Jubilee.*

*"When it was founded no one thought it would work, because they only did project-based lending—for a specific innovation, a specific building design, a specific new technology to enable development and green transition.*

*"Then we turn to the rabbi, and he's holding up a ram's horn, symbolising Jubilee—the Hebrew word, *yool*, from which we get Jubilee. In the Jewish tradition, he said, Jubilee means the trumpet blast of liberation—and he played this ram's horn in the middle of COP negotiation side event. It was wonderful—so incongruous, so different other conversations we were having, but it felt like joy and liberation and celebration.*

*"And then Archbishop Julio spoke, in Christian terms, about how we often associate forgiveness with debt, and that there is a very similar feeling of freedom when you have been forgiven, as when your debts have been repaid, and also a sense of dignifying both parties—the forgiver and the forgiven, the creditor and the debtor—when we are able to create a blank slate, as Jesus does for us and as Jubilee does in systems of debt, systems of financial oppression.*

*"Going back to Rabbi Yonatan, several things really struck me. He said this idea of Jubilee entered into Jewish teaching for the fundamental reason that power belongs to God, and that every 50 years, humans needed a reminder of that. Humans needed a reminder that their power over another human being, financially, couldn't continue forever. 'Just imagine what our world would be like if every 50 years debt was forgiven,' he said.*

*"Just imagine. But my point isn't that that is practically going to happen. My point is that the essence of Jubilee, the essence of what that would mean for our world, I think, is what our systems are crying out for. You can hear it in a lot of the conversations at the moment among politicians. Mark Carney, the prime minister of Canada's recent speech at Davos: he is essentially calling a lot of countries back to a sense of integrity, a sense of legitimacy and of naming things for what they are. He's calling for a reset, which is very much like Jubilee.*

*"A lot of our conflicts, a lot of our heartfelt cries for justice, are about the need for our liberation: the need*

*(contd p31)*



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not to sit under the oppression of another country, and also pointing to the need for liberation for those countries that would oppress others.”

## The Cry of the Body

“Yesterday, the cry of Jubilee; today, the cry of the body. What difference does it make that we respond as part of a worldwide Anglican Communion and as part of a worldwide church, the very body of Christ?

“I want to start with one of my most memorable experiences of being part of the Anglican Communion. In 2018 we were in a town called Bor in South Sudan, as guests of the Archbishop of South Sudan and after a 30 minute Mission Aviation Fellowship flight from the capital, we landed on the dirt runway to be greeted by a marching band and streets lined with people, and the Archbishop was piled into this pickup truck, and there was a procession all the way from the airport to the Cathedral in a tin shed in the middle of the town.

“The cathedral service was jam packed. You can see the kind of energy of the people who had come out to line the streets and were inside that cathedral, and they just loved the fact that the archbishop was with them. We went through the confession, and then the marching band caught up with us and entered the Cathedral, about 10 minutes after the service had started—it was such a fun interruption.

“Later that day, we gathered by the river Nile for dinner and darkness fell, and the mosquitoes came

out, and the Mothers’ Union were there with their scarves wafting the mosquitoes away. I have to say, the Mothers’ Union do phenomenal work across South Sudan. They are a backbone of the church there: so many women I know have been through their literacy and micro-finance training, which has been transformational. But this night, they were on mosquito duty, and I was very, very grateful for them.

“We were there because South Sudan was very fresh from live conflict, and we wanted to see how we could build on the legacy of the South Sudanese churches in peacemaking. One of the ways that we could do that was to bring the gifts, the riches of peacemaking that the South Sudanese church has, to other places of the Anglican Communion.

“The South Sudanese Church, the Anglican Church, working as part of a wider Council of Churches, is, to a large degree, responsible for the fact that South Sudan became independent peacefully. They were the people who crossed divides into enemy tribal regions, who went to different villages, who sat down with chiefs, who risked lives to start a dialogue that eventually ended in a peaceful independence movement.

“We need to know what our church is capable of, and to know that there are gifts of peacemaking that the world is crying out for.

“We were also there to use what the churches were seeing to inform government responses—to speak into the politics, raising the problems that were being faced with the British government, the Kenyan government, the Ugandan Government, all of those

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who were influential. Working not just within the Anglican networks but within the wider body of Christ, we were able to bring together a witness across different churches that had never been done before.

“When the South Sudanese leaders were yet to form a transitional government, they were still in the mindset of war but they had signed a peace agreement. One of them was under house arrest in a different country, and the diplomatic community didn’t know what to do. But the Pope, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Presbyterian moderator of the Church of Scotland invited those leaders still in conflict to the Vatican, where they came and sat down together, and had a spiritual retreat, getting to the heart of their disagreements and giving space for them to be human again, not just the President, the Vice President, the leader of this group.

“At the very end of the retreat, the Pope went slightly off script in a remarkable way. He delivered this beautiful speech, and then he got up and stood in front of the political leaders, and he said: ‘From my heart as a brother, stay in peace.’ Then he got down on the floor, and he kissed each of their feet as a symbol of what he was hoping for.

“A few years later the churches, again in an historic first, visited South Sudan on a pilgrimage of peace—partly a call for accountability for what they had committed to at the retreat: to say, you responded to that feet-kissing cry for peace. What has happened?

“A transitional government had formed, but it wasn’t bringing peace across the nation as had been hoped for. The church was going there to strengthen

the voice of the people. Around 70,000 people came together for an ecumenical service, some people walking for six days to be there. People of every tribe and every part of the church came together, because

of their faith, in a way that was very, very rare in South Sudanese society.

“The end of our story, where we’re all headed, is what Revelation tells us about a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and people and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white with palm branches in their hands. And this is a witness to our political systems, because it was Jesus’s prayer. It was Jesus’s promise that they would know that Jesus is sent from the Father when we are one.

“And so what, really, does it mean for us to be one—and not just to be one, but one body? What does that mean for our worldwide church? What does

that mean for us here? The Anglican Communion is an attempt to write this story across the world. The Anglican Communion is about 165 countries, nearly 90 million people, organised into 42 independent and yet interdependent churches. It is alive with the beauty and diversity that we’ve spoken about and with the witness that we’ve spoken about across this incredible world,

“The organisation that I work with on a day-to-day basis, the Anglican Communion Office, is there to serve the connections between this beautifully, incredibly diverse part of the body of Christ, there to facilitate conversations, strengthen relationships and to build those into our witness worldwide. “This body has power, I think, in a world that is



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grappling with how to relate to each other internationally, firstly, because it is a body that feels. We are not described as water that is here one minute, gone the next. We're not described as glass that is fragile and shatters. We're not described as rock that is impenetrable. We are a body that feels, that is tough, that is resilient, that dances, that is dynamic.

“Again, we see this in the scriptures, that we come together in our differences and in our diversity, to play different roles in that body and to be dependent on each other. And when we do that we are able to rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. This is a very genuine feeling, a response.

“You will all know this when you look at the news and you know people in places of the world that are suffering and you want to respond, or when someone in your parish has had an incredible achievement or a major life milestone, and you want to rejoice with them.

“In my work, part of what this might look like is work that we did last year around the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, last January, there was a major escalation of the violence there, and the two of the main cities in the East were taken and many, many people displaced from their homes, horrific atrocities committed.

“We were able to get onto the phone with the Bishop of Goma and ask, ‘What would help?’ And we were able to connect him to people at the UN, in the US government, in the UK government, South Africa, Kenya, to say, this is what people are experiencing in that conflict. This is how our part of the body is hurting. This is how we would love to see you respond—and not just, interestingly, politically with a witness, but into commercial realms, with investors and mining companies active in the area.

“As we move towards a green economy and need the minerals in this area, more and more are going to be investing and active in eastern DRC. We are able to say to businesses and investors, ‘This is what will make a difference to peace for this part of our body, this is what we encourage you to think about.’ And

not only that, but we can facilitate dialogue with the very people who are experiencing that.

“This is part of the gift of being a worldwide body, that when one part hurts, we can all respond. We're a body that feels but we're also a body that acts in particular ways, and is at its best when it's acting in particular ways. We are a body that opens itself in embrace.

“The Croatian theologian Miroslav Volf wrote about the Christian faith, and particularly about Jesus's journey to the cross and to the resurrection, and he encapsulates the Christian

approach, the Christian faith, as the will to embrace, the will to open your arms. This is Jesus's gesture on the cross, and Volf calls it ‘a scandal’.

“He calls it a scandal because as you open your arms and embrace, you open yourself to all of the possibilities of return, a joyous, reciprocal response that results in new life, new relationship, new hope. But you also open yourself to further pain, to rejection. You open in that act of embrace the most vulnerable parts of yourself. And so he calls that the scandal of our faith.

“Hear me right: I am not saying that embrace is always appropriate in every single situation where abuse has occurred. But what we are saying is that it is so easy, in lots of our situations of tension, disagreement and injustice, to close our arms, to shut everything down, and this is what Volf calls the ‘posture of exclusion’. His book, *Exclusion and embrace* asks how do we move from exclusion to embrace?

*The Croatian theologian  
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This is Jesus's gesture on the  
cross, and Volf calls it  
‘a scandal’*

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“Volf says that people continue in this scandalous way of embrace, the way of the church to embrace, precisely because in that scandal, they have discovered a promise. I think the promise is that regardless of the outcome, God is with us and we are following in the steps that Jesus took, and we have the Holy Spirit as our guide and as our comforter and as our reassurer. If we never open our arms in embrace, we will never experience the joy of it being reciprocated.

“And so in South Sudan, there was a will to embrace. There was an opening from the church to try something. It wasn't necessarily reciprocated by the political leaders. There is still a lot of conflict, but that will to embrace was there, and I think we see this in a lot of what the Anglican Communion does globally.

“The Anglican Communion is also working to address climate change, with its worldwide ecosystem restoration initiative, called the Communion Forest—from the church in Kenya planting 15 million trees, to prairies in Kansas, in the US and mangroves across the Pacific being restored. It's not just a nice example of doing some planting and some weeding. It is prophetic hope to say that the changes that we see around us are not the end; and even if our political and economic systems don't respond in the way that we hope, we want to open our arms as an embrace of this world that God has created and be part of restoring that.

“The real joy in that this is a start for how we then want to see our governments respond. Last year we took this piece of work through to the COP climate change negotiations and into governments around the

Anglican Communion. We called it Lungs of the Earth, because these are the very ecosystems that are allowing our world to breathe, that are keeping our air clean, that are reducing the amount of carbon in the air and so keeping our temperatures down.

“So if in your church you are restoring forest land, then you might start to care what your government is doing about logging and about deforestation, and you might have a conversation with them; and if you care about the oceans, and if you are restoring mangroves and cleaning out plastic and speaking about the fact that your islands might disappear in the next few years, then you're going to want to talk to your government about how they are supporting the resilience of communities in island nations, in coastal nations, against flooding, because communities can be resilient to a lot of these shocks, but it needs investment and it needs cooperation with the people of the community who are so often the people of the church. And if you care about the ice caps, if you're part of the Anglican Diocese of the Arctic, for example, then you care about emissions in other parts of our world, because that's what's melting your ice and changing your ways of hunting and of getting to particular places in your diocese. So this is a beautiful way of embracing our world and of working as one body together.

“This body has Jesus as its head. It's very obvious, yes, but I think it has a profound witness. I think it can free us to see our dignity as part of that body, with Jesus as its honoured head. We serve Him, not the

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voices of accusation or the voices of oppression. It also frees us to be deeply humble—that sometimes the body gets out of shape, the body's not working as well as it could, and we need to change. 'We need to shape up' leaves room for repentance and restoration.

"I won't have time to do them complete justice, but examples of this include last year's UN Permanent Forum on Issues of African Descent, at which the Archbishop of York joined senior political leaders from St Lucia, Jamaica, Ghana and Barbados to talk about the Church of England's work to reckon with how it benefited through its investments from enslavement of peoples across Western Africa and the Caribbean.

"The Church of England went through a process of deep repentance as they recognised the amount of money that they had benefited from, and since then it has been a continuing dialogue to try to understand how they could repair that wrong. Part of it was for Archbishop Stephen to sit with leaders from some of the countries deeply affected to say, 'This is where we've got to in our process. Please give honest feedback about where we need to go next.'

"Then, there was the sacred circle in Canada, a gathering of indigenous Anglicans—a phenomenal gathering, full of life, but also full of the legacy of how indigenous peoples were damaged by the churches of colonisation. My church particularly. And this represents part of an ongoing journey of healing; of us saying, 'How do we repair those relationships?'

"That is not just in apology, and it's not just in self-determination—which is what the indigenous

Anglican church there is aiming for: it's also about how we recognise that it is these voices of the indigenous Christians that really show us the way on issues like climate change. Because it is they who have lived with the Earth in such a rooted way that they understand God's patterns, the patterns of the Creator, in ways that are powerful, and also they have not been subject to a lot of the same consumerist systems that are driving a lot of our climate damage.

"So how do we not just apologise and move on, but how do we genuinely, as a body with Jesus as its head, listen to the people that need to be listened to?

"A nice light one to finish on: theological differences. No one ever has any of those! Theological differences are a reality in our Anglican Communion, and they are pressing. Some churches of the Anglican Communion wouldn't recognise the leadership of Canterbury at the moment, which is where the group affectionately known as IASCUFO—the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity Faith and Order, one of the main forums where the Anglican Communion, does its theological and ecclesiological reflection. This diverse group of theologians from different perspectives, different traditions and different countries of the Anglican Communion came together to propose a way forward amidst some of these persistent divisions—the [Nairobi-Cairo Proposals](#), which I would really recommend to you: a deep dive on the theology of some of our divisions and what it means to be Anglican (see photo above).

"Their two proposals acknowledge that the Anglican

(contd p36)

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## *The Cry of Love*

*Synod Speaker Martha Jarvis reflected on the story of Jesus and the woman at the well to explore:*

*The power of presence – questioning who is truly the guest and who is the host*

*The power of gentleness – challenging unloving status quos*

*The power of freedom – discovering glory in the ordinary*

*(contd from p35)*

Communion now looks very different from where it started. Just as when the UN Security Council was formed by those five powers—the UK, US, China, France and Russia—things are now very different, the same is true of the Anglican Communion.

“So how do we, without losing the value that Canterbury has for us, reflect the reality of the Communion in our leadership and in our decision-making processes? And how do we understand what it means to be Anglican through the historic value of Canterbury, but also the dynamism of relationships that have grown since Canterbury was the mother church?”

“These conversations are never easy. We are a body, and therefore we can suffer wounds. But that idea of Jesus being our head can, in these conversations, give us a profound witness to a world where international relations and perceptions of the other are often entirely without grace; where it can be really difficult in any kind of political or economic discussion to bring humility into that conversation; and to bring the dignity that is owed to us as part of a body with Jesus as its head. So the way that we do these conversations matters.

“The good news is that we know the end of the story. We know that vision, in Revelation, is a reality. And so we step forward with hope, not as a feeling, not as wishful thinking, but as a conviction of a known future that changes how we act today.

“So that is our hope: all of the nations of Revelation coming together under Jesus with God in our very midst. That is what we can channel into our conversations now for a world that is crying out for it.”

## The Cry of Love

Martha’s final address drew on Psalm 85: 10—“truth and mercy have met together. Justice and peace have kissed.”

She went on to describe the many networks and commissions of the Anglican Communion, drawing it together and working to practically and fully engage with the challenges faced by the world today—from the Environmental Network to the Safe Church Commission, the Youth Network, the Inter Faith Commission, the Church Planting Network and more.

Further illustrating her theme of The Cry of Love, she turned to Mozambique and Bishop Dinis Sengulane—part of a group of church leaders who were instrumental in bringing to an end the country’s 16-year civil war, crossing enemy lines to mediate between the government and the opposition groups.

“He described going to the government and saying ‘We need peace’—to which they responded, ‘We have to keep fighting. There is no other way.’

“And then they went to the opposition group, RENAMO, saying ‘We need peace’—to which they responded, ‘We have to keep fighting. There is no other way.’

“As Bishop Dinis said, ‘We had to show them the way. We had to show them the way of Jesus, the way of shining.’

“We might think we need to show them the cry of love and respond to that—that sometimes there can be a way that Jesus leads us down that we’re not yet seeing. And, in all likelihood, until Jesus comes again, that won’t solve everything. It won’t resolve a lot of the issues that are on our hearts. But it can make a transformative difference in the way that Jesus’s encounter with the woman at the well did. It can have that contagious impact on our homes, on our communities and on nations.

“So that’s the cry of love that I think we are responding to; that is the ‘how’ of the way we respond to the cry for Jubilee and the cry of the body. In a time of transition and rupture internationally that we’ve seen across the UN and across a lot of our politics, this is a moment for us to hear God afresh, to hear what the stones would cry out for.”

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# Synod Prayer

*God of mission, we are Your Church,  
Christ's body in the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf,  
Your holy people for Your needy world.  
In our listening, help us to hear Your voice.  
In our speaking, help us to bless and encourage each other.  
In our thinking, give us wisdom.  
In our planning, give us faith to move mountains.  
In our action, give us the power of Your Holy Spirit.  
So that all we do and think and say may be for Your glory  
and for the growth of the kingdom of your Son,  
our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.*



**SYNOD BUSINESS BEGAN EACH DAY WITH THE LIGHTING OF A CANDLE AND THE SYNOD PRAYER, IN A CONFERENCE HALL GENEROUSLY DECORATED WITH FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS IN THE COLOURS OF THE DIOCESE – A MOVING GESTURE BY SYNOD SUPPORTERS *THIS IS BAHRAIN*, WHOSE UNSTINTING EFFORTS ENSURED THIS GOLDEN JUBILEE SYNOD WAS TRULY EXCEPTIONAL**

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## Synod 2027

Synod 2027 will meet on 1-4 February at the Lordos Beach Hotel in Larnaca, Cyprus

# House Elections

## House of Laity



**CYPRUS CO-CHAIR  
DEBORAH  
GRAHAM**



**GULF CO-CHAIR  
CHRISTIANA  
NWANDU**

## House of Clergy



**CHAIR  
REVD GEORGE  
VIDIAKIN**

### STANDING AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

#### HOUSE OF LAITY

##### **Elected Members**

Cyprus: Mr Chris Clapham 2026 – 2029

Gulf: Mrs Louise Bougourd 2025 – 2028

##### **Elected Alternates**

Cyprus: Mrs Sue Mantovani 2026 – 2027

Gulf: Mrs Christiana Nwandu 2025 – 2028

*(completing Mr Chris Clapham's term)*

#### HOUSE OF CLERGY

The Ven Paul Carr *(ex officio)*

The Ven Mark Derry *(ex officio)*

##### **Elected Members**

Cyprus: The Revd Deborah Moorgas 2025 – 2028

Gulf: The Revd Prem Mitra 2025 – 2028

##### **Elected Alternates**

Cyprus: The Revd John Attenborough 2026 – 2027

Gulf: The Revd Franklin Isaac 2025 – 2028

*(Revd Navina Thompson from May 2026)*

### CO-CHAIRS: HOUSE OF LAITY

Cyprus: Mrs Deborah Graham 2025 – 2028

Gulf: Mrs Christiana Nwandu 2026 – 2029

*(re-elected)*

*(re-elected)*

##### **Elected Alternates**

Cyprus: Mr Chris Clapham 2026 – 2029

Gulf: Mrs Manisha Cornelius 2026 – 2027

*(completing Mrs Beulah Miller's term)*

### CHAIR: HOUSE OF CLERGY

The Revd George Vidiakin 2025 – 2028

The Revd Kent Middleton *(Alternate Chair)* 2025 – 2028

### PROVINCIAL SYNOD

#### HOUSE OF LAITY

Cyprus: Mr Chris Clapham 2026 – 2031

Gulf: Mr David Axtell 2026 – 2031

*(re-elected)*

##### **Elected Alternates**

Cyprus: Mrs Sue Mantovani 2022 – 2027

Gulf: Mrs Louise Bougourd 2023 – 2028

#### HOUSE OF CLERGY

The Revd Drew Schmotzer 2026 – 2031

##### **Elected Alternate**

The Ven Mark Derry 2026 – 2031

*(contd p39)*

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(contd from p38)

**WORKING GROUP to review Diocesan Constitution and Standing Orders**

HOUSE OF LAITY

**Elected Members**

Cyprus: Mr Chris Clapham  
Ms Linda Balfe (Mr Brian Forey from June 2026)  
Gulf: Mr Pushpak Gilbert  
Mr Mathew Joseph

**Elected Alternates**

Cyprus: Mr Talal Kawar  
Gulf: Mrs Olga Kuznetsova

HOUSE OF CLERGY

**Elected Members**

Cyprus: The Revd George Vidiakin  
The Ven Paul Carr  
Gulf: The Revd Canon Dr Michael Mbona  
The Revd Kent Middleton (chair)

**Elected Alternates**

Cyprus: The Very Revd Dr Walter Brownridge  
Gulf: The Revd MD Johnson

**SUB-COMMITTEE to draw up terms for, and consider, applications to Contingency Fund**

HOUSE OF LAITY

**Elected Members**

Ms Manisha Cornelius	2024 – 2027
Mr Arun Kanagaraj	2024 – 2027
Mrs Marina Peters	2024 – 2027
Mr Gabriel Simpri	2024 – 2027

**Elected Alternates**

Mrs Jessy George	2025 – 2028
Mrs Fozia Prince	2025 – 2028

HOUSE OF CLERGY

**Elected Members**

Cyprus: The Revd Alec Mitchell	2024 – 2027	(Very Revd Walter Brownridge from June 2026)
Gulf: The Revd Dr Franklin Isaac	2024 – 2027	

**Elected Alternates**

Cyprus: The Ven Paul Carr	2026 – 2027	(completing Revd Geoff Graham's term)
Gulf: The Revd MD Johnson	2024 – 2027	

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**Vacancy-in-See Committee Members (one-year terms)**

**HOUSE OF CLERGY**

THE REVD DR DAVID JARRATT  
THE REVD JOHN ATTENBOROUGH  
THE REVD NAVINA THOMPSON (CYPRUS ALTERNATE)  
THE REVD CANON DR MICHAEL Mbona (GULF ALTERNATE)

**HOUSE OF LAITY**

MRS MARGARET CHARALAMBIDES  
MR BRIAN FOREY  
MRS OLGA KUZNETSOVA  
MRS JULIA UNDEVIK  
(CYPRUS ALTERNATE) MRS JANET DYKES  
(GULF ALTERNATE) MRS PRIYANKA ABNIS

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# Synod Motions

## Motion 1

Synod receives and approves September 2025 Synod minutes

*The motion was unanimously approved*

## Motion 2

That Synod approve the creation of an Archdeaconry of Northern Arabia consisting of the parishes in the countries of Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait and Qatar, and the central territories of the Arabian Peninsula; and an Archdeaconry of Southern Arabia consisting of the parishes of the countries of the UAE, Oman and Yemen.

*The motion was approved with 1 abstention*

## Motion 3

Synod tasks the Constitutional Review Committee with drafting all required proposals to amend the Diocesan Constitution to accommodate the new Archdeaconries, with these proposals and a timeline for their implementation to be presented to an Extraordinary Meeting of Synod to be held in September 2026.

*The motion was unanimously approved*

## Motion 4

Synod approves the Bishop's Task Force proposals on Cathedrals.

*The motion was unanimously approved*

## Motion 5

Synod tasks the Constitutional Review Committee with drafting amendments/articles required to accommodate (11) BTF proposals on Cathedral Deans, a Vicar General and Honorary Canons.

1. That a church may be designated a Cathedral by recommendation of the Bishop and with the support of the church in question and a majority of Synod, where such a Cathedral is deemed to have a strategic location, to be able to fulfil its role as a centre of liturgical excellence, theological teaching and civic engagement.

2. That a Cathedral can be returned to the status of Parish Church by writ of the Bishop with the majority support of Synod, and after consultation with the Dean and Cathedral Council.

3. That a candidate for Dean will be required to have a minimum of 10 years in Holy Orders.

4. That a Dean is, in the first instance, the parish priest of the Cathedral parish.

5. That Deans will rank as the most senior priests of the Diocese.

(contd p41)



SYNOD 2026 MEMBERS, OBSERVERS AND STAFF AT PRINCESS SABEKA PARK, AWALI

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(contd from p40)

6. That Deans will alternate each Synodical year as the Vicar General of the Diocese, representing the Bishop in Administrative and Pastoral matters as directed or required through episcopal vacancy, sabbatical or incapacity.

7. That Deans will be members of the Standing and Finance Committee.

8. That each Cathedral of the Diocese will have a College of Honorary Canons.

9. That Honorary Canons—selected for their modelling of exceptional ministry and service in or for the Diocese or for their potential to contribute to the ongoing mission of the Diocese and Cathedral—will be appointed by the Bishop, after consultation with the relevant Dean and other parties, to retire at the age of 70—when, at the discretion of the Bishop, the title of Canon Emeritus may sometimes be awarded. Their role might include promoting the Cathedral locally and internationally, fundraising, developing Cathedral-to-Cathedral links with companion Dioceses or contacts in the Anglican Communion, and supporting the liturgical and teaching charism of the Cathedral.

10. The Chair of the College of Canons will be the Dean of the Cathedral, and the College will meet at least annually. The College of Canons will act in an advisory and supportive role to the Dean and Cathedral, with authority for decision-making reserved entirely for the Cathedral Council. The Bishop may attend meetings of the College of Canons.

11. Honorary Canons can be removed by the Bishop, after consultation, for past or present behaviour that brings the Diocese into disrepute.

*The motion was unanimously approved*

#### **Motion 6**

Synod tasks the Bishop's Task Force with presenting these (11) proposals and a timeline for their implementation to an Extraordinary Meeting of Synod to be held in September 2026.

*The motion was unanimously approved*

#### **Motion 7**

This Synod affirms:

(a) the establishing of an Archdeaconry Forum in each Archdeaconry, chaired by the relevant Archdeacon, to hold meetings at least biannually to which all Archdeaconry licensed and PtO clergy and members of parish electoral rolls are invited, to offer input on Diocesan and parish issues between and in support of meetings of Synod;

*The motion was approved with 1 against*

(b) the establishing of an Archdeaconry Council in each Archdeaconry, consisting of two members of the House of Clergy and two members of the House of Laity from the relevant Archdeaconry appointed by the Bishop following recommendations that arise from the relevant Archdeaconry Forum for a two-year term to serve a maximum of two consecutive terms and chaired by the relevant Archdeacon, to assist in the governance of that Archdeaconry with particular regard to HR and legal issues.

*The motion was approved with 6 against*

#### **Motion 8**

This Synod affirms the establishment of a Diocesan Young Adults Council, comprising up to two representatives (aged 18–35) from each parish; chaired by a member elected annually by the Council; operating under the guidance of a ministry chaplain nominated by the Bishop from among the licensed and PtO clergy of the Diocese; with the Council Chair and one additional member attending Synod as extraordinary members of the House of Laity under a special regime, and attending any other meetings at the discretion of the Bishop.

*The motion was approved with 2 against and 1 abstention*

#### **Motion 9**

Synod approves the conducting of annual parish surveys to provide the Bishop and Synod with a comprehensive understanding of the Diocese.

*The motion was unanimously approved*

#### **Motion 10**

Subject to final audit, Synod receives and approves the Diocesan (ACCL) financial statements for 2025.

*The motion was unanimously approved*

#### **Motion 11**

Synod receives and approves the report on the Diocesan Ministry programme.

*The motion was approved with 1 abstention*

#### **Motion 12**

Synod receives and approves the proposed Diocesan budget for 2026.

*The motion was approved with 1 abstention*

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# seen@synod





**TOP: MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION OF ST CHRISTOPHER'S CATHEDRAL, BAHRAIN WITH BISHOP SEAN, JENNY AND FORMER DEAN CANON CHRIS BUTT, AT THE JUBILEE GALA DINNER, GENEROUSLY HOSTED BY THIS IS BAHRAIN AT THE GULF HOTEL.**

**ABOVE: ON BEHALF OF THE DIOCESAN MOTHERS' UNION, CO-PRESIDENT PAULINE MITRA GIFTED WORLDWIDE MU PRESIDENT KATHLEEN SNOW A SHAWL IN THE UNION COLOURS**



**ABOVE: THE MOST REVEREND ALDO BERARDI, APOSTOLIC VICAR OF NORTHERN ARABIA, SENT A BEAUTIFUL ARRANGEMENT OF FLOWERS WITH A MESSAGE CONVEYING HIS CONGRATULATIONS TO BISHOP SEAN AND THE DIOCESE ON ITS GOLDEN JUBILEE**