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Reporting from the spring meeting of
Standing Committee/Bishop's Council

An initiative of the Diocesan Communications Team

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The Five Marks of Liturgy

Worship to take centre stage at Synod 2019

Standing Committee has started to consider arrangements for next year's Synod, based on feedback from the 2018 meeting.

Of 52 responses, 50 rated it excellent or good with worship and spiritual addresses scoring 100%. Most adverse comments were about the hotel and the food.

Workshops were also popular, prompting a return to the three-session model next year. Having three speakers, rather than one, was also appreciated for adding extra depth of spirituality. But finances may dictate a return to a single speaker who will be the former Archbishop of Wales Dr Barry Morgan (pictured)



Theme

Worship will feature as a conference theme next year.

A provisional title, *The Five Marks of Liturgy*, has been pencilled in. Consideration is also being given to introducing alternative forms of worship as tasters and to including a prayer workshop.

But there was some concern that Synod was "business heavy" so Standing Committee will look at means of consolidation. And the days of pre-printed papers may be numbered – instead these may be circulated electronically, enabling members and observers to print off just those that are of interest to them or simply view them on tablets etc.

One group seen to be inadequately catered for is clergy spouses so an evening event for them could be included. And Night Prayer could be delayed in response to feedback requests.

Two other elements that proved popular were the bookstall and the video. The latter now serves as both a window on the diocese and a promotional tool for potential partners and funders. These will continue.

Meanwhile, conference fees have been pegged at €175. But late applicants will be charged €200. The meeting will return to its usual venue, the Lordos Beach Hotel in Larnaca, Cyprus, from February 4th-8th

FINANCE: Still waiting...

The ongoing financial crisis in the diocese continues with no immediate end in sight.



Finance Director John Banfield told Standing Committee that the outstanding contributions from Dubai remain tied up despite clearance from the UAE government. Instead, church accounts have been frozen due to an internal error.

Therefore, following their offer of help at Synod in February, the first of three tranches of €50,000 has been drawn down from funds held by the Foundation.

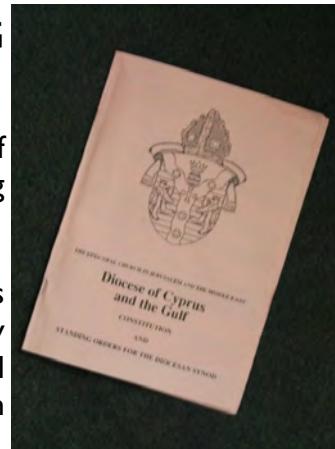
"We have to assume this will be sorted out quickly," he said. "Otherwise we will have to take another 50k. The whole financial plan for 2018/9 is predicated on receipt of the Dubai money."

Canon John also reported that financial support for Baghdad from the Foundation for Relief & Reconciliation in the Middle East (FRRME) had been reduced. "It's an area for concern," he warned. "I can foresee a time when Baghdad needs to be funded by the diocese."

EGM/FORUMS TO BE HELD ON CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION

The decision at Synod 2018 to allow further consideration of proposed constitutional revisions has elicited responses running to eleven A4 pages.

Submissions from both Cyprus and The Gulf suggest adjustments to the proposals in a wide variety of areas, including clergy appointments and tenure, electoral rolls, parish/church council procedures and Standing Orders. There were key concerns in Doha, Sharjah and Bahrain.



The comments will form the basis of further discussion by Standing Committee at an Extraordinary meeting in June, leading to a further report to Synod 2019 for debate.

In between, a series of forums will be held in the autumn across the diocese to allow everyone to have their say and help reach "the greatest possible degree of consensus":

- Bahrain - Wednesday September 12th
- UAE (Sharjah) - Thursday September 13th
- Doha – Thursday September 20th
- Cyprus (Larnaca) - Tuesday October 9th



Sweeping new EU regulations covering data protection came into force on May 25th. Although they apply only to Cyprus, Standing Committee has commended them to all chaplaincies as "a gold standard" and their adoption is to become diocesan policy. Information is being sent to all parishes/chaplaincies

MINISTRY UPDATE

Ordination training in the diocese continues to be encouraging.

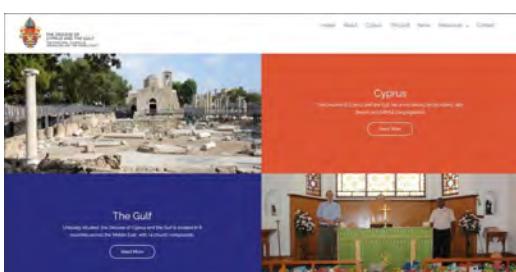
Director of Ministry John Holdsworth told Standing Committee that students enrolled at Queen's University, Newfoundland, had gained good marks in their latest submissions. Other placements had also been successful.

The theme of this term's course is Anglicanism. "This demonstrates well the advantages of having a course over which we have input and which caters for our specific needs," Archdeacon John said.

One ordinand, Navina Thompson (*pictured*), has been ordained Deacon in Abu Dhabi. Two others, Justin Arnott and Peter Day, will follow in July in Nicosia. Revd Charlie Lloyd Evans will be ordained Priest in Abu Dhabi in September.

Looking ahead, there are plans for a selection conference in the Gulf in the autumn. There are several candidates.

There is also to be residential training for group facilitators and the possibility of a summer school in Beirut next year is to be explored in the near future.



WEBSITE: "We're getting there"

The new diocesan website has "turned a corner," Communications Team leader John Holdsworth told Standing Committee.

There's to be a new site map that identifies key areas of diocesan activity and information to be included. And

the team has devised a plan for populating the pages.

Paying tribute to the development work done, free of charge, by Doha-based Saracen technologies, Archdeacon John compared the website to an ocean liner. "We've built it," he said, "now we have to kit it out."

Sadly, material from the old site is no longer available. So "it will involve new writing and research into the resources required.



BARNABAS TEAM WELCOMES NEW SPIRITUALITY ADVISER

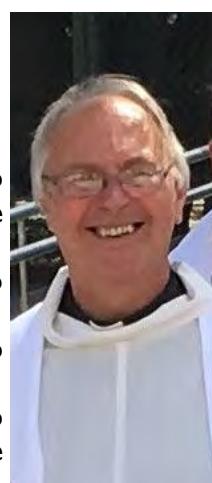
Canon Andrew Mayes (*pictured, right*) has arrived in Limassol to take up his post as parish priest and as the new part-time Spirituality Adviser for the diocese.

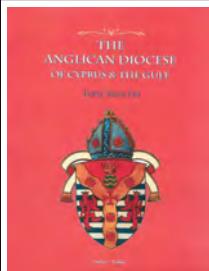
Team Convenor Sarel du Plessis told Standing Committee their full report into feedback from February's Synod should be published by the end of June.

Meanwhile, Revd Harrison Chinnakuma (*Dubai*) has left the team due to pressure of work and youth worker Jill Duncan has joined

Bookings for the retreat house at Katfiyio are encouraging. The team is also advertising for new caretakers from January 2019 and a couple of enquiries have already been received.

There's been a good response too from people following the team's study courses, with the Lent programme and Pilgrim course both proving popular.





HISTORY - ON ITS WAY

Plans for an official history of the diocese have "evolved considerably" since Synod and author Angela Murray (*Bahrain*) hopes to fix a publication date by the autumn.

The resulting book will have four parts: a preliminary section including four specially commissioned maps; three chapters charting the road to the establishment of the diocese; and a narrative history covering its establishment up to the present. There will also be a resource/reference section including eight topic-specific chronologies.

The research phase is almost complete and two early chapters have been written, as has much of sections 3 and 4. "It has turned out to be a much bigger project than I envisaged," Angela told Standing Committee.

"But a huge network of contributors has offered support and we are moving forward positively."

• The new school at St George's Baghdad is due to open in September; the church now has official legal recognition

- Tenders for the building project in Bahrain are in and are being reviewed
- But there's been no progress on the construction of the new church at Mussafah, Abu Dhabi
- Fr Kent Middleton has been installed as Chaplain of Ras Al Kaimah and Fujairah
- Chaos still reigns in Yemen, but the eye clinic continues to thrive. Chances of appointing a priest in Aden are as slim as ever

...AND IN CYPRUS

• Parishes are struggling to deal with new demands from civic authorities over banking, hire facilities and legal issues. New arrangements are being processed that will provide them with a legal identity by the end of the year

- The authorities in Famagusta have unilaterally seized a large piece of land owned by the Church for a road widening scheme without compensation. The diocese is taking legal advice
- Revd Navina Thompson has joined the ministry team in Ammochostos. But the chaplain in Kyrenia, Revd Wendy Hough, has resigned.

"A WONDERFUL DAY" AS GRADUATES TAKE THEIR BOW

The first graduates of the degree programme that underlies Diocesan Ministerial training were admitted at a historic service in Nicosia on St Barnabas' day.

Revd Christine Goldsmith and Revd Geoff Graham (right) have both achieved the degree of BTh in Discipleship and Ministry. The degree is an award of Queens College Newfoundland. The Principal, Dr Richard Singleton, was present and spoke at the service.

The award is the result of five years of group and individual study, and Chris and Geoff were congratulated by Bishop Michael, who presided, and preached at the ceremony which took place in the context of Evensong.

Friends, families, supporters and members of the cathedral congregation heard speakers encouraging a culture of life-long learning and commending the idea of a learning church. Chris and Geoff, who serve at Limassol and Larnaca respectively were delighted to be part of this historic moment.

"It was a wonderful day," said Chris who is now herself a facilitator on the course, helping others to follow in her footsteps.

