

Diocese of Moray Ross and Caithness
St Boniface & St Gilbert's Regional Synod
29th September 2018
St James the Great Dingwall

The Eucharist was celebrated by the Rev Julia Boothby.

The business meeting convened at 11.15am chaired by the Rev James Currall who welcomed those present.

Apologies: Bishop Mark, Dean Alison Simpson, Rev David Higgon, Rev Valerie Saunders, Rev Chris Mayo, Rev Ruth Lockhart, Rev Ellie Charman, Ann Nowicki, Charlie Brooke.

Attendance: 20 - Clergy 7, Laity 13

RIP: A short silence was held in memory of Janice Broun who died during the year.

Minutes of the Regional Synod held on 7th October 2017 were presented, noting an amendment to the title from "Chapter meeting" to "Synod".

Matters Arising

The concerns raised regarding the website last year were taken to the Diocesan Standing Committee by the Diocesan Secretary who was informed that efforts are being made to keep it up to date.

However there are still serious concerns. Synod was strongly of the opinion that a website should be the public face of the Church in respect of mission and evangelism and not just a platform for notices. The meeting requested that the Standing Committee produce a report on the current state of the website and plans for its future development for discussion at Diocesan Synod. Robin agreed to take this to the Standing Committee meeting on Wed 3rd October.

Proposed Richard Stanley, *Seconded* Janet McDonald.

Richard was thanked for his service as *administrator*.

Janet McDonald agreed to act as *minutes secretary* and Beatrice Somers as *administrator*. *Proposed* Val Dunford, *Seconded* Gilly Court.

Diocesan Budget

Since this will be adopted on Wednesday by the standing committee, the following queries were raised/observations suggested for consideration, when planning next year's budget.

- a) *Website:* It was suggested that maybe more money should be set aside for this in future budgets to allow paid work to be done on it.
- b) *Treasurer's salary:* Clarification was given that the increase in this is due to our Bishop's role as Primus (money coming from the Province), and some of the work of individual charges being taken on.
- c) *Reserves:* A request was made that the balance be reported to Regional Synods.
- d) *Mission & Ministry:* A query was raised as to how this sum was used. It was explained that some charges receive support with clergy costs but this is offset by a grant from the province.
- e) *Diocesan staff:* In relation to the increase Robin Lingard explained that there are now more cathedral office secretarial staff who are shared with the diocese.

Motions for Diocesan Synod

Change of marriage rites. Rev Nigel Wright spoke on this subject. He proposed that a motion from Regional Synod be put to Diocesan Synod asking that the SEC offers an historic apology to those who

have suffered hurt due to lack of welcome in Churches and exclusion from areas of Church life. He also felt that failure to show a lead to others who had such attitudes should be included.

He wondered whether something like the cascade conversation, which was executed with such remarkable grace in the run up to the changing of the Canon on Marriage, would be a way of taken this process to its conclusion.

It was mentioned that there are other issues where the church has not shown the love of God e.g. in relation to divorcées, which could be included.

There is some urgency here, since it would set an example to respond in this way before Lambeth 2020. Therefore it would need to be on the agenda for Diocesan Synod in March 2019.

Gilly Court and Norma Higgott proposed that a group be set up to draught a motion to be taken to Diocesan Synod. This was unanimously agreed by the meeting and the following members were appointed to the group: Rev Nigel Wright, Richard Stanley, Beatrice Somers and Rev Norma Higgott. This motion could be circulated to the rest of the group for comment before the Christmas. If such a proposal were accepted by Diocesan Synod it would then go back for discussion in charges before Provincial Synod.

It was felt that this would also support and encourage the Church of Scotland in being able to move the issue forward.

AOCB: Val Dunsford proposed that a motion was put to Diocesan Synod on poverty. *Seconded* Beatrice Somers. Rev James Currall said that he would co-ordinate with the other Regional Synods to take this as a concerted action to Diocesan Synod. Robin Lingard offered to take this to Standing Committee.

Date of next Meeting

September 28th 2019
Golspie Primary School
10.30 am

Afternoon Session

Ley-Anne Forsyth, the Diocesan Youth Officer, spoke movingly and passionately about Poverty in the Highlands and in smaller groups we looked at what practical steps we could take to help in our communities. We concluded by sharing our ideas. This was a very positive and stimulating session following which we all hoped to be able to work with our vestries to take at least some steps to offer appropriate help. Ley-Anne stressed her availability to come to address vestries on the matters relating to poverty on our doorsteps, and to outline possible plans of action.