



DIOCESE OF SALISBURY

SALISBURY DIOCESAN SYNOD MINUTES OF THE 129th SESSION OF THE SYNOD HELD AT AMESBURY BAPTIST CHURCH ON SATURDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2019

1. **Opening Worship and Presidential Address**

Members took part in the Liturgy of the Word led by the Bishop of Ramsbury. The Bishop of Salisbury delivered the Presidential Address on themes of confirmation candidates, new worshipping communities and the numbers who join us for Remembrance Day services. He also spoke of our diocesan commitment to Renewing Hope: Pray, Serve, Grow, the importance of our links and partnerships and the need for Christians to be a people committed to being about the truth.

A full copy of the presidential address is available from the web site at www.salisbury.anglican.org or from fiona.torrance@salisbury.anglican.org at the Diocesan Office.

2. **Approval of Minutes of last meeting**

Synod approved the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2019. There were no matters arising.

3. **Notices, Co-options and Apologies**

Synod welcomed the Revd Canon Jonathan Triffitt as the newly elected Chairman of the House of Clergy. (Canon Triffitt paid tribute to his predecessor, the Revd Canon Thomas Woodhouse, before chairing the afternoon session of the Synod.)

The DAC Chairman updated Synod on developments and improvements relating to the DAC, including additional staffing with delegated powers and increased use of electronic systems to provide a better service to parishes.

The Chairman of the House of Laity promulgated Amending Canon 39 and the Archdeacon of Sarum explained the changes.

There were no co-options.

Apologies were received from 16 clergy and 17 laity.

4. **Diocesan Priorities and Five Year Financial Framework**

The Diocesan Secretary updated Synod on the journey so far in the interim review of Renewing Hope: Pray, Serve, Grow. This included the stock-take by Bishop John Gladwin, together with reviews of Mission and Ministry, Property, IT, office space, communications and Fairer Share. He asked Synod to consider what our future shared priorities should be and how these might be taken forward within a sustainable financial framework.

The Bishop of Sherborne described the journey which had resulted in identifying the three priorities for growth before Synod:

- Discipleship and Evangelism
- Dynamic Collaboration and Leadership
- Transforming Lives and Communities

She explained that there was a need to identify new ways of doing things in order to respond to external change and influences, including the need to re-align aspects of our

statutory work. Synod also learnt that the Diocese had been chosen to be part of a pilot scheme for “Growing Faith”.

The DBF Chairman set out the aims of the Finance Committee over the next five years. He reminded Synod members of the financial challenge the Diocese faced and the benefits of working within a five year framework aligning sustainable finances to our shared goals. He also provided a brief update on the on-going Fairer Share review work.

The Diocesan Secretary outlined four current areas of work which sought to address diocesan priorities within a sustainable financial framework:

- Re-imagine patterns of ministry
- Find new sources of income to support objectives
- Plan to invest in change
- Identify new ways of working

He invited members of Synod to contribute their thoughts, ideas and involvement.

Members briefly discussed amongst themselves:

- What opportunities this refreshed Vision might create for their own parish/deanery/area.
- What questions or comments they might have about the priorities.
- Their thoughts on the proposal to work within a five year financial framework.

In feedback, several members expressed the wish for background paperwork to be circulated in advance and more time provided to adequately discuss the ideas and proposals. Several responses focussed on finance including concerns that any cuts may damage parishes, the need for urgent investment to quickly address priorities, a plea to assist parishes with their local accounts and the huge importance of achieving sustainable diocesan finances. Additional comments centred around re-imagining ministry, considering the ecumenical dimension and the importance of communicating this work effectively to the parishes.

Turning to the Motion before Synod, the Chairman House of Laity advised that a proposed amendment had been received from the Archdeacon of Sarum. The Archdeacon then spoke to his amendment which he hoped would provide more time, space and ownership and excite Synod to action. The DBF Chairman, mover of the original Motion, expressed his willingness to accept the amendment and the Archdeacon, seconded by the Revd Anthony Gilbert, therefore proposed:

“That this Synod receives the Diocesan Priorities and commits to working towards a sustainable financial plan for the period 2021-2025”

is amended to:

“That this Synod takes note of the Diocesan Priorities outlined in the presentation, and having given consideration to written proposals:

- a. looks to the final approval of these Priorities at the February 2020 Diocesan Synod, and
- b. requests the Chairman of the Board of Finance to bring the detailed Five-year Financial Plan for the period 2021-2025 to the Diocesan Synod for first consideration at the February Diocesan Synod, and a discussion to agree the budget for 2021 “with line of sight” to the 5 year framework at the Diocesan Synod in June 2020.”

During debate, some members were concerned that accepting the amendment would delay necessary action, although the majority welcomed more time and information to better understand what they would be agreeing to. The Archdeacon then moved the Amendment which was carried with 65 votes in favour, 12 against and 7 abstentions. This then became the main Motion which Synod then approved with 63 votes in support, 9 against and 9 abstentions.

5. The Channel Islands

The Bishop reported that the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on the Relationship of the Channel Islands to the wider Church of England had recommended that in future they be attached to the Diocese of Salisbury. He stated that he would agree to this if supported by Synod. The ensuing debate demonstrated that there was strong and mutual enthusiasm for the proposals. The Bishop then moved:

“That this Synod welcomes the report of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission regarding episcopal oversight of the Channel Islands and commits to working with the report's recommendations.”

The vote was carried unanimously. The full report is available at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/Report%20-%20FINAL%20-%208-10-19.pdf>.

6. The Church and the Environment

Synod received a presentation from Dr Ruth Valerio who led members in consideration of environmental issues in general and the Diocese's approach to Lent 2020 in particular. She asked members to do five things to make a difference, these being to Teach, Give (generously), Pray, Speak Out and Live It (in the changes we make in our own lives). Dr Valerio introduced the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2020 which she had written and which addressed both environmental and social justice issues. Each chapter would be accompanied by web pages providing more resources with the aim of being both practical and inspiring. Synod members discussed amongst themselves what had struck or excited them and what they might do.

The Archdeacon of Sherborne then moved:

“That this Synod recognises that there is a Climate Emergency and

- i. Encourages every part of the Diocese to engage with the Fifth Mark of Mission as exemplified in the Strategic Aims set out in the Diocesan Environment Policy.
- ii. Welcomes the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2020, “Saying Yes to Life” and recommends it for use in the parishes of the Diocese of Salisbury.”

He spoke of the Fifth Mark of Mission and reminded Synod that Salisbury was the first diocese to achieve an Eco Diocese award, but there was still a great deal to do. He challenged members to see how their churches could get involved with Eco Church and commended “Saying Yes to Life” to all parishes for Lent. During debate Synod members were keen to encourage parishes to get involved. There was enthusiastic applause for a suggestion that pressure be put on historical societies to apply environmental considerations when looking at building works even if that meant the use of modern materials; it was suggested, however, that the only real way to bring pressure to bear on such societies was to join them. The Bishop expressed his desire that all parishes use “Saying Yes to Life” during Lent 2020 in place of the Diocesan “Praying Together” booklet which had been discontinued. Copies cost £10 each, but there were bulk discounts available and he personally pledged to fund at least 200 copies.

Synod then voted and supported the Motion unanimously.

7. The Board of Education

The Annual Report for the Board of Education was deferred with Synod just noting the written report they had already received.

8. The Cathedral

This item had been postponed from earlier in the agenda. Synod members had each received a copy of the Salisbury Cathedral Annual Report 2018/19. The Dean described the busy life of the Cathedral over the previous twelve months. Looking ahead, he announced “Salisbury 2020: City on the Move” - a year long programme of events and activities marking the 800th anniversary of the laying of the Cathedral's first foundation stone and the development of the current city. Synod noted that, apart from being an

important piece of medieval history, the programme was valuable because visitor numbers were still 10% below where they had been before the terrorist events of 2018. Synod received the Report nem con.

10. Creating a Safer Church

The Archdeacon of Wilts introduced a working document outlining changes to safeguarding training. Synod received the document. She advised that if safeguarding advisers needed to undertake a risk assessment, these were now much more involved and would therefore take longer. She reported to Synod on the Past Cases Review which was due to be completed at the end of January 2020; an update paper will be circulated with these minutes. She also reported that the current Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) would be reducing her hours but an additional DSA would start at the beginning of January resulting in an overall increase in capacity in the safeguarding department. She noted a plea from the floor that lengthy new safeguarding materials be marked up to show the recipients what had changed. Synod then formally received the Safeguarding Report.

11. Questions

The Revd Anthony Gilbert asked about the ethics of the Church of England appointing Mr Jonathan de Bernhardt Wood as its National Advisor for Giving and Income Generation given his views as stated in his 2007 book "The Porcupine Principle".

The Diocesan Secretary replied that he had taken this up with the National Church on behalf of the Bishop. The response had been that the comments had come from a book that Mr de Bernhardt Wood had authored over twelve years ago and were taken out of context and that he now worked within very clear guiding principles relating to his work and that of his team.

Synod remained concerned by the question of morality in fundraising and additional comments attributed to Mr de Bernhardt Wood elicited reproach from many Synod members.

12. Any other business

The Diocesan Secretary announced the departure at the end of the year of the Deputy Diocesan Secretary, Mr Stephen Dawson. Synod expressed its thanks for all he had done for the Diocese by prolonged applause.

Relating to the many strands of current work, the Director of Education urged Synod members to find creative ways to continue the engagement and discussion and feed comments back to the Bishop and Diocesan Secretary.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Synod will next meet from 10 am to 3 pm on Saturday 29 February 2020 at Corfe Mullen. Any Motions, proposals for business or other matters should be with the Diocesan Secretary by 13 January.