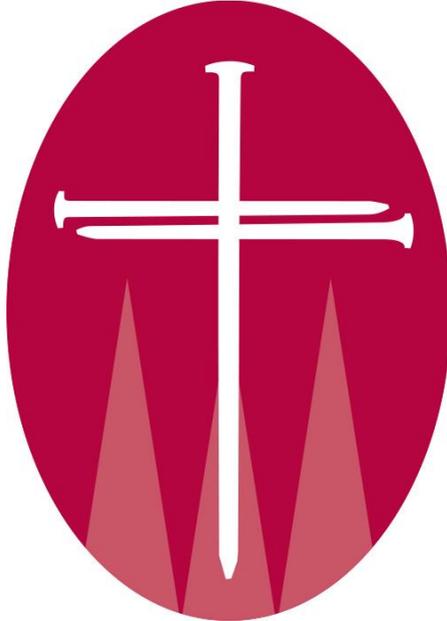


Coventry Diocesan Synod

Guide for members



Worshipping God

Making New Disciples

Transforming Communities

November 2018
(updated January 2021)

Introduction

This booklet aims to bring together essential information which members of Synod need to understand what the Diocesan Synod is, what it does and how it works.

Contents

Foreword	p2
<i>By the Bishop of Coventry</i>	
The Diocesan Mission Purpose	p3
<i>The whole Diocese Strategy</i>	
<i>The eight essential qualities</i>	
The aims and essential facts of the Diocesan Synod	p5
<i>Worship, Mission and Transformation</i>	
<i>Chairs, Members & Meetings</i>	
How does it work?	P6
<i>Motions, Questions & Standing Orders</i>	
Legal requirements of the Diocesan Synod	p6
<i>The Synodical Government Measure 1969</i>	
The Coventry Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd.	P7
<i>A limited company and a registered charity</i>	
Bishop's Council & Other Committees	p7
People – Ex-officio and staff members	p9

Foreword by the Bishop of Coventry



I am very pleased that you will be a member of Diocesan Synod for the coming triennium. Thank you for taking on this important role.

Synods in the life of the Church are there to bring people together from different parts (north, south, east, west; rural, urban, suburban, inner city) of the Diocese and different dimensions (bishops, clergy, lay) of the Church so that, in being together, we can carry the Diocese forward together into the next phase of its life.

As I hope is already familiar to you, the Diocese of Coventry is committed to enabling our parishes to ‘worship God, make new disciples and transform communities’. We seek to do this by helping each Church community to be healthy and strong so that the capacities for life and growth inherent in the Church as the Body of Christ can be released. Synod will have much to do over the next three years to ensure that all the parishes, officers and systems of the Diocese are structured and supported for this end.

Synod will also need to keep a close eye on the evolving cultural situation in which we find ourselves in modern Britain, with all the challenges and opportunities that it brings for serious Christian engagement. Whether we look to areas of economics, ethics, education, business, politics (and the list could go on), there a vital need for the Christian voice to be heard and for the Church of England to fulfil its particular responsibility to serve the nation and to shape its life.

I look forward to our time together in Diocesan Synod over the next three years.

+ Christopher Coventry

The Diocesan Mission Purpose

Our parishes have long been united by what has been called our **three-fold Diocesan Mission Purpose**:

Worshipping God | Making New Disciples | Transforming communities

In seeking a truly integrated strategy, we need to include cathedral, schools and chaplaincies as well as churches. '**Whole diocese**' therefore includes:



All of these *together* gather around the Diocesan Bishop to share in the apostolic ministry and mission given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ, which for the Diocese of Coventry includes a historical and international emphasis on Reconciliation. A working understanding of reconciliation is that used by the Dean of Coventry: 'Journeying from a fractured past towards a shared future.'

We have been seeking a biblical text which can unify all the different aspects of the Diocese, which also encapsulates our Mission Purpose, with its emphasis on Reconciliation. The following verse achieves this:

'All this is from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.' (2 Corinthians 5:18, NRSV)

- All this is from God **Worshipping God**
- who reconciled us to himself through Christ **Making New Disciples**
- and has given us the ministry of reconciliation **Transforming Communities**

This verse therefore gives a common purpose to the 'Whole Diocese', from which we can – all 'together' – be: '**Partners together in the gospel and ministry of reconciliation**'.

The Whole Diocese Strategy

Our Whole Diocese shared objectives are:

- Making the gospel known throughout the Whole Diocese so that people become followers Christ.
- Strengthening the health of churches and organisations across the Whole Diocese in the 8 Essential Qualities (8EQs) identified by NCD.
- Supporting the wellbeing and flourishing of clergy and lay people across the Whole Diocese.
- Equipping the Whole Diocese for the work of reconciliation.
- Promoting life-long Christian learning and education across the Whole Diocese.
- Delivering positive community transformation across the Whole Diocese.

The intention of this approach is to enable resources to be more effectively aligned to support our Whole Diocese objectives which are considered to have the greatest impact on health and growth.

These objectives and themes provide a framework for decision making and resource support for 2019, and will guide the majority of Diocesan decision making.

The eight essential qualities

Our primary means of helping to deliver this purpose has been the application of the healthy church principles identified by National Church Development (NCD), known locally as the 8EQs (8 Essential Qualities).

They are:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Empowering leadership | Gift-orientated ministry |
| Passionate spirituality | Inspiring worship |
| Holistic small groups | Need orientated outreach |
| Loving relationships | Functional structures |

For more about each of these areas see Diocesan website (www.coventry.anglican.org).

Aims and essential facts of the Diocesan Synod

The aims of the Diocesan Synod are to take part in fulfilling this purpose and enabling the whole diocese to do the same, by:

- Testing and approving the strategy and direction of the Diocese to ensure that all parts of the Diocese are supported and enabled to achieve the Mission Purpose
- Bringing people together from across the diocese to share ideas and experience
- Representing the people and churches of the Diocese on subjects affecting Diocesan life.

Chairs

Meetings of the Diocesan Synod are normally chaired (led) by three people, who sit facing the members during meetings.

- Bishop Christopher, who as Bishop of Coventry is President of the Synod
- The Reverend Charlotte Gale, Chair of the House of Clergy
- Mrs Helen Simmonds, the Chair of the House of Laity

Members

The Chairs are joined by the members:

- The Diocesan Synod can have up to members.
- of those people are elected by the Deanery Synods
- The Bishops, Archdeacons, the six General Synod representatives and some others are members automatically (they are known as *ex-officio* members)
- There can also be some Bishop's nominees and co-options
- The lay members of Diocesan Synod are known as the House of Laity, and there are also Houses of Clergy and Bishops for those groups. The Houses will occasionally vote separately, and can also meet separately if necessary.
- Membership of the Diocesan Synod lasts for three years (or a Triennium). The current term of office started on 1 August 2018, and will end on 31 July 2021.

Meetings

- The Diocesan Synod normally meets three times each year, in, November, March and June.
- The meetings are usually a mixture of worship, prayer, presentations, debates and discussion.

How does it work?

Motions

- A motion is a formal statement presented to the Synod for debate and to be put to a vote. They are shown on Synod agendas in italics.
- Motions can come from individual members, Bishop's Council, Deanery Synods, or the General Synod.
- Motions from Deanery Synods or individual members should be sent to the Bishop's Council via the Diocesan Secretary.

Asking questions

- Members can ask questions, either:
 - ❖ In advance under Standing Order no. 69, which allows for a prepared answer, or
 - ❖ In the informal session at the end of Synod.
- Questions can be addressed to Officers of the Synod and to the Chair of any body established by the Synod.

Standing Orders

The rules which govern the Synod are its 'Standing Orders'. They cover many things, including:

- How the Chairs of the two Houses are elected
- How debates and votes should happen in Synod meetings
- The membership of the Bishop's Council
- How the agenda for Diocesan Synod meetings is set
- How the Synod handles financial business

The Standing Orders are available in a separate booklet or on the Diocesan website.

Diocesan Synod – legal requirements

The Synodical Government Measure 1969 gives Diocesan Synods the following functions:

- To consider matters concerning the Church of England, and to make provision for such matters in this Diocese
- To consider and express opinion on any matter of religious or public interest
- To advise the Bishop when consulted by him
- To consider matters referred to it by the General Synod
- To consider and approve the DBF's annual budget
- To receive and adopt the DBF's annual Report and Accounts

The Coventry Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd ("the DBF")

- The DBF was formed in 1936 to manage the financial affairs and hold the assets of the Diocese.
- It is a charitable company limited by membership guarantees and is also a registered charity.
- Every member of Diocesan Synod is a member of the DBF for company law purposes and has a personal liability limited to £1 under their guarantee as company members in the event of its being wound up.
- The main expense of the DBF is the cost of ongoing ministry. The DBF also finances training for ministry the Diocesan Training Partnership as well as other central activities.
- The DBF's main income is from Deanery Share. This is the money the Deaneries agree to give to the DBF each year. Since 2012, a Deanery's Share is based on its 'cost of ministers', with a central Support Fund to assist deaneries that need it. The Share also includes a contribution to the Support Fund, and any surplus helps new initiatives for mission.

Bishop's Council and Other Committees

Committees are a key element of how the Diocese operates, with responsibilities ranging from oversight of the DBF to managing its property and investments to working with applicants to the Diocesan Mission Fund.

Bishop's Council

The Bishop's Council is the senior Committee of the Diocese and acts in various capacities. It is the Standing Committee of the Diocesan Synod, the Directors and Trustees of the DBF and also the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee (DMPC).

As the Standing Committee it:

- Advises the Bishop in Council
- Prepares the Synod's agenda (delegated to the Business Committee)
- Develops policy for the Synod to debate
- Receives tasks from the Synod

As the Directors and Trustees of the DBF it:

- Is responsible for central diocesan finances
- Approves the DBF budget and the annual report and accounts before presentation to Synod
- Is responsible for complying with legislation

As the DMPC it:

- Has oversight of Diocesan Deployment
- Considers and authorises pastoral schemes
- Interacts with the Deanery Pastoral Committees

The Bishop's Council also makes appointments to several other bodies, including the Diocesan Finance Group, the Diocesan Mission Fund Committee, the DAC and the Glebe Committee.

Other Committees

The Diocesan Synod is the primary source of members for other committees, as it elects the members of several different groups, including:

The Coventry Diocesan Board of Education (DBE)

The DBE has a particular role in promoting Christian education and Church Schools within the Diocese. It is also a separate charity and limited company, and its members are the directors of the company and the trustees of the Charity. For more information, please see the DBE's website, www.coventrydbe.org.

The Diocesan Mission Fund Committee (DMFC)

The Diocesan Mission Fund was created to give grants to parishes, benefices and deaneries for new forms of mission which are pioneering, sustainable, and have an emphasis on making new Christians and disciples. Applications for funding for new mission projects are sent to the DMFC via the Diocesan Office.

The Vacancy in See Committee

The "See of Coventry" is the post held by the Bishop of Coventry. This Committee only meets when the post of the Bishop of Coventry is (or is about to be) vacant. Its duties are to prepare a statement and provide information about the Diocese and to elect some of its members to the Crown Nominations Commission.

The Parsonages Committee

This Committee is responsible for the provision, improvement and repair of the houses occupied by most of the clergy in the Diocese.

Synod also elects members to the Board of Patronage and the Diocesan Trustees.

For more information

Please look on the Diocesan Website, www.coventry.anglican.org, or contact one of the following:

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