

Diocesan Synod was held on 25th February 2012 at St Paul's Church, Bursledon.

Presidential Address by Bishop Peter

+Peter welcomed Bishop Tim to Synod. +Peter reflected on some of the words used +Tim's consecration: "Encourage the faithful; restore the lost & build up the body of Christ", noting that this was the calling and charge of a bishop, but it equally applied to all of us.

Winchester Cathedral –James Atwell, Dean of Winchester gave a presentation on the Cathedral and its goal to be "At the heart of the Community".

The cathedral has a chapter (which sets policy), a college of canons and a cathedral council (which call chapter to account); the Bishop is a visitor. The cathedral has £5M turnover per year, 100+ employees and 700 volunteers. One vision for the cathedral is "to discover and live out the beauty of holiness." It is the seat of the bishop, the place where bishop teaches from. There are 300,000 visitors a year as well as 25,000 children who visit each year for education sessions that fit into the national curriculum; sadly some have not been to church before. The cathedral's mission says it "seeks to reflect the dynamic love of God revealed in Christ", to be "a servant of others ... in their search for meaning" to enable "reconciliation and wholeness."

Looking ahead, conservation work is on-going, e.g. the roof, the total maybe £18M over 10 years. There is an ambition for a new education centre and a better display area for the Winchester Bible. This October there will be the "Chronicles of Light" dramatic and light show showing the history of the cathedral.

Anglican Communion Covenant

Following on from the debates in Deanery Synods, the motion "That this synod approve the draft Act of Synod adopting the Anglican Communion Covenant" was debated.

The debate was introduced by John Rees, the Provincial Registrar – he was one of people involved in original draft. His description of the Anglican Communion Covenant followed the description in his paper which was made available at the November Deanery Synod.

The Act is expected to go to General Synod in July or October, if more than 50% of Diocese accept it.

There were a number of speeches, most were against the covenant with comments like "we don't enter covenants with escape clauses", "some churches constitutions do not allow them to sign", "people's understanding changes at different rates", "there is no need" and "the covenant would not help resolve the homosexuality issue". One person, speaking in favour, quoted Archbishop Rowan Williams "Churches must be responsible to one another and for one another".

Bishop Tim then spoke in favour of the motion, explaining he had spent his life working to build up Anglican Communion, noting the quotation "I am because you are, we are because He is". +Tim then reiterated first section of the Covenant – we must discover who Christ is, in his full stature.

Synod then voted:

Laity – For 39 Against 10 Abs 2

Clergy – For 22 Against 11 Abs 4

Bishops - For 3 Against 0 Abs 0

The motion was carried.

2013 Budget – Preliminary Discussions

The motion put to Synod was: “This Synod asks the Bishop’s Council and Standing Committee to take note of the feedback relating to the 2013 budget.”

Bishop Peter introduced the preliminary thought about the budget, the current assumption is

- Stipends+Salaries go up by 3% (cost of living rise)
- Stipendiary clergy reduction of 3 posts in line with deanery plans
- General inflation of 3%
- National church responsibility up 3%

This adds up to 1.9% increase in parish share. However to remain as this year a 3.8% increase is required.

Feedback will go from Synod to Bishop’s Council whose decisions will be fed back to deaneries via Area Teams, and their views will go back to Bishop’s council and Diocesan Synod in June for approval.

Synod was asked “what would we as synod like to say to Bishops council?”

Comments included: “Live within financial limitations the country is facing”, “recognise contribution of volunteers”, “have formula to help in apportioning of parish share”, “consider areas of new housing”, “cost of buildings – bishops council is best place to start that discussion”, “must use best practice”, “need creative thinking [on ways we raise revenue]”, “collection rate is misleading if people are drawing on reserves” and “lead thefts”

Synod voted on the motion, all were in favour!

Tourism – Diocesan Tourism Advisor Revd Canon Graham Trassler

There is a tourism page on the Diocesan website
<http://www.cofewinchester.org.uk/parish-life/tourism/>.

There is an exhibition on tourism on May 24th at Old Alresford Place.

Parish Giving Scheme & Life Giving – Gordon Randall

Both schemes are from Diocese of Gloucester,

Parish Giving Scheme is method of payment – giving by direct debit becomes possible, and people can elect to have the amount automatically increased by the level of inflation each year.

Life Giving is stewardship material which has worked well in Gloucester. It complements the other material that’s available.

Engaging with the Future Bishop Jonathan asked Synod to split into groups to discuss:

- When are we at our best, what does it look like?
- What challenges do we face as a Diocese?
- What opportunities are open to us?

Suggestions from the group I was in included:

- 1) When we have an aim, when seen to have a point, when working together – but the need for this to be undergirded by prayer was recognised.
- 2) Challenge of a new bishop, having enough talented people to lead/shepherd us. Making what we represent as a church relevant. Overcoming negativity. Parochial system that is not recognised by town's people at least.
- 3) Occasional offices, schools, uniformed groups, connections, collaborative ministry

Feedback to Synod tended to concentrate on the first question. Thoughts included:

- When we enable people express their joy and sadness
- At best when undergirded by prayer
- When God touches and reaches us
- When there is something to focus on, a real vision
- At times of crisis, when need to achieve a common goal
- When focused on Christ in our service – when we are being rather than doing as well.

Simon Swindells

26th February 2012