

Report to Methodist Recorder

DARLINGTON DISTRICT AUTUMN SYNOD

The Darlington District Synod met at Staindrop School near Barnard Castle. The theme of the day continued a series of presentations on the various ministries within the Church and their combined use to meet our mission in the many varied areas of the District. Following on from last Synod's discussions about Diaconal ministry, Mrs Gill Dascombe, a former Vice President of Conference, spoke on the ministry of lay people. Recognising that we are all part of the laity, Gill identified and challenged us to consider the ministry of those not called to be ordained, both employed and volunteers, all serving the church as part of the whole people of God, all members of the team.

In the discussion time Gill challenged us to identify the roles of lay people in our church and community, consider the support and training structures we provide for these ministries and to see how, together, the ministry of ordained, employed and volunteer, support one another in the church's ministry to those in the community and beyond.

Maria Layfield from Action for Children outlined the Independent Volunteering Scheme and the valuable work which was done by people volunteering alongside young people. Stuart Nimmo from Together Middlesborough and Cleveland, outlined this ecumenical social justice project which empowers local people to be involved in their local area. Both speakers enhanced our theme of looking at the diversity of lay ministry and its value in the church.

The Conference Representatives presented Synod with a variety of reports beginning with the Presidential theme of Holiness and Justice and ending with references from the excellent report of the Secretary of Conference which had inspired the delegates.

The District's partnership links with the Miathene Synod in Kenya were strengthened during closing worship when Rev Janet Park, Superintendent of the North Yorkshire Dales Circuit, presented Mrs Debs Coggrave, Convenor of the Miathene Synod Link Team, with a banner to be taken on the next visit to Kenya as a gift from the District.