

Minutes of the Edinburgh Diocesan Synod held on 12 March 2022

at St Paul's & St George's Church, York Place, Edinburgh

The meeting was in-person as well as being live-streamed

Synod commenced with Eucharist at 8.30am

*There were 73 attendees (37 Clergy - 51%; 36 Lay - 68%)
with apologies from 15 Clergy and 11 Lay*

STANDING ITEMS

The Dean, The Very Rev Frances Burberry, called Synod to Order. Bishop John had contracted Covid, and had been required to remain in isolation. Although he was absent, he sent his best wishes to all Synod members.

The Dean then announced that the Cathedral Chapter accepted the nomination of former Synod Clerk, The Revd Ruth Innes, as an Honorary Canon. This was approved by Standing Committee and she was installed on 27 February. The Dean asked that the decision be homologated by Synod. This was **UNANIMOUSLY accepted**.

A moment of silence was held for all those who had died since the last Diocesan Synod:

- Dennis Wood
- The Rev Isabel Ryrie
- Bernard Hill
- The Rev Canon Jack Trimble
- The Rev Jack Denholm

The Rev Canon Sarah Shaw, Synod Clerk, introduced members new to Diocesan Synod:

- The Rev Lesley Penny - Curate, Edinburgh St Cuthbert's
- Christine Little - Lay representative, Kelso
- James Bryce - Alternate Lay Representative, Edinburgh St Pauls & St George's
- Roddy Simson - Alternate Lay Representative, Edinburgh St Peters
- Steven Gillespie - Alternate Lay Representative, South Queensferry
- Helen Parker – Lay Representative, St Mary's Cathedral
- Robin Quinn - Lay Representative, Edinburgh, Christ Church
- Heather Barcroft – Lay Representative, Gullane
- The Rev Iain Lothian - Rector, Edinburgh St James's Leith
- The Rev Jaime Wright - Curate, Edinburgh Old St Pauls
- Neville Long – Alternate Lay Representative, Edinburgh Holy Cross
- The Rev John Vincent, Priest in Charge, Edinburgh St Martin of Tours
- David Stevens, Lay Representative, Edinburgh Old St Pauls
- Ann Donoghue - Dalmahoy
- Bethany Nelson - Lay Assistant, Edinburgh St Pauls & St George's
- The Rev Paul Burrows - Edinburgh Old St Pauls
- Alison Wilson - Alternate Lay Representative, Balerno St Mungo's.

Bishop's Address

A video address, recorded by Bishop John, was played to Synod.

He was sorry not to be in attendance, due to his isolation with Covid. He reflected that it was likely to be our uncomfortable companion for the foreseeable future, but also that we had to learn new ways to do things – communicating through video being only one example of this. He reflected on the War in Ukraine and our response to it – theological and practical – and that his Lent Appeal for The Welcoming seemed even more pertinent as we looked to receive Ukrainian refugees. The world we now lived in was unstable and fluid, and the 'new normal' talked about was a long way off, which might test our deepest Christian convictions and require us to stand up for what we believe in new and unexpected ways.

As a Diocese, we were exploring ways to release some new funds for mission – for example, modest support for charges where there was potential for growth or looking at mission in a different way.

We needed to learn both to pace ourselves and to live with the world as it now was. To endure. To be a people who do justice, act with kindness and walk humbly with the God we know in Jesus Christ.

The full text of the address is available on the Diocesan website

Bishop's Lent appeal 2022

Synod received a presentation from The Welcoming charity, which aimed to support 'New Sots' – refugees and asylum seekers – to access support and services so that all felt welcome and part of a diverse Scotland.

Synod **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2021.

ADMINISTRATION

ANNUAL REPORTS

Standing Committee

Godfrey Robson, Diocesan Secretary, presented the report of the Diocesan Standing Committee. He remarked that, although it was a brief report, this was not due to lack of business, but partly due to the Standing Committee being a receiving body for reports from pendant committees. The appointment of the Ministry Coordinator in 2021 was welcomed, particularly as it promoted collegiality amongst clergy. The Carbon Neutral Group had been established following the challenge handed down from General Synod, to be carbon neutral by 2030. The work of the group reported to Standing Committee directly. Safeguarding remained on the agenda as an important subject.

The motion that Synod approved the report of the Standing Committee was proposed by Godfrey Robson and seconded by Ian Lawson, and was CARRIED unanimously

Finance & Management Committee

Godfrey Robson, Convener of the Finance & Management Committee, presented the report. He noted that it had been an exceptionally busy year. The standard business had been to submit the 2020 audited accounts. A review of the individual accounts of charges had been carried out, with much work done by Kenneth Ramage and Anne McAlister. He noted that this was not an intention to police the accounts, but to

keep a finger on the overall pulse of the Diocese and to therefore focus support where it was needed. The 2022 budget had been approved at the October 2021 Diocesan Synod. A Covid relief scheme had been established to help charges with any financial difficulties and limited resources. Two distributions to various charges had been made in 2021. The committee had also managed the Provincial Recovery & Renewal Fund applications, and was a conduit for the distribution of grants from it. The committee was also looking at the longer-term financial picture, including the use of investments. Godfrey Robson also highlighted the often-thankless tasks undertaken by the Diocesan Buildings Committee, but which were nevertheless very important.

Questions

Helen Vincent - St Marks Portobello. What recommendations might emerge from the review of the use of investments?

Godfrey Robson responded that the Diocese had a high proportion of its investments in the Provincial Unit Trust Pool (UTP). Some of the investments had restricted uses, but most were intended for producing income for the General Fund, which funded the normal annual day-to-day expenditure. The committee was looking at whether a proportion of those funds could be called in to support growth in the Diocese, whilst making a minimal impact on future income and preserving levels of reserves. It was hoped that a proposal might be possible to bring to the next Diocesan Synod. It was emphasised that this initiative was not intended as a quota-saving exercise.

The motion that Synod approved the report of the Finance & Management Committee was proposed by Godfrey Robson and seconded by Ian Lawson and was CARRIED unanimously

Cathedral Accounts

The Very Rev John Conway, Provost of St Mary's Cathedral, presented the accounts for 2021. He reported that the full accounts were available from the Cathedral office. It was noted that activity had been restricted by Covid. It had been a challenging time, and it was difficult to make comparisons with previous years. However, the recovery from a deficit financial position was continuing, and there were signs of hope. There had been a drop-in visitor numbers and consequent donations, but there had been an increase in giving through standing orders. There had been an increased use of the buildings and premises by external organisations, and this had brought in additional income. There had been a grant from the Friends of Cathedral Music to help the paid Layclerks during the Covid lockdown. The work to overhaul the Cathedral organ had now been completed. He concluded by stating that the

congregation was very much looking forward to welcoming the Diocese back into its Cathedral.

Safeguarding

Simon Filsell, Diocesan Administrator & Protection Officer, presented the annual safeguarding report. He thanked all the volunteer PVG Coordinators for their hard work, and for completing the Annual Checklists. He emphasised the benefits of having Safeguarding on all Vestry and AGM agendas, to keep the subject regularly in mind, and maintain the culture of keeping those vulnerable children and adults safe. There was a degree of uncertainty about Regulated Work and appointing a Regulated Work Employer, and he would be sending out some specific help to those who were unsure about such matters.

Elections

Godfrey Robson, Diocesan Secretary, reported that there had been no nominations for any of the 4 Clergy vacancies or the 3 Lay vacancies on General Synod. It was confirmed that the Rev Canon Dean Fostekew had been re-elected for a second term as a clergy member on General Synod. The Rev Canon Bob King had completed one term of the Finance and Management committee and he was duly re-elected for a second term. It was noted that there were three Lay vacancies on the Mission & Ministry Committee, and further thought would be given to how those might be filled.

The Very Rev Frances Burberry reported that Godfrey Robson had now completed his five-year term as Diocesan Secretary. He was willing to continue for a second term, but did not feel able to commit to a full five years. Again, his reappointment was unanimously confirmed, whilst noting that a search for a successor needed to start immediately. He was sincerely thanked for the energy and commitment he brought to the role, which had turned out to be a far greater commitment than the two days per week he had been led to believe at the outset.

General Synod business

The Rev Rosie Addis presented a proposal by the Provincial Liturgical Committee on changes to the Scottish Liturgy 1982. It was noted that this had been through the General Synod for the first time in 2021, and Diocesan Synods were now being asked for their views before it returned to General Synod in 2022. The new edition included changes to language where there were references to humans and to God, with formal changes to gendered language.

Questions/comments were from:

The Revd Canon Dave Richards, Rector, Edinburgh St Pauls & St Georges -

The Revd Peter Harris, Rector, Dalkeith & Lasswade

The Revd Canon Marion Chatterley, Vice Provost, St Mary's Cathedral

The Revd Philip Blackledge, Rector, Melrose

The Revd David Paton-Williams, Rector, Edinburgh, St Columba's

Victoria Elliott, Lay Member of General Synod

The Revd Diana Hall, Rector, Dunbar

Robin Quinn, Christ Church Morningside, Edinburgh

The Revd Canon Bob King, Rector, Kelso

The Rev Rosie Addis thanked Synod for the comments, which she would take back to the Provincial Liturgical Committee

Carbon Neutral

Bethany Nelson, Lay Ministry Assistant, Edinburgh St Pauls & St George's and leader of the Diocesan Environmental Group introduced this item, which took forward the challenge of General Synod for congregations “to be carbon neutral by 2030”. Bethany explained that her own background was in ecology and hydrology and the climate change effects on Scottish seabird colonies. Her international travel had informed her thoughts on climate change and its relations with Christian faith. The Diocesan Carbon Neutral Group had already met twice and was keen to begin work on communicating and sharing resources. There had been a request for a representative to be appointed in each congregation, and there had been 16 representatives confirmed so far. However, it was recognised that there were small congregations around the Diocese, and they should not be concerned if they could not appoint a representative individually, as this matter could be shared across groups of charges. The SEC toolkit was being produced and Robert Woodford, a member of the Diocesan Environmental Group, was also on the Provincial Environmental Group and was working hard to get it completed and distributed. It would include an online emissions calculator to help charges understand their carbon footprint. A dedicated page on the Diocesan website was being developed so that resources and ideas could be shared.

Mission & Ministry

The Rev Canon Dr Sophia Marriage presented the Mission & Ministry Committee annual report. Business had been dominated by Covid, and how to rebuild after the

lockdown. There had been appointments of a Ministerial Development Officer and a part-time Administrative Assistant. A special tribute was paid to Helen Godfrey, who had stepped down from the committee in April 2021 after many years of dedicated service on the committee. There was now an aim to set future priorities and vision, but this needed collaboration across the Diocese. The Season of Pilgrimage had started, with pilgrimages happening from several churches. The season would incorporate a pilgrimage towards carbon neutral. Five mission principles were established in 2018, but limited resources had meant that only two of them could be given priority at the current time, namely Enabling Ministry and Developing Disciples. The Ministerial Development Officer, the Rev Jane McLaren, was leading a new Ministerial Review process, with 18 trained to undertake reviews with each member of the clergy. In tandem with that, several Continuing Ministerial Development events were being planned to support that work.

Claire Benton-Evans, Youth & Children Officer, then introduced her report. Many churches were wondering where their young people and children had gone during the pandemic. There was a need to build and rebuild relationships with our young people. There were many examples of this across the Diocese and there was a need to share those and to demonstrate that "we have not forgotten you". It was hoped that the Provincial Youth Camp at Glenalmond in 2022 could once more take place in person. Claire encouraged all congregations to send delegates, even where there was just one young person within a congregation, so that they could link up with the network of young people across the Diocese.

Discussions were then encouraged around the tables of Synod members, considering the following questions:

1. What one thing has encouraged / blessed you in the life of your church in the last year?
2. What one thing are you doing to build relationship with the young people in your church / community?
3. What can you – personally and as a local congregation – do to encourage each other / other churches around in faith and ministry?

Questions

The Rev Peter Harris, Rector of Dalkeith & Lasswade - How could we help members to see other ways of doing 'church'?

The Rev Canon Dr Sophia Marriage responded. It was clear that there was a gap in lay ministry, and this was also identified in the lack of lay members on the Mission and Ministry committee. She hopes that this could become a priority in the committee's work, once current priorities had been completed. All congregations

were encouraged to put forward names of people who might serve on the committee and help to achieve all of the priorities. There was also a need for people to serve on short-term project groups, which would have a lesser commitment.

The Motion that Synod approved the reports of the Mission & Ministry Committee and pendant committees was proposed by the Rev Canon Dr Sophia marriage and seconded by the Revd Liz O’Ryan and was CARRIED unanimously.

The Very Rev Frances Burberry then led a moment of silence and a prayer for the people of Ukraine.

The chair was handed to Godfrey Robson, Diocesan Secretary

Finance

Ian Lawson, Diocesan Treasurer, updated Synod on the 2021 Accounts and the current financial position. The accounts for 2021 were fully drafted and the audit was due very soon. He then presented the end of year financial position, noting an operating surplus of £93k. The General Fund balance had increased to £258k, which funded the day-to-day operation of the Diocese. This increase in the Fund balance was above the projected recovery target, following a series of deficit years. The increases had been partly a result of increased Unit Trust Pool dividends, a sequence of Diocesan Office staff vacancies, deferred events and savings in travel costs. The capital value of the Unit Trust Pool investments had increased, and had outperformed the FTSE. This provided the environment for a discussion about the potential for realising some assets to support direct growth projects in the diocese. This was an ongoing body of work by the Finance & Management Committee.

Questions were from:

The Rev Rosie Addis, Edinburgh St John's. Many charges struggle to balance their books, and this will probably get worse. Yet our structure as a Church requires each to be self-sufficient and also to bear all the weight and keep to all the regulations of running a self-contained charity. How might we get into a position of a vision for the next three to five years of operating more as a single diocese than just as a collection of separate charges?

Ian Lawson responded to say that the Standing Committee had discussed it and it was very aware of the issue and the opportunities presented.

Robin Quinn, Christ Church Morningside, Edinburgh - Were the unit trust pool investments invested in funds which operated in eco-friendly industries?

Elaine Vincent, St Mark's Portobello. Is there something we can do as a Synod to think about what we can do holistically as a diocese? There are new housing developments across Edinburgh and the diocese and need to be seen as mission opportunities.

Val Hale, Lay Rep, Dunbar & the Rev Diana Hall, Rector, Dunbar. It was likely that local charges would not be able to fully fund the costs of reaching carbon neutral by 2030, and grant funding would need to be considered.

Godfrey Robson thanked Ian Lawson for all his hard work in keeping the Diocesan finances in good order.

Dean's Report

The Very Rev Frances Burberry presented her report. Several institutions of new rectors still went ahead in 2021, despite the Covid restrictions. The General Synod went ahead, but was purely online. She had attended a conference at Launde Abbey with delegates from the Church of England, entitled 'Reconciling Mission', part of an 18-month programme. A visit to St Mary's Coldstream had collided with cyclists on the Tour of Britain race. December saw the interviews for the Ministry Development Officer, which was a key moment in supporting our clergy. She was looking forward to resuming normal duties which had been on hold during the pandemic lockdown, in particular being able to meet with charges through visitations once more.

The Dean confirmed the acts of Synod