

A MEETING OF THE NEWCASTLE DIOCESAN SYNOD WAS HELD ON SATURDAY 14TH MAY 2016
AT THE DR THOMLINSON CHURCH OF ENGLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL, ROTHBURY
FROM 10:00 AM TO 1:00 PM

Present: The Bishop of Newcastle, the Assistant Bishop of Newcastle, the Dean, the Archdeacon of Lindisfarne, the Archdeacon of Northumberland, the Revd Canon J Sinclair (Chair of the House of Clergy), Canon C Wolstenholme (Chair of the House of Laity), 43 Members of the House of Clergy and 40 Members of the House of Laity.

In Attendance: Mr S Waddle (Diocesan Secretary), the Revd I Flintoft (Bishop's Chaplain), Mrs J Lowdon (Registrar), Ms E Gibson, Mrs L Kerry (Chair of the Developing Stewardship Group), Mr J Hall (Diocesan Accountant), Mrs C Hepple (Administrative Secretary) and Mr A Patterson (Administrator).

In the Chair: Canon Carol Wolstenholme, Chair of the House of Laity.

1. Welcome and Opening Worship

The Chair welcomed members and guests to the meeting and the Secretary recorded 33 apologies. The Revd J Harvey led the Synod in worship. After the worship Ms E Gibson joined Mr Harvey and they gave a short presentation about the diocesan youth event, *Staying Alive*, which was planned to take place at the Seahouses Hostel from 28th to 31st July 2016.

2. Diocesan Synod

2.1 The Minutes of a meeting of the Diocesan Synod held on 28th November 2015 were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting (*Paper DS16 02*).

2.2 There were no matters arising.

3. Notices

3.1 Amending Canon No. 34, which would strengthen the Church's position on Safeguarding, was promulgated.

4. Questions

There were no questions submitted by members.

5. Presidential Address

The Bishop of Newcastle delivered a Presidential Address which reflected on how God cared for all of our world. The Address included reference to how we may: unite communities; care for all aspects of our wider mission; see God's love in everything we do; be passionate about serving God; and reminded us that we are not called to be comfortable, we are called to be faithful. The Bishop looked forward to seeing how we respond in a generous, open and engaged way to the challenges of Renewal and Reform.

6. General Synod Report

The Revd C Pickford, General Synod Member, presented a report outlining the themes considered at the February 2016 sitting of the General Synod. These had included the environment; poverty; evangelism; Islam; the Columba Declaration; organ and blood

donation; Renewal and Reform; resourcing the future; young people; and the impact of benefits sanctions on the poor.

7. Annual Reports

7.1 Financial Statements (*Papers DS16 04 and DS16 04A*)

Canon S Harper, Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance, presented an overview of the financial statements for 2015. Canon Harper advised that whilst the contributions to parish share had increased the aspiration to achieve a 100% collection of the requested parish share would be essential in future years to help the diocese fund new mission initiatives. Canon Harper explained changes to accounting policies.

Following some general questions about the financial statements Canon Harper proposed that the financial statements for the year ending 31st December be received. The Synod, sitting as members of the Diocesan Board of Finance, voted in favour to receive the Financial Statements.

The Synod took a short break.

The Revd Canon John Sinclair, Chair of the House of Clergy, took the Chair

7.2 Annual Reports 2015 (*Paper DS16 03*)

The Rt Revd F White, Assistant Bishop of Newcastle presented an overview of the activities carried out in the diocese in 2015 and commended the work which supports the life of the diocese, for example: Education; Parish Giving; Stewardship; Houses; DAC; DMPC; Interfaith; Ecumenical and Major Incident Planning. The Assistant Bishop proposed that the Annual Reports for Boards, Committees, Supporting Ministers and Task Groups be received.

The Synod received the 2015 Annual Reports for Boards, Committees, supporting Ministers and Task Groups.

8. Responding to Renewal and Reform

8.1 National work streams and Lay Leadership (*Paper DS16 05*)

Canon Wolstenholme, Chair of the house of Laity updated the Synod on the programme of Renewal and Reform and went on to report about the developments of the work stream for Lay Leadership. Work had begun with meetings with Lay Leaders and a consultation would continue through the summer with Clergy, Readers and Task Groups.

8.2 Companions of St Aidan

The Archdeacon of Northumberland explained that the Companions of St Aidan would hold a Hosting at Woodhorn Church on Sunday 5th June and invited those who would like to share in the creation and design of the Companions to attend.

9. Farewells

The two Chairs expressed thanks to the Assistant Bishop for his spiritual leadership of Synod and offered the very good wishes of everyone in the diocese to him in his forthcoming retirement. The Synod responded with applause.

10. Worship and Close

The Bishop and the Assistant Bishop concluded the meeting with a joint blessing and the meeting closed at 1:00 pm.