



BIRMINGHAM DIOCESAN SYNOD (DS)

Saturday 13 November 2021 at 9.30am

Christ Church Secondary Academy, Daleview Rd, Yardley Wood, Birmingham B14 4HN

MINUTES

- 1. Service of Holy Communion** – Synod commenced with a Service of Holy Communion and the commissioning of the Revd Canon Priscilla White and Mr Trevor Lewis as Chairs of the Houses of Clergy and Laity respectively.
- 2. Prayers, Welcome, Apologies, Previous Minutes and Bishop’s Briefing**

The meeting was opened by Mr Mark Bowman Dalton, the Headteacher of Christ Church Secondary Academy. His welcome speech is attached to the Minutes.

General Synod Representatives 2021-2026

The President informed members of the General Synod representatives for the Quinquennium 2021-2026 as follows:

The Revd Tim Bateman (newly elected)	Mrs Dawn Brathwaite (newly elected)
The Revd Douglas Machiridza (newly elected)	Mr Guy Hordern (newly elected)
The Revd Priscilla White (re-elected)	Dr Rachel Jepson (re-elected)

Thanks were given to all candidates who offered themselves for service in this way and to the time and effort that has been given during the course of the election. Thanks were also given to all those who voted.

Diocesan Synod Membership and Election Results 2021-2024

Members noted Diocesan Synod Membership and the Election Results for the Diocesan Synod Board/Council and Committee Members 2021-2024. A second round of nominations would be held to fill the remaining vacancies, the closing date for which would be 12 noon on 18 November 2021.

The Bishop was delighted to announce the following appointments: the Revd Phelim O’Hare as Area Dean of Kings Norton, Moseley & Shirley Deanery; the Revd Ben Baker, Associate Vicar at St John Harborne; The Revd Liz Bickley, Priest-in-Charge at Dordon, Baddesley Ensor & Grendon; The Revd Steve Johnson, Associate Minister, Knowle and the Revd Magdalen Smith, Associate Vicar of the parish of Moseley.

The Bishop acknowledged the apologies given before the meeting and noted that no further amendments to the Minutes of DS 210708 had been received.

The Revd Canon Catherine Grylls (Kings Norton, Moseley & Shirley deanery) asked for the Minutes of Diocesan Synod to be published on the Church of England Birmingham website.

RESOLUTION: The Diocesan Synod approved the Minutes of DS 210708

RESOLUTION: The Diocesan Synod adopted the following motion put forward by the President:

Under item 4 at our last meeting, we agreed the proposal for the new scheme for the Diocesan Board of Education. This has now been sent to the Archbishops Council. Following their certification, we are now able to propose the new scheme is made.

- 3. Adoption of Birmingham Diocesan Synod Standing Orders 2021-2024**

Dr Jan Smart confirmed that the only change to the Standing Orders was to reflect the new Deanery structures.

RESOLUTION: The Diocesan Synod approved the appointment of Dr Jan Smart as Secretary to Diocesan Synod.

RESOLUTION: The Diocesan Synod adopted the Birmingham Diocesan Synod Standing Orders 2021-2024.

4. Report of the proceedings of General Synod

Mr Geoff Shuttleworth (Handsworth & Central Deanery) reported on the July 2021 session of the General Synod. A copy of his report is attached to the Minutes.

Thanks were given to all the General Synod Representatives for their support to the diocese for the last six years.

5. Environmental Update

Mr Dan Mayes (Property Director) gave an overview of the following three projects that are underway in Birmingham:

- A new CofEB Environmental Board, led by the Bishop of Birmingham, has been formed. The board will meet twice a year.
- A Net Zero Environment Group (NZEG) has also been set up to focus specifically on the 2030 net zero carbon target, which will report to the CofEB Environment Board. NZEG will meet six times a year.
- BACA (Birmingham Anglicans Climate Action group) will continue to operate as well as having four members on NZEG.

A copy of his presentation has been provided to Diocesan Synod members.

In response to a question from the Revd Ben Green (Kings Norton, Moseley & Shirley Deanery) with regards to costs, Dan reported that data would be gathered by the end of 2022 and costings would be calculated for each diocese.

The Revd Nick Parker (Yardley & Solihull Deanery) asked if grants and schemes would be available. Dan responded that this was being looked into. There would be an estimated cost of £60-£70k per clergy house to make them net zero.

The Revd Patrick Gerard (Bishop's Environment Advisor) advised that work is ongoing with regards to the faculty system and a sub-committee to DAC has been formed which will look into how heating projects can be supported.

Mrs Beryl Moppett (Yardley & Solihull Deanery & BACA member) reported that 22 churches are required for the CofEB to obtain a Silver Eco Diocese award. There are currently 8 churches who have obtained a Silver Award and she urged churches who have obtained a Bronze Award to work towards obtaining a Silver Award.

6. Mothers' Union

Mrs Deirdre Moll, President of the Mothers' Union Birmingham, gave an update on the Mothers' Union. A copy of her report is attached to the Minutes.

The Revd Canon Martin Stephenson (Kings Norton, Moseley & Shirley Deanery) congratulated Deirdre on her report and gave his encouragement for men to join the Mothers' Union.

7. Living in Love and Faith Update

Bishop David gave an update to Synod on behalf of the Revd Dr Sally Nash, LLF Advocate Diocese of Birmingham, as follows:

We have run a number of training sessions for potential facilitators and have 19 people willing to facilitate an LLF course in their Deanery or beyond. Currently we are thinking we have the resources to run at least one Diocesan organised (ie open to anyone) course in each Deanery and two at the Diocesan Offices, one during day time and one evening. We are seeking to liaise with Area Deans as to what is already happening or planned in their Deanery as well as identifying the most appropriate venue for the course in each Deanery. Sally is working with Jess Foster to organise the events.

Currently we have a good range of lay and ordained people but it would be helpful to have wider diversity of facilitators including different ethnicities and church traditions.

8. Update from the Reference Group for Racial Justice

Mr Alfred Beckett (Aston & Sutton Coldfield Deanery) spoke on the motion from the Aston and Sutton Coldfield Deanery. He reminded members that, in an ideal world, he should not have to address Synod in this way. The issue of providing Racial Justice Officers has been recognised but the Archbishop's Council are not doing anything about it. There is a need to move in a positive direction with regards to equality and colour of skin should not make us different.

The Revd Canon Douglas Machiridza spoke on behalf of the Reference Group for Racial Justice. A copy of his report is attached to the Minutes.

The Revd Canon Priscilla White (General Synod Representative) stated that she was aware of the disquiet on General Synod on the failure of Archbishop's Council to provide resources and she hoped that members would support the motion.

The Very Revd Matt Thompson gave his support to the motion and felt a deep confusion and hurt following the decision of the Archbishop's Council. The Lament to Action report had been taken very seriously and it was time to take some action.

Mr Jonathan Goll (Warley & Edgbaston Deanery) felt that the matter should have been referred to General Synod. Racial Justice is a biblical duty.

The Revd Tim Bateman (Handsworth & Central Deanery) gave his support to having representation across the Church of England and asked what the priorities of this role should have.

The Revd Canon Catherine Grylls (Kings Norton, Moseley & Shirley Deanery) reminded members of the importance of acting as we speak. It is important to see the flourishing of our neighbour.

Mr Geoff Shuttleworth (Handsworth & Central Deanery) gave his support to the motion and noted that lack of money was not a valid argument. We all have a responsibility to be inclusive in all directions.

The Revd Jeremy Allcock (Handsworth & Central Deanery) raised the importance of reflection. His worries centred around that however much resource is available, racial issues will still be on the increase. We all need to think about our own responsibility.

Mr Guy Hordern (General Synod Representative) felt it was an opportunity to lead on Time for Change.

Mr Anesu Muyambi (Handsworth & Central Deanery) commented that we need more balance, for example in our parish representation and our Diocesan Synod membership. Without balance we are fighting a losing battle.

Bishop Anne felt perplexed by the decision of Archbishop's Council and that affordability was not a good enough reason to reject the proposal of a full-time officer for each diocese. She wondered if there were any alternative proposals that Archbishop's Council are working on and felt that to support the motion would raise the issue.

The Revd Calvert Prentis, Diocesan Director of Ordinands and Vocational Development supported the motion and reiterated that every human being is equal. Historically, there has been a part-time BAME advisor in Birmingham and it is important that we continue to provide for this type of role.

Bishop David thanked everyone for their contributions and for the opportunity to open discussions.

RESOLUTION: The Diocesan Synod adopted the following motion put forward by the Revd Ann Richardson on behalf of Aston & Sutton Coldfield Deanery Synod:

This Synod, understanding that dioceses want to fully engage with the recommendations contained in From Lament to Action, but are often restricted by resources available, calls upon the Archbishop's Council to revisit its decision not to implement the recommendation in From Lament to Action (p49) that full-time Racial Justice Officers should be appointed in each diocese and be centrally funded for a term of five years. We raise the concern that not resourcing the church in taking strides towards full-inclusion and equality risks the integrity of the mission and ministry of the Church being undermined.

9. 2022 Budget

Mr Steven Skakel (Chair of the DBF) invited the Finance Director, Ms Karen Preece to take members through the proposed 2022 budget. A copy of her presentation has been provided to Diocesan Synod members.

RESOLUTION: The Diocesan Synod adopted the following motion put forward by the Chair of the DBF:

This synod authorises:

- a) expenditure of £10,455,503 in 2022 in accordance with the 2022 Budget following approval by Bishop's Council based on a parish stipendiary clergy deployment of 110 with an average of 12 vacancies and an average of 23 stipendiary curates-in-training;***
- b) an incumbent's stipend of £26,652 (+2.0%) and a staff salary rise of +2.0% with effect from 1 April 2022;***

and notes that the Bishop's Council will determine the allocation of Common Fund (projected income of £5,183,000) in accordance with the Transitional Diocesan method under the People & Places framework as agreed by Synod at their meeting on 14 November 2020.

10. Meeting Dates 2022 followed by The Blessing

Members of the Diocesan Synod noted the meeting dates for 2022.

On behalf of Diocesan Synod, +David thanked Christ Church Secondary Academy for hosting the meeting.

The next meetings of Diocesan Synod are:

Saturday 26 March 2022

Thursday 14 July 2022

Saturday 12 November 2022

Synod adjourned at 1pm with prayers led by Bishop David, followed by the Blessing.

Summary of Resolutions

Agenda Item	Resolution
2.	The Diocesan Synod approved the minutes of DS 210708.
2.	The Diocesan Synod adopted the following motion put forward by the President: Under item 4 at our last meeting, we agreed the proposal for the new scheme for the Diocesan Board of Education. This has now been sent to the Archbishops Council. Following their certification, we are now able to propose the new scheme is made.
3.	The Diocesan Synod approved the appointment of Dr Jan Smart as Secretary to Diocesan Synod.
3.	The Diocesan Synod adopted the Birmingham Diocesan Synod Standing Orders 2021-2024.
8.	The Diocesan Synod adopted the following motion put forward by the Revd Ann Richardson on behalf of Aston & Sutton Coldfield Deanery Synod: This Synod, understanding that dioceses want to fully engage with the recommendations contained in From Lament to Action, but are often restricted by resources available, calls upon the Archbishop's Council to revisit its decision not to implement the recommendation in From Lament to Action (p49) that full-time Racial Justice Officers should be appointed in each diocese and be centrally funded for a term of five years. We raise the concern that not resourcing the church in taking strides towards full-inclusion and equality risks the integrity of the mission and ministry of the Church being undermined.
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Welcome to Christ Church, Church of England Secondary Academy.

We are in a 19.2 million pound facility. This beautiful place represents the beginnings of our investment into the future of every young person who attends this school and everyone in our local community.

In September we welcomed our founding cohort into their magnificent new school. They are passionate about learning, willing to work hard and are ready to challenge and develop themselves in our Christian community.

Our mission statement reads as follows:

Through valuing every individual, as made in God's image, we will learn, flourish, and celebrate truth.

We believe academic ability is not fixed and that, through excellent teaching taking place within a purposeful, rigorous classroom culture, all students have what it takes to achieve success and reach their goals.

In this place, our students immerse themselves in a wide array of subjects and develop their talents within these, and become creative, critical and reflective thinkers who make connections between their studies and the real world.

In this place, there is confidence that the pursuit of wisdom, knowledge and skills is consistent with how God has shaped the world and ourselves.

We see every individual as being **created in the image of God** and therefore being of unique **value** and **meaning**. We see each student's education and their **growth as a whole person** flowing out of such an understanding.

In this place, the importance of faith and belief is openly acknowledged. There is a chapel for prayer, small services and personal reflection. There are daily assemblies and religious education is studied by all students. Spiritual and moral development are strong features of our curriculum.

Our students are gaining the knowledge, character, spirituality and morality necessary to enable them to achieve their goals; to access the higher education opportunities of their choosing and then thrive there; to go on to have fulfilling careers and joyful lives and then make their own contribution to their community. Our students, through their hard work and through valuing every individual, are a source of inspiration and hope for the future. The worth of each student impels us to work to fulfil their God-given potential.

We are intolerant of intolerance, expect outstanding behaviour everywhere and are committed to every young person going to university or into meaningful employment.

In this place, we encourage our students to take responsibility for themselves and their own decisions. We develop their habits of kindness and self-discipline. Every day we seek to be a hospitable community that seeks to embody an ethos of living well together.

At CCSA human dignity, the ultimate worth of each person, is central to the excellent education that our students receive and that they deserve.

Thank you and have a great rest of the day.

Report to Diocesan Synod on General Synod. November 2021

First of all, may I congratulate the 3 clergy and 3 lay members who have been elected to represent Birmingham at General Synod for the next 5 years.

I feel I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to represent the diocese for the last 7 years.

Notable events have been

- the final decision to appoint women bishops,
- the continuing debate on marriage and same-sex relationships,
- the drive to ensure that there is a church presence in every community,
- the setting of targets for zero carbon emissions and
- considerable debate about the relationship between laity and clergy.

I have taken a particular interest in the role of the laity and have spoken several times on the role of the laity in supporting parish clergy in what is acknowledged to be a difficult role.

I ask my successor General Synod members to “Have Faith” and work to our mission to reach all God’s people.

Now a brief summary of the July 2021 meeting of the General Synod.

The meeting was held virtually and was opened by the Archbishop of York.

He urged us to take courage in these difficult times of Covid pandemic. He thanked the NHS staff for their dedication. He spoke passionately about the need for the Church to address the issues of Racial Equality that face the Church and society at this time.

The Synod dealt with numerous procedural matters and approved the Archbishops’ Council budget for 2022. The First Church Commissioner spoke about the satisfactory rate of return on Church investments that had allowed distribution of £281 million to churches and institutions. The church will invest responsibly including forestry and affordable housing.

The Archbishop of York addressed the Synod on the **Vision and Strategy** of the Church of England in the 2020’s. The report and debate included the use of church buildings, sharing resources, cross-boundary working and the need for flexibility. This debate will continue.

The Archbishop concluded the debate by saying that he would like us to be a Christ-centred and Jesus Christ shaped church, making a difference in our world and having an effect on every community that we serve.

Another important presentation was the **Living in Love and Faith** report which emphasized the need for inclusion, discernment and engagement.

The Bishop of London agreed that there are divided views on the topic

Two overlapping debates covered the **Nature of Ordained Ministry** and **The Clergy Discipline Measure**.

The first covered the need for training, pastoral and practical support for parish clergy; the relationship between clergy, bishops and congregations; bullying, and accountability. Examples were given of Good Practice that could be shared.

The second dealt with Complaints within the Church and support for the clergy. Debates dealt with the conduct of the clergy and pastoral breakdown, and the ways in which such matters are handled.

The debate was closed by the Bishop of Lambeth saying that there is “still much work to be done”.

On which note I conclude my report.

Geoffrey Shuttleworth November 2021

Diocesan synod.

November 13 2021

Thank you Bp David for this opportunity to update synod on the Mothers Union. I appreciate it.

MU Birmingham is currently in good shape. We have approaching 600 members in 25 branches spread across the diocese as well as a good number of diocesan members. I have been the Diocesan President since January 2019 and am set to be for a further three years. What an eventful time it has been - dominated like everyone with the difficulties of Covid. However, Branch leaders have been brilliant at keeping in touch with their members and their wider church communities with lots of phone calls and acts of kindness. Branch meetings are cautiously resuming and there are positive hopes and tentative planning for next year

Before Covid most branches were in a steady pattern of monthly meetings with many members additionally involved in projects These include being on the rota for the Children's Hospital where, stationed in the chapel, hospitality and a listening ear was offered to anyone who came in. Prison work continued with involvement in running a crèche on family days and providing parenting courses. Presents are collected each Christmas for prisoners to give to their families This morning I have with me eight carrier bags full of presents on their way to the coordinator. Maternity units ask for knitted garments for tiny premature babies particularly bonnets and also request garments for those born very prematurely who do not survive. The parents in the midst of their grief appreciate that their baby is being given the dignity of clothing. Covid brought fresh requests for new items such as scrubs, scrub bags, face masks. All were made and delivered. In the past few months, the Northfield branch, at the request of a local midwife, has started making up bounty boxes for new mothers in the area who are in poverty. In 2020 3,364 different items were made and distributed by the Birmingham members . So many lives touched by this action and outreach.

Every year the MU has a theme set by the central charity for the global movement to use. In 2020 it was Building Hope and Confidence. Unfortunately, this didn't get to be used very much as Covid came, so, perhaps it was unsurprising to see this year the theme reappearing as Rebuilding Hope and Confidence. For over 140 years MU has worked with communities to tackle poverty and social Injustice, firm in the belief that faith and compassion have the power to transform lives. Always led by the guiding principles of listening, observing and taking action projects such as parenting groups, prison ministry, crafting, literacy programmes, supporting public demonstrations against social ills, all take shape. MU members are driven by faith and increasingly work with people of all faiths and none, partnering with others as appropriate to deliver what is needed .

For 2022 the theme is Transformation Now ! It is felt that it is time to transform ourselves, personally and spiritually to live out our faith. We want to take a full part of the work of transformation in the wider church as well as the transformation that MU needs to continue to be relevant for 21st Century life

You may think that what I am saying is all about urging you to become an MU member. Perhaps it is, and I willingly admit that I want to help you understand what MU all it is about, and how it continues to be an amazing movement set at the heart of the Anglican communion with 4 million members across 83 countries. This morning though my aim is really to offer MU resources to you, for you to use in your parish.

- **Firstly, there is AFIA.** AFIA stands for Away From It All. Every year MU Birmingham MU arranges and pays for something like 8-10 holidays for families in great need who have not had a holiday for three years. Often the holiday is a week in a caravan at the seaside. But it can be lots of things, all depending on what the family wants. We have funded a child to go on their Year 6 residential adventure training holiday with the rest of their school year. One family asked for a weekend at Alton Towers, another wanted to be on a farm for a few days. Another person just wanted a day out with her daughter after prolonged medical treatment. This year we helped to fund a trip which for three coach loads of families from Smethwick to go to the seaside for the day. Lots of food for the whole day was provided and the children were equipped with buckets and spades. For most this was their only time away this summer, and it would have enabled every child to go back to school having done something fun to talk about. If you know a family in great need, and usually there will be multiple issues that they have, who have not had a holiday for three years, let us know. Our funds are not limitless, but we will do our best to help.

So that is what you can access for an individual family, the next resource I can offer is called

- **Metamorphosis** This is a tool that could be used by a parish or perhaps two or three parishes in a deanery who want to find a way of bringing positive change to their church or community. In essence, it is a creative approach to bible study and prayer to discern what the needs are in a community and what gifts the members of the group discover they have to offer. Over a series of 8 sessions the group meets and is led to discern how they can reach out into their communities and help where it is needed. Projects in place or are being planned in other dioceses, which include Southwark, Ely, Oxford, Portsmouth, have included a pop-up café, a parent and toddler group, an after-school club, a holiday lunch club. The sessions can be done on Zoom which may make it easier for people to commit to them. If anyone is interested, we can explore this together, with staff from Mary Sumner House, the central charity, who will be able to guide how best we can use it. I only hear good reports about it, and it would be great if we found that we could use it in Birmingham.

My next two resources are concerned with two challenging social issues. The first is

- **Standing up for gender justice.** This has become increasingly relevant to us all. There will be women here today who have been abused by their partner and gender-based violence is an important part of the current work of the MU. During the Covid 19 lockdowns made many difficult relationships even more difficult and abusive. Research shows that worldwide 1 in 3 women experience physical or sexual violence at some points in their lives. In the UK, the figure is 1 in 4, with two women in England and Wales every week being killed by their partner. A diocese in the York province has researched the prevalence in their church congregations and found that the figure was still 1 in 4. So, in our churches tomorrow, there will be people who are directly affected and mostly with no signs to show who they are. I was at an event recently full of people I know well, people just like me. A person who was leading a session, unexpectedly shared her own story. An abusive first marriage to someone who was a church warden. He increasingly controlled all their finances and then became abusive. She was advised by a clergy person when she asked for help to stay in the relationship, and was then physically attacked and raped by her husband which left her in

A & E needing reconstructive surgery. Destitute she fled with her children. We were all left stunned by her story: a woman who was just one of us. There will be women you know well who are affected. MU is part of a campaign called **No more 1 in 3**. Each year there is a period of 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. It runs from 25th November (International day for the elimination of violence against women) until 10th December (International Human Rights Day). MU joins with over 6000 organisations across the world to raise awareness and calls for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls. This year we are being encouraged to wear our badges and scarves to show our support of the campaign and to join in events on the Global Day of Action. I have resources with me today that you can use.

The second challenging social issue is

- **Modern slavery.** This is the fastest growing trade in the world. We all have a slavery footprint whether it is through the clothes we buy, the food we choose to eat, where our financial investments are placed, our whole life style. There is an online tool that you can use called slavery footprint.org to see what your footprint may be. Last year it was estimated that in the West Midlands there were of the order of 4200 slavery victims. MU is a partner of the Clewer initiative and has some useful resources to help churches engage with this issue. Much is about recognising the signs and then knowing who to contact about it. It is all about seeing what is Hidden in Plain Sight. You can easily access online training given by Debbie Huxton who is the Lichfield diocese MU modern slavery campaigner.

Sometimes the only vision of an MU branch is a group of more mature ladies sitting in the church hall listening to a speaker before they have a cup of tea and cake. There is a certain truth to this, but it is not the only model.

A new MU Branch was set up in Epping three years ago. It came out of an Alpha course. When it ended the people on it, mostly young women, wanted to keep meeting and to focus their enthusiasm for putting their faith into action. They identified with the 1 in 3 campaign in particular and decided that the aims of the MU gave them a focus around which they could continue as a community. They meet in a pub and largely communicate by What's app. Could this form of an MU branch work in your church?

We have adapted to new ways of working in the last eighteen months. Mothers Union is based in prayer and Midday prayers take place every day. These are now streamed from London. With several hundred joining each day. In Birmingham we have had several quiet days by Zoom led by our Chaplain, Martin Stephenson and one by Andy Delmege. They have worked really well and what an opportunity for others to join in. At one we were joined by a lady from Botswana.. She had seen the invite on our Facebook page.

A few weeks ago, I went to the MU branch at Kingsbury. They met, celebrating the Eucharist during which the prem baby clothes they had knitted were blessed. It was followed by a cup of tea and chocolate biscuits, during which I was given a cheque for the overseas fund for projects in Africa. A normal meeting in a normal branch and nothing really to remark upon but it does encapsulate for me, what MU is all about. It is rooted in prayer and worship. The crafting was recognised that by using our talents we can reach out to minister to a local need; fund raising had taken place

previously to help with projects in more challenging area of the world and the tea and biscuits was all about the friendship and hospitality that binds us altogether. Nothing to remark upon except signs of an active Christian community, living out their faith.

In the entrance hall we have a stand showing a bit more about the projects MU is engaged in as well as packs of resources including my contact details if you would like to be in touch. You will also find that there is some Chocolate on offer.

Archbishop Justin describes the MU as being at the very heart of the Anglican Communion. I see us as engaging in the mission of Church of England Birmingham ready to use our gifts and enthusiasm foremost in practical acts of kindness and love and firmly based in prayer and worship.

Of course, I do invite you to share and support this vision and would love to welcome you as a member of the family that is Mothers' Union Birmingham.

Update and response to the motion by ‘The Birmingham Reference Group for Racial Justice’.

We could be forgiven for being sceptical on whether the Church of England is serious about *inclusion* and *equality* concerns especially inclusion of UKME/GMH clergy in all its structures.

Reports as we all know have been written time and time again and when it seems as if there is some momentum, the ‘*rug seems to be pulled out from under our feet*’.

As a *perennial optimist*, I too welcomed the publication of the report FROM LAMENT TO ACTION with *cautious optimism and hopeful anticipation* as it appeared to herald the reaching of a ‘*Kairos moment*’ where the tide appeared turning in the right direction.

Coincidentally the airing of the PANORAMA BBC PROGRAMME: IS THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND RACIST? during the same week– *could have left one with a feeling that yes indeed, these two events could be the catalyst to bring about the long awaited significant changes!*

And when the report **FROM LAMENT TO ACTION** was published with 7 specific recommendations by the Task Force, recommendations which included the one which is subject of the motion:

- (i) Creation of posts of Racial Justice Officers in every diocese (funded centrally for a period of 5 years).

One could also be forgiven, to have at least thought, ***aha!*** we are at least getting somewhere, considering the *hype and razmataz* that accompanied the Task Force ‘s report and the *prevailing mood* but only to be surprised and shocked when reports came not so long after publication that, **The Archbishop’s Council** had turned down the recommendation sighting *financial and resource limitations*.

Our view as the *Racial Justice Group* is, since the national church has not sought to *make cuts elsewhere* in order to *protect, preserve and resource* this significant undertaking, one seriously wonders whether the Church sees **full-inclusion** and **equality** as key drivers in the fulfilment of its mission and ministry.

To say that we are **appalled** is an understatement, it makes us collectively question whether the church or mother church is willing to respect the gifts and talents of **all** its children. At our last Black History Month Service at St

Martin's in the Bullring a few weeks ago, we **all** celebrated the fact that we **WERE CALLED TO BE**. We Prayed and Thanked God for the GRACE HE EXTENDS TO US TO BE CALLED HIS CHILDREN, THROUGH THE SONSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST, WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO COLOUR, STATUS OR BACKGROUND.

Way forward

Azariah France-Williams says in his latest book, Ghost-ship,'

'It's not about bringing more black and brown clergy into the system, it's about changing the system so that those who are already there, as well as others who may want to join in the future, have a place that is healthy, where they can flourish as individuals and as ministers within the sense of calling that they have'.

So, I move in support of the motion requesting the Archbishop's Council to revisit and rescind its decision not to implement the recommendation in **From Lament to Action** of creating posts of Racial Justice Officers in every diocese and funded centrally for a period of 5years. Thank you.