



SUPPORTING PAPERS

DIOCESAN SYNOD

ON 20TH MAY 2023



**SUPPORTING PAPERS FOR DIOCESAN SYNOD
ON 20TH MAY 2023**

INDEX

PAGES

MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN SYNOD

1	Agenda item 3. EXCEPTIONAL PATHWAY FOR ORDINATION
4	Agenda item 4. READER MINISTRY
6	Agenda item 6. RACIAL JUSTICE STRATEGY
11	Agenda item 11. EASYFUNDRAISING
13	Agenda item 12. CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL FRIENDS
14	Agenda item 13. REPORT ON THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL
16	Agenda item 14. REPORT FROM GENERAL SYNOD

MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN SYNOD

AGENDA ITEM 3. EXCEPTIONAL PATHWAY FOR ORDINATION

Exceptional Discernment & Training Pathway

Discernment

1. Identification of need

The initial observation of need (a lack of Ordained Ministry in a particular area) might come from an Incumbent or from a Bishop. An example would be where there is a prolonged vacancy.

If an Incumbent identifies a need, (s)he may contact their Suffragan Bishop.

If a Suffragan Bishop identifies a need, (s)he may contact the Diocesan Bishop for authorisation to follow the Exceptional Discernment & Training Pathway.

If the Diocesan Bishop agrees, the Suffragan Bishop may call out a candidate to address the need (this candidate may be in a neighbouring parish).

2. Identification of candidate

If an Incumbent identifies a candidate, (s)he may contact their Suffragan Bishop for authorisation to follow the Exceptional Discernment & Training Pathway.

When a Suffragan Bishop identifies a potential candidate, (s)he will discuss the candidate with the Incumbent.

If the Incumbent is supportive of the candidate (irrespective of the Incumbent's ability or willingness to be a Training Incumbent, as the candidate may be deployed in a nearby parish), the Incumbent may approach the candidate to see if (s)he would be willing, and to see if the candidate also senses an internal call to self- supporting Ordained Ministry.

If willing, the Incumbent should inform the Suffragan Bishop who will in turn inform the DDO by Easter each year in order for the candidate to be prepared for the shared national discernment process and start training in September.

If the candidate is a Reader, the Suffragan Bishop will check the Reader's blue file to ensure there are no immediate reasons why (s)he could not be considered for Ordained Ministry.

There is no absolute upper age limit and the bishops will consider case-by-case. Occupational health screening may be requested at the point of offering a Title post. It will be requested for anyone over 70.

Training

IME1

Candidates will be trained in the Diocese with a focus on Christian theology and liturgical practice. This will take place at the same time as the shared national discernment process.

The training will be tailored to the needs of each candidate. This could take up to two years depending on previous theological knowledge and ministerial experience.

Evidence of liturgical competence (in modern and traditional language rites for the Eucharist, Mattins and Evensong) must be a primary consideration ahead of ordination, which might even be delayed if this work has not been completed to a satisfactory level.

Ordinations following a training process outwith the shared national provision will take place once the national Formation Criteria has been met, as assessed by an independent adviser.

Ordination would be set for the point at which the candidate is ready, as opposed to being fixed by the date of general ordinations around Pentecost and Trinity Sunday. If ordination happens at a different point in the year, the Bishop of Chichester and Director of Apostolic Life will decide when the candidate will begin to engage with the diocesan IME 2 programme.

A placement (normally lasting 6 months) may be required elsewhere during training.

The Role Description and licence for a title post may permit and/or restrain ministry (e.g. a focus on sacramental ministry in a particular area).

IME 2

Curacies will be 3 to 3.5 years (the same for all SSM and SM curates) to enable adequate formation and training. The process for this will be the same as SSM curacies.

Training will be appropriately shaped to prepare curates for their future ministry, including undertaking placements if appropriate and liturgical formation.

All will play a full part in their curate cohort as a means of mutual support, to assist in their ministerial formation and to aid reflective practice.

Those who are not distinctive deacons will go on, usually after a year in ministry, to be ordained priest. Whilst the expectation is to follow the normal timescale between ordination as a deacon then priest, this could be longer if the deacon is not yet ready.

The Training Incumbent may not be the Incumbent of the candidate because the individual may be deployed in a nearby parish.

Decision making for the whole process lies with the bishops in conjunction with diocesan officers responsible for discernment and training.

Version 1.0
March 2023

Revd Dr Keir Shreeves, Diocesan Director of Ordinands

AGENDA ITEM 4. READER MINISTRY

Request from Eastbourne Deanery Synod:

‘St John’s PCC requests an explanation of the reasons behind the changes to the regulations governing Reader Ministry promulgated on 2nd December 2022 to take effect from 1st January 2023, and especially the decision that readers should retire from active ministry when they reach the age of eighty.’

In 2022 the Bishop’s senior staff team requested that Canon Rebecca Swyer and Bishop Will conduct a review of the structures of support and administration offered by the diocese for those in Reader ministry. This review was conducted in collaboration with Revd Jayne Prestwood, Officer for Lay Vocation and Ministry, and Peter Mansell, Warden of Lay Ministry. The remit of the review was wide ranging and covered safeguarding, pastoral support, ministerial development and structures of accountability.

One anomaly which the review identified was the disparity between clergy and Readers in relation to PTO and retirement from ministry. Clergy are required to retire from ministry at age 70 and can if they choose to, apply at that stage for permission to officiate. In most cases, clergy will have moved away from their last parish and will exercise PTO in a different context from their former ministry. This change helps clergy to make a clear distinction between their active formal ministry and any ministry they may choose to offer in retirement. Until now Readers have been required to become PTO at age 70 and this move to PTO has always been intended to mark – as it does for clergy – a move towards retirement from active and formal ministry to a less active and formal ministry. This is the national understanding of PTO for Readers. In practice however, because Readers in the main exercise their ministry within the local community which they do not leave on becoming PTO, there has seldom been any distinction between licenced and PTO ministry for Readers, making the change to PTO fairly meaningless. We felt that this disparity left Readers in a difficult position with no clear retirement and in some cases feeling or being placed under pressure to ‘carry on indefinitely’ in parishes that have become over reliant on their help, even when those Readers may have health issues or family responsibilities.

The changes made to Reader PTO reflect the fact that there comes a time for all those in frontline leadership positions to start to let go of those responsibilities, move to a ministry more focussed on encouraging and supporting others, and pass the baton on to the next generation.

In light of this we felt it would be right to introduce a staged process which enables a Reader to move towards full retirement at aged 80 – 10 years longer the clergy retirement age.

Some key points to note

1. The new arrangements extend a Reader’s licenced ministry up to 75 – enabling an additional 5 years of licenced active ministry. There then follows a further 5 years of transition towards retirement at 80 to allow both the Reader and the parish to prepare. This is more generous than the national recommendations which require the move to PTO to be at 70.

2. The new scheme makes clear that:

‘in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, the needs of the parish might best be served by deferring the move to Reader Emeritus status beyond age 80 for a maximum of one further year.’ This means that there is a degree of flexibility built into the scheme which will allow a case to be made for a Reader to continue beyond the age of 80.

3. The new regulations have detailed and flexible transition arrangements as we move all Readers onto the new structures. This means that no one is being forced into the arrangements without time to adjust or prepare.

4. We have now introduced a Reader Ministerial Development Scheme which enables a much more detailed and purposeful process of reflection throughout a Reader’s ministry.

5. The introduction of the title of Reader Emeritus in the diocese brings Chichester Diocese into line with most other Church of England Dioceses and will enable the contribution of retired Readers to be acknowledged and celebrated and will allow them to have a continued link with the Reader network, though retired from active ministry.

Revd Jayne Prestwood, Officer for Lay Vocation and Ministry

April 2023

AGENDA ITEM 6. RACIAL JUSTICE STRATEGY

The Diocese of Chichester Racial Justice Vision, Strategy and Objectives for 2023 -2027

If one member suffers, all suffer together with it, if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. 1 Corinthians 12. 26.

The Diocese of Chichester is committed to real and lasting change on issues of racial justice. All human beings are fearfully and wonderfully created in the image of God (Psalm 139.14 and Genesis 1.27). There can be no place for racism in God's World and no place for racism within God's Church. There is no place for racism in Chichester Diocese.

This Diocesan strategy is informed by the Church of England's Anti-Racism Taskforce 2021 report *From Lament To Action* and is rooted in action. We need every person in every church and in every school to help root racism out. All of us have an important part to play in this quest for racial justice.

Seeking the will of God, and discerning God's call, to help achieve this the Diocese has identified four priority areas of focus in the five year period from 2023 to 2027:

1. **Speaking Race:** We will help to equip and resource parishes and chaplaincies to create safe spaces for open, honest and frank conversations about race. We will help the communities that we serve to take an honest look at themselves and where they may be on issues of racial justice. People will grow in confidence speaking about race, speaking out against racism and advocating for racial justice.
2. **Representative Leadership:** We will attract, retain, equip and empower more Global Majority Heritage and UK Minority Ethnic leaders to better represent the diversity of the communities that we serve.
3. **Participation:** We will encourage wider participation of our Global Majority Heritage and UK Minority Ethnic communities across our Household of Faith.
4. **Young People:** We will equip and empower our Church Schools and our young people to help guide and lead us in combatting racism and in tackling racial inequality.

Over the next five years, guided and sustained by The Holy Spirit, we hope to achieve the following goals:

1. Appoint and train a lay or ordained Racial Justice Advocate (RJA) in every deanery and in key focus areas (e.g., schools, diocesan departments). We will focus initially on the Deanery Synods of the areas where we have offered Racial Justice Training.
2. Working initially with the Diocesan Senior Leadership Team and with the DDO and the Discernment team, attract and retain at least ten more UKME/GMH individuals into (a) the discernment process, and (b) roles of ordained ministry across the Diocese.
3. Increase participation of UKME/GMH people across the governance structures of the Diocese to reflect local demographics (i.e., 7% UKME/GMH), including at Deanery Synod, Diocesan Synod, the Board of Education, Bishop's Council/Finance Committee, the Senior Leadership Team of the Diocese and at Chichester Cathedral.
4. See teaching about and advocacy for racial justice embedded into the regular teaching and preaching life of our Diocese throughout the year, for example through the Year Of / Lent Courses / The Department for Apostolic Life Programmes / IME Training.
5. Work with 5 Growing Partnership schools and parishes from across the Diocese in raising awareness and to encourage culture change around racial justice in their communities.
6. Host an annual Black History Month service of celebration at Chichester Cathedral or another venue within the diocese and increase the number of BHM/Racial Justice Sunday services offered in parishes/chapels each year.
7. Increase visibility for and celebrate the success of UKME/GMH people and their allies by telling their stories creatively throughout the year. E.g. Record a video or post reflections to be shared each month from committee members and advocates, congregation members from the diocese.
8. See advocacy and training for racial justice embedded into departmental budgets across the whole life of our Diocese, for example at The Department For Apostolic Life, at The Board of Education and at Chichester Cathedral.

The membership of the committee appointed to help oversee and to deliver this strategy can be found here: *[Link to Diocesan website to be added when uploaded]*

1. Rev Martha Mutikani(*Core group member*) Racial Justice Officer, Associate Vicar Uckfield Plurality, Assistant Dean of Women Ministry & Specialist Nurse Practitioner jsfield.vicar@gmail.com or martha.mutikani@chichester.anglican.org
2. Rev Dr Godfrey Kesari (*Core group member*) Racial Justice Officer, Vicar Southwater Church & Theologian revdgodfrey@yahoo.co.uk
3. Rev Canon Dr Jack Dunn (*Core group member*) Precentor Chichester Cathedral and Parish Development Officer Jack.Dunn@chichester.anglican.org
4. Rev Dr Jonathan Jong (*Core group member*) Rector of Cocking with West Lavington, Bepton, and Heyshott;Assistant Professor at the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations, Coventry University frjonathan@underthedowns.co.uk,
5. Lisa Williamson - (*Core group member*) Chichester Diocesan Communications officer – Lisa.Williamson@chichester.anglican.org
6. Rosemary Black (*Core group member*) CofE Chichester Education- Siams, Manager - Rosemary.Black@chichester.anglican.org,
7. The Revd Dr Keir Shreeves (*Core group member*) Diocesan Director of Ordinands keir.shreeves@chichester.anglican.org
8. Tom Leighton (*Schools Advocate*) (Deputy Head of Steyning Grammar School) tleighton@sgs.uk.net on behalf of a. Demi Alao (*Junior Racial Justice Ambassador* at Steyning Grammar School 2022/2023) b. Billy Wheals (*Junior Racial Justice Ambassador* at Steyning Grammar School 2022/2023).
9. Joanna Reffin – (*Hastings Archdeaconry Advocate*) St Margaret’s Isfield, Specialist Physiotherapist at King’s College Hospital London- jo.reffin@gmail.com
10. Revd Sandi Wickens (*Hastings Archdeaconry Advocate*) Priest in Charge Westfield, Guestling, and Fairlight, revsandiwickens@gmail.com
11. Dr Tino Zhou- (*Brighton Archdeaconry Advocate*) Engineer & St Andrews Old Church Hove, Zinafe Chair of Trustees tinozivashe.z@zinafe.org.uk
12. Rev'd Emma Ham-Riche – (*Brighton Archdeaconry Advocate*) - Priest-in- Charge Preston St John with Brighton, St Augustine and St Saviour ehamriche@gmail.com
13. Canon Vanessa Baron- (*Cathedral and Chichester Advocate*) Canon Treasurer Chichester Cathedral Vanessa.Baron@chichestercathedral.org.uk
14. Rev Jules Middleton- (*Horsham Archdeaconry Advocate*) Priest in Charge St Edward The Confessor, Burgess Hill revjulesmiddleton@gmail.com
15. Rev Steve Burston- (*Horsham Archdeaconry Advocate*) Vicar St John’s Crawley steve@churchcrawley.com

The committee’s terms of reference may be found here. *[Link to Diocesan website to be added when uploaded]*

If you would like to get involved in, or find out more about the life, work and ministry of this committee, please contact: martha.mutikani@chichester.anglican.org or revdgodfrey@yahoo.co.uk

We invite you to pray daily, for the work and ministry of this committee and also for the elimination of racism throughout God's World.

Together, in the words of Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr, we pray:

*Ever present God,
you called us to be in relationship with one another and
promised to dwell wherever two or three are gathered.
In our community, we are many different people;
we come from many different places, have many different cultures.
Open our hearts that we may be bold
in finding the riches of inclusion and the treasures of diversity among us.
We pray in faith.
Amen*

Our commitment to anti-racism

The Diocese of Chichester is committed to being actively anti-racist.

Sadly, racism still exists. As a diocese we have a crucial role to play in combating racism in our churches, schools, other institutions and communities.

The message in the Bible is clear and unambiguous - we are all one in Christ. It could not have been put better than this - the verse reads, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3.28)

Our churches and schools will:

A, be biblically and theologically rooted while challenging the injustices of structural racism, combating racist behaviours and promoting racial justice and equity;

B, they will be proactive and vigilant in challenging racism and shaping anti-racist behaviours.

C, they won't deny, obscure or downplay the painful lived reality of racism experienced by many;

D, they will acknowledge the huge, but worthwhile transformative work that needs to be done as we build and strengthen our communities;

E, they will expect those who work within the Diocese of Chichester to be welcoming to people of minority ethnic backgrounds;

F, they will celebrate and give thanks for the diversity in God's creation and strive for greater inclusivity in all social spheres at all levels so that the participation of all - people of diverse cultures and backgrounds - can be encouraged, secured, celebrated and valued.

We know we have to do a lot more to transform the church and the wider society to be more all-embracing in accordance with God's will. We pledge to address the systemic issues identified and highlighted by the Anti-Racism taskforce report 'From Lament to Action' as best as we can through a rigorous programme of actions. We will endeavour to do our best for changing attitudes and repudiating racism or the so-called otherness of others and replacing it with our common humanity. Love of God and for our neighbours will enable us to persevere in the relentless pursuit of a positive change for the emergence of a social order free from the scourge of racism. Race should fade into insignificance when we build God's kingdom. It is built on all-embracing love. Let us join hands to build it.

Revd Martha Mutikani and Revd Godfrey Kesari, Racial Justice Officers
April 2023

AGENDA ITEM 11. EASYFUNDRAISING

Easyfundraising and the Diocese of Chichester – a very productive partnership

An introduction to easyfundraising

It is often said the best recommendations are by word of mouth, and so we couldn't recommend easyfundraising enough for our churches. Since our partnership with easyfundraising began in the summer of 2021 our churches have raised over £10000 in free donations, with over 85 churches in the diocese now signed up to participate.

So, what is easyfundraising? - Offering an easy, continuous, and accessible fundraising option, easyfundraising gives churches the chance to raise money to support themselves from within the church congregation and also the wider community through online shopping.

Big brands like Amazon, eBay, John Lewis, M&S, Waitrose, Etsy, Just Eat, Screwfix, Moonpig, Argos, and 7,000 others want to give back to churches. That's why they have partnered with easyfundraising, so when someone shops online with them, the brand gives back a percentage of what an online shopper spends to your church; for free. It's like using a cashback site, but instead of one individual benefiting, clergy, members of your congregations, even their friends and family and the local community can pull together and raise funds for your church.

What's in it for your church?

Not only does easyfundraising allow your church to create a continual income stream, it also gives people the opportunity to give without it coming directly out of their pockets. This type of fundraiser relieves the pressure on those who still want to give; but also the pressure on your church, as you have a low-effort fundraising option that can last all year.

How easyfundraising can slot into everyday life

Because we lead busy lives, easyfundraising has built several tools to make it easy for anyone to support your church. For online shoppers who shop on laptops and computers, there is a handy reminder that when downloaded, pops up, so they can collect free funding in just one click. Or, for the shopper who shops via their mobile, the easyfundraising app keeps things really simple.

How to get started

1. Create your church profile on the easyfundraising site. Please go to the diocesan website webpage www.chichester.anglican.org/easyfundraising to do this.
2. Get familiar with easyfundraising. Book a call with one of the team, who will show you around, so you are up to speed on how the site works. They will also show you how to track your supporters and the free funding they will help you generate.

3. Now it's time to share the good news. Use the free marketing tools including social media copy, images, posters, and flyers in your easyfundraising account to tell your church community how easy it is for them to support you when they shop online. easyfundraising can also provide bespoke posters and flyers which will include a QR code and image of your church. To request these please email assets@easyfundraising.org.uk and include your church name and an image of your choice.

Do you want to hear of some success?

We are delighted to share with you some video testimonials we have recorded with churches who have joined the scheme and want to tell the story of their success. Please click the links below to watch the video clips:

- An overview featuring the parishes of, St Peter's Beeding, St Laurence Falmer and St Mary's Billingshurst - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_wGDDFNSYk
- St Laurence Falmer - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FSA58zTYpk>
- St Richard's Aldwick - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMMGU7oEtaw>
- St Mary's Salehurst - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50YnS9-j2Wg>
- St Mary's Billingshurst - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twb6LcfuPgU>
- St Giles Graffham - <https://youtu.be/9niJivtNKQg>

Revd Andrew Smith, Generous Giving Adviser
April 2023

AGENDA ITEM 12. CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL FRIENDS

Chichester Cathedral Friends is a registered charity formed to support the mission and ministry of the Cathedral.

The Friends was founded in 1939 and over the 84 years of its existence it has supported an extensive range of projects. The seats on which worshippers sit in the Cathedral were funded by The Friends. The re-ordering of the Sailor's Chapel in the north-west corner was funded by The Friends. The glass floor above the Roman remains was funded by The Friends. The list is extensive and impressive.

In the past 3 years alone, The Friends has donated over £275,000 to projects, each of which contributes to the Cathedral's strategic activities of Worship, Hospitality and Education. Recent projects include a major contribution to the new Cathedral toilet block, a new plinth for the font, the new camera system in the organ loft, the new Cathedral database facility and substantial annual funding in support of a chorister.

Most Friends join out of a wish to show their support for the Cathedral as well as to attend events and to make new friends. Events include lunches and concerts, monthly coffee mornings in the Cathedral, talks and social gatherings. Recent speakers at Friends events include Lord Hennessy, professor of modern history at London University, John Barkshire, former chairman of the National Memorial Arboretum and Lord Herbert of South Downs, former government minister for the police. Rear Admiral John Lippiett, former chief executive of The Mary Rose Trust, will be the guest speaker at the 2023 AGM in June.

The Friends is run by volunteers and if people have time and want to help, there are many opportunities to contribute.

Membership of The Friends costs £15 per year, or £25 for a couple. For more information visit: www.chichestercathedral.org.uk/friends.

Mr Malcolm Gill
April 2023

AGENDA ITEM 13. REPORT ON THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL

Bishop's Council has met twice since the last meeting of Diocesan Synod on Thursday 8th December 2022 and Thursday 20th April 2023, on both occasions at Church House, Hove, with a small virtual attendance at each meeting.

On 8th December, Canon Rebecca Swyer presented the annual report of the Department for Apostolic Life to Bishop's Council praising the commitment and flexibility of her team and its effectiveness particularly in CMD work. The team remains keen to hear feedback and is looking to secure external funding for their initiatives where possible. The Great is Thy Faithfulness course was proving popular and seeing collaboration between parishes.

Council also received the Safeguarding and Serious Incident update, a standing item, and noted that there had been a significant improvement in the number of PTO clergy now trained, and that there were no outstanding issues of non-engagement with training.

100 parishes had applied for energy cost grants by the time of the meeting and a minimum grant of £250 would be given with the highest proposed grant being £20,000.

Council considered the audit plan and heard that a re-tender for the diocesan audit would occur in 2023.

Minor changes to the Committee Handbook were agreed in respect of the Council for the Promotion of the Common Good and to the DBE terms of reference following the new scheme. A number of committee vacancies were mentioned with a request for suggestions to fill these.

The Diocesan Secretary asked for approval of a new Grievance Policy and Procedure, which was granted, as were three declarations related to the renewal of diocesan insurance policies.

On 20th April Council received the Education Department annual report. Recovery from Covid is going well but government support is insufficient and school leaders feel under pressure. 90% of our diocesan schools are rated good or outstanding and we continue to develop fruitful partnerships with others, and to be inspired by Christian hope in all our education work. Equipping clergy to work with maintained schools remains a priority.

Revd Dr Keir Shreeves briefed Council about Exceptional Pathways to ordination. These pathways will allow locally deployable ordained ministry to take place in areas where need has been identified and will include those called over the age of 55. Diocesan policy on this would continue to evolve and it was hoped that new energy and potential would be released in places where there was a need.

The Safeguarding and Serious Incident update was discussed and the diocese's risk based approach to safeguarding training was affirmed.

Annual reports were received from the DMPC, the Parsonages and Houses Committee, and the Assets and Audit Committees.

The Diocesan Statutory Accounts and Financial Statements, the Red Book and the Audit findings report and Letter of Representation were received, discussed and approved for presentation to Diocesan Synod at its May meeting. A tender for auditors would be held this year. The finance team was congratulated on the outturn for the year, but a note of caution was raised about parishes' pledges for the current year not being sufficient to balance the budget.

The Bishop of Chichester briefed Council on the General Synod debate of LLF which had recommended a continuing exploration of the issues in working parties. The House of Bishops would continue to monitor reaction to the debate closely. It was noted that reactions among parishes to LLF could also have a detrimental effect on finances and this too was being monitored closely.

The diocese's Racial Justice Strategy was presented and noted; Diocesan Synod agenda and 2024 meeting dates were approved.

A short discussion took place about the further evolution of the Disciplinary Process and Procedure; a change to the treatment of Subject Access Request procedure; and the delegation of Serious Incident Reporting powers. All were agreed.

Three sub-committee appointments were noted and approved.

Mr John Booth, Chair of the House of Laity
27 April 2023

AGENDA ITEM 14. REPORT FROM GENERAL SYNOD

Report on General Synod London February 6th to 9th 2023

General Synod met at Church House in London for three and a half days from Monday 6th to Thursday 9th February.

The meeting was dominated by the debate on the Living in Love and Faith. In total the debate lasted for 8 hours with 5 hours taking place on the Wednesday afternoon with the debate being completed during the morning session on the Thursday. The debate was extensive and exhaustive with strong speeches from all sides of the debate. Significant contributions from Chichester Diocese came most significantly from Bishop Martin who spoke strongly to support the traditional position of Holy Matrimony. In total over 20 amendments were moved with almost all being defeated with all being voted on by a count of houses.

One amendment which did receive support and was passed was one by Rev Andrew Cornes. It called on the Synod to endorse the decision of the College and House of Bishops not to propose any change to the doctrine of marriage and their intention that the final version of the Prayers of Love and Faith should not be contrary to or indicative of a departure from the doctrine of the Church of England. The vote on the amendment was Bishops 22 for 14 against and 4 abstentions, Clergy 100 for 94 against and 3 abstentions, and laity 98 for 96 against and 4 abstentions. Dr Simon Eyre spoke to the other amendment by Andrew Cornes highlighting the effect that the introduction of prayers would be likely to have on the Worldwide Anglican Communion with an appeal for the Bishops to listen attentively to their point of view and highlighting risk of provinces potentially breaking away. The final vote was preceded by a short period of prayer. The motion from the Bishop of London was finally passed with Bishops 36 for 4 against and 2 abstentions, Clergy 111 for, 85 against and 3 abstentions, and laity 103 for 92 against and 5 abstentions. The result still leaves the church very divided but with the hope that further debate at York will provide clarity about proposed prayers and pastoral principles surrounding the use of prayers of blessing. The full debate can be viewed on You Tube and full details of all the members votes on each amendment and the final vote are publicly available if anyone wishes to see how Chichester Synod representatives voted.

In many ways the more important debate was on the cost-of-living crisis. Regrettably, in contrast to the LLF debate, this was relatively poorly attended in view of its importance. The call to pray and call on the Government to do more was highlighted but also the prominent role the church has in meeting the needs that are arising. It was stressed that inflation has done some irreversible damage to the economy, we have not yet seen the worst effects of the crisis, the long-term effects of increased poverty and deprivation are evident reaching staggering levels in some areas. A stark example is that over 40% of children in Newcastle are living in poverty. The post covid effects on mental health were highlighted as particular issue. Additionally there has been a very significant effect on parish's ability to pay parish share which is down 7% nationally since 2019. Similarly charitable giving has reduced by up to 60% for some sectors. The role of Faith Covenants between Local Government and Faith communities was stressed with Churches having a vital role to support those suffering mental health problems and loneliness with the provision of warm spaces being used to help address

these issues. The plight of clergy in all this was highlighted with 18% of all clergy receiving support from the clergy support trust in 2022. The motion was unanimously passed.

A considerable amount of more minor legislation was passed while other debates covered the Diocesan Finance Initiative allowing wealthy Dioceses to share resources with those Diocese's less well endowed, Clergy pensions, the funding of Theological Institutions and a measure proposing an Electronic Register book of services.

Throughout, despite the contentious nature of the LLF debate, all the debates were marked by courtesy and kindness on all sides.

The next General Synod is scheduled to take place in York from 7th to 11th July.

Revd Arwen Folkes 95

Dr Simon Eyre 287