

STRETFORD DEANERY SYNOD

Report on a meeting of the Manchester Diocesan Synod held on Saturday 28 February 2015 at St. Paul's Church, Kersal Moor.

1. Worship

The meeting opened with an Act of Worship.

2. Presidential Address

The Diocesan Bishop welcomed the Synod to its 133rd meeting and addressed the Synod.

He made reference to a survey of clergy views on several aspects of ministry. This indicated that clergy felt prepared for and liked pastoral care but, on the other hand, felt ill-prepared for and did not like involvement in mission and evangelism.

3. Minutes

The Synod approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 October 2014. There were no matters arising.

4. Questions under Standing Order 69

None.

5. Report on General Synod

Mr John Barber and Rev. Andy Salmon reported on their experience as first-time members of the General Synod since 2010. Both commented that it had been a great privilege to represent the Diocese of Manchester on the General Synod and drew attention to the elections for the 2015 to 2020 quinquennium to be held later this year.

6. Welcoming and Belonging

(a) The Bishop of Bolton (Rt. Rev. Chris Edmondson) introduced a paper prepared by Rev. Alec Mitchell and entitled "We've been expecting you." The subtitle is "Welcome and Belonging: Manchester and Disability". The paper focused on the welcome our churches extend to those who live with disabilities, whether mental, physical or social. There was special mention on welcoming those with mental health problems. The paper also offered particular encouragement to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities if we are to be a truly inclusive church.

(b) The Synod agreed to endorse and support the work being done to promote "Welcome and Inclusion" in all its aspects, not least those who live with disability, ill-health and the frailties of older-age.

7. Financial Matters

The Diocesan Synod adjourned for a meeting of the Diocesan Board of Finance which:

- a) received an update on the financial year 2014
- b) received the minutes of meetings of the Finance Committee and the Property Committee held during recent months

The Diocesan Synod re-convened at this point.

8. Parish Share Review

Rev. Jonathan Carmyllie and Mrs Alison Bamford presented a report on an extensive consultation throughout the Diocese and intensive discussions within a Parish Share Review Group appointed in 2013.

The Group presented three options for amendment of the current Parish Share scheme. After some discussion the Diocesan Synod accepted Option 1 which had been recommended strongly by the Group, as follows:

The Diocese will have a potential-based Parish Share system using congregational size and relative income as primary factors, but with individual parish discussions and agreements as an integral part of the process.

9. Stewardship and Giving

Following a question at the October 2014 meeting of the Diocesan Synod concerning the principle of the giving of 5% of income to churches by members of congregations it was reported that the Stewardship Committee had subsequently discussed this matter. Following some discussion and minor amendment the Synod approved the following motion proposed on behalf of the Stewardship Committee by Rev. Anne Edwards.

"This Synod, affirming that God gives abundant gifts to us as individuals and as a Church, and that we are stewards of all that God has given us:

- (a) Encourages church members (including children and young people) to live generously as disciples of Jesus Christ, joyfully giving time, skills, money and other resources to God's mission in the world, in times of economic stringency as well as of plenty, in response to the lavish generosity of God to us in Christ who made Himself poor that we might become rich;*
- (b) Reconfirms its challenge to church members to assess annually their financial giving as a proportion of income and to adopt a target of giving of up to 5% of their after tax income to and through the church, and a similar amount to other work that helps to build God's kingdom;*
- (c) Commends the 'Giving for Life' Guide (GS1723a) to parishes and deaneries for prayerful discussion and action;*
- (d) Actively encourages the deaneries and parishes, in conjunction with the Diocesan Stewardship Officer, to pro-actively support and develop positive Christian Stewardship practice on an ongoing basis, using the four key tasks identified in 'Giving for Life' as a best practice guide."*

10. Governance Review

The Diocesan Secretary (Canon Martin Miller) presented a report identifying issues which have to be addressed by the Governance Review Panel and the Diocesan Synod in their discussions on amendment of the Diocesan Committee structures and responsibilities. The paper contained a detailed analysis of the governance arrangements in several other Dioceses of the Church of England. The report was received by the Diocesan Synod with little comment.

11. Instruments of Delegation

The Synod approved Regulations on the delegation of certain episcopal functions by the Diocesan Bishop to four retired bishops now living within or close to the boundaries of the Diocese of Manchester.

12. The Blessing

The Synod concluded with a blessing by the Diocesan Bishop.