

ELY DIOCESAN SYNOD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Ely Diocesan Synod held by video conference on Tuesday 8 December 2020

Canon Simon Kershaw, Chair of the House of Laity, in the Chair

The meeting opened with Dwelling in the Word led by the Ven Dr Alex Hughes, Archdeacon of Cambridge.

Mr Andrew Read, Diocesan Director of Education and Interim Director of Mission and Ministry, introduced the Commissioning of:
Reverend Doctor Lynda Taylor, serving as Lead Chaplain for Cambridgeshire Constabulary, and Mrs Sue Nelms, Licensed Lay Minister, serving as the Bishops Adviser for Disability.

1. **Apologies for Absence received** House of Clergy 10 House of Laity 6
2. The **Minutes** of Diocesan Synod held on 7 October 2020 were agreed as accurate and signed by the Chair, Canon Simon Kershaw.

Matters Arising - for Synod to note - the Diocese's second submission to the Strategic Development Fund was unsuccessful.

Question raised under Standing Order 86 by Sue Davies Scourfield: I am looking forward to discussing Pastoral Principles for Living Well Together that appear in item 7 of the agenda, and I welcome these precepts, being deeply saddened by genuine abuse that has been experienced by some LGBTQ+ people in the church, but I wonder what you would say to both clergy and laity who fear being labelled - or even attacked - as transphobic or homophobic for disclosing that they adhere to the church's historic understanding of orthodox and biblical teaching on human identity and sexuality?"

Response from Bishop of Ely: "Bishop Dagmar and I wrote in a letter about the publication of *Living in Love and Faith* that, in our discussions about human identity, relationships and sexuality, it is paramount that we all remember that we are not dealing with abstract issues. We are speaking with and of individuals created in God's image and likeness and seeking faithfully to discern His will for their lives and for the church.

As we engage in this process together, we need to do everything to enable good listening and good discernment. This means all of us will hear views and experiences which we may find uncomfortable or challenging. We need to make every space as safe as possible for people to engage as well as possible and our conversation this evening is an important first stage in doing that."

3. **Oral Report from Bishop's Councils 29 October and 18 November 2020:** presented by the Diocesan Secretary. There were no questions
4. **Presidential Address:** Bishop Stephen delivered his Presidential Address within which he presented slides showing feedback from the discussions after his Address to the previous Synod (slides attached). He also encouraged support for as well as the acknowledgement of reluctance of many people which may be raised through the discussions relating to *Living in Love and Faith*. He robustly stated that neither he nor Bishop Dagmar would countenance the "unchurching" of any individual. A Bishop's Study Day relating to Living in Love and Faith will be held on 3 March 2021.

5. **Deanery Planning update:** The Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech

A presentation to support the Deanery Planning exercise (slides attached)

Motion *“Deanery Planning is to take place within the framework of the gospel and its expression in the diocesan strategy: ‘we pray to be generous and visible people of Jesus Christ’. It is a means by which we support the discovery, encouragement and management of the gifts and resources with which we are equipped by a generous God. This synod commends this approach and asks all parishes or benefices to provide input into, and engage in discussions about, the plan for their deanery, following the principles, outline process and timescale requested by Bishop’s Council”*

The motion was carried by a majority

Abstentions: Revd Canon Brian Atling, Mrs Katherine Banks, Mr David Brock, Mrs Mary Hurst, Revd Rachel Rosborough.

6. Presentation by representatives of Fincham & Feltwell: **a lived example of Deanery Planning.** Revd Canon William Burke, Rural Dean of Fincham & Feltwell, introduced Dr Fraser Reich and Revd Carol Nicholas Letch to deliver information about the Deanery strategy behind Deanery Planning (slides attached).

Revd Canon Alison Myers, Chair of the House of Clergy, in the Chair.

7. **The Pastoral Principles for Living Well Together:** a prelude to *Living in Love and Faith*. Revd Canon Alison Myers introduced the principles of pastoral practice for how the Church of England can live and work together. In later 2021, the documentation about *Living in Love and Faith* will be widely circulated for Diocesan engagement and discussion. Members of Diocesan Synod are encouraged to lead their Deanery communities to explore and practise both.

A feedback summary from each breakout groups was asked to be sent to the Bishop of Ely.

8. **Business of the Ely Diocesan Board of Finance (EDBF):** the Revd Canon Brian Atling (BA), Chair of the EDBF, advised that the final budget for 2021 had been circulated widely through the Diocese to licensed clergy and PCC representatives. The 2020 deficit out-turn remains likely to be just under £1m.

9. Proposed Scheme for **Cathedral representation** at Ely Deanery Synod

Motion: “This synod approves the Scheme for Cathedral representatives on Ely Deanery Synod and recommends up to three (3) representatives are elected to the Ely Deanery Synod’s House of Laity.”

Proposed: The Very Revd Mark Bonney Seconded: Revd Canon Simon Talbott

Abstentions: Revd Stephen Day and Revd Canon Jonathan Young

The motion was carried by a majority

There being no further business, the Bishop of Ely closed proceedings with prayer at 9.06 pm.

The next meeting of Diocesan Synod will be held by video conference on Saturday 13 March 2021 starting at 9.30am.

