

UNITED DIOCESE OF MORAY, ROSS AND CAITHNESS

DRAFT MINUTES, DIOCESAN SYNOD, 10th MARCH, 2018

The Most Revd Mark Strange, Diocesan Bishop and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church presided at the Synod Eucharist at 10.30am on Saturday 10 March 2018, marking the feast day of St Kessog and asking for the **guidance** of the Holy Spirit. The Eucharist was followed by coffee and the business meeting began at 11.30am. with a welcome from the Bishop.

Clergy with permission to be absent from Synod

Revd Peter Simpson; Revd Chris Mayo; Revd Ruth Flockhart; Revd Alison Hart; Revd Canon Christopher Ketley

Apologies for absence

Revd Canon Fiona Newton; Mrs Louise Jeffrey; Revd Canon David McAlister; Revd Canon Robin Forrest; Mrs Joy Garnett; Mr Robin Lingard; Revd Dr Marion Keston; Mrs Jean Grimshaw; Mr Jeff Lowndes.

Minutes of Synod, 11th March, 2017

These were approved. There were no matters arising

Membership of Synod

These are printed in the papers. The Bishop welcomed new clergy and Lay Representatives to Synod. One clergy member had retired this year

In Memorium

Six former members of Synod had passed away this year and the Bishop paid tribute to them.

Bishop's Charge - A copy is attached to these Minutes.

Diocesan Statistics

In the absence of the Rev Canon Christopher Ketley, Synod Clerk, due to illness, Bishop Mark presented the Diocesan Statistics. A copy of the Synod Clerk's report is attached to these Minutes. A question was raised about the requirement to record the age profile of members. It was agreed that this was a subject which should be handled with delicacy. Members were informed that the provincial Board of Mission is looking at how statistics are gathered and what else, if anything, is needed, and they were reminded that the chief instrument of mission is people speaking about their faith. The Bishop thanked the Rev Christopher Ketley and Mr Ian Higgott for the work they had done in preparing the statistical report

Appointment of Tellers.

The Rev Heather Widdows and Mr Derek Bedford were appointed as Tellers for this Synod.

Dean's Report

The Dean's Report was contained within the Synod Papers. The Dean highlighted the lack of applications for work under Canon 35, suggesting that austerity could be the cause of lack of building works, but she reminded members that the provincial Building Committee still has funds available for small grants. She also mentioned her evolving role in a Diocese where the Bishop is also Primus. Dean Alison thanked members of the Diocesan Buildings Committee for their support and also the congregation at St Columba's, Nairn. Visits to Charges for building inspection had been somewhat in abeyance because of pressure of work, but she hoped to resume these in the near future.

Diocesan Standing Committee

The report was contained within Synod papers and was accepted without any further questions.

Protection Officer's Report

Dr. MacFarlane informed Synod that two training days have been arranged for the coming year – 24th May, in the Kenneth Street Halls, for clergy; 16th June, in the Old Boys School, for clergy and laity.

Licensed clergy were reminded that they are required to attend a training day.

Some Charges had not yet submitted their annual report and were requested to do so as soon as possible. This is a requirement. Any incidents in need of reporting should be passed through the Diocesan Office (not straight to provincial Office) so that the Diocesan Officer is aware of what is happening. Bishop Mark thanked Dr. MacFarlane for her work.

Diocesan Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Mrs Louise Monaghan, began her report by injecting a little fizz into the proceedings, and asking what causes the cause of fizz in the diocese. Amongst other items she mentioned the presence of so many Ordinands, the growth of youth groups and the power of prayer. She enquired about the sources of seed funding for new activities or for sustaining present activities, and, from amongst Synod members the following sources were mentioned –

Co-op Community Grants, Grants from the DBMM, wind farms, landfill funding, Awards for All – to which the Treasurer added Provincial Building Grants, Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, All Churches Trust, Tesco Community Grants, Ecclesiastical Insurance – and each other.

The Treasurer then led members through the accounts. A question was asked about the need for full financial assessment of any motion being put to Synod for forwarding to General Synod (this to the request of the Provincial Standing Committee). Bishop Mark explained that in the past some motions had been agreed at General Synod, only for no action to be taken because funds were not available. If a person/charge wished to forward a motion, the relevant diocesan officials should be consulted regarding cost. Bishop Mark thanked Louise for all her work, both for the Diocese and for individual Charges, and announced that she would be continuing as Diocesan Treasurer and also taking on the role of Personal Assistant to Bishop Mark as Primus.

Elections

General Synod – House of Clergy

Nominations were required for two clerical members.

The Rev Michael Last and the Very Rev. Sarah Murray were nominated and elected unopposed.

Alternate Clergy member of General Synod

Two nominations were required for clergy alternates – no nominations were received; alternates will be sought by the Diocesan Standing Committee if required.

General Synod – House of Laity

Nomination was required for one lay member.

Mrs Deborah Munday was nominated and elected unopposed.

Alternate Lay members of General Synod

Nominations were required for two Lay Alternates. Mr Hugh Morrison was nominated and elected unopposed. The further Lay member will be sought by the Diocesan Standing Committee if required.

Faith and Order Board

Nomination was required for one Lay Member – following an election, Mr Grant Swain was elected.

Diocesan Standing Committee

Nomination was required for one Lay Member - following an election, Mrs Win MacDonald was elected.

Notices

- The Diocesan Secretary announced that next year's Diocesan Synod would be held on Saturday 2nd March 20129 (thus avoiding a clash with Six Nations Rugby), venue to be announced later.

- This year's meeting of Lay Representatives will be on Saturday 12th May, in the Old Boys' School following a Eucharist in the Cathedral.
- Mrs Sanderson also asked that she be informed of any Charge activities around the issue of Child Poverty; General Synod Office is compiling a report on this issue.

Afternoon session

Provincial and other matters

1. The Rev Richard Burkitt gave his annual report on the activities of For the Right Reasons. He thanked all those who had contributed to 'the Kevin Fund', which had allowed the print shop manager, Kevin, to receive financial support during his absence for treatment for cancer. He is making good progress. The difficulties of obtaining charitable funding when positive outcomes cannot be guaranteed were highlighted.
2. New data protection legislation – The Registrar spoke about the introduction of new legislation in the area of data protection, which every part of the SEC will be subject to, including individual charges. The new legislation (known as GDPR) replaces the Data protection Act, and applies to all living people. Areas affected include Pay Roll Records, photographs, baptism and Marriage Records, Holiday Club and Sunday School records, Gift Aid declarations and the recording of Pastoral Care activities. Provincial Guidelines on the application of GDPR will be issued shortly. The major issues include the necessity for holding data, secure storage, and accountability of processing/access and consent of the person concerned. The major questions data holders should ask themselves include – what data do you have? Why do you have it? Was consent given? How is it stored? Who has access? How long will it be kept? Is storage secure? Does removal (expunction) of data satisfy legal requirements?

Any Charge or organisation experiencing difficulties should refer the matter to the Registrar, after consulting the provincial Guidelines or accessing ICO.org.uk (twelve steps) for guidance.

3. Provincial Director of Communications, Miss Lorna Finley, brought greetings from General Synod Office. Miss Finley stressed the importance of the Data Protection legislation which the Diocesan Registrar had spoken about (see above) and referred to the Diocesan Secretary's request for information about Charge activities in the area of child poverty, as the provincial Church and Society Committee is in the process of compiling a report on this issue for the next meeting of General Synod. Miss Finley indicated that in the near future there would be a Diocese by Diocese workshop to help Charges discover new ways by which they could 'tell their story', as part of the mission of the church to the world around it. She did accept, however, that Bishop Mark's election as Primus would put additional strain on this Diocese. Miss Finley paid tribute to the work Bishop Mark was doing as Primus.

It was commented, from the floor, that the Bishops used to meet in all Dioceses, and not just in Edinburgh, and that news of activities in other Dioceses would be welcome. Additionally, the publicity around the selection of Bishop Ann was perceived as very negative. Miss Finley outlined the response of the Provincial Communications Department to that publicity and indicated that anyone who needed help with communications/publicity was always welcome to contact her. Bishop Mark thanked Miss Finley for her attendance and input into Synod.

Diocesan Administration Board

The report in Synod Papers was received. There were no questions

Diocesan Mission and Ministry Board

The report in Synod Papers was received. There were no questions

Diocesan Director of Ordinands' Report

The report from the DDO in Synod papers was received. The Rev Macritchie was able to tell Synod that Mr Philip Schonken had been recommended for training by BAP, which brings the number of Ordinands in the Diocese to eight. Bishop Mark commented that he had the joyful problem of finding posts and funding for Ordinands coming out of training.

Presentation by St Andrew's Cathedral

The Provost invited members of Synod to consider a number of questions which had already been put to the Cathedral congregations.

What is a cathedral?

What does this Cathedral do well?

What is missing from the Cathedral?

What lies ahead?

Each table at Synod was asked to respond to these questions.

The Provost then asked Synod to think about what lies ahead and highlighted areas of growth over the recent past, including

- 1) Creation of the Social Action Fund, providing meals for children outwith term time and the founding of the school uniform bank and toiletries bank.
- 2) The Building Fund to establish a firm base for the on-going maintenance of the Cathedral fabric.
- 3) The strengthening of the Cathedral as a spiritual hub for the city and the support of the worshipping community.
- 4) The development of the Cathedral as a visitor destination and as a venue for cultural events.

Synod was then asked to consider what else we would like the Cathedral to do and what would make Charges feel more part of the Cathedral. One suggestion was that specific Charges could be invited to Evensong on a rota basis to celebrate their Mother Church; another was that all Charges should be closed on one Sunday (perhaps Mothering Sunday?) so that everyone in the Diocese could worship together in the Cathedral.

The Provost concluded by saying that several cultural events were planned for the coming year and that details would be circulated in the near future.

Diocesan Youth Group

The Diocesan Youth Officer, Ley-Anne Forsyth, led a lively presentation of the activities of the Diocesan Youth Group and of other provincial youth activities, including a session on the 'different language' young people use. She described the calendar of events organised for young people, including sleep-overs, go karting, a tour of a search and rescue helicopter base. The Diocesan Youth Group worships together in the Cathedral twice a month followed by their own meeting in the Kenneth Street Halls, and is always looking for new members.

Reflection

The Bishop thanked everyone for their attendance and participation, and for making this Synod a relaxed event. He, and the Diocese, have a busy year ahead. Bishop Mark confirmed the Acts of Synod and the meeting closed at 3.30 p.m. The Bishop sent everyone out with God's blessing.

SYNOD CLERK'S REPORT TO DIOCESAN SYNOD, MARCH 10th 2018

Trust in God! That appears to be something that the church is not very good at. The predictions for congregations according to the 2016 Scottish Church Census are not encouraging. However, you will have read in the press that maybe the fall has 'bottomed out' though some institutional churches will continue to decline

Our figures are showing a decline across most of the categories. With the exception Non-Public Worship.

To make some specific points:

- Persons in the Congregation & Communicants Roll Totals for last year have dropped by 4%.
- There has been a general drop in the number of Eucharists, equivalent to 2-3 Eucharistic services a week. But we have been running a number of vacancies over the last year.
- Easter and Sunday Next Before Advent Communicants have shown a drop of 10 & 16% respectively but the attendance on Sunday Next Before Advent has shown an increase mainly due to Gordonstoun School's figures. (Gordonstoun figures are now being recorded differently)
- Total Communion at Public Worship are down 3%.
- Total communion at Non - Public Worship were also down 3%. Which reflects a levelling out of the previous two years increase of 30%.
- If you average the number of communicants by the number of celebrations of Holy Communion we see a steady increase from 15.5 in 2014 to 17 in 2017.

From the 2016 Brierley Census of Scottish Churches the future doesn't look too encouraging. Young people and families appear to be drawn increasingly to non-conformist churches. The Roman Catholic Church is only buoyed up, in the Aberdeen Diocese, due to influx of Polish Catholics.

For the future an age breakdown of our congregations, rather than on gender may be helpful. We could be growing in the 50 to 65-year age group, with this growth hidden by our very senior members passing on to the next stage in their life of Faith.

Although these figures may appear depressing, I think due to the age in which we live and work, we are actually doing quite well.

However, I would like to end a quote of St. Augustine of Hippo which will, hopefully, encourage you:

Pray as if everything depended on God. Work as if everything depends on you!

After all if we do not TRUST in God who will!

The Revd Canon Christopher G. Ketley
Synod Clerk

Table Feedback from Cathedral Presentation Synod 2018.

What is a Cathedral?

- Focus
- A big church
- A landmark
- An elitist club
- A focal point
- Good music
- Civic events
- Venue for events
- Music/choirs
- A place for those in need
- Shelter
- Resource for the city
- Seat of Bishop
- Place of inclusion
- Mother church
- Visitor Attraction
- A place to play
- Focus
- Mother church
- Drain on finances
- Big church with a spire
- Diocesan church
- Tourist attraction
- We should use the space better (?)
- Focal point- provides what others can't for the whole
- Welcomes visitors
- Allows Diocese to come together and worship
- Focal point for the city
- Concert and cultural venue
- Landmark
- A building
- Bishops chair
- Diocesan church
- Tourist attraction
- Gathering place
- Performance venue
- Place of prayer
- Place of worship
- Place of peace and serenity- for anyone
- Big occasions
- Mother hen
- Hub
- Focus for Diocese & Inverness

What does the Cathedral do well?

- Regular/ daily services
- Bells
- Evening worship
- PR

- Music
- Atmosphere
- Civic events
- Hospitality
- Outreach to the city
- Bells
- A variety of services to suit everyone
- Tourist attraction
- Social outreach
- Welcoming
- Family for each congregation
- Bishop Eden Primary School
- Old Boys School Coffee Shop
- Venue for other events
- Supporting local craftspeople
- Christmas services
- Hosts concerts and community events
- Welcoming
- Ministry to the poor
- Warm
- Café
- Good music
- Big services
- Offering a quiet space and candles
- Tourism
- Singing/music
- Venue
- Ceremony
- Welcome for people in need
- Pomp and circumstance- especially when the Bishop is there
- Good outreach- clothing etc.
- It is a central point
- Communicating into the wideness
- Welcoming
- Café
- Centre of worship
- Library
- Concert/cultural venue
- Big occasions
- Tourist attraction

What's missing?

- Online services
- Children on Sunday
- Presence in the wider Diocese
- Spires
- Odour of sanctity
- Effective lighting
- Effective sound system
- Spires
- All of us
- Sufficient toilets

- Private prayer space
- Not enough staff to do what it does
- More effective communication
- Gospel choir
- Effective lighting and sound system
- Cathedral seating
- Cathedral Day
- Shared online services
- Wi-Fi
- Volunteer guides
- Counselling service
- Comfortable pews/seats
- Good sound system
- Better lighting
- Good pipe organ
- Something comfortable to sit on
- Good cathedral day
- Better advertising for library

What could the Cathedral do and what can we [the Diocese] do?

- Go more often!
- Get involved more with Cathedral outreach
- Spread the outreach to the wider Diocese
- Diocesan Events
- Keep developing community involvement
- Positive image of the church
- Work at engagement/relationships with local churches and diocese
- More events other churches invited to participate in
- Volunteer- guiding visitors
- Communicating better
- People from cathedral visit other parishes throughout Diocese

BISHOP'S CHARGE

Well this has been some year. I have found myself in a very different form of ministry in a Province that is going through fundamental changes.

The changes to our marriage Canon have now taken effect and despite the anxieties shown by some, the church has managed to steer a way through this. I have spoken to the Anglican Primates and continue to do so and in fact I have an invitation to Brazil in May, USA in June and Wales in September to discuss with those churches the processes we have undertaken.

The Province has experienced three Episcopal Vacancies, two which were a bit unexpected. The running of the Canon 4 process has caused some difficulties but Aberdeen and Orkney now has a new bishop, +Anne and both Brechin and St Andrews are still on track for new bishops by the end of the year. That will make my life and therefore the life of those who support me far more comfortable.

Within the diocese we have witnessed the dedication of All Saints Mission Kinlochewe, and the development of the Crask Inn and we are preparing for the dedication of the building in April. You will hear later about developments in the Cathedral and in Youth work. We have welcomed new clergy to the diocese and await the arrival of our new priest for the Wyvis group and Invergordon in May.

As you will see from the DDO report we continue to see a number of people preparing for Ordination. This year Claire Caley will be ordained Priest and I expect to ordain Ellie Charmain as Deacon. Megan Cambridge will be Licensed as Lay Reader.

We have seen a small drop in numbers across the diocese this year much of it affected by the economic difficulties in some of our communities. We are aware of a number of growing estates etc on the edges of our communities and we need to be better at letting them know we are here.

The cost of ministry continues to limit the mission of the diocese and we have a number of new plans that will come on line when and if the resources become available. Please keep up with the stewardship in your charges, without the resources our ability to minister to our communities diminishes.

As you all know, the extra work I have taken up has also created more work for others and I wish to thank those who have taken on those responsibilities - Dean Alison for her commitment to all we do, Provost Sarah for stepping up as my focus shifted, Canon Mel for agreeing to be my Primus Chaplain, Douglas for his additional work load in so many directions, in fact to all of you who have expanded your ministry and care to accommodate all I now have to do.

I would like here to thank the late Bill Anderson our former Chancellor. Bill served this diocese with great joy and with great affection for us. His death was a shock and I know George will miss his wise words and unfailing concern for this diocese and those who live and serve here.

I have had one concern and that has been Louise and her changing life, moving on from the business she set up and ran so successfully. Were we going to lose her faithful and inspirational care of our finances? Well I am delighted to say that Louise has accepted my offer as PA to the Primus, a role part funded by the Province. We have been able to put together a package which means Louise will continue her work for the finance of the Diocese, increase her work for the Charges and ensure that the additional work created by my new role will not impact to severely on the present structure, Louise will be employed by the Diocese and we won't lose her, she even pointed out that this year her appointment will be Budget Neutral! Thank you Louise.

And finally in what is I suppose a transitional Charge as we see how things change, as new clergy settle in, as new ordinands begin to affect our lives and as I hear a new determination to see our churches grow, may I thank you all for your support and your care for me and for my family.

Mark, Bishop of Moray, Ross and Caithness, and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church