

General Synod Update

Diocesan Synod - 3 July 2021

Presented by Kat Alldred and Revd Alicia Dring on behalf of the General Synod Representatives

It may be useful to start by giving those new or unfamiliar with the General Synod a brief overview and introduce ourselves. The Diocese of Derby is allocated three lay and three clergy seats at General Synod (this figure remains the same for the next quinquennium).

Representatives (reps) are elected by Diocesan Synod members but do not have to be Diocesan Synod members themselves (they only need to be 18 years or older and on an electoral roll within the diocese). When you become a member of general synod, you automatically become an ex-officio member of Diocesan Synod. The term of office is five years.

The current reps are:

- Kat Alldread (Lay: NE Deanery),
- Sian Kellogg (Lay: Dove & Derwent Deanery),
- Rhodri Williams (Lay: Derby City Deanery),
- Rev. Mark Broomhead (Clergy: NE Deanery),
- Rev. Alicia Dring (Clergy: Derby City Deanery)
- Fr. Julian Hollywell (Clergy: Derby City Deanery)

New elections will take place over the summer.

There is a real team approach, not always agreeing but always supporting one another as members. Ensuring the diocese is represented at every session and business is brought back from Synod for us to act upon. For example, the Living in Love and Faith (LLF) work is being championed by Alicia, who is leading a diocesan group to facilitate the delivery of the programme throughout the diocese. And with the safeguarding past case review2 (PCR2), reps have met with +Libby to consider how we can help connect with survivors to recognise and respond to the PCR2 outcomes.

At February and April's meetings, Synod was presented with the Church of England's discernment of its [Vision and Strategy](#), - to **proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ afresh in each generation** to the people of England.

The work to develop the new Vision and Strategy is underway but the foundations are already clear: The Church of England must adapt and put its trust in God to become a **simpler, humbler, bolder Church that is Jesus Christ centred and Jesus Christ shaped**.

Clear links were made with [The Five Marks of Mission](#) and [LLF](#) and we saw stories of hope and salvation which were uplifting to hear and helped visually root the CoFE vision into relatable analogies.

Safeguarding was once again quite rightly at the heart of the agenda with the Safeguarding Code of Practice Measure approved and response provided to the recommendation made in the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). Other legislative business included the approval of the Legislative Reform (Church of England pensions) order 2021, the Clergy

Discipline Measure 2003: Code of practice and payments to the Churches Conservation Trust Order 2021.

Synod saw the appointment of Dame Caroline Spelman as Chair of the Dioceses Commission, Mr Clive Mather as Chair of the Church of England Pensions Board and Canon Robert Hammond as Chair of the Business Committee.

There were some challenging private members motions and questions, with a distinct few having a loud voice at the table, which clearly split the Synod down the middle at times. Reflecting on this point, we want to invite and encourage you as Diocesan Synod members to bring motions and questions forward, to utilise the opportunity we have to raise these issues on the behalf of the diocese.

Next week will be the fourth online meeting of General Synod. This is the final meeting of this term of members whose term was extended during 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic restrictions making elections difficult. First planned to be held in person in York, then moved to London, the meeting is now to be held online due to the current government restrictions and with a reduced agenda.

On the agenda are the:

- **Annual Reports, 2022 Budget, Climate Change,**
- Recommendations of '**Responsible Representation**' for the Crown Nominations Commission (CNC)
- Presentations on **Racial Justice, Safeguarding, Living in love and faith (LLF)** and **Transforming Effectiveness.**
- As well as debates on the **Clergy Discipline Measure (CDM)** and the **CofE Vision and Strategy**
- Plus, reviews of the **Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011** and **Five Guiding Principles.**

We look forward to hearing the executive summary of the 'Coming Home' report; tackling the Housing Crisis Together and seeing how we support all this being weaved into the future work and decisions in our diocese. And to conclude the Synod there will be farewells to those General Synod members who will not be standing for re-election this year.

It will most probably be an intense four days on Zoom, with the unfortunate disadvantage of not being together as Synod Reps to talk over business but the group will be sure to keep in constant touch with one another via our WhatsApp group for support, encouragement and reflection.

Finally, as this may be our last time presenting the General Synod report to you (with elections for the next quinquennium soon to commence) we would all like to thank you for your support and faith electing us as general synod reps. It has been a privilege to serve the diocese in this way.

Living in Love and Faith

Just a short report about progress with rolling out LLF within the Diocese. Working with Bishop Malcolm we have put together a group of people who will be trained as facilitators for the small groups to discuss the material. It is hoped that all facilitators will undertake the course themselves over the summer before we begin running groups in the Autumn. We also hope to put a working group together to assist with the management of the project.

Eeva John who is the National Enabling Officer for LLF will be coming for a taster session with us in the Diocese on the morning of Thursday 7 October – at the moment this is likely to be on Zoom, but we will let you know more details over the summer. This session will be open to all and following on from that we hope to have a number of online and in person groups available for people to join.

We know that this is a challenging issue for some to discuss and the material allows space for us to share things honestly and openly – whatever your own perspective.

However, what is absolutely crucial is that all participants must be able to feel safe to voice their experiences and opinions without judgement or censure. As well as facilitators, chaplains will also be available to support participants.

And how ever tempting it may be to run a course in your own parish, we would encourage you to invite someone else in to facilitate – strong opinions from the leaders of your church can dissuade others from being truly honest in sharing their experiences. Maybe you could consider swapping facilitators with another parish to keep things as independent as you can.

And finally, I am indebted to Sian Kellogg who has purloined 100 free course books for us to share across the Diocese. I do hope you will take the opportunity to engage with the material with open hearts and minds to hear from God and from the experiences of the participants. Take a look at the [LLF](#) material online.

Please allow the Spirit to challenge you, to reveal your prejudice, to grow your heart of compassion and to hear what God is saying to our church in 2021. LLF is not here to force anyone to change their mind but to grow us all in integrity and hope.

Please call or email me if you want to talk further (Alicia Dring; alicia@stpeterlittleover.org.uk).