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GROW FAITH • BRING HOPE • DEMONSTRATE LOVE
DIOCESE OF ST ASAPH

Standing Committee Bulletin 24: 29 November 2022, Hope Street, Wrexham

Bishop Gregory as chair welcomed



everyone to Standing Committee (SC) at Hope Street, Wrexham. He places much value on SC. The Diocesan Conference is the “parliament” of the Diocese of St Asaph but it only meets once a year. The real business of shaping strategy and policy must be done at SC. Very often SC receives great proposals and can seem loathe to challenge ideas, but SC has the right to challenge, and we respect the right of SC to challenge.

Rachel Kitchen, Senior Leader at Hope Street led an opening reflection based on Luke 8 asking “Where is your faith?”

Conflicts of interest: Those standing for election as VPs declared a conflict of interest.

The Minutes of the last meeting were accepted.

Matters Arising

Bishop Gregory: Following the affirmation by SC to recruit an Archdeacon of Wrexham, interviews have taken place and a candidate invited to take up the post. More details will follow once all pre-employment checks are complete.

Election of Vice Presidents for the new Triennium.

Four nominations were received for VPs: (clergy) Revd Canon Jason Bray, Revd Canon Sue Huyton, (lay) Norma Rowles and Llŷr Williams. All the VPs were voted in.

Standing Committee, Celebrating Success

Diane McCarthy asked everyone to think of the best thing and the most surprising thing achieved by MAs over the last 3 years.

There were some great responses which included: more unity, being together and being able to see a way forward; praise for the clergy; less reliance on paper documents and introduction of flexible work patterns.





Shared resources and sharing of staff; each church is identifying its own flavour and trying new things; restructuring and putting the MA on a firm footing; the voices of young people and children have been raised across the MA; increasing awareness of environmental action; a willingness to reach out and support each other.

Using space differently and not being restricted to the buildings to continue worshipping; many congregations are growing through the pandemic despite people moving away; pulling together and finding new ways; raising the profile of the church in the community and other churches responding.

Bishop Gregory: Some common themes have emerged. The fact that we pulled together was a remarkable truth: we went into isolation in March 2020 but we came together in a remarkably new way. We managed to sustain our financial life, and everyone cooperated. In 2020 we ordained 12 new people, the most for decades.

What surprised us most:

Being visible; continued positivity; supporting each other; working together; growing engagement with children and family; use of technology; honesty as to where we are; what our finances are meant to be about; struggles facing individual mission areas and the disparity in resources; resilience in congregations; how people have adapted to other ways of worship.

Bishop Gregory: If you lost someone in Covid or were very ill, I would never want to undervalue the costliness of Covid but for some of us, Covid offered opportunities – it gave us the push to try new things and we took a great leap forward with Zoom. We would never have done that unless we were pushed. The variety of projects which went on...our churches grew closer to our communities again because we served

them – the lunches, the cream teas, the hygiene hampers, etc.

Many things got going in Covid – it wasn't all set back.

The key points from this session will be compiled into a "Little Book of Hope" which will be circulated to SC members.

Tracey White, Director of Resources introduced and led a taster LyCiG session. Since 2017, 528 people in the diocese have interacted with LyCiG in some way.



LyCiG Local is a 7-week course over 1/1.5 hours. There are 7 steps to growth:

- A culture of growth
- Effective strategy
- Fruitful evangelism
- Engaging worship
- Inviting and welcoming
- Making a pathway
- A planned journey for growth.

All clergy will be asked to attend a LyCiG residential within two years of joining the diocese. Costs will be covered by diocese.

Each MA can download resources to run a LyCiG local course – this can be lay-led.

MAs are asked to book onto a LyCiG Residential in 2023 – a training bursary will cover the course and travel.

Lunch





Asaph 1450

Bishop Gregory outlined plans for Asaph 1450. See separate paper or *Teulu Asaph* or Bishop Gregory's Advent Message for details: dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/asaph-1450/

There will be one big service for the feast day of St Asaph (6 May) which has been moved to 29 April so it doesn't clash with the Coronation.

Rebecca Sparey-Taylor: It was the most positively received Advent Message for a long time.

Archdeacon Barry: Every MA leadership is being offered a funded retreat. What does it mean? What are we funding?

Bishop Gregory: We want MAs to be creative, do something that's relevant for their context and we'll do our best to support whatever that is with funding.

10-year Plans for Growth



Diane: The RB has recognised that investment in the grass roots of our church is essential. There are three different sources of

funding:

Partnership funding (formerly the Block Grant). This is our annual grant from the CinW and is used to cover central costs in the diocese. MA Share pays for frontline costs. For 2023, £2.7m is being split between the six dioceses and we will receive £400,000 next year.

Structural Resilience Fund: This is a new source of funding and will go strengthening us for the future. £3.7m will be split equally across the six diocese in 2023 but going forward, it might be allocated differently. For 2023, we're getting £600,000.

Mission and Growth Fund: £100M over the next 10 years. It was expected to be front-

loaded but how it will be delivered is still to be confirmed.

Partnership Funding is already in our budget for next year. But the £600,000 from the Structural Resilience Fund has been allocated recently so isn't in the budget. The DBF met recently to discuss how to allocate it and have agreed a three-way split:

1. To enhance the MA Share Discount Scheme in 2023 so that all MAs who pay in full will get a higher level of discount. All MAs have paid their share so far this year and that's due to partnership working and generosity.
2. Some money will be ring-fenced for those MAs facing difficulties – those who need some breathing space and support to make their plans happen.
3. Initiatives in growth and mission – we have lots of plans to grow God's Kingdom and we're also starting to develop a shopping list for the £100m! The plans include (in alphabetical order):

Asaph 1450, Cathedral Ministry, Chaplaincy, Church Army Centre of Missions, Church Buildings, DotChurch: DotEglwys, Mission Hub Churches, Operational Support, Resource Church, Rural Ministry, Tourism, Welsh Language Ministry.



Sam Allin: The most recent meeting of the RB did agree a proposed way forward for the £100m and the proposal has gone to the Bench of Bishops.

The other funding will be awarded by committee, fairly and equitably, so it more accurately reflects the situation in each diocese.

Bishop Gregory: This is a very exciting opportunity. We are grateful that the RB is mission minded.





Diane: Our commitment is to keep SC completely informed as we develop proposals to bid for the £100m.

Developing Steering Group: Equipping the Saints

Pam Powell: The Developing Steering Group looks after the ministry of all people, not just those who are ordained.



We have all got a ministry and a vocation. Ephesians 4:11-16. It's crucial to the health of Christian congregations that members use their God given talents appropriately. We are all different – musicians, artists, florists, hosts, welcomers etc.

We are processing the largest number of vocations for several years. Some of those will be going through a discernment panel very shortly.

Look at the website for information:

<https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/vocations-and-ministry/>

Tracey White (presented on behalf of Andy Grimwood who was unwell): The steering group focuses on the priorities of growing faith, bringing hope and demonstrating love. During 2022, there has been MAL training in September and Clergy School in November. Over the next year, there will be several strands:

- Managing Expectations (from clergy school)
- Skilful Shepherds to accompany Asaph 1450
- MAL – mission focused oversight ministry
- Training for LLMs
- The Spirituality Group will be running a Lent Retreat.

Online training developed by the diocese is available at

<https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/training/>

In addition, St Padarn's runs a series of training events:

<https://www.stpadarns.ac.uk/en/ministry/continuing-ministerial-development/>

Engaging Steering Group: Serving our Communities

Archdeacon Barry introduced the work of the Engaging Steering Group.

Sarah Wheat: This Works! is based on LyCiG and the 4Ps:

<https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/faith-in-action/this-works/>

To help identify local needs, there are Social Engagement Resources that include a Community Mapping exercise. There's a short film highlighting how to do it. Knowing our communities helps us serve them in the best way. It helps identify the community connectors. Why don't we all come together to do the best for our communities?

<https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/faith-in-action/this-works/social-engagement-resources/>

Sarah showed a film about Drop In Friday at St Peter's Church in Ruthin:

<https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/faith-in-action/this-works/this-works-films/>

Nurturing Steering Group: Raising a new generation

Hannah Daniels, Youth and Children's Officer introduced some of the priorities of the Nurturing Steering Group. In many ways, the church system doesn't listen to young people.



Children aged 10-25 (Gen Z) are not just tech savvy – they are tech innate! They only know the tech/social media world. They use TikTok, Snapchat and BeReal. The





church has seen the biggest decline in attendance in the under 16-year age group. Churches are unwelcoming – and worst of all there's no wifi!

But beliefs of Gen Z connect with Christianity – they are moral, upright and just. They want to change the world. There is a need and yearning among young people.

Young people are facing complex issues which the church doesn't address - self-harm, sexting, friendship. Where is God in their hurt and anxiety? But the diocese is keen to address this and is investing in youth chaplains – Cat Birch (Hope Street) Esther Andrews (Mold) Jampa King (Pool) John Andrews (Estuary & Mountain) Alan McKinley (Penrhyn Bay) Rachel Pawley (Welshpool). Hannah outlined some plans:

- Chaplaincy in secondary schools
- Mobile prayer bus
- Cathedral tour to Finland
- Mental health first aid for young people.
- Eco-education day

Diane: A New Diocesan Director of Education for north Wales (covering the dioceses of St Asaph and Bangor) has just been appointed. Justine Baldwin will take up the role in early 2023.

Bishop Gregory paid tribute to Tracey White who is taking early retirement this Christmas. This was her last meeting and SC gave her a round of applause and a bouquet of flowers to thank her for her enthusiasm and expertise over the last 19 years.

Date of the next meeting: Thursday 16 February, 7pm via ZOOM.

Further information.

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

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

