

## Annual Report 2018

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**Terms of Reference:** The Council has a dual role and function, acting as the Standing Committee of the Diocesan Synod and giving advice to the Bishop on any matter about which he consults the Council.

### ***Living God's Love***

During the year, the Council continued to receive regular reports on the progress of Living God's Love, and in particular, an update from the Director of Mission who reported that all three Church Growth Officers had been appointed during the year, including the Reverend Kate Peacock, who began her role at Easter 2018 as full time Church Growth Officer. The Council received an update from the Bishop of Hertford on the Living God's Love Strategic Plan and heard that the Board for Mission and Ministry had started to "get into its stride". Workplans and objectives for staff reporting to the Board were discussed at an early meeting of the new Board to enable the Board to work towards the Living God's Love vision and goals. The Reaching New People (RNP) Team had achieved a full complement of staff and the task was now underway to establish the best way to monitor the progress of growing disciples. The Church Army Research Unit would feedback results of a pilot scheme in the Spring of 2019. The Council celebrated the work that had been built on and developed over the last five years.

*During the year the Council met four times, the Policy Sub-Committee met once and the Agenda Group met six times. The Council dealt with the following major subject areas:*

**New Board for Mission and Ministry:** - Early in the year, the Council received and noted the results of the elections to the Board for Mission and Ministry.

**Thy Kingdom Come 2018:** - The Council noted that Archbishop Justin Welby hosted the Beacon Celebration of Thy Kingdom Come 2018 at St Albans Cathedral on the evening of Saturday 19 June 2018, which saw thousands of young people come together to celebrate and share their faith. Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church of America, Michael Curry, also joined Archbishop Justin at the event; the two leaders had travelled to the event after participating in the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

**Reaching New People Project (RNP):** - Early in the year, the Council received an update from the Director of Mission, who confirmed that the new team were working on a new and different vision for making new disciples, with a target of 8,000 across 10 years, to develop Fresh Expressions of Church and equip leaders. A data collection pilot scheme had been rolled out and figures were being received from people who were serving and growing in faith. The Director of Mission confirmed that the IT Officer was working to build Fresh Expressions into the existing Diocesan Dashboards and the results of the pilot scheme would go live as soon as this had been finalised. A Fresh Expressions Launch took place at Rothamsted Conference Centre in January 2018, when as part of his introduction, Bishop Michael said "We want to grow spiritually to go deeper into God and grow numerically so that there are more of us to make a bigger impact for Christ in our communities." The Fresh Expressions Governance Group had met twice during the year.

**Safeguarding:** - Early in the year, the Council received the Safeguarding Audit Report and Action Plan and were pleased to note the positive and encouraging feedback from the Safeguarding Auditors. The minor recommendations in the Action Plan continued to be implemented. The Council agreed to replace the existing

constitution of the Safeguarding Management Group (SMG) with a revised constitution based on the national model terms and reference for a renamed Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel (DSAP).

**Lambeth Conference 2020 - Pre-Conference Hospitality Initiative:** - The Council received a presentation on the Lambeth Conference 2020:Pre-Conference Hospitality Initiative from Mr Stephen Lyon, (Secretary to the Overseas Bishops Fund). The presentation illustrated an exciting draft programme of how the Hospitality Initiative could be rolled out, to include events at Diocesan, Archdeaconry, Deanery and Parish level, to allow for the maximum opportunity for the overseas visitors to meet as many people as possible within the Diocese before they moved on to the Lambeth Conference.

**Ministry Strategy:** – During the year, the Council received regular updates from the Director of Ministry who reported that the Vocations Team were looking at more intentional work with Black Minority Ethnic (BAME) people. Curates' Training was in the process of being revised to include (i) Improving worship; (ii) Young People and (iii) Fresh Expressions.

**Celebrating and Including BAME Persons in our Diocese:** - In the Autumn, the Council received a presentation from the Bishop of Bedford and the Reverend Grace Sentamu Baverstock on "Celebrating and Including BAME persons in our Diocese". Following the presentation, members of the Bishop's Council worked together and made the following suggestions: (1) that BAME persons in church were invited to perform roles of added value in church; (2) to make them welcome in rural communities; (3) that there was a need for role models in church to be addressed and (4) that experiences needed to be personalised to change people's perceptions. The Bishop's Council suggested that this item should be included at a Diocesan Synod meeting in 2019.

**The Future of the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee (DMPC):** - During the year, the Council unanimously agreed to recommend to Diocesan Synod that from 1 January 2019 the functions of the DMPC should be carried out by the Bishop's Council and Standing Committee, together with a newly created Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Executive Committee.

**Budget and Accounts:** - The Council approved the budget and accounts for presentation to Diocesan Synod and received updates from the Chairman of the Diocesan Board of Finance on planning assumptions for the Budget 2019.

**Delegation of Authority Policy:** - In the Autumn, the Council received the Delegation of Authority Policy which had been approved at the Diocesan Board of Finance meeting in July 2018.

**Diocesan Synod Triennial Elections for 2018-2021:** - The Council noted the newly elected Diocesan Synod, which took office in August, and nominations for autumn elections to Boards and Committees for the new triennium were sought at the end of August.

**General Synod:** - In April and July, the Council received oral reports on the proceedings at General Synod on subjects as diverse as (1) Digital Evangelism and using social media to promote the work of the church, (2) an environmental debate on food wastage, (3) welcoming and valuing people with Down's Syndrome, (4) Environmental and Ethical Investment and companies not acting in accord with the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change, (5) the long term sustainability of the NHS and (6) a debate on the ethics of nuclear weapons.

**Church Representation Rules (CRR):** - The Council approved a Scheme required under the CRR to make provision for Establishing a Team Council for the Benefice of Berkhamsted to further the mission of the church across all the constituent parishes through mutual encouragement, collaborative working and joint initiatives; and ratified a Scheme to revoke the 2008 Church Representations Rules Scheme for the Parish of Luton St Anne with St Christopher to help the parish streamline their administrative procedures.

**The Future of SeeRound:** - In the Autumn, the Council received a report from the Communications Officer confirming that the new quarterly magazine "Alban Life", approved at Bishop's Council in July 2018 and consisting of 28 pages including a four page pull out prayer diary, would be published in the run up to Advent Sunday.

**Ministry after 70 Policy:** - The Council considered and approved a new Ministry after 70 Policy.