

**MINUTES OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE EIGHTEENTH DIOCESAN SYNOD,  
HELD AT ST MARY'S CHURCH, HORSHAM AND ON ZOOM ON 20<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2023**

<i>PRESENT:</i> <i>(in person or on Zoom)</i>	The Bishop (President)	
	Suffragan Bishops	2
	Clergy	57
	Laity	54
	Miss Gabrielle Higgins (Diocesan Secretary)	
	Mr Darren Oliver (Diocesan Registrar)	

The meeting began with an act of worship.

The Bishop of Chichester first thanked Canon Lisa Barnett and the St Mary's Horsham team for hosting Synod once again.

**10.30 am MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN SYNOD**

**1. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS INCLUDING STATEMENT ON LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH**

The Bishop of Chichester gave a Presidential Address, and began by reading the amended Motion passed at the General Synod in February on Living in Love and Faith.

+MC encouraged that we speak truthfully and humbly about the demands and the grace that come from faith in Jesus Christ in a way that does no damage or harm to a brother or sister whose Christian faith and discipline is, in good conscience, built differently from our own, but on the same foundations laid by Jesus Christ. +MC bade those present to remember that, whatever judgements we make, we shall ourselves be judged for our treatment of others, and into this consideration we should add the injunction St Paul makes in Romans 14 about the strong and the weak, together with Paul's repeated insistence that God's grace is revealed in weakness, not in any boasting about our own strength. Where the Church of England would go with LLF remained unclear. There were three working groups considering what, and how, LLF proposals could be implemented. Those groups were considering the LLF Prayers, Pastoral Guidance and Pastoral Reassurance. +MC had been present at the recent House of Bishops' meeting, and noted that an update is promised for the General Synod in July, but suspected this would be no more than an update, and confirmed there was nothing further that could be reported on those groups at that stage.

+MC quoted a pastoral letter issued by the Roman Catholic Bishops of Scandinavia, concluding 'The point of the Church's teaching is not to curtail love but to enable it [repeating a passage from the Catechism of 1566]: 'The whole concern of doctrine and its teaching must be directed to the love that never ends. Whether something is proposed for belief, for hope or for action, the love of our Lord must always be made accessible, so that anyone can see that all the works of perfect Christian virtue spring from love and have no other objective than to arrive at love.'

'May the Holy Spirit, whose promised gift we celebrate at Pentecost, inspire us to bear witness to this love in our Diocese, Church and nation today. Amen.'

The full text can be found at [Documents - presidential address DioSynodMay2023 - Diocese of Chichester \(anglican.org\)](https://www.anglican.org/documents/presidential-address-diosynodmay2023)

The Revd Tim Crook (50, Arundel & Bognor Deanery) said he could not imagine the full extent of the impact from the enormous additional personal heartache, mental and emotional strain that February's General Synod's decision on LLF would have had, especially on our three Bishops, and asked that they be assured of their ongoing prayers for them all. Sadly, at South Bersted, they had already experienced parishioners leaving their membership for another denomination, as a direct result of this decision. The risk of schism, and our inability to express any real sense of unity as one apostolic household of faith across this Diocese, seemed tragically, in their PCC's view, to be now highly probable. He asked if this Synod could be informed as to what progress was being made in the process of assessing risk within this Diocese, as a result of our now confirmed trajectory of travel.

+MC explained that we were still in the process of discerning exactly what decisions were to be made and what was going to happen. As he had already said, there would be further update about this, so that, as yet, no final outcomes could be judged. In Bishop's Council there had been very clear and very helpful calls for assessment of what financial and other implications might emerge from decisions which were yet to be known. +MC was very grateful to the Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship, who were working very closely with them to monitor this.

The Revd Jonathan Frais (JF) (74, Battle & Bexhill Deanery) asked what financial forecasts, if any, had been drawn up by the CofE to assess likely impact - thinking specifically of current and future giving for parish share, whether from contributions being withheld or simply because parishes themselves were no longer receiving the income to pass on. Also, what forecasts there might already be for parishes unable to remain in spiritual fellowship with those who did offer the PLF - thinking, for instance, whether there might be new ways within the CofE to continue to give generously for the cause of the Gospel.

+MC reiterated that, because no final decisions had been made, it was very difficult to see a national picture. The Diocesan Secretaries were closely networked, which offers the CofE an opportunity to assess what is happening within dioceses; we continue to wish to work in close partnerships with one other, as seen in the House of Bishops. The Pastoral Reassurance Group was looking specifically at the issues JF had raised, as to how the future might pan out, but of course they had not yet reported their findings.

Mrs Helen Bridger (195, Battle & Bexhill Deanery) asked: given the strong feelings held on this matter and the public perception that the CofE now offers blessings when same-sex couples approach the Church, what safeguards and pastoral support would be offered to those who were unwilling to use the prayers?

+MC responded that, once again, we were still in a process of discernment over this. The actual wording of the prayers - and the legal implications they might raise - was still being refined, as indicated in the motion read out at the beginning of his address. The Pastoral Guidance Group was looking specifically at the implications of this: again, their report had not yet been finalised; and how this would affect clergy would also be a concern for the Pastoral Reassurance Group, so there was quite close overlap between the working of those groups.

The Revd Martin Lane (195, Hastings Deanery) [online] thanked Bishop Martin for the work that had been done to protect the financial position of our Diocese in 2022. He had noted the Question and Answer to Jonathan Frai concerning the financial impact nationally, and asked if +MC could quantify the likely impact of the proposed introduction of PLF on our financial position in this Diocese in 2023 and beyond?

+MC responded that, as members would be aware, there had been a survey, asking people not to take any action but to give an indicative response of what might be likely to occur if certain decisions were taken in the LLF process; analysis of those responses was still ongoing. It remained impossible to give an exact answer, but +MC wanted to reassure that attention was being paid to those survey responses, which would be enormously helpful.

The Revd Mark Payne (MP) (60, Chichester Deanery) stated that their links in Chichester Diocese with Anglican dioceses in West Africa and Kenya had been a source of rich blessing on both sides for nearly 50 years. MP asked, if the PLF were authorised for use with sexually-active couples outside heterosexual marriage, what effect this would be likely to have on our relationship with our Anglican Companion Link dioceses.

+MC thanked MP for this very helpful question, which raised our perspective from the simply local – either diocesan or national – level to remind us we are part of the Anglican Communion. In the light of the Lambeth Conference the previous year we were aware that these issues touch on our relationships across the Communion in a variety of ways. It was +MC's view that the formal partnerships we have with the province of West Africa and North Kenya remained in good shape, and that these continued to develop, with regular communication. There was a range of links across the Diocese which would register different views - anxiety was already being heard – and some of those would stretch outside the Anglican Communion's present structures into the GAFCON network as well. We were also confident that some relationships which were local to the parish would be driven by the parish itself, and that the individual parish would take a view in terms of where the LLF process sat with their relationship to the CofE. It was therefore not possible, as a diocese, to assess all our links with the Anglican Communion, as many were individual and autonomous, but we hoped and prayed that, whatever the nature of the link, and whichever part of the Anglican Communion, they would be sustained. They do, indeed, enrich us, which +MC felt was the value of MP's point, and for which he thanked him.

Miss Alison Marchant (AM) (197 Battle & Bexhill) reported that several people had approached her with concern at the idea of offering prayers and blessings for same-sex marriages, and she would be grateful to know how she should respond, when those people find it incomprehensible that the national Church, which does not feel morally able to allow same-sex couples to be married in church, can possibly think it is right to ask God to bless what the Church itself will not offer because it does not consider it to be right. Opinions expressed had included, 'The church has lost the plot'; and 'Bonkers!' Others felt this process was taking much time and energy away from our commission to go into the world and make disciples, particularly as – by pursuing this current focus – we had jettisoned 85% of the Anglicans worldwide who focus on the Great Commission, sometimes at the cost of their lives, and who feel abandoned by Canterbury.

+MC responded that the question essentially concerned how we managed division; how that is perceived from outside, and what it does for the life of our Church and mission together. The Church had always lived with division of opinion. Within much of his own experience of public ordained ministry, it had been convulsed and challenged over division around ordination of women, which had taken a long time to find a way in which to live together, reaching an understanding that there were very clear and profound theological differences but within a single communion. There had been a near-200 year phase of reformation; and divisions also over the very nature and meaning of the Eucharist. We were now seeing ourselves facing similar theological and doctrinal divisions. It was +MC's belief that, if we had the patience and the will, we have the capacity to drill deeply into the meaning, understanding and causes of our divisions, and to find a way in which we can embrace them within the spectrum of Anglican understanding, practice and doctrine. That had been the way of the CofE: how that would happen now would be part of the process in which we were engaged. AM was right to direct our attention to the seriousness of it, and also for our need to be attentive to the way it might damage our mission and witness in the world.

The Revd Arwen Folkes (AW) (24, Lewes and Seaford) felt it was only fair to share that they had had a family leave the parish on account of the slowness of the national Church to meet them where they were: the reports that were being made around pastoral reassurance and safeguards should apply to both sides of this conversation. AF therefore wanted to ask: was the Pastoral Reassurance Group considering the matter of transparency around theology that various churches hold, which meant clergy would not be approached, and LGBTQ+ people would not be refused, should they come forward for blessing, or if the clergy wished to refuse a blessing?

+MC confirmed that these were precisely the concerns and area of work the Pastoral Reassurance Group was taking forward. The names of the people in that group, and the co-chairs, had now been published.

The Revd Natalie Loveless (NL) (52, Arundel & Bognor) had waited to hear +MC's address before posing her question: what was the communications policy and was +MC aware of the pastoral implications of that? NL had welcomed +MC's address, but felt it had been too late and to too narrow an audience, so she wanted to ask whether it had been a communications policy not to say anything. She referred to the pastoral principles given at a previous Synod: cast out fear, pay attention to power, and speak into silence. NL had felt that the silence had been deafening. She wondered if there had been a steer from Bishop's Council or senior staff. They had not received any response: other than +MC's and +Ruth Horsham's signed statement about marriage, nothing else had come out. Radio Sussex had requested interviews with senior staff, but only guested Andrew Woodward, very good as he had been. NL asked whether the Bishop was aware of the pastoral implications for people in the Diocese who shepherd, because that response had seemed aimed at conservative evangelicals and perhaps society priests; but there was fear, and the silence had not created a safe space. NL said she felt that +MC had skipped over an apology that morning, and reiterated his own position, but for NL it had not spoken into the silence, which had brought fear and hurt.

+MC responded that they were very aware of the pastoral implications, and it was the case that the point made about hurt and anxiety existed whatever your viewpoint in this very divided context we were facing. The process to which we had committed ourselves meant that, until we had definitive, clear and agreed decisions, it would be unwise to speculate on the range of options available to us as they were still being worked on. He regretted the timeframe for news sought over specific proposals: ‘What are you going to say?’, ‘What are the prayers going to say?’, ‘What pastoral guidance is there going to be?’, ‘What reassurance will there be?’; ‘How will clergy be treated?’, ‘What is going to happen to ordinands?’ However, rather than speculating and raising false expectations or groundless fears, he was afraid it was necessary for the groups to do their work, and for the reports to be agreed, before we could say: ‘This is what is going to happen’. Then there would be questions of debate at Synod, and reception of those things. +MC understood the unease and anxiety that existed across the spectrum, but did not believe this would be helped by speculating on a range of outcomes which may or may not materialise. Until we had something definite, he believed it was unwise to say anything further.

+MC thanked everyone who had submitted questions, and commended the matter to Synod Members’ prayers, as well as their continued attention to how this unfolded, with special prayers for our General Synod members meeting in July, who would need to continue to engage with this as we moved forward to November’s General Synod.

## 2. **STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDING, AND STRATEGIC MISSION AND MINISTRY FUNDING UPDATE**

Mr Stuart Britton, Strategic Programme Manager (SB), provided a summary update on major Strategic Development Funded (SDF) projects within the Diocese and gave an introduction to next strategic steps: the Diocesan Investment Programme (DIP). SB explained that his role is funded by the national church.

There are three SDF projects, which have attracted just over £5m of national funding from the Church over the last six years:

- **Funding for three church apostolic partnerships**  
(Completed 2017, £825k)
  - Development of multi-congregation church into St John’s Crawley; significant growth in breadth and depth, exceeding expected outcomes; embryonic resource church.
  - A church graft into Holy Trinity High Hurstwood: positive shift in community links with the church; strengthening of ministry at neighbouring CofE village school.
  - Development of multi-congregation church at St Matthias Brighton: solid growth through building strong community links.
- **Brighton and Hove: ‘Revitalising the church, renewing the city’**  
(2021-26, £2.7m): seeking to reverse a 50% decline in the CofE’s presence in the city back to a trajectory of growth and health; strategic investment in both evangelical and catholic traditions.
  - All Saints Hove – to grow and help others to grow through developing confident leaders in mission, and sending teams to other catholic parishes across the city. More than 300 people attended various Christmas services, many through new ministry initiatives; significant growth in children’s and families’ work, with more baptisms and weddings.

- St Peter's Brighton – to launch a further four new church partnerships, releasing ordained and lay ministers from St Peter's: St Richard's Hollingdean (started 10/21); St Leonard's Aldrington (11/21); soft launch at All Saints Patcham, and St Andrew's Moulscroomb (1/23). St Richard's has celebrated many transformed lives for Jesus through new community initiatives and Alpha; St Leonards has seen significant growth, and celebrated a return to the church building after 12 months redevelopment on Easter Sunday.
- **Crawley St John's: 'The beauty of Christ for Crawley's new generation.'** (2022, £1.6m). The Covid pandemic had amplified the needs of the city: specifically unemployment, debt, hunger, homelessness, and mental ill health.
  - Four new worshipping communities: partnerships at St Richard's (Three Bridges) & St Peter's (West Green); new plants at Kilnwood Vale and Forge Wood.
  - Leadership development pipeline ('Character School - developing leaders in the way of Jesus'): first cohort going extremely well, with a cohort of 17 people reflecting different ages and backgrounds, and new signups for September.
  - Accelerate upscaling of St John's as a resource church.
  - Strong Alpha attendance and 99 baptisms at St John's to date.

#### Strategic Steps for the next 10 years - Diocesan Investment Programme (DIP)

SB reported that £340m has been allocated by National Church to the Diocesan Investment Programme over the next three years (with further funding - uncommitted but likely - to be released beyond that) to directly advance diocesan vision and strategy plans for local parishes and communities.

There are three national strategic priorities for the 2020s:

- A church of missionary disciples
- A church where mixed ecology is the norm
- A church which is younger and more diverse.

SB reminded Synod of our Diocese's vision for growth (the 4 mores): more open; more converted to Jesus Christ; more generous; more engaged – in parallel, recognising the potential investment opportunity that national church would look to provide, with its experience across other dioceses also benefiting us.

He explained that they were considering an early framework of what implementation might look like across the Diocese, which is envisaged in phases, with a cross-weave geographically (instead of the hotspots of the 2017 project) and thematically: Families, Children and Youth; Prayer and Worship; Excellent Leaders; DIP Enablers, and Eco Mission, to impact the city, town and rural hubs. The phases are as follows:

- Current (phase 0) – design and prepare –taking stock, discerning and planning
- phase 1, 2024-25 Launch and 'Experiment' — learning and looking to success
- phase 2, 2025-27 Regroup, learn and expand — rolling out across the Diocese
- phase 3, 2027-30 Transition — growth is 'business as usual'.

The Revd Martin Poole (26, Brighton) asked whether we knew how much of that DIP fund we would be likely to receive. SB responded that we did not as yet: it was still early days in understanding the detail of

the projects. We first had to devise a strategy, and he expected we might know what level it might be potentially possible to receive in around nine months. +MC thanked SB for the presentation and for all the work that he was doing. +MC emphasised the great hope of growth becoming 'Business as Usual', and looked to the opportunity for further engagement at Synod next year, as we moved into the implementation stage.

### 3. **EXCEPTIONAL PATHWAY FOR ORDINATION (pages 1-3 of the supporting papers)**

The Revd Dr Keir Shreeves, Diocesan Director of Ordinands (KS), had been asked to address Synod about the Exceptional Discernment and Training Pathway for ordained ministry, explaining that this pathway had arisen from requests from the bishops against need within the Diocese. The procedure is contained within the papers, which it was expected would be refined over time - a pathway for candidates to be called out by a Bishop for self-supporting, Assistant-focus, locally-deployable, ordained ministry. The objective call - the call of the church - is prioritised over the subjective call - the personal inner call. While discernment would follow the national process, training would take place within the Diocese. There are three notable aspects:

- Sacramental need, due to lack of ordained ministers - especially the case in some rural areas - with appropriate candidates likely to already be in or near the specific context of need.
- Those being called out would already have a good deal of life experience, theological knowledge and ministerial practice. Therefore candidates over the current age limit of 55 would be considered. (There is no plan to change the current diocesan upper age limits for ordination: this pathway removes the age limit against diocesan need.)
- Thirdly, exceptional: discernment and training would usually take place at the same time because candidates would be able to meet the national formation qualities: personal and emotional maturity; ministerial experience; prior knowledge, and existing transferable experience.

KS reassured that training, though part-time, is sufficient. It is bespoke, taking into account the experience and knowledge of the candidate; uses qualified diocesan clergy, and there is an external examiner, with a key module provided by a theological college. Costs are low. Ordination is set for the point at which the candidate is ready, after which they follow standard curacy within a cohort. Candidates are ordained and licensed like any other – fully deacons and priests of the universal church - with future discernment possible; however, there is emphasis on the expectation and purpose of calling out being to serve their ministry in the location of need. KS briefly referenced the Caleb Stream, run by St Mellitus College – not used by the Diocese for a variety of reasons, including the £8k fee. Two people had already gone through the Pathway, with two currently on it.

KS invited Revd Trevor Harrison (TH) to share his personal experience. TH related that he was currently Assistant Curate at Groombridge in addition to being a notional full-time lawyer. He had worshipped in his local church for 35 years, where he had been prompted to explore coming to ordained ministry in June 2013. Having been told he was 'too old', he was recommended to Reader ministry, in which he had happily engaged. After an off-the-cuff remark of +MC's, he had been unsure about making the commitment to the Exceptional Pathway but, following a brief period of reflection and preparation, had had a virtual BAP in June 2020; been ordained Deacon and Curate in September 2020, and become an ordained priest in June 2021. Three weeks after this, his incumbent priest had retired - an interesting and fun period, albeit he was now happily serving under a new incumbent, and freer from much of the clerical administration.

Taking the Pathway had not been an easy decision in one sense - +MC's curve-ball had taken him aback - but TH felt that he had embraced ministry, and ministry him, and had had no difficulty in adapting to a very worthwhile role. Of broadly eucharistic and catholic tradition, he respects the various other traditions. Being licensed to the Deanery as well as to his parish, TH provides cover when needed - to date, having visited around half the parishes. TH considered it a matter of grace, thanked God to have been given this opportunity, and wished Godspeed to all those who followed in his path. +MC thanked KS for his presentation, and TH for his reflection and for his comments on grace, which were visible in his own life.

#### 4. **READER MINISTRY (pages 4-5 of the supporting papers)**

The Bishop of Lewes (+WL) referred those present to the relevant paper. He expressed a hope and certainty that a great deal of care was taken in helping individuals discern vocation in all of the varied vocations within the Church, of which readers formed a very important group; also in supporting them throughout their public ministry - through what they are called to do and be - in order to build the Church. The desire for this paper sat in trying to help individuals and church communities appreciate that support, and how it extended to drawing to a close well the aspect of public ministry - which might be the end of that particular part of that vocation, while of course not being the end of their vocation and calling as Christians and baptised members of the Church.

Mr Jonathan Cornell (203, Eastbourne) posed a number of questions. Firstly, it seemed from this paper that, apart from Peter Mansell, neither readers nor parish clergy had been consulted about recent changes: why had there not been more consultation with the people directly affected, and the review already put in place? What was the situation of readers who were already over 80, some by a number of years: was their PTO being removed forthwith? If not, what arrangements were being made for them? Had the feelings of those who had served their churches over many years, and had anticipated continuing to do so, been considered? Was it appropriate to make decisions at diocesan level about a person's capability to serve the church: would this not have been better left to the parish to decide? In many cases it would be parishes who would be the poorer for this development. Had there been sufficient understanding at diocesan level of how demoralised many readers felt, not just by these imposed decisions, but also by the way their role had been sidelined over recent years? There used to be diocesan-wide wardens, with pastoral oversight for readers within their area; a Readers' Committee, chaired by one of the bishops, who held responsibility for nurturing reader ministry; training days to encourage ministry, and an annual Readers' Conference with excellent speakers. No longer were any of those in place.

+WL responded that no reader's PTO was being removed from them. Most readers' PTOs were due for renewal at the beginning of next year. Shortly after the initial paper, an additional letter had followed, explaining interim arrangements which would allow all readers - with the permission of their incumbent and PCC - to apply to have their PTO extended for a further three years to 2027. Many readers aged 80 would therefore be 84 by the time that part of their ministry would cease. Much discussion had taken place, both with Peter Mansell - who has direct connection with readers all of the time; and also with clergy, much of that contained within the paper emanating from those clergy discussions, including genuine concerns which had been brought over a long period of time. Examples of previous difficulties included clergy arriving to an incumbency where there had been concern from people over the ability of a reader - perhaps having faithfully ministered for thirty years - to continue in some tasks; due to respect over that historical link, and a sensitivity in not letting that reader down, it could be incredibly difficult to engineer change at a local level and easier to follow diocesan guidelines.



In terms of ongoing training and care of readers, +WL underlined the hope that we continue to support them in all that they do; the way we do so perhaps needing to be constantly considered and reflected upon. There were considerably fewer readers than had once been the case, with other routes available for laity to assist in official roles within the life of the Church.

## **5. BISHOP'S CHAPLAIN FOR RETIRED MINISTRY**

The Bishop of Lewes (+WL) referenced, as many might already have noted, the appointment of the Revd Simon Hobbs (SH) as the Bishop's Chaplain for Retired Ministry. Himself recently retired as Mental Health Chaplain, Simon had a wealth of experience as a parochial parish priest. Chichester Diocese has the second largest number of retired clergy in the Southern Province. SH had been tasked with beginning to look at how we could better support those clergy, which would in part be steered from a survey kindly conducted by the Revd Martha Weatherill. Although working only one day a week, SH had already made a great start.

+WL underlined our huge gratitude for the incredible and diverse work of retired clergy, and +MC hoped to hear a personal report from SH, once he had been longer in post.

## **6. RACIAL JUSTICE STRATEGY (pages 4-5 of the supporting papers)**

+MC thanked the Revd Martha Mutikani (MM) for all the work, energy and enthusiasm she brought to this area of life. He was sorry to have received apologies from Revd Godfrey Kesari – one of the diocesan leaders in this sphere of work - who was visiting his very sick father in India, and asked that all kept father and son in their prayers.

In an introductory video, MM reflected she had always wondered what it would be like if there was no racism because when God created human-beings he intended them to be loving and to look on each other as equals: yes, some people could be better off, but no one should be 'better than'. She related a friend's story who, when talking about racial justice had been asked by a little girl: 'Please, miss, who is black and what does 'black' mean?' This had made MM's heart stop, a moment her friend had remembered so vividly: the realisation that we are born innocent, looking on each other as equals, as the creation of God. In the bible we hear everything God made was good, and that he made it to perfection. Looking at herself in the mirror, and her friends who are different - white, Indian, Chinese - MM sees them all as beautiful and wonders: if God deemed everything He made beautiful, where did the problems start, and how? On a recent visit to the Museum of International Slavery in Liverpool MM had realised they arose when we stopped looking at every human being as being made in the likeness of God. Only a full diversity that is multicultural and multiracial could fulfil the image of what God intended to be good, and so she wondered how we could all live together as people who are wonderfully and fearfully made by the God who says 'I know you; I know what I intend for you, and what I intend for you is that you may have peace, be loved, and I am the great I am'. People had been given authority and responsibility by God to steward his creation: no one should be 'better than'. MM sought to encourage the understanding that God wants equality of every human being, and that it is everyone's business to make that equality possible; for everyone to make His wonderful creation beautiful and adorable. As the little girl had said: 'What is black?': may we see beauty and not colour.

MM then spoke directly to Synod, explaining she was passionate on the subject of racial justice. She had moved to this country in 2000, and had a baby in 2001 (now at university). This daughter had done well in

primary school, but her first term following transition to secondary school had seen the first of three attempted suicides, as a result of racism directed towards her, examples having been receiving monkey and banana images on social media. MM worked with teachers and the school, their findings being that children could be very cruel, not because they had always been so, but because it had been acquired and learned; it is our responsibility, as a Church, to look at how we encourage courageous advocates of racial justice in our every parish.

MM's daughter had attempted suicide, not because there had not been people present who loved her – she had been supported by some white students and their mothers – but because there had not been enough advocates to help. As a Church, we need to hear what the Holy Spirit says to us: how can we listen more closely to what God is challenging us to be and to do? There is still evidence of current racism, one example being the refugee crisis in which Ukrainians have been welcomed into English homes, while some Afghans – who had arrived here earlier – were yet to be housed: why is that? We need to speak more about race, and to have greater representation of minority leadership - global majority heritage.

She and Godfrey Kesari had been encouraged by the Bishops to bring together a Strategy Committee comprising 15 people from across the Diocese. They consider it important to move away from lamenting and apologising, and instead start to act. They have chosen to focus on young people, making schools the direct way to communicate and promote their strategy. Five schools had been identified initially - St Catherine's, Steyning Grammar, Christ's Hospital, Holy Trinity and Bishop Luffa (pending) – to launch a Courageous Advocates programme, the ultimate aim being to have Racial Justice Ambassadors in every diocesan church school, and Diversity Days (already trialled at Steyning Grammar).

MM summarised that racism is injustice caused by racial discrimination, which remains a real and pervasive reality in our world in both explicit and implicit ways. She concluded with a quotation Godfrey Kesari had cited from Revelation 7, and asked for God's blessing as they work to make Racial Justice a priority in every parish.

+MC echoed that there had been some fantastic work with young people – a Racial Justice celebration in the Cathedral, which had seen young ambassadors gathering, sharing faith and hopes for a new shape and form of society in which race was not a source of peer discrimination. As a result of MM's work we had been identified as a diocese to receive one of the visiting Windrush bishops, Bishop Leon Golding from Jamaica, from 16 – 20 June 2023, organised by the Government in partnership with the Church. This was a great opportunity to learn from one another, and to share our commitment to moving forward to a new phase of life in which every person of every nation, race and colour is valued. Details were being finalised, and would include involvement with some members' parishes.

## **7. STORRINGTON DEANERY SYNOD MOTION**

Dr Brian Hanson (262, Storrington Deanery) (BH) moved "That, noting the proposal of the Church Commissioners to create an investment fund of £100 million to mitigate their Fund's connection with the slave trade, this Diocesan Synod considers that the proposal should not be implemented without prior debate and approval in the General Synod."

BH reported that the motion in Storrington Deanery Synod had been carried by 19 votes to nil, with 4 abstentions, and had then been sent to this Synod for debate. What had prompted the motion; and what was Deanery Synod attempting to achieve? The motion had been tabled as a reaction to the news of the fund. Their Synod had not found this an easy question to consider: they were all agreed that slavery was

a terrible time in human history, which they all deplored; racial justice is what we all strive for. However, Deanery members had wrestled with the question of whether the establishment of such a fund was an appropriate use of the Church's money, and some had not been convinced that this was the way to achieve racial justice. Having read the Church Commissioners' circulated paper, BH did not find the Commissioners' arguments convincing. The paper states that Queen Anne's Bounty had not benefitted from any capital appreciation of the South Sea Company's annuities, but 30 per cent of the income had been derived from the Company's dividends. BH reminded Synod that transatlantic slavery had not simply been perpetrated by the British, but had been widespread across the world – for example, Arab nations had taken huge numbers of slaves from Africa; also, the British - and Anglicans in particular – had been at the forefront of the abolition of slavery movement. There was therefore uncertainty over whether the Church's money should be used for this purpose; furthermore, some consternation that public knowledge of such a Fund would make it more difficult to raise money from the general public for capital projects to repair their church.

A second concern had been whether decisions about allocating huge sums of the Church's money were being taken by the appropriate people. BH opined that the Church Commissioners do a fantastic job of managing their assets, but would argue that these were, by law, assets of the CofE; whereas reading the charts provided, he had gained the slight impression that it was the Commissioners' money and that they made grants to the CofE out of their own generosity. The papers state that monies are allocated by the Church Commissioners Board of Governors, numbering 33 people, and by the Archbishops' Council of 19 people, but that they take their decisions on the recommendation of the Triennium Funding Working Group, comprising 11 people: five bishops, three clergy and three laity. Should £100m be diverted away from the mission of the CofE, as some would see it, by 11 people? Storrington Deanery Synod had been concerned about whether the destination of such large sums should be without reference to a larger cross-section of the Church - namely the General Synod - which at least has elected representatives from every diocese.

Storrington Deanery was aware that, owing to the slowness of Synodical government, the motion had been overtaken by events, in that the Fund was already in existence: therefore, if the motion, as drafted, were to be passed by this Synod, it would not be capable of being debated in General Synod. BH nevertheless wished to ask Bishop's Council whether, having listened to this debate, it might consider tabling for debate in a future Diocesan Synod a motion about decision-making involving large sums of the Church's money, with a view to that motion being sent to the General Synod for debate. In summary: is the Transatlantic Slavery Fund a good and proper use of the Church's money; and were the decisions to set up the Fund taken by an appropriate body?

+MC thanked BH, and also for his clarification in terms of the process: that this motion in its present form could not go to General Synod; and also BH's hope that we could return to the subject, and the particular concerns raised, and that that process could go through the Bishop's Council.

+MC was enormously grateful to Gareth Mostyn, Chief Executive and Secretary to the Church Commissioners (GM), for being present to contribute to the debate by informing Synod how decisions are made: the Commissioners' approach to investment, distribution, and the impact of the investment fund. Synod would then continue to discuss the issue but, as BH had identified, the outcome of the motion would not go to General Synod, but therefore rest there.

Gareth Mostyn thanked Synod for the invitation. He supports the Board and its committees to fulfil their purpose of supporting CofE ministry, particularly in areas of need and opportunity. The Commissioners

were best known for being stewards of the Church's Endowment Fund, but also provide financial and administrative support for cathedrals, bishops in their ministry, as well as having a role in some parish reorganisations.

The Board of Commissioners comprises 27 (plus six Members of the Houses of Commons and Lords): two Archbishops; four General Synod laity (elected); three General Synod clergy (elected); four bishops from the House of Bishops (elected); two deans (elected) as well as others appointed by the Crown or Archbishops for their respective financial, legal or grant-making skills (including five on General Synod). Therefore, the majority are General Synod members, representing the views not just of General Synod, but of their respective dioceses and parishes (while ensuring they formally operate as trustees of the Commissioners). A number of Crown appointments as well as an MP in government ensure the maintenance of close ties between Church and State – an important aspect since the Endowment Fund has its origins in a fund set up by Queen Anne in 1704.

Funds are invested professionally and ethically to generate returns. Over the current 3-year budgeting period, £1.2bn would be distributed, which it was hoped to maintain in coming years - about 20% of the CofE's running costs, with the majority met by the generosity of parishioners' giving. Long-term investment performance is key: this had helped grow distributions at three times the inflation rate over the last 15 years and, in the current budget period, there is growth of a further 30%.

The Assets Committee determines the investment strategy as well as how much can be distributed, with a fiduciary duty to manage that in the best way possible. It is a robust body, comprising experienced financiers (and four General Synod members) whose skill and experience are critical in ensuring both wise investments and wise decisions in their distribution and deployment, as well as judging when to say 'no'. The Triennium Funding Working Group brings together members of the Church Commissioners Board, with members of the Archbishops' Council and members of the House of Bishops, who recommend priorities, which come together with the Assets Committee recommendation of a quantum, which is then agreed by the House of Bishops, and Church Commissioners before being presented to General Synod to vote its support. It is a thorough, efficient and focused process, so that decisions do get made, the overarching goal being to use CofE money to support work of the CofE, shaped on the Five Marks of Mission.

In 2019 the Audit Committee had proposed undertaking research into the Fund's history to determine whether it had profited from historic transatlantic slavery. Colleagues 'who knew or thought they knew' felt it would not be an issue as the Fund had originally come from taxes on clergy, which had been gathered in 1704, in what became known as Queen Anne's Bounty, with no links to slavery. However, the transatlantic slave trade had been a significant shaper in the society and economy of England as well as around the world, and we needed to better understand and know whether the CofE Fund had profited. Research had been very detailed, including the examination of 300-year-old, handwritten ledgers and, after three years of this investigation, it had become clear that the origins of today's Fund had come partly from the abhorrent practice of enslaving people two or three hundred years ago. There were two main ways: it had significant investment in the South Sea Company, which had bought and sold, traded and transported, millions of enslaved people purely for profit, who were imprisoned and shipped in grotesque conditions, many dying in the process. Accumulated investments were equivalent to a sum of £400m today. The Fund had also received benefactions from individuals, the incomes of around 30% of whom might have been derived from slavery.

GM emphasised that transparency over the findings was paramount in order to move forward and invest

in a better future for all. It was hoped and prayed that this could be a source of hope, change and renewal. They had been deeply saddened and ashamed by what had been learned. Therefore, in response, a funding commitment of £100m had been made with the intention of creating a lasting legacy. A new Oversight Group was being formed to work with the Church to help shape and deliver that overall response, so that it could be really positive, listening widely to ensure that work was done sensitively, sensibly and with accountability. The plan is to establish an impact investment fund that will grow over time to make lasting, positive impact as well as to support further research and help dioceses/churches if they wish to research their own history. The sum of £100m represents less than 3% of the £3.6bn distribution of the next nine years, for funding plans to which they remain committed and which have not been reduced. GM explained this response is an essential part of how mission is carried out: there is currently hard work to invest funds in order to make excellent returns in an ethical way, but at one time in our history that had been far from the truth, for which we are very sorry. No amount of money would ever repair the damage done. The Church is not always seen as a safe and inclusive place for global majority heritage worshippers, so it is hoped and believed that this visible demonstration that the Church is here for all could help to make the CofE more relevant to more people across our nation today: a Church where everyone is welcome. We can live this out by taking responsibility for our Fund's past involvement in the degradation of fellow humans, seeing our response as an essential missional activity that will support the work and ministry of the CofE: having heard MM's speech earlier that morning, GM was doubly convinced of this.

+MC thanked GM for the helpful background to the motion in front of Synod. Points and expectations over results of the vote had been clarified: it would not go to General Synod. Nevertheless, there remained time for comments and debate over the issues raised.

The Revd Canon Mark Gilbert (131, Petworth Deanery) supported the motion. Firstly, the impact on giving away £100m, without the Church owning it, might have been the right decision for the Church Commissioners to have made – but it should have been made at General Synod and owned by the whole Church because it had a huge impact on a country parish, when you were trying to raise your Parish Share. People feel that the Church has 'loads of money', whereas we all knew that not to be the case. MG hoped this would return to Bishop's Council, where we could voice the belief that General Synod is the appropriate place for such decisions to be made.

The Revd Jonathan Fraiss (74, Battle Deanery) reported that their Deanery Synod had also had discussion on this matter, but knew they had been out of time for the business deadline, and assumed it would then be discussed in November. They were glad of Church House's helpful suggestion to bring something into today's debate instead. There had been two parts to their discussion not previously raised in the debate. One had been the emphasis on making any distribution 'fair and equal'. People had wondered how you could do this, since events had been so long ago: the implications so major today, but where would you start, which had seemed to cause a blockage for them. Also, what was the modern-day challenge? They felt sure modern-day slavery would be the sort of area into which we needed to bring our giving and our offer of 'mitigating work'. Their motion had been carried 15 to 9. JF reflected that they had struggled in the debate, with strong word that the history needed to be broader. Part of our modern culture involved children being educated that everything we did in the past was wrong; but the Church had led the way in abolishing the slave trade; the English enacted Slavery Abolition, and the Royal Navy squadron had policed the oceans to intercept slavers from other countries. As a Deanery, they would be pleased to support any direction that this Synod wished to take the motion before it.

Mr Ian Macdowell (217, Crowborough Deanery) wished his Deanery had debated this. It was not an easy

topic to consider: it was abhorrent to think about: we are to be a holy people, seeking God's blessing, so it was troubling to find this in our history. He agreed with BH that this is something the whole Church needed to consider. As he had read the Church Commissioners' papers he had wondered: is £100m enough? He did not want to be associated with this history, and would welcome wider discussion within the Church as to what we should best be doing.

Mr John Booth (171, Arundel & Bognor Deanery) (JB) absolutely applauded the putting-right of historic wrongs, and wished to congratulate the Church Commissioners for their long history of managing the Church's assets to a very high standard. Where he sympathised with the Storrington motion was over the question of accountability, and also over the importance of proper debate in order to bring out all the angles in difficult subjects. He had that week met with the new Prime Minister of Grenada who had been visited by the BBC journalist, Laura Trevelyan, who had told him she wanted to right some of the wrongs, which had been perpetrated by her own family historically, by making available £100k to the people of Grenada. While being naturally grateful, the Prime Minister had felt there was something neo-imperialistic, in that she wanted to direct them in how to spend this money. The Church Commissioners' gesture was laudable, motivated by all the right feelings, but JB advocated it was important for there to be proper debate, perhaps at General Synod, which might flush out some nuanced issues. It was important not to perpetuate previous wrongs to recipients' forebears by giving it in the wrong spirit.

The Revd Canon Paul Seaman (136, Storrington) (PS) said that, as far as the Church's finances were concerned, many people saw no distinction between the national Church, our diocesan Household of Faith and our local parish: for them it is the CofE and all are funded directly or indirectly from the same source, money which is plentiful and readily available. This perception or impression, however inaccurate, does frustratingly shape the thinking of many when considering how generous they should be in supporting the Church's mission and ministry, both at diocesan and parish level. The reporting of large amounts of spending by the Church Commissioners - however commendable the cause - does have an impact on how people in the deaneries and parishes respond to appeals for more generous giving. PS had had this corroborated by clergy friends in other parts of the country; by conversations he had had with people in their local congregations, and in wider communities across their Deanery. Their efforts to encourage more in Generous Giving to support ministry across the Diocese, as well as trying to draw in funds from the wider community to help maintain expensive church buildings, were being undermined by some of the spending decisions made by the national Church through the Church Commissioners. It was PS's view that, if these major spending proposals were more widely considered, the impact on the Church's work locally might be less significant and less detrimental at parish level. Storrington Deanery Synod would want to encourage the Church Commissioners to consider more carefully, and consult more widely, so that the impact on the funding challenges of the local church across the country would be minimised.

The Revd Arwen Folkes (24, Lewes & Seaford Deanery) (AF) spoke against the motion and strongly urged Synod to reject it. The money being proposed by the Church Commissioners was not a return, a gift, 'surplus to requirements', or an investment project, but the return of monies that were not our own to the community from which they had been stolen. It was not even therefore for the Church Commissioners to determine or to debate how that money should be spent, but up to the community to whom it rightfully belonged. AF felt embarrassed and ashamed that we have received this motion, after hearing a presentation on racial justice from MM, who had spoken so movingly. She did not want to take this embarrassment or shame further by voting in favour of this motion.

+MC invited MM to comment. She explained that hearing the motion had made her feel embarrassed and so emotional. [The monies are] an atonement for what we sinned against - a gesture of reconciliation -

and MM did not think we should be considering the motion.

+MC expressed the hope to Gareth Mostyn that this had proved an opportunity for him to be informed and asked whether, on that basis, he wished to make a response.

Gareth Mostyn said that this motion debate - whatever the outcome - would not just rest at this Synod: he would share it with the Church Commissioners' Board and at their AGM the following month. He wanted to apologise for having sounded emotional during part of his report; he hadn't meant to be overbearing in that way, but had been taken aback by his own reaction when speaking about certain aspects. He had listened carefully to the series of comments about the impact on giving. The Commissioners were working on additional material about the work they have done, which he hoped dioceses and parishes would find useful in giving explanations to fellow parishioners. He agreed that the point made about modern slavery had been an excellent one, and explained that the Church Commissioners are also committed to countering modern slavery, working and lobbying with other investing bodies to ensure supply chains are fair and do not entail modern slavery. Addressing the question of whether £100m 'was enough', he reiterated his earlier comment that no amount would ever be enough. The Church Commissioners had wanted to commit a 'serious' amount of money, while at the same time not undermining their support of wider CofE ministry.

GM again thanked Synod for the invitation to be present, noting it had been a privilege.

Mr John Booth (171, Arundel & Bognor Deanery) raised a Point of Order, proposing that Synod move to next business for two reasons. Firstly, that the motion was effectively timed out because, as BH had said, the Fund had already been set up; and secondly because, for many, this was about the accountability of the Church Commissioners and not about the particular financial decision they had made. He therefore felt it would be divisive to put it to the vote, given that there was that different understanding in Synod.

Dr Hanson responded simply to say that he had sympathy with John Booth but that, as he had said when he had moved the motion, they realised it was defective in that it could not go to General Synod, but still felt within the Deanery that this was a matter that should be considered by the Bishop's Council. BH was so sorry that Martha Mutikani had taken the view she had. He reiterated that the motion was not that the £100m fund should not have been made, just about who should have made that decision: whether it should be the Church Commissioners' 27 board members or – as Mark Gilbert and others had said – whether it should be a wider forum, namely the General Synod. BH therefore resisted next business because he thought it would be good for Bishop's Council to be aware of where their Diocesan Synod stood on this matter.

A vote was taken the Point of Order that we move to next business:

In favour: 46

Against: 49

Abstentions: 7

The Point of Order proposal to move to next business FAILED.

The Revd Arwen Folkes (24, Lewes & Seaford Deanery) asked whether, given BH's clarification that the figure was merely illustrative of a different issue, we could move to amend the motion before it went to vote in order to remove any specific mention of any monies, so that it was a general query over the actions of the Church Commissioners.

+MC was advised that we were not able to amend the motion at that point.

The Motion was therefore voted on, as it stood in front of Synod.

The motion was PASSED:

In favour: 50

Against: 37

Abstentions: 18

+MC confirmed this was an illustrative vote in terms of procedure. He thanked everyone who had contributed: Storrington Deanery, through Dr Hanson, for raising an important issue, and to Gareth Mostyn for his contributions.



## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE CHICHESTER DIOCESAN FUND AND BOARD OF FINANCE (INCORPORATED)**

### **8. PRESENTATION OF THE 2022 ACCOUNTS (see separate booklet)**

Mrs Lesley Lynn spoke to the Accounts as Chair of the Finance Committee. She began by thanking all the parishes across Sussex because a very challenging budget for Parish Share had been set at £13.5m, as we had come out of the pandemic, and the response had been brilliant: income raised in 2022 had been over £150k more than budgeted, a simply heroic effort for which she was immensely grateful. The other ‘thank you’ was to our tiny Finance team of three, which had been affected by the Finance Director’s illness and hospitalisation, as well as staff turnover, yet still managed to bring together the Accounts and have them audited to timetable.

As the headline number showed, we had managed to bring in a smaller deficit than in 2021, and considerably smaller than had been anticipated or forecast. We had not drawn significantly into our reserves or depleted our general funds. LL was really thankful to God for guiding that result because greater resilience would be so desperately needed as we faced the current year, which would be much more challenging.

There were no questions about the Accounts.

Mrs Lesley Lynn (Chair) moved “That the Annual Accounts and Report of the DBF for 2022 be received”.

The motion was PASSED by a show of hands.

### **9. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS**

Mrs Lesley Lynn (Chair) explained that they were in the process of putting the audit out to tender, so LL was asking that we did not automatically deem the reappointment of haysmacintyre: they were tendering, but Bishop’s Council would be making the decision over whether to appoint another company or to reappoint. LL thanked the three really good and capable volunteers who served on the Audit team, who were much more experienced in grilling audit firms than LL; she confidently reassured Synod that, under their and Catherine Dawkins’ direction, the tender process would yield a good outcome.

Mrs Lesley Lynn (Chair) moved “That, pending re-tendering of the audit contract, haysmacintyre LLP, Chartered Accountants, shall not be deemed to be re-appointed as auditors of the Company, without prejudice to the Directors’ right to re-appoint them if they think fit at the conclusion of the tendering process, and notice of this resolution shall be given to them”.

The motion was PASSED by a show of hands.

## 10. ETHICAL INVESTMENT AND ENVIRONMENT UPDATE

Mrs Lesley Lynn (Chair) said members might recall that, when she had last addressed this meeting, it was to report that the CofE National Investment Bodies (NIBS) had just decided to dis-invest from BP, but that we as a Diocese had decided to diverge from doing this, and remain invested in BP, because we believed that the BP Board was certainly not the most egregious of the fossil-fuel companies in terms of their plans for meeting targets set in Paris for reducing carbon emissions. However, LL – while being correct about NIBS’ direction of travel – had been wrong about their timing. They were reconsidering their attitude to investment in fossil-fuel companies, but not making a proposal until their July Synod; they were therefore unwilling to engage with LL until after that, meaning we would instead bring the matter back to Synod in May.

LL made one observation: as many members may have read in the papers, at BP’s AGM about three weeks earlier, one activist investor had put in a motion that the Board reinstate interim targets for carbon reductions for 2023 (which BP had removed almost as soon as the CofE said they were going to dis-invest). Chichester Diocese, still holding a minute percentage of shares, had been able to vote in favour of that motion, albeit the motion was defeated. The CofE NIB (having sold its shares) did not have a say. LL believed that engagement with these companies was the way to go, and was very disappointed that the CofE NIB was unable to vote on that motion with the other environmentally-concerned BP investors.

As an economist, LL does not believe that working only on the supply side of the equation is the way to solve climate change; we should also work on the demand side. As a Diocese, we are moving towards making ourselves carbon neutral. LL was pleased to report that great progress on heat decarbonisation had been made, with plans in place for 67 of our 68 schools; and on the basis of which one of our schools had successfully applied for a government grant for work to be done on decarbonisation, with another school in the process of applying. Our schools represent a larger proportion of our carbon footprint than either our churches or parsonages, so effort on the schools side is really important in meeting our targets for carbon neutrality.

LL commented that, with great foresight, Synod had turned down the request for money to employ someone who would work on carbon neutrality and grants, and she therefore wanted to record her immense thanks, on behalf of everyone, to those on the Diocesan Board of Education for their enormous amount of work on heat decarbonisation plans and securing the relevant grants. On the parsonage side there had been two test cases: Scott Ralph had already completed an air source heat pump installation in one parsonage, and the other was out to tender. The Archbishops’ Council had made funds available to engage a consultant.

+MC thanked LL for her report and for her enthusiasm. He underlined that this had simply been an update, and explained that there would be a further report at the November Synod when there would be more opportunity for debate. He asked that any questions on this subject be sent in by email, due to time pressures on the meeting.

## **MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN SYNOD**

### **11. EASY FUNDRAISING (pages 11-13 of the supporting papers)**

The Revd Andrew Smith, Generous Giving Adviser (AS) was grateful for the opportunity to spotlight this way of obtaining a charity contribution for your church when you shop online with any of 7,000 companies, who make a contribution of between 0.5% and 5%. It works really well. A number of churches in our Diocese had benefited from it over a number of years, but AS was very grateful to Lesley Lynn who, when he had joined the team a couple of years earlier, had prompted him to look into this, and in May 2021 he had set up a formal relationship with Easyfundraising. Chichester was now the best-performing diocese within their programme, both in terms of revenue and number of churches registered. It had been a significant contributor to a number of our churches, which had been looking for different ways of raising funds.

AS demonstrated its ease of use, with just four steps to register as a supporter: starting on the diocesan website, you select Parish Support and Resources; next click on Generous Giving which offers the Easyfundraising tab; finally, a weblink reaches our dedicated web page where you can register. If your church is already registered you simply enter it in the box; if it is not, there is a small procedure, after which it would become the recipient of funds. Likewise, by registering in a similar fashion with shops you regularly use, their website instantly recognises you, and automatically prompts you to accept their donation alongside your purchase – again, benefiting your church in just one or two clicks.

Supporting Papers reference the detail. Some testimonial videos from the Revd Lucy Sullivan and church officers testified to the ease and success of the scheme, and underlined that participants could be drawn not just from the church but also village community, and beyond, to make a contribution at no additional cost to themselves, simply when making their regular grocery, decorating and other purchases.

+MC thanked AS for highlighting this, and for the support work that goes on in various aspects of our fundraising support.

### **12 CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL FRIENDS (page 13 of the supporting papers)**

+MC welcomed to Synod for the first time Mr Malcolm Gill, Chairman of Chichester Cathedral Friends (MG) who support our wonderful Cathedral. Mr Gill reported that they are a registered charity, founded by Bishop George Bell in 1939, with roughly a thousand Friends. They are run by volunteers, with most members living in and around West Sussex and the Chichester area. Their main sources of income are subscriptions, donations and legacies, the last being extremely important. Among findings from a recent members' survey, the vast majority had stated 'supporting our wonderful Cathedral' as being their principal reason for joining; while others also cited social reasons - to meet new people and to enjoy some of the activities. The Friends' objectives are straightforward: to encourage interest in the Cathedral through their activity programme; to assist and support the Dean and Chapter, mainly financially; and to promote the Cathedral's mission.

The Friends support the Cathedral by making grants, following application from the Dean and Chapter, the sole beneficiaries. Over the last 85 years they had contributed to an enormous range of different projects, including: new chairs in the Nave; new robes and vestments; sponsoring a Choral Sponsorship and supporting the Music side of the Cathedral – namely a new Platinum Endowment Trust for Music,

underwriting the costs of Music within the Cathedral in all its aspects for the foreseeable future, which had been launched with a grant of £25k. A new toilet block had been one of the largest ever projects; new bell ropes, and they had also contributed towards the statue of St Richard outside the West Door. They hold a range of events: concerts, talks and discussions, speaker lunches, coffee mornings and coach trips.

The Friends would love to have more members, and MG invited everyone to please join them or encourage your parishioners to do so, and generally spread the word. The support of the parishes was vital for what is really the Jewel in the Crown of Sussex. Annual membership fee is only £15 (£25 joint).

+MC thanked MG for his time and presence. The Normans had made us a diocese in 1075: we remain the same shape and size, with the Cathedral still where it was in 1075: there was something in that continuity, and in what that building points to, which is of enormous importance to us all.

### **13 REPORT ON THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL – written report (pages 14-15 of the supporting papers)**

+MC had been asked to draw Synod's attention to a detail in the report on the second page (p15 of the circulated papers) about the response to the LLF process. The note says that it could have a detrimental effect on finances – and we've already heard that that is being carefully monitored. However, he had been asked to clarify that the point had also been made that we were not simply worried about the money: we are worried about our fellowship and household life together. The fragmenting of our life together is something we want to recognise as a danger, and surely find a way to avoid that risk. +MC confirmed that this had certainly been very clearly stated.

Mr John Booth (171, Arundel & Bognor Deanery) said the Report was a true reflection of those two meetings. He was glad to accept the Bishop's amendment, and to answer any questions. There were no questions.

Mr John Booth moved "that this report, in my name, be received".

The report was received by a show of hands.

### **14 REPORT FROM GENERAL SYNOD – written reports (pages 16-17 of the supporting papers)**

The Revd Arwen Folkes moved "That this report be received".

There were no questions.

The report was received by a show of hands.

### **15. QUESTIONS UNDER SO69**

Dr Brian Hanson (BH) asked +MC: as a member of the Cathedral Council, and having been rebuffed on numerous occasions concerning the renaming of 4 Canon Lane as George Bell House, whether the four Wiccamical Canons had reported to Bishop's Council as to how the reputation of Bishop George Bell could be restored in the Church and, in particular, in this Diocese, and if so, whether that report could be made available to the members of this Synod?

+MC explained that there had been a Zoom meeting with the Wiccamical Canons to enquire into how best

we could promote, explain, understand and value the theological, ecumenical and artistic achievements of Bishop George Bell. It had been a very useful meeting, from which there had been no formal report, but action. They were now in the process of securing funding for an ongoing series of lectures to draw in a wider range of voices on a range of issues. It had agreed with the Cathedral in principle how that funding could be disbursed; how lectures could happen, and they were also looking at a potential group of people for a Colloquium. Once the finance package had been agreed and settled (which had taken a little time, in part due to pressures on the Finance Department) and the first of the series launch had been agreed, together with details over hosting in the Cathedral, it was +MC's hope that they would be able not only to inform Bishop's Council, but to advertise more widely across the Diocese and beyond.

It was therefore +MC's expectation that the piece of work envisaged - but which had not really taken off - for the house called 4 Canon Lane, dedicated as George Bell House, would now be given a discrete funding programme, so that the theological reflection work under George Bell's patronage could continue.

The Bishop summarised that it had been a long, busy and wide-ranging Synod. If members had outstanding questions they had been unable to voice, or further important matters on which they would like clarification, he asked that they email the Diocesan Secretary, and they would respond as best they could.

+MC ended the meeting with words from Martin Luther King and a blessing.