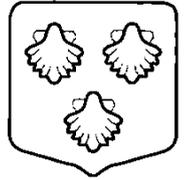
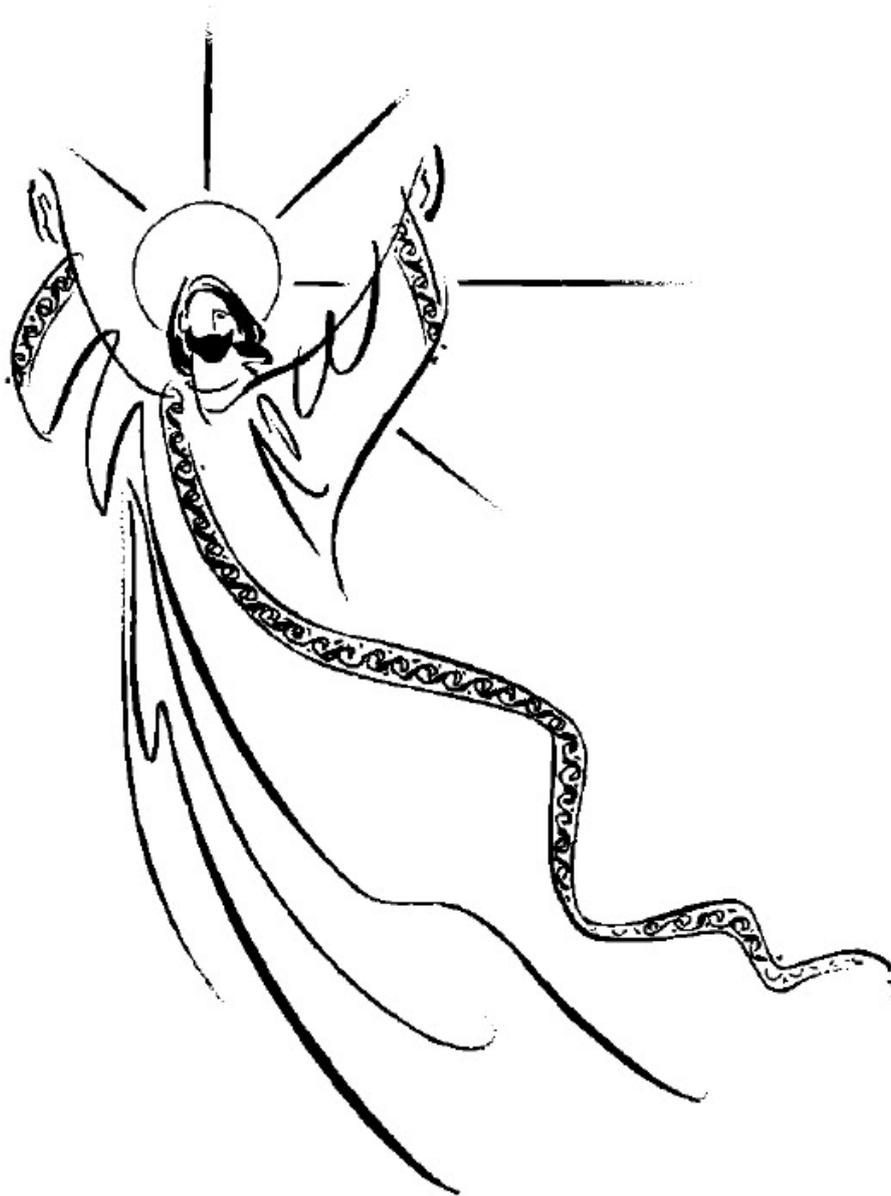


# ST. JAMES'



ANGLICAN CHURCH, MORPETH



“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,  
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,  
and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.”

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026

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ST. JAMES PARISH, MORPETH  
ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF NEWCASTLE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SUNDAY, MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2026

AGENDA

1. Opening prayer
2. Acknowledgement of Country
3. Opening remarks.
4. Attendance and apologies
5. Notice for items for Closure of Agenda
6. Minutes of the AGM, 16 March 2025 - ratified at the first meeting of the new Parish Council on .
7. Reports:
  - a. Incumbent's Report
  - b. Treasurer's Report
  - c. Warden's Report
  - d. Parish Council Report
  - e. Environment Officer Report
  - f. Mission Report
  - g. Safe Ministry Officer's Report
  - h. SRE Report
  - i. Combined Churches of Morpeth Report
8. Elections  
Guidelines: Size of Parish Council in accordance with Administration of Parishes Ordinance 2010 section 6 (b).
  - i) The Incumbent and any associate or assistant clergy licensed to the Parish
  - ii) The Officers of the Parish being
    - (1) A Churchwarden appointed by the Incumbent
    - (2) 2 Churchwardens elected by the members of the Parish and
  - iii) no more than 3 people elected by the Parish Annual Meeting and 2 people appointed by the Incumbent within 21 days of the annual meeting
  - iv) the Mission Secretary
  - a) Appointment of Rector's Warden (by the Incumbent)
  - b) People's Wardens (2)
  - c) Mission Secretary
  - d) Parish Councillors
  - e) Synod Representatives
  - f) Incumbency Board members
9. General Business Items (which have been notified seven days prior)
10. Items from Closure of Agenda
11. Closure of Meeting

# Minutes of the Annual General Meeting for the Anglican Parish of Morpeth March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Ratified by Parish Council at their first Meeting

**Opening prayer:** Father Nicholas Edwards.

**Acknowledgement of Country:** Father Nicholas Edwards.

**Opening remarks:** Father Nicholas welcomed parishioners to the 2025 Annual General Meeting (AGM) and thanked them for their attendance. He thanked the outgoing Parish Wardens and Councilors for their commitment and support in 2024 and all the volunteers in other roles who have worked hard to enable St James to continue to carry out God's work in the Morpeth and surrounding communities.

**Attendance:** Father Nicholas Edwards and twenty-two (22) Parishioners attended the 2025 AGM.

**Apologies:** Katherine Lindsay, Richard Harris, Janet Killen, Fr James Hudson and Fay Beavis.

**Notice for items for Closure of Agenda** — nil.

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 10 March 2024** – were ratified at the first meeting of the new 2024 Parish Council on 11 April 2024.

## Reports

### Priest-in-Charge

Presented by Father Nicholas Edwards on pages 3 and 4 of the AGM Report booklet.

In his report, Father Nicholas has detailed the ministries that he and the parish have undertaken in 2024. It has been a very busy but positive year. While it is pleasing to see more coming to services, we still need to work on our financial security and involving the Morpeth community. We need to maintain these relationships and cannot rest on our laurels. Fr Nicholas thanked all in the parish for their support and prayers.

### Motion before the Chair:

“That the Priest-in-Charge's report be accepted”.

Moved by Father Nicholas, seconded by Rev'd Sheila Bourne. All in favour. Carried.

### Treasurer

Presented by the Treasurer, Phillip Weston, on pages 5 to 14 of the AGM Report booklet.

### Motion before the Chair:

“That the Treasurer's report be accepted as ratified by Parish Council 2024”.

Moved by Phil Weston, seconded by Ron Hacker. All in favour. Carried.

### Wardens', WHS and Safety and Safe Ministry Officer

Presented by Ross Whybin, Church Warden, WHS and Safety and Safe Ministry Officer, on pages 15 to 18 of the AGM Report booklet.

### Parish Council

Presented by Helen Priestley, Parish Secretary, on page 19 of the AGM Report booklet.

### **St James' Guild**

Presented by Jan Garnsey and Robyn Carroll, Guild Secretaries, on pages 20 and 21 of the AGM Report booklet.

Fr Nicholas thanked Jan Garnsey for her commitment to the Guild over the past twenty plus years. Catering and hospitality are to continue but in a modified form.

### **Combined Churches of Morpeth Committee**

Presented by Fr George Garnsey on page 22 of the AGM Report booklet.

### **Special Religious Education (SRE)**

Presented by Helen Priestley on page 23 of the AGM Report booklet.

### **Events/Fundraising**

Presented by Helen Priestley, Coordinator, on pages 24 and 25 of the AGM Report booklet.

### **Op Shop**

Presented by the Op Shop Team on pages 26 and 27 of the AGM Report booklet.

### **Environment Officer**

Presented by Ron Hacker, Environment Officer, on page 28 of the AGM Report booklet.

### **Mission**

Presented by Patsy and John Carpenter, Mission Secretaries, on page 29 of the AGM Report booklet.

### **Motion before the Chair:**

"That the reports listed above be accepted as presented". Moved by Elizabeth Archer, seconded by Rev'd Sheila Bourne. All in favour. Carried.

### **Elections**

- Appointment of Rector's Warden (by the Incumbent) —Katherine Lindsay
- People's Wardens – Helen Priestley — elected unopposed
- People's Warden – Phillip Weston - elected unopposed
- Parish Councillor – Ron Hacker - elected unopposed
- Parish Councillor – Peter Taylor - elected unopposed
- Mission Secretaries – Patsy and John Carpenter

Father Nicholas thanked the following outgoing members of Parish Council:

- Rev'd Sheila Bourne for her contribution in 2024
- Father James Hudson for his contribution as the Rector's Warden, initially for six (6) months which grew into twelve months, and,
- Ross Whybin for his contribution to Parish Council, and the parish, over the past five (5) years in many roles including a Church Warden, Work Health and Safety Officer and safe Ministry Officer. All carried out to perfection and tirelessly. He has agreed to continue as the Safe Ministry Officer and Sacrosanct, both vital pillars that will assist to keep St James going.

Ross was presented with a gift from the parish by Father Nicholas in appreciation of his contribution. As Fr James was unable to attend the AGM, Father Nicholas is to give him his gift when convenient.

● **Synod Representatives** – elected for a three (3) year term.

All current as elected in 2023.

- Phillip Weston,
- Ron Hacker, and,
- Helen Priestley.

**Incumbency Board** - All current as elected in 2023.

- Rev'd Shelia Bourne
- Phillip Weston
- Helen Priestley, and,
- Ross Whybin.

**General Business Item (which was notified seven (7) days prior)**

**Items from Closure of Agenda** — Nil.

**Closure of Meeting**— 10.55 am with the 'Grace'.

**Signed:** .....**Date:** .....

# **Rector's Annual Report to the Parish Annual General Meeting: St James Anglican Church, Morpeth**

March 2026

Dear friends in Christ,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is with deep gratitude and a spirit of prayer that I present this report for the past year in the life of our parish. As we gather for our Annual General Meeting, we do so mindful that all we are and all we offer belong first to God. "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain" (Psalm 127:1). Yet we also know that, in his mercy, the Lord has really been building something good among us here at St James.

Over the past year we have continued our shared vocation: seeking Jesus Christ, experiencing his presence, and making him known in Morpeth and beyond. That vocation has found expression in worship, pastoral care, fellowship, service to the community, and in the countless unseen acts of kindness and faithfulness that together form the true fabric of parish life.

## **Worship at the Heart of Parish Life**

At the centre of our common life stands the worship of Almighty God. Week by week, Sunday by Sunday, our Parish Mass remains the focal point of our shared identity and mission. It continues to grow gently in depth and devotion, sustained by the dedication of many volunteers and the faithful attendance of our congregation.

Holy Week and Easter once again offered profound opportunities to pray and reflect together: from Palm Sunday's joyful procession to the stillness of Good Friday and the delight of Easter morning. Our Patronal Festival—marked by glorious music, beautiful liturgy, and generous hospitality—and our recent baptisms and confirmations, were particular highlight.

I record particular thanks to Evanne Sherringham and the choir; to our organists (Fr George and Maria Taylor) and musicians; to Ross W for his careful work as sacristan and in safe ministry; and to Grant and Brendt who serve faithfully in the sanctuary week by week. The contribution of our guest preachers, including Rev'd Janet Killen, Fr Stephen Williams, Dr Anne Wakatama, and others, has enriched our life of worship and proclamation.

In all this we remember the exhortation of Scripture: "Since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe." (Hebrews 12:28)

## **Pastoral Care and Christian Community**

Pastoral care remains at the heart of our calling. Much of this work is quiet and often unseen, yet it is among the most important ministries of the Church. Regular visiting, prayer and Holy Communion for those unable to attend church continue steadily. I remain deeply grateful to the Rev'd Sheila for her tireless and compassionate support in this ministry.

Monthly visits to Largs nursing home for Holy Communion and conversation are warmly received and much appreciated. Within the parish, we have shared together in baptisms and weddings, and we have also commended several faithful souls to God in funerals and memorial services. In all these moments of joy and sorrow, the Church accompanies people with prayer, hope and love.

Our study group and the fellowship which runs alongside many of our activities continue to offer opportunities for growth in faith and friendship. Morning teas, shared meals and parish gatherings provide simple but vital expressions of Christian community.

### **Community Engagement and Outreach**

St James continues to be a visible and valued presence within the wider Morpeth community. Through events, partnerships and acts of service we seek to be a church not only for ourselves but for all.

I am particularly grateful to those who organised and supported parish events over the past year: Ross, Peter, Helen and others involved in Morpeth's Got Talent, and for leadership of the parish auction; Robyn for her art work in family and community gatherings; and Patsy and John for their mission leadership. A standout contribution has been from Katherine, to whom we have now said farewell. We are very grateful for her skilful and creative leadership of Sunday school, generous hospitality and catering, wise guidance, and service in the sanctuary and with music—all of which will be much missed.

It is encouraging to note that our plan to involve more people who are not regular church-goers in our activities is genuinely taking shape. Many who first come through concerts, community events, or special services are now beginning to feel at home here. This widening of our circle is an authentic expression of mission, and I thank all who contribute through welcome, creativity and hospitality.

Our partnership with the City of Maitland Brass Band continues to flourish. Our relationship with the Cessnock Correctional Centre, supported especially by Ray and others, remains a powerful sign of shared humanity and hope. The Op Shop—continually surprising us as it lives up to its name, 'Joy on High'—continues strongly under Kathy and her team, and our regular hospitality ministries welcome many from across the district.

### **Buildings, Grounds and Practical Stewardship**

The care and development of our buildings and grounds continues through the devoted efforts of many volunteers. I offer sincere thanks to Phil, Peter, Grant, Ross E, Brendt, Pauline, Bob and Ray for their work in the gardens and property; to Ken from Husky Demolition for generous practical support; and to those who assist with maintenance and preparation behind the scenes.

Thanks are due to Phil for his tireless service as honorary treasurer; to Helen for her careful work as honorary secretary; to our wardens and parish councillors Peter, Ron and Sheila; and to all who carry responsibility for governance and administration.

I also wish to thank Julie D and Helen P for their work in cleaning and care of our hall; Pauline for the beauty of church flowers; Robyn for her role earlier in the year coordinating hospitality; and the many others whose quiet, faithful service sustains parish life week by week.

### **Looking Ahead with Faith and Hope**

As we look to the coming months and year, we do so with confidence in God's continued guidance. Plans continue to develop for strengthening our musical life, broadening community connections, and deepening our spiritual formation.

In particular, I hope that we may grow in our service to those most in need: especially those who are poor, lonely, or burdened by life's difficulties. The Gospel continually calls us to recognise Christ in those who hunger, those who are isolated, and those who long for friendship and dignity. We will seek practical and prayerful ways to respond more fully to this call, so that St James may be known ever more clearly as a place of compassion and hope.

We go forward trusting in the promise of our Lord: "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me."  
(Matthew 25:35)

**Gratitude**

Finally, I offer heartfelt thanks to each one of you. This parish is sustained not by one person but by the shared faith and generosity of many. Your prayers, your presence, your service and your love make Christ known in this place.

Above all, we give thanks to God, who has sustained us and drawn us together in fellowship and mission. May we continue to seek his will, trust in his grace, and walk together in faith.

With every blessing,

Fr Nicholas Edwards

**Rector**

St James Anglican Church, Morpeth

# ANGLICAN PARISH OF MORPETH

## TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2025

Presented to the Annual General Meeting, held on March 1, 2026

### 2025

#### Income

2025 began at a disadvantage thanks to the over \$25,000.00 deficit realised in 2024. When last years budget was approved it acknowledged that parish council had to withdraw \$25,000.00 from the parish's term deposit and place back in the general working account to allow the continued financial running of the parish.

Through 2025 the parish lost a few parishioners that represented a significant loss to our income stream, however loose giving was almost 25% higher than what was budgeted.

Other than the occasional additional service such as evensong(s) this offering was through the plate on Sundays.

This supported the loss to pledged giving and resulted in the parish exceeding the overall budgeted amount for giving income by 1.4%.

Donations in 2025 were down compared to the budgeted amount, with almost half of the monies received was through the Green Donation Box that was installed at the beginning of 2025.

The Op Shop income exceeded the budgeted amount by over 18%! This is thanks completely to a team of amazing volunteers led by Kathy Pearson. This team is made up of community members and parishioners, and it is always a 'joy' to catch up with them on a Friday or Saturday. The parish owe them much thanks.

Fundraising was constantly occurring and evolving and as a result of a lot of hard work from a number of people from the parish income from Fundraising exceeded the 2025 budget by 50%. With most of the fundraising events there was expenses that were incurred so I thought it might be appropriate to offer a small summary below that shows the income that is on the budget figures less the expenditure costs shown on the expenditure sheet so you can see the nett income to the parish from each event held:

event	income	costs	Profit
St Valentine's Dinner	\$ 1,039.20	\$ 377.74	\$ 661.46
Pancake Tuesday	\$ 250.00	\$ -	\$ 250.00
Auction	\$ 3,275.58	\$ -	\$ 3,275.58
St James Day Lunch	\$ 75.00	\$ 541.75	-\$ 466.75
Brunch & Supper	\$ 739.76	\$ -	\$ 739.76
MGT	\$ 2,379.12	\$ 311.76	\$ 2,067.36
Heritage Weekend	\$ 1,466.00	\$ 488.84	\$ 977.16
Christmas Stall & Breakfast	\$ 841.34	\$ -	\$ 841.34
Op Shop Morning Teas	\$ 2,029.25	\$ -	\$ 2,029.25

When you look at the above there are a few things that should be pointed out.

Firstly, there are a number of events that are raising money for the parish that have had NO costs recorded by them. What this means is that there are parishioners who not only contribute their time but donate the goods they provide as well;

There are other costs shown for some events which also are much less than what was actually spent thanks to the same generosity from parishioners involved in supporting those events, and The income for the heritage weekend does not include the income taken from the Op Shop, which is recorded in the total income shown elsewhere for the Op Shop.

I know that the Parish Council Report has more information on Fundraising, but I would like to add my thanks to all those who organise and undertake all the work that goes into these events to make them successful.

Interest earned on our investments did not result in the income I had anticipated in 2025. Money received from the diocese for our trust monies and term deposits were calculated on lower interest rates than I had based my calculations on. The economy overall was slower than was being predicted this time last year and even when it did start to move upward the Trustees of Church Property were cautious with any improvement to the dividend rate realised on our trusts.

Hall Use was severely down compared to the budget. With the loss of the dancers who were a primary letting the hall failed to attract another primary user.

GST refund is shown as up on budget, but this figure includes the September and December quarters from 2024 which were late in being lodged.

### **Summary:**

Overall, the budgeted income of \$207,400.00 was exceeded by 2.3% with a total of \$212,244.68 being raised.

### **Expenditure**

#### Diocesan Set & Stipendiary

These were generally as set by the diocese in late 2024 with the following adjustments:

Only 52% of annual leave was claimed. The balance of this allowance is adjusted to 2026 pay rate and carried over into the new year.

Parental leave levy and Cyber Liability insurance levy were ceased.

No locum costs were outlaid during 2025.

#### Worship and Ministry costs

Church supplies were 16% higher than budgeted. This was made up of candles (37%), Paper & ink (23%), Incense (7%), Communion items (4%) with the rest being for specific items relating to services.

#### Hospitality

Was 34% higher than budgeted, which isn't a bad thing in the whole scheme of things!

#### Building – Utilities

Electricity, Gas and EV Charging was 49% more than budgeted. The parish was with energy Australia and as a result of large increases in their rates during 2025 we have recently changed service provider on the rectory and church. This and the addition of solar panels to the rectory will hopefully assist in bringing electricity costs into control.

Telephone & Internet was higher than budgeted a parish mobile phone was commissioned during 2025 and those costs were not initially included in the budget.

#### Repairs and Maintenance

Building Maintenance is the largest single expenditure the parish meets, outside of diocesan set costs. In 2025 we spent 13% more than the \$5,000.00 budgeted on the church (\$5,651.51), only 74% of \$2,000.00 budgeted on the hall and 4% more than the \$10,000.00 budgeted on the Rectory (\$10,409.30).

Preparatory works on the sinking of the hall commenced in 2025 with \$10,000.00 budgeted. Of this \$4,719.00 was expended. This work is set to continue in 2026.

#### Compliance

Bank and Accounting Fees exceeded the budgeted allowance by 167%. This is due to accounting fees for September and December 2024 being included as well as the parish now having to pay licencing fees for the accounting software package we have been told to use by the diocese.

#### Fundraising

Although much higher than budgeted this is explained in the summary shown in the income section above.

#### Other

Although Miscellaneous looks ridiculously high it is because the monies held in the main parish account for the columbarium was transferred to the columbarium account in December 2025. This was \$2,731.66 out of the \$2,816.26 total which really means miscellaneous expenses only totalled \$84.60.

### **Summary:**

Overall, the budgeted expenditure of \$207,400.00 was not realised with only 94% of this amount, or \$195,154.12 expended.



## 2026 - The Budget

The budget is outlined on the spreadsheets at the end of this report.

The budget formulated for 2026 is a balanced budget with a matching income and expenditure of \$216,400.00 and was ratified by Parish Council at its meeting on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026 and is presented for approval by parishioners present at the AGM

### Income

Loose and pledged

Giving: I have allowed an average of 7.2% increase in giving, which includes donations or thank offerings from baptisms.

Donations: Donations have been set \$7,274.00 and is broken up into two (2) sections:  
1. \$3,134.00 - General donations  
2. \$4,140.00 - Specific donations toward hall repair costs as shown in the expenditure items. This represents 20% of the money budgeted to continue with the documentation necessary for the repair methodology and approval process in 2026. The other 80% of the repair costs are explained elsewhere in this report.

Funerals: This income has been based on offering ten (10) funerals during 2026 –

Transfers: This is where the next 40% of funding for the hall documentation will come from. \$8,280.00 will be permanently withdrawn from the main parish term deposit to support the cost of this process in 2026. This equates to 40% of the budgeted expenditure and along with the 20% from specific donations it makes up 60% of the expenditure cost. The final 40% will come from general income, similar to standard R&M to buildings.

Op Shop: I have increased the income value of income from this by 5% which is assisted by changing eftpos fee to be carried by the purchaser late in 2025.

Fundraising: I have increased Fundraising income by 25%. While this may seem like a lot we do have successive events like MGT and Auction that will be a greater success in 2026 and new events in process which will make this target achievable.

Weddings: This figure is based on three (3) weddings for 2026.

Interest: I have kept interest payments the same as 2025 as the diocese seem to be very conservative with their interest payments and the RBA forecasts are also minimal for 2026 (less than 1.25% increase).

Hall Use: Hire rates have been increased by 10% from January, and additional use and opportune rental rates will be actively sought in 2026.

GST Refund: Will be larger than 2025 as building works, particularly to the hall will offer the opportunity to collect GST.

### Expenditure

To the right-hand side of the expenditure column there is a column of note references and then two (2) follow on pages of explanations attached. I ask you to take the time to read these comprehensively. I will make a few additional comments below:

#### Diocesan Set & Stipendiary

Stipend and

Associated on costs : As noted these are set by the diocese for the coming year. Items larger than normal is the Annual Leave Loading carried over from 2025 (25 days) and added to 2026 allocation (20 days).

Parish Contribution: This figure is calculated from the 2024 financial figures submitted to the diocese and based on gross income less transfers and some mission projects.

Locum: Calculated to engage an external Locum for four (4) Sundays.

#### Worship & Ministry

Music Programs: A new incentive – to fund the enhancement of music in parish worship and will be funded through retaining clergy Fees received for funerals which would normally be transferred to the clergy Discretionary Account.

Community Lunches: A new incentive – to fund a new ministry of offering a community lunches to the needy or lonely in our community. Planned for Thursdays.

Wedding Expenses: As in income this figure is based on three (3) weddings for 2026.

Buildings-Utilities

Electricity: The quest to reduce electricity costs continue with providers being changed and monitoring of electricity use a priority.

Telephone & Internet: Rectory and hall have internet and we have a parish owned mobile phone which is used to ease contact to the parish.

Repairs and

Maintenance:

R&M has been set out under Note 12 on the 'NOTES FOR EXPENDITURE'. I would like to affirm the following:

\$8,820.00 is a new item specifically to install security cameras to the inside of the church. This requires the installation Wi-Fi to the building which we will 'piggy-back' onto the existing Wi-Fi located in the Rectory.

\$20,700.00 is shown as more money to be spent on the investigation, to allow the structural integrity of the hall to be understood and documentation prepared to undertake the repair works.

As outlined elsewhere in this budget paper funding for this money will be made up of \$8,280.00 from general account (40%), \$8,280.00 taken from the parish's main Term Deposit (40%) and \$4,140.00 received from parishioners and community members specifically given for this purpose (20%).

**Summary**

It is really important that if this budget is accepted by the parish then it is done so particularly understanding your role and commitment to the income of the parish as outlined in this report. It is a commitment from us all, not just others.

I present the 2026 budget to the meeting and will move for the acceptance of this ratified budget as presented.

**Accountant for 2026**

For lots of reasons it is better to have a practicing certified accountant to submit our paperwork, forms and calculating the government tax, and if we do realise our budget we will require our books to be audited once more.

I would like to seek permission to continue to engage Tumbers and Associates, Church Street, Maitland (Principle: Linda Kowalki) as the Parish accountant for assisting in the preparation of the Xero Accounts and government BAS statements.

Respectfully Submitted



**Phillip G. Weston OAM**

Hon Treasurer

# Anglican Parish of Morpeth

## INCOME

ratified by Parish Council on February 4, 2026

January 31, 2026

Final comparison for 2025 - Budget to Actual				PROPOSED 2026 BUDGET	%	
ITEMS	ACCEPTED 2025 BUDGET	Actual Income 2025	2025 Actual to 2025 Budget		increase to 2025 actual	
<b>Loose giving</b>	\$ 23,200.00	\$ 28,871.55	124.4%	\$ 30,604.00	6.0%	
Baptisms	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 892.60	59.5%	\$ 1,500.00	68.0%	
<b>Pledged giving</b>	\$ 55,484.00	\$ 51,548.65	92.9%	\$ 55,095.00	6.9%	Significant loss of giving in 2025 due to some parishioner deaths
envelopes	\$ 3,270.00	\$ 2,758.65		\$ 3,380.00	22.5%	
electronic	\$ 52,214.00	\$ 48,790.00		\$ 51,715.00	6.0%	
	<b>\$ 80,184.00</b>	<b>\$ 81,312.80</b>	101.4%	<b>\$ 87,199.00</b>	7.2%	
<b>Donations</b>	\$ 4,820.00	\$ 3,134.16	65.0%	\$ 7,274.00	132.1%	
Study Group Literature		\$ 182.81		\$ 3,134.00	general	Same value as 2025 Canvas specific donations toward Hall repair work costs (20%)
Donkey Welfare		\$ 20.00		\$ 4,140.00	hall repairs	
Hot Cross Buns		\$ 50.00				
Lectonaries		\$ 33.00				
New Hymn Books		\$ 90.00				
Lunette		\$ 300.00				
Hall Turf		\$ 300.00				
Christmas Lunch		\$ 100.00				
Op Shop sign		\$ 280.00				
Green Donation Box		\$ 1,676.45				
General		\$ 101.90				
<b>Funerals</b>	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 5,800.00	138.1%	\$ 7,500.00	29.3%	
<b>Transfers</b>	\$ 27,236.00	\$ 30,839.37	113.2%	\$ 8,280.00		40% of hall costs taken from parish term deposit capital (reduce capital and interest income)
St James Guild		\$ 6,753.87				
Return of Capital		\$ 26,000.00		\$ 8,280.00		
Discretionary Fund		\$ 685.50		\$ -		
<b>Op Shop</b>	\$ 43,000.00	\$ 51,067.08	118.8%	\$ 54,030.00	6.8%	Op Shop - 5.0% increase in sales + 0.8% offset by eftpos payment surcharge
<b>Fundraising</b>	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 12,095.25	151.2%	\$ 15,120.00	25.0%	
St Valentine's Dinner		\$ 1,039.20				
Pancake Tuesday		\$ 250.00				
Auction		\$ 3,275.98				
St James Day Lunch		\$ 75.00				
Brunch & Supper		\$ 739.76				
MGT		\$ 2,379.12				
Heritage Weekend		\$ 1,466.00				
Christmas Stall & Breakfast		\$ 847.34				
Op Shop Morning Teas		\$ 2,029.25				
<b>Weddings</b>	\$ 1,550.00	\$ -	0.0%	\$ 4,650.00		Based on 3 weddings
<b>Interest (Truste &amp; asdf)</b>	\$ 24,405.00	\$ 17,781.52	72.9%	\$ 17,689.40	-0.5%	
Trustee Interest	\$ 17,895.00	\$ 13,197.02		\$ 13,184.33		unit rate set by trustees
ASDF Interest	\$ 6,510.00	\$ 4,584.50		\$ 4,505.07		Percentage rate set by asdf
<b>Hall use</b>	\$ 10,900.00	\$ 5,176.50	47.5%	\$ 6,000.00		10% rate increase and 50% usage increase
General		\$ 3,741.00				
YFDC Debt 2024		\$ 1,435.50				
<b>Sundries</b>						
GST Refund	\$ 3,105.00	\$ 5,038.00	162.3%	\$ 8,657.60		
	<b>\$ 207,400.00</b>	<b>\$ 212,244.68</b>	102.3%	<b>\$ 218,400.00</b>		

# Anglican Parish of Morpeth

## EXPENDITURE

ratified by Parish Council on February 4, 2026

ry 31, 2026

Final comparison for 2025 - Budget to Actual				PROPOSED 2026 BUDGET	% increase to 2025 actual	NOTES
	ACCEPTED 2025 BUDGET	Actual Expenditure 2025	2025 Actual to 2025 Budget			
<b>Diocesan Set &amp; Stipendary</b>						
Stipend	\$ 72,665.00	\$ 72,665.64	100.00%	\$ 74,990.00	3.2%	1
Holiday leave loading	\$ 1,497.82	\$ 782.55	52.25%	\$ 2,118.90	170.8%	1
Long Service Leave	\$ 1,764.00	\$ 1,764.00	100.00%	\$ 1,812.00	2.7%	1
Car Depreciation	\$ 9,048.00	\$ 9,048.00	100.00%	\$ 9,048.00	0.0%	1
Superannuation	\$ 13,951.00	\$ 13,951.80	100.01%	\$ 14,398.00	3.2%	1
Professional Development	\$ 1,050.00	\$ 1,050.00	100.00%	\$ 1,050.00	0.0%	1
Parental Leave	\$ 240.00	\$ 60.00	25.00%			2
Study Leave/ Continuing Education		\$ 1,473.56		\$ 727.00	-50.7%	1
	<b>\$ 100,215.82</b>	<b>\$ 100,795.55</b>	<b>100.58%</b>	<b>\$ 104,143.90</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	
Insurance	\$ 23,905.00	\$ 19,111.26	79.95%	\$ 21,023.00	10.0%	3
Parish Contribution	\$ 11,995.70	\$ 11,995.68	100.00%	\$ 9,533.00	-20.5%	1
Copyright - CCLI & CAL	\$ 191.06	\$ 167.73	87.79%	\$ 191.06	13.9%	1
Synod Printing & Postage	\$ 200.04	\$ 200.04	100.00%	\$ 200.04	0.0%	1
Workers Compensation Ins Levy	\$ 500.66	\$ 1,703.35	340.22%	\$ 1,771.00	4.0%	3
Cyber Liability Ins Levy	\$ 42.19	\$ -	0.00%			2
Travel - CLM	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,400.00	100.00%	\$ 2,400.00	0.0%	1
Locum	\$ 624.00	\$ -	0.00%	\$ 764.00		1
	<b>\$ 139,531.62</b>	<b>\$ 136,373.61</b>	<b>97.74%</b>	<b>\$ 140,026.00</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	
<b>Worship &amp; Ministry Costs</b>						
Church Supplies	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 4,190.09	116.39%	\$ 3,601.00	-14.1%	4
Music Programs				\$ 4,000.00		5
Children's Ministry	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 93.70	9.37%	\$ 400.00	326.9%	
Community Lunches				\$ 2,600.00		6
Wedding Expenses	\$ 450.00	\$ -	0.00%	\$ 1,200.00		7
Funeral Clergy to DA	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,600.00	108.33%		-100.0%	5
Pastoral Care	\$ 200.00	\$ 57.94	28.97%	\$ 200.00	245.2%	
Hospitality	\$ 600.00	\$ 804.08	134.01%	\$ 900.00	11.9%	
Website/ Advertising	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,109.00	73.93%	\$ 1,130.00	1.9%	
<b>Building - Utilities</b>						
Electricity, Gas & EV Charge	\$ 4,360.00	\$ 6,521.01	149.56%	\$ 5,953.00	-8.7%	8
Water	\$ 1,841.08	\$ 1,707.82	92.76%	\$ 1,820.00	6.6%	9
Council	\$ 1,544.30	\$ 1,565.13	101.35%	\$ 1,670.00	6.7%	9
Telephone & Internet	\$ 2,813.00	\$ 3,069.65	109.12%	\$ 3,060.00	-0.3%	10
<b>Repairs and Maintenance</b>						
Hall expenses	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 899.63	44.98%	\$ 2,000.00	122.3%	11
Buildings	\$ 28,000.00	\$ 22,996.41	82.13%	\$ 36,520.00	58.8%	12
Grounds	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 1,647.73	27.46%	\$ 2,000.00	21.4%	
Plant & Equipment	\$ 2,750.00	\$ 1,273.00	46.29%	\$ 1,000.00	-21.4%	13
Equipment Renewal	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 1,194.00	47.76%	\$ 1,000.00	-16.2%	14
<b>Compliance</b>						
Safe Ministry	\$ 600.00	\$ -	0.00%	\$ 400.00		
Environmental Education	\$ 400.00	\$ -	0.00%	\$ 400.00		
Bank & Accounting Fees	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 4,003.47	266.90%	\$ 3,980.00	-0.6%	15
<b>Fundraising</b>						
Fundraising	\$ 310.00	\$ 1,720.09	554.87%	\$ 1,580.00	-8.1%	16
<b>Other</b>						
Miscellaneous	\$ 2,300.00	\$ 2,816.26	122.45%	\$ 500.00	-82.2%	17
Stationary/ Journal/ Postage	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 511.50	42.63%	\$ 500.00	-2.2%	
	<b>\$ 207,400.00</b>	<b>\$ 195,154.12</b>	<b>94.10%</b>	<b>\$ 216,440.00</b>	<b>10.9%</b>	

## NOTES FOR EXPENDITURE

<b>1</b>	<p>All costs shown associated with the cost of a full time incumbent are set by the diocese through Diocesan Council or Government law</p> <p>Superannuation is calculated at 19.2% p.a. (national rate is 12%)</p> <p>Annual Leave Loading includes 22 days of unclaimed leave carried over from previous years, which when claimed is paid out at current Stipend rate. The Diocesan Council calculates leave Loading "based on the assumption that</p> <p>(a) leave forms are submitted to the Diocesan Office for all 20 days of leave and</p> <p>(b) that the full entitlement of leave is taken in the calendar year it was accrued.</p> <p>The value of the Parish Contribution is calculated by the diocese based on parish's annual returns of income</p> <p>Locum costs are based on four (4) Sunday services and is made up of \$131.00 for taking the service + \$26.00 for payment of Superannuation + Locum Travel is a New Item and is based on \$0.88/km and has been calculated at 30km per service. (total \$764.00 per year)</p> <p>Travel for CLM is a allowance for costs relating to travel that is allowed to be paid to our CLM (Rev'd Narelle) as set by the diocese. This is the only payment received from the parish</p>
<b>2</b>	<p>Parental Leave payments ceased being collected in 2025 and were not shown in the Memorandum containing 2026 Parish costs</p> <p>Cyber Liability Insurance Levy Payments were not collected in 2025 and were not shown in the Memorandum containing 2026 Parish costs</p>
<b>3</b>	<p>Insurance Premium is calculated and passed on by the diocese usually in May of each year. An allowance of 10% increase has been included in the 2026 premium.</p> <p>Workers Compensation Insurance Levy is for paid clergy and not CLM clergy or volunteers. An allowance of 4% increase has been included in the 2026 premium. The correct figure will be issued in July 2026</p>
<b>4</b>	2025 figure includes purchase of furniture and fittings that should not reoccur in 2026
<b>5</b>	<p>New Item. <b>(to be approved)</b></p> <p>This is to fund the enhancement of music in worship in the parish and is to be initially funded by Clergy funeral fees being allocated here instead of being transferred to Clergy Discretionary Account</p>
<b>6</b>	<p>New Item. <b>(to be approved)</b></p> <p>Based on initial 10 lunches for 2026</p>
<b>7</b>	Based on three (3) weddings for 2026
<b>8</b>	<p>Electricity is paid to all three buildings and we rent bottle gas on the hall for the kitchen. Based on 2025 figures the following allowances for each building have been allowed: Church \$2,000.00 + Hall \$753.00 + Rectory \$3,200.00 = \$5,953.00 for 2026. Rectory also includes cost of charging Fr Nic's electric car (we used to pay for petrol in the old days!) Rectory and Hall have solar panels</p> <p>Church and Rectory have been changed from Energy Australia to Origin and it is hoped that this will offset any rises in rates for 2026 and even realise a saving of up to 10%</p>
<b>9</b>	Based on a 7% increase in Council and Water rates for 2026
<b>10</b>	<p>We pay for telephone and internet to the Rectory and Internet to the hall and we have a mobile phone plan for the parish mobile phone</p> <p>Based on 2025 figures the following allowances have been budgeted: Rectory \$1,500.00 + Hall \$1,140.00 + Mobile \$420.00 = \$3,060.00 for 2026</p>
<b>11</b>	Includes professional monthly cleaning and Sanitary Bin Hire, as well as disposables

<b>12</b>	This money is the largest expenditure item in the budget that is not set by the diocese and is based on last year's figures as well as any projects that have been developed by Parish Council and need money for implementing. The total of \$36,520.00 is made up in the following way:
	We have allocated \$8,820.00 for maintenance to the Church, which includes \$6,820.00 to install security cameras and bring in Wi-Fi into the building from the rectory.
	We have allocated \$2,000.00 for minimal maintenance to the hall
	We have allocated \$5,000.00 for minimal maintenance to the Rectory
	We have allocated \$20,700.00 for continued documentation and repair methodology to the Hall. This is made up of the following consultant Fees, continuing on the work begun in 2025: RCA Australia \$2,700.00 + Heritas Architecture \$10,000.00 + Bill Jordan & Associates Engineers \$8,000.00
<b>13</b>	Pared-back this item to only cover Organ tuning for 2026
<b>14</b>	2025 includes purchase of new printer and this should not be needed in 2026
<b>15</b>	2025 figure included some accounting fees from 2024.
	the 2026 figure budgetted is made up of Accounting Fees, Licencing of Accounting Package, Bank Fees and Charges
<b>16</b>	All costs associated with Fundraising should be well offset by income from Fundraising. Event planning and review needs to safeguard events running at a loss.
	Please read Fundraising section of the Treasurer's main report
<b>17</b>	Miscellaneous expenditure is used when the expenditure does not fit any specific item. The \$2,816.26 listed in miscellaneous for 2025 was made up of: Anglican Women membership \$25.00 + Advent Study Books \$59.60 + annual transfer of nett income from columbarium into Columbarium account \$2,731.66

## Wardens' Report for Anglican Parish of Morpeth

Annual General Meeting March 1, 2026

Priest's warden: Katherine Lindsay  
People's wardens: Helen Priestley & Phillip Weston

The objective of a Churchwarden is to oversee the temporal running of the church by working closely with the incumbent, supporting both the issues of the incumbent as well as of the people by managing the ministry and business issues of the parish.

### *Duties and responsibilities:*

- *Serves as the Executive Committee of Parish Council with such powers and duties, not including the powers and duties of any Ministry Team, as the Parish Council may determine*
  - *Takes custody and care of furniture, books, sacred vessels, registers, records and furnishing of every church building, parish hall or other building in their parish*
  - *Ensure the Parish Council receives an annual report on the condition of all Church Property in the parish*
  - *Advise the Incumbent, Parish Council and Diocesan Chief Executive promptly if any Parish land, building or facilities become unsafe, or that the parish is unable to comply with all or part of the Diocesan Work Health and Safety Policies*
  - *Report to the Bishop any irregularities in the performance of services or neglect of duty by any licensed person including concerns about their conduct or wellbeing*
  - *Removes names from the Parish Electoral Role as required*
  - *Administer the implementation of all policies and procedures as defined in the Diocesan Handbook*
  - *Provides active support to the incumbent with regards to Safe Ministry including the reporting of issues, incidents and conduct, matters of compliance and adherence to Faithfulness in Service as required*
  - *Other duties as required by the incumbent, that are within the capabilities of the volunteers skills and experience*
  - *Ability to work in a team and under the direction of the rector/priest in charge/locum priest*
- VOLUNTEER ROLE DUTY STATEMENT Volunteer and Other Church Workers Policy and Procedure Churchwarden*
- *Adhere to the Parish Safety Policy and the Dioceses' commitment to the NSW child safe standards*
  - *Undertake and maintain any necessary volunteer screening and/or training as directed by the Incumbent/SO/Diocese*
  - *Adhere to the Diocese and General Synod Codes of Conduct*

### *In addition to this they must:*

- *Must ensure the safety of any person attending Public Worship and other events in the parish.*

## **WHS**

As previously delegated by the bishop the wardens continue to monitor changes to government regulations relating to all Plans for Covidsafe Worship and Service of Food.

In addition to this we monitor and attend to any issues, concerns or mishaps that arise during any event or service and liaise with Parish Services at the diocesan office as needed. We offer our great appreciation to Ross Whybin for his assistance in WHS compliance and the knowledge of all of this that he so graciously offers.

In 2025 the following incidents were reported:

- a complaint against the parish for content placed on the parish Facebook page,
- a parishioner fell unconscious and unresponsive during Sunday mass.
- the Morpeth CWA complained cockroaches in hall kitchen, mouse droppings on dinner plates, no toilet paper and difficulty using the dishwasher.
- a volunteer bitten by dog when working on plant stall at Parish fete.
- an unidentified mourner fell when leaving the pew.

A serious injury that occurred in November 2024 to a volunteer while undertaking a task in the church, continues due to its severity. As a result of trying to support the parishioner to be financially supported for their incurred medical expenses we have discovered that the ‘Volunteer Insurance’ that the diocese promotes that it has for all church volunteers only covers the volunteer “for **non-Medicare** expenses”, which means the insurance does not cover any cost or service that attracts a Medicare rebate, including the Medicare “gap.”

This is the case for all people who undertake tasks in any capacity for the parish in a voluntary capacity, including Rev’d Narelle as a CLM.

The wardens have met and discussed this issue with Bishop Sonia and in response she has taken it to the diocesan CEO and we have been told that:

*“Bishop Peter has asked for a review, specifically in light of (the diocese’s) stated wellbeing and support commitments, to include*

- 1. the adequacy and clarity of our insurance arrangements for volunteers,*
- 2. expectations we set with parishes about coverage,*
- 3. this (our) particular case.”*

At the time of writing this report we are still waiting to hear back any outcome from the requested review.

## **Church**

Church was sprayed for spiders, cockroaches, general pests and mice baits were installed in the vestry, organ and under the floor. No white ant inspection was carried out.

Compliance testing to all fire safety equipment was also carried out.

The path from the church entry to the driveway was formalized with an asphalt surface laid to make access easier and more weather dependent.

The William Davidson organ was tuned in January and July.

The current security system has been serviced and is now working to its capacity. Parish Council have been researching security camera placement, which includes the introduction of Wi-Fi to the building. As this is a considerable expense and is really the initial stage or a multi-stage program the value of this has been included in the 2026 draft budget found elsewhere in the AGM papers. There is continued decay of the sandstone external walling of the church, mainly the original stonework to the tower. This will continue to be monitored.

Minor maintenance was done through the generosity of volunteers.

## **Hall**

The Hall was sprayed for spiders, cockroaches, general pests and mice baits were installed under the floor and to the external perimeter. No white ant inspection was carried out.

Compliance testing to all fire safety equipment was also carried out.

A multi-tiered cleaning program is now in place with a combination of generous volunteers and a monthly professional clean to key food areas in place.

The new Parish Hall sign has been erected.

Investigation into the sinking of the rear of the ‘old hall’ and connected entry link commenced in 2025 with the commencement of investigation and documentation that will develop a repair methodology. A Heritage engineer, Heritage architect and a Geotechnical engineer have been engaged to develop a strategy to develop this methodology further in 2026 with a preliminary value of this being included in the 2026 draft budget found elsewhere in the AGM papers.

### **Grounds to Church and Hall**

The grounds to both properties in our charge have continued to be cared for by the weekly mowing group led and nurtured by Ray Wilson and Peter Taylor.

Turf has been laid under the large trees at the side of the hall thanks to Ron Hacker and Katherine Lindsay and this is continuing to be cared for but regeneration is slow

Landscaping and garden beautification to the church grounds, including the columbarium area continues through the generosity of volunteers.

### **Rectory**

The Rectory was sprayed for spiders, cockroaches, general pests and mice baits were installed. No white ant inspection was carried out.

Compliance testing to all fire safety equipment was also carried out.

Solar panels were installed to the roof of the rectory in 2025 and are now contributing to the power usage of the building and occupants.

Electrical faults were attended to by a licensed electrician.

The current security system has been serviced and is now able to work to its capacity.

The picket fence between the rectory and garage has been repaired with the majority of timbers being replaced.

Minor maintenance was done through the generosity of volunteers.

### **St John's Cemetery**

The cemetery in our charge has continued to be cared for by the weekly mowing group led and nurtured by Ray Wilson and Peter Taylor.

This year saw significant damage due to subterranean ground water entering the property. This resulted in almost \$9,000 being spent on laying new sub soil and surface drainage system to the perimeter of the property.

The cemetery is still in infrequent use with one internment of ashes through the year.

Respectfully submitted

St James' Wardens.

**ST JAMES ANGLICAN CHURCH, MORPETH**  
**Annual General Meeting Sunday 01 March 2026**  
**PARISH COUNCIL REPORT**

**Parish Council 2026**

The Parish Council of 2025 was made up of the following members:

- Fr Nicholas Edwards
- Rev'd Narelle Riley
- Dr Katherine Lindsay, Rector's Warden
- Phillip Weston, OAM, People's Warden
- Helen Priestley, People's Warden
- Ron Hacker, OAM, Parish Councillor
- Rev'd Sheila Bourne, Parish Councillor
- Peter Taylor, Parish Councillor
- Helen Priestley, (Hon) Parish Secretary
- Phillip Weston, OAM, (Hon) Parish Treasurer, and,
- Patsy and John Carpenter, Mission Secretaries. Katherine Lindsay

**Clergy 2025**

Our Rector, Father Nicholas Edwards, has faithfully guided us through 2025 and we thank him for his leadership and support. In his spare time, Father Nicholas ensured that our Calendar for 2025 included worship services, and events for parishioners, their families and friends, and local community.

Events included a Grand Auction, Morpeth's Got Talent, a Village Fair and an Advent Breakfast with a Christmas table.

Reverend Narelle continued as our CLM. We thank her for sharing her life experiences with us in her sermons. Not only have they have given us hope, guidance and courage for our daily living., we are also thankful for her love, support and friendship, and for being part of our St James Parish family.

**In 2025, Parish Council:**

- Our Shop had very successful year. Our thanks go to the Op Shop Team for their commitment and team efforts that made 2025 a successful year. Their support to St James financially and the ministry offered to those in need is greatly appreciated.
- The Temporary Toilet in the church grounds has proven to provide relief for parishioners and visitors.
- Thank you to our Maintenance Team for their work in caring for our Church grounds and the Hinton Cemetery. Their efforts to keep them looking really lovely are very much appreciated.
- 'Approved in principle' to the installation of a camera Security System in the Church.
- Agreed that First Aid training is a priority and to be arranged early in 2026.
- Hall foundation failure - Father Nicholas and the Wardens met with representatives from the Diocese to discuss the preferred options to manage this matter. For further information on this, please refer to the Warden's report.
- Farewelled Dr Katherine Lindsay, Rector's Warden/Mission Secretary, and Patsy and John Carpenter, Mission Secretaries, who had moved away from the Morpeth area and no longer able to attend St James. Our thanks go to them for their contribution to St James and Parishioners and we wish God's blessings for the future.
- Supported the operations and work of St James in 2025 and ensured that they were carried out in accordance with Diocesan regulations and directions. In addition, various tasks were undertaken and completed by Parish Council in 2025 which you will read details of as part of other reports presented in this booklet.

On behalf of Parish Council, thank you to all for your prayers, support and friendship in 2025.

Submitted to the Annual General Meeting 01 March 2026.

Helen Priestley

(Hon) Parish Secretary

11 February 2026

ENVIRONMENT OFFICER  
REPORT TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
1 March 2026

Highlights since the 2025 annual report include:

- The clump of approx. fifty native shrub seedlings planted in the Rectory grounds in June 2024 has established well and grown into a substantial feature which should be providing good habitat for native species (although no specific observations have been conducted). Pictures showing the progress of the planting were posted on the Anglican Ecocare Facebook page.
- Laying of Sir Walter buffalo grass turf in the bare, shaded patch beside the hall occurred on 4 September 2025, following two sprays to control germinations of bindii. Turf pieces of various size were planted with a view to allowing natural spread to complete the coverage. The area was fertilised on 20 September, to promote maximum growth before development of the tree canopies reduced the available sunlight. Although the turf established well, and early growth was encouraging, subsequent progress has been disappointing. The grass has not runnered as expected, and has been severely affected by the hot weather in recent weeks – especially one day of 41° C. It may be necessary to purchase some additional rolls of turf, and perhaps spread a general lawn seed mix over the area, when the weather cools. Thanks to Ray Wilson and Peter Taylor for assistance with the planting, and to Peter Taylor and Pauline Dunn for regularly watering the area.
- The Season of Creation in September was marked by some special prayers and by a visit to the Resourceful Living factory at Kurri Kurri on Saturday 11 October. The company produces a wide range of products (e.g. garden furniture) from recycled plastic. The visit occurred coincidentally just one year after the fire which destroyed the original factory and forced the cancellation of the visit planned in 2024. The guided tour was enjoyed by all, including several members of the Maitland West Lions club who joined us courtesy of Helen Priestley's sister.
- While some special prayers were offered in the Season of Creation it is encouraging to note that prayer for the environment is often included in the regular Sunday Intercessions, and that an aspiration for environmental stewardship is included in the Acknowledgement of Country before each Sunday service.
- Rubbish bin lids in the hall have been painted and labelled to help segregate items suitable for recycling. A further notice in the kitchen may be required to ensure proper use of the bins.
- I have established contact with Upcycle Newcastle, an organisation that recycles old clothes. This includes making new items from old garments which they sell through a retail outlet in Hunter St. They are particularly interested in jeans (or any denim garments) and cotton T-shirts. I hope that this contact will provide a means of usefully disposing of some items from the OpShop that are surplus to requirements.
- Parish Council has supported the idea of establishing a collection point for hard-to-recycle materials (e.g. tablet blister packs) that can be forwarded to a specialist recycling company for processing. I hope to be able to develop this concept in the coming year.

Ron Hacker  
Environment Officer  
31 January 2026

## Report on Missions

*St James Anglican Church, Morpeth*

March 1, 2026

We are very grateful to our Mission Secretary Patsy Carpenter who along with John steered this ministry until they moved to Cessnock in the later part of the year.

Equal gratitude to Katherine Lindsay who took over these reigns upon their departure and continued to raise awareness of our primary projects for 2025.

We began the year by forwarding our mission monies for our 2024 primary project - ABM Anglicans in Development (AID) Environment, Climate and WASH Program – Solomon Islands.

It is to support communities to adapt to or mitigate the effects of changes in their local weather patterns and climate in various ways: preparing their communities for increasingly common natural disasters and improving their ability to respond quickly and appropriately; protecting the environment from further degradation; increasing crop yields with better agricultural practices; and providing improved access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities.

The Pacific Island nations are within one of the most vulnerable regions in the world to the impacts of climate change due to rising sea levels and increased intensity of storms and cyclones. The Anglican Church of Melanesia (ACOM) provides support throughout the Solomon Islands to strengthen communities in preparation for natural disasters and climate change, while working to improve their food security.

The church faces significant challenges with delivering support, including disruptions to inter-island travel in the country and even climate change itself. Weather patterns are becoming less predictable and can play havoc with planning training around planting and harvesting seasons. Despite the challenges, there is a strong commitment by communities and schools to work together with ACOM. A total of 1,850 people currently benefit from this support, including 1,080 children.

Each month, ACOM has been networking and sharing lessons learnt on Disaster Preparedness and Climate Change with officers from the Solomon Islands National Disaster Management Office and the Solomon Islands Climate Action Network. The Climate Change and Disaster Management project extends into the community, with recent activity including work proceeding on the Bishopsdale Coastal Protection site to reduce coastal erosion due to sea-level rise and high swells.

The parish raised and contributed \$1,657.45 to assist in supporting this mission project in 2024.

Our Primary mission project for financial support in 2025 was the St. John the Evangelist Anglican Seminary, located in Kitwe, Zambia, which is a theological training institution dedicated to preparing leaders for the Anglican Church. It provides diploma and degree-level training (including Bachelor of Theology) for ministry, often supported by the Anglican Board of Mission (ABM). The seminary focuses on intellectual initiative, pastoral leadership, and spiritual formation, though it has faced challenges requiring infrastructure updates.

Many would think of the majestic Victoria Falls when they think of Zambia which is a landlocked country in central-southern Africa. The country had steady economic growth in the early 2000's but largely due to a combination of falling global copper prices, severe power outages, and low rainfall the economy has contracted, the already low average wages of workers fell, with the gross national income per capita reported at just US\$3,960 in 2020. Economic conditions worsened in 2020-2021 due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, and a non-ending drought. Of the country's 20 million people, more than 70% live below the income poverty line (income of \$3.00US per day or less),

The parish raised and contributed \$1,870.00 to assist in supporting this mission project in 2025.

Our other primary mission project is the support of the St Christopher's Emergency Kitchen in Rutherford. Every week parishioners have donated items to the hamper for distribution, from groceries and personal hygiene items, blankets, uggs and beanies, presents for those who cannot afford to buy these @ Christmas, School supplies and everything in between. The Emergency Kitchen, led by welfare coordinator Kerrie Duffey, the volunteers from St Christopher's support those in our community who are homeless, couch surfing, or struggling financially. Every Tuesday morning the team offer a helping hand to those that knock on their door. They provide groceries to take home, advise on the provision of financial help and support services, or simply share a coffee, a meal and a kind ear.

Kerrie and her team are on the front line when it comes to the needs of the most vulnerable in our community and the realities of the current cost of living crisis. These needs do not differentiate by age and neither do St Christopher's as they are more recently supporting teenagers and community members of all ages.

Our parish has also raised money and donated to the following diverse and encompassing organisations, from local organisations to international platforms, who have a single commonality of tirelessly trying to support those who find themselves in forced hardship.

We supported the following organisations in 2025:

- Zara's House Refugee Women & Children's Centre, Jesmond: (\$1,600.00)
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), also known as the UN Refugee Agency - Emergency Appeal for Gaza Refugees: (\$1,600.00)
- The Samaritans Winter Appeal: (\$250.00)
- Red Cross Flood Appeal: (\$250.00)
- Donkey Welfare with Heart: (\$400.00)
- Hunter Legacy: (\$600.00)
- Maitland City Brass Band: (\$150.00)

Respectfully submitted on behalf of  
all those involved in Missions in 2025.

***Phillip G Weston***

# St James Anglican Church Morpeth Op Shop (Joy on High) Report

## AGM Sunday 01 March 2026

### Our aims:

- To provide financial support for St James
- To use our expertise and experience to build a successful op shop
- To provide outreach to our local community for people in hardship
- To assist other local charities
- To build team spirit

### Overall achievements of the past year:

- A strong cooperative, enthusiastic team
- Financial support to the church
- Growth of the op shop
- Support of the local community

### Financial achievements:

- Now we are trading Saturdays 9.30am-1pm our profit has increased. **End of year sales realised \$52,207.53.** Saturday has proven to be popular with young people and families, a different dynamic to Fridays.
- “Morpeth Village Fair” weekend was a great success. Saturday was non-stop selling across the day. Sunday was quieter, closing at 1pm.
- A steady stream of quality donations continues, allowing us to sell to the public at affordable prices.

### Customer relationships:

- Feedback from our customers on the quality and affordability of items is most encouraging.
- As expected, we have many conversations with customers. Most importantly, we see our role as that of a listener when needed. Most of the time we laugh a lot.
- A major fundraiser for St James was ‘Morpeth’s Got Talent’. The op shop was actively involved in the promotion of ticket sales. Other promotions include the first Friday Devonshire tea which continues to grow in numbers. Small groups from as far as Stockton and the Central Coast are visiting. Several people from aged care facilities enjoy a morning out with a carer. It is most popular with our regular customers. The socialisation is robust.

### Community service and outreach:

- At the end of this year, we had the privilege of helping a local family whose house was destroyed by fire. We assisted with clothing and bed linen and invited them to our first Christmas Day Lunch.
- We donated fixtures and stands to a local church op shop just getting started.
- One Friday morning we came across a homeless man sleeping on our side veranda. We provided breakfast and a bag of fruit. We also offered clean clothes and shoes.
- Caring and sharing within our community also involves contributions from our parish family (saleable items, homemade jams, pickles) which are also made by one of our volunteers who brings in farm produce for sale which is very popular.
- The parish ladies provide delicious homemade scones for our monthly morning tea. A real winner!

All this assistance keeps the op shop invigorated and pulsing with enthusiasm. The combined efforts reinforce our commitment to inclusivity, fundraising and community outreach.

### Moving into 2026:

We remain committed and enthusiastic with new changes and ideas currently being implemented to support the physical aspects of operating the op shop e.g. fixtures, layout etc.

Kind Regards,

The Op Shop Team

## **SAFE MINISTRY OFFICER'S REPORT TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**1<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2026**

There are currently 39 volunteers on the Parish Volunteer Register.

All are safe ministry compliant at the time of writing this report.

The roles of 8 volunteers were terminated upon their request due to ill health or leaving the Parish.

The safe ministry compliance of 2 new volunteers is underway.

Several group safe ministry training sessions on the Office of Children's Guardian (OCG) Child Safe Sport, Module 1 were conducted.

The Parish Safe Ministry Plan for Continuous Improvement Self Audit Tool was submitted to the Diocese for Semester 1 (February 2025) and Semester 2 (October 2025).

The expiry dates of volunteers' Working with Children Checks and Safe Ministry Training were reviewed 3-monthly. Volunteers were contacted close to the expiry date of either of these.

A Safety Standard Check of the performance of volunteers in their roles in the Church was conducted 3-monthly. No issues were noted.

A 3-monthly random check of Safe Ministry and Child Safety was undertaken at the Parish Sunday School. No issues were noted.

Sunday School Attendance Sheets have been completed as required.

I commend the volunteer Sunday School teachers for their dedication to this important ministry.

8 incidents in and around the church and complaints were reported to the Diocese (see Wardens' Report).

Risk Assessments of Parish events were conducted. These included Morpeth's Got Talent, Grand Auction, Carwash, Sausage Sizzle, Morning Tea event and Fete.

I wish to thank Fr Nick, Rev'd Narelle, Regina Valentine (Diocese) and our volunteers for their continued support of safe ministry in the Morpeth Parish.

Leslie Ross Whybin

Safe Ministry Officer

**ST JAMES ANGLICAN CHURCH, MORPETH**  
**SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SRE) REPORT**  
**Annual General Meeting 01 March 2026**

Special Religious Education (SRE) classes were held at the Hinton Public School in 2025. I represented our Church, St James, Anglican. with our Roman Catholic colleague and friend, Mrs Christine Eager, represented the Roman Catholic Church. Mrs Eagar taught classes year 3 to 6 and I had classes 1 and 2, and kinder - eighteen (18) students. At the start of term 3, this increased to twenty-seven (27). It was very pleasing that parents had consented to their children joining the SRE class. However, as the term progressed, it became evident that some of the new children were not very interested in the scriptures or contributing to class discussions. By term 4 these children had decided that scripture was “okay” and joined the rest of the class in activities and discussion,

Our Curriculum and teaching resources “Godspace” were provided by the Presbyterian Church and included activity books for the children.

The curriculum included stories from the Old and New Testaments, God’s world and that Jesus is our friend who will always be with us wherever we may be.

The children participated in class discussions and activities including role plays of “The Great Banquet” how Jesus called and saved Peter, and ways in which we can all be his disciples.

My thanks to the school staff for their assistance and support and willingness to be in classroom with me My thanks also to the children in my class for giving me the opportunity to bring God’s word to them at their level to enable them to learn about the scriptures and God, and have fun while learning.

SRE resumes at Hinton Public school on Monday 23 February 2026.

Submitted to the Annual General Meeting, St James, 01 March 2026.

Helen Priestley

07 February 2026

**REPORT OF THE MORPETH COMBINED CHURCHES COMMITTEE**  
**TO ST JAMES' CHURCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
Sunday 1 March 2026

The Committee met several times during 2025. All three Member Churches were represented on the Committee. The seven main events involving the three churches were

(1) The World Day of Prayer

Is observed annually on the first Friday in March. The three churches take it in turn to host this event. In 2025 St James' was the host church. The order of service was prepared by women from the Churches of the Cook Islands, copies being presented by the National Council of Churches in Australia. The service was very well attended, all three churches providing readers.

The preacher was the Revd Kimberlee Hodges, the Rector of Christ Church, Dungog. She gave an eloquent account of HOPE25 of which she was CEO.

Jan Garnsey and Rita Suters generously provided and served morning tea after the Service

(2) Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The week is observed each year between Ascension Day and Pentecost, or at the date as close as possible. Morpeth Uniting Church were our gracious hosts, also providing the preacher, the Revd Christine Sheppard. The service was held on Thursday 5 June. Once again the order of service was provided by the National Council of Churches in Australia. All three churches were well represented and shared the readings which included texts from the Early Christian Fathers. An offering was received and was sent to the NCCA.

(3) Hiroshima Day Service, Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle

This service is prepared each year by *Christians for Peace* (Newcastle). It is a great opportunity for Christians to remember the devastation caused by the atomic bomb dropped on Japan in August 1945 and to pray for world peace. In 2025 the service was held on Sunday 3 August and the preacher was our Rector, Father Nicholas Edwards.

(4) Morpeth's Got Talent

St James' hosted this very entertaining evening, compared with great flair and panache by our own Ross Wybin. Again, all three churches were well represented both in the audience and by the performers. Katherine Lindsay and her helpers provided a generous supper.

(5) Nine Lessons and Carols for Advent.

This was another fine act of worship in which all three Morpeth churches participated, St James' being the host.

(6) Carols at Closebourne

Closebourne Village allowed the churches to invite the local community to come to Closebourne for carols every year since 2012. Bishop Sonia accepted Father Nick's invitation to comper the carols and to preach the sermon. In spite of the heat over 200 people attended. Maitland City Choir led the singing and there was good audience participation. (Friday 5 December, 2025)

(7) Nine Lessons and Carols for Christmas – Friday 19 December.

All three churches were well represented among those attending and the readers. St James' hosted both the service and the supper of Christmas cake and punch which followed. The music was provided, not only by one of our regular organists, Evanne Sherringham, but also the City of Maitland Brass Band. Altogether a very fine crowning of the year!

**George Garnsey**  
Chairman  
Combined Churches Committee.