



2. Bristol Diocesan Synod Minutes (Draft)

Date: Saturday, 18 November 2023

Time: 9.30am to 3:00pm

Venue: Pattern Church, Penzance Drive, Swindon, SN5 7JL

The agenda and papers for this meeting can be found on the Diocese of Bristol website at: [Diocesan Synod - Diocese of Bristol \(anglican.org\)](https://www.anglican.org/diocesan-synod-diocese-of-bristol)

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| 1. | Eucharist and commissioning of the Revd Andy Murray as Dean of Priority Communities |
| Bishop Viv Faull celebrated the Eucharist and commissioned the Revd Dr Andy Murray as Dean of Priority Communities. | |
| Bruce Finnamore in the Chair | |
| 2. | Welcome, Minutes of last meeting, apologies |
| Bruce welcomed members and especially the visitors who were present to support the Revd Dr Andy Murray, to the November meeting of Diocesan Synod. | |
| Bruce thanked Joel Sales, Kaf Smith and Jo Winson from Pattern Church for hosting the meeting, and the Governance Support Team, and in particular Emma Bakewell, for organising it, especially as the Diocesan Office had experienced technical difficulties with emails in the days leading up to Synod. | |
| Bruce informed Synod that one amendment had been requested to the minutes, this was: | |
| Aurea Hart’s question under Section 12 was amended from: “xxxx (Chippenham) – commended the Deanery dashboard for people who hadn’t yet used it as it made the requirements of safeguarding easier to manage” to “Aurea Hart (Chippenham) – commended the parish dashboard for people who hadn’t yet used it as it made the requirements of safeguarding easier to manage”. | |
| Bruce noted 12 apologies from the House of Clergy and 10 apologies from House of Laity. There was also an apology from Trudie Wigley (Chair of the House of Clergy) who was not present as it was her son’s eighteenth birthday. Trudie had been fully involved in designing and supporting the preparation of the meeting. | |
| Bruce explained the structure of the meeting. The meeting was largely formed of three parts. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first part covered routine business, including Amendments to Standing Orders, Bishop’s Council Report and Transforming Church. Together (TC.T) • The second part looked at TC.T Good News Stories, The Well BMO, and the | |

Budget 2024

- The final part focused on the General Synod Report and Living in Love and Faith (LLF)

Bruce acknowledged that Synod might cover some subjects that Synod members, visitors or Diocesan Support Services Staff might find triggering. Due to this, Caroline Jowett-Ive (Director of People and Safeguarding) and Simon Taylor (Director of Mission & Ministry Support) were available should anyone wish to speak with them.

3. Amendments to Standing Orders (motion below)

Bruce thanked Lee Coley (Diocesan Registrar) in his absence for all his work with the standing orders.

Bruce explained that this session would cover four areas:

- the purpose of the changes and why we were doing it now;
- the process we were following;
- principal changes we were proposing; and
- the guidelines which support the new proposed standing orders.

Purpose

- Increased engagement and participation;
- Encourage inclusivity and diversity;
- Reflect changes in communication methods:
 - (i) technology
 - (ii) virtual meetings
- Improved governance and accountability
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of Synod and Synod members
- Add value by making best use of talents

Overall, to motivate and inspire.

Process

- Reviewed current standing orders (last amended November 2021);
- Spoken to cross-section of current Synod members;
- Reviewed experience of other Dioceses;
- Discussed draft changes with Agenda Committee and Bishops Council; and
- Prepared guidelines to support the Standing Orders.

Principle Changes

- House of Chairs can serve a maximum of three consecutive terms
- Redefined “meeting place” to enable virtual meetings to be covered
- Minutes signed off formally
- Distinguish between formal debate; informal discussion; presentations; for information
- Failure to attend three consecutive meetings will cease to be a Synod member

Guidelines

- Purpose of Synod
 - (i) to consider and express an opinion on matters affecting the Diocese.

- (ii) to advise the Bishop when required.
- (iii) to consider and express an opinion on matters referred by General Synod.
“ Encounter. Listen. Discern.” Pope Francis

- Principles

- (i) 11 principles underpinned by the spirit of Christian grace.
- (ii) Explanation of how Synod works

Bruce invited questions and reminded Synod about processes and provisions in place to assist with the efficient running of the meeting. This included, if a member wished to ask a question they should raise their hand, and when called on to state their name and deanery.

Questions:

Kate Davison (Kingswood and South Gloucestershire) – queried when members who had not attended three consecutive meetings would forfeit their membership and when that would come into effect?

Answer: it was clarified that it would come into effect for the next meeting, March 2024.

Julien Rivers (Bristol West) – Queried whether members who miss two consecutive meetings were going to receive a reminder email or notice that non-attendance of the following meeting would result in a forfeit of membership?

Answer: Yes. Bruce further clarified that attendance at Synod meetings was vital and these new rules were to reinforce this. That said, there was an element of discretion so if a member had good reasons for non-attendance, then an exception might be made on a case-by-case basis.

Bruce Fynamore (Chair of the House of Laity) then moved:

- a) that this Synod approves the proposed amendments to the Standing Orders.

Motion was carried unanimously.

4.

Bishop’s Council & Board of Directors Report 13 July and 12 Oct 2023 (motion below)

Bruce introduced Alison Rowe (Bishop’s Council member) who presented the Bishop’s Council Report

Alison summarised the report, highlighting that the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee had recommended four suspensions, two pastoral schemes and one BMO. In addition to this, and in line with rule 24 of Church Representation Rules, the committee had considered the scheme to provide representation of BMO (The Well Church, North Swindon of Deanery Synod) and recommended it to Diocesan Synod.

Bishop’s Council have also continued to monitor progress with TC.T by looking at ways to support parishes as they build their own plans for the future and discern how various elements might be applicable. A key focus was how the strategies were communicated to parishes and how they might be energised to start conversations about their futures.

Bishop's Council has considered Diocesan Synod Election Formulas for the next Diocesan Synod and recommended a formula for Synod's approval.

Bishop's Council has also carefully considered the Budget for 2024, a more detailed report would be presented later in the meeting by Richard Bacon.

Questions:

Kat Campion-Spall (General Synod) – queried who was eligible to be on the Mission Initiative role of a BMO?

Answer: It was clarified that it was very similar to that of an electoral roll and details could be found in the Church Representation Rules.

Alison Rowe (Bishop's Council Member) then moved:

- a) that this report be received.
- b) the Church Representation Rules (CRR) Scheme for The Well BMO is approved.
- c) the Diocesan Election formula 2024-2027 as recommended by Bishop's Council is approved.

Each motion was carried unanimously.

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| 5. Transforming Church. Together (TC.T) |
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Bruce invited Rob Mountain, Director of Transformation, to provide an update on TC.T.

Rob focused on the Programme Board results. He explained that TC.T had an overall rating of 'amber' and that two major areas of risk had been identified:

- Parish Share; and
- Parish Engagement

In light of the second risk, the next Programme Board would focus on:

- how to establish an 'Holistic' view of progress for the TC.T Strategy (i.e. beyond programme related 'metrics').
- two meetings to be held in the new year to engage with incumbents (29/01/2024 in Swindon and 01/02/2024 in Bristol). These meetings would be supported by Bishops, Archdeacons, Diocesan Secretary, Missional Project / Workstream leads, key support staff.

Synod was asked to discuss in tables, "what are the topics you want us to cover at these incumbent meetings?"

Synod was asked to write down any thoughts or comments on a piece of paper that was collected by Diocesan Staff and will be used to form the basis of discussion at the Synod in March.

Post-meeting note: these comments and suggestions have been presented to Bishop's Council and will be used to inform the content of the Incumbent Meetings.

6. TC.T Good News Stories

Rob continued to present and highlighted good news stories from around the Diocese, that provide inspiration for future TC.T activities. These included but are not limited to:

- Chippenham Mission Area
- Parish-facing new starters in the Diocesan Office, which include: Lee Barnes (Advisor for Curacy); and Rosy Ashley (Advisor for Parish Development)
- Proposal to graft from St Michael's (Stoke Gifford) to Holy Trinity (Stapleton) was being discussed.
- Open Table at St Paul's, Clifton.
- Net Zero:
 - (i) Multiple heat pumps and 19 solar panel arrays installed at clergy homes.
 - (ii) Number of Eco Champs has increased from 20 in 2021 to 124 in 2023
 - (iii) Energy footprint tool responses increased from 40% in 2021 to 77% in 2023
- St Mark's Swindon good work using SDF funding to support the mission of the parish - some good lessons for TC.T
- Partnership focus points created: environmental action; youth engagement; and racial justice;
- Dean of Priority Communities, The Revd Dr Andy Murray, appointed
- Number of Priority Communities expanded from 11 to 14.
- Established North Wiltshire Wild Church – good example for others
- Benefice of Fromeside had 63 attendees at its dementia awareness training.
- Christ Church (Downend) warm spaces linked up with Music Train.
- Holy Trinity (Horfield) appointed a person to specifically work on inclusion.
- St Leonard's Primary School passed its church school partnership award.
- Growing Faith Together conference at St Michael's (Stoke Gifford) on 20/01/2024.

Questions:

Julia Childerhouse (Chippenham) – we wanted inclusion and diversity at Synod, but in terms of young people and people who are less academic. Is there any work about how to diversify on age or academic ability?

Answer: A lot of work was being done to grow faith amongst young people. The Education team was aiming to go out to young people in their areas and meet with them on their terms.

David Cain (Swindon) – Suggested that the DBF should not worry about meeting in January and February. He highlighted this should be about parish engagement and a top-down approach wasn't going to work. David explained that he had lots of experience in strategies and TC.T is the best he has seen, but a failure of parish engagement poses a serious risk and the DBF needs to consider how to achieve this.

Answer: Richard Leaman completely agreed that parishes are vital, but where his experience differs is that there also needs clear strategic direction from key leaders which should inspire. Parish engagement is vital, and leadership at a local level is equally vital. Unless local leaders (Clergy/Lay) are inspired, understand the plan, and can enthuse their parishes, we will not get parish engagement. The hope and belief was that through inspiring local leaders we will get this engagement.

Bruce Finnamore suggested that both a top-down sense of direction and bottom-up engagement was the best approach. It was important that both incumbents and Lay Readers work together to enthuse, energise and guide parishes.

7. The Well BMO

Bruce introduced Paul Freeland, Leader of The Well BMO.

Paul explained that in 2018 the resourcing church, Pattern Church, was established with the mandate to plant churches. In September 2021, fifty people were sent out from Pattern Church to plant The Well. It was called The Well because of Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well.

Paul explained that The Well's calling is to the people of North Swindon where there are approximately 40,000 people living in homes that were built in the last 20 years. Since launching in 2021, The Well has been meeting in St Francis' School; however, the church would be moving to a new building in the new year.

Paul had also had the privilege of baptizing fourteen people and celebrating three weddings.

The Well continues to grow with many people returning to church after a long absence or finding faith for the first time. It has also put considerable resource into serving its local community by hosting a toddler group, crafts group, men's and women's ministry. It was also in the process of re-opening of the old Youth Centre.

Paul thanked the Bishop, her team and all who supported and encouraged The Well. Paul particularly thanked Synod for approving the CRR Scheme which allowed The Well to have Deanery Synod representation.

8. Bristol DBF Budget 2024 (motion below)

Richard Bacon (Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance) presented the 2024 Budget.

Richard explained that there had been an enormous amount of work behind the scenes to prepare the budget and accompanying information so that it might be reviewed by Bishop's Council and recommended to Diocesan Synod for approval. Richard thanked everyone who was involved in its preparation.

Richard Bacon summarized the budget.

Some costs have increased due to:

- i) An increased number of clerical posts planned in 2024 (circa £1m extra cost);
- ii) Investing in IT systems;
- iii) Increased work to ensure compliance and repairs to our clergy property; and
- iv) Increased Net Zero activity.

The parish share income projection for 2024 was £5.4 million which was slightly down from 2023. The DBF expected to collect about 86% of budgeted parish share in 2023 and so slightly lower expectations had been set for 2024.

Richard Bacon outlined that Total Return Accounting was a way of maximising the total returns from our investments; extracting the growth in capital as well as the

normal investment returns. The aim was to sustain the real value of the investments we have, and to draw down the remainder. At the moment the drawdown was set at 4%.

As a result, we will use £0.8 million in 2023 and we will draw down another £1.4 million in 2024. This will be used principally for Net zero projects as agreed at last year's Synod.

Overall in 2024, we expect to see a deficit of around £0.6 million which was in line with the TC.T 5-year plan.

Richard invited Synod to discuss in tables the following: "Identify if there are any points that you would like Richard or the team to clarify and comments you would like to make."

Synod was asked to write any comments on a piece of paper which was then collected by Diocesan staff.

Questions

Clare Jefferis (Bristol West) – Clare thanked Richard for his very accessible presentation and asked if he might provide a summary of his report and if the slides might be included with the minutes so they could be shared with PCCs.

Richard Bacon agreed this would be done.

Julian Rivers (Bristol West) – Julian queried whether it would be possible to see information about the value of the work from clergy that isn't represented in the clergy cost figures. For example, Self-Supporting Minsters were not captured in the budget.

Richard Bacon (Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance) – Richard confirmed that something would be put together and circulated.

John Spens (Kingswood and South Gloucestershire) – John highlighted that on Page 11 it showed that £0.5million had been spent on churches that are no longer required. Jon queried the cost of buildings that are no longer required. John also highlighted that on Page 8 it states that only 84% of parish share has been met.

Richard Bacon (Chair of Bristol Diocesan Board of Finance) - Richard confirmed that it been a difficult time for everybody and in 2023, and that some parishes had been to the DSS to say they can't give what has been requested. Consequently in 2024, the DBF has tried to be more realistic about what parishes are going to be able to afford. That said, Richard confirmed that the DBF has seen a higher percentage of pledges as a proportion of the budget. The process was not finished, and we do not know what those figures will actually be. Richard reiterated that Parish share was an essential part of how we as a diocese work together.

The Fundraising support officer was a role within the DSS which was specifically to support parishes in their own fundraising efforts. A growth in fundraising, projects and outreach should in turn help to grow congregations.

Richard Leaman (Diocesan Secretary) Outlined that the DBF was fully responsible for caring for All Saints (Corn Street) which was a closed church and

contains the grave of Edward Colston, and the roof of the church was in need of replacement. The Finance Committee was asking Synod to allocate £0.5m to this building because the DBF sees it as an opportunity rather than a problem. A chance for the Church to reflect and lament on its past, and to transform the building into something meaningful, positive, and forward-looking. Before we can transform the church however, we need to fix the roof.

David Stevenson (City) – David queried the diversification of income streams of local churches and at Diocesan level beyond the lifespan of TC.T and to what extent it was imagined that we will go back to a point where the principal source of income will be parish share.

Richard Leaman (Diocesan Secretary) acknowledged, that in the future, parish share was unlikely to cover the cost of the number of clergy we all want. Therefore, if we are to reach financial sustainability - as Synod have charged us to do - we must find other ways to generate income, through partnership building, local fundraising, improved access to grants, and social impact work, all of which may require us to generate a 'social enterprise'. Work was in hand on this.

Richard Bacon (Chair of Diocesan Board of Finance) then moved:

that this Synod authorises the Bristol Diocesan Board of Finance Limited to expend in the year 2024 sums totalling is £13,983,578 in respect of the items in the Budget for that year.

Motion was carried with one abstention.

9. Question Time

Bruce referred to the written questions and asked if any of those who submitted written questions wished to ask any supplementary questions.

Rich Cresswell (Kingswood and South Gloucestershire) – confirmed that he did not have a supplementary question.

Bruce reported that as Sally Robertson was unable to attend Diocesan Synod, she had delegated her supplementary question to Simon Stevenette.

Simon Stevenette (Swindon) – Simon asked whether the Ofsted report on the Deanery School was fair and if there had been any surprises?

Liz Townend (Director of Education) confirmed, with sadness, that it was a fair report. At first the school expected to receive a grading of "requires improvement" which was the next grade up; however, conversation with parents led Ofsted to grade the school as "inadequate". Liz felt that Ofsted had made the right decision because parents were unhappy and this must be acknowledged in the report.

Liz explained that a number of factors led to an "inadequate" grading, these included:

- It was challenging to set up a new secondary school;
- The Trust did not have the institutional knowledge required to set up the school effectively;
- There has been a significant turnover in headteachers, three since the school

had opened;

- Children with additional needs did not get the care they needed; and
- A lot of children with additional needs had also been excluded from other local schools and enrolled at the Deanery. Thus creating additional pressures on the school.

Liz explained that these were not excuses but were reasons why the Deanery received the rating it did.

Joel Sales (Swindon) – Joel thanked Liz for her leadership and asked why after the first headteacher suddenly left there wasn't a crisis meeting and money and resources weren't re-directed to the Deanery to help manage and resolve the issues there. Joel highlighted that the Bristol Diocesan Board of Finance is spending £0.5million on the closed church of All Saints (Bristol) which requires a new roof but we have let Swindon down.

Liz Townend (Director of Education) – Liz agreed that the leadership of the Deanery had not worked effectively enough and explained that this stemmed from the fact that the Diocesan of Bristol Academies Trust (DBAT) did not have sufficient knowledge and experience and did not reach out for it.

Liz suggested that the DBAT could have offered a higher salary to attract an experienced headteacher; however, when opening a new school, the budget was very tight. The Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) might have loaned the DBAT some additional funds; however, it was already supporting DBAT by several hundred thousand pounds.

Bishop Viv highlighted that it was important to review how the diocese could and should have supported the Deanery School and it now had hard questions to answer about the governance of its schools. Bishop Viv confirmed that action has already been taken and the DBE needed to be much more firmly linked with Bishop's Council.

Aurea Hart (Chippenham) – Aurea welcomed Simon Taylor's (Director of Mission and Ministry Support) written response and asked if LLM might be involved as early as possible in future TC.T discussions?

Simon Taylor (Director of Mission and Ministry Support) – Simon confirmed that he and Stephanie Hayton (Adviser for Lay Ministry (Warden of Readers)) would share their work on how LLMs fit into TC.T with Aurea.

Malcolm Strange (Kingswood and South Gloucestershire) – Malcolm explained that one of his churches was entering its second winter without heating.

The PCC had approached Parish Buying in August but had no response. In October they responded to say they had found the PCC's email. In November they said they would work on the email.

Malcolm asked whether any of the General Synod members would be willing to meet with his church's environment group to discuss this matter and raise a question at General Synod on the inadequacy of Parish Buying. Kat Champion-Spall (General Synod member) agreed to meet with Malcolm and the environment group.

10. General Synod Report (July and November 2023)

Alice Kemp (General Synod Member) presented the General Synod Report on the July meeting, and Bishop Viv summarised the November meeting.

The February and November meetings were held in London, whereas the July

meeting was held in York.

Alice provided an overview of General Synod so that anyone who might be interested in standing for election knew more about it.

Each General Synod member can ask two written questions before each Synod, and will receive a written response. There was then an opportunity to ask a supplementary question.

Alice explained that asking questions was an easier avenue for getting matters onto to the General Synod agenda. Alice therefore encouraged Diocesan Synod to talk to its General Synod members should anyone wish to raise a subject at General Synod. That said, the July General Synod received 237 written questions, consequently there was not time for everyone to ask supplementary questions.

Alice referred to her written report drawing Diocesan Synod's attention the following:

- Proposed amendments to the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules which were specifically designed to help with contested heritage; and
- Clergy Conduct Measure which is looking at a new system that has three levels of complaints (grievance, allegations to conduct or allegations to serious misconduct).

Questions

Julia Childerhouse (Chippenham) –asked whether Alice would recommend people standing for General Synod?

Alice Kemp (General Synod Member) –confirmed that being a member was hard work and a significant commitment, but you get the opportunity to have your say in what is happening and understand how the Church of England works.

Sean Doherty (House of Clergy ex-officio) –confirmed that he enjoyed General Synod due to the sense of comradery. At General Synod you meet people from all over the Church of England doing all kinds of different things. In particular, in York, Sean explained that the members stay, eat, worship and pray together. Whilst there are headlines when members disagree, it is much better than it seems from the outside.

Ian Henderson (North Wiltshire) –queried the Amending Canon no.42 which requires each Diocese to appoint a Diocesan Safeguarding officer, rather than an adviser. Ian asked; as the Diocese already had a Safeguarding Adviser was the intention behind the Officer for them to take on a leadership position or was the plan to appoint another person to the new position?

Bishop Viv –explained that the Diocese of Bristol had it's very own "Bond. Adam Bond". Adam Bond was currently the Safeguarding Adviser, but his title would change to Safeguarding Officer which will put him in a different relationship with the Bishop. Bishop Viv informed Diocesan Synod that Adam's advice would be taken seriously.

Bruce then read aloud the formal proclamation to Amend Canon no.42

"I give notice that, at its July 2023 group of sessions, the General Synod resolved that Amending Canon No. 42 be made, promulgated and executed. "Amending Canon No. 42 amends Canon C 30 by replacing the requirement for the bishop of each diocese to appoint a Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) with a requirement for the bishop to appoint a Diocesan Safeguarding Officer (DSO) with responsibility in the diocese, independent of the bishop, for professional leadership

on and management of safeguarding matters. The Canon also provides for the professional supervision of DSOs and for the quality assurance of their work by the National Safeguarding Team. The changes will come into force diocese by diocese upon certification by the Archbishops' Council.

11. Living in Love and Faith (LLF)

Bruce invited Bishop Viv to speak about the November General Synod which had met earlier in the week (13 – 15 November 2023).

Last month the House of Bishops agreed to commend the Prayers of Love and Faith for use in existing church services. Synod heard that was likely to take place by mid-December.

Bishop Viv highlighted that the most debated and commented on subject at (and after) General Synod was the agreement that special services of prayer and dedication asking for God's blessing for same-sex couples should be introduced soon in the Church of England, on a trial basis.

The final motion contained an amendment tabled by the Bishop of Oxford, Steven Croft, to bring forward the standalone services based around texts known as Prayers of Love and Faith. The amendment was passed by one vote (after a vote by houses) and the amended motion passed with somewhat greater support.

Bishop Viv explained that Prayers of Love and Faith (PLF) is a collection of prayers, readings and other resources for praying with and for a same-sex couple who love one another and who wish to give thanks for and mark that love in faith before God.

At last month's meeting the House of Bishops also agreed that structures for special standalone services based on the PLF could also go forward to be formally authorised under canon law under a process expected to take about two years. However, the amended motion means that the services could be authorised for use sooner, but temporarily, under separate legislation. That would enable the first standalone Prayers of Love and Faith services to take place in churches at the same time as the process of seeking permanent authorisation is under way.

General Synod also reviewed other work to implement the landmark motion agreed by Synod in February on the Church's approach to same-sex relationships. That motion called on the Church to "lament and repent" of the Church's treatment of LGBTQI+ community, and called on the House of Bishops to further refine and commend the Prayers of Love and Faith for use in the Church of England, together with new pastoral guidance and proposals for pastoral reassurance.

Bishop Viv concluded:

"We will, now, and in the days ahead consider and attend to the deep divisions over and around the particular set of doctrines concerning human identity and sexual relating. This is not easy work. It has not been easy through the more than 6 hard years of work of Living in Love and Faith. But, when we have been at our best, may we turn away from the temptation of schism. May we continue to honour each other, respect each other, love each other, yearn for the best for each other, that our parishes, our communities, our nation may see Christ in our life".

Neil Warwick (Archdeacon of Bristol) led Diocesan Synod in a session to discuss LLF.

Neil asked Diocesan Synod to recognise and be mindful that in the room, there would be various ideas, feelings and responses.

Synod was asked to:

1. Share in pairs;
2. Be quiet in the presence of God; and
3. As a table to talk about how do we support ourselves and others at this time?

Synod was then asked to write down any thoughts or comments on a piece of paper that was collected by Diocesan Staff and would be used to help us engage again on this at the Synod in March.

Feedback

Diocesan Synod voiced the following feedback, comments and questions:

- “compassion” and “unity” are very important in this debate and how we approach each other.
- Justin Wellby asked General Synod to pray for someone who would have voted differently from themselves.
- What will the prayers mean? It’s not marriage, but what will it be?
- We need help to communicate effectively. We need the right language.
- Around the table we will have different positions, but we want to say the Lord’s people around the Lord’s table.
- To reflect how wonderful it has been to share worship and communion at Diocesan Synod. To keep doing that as we move forward.
- This is something about people and when we meet with people, we can find that our views do change and we need to be not too entrenched.
- How can we journey together?
- We need more information, what has been decided, what is next? Is this something for PCC’s to discuss? What happens in a vacancy? How will this impact patronage?
- We need to move away from toleration, and instead embrace understanding.
- To acknowledge there is a power dynamic in right and wrong.
- Listening and listening respectfully.
- Not arguing points of detail. Learning how we can successfully navigate through this.
- Continuing to equip people to understand how people make their minds up.
- Commend LLF resource so we can engage with scripture.

- How to support clergy and parishes as part of this process. Also reflected on TC.T objectives and how they feed into this. Talked about Openness and bravery.
- Talked about the use of language and how words like “progressive”, “inclusive” and “evangelical” can be hurtful. We need to look at use of language. We need to remember that this can impact people very deeply in different ways. We need to be mindful. We need to support Clergy. Clarity and guidance as to how to respond. How could this affect working across parish boundaries.

Bruce was very encouraged by what he had heard and suggested that by working together we can go a long way.

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| 12. | Conclusion, Blessing and Close |
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Bruce observed that today had been a very important and constructive Diocesan Synod. Synod had approved many matters, including the new standing orders and the 2024 budget, which would enable us as a Diocese to move forward together. Synod had also heard good news on the progress we are making with a number of initiatives. TC.T was still early days, but we are making progress. The good news stories and The Well were examples of what might be achieved by working together. There were a lot of constructive discussions around LLF, and whilst there were differences of opinions, it was important to ensure that where views differed people could disagree agreeably. The Synod discussions demonstrated that by working together we can go a long way in a short time.

Bruce thanked everyone for their contributions throughout the day. Thanked Synod members for staying so Synod would remain quorate, and prayed that Synod would continue to develop and help the growth of the Kingdom of God in the Diocese of Bristol.

Before closing Synod with a blessing, Bishop Viv asked for Diocesan Synod’s consent for an Instrument of Delegation so Neil might exercise ministry and tasks on behalf of Bishop Viv in his role as Suffragan Bishop. Bishop Viv explained that Lucy Cleland (Bishop’s Chaplain) had a copy of the instrument should anyone wish to read it.

Motion was carried unanimously.

Bishop Viv closed the Diocesan Synod with a blessing.