

# HEYWOOD & MIDDLETON DEANERY

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## DIOCESAN SYNOD MEETING

Held at St Ann's Church

Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009

### Diocesan Synod Report

The meeting was held in St Ann's Church, Manchester on the evening of Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June, to receive the Passing Winter Report, The Board of Educational Governance Structure and the General Synod Digest.

**Bishop Nigel announced** that Bishop Stephen was retiring as Bishop of Hulme, the post of which would be in abeyance. He would be greatly missed and his farewell would be at the William Temple Church at the end of July. Bishop Nigel thanked all members retiring from Synod. **The timetable and process for Diocesan Elections** for members to Synod was approved and would take place over the next few months. Bishop Nigel asked for the process to include younger members and to reflect the multi-ethnic nature of the Diocese. **Heywood and Middleton Deanery will have three Lay places and three Clergy places, to serve from Oct 09 – July 2012.** Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee members will be elected after October to commence in January 2010. Graham Kent, the Ecumenical Officer for Greater Manchester was in attendance. Members were asked to remember Philip Gore who had died recently and was greatly missed, also Margaret Walker, who had died during this triennium of Synod. Bishop Nigel said that now that the Bishops had been reduced from four to three, he would be relying on the ministry of retired clergy; specifically he asked for Bishop Rupert Hall to be delegated, as and when Bishop Nigel chose, which was approved. He thanked churches for support with the income surveys. **In November the Draft 2010 Budget** would be put before Synod to vote. The clergy pension provision was a concern. Also the non-collection contingency charge has finished.

Martin Miller spoke on the **"Hope Not Hate" Campaign** against the BNP, mobilised by faith groups, community groups, business, trades unions, arts, and other groups, launched at Manchester Cathedral on 18<sup>th</sup> March. On 25<sup>th</sup> March Bishop Nigel said, "We affirm the reality of one human race ... strengthened not weakened by its diversity. We have common values we have to defend, that for the common good, we may always be a city free from hate and full of hope." Manchester pledged opposition to racist and fascist groups, to be a tolerant and inclusive society. Nick Griffin was elected an MEP on only 8% of the vote. Manchester, Stockport and Trafford had all signed motions of support for "Hope Not Hate."

Bishop Mark told the meeting about his **visit to Namibia in January**. As one of our link Dioceses since 1988 the people of Namibia hold Manchester in high esteem and pray for us daily. There is a deep sense of partnership in mission, with many exchange visits and the Anglican Church is growing there, where the Anglican Church is the largest Christian church, after the Roman Catholic and Lutheran churches. Namibia is on the south-west coast of Africa, with a population of 1.8 million and is one big diocese led by Bishop Nathaniel, with thirty vast parishes stretching for many miles. Most people live on £15 per month from subsistence farming around the vast areas of desert. A theological training course has been launched with 54 students. Congregations are growing and large numbers are being confirmed, with admirable sacrificial giving. Mme Jackie Park is committed to working with many poor families suffering from HIV Aids. Bishop Mark said it was a joy to share the Gospel with people who had so little. He said he would like Manchester clergy and readers and schools to be linked with those in Namibia. A new large church called St Michael's was being built by the people to

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replace a smaller church. Sister Gertrude and the Sisters were working for people in the community. Bishop Mark concluded by saying he had produced a leaflet to come out soon, showing how contributions could be made to this work. He prayed, "God Bless Africa. Guard her Children. Guide her leaders and give her peace. Amen."

Maurice Smith said of the **Board of Educational Governance Structure** that membership would be a role in support, but of scrutiny, small in membership and sharper in focus, with two reps from each Deanery. This was approved by all, with two abstentions and will be recommended to the Secretary of State.

**The new Safeguarding of Children** report was approved. It includes policies and procedures and can be downloaded from the website and should be publicised in each parish.

**An End of Triennium Report** was given by John Beck, who said the highlights were the new business plan for Manchester Cathedral: identity, vision, mission, growth; Run the Race (now past half-way) Back to Church Sunday, Experience Easter, Halloween Choice, Regional training, Social responsibility, Hope Not Hate, Fair Trade and the United Utilities water tax "Don't Drain on us" campaign. Discussions have included the Parish Share, Clergy pensions, Congestions charges, Reducing the carbon footprint, Schools admissions code, Clergy discipline measures, and more. Synod has enabled more people to speak and engage with each other, an example for the rest of the diocese, to allow for change and continuity.

**The next Synod meeting** in November will discuss New Committee Membership, Fresh Expressions, Clergy HR, Budget 2010, Apportionment of Parish Share 2010, General Synod July 09.

*Pat Barr for Heywood and Middleton Deanery*

*Submitted by Pat Barr*