

**The Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham**

**REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE DIOCESAN SYNOD**

Held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2007 at 9.00am at The Bearings, Newark

**DS/07**

**10. WELCOME** Bishop George welcomed our ecumenical guests and new members, and in particular Maureen Weston, the new Diocesan MU president.

**PRAYERS** Revd Michael Taylor led the prayers and read a passage from Acts Chapter 8 focussing on education. Bishop George remembered Bishop McGuinness former Bishop of Nottingham who died recently.

**11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** there were 12 clergy and 15 lay apologies

**12. MINUTES** of the previous meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2007 were agreed & signed. DS/Apr07/1

**13. MATTERS ARISING** There were no matters notified in writing.

**14. NOTICES AND UPDATES**

The Bishop of Sherwood:

- i. Seed Scattering May 13<sup>th</sup> 6pm at the Minster, all invited. The theme 'Scattering the Seed of the Gospel'. Bishop Tony highlighted "*unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds*". John 12:24
- ii. Tim Friend, the newly appointed Sports Ambassador is due to take up his post in January 2008.

Peter Hill:

- iii. Reported that the issues surrounding retired clergy fees had made no progress since the last Synod. The national advice remains to keep within the current guidelines. However, due to the delay in the national process the House of Clergy Standing Committee was to be asked to look at the issue and suggest a temporary solution by presenting a motion for Bishop's Council.
- iv. House of Laity Minutes and the national summary from General Synod had been made available on members' chairs.

**15. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.**

The Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham focussed on his recent sabbatical and his future ministry in the diocese. He thanked Diocesan Synod members and Bishop's Council for allowing him to be able to take this time. The highlight of the sabbatical was when he was able to accept an invitation to speak at the Mar Thoma Church Convention in India and also visiting Sri Lanka for the first time. Other energies were focussed on on-going issues in the House of Lords, such as the flexible working hours for parents and the casino debate. He thanked his PA Jackie and secretary Janice for their support during his time away. He announced that The Venerable Robin Turner had retired and welcomed Canon Tony Evans as his new Chaplain.

**16. QUESTIONS** There were no questions

## **17. DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION (DBE) ANNUAL REPORT** DS/Apr07/2

Revd Michael Taylor Chair of the Diocesan Board of Education led, describing the work undertaken during the last year, focussing on working together with children and young people. The current triennium commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007. Maureen Collins and Adam Boyes, Church School Development Officers (CSDOs) were introduced to members. Adam works with Hucknall local schools and Maureen works more widely in the Diocese developing the Education Department website and supporting new developments. Ronnie Ogier spoke of the exciting new project of the Mansfield Academy.

- In answer to a question from the floor regarding Further Education Colleges, Ronnie Ogier replied that Bishop George had held a reception last year for all FE College Heads and Governors. We are in the near future looking to appoint a 0.5 post in the North of the Diocese to work with the FE colleges.
- Regarding the development of Church of England Primary Schools it was commented that some primary schools have shut over the last year. Churches in the City of Nottingham have strong relationships with community primary schools.
- We have an ongoing strong relationship with the Roman Catholics in education. We are also working closely with Local Authorities and meet with schools officers in the county and city once a term.
- Invitations were welcomed from parishes for CSDOs to visit. Maureen Collins stated they would be very glad to meet with PCCs or Deanery Groups. Churches have a fantastic opportunity to get involved in helping in schools.

Revd Michael Taylor gave a summary of the DBE 5 yr plan the aims of which are:

- To develop support for Head Teachers
- Setting up of a school provision review
- Set up focus groups and look at national issues
- Establish a Voluntary Aided Church Secondary School in the north of the diocese

## **18. YOUTH EVANGELISM FUND UPDATE**

DS/Apr07/3

Angela Heywood, Youth Officer presented examples of projects from last year. The purpose of the fund was to enable more young people [aged 11-20] to connect with the Christian gospel. She felt it was important to let young people have their say and encouraged adults to let go of the controls. Theory needs to be put into practice to enable confidence in young adults.

*Following the coffee break Ms Christine Russell, Chair of the House of Laity took the Chair.*

## **19. MISSION DEVELOPMENT FUND** A verbal report on projects to date.

The Canon Missioner introduced this item and explained the process of deciding on the release of funds: Advisers (offering encouragement), a Task Group & Bishop's Council (debate and decision). Some of the projects now funded made presentations:

i) **I-chaplaincy** – Revd David McCoulough thanked the Diocese for funding this project and paid tribute to the work that Revd Rachel Shock had undertaken. He explained the reasons for the change to I (internet) Chaplaincy. Positive comments from those commercial companies involved had been received and the website had received approximately 500 hits.

- Rachel had had a couple of face to face conversations from first contacts by email. This needs further work.
- Personal issues are more often discussed through the internet than work issues.

- Links have been made with Aberdeen University on their research project.
- Email keeps anonymity and pastoral issues are not referred back to parish clergy at the moment. However, in the case of an agoraphobic arrangements had been made for a home visit by the parish priest to arrange a baptism service.

ii) **Hucknall School's Project:** Revd Penny Compton thanked the Diocesan Mission Fund for funding the post for the next 3 years to work with Church of England and state schools. The worker, Ian works in secondary schools and has already established three cell groups and is line managed by Adam Boyes.

This is a big commitment for any parish involving a placement fee of £500, plus college fees, expenses, living expenses and accommodation. All three churches in Hucknall pool resources to fund this project.

iii) **The Malt Cross Project in Central Nottingham:** Mr David Ward

The Malt Cross café bar opened in November 2003 and works in partnership with the Church Army, Police and Drug Action Teams to change the Nottingham City Centre atmosphere.

- There are Bibles in the prayer room but no literature is on display. It is more important to talk.
- There is an Outreach Team known as Street Pastors working the streets and clubs. Holy Communion is held once a month for around 20 / 30 people.
- Alcohol is served in the bar but it is self-policing. It has created a safe atmosphere and there is a growing community regularly using the bar.

iv) **Monitoring and encouraging good practice through the Mission Development Fund:** Revd David Jones, Officer for Urban Life and Mission:

When the Mission Development Fund (MDF) was set up it was decided that evaluation would be part of the activity of each project. An important feature of these grants is that they have been made to projects which are undertaking innovatory activities (fresh expressions of Church) and churches in the diocese should be able to learn from these experiences.

A record is kept of all activities supported through this fund involving audit trails, monitoring change and success, clearly marking milestones. David explained that if the MDF is going to have a lasting effect on the life of the Church in this diocese, it is imperative that we have a clear understanding of what these new projects set out to do. Through evaluating their activities we will be able to build up a picture that others can learn from.

#### **19. BACK TO CHURCH SUNDAY** DS/Apr07/4

The Canon Missioner reported that our diocese had officially registered to be part of this national campaign to get people back into church. This would be on 30<sup>th</sup> September and 20 dioceses had adopted this scheme this year however only 24 parishes so far had registered from our diocese. The deadline for parishes to register was 1<sup>st</sup> May.

#### **20. GENERAL SYNOD REPORT** DS/Apr07/5

Colin Slater reported on the progress of the Mothers' Union question from the last Diocesan Synod. This question had not been raised by anyone else and the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, replied as follows: *"The strength and spread of faith in this country is often underestimated, and we as individuals of faith, must all take responsibility for changing that. We must learn to be more open and confident in our faith, to voice our Christian belief to grow our churches. When we speak as confidently about our faith in Jesus Christ as those who speak against faith, then we might not only grow in confidence but also to change the 'mood music' against which any such public debates take place"*

Encouragement was made for questions to be submitted to General Synod whether they reached debate or not. Christine Russell reminded members that they could use the Private Members Motion process to forward items for debate.

## **21. BISHOP'S COUNCIL REPORT** DS/Apr076

The Chief Executive reported. Following the recent retirement of the Director of Social Responsibility a twin departmental review had recommended that the Diocese would be better served by the Ministry and Social Responsibility departments combining. This had now been completed and the new department was named The Department for Development. There was an indication from some Synod members that the name should be looked at again, and the CE invited suggestions. Thanks were recorded for the work and ministry of Ms Patricia Stoa, the Director of Social Responsibility and the Office Manager, Marian Welham as they prepared to retire on 30th April.

- In response to a question, Canon Alan Payne, the newly designated Director for Development stressed that a number of posts within the new department had been reconfigured and there are now more social responsibility type posts than previously. Even though the Social Responsibility Director and Office Manager are retiring we are not losing or neglecting these key resource areas.
- The Synod was assured that the Global and Local Officer, as a salaried 0.5 post, will include ethical values and environmental issues as part of the job description.

## **22. DELIVERY OF MINISTRY** DS/Apr077

**The Collingham Model** A presentation on a methodology for working developmentally with larger groups of small parishes was led by Nick Narracott, Lay Chair of Newark Deanery

The presentation focused on how with collaboration it is possible to share resources across boundaries. Due to the on-going increases of building maintenance it was thought that combining and sharing was a clear way forward to reduce these costs and reconfigure the future.

All parishes and PCCs combined to provide three working groups reporting to PCCs: Prayer and Worship; Finance, Buildings and Maintenance; Education and Ministry. The results of this had achieved a sustainable pattern of services and growing congregations, together with more involvement from family groups, and an emerging young people's church and Confirmations with a significant increase in lay involvement and pastoral care.

The reorganisation had brought people together and broken down barriers changing people's perceptions by improving communication and thus reducing stress on the Priest in Charge, Revd David Milner. This is obviously an on-going process and the time has to be right in the parish for it work

Revd Tony Tucker, Area Dean, hoped this model would be used by others and suggested it be available on the diocesan website for groups to use in future.

Ms Christine Russell expressed the appreciation of the Synod for the presentation from the Chair.

**CLOSING PRAYER AND BLESSING** led by the Bishop of Sherwood..