

DEANERY, DIOCESAN AND GENERAL SYNOD REPORT FOR APCM 2024

DEANERY SYNOD

Meetings were held in May 2023, and February 2024 with the Deanery service in July 2023.

We said farewell to Revd Saxon, Revd Jeewan, Revd Sodadasi. Revd Margaret Davies

Regular agenda items include:

Finance

- Parish Share, and the challenges of the cost-of-living crisis/ energy costs

Diocesan Synod Reports

- Diocesan Synod meets 3x per year and representatives report back to Deanery Synod

General Synod reports

- General Synod meets at least twice a year and General Synod representative reports back to deanery (each rep reports to 2 Deaneries)

News from the Parishes e.g.

- Vacancies and the challenges of an interregnum
- Initiatives and encouragements in ministry

There is always a **topical presentation** led by an outside speaker or by the Area Dean.

This can take the form of group work. Topics covered this past year include:

- In May the Diocesan Wellbeing and Ministerial Development Advisor, Jill Mowbray, spoke about the need for wellbeing to be a priority for all those involved in ministry.
- In February, parishes were asked to highlight challenges and encouragements in ministry, particularly in times of vacancy.
- The talk on using social media in church will now take place at a later date, as the October meeting was cancelled due to the hall being unavailable.

In July there was a Deanery Service at Newport Church.

Please ensure you email the Deanery Secretary after APCM with details of your Deanery Reps as there will be Diocesan Synod elections later this year and General Synod elections in 2026.

Email sandrajturner@hotmail.com ,thankyou.

Sandie Turner (Deanery Secretary & Deanery Standing Committee)

DIOCESAN SYNOD REPORT

Diocesan Synod met in person in June and October 2023; the meeting planned for March 2024 was cancelled.

There is always a Presidential Address from Bishop Guli.

Topics presented/ debated include:

- The challenges of Parish share.
- There was an encouraging annual report and slide show from the **Diocesan Board of Education**, (now headed up by Bishop Roger). This highlighted progress in our church schools and Vine Trust Schools in areas as diverse as reducing carbon footprint, dealing with RAAC concrete, delivering RS lessons, early years' learning and Collective Worship.

- The timetable and voting regulations for the 2024 Diocesan Synod elections was issued.
- Approving the annual budget
- Update on the Living in Love and faith process.
- There is time for questions which are put in writing ahead of the Synod.

Sandie Turner (SW Deanery lay representative for Diocesan Synod)

GENERAL SYNOD REPORT.

General Synod met in person in July 2023 in York and then in November 2023 and February 2024 in London.

November's Synod was almost entirely taken up with Living in Love and Faith. The amended motion below was narrowly carried:

'That this Synod, conscious that the Church is not of one mind on the issues raised by Living in Love and Faith, that we are in a period of uncertainty, and that many in the Church on all sides are being deeply hurt at this time, recognise the progress made by the House of Bishops towards implementing the motion on Living in Love and Faith passed by this Synod in February 2023, as reported in GS 2328, encourage the House to continue its work of implementation, and ask the House to consider whether some standalone services for same-sex couples could be made available for use, possibly on a trial basis, on the timescale envisaged by the motion passed by the Synod in February 2023.

The Prayers for use in a Sunday service were commended for use in December 2023 and to date they have been used c 6 times. The Synod in February moved no further on this matter, and we expect more concrete proposals in July.

There is always an address from the Archbishop.

Reports presented included:

Archbishops' Commission on Households and Families
The war in Ukraine
Racial Justice
Safeguarding

Some are debates e.g.

Prayers of Love and Faith
The Future of Work
Land and Nature
The historic slave trade

Some motions are raised by Diocesan Synods

Calls for an enforceable Code of Conduct for PCC lay members,
Calls for clergy pensions to be restored to their 2011 levels.

And some business is legislation, e.g.

Setting of Parochial fees
Revision of Standing Orders

There are now 2 question sessions

Sandie Turner (Elected member of General Synod for Chelmsford Diocese.)