

Diocesan Synod 26th September 2020 – Report back from breakout group Ebba:

1. What really matters?
 - a. furthering the Kingdom
 - b. making sure everyone is heard. We had a concern that the loudest voices would be the ones that were listened to and that small poor Parishes may not be heard.
 - c. The need to remember that Parishes are 'poor' in different contexts – there is a difference between the inner-city ones and the rural ones.

2. If the High Street is said to have too many shops, perhaps we can say we have too many Churches (or rather Church buildings). Some will help build the Kingdom and some will not. Some have a means of providing an income stream – which has dried up in a Covid world – but some do not. We need to think about getting rid of some Church buildings.

3. We feel a little disturbed by some of the things said. There is an implication that some Parishes have 'failed' in not being able to pay their Parish Share. This despite them having put huge effort into trying. Whilst accepting there may be some who haven't tried, no-one should be made to feel a failure if they've worked hard.

4. We need to be more creative in trying to raise money and remember we are part of a larger community. We should look beyond the walls of the Church and draw there. It's not just about asking the people who walk through the doors to dig deeper. Involving a wider audience could bear fruit – money comes when people feel involved.

5. It's important to maintain a presence in every community with Parishes resourced to deliver – not just with clergy but with trained lay people too.

In summary:

What matters is listening to everybody and hearing the 'still small voice'.

We should be outward looking – concerned about links to other organisations.

We should be bold, be imaginative, be honest and not lose sight of God