

Archdeaconry Synod Report 2023

This year Synod met in Calpe, an hour north of Alicante, from Tuesday 31st January until Friday morning 3rd February. There were around 90 present, with some Europe Diocese staff joining sessions via Zoom.

The theme of the conference was “Ministry and Sustainability in the Contemporary World”, with a definite emphasis on the environment.

Contributions were made by Bishop David Hamid, Archdeacon David Waller, Europe Diocesan staff and clergy and lay members of the Synod.

Day 1 began with Eucharist, and Bishop David preached on being an inclusive community. In Europe he said we welcome other denominations into our chaplaincies and liaise with other denominations at a local level. The word Synod in Greek implies a coming together, an assembly, a journey. This is all intrinsically related to the work of the Holy Spirit. The Council of Jerusalem was effectively the first synod (recorded in Acts), where they discussed Gentiles becoming part of the church. They were to become an “inclusive” community due to the work of the Spirit. The church is to show that God’s love flows freely, where there are no second-class citizens and no discrimination. He pointed out that divisions now threaten to reduce our diversity and we need to remember that the Spirit is in charge.

Archdeaconry AGM – chaired by Ven David Waller

New members were welcomed and those who have died in the last year were remembered with a minute of silence (Rev Ron Corne, Terry Weineck and Patrick Zeon).

After apologies for absence, welcome of Rev Canon Debbie Flach, Diocesan Dean for Women’s Ministry, and approval of last year’s Minutes there was a hard to follow confusing Financial Report from the Archdeaconry Treasurer Gwen Furmston.

Recommendations 1 & 2 noted and accepted - the position of the 2021 and 2022 accounts – they have not been independently examined due to illness.

Recommendation 3 – General Archdeaconry Fund - contingency reserve contribution by chaplaincies. In 2021 amount per electoral roll member was £0.58. If the contingency reserve is to be maintained at current money values, then 2023 charge should be £0.94 per member. The figure decided on in any case is dependent on the overall figures supplied by the Diocesan office. It was decided to quota charged should be set at £0.58 per member.

Recommendation 4 - Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) in which Diocesan Synod identifies £200 as the contribution for each Licensed Clergy/Reader. This is not being asked for in 2023 but will be asked for in 2024.

Recommendation 5A - chaplaincies to pay to the Area Dean’s Support Fund £2.03 per electoral roll member in 2023 (was £1.93 per member in 2022).

Recommendation 5B - agree that the contingency monies currently in the Area Dean’s Support Fund (£1,968.79) be transferred to the General Archdeaconry monies. This was passed quickly with no discussion and some folk asked why. No answers were given.

Recommendation 6 - mileage rate of 0.35euros per km was proposed to remain the same, even though costs have increased. Many chaplaincies objected and asked for the rate to be raised. The Archdeacon said this was a MINIMUM amount per mile, and that chaplaincies could pay more. After debate this was referred back to the Standing Committee for more discussion.

(Since Synod, SC have discussed and decided not to raise the amount per km)

Recommendation 7 - chaplaincy contribution to Ferede (for Spanish chaplaincies), which is based on Electoral Roll numbers and numbers of Worship Centres, which was to remain unchanged for 2023.

Points to be noted from Treasurer:

- Any changes in Treasurers be communicated to the Archdeaconry.
- if any payments for the above cannot be made she is to be informed by 31.5.23
- when writing to Nick Wraight in the Europe Diocese regarding payments from the chaplaincy account copy her in
- make sure any communication with her clearly identifies the chaplaincy.

Secretary Joan Berry noted that she is gathering different liturgical texts in different languages to be approved for use by the Bishop. She noted that all Chaplaincy Constitutions in the Archdeaconry are being reviewed by the Archdeacon since there are variations in what they contain.

David Coulson, Lay Vice Chair, will not stand for re-election in 2024 after serving for 5 years. This year will mark new elections for his position and that of Secretary and Treasurer.

The Archdeaconry Handbook has been updated and distributed (now much shortened due to online guidelines being available).

Diocese of Europe staff reports

Andrew Caspari COO and Diocesan Secretary. How do we create God's dream and not God's nightmare?

An income of £350k was received in the Diocese for the Ukraine, and this is being used in Ukraine and through projects linked with the Diocese on borders of Ukraine. It is being given to smaller projects rather than big charities.

95% of the contributions requested to the Common Fund were met, with our Gibraltar Synod area giving 98% of our quota.

In Kyiv the small chaplaincy has expanded, God is working miracles, but in St Andrews chaplaincy in Moscow half the congregation have had to leave.

Media – there will be more training made available.

The Diocese of Europe exists to:

- enable us to be part of the Church of England; support all aspects of ministry & mission; keep churches safe; training & vocation; communications; financial support (including Gift Aid); Locum ministry.

New challenges: getting people back to church; finding new people; being potentially a poorer church

Opportunities: digital; migration, tourism returning; climate care; new funding streams; ability to use buildings in new ways

Priorities: grow young people; net zero policy; racial justice; communications (especially digital); supporting ministry

Grace Fagan, Head of Safeguarding. (via Zoom) - A dashboard is available, which we were encouraged to use. All are requested to do basic training, including Church Wardens, along with all necessary checks. There is a new domestic abuse course online (with “aftercare” available). There is also a youth network available but there is no representative from chaplaincies from the Gibraltar Synod.

Communications: There are/were 75k website users and 7,077 hits on the top story which was prayers for Ukraine. No further breakdown of stats was given. There is a new logo design, with guidelines available for its use, with colours etc.

Finance: There is a balanced budget, and the Common Fund which has been frozen since 2019 will gradually increase up to 10%. During this year and next year we will continue to use reserves. The Common Fund is currently at 8% of the 2019 rate. During 2020-22 £340k of “hardship funding” has been distributed, and more funds will be given during 2023 (£150k?)

The Diocesan Board of Finance will seek more funding. They exist to create income and use reserves wisely. There is a Missions Opportunities Fund – to grow the church and create new congregations/chaplaincies. And the Hardship Fund has helped 28 different chaplaincies.

Juliet Evans, Diocesan Fundraising Adviser – had sent out a fundraising questionnaire to chaplaincy treasurers and had 21 responses from our Gibraltar area. Brief results showed that only three chaplaincies had a mission statement and shared it. She is new in post and will look at regular giving, different funding streams, grants, major donors, digital, Gift Aid and legacies. Currently she is working on communications,

improving mechanisms and good practice. She aims to create templates chaplaincies can use and provide a more systematic approach. She is looking to produce website resources and to give planned giving training. Emphasised Fund Raising AND Faith Raising.

Bishop David – An update on Living in Love and Faith policy

The whole College of Bishops met to discuss identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage and on 17th January 2023 proposals were finalised. However, there was a leak to the press which only gave partial information about the nature of the recommendations. The proposals included 3 main elements:

1) A pastoral letter and apology. See link

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/living-love-and-faith/bishops-response-living-love-and-faith>

For an apology to be real the bishop said it needs to bring change in the church's life. For the first time bishops have acknowledged diversity amongst themselves, and the letter includes "radical Christian inclusion" – but this is not a radical departure from their faith.

2) Prayers of love and faith. This is still in draft form and is a collection of prayers and spiritual references for voluntary use. Same sex couples can receive a blessing and thanks be given for their partnership/civil marriage. Ambivalence is written into the resources and the church's teaching on marriage as contained in the BCP and Canons remains unchanged. The word "blessing" is ambiguous and can be confusing since rings are blessed in a marriage service. This response is to provide pastoral provision. In England and Wales in 2017 civil marriage became possible for same sex couples. The Church of England was excluded from this. Blessing a civil marriage doesn't therefore contradict church doctrine. Although Civil marriage and Holy Matrimony both share the word marriage, they are two distinct institutions.

3) New pastoral guidelines. There remains much work to be done and there are mixed reactions to the proposals. Some feel the bishops haven't gone far enough; others they have gone too far. The pastoral guidelines are the practical implications based on the bishops' proposals. These will be released by the summer and will include what the church believes about sexuality outside of marriage. Currently clergy can't have same sex civil marriage but can have a civil partnership. This may change.

Outstanding issues which need to be addressed: singleness, celibacy, friendship, community life, teaching in schools, parliamentary pressure, gender recognition, banning conversion therapy.

Our Archdeaconry link with Peru

Rev Deborah Chapman in Barcelona is our link with Peru. We were unable to welcome our friends from Peru due to the troubles there but watched a video from Bishop Jorge, who asked for prayer. A brief history of Anglicanism in Peru was given. In the 1840s the Anglican church in Peru was made up of engineers and entrepreneurial ex-pats, not indigenous peoples. In 1979 the Sutton family went out as church planters to Lima, to join other ex-pat missionaries who were reaching out to local people. Sent from All Saints, Woodford Wells church they stayed for 8 years until the husband's ill health took them back to the UK. Bishop Jorge is now the first indigenous Anglican bishop in Peru.

Current priorities of the Anglican church are:

Training; children's ministry; pastoral ministry; safe church; soup kitchens; a new diocese in Arequipa (south of the country); youth ministry; disabled people's ministry; women's ministry (Mother's Union); being ambassadors of health; building up a diocesan news network.

Diocesan Environment Policy, Mags Byrd, Net Zero Carbon Working Group

The Caring for Creation policy has replaced the Environment Policy. There are 3 areas to the policy:

1) Caring for Creation – this extends the previous policy, has theological background and is about eco-church (linked with A Rocha UK). Training is needed across the diocese to help reduce carbon emissions, measure progress, be energy efficient and for mutual support. During the season of creation (September to October) a range of activities and resources will be available.

2) Net zero project by 2030. Policy of Diocesan website –

www.europe.anglican.org/resources/caringforcreation

We are only in the first phase of activity and is based on the "national roadmap" of the Church of England but adapted to the characteristics of our own diocese. The focus areas of activity are energy, buildings, work-related travel. Also, eco-church will produce activities for chaplaincies, and will cover worship and teaching, church building management, management of church land, community and global engagement and lifestyle.

At chaplaincy level activities are to include: measurement and reporting of energy and emissions; appointing a Local Environment Officer (LEO) and making a plan; switching to renewable energy and lighting; engaging with eco-church.

At Archdeaconry level activities are to include: appointing an Environmental Officer, supporting the network of LEOs, training/mentoring, regular follow up through Synod.

At Diocesan level activities are to include: planning and reporting, supporting communications & resource sharing, carbon reduction plans for offices, updated travel policy, Caring for Creation (C4C) Working Group has to report to the Bishop's Council.

3) Taking action. Primarily we need to have it on the agenda and have actions at local congregational levels. Chaplaincies are to recruit an LEO, engage with eco-church, switch to green energy, measure energy use and make a plan.

Spanish chaplaincies business meeting

In summary, we need to have a legal rep available at each legal appointment, who should be a long-term local resident. We need to do an annual review of all official documents. Sabadel bank offer free banking, loans for a vehicle or lease a vehicle over five years.

Church Wardens to be up-to-date with all safeguarding paperwork, health and safety issues and risk assessments.

Archdeacon's final report (David Waller)

Many chaplaincies have vacancies and are at various stages of recruitment, preparing paperwork etc. The recruitment process was summarised as follows: vacancy; create job description; formal interview; shortlisting; appointment – with DBS and medical checks and visa process. In terms of chaplaincy support there are monthly online cluster groups. In addition, there is a vacancy support group, the annual Archdeacon visitation and an open forum for admission of new Church Wardens, treasurers and secretaries. Other support includes the Hardship Fund, DBF staff, annual clergy chapter training, CMD fund and Archdeaconry Synod.

Trends in the Archdeaconry Synod:

- There is a gradual numerical recovery, but finances are lagging
- There are a good number of people applying for vacancies
- There is an increasing diversity of applicants and congregations
- There is outstanding lay leadership in places where there is a vacancy
- There is some deeply sacrificial clergy ministry
- New congregations will be established in Girona (Costa Brava) and Rabat (Casablanca)

Future Aims:

- net carbon zero by 2030
- good and diverse appointments
- continuing clergy and chaplaincy support
- local language liturgies

Attended by Fiona Goode &

M MacInnes

13 February 2023 (notes)