

Priorities and Plans 2025-2027

The Cast the Net visioning process has given the Diocese of Toronto the time to listen, discern, pray and wait for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. John 21 became our portion of scripture to help us reflect on how we are being called into the future. Like the disciples fishing all night and catching nothing, it would have been easier for us to wring our hands and lower our heads and just give in to the hardship of the pandemic. Yet, the call of Jesus to the Church is persistent... *cast the net to the right side of the boat...* and the disciples did. The nets were full, and the boat was swamped with the catch. The disciples knew instinctively that they did not do this on their own, that this was not just a moment of good fortune; they knew that Jesus had done this thing for them. And we do too.

The 96-page Cast the Net report was distilled into 20 Calls. They have become a compass, a guiding document, reminders of what we learned during our wilderness experience in COVID, aspirational benchmarks for parishes, ministries, small groups, committees, diocesan staff, Synod Council and Synod. The 20 Calls form the foundation of our work and ministry for the season ahead.

At the center of our work is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and our ministry hinges on the four axes: Renewing Spirituality, Inspiring Faith in Action, Reimagining Ministry, and Transforming Diocesan Culture. Our priorities and plans for 2025-2027 herein represent how we are called to live in this new season as the Diocese of Toronto.

Renewing Spirituality

We are renewed daily in our spiritual lives and share our faith with others. - Calls 1-3

The Season of Spiritual Renewal continues to call us to pray, study and grow in our faith. Workshops, educational events, training moments and large worship services have helped to draw us together and to remember how Jesus is calling us to serve the world God loves. The Season comes to its natural close at the end of Epiphany in 2026. The Diocese will discern what is next and how we will continue to support these initiatives and our collective call to discipleship.

Youth and children's ministry initiatives will continue to be important foci over the next two years. The Youth Ministry Apprenticeship program coordinators and the Archidiaconal Youth Ministry coordinators will continue to be supported in the operating budget.

We are called to tell the good story. Communication is at the heart of our mutual ministry. We will continue to provide timely information, resources and support to clergy and laity of the Diocese through the website, *The Anglican, Bulletin Board*, and social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. We will support parishes and ministries to engage the digital world.

Inspiring Faith in Action

We seek justice for all, walk alongside those in need and respond with loving service and prophetic advocacy. - Calls 4-8

We will continue to advocate at all levels of government for affordable housing for all and for an end to homelessness.

We will continue to advocate for adequate income supports, wages and working conditions that enable people to meet their basic needs and uphold human dignity and well-being.

By Synod 2027:

- At least one advocacy workshop will have been held in every Archdeaconry in the Diocese, to equip Anglicans to write and visit their elected representatives.
- At least 65% of parishes will have passed the Social Justice Vestry Motion each year.
- At least 35% of parishes in the Diocese will have engaged with government in some form of advocacy on issues of poverty and/or affordable housing (letter-writing, visits, town halls, all-candidates' meetings, etc.).

We will continue to participate in the work of refugee resettlement by encouraging and equipping parishes to work with the Anglican United Refugee Alliance (AURA).

By Synod 2027:

- At least 25% of parishes in the Diocese will be involved in refugee sponsorship (up from 16.5% at the end of 2024).

We will support and challenge the Diocese to address the climate crisis through education, prayer, liturgy, advocacy and action, in partnership with the wider Church.

By Synod 2027:

- At least 50% of diocesan parishes will have enrolled in energy audit/benchmarking programs (i.e. in partnership with Zero Emission Churches).
- The Volunteer Corps will include property consultants to advise parishes on energy conservation, retrofits and moving toward zero-emission energy sources.

- We will have developed a theological framework for property decisions and a creation care plan to minimize environmental impact.
- We will have launched a Diocesan Development Plan, pre-development fund, and toolkit to guide ministry-focused property projects.
- With Mission Alignment, we will ensure parish developments prioritize mission and community needs, with support for renovations and energy conservation.
- At least 25% of parishes will have participated in planting native trees/shrubs through the Communion Forest Initiative (launching in Fall 2025).

We will continue to offer a tithe (10%) from the Ministry Allocation Fund (MAF) to Indigenous communities and partner agencies through 2027.

By Synod 2027:

- We will have developed a long-term policy in consultation with Indigenous leaders to guide the Diocese in redistributing a portion of monies from sale of properties.
- We will educate and engage our parishes and expand their outreach programs with workshops and sermons to foster understanding and gather feedback on our reconciliation journey.

Reimagining ministry

We support and encourage faithful and fruitful ministry by all who serve the life of the Church - Calls 9-15

We will continue to support parishes, missions and ministries large and small, rural and urban, in every region of the Diocese to meet the changing needs of ministry in each context. We will engage in new and emerging models of parish life.

By Synod 2027:

- Regional ministries will be supported by a structure and systems (governance, clergy and lay Human Resources) that are adaptable and scalable to the different sizes and contexts of regions within our Diocese.
- We will integrate a mixed ecology approach to ministry in every regionalization, e.g. diaspora, immigrant and language-based ministries, generational ministries, and new missional expressions of church.
- Measures of success for regional ministries and best practices will be identified and integrated into communications, training and coaching, and consultation.
- Regionalized ministry leadership will be provided with coaching and ongoing support through the first 3 years of regionalization.

- 40% of the Volunteer Corps will be drawn from the Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) communities of our Diocese.
- Congregations will have access to information and consultancy to evaluate and expand the effectiveness of hybrid and online ministry through the Online Mission & Ministry Working Group's communications strategy.
- The Project Enabling and Monitoring Group (PEMG) will apply research-based metrics to hybrid and online ministry grant applications.

Transforming Diocesan Culture

We live and work as the Body of Christ, each member connected to the whole, and each valued for their unique gifts. - Calls 16-20

Human Resources will continue to shepherd screening for ministry, update policies (e.g., sick leave, parental leave), recruit a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Advisor, and enhance support for clergy and lay leaders.

By Synod 2027:

- We will continue implementation of the Remuneration Task Force recommendations.
- We will complete the clergy performance evaluation process.
- We will establish a task force (with a pilot program in 2026, expanding diocesan-wide in 2027) to create resources and training for parishes to support mental health, including workshops for clergy and lay leaders. This would address a growing societal need and align with our compassionate mission.

Records and Archives Management will support parishes in managing their records, to ensure that the enduring value of our story will be available to future generations to understand the ministry and outreach work of the congregations.

We will explore options to increase storage space to accommodate ongoing expansion of paper records transferred by congregations and to ensure they are kept in ideal conditions and protected by a fire suppression system.

Stewardship Development will continue to support clergy and lay leaders through educational stewardship programs. We will collaborate with the Anglican Diocese of Toronto Foundation to implement a diocesan-wide estate planning seminar program that encourages will preparation and financial gifts in support of ministry.

We will ensure that FaithWorks is promoted enthusiastically in all parishes and that every household in the Diocese is invited to participate in the campaign, particularly in 2026, FaithWorks' 30th anniversary year.

By Synod 2027:

- We will follow through on the recommendations of our feasibility study to engage all parishes in a diocesan major gift fundraising campaign, with the possibility of launching in late 2026 and running through mid-2028.
- The Case for Support will strengthen local parishes to enhance ministry programs, reimagine ministry for new congregations, green initiatives, and technology, including endowments, renew spirituality for youth, family, and discipleship programs, also with endowments, and inspire faith in action for reconciliation, refugee support and community projects.
- We will establish a \$5 million Emergency Reserve Fund, funded by the Consolidated Trust Fund (CTF), to ensure stability during crises. The Finance Committee to discuss further on target amounts, access criteria and investment strategies.
- We will create a Self-Insurance Reserve to manage risks internally, reducing premiums by 15-20%, after completing an actuarial risk study and building the fund based on its recommendations.
- We will increase rental income to \$1.7 million through property optimization and a new management system, reducing reliance on parish allotments.

Property Resources will repurpose underused properties for services like food banks or social enterprises, serving communities and generating income. This would strengthen community ties and support financial goals.

By Synod 2027:

- We will identify pilot properties by end of 2026 and establish repurposing guidelines by 2027.

Congregational Development will work in partnership with Property Resources so that parishes seeking property developments have ministry- and mission-focused strategies.

By Synod 2027:

- An Innovation Fund for Ministry Projects will be created or established with existing funds for parishes to propose experimental outreach or discipleship programs, encouraging creativity and adaptability.
- We will open applications by 2026, with outcomes assessed by 2027.