Note of a meeting of the [Inclusive Church] Synod 2015 campaign group, held on 8 December 2013, at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church.

Present: Giles Goddard (IC), Bob Callaghan (IC), Simon Sarmiento (IC), Robert Hammond (Aff Cath), Dorothea Hackman (London WATCH), Rachel Beck (IC), Mike Dark (EFLGC and current LGBTAC chair), Savi Hensman (LGCM) Paul Edelin (GRAS), Michael Skinner (SCP), Dan Barnes-Davis (Young IC)

Apologies: Guy Elsmore (MC), Colin Coward (CA), Sally Barnes (WATCH)

1. GG welcomed those present. Prayers were led by DB-D. Introductions were made. Notes of the previous meeting were accepted.
2. SS noted that since the last meeting, it had become clear that the women bishops legislation was likely to win final approval well before the 2015 GS election, which meant that a primary focus of the latter would now be on issues relating to the Pilling report, which had surprisingly already been published.
3. In discussion, those present agreed that the campaign still needed to be broadly based addressing inclusivity in a wide sense, with many issues of discrimination against women clergy remaining, not to mention racial prejudice within the church and similar issues relating to the disabled, the poor and mental health matters. It was agreed that the campaign TITLE should be simply “Synod 2015” although the detailed material should list all the names of supporting organisations. **ACTION:** **GG** agreed to write to the new chair of WATCH seeking clarification on their involvement, which would be welcomed.
4. Further discussion on how the campaign materials should be re-focused led to the following conclusions:
	1. Although the November 2012 vote failure should not be made too much of, since the outcome now under debate was in fact a win-win improvement over what had been rejected, this experience had shown how unrepresentative GS members often were of diocesan opinion.
	2. The recent GS vote against any change to the GS electorate away from Deanery Synod members should be played up as a vote of confidence in the Deanery Synod membership as the best way forward to represent the grass roots of the CofE.
	3. The campaign manifesto should articulate a broad **theological** basis for supporting “liberal” causes within the church.
	4. Use should be made of the ABC’s various quotes about the importance of inclusivity.

**ACTION: DH** agreed to take these ideas and revise the existing materials.

1. In relation to the 2014 Deanery Synod elections, the key problem was getting new people to stand at all, and to welcome contested elections at a PCC, rather than specific issues. Many intelligent lay people simply do not see the value of engaging with synodical structures at all. The importance of Deanery Synods at this juncture of the life of the CofE had to be stressed over and over again. GG mentioned an excellent leaflet on this prepared by NADAWM – copy attached to these minutes, and it was agreed that wherever possible we should offer to share the costs of distribution of all such efforts.
2. In relation to the 2015 General Synod elections, the key issue was to increase the voting turnout among elected DS members, many of whom have not historically exercised this key right of membership. It was important to encourage attendance at election hustings in every diocese, and to provide DS members with materials to help them understand the coded language often used in election addresses.
3. It was agreed that a campaign website should be established, **ACTION: SS, assisted by BC and DB-D.**
4. The list of key dioceses was reviewed. Many actions here remain outstanding and need to be renewed, see below. SS raised the question of reviewing the list in the light of the shift away from the women bishops issue, which was the sole basis on which it had originally been constructed. To be an agenda item for the next meeting.
	1. *Blackburn – SS had visited Chris Newlands*
	2. *Chelmsford – RH reported a local group was now established*
	3. *Chichester - attempts to engage via CHALICE had failed;* ***SS*** *now to contact Keith Sharpe*
	4. *Guildford – GG had talked to Hilary and Robert Cotton*
	5. *London - DH reported on how hard it was to obtain lists of email addresses from official sources*
	6. *Peterborough – SS still to engage*
	7. *Rochester –BC to engage, local people reported to be waiting for National WATCH guidance*
	8. *Sheffield RB had engaged and would visit within the next few weeks.*
	9. *West Yorkshire and Dales – SS to engage (should this new diocese be included?)*
	10. *Winchester – BC had visited*
5. Mailing lists
	1. SS had not yet established the larger email list with all diocesan contacts and local group leaders included. This will be put in place before Christmas **ACTION: SS**
	2. It was noted that this method of local diocesan contacts was key to the recent No Covenant campaign, and it was suggested that Lesley Crawley, the former NAC coordinator, should be contacted for advice about why that campaign was so successful. **Action: GG**
	3. **ACTION: ALL to send contact details to Simon so that he can update list, and add anyone else who they think should be on the list.**

1. Budget promises now total about £10.5 K. We have £4.5K available shortly. Increased promises were likely to come from AffCath and IC.
2. It was agreed that the campaign should proceed to employ a consultant for 15 days in early 2014 to work on the Deanery Synod phase of the campaign. A notice will be put out, and interviews held on 8 January, with GG, SS and DH as the panel. **Action: GG**
3. It was agreed that the next meeting should be on Saturday 25 January as an adjunct to the already scheduled IC Partnership Day. Details of venue and time to be issued. **Action: GG**
4. The meeting concluded with The Grace.

SS/ 11 December 2013