

**REPORT ON THE 145TH SYNOD OF THE
DIOCESE OF JAMAICA & THE CAYMAN ISLANDS
APRIL 7-10, 2015**

THE FIRST DAY – APRIL 7, 2015

The Synod under the theme “**Singing the Lord’s Song in a Strange Land**” began on Tuesday, April 7, 2015 with an Opening Service at the St. James Parish Church, Montego Bay.

The Service was attended by clergy and lay representatives from churches across the Diocese. Special guests included the Governor General, the Chief Justice and Chancellor of the Diocese, the President of the Court of Appeal, the former Governor General, Custodes of St. Ann, Trelawny, St. James and Hanover, Senior Officers of the Jamaica Constabulary Force and members of the Ecumenical Fraternity.

The highlight of the Service was the ‘Charge’ or message to the church and the nation, delivered by The Bishop of Jamaica & The Cayman Islands, the Rt. Rev. Howard Gregory. The Charge was based on Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14 in which the prophet assured the Israelites who were exiled under Babylonian rule for 70 years that the Lord would restore them to their homeland. He encouraged them to live their lives as they had before and to continue to worship and serve God in whatever location they found themselves.

Bishop Gregory noted that today, pastoral leaders were challenged to discern the Lord’s message in a world in which the groundings that we have known “seem to be constantly shifting and we now live at a place that feels like an exile.” He cited moral decline and depravity in Jamaica; high levels of crime and violence, especially against children; indiscipline; as well as the harsh economic environment; and for the Anglican Church, the declining membership and loss of status, as contributory factors. However, as Jeremiah told the Israelites in exile, the Lord Bishop urged the nation and the Church to acknowledge their mistakes, and to seek forgiveness and renewal.

He said the visioning process in the Diocese was a call to be realistic about our situation which resulted from our collective choices and failures, and he challenged members to “seize the opportunities of the present historical moment for mission and ministry” in the church and the world.

Music at the Service was provided by a combined choir from the Montego Bay Region, along with the organ, drums and the *Pans of Praise Steel Band* of the St. James Parish Church.

THE SECOND DAY – APRIL 8, 2015

The second day began with Matins (Morning Prayer) followed by the Holy Eucharist led by the Montego Bay Region. The Rt. Rev. Leon Golding, Suffragan Bishop of Montego Bay, was Celebrant and Preacher at the Eucharist.

Bishop Golding based his Sermon on Acts 10:39 in which Peter, a Jew, proclaimed Jesus crucified, ascended and glorified in the home of Cornelius, a Gentile who, by Jewish tradition, was considered to be unclean. He noted that, throughout history, the Lord's people have done likewise and sung the Lord's Song in hostile and strange places. He stated that Christians in this era were also called to sing the song of forgiveness, peace, justice and salvation in a changing world where people were even anti-God.

However, Bishop Golding asserted that the Lord's Song remained the same, and he challenged the Church to tell the old story in a new, dynamic way. He said the strange land in which we find ourselves is a fertile place with possibilities for growth which force us to look again at the core business of the Church and its mission. He said God was calling the Church to action and he urged members not to give in, as this strange land can be a good place to give witness to the Lord's Song.

The Business Session of the Synod, which was held at the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort in Montego Bay, was attended by 263 Clergy, Church Workers and Lay Representatives, as well as 16 Youth Representatives.

It began with Part Two of the Lord Bishop's Charge in which he reported on developments in the Diocese, the Province of the West Indies and the wider Anglican Communion during 2014. Bishop Gregory welcomed newly-appointed officers of the Church, including The Hon. Justice Zaila McCalla, the first female Chancellor; Mr. Peter Depass, Acting Registrar; The Hon. Earl Jarrett as a member of the Incorporated Lay Body; and the Venerable Patrick Cunningham, Archdeacon of the Kingston Region. He also acknowledged the presence of first-time Lay Representatives.

Of special note outside of the Diocese were the death in March 2015 of the Rev. Dr. Phillip Potter, the third Secretary General of the World Council of Churches and former Lecturer at the United Theological College of the West Indies; and the appointment of the Most Rev. Josiah Atkins Idowu-Fearon of Nigeria as Secretary General of the Anglican Communion.

Nine resolutions were tabled for discussion and Bills to amend several Canons (laws governing the Church) were mentioned for first reading by the Chancellor.

Financial Statements for 2014 and Estimates of Expenditure for 2015 were presented by the Chairman of the Diocesan Financial Board, the Hon. Michael Fennell, who cautioned that the Diocese was in crisis and pointed to the growing debt of Churches and Cures. He noted that Current Account Balances stood at J\$231.6 million at December 31, 2014 – an increase of J\$38.5 million on the J\$193.1 million recorded at the end of 2013. Mr. Fennell listed the following as the main priorities in 2015:

- Controlling expenses in all Churches
- Finding new sources of revenue and balancing the budget
- Improving leadership across the Diocese through training of Attorneys and other administrators
- Implementation of the new Vision and Strategic Development Plan

He challenged all members, especially the youth, to play their part in identifying solutions. The 2015 Budget of J\$182.9 million was approved by the Synod.

The morning session ended with a Panel Discussion in which Mrs. Diahann Gordon-Harrison, Children’s Advocate, was the main presenter. The focus was **“Children, Crime, Corruption – A Case Study of Jamaica’s Adolescents.”**

The Children’s Advocate defined corruption as “the cold calculated theft of opportunity that stifles economic growth, undermines social capital, shows contempt for law and order and fosters inequitable distribution of wealth.” She referred to a Survey conducted by her Office in 2014, which showed children as both perpetrators and victims of corruption. She cited statistics from the Jamaica Constabulary Force which indicated that in 2012/13 there were 479 offences in which children were perpetrators and this number increased to 565 in 2013/14.

Referring to a Social Learning Theory which states that children emulate the behaviour of people around them, Mrs. Gordon-Harrison emphasized the importance of positive role models. She recommended the strengthening of parenting and conflict resolution programmes with the establishment of parent hubs in communities, as well as, robust and continuous programmes at the national level to reinforce community initiatives.

She also highlighted the negative impact of social media through which youth were being subliminally prepared to receive sexual attention. She noted that cases of sexual abuse of children increased from 2,671 in 2011 to 2,756 in 2012; and that parents were often the perpetrators.

Mrs. Gordon-Harrison asserted that ill-equipped parents were incapable of nurturing well-adjusted children, and she urged members of the Church to help address this situation by guiding youngsters with whom they interact, building their self-esteem and speaking out against child abuse.

There were five panelists. The first, Mr. Sterling Soares, of St. Andrew Parish Church, suggested that Biblical principles should be reinforced in children through Sunday School. Sister Myrel Moss, of the Church Army, encouraged the Mothers' Union to step up its Parenting Programme; while Mrs. Phyllis Webster of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Molynes Road, emphasized the need for love in the home. Miss Phillippa Williams, of St. George's Church, East Street, urged inner city churches, in particular, to develop mentorship programmes for at-risk children and families; and the Rev. Mary Graham, Rector of St. George's Church, Grand Cayman, maintained that protection of the nation's children, and not the cost of this effort, should be the priority.

The afternoon session began with the Lord Bishop announcing the winning entry in the Visioning Song Competition conducted in 2014. He invited members of Synod to sing the song titled "*Arise, Arise O Christian*" written by Mrs. Doris Jacques of St. Cyprian's Church, August Town, with music composed by Miss Stephanie Williams of the School of Music at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts.

The Report from the Board of Nominations was then received, following which an Update on the Visioning Process was presented by Mrs. Fay McIntosh, a member of the Monitoring Committee overseeing the development of Strategic Visioning Plans by congregations across the Diocese. She explained that a standardized reporting format was developed for submission of the Plans which are being guided by the Five Marks of Mission and which are expected to be Strategic, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely (SMART). Mrs. McIntosh said while there was general awareness about the Visioning Process and its objectives, several churches were tardy in designing their Plans; and the Monitoring Committee would be willing to assist them to expedite this.

Mrs. Andria Dillbert of St. George's Church, Grand Cayman shared with members of the Synod the strategic planning process in which her entire congregation was engaged. This Plan covers the following areas: Communication; Community and Outreach; Education and Training; Evangelism and Church Planting; Stewardship; Liturgy and Worship; Fellowship; Finance; Youth and Development. Strategies include the production of a Church brochure, quarterly newsletter, and revamped website; the establishment of a Food Bank; the formation of a Good News Club at the Georgetown Primary School; the collection of cans for recycling; the drafting of a Child Protection Policy; the establishment of a Skills Bank; and pastoral training for members.

Resolutions were then read and approved concerning the Change of Status of the following Churches from settled congregations to Missions:

- St. James Church – Kendal, Manchester
- St. Phillip’s Church – Old England, Manchester
- St. Luke’s Church – Aboukir, St. Ann
- St. James Church – Gibraltar, St. Ann
- St. Jude’s Church – Slipe, St. Elizabeth
- St. Matthew’s Church – Catadupa, St. James
- St. James Church – Mt. Herman, St. Elizabeth

A Resolution proposing the development of a Diocesan Mission Policy for Schools was moved by Dr. The Hon. Vincent Lawrence and passed by members.

Evensong followed, led by Captain Joshua Henry of the Montego Bay Region.

The first agenda item in the final session of the day was the report submitted by the Rev. Jerry Keucher, a Management and Congregational Consultant serving in the Diocese of Long Island. Rev. Keucher, who visited Jamaica from February 22 to March 2 to review challenges facing the Diocese and recommend solutions, met with the Diocesan Council and Diocesan Financial Board, as well as clergy and laity island-wide. The report, which was presented by the Hon. Michael Fennell, Chairman of the Diocesan Financial Board, recommended that:

- the chronic Diocesan deficit be reduced
- communication be improved
- the formula for the Assessment be changed to a fixed percentage; and interest charges on unpaid balances be discontinued
- closures, mergers and consolidation of Cures be pursued

Mr. Fennell advised that several of these suggestions would be addressed prior to Synod 2016. These include: the establishment of a Task Force to identify communication weaknesses; a review of budget timelines and the fixed percentage for the Assessment; examination of non-viable congregations; revision of the Diocesan structure and expenses and attainment of a balanced budget.

A Report on the Method of Assessment was presented next by Dr. The Hon. Vincent Lawrence, Chairman of the Task Force appointed to review this system and provide alternative methods which would incorporate new categories in the definition of Assessable and Non-Assessable Income. He explained that the Task Force examined the Diocese’s Policy on the Assessment to determine the equity in its application and relevance to Diocesan funding sources and requirements. It also considered concerns expressed by churches about a decline in In-giving.

The Task Force determined that the current formula for the Assessment was fair and equitable; and that non-payment by churches was not necessarily related to the amount of In-giving. It proposed that the Diocesan Budget and its relationship to the size and growth of the Church be reviewed; and that there be efficient and effective use of available human and financial resources. Other recommendations included: the introduction of Key Performance Indicators for Cures; more effective use of the Diocese's assets to generate revenues and implementation of continuing training in the preparation of annual returns.

The day ended with a review of the Report on Anglican Schools as presented in the Synod Handbook. This was done by the Rev. Michael Allen, Rector of the Church of the Ascension, Mona Heights, who spoke from the perspective of "reclaiming our schools." Fr. Allen suggested that one way of achieving that objective was to constantly improve the product, as is being done at Church Teachers' College in Mandeville. He said there was need for a greater Anglican presence in the Church's educational institutions. Noting, however, that this was not possible in High Schools as there is only one Chaplain per school, he urged congregations to offer urgently-needed assistance.

While Diocesan Preparatory Schools continue to perform well, there was concern about our Primary Schools. With respect to our Early Childhood institutions, there was no reporting structure; and he said human resource constraints in the Diocese's Schools Division made oversight of these institutions difficult. Father Allen proposed that Deaneries be mobilized to assist in gathering the necessary information. He stated that leadership was critical in the effective management of Diocesan institutions, and he encouraged more Anglicans to consider teaching as a vocation.

THE THIRD DAY – APRIL 9, 2015

Like the previous day, the third day of the Synod began with Morning Prayer and the Holy Eucharist conducted by the Kingston Region. The Rt. Rev. Dr. Robert Thompson, Suffragan Bishop of Kingston, was Celebrant and Preacher at the Eucharist.

In his Sermon, Bishop Thompson noted that the account of Jesus' meeting with his disciples in St. Luke 24: 46-49 was similar to the Great Commission in St. Matthew's Gospel. Both meetings happened after his crucifixion and resurrection; and although the disciples did not fully understand their new role, Jesus commissioned them to continue his work.

Bishop Thompson emphasized that little could be achieved by way of church planting unless every Anglican sees himself or herself as baptized for mission. He stated that a strategic approach to place Evangelism on the hearts of its baptized members had contributed to growth of

2% per annum in the Church of England over the last three years. While acknowledging that every Christian could not be an evangelist, he asserted that every Christian was a witness, “empowered by the Holy Spirit to tell the story of their encounter with Jesus Christ and share what they have experienced.”

He maintained that confirmation should not be viewed as an activity to boost numbers, but to embrace the Christian journey; and he implored the Synod to grow the body of Christ – the Church – by the depth of members’ spiritual lives.

The chief business in the morning session was the Annual General Meeting of the Jamaica Church Missionary Society (JCMS), of which all baptized Anglicans are members. The report was presented by JCMS Chairman, The Rt. Rev. Robert Thompson.

He stated that the Society was being challenged increasingly to maintain buildings, at great cost; and he highlighted the need for the Church to close some physical structures, in order to use its resources more effectively for mission. He also urged Rectors to work closely with the Church Army and the newly-commissioned Associate Evangelists to re-engage their congregations for Evangelism; and he applauded the efforts of Sister Phyllis Thomas, Director of Evangelism.

Bishop Thompson reported on ongoing initiatives to revitalize St. Alban’s Mission, Denham Town and Spot Valley Mission, Montego Bay; as well as the acquisition of a J\$7.8 million house from the National Housing Trust to accommodate the newly-established Longville Park Mission in Clarendon. He urged the full support of members across the Diocese, noting that funds would have to be raised to fence and secure the property.

The JCMS Chairman acknowledged the intervention at the 2014 Synod by Dr. Horace Phillips, through whom contributions of more than J\$400,000 were received. A moment’s silence was observed in memory of Dr. Phillips who died during the year. Bishop Thompson reported that the Society surpassed its budget for 2014 by J\$1.5 million; and he thanked top contributors, led by St. George’s Church, Grand Cayman, which gave approximately J\$479,000.00.

The Bishop informed the Synod of the upgrading of St. Agnes Mission in Grange, Hanover, from a Mission to a Settled Congregation and he piloted the resolution for the change in status, which was unanimously approved. Members of St. Agnes, who led the initiative to increase its membership and clear its debts, were presented to the Synod.

The JCMS Annual General Meeting ended with the Rev. Leroy Johnson leading members of the Synod in a dub poem/song entitled ***“You can’t be a beacon if your light don’t shine.”***

The next presentation was made by Dr. The Hon. Vincent Lawrence, Chairman of the Diocesan Property Advisory Board which was established by the Synod in 2009 with a mandate to spearhead the development of Diocesan properties to promote long-term growth and provide financial support for the Church's Mission and Ministry. Dr. Lawrence was assisted during the presentation by Mr. Ian Roxborough, who is contracted to develop the property data base, and he introduced the Property Development Manager, the Rev. Ralph "Jim" Parkes, both of whom serve in the Diocesan Property Development Unit which facilitates the Advisory Board's day-to-day work.

The following information on the Property Data Base, Property Development and Property Sales was included in the presentation:

- As at January 2015, 889 parcels of land were identified as belonging to the Diocese, with 459 in the Kingston Region; 239 in the Mandeville Region and 191 in the Montego Bay Region.
- Sixty-seven percent of these properties are Churches, Rectories, Church Halls, Missions, Cemeteries and Schools
- Sixty-seven percent of church lands are without registered titles
- The National Land Agency has validated a total 40% of the properties identified. In giving the breakdown, he said the process was completed for 74% of the properties in St. James; 88% in Kingston; 31% in St. Elizabeth and 17% in St. Mary.

However, Dr. Lawrence cautioned that security, protection and retention of church lands must be given more priority, and to this end, guidelines concerning property management have been issued to Rectors and Wardens to prevent unauthorized use of these lands.

He then gave the following update on property development: Construction of The Bailey Suites of apartments at Kensington Crescent in Kingston is scheduled for completion in June; the construction of super studios near to the University of the West Indies and the University of Technology is now awaiting approval from the Kingston & St. Andrew Corporation; and expansion of the St. Peter's Court apartment complex is now being planned. Other projects in the pipeline include the development of 35 acres of land adjoining St. Dorothy's Church, Old Harbour; and 100 acres in Orolands, near Sav-la-Mar, for commercial/residential use. He also announced plans to establish a new Diocesan camp site on Snowdon church lands in Newport, Mandeville. The former camp site in Negril and the property which once housed Elizabeth House for the elderly will be sold. Dr. Lawrence urged Cures to work with the Diocese to optimize the use of lands under their control.

Mr. Roxborough's presentation highlighted the web-based data base of Diocesan properties and he said Churches would receive passwords to facilitate access to this information.

Miss Claudette Marshall, Lay Representative from St. Luke's Church, Cross Roads, closed the morning session with a report on Outreach Programmes as presented in the Synod Handbook. While few reports in this category were received, she noted that the three Children's Homes had pointed to financial challenges. She suggested that, for best results, these institutions, as well as the Homes for the Aged, collaborate in formulating development plans and sharing best practices.

With respect to the Hospital Chaplaincy Programme, Miss Marshall pointed to the need for additional assistance and suggested that lay persons be trained for this ministry. She also urged congregations to demonstrate greater commitment to the Outreach Programmes by adopting a child, a home or a hospital.

Following lunch, there was an Awards Ceremony at which the contribution of Clergy and Church Workers who retired during the past year was recognized. The awardees were: The Venerable Edmund Davis, The Rev. A. Elizabeth Roach, The Rev. William Lindsay, The Rev. Horace Richards, The Rev. Harold Jones, and Sister Norma Thompson.

The following organizations also received plaques for their outstanding performance in 2014:

- St. George's Church, Grand Cayman – Lead Contributor, JCMS
- St. John the Baptist Church, Coleyville, Manchester – Outstanding Mothers' Union Branch
- St. Gabriel's Church, May Pen – Outstanding Brotherhood of St. Andrew Branch
- AYP St. Andrew – Area Council of the Year

The election of Diocesan Boards, Councils and Committees followed.

The afternoon session continued with a Youth presentation entitled **“Hello Are You Listening? Things I Want My Church To Understand.”** Panelists were: Dimitri Thompson – St. Jude's Church, Stony Hill; Kedon Glave – St. Silas Church, Troy, Trelawny; Audrian McFarlane – Church of the Ascension, Mona Heights; Peterkin Pusey – St. Peter's Church, Petersfield, Westmoreland; Ottieno Channer – The Church of St. Thomas, Lacovia, St. Elizabeth.

Points made included:

- Adults in churches should be more nurturing and less critical of youth
- Youth want to be a part of the decision-making process, especially when decisions concern them
- Church should be “a home away from home,” providing spiritual and moral guidance for the youth
- A desire to see changes in the Order of Service to accommodate more contemporary music

- The Book of Common Prayer and the CPWI Hymnal should be accessible electronically
- There should be greater tolerance on the part of both youth and adults. The conclusion – work with people who will work with you

The Rev. Fr. Michael Elliott, Rector of the Church of the Holy Spirit in Cumberland, Portmore, rounded off the discussion with a presentation on “**The Millennial Challenges**” in a world that is volatile, uncertain, contemptuous and ambiguous. He described the Millennials as a diverse group including well-educated, technologically savvy, and flexible persons who are not affiliated with the Church and have lost faith in this institution, but not in God. He charged that the Church needed to realign its vision in order to engage these persons, many of whom are committed to social justice causes, and he listed seven ways to attract them:

- Make the Church a place of service that demonstrates care for the society, and not only its members
- Speak honestly and be authentic
- Reflect the current diversity of neighbourhoods in which churches are located because the Gospel brings together people who are different
- Be open to institutional change
- Be “wired and online” in the virtual world where young people spend most of their time
- Recognise that this is a new mission field and whatever we do, never forget to preach Christ crucified and risen.

A new dimension was added to Evensong which followed under the leadership of Sister Molly Walton of the Church Army, ably assisted by her puppets.

The final session for the day was devoted to the second reading of the Canons to be amended. This was done by the Chancellor who said it was recommended that a new Canon – XXXVIII – be introduced to facilitate incorporation of the proposed Code of Conduct into the Canons. It was further proposed that the original Canon XXXVIII, relating to Discipline of the Clergy, be renumbered XXXVIII A.

The Acting Registrar, Peter Depass, presented an overview of the Code of Conduct which he said would provide visible guidelines for clergy, church workers and church personnel; direct their dealings with others; clarify ethical concerns and help to increase public confidence in the Church. The Code was drafted by a sub-committee of the Canons Committee.

THE FOURTH DAY – APRIL 10, 2015

The Synod's final worship session was led by the Mandeville Region. The Venerable Winston Thomas, Archdeacon and Administrator of the Mandeville Region, presided and delivered the Sermon at the sung Eucharist.

Using as his text John 21:6 & 7, Archdeacon Thomas asserted that the risen Lord comes to everyone at the level of their experience. He noted that Jesus had shown himself to his disciples on many occasions during the 40 days following his resurrection; and on each occasion, he assured them of his victory over death and sent them out to tell the news. Like the disciples who were fishing, he said Jesus comes to us while we are busy with the common tasks of life, and commands us to cast our nets.

He expressed the hope that we would "have the eyes to see him (Jesus) and respond to his gracious invitation and loving commandments." Noting that the disciples succeeded because they obeyed Jesus command to cast their nets on the other side of the boat after a frustrating night at sea, Archdeacon Thomas emphasized that there was no substitute for obedience. "Obedience to the living Lord produces harmony in life. Obedience to the living Lord brings fruitfulness and good success," he affirmed.

Amendments to Canons

The chief business for the morning was the third reading of proposed amendments to the Canons and discussion on the Code of Conduct. Bishop Gregory explained that the Code was necessary in light of developments in the Diocese that had attracted unfortunate media coverage. He said it was designed to protect clergy and laity, and set standards against which the church can be measured. The Lord Bishop noted that following approval of the Code, the Diocesan Council would amend sections, as required, undertake a sensitization programme across the Diocese and set the date for its implementation. The Code was overwhelmingly approved by the Synod.

The following Canons were also approved by the Synod:

- Canon XXVIII, Article 4A: Of Removal of Clergy
- Canon XXXVIII, Article 6, Sections 3 & 4: Of Discipline of the Clergy – to allow the Bishop greater flexibility in disciplinary matters, rather than always having to resort to an ecclesiastical court
- Canon XXVIII, Article 11: Of Removal of Clergymen – to provide that in the event of a decision to remove clergy, the Bishop shall be under no obligation to provide an alternative assignment

- Canon XXIX: Of Clerical Duties – to put in place a mechanism for congregations, through the Church Committee, to make a written complaint to the Bishop concerning their Rector
- Canon VIII, Article 12A: Of Finance – to allow Diocesan Officers to become signatories on Church accounts where there is reason to believe that the finances are not being managed in accordance with the Canons
- Canon VIII, Article 15A: Of Finance – to allow the intervention of an oversight team to assist Cures that are not compliant in the management of their financial obligations

Election Results & Appointments

The results of elections to the following Diocesan Boards, Committees and Councils, held on Day 3, were announced:

- The Board of Nominations
- The Canons Committee
- The Diocesan Council
- The Diocesan Financial Board
- The Church Army Council

Members of the following Committees and Boards were also announced:

- The Board of Mission & Ministry
- The Education & Youth Board
- The Diocesan Schools' Trust
- The Jamaica Church Missionary Society
- The Nuttall Memorial Hospital Trust & Board
- The Hillcrest Diocesan Retreat Centre
- The Anglican Church Insurance Fund
- The Committee to deal with Applications for Re-Marriage of Divorced Persons
- Representatives to Provincial Synod

Rural Deans

Rural Deans for 2015 were named as follows:

- Kingston: The Very Rev. Dr. Alton Tulloch
- St. Andrew: The Very Rev. Franklyn Jackson
- St. Mary: The Very Rev. Canon Charles Manderson
- Portland: The Very Rev. Vinton Greene
- St. Thomas: The Very Rev. Jean Fairweather-Wilson
- Portmore: The Very Rev. Robert McLean
- St. Catherine: The Very Rev. Canon Collin Reid
- Clarendon: VACANT

- Manchester: The Very Rev. Barrington Soares
- St. Elizabeth: The Very Rev. Peter D. Clarke
- St. Ann: The Very Rev. Richard Tucker
- Trelawny: VACANT
- St. James/Hanover: The Very Rev. Annett Brown
- Westmoreland: The Very Rev. Hartley Perrin

Vacancies

Bishop Gregory announced that several vacancies were imminent for Principals of Diocesan High Schools. However, he warned that being Anglican was not enough, and he said that persons aspiring for these jobs would be required to pursue the Ministry of Education’s training programme designed to raise standards in secondary institutions.

Bishop’s Closing Remarks

Bishop Gregory said that the theme for the Synod highlighted the fact that the Church was moving into new territory. He stated that there was no running from change or the difficulties it brings, and he urged members to engage the current challenges, as expressed by the youth and other presenters.

The Lord Bishop said that despite the emergence of new churches and new religious expressions, mainline denominations were expected to offer the spiritual depth that many people still sought. He asserted that there was no need to retreat, but to give new expression to our tradition and roots. The Bishop said it was regrettable that some churches will close, but he urged the Synod to seize the exciting adventure, rather than mope.

He thanked clergy, laity and officers of the Diocese; as well as, visiting presenters, members of the Secretariat and the hotel’s staff for their role in the successful conduct of the Synod.

Bishop Thompson in turn, thanked Bishop Gregory for his leadership and patience as President of the Synod.

The proceedings were officially closed with the Lord Bishop’s blessing and the singing of the Doxology.