

A photograph of a forest floor covered in moss and fallen leaves. A path leads through the trees, which have thick trunks and dense green foliage. Sunlight filters through the canopy.

TE NGAHERE PUĀWAI

A vision for the flourishing of Waiapu



PAGE 1

A message from Bishop Andrew

PAGE 2

The story of this vision so far.

PAGE 3

A vision for Waiapu.

PAGE 4

Our Values

PAGE 5

Our strategic priorities.

PAGE 10

A Prayer for Waiapu

FROM BISHOP ANDREW

In the beautiful native forests, ngahere, of Aotearoa New Zealand there is a multiplicity and diversity of life. From the large trees that form the canopy to the smallest of shrubs or the newest shoots of life, there is a connectedness and relationship that allows for the beauty of the whole.

In this image, we find something of the vision we believe God has for our Diocese. A diverse eco-system of faithful life that in turn gives life to the whole, a community of interdependence and connection that leads to flourishing. This document is intended to help you catch some of the hope and possibility of this vision, set within the Anglican Communion Marks of Mission and as part of our Three Tikanga Church, and to outline the taonga we believe God has given us to help build that picture into a reality across the Anglican Diocese of Waiapu.

I am grateful for the work of all who have contributed to this expression of God's calling for Waiapu. From members of Standing Committee, diocesan leaders, both lay and ordained, senior staff from Anglican Care Waiapu and from the Shared Services Team, alongside members of Synod. This document expresses a collective discernment of the Spirit's work in our Diocese and across its expressions in church, mission, social services and investments.

My prayer is that the possibilities and promise that lie behind these words gives a renewed sense of love, peace and joy for what God is calling us to become.



+ *Andrew Waiapu*
RT REV'D ANDREW HEDGE
BISHOP OF WAIAPU

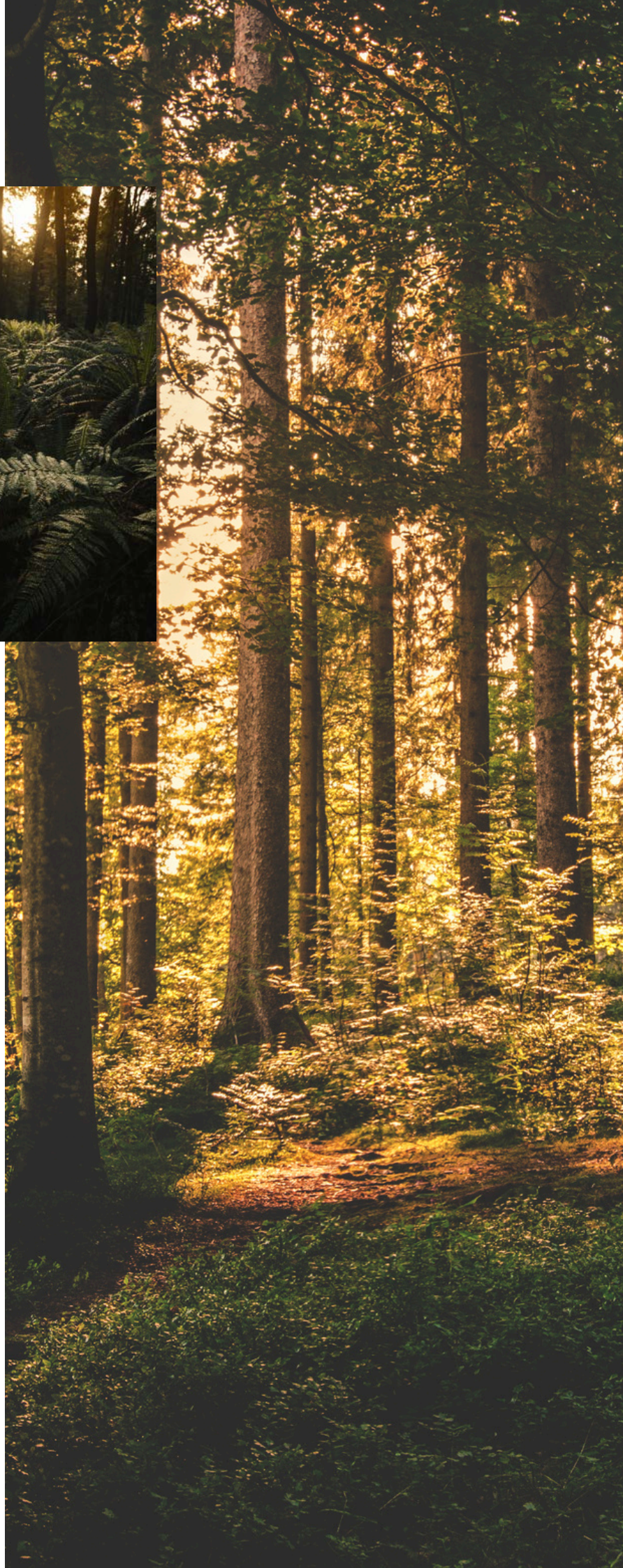
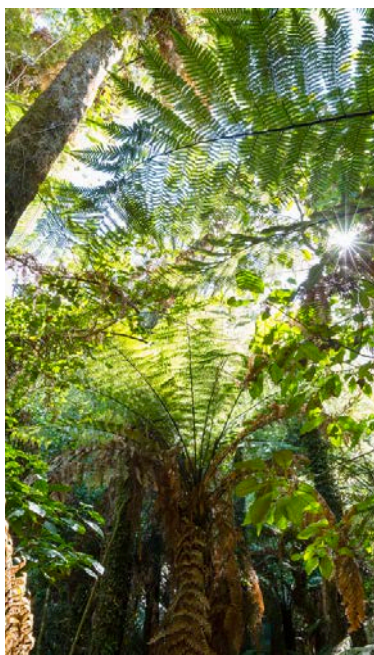
How was this vision discerned?

A true vision is not the product of one time, one leader or one initiative. Instead, it is the product of the collective wisdom, energy, discomfort, observations and determination of a community attempting to declare what it believes it is called to become. The official beginning of the process to develop this vision was through the invitation of the Bishop to members of the Standing Committee, the Archdeacons, the Diocesan Registrar, the Ministry Educator, and leaders from the Diocesan Shared Services Team and Anglican Care Waiapu, to engage in a two-day wānanga of imagination and dreaming in June of 2023. From this gathering, the core pillars that remain as our strategic priorities were formed, including a focus on the local expression of Anglican life, a renewal of our efforts toward vocation, a greater collegiality and connectedness across our diocese, and a resourcing of ministry to children and young people.

From this initial gathering, the strategic priorities were brought to Synod in September of 2023 where all members were encouraged to engage and discuss what they may mean and how they could be worked out. This development was then considered by the Strategy Working Group who, reporting to the Standing Committee, crystalised the thoughts and developed this document and an action plan to enable the vision to unfold.

As this work continues, the peoples' prayer is needed such that Waiapu can move with the Spirit of God to become the community the Kingdom needs for another generation.

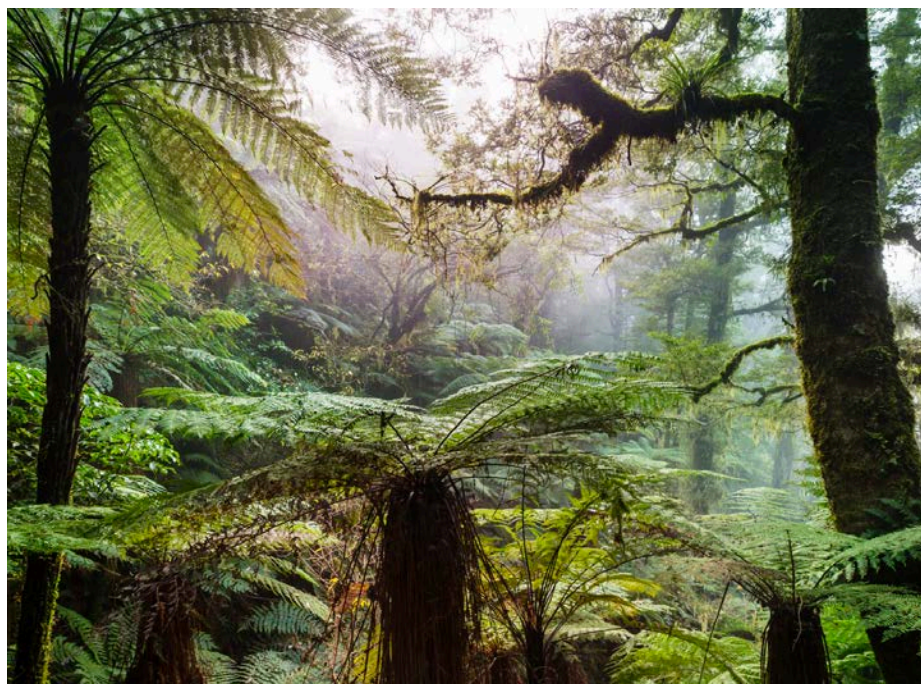




Our Vision

Faith giving life

Named for the river that flows from the Raukūmara ranges into the Waipapu plains, we believe our history and our future as a Diocese is centred on carrying the gospel into the lives of the communities we serve, to bring a flourishing and fullness of life.



Our Values and Strategic Priorities

A vision is best understood as a horizon - a destination toward which we are heading. Navigating that journey is the work of values and strategic priorities. These are the constellations which, when visible, help us to know we are going the right way.

As a diocese, we wish to be a people characterised by aroha (love), rongo (peace), and hari (joy) as we continue to proclaim the gospel to the peoples of our place. Aroha reflects our knowledge that all people are created in the image of God and so worthy of respect and honour. Rongo reflects the need for meaningful conversations that explore our differences but find our common ground. Hari acknowledges that even when it is hard, the work we have to do is a gift from God, and ultimately will be done in God's power - so let's enjoy ourselves.

Our strategic priorities are outlined more fully in the coming pages and reflect the areas of particular focus as we grow faith giving life across Waiapu.



Discipleship

If Jesus had been a kiwi, we believe he would have said “Consider the harakeke”. For Māori, the harakeke captures a vision of community and life together that is mirrored in the calling of the church to protect, equip and build up the life of the faithful as a witness of God’s love and life in all places, friendly and hostile.

The story of God’s people is filled with moments in which all seemed lost, and yet every time God brings about a movement of renewal that brings life to dry bones. We believe God is doing that work in our generation, and our desire is to see our churches revitalised alongside a zeal for planting and mission.

To achieve this, we believe God is calling us to become a network of communities and organisations that have a deeply local focus, and that are equipped to be the church for the place and people God has planted

them within. To become such a network, we intend to re-engage with the whakapapa of our diocese - a genealogy of missionaries, risk takers, deeply local hearts and agents for change. This will shape within us, once again, a sense of radical hospitality that breaks down the walls that divide us from them - liberal from conservative, insider from outsider - as we share in a grace-filled mission and hear the voice of spiritual renewal spoken over our people and in the voices of our people.

We long to be known as communities of welcome and hospitality who offer a vibrant spirituality and a rich sacramental life that fosters a theological imagination for service, grace, justice, and blessing. To become this, we will strive to recentre ourselves on community, and foster a greater formational environment such that connection and encounter are hallmarks of our common life.

Koru Ministry



We are a diocese with a rich history of ministry to children, young people and their families. Alongside this, many of those reading this will remember formative and faith growing experiences they enjoyed through the ministries of both the local church and the diocese when they were younger.

In the image of the forest, this ministry is akin to the nurturing and care for the smallest of shoots. The wonder of this is that, until it begins to grow, you do not know whether it will become a mighty totara that will be a shelter for others in years to come, or the simplicity of a fern that brings beauty to the experience of life.

In many of our churches and communities, the presence of this new life is rare. In light of this, we know it is an area that needs dedication, prayer and resourcing as we aspire to meet and form those whom God is calling to

take on the baton of leadership, and form the church for another generation.

We believe this can be achieved through a deliberate investment in formational opportunities and gatherings that foster community, and by developing relevant pathways of training and practice that draw out the gifts of the tamariki, rangitahi and whānau that God calls alongside us.

We wish to be known as a diocese that generously gives of itself to welcome, equip and grow another generation to help build the kingdom of God. To become this, we intend to release resources for regional ministry to children, young people and their families, which will also see a strategic emphasis toward the development of intentional communities, educational opportunities and greater engagement with the Anglican Schools Network.

Whakapapa



Ka mua, ka muri. This whakatauki gives expression to our belief that who we have been is an integral part of who we will become. As a diocese, we have a beautiful story that speaks of encounter, biculturalism, faithfulness, and a striving for justice and equity. This beauty is marked by other stories of tragedy, betrayal and pain that also form part of who we are. To become what God calls us to be in the future, we must know who we have been, giving thanks for that which is light and confessing that which is not.

We believe we are called to live into

our relationships with Te Pihopatanga and together nurture the proclamation of the gospel in Waiapu.

We intend to live into the whakapapa of our Diocese and grow in our understanding of this through the sharing of gifts, taonga, and wānanga to understand the mātauranga and worldview we each carry.

While a standalone priority, whakapapa will undergird all of our actions as we continue to discern God's will for Waiapu and seek to grow in relationship with Te Pihopatanga.



Vocation

At baptism, we pray “May you grow in the Holy Spirit, fulfil your ministry and follow Christ your whole life long.” Ministry is not the domain of an exclusive few; it is an expression of the personal and corporate call to follow Jesus and to grow into the fullness of the likeness of Christ.

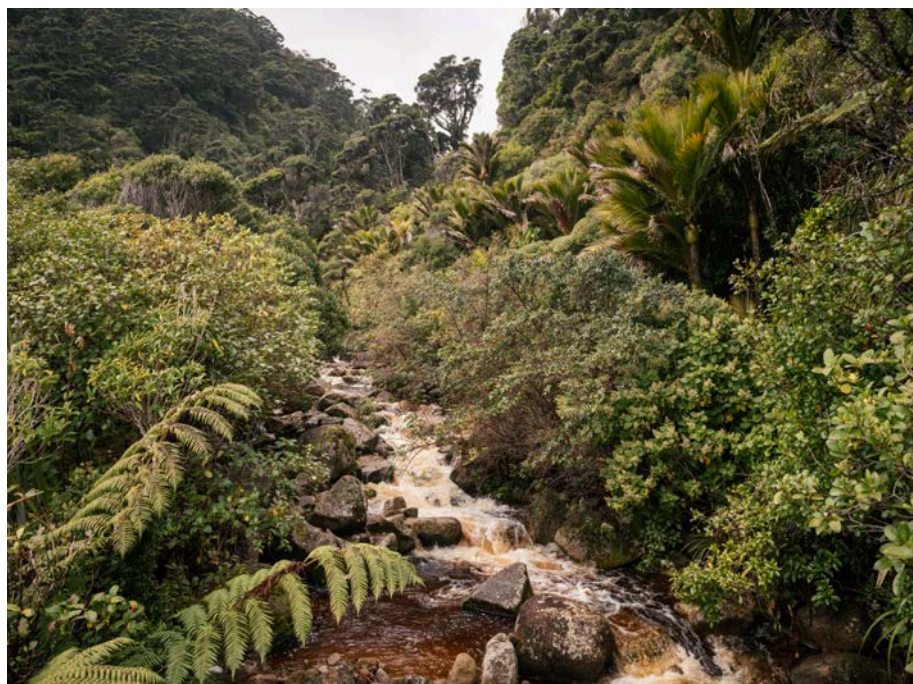
Ministry is so much greater than the daily bread of income or work and is better captured by the word ‘vocation’ that speaks of the identity-expressing, purpose-driven spirit that makes us feel like we were created to do that work.

We believe the future of the church is rooted in the same reality its past has been: the calling of the saints to step into their ministry, equipping them for this work and supporting them in all that God brings them into. To achieve this, we need a reorientation of formation, education and training where communities are encouraged to

look beyond themselves, to develop cultural literacy and practice of ministry and mission that touches the lives of their neighbours, and where we see ourselves as a community of learners driven to uplift and support one another rather than compare or diminish.

We wish to be known as a diocese that serves the cities, communities and villages in which it is planted. This needs us, in the first instance, to grow a greater sense of community and belonging within our parishes and services by forming leaders who understand community development, love the people God calls them to fellowship with and honour the stories of all people, helping to discern where God is calling them.

This is not just about training and education; it is a task of spiritual formation that must be heard in every pulpit, across our conversations and in our lived experience of one another.



Connection

As a diocese, we are a large organisation housing multiple entities across the world of social services, mission, education, investment and social impact, not to mention an expression of corporate life spread across a vast geographical area. In such a context, it is easy to become siloed and to hold different horizons as the ultimate goal of our life together.

With this new direction, we intend to work toward a greater alignment of all that our history has made us today. This will begin at an institutional level, with a cross-board integration of our vision and those strategic priorities that can be shared alongside a review

of our canons and policies to ensure our common life is as rich and interdependent as possible.

Through this work, we aim to build a relational and collegial culture across the diocese where we are invested and supportive of the work and mission of one another: are willing to put our taonga into the places we share vision, release the burdens carried by smaller communities, and review our assets to bring the resources to bear on the building of God's Kingdom. Through this, we hope to release a spirit of creativity and energy that will fan the flames of flourishing across our churches, services and Waiapu.



A prayer for Waiapu

God of past and present, yours is the Spirit that fires the life of your Church and yours is the work we are given to do; bless our diocese with a courage to pray for that which seems inconceivable, a tenacity of hope that sees your kingdom even in the ashes, and a grace that knows we are all brothers and sisters in your love. Amen.

Prayer undergirds everything in the kingdom of God and, so too it should in the life of the church. Whether you see the hope of this vision and wonder how you can be a part, or long to see it come to be but feel your time has passed, prayer is something we can all do to prepare ourselves and our communities for the work of God. Please share this prayer amongst the prayers of your communities and offer it in your devotions as we seek to see and hear God's will done on earth as in heaven.