



**SALISBURY DIOCESAN SYNOD**  
**REPORT OF THE 86<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE SYNOD HELD AT**  
**AMESBURY BAPTIST CHURCH CENTRE ON SATURDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2005**

**1. Liturgy of the Word with Presidential Address**

Members took part in the Liturgy of the Word and the Bishop of Sherborne delivered the Presidential Address. He spoke of the disciples' connecting with people and making effective local relationships and local church. He spoke also of their spending time renewing their relationship with God. They were enthusiastic young people who drew crowds and were excited and urgent to discover the words of Jesus. These days we have so much heritage to maintain that we can be cynical and tired. We should, however, learn from the example of the disciples, try to share their enthusiasm and reflect on how we can develop as mature Christian disciples.

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

The Diocesan Secretary welcomed the Revd Humphrey Southern as the newly elected Chairman of the House of Clergy.

She advised Synod of the death of former House of Laity member Col John Crompton.

Apologies were received from the Bishop, 16 members of the House of Clergy and 15 member of the House of Laity.

**3 Shaping the Cathedral for Future Mission**

The Dean, the Very Revd June Osborne, gave a report on the vision of the long-term strategy for the Cathedral. Cathedral staff had reflected on the Cathedral Mission Statement which advocated:

- Supporting diocesan activities
- Being a dynamic centre of Christian worship
- Building partnerships worldwide
- Witnessing to God's love
- Being outward looking and engaging with society
- Conserving, enhancing and interpreting the building.

Staff were now looking to the future and testing the themes of prayerfulness, hospitality and citizenship, specifically:

- A vision of peace in a place of prayer
- A vision of hospitality
- A vision of modern society

Feedback had been sought and received and it was clear that people wished to see a more holistic view. There had also been a call for improved meeting facilities. A Conservation Plan had now been produced and work was in progress on a Master Plan to be completed within the next 18 months.

Mr Alun Williams, Head of Visitor Services, reported that the external repair programme was going to plan although about ten years' work remained. More attention is now being given to maintenance and repair of the internal areas:

- Changes to the layout have been proposed to meet the needs of current worship and liturgy.
- Consideration is being given to more sympathetic storage solutions.
- Improvements are being made to display and interpretation for visitors.
- Visitor flow is constantly under review.
- Consideration is being given to a new unified lighting scheme.

Discussions with Salisbury District Council are under way to develop plans for the Cathedral and Close with the City, together with plans for traffic management within the Close. The plans seek to protect important views of the Cathedral. In addition, efforts are being made to strengthen the links between Cathedral and parishes, the Sudan and Latvia.

The Dean emphasised that members of Cathedral staff were very willing to come and speak to deaneries about this or any other matters of common concern.

Mr Hugh Privett, (General Synod), asked if there were any plans for linking the administration of the Cathedral and the Diocesan Office. The Dean replied that the teams work together as closely as possible and talk constantly about where resources might be shared. Mrs Jean Alexander, Diocesan Ecumenical Officer, asked for information on what the Cathedral does ecumenically. The Dean responded that a very successful ecumenical service had just taken place. Sarum Canons had been introduced to include people of many different Christian traditions. Staff worked ecumenically on many different levels and the Cathedral is keen to be a resource in this area. Mr Richard Southwell, (Heytesbury), wanted to know what might be done with the workshop site which currently blocks one view of the Cathedral. Mr Alun Williams responded that this formed part of the overall discussions contributing to the Master Plan but that no decisions would be made yet. Mrs Ann Johnson, (Poole), put in a plea that not too much be tidied away because it was nice to be able to point out "work in progress" to Cathedral visitors.

#### **4. The Diocesan Latvian Link**

Canon David Durston, Chairman of the Latvia working party, gave a report on the visit of members from the Latvian Lutheran Church to the diocese that took place in January 2005. The Link has been in operation for 20 years although it has only been able to function effectively since Latvia gained its independence in 1991. The primary focus had been on forging links between parishes in the diocese and in Latvia. In addition, links were now increasing with the Cathedral and diocesan staff. Canon Durston thanked those parishes and individuals whose financial contributions made this work possible.

He then welcomed Juris Balodis and Laila Ozolina from St Saviours in Riga which has a link with Sherborne Abbey. They spoke of the valuable voluntary ministry of the Church to the elderly and disadvantaged of Riga. They have a regular congregation of about 40 persons, but they have a big body of volunteers and operate a Seniors Club, a soup kitchen and a family shelter. They develop programmes, for instance cultural, literary and musical, for the elderly. They also arrange for a doctor to visit twice a month and they provide assistance with medical payments. Information on these activities is available on the web site of St Saviours, Riga.

The Revd Simon Wilkinson (Stonehenge) informed Synod that the congregation of St Saviours had been faced with a building in serious disrepair and had needed to decide whether to put their resources into the building or into people. Its people-focused choices resulted in the wonderful work Synod had been hearing about. Following a question from Mr Godfrey Moles (Purbeck), Synod were informed that, although improvements were beginning to take place at national level, there is still very little provision for the poor in Latvia.

**5. The Aldhelm Way**

As an additional agenda item the Bishop of Sherborne gave an update on plans for the celebration of the 1300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St Aldhelm this year.

**6. Promoting Mental Health**

Fay Wilson Rudd, Chair of the Mental Health Working Party in the Diocese of Bath and Wells presented details of a resource pack for spiritual and pastoral care. This was part of a pilot project involving five dioceses. She informed Synod that all people have mental health; sometimes this is good and sometimes not so. When problems arise, it can be difficult to know how to cope with those whose behaviour is not the same as our own. The pack offers various resources, its main aims being to provide encouragement and to ensure that churches are welcoming towards mental health sufferers and their carers. It also seeks to dispel the myths that surround mentally ill people and to put parishes in touch with the experts and agencies who can provide advice and guidance. Fay Wilson Rudd made the point that people are often not able to differentiate between mental ill health and learning difficulties.

This subject struck a chord with several members who spoke of experiences with mental health issues in their own parishes. Some of these experiences highlighted problems, but there were also examples of valuable work being undertaken. It was noted that there were particular problems with young men in the 18 – 25 age bracket and that these were exacerbated by the many negative assumptions made regarding young men as opposed to young women.

Copies of the resource pack are available to look through at the Salisbury Diocesan Office.

**7. Shaping the Boards for Future Mission**

The Bishop of Ramsbury presented the Report on Diocesan Structures and the recommendations for new ways of working to enable the diocese to discern the signs of God at work and to develop strategies for the Church of the future. The Bishop had asked parishes where the signs were of God working in their deaneries and what the signs were of God working in the world. The current visits of bishops to deaneries were further identifying needs and seeking information. A diocesan purpose had emerged, namely to develop mature Christian discipleship by:

- Leaving our places of safety
- Discerning what God is doing
- Making Church where God chooses.

Three priorities for mission had been identified:

- Learning
- Connecting
- Resourcing

And three objectives had emerged:

- To simplify structures
- To minimise duplication
- To forge ever closer links with parishes.

Two task groups had been appointed to develop the proposals. One had considered organisational issues and the other had considered legal issues. Consultations had taken place and the principles for change had been decided:

- To govern more effectively
- To take action locally

The resulting proposals were as set out before Synod in the Report and recommendations.

Synod members commented as follows:

- New structures are needed to reflect the needs of the Church today.
- Is Synod too large a body to be an effective DBF?
- Will a combined Bishop's Council and DBF Executive be an effective body?
- The combined Bishop's Council and DBF Executive will be a wider base for decision-making and Synod will be empowered.
- Guildford and many other dioceses have combined Bishop's Council and DBF and the move has proved very effective.
- The best run companies and charities combine strategic thinking with financial planning, as is proposed.
- Where will the financial control lie?
- If the recommendations are supported then mission in the diocese will be governed by finance.
- Mrs Elizabeth Young (Chalke) wished to record her thanks for what the Board of Parish Development had achieved.
- Area teams will address areas of work concerning Parish Development and Church & Society.
- More time is needed to consider the report and its proposals.
- The proposals form an important skeleton, but they are only the first step forward.

The Bishop of Ramsbury confirmed that, should the Motion be passed, more detailed proposals would be available from the Diocesan Office as the detail of the recommendations was developed. This would inform ongoing discussion and debate and would also be brought to Synod in June.

The Bishop of Ramsbury then moved, on behalf of the Bishop's Council:

That this Synod:

1. takes note of the Bishop's Council Report on the Diocesan Structures Review dated January 2005.
2. agrees to the following recommendations in the report:
  - A. para 6.1.1 that Bishop's Council incorporates the legal responsibilities currently exercised by the Diocesan Board of Finance and the Diocesan Pastoral Committee.
  - B. para 6.1.2 that Diocesan Synod becomes the Board of Finance.
  - C. para 6.1.4 that the implementation of the changes to Synod, Bishop's Council, Diocesan Board of Finance and the Diocesan Pastoral Committee will be at the next Triennium (Autumn 2006).
  - D. para 6.1.5 that the Boards of Ministry, Church and Society and Parish Development are abolished with effect from the end of 2005 or sooner if appropriate.
  - E. Para 6.1.6 that the model of area team working be further developed
  - F. para 6.1.7 that the post Director of Church and Society comes to an end and asks the Diocesan Secretary to enter into the necessary discussions with the post holder.
  - G. Para 6.1.8 that the post of Adviser in Parish Development come to an end
  - H. Para 6.1.9 that Bishop's Council set up scrutiny panels to review the work of area teams and central services

3. requests a further progress report from the Diocesan Secretary at the meeting of this Synod in November 2005.

Motion 1 was carried with 80 votes in favour and 1 against. Motion 2 was carried with 67 votes in favour and 15 against. Motion three was carried nem con.

8. **Questions**

Mr Tim Price (Salisbury) asked "In view of the increasingly widespread use of personal IT equipment, would it be possible for members, who choose to do so, to receive their Synod papers via email? E-distribution of paperwork would reduce the diocese's expenditure on postage and would considerably ease the task of those members who choose to file their papers electronically."

The Diocesan Secretary responded that she supported this suggestion and hoped it could be achieved. She asked that Synod members who had not already done so would provide their email address for diocesan records.

9. **The Liturgy of the Eucharist**

The meeting concluded with the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

10. **Date of Next Meeting**

17 June, 6 pm, at St Paul's Church, Fisherton Anger, Salisbury

11. **Attendance:**

House of Clergy	49%
House of Laity	66%
House of Bishops	66%