



Anglican Diocese  
of Auckland

# SYNOD GUIDE



## **A GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND**

The principle of government by synod is important because it emphasises the fact that the Church is the whole people of God and that the responsibility for governance is shared by bishop(s), clergy and laity together.

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## ABOUT SYNOD

### WHAT IS SYNOD?

Synod is the governing body of the diocese, a bit like Parliament is for New Zealand. It is a formal meeting that consists of the bishop(s) together with licensed clergy, elected lay representatives from the ministry units of the diocese, and some appointed representatives.

The diocesan Synod of Auckland has approximately 400 members who meet once a year in September (usually the first Thursday to Saturday), to:

- decide matters of policy for the diocese
- express the mind of the church on specific matters
- elect the members of Diocesan Council and other committees, and
- consider the reports and accounts of various diocesan bodies.

Synod is generally held at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Parnell but on occasions may be held elsewhere.

Through Synod the Anglican Church in the diocese orders its own life and speaks both to its own members and to the world within which it works.

Each synod is numbered and consists of three sessions (i.e. three consecutive years). Lay synod representatives are elected for a three-year period at the annual general meeting of the ministry unit before the first session of the synod. For example, the 56th Synod was for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021.

Detailed regulations as to the composition of Synod and how representatives are elected are contained in the Diocesan Synod Statute. A copy of this statute is available on the diocesan website or from the Diocesan Office on request. Figure 1 (at the back of this booklet) shows how Synod is made up.

### BEING A SYNOD REPRESENTATIVE

Synod representatives are elected by their ministry unit to debate and consider the work of the whole Church as it is presented at Synod and to make decisions accordingly. Synod reps are then responsible for informing the members of their ministry unit, especially the governing body, about what happens at Synod and the resolutions or decisions made.

Being a synod representative is a responsible job, but it need not be a lonely one. Being together at Synod also provides an opportunity to meet and share with others in the diocesan family.

## BEFORE SYNOD

Several activities take place in the weeks and months before Synod is in session.

### RAISING BILLS AND MOTIONS

Synod members have the opportunity to inform policy by submitting motions and bills. The date that proposed motions or bills must be sent to the Diocesan Manager is communicated to synod members early in the year.

### THE LEGAL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

This committee reviews all bills and motions coming before Synod and may promote legislation to amend diocesan statutes. It reviews the standing resolutions annually to see if they should remain and whether any should be added from decisions made at the previous synod. It reports its findings to Synod each year.

### WRITING REPORTS

Representatives from selected committees, groups, or diocesan-related organisations are required to provide reports to Synod. These reports are included in the yearbook. Anyone who needs to provide a report will be told when they should submit their report to the Diocesan Manager.

### YEARBOOK

All legal business, reports and financial accounts are documented in the diocesan yearbook. Each synod member is sent a copy of the yearbook about three weeks before Synod starts.

### PRE-SYNOD MEETINGS

After the bills and motions have been sent out, the archdeacons hold regional meetings where the bills and motions are discussed. These meetings are open to all members of ministry units and are especially helpful for new members of Synod.

### ATTENDANCE

If you are unable to attend all or part of Synod, this must be communicated in writing to the bishop.

## DURING SYNOD

### HOW TO KEEP TRACK OF WHAT IS HAPPENING

Familiarise yourself before the event with the business in your yearbook, e.g. motions (statements of policy, etc.), bills (legal matters of formal church government), reports and accounts.

Each day Synod is in session, you will be provided with an order paper which sets out the agenda for the day. Events move quite quickly at the beginning of the first day when formalities are dealt with in a short time. Discussion usually happens later when motions are presented to Synod.

### ETIQUETTE

It is customary to stand when the president enters or leaves Synod. If you need to walk in front of the president, it is usual to acknowledge them with a slight bow, but don't pass between the president and a member who is speaking.

### ATTENDANCE BOOK

Each member of Synod should sign the attendance book each day when present.

### OBSERVERS

Synod is open to the public, but observers do not have voting rights. The president can order non-members to withdraw at any time.

### PROCEDURE

Synod operates under Standing Orders, just like Parliament. These regulate the way business is organised and debate is conducted, and you can find a copy on the diocesan website. Synod may operate in three modes: in ordinary session, in committee, or in conference.

- 1) Synod normally operates in ordinary session to debate bills and motions. The bishop presides or chairs this session and proceedings are recorded as formal minutes.
- 2) When there is likely to be debate on the wording of a bill or long and involved discussion of a motion, Synod may sit in committee. During this time, the rules of debate are considerably relaxed, the chair of committees presides, and the content of discussion is not recorded in the proceedings. Speakers are limited to three minutes.
- 3) Synod in conference is even less formal and may be chaired by someone other than the president. The chairperson can determine speaking times.

Synod moves in and out of conference and committee by motions to that effect.

### PASSING OF BILLS

The laws or rules by which the Church governs itself are called statutes. These are framed by the synod and can only be created or altered by the presentation of a bill, which goes through a three-stage process as set out in Standing Order 35.

#### Approval in principle

This is the first stage when Synod considers the general approach of the bill but does not discuss the details or make amendments. The mover introduces the bill by explaining its background, effect, and key provisions, and then moves that "the principle of Bill (#) be approved". The mover has up to ten minutes to speak. The seconder may speak for up to five minutes or reserve the right to speak. The principle of the bill will be debated, without discussion of its details. The mover may then exercise their right of reply and the seconder may speak if they have not already done so. The president will put the motion and if Synod approves the bill in principle, it moves immediately to the second stage.

#### Approval in detail

At this stage, Synod goes through the bill clause by clause. Synod does this by going "into committee", which means that it operates more informally. The chairperson goes through the wording outlined in the bill, putting each clause or group of clauses to the committee for discussion and a vote. The mover may comment on different parts of the bill as they come up, or answer any questions raised. Amendments do not require a seconder but must be submitted in writing to the committee secretaries and will be dealt with in order as they relate to the content of the bill.

After the committee has considered all parts of the bill, the chairperson will ask the committee to approve the bill as a whole, including any amendments. The committee secretaries keep minutes of the discussion, but only final decisions are noted in the proceedings (minutes) of Synod. If the committee approves the bill in detail, the chairperson will move that "the detail of Bill (#), as agreed by Synod in committee, be approved". The passage of the bill will then be an order of the day for the last sitting day of that session.

#### Passage of the bill

This is a single motion moved by the president on the last day of Synod. This allows synod members an opportunity to reflect on the bill and raise any issues before it passes. It is possible at this stage for a member to move that Synod goes back into committee to re-consider any part of the bill and move amendments.

When the time comes for the order of the day to be dealt with, the president will move that "all bills that have been approved in detail now pass and become statutes". The motion will be put without debate, unless any member of Synod requires the motion to be debated (in which case the mover of each bill may exercise a right of reply before the motion is put) and/or divided (so that each bill can be voted on separately). If a passage motion is carried, each bill to which the



motion relates becomes a statute. Bills take immediate effect as statutes, unless detailed to take effect later.

If necessary, although this is quite rare, standing orders can be suspended to allow changes to the timing of this process. This is usually only necessary when a bill has been introduced urgently during a session of Synod and there is not time to complete the usual processes.

If you have queries about a bill, or would like to move an amendment, it is helpful to speak to the mover or seconder as early as possible. They may be able to answer your question or help you word an amendment. Others may have raised the same issues already.

## THE SUBMISSION OF A MOTION

### STANDING ORDERS

If you wish to submit a motion to Synod for consideration, you must give notice in writing to the Diocesan Manager at least 60 days before Synod opens. Motions can be introduced at any time without notice but only if the whole of Synod grants permission for the mover to do so. These motions will be dealt with only after all motions for which prior notice was given have been considered – if time permits. Often there is not enough time for late motions to be heard, so planning ahead is essential.

These rules are laid down so that members have ample opportunity to think about the issues before they are called to vote for or against a particular matter.

A motion that has been accepted by Synod may not be withdrawn except with the permission of Synod.

### AMENDMENTS TO A MOTION

Amendments may be moved at any time, according to the normal rules. One or two points worth noting are:

- 1) Any amendment, unless it is very minor, needs to be given in writing to the president and synod secretaries (i.e. two copies). Write out the wording you want to change and take it up to the top table.
- 2) An amendment of which prior notice has been given has certain priorities, detailed in Standing Order 29.
- 3) No member who has already spoken to the motion may move or second an amendment to that motion; nor may a member who has moved or seconded an amendment move or second a further amendment to the same motion.
- 4) When the later part of a motion has been amended, no amendment can be proposed to

an earlier part of the motion.

- 5) When an amendment is being considered, the debate focuses on the amendment and decides whether to accept it or not. If accepted, debate then returns to the motion in its amended form (if not accepted, it returns to the original). A member may speak only once to an amendment. At the end of the debate, the mover of the motion may exercise a right of reply before the motion is put.

Please consult Standing Orders 58 to 67 for the rules about amendments as they are rather complicated.

### SPEAKING RIGHTS

Every Synod member has speaking rights. Non-members require prior permission from Synod to speak.

### SPEAKING AT SYNOD

If every member spoke to every issue before Synod we might be in session for many months! When you have a contribution to make and wish to speak, be succinct and try to avoid repeating what others have said. Here are some suggestions:

When you speak, use one of the microphones or you'll be greeted with cries of "Can't hear!" from the other end of the auditorium. Before you start, introduce yourself by name and ministry unit. Address your remarks to "Mr/Madam President" or "Mr/ Madam Chair", say what you have to say, then sit down. There is no rule against using notes. A short speech read clearly from your own notes is much more effective than a long waffle that never quite gets to the point.

A system of lights and buzzers will let you know when your time is up. Movers of a motion are allowed ten minutes; other speakers have five minutes (except when Synod is in committee, when speakers are limited to three minutes). Extensions of time are rare and may only be granted with the unanimous consent of Synod on the motion of someone who has not yet spoken in that debate.

### VOTING RIGHTS

Most members have voting rights under the Synod statute. Those who do not have the right to vote include the Diocesan Manager and any ordained minister who has permission to officiate in the diocese but does not hold a licence from the bishop to an ecclesiastical office in the diocese.

### VOTING ON BILLS AND MOTIONS

When any matter has been debated sufficiently, the president or chairperson puts the question to the vote by asking those in favour to say "yes" or "aye" and then those against to say "no".

The motion is then declared “agreed” (if there is no dissenting voice), “carried” (if a majority is in favour) or “lost”. The president may ask for a show of hands if the vote sounds close on the voices.

Any member may demand a “division” on a vote, which means individual votes are recorded and counted. Every member present when a division is taken must record his or her vote. When a division is taken, the motion must be passed in each house of Synod to be passed as a whole, i.e. by the bishop(s), a majority of clergy present and a majority of laity present. A division does not apply when Synod is in committee.

A simpler procedure known as “counting of votes” may be requested, as provided for in Standing Order 92.

## NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

A good deal of the work of Synod is carried out by various committees during the year. Each Synod has the duty of electing representatives to serve on certain committees and boards, e.g. Diocesan Council, General Synod. Various other bodies, such as trust boards, also require members to be elected occasionally by Synod or the Diocesan Council.

At the beginning of each session of Synod, the president announces the elections to be held and the times and dates for the closing of nominations and elections. Any member may nominate a person for election, provided they have obtained the nominee's consent beforehand and they have a seconder (for some nominations this may need to be from a different house). Nomination forms are available from the Diocesan Office before Synod. Nominations can be submitted before Synod or during Synod up until nominations close.

Elections are held by paper ballot and voting papers are provided at Synod. Several voting rounds may be required to reach an outcome. The successful candidates are announced at Synod by the president once votes have been counted.

## REPORTS

Synod formally receives various reports during the general debate. This gives synod members an opportunity to speak to any matter referred to in the tabled reports which has not already been considered and determined by Synod. Speaking time is limited to five minutes and a list of those wishing to speak will be established first.

## SUSPENSION OF A STANDING ORDER

Synod can do something not otherwise permitted by standing orders by temporarily “suspending” them by a motion under Standing Order 103. This is normally only for something uncontroversial that has arisen during Synod. The unanimous assent of Synod is required, unless notice has been given on a previous day, in which case only a simple majority is required.

## SELECT COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

Sometimes Synod appoints a select committee or commission to investigate a matter and report back (see Standing Orders 81-88). If the report is to be given to the same session of Synod, a select committee is appointed that consists only of Synod members. If more work is required and the report is to a later session or to Diocesan Council, a commission is appointed which may include non-members of Synod. A motion to appoint a select committee or commission must contain the names of the proposed members, the day and time when their report is to be received, and the terms of reference.

## AFTER SYNOD

It is important that synod representatives report back to their ministry units on the matters discussed and resolutions made at Synod. The Diocesan Office provides a resumé of the highlights of Synod, which is available to synod representatives. This can be used as the basis for your report to your ministry unit. The full proceedings of Synod are published as soon as practicable after the close of a session, and a copy is sent to all synod representatives, along with copies of all statutes passed.

If you have any questions or queries before, during or after Synod, please contact the Diocesan Office.

## WHAT ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT?

### TERMS

BILL	Draft legislation which Synod is invited to pass as a statute.
BUSINESS	Any matter coming before Synod.
BISHOP'S CHARGE	A report presented by the bishop after the Synod Eucharist. It may include comment on significant matters and suggestions for consideration and possible action.
CANONS	Legislation passed by General Synod, which is divided into titles (or parts) and canons (chapters).
CHANCELLOR	The official legal adviser to the bishop of a diocese.
CLERGY/CLERICAL	In Synod, the term applies to those who are priests or deacons but not to bishops.
COMMISSION	A body of persons set up by Synod or the bishop(s) to report on a certain matter. It can include those who are not members of Synod and usually reports to a later session of Synod or to Diocesan Council.
CONSTITUTION	The set of rules, first agreed in 1857 and substantially revised in 1992, which establishes the structure and operation of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia.
COOPERATING VENTURE	A ministry unit made up of two or more congregations of different denominations (Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian).

DIOCESE	An area under the jurisdiction of a diocesan bishop.
DIOCESAN COUNCIL	The committee elected to act for the diocesan Synod between annual sessions, but only with such powers as Synod may grant. Formerly known as the Standing Committee.
DIOCESAN MANAGER	The principal administrative officer of the diocese, who used to be called the Registrar or Diocesan Secretary (the term still used in our canons and statutes).
GENERAL SYNOD	The Synod of the whole Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, held every two years.
GOVERNING BODY	The group responsible for the governance of a ministry unit. In a parish, this is called the vestry; in a local shared ministry unit, it is called the council.
HOUSE	Synod is divided into three groups, called houses: bishop(s), clergy, and laity.
IN CONFERENCE	One of the three modes of conducting business at Synod, with procedures specified by standing orders.
IN COMMITTEE	One of the three modes of conducting business at Synod, with procedures specified by standing orders.
KOMITI TUMUAKI	The Standing Committee of Te Pihopatanga o Te Tai Tokerau (the Tikanga Māori equivalent of the Diocese of Auckland).

LAY PERSON/LAITY	Any church member who is not ordained.	MOTION	A resolution before it has been agreed by Synod.
LEAVE OF SYNOD	Permission given by Synod for any member to take a procedural step which is not otherwise permitted.	ORDER OF THE DAY	Any business which is made an Order of the Day has a fixed position in the order of proceedings and has priority over other business when that time comes.
LEGAL BUSINESS COMMITTEE	Formerly known as the Bills Revision Committee, this group reviews proposed bills and motions before they come to Synod.	ORDER PAPER	The daily printed list of the business of Synod set out in the order in which it is to be considered, i.e. the agenda or programme.
LICENCE	A bishop's legal authority, given for any ecclesiastical office or function within the diocese. Clergy and lay ministers are licensed.	ORDINARY SESSION	One of the three modes of conducting business. Synod will sit in ordinary session unless it is in committee or conference mode.
LOCAL LICENCE	A bishop's licence to work only within a specified ministry unit.	PARISH	One of the three types of ministry unit in this diocese (see Ministry Unit).
LOCAL SHARED MINISTRY (LSM)	One of the three types of ministry unit in this diocese (see Ministry Unit).	PERMISSION TO OFFICIATE (PTO)	A bishop's authority given to ordained ministers to take services in the diocese, but without giving them a licence or a seat in Synod.
MEMBER OF SYNOD	Anyone who is entitled to a seat in Synod.	POINT OF ORDER	Calling the chairperson's attention to the rules of procedure.
MINISTRY UNIT	The local unit for ministry in the diocese. Each has a defined geographical boundary, governing body and one or more churches. There are three types of ministry unit: parish, mission district and local shared ministry unit, as defined by the Ministry Unit Statute 2013.	PROCEEDINGS	The formal minutes of Synod.
MISSION DISTRICT	One of the three types of ministry unit in this diocese (see Ministry Unit).	RESOLUTION	A motion after it has been agreed by a vote.
MISSION VENTURE	A worshipping community or group within the diocese, which is not a ministry unit but has a formal association with the diocese. An ordained minister may be licensed to a mission venture.	SPEAKING RIGHTS	The right of all synod members to speak at Synod. Procedures around speaking at Synod are set out in standing orders.
		STANDING COMMITTEE	Now known as Diocesan Council.
		STANDING ORDERS	Rules fixed by Synod to govern its procedure.

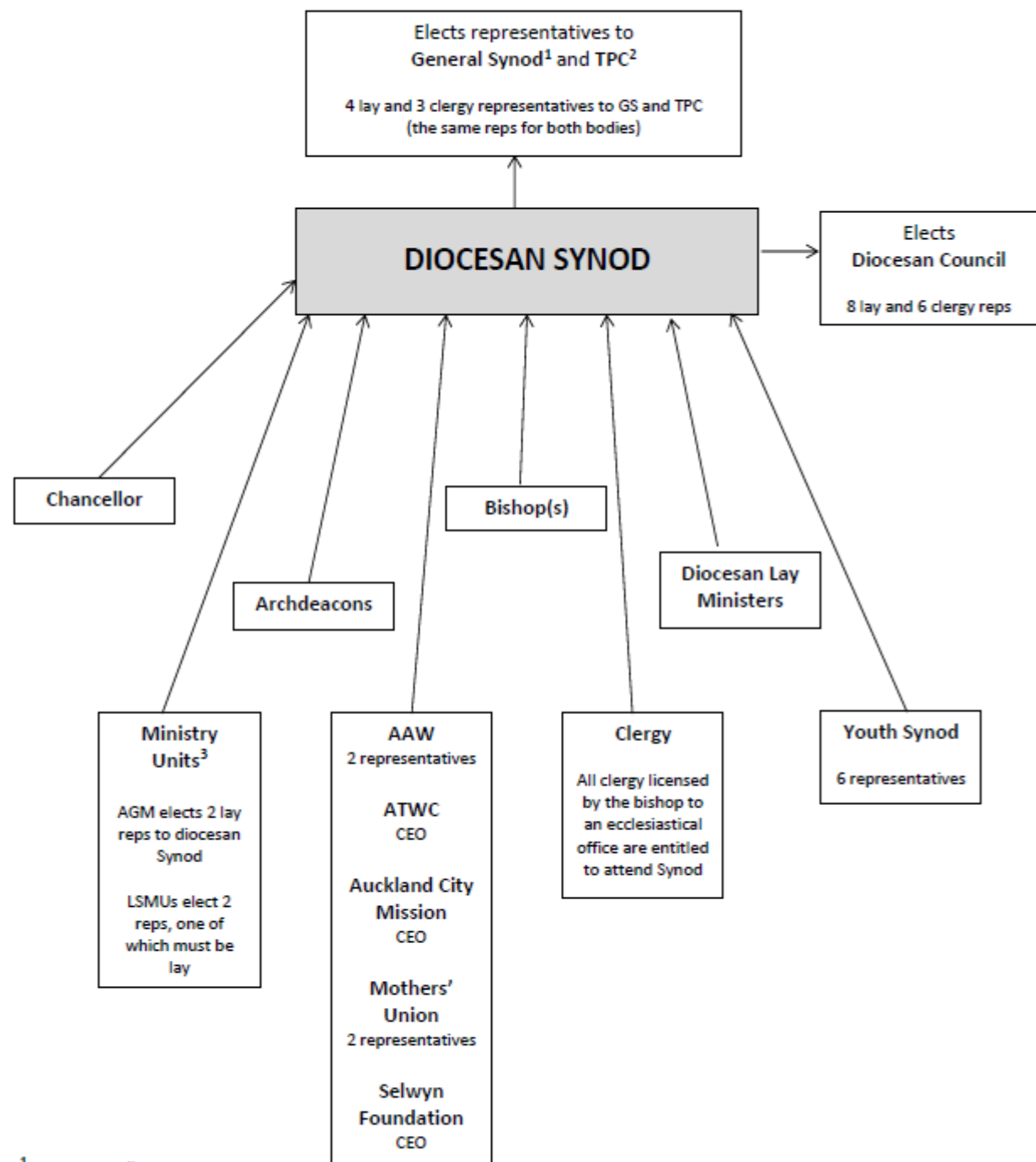


STANDING RESOLUTION	A resolution from a previous synod which should remain in force as an ongoing statement of policy or other important matter. All other resolutions expire at the next synod.
STATUTE	Legislation to which Synod has agreed, a bill after its enactment.
SYNOD	The official diocesan legislative body, the lay members of which are elected for a three-year term.
TIKANGA PĀKEHĀ CONFERENCE (TPC)	A bi-annual conference of Tikanga Pākehā representatives of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia. The TPC representatives also attend General Synod.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AAW	Association of Anglican Women
ACC	Anglican Consultative Council
ACM	Auckland City Mission
AMB	Anglican Missions Board
ATB	Anglican Trusts Board
ATWC	Anglican Trust For Women & Children
AYM	Anglican Youth Ministries
CMS	Church Missionary Society
DC/Dio Council	Diocesan Council
Dio	Diocese; Diocesan School for Girls
DYF	Diocesan Youth Facilitator
GSTHW	General Synod Te Hīnota Whānui
GTB	General Trusts Board
ICHC	Interchurch Council on Hospital Chaplaincy
JRC	Joint Regional Committee
KT	Komiti Tumuaki
LSMU	Local Shared Ministry Unit
LSP	Local Service Provider Committee for Hospital Chaplaincy
NSM	Non-Stipendiary Ministry
NURM	Northern Urban Rural Mission
NZACN	New Zealand Anglican Care Network
NZACPB	New Zealand Anglican Church Pension Board
NZCCSS	New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services
PMS	Parish Ministry Support
PTO	Permission to Officiate
SPACE	Supporting Parents Alongside Children's Education
TIML	Trust Investments Management Limited
TPC	Tikanga Pākehā Conference
+	Bishop

**FIGURE 1 - AUCKLAND DIOCESAN SYNOD**



<sup>1</sup> Represents 3 tikanga

<sup>2</sup> Represents 7 Pākehā dioceses

<sup>3</sup> Ministry unit is a generic term that encompasses parishes, mission districts, LSMUs and cooperating parishes.