

HEYWOOD & MIDDLETON DEANERY

www.heywoodandmiddletondeanery.org

DIOCESAN SYNOD MEETING 21st November 2009

Diocesan Meeting Report

The meeting was held on Saturday morning 21st November at Trinity High School with representatives from Heywood and Middleton Deanery in attendance: Mrs Allison Bamford, Rev'd Matthew Carlisle, Mr George, Etugo, Rev'd Maureen Thorp and Mrs Pat Barr. Following worship with Eucharist, elections took place with Rev'd Andy Salmon elected Clergy Chair and Mr Philip Blinkhorne elected Lay Chair.

Bishop Nigel in his Presidential Address welcomed everyone to the opening session of the new trimester of the Synod and he announced David Sharples would be installed as the new Archdeacon of Salford on 28th November. Bishop Nigel said he would be inviting all church wardens of the Diocese to an evening of consultation with him over a period of 15 evenings. On 28 February the Archbishops of York and Canterbury would be visiting Manchester. 'Run the Race' was continuing as Bishop Nigel visited the remaining parishes in the Diocese. 2011 would see the 400th anniversary of the Authorised Version of the Holy Bible with a Diocesan visit planned to the Holy Land. Preparations for events are underway for the Olympic Games in 2012.

Bishop Chris introduced Bishop Graham Cray, who was visiting Manchester to talk about "Fresh Expressions" mission-shaped thinking and strategies in response to the changing world and the decline of Christendom. The Fresh Expressions Area Strategies Team, called the FEAST Group will help to take the Church towards 2025. Informal churches are being set up in Costa Coffee cafes, Leigh Sports Village, gyms, Toddler Groups, forging a new, attractive way to make the Word of God known. Some meetings were monthly, some after school. Other names were Espresso Church, Messy Church, Rural Cell, The Living Room, Moot, and Sanctuary and were very attractive to new Christians. The Arch Bishop of York said that "Fresh Expressions was trying to be Christ-like in every area." God's spirit is on the move with new types of church and new types of ministers, plus a lot of opportunity for lay people, a strong mission for us and a willingness to re-imagine the church. There are different ways of coming to Christ and at different times of the week now, using engaging methods. Many people actually don't know the Bible story which will be new to them. This is an age of deep spiritual exploration and questioning. Resources are on the website: www.freshexpressions.org.uk/missionshaped_ministry. "Mission is seeing what God is doing and joining in with him" to plant new congregations and make disciples.

Bishop Nigel also welcomed three Synod members under Bishop's Nomination, including Mrs Barbara Taylor, President of the Manchester Diocese Mothers' Union, and he acknowledged the terrific work done by the MU.

Canon Alan Cooper, Chair of the Board of Finance, said he was optimistic about 2010 and he thought the proposed budget was realistic and achievable. Key principles were the Clergy pay increase from April of 1%, Deanery Share request to break even and successfully lowered this year, reduced by 7.2% on average, with extra funding from the Church Commissioners of £2,007,000, and clergy posts reduced to 244 with a 3% notional vacancy. There would be a three year rolling program to improve energy

HEYWOOD & MIDDLETON DEANERY

www.heywoodandmiddletondeanery.org

DIOCESAN SYNOD MEETING

21st November 2009

efficiency in properties. Empty properties could be rented out to provide an income. Some other Dioceses like Rochester and Oxford support Manchester Diocese by paying their Parish Share in full.

The Encouragement Scheme meant that for 2011 a 2% discount would be given if 25 % was paid each quarter, ie. March, June, September and December.

A report from the July General Synod in York included discussions on clergy pensions, poorer communities, the economic downturn, support for "Fresh Expressions" and a debate on Christian Stewardship, "Giving for Life," as the average church member gives 3% of their income after tax, but will be challenged to try to give 5% by teaching and preaching.

The meeting closed at one pm with a blessing from the Bishop.

Pat Barr