

## Standing Committee Bulletin 13: 27 November 2019

### St Matthew's Church, Buckley



**Bishop Gregory** welcomed everyone to SC and opened with a reflection.

#### Minutes of the last meeting

**Hugh Burgess** asked a question referring to page 6 of the last set of minutes regarding trustees. Diane will ask the Registrar to provide a more detailed answer.

*The minutes were carried.*

#### Election of vice presidents

Bishop Gregory paid tribute to those who served as Vice Presidents for the last triennial – Hilary Murray, Martin Batchelor and Norma Rowles. Hilary and Martin have decided to stand down and Bishop Gregory thanked them for their service.

Sue Huyton, Steve Willson and Llyr Williams were nominated and duly elected as Vice Presidents, along with Norma Rowles.

**Norma** took over as Chair of the meeting.



#### Review of the 2019 Diocesan Conference

**Diane McCarthy:** 92% of people returning the questionnaire said the conference was either good or excellent.

The theme of Hope struck a chord with many people, especially how it was articulated by the keynote speaker, Simon Ponsonby.

Booklets with feedback from the breakout sessions will be available shortly.

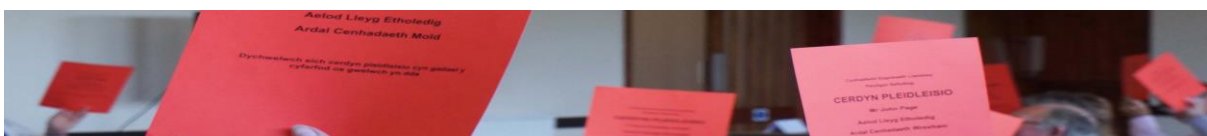
Simon Ponsonby was very highly rated. Over 96% of people rated his presentation skills, excellent or good and 94% rated the content either excellent or good.

The ongoing work to establish our diocese as an eco-diocese was well received with non-plastic packaging for the lunches, reducing the amount of paper sent and fewer leaflets distributed either in the conference packs or via the marketplace.

Some less favourable areas were:

1. The group sessions polarised opinion. Diane thanked the facilitators for all their hard work.
2. The reduced number of stalls, to ensure more space, didn't please everyone.
3. Most of the concerns were practical concerning the venue. St Joseph's do a great job in welcoming us but it's a school, not a conference centre. Some people commented on the temperature of the hall, the toilet facilities and the difficulties in navigating the building.

Next year the conference will take place at Glyndwr University on Saturday 10 October. It is a fully equipped conference venue with breakout rooms and top-



quality technology. It offers more flexible facilities, allowing us to make cost savings and relieve the pressure on St Joseph's.

### Church near me: Promotional opportunity for your church

**Karen Maurice**, the Diocesan Communications Officer introduced everyone to **Churchnearme.co.uk** – a new section of the website with details of all churches and priests across the diocese. The facility is searchable so people can find their nearest church (based on postcode or place name) and find the churches located in each Mission Area. Most churches have photos and basic information and Karen encouraged SC members to check their own church's entry and email her with any amendments. In due course, MA Administrators will be given access to the site to keep entries up to date. Karen asked that Christmas services be emailed so the website can be populated with Christmas information.

### 2020 Vision - Fairtrade

The Diocesan Engagement Officer, **Sarah Wheat** introduced **Lis Perkins** and **Jean Audrey Speare** to explain why being a Fairtrade Province continues to be important.



**Lis Perkins:** We all have a relationship with other countries which produce so many products we can't produce in this country. This link is a partnership and FairTrade ensures greater equality for farmers and producers in the global south. Fairtrade is not just a business; it's a campaign. It's **not** a charity. It's a business model.

Fairtrade labelling came in 1997 and in 2002 the Fairtrade mark we recognise today was launched. It comes with a guarantee for a fair deal for farmers. Details at <http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/>

These days, there are other marks like Rainforest Alliance and Coca Life. They are better than no mark but in terms of Rainforest Alliance, only 50% of the product must reach a certain standard. In Fairtrade it is 100%.

Cocoa Life is a new mark produced by Cadbury's. Details of both these can be searched online:

- <https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/>
- <https://www.cocoalife.org/>

In neither case, is there independent verification.

### So why support Fairtrade?

Fairtrade makes a difference. It pays a proper price, pegged to the world price but always higher. There's also a premium, which goes to the community – they decide how that money is spent.

The average age of a farmer (globally) is 60 – if we don't start paying properly for our goods, who is going to grow our food in future?

**Jean Audrey Speare:** All churches can use Fairtrade tea, coffee, sugar and biscuits. How about Fairtrade flowers or Fairtrade Eucharist wine? A Mission Area could bulk buy or run a stall. Why not raise awareness in your services, include Fairtrade in your intercessions, run an event in Fairtrade Fortnight (January) and make a personal choice for Fairtrade.

### 2020 Vision – Modern Slavery

Sarah introduced **Ali Ussery** who will be working for the Diocese for two days a week for six months. Her organisation, Haven of Light, will be the recipient of the 2020 Diocesan Offering.





Ali explained how modern slavery is a global issue which impacts here in north Wales too. She has been involved in the UK and north Wales

for the last six years. We have many cases of exploitation in our midst – people working in our fields, sexual exploitation, pop up brothels, county lines – our young people are being groomed by gangs. Problems exist in rural and urban communities and along the coast.

Ali will be setting up awareness raising sessions and is keen to speak to church groups, community groups, schools to help inform people: Alisonussery@cinw.org.uk / 07929777347

The Fairtrade church pledge: To use Fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar after services and all meetings to which the church is responsible...do we continue our commitment to be a FairTrade Diocese?

**Heather Fenton:** Buying Fairtrade it isn't always easy, especially in rural communities where the church is keen to support a local shop. **Lis Perkins:** FairTrade is widely available in most supermarkets, and if it's not, she encouraged people to complain to the customer services desk. We have power as consumers – we need to tell them what we want to buy. **Sandra Roberts:** The Coop has a wide range of Fairtrade. **Michael Plane:** Traidcraft will supply local shops with Fairtrade goods.

*SC voted to commit to continue to be a Fairtrade diocese. Passed unanimously.*

### Proposal to merge Tanat Valley and Vyrnwy Mission Areas

**Archdeacon Barry:** Both MAs have been consulting for many months to consider whether a single Mission Area was viable. After lots of meetings, all the churches voted and at the beginning of February 2020, the two MAs will become the Tanat and Vyrnwy Mission Area.

**Martin Snellgrove:** Is anyone upset by the change of symmetry for the archdeacons. (Montgomery only has 6 MAs now) **A/D Barry:** This isn't an issue!

### Provincial Reports - Bench of Bishops

**Bishop Gregory:** The issue of same sex relationships was discussed by the bench. It's moving ahead with a proposal to have a theological evaluation of the arguments for same sex marriage and is commissioning work on a rite of blessing for same sex partnerships. We need to see if we can, as a church, move to equal marriage as a long-term goal and allow for blessings in the short term. It's intended that the work will be completed in 2020, to be presented to GB in 2021.

The Bench reviewed the work of the SLAC (Standing Liturgical Advisory Committee) and its intention to work bilingually and ensure Welsh liturgy is available. The Provincial service to celebrate 2020 on 7 June in the Cathedral at 3.30pm will see the liturgy written in Welsh and then translated into English.

The 2020 National Prayer Breakfast at the Senedd will focus on celebrating the centenary of the disestablishment of the CinW.

The Bench has decided to work provincially with the Cursillo movement.

The Bench had a report on the independent inquiry into child sexual abuse. The report is yet to be written but the enquiry felt the CinW had operated to a much higher standard than the CofE.

The Provincial Standing Committee is looking to create a provincial education council.

The Bench welcomed the Bishop-elect of Monmouth The Ven Cherry Vann.

**Jonathan Smith:** Equal marriage - will that change the marriage canon in the CinW?

**Bishop Gregory:** That's the theological work which needs to be done. It will have





to change the theological teaching on the churches view of marriage. Several Anglican Provinces have already done that. It hasn't stopped ecumenical cooperation. **Heather Fenton:** Have any same sex couples been involved in the consultation? **Bishop Gregory:** Yes, people within the LGBT community are involved in the consultation.

### Provincial Reports - Report from the Representative Body (RB)

**Dean Nigel:** The RB met on 14 November and the first item was the risks register which is reviewed annually. Falling congregations is now seen as the highest risk facing the RB. There are concerns across the province about this. The Evangelism Fund is going to play an important part in changing the trend. It also highlighted that as we work at so many different levels, we don't own each other's risks. Each diocese has its own risk registers but do our structures need to be much more joined up in future?

The other key matter was the CinW's investments and the predicted fall in return. With fluctuations in the market, it's hoped the return for distribution will remain the same.

A block grant of £6.157m will remain until 2021. The **remuneration group** reported that the clergy pension could increase by as much as 5% but the figure won't be confirmed until March 2020. All the dioceses made it clear that such an increase could only be funded by a reduction in the number of clergy.

Two dioceses have now been awarded a grant from the **Evangelism Fund:** £1.9m to St Asaph and £3m to Bangor. Two dioceses are working hard on their application – Llandaff and St David's. Monmouth can't apply yet as they have no Bishop in place.

There is now a three-year embargo for a diocese to submit a second application or

until all diocese have submitted their first application.

If all the existing bids are successful there will only be £1m left in the fund. There is a possibility it will be extended.

Sir Paul Silk is now the chair of the Evangelism Fund and Bishop of Bangor is the vice chair.

The RB had a report from St Padarns. The cost of the Institute is £2.4m in the next year.

**Hugh Burgess:** What will happen if St Asaph can't pay the Pension? **Dean Nigel:** The RB will have to foot the bill. **Steve**

**Willson:** What is the Bangor Project? **Bishop Gregory:** It has three strands – Pilgrimage, Welsh Language ministry and social enterprise.

**Archdeacon John** said Grace before lunch. A Fairtrade stall was available.



### Report from Bishop Gregory on his sabbatical

Bishop Gregory was on sabbatical from July to October. The first week was spent decluttering, followed by a family holiday. August was the month he made a commitment to grow spiritually. He went to Belmont Abbey in Hereford to study icon painting, which was a powerful experience. September was a month of study: Bishop Gregory celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland and then went on a three-week scholarship in Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria.

He spent time writing papers:



1. A theology to sustain the future – the theology behind mission areas.
2. Expectations of Clergy in the Diocese.
3. His own future ministry – he's been bishop for 10 years and could be bishop for another 10 years yet! – what is the most important thing he can do for the diocese? This paper has been shared with Bishop's Staff.
4. Draft of Retrospective, looking back at the church now from 2025 – this will come to Standing Committee in due course.



In the last week Bishop Gregory went to Egypt, part of his work as the Anglican co-chair of the Anglican Orthodox International Commission. On the final day he went to Anaphora in the Egyptian desert run by a Coptic monk, Bishop Thomas. The latest *Teulu Asaph* magazine includes a piece from Bishop Gregory on this.

Words spoken by Bishop Thomas had a profound effect on Bishop Gregory: "The mission of a bishop is to lift up and help everyone around me."

Bishop Gregory thanked everyone for enabling him to go on sabbatical.

### **St Asaph Cathedral, mother church of our diocese**

**Dean Nigel:** In 2016 a report came out in the CinW on Cathedrals. One of the recommendations, was for a new scheme of governance for the Cathedral. We're proposing to create a new Governance structure:

A new Chapter or Trustee Body will be formed with 9 members: five clerical and 4 lay. They will be appointed according to expertise required, eg finance, buildings, etc.

The Greater Chapter will be like the structure of the chapter now. It will meet four times a year and will scrutinise the Trustee Body.

The chapter will hold one meeting per year at which all will be present, like an AGM.

The Visitor is the Bishop and all groups will be responsible to the Bishop.

There are two other cathedrals which have new forms of governance: Llandaff is very similar to the St Asaph model.

**Kevin Horswell:** How does this relate to the MAs? **Nigel:** The chapter is the Mission Area Conference in Elwy Mission Area.

### **St Asaph Cathedral development**

Over the last few years, St Asaph Cathedral has been transformed, with the opening of a tearoom, new toilets, new meeting space and interactive



interpretation. None of this would have been possible without the hard work and determination of Jackie Feak, who was originally employed as the Hospitality Coordinator for the Cathedral, thanks to a grant from the Transformation Fund. Thanks to that grant, we have now been able to:

- continue to employ the hospitality coordinator but as the tearoom manager – it's about extending a welcome,
- Employ two tearoom supervisors, who oversee a team of volunteers,
- Employ an activities officer (funded by the National Lottery): we have a much-increased footfall at the



Cathedral – people come to one event and follow on to another.

**Lona Kernahan, Activities Coordinator** explained her role.



Lona has worked in museums and heritage for the last 15 years. Her focus is education and community engagement. Her remit is to create a new programme

of activities for families, adults, community groups, recruit more volunteers and encourage participation, look at the schools' programme and try to engage with as many people as possible.

The first few events didn't attract as many people as hoped, but the Cathedral mysteries based on the escape room idea has gained much interest. Following on from this, she ran a Roman Day. Research suggested there could have been a Roman fort in St Asaph!

The café is doing very well and is supported by an excellent team of volunteers.

The Cathedral is now rolling out a new workshop for schools based on William Morgan. This has involved working with **Jennie Downes, the Diocesan Schools Officer**. She explained how she worked with pupils from Ysgol Esgob Morgan to investigate the life of William Morgan. This work has been extended to Welsh language schools to investigate the life of all the translators and has become a model for learning as part of the new



curriculum in Wales. More schools will be involved in 2020.

### Date of the next meeting

Tuesday 31 March 2020 at Quinta Hall, Weston Rhyn, Oswestry SY10 7LR,

### Further information

All the papers to accompany this meeting can be found at:  
<https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/standing-committee/>

