

THE DEANERY OF HEYWOOD and MIDDLETON

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Minutes of the Heywood & Middleton Deanery Synod

Wednesday 19th October 2011

St John, Thornham

Of the 61 members of the Deanery Synod, there were 35 members present and 15 apologies were received.

1. Opening Prayers

The meeting opened at 7:30pm with a reading from St Paul's letter to the Romans, read by Mrs Alison Clissold followed by prayers by the Area Dean.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

These were accepted as a correct record. Proposed by Mrs Pat Barr and seconded by Garth Redford

3. Matters arising

None

4. Area Dean (AD) Announcements

1. Pastoral Committee: progress update and plan

The AD stressed the importance of bringing the recently distributed Pastoral Committee Questionnaire to a meeting with the P.C.C. to help in the compilation of responses

2. Update on: "Two Sisters and a Funeral"

The AD reminded members of the forthcoming event on Saturday 29th Oct and that profits from the ticket sales made by churches would go directly to the respective churches in proportion to the number of tickets they sold.

3. Attendance Survey

This appears to be well underway across all parishes

5. Financial Report : Mr G Etugo (GE)

GE reported a balance of

- £74.78 in the Halifax Bank
- £242.52 in the Yorkshire Bank (Current account).

He indicated that whilst we had a reasonably healthy balance there would be no immediate need for further contributions from parishes.

The report was accepted by the members with thanks.

6. Diocesan Synod Report : Mrs Pat Barr (PB)

PB gave a full and detailed report on the last meeting of the Diocesan Synod at which the issue of Women Bishops was debated. She indicated that the debate was passionate, but never heated

The main motion, ***"That this Synod approve the proposals embodied in the draft Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure and in draft Amending Canon No30"*** was carried in all three houses of Bishops, Clergy and Laity.

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An amendment to improve upon the current assurances surrounding those who didn't agree with the main motion was defeated by a single vote. However, the Diocesan Synod of Manchester proposed a motion that called upon General Synod to call upon the House of Bishops to amend the Draft measure in the manner proposed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York which would mean that the protection provided for those who could not accept the consecration and ordination of women as bishops would be revisited. This would now go to general Synod to be debated next July.

(A full summary of the report is attached and is also available on the Deanery website. Ed.)

7. Any Other Business

This item was promoted up the running order to allow undivided focus on the main agenda item.

Mr Jack Wilson reported that St Leonard's church had gained an award from English Heritage which would support the provision that could be offered to tourists in explaining the history of the church.

He also reported that at a meeting at The Old Grammar School attention had been brought to the situation in Uganda, where the practice of witchcraft was on the increase. This was particularly upsetting as children were being taken from their families and being then abused and in some cases offered as sacrifices. Dorothy Taylor had been in touch with Janet, Bishop of Uganda about the issue. He added that this practice was also increasing in this country.

Canon Nick Feist then prayed for an improved situation in Uganda; for its detection and for those responsible to be brought to justice.

8. MAIN TOPIC: The Anglican Communion Covenant presented by Rev Phil Rawlings

Rev'd Canon Phil Rawlings (PR), the current inter-faith officer for Oldham, presented the main agenda item, via a Power Point presentation, ***"That this Synod approve the draft Act of Synod adopting the Anglican Communion Covenant"***

The presentation covered:

- Who or what is the Anglican Communion
- The Four Instruments which hold the Anglican Communion together
 - The Archbishop of Canterbury
 - The Lambeth Conference
 - The Anglican Consultative Council
 - The Primates' Meetings
- The background to why the need for a Covenant arose
- Overview of the document
 - Section 1: Our inheritance of faith
 - Section 2: The life we share with others : our Anglican vocation
 - Section 3: Our unity and common life
 - Section 4: Our Covenanted life together
- The reasons being put forward for not accepting the Covenant.

(A copy of the presentation is available on the deanery website along with versions in handout form. Ed)

The Diocesan Synod will be asked to adopt the motion in March 2012.

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He went on to explain that the Anglican Covenant document to be adopted had been drawn up because, to date, there was no explicit definition of what being an Anglican meant, nor was there an agreed way in which differences of opinion/interpretation should be resolved.

At present, there is no central control; all Anglican provinces are totally independent of each other, but in communion through an historic and on-going relationship with each other.

The proposed Anglican Covenant was trying to avoid being prescriptive but was attempting to allow freedom of expression to develop ideas through an agreed process. The process through which disputes were to be resolved has not itself been resolved.

There followed much debate and questioning of PR to better understand the implications of adoption or rejection of the Covenant. Concern was expressed over the style of the presentation, favouring a different approach where two speakers, one in favour of the motion and one against, to better present both sides of the argument. PM explained that the style adopted was that adopted when the previous motion on Women Bishops was presented to Deanery Synods and was the way the Bishop required it to be done.

When the motion was put to the meeting for acceptance or rejection, Mrs Pat Barr, suggested that the issue was very complex and warranted further thought and consideration before any decisions could be made either way. Mr Geoff Williams proposed a motion, seconded by Mr Jack Wilson, that the vote be postponed until the next meeting to allow members to consider the matter more fully. This was put to the vote. There were 28 in favour, with 3 against; there were 4 abstentions.

Sister Frances Guite proposed a vote of thanks to Canon Rawlings for his presentation.

9. Next Deanery Synod meeting

This was not discussed.

Diary

2011			
Saturday 29 th	7:30pm	Deanery Event Two Sisters and a Funeral Roger Jones Musical	All Saints and Martyrs, Langley
Tuesday	Nov 1 st	7:30pm	All Saints & Martyrs Patronal Festival : Rev'd Chris Bracegirdle preaching

10. Meeting was closed at 9:00pm followed by Compline

Compline was led by Rev'd Peter Demain.