



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

DIOCESE OF SALISBURY

**SALISBURY DIOCESAN SYNOD
MINUTES OF THE 105th SESSION OF THE SYNOD HELD AT
MARKET LAVINGTON COMMUNITY HALL ON SATURDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2011**

1. Meeting of the House of Clergy to Elect a New Chairman

The House of clergy elected the Revd Antony MacRow-Wood to be its chairman for the remainder of the triennium.

2. Opening Worship and Presidential Address

Synod welcomed the Bishop to his first meeting of the Salisbury Diocesan Synod.

Prayers were led by the Bishop of Sherborne.

The Bishop gave the Presidential Address. He thanked all those who served the Synod and the diocese, particularly Canon Paul Richardson for having chaired the House of Clergy, and bade farewell to the Archdeacon of Wilts who was attending his last Synod before leaving to become Bishop of Bradwell. All would be welcome to attend the Archdeacon's departure service in Salisbury Cathedral at 4.30 pm on 11 December. His consecration at St Paul's will be at 11 am on 25 January 2012. The Bishop then introduced the business of the meeting and, in relation to the function of Synod, reflected that the aim of any group was for the whole to be greater than the sum of its parts. He also brought four additional issues to the attention of Synod:

- The need to encourage growth in both numbers and depth of Church members, whilst recognising the paradox that the Church is least attractive when talking about itself. The need, therefore, to focus on the things that really matter.
- In respect of the St Paul's issue, that the leadership had failed to respond to the opportunity of a crisis.
- That he, together with the Dean and Canon Ian Woodward, would be visiting the Sudan shortly. The Link is a good thing for the Diocese of Salisbury and opens us up to the world.
- In the light of the See of Ramsbury Advisory Group suggestion to consider that the number of archdeacons in the diocese might reduce from four to three, the beginning of work to bring clarity to the distinctive roles of bishops and archdeacons.

The Bishop concluded by looking forward to a fruitful and happy partnership with all in the diocese and beyond.

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.

3. Notices, Co-options and Apologies

Synod members were asked to assist with spreading the Sarum Link to more households. This being the last meeting attended by Mr Richard Trahair, Diocesan Property Secretary, before his retirement, Synod expressed its thanks with prolonged applause. Synod welcomed Mr Stephen Dawson as Deputy Diocesan Secretary.

Synod welcomed Sir Al Aynsley-Green as a Bishop's Nomination to Synod.

Apologies were received from 12 clergy and 19 laity.

4. **Children and Young People**

Mrs Joy Tubbs, Deputy Director of Education, Mrs Barbara Meardon, Children's Adviser and Mrs Lizzie Whitbread, Adviser for Young People introduced the Diocesan Children and Young People Strategy. This was set within the context of wider Board of Education (DBE) strategic plans and would be a core part of overall diocesan strategy. As well as creating outstanding Church Schools, the desire was to support parishes, deaneries and schools in providing a range of opportunities for children and young people to explore and develop faith. The plans sought to build on actions which the DBE had already identified as successful. There were four key priorities:

1. To develop confident leaders
2. To capture good practice
3. To develop local, regional and national links
4. To develop robust evaluation processes

In response to questions, Mrs Whitbread explained that criteria would be worked out with each deanery to identify the current situation and create a step by step process to move on from there. Mrs Tubbs explained that they would start with a specific group of deaneries and would look for solutions personal to those. In addition, they will be looking for champions for specific causes.

Synod then broke into discussion groups to consider the question, "What can you do to help make this strategy real?". Ideas were written down and handed to the DBE team, but some comments from the floor included:

- Find out what children and young people really want
- Include an address from young people at Synod
- Get involved with community projects
- Continue "Open the Book" into secondary education
- Have a celebration of what is already happening
- Build up commitment in churches
- Is the deanery the right focus for this strategy?
- The Bishop committed to ask each deanery, as part of his induction visit, what they are doing to support the strategy.

The Chairman DBE commented that children accounted for 25% of the population and were therefore critical to the Church. He then proposed the motion on behalf of Bishop's Council that:

"This Synod adopts the Children and Young People Strategy."

The motion was carried with none against and 8 abstentions.

5. **Olympics**

The Bishop of Sherborne introduced the item and also introduced Canon Duncan Green, Head of Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Services, London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. Synod watched a short video created by "More Than Gold", an organisation which exists to help churches get involved with the Games. The message was that the Games can be used as a catalyst for mission and outreach and churches were encouraged to sign up at www.morethangold.co.uk

Canon Green explained that the Olympics will have an effect on the whole country and there were therefore great opportunities to be grasped:

- Over 9 million tickets will be sold
- 200,000 volunteers will be involved
- The Games will require the largest catering operation in peace time and the largest logistical operation since WW2
- A prayer relay will be following the torch relay
- A "Local Leaders" resource was being launched in the next few days
- A "Get Set" programme was being launched for schools and Synod members were asked to please encourage schools to sign up

The official objective was to use the power of the Games to inspire change. The Church was usually very good at being in a different place from everybody else and it was time to start being where the people are. This would be a great opportunity for forging links in our communities and Canon Green challenged Synod members to go back and enthuse their churches.

The Bishop of Sherborne introduced the Weymouth and Portland deanery "Refresh 2012" initiative and Synod watched a video which demonstrated the many things the deanery was doing to engage with the Olympics. Any questions should be addressed to the Revd Anni Douglas, 07809 467717 anni@weymouthandportlandchurch.org

Finally the Bishop of Sherborne introduced the Revd Andy Bowerman, Priest in Charge of Wareham, who explained that his benefice, in Purbeck Deanery, had signed up with More Than Gold nine months previously and they had already held two meetings with the local community. He then described some of the opportunities and plans that had been identified:

- The Torch will pass through Purbeck on 13 July and several thousand people will be expected in Wareham on that day
- Local schools will have a half day holiday so that the children can see the Torch
- Wareham will also be commemorating 250 years since the Wareham Fire and will use some of the Olympic Flame to help in this commemoration
- Local people will be running holiday clubs and mini-olympic events
- They will be developing a Sports Café for young people to drop into
- There will be street parties, which will also be celebrating the Jubilee
- A Flower Festival is planned demonstrating olympic themes and ideals
- There will be services to celebrate sport
- Interviews are planned with local people who are involved with the Games in official capacities
- Churches are being asked to pray for the Olympics and the Jubilee. Please pray for the safety of the Games

In response to a question, Mr Bowerman confirmed that the plans included the Para-Olympics. Canon Green was not sure if there were to be athlete training camps within the diocese but he would check and advise the Diocesan Office so that any might be publicised. It was noted that the Torch would pass twice through Wiltshire and Wiltshire parishes were encouraged to think how they could engage with this opportunity.

Mrs Beth Buchan reminded Synod that the annual Great Dorset Steam Fair within the diocese was another important opportunity for the Church to be visible and engaging with people where they are.

The Bishop of Sherborne concluded by thanking all the speakers. Synod members had seen that the Olympics were going to be much bigger and wider-reaching than they had imagined and now was the time to get involved.

6. Lead Theft

An additional item was taken at this point to remind Synod of the serious issue of lead theft and encourage members to sign (and to get their friends and contacts to sign) an E-Petition on the subject. Please go to <http://submissions.epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/406>

7. Anglican Communion Covenant

The main debate will take place at the February meeting of Synod but the Chairman of the House of Laity presented an introduction to this debate. He also introduced the speakers, the Revd Gavin Foster and Canon Giles Goddard, who presented Synod with background information and with a flavour of the opposing views held around this subject.

Arguments in favour of the Covenant included:

- The old ways are no longer working and we need something new
- It's about living up to the gift of unity

- It will have relational benefits
- It focusses on the things we do have in common
- There are educational benefits and it will help us to understand what it is to be Anglican
- There are institutional benefits; getting our structures in a place where we know what is supposed to happen

Arguments against the Covenant included:

- This is a contractual document, not a covenant
- We shall end up with an inner and an outer group in the Communion
- It is not a pleasant idea that members can be pushed out
- Not sure the Covenant is particularly scriptural
- It is already not working – there are some provinces which have already said that they probably won't sign-up
- Anglicanism is by its nature complicated. Part of this is not having imposed authority and is holding extremes together
- The consequences are unclear

Questions and observations from the floor included:

- There is no threat to the Communion if the Covenant is not adopted
- The Instruments of Communion are insufficient to deal with the issues coming forward today, which are much wider than homosexuality
- Lay presidency of the Communion is another issue that needs working through, and it is not clear how the Covenant will help with that
- There are provisions for joining and leaving the Covenant, so will there be a two tier Anglican Communion?
- Those outside the Covenant will not have representation on standing committees, etc
- What protection will be given to those who do not want to vote the same way as other provinces?

Synod then formed discussion groups with each group attempting to find a consensus. Reports from the groups were passed to the Chairman House of Laity. Subsequent comments from the floor included:

- If the Covenant is supported, it may send a negative signal to those on the margins
- If the Church of England does not support it, it will put the Archbishop of Canterbury in a difficult situation
- Working out how change can happen is a challenge. The Covenant may make change more difficult
- It's a combination of a Church of England fudge and a bit of a muddle
- The discussion should be more about what a covenant actually means
- Different provinces have different cultural mores and each is at its own point of evolution; we are trying to impose our own cultural mores which will not work.
- If not all the provinces support the Covenant, how can we start with a two tier system?
- It is a "least worst option", although we should not create the myth that we can solve all disagreements
- What would a sanction or relational consequence look like? – to exclude people from our councils and meetings would be a disaster
- We need to bring separated people back together, not exclude them
- Why would the Archbishop of Canterbury be in favour of this?
- Will the Communion end up in the same situation as the European Union?
- The Covenant is unlikely to make the situation worse and it may manage to make it better

The Chairman House of Laity thanked the speakers. Synod members were urged to read the Covenant at <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/commission/covenant/final/text.cfm> and note that Section 4 is where the problems and disagreements lie.

8. Diocesan Synod Elections 2012

Synod approved the following motion nem con:

- a) "This Synod, in order to ensure a majority for the House of Laity and that the total membership of the Synod and Board of Finance lies between 150 and 270 members, determines that the formula for clergy members to be elected by the Houses of Clergy of the deanery synods shall be on a proportion of 20% of the membership of those Houses.
- b) It further determines that the form of voting paper to be used by the deaneries in this election and for any election to fill a casual vacancy occurring during the next ensuing three years shall be that contained in Section 7 of Appendix 1 of Church Representation Rules, which is for elections to be decided by simple majority."

9. Items to Note

1. Synod noted that the diocesan Safeguarding Guidelines had been revised and would be available on the diocesan web site by the end of the month.
2. Synod noted the Finance Report for 30 September 2011.

10. Future Business Items

Synod members were invited to suggest any items they would like to see included on a future agenda. Contributions included:

- Homosexuality/transgender people and the Church
- Church unity
- An occasional eucharist
- Money
- Marriage – particularly the issue of same-sex marriages in church
- Information about and from the self-supporting ministers
- Our buildings
- Revision of the Act of Succession
- Youth Synods
- Diminishing bureaucracy (Bonfire of the Red Tape). In respect of this item, the Diocesan Secretary explained that the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops had established a task group to assess options for reducing the time spent by parish clergy and church members on the management of structures and processes. The group was keen to receive suggestions about areas that might benefit from simplification, together with practical ideas about how that might be achieved. Submissions can be made by email to: task.group@churchofengland.org or by post to Nicholas Hills, Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3AZ, by 9 December 2011. The Chairman House of Laity added that the General Synod Election Committee was looking again at reform of church electoral processes.

The Chairman DBF reported that a new web site, www.parishbuying.co.uk would be launched in January and was aimed at helping parishes buy with confidence, save time, save money and improve stewardship. It will be a free resource.

11. Questions

Mrs Norma Aitcheson (Wimborne Deanery) asked that more priests be trained in use of the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) as well as how to use a microphone and how to project their voices. The Director of LDMT reported that BCP is part of both residential and non-residential training which she encourages clergy to take part in and that a special day on the subject will take place in 2012.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Synod will next meet from 10 am to 3 pm on Saturday 18 February at St Nicholas Church Centre, Corfe Mullen. Any Motions, proposals for business or other matters should be with the Diocesan Secretary by 13 January.