



## Standing Committee Bulletin 9: 27 November 2018 St Peter's Church, Holywell

**Martin Batchelor**, as Chair, welcomed everyone to Standing Committee (SC). The number of apologies was noted with disappointment, especially as some Mission Areas had no representation.

**Jane James** offered a reflection and Huw Lloyd read from Paul's letter to the Colossians.



- Growth: Building the life of God's people
- Service: Ministry in the Name of Christ
- Youth: Sharing good news with young people
- Enablement: Discerning the breadth of God's work
- Mission Areas: Focussing on God's Kingdom

**Sandra Roberts** asked about the priority to explore opportunities for paid lay ministries? Penedeyrn Mission Area has had a Transformation Fund grant to finance an evangelist and administrator – these have been invaluable and borne fruit. Once the grant runs out, what happens then?

### Metanoia

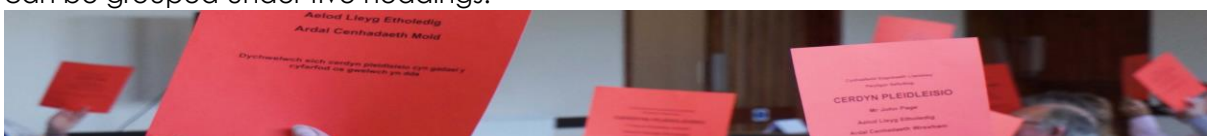
**Bishop Gregory** highlighted the main responses to his Metanoia exercise at the Diocese Conference. The details are included in the meeting papers.

SC offered feedback on the main themes. Among the comments were:

- It's about Mission not buildings
- We need to become a church of our time
- We need to develop buildings to serve Christ
- Let congregations know that it's not failure to close a building
- We need to move from churchiness to outward mission.
- There's too much top down.

### Diocesan Strategy and Review of the Eight Priorities

Bishop Gregory reminded everyone of the eight priorities and explained how they can be grouped under five headings:



**+G:** We need to look very seriously at how we pay a whole host of different roles while at the same



time being mindful of the budget. We need to balance the books. We have been running a deficit budget for a couple of years now and there's a strong feeling that we need to return to the black. There's a tension between wanting to invest in lay ministries but there's a lot of work needed to get this into place.

**SR:** What about the Evangelism Fund?

**+G:** This is a good initiative. It's quite clear that any bids are about new life of the church and not supporting what is already happening.

**Hilary Murray:** What's the purpose of a school's advocate? We do that already in Penedeyrn.

**Roz Williams** replied: It's great to hear that – we want a link between the MA and every school in that MA. There should be an advocate for each school and best practice should be shared.

Schools ministry is more than just the vicar going to take assembly now and again.



**Martin Batchelor:** There's no mention of chaplaincy in the document. We have several excellent chaplaincies already.

**+G:** The document will be refined to include mention of this.

The strategy was passed with four abstentions.

### Progress on growth strategy – from the Archdeacons

Each Archdeacon outlined the signs of growth in their archdeaconry:

#### Andy Grimwood:

- Growth in discipleship and numbers
- There's a focus on prayer
- Congregations meeting together
- Improved communication
- MAC members who want it to work – there's a positivity to make it work
- Commissioned Pastoral Assistants and Worship Leaders
- Seeing children coming into church who feel at home in church
- Recognising the needs of community – and building relationships

Prayer – He's been amazingly encouraged by the amount of prayer going on.

Among the other items mentioned:

Breakfast/brunch informal services – attracting in new people – another two churches have picked up on it. Andy recommended the book – *A meal with Jesus* by Tim Chester.

Children's ministry taking place not on our premises but in the Adventure Playground in Rhyl; Lego Church, Messy Church in a school hall.

Midweek services – the growth is happening here. Non-traditional worship on a midweek evening; growth in midweek groups e.g. START, Tea and Talk, EXPLORER groups

**Barry Wilson** thanked Montgomery for their warm welcome. He outlined some of the tough issues facing Montgomery:

Since 2008 there has been a reduction in attendance of 32%. Many congregations are struggling but there's hope:

- One church grew by 10% because a family came and decided to worship regularly
- Storytellers which works in each school
- New services – e.g. Pet services and Blue services, Café services
- Dementia Friendly services
- Welcome packs for people who live locally
- LYCIG local courses

**John Lomas** outlined signs of growth in Wrexham:

- One church runs a monthly MA Celtic Service which attracts about 20 people, including some who work on Sundays.
- Another MA has created a bookmark with MA prayers on one side and the LYCIG prayer on the other.
- Silent prayer in Lent and Advent.
- Community bible project
- Engagement with local Women's Refuge



- Pizza Church – proving popular with young people and parents

**Barry Wilson** outlined how we needed to understand what's going on and what's required. Research is underway in two ways:

Subjective observations – getting a sense of what it feels like in a MA; what's the temperature? what are people saying?

But you also need objective analysis too – what is the evidence saying and what are the statistics?



We're learning about and celebrating success. But we also need to listen, acknowledge and address areas of concern.

We need to journey together to manage problems - one step at a time.

Over the next 3 months there will be a statistical and financial review of each church. This will start in Montgomery and then move to Wrexham and St Asaph.

There is ongoing decline in Montgomery – from 1,094 in 2208 to 832 in 2017. Many of the churches are small and fragile:

- 59% of churches have fewer than 10 people attending each Sunday
- 25% have between 11 and 20 on Sunday
- 78% have no midweek attendance
- 67% have no children/youth
- 20% have between 1-5 children

Often the statistics don't tell the whole story – in smaller communities there's much integration between community and church.

Attendance at festivals has fallen, even at Christmas, which is unusual compared to other parts of the UK.

About 51% of churches are relying on their financial reserves – that can only be done for so long.

We're developing a profile for each church. All the information will be agreed with everyone to ensure it accurately reflects the situation.

During 2019, we will work with all rural clergy, MAC and others to develop a rural strategy to help us move forward. We will focus on numerical and spiritual growth. In the second half 2019, we'll look to develop an urban strategy for our town centre areas.

Both strategies need to be grounded – it needs to be bottom up. These will guide diocesan planning and inform and resource MA action plans. The strategies will also assist the mentoring process and provide a benchmark.

**John Lomas** outlined the tools to help:

LYCIG – if you haven't been, get on the next one in March.

LYCIG local – set up your own small group

Start! Courses – A 6-week course with the basics...followed by Moving ON.

Find a nurture course which works for you – there should be a nurture course in every MA.

Hope and a Future – how to transform your church

Healthy Church Handbook – a check list

The 2020 Vision toolkits – they cover all aspects of church life – good admin is crucial in church growth.

**Andy Grimwood** outlined how they will develop the strategies:

The Archdeacons will be working with three groups:



MALS – being a partner in the gospel / critical friend.

MAC/MAE – do their priorities fit the 4 Ps of LYCIG? Are they strategic? Are we being proactive or reactive?

Shared Ministry Team - Are resources being used to meet priorities? Are there blockages or stumbling blocks?

1 Cor 16 v 13-14: *Be on our guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love.*

## Lunch

After lunch, **Norma Rowles** took over as Chair

## Evangelism Fund Bid – Resource Church (RC)

**Bishop Gregory** explained more about the new bid to the CinW Evangelism Fund. There are increasing numbers of people who see the vision for this project.

**John Lomas:** The Church Revitalisation Trust (CRT) is partnering with us – they will help to make this succeed. CRT is based at Holy Trinity Brompton in London and is strongly placed to church plant. They will support and provide resources.

Number 1 Hope Street in Wrexham is the proposed location for Resource Church.

**Diane McCarthy:** The Bishop's Staff team have met with Simon Lloyd, provincial Secretary, and he is working with each diocese to ensure their bids are well researched and well structured.

**Michael Plane and Emyr Hughes** explained more about 1 Hope Street. Michael and Emyr had conducted a wide search – freehold properties in accessible locations are very rare. They looked at several options, including the idea of a new purpose-built building.

1 Hope Street is close to St Giles and on the High Street in Wrexham. The freehold

is worthwhile, and all due diligence checks and surveys have been completed.



The building dates from 1932 and has a steel and concrete frame which is in good order. Wrexham is on the cusp of revival – many tenants in Eagles Meadows are looking to relocate back into the town centre.

Wrexham Town Council have already offered their support for the project. They are very excited about the church locating in their town centre. In addition, they have offered the opportunity to apply for a town centre grant to improve the front of the building.

Emyr showed slides of the property, with its attractive frontage and features. It has huge display windows and good connection with both the High Street and with St Giles.

This property is similar to the RC in Portsmouth.

**DM:** Figures were given to the DBF last week and they have approved the investment. It's a huge step forward in faith but it's only right to invest in growth for the future.

The first draft of the bid for RC was shared with SC. The bid is for a five-year period and approximately two thirds of the cost of the project will be covered by the bid to the EF.

After 5 years RC should be self-financing. The plan is to launch it in Sept 2020, with a project leader starting in 2019.





**Tracey White** explained about stewardship and sustainability. She visited various churches which CRT have planted, and all have grown. The expectation right from the start is that

people give. They give of their time, their talents, their energy and their money. This church needs to be a blessing not a drain.

The bid document contains growth projection figures. Growth levels off around year 4, when people will be sent out to plant other churches. There will be a flow of people out of RC to support and resource other churches across the diocese.

**John Lomas:** John is working to keep people in Wrexham informed and onboard with what's happening. He highlighted the example of St George Church in Gateshead which was launched last year and has 150 people already. Everyone is expected to be church and not just go to church. Come as you are and discover Jesus, is the message.

**Bishop Gregory** thanked everyone for the hard work done of this already.

**Jeffrey Olstead** was concerned that CRT's main focus is cities and urban issues. This is a great resource for Wrexham, but there's much of the diocese which isn't Wrexham. Is this value for money? Is it the best way to spend the money? What's the benefit for the diocese? Churches are being closed in the south of the diocese and now you're opening a new church in Wrexham. It won't help us in rural areas – many will not want to fund this.

**Pam Powell:** She's based towards Wrexham and is excited about RC. Her heart and experience is in the south too

and the diocese is already looking at how it can help rural areas.

**Steve Willson:** The key to answering such concerns is to ensure RC succeeds. What's been laid out is an emphasis on sending people out from Wrexham to the rural areas. The rural areas on their own couldn't sustain it; what's planted in Wrexham needs to resource the rural areas.

**Norma Rowles:** Young people are prepared to travel. When they come home, they spread the word.

**Hilary Murray:** We have an eight-year-old link with SWTA and it's not mentioned in the bid document. If RC goes ahead that's a great opportunity for young people to see the growth in Africa and see the revival there too.

**Diane:** The bid document is only in draft so that can be added.

**Barry Wilson:** The reason we need to focus on a rural strategy now is that there's the potential for a second bid to the EF in 18 months. We need to build our case for that.

**Diane:** RC isn't a panacea but it's our best chance. An approach for rural churches will begin next, in early 2019. A coherent rural strategy is key to a future successful bid.

This bid needs to sing with the song of the Diocese of St Asaph. CRT has a lot to learn from us too – it's a real partnership. Only four out of 228 churches in this diocese have 100+ people attending every week.

**Bishop Gregory:** I believe in signs and the building on Hope Street, seems like a sign from God. Everything that has happened since is confirming my instinct that God is at work - I believe it can give hope and reach the 97% who currently have no contact with church.

SC passed the proposal to bid for EF funding with one abstention



## Report from the Grants Committee

**Clive Myers** updated SC on the committee membership, the grants it can offer and how to find out further information.

The committee meets four times per year and separately from the steering groups. They will also consider urgent requests if possible.

There is still money in the Youth Grants Scheme and the Social Engagement Grants Scheme for 2018 – bids were strongly encouraged!

Look at the grants guide for information which will be on the new website shortly.

## Review of the Diocesan Conference for 2018

Diane McCarthy highlighted the feedback from the conference. See the meeting papers for full details.

She offered her thanks to St Joseph's who are very patient with us and extremely hospitable as a venue.

If anyone would like to get involved in the planning of next year's conference, please get in touch.

**David Lewis** offered thanks to Diane and the diocesan team for all they do.

**Matters raised by the MA:** (see the meeting notes for the questions)

**Llŷr Williams** responded to the question from Dyffryn Clwyd who had asked about reusing burial spaces, as church graveyards are full and closed. Llŷr replied, that it's outside CinW hands. Legislation doesn't allow for the reuse of burial plots even after a period of time and it would need an Act of Parliament to change that legislation.

**Bishop Gregory** responded to a question from Penedeyrn about the number of initiatives and how they are evaluated.

He will be circulating a list of all initiatives and who holds responsibility for them with the meeting minutes.

**Diane McCarthy** responded to Tanat Valley and Vyrnwy MA's request for additional guidance for membership returns. She said we will review the guidance and provide more detailed diocesan information to help. She also drew SC's attention to a Church Times article from 16 November 2019.

## Any Other Business –

The Advent Message was shown to SC ahead of its launch on Advent Sunday. The message is available in several different formats and centres on a conversation between Bishop Gregory and some young people in the diocese.

## Date of the 2019 meetings of the SC

Wednesday 27 March 2019 in Llandrinio Village Hall

Tuesday 25 June 2019 in St Andrew's Church and Community Hub Garden City

Tuesday 24 September 2019 at St Peter's Church Holywell

Wednesday 27 November 2019 at St Matthew's Church Hall Buckley

## Further information.

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

<http://stasaph.churchinwales.org.uk/life/standing-committee-information-papers/>

