



SUPPORTING PAPERS

DIOCESAN SYNOD

ON 14TH MAY 2022



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MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN SYNOD

AGENDA ITEM 6. ADJUSTMENT OF PARISH MINISTRY COSTS

Introduction

Synod is invited to approve two revisions to the calculation of Parish Ministry Costs (PMC). The first would reduce the PMC for C2 Associate Vicar posts and abolish the CB Associate Vicar category. The second would reduce the PMC for House for Duty posts. The two are independent, and Synod may approve one, both, or neither. The proposed resolutions are:

- (1) "That Parish Ministry Costs be adjusted by removing the share of parish support and national church costs for the C2 category of Associate Vicars, and by abolishing the CB category and including all Associate Vicars within C2"
- (2) "That Parish Ministry Costs be adjusted by including a half share of the training element for house for duty posts instead of a full share".

Background

It is believed that the Diocese of Chichester once operated a formula system for parish share, under which the amount which each parish was asked to pay was calculated by reference to unknown factors, which probably included factors such as size, income or deprivation.

At an unknown time in the past, that was replaced by a system which looked only at costs for the information given to parishes, and asked parishes to pledge against that cost. The costs (PMC) break down to:

1. The cost of the stipend, National Insurance and pension for each stipendiary clergy post in the benefice, whether filled or vacant;
2. An equal share of the property budget for every house in the benefice maintained by the diocese;
3. An equal share of the ministry support budget and of the training budget for every stipendiary or house for duty clergy post in the benefice, whether filled or vacant;
4. A share of the parish support budget and of the national church responsibilities budget for every stipendiary or house for duty clergy post in the benefice, whether filled or vacant, with a full share for full time stipendiary incumbents or team vicars and a half share for assistant, part time or house for duty posts.

Since that time, there have been a number of minor changes, such as introduction of calculations for posts attracting a part stipend other than 0.5 or changes relating to which expenditure goes in which budget but, it is believed, only one significant change, relating to Associate Vicars (assistant priests).

Associate Vicars and the Bishop Richard exception

In 2015, the then Bishop of Lewes proposed that the full time stipendiary assistant priest category be divided in two: the existing category (now known as C2) for those where the assistant priest had responsibility for a separate place of worship and a new category (now known as CB) for other posts. C2 would continue to attract a full share of ministry support and training costs and a half share of parish support and national church costs, while CB would attract none of those costs.

The rationale was to promote growth by making extra staff more affordable for larger churches where much of the diocese's growth was happening, and it seems to have been prompted in particular by one parish's wish to appoint an assistant priest. The Bishop of Lewes also anticipated that requests would come from two other parishes, but only one of those has materialised, and then only six years later.

The Bishop's paper noted that there were only seven¹ existing assistant posts in the diocese at the time, of which three carried responsibility for a separate place of worship, two pledged very significantly less than PMC already and two he hoped could be persuaded to maintain their existing generosity, although his hopes were not realised.

The Parish Share Review

In November 2017, a parish share review group, which had been set up following a diocesan synod motion in 2013, recommended to Synod that no significant structural changes to the Chichester system should be made. A [full copy](#) is in the related resources of the Diocesan Synod webpage, should anyone wish to read it, but the two key sections are as follows:

Associate Vicars

Costs for a second stipendiary priest without oversight of a separate church are currently significantly less, as no costs at all are allocated for training, ministry support, parish support or national church contributions. This is the hardest category to justify by way of principle, at least as far as training and ministry costs are concerned: the second priest should only be in post if there is a ministry need for a second post, and the same demands for training successors exist; and the second priest makes the same demands on ministry support as other clergy. In addition, where a benefice has more than one church, it can be difficult to assess whether the second priest has oversight of one or not. However, on balance, the group resolved to make no recommendation for change here either. Only four parishes are in this position, two of whom are currently unable to pledge a sum which even amounts to the costs attributed to one priest. The remaining two would be hit very hard, again for a marginal benefit for other parishes, and so once again, the group proposes no

¹ In fact eight, plus two Conventional Districts whose Curates-in-Charge were and are treated as assistant posts for PMC purposes

change, although the parishes in this category are of course encouraged to pledge particularly generously.

Training costs

The group was initially attracted to reducing the amount of Training costs for part time and house for duty clergy posts. Although it costs the same to train all clergy, the general pattern is that the majority of house for duty (and to a lesser extent part time) clergy are retired or close to retirement. As a result, the next generation of clergy holding these posts are likely to have been trained long ago, and therefore not to be requiring current investment in training. In addition, because stipend, NI and pension costs are lower, the proportion of parish ministry costs attributed to training for a part time or house for duty post can appear disproportionately large.

However, it is important to note that training costs are about investing in new clergy for the benefit of the future of the whole diocese and all parishes should share in the costs of the household of faith. In addition, even parishes with part time and house for duty posts still need a supply of new clergy, even if it is on a longer time frame.

Furthermore, when modelling the impact that various different percentage changes would have, it was clear that under the present system, the total amount of parish ministry costs for part time and house for duty posts compared to the costs for full time posts has a strong correlation with the number of days a week part time and house for duty clergy are expected to devote to ministry compared to full time clergy. All potential alternatives weakened the correlation, so what might be an improvement to one element of the costs resulted in greater unfairness on the costs overall.

It was also clear that the effect of the change would simply be to redistribute the pain of parishes who are unable to pledge a sum equivalent to their costs: the proportion of parishes with part time or house for duty posts in that position would be reduced, but the proportion of parishes with full time posts would be increased, and a greater proportion of those are already in that position.

Overall the group concluded that these costs too should continue to be allocated per head of clergy.

The recommendations were adopted in May 2018, together with an agreement that the current system would be retained for five years before any further in depth reviews.

The current position

Associate Vicars

In the last seven years, the number of Associate Vicars has doubled to 20, of which 7 benefit from the Bishop Richard exception and 4 more in effect benefit from it as they are on Locally Supported Ministry Post agreements². More requests are being made.

Most of the 11 which benefit from the lower PMC are the larger churches which might better be able to afford to give more in parish share, yet the effect of the current system is that the smaller churches without the additional staffing subsidise the training and ministry costs for the additional staff at the larger churches.

In addition, the difficulty of assessing when an Associate Vicar has responsibility for a separate place of worship has become clear; one parish challenged the classification of another, which has two places of worship yet was identified by Bishop Richard as to benefit from his exception; and a third parish indicated that their new Associate Vicar would not have responsibility for their second place of worship, when in fact he did.

As a result, the decision has already been taken to simplify the test to whether there is a separate place of worship or not, regardless of how responsibilities are distributed. Even this has the potential for grey areas, for example where frequent but not weekly worship takes place at another venue.

Finally, it is suggested that it is harder to justify the inclusion of an additional cost element in PMC for parish support and national church responsibilities for any Associate Vicars, as these elements are less closely related to the number of clergy.

Training

In 2018, at the time of the Parish Ministry Costs Review, the PMC for a full time stipendiary post was £69,656, of which housing comprised £5,076. The PMC for a half stipend post was £43,641 (62.7% of a full time PMC) and for a house for duty post it was £26,331 (37.8% of a full time PMC).

This compares to a time expectation of 58% for a half stipend post (3.5 days a week) and 42% of full time for a house for duty post (2.5 days a week).

In 2022, the housing element of PMC rose dramatically. During the pandemic, the housing budget was reduced dramatically – but at the same time, the subsidy from the Pastoral Fund for the housing budget which had been agreed by Diocesan Synod at the end of 2014 came to an end. These two factors effectively cancelled each other out, but as the pandemic reduction is reintroduced but the subsidy is not, the housing element has increased to £7,849 in 2022 and is likely to rise to around £10,000 in 2023.

² Time limited appointments under which the parish enters into a legally binding agreement to pay the stipend, NI pension and housing costs in full for the duration of the appointment.

As a result, in 2022, the PMC for a full time stipendiary post is £76,967, while the PMC for a half stipend post it is £49,157 (63.9% of a full time PMC) and for a house for duty post is £30,658 (39.8% of a full time PMC).

The percentage increase over the four years has been 10.6% for a full time stipendiary, 12.6% for a half stipend and 16.4% for a house for duty post. This is likely to be exacerbated next year, with the current best estimate being a rise over the five years from 2018 by 13.8% for a full time stipend, 17.6% for a half stipend and 25.2% for a house for duty post.

The impact on house for duty posts has therefore been particularly severe, and strong representations were made at several autumn deanery meetings about this. It is therefore suggested that corrective action needs to be taken.

Table 1: summary of changes in PMC for the three major post types

	Time expectation per week	% of full time	2018	% of full time	2022	% of full time	Increase 2018-2022	Possible increase 2018-2023
Full time stipendiary	6 days	100%	£69,656	100%	£76,967	100%	10.6%	13.8%
Part time stipendiary	3.5 days	58%	£43,641	62.7%	£49,157	63.9%	12.6%	17.6%
House for duty	2.5 days	42%	£26,331	37.8%	£30,658	39.8%	16.4%	25.2%

Proposal

In light of the above, it is proposed to make two changes:

1. Reduce the PMC for C2 Associate Vicars by removing the share of parish support and national church costs and abolish the CB category, so that all Associate Vicars are in future included at C2;
2. Reduce the PMC for house for duty posts by including only a half share for training.

It is important to stress that proposal 1 does not prevent the promotion of growth, which was the rationale for the introduction of the CB category. Over the last seven years, the understanding of PMC as simply the average costs of having a particular type of priest, not a bill, has developed: parishes who can give more than the average are encouraged to do so, in order to support those parishes which cannot give as much as the average. So where additional ordained staffing is the right thing for the mission and ministry of the diocese, notably to support growth, that can be accommodated by making clear that parish share is not expected to be as high as the average shown by PMC immediately, or, in some cases, ever.

Likely impact on PMC

If the PMC calculations for 2022 are re-worked for each proposal, the changes would be as shown in the tables below. These are before the increase for 2023.

Table 2: Impact on 2022 figures of each proposal: PMC elements

	Current	Proposal 1 (Associate Vicars)	Proposal 2 (Training)	Both proposals
Training element	£10,691	£10,384	£11,589	£11,229
Ministry support element	£2,807	£2,727	£2,807	£2,727
Parish support element	£11,964	£12,198	£11,964	£12,198
National church responsibilities element	£3,217	£3,280	£3,217	£3,280

Table 3: Impact on 2022 figures of each proposal: PMC for major post types

	Current	Proposal 1 (Associate Vicars)	Change	Proposal 2 (Training)	Change	Both proposals	Change
Associate Vicar: C2	£69,015	£61,038	-11.6%	£69,913	+1.3%	£61,883	-10.3%
Associate Vicar: CB	£47,927	£61,038	+27.4%	£47,927	-	£61,883	+29.1%
Full time stipendiary	£76,967	£76,877	-0.1%	£77,865	+1.2%	£77,722	+1.0%
Part time stipendiary	£49,157	£48,918	-0.5%	£50,055	+1.8%	£49,763	+1.2%
House for duty	£30,658	£30,419	-0.8%	£25,761	-16.0%	£25,650	-16.3%

Likely impact on parish share

C2 – Proposal 1

It is unlikely there would be any impact of the significant reduction on the C2 rate, as at present none of the parishes concerned pledge as much as the PMC would be with this reduction.

CB – Proposal 1

The impact of the significant increase in the CB rate is unlikely to be immediate, but it is to be hoped that the larger parishes might increase their parish share over time. A further impact is that some larger churches have indicated that they would prefer to appoint a lay minister than pay the additional parish share.

House for duty – Proposal 2

The impact of the significant reduction in the house for duty rate is likely to be mixed:

- Nearly 60% already pay less than 85% of PMC, so it should make no difference, except encouragement;
- 5% give 85-90% so it is hoped they would maintain their giving to be at 100% or maybe beyond;
- Nearly 20% pay or have a history of paying 100% on the nail, so there is a high risk they would decrease, but engagement might avoid it in some cases;
- Nearly 20% already pay (or have in the past paid) in excess of PMC, so they might continue at least in some cases.

Full and part time incumbents and priests in charge – Proposal 2

The impact of the consequent increase for full and part time incumbents and priests-in-charge is hard to assess, but seems unlikely to be significantly different from the general impact of PMC rises: some will struggle to increase parish share by the same percentage, some will be able to do more, and it might result in those which could do more but resolutely refuse to give more than PMC increasing their parish share more than they otherwise would.

Consultation

All parishes with C2 or CB posts, or who have expressed interest in appointing an Associate Vicar, have been consulted on Proposal 1.

Of the 12 who would or could (if a possible future appointment is made) be negatively affected, at the time of writing:

- 6 expressed the view that the proposals made sense;
- 1 agreed that there should be only one category for Associate Vicars, but urged that it should be the existing CB category with no element for training or ministry support as well as no element for parish support or national church contributions;
- 5 have not yet responded substantively.

Of the seven responding, two emphasised the need to continue to support growth, three emphasised the importance of priestly and not only lay ministry, and four expressed concerns about affordability, as did one of the holding replies (although that parish indicated it was unlikely to reappoint when the Associate Vicar moves on in any event).

Of the eight who would be positively affected, seven have responded at the time of writing, all unsurprisingly supporting the proposal. Four commented that it would be fairer not to have two categories, with two indicating some resentment at the current differential. One commented that the current differential seemed particularly hard to justify given that those with the higher PMC also have at least two buildings to maintain rather than one. One is unlikely to reappoint when the Associate Vicar moves on in any event.

Gabrielle Higgins
22 April 2022

AGENDA ITEM 8. APOSTOLIC PARTNERSHIPS

Apostolic Partnerships in the Diocese of Chichester

Summary

This paper on Apostolic Partnerships has been developed and discussed by the Senior Staff and received the support of the Bishop's Council in April 2022.

It seeks to set down a clear theological basis for Apostolic Partnerships as one element of our Diocesan Vision for Growth. It draws on diverse theological perspectives, whilst making it clear that there is *one* mission that is God's.

The paper then explores principles for Apostolic Partnerships and the enormous variety of forms such partnerships could take, noting that these are not just for large urban churches, but potentially for *all* parishes in every sort of context and theological tradition.

Apostolic Partnerships are to be seen as part of the life of the whole household of faith, making the dimension of mutual learning and equipping for mission of central importance. This will largely be enabled through the department for Apostolic Life.

Processes for developing proposals for Apostolic Partnerships are included, which we would envisage piloting in different contexts (forms are currently being developed to assist in this process). There are also some clear expectations set for when a member of clergy is asked to minister in a context that is not of their own church tradition in order that they can do so with integrity.

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Diocesan Strategy for Apostolic Partnerships

*'I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.'*¹

Definitions

The term 'planting' was first used officially in the 1994 report, 'Breaking New Ground: Church Planting in the Church of England'. 'Planting' as a term today carries a great deal of baggage and can seem to lack mutuality.

However, in our own time and in this diocese, the term 'Apostolic Partnerships' is seen as more helpful. Bishop Martin has said:

*'This is, at its best, the embracing by one Christian congregation of the needs of another in ways that safeguard and respect a partner's identity, though that identity might be very different, struggling, afraid, and consequently a bit hostile.'*²

Background

Diocesan Vision for Growth

The first phase of the Diocesan Vision for Growth (launched in 2015) set some ambitious goals founded on the pursuit of the common good and an expectation of spiritual and numerical growth. The Vision introduced theological terminology that has since become familiar as the diocese has sought to work together more closely as the **'household of faith'**, transforming the **'apostolic life'** of individuals and parishes in order that more people might come to 'know, love, and follow Jesus'.

One outcome was the setting up of four initial apostolic partnerships, which emerged from identification of local need and opportunity. Each partnership was distinct in character, deliberately seeking incarnation into the local ecclesial context.

The second phase of the Vision for Growth (launched in 2020) is based on the four Marks of the Church: *'We aim to be in practice what we are by the grace of God: a church that is one, holy, catholic and apostolic.'*³

The section entitled 'More engaged: a sign of being apostolic' says:

'We have a vision for a church where people have a sense of vocation to love, expressing itself in service; and a church family that nurtures and encourages that vocation. We long to see a renewed church which brings blessing and transformation to its parish; a church which works with all those of good will to contribute to the common good.'

'Over the next five years we will work with you to enable: at least 20 more apostolic partnerships, particularly in areas of new housing and economic deprivation.'

¹ Philippians 1.3-6

² In R. Thorpe, Resource Churches, 2021, p.50

³ +Martin's introduction to the 2020 Vision for Growth

Despite disruption caused by the pandemic, several such apostolic partnerships have already been initiated.⁴

Also pertinent is the section, 'More generous: a sign of being catholic':

'We have a vision of a diocese characterised by a radical, generous response to the self-giving of Jesus Christ, who fills the Church with his life (Eph. 1.23): that is its catholicity...wealthier parishes contribute joyfully to sustain ministry in deprived areas and economically deprived parishes don't feel a liability to the rest.'

The Five Marks of Mission

The Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) developed the five marks of mission as a means of distilling an understanding of contemporary mission.

These are:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

The marks were subsequently adopted by the General Synod of the Church of England and widely used by other denominations in the development of strategic missional initiatives. Apostolic partnerships within the Diocese of Chichester would be one expression of the marks of mission, particularly (but not exclusively) the first three.

National Vision for the Church of England in the 2020's

The shaping of missionary disciples through engagement with the 5 marks of mission is central to the National Vision:

*'The Church of England seeks to be a Simpler, Humbler, Bolder Church which is Jesus Christ Centred and Jesus Christ shaped.'*⁵

The Vision places includes **three strategic priorities** of being a **younger and more diverse** church of **missional disciples** where **mixed ecology** is the norm.

*'The Church of Jesus Christ has always been a mixed ecology. Every church was planted once...in the diverse smorgasbord of the different cultures and contexts which we serve in England today we will probably need a greater and more diverse expression of church life...the most vibrant and creative new expressions of church life nearly always arise out of healthy flourishing parish ministry.'*⁶

A 2018 Statement by the House of Bishops had already affirmed planting as:

⁴ E.g., St. Michael and All Angels, Eastbourne and St. Richard's, Hollingdean

⁵ [A vision for the Church of England in the 2020s | The Church of England](#)

⁶ [A Vision for the Church of England in the 2020s](#)

‘...one among a variety of ways by which the Church of England seeks to share in the apostolic mission by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and drawing people into the adventure of discipleship. It is complementary to, and not a replacement for, other vehicles of mission...’⁷

Strategic Questions

It is against this background that Bishop Ruth organised an apostolic partnership vision and strategy morning in the diocese, led by Philip James (Head of Strategy at Church House Westminster) and +Ric Thorpe (Bishop of Islington) in April 2021.

Following the session, three strategic questions were distilled by +Ruth for the Bishop’s Staff Meeting to consider, with a view to defining our diocesan policy on apostolic partnerships:

1. Can we articulate a theological vision for apostolic partnerships in this diocese and the different kinds of partnerships that we want to encourage and enable?
2. Where in the diocese is the strategic pipeline of clergy, lay leaders and parishes with the capacity and intent to initiate partnerships and how are we engaging with them?
3. How do we ensure that partnerships are in the vision and emerging plans of those leading on the current Deanery Review processes?

Theological Vision

The theological underpinning for apostolic partnerships must lie in the very nature of the Church as the body of Christ, the primary sign and instrument of the kingdom of God and at the heart of God’s loving purposes and the salvific work of Christ. Therefore, the Church is at the heart of the *missio dei* and why she is one, holy, catholic and apostolic.

The Great Commission sets down some key features of mission and evangelism, which can be applied to apostolic partnerships in particular:

*‘And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All **authority** in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **Go** therefore and **make disciples** of **all** nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and **teaching them** to obey everything that I have **commanded** you. And remember, **I am with you always**, to the end of the age.’⁸*

Authority

We have confidence in the authority of the gospel, the salvific work of Jesus Christ, which is the same yesterday, today and for all time. We engage in God’s mission, by *his* authority and in *his* strength.⁹

The pattern of Jesus Christ calling and sending disciples is clear in the gospels and in the life of the early church. +Ric Thorpe roots the theology of church planting in the examples of the early church in Jerusalem, Antioch, and Ephesus. He reminds us that these early churches were rooted in teaching the Holy Scriptures, fellowship and generosity and sharing resources, in breaking bread together, in prayer, particularly prayer for healing, in diaconal

⁷ [CHURCH PLANTING AND THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH - June 2018 0.pdf \(churchofengland.org\)](#)

⁸ Matthew 28.18-20

⁹ ‘It is not so much that God has a mission for his Church in the world, but that God has a Church for his mission in the world.’, C. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible’s Grand Narrative*, IVP, 2006, p.62

service, in evangelism (particularly to new and diverse groups of people), in raising up new leaders and in sending out missionaries.¹⁰

Authority in the Church of England is primarily exercised through the ministry of bishops:

*'As chief pastors, it is their duty to share with their fellow presbyters the oversight of the Church, speaking in the name of God and expounding the gospel of salvation. With the Shepherd's love, they are to be merciful, but with firmness; to minister discipline, but with compassion.'*¹¹

Ultimately though, mission and ministry are not ours but Christ's. All bishops, priests and deacons should:

*'...embody and proclaim for all to see what is true of the whole body...All the faithful are marked by baptism and share in the messianic identity of Jesus as Prophet, Priest and King, an identity he imparts to his Church because it is his Body and one with him.'*¹²

Go – apostolic¹³

Throughout history and across denominations and theological traditions the work of mission¹⁴ and evangelism in the power of the Holy Spirit has led to the creation of new local churches. Whilst church planting in the Church of England today tends to be seen primarily as being in the DNA of churches of an evangelical tradition, it is a misnomer to suggest it is not also in the DNA of churches of a more catholic tradition. Many Anglo-Catholic churches of today (such as the Wagner churches in Brighton) were planted in the 19th and early 20th centuries, founded to serve the growing cities of Victorian England, particularly in areas of great poverty and social need.

By virtue of their baptismal calling, all Christians are called to be apostolic:

*'God has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and has given us a place with the saints in light. You have received the light of Christ; walk in this light all the days of your life. Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father.'*¹⁵

The journey of faith is not merely an individual one, but taken within the community of the Church, the Body of Christ which spans eternity and which journeys together into the fullness of God's love. Bodies must develop, grow, move and be active to be healthy and fit and the Body of Christ is no exception.

Discipleship is a fundamental part of what it means to grow and be formed as a Christian and being apostolic encompasses evangelism.

¹⁰ R. Thorpe, *Resource Churches*, 2021, pp.35-46

¹¹ Common Worship, *Ordination of Bishops*

¹² *The Mission and Ministry of the Whole Church*, p.72

¹³ See the first mark of mission

¹⁴ From the Latin root word *Missio* meaning 'being sent'

¹⁵ Common Worship *Rite of Holy Baptism*

Make disciples¹⁶

*'And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.'*¹⁷

The annunciation by the angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary encapsulates the centrality of evangelism in the Church. Gabriel is the messenger sent from God to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.¹⁸ Proclamation of the gospel in evangelism through teaching, preaching and discipleship nurture is essential to enable spiritual and numerical growth in the Church.

Introductory discipleship courses such as Alpha, the Pilgrim Course and Christianity Explored foster a culture of invitation and hospitality, recognising that people are more likely to be open and responsive to faith when a family member or friend invite them, and when some experience of shared food and fellowship is included.

Fr James Mallon, a Canadian Roman Catholic priest (and advocate of Alpha), clearly identifies the making of disciples as the theological centre and key to effective mission:

*'The finite verb is "make" – literally, "make disciples" (matheteusate). This task is the very heart of the Great Commission, and it is around the making of disciples that all the other Missionary aspects of the Church revolve: the going, the baptizing and the teaching.'*¹⁹

In his commentary on the Vision for the Church of England in the 2020's, Archbishop Stephen Cottrell explores the first strategic priority of becoming 'much more a church of missionary disciples', noting:

*'We are an apostolic church. God calls every one of us to be a missionary disciple. In the New Testament the same twelve who are named disciples are also called apostles. There is no point when they graduate from one to the other. They are always those who gather around Jesus and follow him. And they are always those who are sent out by him. It must be the same with us. We are called to gather around Jesus in worship, prayer and fellowship. In the power of the Holy Spirit, we are sent out by Jesus to be his witnesses and ambassadors in the world.'*²⁰

AII²¹

The parish system which is central to mission and ministry in the Church of England has at its core the concept of the 'cure of souls', held by the diocesan bishop and shared with their priests when licensed to a parish: 'Receive this cure of souls which is both yours and mine.' The cure of souls includes everyone living in that parish or benefice, whether Christian or not. It means much more than care, this deep love centres on the reconciliation between individuals and God and between people and communities through the salvific work of Jesus Christ.

¹⁶ See the second mark of mission

¹⁷ II Cor.3.18

¹⁸ Luke 1.28-33

¹⁹ J. Mallon, *Divine Renovation*, Twenty-third Publications, 2014, pp.19-20

²⁰ *A Vision for the Church of England in the 2020s 'Christ centred and Jesus shaped. Simpler, humbler, bolder'* The Most Revd Stephen Cottrell Archbishop of York, 2020 , p.2

²¹ See the third and fourth marks of mission

Mission therefore includes engagement in the wider community (the Common Good) through social action and church communities often do this sacrificially – including in our most financially deprived parishes.²²

‘We have to continue to reach out to the communities of our land, especially to the marginalised communities that feel that they are always the recipient and never a resource. ‘Theirs is the Kingdom of heaven,’ says the Lord.’²³

In a church with a broad ecclesiology, the Church of England seeks the mutual flourishing of all (encapsulated in the Five Guiding Principles). Diverse theological traditions, parishes of different size and context and a variety of apostolic partnerships are all equally valued in the diocese. Some parishes might not be rich in finance or resources but can still ‘contribute to the enrichment of our diocesan household of faith’.²⁴

As we are reminded in I Corinthians:

‘The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you’, nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’ On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable.’²⁵

Baptising²⁶

Holiness is one of the four marks of the Church and our Vision for Growth notes that: ‘We want to see our life flow out of prayer and worship, rather than see these things as one amongst other activities that we do.’ It is in and through regular worship that communion with God and one another is actualised within the local household of faith.^{27 28}

The Articles of Religion unequivocally assert the importance of sacraments:

‘Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God's good will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in him.’²⁹

Being ‘sacramental’ is not just for those from a catholic tradition and not just about the Eucharist. There are two dominical sacraments for all: Baptism and Eucharist, which are intimately linked and both missional. It is through the sacrament of Baptism that Christians are grafted into the Body of Christ, and it is through baptism that all Christians are called and sent by God.

²² See Mk. 12.41-44

²³ +Martin, in R. Thorpe, Resource Churches, 2021, p.50

²⁴ Ibid. p.51

²⁵ I Cor.12.21-22

²⁶ See the second mark of mission

²⁷ Mt. 18.18-20

²⁸ E.g., the Parish Vision of All Saints Hove, one of our SDF projects says: ‘We believe in worship full of colour, drama, and symbol. We believe that worship should inspire and challenge us as we think deeply about what faith means in our contemporary world, to challenge, to question, to doubt and explore.’

<https://allsaintshove.org/>

²⁹ Article XXV

Through the work of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist, Christians encounter and are fed by Jesus Christ in Word and Sacrament. Our worship forms us into a household of faith whose lives and witness are shaped by our offering of thanksgiving to God and an openness to receiving and being formed by him.

*I am the food of grown men; grow and you shall feed upon me; nor shall you change me, like the food of your flesh, into yourself, but you shall be changed into me.*³⁰

Jesus promised: ‘...whoever eats me will live because of me’³¹ and the New Testament Church lived this Eucharistic life powerfully, leading Paul to say: ‘it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me.’³²

Flowing from the sacraments sit a wide range of other forms of worship; it should not be a matter of ‘either/or’, but ‘both/and’.³³

Teaching them³⁴

The task of handing on the faith is a particular responsibility given to ordained ministers, but forming and nurturing people in the faith is a responsibility of the whole household of faith. Our Christian initiation resources³⁵ seek to equip people to:

‘...mobilise the members of our congregation to share their faith personally as a sponsor who accompanies those preparing for baptism and confirmation. This sharing of faith should also engage the congregation as a whole in a process of renewal in the foundations of Christian faith – the scriptures, “the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers.” (Acts 2.42)’³⁶

Recent years have seen various initiatives in the Church of England focussing on the importance of lay discipleship and development. ‘Setting God’s People Free’ brought new emphasis on equipping and valuing the contribution of lay Christians in modelling effective discipleship in the world. Alongside that, there has been a flourishing of different forms of licensed and authorised lay ministry and lay leadership roles within the church.

‘The flourishing of the diversity of gifts and ministries is intrinsic to the church whose being flows from the indwelling of the Spirit poured out at Pentecost. The subject of ‘lay ministry’ is not one to which we should turn under pressure either of declining resources to finance professional ordained ministries, or a reduction in the numbers of those willing to serve as priests in parishes whether stipendiary or self-supporting.’³⁷

The word ‘baptism’ comes from a Greek word, meaning to ‘plunge’ or ‘immerse’. Baptism is the call to every Christian to immerse themselves in a life of discipleship, following God’s call: ‘Baptism marks the beginning of a journey with God which continues for the rest of our lives, the first step in response to God’s love.’³⁸ How we live that out will vary from person to

³⁰ St. Augustine VII, 10, 16: PL 32, 742

³¹ John 6.57

³² Gal. 2.20

³³ I Cor. 12.4-7

³⁴ See the third mark of mission

³⁵ [Baptism and Confirmation Resources - Diocese of Chichester \(anglican.org\)](http://www.anglican.org.uk/Baptism_and_Confirmation_Resources_-_Diocese_of_Chichester)

³⁶ Bishop Martin’s Christian Initiation project brief

³⁷ *Kingdom Calling*, Faith and Order Commission, CHP, 2020, p.89

³⁸ Pastoral Introduction, Common Worship Rites of Christian Initiation

person, but: *'Each ministry is a full one, in its own terms, not a poor substitute for something else, and all ministries are equal in value in the divine economy and should be regarded and treated as equal in value in the way that the Church administers them.'*³⁹

The mission of the Church is not the business or responsibility of clergy alone, though the exact forms of lay ministry required can vary across theological traditions. Ordained and lay ministers should work collaboratively and not competitively. Mallon says:

*'...I constantly seek to focus on the three fundamental tasks of the priest: to preach the Word of God, to celebrate the sacraments and to lead the Church. All other ministry not only can be pushed out but ought to be pushed out to others. As parishioners mature in their Christian life, they ought to be called into service according to their gifts and equipped to serve in that ministry'*⁴⁰

Collaborative ministry seeks to reflect the life of the Holy Trinity; in the *missio dei*, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit work together in complete, loving co-operation.

Commanded

*'Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?' He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself."*⁴¹

Church planting can be caricatured as large churches 'empire building' with the suggestion of some uncomfortable power dynamics perceived to be at play as large churches 'take over' small ones. The language of 'partnerships' is far more helpful in this respect. Churches should not be competition with each other, but seek to: *'...encourage one another and build up each other...'*⁴²

In fact, apostolic endeavours are not optional extras for the few, but should be undertaken by all Christians, as individuals and as the household of faith as a response to God's commandment to 'love your neighbour'. Believing in Christ requires means abiding in him and he in us,⁴³ which will in turn lead to following him and seeking to perform tasks in his name and strength. John uses the image of Jesus as the vine and his disciples as the branches: *'Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers.'*⁴⁴

'I am with you always'

The current age is marked by doubt and fear (exacerbated by the global Coronavirus pandemic), something that seems to be impacting and to some degree immobilising the institution of the Church of England and its future. However, the Church does not belong to

³⁹ *The Mission and Ministry of the Whole Church*, The Church of England Faith and Order Advisory Group, 2007, p.122

⁴⁰ Mallon, p.82-83

⁴¹ Mt 22.36-38

⁴² 1 Thess. 5.11

⁴³ Jn. 14.15-17

⁴⁴ Jn. 15.5-6

us – it is *Christ's* body, and he has promised to be with us always through the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Gospel is not diminished, but if our practical and financial resources are, we must discern different and nuanced ways of proclaiming the unchanging gospel. The church in our age needs to be pioneering in its approach to mission without becoming guilty of '*pneumatological amnesia, if we locate the work of the Spirit in the new, the novel, the modern*'⁴⁵ and forget the centrality of *anamnesis* or 'deep remembering', particularly – but not solely - at the fore in the celebration of the Eucharist.

Principles for Apostolic Partnerships

It is from this rich theological understanding of the Great Commission that we can draw a number of principles relating to the place of apostolic partnerships within the Diocese of Chichester:

- The diocese is a household of faith in which all Christians must be equally valued. Apostolic partnerships are about growing the household – the Church – and not merely a way of growing one congregation. We seek to discern God's call and participate in the *Missio Dei*, in and through the Holy Spirit.
- All apostolic partnerships are exercised as an extension of the Bishops' ministry of oversight and leadership in mission, a sign of the Church being One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. This ministry is shared with deacons, priests, and lay leaders whose initial and ongoing training and formation should encourage and equip them with a passion for and entrepreneurial approach to mission.
- The policy and practice related to apostolic partnerships is strategic and part of the overall Diocesan Vision for Growth and parish and deanery mission action planning⁴⁶ and reflects the 5 marks of mission.
- In obedience to Christ's command that 'they be one' we have an obligation to work in partnership with our sister churches wherever possible and practical. Within our own household of faith, we must strive for mutual learning, mutual flourishing, and the greatest degree of communion across theological traditions. When a partnership requires a priest of one tradition to minister within another tradition, careful and sensitive preparation and ongoing support is necessary⁴⁷, in order that they can inhabit and honour the theology and spirituality underpinning the liturgy and worship where they minister. Similar preparation and support might also be needed for those in roles of lay leadership.
- The parish system remains the primary way in which the Church of England ministers to every person and place and through which the cure of souls is exercised. Many parish churches are flourishing as a 'sign and instrument of the kingdom' and have the resourcefulness and potential for growth and should be encouraged to participate effectively in apostolic partnerships.
- We do not have a list of specifically identified Resource Churches like many other dioceses do. We see every parish as having the potential for a footprint of ministry

⁴⁵ Revd Dr Simon Cuff, speaking at the Gregory Centre Multiply X conference, 2021

⁴⁶ Reviewed and renewed every three years

⁴⁷ Following the guidelines given in Appendix 3

and mission wider than parish boundaries. We recognise that some of our churches will become hubs of training and resourcing (such as All Saints, Hove). However, just because a church is large does not necessarily mean that it has the vision and character necessary to undertake significant apostolic partnership work, though often it is the larger churches who tend to do planting and grafting partnerships.

- Effective mission requires employment of creativity and imagination and a 'mixed ecology' that includes inherited models of church, apostolic partnerships, and Fresh Expressions. Apostolic partnerships should be accessible and easy to engage with for more and for different people and avoid a 'one size' and 'one model fits all' approach. Partnerships can happen within and across deaneries and in both rural and urban contexts.
- These mission initiatives are always about *partnership* and not the exercise of *power*. However large or small numerically, parishes can engage in effective apostolic partnerships. Church growth must be spiritual as well as numerical and size of congregation does not automatically equate to spiritual growth.
- Apostolic partnerships must be established through agreed values: respectful, realistic, achievable, and effective. They must be well planned, thoroughly consulted, well communicated at all levels, monitored for effectiveness and lessons learnt, with clear accountability.

What kinds of partnership do we want to encourage and enable?

'Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.'

⁴⁸

There is no one model of apostolic partnership we want to encourage and enable, but clarification should emerge through a process of prayerful discernment. *'If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.'* ⁴⁹ In many cases, apostolic partnerships might grow from existing parish initiatives. The focussed mission needs of a parish and within a deanery should emerge through the ongoing review and development of deanery and parish Mission Action Plans (MAPs).

Some examples of models of apostolic partnerships are:

- The informal sharing of skills, training, and resources across two or more parishes. Acorns are as necessary and valuable as oaks!
- Parishes coming together to share in the appointment of a staff member, e.g., a youth worker.
- A PCC linking with other organisations or churches in the local community to set up a project, such as a dementia café or food bank. Such projects can be a step towards discipleship, e.g., a dementia café might lead to the provision of dementia friendly worship, which enables guests and their carers to grow in their spiritual life.

⁴⁸ I Corinthians 12.4-7

⁴⁹ Galatians 5.25

- Establishing mission endeavours aimed at engaging with specific groups or age groups, such as nursing homes.
- Collaborative working on opportunities to engage with the unchurched by using new formats or styles of worship and outreach, such as Messy Church, Forest Church, and Café Church. Such gatherings of people can grow into congregations, focussed on a particular time, place, and liturgical format.
- A Growing Partnership agreement between Church Schools and their parish church⁵⁰ ‘...is designed to establish and grow a foundation for both schools and church communities to grow in partnership to fulfil God’s mission. We are looking to grow a shared sense of belonging within both bodies.’ Such a partnership aims to foster Christian education and discipleship, offer mutual support working together for the common good and ‘a sense of mutual belonging in both church community and school’.
- A focussed graft model, which involves one parish sending apostolic teams to another parish to encourage, enable and equip people in particular missionary endeavours. This could be used to kickstart new initiatives, such as developing Messy Church or enhancing music in worship.⁵¹
- A parish graft model, which seeks to renew, rebuild, and restore an existing congregation by bringing in people and resources (often from a neighbouring parish) to work with them. This model can clearly hold to the existing theological tradition of the parish with respect and integrity.⁵²
- A ‘minster’ model, where one larger church provides support, collegiality, oversight and shares resources, training and gatherings encourage and to enable missional activity appropriate to that area. This model can work well in a rural market town and surrounding villages, a multi-parish team or a cluster of parishes.
- A church plant form of apostolic partnership involves the sending of a team of people and financial and practical resources into a church or parish with a very small and declining congregation. Such plants require an invitation from the bishop, a church building, and an area where there is a potential congregation. Normally, the existing form of worship continues, but alongside that new and different services are introduced which tend to be akin to those within the planting church.⁵³
- Establishing a church within a new housing estate, employing both people and practical resources, and potentially collaborating with the developer to provide a new church building, commonly combined with a community centre.

How?

Many forms of apostolic partnerships will be developed and agreed locally by clergy and PCCs in response to the mission needs identified in parish and deanery MAPs. These are likely to require consultation between incumbents and PCCs of any parishes involved in the proposed partnership and the deanery standing committee, other organisations, or churches of other denominations as appropriate.

⁵⁰ https://cofechichestereducation.contentfiles.net/media/documents/document/2021/03/Growing_Partnerships_-_FINAL.pdf

⁵¹ See appendix 2

⁵² See appendix 1

⁵³ See appendix 1

Opportunities for plants or parish graft forms of apostolic partnership might appropriately be explored where:

- parts of the community are not currently being reached by the existing congregation
- changes to the local demographic make it unlikely that an existing congregation will have the capacity or capability to engage new members effectively
- an existing congregation has the readiness, capability, and capacity to undertake a graft or plant partnership elsewhere

Any ideas for a parish graft or planting apostolic partnership must be discussed with the suffragan bishop at the outset. If they decide that the proposed partnership has potential, the idea can go through a process of consultation and development of a proposal with all appropriate parties (including neighbouring parishes and ecumenical partners, if appropriate) and with the cooperation and support of the local incumbent(s), PCCs and rural dean. The parish development officers within the Apostolic Life team should normally be part of the process of developing a proposal and Appendix I sets down the process and requirements. The proposal must be based on the principles of mutual respect, realism, achievability, and effectiveness.

‘...that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.’⁵⁴

Any ideas for an apostolic partnership in the form of a focussed graft must follow a similar process, as set down in Appendix 2.

Any planting or grafting partnership must work within the legal framework for worship within the Church of England. Recognised leaders must be people whose vocations have been appropriately discerned (in accordance with diocesan requirements and with canon law) and who have undergone necessary formational, skills and safeguarding training, and then been commissioned or licensed by the bishop.

Bishop’s Mission Orders (BMOs) would be used where these are required to help overcome structural or other blockages.

Developed proposals must then be discussed with the suffragan bishop who will consult with the diocesan bishop and senior staff to decide whether the proposal will effectively enable mission and foster partnership within the diocesan household of faith.

Alongside consideration of particular proposals for apostolic partnerships, the Bishop’s senior staff will hold and direct the strategic vision for apostolic partnerships within wider mission planning of the household of faith. This will include the ongoing development of existing apostolic partnerships, consideration of geographical locations that would benefit from revitalisation of both the church and local community and also potential apostolic partnerships in new estates.

⁵⁴1 Cor.12.25-27

Nurturing Gifts and Confidence in Mission

Calling

We expect all candidates for ordained ministry to be pioneering, demonstrating an aptitude for and receiving initial training in mission and evangelism to increase their skills and confidence. The Formation Framework for Initial Ministerial Education (IME) 1 highlights the requirement for deacons to: *‘...see the bigger picture and...has the capacity to develop a strategy which takes people with them in enabling the church to look outwards and see itself as the servant of the community and its needs, developing its understanding of its God-given diakonia’.*

⁵⁵Priests are required to: *‘Enable and lead the church’s mission and evangelism in contexts where it has little presence’* accompanied by *‘...the ability to evaluate risk and judge when a risky venture is justified and appropriate.’*⁵⁶

The House of Bishops’ Formation Criteria for IME 2 demands that by the end of curacy all incumbent status candidates: *‘Are able to engage courageously in mission, evangelism and apologetics in a range of contexts and particularly in local communities and churches’.* The document then states that all incumbents must: *‘lead, enable and release missional vision and faithful witness in and among those for whom they have responsibility.’*⁵⁷

The initial discernment for ordained ministry will focus on clarification of calling and potential for growth: *‘And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.”’*⁵⁸ Discernment through curacy hones that sense of calling and seeks to shape the person accordingly. In his gospel, John describes Jesus ‘staring hard’ at Simon and then says: *“‘You are Simon, son of John. You are to be called Cephas” (which is translated Rock).’*⁵⁹

This further discernment of calling should enable us to identify those with clear potential for undertaking apostolic partnerships and so ensure the curacy includes appropriate ministerial experience, additional training and placements or secondments.

Training and Resourcing

As part of good stewardship of diocesan resources, we will be strategic in the identification of people or places who would benefit from training opportunities and parish development support. Deanery Mission Action Planning will significantly inform strategic decision-making.

*‘In missiology we recognise that the context of mission is at least as important as the method and the commitment of those involved. In some parishes growth can be achieved relatively easily provided the funds are available and the motivation, to the glory of God, is clear. In other parishes...the challenges brought by social deprivation, isolation and the paucity of resources, means that growth is much harder to achieve.’*⁶⁰

⁵⁵ <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/IME%201%20Distinctive%20Deacon%20qualities%20and%20evidence%20%28from%20autumn%202022%29.pdf>

⁵⁶ <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/IME%201%20Priest%20qualities%20and%20evidence%20%28from%20autumn%202022%29.pdf>

⁵⁷ [formation_criteria_for_ordained_ministry.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/formation_criteria_for_ordained_ministry.pdf) (churchofengland.org)

⁵⁸ Matt. 4.19

⁵⁹ John 1.42

⁶⁰ *Time to Sow in the North*, J. Tomlinson, St John’s College Nottingham Ltd, 2020, p.21

Alongside ongoing engagement with the Strategic Development Fund, whose criteria limit funding to our largest urban conurbations of Brighton and Hove and Crawley, the diocese has a Mission Fund⁶¹ to offer grants of up to £30,000 for larger projects and £1000 for smaller projects across the diocese. The Fund's overall guidelines are:

- the development of a new church congregation in an existing or new community
- the mission development of a new ministry within an existing parish church (e.g. youth work, schools' work or parent and children ministries).
- the mission development of network ministries (e.g. ministry among employment, leisure, recreation, or consumer networks which are not tied to a narrow geographical location).
- the support of other mission initiatives that are particularly focussed on the development of Christian community among people who are not currently part of the life of a church.

The Church of England's new Innovation Funding might provide funding assistance towards certain apostolic partnerships. The Fund:

*'...will support limited-scale projects which will innovate in the light of the Church of England Vision and Strategy and generate learning about 'good growth', i.e. growth which increases the number of new disciples, strengthens discipleship, grows the impact of the Church's social engagement work, or increases and diversifies the number of leaders in the church.'*⁶²

Training and Resourcing for Ordained Ministry

We would expect all ordinands and curates to gain experience and understanding of a breadth of theological traditions – including their distinctive approaches to church growth - through placements and specific IMEI and 2 training, including in the forging of apostolic partnerships. In part, this would seek to challenge and avoid the false dichotomy often alluded to between Catholic and evangelical expressions of mission, seeking rather an appreciation of the perspective each theological tradition brings on God's mission.

The SDF funded projects at St. Peter's, Brighton and All Saints Hove will both act as leadership training hubs for those in IMEI. We would also seek to draw on other apostolic partnerships within the diocese, as appropriate.

Training and Resourcing for Lay Ministry

Most forms of apostolic partnership require the engagement of laity in practical ways and the exercise of some form of lay leadership.

The Authorised Lay Ministry (ALM) programme is designed to equip laity to serve in forms of locally commissioned ministry. This currently includes electives in: Children's, Youth and Family Ministry; Chaplaincy; Mission Enabler; Pastoral Ministry and Worship and Liturgy.

The Mission Enabler elective is for:

⁶¹ Deploying part of the grant from the All Churches Trust as well as an amount from the Pastoral Fund

⁶² Innovation Fund Guidance Notes are available here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/renewal-reform/funding-mission-and-growth/innovation-funding>

*'Those exploring how to begin, sustain and grow a fresh expression of church; Experienced pioneers who want to reflect on what they are doing; Those wanting to learn qualities of Christian ministry; Christians who want their churches to be more effective in mission; All traditions and ages; Urban, suburban and rural contexts.'*⁶³

Any need for additional electives is likely to become evident through the Mission Action Planning process.

We would expect that ALM training and initial and ongoing ministerial development for Readers⁶⁴ and other Licensed Lay Ministers will engage with the leadership training hubs and/or other apostolic partnerships within the diocese, deepening knowledge and understanding and developing their ministerial practice.

The Setting God's People Free initiative focuses on the need for two essential changes in culture and practice:

First. Until, together, we find a way to form and equip lay people to follow Jesus confidently in every sphere of life in ways that demonstrate the Gospel we will never set God's people free to evangelise the nation.

*Second. Until laity and clergy are convinced, based on their baptismal mutuality, that they are equal in worth and status, complementary in gifting and vocation, mutually accountable in discipleship, and equal partners in mission, we will never form Christian communities that can evangelise the nation*⁶⁵

Nurturing the gifts and confidence of all laity in mission begins with taking the preparation for the rites of Christian Initiation seriously. Bishop Martin notes that:

'The preparation of candidates is a work of evangelisation, for the candidate and for the whole congregation... The process of learning does not conclude with baptism and confirmation: that is the declaration of intent, commitment to a whole life of being evangelised.'^{66 67}

Instilling ongoing confidence in mission should encourage and equip laity to inhabit and express their baptismal calling within the gathered church community, apostolic partnerships and other mission initiatives in the wider community. In addition, the ongoing nurture of Christian discipleship should include and impact the whole of life and work, and worship:

'...and should be at one and the same time the place where we gather to be with Jesus and bring to him the joys and burdens of the previous week and the place from which we are sent to build the Kingdom. We need to ensure that our worship reflects and celebrates

⁶³

[https://cofechichester.contentfiles.net/media/documents/document/2021/07/Authorised Lay Ministry course prospectus 07.2021.pdf](https://cofechichester.contentfiles.net/media/documents/document/2021/07/Authorised_Lay_Ministry_course_prospectus_07.2021.pdf)

⁶⁴ Alongside their initial training at St. Augustine's College of Theology

⁶⁵ GS 2056, *Setting God's People Free*, A Report from the Archbishops' Council, 2017

⁶⁶ Ad Clerum, January 2022

⁶⁷ The diocesan Christian Initiation resources (currently being piloted) are available on the website <https://www.chichester.anglican.org/Baptism-and-Confirmation-Resources/>

midweek lives and then we need to recover worship as the point where the gathered Church is fed, commissioned and sent into the world.’⁶⁸

Training and Resourcing for Parishes and Deaneries

The mission action planning process encourages parishes to work together within and across deanery boundaries. However, we recognise that currently some parishes are more confident and equipped than others to work in partnership. Perceptions about power dynamics can be evident, with a significant fear that larger churches want to ‘take over’ smaller churches. The *Love, Sweat and Tears* report from the Centre for Theology and Community examined five church plants in East London, concluding that:

‘Every church plant causes anxiety at the church itself and in neighbouring parishes. Every church planting process needs effective, regular and intentional communication before, during and after the plant to manage expectations and address fears and anxieties.’⁶⁹

It would be beneficial to offer specific training for rural deans, lay chairs and deanery synods that draws on best practice from within and outside of the diocese to help foster a growing culture of apostolic partnership. Part of this would be offering a strategic communications programme that tells the real stories of apostolic partnerships via different case studies, as they unfold. Stories which are practical and realistic, and which portray accurately the risks and vulnerabilities involved and that also pay adequate attention to what larger ‘resourcing churches’ learn and gain from the faith communities that they partner with. Put simply, we need to arrest the narrative that ‘it’s all okay for them as they have money/people/backing.’

The senior staff and Department for Apostolic Life should continue to discover authentic and creative ways to encourage Christians to meet and to pray, worship, reflect, socialise and re-discover the joy and good news of the Gospel together, across the east and the west and the north and the south of the diocese, across church traditions and across both lay and ordained members of the Body of Jesus Christ. This is one of the central pillars of our ‘Great Is Thy Faithfulness’ church growth programme for parishes, currently being piloted in the diocese and overseen by the two Parish Development Officers.

There are also external training programmes and resources. The Gregory Centre for Church Multiplication runs the Plant Course,⁷⁰ pioneered by Bishop Ric Thorpe, which:

‘...is a practical, encouraging and stretching course to equip church planters and their teams. It’s designed for churches who are ready to plant in the next 6-12 months and have their bishop’s or denominational authority’s approval... At the end of the course, the church planters present their planting vision, strategic plan, budget and growth plans to one another and a panel of experienced clergy and other experts. The Plant Course is for all church traditions, approaches and contexts. We’re committed to supporting each team in their journey of multiplying disciples and congregations.’⁷¹

⁶⁸ *Setting God’s People Free*, Section 4.5

⁶⁹ *Love, Sweat and Tears*, CTC, 2016, p. 101

⁷⁰ The Deputy Director of Apostolic Life has been trained to deliver this course locally at minimum cost

⁷¹ <https://ccx.org.uk/plant/>

The Leading Your Church into Growth (LYCIG) course is aimed at clergy and lay leaders from different theological traditions and offers encouragement and help in growing and leading churches effectively:

*The local church: Learns key biblical teachings on growth; discusses, asks questions and applies these teachings to their own situation; becomes inspired and motivated; makes decisions, implements plans and new ways of working; Sticks with these plans, reviewing and adapting them as they go along.*⁷²

From a catholic perspective, Fr James Mallon's *Divine Renovation* resources provide theological vision, detailed advice, and models for moving parishes from maintenance to mission. The Society employs two Missioners to help encourage and equip affiliated parishes and clergy in mission: 'Led by the Holy Spirit and formed by the scriptures and the sacraments, our task as Catholic Anglicans is to draw all people into new life in Christ who is the Living Bread.'⁷³

How do we decide what flourishing or fruitfulness looks like?

The Church of England's *From Anecdote to Evidence* project concluded that:

*'...while there is no single recipe, there are common ingredients strongly associated with growth in churches of any size, place or context: Good leadership; a clear mission and purpose; willingness to self-reflect, to change and adapt according to context; involvement of lay members; being intentional in prioritising growth; being intentional in chosen style of worship; being intentional in nurturing disciples. All of the above are linked to growing churches.'*⁷⁴

It also concluded that the following features are common in churches in decline: a church with no children or under 16s; grouping multiple churches together under one leader, rather than one clear leader for one community; a lack of affirmation of lay vocations/ministry or unreasonable expectations of clergy; burdensome buildings; an apathy or unwillingness to change and grow; a lack of consistency and clarity in the style of worship and theological tradition.⁷⁵

The *A Time to Sow* report surveyed Anglo-Catholic parishes in London and identified seven 'habits of growth': Growth-minded priest, trained to lead effectively; maximising of resources, including buildings; building lay leadership capacity in the congregation; good hospitality; children made welcome; working with local partners, such as schools and community groups; provision of midweek events.⁷⁶

Church growth can be numerical and/or spiritual, but assessment of this needs to be more nuanced than Sunday attendance alone. The HTB apostolic partnership based at St. John's, Crawley brings together both evangelical and catholic expressions of mission and worship and their Vision is for: 'a vibrant Church in the heart of the town seeking to play its part in the

⁷² <https://www.leadingyourchurchintogrowth.org.uk/the-national-courses>

⁷³ https://www.sswsh.com/uploads/Mission_Strategy.pdf

⁷⁴ *From Anecdote to Evidence*, p.8, Church Commissioners, 2014

⁷⁵ Ibid.pp25-31

⁷⁶ *A Time to Sow*, The Centre for Community and Mission, 2017, p.xvi

evangelisation of the nations, the revitalisation of the church and the transformation of society, by loving Jesus, loving church, loving people and loving Crawley.’ They identify six key values:

To proclaim unashamedly the Gospel of Jesus Christ; to love one another loyally and deeply; we help people find their identity in Christ; we come from Blessing (not for Blessing) in order to bless others; we expect to see the awe and wonder of God’s Kingdom break through; we radically pursue unity in the church.’⁷⁷

The *Time to Sow in the North* report which focuses on parishes within the catholic spectrum notes:

‘That growth may not always be expressed in an increase in congregational size at the main service. It may also be apparent in a faithful support for daily Mass, a call for more devotional services, an interest in seasonal study groups, a willingness to go on pilgrimage, a campaign for social justice, or a practical involvement in the community.’⁷⁸

This reflects the 5 marks of mission, which can be a helpful descriptor of flourishing church communities.

‘In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God.’⁷⁹

Pro Ecclesia as a Vehicle for Mutual Learning

Pro Ecclesia (meaning ‘for the church’) is an umbrella heading for several different programmes within the Department for Apostolic Life, focussing on the training and equipping of laity and clergy across the diocese to live out their baptismal calling and so engage effectively in mission.

The second diocesan SDF bid focusses on two parishes (All Saints, Hove and St. Peter’s, Brighton), but includes an expectation of collaborative working and mutual learning between the two projects. *Pro Ecclesia* will act as the primary vehicle for mutual listening and learning between the two parishes and as a bridge between these projects and the wider diocese.⁸⁰ In due course, we would expect *Pro Ecclesia* to engage also with those who have developed other apostolic partnerships within the diocese.

The process of theological reflection and shared reflective practice should in time lead to greater reflexivity in the practice of initiating and shaping apostolic partnerships across the diocese. This process will also draw on the experience of those clergy ministering within theological traditions different from their own as part of an apostolic partnership, who could

⁷⁷ <https://stjohnscrawley.com/36/Our-Vision>

⁷⁸ *Time to Sow in the North*, J. Tomlinson, St John’s College Nottingham Ltd, 2020, p.22

⁷⁹ Col.1.3-6

⁸⁰ The *Pro Ecclesia* oversight board consists of the Director for Apostolic Life (chair), DDO, CMD Officer, Chancellor of Chichester Cathedral, Associate Vicar of St. Peter’s, Vicar of All Saints and the Associate Vicar/Director of Training at All Saints

bring nuanced insights into the richness brought by the diverse ways ministry and mission are exercised, whilst also recognising the commonality that binds us together as the body of Christ.

Diocesan training programmes such as ALM electives, the Great is Thy Faithfulness course and IME 2 will use the experience and expertise of the clergy and lay leaders of All Saints and St. Peter's and others to deliver focussed teaching and mission placements, as appropriate.⁸¹ This relational contact with the two SDF resource hubs should build trust and encourage further reflection, discussion, and enriched learning across the diocese about the role apostolic partnerships play in enabling God's mission. There would be an expectation of drawing also on the experience of those involved in the first SDF bid, and others engaged in apostolic partnerships within the diocese.

We recognise that initiating and developing a new apostolic partnership can be costly for the priest, deacon or lay person leading the project. A network of practitioners will be set up within the diocese to encourage mutual support and learning.

We envisage that a *Pro Ecclesia* newsletter might also be a helpful way of disseminating learning and sharing experience to encourage and inspire others in the diocese to engage in apostolic partnerships.

Conclusion

Apostolic partnerships are one element within the wider Diocesan Vision for Growth. Through their development in ways that are flexible and contextually appropriate we can demonstrate discernment of God's mission in the Church and wider community, the wise stewardship of our limited resources, mutual support and flourishing, learning and accountability within the diocesan household of faith. Above all, apostolic partnerships can be a means by which more people can come to 'know, love and follow Jesus.'

*'Jesus promised that we would receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon us. That power is there for the asking – from the same Spirit who reminds us that we are the very mission of Christ, the Spirit who brings a revolution of life even to a valley of dry bones. What a moment! What a time! What a privilege to play a role in the renovation of God's Church! God knows! God knows that these bones can live. Hallelujah! Do you?'*⁸²

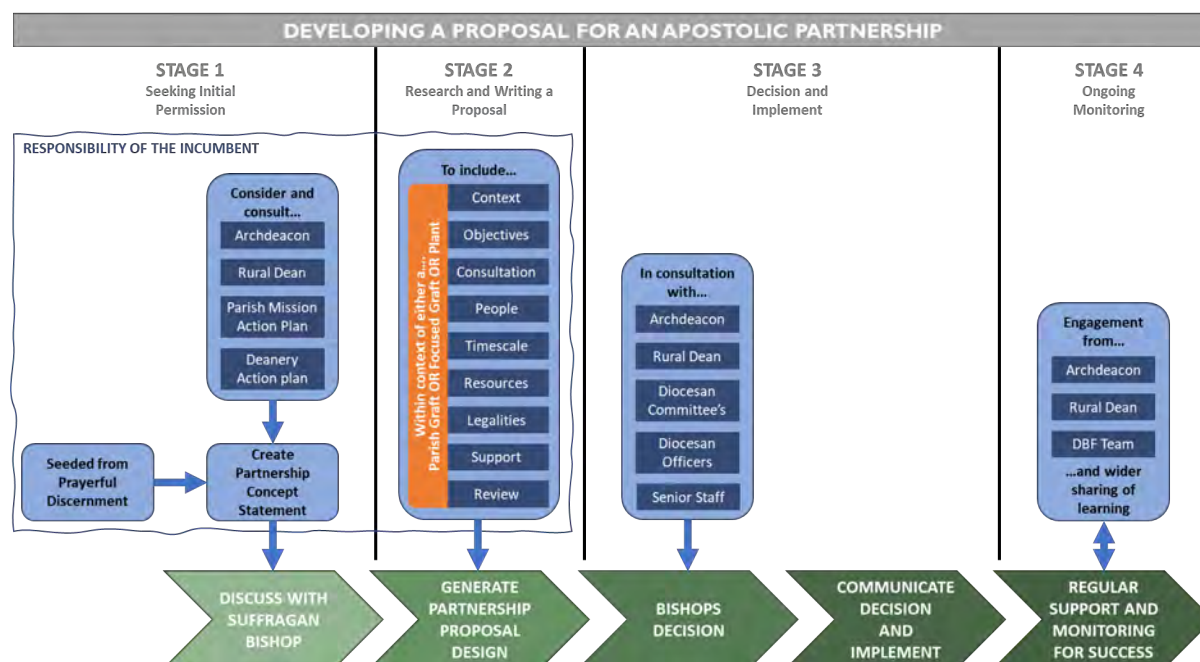
⁸¹ This is part of the Role Description for the Associate Minister and Director of Training at All Saints

⁸² James Mallon, *Divine Renovation*, Twenty-third Publications, 2014, p.286

Appendices

N.B. The diversity of apostolic partnerships requires a flexible approach to identifying the most appropriate process for developing a proposal. Whilst Appendix 1 and 2 specify which process is suitable for a plant, parish graft or focussed graft, these processes can also be used for other forms of apostolic partnership. Advice about this will be given by the relevant archdeacon or bishop.

The following diagram outlines the basic process for developing a proposal for an apostolic partnership. The information is fleshed out in appendix 1 and 2. In due course proposal template documents will also be available.



Appendix I- Developing a Proposal for an Apostolic Partnership (a Parish Graft or Plant)

Stage 1 – seeking initial permission

Contact your suffragan bishop to discuss your ideas.

In preparation for the meeting, please send the bishop a written statement (no more than 500 words) that sets out the gist of the proposed apostolic partnership and how it fits into the Parish and Deanery Mission Action Plans and within the Diocese of Chichester's Vision for Growth.

Following the meeting, the bishop will consult the diocesan bishop, relevant archdeacon(s), Parish Development Officers and other staff as appropriate.

Before a more detailed proposal can be developed, advice will be given about whether the proposed apostolic partnership sits within wider mission planning of the household of faith.

Stage 2 – research and writing a proposal

The proposal must consider the following:

Context: Locality, theological tradition, ethnicity, deprivation index etc⁸³.

Objectives: Who is this partnership seeking to reach?

Consultation: What preliminary consultation is needed with existing Church of England parishes and structures, such as the incumbent and PCC of the parish concerned, the Rural Dean, deanery and neighbouring parishes? Have you consulted with other churches (including non-Anglican) in the area that might be affected by the apostolic partnership?

People: Who will be involved in the plant/graft in terms of lay and ordained leadership, numbers of people committed to the project etc? How will appropriate forms of lay ministry and leadership be developed, noting how this links in with licenced and authorised lay ministry selection processes and training in the diocese? What safeguarding training or level of DBS checks would be required?

Timescale: When would you be ready to begin to undertake the partnership and what would be the key stages in the process of preparing, setting up and starting the partnership? What are the proposed review dates and deadlines for any funding bids?

Resources: How you are proposing to fund and resource the partnership, e.g., Capital costs of building (if any), running costs, stipends/salaries and oncosts, housing, expenses?

Legalities: What legalities will be required? It is likely that this will require a detailed conversation with the bishop/archdeacon and appropriate diocesan officers but might include Pastoral Scheme or Pastoral Order; Bishop's Mission Order (BMO); licences and lay commissions/authorisations; charitable status; issues with the building; governance structure

⁸³ <https://cuf.org.uk/lookup-tool>

and representation, including questions such as PCC and Churchwarden equivalents; safeguarding provision in keeping with SQP.⁸⁴

Support: What support you might need from the Diocese to help you achieve your objectives?

Review: What pattern of review and oversight might be appropriate?

Stage 3 – decision

The proposal will be discussed by the three bishops, in consultation with the archdeacons, other senior staff and diocesan officers as appropriate. It might also require discussion and consultation with the Operating Committee and other committees of the Bishop's Council and DBF.

A written decision and any amendments or conditions will then be communicated within an agreed timeframe.

Stage 4 – ongoing monitoring and development

What might the ongoing monitoring/support of the apostolic partnership look like (including the feeding back of learning)? This is likely to involve the archdeacon, rural dean and DBF staff.

How is it envisaged that the culture shift occurring through initiating an apostolic partnership will impact on the trajectory of growth in the future?

⁸⁴ <https://safeguarding.chichester.anglican.org/sqp/>

Appendix 2- Developing a Proposal for an Apostolic Partnership (a Focussed Graft)

Stage 1 – seeking initial permission

Contact your suffragan bishop to discuss your ideas.

In preparation for the meeting, please send the bishop a written statement (no more than 500 words) that sets out the gist of the proposed apostolic partnership and how it fits into the Parish and Deanery Mission Action Plans and within the Diocese of Chichester's Vision for Growth.

Following the meeting, the bishop will consult the diocesan bishop, relevant archdeacon(s), Parish Development Officers and other staff, as appropriate.

Before a more detailed proposal can be developed, advice will be given about whether the proposed apostolic partnership sits within wider mission planning of the household of faith.

Stage 2 – research and writing a proposal

The proposal must consider the following:

Context: Locality, theological tradition, ethnicity, deprivation index etc⁸⁵.

Objectives: Who is this partnership seeking to reach and what would therefore be the focus of the graft?

Consultation: What preliminary consultation is needed with existing Church of England parishes and structures? This would primarily be the incumbent and PCC of the parish concerned, but it might also be appropriate to speak to the Rural Dean, Chapter, deanery and neighbouring parishes. Have you consulted with other churches (including non-Anglican) in the area that might be affected by the apostolic partnership?

People: Who will need to be involved in the partnership in terms of apostolic teams from the sending parish and lay and ordained people within the receiving parish? How will appropriate forms of lay ministry and leadership be developed, noting how this links in with licenced and authorised lay ministry selection processes and training in the diocese? What safeguarding training or level of DBS checks would be required?

Timescale: When would you be ready to begin to undertake the partnership and what would be the key stages in the process of preparing, setting up and starting the partnership? What is the continuity and sustainability plan for the initiative when the apostolic teams have left? What are the proposed review dates and deadlines for any funding bids?

Resources: How you are proposing to fund and resource the partnership, e.g., Capital costs, running costs, salaries and oncosts, housing, expenses? Which responsibilities will fall to the sending parish and which to the receiving parish?

Legalities: What legalities will be required? It is likely that this will require a detailed conversation with the bishop/archdeacon and appropriate diocesan officers but might

⁸⁵ <https://cuf.org.uk/lookup-tool>

include licences and lay commissions/authorisations; issues with the building; safeguarding provision in keeping with SQP.⁸⁶

Support: What support you might need from the Diocese to help you achieve your objectives?

Review: What pattern of review and oversight might be appropriate?

Stage 3 – decision

The proposal will be discussed by the three bishops, in consultation with the archdeacons, other senior staff and diocesan officers as appropriate. It might also require discussion and consultation with the Operating Committee and other committees of the Bishop's Council and DBF.

A written decision and any amendments or conditions will then be communicated within an agreed timeframe.

Stage 4 – ongoing monitoring and development

What might the ongoing monitoring/support of the apostolic partnership look like (including the feeding back of learning)? This is likely to involve the archdeacon, rural dean and DBF staff.

How is it envisaged that the culture shift occurring through initiating an apostolic partnership will impact on the trajectory of growth in the future?

⁸⁶ <https://safeguarding.chichester.anglican.org/sqp/>

Appendix 3

Liturgical Preparation/Formation for Priests Moving to a Parish of a Different Theological Tradition to Their Own

When an apostolic partnership is undertaken between Evangelicals and Catholics there will inevitably be preparation needed to enable a priest to minister with integrity and authenticity within the parish to which they are sent if the theological tradition is different from their own. Preparation would need to focus on expressions of liturgy and worship and preaching and teaching the faith appropriately and effectively.

Each tradition requires focus on specific areas, which are listed below. However, behind these lists runs rich threads of commonality through both traditions: Word and sacrament; adoration of and encounter with God, the Holy Trinity; reconciliation; the making and nurture of disciples.

The priest will therefore be given a mentor who for the first year will assist with the 'how to' and the 'why' in relation to liturgy and worship, thus enabling theological reflection and reflective practice.

This is not merely about learning how to 'perform' liturgy in a Catholic or Evangelical way but helping a priest to prepare for this dimension of ministry also on a spiritual and theological level. It is imperative that the priest understands the theological basis for liturgical rites and sacraments, including how they relate to mission and the nurture of Christian disciples.

In the light of theological exploration, there may be some aspects of liturgy, ritual and practice that the priest feels unable to do in conscience. Depending on what this is, it might be necessary to make appropriate adaptations or even to draw in additional priestly provision.

For an Evangelical Priest Moving to a more Catholic Context

The theology and practice relating to the following areas will need to be addressed:

- Priesthood as part of the three-fold order of ministry
- Lay ministry
- The Eucharist and Eucharistic devotions, including the reserved sacrament and home communion/house Eucharist
- Baptism, first communion and Confirmation
- Preaching – homilies, preaching on the lectionary/Gospel reading
- Marriage – including nuptial Eucharists
- Ministry to the sick and dying, including the last rites
- Funerals, including requiem Eucharists
- Sacramental confession
- Liturgical calendar and lectionary
- Seasons – including Holy Week
- Marian devotions (and other saints) and pilgrimage
- Ecumenical links – through theology and liturgy

- The church building – design and furnishings

For a Catholic Priest Moving to a more Evangelical Context

The theology and practice relating to the following areas will need to be addressed:

- Priesthood and presbyter – the priesthood of all believers
- Lay ministry
- Eucharistic theology and practice
- Conversion - individual, responding to the gospel, sin and the cross
- Preaching and scripture - expository, spirituality, thematic/series vs lectionary - biblicism and crucicentrism
- 'Low' church worship - movement, vestment, seating, lay ministry
- Sung worship and liturgy, extemporary prayer, planned-spontaneity, informality, accessibility
- Gifts of the Spirit - prophecy, tongues, words of knowledge, pictures, the supernatural and pneumatology
- Prayer ministry at the end of public worship - call to prayer, plenary prayer, individual prayer, healing prayer
- Para-church conferences, e.g., EMA, Spring Harvest, Focus and New Wine
- Ecumenical links, e.g., through New Wine, Sussex Gospel Partnership
- The church building – design and furnishings

**The Revd Canon Rebecca Swyer
April 2022**

AGENDA ITEM 9. REPORTS FROM GENERAL SYNOD

November 2021 Group of Sessions

Monday, 15 November, was Induction Day for new members of General Synod. The induction programme proved to be helpful not only to new members (approximately 60% of members were elected for the first time in 2021) but also to returning members, given that the last in-person Synod was held in February 2020.

On Tuesday, 16 November, members and guests gathered in Westminster Abbey for a celebration of Holy Communion attended by HRH the Earl of Wessex, representing Her Majesty the Queen. The preacher was His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos, Coptic Orthodox Archbishop of London, who took as his text Luke 19. 1–10.

After lunch, His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, welcomed the Earl and asked him to assure Her Majesty of Synod's prayers and good wishes. The Earl then delivered Her Majesty's address, in which she referred to the challenges of the pandemic and the hope she finds in the unchanging teaching of Jesus Christ. She reminded those present that bringing *'the people of this country to the knowledge and the love of God'* must be Synod's priority. The Archbishop of York responded to the address, noting that the light of the Gospel shone through Her Majesty's words. He then set out the priorities for the future, namely the proclamation of the Gospel and the nurturing of new disciples.

The Archbishop's Presidential Address focussed on the nature of change. With reference to the miraculous catch of fish in John 21, the Archbishop reminded Synod of the importance of attentive listening to God and faithful obedience to his will. He also spoke openly about some of the new challenges the Church faces in the wake of the pandemic. He wished to stress that the planting of new church communities did not mean the CofE was abandoning or neglecting the parish system.

A Diocesan Synod motion from Sheffield asked that legislation be drafted to allow dioceses to share their historic wealth with other dioceses across the wider Church of England. There is a huge disparity in finances between dioceses: the North of the country being poorer than the South. A lively debate followed and the motion carried by a show of hands. Tuesday's business concluded with Questions.

Wednesday morning saw a Leeds Diocesan Synod Motion come before Synod, calling on the government and all political parties to adopt a policy of reducing the wealth gap between the rich and the poor. The motion was carried with an amendment stressing the need for urgent action.

There followed a report by Canon John Spence, Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Archbishops' Council, on the financial health of the CofE. Mr Mark Sheard was appointed to the Archbishops' Council.

Later in the day, there was a presentation on Vision and Strategy (GS2238). Three key themes were identified: a church where 'mixed ecology' is the norm; a church of missionary disciples; a church which is younger and more diverse. The Archbishop of York explained what 'mixed ecology' means – and indeed what it *doesn't* mean. He stressed once more that

fresh expressions and newer forms of outreach and evangelism are not a threat to the established parish system. The revitalisation of the parish for mission would be key to the implementation of the Vision.

The final item of business before Farewells and Prorogation was a report by the Governance Review Group. The Group had been meeting over eighteen months to discuss simplifying existing national CofE structures in line with the wider vision for a 'simpler, humbler, bolder' Church. The proposal to dismantle certain existing structures and establish a new National Church of England National Services with trustees and a management group aroused the suspicion of some members of Synod.

Synod was prorogued at 4.40pm.

Bradley Smith
April 2022

General Synod November 2021 & February 2022

As a newcomer to Synod, I was struck by the emphasis from the start on living and proclaiming the gospel of Christ, and on disagreeing well. There were, of course, drier issues of governance and procedures on the agenda, but many of the speeches revealed passion for Jesus and love for his people, which was refreshing. Although Covid stopped some people attending, the February 'hybrid' sessions included members joining online as well as those at Church House.

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York delivered [a joint presidential address](#) to the November group of sessions. Archbishop Justin emphasised: 'As disciples of Jesus Christ, our first and foremost task is to listen to Christ, above all in careful meditation on the scriptures and in prayer. But also in listening to each other and in seeking to discern the voice of the Holy Spirit.'

But he was also realistic when he added: 'We seek to model disagreeing well, for we are all different and disagreeing is human, but seeking to destroy and reject each other and exclude each other is less than human.'

The theme of disagreeing well was continued when Archbishop Stephen said: 'The harvest is rich but the labourers aren't few. We have a lot of labourers in the Church of England, the trouble is that the labourers are in the barn arguing what colour to paint the combine harvester.'

That emphasis on the gospel and disagreeing well continued in the February group of sessions, when Archbishop Justin challenged Synod to: '...pray like Jesus, live like Jesus, serve like Jesus, listen like Jesus and in being one, with all our disagreements, reveal Jesus to our boxed in, dragged down, conflict ridden world'.

Some of the debates have reached near-unanimous agreement such as the challenge to the Government to adopt an explicit policy of reducing the wealth gap between the rich and the poor, and a call to challenge slavery and human trafficking.

Presentations have brought us up to date on Vision and Strategy, seeking to allay fears that parishes are not under threat, but building to a future where

- ‘mixed ecology’ is the norm in every local context
- the parish system is revitalised for mission from which flows a flourishing of new Christian communities
- every person has the opportunity to encounter the transformation that a life centred on Jesus Christ can bring.

As Chair of the Archbishops' Racial Justice Commission, Lord Boateng gave a passionate presentation on the commission's racial justice work, but said it was ‘chilling’, ‘wounding’ and a ‘scandal’ that there had been no action on a ‘long list’ of recommendations over the years to tackle racial injustice.

The same comment about inaction was made of other aspects of Synod's work including ‘Setting God's People Free’ - the latest in a long line of Reports produced since 1945 about the role of Christian lay people; and also on Safeguarding, which is overseen by a small, mainly part-time staff, on a limited budget, with a restricted remit. There were calls for their remit to be extended to cover bullying.

Several items of business have addressed the day-to-day issues of concern to local clergy and PCCs. There was a lively debate on changes to the Faculty rules, particularly relating to carbon reduction to reach the goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2030. The main aim was to limit what requires a Faculty, such as the replacement of boilers or digging trenches to add Wi-Fi cables. But there were concerns that, without rules, PCCs would opt for short-term, low cost solutions which would not replace fossil-fuel boilers, or lead the way in our communities as exemplars of sustainable living.

The Clergy Remuneration Review was presented by Richard Jackson, now Bishop of Hereford; Synod was invited to ‘take note’. The review concluded that the clergy remuneration package (stipend, housing and pension estimated to be £50,000 p.a) was adequate and appropriate for most, but ‘a single stipend was unlikely to be adequate for all’. The review acknowledged that stipends have not kept pace with inflation and said ‘there needs to be a commitment on the part of the Church to maintain the overall value of the stipend against inflation in the future’.

The range of issues that most concern Synod members is revealed in Question time; written answers are provided but supplementary questions from the Chamber overrun the time available. There were [132 questions](#) submitted to the November group of sessions and [150 questions](#) submitted in February. The subjects included questions on Conversion Therapy, the Process for appointing Archbishops' Appointments Secretary; the Abolition of Church of England Youth Council; the Investigation into John Smyth QC in Africa; Legislation to enable use of individual cups at Holy Communion; Inclusion of openly LGBTI+ voices in House of Bishops discussions; Costs of Lambeth Palace and Bishopthorpe Palace; a route map to Net Zero... and many more issues.

Fringe meetings further emphasise members' concerns such as: disability and

church, persecution, rural affairs, gender and sexuality, reform of clergy discipline, conversion therapy, the environment and more.

It is a privilege to serve Chichester Diocese on Synod and would value your prayers as we navigate these difficult areas as we...pray like Jesus, live like Jesus, serve like Jesus, listen like Jesus and remain as one, with all our disagreements

For the reports from the November 2021 group of sessions visit

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/general-synod/agendas-papers/general-synod-november-2021>

For the reports from the February 2022 group of sessions visit

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/general-synod/agendas-papers/general-synod-february-2022>

Catherine Butcher
February 2022

AGENDA ITEM 10. REPORT FROM THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL

Since the last ordinary Diocesan Synod the Bishop's Council has met three times – in November, February and April.

The Council acts as the Standing Committee of the Diocesan Synod tasked with a number of responsibilities as laid down in the relevant standing orders. The Council has other responsibilities with regard to the Diocesan Board of Finance.

At the November meeting the Deputy Director for Apostolic Life presented the Director's annual report on the department. The team had been added to, thanks to central church support. It had been a busy year and the Deanery Planning work was emphasized in particular. Thanks were expressed to Rebecca Swyer, for the incredible range of work being undertaken and for leading the many facets of the Apostolic Life team.

Safeguarding is on every agenda. At the November meeting PCR2 report was not yet ready for publication however has subsequently by April been published. In summary, it was very positive about the current culture and the changes made over the last 10 years, the leadership in the diocese and safeguarding in the diocese. The primary recommendation was in relation to record keeping, file keeping and additional resource, but it was generally very positive.

It was noted that the permission to officiate clergy do need to catch up on training. The Council were assured this will be addressed. Permission to officiate now lasts for three years rather than five and will not be renewed until the appropriate training is done.

The Council always review the last Diocesan Synod and the practical arrangements and discussed matters arising including the extraordinary meeting for Living in Love and Faith in Feb. At the April meeting the future agenda was discussed for the Diocesan Synod and arrangements made.

At the February meeting, the first of the new triennium, the members of the Bishop's Council were given comprehensive training on the duties of trustees. Key points were:- Reporting serious incidents to the Charity Commission; understanding how risk is managed; the need for trustees to consider family members and business associates that could give rise to a conflict of interest; there should be various policies in place, including a counter fraud policy and a complaints policy; there should be an internal financial controls checklist; when looking at the annual accounts, trustees should note the 'Free reserve figure' which showed whether the organisation was solvent or not.

Various vacancies on boards, councils and committees were discussed and people appointed. Canon Mark Gilbert was appointed as Vice Chair of the House of Clergy and Mrs Sara Stonor as Vice Chair of the House of Laity in addition to many appointments to casual vacancies on boards and councils and other bodies.

The Council received reports from the Operating committee, the Mission and Pastoral Committee, the Parsonage and House Committees, the Assets Committee and Audit

Committee. The statutory accounts and red book were discussed and the five year outlook and planning for the future were looked at. Policies were approved, and various changes to school instruments of government noted.

The Council also approved the purchase of a house for the Archdeacon of Chichester to replace the one sold in Brighton some years ago, which will be rented out for as long as the Archdeacon is a guest of the Bishop at the Palace.

Canon Mark Gilbert
Vice-Chair House of Clergy
April 2022