

DIOCESAN SYNOD ACTS

21st March 2024

Acts of the Diocesan Synod held on 21st March 2024 at St Paul's Church, Bursledon.

44 members were present.

1 WELCOME WORSHIP

The chair of the house of laity welcomed members and reminded those present that the June meeting would be the last of the triennium. Elections for the new synod would be held in June and July 2024.

Lyndhurst Deanery led members in opening worship.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Bishop Philip gave his first presential address to Synod. Full text of the speech can be found [here](#).

3 DISCUSSION

Members were invited to breakout into small groups to discuss what they had heard. The following was fed back:

- The importance of wellbeing of the laity as well as clergy.
- How do parishes ensure the wider community appreciate the value of their local church.
- How to encourage greater diversity in the next Diocesan Synod, particularly younger members.
- The fine balance between supporting and encouraging grass roots ideas and ensuring good governance and accountability.

4 CREATION CARE:WHAT CAN WE DO TOGETHER TO RESPOND TO GOD'S CALL?

Sam identified and outlined three opportunities creation care presents us: for discipleship, for mission and for our resource stewardship. For discipleship, drawing on Colossians 1:15-20 he suggested that the gospel is good news for all creation, not just humanity. As disciples we are called to follow in the steps of Jesus who is the agent of creation and it's sustainer. Creation care offers us an opportunity to be increasingly shaped in Christ's image. For mission, he spoke about a Tearfund survey of Christian young people which found that 9 out of 10 Christian young people care about Climate Change but only 1 out of 10 think their church is doing enough about it. As this area continues to become a growing priority for the wider population, creation care presents an opportunity to reach those who might not usually engage with the church. For resource stewardship, Sam noted that whilst there are significant costs associated with creation care there is space for savings too. Whether it's changing to LED lighting, insulating pipes, getting new urns or reviewing heating timetables, small steps can make a difference in reducing our carbon footprint and our energy bills.

After discussing these opportunities, he gave an update on the activity of the Diocesan Environment Group (DEG). Following capacity funding from the Church Commissioners secured last year the roles of Net Zero Project Co-ordinator (Lucy Howlett) and Diocesan Environment officer (Sam Scott) have been filled. After many years of service David Morgan has stepped down as chair of the DEG, along with members Rolf Hawkins and Jenny Hobbs. We are hugely grateful for their many years of service and the impact they've had in this area. Over the last year 15 new churches have registered with Eco Church, 12 have been awarded bronze and 6 silver. Lucy and Sam are now working to distribute national grants to parishes, starting with an Energy Audit subsidy bring the total cost for parishes to £145 +VAT per audit.

5 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDERS

Six questions had been received from two members. Written responses had been emailed to members.

Sarah Yetman asked the following supplementary question (relating to her question regarding women in ministry):

Could the working group keep working group looking at the appointment of a Dean of Women or similar role, continue their work once this role had been appointed?

The Bishop of Winchester responded by confirming that he was sure this would be possible.

7 **UPDATE FROM BISHOP'S COUNCIL DS 24/01**

Members asked for clarification around small loans for net zero works. The Diocesan Secretary confirmed the intention would be to offer loans of up to £20k for a duration of 3 years.

8 **UPDATE FROM GENERAL SYNOD**

The Rev'd James Pitkin updated members on the February session of General Synod. He updates members on the following business conducted,

Code of Conduct for PCCs (GS2335)

Some PCCs already have agreed Code of Conducts developed locally but the Archbishops' Council is going to look at offering some guidelines.

Racial Justice: Furthering the Implementation of 'From Lament to Action' (GS2338)

Commending the practical and positive outcomes and acknowledging the work still to be done at all levels (All voted in favour)

Bullying by Lay Officers (GS2339)

Requesting the Archbishops' Council to bring forward legislative proposals to enable disqualification of Lay Officers (Churchwardens, PCC members or other Lay Officers) (For 273, Against 15 and Abstentions 22)

Church Commissioners' Response to Links to Transatlantic Chattel Slavery (GS2341)

A presentation on progress which attracted a lot of media responses, most of which are not based on fact.

Estates Evangelism (GS2345)

A decision to re-dedicate to the goal of establishing a worshipping Christian community on every significant social housing estate and raise up lay and ordained leaders from these communities (Passed unanimously)

Clergy Pensions (GS2330)

A request to the Archbishops' Council, the Pensions Board and the Church Commissioners to work to restore the pensions to pre-2011 levels (2/3 of National Minimum Stipend (NMS) for 37 years' service rather than 1/2 for 43 years' service). Also, to link future increases in NMS to CPIH (Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' Housing costs) and restore the real value of pensions. (Passed unanimously)

Living in Love and Faith (GS2346) Living in Love and Faith...

Four years ago, General Synod heard about the *Living in Love and Faith* project (LLF) (officially launched in July 2020).

This time the motion was: *‘That this Synod welcome the further work carried out on Living in Love and Faith and the focus on reconciliation and bridge building; and ask that the proposal for a set of commitments through which the whole Church can continue to pursue the implementation of the motions previously passed by Synod on Living in Love and Faith, be brought back to Synod as soon as possible.’*

Debate ranged across two days and several amendments were considered. A motion to ‘move to next business’ was supported which meant that the main motion was not voted on. The LLF issue returns to the House of Bishops for consideration and action.

DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

19th June 2024 – *last meeting of triennium*

14th November 2024

DEEMED BUSINESS

Approved nem con.

- Acts of Synod November 2023
- Committee Updates
 - DAC SC 24/02