

Oxford Diocesan Synod Saturday 12th March 2016

A summary of proceedings for website:

Bishop Colin welcomed people to Synod and in particular those people that were new to synod.

OPENING WORSHIP - On behalf of the Abingdon Deanery, Mr Keith Dunnett led synod members in a period of worship using 'Dwelling in the world' based around Philippians 1:27 to 2: 1-10. Reflection: The message of the gospel according to St. Paul.

NOTICES AND WELCOME - Bishop Colin announced that the next stage of appointing a new Bishop of Oxford had taken place this week. He was not a member of this panel but understood the initial stages looked encouraging.

Rosemary Pearce, Diocesan Secretary updated on the office move to Kidlington: Planning to move Wednesday 23rd March. Phones will be switched off on that Wednesday and open to the public the following Wednesday after Easter. Staff will be on leave Maundy Thursday to Bank Holiday Monday. Bishop Colin asked for thanks to be passed on to staff at DCH as this was a major project that had been managed very professionally.

Bishop Colin introduced Andrew Anderson-Gear, the new Director of Mission. Andrew spoke of his hopes for his new role.

3 key areas of work for the Board of Mission will be: developing discipleship, growing leadership and vocations.

As an additional item the **Amending Canon No. 34** was promulgated. This relates to changes in requirement around safeguarding. The full document is on the website

MINUTES of the meeting held on Saturday 14th November 2015 were approved and signed by Bishop Colin.

QUESTIONS: No questions had been received under Standing Order 70.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS: The Revd John Tattersall, Chair of the Board of Finance, set out a number of points. He made a statement about the use of glebe income (a percentage of which is allocated to specific benefices in support for areas of rurality or deprivation).

- Expected outturn in results for 2015: Audit not yet complete but no significant changes expected. Surplus just under 4% of revenue: primarily due to the number of clergy and staff vacancies £620k savings, and good yield on investments.
- Financial implications of move to Kidlington: expected to be broadly within budget.
- Bishop's Council at its last meeting designated surplus in 2015 to fund deanery plans in next few years.
- Church Commissioners funding is not likely to be available until a new Bishop is in place and strategic plans are agreed.
- Parish share: Thank you to all parishes, benefices and deaneries. 96.5% very warmly received.
- We are budgeting for a 3% underpayment in 2016.

DEANERY SYNOD MOTION from the Wycombe Deanery.

Due to the failure to appoint a new diocesan bishop it was urged that members consider a change as our current system was not transparent. The process was drawn out, as had been the appointment of Bishop John, unlike the Swedish Bishop who had been appointed and was in post in a matter of days. A lengthy delay had meant that Bishop Colin was currently covering two roles and this could not be sustained long-term. There was a lively debate before moving to a vote. Full details of the Motion can be found at <http://www.oxford.anglican.org/who-we-are/governance/diocesan-synod/>

Vote: The Motion was carried with 5 votes Against (Abstentions: 6)

Bishop Colin thanked members for their kind words of support during the debate.

HALF A MILLION PEOPLE EVERY WEEK: MAKING THE MOST OF MISSION THROUGH WEDDINGS, FUNERALS & BAPTISMS.

The Revd Canon Dr Sandra Millar, Head of Projects and Developments, Church of England (Archbishops' Council) gave an entertaining delivery of the research projects she had headed up.

Over the past few years Archbishops' Council has invested in wide research with the public and developed resources to support parish ministry to those who we meet at key times in life, whether in celebration or sadness. Sandra's presentation shared the key themes that have emerged out of that research and shared tools that will help engage those we meet with the good news of Jesus Christ.

This talk was very well received. A fuller account will be in the final Minutes and information is also available from the Church of England Website. <https://www.churchofengland.org/weddings-baptisms-funerals.aspx>

MATTERS FROM GENERAL SYNOD - The synod split into 12 areas led by a General Synod member. This was a chance to discuss matters raised at February's Sessions. <https://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/structure/general-synod/agendas-and-papers/february-2016-group-of-sessions.aspx>

QUINQUENNIAL INSPECTIONS IN THE DEANERY, Mr Charles Baker Chair, DAC

Mr Baker reminded members that the DAC would be 100 years old in April this year. He proposed a change to the diocesan scheme for quinquennial inspections set in 1993 when this diocese required every deanery to organise quinquennial inspections. Since then practice has varied widely. Following discussions with Area Deans and Lay Chairs, he recommended that these rules be removed. He also urged parishes to make use of the staff that we have available in the diocese for advice. Questions were taken before being moved to a formal vote.

The Motion was carried with 5 votes Against (Abstentions: 9).

It will come into immediate effect. The full paper setting out the proposals is available on the website.

Bishop Colin thanked DAC and archdeacons for all the work they had done in bringing this Motion to Synod.

REFLECTION Mr John Smith, Deanery Synod Lay Chair, Sonning Deanery, gave a reflection on the morning's business.

CLOSING PRAYERS were led by the Bishop of Dorchester.