



Committee Meeting
19:30 Tuesday, 27 September 2016

Venue: Congo, Church House

In attendance: Mike Gilbertson, Ruth Ackroyd, Elaine Graham, David Blackmore, George Crowder, Joe Kennedy, Julie Withers, David Herbert, David Lamb, Liz Shercliff, Jane Hood

1. **Prayer** led by Ruth Ackroyd.
2. **Apologies** Christopher Burkett, James Durbin, David Felix.
3. **Notes of meeting held 28 April 2016** accepted as a record of the meeting.
4. **New committee member** Lesley Young, Reader at Great Meols and Wirral North Lay Chair. All agreed to Lesley Young joining as member.
Action: Mike Gilbertson / Jane Hood to find appropriate way to do this and advise her accordingly.
5. **YBible update** David Lamb reported on the 15 September launch:
 - a. Around 300 people attended;
 - b. St Denys Bookshop, Manchester and information stalls run by the Bible Society, BSL Bible, Bible Reading Fellowship, Scripture Union and Exploring Faith Matters were present;
 - c. Bishop Keith led the welcome;
 - d. Dr Peter Oakes, Head of the Department of Religions and Theology at the University of Manchester, and a well-respected New Testament scholar. He spoke about *The Bible for Real People: Then and Now*. The PowerPoints did not show well;
 - e. Hannah Dobbins from Bible Society introduced an Open the Book team, an initiative designed to bring the Bible to life for children in primary schools. They read and acted out Jesus walking on the water;
 - f. A deaf person spoke about the BSL Bible project;
 - g. The Big Bible Quiz – clergy v laity – won by the laity team;
 - h. Ideas shared about what could be done in parishes, eg learning Bible verses; reading the Bible in pairs, etc;Any feedback or items for inclusion on the YBible webpage welcomed. To maintain momentum, webpage will be updated and news items on website re Bible initiatives and resources that can be shared. YBible planning meeting to be organised.
Action: Jane Hood
6. **RME Update** Renewal and Reform and changes in financing thereof. The general encouragement of vocations in this diocese is going well. Need to encourage accredited and formal lay vocations and a change in culture. Recommendations to Archbishops' Council to encourage lay ministries. Some dioceses are linking Reader training to have discipleship from top to bottom. Lay ministry on the agenda in the widest sense with not so much formal accreditation. To be discussed at General Synod in February 2017. Elaine Graham to have a conversation with officers as soon as something concrete is available. There is a shortage of young women (under 32 years of age) going into stipendiary ministry, not so good as

proportion of attendances in churches. MG can send link. There are no female staff members on ASCMM weekends unless Liz Shercliff goes in her own time. Need to invite women to go for the weekend to take the services. Trying to fill third seat on ASCMM trustees. David Felix to be advised to action.

7. **MDR update** Scheme being revamped by Gary O'Neill. Scheme has been approved by Rural Deans and Bishop's Council. Not yet emerged as fully-fledged scheme. Mike Gilbertson hopes new scheme will be available from 1 January 2017. Gary O'Neill is suggesting a four-year cycle and not seeing someone every two years. Paperwork would always go back to the lead reviewer. How are spiritual advisers / soul friends prepared and trained? Is it assumed that everyone has a spiritual adviser / soul friend? How are goals established? The panel of lead reviewers will be trained by Gary O'Neill. CMD linked? Appraisal or peer review? Confidentiality needs? Gary O'Neill to provide details and attend committee meeting to discuss.
8. **CfM activities**
 - a. Women's Voices 2 on 10 September, 50 people attended;
 - b. 100 people booked in for mental health day on 6 October;
 - c. 61 students started Foundations for Ministry on 19 September;
 - d. Four Pastoral Workers were licensed on 24 September;
 - e. Eight Readers to be licensed on 15 October;
 - f. 54 people attended 24 Hours with Rowan Williams on 20 September;
 - g. 11 Pastoral Workers in training;
 - h. 20 Readers in training.
9. **Curacy numbers over the next two to three years** In ten years' time there will be bulge of clergy retiring. There is a flexible policy in this diocese with regard to deployment of curates. One person already in post for a year as curate-in-charge, overseen by neighbouring priest. Unless parish share increased we will become a slightly exporting diocese.
10. **Lay ministry consultations** Liz Shercliff: Two people are researching how Readers are called, selected and deployed. Both researchers came here to talk to students. There are common issues across both provinces – at present incumbent is king. Selection is by the Warden of Readers and a panel appointed by the Warden. A more robust selection process in some dioceses is being considered. There are training issues, eg incumbent won't let them preach; someone preaching to an empty church as the incumbent has already set the programme. Some dioceses are licensing Readers to the diocese and not a parish. Where a new incumbent doesn't accept a Reader or where the Reader is deemed to be the wrong gender. Some dioceses have task groups rather than Reader councils. Lots of Readers hardly get used after four years training. In Chester in particular when Readers move on to ordained ministry; this can present a problem between Durham and Chester validations. In September 2016 Durham University authorised two new awards for use through *All Saints*: a graduate certificate and a graduate diploma. Designed to enable those coming to theological education with qualifications outside theology, these two awards also make it possible for Chester students who have an FdA to study at Level Six, effectively obtaining the same qualification as a bachelor's degree. Are Readers trained for maintenance or mission? Should Readers be licensed to deaneries? Reader training could be integrated into discipleship programmes. Offer a different numbers of ways through; clergy to facilitate parish ministries.

11. John Knowles standing down as Warden of Readers

With effect from 31 December 2016. New warden to be recruited. How does job description fit with warden rooted in a parish? In other dioceses the bishop is the warden and has an assistant; the downside of this is time commitment. To be discussed further when Christopher Burkett returns to work.

12. 2017 Lay conference. 19 to 21 May at Swanwick. The theme is Mission impossible – your chance to make a difference. One free place per parish is being offered. Speakers yet to be confirmed.

13. Topic / facilitator for CfM day conference on 8 November 2016. Nothing organised yet. Due to short notice this will need to be a home-made day, perhaps with a YBible theme. Workshop on some of the work that needs to be done by CfM. Look at scheduling and the rest of the year. Would build fellowship. Divide into groups and do a Bible study. A learning exercise on two levels. Philip Alexander to be asked if he might be willing to provide input for part of the day.

Action: Mike Gilbertson

14. There was no other business.

Date and time of next meetings

- Tuesday, 8 November 2016, 09:30 Annual Conference, Foxhill
- Thursday, 12 January 2017. 19:30 Congo, Church House
- Wednesday, 17 May 2017 19:30 Foxhill
- Thursday, 29 June 2017 19:00 Social evening. Details to be advised
- Thursday, 21 September 2017 19:30 Congo, Church House
- Wednesday, 29 November 2017 09:30 Annual Conference, Gladstone's Library, Hawarden