

## **Diocesan Synod Digest**

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

Diocesan Synod met for their first meeting of 2024 at the YMCA Showroom in Lincoln, and the first meeting chaired by our new Chair of the House of Clergy, the Revd Canon Martyn Taylor.

After the usual welcomes, coffee and breakfast sandwiches on arrival, Synod were led in prayerful reflection of John 15 1-8, Jesus as the True Vine, by the Revd Julie Donn. Following approval of the minutes of the previous meeting, Synod received a question submitted under Standing Order 72 by Ruth Brewin from Haverstoe Deanery, relating to the slavery reparations planned by the National Church. A full response was provided by David Dadswell, Diocesan Secretary.

### **Bishop's Presidential Address**

The bishop gave an address to Synod, where he focused on the Gospel reading we had heard about the invitation to abide in Christ, and that the invitation is one we need to hear particularly, in times of uncertainty, change, anxiety. The bishop considered the themes of being called and sent, and of being ambassadors of the Gospel, particularly with the backdrop of our changing world and in the context of Time to Change Together. The bishop's full address can be found [here](#).

### **The Annual General Meeting**

The next section of the meeting formed the Annual General Meeting of the Lincoln Diocesan Trust and Board of Finance Ltd. The minutes of the meeting of the previous AGM were approved, then the Chair of the Board of Finance, Canon Prof Muriel Robinson took Synod through a PowerPoint presentation pulling out the key themes of report including charts detailing overall income and expenditure. The PowerPoint slides can be used to explain headlines of the report to your Deanery Synods and PCCs and can be found [here](#).

After some initial questions of clarification, Synod engaged in a round table discussion followed by open debate on the Financial Statements before they were formally received by members. In their final order of business under the AGM, Synod approved the recommendation from the Bishop's Council of Diocesan Trustees to reappoint Haysmacinture LLP as our Auditors for the 2024.

### **Safeguarding**

Synod received a presentation introduced by the Bishop of Lincoln and led by Jack Redeyoff, Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, on the work of the Safeguarding department. The presentation and following discussion focused on the importance of Safer Recruitment and People Management, as both a requirement from the House of Bishops guidance as well as an important part of the impending external Safeguarding audit (INEQE). Synod members asked questions relating to the requirements of all parish officers to be safely recruited by the parish, and where responsibilities lie for the recruitment of clergy. The PowerPoint slides for the presentation, including links to a few helpful resources, can be found [here](#).

### **Election results**

The announced James Tannock from Yarborough Deanery was then announced as duly elected unopposed to the casual vacancy position of Stow and Lindsey lay rep on the Bishop's Council of Diocesan Trustees. James received a warm welcome and applause before Synod took a short refreshment break.

## **General Synod**

After the break, General Synod rep, Mrs Sue Slater, gave a report on the February sessions of General Synod which had been held in York. The summary included detail on the debates on slavery, and numerous procedural motions relating to Church law. Synod then asked questions of the reps and provided feedback.

## **Time to Change Together**

The Bishop of Grimsby then presented an update on Time to Change Together and did a presentation on the establishment of Focal and Oversight Ministries within our Diocese, after providing a summary update on the progress so far. After receiving the presentation and asking a number of questions of clarification, Synod engaged in a round-table discussion on the themes of Focal and Oversight Ministry before the chair opened up the debate. The paper on Focal and Oversight Ministry was then formally “taken note of” by Synod, with 3 votes recorded against and no abstentions.

## **Deanery Simplification**

Canon Nigel Bacon, Chair of the House of Laity, presented a paper created by the Archdeacon of Lincoln on the history and reasons for moving towards Deanery Simplification, in line with our new Deanery Partnership structure. The consultation process in advance of the bishop confirming any change was laid out, with confirmation that consultation proceedings would start straight away. Diocesan Synod would then be consulted themselves in November following, following a process in each Deanery. Synod then debated and took note of this item.

## **Strategic Development Project: Resourcing the Urban Church**

The Bishop of Grimsby introduced the final item on the agenda, which was the Strategic Development Project Annual Report. Rachel McLafferty, the new Strategic Programme Manager for the Diocese, then provided some key messages from the report and updated Synod on the progress made within the year. Rachel explained the importance of measuring our successes to the agreed metrics set out at the beginning of the project, being Sunday attendance figures, but also noted that the project was about lives and individual stories that could not be quantified with numbers.

The Bishop of Lincoln then closed Synod in Prayer.