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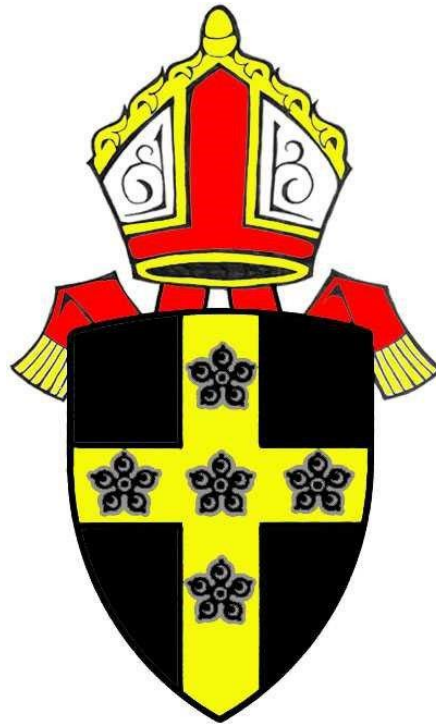
Diocese Of St Davids

Diocesan Conference

Halliwell Centre, UWTSO

5 October 2024 9:30 am - 4:30 pm

## Teulu Dewi



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Growing Hope

# AGENDA and TIMINGS

## **Session 1 9.30 -11.30**

From 9.30am

Registration

Teas, Coffees & Biscuits

9.45am

Rules for Conference

10.00am

1. President's Welcome

10.05am

2. Opening Worship/Prayers

10.15am

3. Apologies

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2023

5. Receive the Standing Committee Report

6. Motion on Plenary Powers

7. DBF report

8. 2025 Budget

9. Annual Reports of Committees and Boards

10. Constitutional Amendments

**11.20-11.45pm**

**Coffee Break**

## **Session 2 11.45-1.00pm**

11.45pm

11. Extraordinary Diocesan Conference Report

12:00pm

12. Year of Children, Youth and Families (CYF) Introduction

Lead for the Diocese – Revd Sophie Whitmarsh – St Davids CYF Missioner

12.20pm

13. Round Table Discussion

12:50pm

14. Plenary

**Lunch: 1:00 – 2:00pm**

## **Session 3: 2:00- 4:30pm**

2.00 pm

15. Presentations

2.20 pm

16. Plans for the Year

2.40 pm

17. Presentations

3.10 pm

18. Safeguarding - Meleri Cray

3.20 pm

19. Question Time

3:40 pm

20. Election Results

3.45 pm

21. Closing Worship – Holy Eucharist

*Departure*

**Session I**

Conference was opened at 9:30am to allow members to register and join.

**FORMAL CONFERENCE BUSINESS**

Ven Paul R Mackness provided an introduction to the Conference.

**1. President's Welcome**

Mr Arwel BC Davies, the Diocesan Registrar confirmed that Ven Paul R Mackness would be President for this Conference. Ven P R Mackness took the Chair.

Members were encouraged to use the Welsh language.

Standing Orders were in force.

When speaking, members were encouraged to give their name and LMA, and state if they were co-opted, nominated or ex-officio.

An explanation of the procedure for Voting tied to Agenda no 18. *Election Results* was given.

**2. Opening Worship / Prayers**

Led by Ven Mones Farah.

**3. Apologies**

Ven Paul Mackness detailed apologies from 20 clergy and 17 laity. 4 clerics and 53 lay members had not responded.

**4. Minutes of the Meeting held via Zoom on 1 October 2022**

The minutes of the Conference held at the Nant-y-Ffin Hotel, Llandissilio on 1 October 2022 were proposed by Ven Mones Farah and seconded by Revd Belinda Roberts. There was one abstention and all other members agreed *nem con*. The minutes were confirmed and signed.

**5. Receive the Standing Committee Report**

Ven P R Mackness read a statement regarding age restrictions to Conference members.

Clergy could be members up to 70 years of age and laity from 16-75 years of age. The current Diocesan Conference Constitution has been in place since 2010. The Provincial Constitution states that no Cleric over 70 can be a member of Conference (e.g. a voting member), and no lay person over the age of 75 can be a member of the Governing Body or the Representative Body. The DBF Articles of Association say the same about its membership. As the electors for those bodies are members of the Diocesan Conference, it follows that only those eligible for election should be electors. This is a principle of British Electoral Law.

There have been numerous attempts to remove the age limit during this period. There was an attempt to bring a motion to this Conference by an LMA, however, it was not submitted in the correct format. The Standing Committee had given the opportunity for the motion to be re-submitted, however, nothing was received.

The issue of age limits was raised at the Governing Body meeting in September, and it was agreed that the Provincial Standing Committee (chaired by Mr Tim Llewelyn and of which Ven PR Mackness is a member) would revisit age limits in the Constitution.

If any member wishes to change the age limit rules, they need to change the Provincial Constitution, the Diocesan Conference's will naturally follow. The DBF will also need to be petitioned to change its Articles. Ven PR Mackness' advice was either to wait and see what the results of the Provincial Standing Committee's findings are, or to persuade a member of the Governing Body to bring a Private Member's Motion to the Governing Body.

The floor was opened for questions.

Revd Canon Marianne Osborne asked about the roles that laity over the age of 75 could hold in LMAs.

Ven PR Mackness advised that LMA wardens must be under 75 years of age. There is no age limit for LMA Council Members. The role of sub-warden no longer exists and there was no limit for other officers in the LMA.

Mr Tim Llewelyn (Acting Chair of the Standing Committee and Vice Chair of the DBF) thanked the Standing Committee members for their work during the past year. Mr T Llewelyn proposed and Ven PR Mackness seconded that the Standing Committee report be accepted. Passed unanimously.

#### **6. Motion on Plenary Powers**

Mr Tim Llewelyn asked that the Conference delegate plenary powers to the Standing Committee for a further twelve months, explaining that this would allow the Standing Committee to function during the periods between conferences. This was seconded by Ven P R Mackness.

Passed unanimously.

#### **7. DBF Report**

Ven P R Mackness called on Mrs Hazel AL Evans (Chair of the DBF) to speak to the report.

In addition to the contents of the report, Mrs HAL Evans thanked Mr Nicholas CP Griffin and Mr Dan Jones for their contributions to the Diocese during their time on the Board of Finance. New members of the Board have now been elected and members look forward to working with them.

The lack of administrative staff at the Diocesan Office was noted, with the existing staff being thanked for their work in ensuring that the Office remains operational. Churches and members were thanked for their patience during this period.

The translation of the Diocesan Website is now complete; thanks were expressed to Mrs Eluned Rees for undertaking the work on the instruction of Ven Dorrien Davies.

Members were asked to pray for the College of Episcopal Electors in choosing a new Bishop.

Mrs HAL Evans proposed and Mr Nigel Roberts (Vice Chair of the DBF and Chair of the Parsonage Board) seconded that the DBF report be accepted.

Passed unanimously.

## 8. 2024 Budget

The Vice Chair of DBF, Mr Tim Llewelyn explained the current budget planning for next year. Setting the Budget had not been an easy task. Ven PR Mackness, Mrs Hazel Evans, Mrs Nia M Evans, Mr Ferguson Clemas-Howard and Mrs Jen Jackson were thanked for their support. The budget is a work in progress at this stage and requires approval from the Executive Committee.

A number of factors have had to be taken into account, namely:

- Continuing to support Ministry across the Diocese
- Supporting the approved 5% increase in Stipends
- Acknowledging the reality of the cost-of-living crisis
- The change to accounting requirements - requirement to better provide in terms of debtors for any outstanding Ministry Share contributions. (In effect, every uncontributed £1 of Ministry Share has an actual negative impact on Diocesan costs.)

There is a total expenditure budget of £5.13 million, an increase of 6% on 2023. At this stage, and for the first time, a deficit budget is being proposed (i.e. income will not equal expenditure) to the sum of £171,000.

85 clergy are budgeted for, but in reality that that might not be possible. The deficit of £171,000 equates to roughly 4 stipends. A re-budget on a quarterly basis is proposed, allowing for an accurate and up to date clergy number position. A Ministry Share increase is proposed, taking it back to the level budgeted for in 2020 (the last pre-Covid budget). Ministry Share expectations will be published to Churches and there is a commitment that the figure will not exceed that which is published. If re-budgeting allows, the figured may be decreased as the year progresses.

£50,000 from Diocesan Investments which are budgeted for year on year, £200,000 from other Diocesan Investments and £28,000 that was set aside for Strategy and LMA Development will be injected into the budget. Once these monies are gone, they are gone.

The next steps are as follows:

1. Information to be shared with the DBF Executive and its approval sought.
2. Ministry Share and appeal timeline to be published
3. Re-budget on a quarterly basis.

Mr T Llewelyn thanked Members for their time and the floor was opened for questions.

Mrs Mary Davies (Bro Aeron Mydr LMA) asked if it would be possible to have a version of Mr Llewelyn's statement to go out to LMAs

Ven PR Mackness responded yes, and that information could also be published on the Diocesan website.

The Dean felt if it would be helpful if something could be said about how Diocesan funding is fitting in with the review being conducted by the RB over the funding of the Church in Wales.

Mr T Llewelyn advised that there were two funding discussions/settlements going on with the RB:

1. The Structural Resilience Fund – reflected in the figures calculated by the Diocese, which is also a settlement for the Cathedral.
2. The Church Growth Fund – the release of £100 million over ten years. The design of that program is virtually there and is almost ready for dioceses, Cathedrals, parishes and churches to make grant applications.

There were no further comments or questions.

## **9. Annual Reports of Committees and Boards**

Ven P R Mackness introduced the Annual Reports of Committees and Boards. Members were asked if there were any comments or questions.

Mrs Jane Heard (Bro Teifi LMA) – Noted felt that the face-to-face workshops on completing faculty applications considered in the DAC report would be a brilliant idea.

No further comments or questions were received.

Ven Dorrien Davies (Archdeacon of Carmarthen) thanked all of the Committee Chairs and Committee Members for their hard work during the year. Ven Eileen Davies (Archdeacon of Cardigan) added that they were the “Salt and Light” of the Diocese.

Ven Dorrien Davies proposed that the reports be received by Conference *en bloc* and this was seconded by the Ven Eileen Davies, Archdeacon of Cardigan.

Passed unanimously with none against and no abstentions.

## **10. Extraordinary Diocesan Conference Report**

Ven PR Mackness explained what happened following the Extraordinary Diocesan Conference in July. Conference had been asked to make suggestions relating to three questions about the person specification and the Diocesan requirements for a new Bishop. A similar exercise was carried out with the Diocesan Youth Pilgrimage. The Diocesan Profile Group used the suggestions to create the person specification. The Diocesan Profile Group will be further discussed under Agendum Item 14. *Feedback on next Bishop.*

The floor was opened for questions/comments. None were received.

As the Conference was running ahead of schedule, the Chair proposed to commence Session 2 before the coffee break.

## **Session 2**

### **11. Year of Salt and Light Introduction**

Mrs Susan Henley (Aberystwyth LMA Lay Chair and Standing Committee Representative) was invited to take the Chair. Mrs S Henley invited Revd Justin Arnott (Diocesan Council for Social Responsibility Officer) to introduce the Year of Salt and Light.

The format, aims and objectives of the Year of Salt and Light had previously been published in Pobl Dewi (hard copy and online). Members were encouraged to review these.

Social Responsibility was explained for what it is and is not. Examples of what it is included:

- Climate
- Mental health
- Children & Youth
- Domestic violence
- War
- Refugees
- Migrants
- Human rights
- Education
- Access to basic needs
- Religious freedoms
- LGBTQIA+

How can this all be covered by one Officer? Some Dioceses do not have a DCSR Officer; it has been devolved to each cleric and everyone in the Diocese. Social responsibility should not be passed off to someone else to do or be something that is sat back from. Social responsibility is taught in the Gospels, most notably in the *Sermon on the Mount* and in the phrase *Salt and Light*. Christians should be socially responsible. The exclusivity of being socially responsible has now been lost to the Church (e.g. many activities are carried out by charity shops and charitable organisations).

Part of the *Year of Salt and Light* is to encourage what is already being done outside of the Church and to make connections with what is happening inside the Church.

Different areas of Social Responsibility will be highlighted with themes throughout the year:

- Advent and Lent Bible Studies
- Epiphanytide – Refugees
- Eastertide – Racial Justice
- June – Poverty
- July – Human Trafficking and Slavery
- August – Family
- Creationtide – Environment
- October – Rural Matters
- Kingdombtide – Peace and War

Who and how this is delivered is down to all of us. Need to increase Christian witness in the secular communities that we are living in.

Mrs S Henley thanked Revd J Arnott for the introduction and closed the first part of Session 2.

### **15 Minute Break for Coffee/Tea**

Ven P R Mackness welcomed everyone back and Mrs S Henley took the Chair and opened the second part of Session 2.

Revd J Arnott explained the content of the conference goodie bags to Members.

Revd Wyn Maskell (Diocesan Rural Advisor) was invited to present a session in Welsh on farming/agriculture and the environment. The session opened with prayer.

Farming families in rural parts of the Diocese are knitting communities together; their children attend local schools; they sell their wares at local markets; and they contribute to the social identities of their local communities. They have a wealth of local knowledge and know their land.

A question for the Church to consider is: how do we reach their core, work on their behalf and share their burdens? Tir Dewi was thanked for the support that it provides to those in need.

A video filmed in the community pub in Felinfach was shown to members. Members were then asked to consider how the Church can nurture its rural communities and meet the needs of the young people living in the Diocese.

Revd J Arnott thanked Revd W Maskell for the presentation, advising Members that they should think about the questions asked and discuss them outside of Conference.

Revd Matt Webster was invited to present a session on poverty, food poverty and housing.

Food banks have become a necessity, but they do not tackle the underlying issues of food poverty.

Whilst community gardens are good, they need to be serious projects in order to feed people.

Co-operative projects – how people get together to tackle some of these issues. There is room for us as community organisations to begin to think about how we can better feed people.

Working with people to help them to help themselves should be thought about.

Revd M Webster shared some stories of the complexities that some of the people with whom he works in the local community are experiencing (linked to poverty and housing). People need engagement, proactive help and to be listened to. People are labeled. Once they are labeled they are no longer seen as human beings. Sharing the Gospel and engaging with people should be used as an opportunity to help. Situations in every town/village are different.

Revd J Arnott thanked Revd M Webster for his insights.

Revd Leslie Pitchford (Bro Aeron Mydr LMA) advised that there was an organisation called CAP – Christians Against Poverty and encouraged members to look into it.

Revd Sophie Whitmarsh (Children, Youth and Familiar Missioner) was invited to present a session on Children, Youth and Families. She advised that some LMAs are very good at engaging with her work, others are not. Revd S Whitmarsh believed that there had been some talks about setting up CAP in Haverfordwest.

*The Year of Salt and Light* is about seeking justice for those who are oppressed by societal structures, abused by those who seek only money and material gain, and neglected by a world which is increasingly about “I” rather than “we”. Christians are called to do justice as part and parcel of their everyday living. Children, youth and families are loved by God but often do not know that love for themselves. In doing justice, Christians share the love of God and move people a step closer to encountering Him.

The Children, Youth and Families Strategy is now available on YouTube. The five steps of the strategy are to prepare, to plant, to grow, to nourish, and to harvest. A big part of the work being done in the Diocese falls under “planting” and “nourishing”.

A short film showing some of the work of Plant Dewi, the Centres of Mission, and the Youth Pilgrimage was shown to Members.

It is important that the Diocese shares these stories.

Revd J Arnott thanked Revd S Whitmarsh for her presentation.

He shared a quote from Bishop Desmond Tutu “*There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in.*”

Mrs S Henley closed the session thanking Revd J Arnott, Revd W Maskell, Revd M Webster and Revd S Whitmarsh for their contributions noting that the session had been thought provoking and that there were considerations to be made about what was being done in Churches and LMAs in the Diocese. She encouraged conversation on these matters over lunch so that Members could learn from one another.

The Dean closed the session in prayer.

### **Lunch – 1.00 – 2.00 pm**

#### **12. Groupwork and Discussion – this item was dealt with under Item 11, with members encouraged to think about the topics that had been presented to them**

### **Session 3**

Ven P R Mackness welcomed and invited Mr Tim Llewelyn to take the Chair for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session.

#### **13. USPG**

Mr T Llewelyn invited Ms Ella Sibley of USPG to address Conference.

Online seminars are available at [uspg@org.uk](mailto:uspg@org.uk) for those who wish to participate further.

Mr T Llewelyn thanked Ms Sibley for her presentation.

#### **14. Feedback on next Bishop**

Mr T Llewelyn opened the session by providing some highlights:

- There is a vacancy in see!
- Members met at an Extraordinary Conference in July – this formed the groundwork for the preparation of the Diocesan Profile.
- A Diocesan Profile Group was formed, and a 24-hour meeting was convened at UWTSD Carmarthen Campus, which led to the Profile being produced and published.
- The Vacancy in See was published in the Church Times.
- Clergy interested in the role were to submit documentation by 5 October 2023.
- The College of Episcopal Electors will meet and be in session between the 16-18 October.
- Members were asked to keep the College in their prayers.

Ven PR Mackness thanked all those who served on the Diocesan Profile Group for their contributions, with special thanks given to Mrs HAL Evans and Mr T Llewelyn for their assistance with the final drafting of the documentation. Thanks were also given to those that ensured that the document was as comprehensive as it was. Canon Aled Williams was thanked for translating the document at very short notice in a short space of time.

Ven Mones Farah advised that Zoom prayer meetings were set from the 8-14 October and everyone was encouraged to attend to pray for the process.

Revd Huw Davies (East Landsker LMA) asked how many potential candidates there were and where they were from.

Mr T Llewelyn responded that this was not known. The Provincial Office was preparing the information; it would be sent to the Episcopal Electors who would have to swear an oath of confidentiality.

The Dean advised that a full Choral Eucharist would be held at 9:15am on 16 October at the Cathedral. Archbishop Andy John would be speaking and it was open to all. Eucharists would be held on 17 & 18 October and Choral Evensong at 6pm throughout the week.

Revd Seamus Hargrave (Narberth & Tenby LMA) asked how successful the Vacancy in See email address had been.

Ven PR Mackness advised that several names had been put forward, all of which had been considered by the Electors from the Diocese.

### **15. Bukavu Link**

This item did not go ahead as Revd Dr Jennie Annis was not present.

### **16. Question Time**

Mr T Llewelyn opened the floor for questions on any Diocesan related topic.

Revd Peter Ratcliffe (Bro Teifi LMA) – Would the Diocese support a private members motion to abolish the age limits for laity and clergy being members of Diocesan Conference, Governing Body and such forums and being able to vote on such forums?

Revd Leslie Pitchford (Bro Aeron Mydr LMA) asked what the rationale behind the age limits was.

Ven PR Mackness advised that age limits were set in the Constitution on the grounds that clergy must retire from stipendiary ministry at 70. The age of 75 was brought in for laity with the view to allowing fresh blood to come through. At present, the age limits are set in the Provincial Constitution and the Diocesan Conference can do nothing unless that is changed.

Revd L Pitchford felt that the age limits were odd. Revd P Ratcliffe agreed and advised that the Bro Teifi LMA had passed a resolution in April to support a motion to abolish the age limits.

Members were straw polled with the majority being in favour, a few abstentions and none against.

Based on the poll, Revd P Ratcliffe would take a private members motion to the Governing Body.

Revd Seamus Hargrave (Narberth & Tenby LMA) asked if the Church in Wales would be reviewing the LMA system, looking at how it has been implemented in other dioceses and if there was something that the Diocese of St Davids could learn from it.

Mr T Llewelyn advised that the LMA system is in various degrees of maturity across the province. One or two dioceses have only just adopted the LMA system. At the last Governing Body meeting a motion was put forward asking if there should be a formal review of the system led by the province. That motion was slightly amended to make it a local level review, taking into consideration LMAs that are in different stages of evolution. Yes, there will be a review, but it will be a format which will allow LMAs to review how things are going, so that we can learn what is and is not working and then implement any changes as necessary.

No further questions.

Mr T Llewelyn advised that, as there was time, Revd Sophie Whitmarsh presenting the Children, Youth and Families Strategy to Conference to fill the gap of Agenda Item 15.

Revd Whitmarsh presented the strategy and referred to the bookmarks on which the strategy was printed which had been given to each member as part of their goodie bags.

- Prepare – Will involve Revd Whitmarsh helping to prepare LMAs for Children, Youth and Families work (e.g. training; networking; sharing resources, practices and ideas).
- Plant – Scattering and planting. Pre-discipleship (e.g. LMAs coming alongside Plant Dewi/Centres of Mission deliberately planting seeds with those that have been scattered).
- Nourish – Discipleship (e.g. youth and action groups; toddler groups; chaplaincies; retreats and holidays for families; youth pilgrimage; involving youth and families in the church; home groups).
- Grow – Growing of disciples then begins in order for them to become leaders in the church (e.g. *Parenting for Faith* courses; Diocesan trips and retreats; Bible studies and deeper communication and connection with God; recognising and encouraging gifts).
- Harvest – Young people who are encouraged to step out in their faith; safe places for young people to meet, encouraging their gifts. It will aid in preparing, training and encouraging more people to sow more seeds.

Revd Whitmarsh encouraged people to contact her to discuss how children, youth and families could grow in their areas.

The floor was opened for questions.

Revd Fran Croxon-Hall (Glyn Aeron LMA) – Asked what was being done with regard to diversity in the Diocese. It had not been discussed during the Conference.

Ven PR Mackness responded that diversity would be covered more under the Real Voices section (Item 17 on the Agenda). Diversity also comes under the Representation Group, which he Chairs; the Group is required to provide the province with certain statistical information; currently most of it applies to gender. During the last five years, Ven Mackness has reported to Standing Committee about the need to measure diversity in the Diocese. Unfortunately, this has not progressed as much as would be desired, partly due to the absence of a Bishop. Diversity is something that is on the Agenda of the Church in Wales. It is something that needs to be done and done well, rather than it just being tokenism.

Mrs Marianne Powell (Bro Padarn LMA) – Asked where Messy Church fits in.

Revd S Whitmarsh responded that there is often a misconception that Messy Church is an add-on to church – it is not, it is a church plant. It can be used as an add-on to church, but they work in two very different ways. You would approach Messy Church from every step of the strategy (i.e. prepare well, plant the Messy Church, nourish, grow and harvest from it). There is a cycle to it – every time it is harvested, it can be planted again. There may be staggered harvests. The strategy provides a flexible framework from which to build Children, Youth and Families work. I

Mr Tim Llewelyn thanked Revd Whitmarsh for stepping in, responding to a gap in the agenda and bringing the Conference up to date with a very encouraging strategy.

## **17. Elections Results (this is on the Agenda as Item 18)**

Mr Tim Llewelyn handed over to Mr Howard Llewellyn, Diocesan Secretary, to announce the results of the elections.

Election to the Governing Body:

The candidates were Revd Steven Brett and Revd Robert M Moore. Elected by the majority was the Revd Steven Brett.

Election to the Representative Body:

The candidates were Ven Paul R Mackness and Revd Peter Ratcliffe. Elected by the majority was Ven Paul R Mackness.

Mr Tim Llewelyn thanked the following:

- Ven Paul R Mackness for being the President of Conference for the fourth year running.
- Mr Howard Llewellyn (Diocesan Secretary), Nia Evans, Ferguson Clemas-Howard, Christine Thomas, and especially to Emma O'Connor (Admin & Property Manager) for pulling everything together.
- Mr David Hammond-Williams for all that he will do to publicise all that has happened.
- The Worship Leaders – Ven Mones Farah and Ven Eileen Davies.
- Revd Wyn Maskell and Revd Heulwen Reese.
- All those who presented/provided reports.
- Mrs Lynwen Davies, provider of simultaneous translation.
- The Committee, Stewards and Caterers of Newcastle Emlyn Rugby Club.
- The stallholders.
- All members in attendance.

The Chair was handed back to Ven PR Mackness who thanked Mrs Sue Henley and Mr Tim Llewelyn for being Chairs of Conference.

The 2024 Conference will be held on the 5 October – venue to be confirmed. The theme for next year will be Children, Youth and Families.

Ven Dorrien Davies made an announcement in Welsh about Welsh language Thanksgiving Services on 8 October at 5pm in St Peter's Church, Carmarthen and at 4pm in Llanfyrnach Church, Crymych. There would also be a Thanksgiving Service on 15 October at 6pm at Betws Bledrws Church, Tregaron. Côr Pam Lai will also be there.

The Cathedral will also host the Diocesan Plygain Service on the 15 December at 7pm. All would be welcome.

Ven PR Mackness declared the Formal Business of Conference closed at 2:53pm noting that members were not to leave until the whole Conference had concluded.

He invited Ven Mones Farah to present the next item.

### **18. Real Voices (This is on the Agenda as Item 17)**

Ven M Farah introduced the item and invited Revd Helen Nicholls to speak about refugees and asylum seekers. A video about the experiences of a Syrian refugee, Latifah, who is based in Aberystwyth, was shown to Conference.

Ven PR Mackness thanked Mr David Hammond Williams for filming the video and Ven M Farah for introducing it.

### **19. Closing Worship**

Conference was concluded with Ven Eileen Davies leading the Holy Eucharist.

The Conference closed at 3:50pm.

**ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT**

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Ven Paul Mackness, Acting President of Conference 2023, Clerical Secretary 2024

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**STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Standing Committee consists of 27 Conference Members, its Chair is The Bishop of St Davids. Mr Tim Llewelyn is the Vice Chair and chaired meetings in the Bishop's absence until the election of Bishop Dorrien. There are 11 Ex-Officio members, 14 Elected members and 2 Co-opted members. There are 12 Clerical members and 15 Lay members. The gender balance is currently 11 men and 8 women with 8 vacancies. The Standing Committee has met 4 times during the reporting period. In the absence of the Bishop the Acting President of Conference was the Archdeacon of St Davids as Bishop's Commissary, he has now finished this role and at the invitation of the Bishop has agreed to take on the role of Clerical Secretary on a permanent basis.

**DIOCESAN CONFERENCE PLANNING**

In 2023 two Conferences were held at Newcastle Emlyn Rugby Club. In the absence of the Bishop (due to illness and then retirement) the Archdeacon of St Davids acting as Commissary was President. The additional conference was attended by the Archbishop and looked at the needs of the Diocese prior to the Electoral College and production of the Diocesan profile. The Conferences were chaired by the Archdeacon of St Davids, Mr Tim Llewelyn who formed a panel of Conference Chairs and were formally appointed by Standing Committee as such in November 2021, following the retirement of Mrs Elizabeth Thomas, Mrs Sue Henley was appointed to replace her. The Conference theme was the Year of Salt and Light.

Conference planning was carried out by a group chaired by the Archdeacon of St Davids and comprising the Lay Secretary, Vice Chair of Standing Committee, Clerical Secretary, relevant officers and those involved in delivering the agenda. This was the third time conference had been organised by a Planning Group and it has been agreed that this will continue for the 2024 Conference.

**ELECTIONS & CONSTITUTION**

There will be elections for a new Conference and Standing Committee during 2025.

**SUB COMMITTEES & REPORTING**

The Standing Committee continues to receive all Conference reports at its June meeting, where members are given the opportunity to question the appropriate representative and make suggestions for amendments or additions to reports. All major Diocesan sub-committees are asked to report annually to one of the meetings of the Standing Committee and to brief members on current activities and outlining future plans. Reports from the Directorates of Mission, Ministry and Education were received along with reports from DCSR, Parsonage Board, DBF and Nominations Board. The Standing Committee also receives regular reports from the Evangelism Bid and the Representation Group, which has been asked to look at the representation of women and equality in our structures. The Children Youth and Families Taskforce, the Climate Change and Sustainability Committee and the Welsh Bilingualism and Culture Committee report at each meeting of Standing Committee.

Members of the Standing Committee are all expected to serve on at least one other Diocesan Committee, in order to act as a champion and voice for that are of Diocesan work at Standing Committee.

## DIOCESAN STRATEGY

The Standing Committee, the DBF and the Bishop's Staff have agreed to undertake a new Strategy entitled "Pruning for Growth". This will be officially unveiled to the Diocese at an Extraordinary Diocesan Conference on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July. A "Gardening Group" to oversee the strategy has been appointed and at the time of meeting has met once with further meetings scheduled. A clergy CMD day was held to explain the need for a new strategy.

Standing Committee has had discussions this year around the Children Youth & Families Strategy which it has approved, the Representation of Women and other groups, Evangelism, Discipleship, Climate Change and Social Responsibility/Community Engagement

## EVANGELISM BID & CHURCH GROWTH FUND

Standing Committee continues to give its full support to the Diocesan £1.6 million bid from the Church in Wales Evangelism Fund. This grant facilitates the creation of new church projects, aimed at those who are currently beyond the reach of our mainstream church, targeting specifically the "lost generations". The Fourth Archdeaconry has been dissolved and the Centres of Mission have been transferred to the relevant geographical archdeaconries. The Standing Committee will be involved in proposals to get funding from the RB £100 million Church Growth Fund and discussions will take place during 2024.

## NEXT YEAR'S CONFERENCE:

**Standing Committee has yet to make a decision on venue, but the 2025 Conference will take place on 4 October.**

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Standing Committee invites Conference to:

### 1. Plenary Powers

Delegate plenary powers to the Standing Committee for a further twelve months.

### 2. Approval of the Report

Accept the Report of the Standing Committee.

**ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT**

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Mrs Hazel A L Evans, Chair

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This has been an extremely busy year with Bishop Joanna's resignation on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 which created a vacancy in See. This started the process of Electoral College which was to take place at St. Davids Cathedral on 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> October. Prior to this happening lots of meetings were held to draw up a Diocesan profile and our thanks go to everyone involved in this process. The Electoral College completed their deliberations on the afternoon of 17<sup>th</sup> October with the Archbishop announcing that Bishop Dorrien had been elected as the 130<sup>th</sup> Bishop of St Davids. His election was confirmed by the Bench of Bishops at Eglwys Dewi Sant in Cardiff on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023, followed by his Consecration at Bangor Cathedral on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and his Enthronement at St Davids Cathedral on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2024. His election is excellent news for the Diocese as he knows the Diocese well having served his full-time ministry in each Archdeaconry of the Diocese and we have faith in his Leadership and Guidance.

It will be a challenging year with the priority being on a clear vision to draw down additional funding from the Church in Wales Growth Fund whose priority is on the Growth in Mission in each Diocesan Area.

There has again been a very difficult financial situation with Ministry arrears at an all-time high with arrears totalling over £2 million in the last 4 years. Unfortunately, this is not a position that can be sustained as it would mean the Diocese would be bankrupt in approx. 5 years. It is a challenging time for many Churches with reducing congregation numbers although fortunately this isn't in all our Churches. We appreciate the pressures felt by everyone as we, as Board Members, are either church Members or Clergy in our Churches. We appreciate the effort made by at least 75% of our churches who meet their Ministry Share obligation. A new initiative has been drawn up namely Pruning for Growth whose work will have already started by the time of the conference. This will highlight churches that need support to raise funds by investing in spreading the word of God and in involving the communities that they serve. This may also involve helping some Churches to make difficult decisions and supporting them to move forward.

We are fortunate this year to have gained many new Members on the Board which will bring a new perspective to our work. We unfortunately had to bid farewell to a number of Members who had been on the Board for many years and thank them very much for their valued contributions.

ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Ven Paul Mackness, Acting Chair 2022-24, Clerical Secretary 2024

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BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Board of Nomination is chaired by The Bishop of St Davids and its members comprise of the Archdeacon of Cardigan, Archdeacon of Carmarthen, Archdeacon of St Davids and the Clerical Secretary, all as Ex-officio members. Additionally, there are two elected clergy; one lay member elected from each Archdeaconry; and one co-opted member. In the Bishop's absence the Archdeacon of St Davids chaired the Nomination Board and has now been appointed as Clerical Secretary once again. The Board wishes to thank the previous Secretary, the Revd Shirley Murphy, for her hard work.

THE OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the Nomination Board is to assess and maintain staffing levels effectively in the Diocese, in line with Diocesan mission and ministry objectives and financial budgets. The Board then manages the recruiting process for the Diocese.

ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

The Board has resumed meeting in person with the ability for members to join by Zoom. The Board has keenly monitored clergy staffing needs in the Diocese throughout the changing landscape of LMAs formations. Ensuring a fair and efficient deployment of clergy across our Diocese is one of the main objectives of the Nomination Board. Each LMA has a target stipendiary number to which it is expected to adhere; some however remain below their recommended number, and it is in these areas where the Board has given its attention. There are a number of posts still outstanding at the time of this report and a priority list has been agreed by the Board. A number of new clergy from outside of the Diocese have been recruited

CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

Attracting clergy to fill positions remains a challenge. It is thought to be a widespread problem, with the Church of England describing similar difficulties. We have also seen a number of experienced priests retire.

Maintaining an overall clergy number of 84/5 has been the most difficult task. Exceeding this target has severe financial implications locally as it impacts ministry share levels. Current number forecasts indicate 2024 ending with between 76 and 78 clergy and carrying numerous vacancies.

LOOKING FORWARD

The continuing challenge is to manage to support the Diocesan mission and ministry objectives with this ever-depleting number of stipendiary clergy whilst keeping a watchful eye on the health and well-being of the clergy and their families.

The whole process of clergy recruitment in the context of LMAs is currently under review by the province, so there are likely to be new procedures to be adopted in the future. Predicting clergy retirements is not an easy exercise as the Diocese can only be sure of a cleric retiring at 70. The DBF has agreed to temporarily fund up to 3.5 additional stipends to assist transition if the number of 84 stipends is reached.

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Ven Paul Mackness, Chair of CPC

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### COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Churches and Pastoral Committee consists of the Archdeacons of the diocese, the Bishop, the Chairman or Vice-chairman of the DBF, Chairman of the DAC or another member nominated by them, three members elected by the Diocesan Conference from its own members and three members appointed by the Diocesan Bishop. Nominated and elected members hold office for 6 years. (current sexennial term starting 2020)

### THE OBJECTIVES

The Churches & Pastoral Committee is responsible for keeping under review the pastoral needs for church buildings in the Diocese and advising the Bishop and Diocesan Conference accordingly. It continues to fulfil its pastoral role as well as advising on grants and loans connected with church buildings and administering the quinquennial inspection scheme of churches along with the process for the redundancy of churches.

### ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

Following the appointment of Mr Frans Nicholas as Diocesan Inspector of Churches all QIs are now in-house giving a consistency of reporting. The Representative Body to part funds this post. The Inspector of Churches has also been used to deal with emergencies and has compiled reports for the Archdeacons.

The system of ensuring that up to date electrical inspection reports for churches has been instigated by the Secretary which is continuing to have positive results.

The CPC is now responsible for the Church Repair Grants previously administered by the Representative Body. This grant is for a maximum of £7,500, and applications must fit the grant criteria (shown on Diocesan website) and can only be made every three years. The CPC welcomes applications, which are discussed at each meeting.

### CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

A major challenge for the CPC continues to be that all potential church closures follow the procedures that are set to help the process to redundancy. The number of churches asking for closure and redundancy has increased. There also continue to be issues relating to the care of Churchyards and unauthorised activity. The CPC has made the decision to close the pilot scheme for Pilgrim Churches and move to supporting the Provincial Scheme, a number of site visits have been held with the RB and potential candidate churches.

### LOOKING FORWARD

The CPC will continue to fulfil its pastoral role and look into all matters of the Diocesan Strategy for Growth. The new Church in Wales process for church closure and redundancy has been adopted, it is hoped this will bring greater clarity. It is also hoped that more closed churches will be able to find new ways to be used and cared for. The CPC will be integral to the work of the *Pruning for Growth* strategy.

**ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT**

Reporting period: Easter 2023– Easter 2024

Author: Mrs Jan Every, DAC Secretary/Care of Churches Officer

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**BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

The DAC is the principal body that advises the Diocesan Chancellor and is chaired by a lay member of the committee. It consists of 3 Archdeacons, Diocesan Registrar and Secretary as well as both lay and clergy members offering specialty advice such as architecture, archaeology, history, bells, organs, and textile. Membership is voluntary and the Church in Wales relies on the generosity of these volunteers in giving their time and expertise to the DAC. Two members are appointed by the Diocesan Conference through its Standing Committee; these are currently the Archdeacon Missioner and the Revd Canon Marcus Zipplerlen, the Creation Care and Sustainability Officer.

**THE OBJECTIVES**

The main objective of the DAC is to manage the faculty process through the Online Faculty System (OFS) and through meetings and discussions to assist the Chancellor in his determination of full faculty applications. The DAC members are also there to offer guidance and advice.

**ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR**

The DAC has met 6 times, three of which have included meetings with the Fabric Advisory Committee, (FAC) linked to the Cathedral. Several site visits were carried out. 63 faculty applications have been submitted onto the OFS. 41 of which were full faculties, 12 List B and 1 List A. Most of the applications are at various stages within the faculty system. Many full faculties are being returned to applicants due to lack of sufficient information and evidence submitted, as are List B faculties for the same reasons. The Chancellor has also been returning more Full faculties to the Registrar for further clarification.

**CHALLENGES THIS YEAR**

The faculty process is still not fully understood by both clerics and lay applicants. The continuing difficulty for the DAC is the number of applications having to be returned due to the poor quality of submissions and lack of supporting documents, which leads to lengthy delays. Members have tried advising applicants of the need to seek advice from professional advisors to assist them in their faculty applications (this cannot be the Diocesan Inspector of Churches as he advises the DAC). This is a matter that the DAC will continue to address.

**LOOKING FORWARD**

Staffing issues at the Diocesan Office had contributed to longer delays with the administration of the OFS, this has now been addressed. The DAC continues to manage how best to support, advise and guide all applications submitted and queries received by the Secretary. A review of the OFS and the Faculty System in general has been commissioned, and we await the outcome of this; it is hoped that the review will make the system more user friendly.

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Jan – Dec 2023

Author: Mr Nigel Roberts - Chair / Mr Stanley Jones – Parsonage Inspector

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## BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Parsonage Board met quarterly during the period under the chairmanship of Mr Nigel Roberts. Membership of the board is comprised of the Bishop, Archdeacons, clerical and lay representatives, a clergy spouse representative and co-opted members who have specialism in matters such as property management, valuation and construction. The Parsonage Board Inspector and the Assistant Head of Property Services for the Representative Body also attend together with the Diocesan Secretary and Finance Manager.

Lyndon Evans has been appointed as the Parsonage Board Surveyor providing invaluable professional support to the Inspector.

## THE OBJECTIVES

To manage the Diocesan portfolio of vicarages according to ministry needs and to maintain these buildings to a high standard and to manage the reinvestment programme.

## CURRENT ISSUES

- Board's financial position is robust. Balance of Improvement Fund £1.517m and Repairs Fund £977k as at 31 December 2023. 17 properties rented to tenants with none rented by the Board. 20 empty properties with the majority allocated for future use by clergy. Ongoing property transactions include the sale and purchase in Newport and the sale of Barn Street Haverfordwest.
- The ongoing maintenance and servicing programme has continued, and this includes the 5 yearly inspection of electrical installations and the painting schedule prioritizing where necessary.
- Projected commitments to the end of 2024 include a new Vicarage at Aberystwyth.

## FUTURE PLANS

- Archdeacons are managing a Priority list in relation to replacing those existing properties with inefficient EPC benchmarks and ultimately negating the issue of fuel poverty. This is work in progress.
- Following the Pandemic we continue to proceed on the basis of 'business as usual' and recognising the challenging sector there has been little disruption to service levels and the availability of contactors, where we receive an excellent level of service.
- Through the Board's agents a rent review of our tenanted properties is regularly completed and will continue to be undertaken at regular intervals as we monitor the implications to the Board.
- The Board reviews regular updates from its professional advisers on the variable and challenging residential property market within the Diocese where prices have dropped, and this will present its own challenges in due course for the Board to manage.

# St Davids Diocesan Board of Finance – Finance Sub-Committee **AGENDUM 9**

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Mr Timothy J Llewelyn, Chair, Budget Sub-Committee

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The Finance Sub-Committee meets on a quarterly basis and comprises Clerical and Lay members of the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF). The Diocesan Secretary and Stewardship and Support Officer also attend. The Sub-Committee is charged with: -

- Setting the DBF's annual budget, seeking engagement from budget holders and key stakeholders ahead of approval by the DBF's Executive Committee.
- Regular review of Income and Expenditure, identifying trends and proposing remedial actions where necessary.
- Forecasting future activities and their budgetary implications.
- Regular review of Clergy numbers taking into account new appointments, ordinations, movements into the Diocese and forthcoming retirements.

Areas that were discussed included the following: -

- Ministry Share is the single largest source of Diocesan income, so it is appropriate that time is invested discussing and agreeing its allocation and then monitoring the contributions that Churches make. The Sub-Committee works closely with the Stewardship and Support Officer, directing him to engage with particular Churches and receiving reports on progress.
- The annual budget setting process receives a significant amount of attention, and this has led to the budget now being agreed much later in the year. It is accepted that this does delay the calculation and advice of Churches' individual Ministry Share. The delay in budget agreement does though mean that the Sub-Committee and the DBF Executive are able to have as much up to date financial information as possible.
- The Audit and Risk Committee regularly updates the Diocesan Board of Finance Risk Register and asks all Sub-Committees to identify current risks in their own particular areas. These have been identified from a Finance perspective and are reviewed and updated on an annual basis to ensure that the appropriate mitigating actions are in place.
- Following the retirement of the Stewardship and Support Officer the sub-committee will need to critically assess and review its working practices and engagement with churches.

Audit and Risk Committee

**ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT**

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Ven Paul Mackness, Chair, Audit and Risk Committee

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The Audit and Risk Committee meet on a quarterly basis, its role is to oversee and advise the DBF on matters relating to the annual external audit, the assessment or risks affecting the DBF and scrutiny of budgetary matters within the total return of the DBF's financial position.

The Audit & Risk Committee take responsibility for the DBF's Risk Register and following the completion of a Risk Register in line with the recommended model from the Charity Commissioners and used by the RB last year, an annual review of the whole register has been undertaken. Risks are regularly monitored and revised, individual Trustees and Officers are assigned to each risk.

Tendering for the Board's Professional Advisers is also under the remit of the Audit & Risk Committee and a new rolling programme has been agreed with Auditors and Banking provision being looked at in the reporting period, it was decided to change Auditors following a tendering exercise and to retain our current bankers. The provision of the DBF's Legal Advisors and Property Agents will be delayed to 2024/5. The Audit & Risk Committee has also taken responsibility for ensuring that all Board policies are regularly reviewed by the relevant committee.

The complexities of GDPR requirements post Brexit are also being looked at and following new legal advice the Audit & Risk Committee will oversee the GDPR Data Audit and subsequent policies. For the purposes of GDPR, the Diocesan Board of Finance is the legal entity for the Diocese. LMAs will need to undertake similar exercises and training for this is being planned.

Reporting period: Easter 2022 – Easter 2023

Author: Revd Canon John Cecil (DDE), Chair / Miss Emma O'Connor, Property Manager

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The Endowed Schools Committee (ESC) meets four times per year, is chaired by Revd Canon John Cecil and comprises Clerical and Lay Members of the Diocesan Board of Finance. It is charged with: -

- Responsibility for providing financial support towards repairs and renovation projects in church schools together with the management/disposal of redundant school properties.

The Committee also:

- Assists the Diocesan Director of Education (DDE) in deciding the allocation of finance / funds for minor and capital projects on church schools.
- Manages the disposal of redundant school properties in liaison with the relevant legal adviser and in accordance with the agreed procedure to be adopted where a reverter exists.

The ESC continues to meet in person but has the ability for members to join by Zoom if required. We have continued to strengthen our existing links and connections with our Diocesan Schools, Local Authorities and other Diocesan Committees. We continue to have open discussion and debate around some of the major challenges faced in the Diocese.

We are currently dealing with a wide range of issues including:

- Registering property and land with the Land Registry
- Various complex matters concerning fabric and equipment upgrades at our VA Schools
- Property sales
- Negotiations concerning the reinstatement of Manorbier School and School House

Maintenance and repair issues remain high on our agenda – with planned and emergency works being carried out on our buildings as required.

St Davids Diocese Grants Sub-Committee  
ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

**AGENDUM 9**

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: The Right Revd Dorrien P Davies, Chair

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The Grants Committee has met throughout the year. Its purpose is to oversee the allocation of grants of up to £3,000 that are requested for a variety of projects undertaken by churches and LMAs in the Diocese.

Applications for projects that promote mission and outreach are actively encouraged. Submitting grant applications in good time, with as much information as possible, will usually ensure a successful bid. Receipts for all costs are required in order for grant monies to be processed and paid – it is important to keep accurate records of all project expenditure.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Committee if you have a project that you think would benefit from a grant.

Other grants are also available, visit: <https://stdavids.churchinwales.org.uk/en/resources/>

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Mr Timothy J Llewelyn, Chair, HR Sub-Committee

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The Human Resources (HR) Sub-Committee meets on a quarterly basis and comprises Clerical and Lay members of the Diocesan Board of Finance. The Diocesan Secretary also attends.

During the year a varied and wide range of topics were discussed and throughout, quite rightly, the Sub-Committee ensured that staff welfare was treated as a priority.

Areas that were discussed included the following: -

- During the year a number of staff members left the employ of the Board, and this led to a significant amount of recruitment activity. Particular challenges were encountered in identifying suitable candidates for Finance Department roles where the services of professional recruitment agencies were engaged. It is hoped that all current vacancies will be filled in the very near future.
- A number of business-as-usual reviews were undertaken during the year which included processes and procedures.
- The sub-committee is committed to ensuring that Diocesan Board of Finance staff receive appropriate and timely development to ensure that they have the appropriate skills and knowledge to undertake their respective roles. A recent example was the delivery of a Work Review workshop for line managers.
- The Audit and Risk Committee regularly updates the Diocesan Board of Finance Risk Register and asks all Sub-Committees to identify current risks in their own particular areas. These have been identified from a HR perspective and are reviewed and updated on an annual basis to ensure that the appropriate mitigating actions are in place.

**ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT**

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Mrs Nia Evans, Finance Manager

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Markets began the year on an upwards trajectory. The sudden collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) in the US, however, shook global markets and sent equities around the world plummeting. Two more regional US banks followed, and the Swiss National Bank forced Credit Suisse to merge with UBS. The setbacks highlighted the growing stress in the financial sector caused by rapid interest rate rises over the prior year.

Much of 2023 was dominated by concerns over high inflation, rising interest rates, and weakening economic growth, all of which helped rattle market nerves throughout the summer months. The fixed income market also witnessed a significant downturn, marked by long-term US government bond yields reaching levels not witnessed in 15 years or more. The surge in bond yields triggered market turbulence, impacting everything from real estate to equities.

Markets bounced back strongly towards the end of the year; this was driven by the belief that the key central banks had stopped raising interest rates. The Fed and the UK central bank both voted to keep interest rates on hold from September onwards, providing investors with confidence that the cycle of rate increases had come to an end. Gains were further compounded on the news of lower-than-expected inflation on both sides of the Atlantic.

The stock market rally continued in December, with the S&P 500 hitting a high for the year. Returns through the year were unusually concentrated, however, with the majority of companies underperforming the benchmark, and just a few mega-cap US technology companies driving equity markets, bolstered mainly by a burst of optimism about breakthroughs in AI technology following the popularity of OpenAI's ChatGPT software.

UK equities ended the year up just 7.9%, although the lack of technology exposure meant they lagged overseas equities, which were up 16.0%. Fixed interest investments also produced positive returns, with UK government bonds up 3.7%. The St Davids Diocesan Board of Finance portfolio, which combines a range of asset classes, produced a total return of 6.30%. At the end of the year the portfolio was worth £5,621,977 with a further £32,869 of cash held in a separately identifiable account.

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Mrs Hazel A L Evans, Chair and Miss Emma O'Connor, Property Manager

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The Property Sub-Committee (PSC) meets four times per year, is chaired by Mrs Hazel Evans and comprises Clerical and Lay Members of the Diocesan Board of Finance.

It is charged with: -

- Managing the overall secular estate of the DBF (consistent with approved policies, strategic objectives and budgets set by the DBF).
- Complying with all legal and safety regulations in respect of any let property.

The Committee also aims to maximise the property portfolio and therefore its income, in order to assist the Board with its budget setting, so that there is a reduced request from our Churches for Ministry Share.

The PSC meets in person but has retained the option for members to join via zoom. It continues to engage with LMAs/churches, Community Groups and Associations regarding various property ownership and management matters. With an ever-increasing workload the Board asks that any Churches facing difficulties with property matters make contact with the Property Department of the DBF so that they can work with them to find solutions.

Some delays still continue with services, such as those run by Land Registry and Local Authority Planning Departments.

Diocesan Board of Finance  
Widows Orphans and Dependents Society  
ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

**AGENDUM 9**

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Mrs Nia Evans, Finance Manager

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Of the widows receiving a pension from the Representative Body of the Church in Wales during 2023, six of these had income below the increased target level of £17,290, as agreed by the St Davids Diocesan Pensions and Assistance Committee. Grants were paid from the funds of the Provincial Society in order to bring their income up to the target figure.

In order to facilitate the payments of the required level of grants to those widows with income below the target figure, the Diocesan Pension and Assistance Committee contributed £18,050 to supplement the Provincial Society Fund.

The Diocesan Pension and Assistance Committee were pleased to be able to make an additional grant of £150 to each of the widows at Christmas time, totalling £7,950. The widows who received the grant at Christmas have all expressed their thanks. A social gathering has not been organised for the clergy widows during the past year.

The Diocesan Pensions and Assistance Committee wishes to thank those churches that have sent donations totalling £150 to assist with its work. To help meet the increasing demands of the fund, £16,400 capital has been withdrawn from Trust 464.

The balance at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 was a deficit of £2,511. Capital was released from Trust 464 to cover this deficit.

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Revd Canon John Cecil – Diocesan Director of Education

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#### MEMBERSHIP

The Education Directorate is chaired by the Archdeacon of St Davids, the lead officers are the Director of Education and the Schools Officer. The membership of the Directorate is made up from representatives of the Standing Committee, Church School Headteachers, Bishop's Visitors, Clergy, Section 50 inspectors and School Governors.

#### THE OBJECTIVES

The Directorate for Education oversees the work of church schools in the Diocese. This is primarily done through the Diocesan Director for Education, the Schools Officer, and our Foundation Governors and Bishop's Visitors. The Endowed Schools Committee is responsible for the funding of our Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled Schools and is the financial wing of the Education Directorate. The Education Directorate meets as the Schools Committee three times a year, usually in one of the Church schools.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

The DDE is pleased to welcome Ms Mari Hughes as the new Schools Officer for the Diocese. The Directorate has been involved with the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales, the creation of a new Church in Wales Syllabus for RVE and major revisions to the Section 50 inspection process. Schools have been aided in their curriculum development with INSET provided by *God and The Big Bang*, a resource which develops the teaching of RVE through Science. In September 2023 the first Church Schools Conference was held at St David's Cathedral. The day was well attended, and another conference is planned for 2024. The Diocese is working hard to promote the Archbishop's Young Leaders Award (AYLA) in Church schools. This project promotes Christian values and seeks to nurture leadership skills and encourages learners to be responsible members of their community.

#### CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

Schools are finding it a challenge to produce balanced budgets, with smaller schools being disadvantaged the most. A great deal of officer's time is spent resolving maintenance and premises issues, working with Local Authorities to keep buildings in sound repair and supporting staff to deliver a broad and challenging RVE curriculum.

#### LOOKING FORWARD

The Directorate looks forward to continuing to work with Church schools, Foundation Governors and others in furthering the provision of faith-based education in the Diocese. Encouraging colleagues to become school leaders for the future remains a priority along with looking at creative and sustainable leadership solutions for smaller rural schools.

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Ven Paul Mackness, Chair of Taskforce

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#### TASKFORCE MEMBERSHIP

The Taskforce is chaired by the Archdeacon of St Davids. The membership comprises representatives from the Education Directorate, the Fourth Archdeaconry, the DCSR/Plant Dewi and clergy with an interest/experience in Children, Youth and Families work, further members have been appointed from the Standing Committee.

#### THE OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the Taskforce is to bring together all the relevant Diocesan bodies that work with Children, Youth and Families in order to provide “joined up” thinking and an end to silo working. Bishop Joanna asked that the Taskforce be formed in 2019. The Taskforce oversees all Diocesan work in relation to Children Youth and Families, under the Directorate for Education. The Taskforce oversees the strategy budget set aside for Children, Youth and Families work and with the Grants Committee looks at applications for grants toward Children, Youth and Families work. There is a desire to engage with Children and Youth directly as part of the creation of a CYF strategy.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

The Taskforce has met regularly in person and with the ability of members to join via Zoom. Revd Sophie Whitmarsh is the lead officer as Children, Youth and Families Missioner and was responsible for drafting a CYF strategy for the Diocese which has been approved by both the Taskforce and the Standing Committee. It coordinates work with LMAs, members of the Taskforce and Fourth Archdeaconry. The Taskforce awards grants of up to £1,000 to churches, church organisations, LMAs and Schools. There is potential for the Centre of Missions Evangelists to allocate up to 20% of their time to assist LMAs with CYF work. A successful Diocesan Youth Pilgrimage was undertaken in 2023 and another a larger one is planned for 2024, allowing other Dioceses to send pilgrims to join this activity.

#### CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

The lack of engagement from some LMAs when requested for information or assistance continues to be a challenge. This was noticed in relation to the Church Army research last year and in engaging with the new CYF Missioner.

#### LOOKING FORWARD

Working with the CYF Missioner to continue to roll out and develop the 5-year strategy and build on existing work. The Taskforce will take an active role in *Pruning for Growth*.

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Revd Canon Dr Rhiannon Johnson, Director of Ministry

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## MEMBERSHIP

The Ministry Directorate is chaired by the Bishop (for half the reporting period in his role as Archdeacon of Carmarthen) and its members comprise the Archdeacons, the Dean, the Director of Ministry, and the officers responsible for championing different forms of ministry development in the Diocese. The Directorate meets formally three times a year, but the officers continue to work individually and collaboratively throughout the year.

## THE OBJECTIVES

The Ministry Directorate oversees the provision of lay and ordained ministry in the Diocese including discernment and training. The Directorate advises the Bishop on ministry policy, but its main focus is on delivery, co-ordination and ministry development.

## ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

The achievements of the year will be mainly covered in the reports that follow.

In addition, the Directorate ran a successful course to train new Spiritual Directors. Two new Anna Chaplains for the Diocese trained in a course run by St Padarns and will be licensed soon. This is a ministry supported by the Bible Reading Fellowship working with older people and it is to be hoped that it will flourish in the Diocese.

The Province has produced good bi-lingual materials to encourage the Commissioned Ministries (Worship Leaders, Pastoral Assistants and Catechists).

Four (originally five) young people served as apprentices in Christian ministry, employed by LMAs in the Diocese through the St Padarn's Scheme, which is supported by the Senedd and Coleg Sir Gar. All but one of these are under the age of 25. The Diocese is also providing financial support.

A new round of Ministerial Development Review has taken place. We have been the only Diocese offering this to Readers although take up among them has been limited. The Province plans to make MDR an expectation for those in Reader ministry in the near future.

At Michaelmas a service was held in the Cathedral to celebrate ten years of NSM(L) ministry in the Diocese. The findings of a ten-year study of the Diocesan Scheme showed convincingly that it had widened inclusion in ordained ministry, particularly of first language Welsh speakers as well as training around sixty priests, almost all of whom would not have offered for ministry otherwise.

With the arrival of the new Bishop, the decision was taken to normalise NSM(L) provision in the Diocese. This means that, while the Diocese is very supportive of NSM(L) ministry, candidates go through the normal Provincial Discernment Programme and are trained completely at St Padarn's (as opposed to the Diocesan and St Padarn's hybrid system that had operated previously). As a result, the NSM(L) Management Board was no longer required and the Bishop thanked all those who had served on it for their hard work.

At Easter 2023 there were in training for ordained and licensed ministries:

- Ten candidates in initial training (four for stipendiary ordained, two NSM, three NSM(L)), one for Reader Ministry)
- Three in the early stages of ministry (two deacons; one of whom is stipendiary, and one is NSM(L), and the other is a Reader). We will also shortly gain another newly qualified Reader who is moving to the Diocese.
- Four in the first year of priesthood (two stipendiary, and two NSM(L)).

## CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

Maintaining the Directorate's work is always a challenge, given that most of the officers combine their responsibilities with other ministries.

A new Provincial Discernment Process will be phased in from September 2024. This is both a challenge and an opportunity. The process will have two stages. Stage one is a series of online interviews that will produce a report detailing the areas candidates will need to address before coming to a residential Discernment Conference (stage 2). The role of the Diocesan Directors of Ordinands will change considerably going forward. They will now be expected to provide opportunities for addressing those areas identified in stage one, as well as checking if candidates have a legal right to work in the UK, organising assessments of psychological wellbeing and going through a series of difficult but necessary conversations with the candidates.

The new process is also, to a lesser extent, going to change the role and work of the Fellowship of Vocation, Vocation Advisors and Diocesan Discerners. A large Ministry Development meeting is planned to address this.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Much of the Directorate's work is on-going and will continue. In addition, the coming year will see the introduction of a new pattern of Provincial discernment for ordained ministry. We are also planning to introduce a Diocesan training and support group for Training Incumbents. A celebration service for the ministry of Worship Leaders is planned in the Cathedral for 11<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and a new Diocesan training programme is also being planned, partly to respond to the likely needs of the new discernment framework but also to share with all ordinands some of the additional training that NSM(L)s formerly received.

**ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT**

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Miss Ruth Evans, Warden of Readers

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This year, yet again, Readers have excelled in officiating at services and keeping LMA's flourishing. Some Readers are also Focal Ministers in their own churches. Readers carry out pastoral care and bereavement ministry which includes but is not restricted to officiating at funerals, as well as chaplaincies, school-visiting and assemblies.

On 15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> September 2023, some Readers attended the “Hope of the Gospel” themed Provincial Readers’ Conference at the Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells.

On Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2023, the Annual Readers’ Day was held at St Peter’s Church, Lampeter. A new Reader was licensed, and another Reader was welcomed from another diocese. All Readers present renewed their vows. The theme for the afternoon session was “Experiences of work as a Diocesan Director of Education”.

On Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2023, a “Prayer” themed Readers/LLMs Support Day was held via Zoom.

There are currently forty-three Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers) in the Diocese. This year, two Readers have retired, and one Reader has moved to another denomination. At present, there are two Readers in training, one to be licensed in 2024 and one in 2025.

Readers are usually invited to join clergy on CMD Days.

Thanks to all those clergy who support Reader Ministry and thanks to the staff at the Diocesan Office for their guidance and support.

# Initial Ministerial Development (IME) ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

**AGENDUM 9**

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Revd Jonathan Parker, IME Officer

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## THE OBJECTIVES

IME is the training provided specifically for newly licensed ministers (NLMs), both curates and Readers, during the initial years of their ministry. It typically lasts between two to four years, depending on the minister's and Diocesan needs. The IME Officer's role is to provide pastoral support for the NLMs and additional training opportunities as the need arises. The officer seeks to ensure fruitful relationships with training incumbents through the establishment of 'Learning Agreements' and on-going contact, to ensure NLMs have a Spiritual Director, to monitor their progress through each year and to report to the Bishop.

## ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

One deacon and six priests were ordained in June 2023. We expect one priest and six deacons to have been ordained by the time of the Diocesan Conference. There are around 17 curates in the IME programme at present though some will have finished curacy by October. Since September one training session has been arranged in each term covering marriage law and weddings, confirmation and liturgical resources, and the role of the Cathedral in the Diocese.

## CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

Many of the curates are non-stipendiary ministers and some are still in secular employment. It is important to schedule events to enable everyone to attend, which may require weekend and evening sessions. St Padarn's takes care of provincial training requirements, and these sometimes fall at busy times for curates adding pressure. Attendance at training has not been a priority for some curates so they have missed useful information and networking with peers.

Some curates, and training incumbents, are difficult to get hold of or slow to respond to requests for information.

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Revd Lynn Rees, CMD Officer

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CMD provides training opportunities for licensed ministers to support their continuing professional ministerial development. Attendance is compulsory for full-time stipendiary clergy and self-supporting ministers are expected to attend (other work permitting). Licensed Readers are also invited to attend most CMD training sessions.

Three Diocesan led CMD training days are held each year, together with a Provincial Program of CMD sessions led by the St Padarns Institute which are held both in person and online. Over the past year Diocesan CMD training sessions have been held in person on the following subjects:

- Monday 3rd July: Ministry with Children and Young People led by Revd Sophie Whitmarsh
- Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023: Criticism, Commentaries and Christmas: theological session led by Revd Dr Alun Evans.
- Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024: Diocesan Financial Issues led by the Bishop's Staff

Further dates for CMD sessions have been arranged for the 5<sup>th</sup> of June and 19<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

**ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT**

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Revd Andrew P Johnson, Chair

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Spiritual Direction has been defined as the art of holy listening. It offers a safe and sacred space in which a person can explore prayer and the call of God with the help of another person on the same journey. It leads to a deeper awareness of the self and of God in all parts of life. It can be offered in many different ways, and elements of it will be found in house groups, reflective practice cells, relationships with wise friends and the normal life and worship of the church.

However, some individuals and people at certain stages of their life may wish a more individual and disciplined approach to spiritual direction than everyday church life can afford them. This is particularly true for those exploring a vocation, those in public ministry and those who offer spiritual direction to others.

The Diocese of St Davids has a college of spiritual directors, offering this kind of holy listening. The service they offer is freely given, confidential, Christian, guided by the directee and adheres to a code of practice.

In the past year the Diocese ran a course which trained six new directors. St Padarns has also been running a course which some people from the Diocese are undertaking.

A Provincial code of conduct has been formalised and representatives of each diocese continue to meet regularly. In the next year we hope to have targeted safeguarding training for those offering this ministry, which will be provided by the Province, dealing particularly with issues around the abuse of spiritual authority.

On a Diocesan level, a day is planned for all members of the College to pray together, receive some training, updates and also for the newly trained directors to receive the Bishop's license for this ministry. Directors from the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon are being invited to share the day.

The challenge for the coming year is, as always, matching clients and directors. We hope to be able to roll out the provision of supervision sessions for members of the College. The newly trained directors wish to continue their on-line book group, reading the spiritual classics (although at a more relaxed pace) and would be very open to having others join them in this.

# Fellowship of Vocations

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

**AGENDUM 9**

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Revd Sophie Whitmarsh, FoV Co-ordinator (Interim)

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### BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Fellowship of Vocation is coordinated by Revd Sophie Whitmarsh and is comprised of 43 (Active) lay people who are exploring their vocations. Additionally, there are currently 5 Fellowship of Vocation chaplains (including the Co-ordinator). Due to unforeseen circumstances, a change of chaplains has been necessary in this past year and more changes are likely in the coming months.

### THE OBJECTIVES

The Fellowship of Vocation seeks to be a source of support, resource, and learning for those who are exploring their vocation, whether Lay or ordained. It does this through offering the opportunity to meet several times a year as part of a chaplaincy group, where they will find mutual support and fellowship. There is an Annual Fellowship of Vocation Conference which has a range of speakers, offering different experiences of hearing God's call and how to follow that call. There is also at the BBQ with the Bishop, which is a social occasion offering those on the journey an opportunity to ask questions, and meet others in similar circumstances.

### ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

The Fellowship of Vocation Conference in November was particularly well attended this year with 30 delegates, from a range of backgrounds and ages. The conference which was held in the Ivy Bush hotel invited three speakers, Andy Kitchen from Hope Street Church, Wrexham, Revd Canon David Morris, and Mrs Amy Desborough. They all spoke openly of their varying experiences of calling both as laity and ordained ministers. As coordinator of the Fellowship of Vocation, Revd Sophie Whitmarsh was invited to speak to the Province about the success of the Fellowship of Vocation and its importance for the future of ministry.

### CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

Some of the biggest challenges this year have been with regards the changes in personnel. The Co-ordinator has tried to remove herself as chaplain, to ensure no conflict of interest for those who are going forward for ordained ministry. Following the resignation of one chaplain, and the future resignation of another, she has had to maintain her role as chaplain for the time being.

### LOOKING FORWARD

This coming year our aims are to find a steady commitment of chaplains, particularly in the south of the Diocese, to raise the profile of the Fellowship of Vocation by being present at vocation days and by increasing conversations with the DDO and Vocation Advisors. The first Bishop's BBQ following Covid will be held; and of course all members look forward to an exciting conference in November.

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Revd Canon Mark Ansell, Vocations Coordinator

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There has been a slow, but steady, stream of people seeking to begin their vocations journey over the past year. At the time of writing there are around twenty individuals progressing through the discernment process, including both stipendiary and non-stipendiary ministry and these come from a variety of backgrounds and age groups.

The Vocations Working Group have met regularly throughout the year to monitor progress of individuals, to oversee the discernment process, and to plan initiatives to raise the profile of vocations.

There have been minor changes to the make-up of the team of vocations advisors, who have all received the necessary training. They are spread throughout the Diocese and include fluent Welsh language speakers. More vocations advisors are needed in the south of the Diocese. Their contribution is appreciated, as this responsibility is in addition to their current workload. Further training for vocations advisors will be held during 2024 in order that information about changes to the Provincial and Diocesan discernment process are passed on to the advisors and candidates.

It is hoped that there will be several vocations events during 2024, in order to continue to raise the profile of vocations in our Diocese.

The vocations team continue to work closely with the Fellowship of Vocation to ensure that the appropriate pastoral support is in place for applicants as they proceed through the system.

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: January to December 2023

Author: Venerable Eileen Davies

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**DIRECTORATE MEMBERSHIP**

The Mission Directorate draws together the work of several teams: Communications, *Pobl Dewi*, World Mission, Ecumenism, Interfaith, and Faith and Tourism under the chairmanship of the Archdeacon of Cardigan. It now also includes input from *Plant Dewi* and *Tir Dewi*, as these organisations share the mission work of the Diocese by engaging directly with people of all age groups who need specific help and love.

**THE OBJECTIVES**

The Diocese maintains a variety of outward-focused ministries. To ensure that these ministries have a measure of understanding of, and encouragement for, each other's work, the Mission Directorate has met twice during the last year to exchange ideas.

**ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR**

The main objectives achieved by the Directorate are bringing together good working practices, sharing ideas, and drawing upon each other's strengths. Teams have also worked individually and have had an impact on all aspects of Mission within the Diocese.

**The Communications Team** through *Pobl Dewi* are reaching the length and breadth of the Diocese, with published magazines as well as online versions. *Pobl Dewi* shares up to date knowledge of what is happening within the Diocese and discusses topical issues in depth. The question of the future of the printed version of *Pobl Dewi* was discussed, as well as what the future holds for this quarterly magazine. The conclusion was great appreciation of the vast variety of topics discussed, as well as a colourful, informative magazine which is the envy of many a Diocese. Thanks are offered to the Editorial team, and a special thanks to David Hammond Williams who is the Editor of *Pobl Dewi*.

Social Media channels have continued to play a vital role in Diocesan communications throughout the year, engaging in Prayer and Worship, reaching people where they are, and building upon the lessons learnt throughout the pandemic, acknowledging the continued need for streaming services. The Calendar of Intercessions under the guidance of editor Revd Lorna Bradley, is available via the Diocesan Website, and engagement with the Website is encouraged so as to communicate all that is happening within the Diocese.

**World Mission** focuses its engagement with DRC. The Library, supported by books from St Davids are used to aid Christian Education, with World Mission sponsoring the education of a young girl through Nursing college.

**Ecumenism** – The Diocese has been building relationships with all the different traditions of Christian worship and denominations, and growing partnerships to share together resources for worship. All LMAs have been challenged to take up at least one ecumenical venture during the year, and encouraged to take on board ecumenical events, realising the benefits of technology.

**Interfaith** has seen the greatest need for building relationships across all the different faiths, especially within the Muslim community during the last year, and sharing from each other's understanding of the core values of each of our faiths has been vital. Reverend Shirley Murphy has been appointed the Interfaith Officer for the Diocese.

**Faith and Tourism** encourages churches to open their doors and welcome visitors, to engage with the Christian worshipping family of the church, as well as to learn of the history of the building and the area in which the church is situated. The work includes promoting the churches via Tourist Information Centres, and the Faith and Stones Trails.

**Plant Dewi and Tir Dewi** are working hard to share Christ's love with young families and the rural communities within the Diocese, with full reports included under the DCSR.

**The New Christian Communities and Evangelism Team** have two Impact 242 centres, with 2 staff members in each, namely Merlins Bridge and Crosshands. The Team Leaders are reviewing the vision, impact and long-term strategy, and looking for additional Pioneer Evangelists. The University of Wales Trinity St David's Chaplaincy is shared between Carmarthen and Lampeter campuses. The *Thy Kingdom Come* initiative is planned for May in each Archdeaconry.

### **CHALLENGES THIS YEAR**

All the teams under the banner of Mission continue to look for opportunities to enthuse churches at the local level with the vision of growing in unity with other denominations, sharing good practices, and sharing the Gospel. There are places which have caught this vision, but the team would hope to see more activity.

The Mission Directorate welcomes feedback on the following:

- how Mission is carried out in the Diocese
- reflection of the past year and lessons learnt
- how we proceed for the glory of our Lord

### **LOOKING FORWARD:**

The Diocese faces a new era within the field of Mission, under the leadership and guidance of the Ven Mones Farah, the new Archdeacon Missioner. Working with people of all age groups is clearly vital, as the Diocese seeks ways to help foster new initiatives and develop existing ones in the year ahead.

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Mr David Hammond-Williams, Chairman

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#### TEAM MEMBERSHIP

The Communications Team is made up of a range of clergy and lay members, each bringing specific skills to the table.

#### OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the Communications Team remains to assist and encourage better communication, both internal and external, and to be pro-active in meeting such responsibilities as the Diocese may place upon it from time to time.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

The Team met four times during the period. Meetings continue to be held on Zoom for the convenience of clergy members in particular due to service commitments and also to minimise costs in time and travel.

- Publication of *Pobl Dewi* continues to be the team's principal contribution to diocesan life. Publication is quarterly with a print run of 6,000. Considerable strides have been made in increasing the number of articles written in Welsh. There is also an online version, which is fully bilingual.
- The monthly *Calendar of Intercessions* continues to be a valued resource for the Diocese and continues to evolve under the able editorship of Revd Lorna Bradley.
- The Team's management of the diocesan website and social media channels has continued and the number of followers is increasing steadily. A new Facebook page was created for the Year of Salt & Light. Videos produced and posted on YouTube in connection with the enthronement of Bishop Dorrien attracted record numbers of viewers, in excess of 30,000.
- The drive towards making diocesan communications fully bilingual has made significant progress following the election of Bishop Dorrien, who has assumed responsibility for bilingualism on the Bench of Bishops. The Diocese has retained the services of a translation provider and work is well advanced towards ensuring that all diocesan communications, including official policy documents and forms and the website, conform with diocesan policy.

#### CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

Production and distribution costs of *Pobl Dewi* have increased considerably during the year due to inflationary pressures in the wider economy.

#### LOOKING FORWARD

The team remains keen to foster closer grass-roots relationships with our link diocese of Bukavu in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Our dioceses have been formally linked for ten years but little has been done to broaden the relationship. One option under active consideration is the initiation of an exchange programme that would enable both clergy and lay people to experience life – and worship – in each other's countries.

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Ven Elieen Davies

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## THE OBJECTIVES

*Tir Dewi* was created to provide support to farmers and farming families within the Diocese of St Davids, who were struggling to cope. There was previously a lack of support available and almost nothing in the Welsh language. While its main objective remains the same, the area of operation has increased significantly and it now covers most of Wales.

## ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

*Tir Dewi* has grown considerably and provides support to all who ask for help across most of Wales. The organisation is now recognised as an established part of the Welsh Farming environment and is respected by key partners including Welsh Government, Farming Unions, Young Farmers and other charities in the sector. *Tir Dewi* and the Samaritans have established a joint role to answer ever increasing calls in Rural Areas, and the Samaritans have provided vital training to all volunteers. *Tir Dewi* was launched in Northeast Wales, now ensuring the vast majority of Wales has a branch of *Tir Dewi*.

Cases have increased considerably over the duration of the last year, and our thanks are extended to all the volunteers for their committed response to be by the side of farmers for as long as is needed.

## CHALLENGES

Growth in the number of cases poses many challenges, managing the workload, growing team of volunteers, especially in North and Mid Wales, increased demands for partnerships and increased financial needs. Improving our infrastructure will ensure we can accommodate increased demand. During the year we have seen changes in personnel and roles, as we thank Anne May for her work with Volunteers and Gareth Davies as Chief Executive Officer, wishing them well in their future roles.

## LOOKING FORWARD

We need to ensure that we can meet all demands so will continue to seek new volunteers, support them to deliver this much needed service, so that farmers know they are not on their own.

# St Davids Diocesan Council for Social Responsibility

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Venerable Eileen Davies, Chairperson

**AGENDUM 9**

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### MEMBERSHIP

St Davids Diocesan Council for Social Responsibility (DCSR) is a registered charity with the Bishop of St Davids, The Right Revd Dorrien Davies as its President; Venerable Eileen Davies its chairperson and 15 further members, five of whom are also trustees. The Council meets four times a year to manage and guide its affairs. The Council is a mix of laity and clerics, all with an interest in the social wellbeing of the people of St Davids Diocese.

### OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the DCSR is to promote social responsibility as a fundamental element of a living faith and as an integral part of Church mission. Its strategies for achieving this include supporting the work of the *Plant Dewi* project which works closely with disadvantaged families and *Tir Dewi* a charity which helps rural farming communities. By also working pro-actively with wider organisations on a local and national level, the DCSR strives to identify areas of concern or need and respond in a non-judgmental way.

### ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

The DCSR continues to work with the management team of *Plant Dewi* on a strategic plan, to further support families across the Diocese, extending thanks and gratitude to the whole team for the love and support they have shown during the two decades to make a difference in young families' lives. *Plant Dewi* work in conjunction with other organisations, networking and forming partnerships, and in return young mothers express their personal gratitude for the support they have received, which in some cases has been life changing. The Dads' project has also impacted massively on families' lives, even to the point of saving lives. No greater testimony than this can be expressed. The DCSR is delighted by the expansion of *Tir Dewi* beyond the Diocese but is also encouraged that there have been opportunities for *Plant Dewi* to work alongside by helping young families living in rural areas. This exciting time of collaboration also includes The Fourth Archdeaconry and members of the Children, Youth and Family Taskforce. Connections have been made with many other charities, especially those focused on mental health. Concern about the lack of affordable housing within our communities has been raised with the Bench of Bishops, as well as a request for clarity regarding the CinV policy about the use of redundant and empty church property, with reference to supporting the Police in finding safe havens for victims of abuse. The Revd Justin Arnott is the Social Responsibility Officer and a trustee. Revd Arnott has continued to expand his role, raising awareness of the continued need of support for individuals and groups of people of all ages throughout the Diocese, and this was highlighted during this year of Salt and Light, bringing to the fore the focus on Scriptural texts which encourage us to meet the needs of others "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5).

### CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

Finances continue to be challenging, securing grant funding continues to impact upon the work of *Plant Dewi*. Therefore, it has been necessary for the trustees to give some additional support to the *Plant Dewi* management team, to support different projects. Both trustees and staff are to be commended for their dedication to the work, and their concern for all. Re-establishing

relationships and meeting in person and engaging with LMA's to promote the work of the DCSR continues to be a priority. Other challenges have seen the need to help and support refugees.

#### LOOKING FORWARD

The DCSR looks forward to receiving feedback from the year of Salt and Light. The DCSR also is taking time to look inwardly at our remit and purpose and are asking difficult questions of whether we are taking the social wellbeing of our Diocese seriously. Whole days of assessing the social responsibilities upon our shoulders are planned, as we together work to further His Kingdom in a changing world and as we lean on His Holy Spirit to guide us as we aim to reach out to those in need with God's transforming love.

The DCSR wishes to express its heartfelt thanks to all who promote the work of social responsibility within the Diocese of St Davids, in endeavouring to uphold its Christian principles.

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Revd Wyn Maskell

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### BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Rural Affairs Provincial Advisory group meets bi-monthly and the appointed Lead Officer is Hermione Morris (St Asaph Rural Life Advisor). The Rural Life Advisors portfolio is managed by Bishop John Lomas (Swansea and Brecon Diocese). The current members are Revd Hermione Morris (St Asaph Diocese), Revd Victoria Ashley (Llandaff), Revd Leah Ryder (Monmouth), Revd Wyn Maskell (St Davids Diocese), Revd Andrew Perrin (Swansea and Brecon Diocese), Revd Llewelyn Moules Jones (Bangor Diocese).

### THE OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the Rural Life Advisors Group are to engage with all aspects of rural life and to convey the main issues to the Diocesan Bishops and Clergy, it also works collaboratively and engages with other organisations working in rural areas. The Rural Life Advisors network supports clerics and lay people, empowering them to serve in rural ministry areas. The Rural Life Advisors report on a regular basis to the Diocesan Bishop and the Diocesan Committee for Social Responsibility.

### ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

The group met three times during 2023. Following a presentation to ordinands at St Padarn's, promoting Rural Life Ministry, the group is now engaging with the Institute to arrange a Province-wide course/event for people who wish to explore this area of ministry. The aim is to help to identify those lay and ordained people who are truly passionate about rural ministry and wish to learn and develop further. This will steer us towards a more traditionally shaped course in the future.

Rural communities within the Diocese continue to support one another and celebrate major festivals which enables them to share in fellowship and love of creation.

### CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

There are several challenges facing our rural communities including proposed changes to Single Farm Payment and the introduction of NVZ which will impact the farming sector. The changes include requirements to produce and update risk maps, nutrient management planning and storage of farmyard manures. This will inevitably prove to be financially unviable to many farming families which will in turn have a knock-on effect on our rural communities.

Loneliness in diverse rural communities has been an issue this year. The Church is keen to assist people in combating loneliness in rural communities and also assisting them in addressing issues around social inequality.

### LOOKING FORWARD

Further develop Rural Life course/taster events with St Padarn's. Encourage Diocesan rural clergy to develop teams (lay and ordained) who are passionate about rural ministry; this will enable the Rural Life Team to see what support/interest there is province wide and steer future deliberations and actions for the future of rural ministry.

As part of the year of Salt and Light to implement the Harvest Celebration Initiative. Develop and circulate rural ministry resources to colleagues.

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Revd Shirley Murphy

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### TEAM MEMBERSHIP

The Interfaith Team is made up of a range of clergy and lay members, each bringing specific skills to the table.

### THE OBJECTIVES

The aim is to advise, encourage and facilitate interfaith engagement across Churches in the Diocese.

### ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

Various events have been held throughout the year. These include two Faith Talk Events (and others are scheduled later in the year). On the 9 July 2023, the first of series of Faith Talks was hosted, where people from different ecumenical and interreligious backgrounds talk about their faith and their journeys. This first one was held at St John's Church, Templeton and guests included guests from the URC Church, Molleston Baptist Chapel, a Buddhist Priest, a Catholic Nun, a Methodist Priest, and an Anglican Priest. The second talk was held on 4 November 2023 at Christ Church, Carmarthen and guests from Skanda Vale Temple, two Buddhist Monks, a Pastor from the English Baptist Church, and a Catholic Priest attended. On 16 November 2023, as part of Interfaith Week 2023, a well-attended Coffee and Chat morning was hosted, which brought together people of different faiths and backgrounds.

On the 15 July 2023 members of the Committee represented the Diocese at the Methodist Church in Wales Service in Cardiff where they bid farewell to Revd Dr Stephen Wigley, who had served as Synod Chair for the past 16 years, Revd Andrew Charlesworth was welcomed as his successor. Members of the Committee also attended the URC Templeton Anniversary Service and the Molleston Welsh Baptist Chapel Anniversary service as guests in August 2023. The Committee were invited to attend the All India Tamil Churches Conference in London on 30 September 2023, where the Revd Shirley Murphy preached and presided, maintaining the connection to the Church of South India.

Services continue with the Secret Christian communities around Wales and wider UK. So far this year services have been held in Tamil and Hindi along with a get together for food and fellowship. All this helps to strengthen the fellowship with this community as they are persecuted by their own family members if they are found out to be believers of Jesus Christ. Bibles have also recently been ordered in different languages such as Telugu, Malayalam, Tamil, Hindi, and Kannada and distributed to some of the members of these communities.

### CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

When the word Interfaith is mentioned, many people are afraid that doors are being opened to collaborate with religions. The Committee will continue to work hard to help people understand its aims and objectives.

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Ms Caroline Evans, Faith Tourism Officer

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## GROUP MEMBERSHIP

The Faith Tourism Group is chaired by the Faith Tourism Officer and comprises lay and clergy members with a range of skills, experience and contacts both within the Diocese and the tourism industry. Faith Tourism is an essential part of the Mission of the Church. The Group reports to the Diocese Communications Team and is also part of Provincial Faith Tourism Network.

## THE OBJECTIVES

The Group has two objectives in the Diocese:

1. To encourage and support places of worship that welcome visitors/modern-day pilgrims.
2. To ensure that Faith Tourism is recognised and included in tourism industry initiatives at county, regional and national levels.

## ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

- The Group has met virtually during the year. Members have been working in networks raising the flag for Faith Tourism, very notably in the Fishguard area.
- Adapted versions of *Little Gems* (a series of articles on lesser-known churches that are open to visitors) have been supplied to major tourism organisations, such as Visit Wales.
- The *Saints and Stones* project has been supported by the Group to continue its excellent work.
- *Art on the Faith Trail* – following a hiatus in 2023, and as members were experiencing problems with balancing their creative work and activities in the economic climate, it did not run in 2024 – it will be reassessed for 2025.
- *Ancient Connections* Project – several Group members were involved in this Wexford and north Pembrokeshire project, led by the County Council and funded by the EU/ERDF. It identified the pilgrimage route from Fishguard to St Davids, following the coastal footpath, and named it the Wexford Pembrokeshire Pilgrim Way – <https://wexfordpembrokeshirepilgrimway.org/>. The initial project has ended, however the Pilgrimage Officer has been liaising well with the Cathedral and the area.
- Tourism Associations – Members of the Group are involved with associations such as Carmarthenshire Tourism Association, North Pembrokeshire Trade and Tourism, *Visit Wales*, *Visit Pembrokeshire* and other projects to ensure that Faith Tourism is not ignored.

## CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

The after effect of the pandemic continue to impact church life in terms of service attendance and the availability and energy of church volunteers. Churches have many issues to deal with and pressure on their volunteers can mean that visitor welcome suffers.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Some churches have developed excellent visitor welcome but some feedback seems to indicate that some are still not opening their doors to out-of-service visitors – whilst the ongoing problem of reduced church volunteers is recognised, organisational encouragement to open churches would be welcomed.

Development of digital media is important – potential service attenders and visitors look online for relevant information – this needs to be developed and encouraged. Streaming of Church services since the end of the Covid pandemic is reducing – this is a pity as they not only helped to publicise the individual churches to potential visitors but also increased their outreach.

The Group would welcome new volunteers – anyone with experience or interest in tourism, hospitality, social media, event management, ancient and historical buildings and history is encouraged to volunteer.

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Mrs Catrin Eldred, Manager Plant Dewi

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### BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The St Davids Diocesan Council for Social Responsibility is a registered charity and *Plant Dewi* is its main family support project. The Bishop of St Davids, The Right Revd Dorrien Davies, is President; the Ven Eileen Davies is the Chair, there are also a further 16 Council Members, of whom the Chair and 5 members are Trustees. *Plant Dewi* meets six times a year.

### THE OBJECTIVES

To nurture families and strengthen communities by empowering families to bring about positive changes in their lives, giving hope and a sense of belonging, across the Diocese of St Davids.

### ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

*Plant Dewi* groups and centres have continued to provide holistic support to families, ensuring that children and their parents are offered quality time to enjoy together, to build relationships and to take part in free of charge activities such as baby massage, messy play, crafts, physical activities, story and song, outdoor walks, parenting programmes, visits from other agencies, short courses, cooking, gardening, mindfulness and wellbeing, outings and trips as well as one to one support on a range of issues. Over this period, nearly 2800 families have accessed *Plant Dewi* services, with 253 referrals made to the Baby Bundle Bank. *Plant Dewi* have had opportunities to raise awareness of the work through welcoming Simon Lloyd, Chief Executive of The Representative Body of the Church in Wales; Cefin Campbell, Member of the Senedd for Mid and West Wales; and Julie Morgan, Deputy Minister for Social Services. Staff supported the Cytûn tent at the Urdd Eisteddfod in Llandovery to provide activities for children, and Radio Cymru broadcast a *Plant Dewi* service on Mothering Sunday. The management team and trustees have continued to work with the Lloyds Foundation Enhance Programme and received support on finance management, safeguarding policies and governance. A Team Day was held in July for all staff to spend time sharing good practice, considering the needs of families and the impact the projects have on them. The team also enjoyed a retreat in May, and a Christmas gathering in December which were opportunities to thank staff for all their hard work. Five members of staff reached the 20-year milestone and received a gift of thanks for their dedicated service.

It was identified early on in the year that the school holidays were going to be exceptionally difficult for families in light of the cost-of-living crisis. *Plant Dewi* projects were able to offer a range of craft and play sessions, outdoor sessions and trips and outings to families who would otherwise not have gone anywhere. This, alongside the two-day Family Fun Day held at the National Botanic Garden of Wales during October half term, attracting nearly 150 families, ensured that families who have been impacted by the cost-of-living crisis, could enjoy creating memories together.

### CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

Sustainability of projects continues to be a challenge with funders reporting they are oversubscribed and the number of individuals donating to charities is decreasing. It is becoming more difficult to secure funding and projects are needed more than ever.

### LOOKING FORWARD

Due to the increasing demand for *Plant Dewi* services and following a successful application to the Volunteering Wales Main Grant, a Volunteer Coordinator will be appointed to recruit, train and retain volunteers to support the work across the Diocese. Work is ongoing on consulting with families and communities to enable *Plant Dewi* to secure funding that meets local needs. As always, the management team will continue to ensure that workforce wellbeing is a priority.

# Archdeaconry for New Christian Communities and Evangelism **AGENDUM 9**

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Ven Mones Farah, Archdeacon for New Christian Communities and Evangelism

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Impact 242 - Centres of Mission at Cross Hands and Merlins Bridge continued their outreach to local communities. Below is a snapshot of the activities undertaken by the teams of both centres.

Cross Hands - Chat and Create (faith shared through arts), Crisis Food Bag, drop-ins at the Welsh language secondary school, Impact Church on Sunday afternoons, assemblies at five Primary schools (covering all year groups), Little Stars tots group, Chaplaincy at the local Rugby Club, “Knit, Stitch, coffee and cake”, Men’s/Women Shed (attended by a Pioneer Evangelist), in addition to a social media following average over 9000 post reach at the end of August and over 3000 post engagement, Tiktok presence (starting to develop this work), Twitter (now X) +100 followers.

This was complemented by regular special events, Family Bingo, Church Indoor picnic, Summer stay/play and chat, Summer Play sessions with the Early Integration Team, Cross Hands Festival, Cefneithin Festival, Christmas Narnia Event, Pancake outreach events, Alpha and Easter events. The Centre’s 3-yearly review was conducted in July 2023, by the then Archdeacon of Carmarthen the Venerable Dorrien Davies and an independent reviewer from the Church Army.

Merlins Bridge - Down2Earth youth drop-in, Down2Earth (D2E) Café, D2E College drop-in, Football outreach and connection, Street outreach and connection, Youth Journeys with Jesus group, Journey’s Bible discussion groups, Down 2 Earth church: local expression of church Down 2 Earth worship, Youth Journey’s mentoring, Community Bingo, school outreach ‘Journeys’, The VC gallery ‘outreach to Veterans’, *Thy Kingdom Come* and Ascension Day activities, Diocesan Youth Pilgrimage, supporting CYF Officer. The above activities were complemented by special Christmas and Easter outreach.

New team member Revd Jude Bevan was appointed in July and licensed at the beginning of October.

The initial plan was for the Centres was to run for five years from launch, and then to transfer back to the local LMA and the geographical archdeaconry, however, with the change of direction and strategy within the Diocese it was decided that the transfer would occur a year early, and so from the beginning of March the Merlins Bridge Centre of Mission and the Crosshands Centre of Mission officially came under the leadership and responsibility of the respective Archdeacons.

The Chaplaincy - Lampeter: Services were held weekly during term time, Holy Communion on Fridays and student and staff led compline every Sunday evening; the Christmas Carol Service outreach event was supported by the wonderful Choir of Llandeilo and was attended by students and staff alike including many students from the Chinese studies department.

Carmarthen: A new group “Prayer and Pizza” was created and had a weekend retreat at the Chaplain’s home on the theme of The Holy Spirit’s life and impact in and on the believer. This group is attended by Christian students who are engaged with different Churches in town.

The Chaplain resigned in the middle of January to take up the post of Chaplain to the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon.

Evangelism Committee - The Committee met quarterly to discuss the state of evangelism in LMAs and the Diocese as a whole. In addition, an away day at Ffald y Brenin was arranged to discuss the future of and hindrance to evangelistic growth and activities. The Revd Chris Thompson attended and helped consider the various options and ways to develop fresh expressions, pioneering activities and evangelistic understandings and expressions.

The Committee has assisted a number of LMAs financially in their outreach activities.

# Welsh and Bilingualism Committee

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Ms Rhian Morgan, Chair

**AGENDUM 9**

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### BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Ms Rhian Morgan chairs the Committee. It includes clergy and lay members from across the Diocese and is supported by the Bishop and Archdeacons of St. Davids, Carmarthen and Ceredigion.

Four meetings are held during the year.

### THIS YEAR'S OBJECTIVES

The aims of the Committee are to promote and support the use of the Welsh language and bilingualism across the Diocese, including but not limited to: Churches, the Cathedral, Diocesan and Bishop's Office, Diocesan Schools and various projects and publications.

### THIS YEAR'S ACHIEVEMENTS

The Committee is working towards completing a 'Welsh Offer Questionnaire'. This offers a robust structure for developing our resources across the Diocese in order to ensure that bilingualism becomes a key part of our life and our service. It is used effectively by the Diocese of Bangor.

The Committee succeeded in meeting the challenge of organising Welsh language services on feast days in accordance with last year's arrangements. The services provide an opportunity for the Church to come together in the three Archdeaconries to celebrate through the medium of Welsh.

### THIS YEAR'S CHALLENGES

There has been a discussion about the need to provide opportunities for children to use Welsh outside the school environment, and for the Church to respond to the challenge.

### LOOKING AHEAD

A decision was taken to continue holding Welsh language services on feast days in the Diocese in 2024 following the success and popularity of previous services. Keep an eye on the Diocesan website and Facebook page for information on forthcoming services.

A Welsh language conference is being planned. The Committee will work hard during its next meetings to organise the event – further information will be published soon.

The Committee was pleased to hear that the Bishop will be appointing a Welsh Language Officer for the Diocese. This Officer will provide many benefits for the Diocese, including representation on the Province's Welsh Language Committee.

The Committee is also pleased that the Board of Finance is now utilising the services of a translation company to ensure that written content published by the Diocese is bilingual.

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Revd Marcus Zipperlen, Creation Care and Sustainability Officer

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The 'Creation Care Action Group' (CCAG) comprising lay and ordained members meets around six times per year to promote care for creation across the Diocese. The group reports quarterly to the Standing Committee. New members to CCAG are very welcome. Notable activities of the past year include:

- May - Leading a session with our curates introducing them to Eco-Theology, practical Creation-care mission, and liturgy.
- June - Launching our Diocesan membership of the charity *Caring for God's Acre* at St Davids Cathedral at their *Big Green Service*.
- Providing an Eco-Theology training afternoon to tutors at St Padarns Institute.
- Revd Marcus Zipperlen joining the DAC to support it with creation care matters. Several church buildings are needing to upgrade heating systems requiring difficult choices balancing issues of affordability alongside the need for the new technologies required to limit Carbon-emissions.
- September - Celebrating a 'Creation Sunday' worship gathering and barbecue at Cilrath Acre near Narberth.
- November - Contributing to a panel discussion session for the 'Pioneer Evangelism' conference organized by St Padarns.
- Helping the Diocese engage with the Eco Church scheme, providing training seminars and support.
- Participating in the new Church in Wales 'Climate Change Hub' which meets quarterly to help steer the CinW towards a zero-carbon future.

St Davids is currently a 'Bronze' level Eco-Diocese and working towards gaining a 'Silver' award, which will require a great deal of work (another 96 churches to register on the Eco Church scheme, a further 80 to gain an award, of which 29 must be at silver level).

## **ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT**

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: The Very Revd Dr Sarah Rowland Jones, Dean

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### **GOVERNANCE AND MEMBERSHIP**

The Dean and Chapter of St Davids Cathedral is a registered charity, whose Trustee Body is the senior clergy of the Diocese: the Dean, Archdeacons and Canons, appointed by the Bishop. Tŷ'r Pererin is the Cathedral's Education and Pilgrimage Centre, operating in the old school building, owned by the Friends of St Davids Cathedral. Its work is headed by Mrs Janet Ingram, full-time Education and Pilgrimage Officer, and Revd Canon Sheridan Angharad James.

### **THE OBJECTIVES**

The registered objectives of St Davids Cathedral are 'To advance the Christian Religion of the Church in Wales for the Public Benefit. In particular to promote the mission of the Church in Wales in and through the Cathedral by promoting the statement of faith particularly described in: the Constitution of the Church in Wales; the Royal Charter 1919; the Welsh Church Act 1914; the Welsh Church (Temporalities) Act 1991.' The Cathedral 'Welcomes visitors as Pilgrims', praying all who come – staff or tourists, building contractors or bishops – should sense God's redeeming love, hear Christ's call 'follow me', and take the next step He puts before each.

### **ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR**

It was another busy year, of full celebrations of the liturgical calendar, with many occasional services for a range of events – most notably, the Enthronement of Bishop Dorrien Davies as Bishop of St. Davids on 23 February 2024. The Prince and Princess of Wales visited on 8 September 2023, with a service for the first anniversary of the Accession. Music, led by Canon Leigh Richardson, thrives. Many concerts were given and hosted, though no Festival was held for financial reasons. The Cathedral features regularly on TV, radio and other media, both in English and Welsh.

Tŷ'r Pererin led the Year of Pilgrimage for the Cathedral and the Diocese through to Advent Sunday 2023, marking the 900th anniversary of Pope Callixtus II's 1123 privilege that two pilgrimages here are of equal value to one to Rome. The wealth of resources and activities, including those for Diocesan schools and parish groups, will bring future benefits too. A highlight was the Wales-wide Pilgrimage service in July, led by the Archbishop, with the other Welsh bishops present.

### **CHALLENGES THIS YEAR**

The long hard haul towards post-COVID normality continued. Slowly rising visitor numbers were still, in 2023, over 30% below pre-COVID levels. This had continuing negative impact on income, though the Welcome Team increased per capita giving. Loss making hospitality activities were ended, and tight controls on spending continued. New RB/DBF funding structures for Welsh Cathedrals, from 1 January 2024, will assist our pursuit of long-term sustainable finances.

### **LOOKING FORWARD**

We aim to broaden and deepen the 'holy hospitality' we offer to all our worshippers, pilgrims and visitors; strengthen and consolidate financial sustainability; and work towards a major building project in response to the recent Quinquennial Inspection.

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: The Very Revd Dr Sarah Rowland Jones, Chair

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### GOVERNANCE AND MEMBERSHIP

The Friends of Saint Davids Cathedral is an independent charity, formed in 1932 by the then Dean, the Very Revd Watkyn Morgan. It embraces individuals, corporate groups and parishes from across the world who wish to support the mission and ministry of St Davids Cathedral.

The charity is managed by an Executive Council which meets at least four times a year. This is chaired by The Dean and includes six further Clerics from the Cathedral Chapter, and six members elected from among the Friends during the Annual General Meeting. The Bishop of St. Davids is the President of the Friends. The AGM has traditionally been held on the second weekend of September, generally with a guest speaker. Sadly, train cancellations prevented the former Archbishop of Wales and Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, from reaching us in 2023, but we look forward to welcoming him in September 2024 instead!

### THE OBJECTIVES

'The Friends' has three primary aims:

1. To assist the Dean and Chapter in restoring and maintaining the Cathedral Church to the greater glory of God and in honour of David Patron Saint of Wales.
2. To subscribe to the funds required from time to time for beautifying the Cathedral and for maintaining and improving worship in the Church.
3. To organise the raising of capital funds as required for any emergency that may arise which cannot be provided for out of funds available to the Dean and Chapter.

### ACTIVITIES THIS YEAR

The Friends own land and property within and beyond the Cathedral Close, including Tŷ'r Pererin, the Cathedral's Education and Pilgrimage centre. Tŷ Eglwys Gadeiriol, Cathedral House (formerly Belmont House), in Cross Square, comprises a welcoming café and shop now run by West Point Trading, a beautiful holiday apartment on the first floor, and a rental flat on the second floor. The holiday apartment can be booked via [www.stdavidsescapes.co.uk](http://www.stdavidsescapes.co.uk).

All these provide income to the Friends (alongside membership subscriptions) allowing it to support the Cathedral. Alongside the provision of Tŷ'r Pererin, this ranges from assisting in staff costs and accommodation, to music, to building work and more besides.

### CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

The Friends have begun a process to review the constitution, with a view to moving from being an unincorporated body to become an incorporated body.

### LOOKING FORWARD

The Friends remain grateful to all who support the charity, enabling it to play its part in supporting the life and ministry of the Cathedral and in safeguarding this Diocesan and National treasure for our own time and for future generations. Anyone who is interested in joining the Friends should e-mail [friends@stdavidscathedral.org.uk](mailto:friends@stdavidscathedral.org.uk)

## ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Mrs Heather Witt, Diocesan President Mothers' Union

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## BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Diocesan President, Three Archdeaconry Vice-Presidents, and two General Trustees from each Archdeaconry (General Trustees: two from each Archdeaconry to liaise with the VP to filter information down to branch leaders). The Chaplain, Secretary, Treasurer and Safeguarding Lead attend but do not vote, and are not Trustees.

## THE OBJECTIVES

**Vision:** Our vision is a world where everyone prospers. We actively pursue this vision through prayer, projects and partnerships, helping to build confident people and resilient communities. Our movement seeks to bring about justice, challenge prejudice and advocate change.

**Mission:** We aim to show our Christian faith by helping the sustainable transformation of communities worldwide. We do this by helping to nurture strong relationships at all levels, promoting peace and reconciliation locally, nationally and globally.

We aim to:

- encourage parents in their role to develop the faith of their children
- maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service
- promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children
- help those whose family life has met with adversity
- promote and support married life.

A global movement present in 84 countries, our members are not all mothers, or even all women. They are single, married, parents, grandparents, or young adults just beginning to express their social conscience.

Mothers' Union provides a network through which they can serve Christ in their own community. This is done through prayer, projects and partnership, actively working at the grassroots level in programmes that meet local needs.

## ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

Our membership in 2023 was 540 with 145 paying by Direct Debit which we are pleased to say is helping branch administration.

Our partnership with Plant Dewi grows with MU supporting the Baby Bundle and transport costs. In promoting the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence in 2023 we held vigils in the three archdeaconries, the Carmarthen one being held on King Morgan Bridge where we were fortunate that Bishop Dorrien attended.

## CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

Our challenge again is to maintain branches, as sadly more have closed in 2024. Trustees will look at a new strategy to facilitate existing branches. We are also looking at encouraging more clergy involvement in MU activities, as we feel that at present, clergy in general and new ordinands especially are not given enough information about the work of the Mothers' Union and don't see MU as relevant in their parishes.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Our focus for 2024 will be on electing a new Diocesan President and Trustees as the current triennium comes to an end. A service of thanksgiving will be held in June to celebrate Diocesan President Heather Witt's term of office. We also hope to forge links with Tir Dewi to see if we can help them in any way. We are grateful for Bishop Dorrien's support and are pleased to say he has become a MU member following his enthronement this year.

**ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT**

Reporting period: Easter 2023 – Easter 2024

Author: Ms Dawn Howells, Guild Secretary

**GUILD MEMBERSHIP**

The Guild of Bell Ringers with the President being The Bishop comprises 8 posts:-

Chairperson (Tower Captain of St Marys Pembroke)	Ringling Master
Treasurer	Central Council Representative
Restoration Officer	News Editor
Secretary	Vacant Posts- Education & Safeguarding Officers
There are currently 104 members representing 16 Ringing Towers across South Wales.	

**THE OBJECTIVES**

The main objectives of the Guild are to:-

- Recognise the true position of ringers as representatives of the church
- Promote the ringing of bells for worship and on other suitable occasions
- Promote the care and restoration of bells
- Recruit and train ringers
- Promote and advance change ringing

**ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR**

- St Mary’s Burry Port reinstated bell ringing practices, with ongoing tuition of learners
- Reinstatement of bell ringing for services in Haverfordwest
- Ringing for the enthronement of the Right Reverend Dorrien Paul Davies
- Lots of voluntary maintenance across the Diocese by Guild Bell Restoration Officer/DAC Adviser

**CHALLENGES THIS YEAR**

- Wet towers and deteriorating bell frames and fittings

**LOOKING FORWARD**

- Recruitment of ringers for Cardigan. Fixing of bell frame at Llandeilo and training ringers. Restoration of almost unringable bells St Mary’s, Pembroke.

# Housing Association Report ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

**AGENDUM 9**

Reporting period: Jan – Dec 2023

Author: Mrs N Evans BA FCCA, Hon Secretary

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## COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Management Committee met on three occasions during the year. It comprises the Bishop of St Davids, the Right Reverend Dorrien Davies as President, the Ven P Mackness as Chairperson, Mrs Nia Evans Secretary / Treasurer, the Archdeacons of Carmarthen, St Davids and Cardigan, and five lay persons.

## THE OBJECTIVES

The Housing Association provides rental homes for retired clerics, or widows/widowers and dependants of clergy. The Association endeavours to keep its housing in good repair and seeks to provide a responsive and efficient repair service for its tenants.

## ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

- During the year there has been one change in tenancy with one vacant property at year end.
- A rent review was conducted, which resulted in a rental increase of 5% from January 2023.

Total income for 2023 was £60,527. Expenditure on Charitable Activities amounted to £55,639. The resultant surplus on the Income and Expenditure Account was £4,888. At the year end the Balance Sheet showed total funds of £178,719.

## LOOKING FORWARD

The Housing Association will endeavour to continue to maintain its housing stock in good repair and continue to offer a responsive maintenance service for its tenants.

## **STANDING ORDERS OF THE ST DAVIDS DIOCESAN CONFERENCE**

1. All meetings of the conference shall open and close with prayer.
2. When the President has taken the Chair, no member shall continue standing, except when addressing the Chair.
3. While he is present at the Conference, the President may appoint another member of Conference to chair the Conference in his place.
4. When two or more members rise simultaneously to address the Chair, the Chairman shall decide which of them shall speak first.
5.
  - a) Speeches made by the proposer and seconder of a resolution shall not exceed ten minutes. The proposer may also claim five minutes for reply.
  - b) All other speeches shall not exceed five minutes.
  - c) The Chairman may, with the leave of the Meeting, extend the time for a speech.
  - d) This section shall not apply to the President's Address.
6. No member shall be allowed to speak more than once on the same question, except in explanation or to raise a point of order, unless it is the proposer of a motion exercising the right to reply.
7. Whenever the Chairman rises during a debate, any member speaking or offering to speak shall immediately sit down.
8. If, during a debate, 30 members rise in their places and demand that a vote be now taken, the Chairman shall put that question to the meeting for a decision by a show of hands.
9. If the meeting approves the call for a vote, the Chairman shall first offer the proposer the right of reply and then proceed directly to the vote.
10. Only the business set out on the Agenda Paper shall be transacted. The Agenda shall be sent to all members of Conference with the notice of meeting and Reports at least fourteen days before the date of the meeting.
11.
  - a) Any question requiring an answer, and any motion that members wish to propose must be submitted in writing to the Lay Secretary of Conference at least seven days before the date of the meeting.
  - b) Should any member wish to propose a motion other than for a Special Meeting it should be sent to the Lay Secretary in time for consideration by the Standing Committee at its meeting immediately preceding the meeting of Conference.
12. At a meeting other than a Special Meeting, the President may, at his discretion, allow other items of business of a routine nature not appearing on the Agenda Paper.
13. All amendments shall be in writing, signed by the proposer and must be handed to the Secretaries, if possible before the meeting.
14. No amendment on an amendment shall be in order.

15.
  - a) A motion which is printed on the Agenda Paper need not be read before being put.
  - b) All other motions or amendments shall be read immediately before the vote thereon is taken.
16. When a division is called for, tellers of both the Orders of Clergy and Laity shall be appointed by the President or Chairman.
17. The Standing Committee shall be authorised to act on behalf of the Diocesan Conference, between its meetings in any matter that the Bishop of the Diocese may deem to be necessary, and a report shall be made thereof to the conference at its next meeting.
18. Any member may speak in Welsh or English.
19. A Record of Attendance will be kept.
20. A motion for the suspension of Standing Orders shall not be in order unless a majority of the members present rise in support.
21. These Standing Orders shall be printed and circulated with the Agenda for each and every meeting of Conference.