

Report on the Diocesan Synod held in Milton Keynes on 16th November 2019

The papers for our meetings and, in due course minutes as well, are posted on the Diocesan website: <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/who-we-are/governance/diocesan-synod/>

This report aims to draw out those points which are most pertinent to feed back to members of the Deanery Synod who in turn can feed back to their respective PCC's.

Bishop Steven's Address was entitled 'How to Pray for this General Election', calling for listening, respect and the renewal of our political life in this nation at the present time. In these unusual times he believes that silence is not an option. He reminded us that the Church has a responsibility to pray for our Government and our nation 'in the best and in the worst of times' and referred to several of his friends and colleagues on different sides in Parliament who have asked him to pray for them and for our Government, indicating that this reflects the rising tide of desperation and paralysis at the heart of national life.

He shared a pattern of prayer based on the Psalms, saying that the Psalms call us to prayer which is rooted in praise of God, which gives space to lament and thanksgiving, to intercession, to hearing God's voice and at the end to stillness, confidence and peace. He himself is using a piece of rope with six knots in it as a means to use this pattern to pray each morning until we have a new Government, and possibly beyond. He called us to pray loudly, boldly and publicly.

I would encourage you to take a look at his full address here <https://blogs.oxford.anglican.org/how-to-pray-for-this-general-election/> and consider using his sequence of six dimensions as a basis for individual and corporate prayers.

Full-time Associate Archdeacons in the Diocese of Oxford

A proposal for the appointment of three new full-time Associate Archdeacons for Buckingham, Dorchester and Reading was passed. Because of its large size, the Diocese of Oxford is divided into four smaller 'episcopal Areas', each overseen by their own Area Bishop. In some instances, these 'Areas' are larger than entire dioceses elsewhere in the Church of England. The reality is that the duties of the Archdeacons have widened and workload has increased to such a degree that the Archdeacons have become overstretched. The appointment of Associate Archdeacons is designed to relieve this situation. It has been piloted and the move has been widely welcomed. In case you weren't aware, Amersham Deanery is in the Buckingham Area and our Area Bishop is Bishop Alan. Our Archdeacon is Canon Guy Elsmore.

The Development Fund

We were updated on the latest situation. To recap, a Development Fund has been made available to fund the implementation of the Common Vision in parishes, benefices and deaneries. It makes around £3 million available via grants. Applications can be made at three points in a year. The deadline for the first round of applications was September. 28 Tier 1 (for grants of up to £2,500) applications totalling £49,000 and 25 Tier 2 (for grants over £2,500 - match funding would usually be expected with these) applications totalling £1.5 million were made. 19 Tier 1 and 9 Tier 2 applications have already been approved. The deadline for the second round of applications is January 2020 and the chair encouraged us all to engage with the process.

Stephanie Summerell

For Information, the members of the Oxford Diocesan Synod from the Amersham Deanery are:

Andrew Bell (Gerrards Cross and Fulmer - Ex-Officio as a member of General Synod)
Julie Dziegiel (Great Chesham - Ex-Officio as a member of General Synod)
Lawrence Tebboth (Gerrards Cross and Fulmer and also Lay Chair of Amersham Deanery)
Nigel Edward-Few (Great Chesham)
Edward Weiss (Beaconsfield)
Michael Hardman (Great Chesham)
Stephanie Summerell (Gerrards Cross and Fulmer)

Revd John Goodman (Chalfont St Peter)

Revd Canon Tim Harper (Amersham and also Co Area Dean)

Revd Cassa Messervy (Seer Green and Jordans and also Assistant Area Dean)