



Save the dates for 2026!

21 DAY	Mar MONTH	<b>DIOCESAN CONFERENCE</b> with the Rev'd Nigel Fortescue
7-9 DAY	Aug MONTH	<b>DIOCESAN CAMP</b> with the Rev'd Paul Dale
24 DAY	Oct MONTH	<b>WOMEN'S CONFERENCE</b> with Naomi Reed



Are these in your calendar?



**THE CHURCH I'D LIKE TO JOIN  
GROWS DISCIPLES**  
DIOCESAN CONFERENCE

**Saturday 21 March 2026**  
MACQUARIE ANGLICAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL

[bathurstanglican.org.au/events/](http://bathurstanglican.org.au/events/)



Don't miss our Dubbo conference – 21 March



From Roger and Sally Phelps' ordination



Carols at Mutton Falls last Wednesday

### In brief

**Diocesan office** - closed 23 Dec–5 Jan. The bishop is on leave 25 Dec–26 Jan. Archdeacon Tim St Quintin will serve as commissary from 4–22 January; ArchD Thornhill otherwise.

**Please note the following commissioning dates:**

- **Canowindra** – Saturday 31 January, 10.00am
- **Parkes** – Saturday 7 February, 10.00am
- **Gilgandra** – Saturday 28 February, 2.00pm
- **Molong** – Saturday 7 March, 11.00am

**Bishop's election board:** As the bishop has given advance notice of his intention to retire at the conclusion of Synod on 19 September 2026, some may be wondering how a new bishop is appointed. In this diocese, the appointment is made by a Bishop's Election Board, which is elected by Synod. The following members were elected by Synod in 2024 for a three-year term:

**Clergy:** Andrew Thornhill (Chair), Tim St Quintin, Phil Howes, Andy Martin, James Boardman, Bob Cameron.

**Lay people:** Jane Francis, Mark Galbraith, Ray Haigh, Lisa Milton, Glenn Murray, Eliot Harper.

While the board cannot **formally** convene to consider names until the bishop submits his resignation on 19 March, they are currently meeting to pray and plan.

### DATES TO NOTE 2026:

- 09 Feb** LLM training 7.15-830pm
- 16-19 Mar** Retired clergy retreat – St Clement's Galong – Bp Stead
- 21 Mar** Diocesan conference – Dubbo – the Rev'd Nigel Fortescue
- 24 Mar** Renewal of ministry vows
- 11 May** LLM training 7.15-830pm
- 27-30 Jul** Clergy retreat – Galong – with Canon Greg Harris (BCA)
- 07-09 Aug** Diocesan camp with the Rev'd Paul Dale (Bridgechurch)
- 10 Aug** LLM training 7.15-830pm
- 18 Sept** Stipendiary clergy gathering prior to synod – 2pm – with the Rev'd Kevin Simington
- 18-19 Sept** Synod
- 24 Oct** Women's conference
- 09 Nov** LLM training 7.15-830pm

### From our bishop

Dear friends,

Christmas comes to us after a year marked by news that has been deeply unsettling. Violence close to home, ongoing conflict overseas, and stories that disturb and weary us. Into a world like this, Matthew's Gospel reminds us that the first Christmas also arrived with shocking news.

Mary, pledged to be married, was found to be pregnant. For first-century Jewish life, this was scandalous and devastating. For Joseph, it meant confusion, fear and a decision that could have ended everything quietly and safely. Yet God intervened. An angel told Joseph that this child was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Shocking news indeed—but also the most wonderful news imaginable.

For this child was to be given two names, each filled with hope.

First, **Jesus**—a name that means *God saves*. Christmas tells us that God does not stand at a distance from human failure and sin. He steps into our world to deal with it. Jesus came to save his people from their sins—to restore what has been broken between us and God, through forgiveness won at the cross.

Second, **Immanuel**—*God with us*. Not God far away, but God alongside us. Sharing our world, our pain, our joys and our fears. God who knows what it is to suffer, to be rejected, and yet to love without limit. And by his Spirit, he is still with us today.

So, Christmas proclaims both forgiveness and presence: we can be put right with God, and we are not alone. My prayer this Christmas is that you will know **both** truths deeply—that you are **forgiven in Christ**, and that **God is with you**, whatever your present circumstances.

Have a joyful Christmas!

Mark **Bishop Mark Calder**

## Bishop's video sermon series

**CHRISTMAS** – with Bishop Mark Calder

**DEC 25** Shocking news; wonderful news Matthew 1:18-25

**DEC 28** News worth sharing Luke 2:8-21

**SUMMER SERIES – YEAR OF PROVOCATION** (in a good sense!)

**JAN 04** Draw near Hebrews 10:19-22 - Mark Calder

**JAN 11** Hold firm Hebrews 10:23 - Kevin Simington

**JAN 18** Stir up Hebrews 10:24 - Mark Calder

**JAN 25** Turn up Hebrews 10:25 - Mark Calder

**THE JOY OF GIVING** – with Bishop Mark Calder

**FEB 01** Giving ourselves Romans 12:1-2

**FEB 08** Giving generously 2 Cor 8:1-9

**FEB 15** Giving cheerfully 2 Cor 9:1-8

**LENTEN STUDY/SERMON SERIES**

**The road to Calvary** – with the Rev'd Mike Raiter

**FEB 22** LENT 1 Matt 26:1-16 The Language of Love

**MAR 01** LENT 2 Matt 26:17-35 It is Written

**MAR 08** LENT 3 Matt 26:36-46 In the Garden

**MAR 15** LENT 4 Matt 26:47-56 The Kiss of Death

**MAR 22** LENT 5 Matt 26:57-75 The Tale of Two Trials

**MAR 29** PASSION Matt 27:32-56 The Death of the Son of God

## Contact Info

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## Please Pray

**Pray for Christmas preparations in all the parishes** – that this time will be greatly blessed of God to declare the glory of Jesus! Pray that Christians will rejoice in hearing the Christmas good news again, and that those joining us who aren't Christians will be helped to see who Jesus is!

**Pray for all our clergy at this busy time** - for strength to make it through to the end of the year and then grace to rest well in January.

**Praise God for those who will take up new appointments in 2026:** Bob Cameron, Ben Mackay, and Stuart Border and then those who will be new to our diocese: Ben Feather, Robert and Xanthe Yemm, Robbie Nichols, Mick, Tammy and Mischa George, James and Miriam White, and Steve Cimerosti and their wives and families. Pray that the Lord will give them strength in transition and then all they need to begin well in their new roles.

**Pray for the planning for our conference on March 21** – that our theme on growing disciples will be inspiring, and immensely helpful and practical.

**Pray for our parishes without clergy** – that the Lord will strengthen those who currently assist with ministry in these places AND raise up clergy to love and serve our people:

1. Bourke / Brewarrina
2. Coonamble
3. Warren
4. Cumnock
5. Trundle
6. Condobolin
7. Coonabarabran
8. Wellington
9. West Wyalong

*Including these with resident lay ministers for whom we are very thankful:*

10. Nyngan
11. Coolah–Dunedoo

## Cathedral Services

### Saturday Vigil

6pm (5pm when no daylight saving)

### Sunday

8.30am Traditional

10am Contemporary

Also 8.30am Mon, Wed, Thu (BCP);

10am Fri

## Supporting our clergy

Click [HERE](#) for information on how to support our work. (Or visit our website and navigate to 'support'.)

Account: Synod Management Fund

BSB: 082-441

Account Number: 392 655 240

For more information phone **02 6331 1722** or visit [www.bathurstanglican.org.au](http://www.bathurstanglican.org.au)