

## Christchurch Diocesan Synod 2016 Report

Synod (a governance body, comprising elected lay members, incumbent priests from all ministry units in the Diocese, and youth representatives) began with Eucharist in the Transitional Cathedral on Thursday evening 1<sup>st</sup> September, and convened at St Christopher's, Avonhead, all day Friday and Saturday.

At the Synod service a large contingent of **youth leader** members of "*the Kiln*" were commissioned, including **Kristen Davidson** from our Parish. **Lynnette Lightfoot** was "collated" as Archdeacon of Christchurch (in addition to North Canterbury), **Helen Roud** was licensed as Co-Vicar General, and the Bishop's "charge" was delivered – this is well worth reading in full.

A new mechanism for calculating **parish quota contributions** to the Diocesan operating costs was approved. It is believed this will be fairer to all; however stronger parishes (such as Rangiora) will potentially shoulder a larger share.

On the financial side, an almost break-even 2017 **Diocesan operating budget** was approved. This included a catch-up increase in parish contributions and other CPI-based increases in costs across the board. One significant change is the impending **move of the Diocesan offices** from "portacoms" at Church Corner into rented premises at Harewood (one level of the Stonewood Homes building).

From the **Earthquake Recovery Program** it was reported that of the 234 total projects, 129 had been completed, 64 are under way, 11 are on hold, and the remaining 30 are yet to start. This program is on-track and on-budget to complete by the end of 2018. An additional \$918k of **external agency funding** (total now \$3.5m) was secured in 2015 to augment the insurance proceeds. Church Property Trustees has a dedicated team managing the recovery, and it appears that the **insurance proceeds** received will last the distance. Parishes still need to fund "betterment" costs themselves.

In the **Earthquake Prone Building Program**, it was reported that all the high and medium-risk buildings have been assessed; 27% of the total remain (low-risk timber structures). In 2017 government legislation will set mandatory timeframes during which assessments (likely to be 5 years for Canterbury) and any necessary strengthening (likely to be 15 years for Canterbury) must be undertaken, with some leeway for category 1 heritage buildings.

The **Diocese-wide mission target** (contributed via the Anglican Mission Board) was confirmed unchanged at \$255,000. Contributions in 2016 are ahead of 2015, but slightly below target. We support this with some of our mission projects.

A proposal concerning (not) blessing those who have entered into (**same gendered**) **civil marriages** was parked awaiting the output from a General Synod working group. Instead it was requested that facilitated discussions be convened around this issue, once the working group's report is available.

A Diocese-wide **bequest program** is to be rolled out in 2017, with the aim of better supporting Anglican mission and ministry long-term.

UC Chaplain "Spanky" Moore gave a lively presentation on **Discipleship** and what this means. We were challenged to consider whether our church has become a comfortable **Institution** [echoing the Bishop's Charge], or whether it is a multiplication **Movement** that makes **disciples who make disciples** (of Christ).

Other presentations showcased **young leadership** development, the work of **Anglican Care**, and work to alleviate **3<sup>rd</sup> world debt**.

Other key motions, bills and business items of note:

- A call for central government to further increase the **refugee quota**.
- Amendments to the rules for electing and running the **Cathedral Chapter** (a body similar to a vestry for the Cathedral).
- Adjusting the **rules around parish vestry**: reducing the maximum number of members, setting a minimum age of 16, and encouraging both younger representation and voluntary rotation of long-serving members.
- The temporary **process for parish amalgamations** created after the earthquakes was made permanent.
- Encouraging **evangelism programmes** (e.g. Alpha, Christianity Explored).
- Encouraging more **youth representation at synod**.
- It was agreed in principle to overhaul and update the **rules around clergy appointments** – this will be completed next year.
- A proposal to "tax" a percentage of **parish property sales** was defeated.

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