

**Minutes of a meeting
of
Blackburn Diocesan Synod
Saturday 20 March 2021**

Present

3 Members of the House of Bishops
34 Members of the House of Clergy
38 Members of the House of Laity
1 Visitor

Apologies

5 Members of the House of Clergy
7 Members of the House of Laity

1. Opening Worship

The meeting was chaired by **Canon Alistair McHaffie**, Chair of the House of Clergy. The meeting opened with worship led by **Bishop Julian**.

2. Emmanuel Theological College

Bishop Philip presented on the latest developments with the Emmanuel Theological College. His slides are attached.

Questions were invited.

Rev Marc Wolverson (Vice Chair of the House of Clergy and Leyland Deanery) commended the new theological college. He also commented on the value of residential training and asked if this would still be an option.

Bishop Philip said the option had not been removed. This will be discussed with individual candidates and based on their needs. There are strengths in both contextual and residential training and combining the best of the two is being explored.

Mr Jonathan Greening (Preston Deanery) explained that he had trained with Lancashire and Cumbria Theological Partnership alongside laity and his qualification was both theological and useful in the outside world. He asked if these aspects would be seen at Emmanuel Theological College.

Bishop Philip explained that common awards would be offered through Durham University. Other ways of preparing people for ministry will be available particularly for those without an academic background.

The training required by future clergy and licenced lay ministers is quite different. Some of the training will be completed together and some in different streams.

3. SDF 3 Update

Canon Alistair McHaffie explained that Stage 1 of the SDF 3 application had been approved by the Church Commissioners. Diocesan Synod was now being asked to approve the use of £185,860 from the Diocesan Vision Fund as match funding as required by Stage 2 of the application.

The paper had been endorsed by the Finance Committee in February and the Bishop's Council earlier in March.

Mr Rod Street, the consultant who had completed the detailed work behind the SDF 3 Stage 2 application, was welcomed to the meeting.

Bishop Jill and Mr Street provided an update on strategic context and progress with the project and their slides are attached.

Questions were invited.

Mr Joseph Brookfield (Preston Deanery) asked whether the interns at the churches would be paid a Living Wage. He also asked what the abbreviation "CRT" stood for in the paper.

Mr Street explained that the interns would be volunteers. This is based on the scheme operating at the Preston Resource Church. As well as gaining a year's experience there would be a support package available to them.

"CRT" is the Church Revitalisation Trust. It had been set up through Holy Trinity Brompton to support the renewal and planting of churches.

Rev Christopher Anderton (Blackburn with Darwen Deanery) asked about sustainability of the two churches beyond the five years of the project.

Mr Street stated that this would depend primarily on the generosity of the church but because of the location of both churches, trust funding would be actively sought to support particular roles and activities.

Rev Nancy Goodrich (Tunstall Deanery) asked if anything had been done to assess the needs across the whole Diocese following the pandemic and when/how might the resourcing churches in Blackburn, Blackpool and Preston start resourcing some of these areas.

Bishop Jill explained that the aim of the projects in Blackpool and Blackburn would be to strengthen leadership and to renew and resource. The Blackburn Diocese is concerned with retaining clergy in parishes at a time when many dioceses are pulling back. The work being carried out on our wider strategy should have a more significant impact in terms of balance, including in rural areas. This will look different depending on the needs of particular areas.

Rev Peter Lillicrap (Blackpool Deanery) asked about where the plans had got to for Blackpool St John. In terms of finances, Blackpool has 13 urban priority areas and he feels

that this needs to come from outside rather than inside. He also pointed out that communication around money coming in will need to be managed incredibly well.

Bishop Jill explained that the paper being written is still evolving. At both Blackburn St Luke and Blackpool St John, longer term vision is being looked at.

Mrs Caroline Eames (Lancaster and Morecambe Deanery) spoke about the difficulties in rural parishes and pointed out that the largest part of the Diocese is rural.

Bishop Jill stated that some work is underway regarding how rural parishes can best be resourced. **Archdeacon David** is chairing a group carrying out some focussed work on the needs of rural parishes.

Bishop Philip explained that Strategic Development Funding is mainly restricted to deprived areas involving projects with young people. However, the SDF 3 project will be a resource in which competent and energetic leaders can be sent out into almost any context to work.

Rev Tom Woolford (Leyland Deanery) pointed out that the resourcing churches at Preston, Blackburn and Blackpool are HTB led and asked if resourcing churches would be planted in other traditions.

Bishop Jill would like to see this although the Church Commissioners are keen on funding resourcing churches where there is data available for the tradition. We are trying to draw out leaders in other traditions where this is possible.

Rev Peter Lillicrap (Blackpool Deanery) explained that the Blackpool Centre of Mission trains leaders from different traditions. They are working in partnership with Youthscape to run a Launchpad stretching across Blackburn and Poulton deaneries with over 11 clergy attending between April and June this year.

Bishop Jill moved:

“That this Synod approves the DBF’s financial contribution to the budget for the Blackburn and Blackpool Resourcing Parish project including the specific allocation of £185,860 from the Diocesan Vision fund as required for the Strategic Development Funding Stage 2 application.”

In the vote:

Votes in favour - 65

Votes against - 2

Abstentions - 8

The motion was carried.

4. Proclamation of Canons

Canon Graeme Pollard, Diocesan Secretary promulgated Canons 40 and 41. Amending Canon No. 40 makes provision relating to religious communities and Amending Canon No. 41 makes miscellaneous amendments to the Canons.

5. Questions

None.

6. Motions

None.

The meeting closed with a prayer.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julian". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the top of the first letter. A long horizontal line is drawn underneath the signature.

Signed:

12 June 2021

Dated: