



## DIOCESAN SYNOD SYNOD QUESTIONS NOTICE PAPER

### Question 1

#### **Q Paula Brackenridge [Richmond & Barnes Deanery]**

General Synod has set the target for all parts of the Church to reach net-zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2030. This is a formidable challenge - not least in terms of heating churches, buildings that are often hard to heat well. What plans exist for the Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation department to advise parishes seeking to move to net-zero carbon dioxide heating for their churches?

#### **A The Diocesan Secretary**

The challenge of reaching Net Zero Carbon is indeed formidable. Here in Southwark, Diocesan Synod agreed in July 2021 a revised Environment Policy which included a target for this Diocese of 2035 for Net Zero Carbon. This includes not only churches (which account for about 30% of Diocesan carbon emissions) but also schools (50%), clergy housing (18%), the Cathedral, offices and staff travel.

The Diocesan Environment Officer, who works two days a week within the JPIC team, has worked closely with the Church Buildings Team and the DAC Secretary to advise churches on carbon reduction. This has included a small energy audit scheme funded by the National Environment Team, webinars, support on completing the Energy Footprint Tool, and offering Carbon Literacy training to everyone in the Diocese. Going forward, we have accessed a starter capacity building grant from the National Team of £15,000 with which we have recruited a temporary Net Zero Carbon Project Manager, who is currently drawing up a capacity bid for a longer-term Net Zero Carbon Programme Manager, reporting to the Diocesan Secretary, who will take forward the Net Zero Carbon Action Plan endorsed by Diocesan Synod in March 2023. We will report on progress to Synod in March 2024 and annually thereafter.

### Question 2

#### **Q Adrian Greenwood [Bermondsey & Rotherhithe Deanery]**

On page 14 of the 2022 Annual Report, it states that there were 1,102 baptisms recorded in the Diocese in 2021. Is any further information available about:

- a) the age of those baptised - infant, child or young person, aged over 16?
- b) the location of the service for those being baptised- parish church, school, elsewhere?
- c) in addition, how many were admitted to Holy Communion prior to Confirmation?
- d) in addition, how many were confirmed in the Diocese aged under 16 and over 16? when the statistics for 2022 will be published?

## **A The Diocesan Secretary**

The Annual Report states that there were 1,102 baptisms in 2021. This was inadvertently under-reported. The number of baptisms in 2021 is 1,930 as published in the Statistics for Mission 2021 Report by the National Church and includes estimates for those parishes that are yet to provide their numbers. Submitted data for Southwark Diocese's Parishes shows in 2021 that baptisms for ages were as follows:

- Infants (<1 yr) - 35.7%
- Children (1-4 yrs) - 45.8%
- Children (5-10 yrs) - 7.9%
- Youth (11+yrs) - 4.0%
- Adult (18+yrs) - 6.6%

Baptism data is collected by the National Church and the location is not requested as part of the collection process. We have no information on this, but it is likely that the majority of baptisms took place in churches.

The Diocese does not collect data on Holy Communion prior to Confirmation. There were 124 confirmations in 2021 for under 16s, and 134 for over 16s.

The statistics for 2022 will be published later this year. As a guide, the Statistics for Mission report for 2021 was published in December 2022 and the report for 2020, in December 2021.

### **Question 3**

## **Q Adrian Greenwood [Bermondsey & Rotherhithe Deanery]**

On page 15 of the 2022 Annual Report is given an account of the good progress in meeting the target of increasing the number of Ordained Vocations by 50% by 2020. The Annual Report appears to be silent about the growth in Lay Vocations where a similar target was set. Given the numbers of lay people preparing for licensing and commissioning on 8th October 2023, would you say that the target for Lay Vocations has also been achieved? Or is there more still to be done?

## **A The Diocesan Secretary**

Good progress has been made in putting into place a variety of Lay Ministries since the Southwark Vision 2017 -2025 was written. We now have agreed Diocesan pathways for licensed and commissioned lay ministers. These include the more established ministries such as Readers (now known as Licensed Lay Minister (Reader) and Southwark Pastoral Auxiliaries as well as new ministries such as Licensed Lay Minister (Pastoral), licensed and commissioned Children and Youth workers and Lay Pioneers, as well as a range of affirmed ministries which we are providing training materials for use at parish level

We have our first Licensed Lay Minister (Pastoral) and will licence another at the Commissioning and Licensing Service on Saturday 8 October. We will also license our first Lay Pioneer at this service and Commission our First Children's worker.

Sadly, we were without a substantive person in post for about eight months this year (following a failure to recruit at the first attempt) and this has not helped us to

increase the numbers in the way that we would have wished. There is more that we need to do. However, we have started to look at commissioned lay estates pioneers and have a good process for ensuring that this will generate a new and exciting cohort of people. In addition, as well as the Season of Lay Ministry at Epiphany we have plans for increasing the number of candidates through Lay Vocations information evenings and Saturday mornings and through visits to Deanery Synods and to Deanery Chapters as well as to parishes. In the coming months we will develop a programme which we hope will begin to further deliver towards the increase in 50% that the Southwark Vision requested.

#### Question 4

##### **Q The Revd Nicholas Walsh [East Lewisham Deanery]**

For parishes that currently have a half time stipend, what is the consultative process, mechanisms and timescale for the reduced stipend to be reviewed and potentially increased; especially in the case of numerical growth and an increase in Parish Support Fund payments? In the case of these consultations - what factors would be considered; e.g. deprivation, external sources of income, etc?

##### **A The Diocesan Secretary**

The current process for the review of stipendiary posts is linked both to Southwark Vision and our Deployment strategy (approved by the Diocesan Council of Trustees on 21 July 2020). Southwark Vision leads us towards a fruitful future and as part of achieving this growth the Diocese, guided by the Episcopal Area teams have managed to increase posts through the three rounds of strategic funding centred in places where they can see the potential for growth.

Our deployment strategy focuses on enabling us to retain the maximum number possible of stipendiary ministry numbers. Any additional Diocesan funded posts, whether half or full-time can only take place by a corresponding loss of a post elsewhere in the Diocese. The bishops and archdeacons consider the situation each time there is vacancy. Consideration is also given to the pattern for generosity in the parishes for mission, financial giving, progress made towards covering ministry costs and financial resilience, demographic data and potential for growth.

#### Question 5

##### **Q The Revd Jonathan Macy [Plumstead Deanery]**

Given that "strategy for ministry 2 challenges us to 'ensure that Deaneries become viable centres of mission and ministry'"\* has the Deaneries Advisory Group (DAG) conducted any analysis on the possible impact that the proposed Prayers of Love and Faith would have with regards to working relationships within each deanery, including Deanery Chapters, and possible working relationships between parishes and their Area Deans? If not, could such analysis be prepared for the November Diocesan Synod?

\* 'The Role of Deaneries and the Rules and Constitution of Deanery Synods' p.7

## **A The Bishop of Southwark**

The Deaneries Advisory Group was disbanded in 2018 following the conclusion of its Report to Diocesan Synod. It has been open to all Deaneries to engage with LLF and now to reflect on the proposed Prayers of Love and Faith as they see fit. In Southwark we are a highly relational Diocese, putting a high value on speaking well of each other across difference, and respecting theological convictions, believing these to be held in good faith. Deanery relationships will be neither strengthened or maintained if parishes engage with each other as risks to be assessed.

### **Question 6**

## **Q The Revd David Ruddick [Merton Deanery]**

At the November 2022 meeting of this Synod, Bishop Christopher said that he was in "listening mode" with regard to those who have particular views on the draft 'Prayers of Love and Faith' and related issues.

Would the Bishop let the Synod know the scope of any meetings which have happened since that date, including the numbers attending, members of the college of bishops in this diocese who were in attendance, and a summary of the views or concerns which were heard?

## **A The Bishop of Southwark**

Bishop Christopher met the Diocesan Evangelical Union on 12 January 2023. Those present were members of the DEU committee, two guests at the DEU's request, and the Bishop's Chaplain. This was a formal meeting in which notes were taken, agreed with Bishop Christopher, and circulated by the DEU.

Bishop Christopher met around 25 people LGBT+ clergy and supporters on 26 January 2023. It was a pastoral and informal meeting. No notes or minutes were taken and the meeting was conducted under the Chatham House rule to ensure the highest level of participation. The Bishop's Chaplain was also present.

On 26 April 2023 the Diocesan College of Bishops met around sixty licensed clergy who expressed their views concerns about the proposals made at February's General Synod. The meeting was not officially minuted. Fourteen clergy sent apologies; the Bishop's Chaplain was present.

The Bishops have also met confidentially with clergy where this has been requested.

### **Question 7**

## **Q The Revd Aneal Appadoo [Reigate Deanery]**

At the March Synod, April Alexander of Tandridge Deanery asked a question in which she gave the following opinion:

"The result [of the somewhat flawed election for General Synod] was that half of the successful candidate do not reflect the overwhelmingly liberal views of the Southwark Diocese".

Please can the Diocesan Secretary provide data to this Synod that provides a clear picture of how the different traditions within the Diocese are represented. Recent data acquired by the Diocesan Evangelical Union would suggest that Miss Alexander's asserted opinion may be "overwhelmingly" inaccurate.

**A The Diocesan Secretary**

The Diocese does not collect statistics on the positions or views of electors in General Synod elections, including on questions of churchmanship or alignment with 'liberal' or 'conservative' thinking on any given issue. There is no basis in law for this data to be collected or retained.

Those standing for elected office may, of course, choose how they wish to describe themselves in their communications to their electors.

The task for diocesan officers and the presiding officer is to ensure that elections are carried out fairly, with equal treatment afforded to all candidates. We are satisfied that this was the case. Beyond this, it is not for my colleagues or me to have a view on the outcome.

**Question 8**

**Q Christopher Elliott [Reigate Deanery]**

I have today along, I presume, with many others received the Diocesan Annual Report. Bearing in mind the cost of printing and postage and the environmental damage arising out of the production would it be preferable in future years for this to be available online only.

**A The Diocesan Secretary**

The purpose of the Annual Report is to inform as many people as possible about the strategy and financial condition of the Diocese. In order to do this, we take into account the large number of people on our PCCs and parishes who would like to be able to refer to the single copy of the printed Annual Report that is sent to each parish. We take into account that reports are accessed by a variety of means and we also make this available online.

The partnership between parishes and the Diocese is borne out well by the care that is taken in the production of our Annual Report. The cost to the environment is minimised by the small number that we print (one per parish) and the paper that we use, the very laudable environmental points should not overrule the importance of sharing the information which is at the heart of the success between parishes and the Diocese, especially in our finances.

We are committed to continuing to reduce our carbon footprint, in line with our Diocesan target of 2035 and we will ensure that the question of environmental impact continues to be considered whenever new resources are developed and produced. We receive much positive feedback about the annual report.