Student Laura Lloyd-Williams returns from UN summit with strong message about empowering women
See page 7
The Archbishop of Wales called on the church to step out confidently in faith to tackle its challenges, in his Presidential Address.

Archbishop John Davies acknowledged the church was facing ‘confusing and challenging times’ which could lead to disabling fear and anxiety. He urged members to follow the example of people in the Bible, such as Moses, Joshua and Mary, by putting their faith in God and acting confidently to make change happen.

He warned that ‘simply standing on the shore and gazing at the other side’ would leave the church in ‘increasing danger’.

Archbishop John said, “To coin words from the Letter to the Hebrews, we, at what might be described as confusing and challenging times for our church, are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses: frail people, flawed people, who have been challenged, people who have been anxious, people who have been afraid, people who have sometimes dressed up mere excuses as reasons for saying ‘No’, people who, from time-to-time tried and failed – but at least they tried. But they ultimately proved to be people who, with faith and trust and courage and grit, got the work going.

“That is what the Governing Body’s role has to be – despite being of the same frail and flawed flesh as those people who populate the cloud of witnesses, we are called, as a body and as individuals in our own places, to that same faith and trust and courage and grit, to get the work going. Sometimes it feels safer to wait, anxiously, for a better moment, a more acceptable time. But, as the apostle Paul reminded the Corinthians, working together with Christ, the acceptable time has arrived. The acceptable time is always now.”

Addressing Challenges

The Archbishop reminded members that the Church was addressing its challenges and implementing radical changes following its review in 2012. It was also planning to celebrate its centenary in 2020 by ‘recognising concrete steps, solid
progress, and commitment to our core purpose’. Everyone, he said, had a part to play.

He said, “These are facts, not least among them, that recommendations were received six years ago, facts about which I believe it is both my duty and my responsibility as Archbishop to insist that we remind ourselves and others with regularity; not only here at the Governing Body, but in our dioceses, within their various structures, in our Ministry Areas, in our congregations and, very importantly, in our own hearts and minds as individual Christians, called as today’s cloud of witnesses to play our part, with faith and trust and courage and grit.”

**Resistance to Change**

The Archbishop warned that resistance to change was a problem in the church and it could be disabling for leaders.

He said, “There is in some quarters, a simple dislike of change, resistance to change, even a refusal to consider change, let alone embrace change. This could all too easily sow in the hearts and minds of all of us, who are called to be leaders, the seeds of a deep anxiety, and a disabling fear, both of which have the potential to cause us to shy away from the challenge, divert us from pressing on, and weaken the desire to seize or even try to create opportunities.”

Members, he said, must not be overwhelmed by the challenges facing them but must deal with them by acting in faith.

“Today’s leaders, can all too easily become, perhaps some have become, too hung-up, on falling numbers, and convinced ourselves that they can’t stem the tide and cross over to new ground.

“I know that each one of us could sit down, alone, at a table at home or at our desks, and write an ever-growing list of anxieties that might disable us and others from dipping our feet in the seemingly un-crossable stream and from stepping outside the familiar and the situations which we think, at least for now, offer us security. But step out we are called to, step out we must, because we know in our heart of hearts that not doing so simply perpetuates, in too many cases and too many places, a downcast mood and a sense of downward trend, leaving us not with security, but in increasing danger.”

The Archbishop concluded, “Where and when and if tempted to do so, the Church in Wales cannot simply stand on the shore and anxiously gaze towards the other side; rooted in the call of the prophets and rooted in the Gospel, we must, both attentively and courageously, be ready to cross. Change will happen.”

**Personal Commitment**

During his address, Archbishop John reminded members of their commitment a year ago to putting evangelism at the heart of the church. He then invited them to write down one thing they had each done since towards that.

He said, “Because so much of how the agenda does develop depends on the commitment of individual hearts and minds, we want you, as individuals, to reflect on your response to it after a year. Hence the sheets of paper. They are not going to be collected in, audited or scrutinised in any way – simply a personal opportunity for all of us, as leaders of our church, to honestly reflect upon our own personal commitment.”
The question of how and why the Church should engage in public life was one of the key items on the agenda.

It was an item of two parts – group discussions at this meeting to be followed, in the light of the discussions, by a plenary session at the next meeting in September.

Ahead of the meeting, members were given four reflections from a variety of perspectives on the subject: Canon Carol Wardman, Bishops’ Adviser for Church and Society, looked at why the debate was needed; Canon Dr Peter Sedgwick explored reclaiming the Anglican social theology tradition and also how the church decides about politics; Dr Matthew Rees outlined why it was worth faith groups engaging in politics and the Welsh Government in particular; and Dr Tristan Nash, of the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David, looked at the role of ethics in informing decision-making in the public square.

Introducing the item, the Archbishop said, “It is not only our privilege to speak in the public square it is also our duty and our responsibility. There are very few communities across Wales where Christians are not involved in community projects – that work sits comfortably alongside the Gospel.

But there are other areas in public debate where the voice of the church is questioned, sharper-edged areas which step into – whether it be with a small or a large ‘P’ - the political arena.

“I believe people go into public life to try and do good. But being anointed to be good news, to being sent to bring life in all its fullness, is something which I believe we are called to do. So it isn’t a case of should we have something to say, something to contribute to these areas of people’s lives, or which impact on people’s lives, but how can we? And if we are criticised for trying to say something, for intervening, for debating, my response to that is, ‘bring it on’.”

Stories of faith
People in public life in Wales shared their stories of faith in a film, commissioned by the Standing Committee and shown before members broke up into groups for discussions.

Huw Thomas, the leader of Cardiff Council and Auriol Miller, the Director of the Institute of Welsh Affairs, were among those talking frankly about how their faith motivates their work in the public sphere.

Also featured were: Simon Prince, former Chief Constable of Dyfed Powys Police; Roy Jenkins, BBC radio presenter; Harriet Morgan, a property lawyer at Geldards; and Gaynor Ford, a retired magistrate.

Watch the film ‘Faith in Public Life’
Engage with politics says Darren Millar AM

Politics is a ‘mission field’ said Darren Millar, Assembly Member for Clwyd West and chair of the Assembly Cross Party Group on Faith, who was invited to the meeting to talk about his personal experience as a Christian in public life.

He urged church leaders not just to speak out in the political square but to encourage Christians to engage with the world of politics and in careers which would take them into having influence in government.

God, he said, gave his people a very clear mandate after Creation to ‘fill the earth and govern it’.

“There’s a wonderful verse in Proverbs that when the godly are in authority the people rejoice but when the wicked are in power, they groan. One thing is clear, that if we are not in power, as godly people, then someone else is going to be in power in our place and the outcome of that may not be pretty.”

Mr Millar reminded members that Jesus told his disciples to ‘go into the world and preach the Good News to everybody’.

“So the world, the whole of it, is our mission field, every single part of it – not just geographical places, such as Africa, Asia, Latin American and other far reaching corners of the earth, but town halls, county halls and in our national parliaments. If we can readily send missionaries to unreached people groups across the world but don’t send them to the unreached people groups in Cardiff Bay or Westminster then we are missing God’s mark and missing it very widely.”

Engaging in the public sphere was an effective way to share the Gospel, he said. When Christians engage with decision-makers “whole nations can be transformed”.

Mr Millar said debates and reforms at the National Assembly had been shaped by members who brought a Christian perspective. These included assisted suicide and organ donation. The role of the Cross Party Group of Faith was particularly significant, securing spiritual care guidance for the NHS, a faith tourism action plan and continued commitment to public funding for chaplaincy services. A chaplaincy service at the National Assembly was also being set up.

Church members could do three things to engage, he concluded: pray for those in politics and for those in authority, including holding civic prayer events locally; encourage people to participate in politics – from school governing bodies to the UK government; and offer practical support for those standing for election.

Welcome to our guests

The Revd Sally Thomas - Cytûn & the Covenanted Churches in Wales (Also representing The United Reformed Church);
The Revd Keith Tewksbury (Superintendent of the Conwy & Prestatyn Methodist Circuit) The Methodist Church;
The Venerable Alan J Perry (pictured left) - Executive Archdeacon of the Diocese of Edmonton in the Anglican Church of Canada, who was engaged in a project to visit the Governing Bodies or equivalent in the Anglican Communion, to learn about how the various governance systems function. Mr Perry gave a short account of the Synod in Canada.
Escalating international tension in relation to Syria, following a suspected chemical attack on the rebel-held town of Douma, prompted the Bishop of St Asaph to table an emergency motion. It was seconded by the Bishop of St Davids, Joanna Penberthy. Bishop Gregory said, “It seems to me that having spent yesterday talking about the way in which the church has to speak out in the public square and the Governing Body having been encouraged by the Archbishop to step up and set a pace for the church, we would be missing a huge opportunity and a necessity not to speak out about what is happening in Syria at the moment.”

He acknowledged the complexity of the situation, adding, “We have to avoid the temptation to pontificate. We are none of us experts on the Middle East and it would be easy to have a debate when we assume we have the answers when we don’t.”

Helen Biggin, Llandaff, supported the motion. “It represents everything we have talked about at this Governing Body. I would like to think that implicit in what we are saying is that we hold everyone involved in our prayers,” she said.

Revd Kevin Ellis (Bangor), who has visited Syria on a number of occasions, said many Christians there supported President Assad due to his protection of them and, moreover, atrocities had also been committed by the government’s opponents. He said, “The motion does a brilliant job in holding together our need to respond, to support those involved in potential action and to call for our prayers for those in Syria.”

The Revd Joel Barder (St Davids), reminded members of the Holocaust. “At this moment in Israel it is the Holocaust memorial day and one of great pains felt, even 70 years later, is that the world stood by and watched as these things happened and did very little about it. I wonder if we need also to bear that in mind as we see the images of people attacked by the government, it seems.”

The debate was cut short when twenty members stood up together calling for an immediate vote under constitutional rules. The motion was subsequently carried by an overwhelming majority.

Bishop Gregory thanked members for their support. “Don’t let this motion stop here. Carry it back to your parishes, particularly the invitation to pray,” he urged.

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**Motion**

**That the Governing Body:**

- Note with alarm the return to the international agenda of the possibility of heavy bombardment and violent intervention in the situation in Syria;
- While condemning the use of chemical weapons, is mindful of the complexities of the situation which rule out simplistic answers;
- Call upon the UK Government to prioritise concerted diplomatic action to secure more peaceful and consensual international responses rather than an escalation of violence.
The use of church buildings for mission, the role of the church in the public square and celebrating the Church’s centenary in 2020 were the three issues on the Standing Committee’s ‘front burner’ said its chair, Lis Perkins, presenting the report.

“How can we support sustainable churches? What is a sustainable church? This is quite an issue and it was helpful for us to discuss it in smaller groups so everyone had a chance to express an opinion. We want to incorporate as wide a range of views as possible into the topic.”

In April 2019 the Governing Body will be invited to discuss Church Buildings for Mission. Members were invited to write in with their thoughts on this topic ahead of the Committee’s meeting in February so that it could take into account the range of views across the Church.

On the role of the church in the public square, Mrs Perkins noted that it was an area which could create tension. “Speaking truth to power can be uncomfortable but should we be doing it? That is the question – the role of the church in public life will be a big part of our meeting today and in September. We believe it is a vitally important topic in the church today.”

Outlining plans for the celebration of the Church’s centenary in 2020, Mrs Perkins said the working party was focusing on a digital media campaign, a pilgrimage, a provincial service, a family service in Mid Wales and projects in parishes. A Centenary Appeal Fund was also planned to support one overseas project, focused on South Sudan, and a project in Wales, to help homeless people.

“Telling and hearing the story of the church is very important. We want to show the daily impact of the church in communities throughout the life of the nations,” she said.

“Keep an eye on the website and note the key dates as they become available. The clock is ticking so we need to go back and plan how we are going to mark the centenary in our parishes.”

Dr Heather Payne (Llandaff) said being a welcoming church to everyone should be an aim.

“To be Christ in the world, to have sacred spaces that are of benefit to the community, we must make sure our church buildings are accessible and welcoming. A practical suggestion would be to have a simple audit, a checklist to see what a church is like for people who are not actually there. Changes may need money spent.”

The Revd Dr Adrian Morgan (Swansea & Brecon) suggested a radical answer to the problem of church buildings. “I was in Christchurch, New Zealand after the earthquake in 2011,” he said. “Suddenly most of the churches there were no longer fit for purpose and that completely changed the debate. People began to look strategically at where the people were and where the church needed to be.... Let’s have a conversation of earthshattering consequences,” he urged.

The Archdeacon of Llandaff, Peggy Jackson, suggested some outward action to mark the centenary. “The proposals we have are in-church – by the church to church people. Should we not take courage and speak into the public square of the province? Think of offering some public statement to the people of Wales and commit ourselves to Wales for the future?”

Mrs Perkins urged members to send in further thoughts or other ideas on the important matters for life in Wales today for potential consideration by the Governing Body.

The following recommendations were moved:

- Canon Steven Kirk and His Honour Judge Andrew Keyser QC be appointed members of the Standing Committee for the triennium to 31 December 2020;
- Mrs Lis Perkins and Archdeacon Peggy Jackson continue on the Panel of Governing Body Chairs for a period of six years;
- The Revd Dr Ainsley Griffiths be appointed an Associate Member of the Methodist Conference for 2018 and 2019;
- Canon Steven Kirk be invited to attend the Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church from 7-9 June 2018 as the Church in Wales’s representative and that such appointments of representatives to attend the Synods of other Churches be delegated to the Standing Committee in future.
A student from St Asaph was the youngest Anglican delegate to the recent United Nations’ Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW62).

Laura Lloyd-Williams told Governing Body how she represented the Church in Wales as part of a 16-strong delegation sent by the worldwide Anglican Communion to discuss issues of gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.

Laura said, “I am so fortunate to be part of the Church in Wales which recognises and supports young people. All the Anglican Provinces were asked to send young people, yet only Wales fulfilled this request. I was the only delegate to this Commission at the UN who was under 24-years-old.

“It was an amazingly busy two weeks. I met so many fascinating people from all over the world and heard their stories. I learnt so much and had some life changing experiences.

“I pledged to bring back to the Church in Wales all I learnt to help us to empower women across Wales.”

Laura told Governing Body that the key issues to come out of UNCSW62 were indigenous rights, access to healthcare and education, harmful practices, such as Female Genital Mutilation and early child forced marriage, LBTQI2+ rights and intersectionality and human trafficking and modern slavery.

Laura explained how women in rural communities often have fewer rights than men. “In Canada” she said, “Indigenous women leave school at an early age, get married and have children. That is all that is expected of them. Many go missing and the church ran a campaign to highlight their plight, ringing the church bell for every missing woman. Last year alone, the bell rang 1,200 times.

“In Sudan, the testimony of a women is worth half the value of a man’s”

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Following her address to Governing Body, Laura took questions from delegates.

Lesley Joy (St Asaph) thanked Laura for her “brilliant presentation” and asked her about the situation in the UK.

Gregor Lachlann Waddell (St Asaph) asked about the gender pay gap in the US Church.

The Revd Dean Roberts (Monmouth) said “As a parish priest I see many women in church whose husbands or partners aren’t alongside them. How can we empower women to be Christian witnesses in their home life?”

Laura replied saying by giving women “confidence that they are unstoppable”.

Dr Robert Wilkinson (St Davids) said he was particularly interested in Laura’s closing remarks on discerning potential. He asked, “Are we making assumptions when any role needs to be filled about who is a suitable person for it both in terms of gender and age? It’s too easy to make assumptions that rule out young people and particularly to rule out younger women. I put it to GB that we look at our conscience and not to fall into the trap of doing that.”
Plans to make Newport Cathedral fit for purpose as the Mother Church for the Diocese of Monmouth were unanimously backed by Governing Body. The motion to amend the cathedral constitution and regulations was introduced by the Dean of the Cathedral Church of St Woolos, Lister Tonge. He told delegates that St Woolos, which became the cathedral in 1949, “functions as a cathedral when needed to be so, but only due to the volunteers. “We want to change this, so the building can become a beacon in the city… We are attempting to engage with the community as never before. We house the homeless and attempt to engage with all those in need.”

Dean Lister told members that the difficulties were around governance. The Constitution of the Church in Wales meant that in Newport the roles and responsibilities of the Cathedral Chapter and the church’s PCC overlapped. The Cathedral Chapter were effectively trustees of a charity over which they have little responsibility. The changes to the constitution, would allow the PCC to give up responsibility for the fabric of the building to focus on its responsibility for the mission of the cathedral.

The Archdeacon of Newport, Jonathan Williams, seconded the motion.

The Revd Mark Owen (Monmouth) spoke in support of the motion, “The cathedral belongs to us as a diocese. It feels as it is almost ‘home’ as it never has done before. It will continue to grow and flourish.”

Canon Steven Kirk (Llandaff) was delighted to read about this scheme. He said, “Although I am a member of another cathedral chapter and I wouldn’t want to say that this provision would suit us, this is exactly what the cathedral review should encourage – each cathedral looking at its own governance to see how and where changes should be made. Newport is a trailblazer and I am very pleased to see them move forward in an imaginative way.”

The Bishop of Monmouth, Richard Pain, paid tribute to Dean Lister for his vision in wanting to move the cathedral to a place which represents the whole diocese. He said, “This is an experimental scheme over three years, which will be monitored and scrutinised as any good institution should do. I endorse this scheme 100 percent.”

The motion was carried unanimously.

**Motion**

i. Note the Newport Cathedral Constitution and Regulations dated 13 March 2018;

ii. Give permission for the experimental constitution and regulations to be used in Newport Cathedral for an initial period of three years, the time and date of commencement to be determined by the Dean and Chapter; and

iii. Request for a progress report after two years from its commencement date.
More than 20 members joined in a passionate discussion on admission to Communion. It followed an introduction by the Bishop of St Asaph, Gregory Cameron, who reminded delegates that this issue had first been raised as a question at Governing Body in 2009. It had been referred to the Doctrinal Commission, which had produced a paper that was unanimously accepted by delegates. It was following these discussions that the Bench of Bishop’s issued their pastoral letter on the matter in 2016.

“This did not come out of the blue,” Bishop Gregory told Governing Body. “It is important to note the theological context [for the pastoral letter] and say something about the process.”

He explained:
1. Over the centuries there has been no definitive pattern or relationship between baptism, confirmation and communion. Different emphasis on these sacraments has emerged over the centuries.
2. We are in the business of creating faithful disciples of Jesus Christ; enabling people to grow into a living faith. Admission to communion isn’t about convenience or tidiness, it’s about adopting a system which enables the church to encourage faith.
3. Absolute priority is given to God’s Grace in the work of salvation: God loves us, and we shouldn’t turn faith into work to qualify for salvation.
4. Baptism is complete initiation into the Christian faith. No further initiation is required, and this has been accepted ecumenically over the last 40 years.

To end, Bishop Gregory said, “We are a church which believes in theological debate and as a Bench of Bishop’s we are open to discussion.

“We are committed to this policy. We are listening, and we are ready to work on its improvement, both theological and with practical measures for its reception but, we have stepped out in faith and we are not minded to step back.”

Standing orders were suspended to allow a full and lengthy discussion, which was opened by Canon Patrick Thomas (St Davids) in support of the policy. He explained how he had discussed the issue with young families in his churches most of whom were “very happy that their children had been baptised and were given bread…. Children come more regularly now and there’s a small part of the Kingdom of Heaven in this church. I do believe the Bishops have had an excellent idea this time.”

The Revd John Connell (Monmouth) said, “Thank you. For a mission-minded priest in the catholic tradition, this was what I needed to develop my work with children and young people.” It was wrong he said “to send children back to their place, hungry” after Communion.

The Revd Naomi Starkey (Bangor) reminded everyone that Bishop Gregory’s introduction included the importance of the Grace of God, which is “immeasurable and extended to all. That doesn’t absolve us of the need for preparation but it does allow us to offer unchurched parents a welcome and allow the Holy Spirit to respond.”

In contrast, the Revd Dean Roberts (Monmouth) said, “This debate is focused around the wrong sacrament…. it’s crucial for children who receive communion, to be properly prepared.” He explained how he believed parents bringing children for baptism, should be properly prepared and responsible for bringing up their children in the Christian faith. He said, “This right to be baptised is a hangover from Christendom. Many don’t know what baptism is.”

Andrew Sims (Llandaff) said he’d spoken to people in his congregation who asked, “If confirmation isn’t for communion, then what is it for?” He went on, “As members of Christ’s body we have shot ourselves in the foot if the purpose of confirmation wasn’t communion. I was baptised as an infant and confirmed before I made a personal commitment. When I made a personal commitment, I had nothing left to do to show my outward commitment.”

The Revd Dr Harri Williams (St Davids) asked, “What about children who attend church without their parents? What about children whose parents are divorced and who share parental responsibility – what happens if dad says ‘yes’ but mum says ‘no’? What about those in foster care? Churches must continue to provide age appropriate learning study and reflection.”

Responding, Bishop Gregory said he valued Governing Body’s passion for faith and discipleship. The Bishops would be taking seriously all the comments raised and further guidance would be issued after their meeting in June.
Nine areas to progress for evangelism and mission were outlined to Governing Body by the Bishop of Bangor, Andy John. These areas were identified by three working groups – on growth, evangelism and pioneer ministry – which had now come together to prepare a report, A Framework for Healthy and Joyful Mission.

The nine areas were:

• Expanding the capacity of the church to do mission well – finding ways for the established church to do the work of evangelism in a joyful and anxious-free way. Seasons and festivals offer good opportunities for this.
• Learning from our brothers and sisters’ churches – what are others doing which is creative, dynamic and has traction?
• Looking at the work of pioneer projects and pioneer ministry. People need to embed themselves without an agenda in ways which don’t seem false and inappropriate.
• Data – Bishop Andy said the church’s stats didn’t tell an accurate and complete picture and that we needed to work together to ask the right questions to find out where there was genuine growth. Better data analysis would be helpful.
• The role of chaplains is significant – these are cultural and appropriate.
• Training and selection – “We want to release laity and clergy to focus on the work of evangelism but currently that doesn’t feature strongly on the curriculum of theological colleges,” said Bishop Andy.
• Occasional offices – Bishop Andy said many people came back to us for services such as baptisms, weddings, etc giving us good opportunities to be invitational.
• Para-church organisations – Bishop Andy said there were good things to be learnt from para-church organisations, such as the Church Army. Did they have the capacity to contribute to be a missional church to offer natural church growth?
• Mission action planning – we need to be focussed, strategic and well resourced, not formulaic, said Bishop Andy.

Bishop Andy offered the following recommendations as an update on progress to Governing Body:

1. St Padarn’s Institute to work with Dr Sandra Miller who has worked with the Church of England on occasional offices.
2. The Bench has agreed to showcase good examples of mission and has commissioned a series of films.
3. Every mission or ministry area should establish a pioneer ministry or project.
4. The RB has released £10m for evangelism – this will be specifically for people to come and hear and respond to the Good News.

A formal report will be reviewed by the Bench of Bishops in June with a report to Standing Committee in July and a full debate in September.

Worship and collections

The opening Eucharist, at which the Archbishop was the celebrant, was held in St Paul’s Church Craig y Don, organised by the Diocese of Bangor, and the Bishop of Bangor preached.

Evening Prayer in Holy Trinity Church Llandudno on Wednesday evening was led by the Diocese of St Asaph and the Bishop of St Asaph preached.

Morning Prayer on Thursday morning was again in St Paul’s Church, and the officiant was the Revd Dr Adrian Morgan, organised by the Diocese of Swansea & Brecon.

Prayers and Bible study led by the Revd David Morris (Llandaff) opened the business on Thursday.

Collections taken at the meeting will be given to Kaleidoscope Wales and Christian Aid Wales equally. Kaleidoscope Wales is a charity that provides help and support for people and their families dealing with alcohol and drug problems. The total collection, before the Gift Aid claim has been added, comes to £912.59.

Tributes

Silence was kept in memory of three former Governing Body members who had died recently: Bishop Saunders Davies, who retired as Bishop of Bangor in 2004; Sir William Gladstone, who chaired the Representative Body from 1977-1992; and Graham Whatley, a former member of the GB from the Diocese of Swansea & Brecon.
Q1. The Revd Dr Harri Williams, (St Davids)

Following on from the Governing Body’s decision to recognise the importance of caring for God’s creation (September 2017) would the Representative Body give consideration to providing Parishes/LMAs with ‘Green Loans’ to be able to undertake capital works on buildings which would make them environmentally friendly?

Answer - the Chair of the Representative Body, James Turner

In reviewing the future issues around church buildings the issue of loans has been raised and is under consideration going forward. The challenge with any loan scheme is how to ensure repayment and the appropriate level of interest to charge (given that the loan would use part of the Representative Body’s general funds which are income generating). The suggestion is an interesting one and will be considered alongside a more general review of funding for church buildings.

Q2. Sue Last (St Asaph)

In an increasingly multi faith world, where the equality and diversity legislation supports the special provision for religions, does the Church in Wales have any plans to develop guidelines for use in multi faith chaplaincy?

Answer - Bishop of St Asaph, Gregory Cameron

Multi-faith chaplaincy has become increasingly important as the religious profile of Welsh society becomes notably more diverse, and as secular institutions which support chaplaincy seek to provide for all their users, and to act with complete neutrality towards the sometimes competitive claims of different religions.

Since multi-faith chaplaincy tends to arise in the context of other institutions, it is those institutions, or the chaplains within them, that tend to develop the guidelines that work within their own particular structures. Nevertheless, it would probably be fair to say that the approach of the Church in Wales has tended to be reactive rather than pro-active in these matters, and there has not been the capacity within our existing structures to generate official guidance at Provincial level. At the beginning of May a new director of Faith, Unity and Order will take up his post. For the first time, we will have a Provincial officer whose brief specifically includes responsibility for inter-faith matters, and it may be that an early task for him to look into this question.

Q3. Canon Dr Trish Owens (St Asaph)

Members of Governing Body will have followed the proceedings of the Public Hearings project of the Independent Inquiry in to Child Sex abuse in England. Following the launch of the Truth Project in Cardiff in 2016, and the stakeholder event held in Swansea in March 2018, and in the light of the Church in Wales’ own independent review of 2011 and the subsequent investment in safeguarding at all levels within the province, what is the position of the Church in Wales with regard to the current IICSA?

Answer - Provincial Secretary, Simon Lloyd

The Legal Department has already provided to the Inquiry all documentation that it has requested from the Church in Wales and Mr Mark Powell QC who has extensive Child Protection experience has been retained in order to assist and represent the Church in Wales as necessary. At present a definite date has not been given to us in relation to when the Church in Wales will be called to the Inquiry, but early indications are that it will be some time after March 2019.

The Governing Body will next meet on Wednesday 12 and Thursday 13 September 2018 at the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David, Lampeter.