

Minutes of the Edinburgh Diocesan Synod held on 11 March 2017 at St Paul's & St George's Church, Edinburgh

Synod held a moment of silence to remember those who had died since the last Synod:

Duncan Forrester

Margaret Aitchison

Patrick Duncan

Monica Cameron

BISHOP'S ADDRESS

Bishop John reflected on the story of our faith, a story retold in every age. He reminded Synod that 2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Lutheran Reformation and encouraged us to consider how the church of the present might be refreshed and renewed. He indicated that whilst this Synod would deliberate on hard and difficult matters it would also hear stories of good news about new opportunities for mission and ministry around the diocese. He said, 'We're at a time when in order to grasp the new we may have to let go of the old. And that's hard. What's crucial, then, is that we act with confidence in God not with fear or resignation. That we renew our longing for God, a God of abundance not scarcity, and renew our love for Christ'.

[The full text of the Bishop's address can be found on the Diocesan website]

APOLOGIES AND WELCOMES

The Very Revd Frances Burberry welcomed the following newcomers to Synod:

- Patricia Brignall - *Lay Rep, St Cuthbert's Colinton*
- Lesley Stanley - *St Peter's Linlithgow*
- Miller Bogie - *Lay Rep, St Thomas' Edinburgh*
- Claire Nicholson - *Lay Rep, St John's Jedburgh*
- Rosemary Wilson - *Lay Reader, St Cuthbert's Hawick*
- Jamie McDonald - *Alt Lay Rep, St Mark's Portobello*
- Pauline Moss - *Lay Rep, St Mary's Grangemouth*
- The Revd Linda Harknett - *St Vincent's Edinburgh*

There were 125 Attendees (67 Clergy - 66%; 58 Lay - 89%) with apologies from 8 Clergy and 2 Lay Members

BISHOP'S LENT APPEAL

Bishop John introduced representatives of the two nominated charities, who spoke about the work that would be supported by the 2017 Appeal:

The Revd William Mounsey – *Collective Calling*

“A humanitarian organisation with an international thrust, working especially with refugees from the conflict in the Middle-East.”

Andrew Smith & Lynn Cleal – *'St John and the City' Defibrillator Project*

“Supporting the provision of public access defibrillators throughout the City of Edinburgh, to aid the first response to its citizens and visitors”.

ADMINISTRATION

SYNOD MINUTES

Synod approved the minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2016.

DIOCESAN STANDING COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

David Palmer led synod through the report. The St Hilda's Fund had awarded for grants for mission, to St Peter's Linlithgow, Priory Church South Queensferry, St Mary's Grangemouth, and St James' Leith. The emphasis of the scheme was changing and the Mission & Ministry Committee would develop that the further during the coming year. The deployment of the new Provincial Mission & Ministry Support Grant had been discussed. The Diocesan Registrar and the Diocesan Buildings Committee had completed the production of a property register for all rectories and church properties in the diocese owned by the Diocesan Trustees. The Revd Annie Naish had been appointed as Bishop's Enabler of Mission, and Elizabeth White had been appointed to a new permanent post of Adventures In Faith Coordinator. Siân Harris had been awarded the contract as the Diocesan Communications Coordinator.

The motion that synod approved the report of the Standing Committee was proposed by David Palmer and seconded by The Dean

THE MOTION WAS CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

DIOCESAN FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

David Palmer reported that the Accounts for 2016 had been audited and that the auditors were fully content, other than some very minor items. The 2016 Accounts would be signed and presented to the Autumn Diocesan Synod. It was noted that there

had been a very small surplus. The 2017 Budget was summarised in the report. The church building at St Paul's Livingston was no longer able to be used safely, and it had been fully closed, pending sale.

The motion that synod approved the report of the Finance & Management Committee was proposed by David Palmer and seconded by The Dean

THE MOTION WAS CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

PRESENTATION OF CATHEDRAL ACCOUNTS

David Palmer presented the accounts, which were available for inspection.

ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Bishop John noted that there were some charges which had still not returned an annual check list, and hoped that this would be rectified very soon. The report was noted.

ST ANDREW'S FUND

Alex Stewart, Convener of the Diocesan Buildings Committee, drew Synod's attention to the Fund, which was established from the proceeds of sale of the church building at St Andrew's Prestonpans. It aimed to help charges with limited finances and resources, to with urgent and essential building repairs. Grants were available individually up to £1,000. In addition, a new Provincial Buildings Grant fund was in place, replacing the former Dunderdale Fund. The qualifying criteria was more open than the St Andrews Fund and there was no limit on the size of a grant for which a charge could apply. In order to support the evidence for both of the grants, the committee had provided new guidance for Canon 35 applications for building alterations, as well as revised Quinquennial report forms and procedures.

ELECTIONS

David Palmer introduced the paper detailing the election of members to General Synod and Provincial Committees, along with the election of officials and members to Diocesan Committees. There were several vacancies for which no nominations had been received by the deadline. The following were elected:

General Synod Clergy

- The Very Revd Frances Burberry

- The Revd Canon John McLuckie
- The Revd William Shaw *West Forth Area Council*

Alternates:

- The Revd Oliver Brewer-Lennon
- The Revd Canon Dean Fostekew
- The Revd David Paton-Williams

General Synod Lay

- Ms Pam Dugan
- Mrs Sheila Kidney
- Miss Victoria Stock
- Karen Ellis *Borders Area Council*.

Alternate:

- Mrs Pat Boyd

Provincial Mission Board:

- The Revd Annie Naish

Diocesan Standing Committee

- Mr Neil Stewart
- Miss Victoria Stock

Diocesan Mission & Ministry Committee

- The Revd David Paton-Williams
- Mrs Helen Tyrell

The appointment of Mrs Helen Godfrey was ratifiedied

Diocesan Finance & Management Committee

- Convener: Mr Ian Lawson

Cathedral Board

- Lord Bannatyne, Diocesan Chancellor

Diocesan Secretary

- Mr Godfrey Robson

Synod Clerk

- The Revd Ruth Innes

The Bishop then handed the chair to the Diocesan Secretary

CANONS

Bishop John reported that the three Canons to be discussed, had received their first reading at General Synod in 2016, and all the Diocesan Synods had been invited to discuss them and feedback opinions to the Province. The Canons Committee would then consider those opinions and pass them to General Synod in June.

Canon Sixty Three

Colin Heggie, Diocesan Registrar, introduced the Canon, which made new provision for both the Lay Representative and Alternate Lay Representative for each charge to be ex-officio on each vestry. This would enable better communication and understanding between diocesan synods and vestries.

The Revd Peter Harris, Dalkeith & Lasswade – Questioned what the term Representative meant in the context of a vote. Should they ‘represent’ the voting view of a vestry?

Howard Thompson, Musselburgh – What provision is made, within charges, where a Lay Representative might vote in a way different to the corporate view of their vestry?

David Palmer responded that, in consultation with the SEC General Secretary, the position was that such representatives are elected on the basis of their experience, and can formulate their own views on how they should vote. It followed that members of the General Synod are not required to vote in accordance with the views of the diocesan synods.

The motion that synod approved the revision to Canon Sixty Three was proposed by David Palmer and seconded by The Dean

Voting was as follows:

Clergy: 57 for; 1 against; no abstentions

Laity: 50 for; 0 against; no abstentions

THE MOTION WAS CARRIED

Canon Thirty One

Bishop John noted that the changes to this Canon were of great significance to the diocese, the province, and the Anglican Communion. In 2014 the process began with a cascade conversation, incorporated into the Autumn Diocesan Synod that year. In 2015 the General Synod agreed a way forward, and it was returned a year later with the canonical alteration laid before diocesan synod. The request from general synod was

that an opinion should be expressed through a secret ballot at diocesan synods. Therefore, no majority was being sought.

The 2014 marriage Scotland act enabled people of the same-sex to be married. Clergy were not able to officiate in those ceremonies and the proposal would allow the Scottish Episcopal Church to join in with the processes allowed by that act. There would be no obligation for members of the clergy to join the register but, equally, no clergy would be permitted to officiate unless they had been nominated for the register, directly to the Bishop. The proposed changes to the Canon would protect the consciences of those who did not wish to officiate in such ceremonies. However, it was not a two-sided matter. It is possible that a member of the clergy who did not wish to officiate, and not be nominated for the register, might vote for the amendment in order to protect the consciences of clergy. In the same way, a member of the clergy might vote against the amendment, even though they believe that God would bless same-sex committed relationships, but hold the view that marriage is only between a man and a woman. Whatever the outcome of the vote, the Bishop hoped that our church will continue to be one that contains and respects difference on this matter.

Views expressed by members of synod included the following:

“The matter was not a debate about human sexuality but about a change to Catholic doctrine.”

“Acknowledgement of a divergence of views and opinions should be adopted, with humility and respect”

“The proposed amendment was muddled and imprecise, and did not go far enough, but should nevertheless be supported”

“Distress and pain was often seen within families. Some families would fall apart and split and some would simply not discuss it. Those that did discuss their issues stayed together and saw their issues through. We should be prepared to accept the change and be the family that talked.”

“In the previous discussions, there had been no exploration of the theology of marriage or the unity of the Anglican community. There should be more time for study of theology and science.”

“The debate around marrying divorcees was a similar and, in the Church of England, there were examples where a PCC fully supported an incumbent’s conscience, even though there were divergences views within the membership.”

“The constitution of marriage had been defined since the birth of Christ. The current proposal was linked to the social need to define each other by sexual identity”

“There was no desire to see a split on this issue, and pride should be taken in a church that can debate with maturity. The Canon was well worded.”

“Canons were not the place for debating understandings of theology, and the first sentence should be removed.”

“The focus should be on the canonical change and not on views of human sexuality.”

The motion that synod approved the revision to Canon Thirty One was proposed by David Palmer and seconded by The Dean

Voting was as follows:

Bishop: 1 for (100%)

Clergy: 45 for; 17 against; 3 abstentions (69%)

Laity: 39 for; 14 against; 1 abstentions (72%)

THE MOTION WAS CARRIED

Canon Twenty Two

Bishop John introduced the amendment to the Canon, which partly arose out of concerns to the amendment to Canon Thirty One. The omission of a definition of marriage in Canon Thirty One, meant the only doctrinal definition of marriage would be found in liturgies. This concern had other relevance, with other doctrinal definitions, which could only be found in liturgy. Therefore, liturgical changes required more careful discussion and authorisation, and the amendment was intended to enable that.

Canon Helen Hood, St Mary's Cathedral – In paragraph 3, if the relative clause at the end is removed, at the end of the sentence, it would be more easily understood if it said “The College of Bishops may authorise the use of other services for a defined experimental period”.

The Revd Peter Harris, Dalkeith & Lasswade – Would this Canon allow the change of certain words in worship, such as replacing “Father God” with “Creator”. Also, would other non-standard worship services, such as Messy Church, require authorisation?

Bishop John responded that he respected the intelligence and skill of our clergy in using liturgy well, and that he would not object to small changes, such as those referred to, on an ad hoc basis, which made sense theologically and pastorally. The authorised services were listed. If a regular and frequent change to liturgy was submitted to the Bishop, this would need to be fully considered. The change of wording suggested to the last sentence of the Canon was sensible, and should be passed on to the Faith & Order Board.

The motion that synod approved the revision to Canon Twenty Two was proposed by David Palmer and seconded by The Dean

Voting was as follows:

Clergy: 54 for; none against; 4 abstentions

Laity: 43 for; none against; 7 abstentions

THE MOTION WAS CARRIED

MISSION & MINISTRY

MISSION & MINISTRY REPORT

The Revd John Conway took Synod through the highlights of the report. He noted that the Revd Ken Webb was retiring from his role in the diocese running the Ministerial Development Service, and he thanked him for all his work over many years. Elizabeth White had started in the role of Adventures In Faith Coordinator on a permanent basis, and much had been achieved in connecting people across the diocese through lay learning.

Claire Benton-Evans reported on a busy year of youth and children work. The Play Church had been 2 years in the making, and was now on a journey of pilgrimage around charges in the diocese. It was clear that it was a worthwhile tool in answering children's questions as to what a church was. She encouraged congregations to book a slot to host the Play Church, although it was currently booked up until the end of 2018. The Glenalmond Youth Camp was flourishing, and the diocese would be hosting the provincial celebration of 20 years of its existence. Many of the delegates were now returning as leaders.

The Rev John Conway reported that the 2015 funding change from the province, to providing a Mission & Ministry Support Grant, was allowing increased local decision making in the use of those funds. Some of the money was allowing work in ecumenical partnerships, including that in Dunbar.

John Rae, from St Anne's Dunbar, then spoke to Synod about the work undertaken there. St Anne's had seen years of struggle, until the appointment of the Revd Andrew Bain as part-time rector. They had applied for financial support to enable him to increase to a half-time post, through the Mission & Ministry Support Grant. There was now a growth in confidence and mission, with a consequent increase in congregational numbers and giving. Liz Gordon had been licensed as a Lay Reader and capital funds of £425k had been raised for a major phase of work on the church building. Collaboration with the Methodist Church had been confirmed in a service led by Bishop John. A weekly evening service

had been relaunched, alongside other ecclesiastical and community activities. The church was now open again on a daily basis which was a huge encouragement.

The Revd John Conway then reported that the other source of mission funding, the St Hilda's Fund, had continued its support of the curacy at St Columba's Colinton as well as some work at Grangemouth.

The Revd Willie Shaw, Rector of St Mary's Grangemouth, reported the work of a Community Care Project, which supported the elderly. Following a visit by the local council, the need for extra facilities was identified, in order for the project to continue. One of those facilities was a specialist sterilising dishwasher, and the grant from St Hilda's Fund had enabled the purchase of that and, thereby, the continuation of the project.

The Revd Christine Barclay, Rector of St Peter's Linlithgow, introduced Dr Lesley Stanley, who thanked the diocese for a grant from the St Hilda's Fund, which had brought huge confidence to St Peters as it proceeded with its development project. This would provide facilities to help the congregation as well as the community. It had the official label of being a 'Tiny Church', but was very popular. Plans had been produced by an architect to construct an annexe, which would increase and improve the facilities, as well as upgrading the access to the building. Funds raised to date were over £150k.

The Revd Steve Butler, Rector of St James Leith, reported on the arts event run during Advent at St James'. This enabled much greater networking with the local community. It was known as Adventfest, and it included a concert. The grant from the St Hilda's Fund enabled a high-quality group to be booked, and a consequent large audience attended the concert, many not having been inside St James' before. This work also linked to an arts project in the local primary school.

The Revd John Conway also reported the award of a grant of £5k to South Queensferry Priory in order to appoint a children's outreach worker. The appointment was yet to be made and the funds would be sent once that had happened. There was also continued support for St Margaret's Edinburgh.

There was then a report on the continuing work of the toddlers group. There had been much change as St Margaret's in recent years, but they had come through it with much confidence in the future. There was a potential to develop an all-age congregation. The fund had enabled a children's worker to be employed for 8 hours per week. The extension of this funding gave confidence to seek additional funding from other external sources.

The Revd Rich Cornfield reported on the discussions connected with the establishment of a 'community of mission'. Social transformation had been a

significant part of his life, and the Soul Food project for the homeless had been established at St Pauls and St George's as part of the fruition of that. Some of the people benefiting from the project had now become full church attendees. His thoughts had turned to how to grow that work, working with agencies and other bodies, but without establishing something new or taking over an existing community. The idea of collaborating and joining in with St Margaret's Easter Road had developed, and a meeting with the Revd Colin Reid and the Bethany Trust had created a basis for the extension of the Soul Food project and its principles. The pioneer ministry would be known as a Community of Mission, and he would value Synod's prayers, as they looked to start the project at Pentecost 2017.

The Revd John Conway reminded Synod that, following the appointment of the Bishop's Enabler of Mission, her work would only succeed if all charges in the diocese jointly took responsibility and engaged with mission. There was a need to articulate how the diocese might grow together. It was a significant time for the diocese, and there was an opportunity to take stock of where we were headed, and what the vision and priorities were, to direct the use of resources.

The Rev Annie Naish reflected that, as a newcomer, she was aware of so much that was already happening in the diocese. It was a time of change, with changes of leadership, in senior appointments. There were changes in the diocesan office as well as in the province, particularly with the new Mission & Ministry Support Grant, the retirement of the Primus and the establishment of the new Scottish Episcopal Institute. There was a perceived hunger for growth, also seen through the presentations to Synod that day. 'Growing Together', as an initiative, was about sharing our good news through the principles of prayer, listening, celebrating, involving, enabling and being effective. The initiative suggested the drafting of a vision and a set of priorities, and there was an invitation for the whole diocese to be involved in developing that vision. There would be roadshows around the diocese which would serve to form the vision and priorities. There was a hope to see greater confidence, deepening relationships and the formation of a framework for flourishing and communicating a clear message.

The Rev Canon Ian Paton reported that he had been part of a small group to steer the 'Growing Together' process. A liturgy had been developed to help to draw people together within that process. Packs of material had been produced for each charge and all were encouraged to incorporate liturgy within their existing services.

The motion that Synod approved the report of the Mission & Ministry Committee was proposed by The Revd John Conway and seconded by The Dean

THE MOTION WAS CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

DEAN'S REPORT

The Very Revd Frances Burberry noting, sadly, that the technology was not allowing the screening of her presentation at that moment, proposed the question “what is it like living the life of a Dean in this diocese?”. They were early days, but her start drew a reflection on her recent week. First, the Cathedral, where she was installed, at Choral Evensong. Second, attending the Annual General Meeting of the Walker Trust, of which she was a Trustee, alongside the Bishop. Third, a meeting of key colleagues at the Diocesan Office, to discuss the business of Synod, administration and ministry. Fourth, a desk day at the Diocesan Office, of diary-planning, prioritising and delegating, with planned visitations stretching over several months. Fifth, a visit to North Berwick, with sunshine, good conversations and a beach walk. On the sixth day, the Dean rested, and golf was involved. On the seventh day, it was the day of Synod itself. She looked outwards and forwards to the work and care that lay ahead, to General Synod and beyond.

PRESENTATIONS & FAREWELLS

Bishop John began by reflecting that **Susan Macdonald** had been an excellent Dean, and hoped that she had been as happy to accept his invitation to become Dean as he had to offer the invitation. She had demonstrated the ability to juggle the demands of the role alongside running a busy charge. She had been a great support and a wise adviser as well as a cheerful companion on many trips. Her inspiring and disciplined faith had been invaluable. Many would have reason to thank her for her distinguished ministry. He then presented Susan with a gift which many charges had contributed to, but also reported that the Cathedral Chapter had nominated her as a worthy Honorary Canon.

Synod then indicated its unanimous approval to accept the nomination of Susan Macdonald as an Honorary Canon.

Bishop John then paid tribute to **Canon David Palmer**, on his retirement after 15 years as Diocesan Secretary and Convenor of the Finance & Management Committee. After a particular trip to the Borders, a certain section of road had become known as ‘Palmer's Corner’. His service to the diocese had been exemplary, as well as in the Province, having been Convenor of the Provincial Standing Committee for a time. He had the ability to achieve much, but with the minimum of fuss. The diocese would miss his incisive advice and his generous gift of time and talents. He then presented him with a gift, on behalf of the diocese, and Synod gave long applause.

THE BISHOP CONFIRMED THE ACTS OF SYNOD