



SALISBURY DIOCESAN SYNOD
MINUTES OF THE 99th SESSION OF THE SYNOD HELD AT
AMESBURY BAPTIST CENTRE ON SATURDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2009

1. Opening Worship and Presidential Address

The Bishop welcomed to the Synod Bishop Anthony Poggo of Kajo Keji in Sudan and Bishop Graham Cray, Archbishops' Missioner and Team Leader of Fresh Expressions.

Members took part in the Liturgy of the Word and the Bishop delivered the Presidential Address. He reflected on our being called to be one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. This asks that we model a life together of common prayer, study of the scriptures and living primarily for others rather than ourselves. We are called to be open and engaged which creates the opportunity for change, but runs counter to our current risk-averse culture. Our unity should be God-centred and about His gift of wholeness. All these things are also markers of episcopal ministry and the Bishop and his colleagues seek to model them in their service in the diocese.

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. Notices, Co-options and Apologies

The Diocesan Secretary promulgated Amending Canon Number 28.

The House of Laity Co-opted the President of the Mothers' Union, Mrs Ann Howard and the Vice President, Mrs Jane Lax. The House of Clergy Co-opted the Clergy Retirement Officers the Revd Michael Turner (Ramsbury) and the Revd David Thompson (Sherborne) and also co-opted the Revd John Wood, Rural Dean of Purbeck Deanery.

Apologies were received from 15 clergy and 19 laity.

3 Changing Church for a Changing World

3.1 Canon John Holbrook introduced presentations from the three pioneer ministers who have been in post for a year.

3.1.1 The Revd Chris Tebbutt reported on behalf of Becky Sedgewick, the Devizes children and families worker, who was away leading a large group of children on an adventure weekend. She had set up links and introduced new ways of being Church as well as training others to do the same across denominations and the deanery. For some, the school is becoming their church. She is starting to link parents into what their children are getting involved in as well as identifying wider needs and putting people in touch with agencies such as the Foodbank. She has started a deanery newsletter. Future aims include:

- Getting people connected.
- Developing a deanery strategy for children's work.
- Providing pathways for people to follow.
- Getting all churches and denominations working together.

He would love to see this sort of post and investment built into the deanery plans of other deaneries.

3.1.2 The Revd Paul Bradbury, working in Poole Deanery, spoke of trying “to create islands of life in the midst of the sea”. Phase one of his work had been listening to and praying with people, including non church-goers. Phase two was to articulate a vision centred around a missional community. His focus was on building friendships and relationships rather than religious programmes. Mission initiatives then arose from communities and networks that people led for themselves. Opportunities arose from creating all sorts of groupings such as teams put together to do practical work in the community, creativity groups, workplace ministries and urban vegetable growing. A café lounge base had been created in the heart of Poole. He commented that, for this kind of work to succeed, the structures developed must be simple, flexible and creative.

3.1.3 The Revd Tony Stephens in Weymouth Deanery told Synod that the world needs Christians to engage with people and provide practical help; Christians will then be recognised as good people. He was seeking to develop ecumenical relationships as well as sustainable patterns of working between the Church and other bodies. The Weymouth Street Pastors project has been a very successful exemplar of this approach. It has also created the opportunity for one to one conversations with many non church-goers and a pilot is now running for a “Freedom in Christ Discipleship Course”. In addition, he is considering the possibility of Street Pastors day-time, night church and 24/7 church. He hoped that Street Healing would be launched in 2010. He challenged Synod members to live as if the Gospel were true and the power of God could be delivered through them.

Zoe Hart, Fresh Expressions Enabler for the Diocese of Winchester and member of the national team, reflecting on these presentations, encouraged Synod to continue support for the wonderful vision it had demonstrated in appointing these pioneer ministers.

It was recognised that some in the “mature” Church felt threatened by change. These people needed reassurance that the parish model of ministry would be maintained and not damaged by supporting other expressions of wider Church.

Canon John Holbrook concluded by asking Synod members to consider what could happen in all their communities if this way of being Church were pursued.

3.2 Bishop Graham Cray, Archbishops’ Missioner and Team Leader of Fresh Expressions, praised the progress of these projects in their first year. He commented that not all church planting begins with sacramental expression, but this is where it is heading and he recommended to Synod a DVD entitled “Fresh Expressions of Church in a Sacramental Eucharist”. One size does not fit all when it comes to identifying the most appropriate form of Church for any particular group or individual, but the test of effectiveness of both our mature congregations and our Fresh Expressions initiatives is what sort of disciples they are making. Fresh Expressions tries to reach out and connect with people in communities. It is not a quick fix and there are no standard models, but Bishop Graham believed that it should be on all deanery agenda.

The national Fresh Expressions team has resources to help. These can be found at www.freshexpressions.org.uk and www.sharerresources.org.uk

4. Cathedral Annual Report

The Dean gave a presentation on Cathedral activities in 2009. The Cathedral mission statement, key objectives and annual report are all available to view on the web site www.salcath.co.uk. The Cathedral had lost investment income in the current financial downturn, but the situation is being managed and current major ambitions are finishing the building project, which has seven years still to run, and developing the congregational life of the Cathedral. A new lagacies campaign had just been launched and the Dean asked Synod members to remember to ask people to donate. Nevertheless, she emphasised that finance should not be centre stage of what the Cathedral is about. Keep the “wow” factor!

5. Episcopal Ministry

The Bishop introduced a debate and Motion to reform the way in which Episcopal Ministry is shared within the diocese. It was proposed that the old Area Scheme be replaced with a new Scheme and Instrument of Delegation which better reflected how the bishops actually worked. The move was from a top down approach to one where authority was shared and full use was made of the gifts of individuals in a collaborative ministry. Several Synod members spoke in support of the proposed reform. The Bishop then proposed:

“That this Synod revoke the Diocese of Salisbury Area Scheme 1981 and approve the Diocese of Salisbury Episcopal Ministry Scheme 2009 and associated instrument of delegation under the Dioceses Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007.”

The Motion was passed nem con.

9. Reports to note

Synod noted the finance report for 30 September 2009 and the proposals for future business of Synod and Bishop's Council during 2010.

10. Questions

Mrs Mary Whitton asked whether there was any update on the advice regarding swine flu and the use of the chalice. The Bishop responded that his advice to clergy and churchwardens given on 17 September remained unchanged. Mrs Whitton asked a supplementary question regarding what reaction would be appropriate if this advice were not adhered to. The Bishop responded that he trusted the parish priests locally to consult with their churchwardens, head teachers and other persons and come to their own decisions should their local situation require additional precautions to be taken.

The Diocesan Secretary will consider whether another venue might be possible because of the lack of parking at Amesbury Baptist Centre due to development of the adjacent site.

11. Other business

Synod members suggested the following as possible additional future business:

- The needs of our young people and what we can do to support them.
- The Church and tourism and what we might do about being signposts for people.
- How the diocese can help parishes reduce their carbon footprint.
- How to respond to the challenge of the 2012 Olympics

In response to a question, the Diocesan Secretary reported that the diocese has achieved what is required to be named a Fair Trade diocese but just needs to gain the final accreditation.

In response to a query regarding the training of churchwardens, the Archdeacon of Sarum explained that each Episcopal Area runs two churchwarden conferences each year and these try to address the particular needs of churchwardens in any year.

11. Dates of Next Meetings

Synod will next meet from 10 am on Saturday 6 February 2010 at St Nicholas Church Centre, Corfe Mullen. Meetings will also take place on the evening of Tuesday 22 June at St Paul's Church, Salisbury and on Saturday 6 November (venue to be confirmed).

12. Close

Synod closed with the Liturgy of the Eucharist.