Anglican Diocese of Ottawa



Diocesan Profile

2025

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1. Introduction

The Anglican Diocese of Ottawa is entering a time of prayerful discernment as we prepare to elect our 11th bishop to lead us in Christ's mission.

This Diocesan Profile provides a portrait of our life together—our hopes, our vision for the future, our challenges, our shared ministry, as well as the many ways we serve our communities and the world around us. Whether you are from within our diocese or beyond, as you read our profile, we invite you to join with us in prayer for our future. If the Holy Spirit and our profile call you into intentional discernment towards the ministry of episcopal leadership as our bishop, we invite you join us in that discernment as we journey towards our Episcopal Election on Saturday, February 28, 2026.

1.1 Our Diocese

Our diocese believes in innovation rooted in tradition, and tradition made relevant through imaginative leadership.

We are an episcopally led and synodically governed Church, where the voices of all are heard and respected. We are also members of the Anglican Church of Canada and the wider Anglican Communion, connected to a global body navigating historic shifts in spirituality, climate responsibility, and human rights.

We address the spiritual, social and material needs of our community primarily through our parish ministries and community ministries. Parish ministries involve the individual churches within our diocese, each serving a local community. Community ministries, on the other hand, focus on serving vulnerable populations and addressing social issues.







Our diocese is part of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, the Anglican Church of Canada, and is in a companion relationship with the Diocese of Jerusalem.

1.2 Our Bishop

Our bishop is the spiritual leader and chief pastor of the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa, providing oversight to clergy, parishes, and diocesan ministries. Our bishop guides our diocese in its mission, safeguards the faith and unity of the Church, and ensures that its ministry is carried out in accordance with Anglican tradition and canon law. Working in collaboration with Diocesan Council, committees, and community partners, our bishop offers pastoral care, fosters spiritual growth, and represents our diocese within the wider Anglican Church of Canada and the global Anglican Communion.

1.3 Location

Established in 1896, much of our diocese is located on the traditional territories of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg, Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Mohawk, Haudenosaunee (St. Lawrence Iroquois), and Huron-Wendat peoples. It straddles the Ottawa River to cover large areas of both eastern Ontario and western Quebec, stretching from Cornwall and Hawkesbury in the east to beyond Mattawa in the west, and from Perth and Smiths Falls in the south to beyond Maniwaki in Quebec. It has a mix of rural and urban parishes.

Our major urban center, Ottawa-Gatineau, is the National Capital Region of Canada, a center of federal government as well as high technology and service industries.

1.4 Key Facts

Our bishop's seat is at Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa—a place of worship, prayer, and sacred music at the heart of the city. The bishop's office and the offices of the bishop's leadership team are located in a renovated heritage building next to Christ Church Cathedral. This building, formerly referred to as the "Roper House" named after Bishop John Charles Roper, was renamed "Ascension House" on the commemoration of the 125th anniversary of our diocese in 2022.

Ascension House includes the diocesan leadership team and support staff, with a total of 16 full-time staff. It is a central place where we connect with those who help guide our shared mission, strengthen parish and community ministries, and foster collaboration across our diocese.

In an era of declining attendance, our diocese has worked creatively and intentionally to consolidate its parish and congregational ministries so that expressions of Anglican Christianity might thrive at the local level.

The 2025 statistical return shows:

- Parishes are organized geographically into eight deaneries
- 49 parishes and 11,500 members
- 85 active congregations
- 18 chapels
- 53 active clergy
- 15 additional clergy serve under episcopal jurisdiction
- 95 retired clergy
- 40 active Lay Readers
- Average Sunday attendance across our diocese is 3,500

2. Leadership

2.1 Our Leadership Team and Support Staff

Our bishop is supported by a highly skilled and dedicated leadership team, including the Dean of Ottawa and Rector of Christ Church Cathedral, Executive Archdeacon, Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Director General of Community Ministries, and Directors of Financial Ministry, Property and Asset Management, Human Resources and Communications and Development. In addition to the leadership team positions, the bishop is supported by the Executive Assistant to the Bishop and the Archivist. All these positions are paid positions except for the positions of Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor, whose legal services are provided on a pro bono basis.

2.2 Diocesan Governance

The annual Diocesan Synod, usually held in October, brings together active clergy, elected lay members, and episcopal appointees to review progress, set priorities, and affirm our common life. It is the highest governing body in our diocese.

Diocesan Council, chaired by the bishop, meets regularly between Synods to oversee the mission and ministry of our diocese. The Council includes both clergy and lay members elected by Synod, clergy and lay episcopal appointees, and it oversees the various standing committees of our diocese. It carries out the responsibilities of Synod out of session.

Standing committees, task forces, and working groups assist in diocesan governance. At the parish level, leadership is entrusted to clergy, churchwardens, and parish councils. Canons, Bylaws, and Regulations (CBR) provide the framework for this governance, outlining the structures, responsibilities, and procedures that guide the life and work of our diocese. You can read the full CBRs here: **https://ottawa.anglican.ca/resources/canons-bylaws-and-regulations-cbr.**

Episcopal panels provide expertise, advice and strategic vision to aid the bishop in key areas of ministry.



3. Diocesan Ministries

3.1 Parish Ministries and Programs

Across the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa, each parish and congregation develops ministries tailored to the needs of its community. Led by clergy, laity, and volunteers, these initiatives range from worship, pastoral care, Christian education and formation for all ages – including Sunday school programs and youth groups – community meals, food banks, and community outreach. Activities include partnerships with other community organizations and refugee sponsorship, to name a few.



3.2 Community Ministries
The Anglican Diocese of Ottawa is home to five core community ministries that respond compassionately and creatively to pressing social needs in our diocese. These ministries, grounded in faith and justice, express the diocesan commitment to accompany the most vulnerable and marginalized members of our communities. They report to Diocesan Council through the Community Ministries Committee and are deeply integrated into our missional identity. For more information, visit: **https://ottawa.anglican.ca/what-we-do/community-ministries.**

4. Communications and Development
Our communications resources include:

- Perspective, digital platform and monthly publication (print: formerly Crosstalk)
- E-Newsletter
- Website: ottawa.anglican.ca
- Active social media presence (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube)
- Seasonal fundraising and awareness campaigns (e.g. Lent, Easter, Advent, Giving Tuesday), including coordinated graphics, bulletin inserts, and parish toolkits
- Targeted appeals and capital campaigns in collaboration with parishes and community ministries

The development portfolio is anchored in our mission to build generous, long-term partnerships. Our stewardship practices are grounded in gratitude and narrative—connecting donors with the ministries they sustain. The Communications and Development Office also works closely with parishes to support local stewardship initiatives through training, templates, coaching, and seasonal resource kits.

5. Finances
Our diocese uses a triennial (three-year) budgeting cycle, an approach that aligns long-term financial planning with strategic priorities. Each triennium integrates budgets and goals, providing stability while enabling responsiveness to emerging needs. For example, in the current triennium, a key priority is the Learning Commons, with the budget supporting its eight pillars as a catalyst for diocesan growth and ministry development. The Consolidated Trust Fund, which combines and manages investments from parishes and our diocese, plays a vital role in generating sustainable income to support ministries, capital projects, and long-term mission goals. We have worked to reduce dependence on parish assessments and are exploring more diverse and mission-aligned models of financial stewardship, including legacy giving, donor engagement, and shared resource strategies. Detailed financial reports are available at: **https://ottawa.anglican.ca/finance.**





6. Sources of Conflict and Challenges Ahead
Our diocese is focusing on important opportunities for growth as we navigate dynamics between urban and rural contexts. While ministries in larger centres are often perceived as being more visible, we are very much aware of the unique gifts and needs of smaller and rural parishes. Many of these communities demonstrate deep resilience and creativity in ministry, even as they work with more limited resources, fewer services, aging buildings and the realities of closures and parish consolidations. Across both rural and urban settings, we are discerning together how to best steward our properties in ways that support sustainable and vibrant ministry for the future.

We recognize the importance of strong relationships and open communication between Ascension House and parishes. By continuing to strengthen those relationships across our diocese, we can better engage the gifts of all who serve. Clear processes and more opportunities for shared dialogue will help ensure that leaders and volunteers feel informed and heard.

Some of the challenges ahead include:

- Continuing to respond to shrinking attendance and demographic decline
- Finding solutions to mitigate the financial strain
- Reimagining parish life and ministry structures

- Vocational development and clergy wellness
- Enhancing digital capacity and accessibility
- Making Anglican witness relevant in our world
- Balancing tradition with innovation
- Remaining faithful in a rapidly evolving social and religious context
- Pastoral attentiveness to the current realities of the world in which we live

7. Strengths of our Diocese

7.1 Our Many Gifted People

Our diocese is blessed with many dedicated, faithful, innovative and gifted clergy and lay leaders. Across our parishes and community ministries, there is a deep commitment to caring for one another, to listening with compassion, and to working collaboratively. There is an emerging capacity to reimagine ministry in the context of declining Sunday attendance, aging infrastructure, and demographic shifts. This includes training, tools, and resources to develop the essential parts of a parish's life and ministry.

7.2 Diversity - Living Faithfully with Differences

Our diocese thrives within a framework of cultural, liturgical, and theological diversity. Our members reflect many cultures, languages, and life experiences, sexual orientations, gender identities, and ages.

While the vast majority of our congregations are English-speaking, our diocese is home to St-Bernard-de-Clairvaux, a French-speaking Anglican congregation at Trinity Anglican Church, Old Ottawa South, and to St. Margaret's Inuit congregation at St. Margaret's Church, Ottawa (Vanier), where worship is offered in Inuktitut.

Our diocese continues to demonstrate a capacity to live faithfully with differences, particularly on matters that have challenged the wider Anglican Communion. On issues such as same-gender marriage, our bishop and diocese have taken a pastoral approach that respects the dignity of every person while making space for a range of theological perspectives. There have been significant efforts to welcome, affirm, and include members of the LGBTQ2S+ community in the life of the church—efforts that are now being integrated more intentionally into parish culture and diocesan leadership.



7.3 Creating Communities of Compassion

As a Sponsorship Agreement Holder with the Government of Canada, our diocese remains a key player in refugee sponsorship. In our diocese, our five core Community Ministries respond to urgent social needs: homelessness, food insecurity, housing, refugee sponsorship, and mental health.

We are also renewing and deepening our relationships with Indigenous neighbours and communities, with a commitment to reconciliation rooted in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, as demonstrated through the work of our All My Relations Circle, which brings together clergy, laity, and community members to foster dialogue, understanding, and concrete steps toward healing and reconciliation.



8. Strategic Priorities

Our diocese is guided by a robust and adaptive strategic cycle (2024–2026), built on six integrated areas of action: Financial Sustainability, Enhanced Parish Support, Parish Development and Innovation, Formation and Governance, Communications and Engagement, and Contextual Mission and New Worshipping Communities. Supporting initiatives have been developed to help with these, including the Learning Commons, Future Fund grants, and regular monitoring and review of programs. Consult the Triennial Strategic Priorities here: **https://ottawa.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Full-Page-Triennial-Strategic-Priorities_2024-04-04_Version-2.pdf.**