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St. Albans' parishes prepare action plan.

An open meeting convened yesterday in St. Albans diocese considered a range of issues arising from the Diocesan Bishop's support for the appointment of the new Dean of the Cathedral.

Over 70 clergy and laity were present and 17 others had sent indications of support. Thirty-seven parishes were represented.

Having received reports from a number of members who had recently met with the Bishop, considerable concern was expressed and in particular the following issues were discussed.

1. That the Bishop's action has caused a breakdown of trust and divided the Diocese impinging upon the desire of the Bishop to be seen as a focus of unity.
2. The possibility of seeking alternative Episcopal oversight.
3. The ability of parishes to pay parish share (quota) in the light of lay giving being redirected and members leaving the Church of England.

Reports were received of PCCs considering withholding or suspending parish share commitments.

There was agreement that the grace and glory of the gospel of Christ is being undermined by the issues underlying this appointment.

The Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship, which convened the meeting, was asked to take appropriate action to pursue the matters raised and to work with other evangelical organisations not least to reaffirm the traditional Christian teaching on marriage.

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