

DIOCESAN SYNOD REPORT - NOVEMBER 2011

Birmingham Diocesan Synod met at St Matthew's Church Centre, Nechells on Saturday 19th November 2011.

Presidential Address

Bishop David said that in a world of great uncertainty we need to be joining up our thinking of who we are, and what we believe. We need to keep intense and lively focus of what God wants us to do as Christian disciples and the decisions we make in the context of the current global issues.

Focusing on this year's gospel for the Feast of Christ the King (Matthew 25) how will God judge us? Sheep or goats?

We need to demonstrate our faith by: the way we care for one another, by our response to what God has given us and by praying for those in need.

Anglican Communion Covenant

The main item on the agenda was a debate on the motion referred to Diocesan Synod under Article 8 of the Constitution of the General Synod:

That this Synod approve the draft Act of Synod adopting the Anglican Communion Covenant.

Bishop David introduced the subject and then there followed a very high quality debate with contributions representing many different views, hopes and concerns relating to the Covenant being expressed.

Following a time of silent prayer, the motion was then put to the vote:

House of Clergy	17 for	17 against	1 abstention
House of Laity	12 for	25 against	1 abstention
House of Bishops	1 for	0 against	0 abstentions

Election of Members of Diocesan Synod for 2012 - 2015

Synod agreed the composition of the Diocesan Synod to be elected in 2012 in terms set out in the Church Representation Rules 2011. This means Warley Deanery will have 3 clergy and 2 lay members.

Church House Move

Bishop's Council has agreed that Church House should move from Harborne Park Road to rented offices in the city centre, opposite the Cathedral, and to be shared with the Cathedral staff. Aims are:
-to reduce cost as the move would be cost neutral. Proceeds of sale of 175 Harborne Park Rd would be invested and used to pay the office rents.

-to allow smarter and more flexible working practices.

-to be in a more central location with better access by public transport from all parts of the Diocese.

-to develop closer working between the Cathedral and Diocesan staff to better serve the needs of the Church and wider community across the Diocese.

-it would be better for possible future changes if staff are based in the city centre.

It was noted that many staff currently based in Harborne have concerns about the move such as: parking issues, longer working day, extended commute, impacting on family commitments etc. It was explained how staff have been consulted and how where possible flexible working practices would help overcome some of these issues.

Elden Small 21st November 2011