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The Council for Discipleship and Ministry (CfDM) seeks to support *Living God's Love* by: ♦ encouraging the growth of all Christians as disciples; ♦ enabling missional ministry throughout the Diocese; and ♦ equipping all God's people to discern and fulfil their vocation and ministry.

The tasks of the CfDM include: ♦ steering diocesan policy and strategy in discipleship, ministry development and learning; ♦ supporting, advising and overseeing the Director, Team Leaders and officers in the work of the three teams; and ♦ ensuring effective communication with synods, boards and councils.

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### Vocations Team

- This year 19 candidates were ordained **Deacon**, of whom 13 were stipendiary. A further 15 Deacons were ordained **Priest**, of whom 10 were stipendiary.
- In the autumn 15 candidates started **ordination training**, making a current total of 43 diocesan Ordinands.
- A further 38 **candidates** are currently in conversation with a Diocesan Director of Ordinands (DDO) or Associate DDO (ADDO), and another 26 are seeing a Vocations Adviser.
- During 2017 the Vocations Team ran a number of **events** aimed at supporting candidates through the processes of discernment, selection and ordination.
- The Vocations Team held its annual Archdeaconry vocations event in Hertford in February and will hold a similar one in St Albans Archdeaconry in 2018. Regular informal gatherings for Young Vocations were held and a new Young Vocations Champion was appointed. Attendance at the annual **Seeking the Way** course was both higher and more ethnically diverse than for some years.
- In September one former Pastoral Assistant from the **Hatfield Root Group** started ordination training and three new PA's joined the scheme, all of whom are expected to attend a Bishop's Advisory Panel in 2018.
- The new system of funding Ordinands in training via a Block Grant from Ministry Division was successfully introduced.

### Ministry Development Team (MDT)

- In June 2017, 10 people were admitted and licensed into **Reader ministry**. In the academic year which began in the autumn, there were 23 people training alongside Ordinands, with 5 due to be licensed in June 2018.
- A considerable amount of time was spent preparing for the **Periodic External Review** by Ministry Division. The Reviewers were impressed with the provision of Reader training in the diocese, commending the strong sense of community among staff, students and graduates, the quality of teaching, and the strength of diocesan support for the whole programme. We are confident that the work which Lauryn Awbrey began will be carried on in 2018 with the new appointment of a Lay Ministry Officer.
- There were 51 curates and 27 Readers in **Initial Ministerial Education (IME) Phase 2**. Core training has covered: preaching, marriage, canon law, flourishing ministry, conflict

resolution, and ministries of reconciliation. Additionally, peer groups have looked at topics including: mental health, Fresh Expressions, and children and young people.

- The programme of **Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) events** covered a wide variety of topics. Among these were: leadership, baptism, the world church, gender and ministry, and becoming more invitational. In addition, the MDT in conjunction with the Director of Mission, organised a *Leading Your Church into Growth* course for clergy and laity from 22 parishes and benefices.
- **Safeguarding** training continues to be an increasingly significant part of CMD.
- The MDT provides **grants** for clergy and Readers to undertake training. This year, 164 clergy benefited from grants, with each receiving on average £108. Likewise, 52 Readers received grants with £34 being the average amount given.
- This year 94 clergy went through the **Mission and Ministry Development Review (MMDR)** process. Feedback included: “The level of direction / assistance was exactly right, guiding me to a set of objectives that I feel really committed to.” And: “My consultant enabled me to identify strengths and weaknesses that were impacting both positively and negatively on my ministry and lifestyle. This has helped me focus better on what is achievable in the future.”
- The MDT now has responsibility for training **Lay Leaders of Worship (LLWs)**. Two training sessions for LLWs were held in 2017, and out of these 38 people were authorised to this lay ministry. It was clear from a review that LLWs are enabling new things to happen in their parishes: new Evening Prayer services, all-age worship and Messy Church groups.

## Other Areas of Work

- The **Diocesan Worship and Liturgy Committee (DWLC)** continued to organise study days and offer support, training and inspiring ideas to help parishes enhance the quality of their worship. Topics covered in 2017 included: missional worship, creative worship, AV in worship and *Worshipping the Risen Christ*.
- The **Prayer and Spirituality Resourcing Group (PSRG)** continued to produce the diocesan prayer diary and to run “Holy Listening” – the diocesan course for new Spiritual Directors.
- The **Support in Ministry (SIM)** scheme now supports about 120 Users via 59 Assistants. Recent publicity has significantly increased the enquiries from prospective Users, and this means that in 2018 there will be a need actively to recruit new Assistants so that the scheme can continue to respond promptly to all requests for support.

## Further Comments on the Work of CfDM

- CfDM has been taking very seriously the need to **ordain more ministers** to replace the large numbers leaving full time stipendiary ministry through retirement and the statistics show that this priority is beginning to bear fruit. There is also a need for more SSM clergy, and this is likely to mean finding creative pathways to train them.
- CfDM is also continuing to engage actively with **national initiatives** including the *Renewal and Reform* programme.
- In 2017, **Anthony Archer** stood down as Chair of CfDM after three years’ of excellent service. He was succeeded as interim Chair by the Archdeacon of St Albans.
- At the end of 2017, CfDM ceased to exist as a separate Council within the structures of the Diocese. Its work is being brought together with that of the Board for Church and Society under a new body: the **Board for Mission and Ministry**. Members of the CfDM look forward to the work continuing to grow and flourish under the new Board.