

Standing Committee Bulletin 11: 25 June 2019 St Andrew's Church & Community Hub, Garden City

Martin Batchelor as chair welcomed members to Standing Committee (SC). This year's Ordinands led the worship / reflection.



Sandra Davies (above) was welcomed as the new Finance Officer, replacing Graham Walker who retired this month.

2018 Diocesan Accounts

The Chair of the DBF, **Helen Jones** summarised the accounts (see meeting papers) thanking the churches and MAs for their support. The DBF acknowledges the fragility of finances in some churches.

- 72% of income is from MA share
- 23% of income is from block grant
- The rest comes from dividends, interest and other small incomes

Expenditure:

The DBF had a £109,924 deficit on operations – a great improvement on the budgeted position. This was mainly due to MAs being able to pay their share in full, a higher than expected number of clergy vacancies and strict control of costs.

The value of investments fell at the end of 2018 due to a difficult last quarter, but most has now been recovered. Overall our outcome is good.

2018 brings us closer to a balanced budget, after investing in growth, but we

must remember we could still have unforeseen circumstances. For example, the Clergy pension scheme is due for its triennial revaluation at the end of the year and the DBF remains cautious about its likely recommendations.

The accounts have been audited and found to be complete and accurate.

Hilary Murray: Why was the contribution from Wrexham Education Fund less than budgeted?

Helen: This was due to a vacant chaplaincy post at St Joseph's school.

Hilary Murray: Why is the Pilgrim Church Fund so low with only £509?

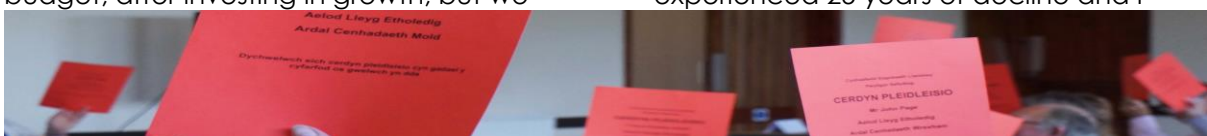
Diane McCarthy: We receive revenue for services held in pilgrim churches and now with seven pilgrim churches, that almost covers all the costs but the DBF has agreed to maintain this fund at £2,000.



The Accounts were passed unanimously.

Hope Street and Evangelism Fund

John Lomas told SC that Hope Street had just been awarded a £1.9m grant from the Evangelism Fund. John shared a video clip from St Joseph's School where the year 11 leavers requested the hymn *10,000 Reasons* (Matt Redman) be played at their Prom Night disco. John told SC: "I've experienced 25 years of decline and I



hope the new ordinands don't preside over another 25 years of decline! Hope Street offers a chance for something new."

<https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/diocese-st-asaph-secures-first-share-church-wales-evangelism-fund/>

Developing a Rural Strategy



Barry Wilson (left) explained the background and process for developing a compelling rural strategy (see meeting papers).

Canon Dr Jill Hopkinson will work alongside the diocese on this important work.

The strategy needs to be based on listening. We will be consulting widely not just to listen but to achieve buy-in. There needs to be a small working party to devise the strategy. It needs to talk to all sorts of people, including those who don't come to church.

The strategy will take a year to devise, starting in September 2019. It will be a comprehensive document.



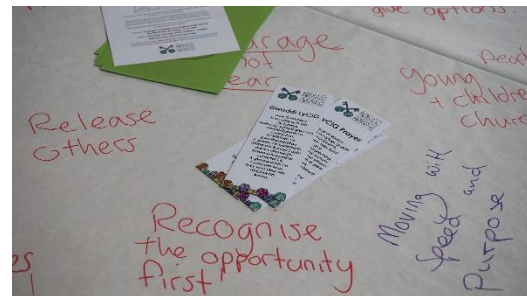
Michael Plane shared two examples where congregations are approaching change and working with the local communities. They are prayerfully seizing opportunities and making difficult decisions.

Llangwnw in Caerinion MA has a beautiful and ancient church, a Victorian church hall and a vacant cottage. Consultations are just starting but a sensitive approach means they are looking at all options. The meetings have been very honest and

prayerful and people are on a journey in a positive and encouraging way.

At Nantglyn in the Denbigh Mission Area

the congregation is facing very challenging decisions. Various repairs are needed on the church and at the same time, the local community is seeking a new community centre. After prayerful discussions, consideration is being given to sharing the church hall with the community. It could become the new heart of the community.



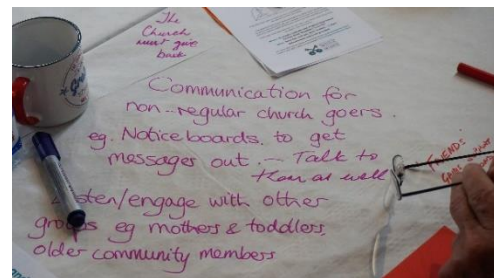
Ros Crawford: Our church recently closed, and people are grieving inwardly. They need support from people in the MA. It is a very painful process. There is a massive sense of loss and grief.

Church congregations must:

- Root their vision in prayer
- Develop the vision with the local community
- Be prepared to make difficult decisions
- Be ready to grab opportunities

Huw Lloyd: Aled MA is very diverse – a large chunk is rural but also on the coast. Which initiative applies to us?

Tracey White: LyCiG is run for every church – all types of church and context. It can equally work in rural and urban areas.



Sarah Wheat: LyCiG and Hope and a future complement each other.

Huw Lloyd: Each MA should take a lead on this – you can't follow everything. We need to focus.

Barry Wilson: The rural strategy is multi-layered. It's not a one size fits all but a toolbox of opportunities. You need to make wise choices for your area: better to do a few things well rather than lots of things badly.

After Lunch – Norma Rowles took over as chair.

Andy Grimwood outlined the work of the Developing Steering Group (DSG).



He summarised the impact on the diocese of LyCiG and asked SC to consider what sort of help our churches need? Should the focus be prayer, presence, proclamation or persuasion.

Anne Hooper: Prayer- we've done two 48 hours of prayer and they've been good, but we need more resources explaining why we pray, what's it for, how do we do it?

Rebecca Sparey-Taylor: We need to be able to articulate answers to prayer. People aren't very good at telling people about our faith – sharing our faith.

Tracey White explained that the DSG is working on materials about different forms of ministry and a survey on training needs. She asked MAs to each identify a training coordinator.

Heather Fenton explained it's not difficult to take the opportunity to share your faith.

International Partnerships

South West Tanganyika (SWT)

Drs Hilary and Adrian Murray will be travelling to Tanzania on 12 August to spend a year (or more!) in the Diocese of SWT. They explained the background to the link between St Asaph and SWT and how they have made a link between Milo and Bala work.

During their year in Tanzania, Adrian will work in the hospital and two dispensaries. He'll be working with the staff to encourage, mentor, train and resource them. He hopes Milo hospital will become a centre of excellence for maternity services.

Hilary will be working on health education and removing stigma for HIV/AIDS. She'll be helping with the administration of the hospital.

You can keep up with their work and life in Tanzania at brechdan.wordpress.com

Bishop Gregory commissioned Hilary and Adrian to be our incarnational link between St Asaph and SWTA.



The Partnership with the Diocese of Helsinki

Bishop Gregory explained the new link with the Diocese of Helsinki, via the Porvoo Agreement. The agreement was signed in early June:

<https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/new-partnership-agreement-welsh-finnish-churches/>

We are making this a living link with a focus on young people.



Tim Feak and four young people told SC about their recent trip to Finland as part of the discipleship and confirmation course.



It's a yearlong commitment and following Finland, continues here with diocesan small groups and sessions in MAs. Hope Street will be a home to develop this.

A group from Finland will visit here in the Autumn and there'll be a confirmation camp in Finland in 2020.

Tim interviewed the young people:

Alex: the best bits were learning the different ways of connecting with the different age groups.

Shay loved being in a different culture, with 5 meals a day, swimming in a lake and going in the sauna.

Mitchell: As a leader, you have to be strong, level-headed and understand different points of view. Sometimes you have to work with people you don't like!

Alysha: God is still in the small and big things no matter what language or culture.

Tim Feak: The more responsibility we gave the young people, the better the camp became.

Young people (aged 14-15) will be able to apply to join us for next year's camp. Some MAs will be able to do their own confirmation camps soon.

Questions raised by Mission Area

Any progress on the appointment of a Welsh language officer for the Province?

Answers have been given by Simon Lloyd, Jeremy Duff and Manon Ceridwen James (with meeting with papers).

Hilary Murray: it would be useful to have pre-prepared service materials / templates to use rather than re-translating items every time.

Penedeyrn Mission Area: As a diocese, are we still committed to Fairtrade?

Jane James: Are we more concerned about a brand or ensuring the products are ethically sourced and fairly-traded. We have one shop in our village – we are using our local shop and not travelling 10 miles to a supermarket.

Hilary Murray: Fairtrade is not a brand but is a mark. It is concerned with the environment, treatment of children and payment for farmers. Co-op and M&S products are all Fairtrade.

Michael Plane: There is a difference between Traidcraft and Fairtrade.

Sarah Wheat: It's not a huge commitment for churches to support Fairtrade. Local shops could be asked to source Fairtrade items. Churches shouldn't be supporting products which exploit people.

Frank Prescott: We should also think about Fairtrade Communion Wine.

Michael Plane: For young people, faith in action is crucial. People want to see the church make a difference in life.

Tracey White: It's a stewardship issue.

Fairtrade reps, Jean-Audrey Speare or Lis Perkins will be asked to speak at a SC meeting in future.

Provincial Reports

Bishop Gregory reported on the last Bench of Bishops meeting when the following was discussed:

1. Clergy remuneration: a radical proposal is under discussion.



2. Cathedrals: The review has looked at how we resource the cathedrals.
3. The Covenant and commitment to seek unity with the Methodist Church of GB, the Presbyterian Church of Wales, URC in Wales and a number of Baptist congregations. The commission is producing a resource to remind us what we can already do together.
4. The bishops approved the order of service for the anniversary of the disestablishment of the CinW. This liturgy was written in Welsh and has been translated into English. There'll be a major service on Trinity Sunday, next year.
5. IICSA (Safeguarding): The CinW will be appearing over 2 days next week.
6. The bishops had a discussion and a guided workshop on anti-Semitism and religious prejudice and decided to adopt the international definition of anti-Semitism.
7. *Presentation on Life Events* resources will assist our churches to support baptisms, weddings and funerals and use them as opportunities to share the faith.
8. Provincial website – it will focus on evangelism. Films have been commissioned and the bishops reviewed them.

Further information.

All the papers to accompany this meeting can be found at:

<https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/standing-committee/>



Governing Body

The magazine *Highlights* is available online:

<https://www.churchinwales.org.uk/structure/representative-body/publications/downloads/highlights/>

and paper copies have been sent to all church secretaries.

Any Other Business:

Date of the next meeting

24 September at St Peter's Church, Holywell.

