

DIOCESAN SYNOD

DRAFT Minutes of the tenth meeting of the Synod of the diocese held at 9.30am on 14th October 2017 at Soothill Hall, Ashville College, Green Lane, Harrogate, HG2 9JP.

Chair: The Bishop of Leeds

1 Opening Worship.

The Synod began with the opening worship led by The Bishop of Leeds.

2 Welcome.

The following are welcomed and given permission to speak:

Mr Chris Tate, Diocesan Director of Communications who was to lead the presentation on Item 8, "Diocesan Communications".

The Revd Canon Andrew Norman, Diocesan Director of Ministry and Mission, The Revd Hayley Matthews, Director of Lay Training, who were to give a presentation on Item 12 "Lay Ministry and Discipleship: national and diocesan perspectives".

Also welcomed was Leah Shimft a student from Germany who had a scholarship to carry out research on the Church of England.

Bishop Nick told the Synod he had recently visited Germany and brought greetings from the EKD and RC Church in Berlin.

3 Apologies.

33 apologies had been received.

4 Declarations of interest – Members were reminded of the need to declare any conflict of interest on matters on the agenda.

None were disclosed.

Chair: The Revd Canon Tony Macpherson

5 Presidential Address.

The Bishop of Leeds gave his Presidential Address, a copy of which is attached to these Minutes.

6 Minutes of the last Meeting on 10 June 2017.

The Chair moved:

“That the draft minutes of the last meeting held on 10 June 2017 (DS2017-10-01) be approved as a as a correct record.”

The motion was approved with four abstentions.

7 Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the Agenda.

There were no matters arising.

8 Diocesan Communications

Members had been circulated with the document (DS2017-10-02) “Communicating Our Message”. A PowerPoint presentation was given by Mr Chris Tate, Diocesan Director of Communications on the circulated document, which outlined the proposals for the diocesan communications strategy. The Synod members were asked to feed in to the strategy by answering three questions: How to tell Christian success stories? What help do you need to achieve this? How to create Communications Champions? The Synod discussed these questions in small groups and filled in feedback sheets. Members then gave reflections from their small group discussions to the whole Synod as follows:

The Revd Andrew Pearson, Armley Deanery

Confirmed that his parish used social media to publicise its activities and it had proved to be a simple and effective way of reaching more people.

The Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs, Bishop of Huddersfield

Queried whether “success” was the right word for the stories and suggested that the focus of the stories should be real stories where God’s touch had changed people’s lives.

Jane Evans, Calder Valley deanery

Communications and encouraging people to be communications champions should be seen as part of the ministry of the churches.

The Revd Guy Donegan-Cross, Harrogate deanery

Communications can seem an overwhelming area for parishes, so it would be good to have a simple communications strategy all churches could follow with a few template resources to use.

Michael Southworth, Bowland and Ewecross deanery

Communications need to be orientated to those outside the church.

The Revd Vaughan Pollard, Outer Bradford deanery

Echoed that communications should be outward looking and should be about what it means to be a Christian in everyday life, not just what goes on in church. He asked that the name of the parish communications champions be re-considered.

Chris Tate confirmed the information from the feedback sheets would inform the Communications review.

9 Determination of Lay and Clergy numbers for Diocesan Synod Elections 2018

Members have been circulated with the document (DS2017-10-03) "Leeds Diocesan Synod Elections 2018". Archdeacon Paul Ayers, Archdeacon of Leeds, gave a brief presentation on the proposal contained in the circulated document and moved the motion below:

"That the proposals for determining the number of lay and clerical members to be elected by the deaneries to Diocesan Synod in the 2018 elections as set out in paper DS2017-10-03 be adopted."

It was confirmed by the Chair that no amendments in writing had been received.

Synod members were invited to debate the motion.
No member indicated they wished to debate the motion.

Synod members voted on the motion:
Approved unanimously.

10 Mode of Voting for Diocesan Synod elections 2018

Archdeacon Paul Ayers gave a brief presentation on this item explaining the options available for the mode of voting for the 2018 Diocesan Synod elections were first past the post or single transferable voting. The motion proposed first past the post mode of voting. He proposed the motion:

"That this Synod determines that the method for electing members of the Diocesan Synod by Deanery Synods shall henceforth be by the "first past the post" system (as set out in section 7 of Appendix 1 of the Church Representation Rules 2017)."

It was confirmed by the Chair that no amendments in writing had been received.

Synod members were invited to debate the motion.
No member indicated they wished to debate the motion.

Synod members voted on the motion:
Approved unanimously.

With Synod's approval, the Synod moved to consider Item 11 See of Richmond

11 See of Richmond (re-designation)

Members had been circulated with the document (DS2017-10-04) "The See of Richmond". The Rt Revd Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds, gave a presentation on this item. The revival of the see of Richmond had allowed the Bishop of Richmond to take responsibility for the Leeds Episcopal Area. However, that the bishop who looks after the area for Leeds was called Bishop of Richmond was causing confusion. So it was proposed that the Dioceses Commission and the General Synod be requested to agree to petition Her Majesty to allow the name of the See to be changed from Richmond to Kirkstall. The Leeds Board had agreed that this matter should be progressed. Bishop Nick proposed the motion.

“That this Synod consents to the Bishop of Leeds submitting a petition to Her Majesty in Council to change the name of the suffragan see of Richmond to the suffragan see of Kirkstall”.

No amendments had been received.

Synod debated the motion:

Paul Brylov, Headingley deanery, parish of Guiseley w Esholt

The ancient parish of Guiseley had made a significant contribution to Kirkstall Abbey and so there was a clear historic connection between the current Leeds Episcopal Area and Kirkstall.

Mary Shepherd, Richmond deanery

This was her last Diocesan Synod as she was moving away from the diocese. She felt that having “Richmond” as the name of the See was a useful reminder of the northern part of the diocese. She expressed concern that changing the name to Kirkstall would remove this reminder. She also felt that having a See name different from that of the episcopal area was not a problem.

Edwina Offori Wakefield deanery

She found that having the See called Richmond helped her understand how large the diocese was. She was not happy to have the name change and asked if a different See could be used?

The Rt Revd Nick Baines replied to the debate

He thanked Mary Shepherd for her long service to the current and her former diocese. He emphasized that while members of the church may not understand the lack of association between the name of the See and the Episcopal Area, it was important to consider the understanding of those outside of the church. It was also important to recognize that the change was to enable the church to engage in mission with those outside the church.

Synod voted on the motion:

In favour: Majority

Against: 1

Abstentions: 6

The motion was approved.

With Synod’s agreement, Synod next considered Item 14 General Synod report.

14 General Synod report.

A copy of a report from Professor Joyce Hill, General Synod member on the July 2017 General Synod meeting (DS2017-10-07) had been circulated to members with the Agenda. Professor Hill outlined that her report was a brief overview but that member could use the link in the report to read the papers and debates.

Barbara Smith, Brighouse and Elland deanery

She asked the outcome of the two items of general interest (change in canon law relating to vesture at public baptism and an amendment to the law relating to the burial of those of who have committed suicide) which were referred to in the report.

Professor Hill confirmed that in both cases there had been a loosening of the law.

Professor Hill was thanked for her report.

With Synod's agreement, Synod next considered Item 16 Questions to Synod.

16 Questions to Synod.

Questions had been received from Mr Arthur Francis (South Craven and Wharfedale Deanery), The Revd David Houlton (Bowland and Ewecross Deanery) and The Revd Dr John Hartley (Outer Bradford Deanery) (two questions). Written replies had been tabled (a copy of the questions and tabled replies are attached to these minutes).

Mr Arthur Francis (South Craven and Wharfedale Deanery) asked a supplementary question. He was grateful for the helpful response. His supplementary question was how many parishes were caught by the 80% cap?

Ashley Ellis, Joint Diocesan Secretary replied that he believed there were about 35 parishes.

The Revd David Houlton (Bowland and Ewecross Deanery) asked a supplementary question. He asked if it was the case that if parishes who are just above the 1500 population limit and are asked to contribute double what they have been asked in the previous year and don't pay this and also existing parishes which are just above population limits who don't pay (though they could have paid if they were slightly smaller) are in both cases going to be seen as failures?

Ashley Ellis, Joint Diocesan Secretary replied that these parishes would not be seen as failures. The share surgeries have been useful to have conversations with those parishes and to review their share requests on an individual basis.

There were no further supplementary questions.

A refreshment break was taken.

Chair: Canon Ann Nicholl

12 Lay Ministry and Discipleship: national and diocesan perspectives

Members had been circulated with links to the two national reports: "Setting God's People Free" and "Serving Together" (DS2017-10-05) (DS2017-10-05-1). Using a comprehensive PowerPoint presentation, Mr Matthew Ambler, (Huddersfield Deanery) introduced the motion and The Revd Canon Andrew Norman, Diocesan Director of Ministry and Mission and The Revd Hayley Matthews, Director of Lay Training, gave presentations. The speakers highlighted several key matters from the reports and the current strategy planning work being carried out in the diocese which had embedded in it response to the challenges in the reports. The key issues to emerge from the reports was the imperative for the church as a whole to enhance and encourage lay ministry and discipleship but in new, flexible and encouraging ways – with a particular emphasis on acknowledging the equal worth and status and complimentary gifting of the laity and clergy. There would need to be an equipping of the laity in accessible and non-prescriptive ways, to be confident and competent in their Monday to Saturday Christian lives. Synod was given an overview of the new learning initiatives across the diocese including a planned digital learning platform accessible to all members of the Church. In addition, Synod was given initial details of the planned Diocesan Lay Conference to be held on 9 June 2018 at Harrogate Conference centre.

The Synod members were asked to discuss three questions: Which insights might be applicable in this diocese? Where do you see perspectives from these reports already being implemented? Are there aspects of the reports you would want to challenge? The Synod discussed these questions in small groups and filled in feedback sheets to aid the diocesan reflection on these matters.

Mr Matthew Ambler, Huddersfield Deanery, proposed the motion to Synod:

“That this Synod, recognising the relevance of Setting God’s People Free and Serving Together for furthering the diocesan vision of Confident Christians, Growing Churches, Transforming Communities,

- 1) welcomes these reports as catalysts for purposeful resourcing of lay discipleship and ministry;*
- 2) affirms efforts within this diocese to ensure that every parish is characterised by dynamic partnerships between clergy and lay, at the same time noting the provocative references to ‘culture change’ and ‘culture shift’ in the two reports;*
- 3) calls on the Secretary to the Diocesan Synod to send a letter on behalf of this Synod to every parish to encourage clergy and lay together, including PCCs,*
 - a) to study these reports and consider which aspects may be applicable in their context,*
 - b) to support the 2018 Lay Conference by ensuring participants are identified, prepared locally in advance, supported by PCCs and invited to feed back to their parishes and deaneries with these two reports and the diocesan vision in mind”.*

Synod debated the motion:

Jane Evans, Calder Valley Deanery

Jane explained she was also chair of the “Clergy and Lay Together sub group of the Diocesan Strategy Group. A key issue was how to achieve a level playing field between lay and clergy, promote whole of life discipleship (ie Monday to Saturday too) and the equal valuing of the discipleship of laity and clergy and the culture change needed (both lay and clergy) to achieve this. Training should be inclusive of all styles of learning.

The Revd Canon James Allison, Brighouse and Elland deanery and General Synod

One of his congregations was using “Life on the Frontline” by London Institute of Contemporary Christianity. He commended the course, which focusses on the frontlines people have in their lives in their families and at work. He highlighted that people need reassurance that they can be supported to be more effective where they are and that they don’t need to go on to formal accreditation first.

Fr Thomas, Community of the Resurrection, General Synod, Religious Communities

He had reservations about the reports. He believed many Anglicans are worried about the mission of the church and want to know Christ better but he felt the reports would not be accessible to them because of the dialect they were written in. He asked that this be addressed. He believed there was a serious lack of reference to worship and worshipping and praying together and identity. He was also concerned that the original report was predicated on a distinction between clergy and laity – whereas there was very little difference. If there was to be a culture change it would be to leave these distinctions behind and to understand that both are Christians.

Millie Cork, General Synod

Emphasised that it was important to consider all God's people – she works with people with additions and people with severe mental health issues and felt it was important to consider how to empower these people to in the context of "Setting People Free".

Jemima Parker, Harrogate deanery

Welcomed the reports and found them encouraging and that the diocese was taking them forward. Felt that something that should underpin the reports is that there should be a recognition of the unconscious bias that spiritual things are more important than non spiritual things. Value and credence needed to be given to the things people do in their homes and at work.

Vaughan Pollard, Outer Bradford deanery

Nowhere in report is "clergy and lay together" mentioned. He was appalled that this division was repeatedly mentioned in the Synod motion. A workshop held in the Bradford Episcopal Area on Whole Life Discipleship was attended by over eighty people. This showed that people were hungry to get involved and we should just get on with it.

Christine Jack, Harrogate deanery

Believed that there had been a change of theology of how the Church and World work together and this needs to underpin our framework of who we are. There was a lot about relationship and identity in the report. It was helpful to use the ecumenical phrase "the Household of God" as this phrase binds all together in how we can work together in the World today.

Amos Kasibiante, Allerton deanery

Echoed the need to remember the relationship between Church and World and also that the whole Church is called. In other parts of the Anglican Communion, a model was used of a parish church which had additional congregations which were run by lay people. He also highlighted that Bishop John Arthur Thomas Robinson had spoken about the theology of the laity in the 1980s.

Matthew Ambler responded to the debate.

Thanked the Synod members for their engagement with the item and acknowledged that the views expressed were wide ranging but would all be considered. It was good to hear of the work already being done but the challenge was to find way that works for everyone without being too prescriptive. The Study guides were being finalized which would be available to the parishes when they considered the reports. Feedback was very much encouraged and would be welcomed to continue the dialogue.

Synod voted on the motion:

In Favour – majority

Against – 1

Abstentions – 1

The motion was approved.

13 Rules for Deanery Synods

Members had been circulated with the document (DS2017-10-06) "Diocese of Leeds Draft Rules for Deanery Synods". The Ven Andy Jolley, Archdeacon of Bradford, presented this item. He said the Rules were important so know boundaries that deaneries were working within. He believed that they were workable.

The Ven Andy Jolley, Archdeacon of Bradford moved:

"That this Synod approves the Rules for Deanery Synods set out in paper DS2017-10-06 and accordingly makes such rules for use by the Deanery Synods of the Diocese of Leeds."

Synod debated the motion:

Paul Brylov, Headingley deanery

He asked the following:

Rule 5 (participation by non members), If the Registrar and Diocesan Secretary were members of the PCC of their local parish and eligible to stand as deanery synod representatives, would they then have the right to speak, move motions and amendments and to vote in synod?

Rule 33 (breaches of order) If a member used pre-prepared note when speaking would this be included in this? Should there be a section for interpretation of words eg "a speech"?

Rule 55 (voting by houses – item iii) – does this mean all matters referred by the Diocesan Synod must be voted on by houses or only when Diocesan Synod has indicated that this is required/essential?

Kay Brown, Allerton deanery

Allerton deanery has had an assistant lay chair and an assistant area dean in the past and these roles aren't referred to in the rules. Would it be possible to continue this going forward as they have found it useful.

Dave Collingwood (Wensley deanery)

He is Lay Chair of Wensley Deanery Synod and was speaking at his first attendance at Leeds Diocesan Synod, though he had served on Synods for about forty years. He was very sad that the proposed Rules were twenty pages of procedures. He advised a move away from rules and procedures as he believed to have an effective deanery synod did not need twenty pages of standing orders.

Jane Evans, Calder Valley deanery

Calder Valley was the smallest deanery in the diocese, so she was particularly concerned about Rule 82 (membership of the standing committee). She believed that for small deaneries this could result in an unwieldy committee - not less than four persons elected by the members of each house on the committee as well as the officers of the deanery synod.

Nick Flood, Allerton deanery

Asked to move that this motion be referred back for re-drafting of something less cumbersome and more practical.

Peter Foscitt, Diocesan Registrar, was asked to provide background to the rules and their preparation and to clarify some of the points which had been raised.

He explained that the Dioceses Scheme had preserved a lot of the arrangements from previous dioceses and in his view this included the Rules for deanery synods. However, the Church Representation Rules require that the Diocesan Synod makes rules for the deanery synods. As part of a proper preparation for drafting the rules, the rules of other dioceses were considered and a structure was chosen which it was hoped would provide a comprehensive governance structure for all deanery synods.

In response to the queries raised:

Rule 5, the Diocesan Registrar is statutorily prohibited from being a member of a deanery synod,

though a Diocesan Secretary could be. To add an interpretation clause would lengthen the document, which may not be welcomed. There was no legal requirement for voting by houses by the deanery synod so Rule 55 (iii) was where Diocesan Synod feels it would be appropriate for the deanery synod to vote on an item in houses.

John Wright, Inner Bradford deanery

He is Lay Chair of Inner Bradford deanery synod. He was confused and worried about the practicality of the rules (particularly with regard to the number on the standing committee) and would prefer if they were guidance.

Archdeacon Andy Jolley replied to the debate

His interpretation of the requirements for a standing committee was not less than four persons in addition to the already named officers to be elected by each house in equal numbers.

Sallie Bassham, Bowland and Ewecross deanery

Seconded the proposal that the matter be referred back.

The Chair proposed that the Synod vote on a proposal that the motion be referred back:

The voting was counted on a show of hands.

In favour to referred back: 36

Against being referred back: 42

The Ven Andy Jolley, Archdeacon of Bradford moved:

"That this Synod approves the Rules for Deanery Synods set out in paper DS2017-10-06 and accordingly makes such rules for use by the Deanery Synods of the Diocese of Leeds."

Synod voted on the motion.

The motion was approved by a majority in favour.

15 Diocesan Synod minutes to appear on the Diocesan Website

The Chair proposed that the approved minutes from the Diocesan Synod appear on the Leeds Diocesan website to help publicise the work of the Synod.

The Chair moved:

"That this Synod approves the posting of the Minutes of the Leeds Diocesan Synod on the Anglican Diocese of Leeds website."

Synod debated the motion:

Geoffrey Berry, Ripon deanery

He felt it would be better to have the clearly marked draft minutes on the diocesan website so they are more up to date rather than waiting for them to be approved at the next Synod.

The Chair moved an amended motion:

“That this Synod approves the posting of the draft Minutes of the Leeds Diocesan Synod on the Anglican Diocese of Leeds website.”

Synod voted on the amended motion.

The amended motion was approved by a majority in favour.

Chair: The Bishop of Leeds

- 17 Bishop of Leeds Blessing and Close.
The Bishop of Leeds led the Synod in prayer and gave his blessing.

DRAFT

Diocese of Leeds

Tenth Diocesan Synod, Saturday 14 October 2017

Presidential Address

I returned late last night from Wittenberg in Germany. I was there to present a paper at a conference on Faith, Theology and the Church (from Tuesday to Thursday) and then record a programme for BBC Radio 4 on Martin Luther and the Reformation. Having launched the Reformation jubilee last October, preaching in the Augustinerklosterkirche in Erfurt where Luther was a monk, it was a privilege to end the year in Wittenberg where it all kicked off. As everyone knows, 31 October 2017 is the 500th anniversary of the day when Luther is alleged to have nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the Schloßkirche, thus challenging the Pope and the Church to address some serious concerns about both theology and the practices of the church.

Many of the stories of Luther's words and deeds are now of dubious provenance. There is no record of him having told the Emperor at the Diet of Worms: "here I stand; I can do no other". (Which hasn't deterred sock manufacturers from producing huge numbers of their products with the phrase added. I might bear the weight of one's foot, but it doesn't seem to bear the weight of history. In fact, there is no evidence that he did actually nail his 95 Theses to the church door - something impossible now because the doors are made of bronze.

But, why let facts get in the way of a good story. Whatever the details of who did what and when, we do know for certain that Luther took his life in his hands when he dared to suggest that the grace of God is there for everyone and cannot be bought - even in the good cause of building St Peter's in Rome. Fear of the consequences of death were trounced by the mercy of God.

Sitting in the Schloßkirche yesterday morning, looking at Luther's tomb, I was very conscious that we can't always control the consequences of the decisions we make. The monk of Erfurt changed the world in ways he could never have imagined when he found Paul's letter to the Romans opening his heart and mind to the riches of God's unmerited love. Not only a revolution in the church, but political ructions, too, that too often led to bloodshed on a huge scale. I wonder what he would have made of it today, if he had known what he was about to unleash.

This is not insignificant for us here in the Diocese of Leeds. After giving my paper at the conference on Thursday, I took part in a panel discussion with the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Berlin and the head of the Protestant Church in Germany (the EKD), where both the divisions and affinities of ecumenical relationships were visible. As the church faces big challenges in British and wider European cultures, the need for Christians to prioritise their common baptismal discipleship over their denominational commitments becomes more urgent.

One of the watchwords of the Reformation traditions is 'ecclesia semper reformanda' - the Church needing constantly to be being renewed and reformed. Nothing stands still in this world. And the church can be no exception. Change is here to stay.

It would be ludicrously absurd to compare the changes our diocese has gone through in the last three and a half years with the enormity of the Reformation, but we need no telling that change brings pain as well as opening up new opportunities for those who are unafraid to explore them. And not every outcome can be predicted. As Luther found out - and it caused him a whole new set of griefs and concerns - there is the small matter of the Law of Unintended Consequences.

Our diocese continues to change as we move on from the initial phase of our creation from 2014 to 2016. We are now functioning as a single diocese with a single administration, and we are now clear about where we are in terms of shaping support for clergy and parishes as they 'do' our mission and ministry locally. But, this has all taken place at a time when the church across the country is facing a hefty drop in the number of stipendiary ordained people during the next fifteen years. This inevitably means that we will need to re-shape not only where we deploy our clergy, but the nature of the role, too. A priest cannot do in six parishes what he or she did in one. And we cannot put clergy into jobs that are not do-able.

In other words, we have a lot of work to do in the next few years. We do so in the face of financial challenges, too, but our primary focus has to be on what sort of ministry and mission we can provide within the constraints over which we do not have complete (or any) control. Now, is this a cause for fear or concern? Well, yes and no. We need to be concerned enough to tackle the challenges head on and pay attention to the detail - understanding the cost of growth as well as the benefits. But, we need not fear. We are engaged in God's mission, and must never lose track of the bigger picture of God's transforming grace, his call to keep moving - with him - and to be faithful to him and each other.

Clearly, if our models of ministry are to change, then they will involve re-focusing the attention of clergy and reimagining the role of lay people. Now, let's get away from some of the moany stuff we keep hearing. Clergy exist for the sake of the laity, not the other way around. That will not change, but, the way we do ministry and mission will look different in the future. This is not about power or rights or means of self-fulfilment; rather, it is about identifying the gifts and vocation of all baptised people, developing and deploying those gifts for the sake of the church ... which exists for the sake of the world.

But, the primary calling of lay people is not to do stuff in and for the church, but to be disciples of Jesus Christ out there in the world. One of the recognised challenges of the church in more recent years has been that lay vocation has too often focused on lay ministries in the church - largely liturgical or pastoral. This is something we need to tackle as we move into the future. Discipleship first.

To this end we are holding a Lay Conference in Harrogate on Saturday 9 June 2018. More details will be forthcoming soon, but planning is well underway under the guidance of Andrew Norman and Hayley Matthews. This is intended to help us re-frame our strategy for lay discipleship and ministry into the future - although this will be a matter of process rather than event.

Nothing of what we do can be done in isolation. On today's agenda this Synod will address several matters that, together, help us discipline our development and mission. Asking the General Synod to change the name of the See of Richmond to Kirkstall is not a whim or a bit of ecclesiastical fancy; no, it is to enable those outside the church in the Leeds Episcopal Area (particularly) to identify with the area bishop and our church structure. People assume Richmond is up north and can't see why the Bishop of Richmond is bothered with the city of Leeds. For the sake of our ongoing mission we need to change this. More later, but I want at this point simply to locate this agenda item in our wider missional context.

A communications strategy for the diocese is not incidental. If we can't communicate effectively in the world in which we now live, then we might as well just tend a long decline. We cannot address the lack of children and young people in our churches without engaging with social media and a way of relating/communicating that is a million miles away from what I grew up with. Do we have the courage to grasp this nettle and learn a new language of evangelism and pastoral care? That is the question - along with: are we willing to put resources into making effective communications and changing the rumour about God and the church?

Rules about synod elections and sizes of synods might not be the stuff of romance, but they matter. It is vital that our synods - at every level - should drive and enhance our mission ... and for that we need people - in the right numbers and variety - who are caught up by a vision of the kingdom of God that grabs popular attention, awakens curiosity, draws people in from being met outside on their territory and in their terms. Are we up for this? It isn't easy, and it will mean sacrifice; but, we need younger energy and vision to challenge us and drag us into new ways of being a renewed and reformed church in this part of Yorkshire.

Again, this is not for the sake of the church's organisation or own well-being. Yorkshire faces massive challenges in the wake of Brexit (however that might ultimately look...), but also in terms of its own political organisation. Westminster seems to have a view of how Yorkshire might be governed in the future (under its devolution proposals), but how do we want to help drive this for the sake of the common good of the people of Yorkshire? Do we want to be stuck in the past, with old enmities and thinking within old white lines, or can we be bold about developing a vision of and strategy for a Yorkshire that makes the most of the Northern Powerhouse - whatever that means?

What I am driving at here is that we should not be a church that merely responds to the initiatives of others, but be creative ourselves at fostering debate and proposition that, rooted in our traditions, offers a refreshed view of future potential.

Of course, this is all stuff and nonsense if we would prefer to just keep turning the handle. In the diocese we have proved that, even where we might have differing degrees of affection for the diocese we have shaped, we can commit ourselves to it as mature adults who follow Jesus Christ.

At this point I want to pay special thanks to the Dean of Wakefield, Jonathan Greener, who will leave the diocese in November and be installed as Dean of Exeter. Jonathan vigorously opposed the creation of the new diocese, but, since its creation, has been an excellent friend and colleague, a creative and imaginative shaper of new things (three cathedrals and three deans in a single diocese), and a brave contributor to all we have done. We owe him a huge debt. Personally, I will miss him, his wisdom and advice, even his humour. But, we wish him God's richest blessing and the fullness of the Spirit's gifts as he and Pamela move into a not-unchallenging situation in Exeter. They go with our love, gratitude and prayers.

So, let me conclude where we began - with Martin Luther. While sitting with three young Germans in the very room in Luther's house in Wittenberg, around the table where he and his friends argued about theology, politics, beer and bodily functions (I kid you not), having our own feisty debate about the meaning of Luther's theology now, we felt close to the heart of passion: the passion that is courageous, contagious, irritating, maybe even hopeful - maybe even the passion for Jesus Christ, his grace and mercy, his call to us and his friends to love one another as he loves us.

The Rt Revd Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds

Question received from Mr Arthur Francis, South Craven and Wharfedale Deanery

“To the Secretary to the Diocesan Synod.

A substantial number of ‘surgeries’ were held across the diocese following publication of the new 2017 parish share scheme. Could Synod be informed about any general themes or issues emerging from these surgeries and will there be any adjustment to the 2017 scheme, for example in the formula or the ‘caps’ and ‘collars’ for 2018. If so, when may we have details of any changes? If not, has consideration been given to the, perhaps unintended, consequences of some of the ‘caps’ and ‘collars’ in the new scheme. For example, a parish whose share is capped in order not to be more than 80% of the parish’s unrestricted income would appear to be faced with the challenge, if it tries to raise more income, of being asked to keep only 20p of every additional £1 raised to spend locally, with the remaining 80p going to the diocese as part of its parish share.”

Reply from Mr Ashley Ellis, Secretary to the Diocesan Synod and Joint Diocesan Secretary

The Diocesan Share Surgeries have been and continue to be well received. They have proven to be a good opportunity for parishes to discuss not only their parish share allocations but also other issues directly with their Archdeacon and members of the diocesan Finance and Stewardship teams.

General themes, which have emerged from the Share Surgeries are the size of the diocesan budget (whether the parish share is affordable), parishes general ability to meet the Parish Share allocations, the percentage of the “caps and collars” and specific issues relating to their parish. There was also widespread support for the write-off of historic share arrears, which was a common theme in the parish share consultations.

In respect of the overall share formula, there will be no change and, if any changes were proposed, these would require Diocesan Synod’s approval. With regard to the parish share “cappings”, unsurprisingly we heard two messages: that the current upper limit on assessments was too high and that the current lower limit on assessments should be reduced further. This feedback has been noted and adjustments to cappings are being worked on and will be published to all parishes before the end of October 2017. With regard to the 80% cap, it should be noted that this is only applicable to those share allocations which would have resulted in a parish contributing more than 80% of its unrestricted income. If a share assessment is under 80% of the parish’s unrestricted income then the 80% cap does not apply.

Question received from The Revd David Houlton, Bowland and Ewecross Deanery

“To the Secretary to the Diocesan Synod.

” What steps are being taken to address apparent anomalies in the new Share calculation as applied in rural parishes, such as: the ‘cliff edge’ that can almost double the Share request when a parish’s population increases from 1499 to 1501, or when Sunday attendance grows from 49 to 51; and the large differences in Share request between parishes with similar income profiles due to IMD being heavily weighted to factors such as crime, education, and access to amenities?”

Reply from Mr Ashley Ellis, Secretary to the Diocesan Synod and Joint Diocesan Secretary.

The “cliff edge” scenario was something that we identified during the share surgeries but it should be noted that the parish population data used is from the national census and as the next census is not until 2021 this data will not change until then. In respect of the attendance data, this was fixed for three years to give room for growth and some stability to Parish Share calculations, so there will be no adjustment until at least 2020. Where parishes raise concerns about the effect of the population/Sunday attendance figures we will review the allocation and make adjustments where appropriate.

With regard to IMD, the factor is actually weighted 56% towards income, employment and health deprivation with 44% weighted for education, crime and local services. There was much discussion including at Diocesan Synod about the use of IMD and Synod did support its use as a nationally accepted and statistically robust formula that has been used to distribute funding targeted at deprived communities for a large number of years. Using elements of IMD and weighted individual domain areas would complicate the system.

First Question received from The Revd Dr John Hartley, Outer Bradford Deanery

“1) To the diocesan bishop:

In your Bishop's Charge at your visitation in Bradford Cathedral on 11th May, commenting on Mark 10:49, you said the word used by the crowd to the blind man meant "Take heart", that the New International Version's "Cheer up" was a trivialization of its meaning, and if we had NIVs in our churches we should get rid of them. In view of the facts that (a) the Greek word "tharsei" has no etymological link to the word "cardia" (heart); (b) that G Abbot-Smith's Lectionary (the standard work on the subject) says the word means "be of good courage" and that the later form of the same word "tharrow" means "be of good cheer", and therefore it is the NIV which is offering the proper translation and your preferred alternative which is using a non-literal figure of speech; and (c) that the House of Bishops'

guidance on how to choose a good translation lists the NIV high among those which fulfil the criteria; will you please withdraw this comment and instruction to the clergy and churchwardens?"

Reply from The Rt Revd Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds.

No.

Second Question received from The Revd Dr John Hartley, Outer Bradford Deanery

“2) To the diocesan bishop:

In answers to previous questions at this Synod you have stated definitively that you are not willing to put instruments of delegation to area bishops into the public domain. In May I received a letter from the area bishop of Bradford purporting to authorize some lay people to distribute the elements at the Holy Communion. The canons say this power is the diocesan bishop's. How am I supposed to know whether the diocesan bishop has delegated it to the area bishop?

If your reply is to ask why I am bothered by such a trivial matter, then please could you say why you have not delegated the responsibility for such a trivial matter to the clergy, as a recent change in the law has allowed?

And if your reply is that I can always ask your office, or the registrar, whether a power has been delegated, then please can you say if you think I ought to respond to every episcopal communication from my area bishop by ringing your office or the registrar to ask if he is acting within his authority?"

Reply from The Rt Revd Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds.

This matter has already been dealt with previously and I can do no more than repeat what I have said previously.

The requirements of s13 of the Diocese Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007 are that prior to the execution of an instrument of delegation by me as bishop, the consent of Synod should be secured. At the Synod held on the 22nd November 2014, Synod gave its consent to the execution of the instrument of delegation.

The role of Synod is not to regulate or to manage the operation of the delegation of my episcopal functions to other bishops. It is to consider if it is appropriate for such a delegation to take place and to give or to refuse its consent.

I do have a legal obligation to send a copy of any such Instrument to the Church Commissioners and to lodge it at the Diocesan Registry. I may revoke any such Instrument at my discretion and any such Instrument once executed does not divest me as bishop of the diocese of any of my functions. (s13 (15) of the Measure).

Given that my functions as diocesan bishop are not divested by any such instrument, the operation of any delegation of Episcopal functions is a matter for me. It is not a matter for the on-going scrutiny of Synod.

I regard no matter as "trivial".

Authority given by way of licence or Instrument of delegation is capable of being exercised without the constant need to check the terms of such authority. Thus it is not usual to seek the production of the Licence for licensed ministers at each service as proof of their authority to undertake a particular service. Likewise there is no need to check if a communication from a Bishop Suffragan is within or without of their delegated authority. That authority is held and that it is exercised properly can be accepted. The operation and exercise of such authority will be a matter for me as I have indicated above.