

Summary of Progress in contending by a Supportive Minister in Oxford diocese

- We have **clarified our theological and pastoral position on matters of sexuality, gender and identity** and we have invested time over the past 5yrs to strengthen people's confidence in the wisdom and clarity of God's good design, as revealed in his word. This has been done through a variety of channels, including a 4 week seminar series on '*A Better Story*' by Glynn Harrison and ongoing teaching on the doctrine of Scripture.
- **As a PCC we are united in our position** re: marriage & sexuality and on the need to contend for the faith with our bishops/diocese. We've expressed this by voting unanimously to pass a resolution which sets out our theological and pastoral position in support of an historic, orthodox view of marriage and the authority of the Scriptures.
- In keeping with the above, our **bishops are not welcome** to preach, administer the sacraments, or confirmation here (i.e. our fellowship with them is impaired).
- We have **established a working group** to take the lead on our response to PLF and related issues and to make recommendations on policy/practice to the PCC.
- Our PCC has voted to pay our **parish share** via the Oxford Good Stewards Trust, rather than directly to the diocese, which enables us to stand together with other like-minded churches. To begin with, we have continued granting our parish share in full to the diocese, via OGST. However, as a PCC we have also decided to review our parish share payment going forward with a view to paying only what we feel able to do so in good conscience. Discussions/calculations are underway (internally) and we are due to finalise our decision-making in the coming weeks.
- We've been **working with other evangelical churches in our diocese** to make use of the work they have already done on this and to stand with them before our bishops. We're grateful to God for the opportunity to work together more closely with them and for their generosity in sharing experience/information with us.
- As a church, we are **coming from further back, but by God's grace we are making good progress**. We are hopeful that the PCC will decide to significantly reduce its parish share contribution and that doing so will send a clear message to our bishops re: the seriousness of the situation they have created.
- Our intention is that any **funds withheld from our full parish share amount would then be used to support orthodox gospel ministry**, so we will continue to give generously to the work of the gospel.
- We are **supported by a separate charitable trust setup some years ago** to help to steward resources faithfully.
- Our **Senior Minister has requested Alternative Spiritual Oversight via CEEC** and that is now being provided by a respected church leader who has been a great encouragement to me personally. We expect our other clergy to follow suit in the coming months.
- Our **diocesan bishop has given the go-ahead for our curate to be ordained presbyter at a separate service of ordination in September** (he was ordained deacon last year in an alternative, orthodox ordination service).