

Synod Executive Meeting Highlights.

June 23, 2026.

The Synod Executive of the Diocese of Western Newfoundland met on Tuesday, June 23, 2026, at the Synod Office. The meeting included prayer, reports, committee business, and continued discernment as the Diocese moves through this season of transition.

Pastoral Visitor Report.

Archbishop Fred Hiltz shared a pastoral report following his visits and conversations across the Diocese. His reflections acknowledged both the challenges and the resilience of our diocesan family. He encouraged continued listening, prayerful discernment, and respectful dialogue as the Diocese prepares for the next chapter of its common life.

The Synod Executive expressed gratitude for Archbishop Fred's ministry among us. His ongoing work is being offered as a gift to the Diocese, with the Diocese covering only travel expenses.

The Executive also recognized the importance of clear communication regarding diocesan leadership and governance during this interim period. Members affirmed their commitment to providing accurate information and fostering healthy, respectful engagement throughout the Diocese.

Archbishop Hiltz's first report is attached and will be on our Diocesan website.

Financial Stewardship.

The Executive approved the Diocese's audited financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2025, and received the financial reports to May 31, 2026.

Allen & Skinner were reappointed as the Diocese's auditors for the coming year.

The Venerable David Taylor's contract as Financial Officer has been extended for another year.

Parish Property and Capital Projects.

Several parish property requests were approved, demonstrating the Diocese's continued commitment to supporting local ministry through responsible stewardship.

Approved projects included:

- Roof repairs for the church in Jackson's Arm, including approval of a diocesan loan and grant.
- Roof replacement at All Saints, Stephenville Crossing.
- An additional grant for the Cathedral to assist with previously approved capital work.
- Ongoing discussions regarding future support for other parish building projects.

50th Anniversary of the Diocese.

Planning is underway for the Diocese's 50th Anniversary celebrations.

As part of our 50th anniversary year, diocesan celebrations will be held on Saturday, October 24, and Sunday, October 25, 2026. On Saturday, clergy and parish representatives from throughout the diocese, along with our ecumenical and community partners and friends of the diocese, will gather for a time of fellowship, remembrance, thanksgiving, and shared reflection on God's faithfulness over the past fifty years. The anniversary celebrations will conclude on Sunday, October 25, with a Diocesan Celebration of the Holy Eucharist at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. Further details will be shared in the coming weeks.

Parishes are encouraged to mark this milestone through local celebrations during the week leading up to October 25.

Leadership Development.

Plans are being put in place for:

- A Lay Reader Conference in August/September.
- A Clergy Conference in September.

These gatherings will provide opportunities for learning, encouragement, fellowship, and renewal in ministry. More details to follow soon.

Human Resources.

The Synod Executive approved an increase to the diocesan travel reimbursement rate from **43 cents to 50 cents per kilometre**, effective **July 1, 2026**.

The Human Resources Committee was also asked to continue developing diocesan guidelines regarding part-time ministry and annual leave.

Search Committee.

Following the cancellation of the Electoral Synod, the Executive formally thanked the members of the Bishop Search Committee for their faithful service and significant work over the past months. With appreciation for their commitment to the Diocese, the committee has been discharged.

Ministry Personnel Updates.

The Executive acknowledged several important staffing transitions:

- Canon Vernon Short will retire effective October 1, 2026.
- Canon Jeffrey Petten will conclude his ministry in the Diocese at the end of August as he begins a new ministry in the Diocese of Central Newfoundland.
- Deborah Howe has been appointed to return as the Diocese's Wellness Officer effective July 1, 2026.

The Diocese gives thanks for the faithful ministry of those concluding their service and offers prayers for those beginning new responsibilities.

Looking Ahead.

The Synod Executive remains committed to providing leadership, transparency, and pastoral care as the Diocese continues this period of transition. Members ask for the continued prayers of clergy and laity as important work continues in the months ahead.

The next meeting of Synod Executive is scheduled for **August 5, 2026.**

