

**CELESTIAL CHURCH OF CHRIST  
UNITED KINGDOM Diocese**

*Address*

*by the Secretary to the Board of Trustees,  
Superior Evangelist B. Oyelakin*

**AT THE DIOCESE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
held on SATURDAY, January 5, 2019**

**VENUE: CCC Diocesan Headquarters,  
CCC Harton Street, London SE8 4DQ**

My dear fathers, mothers and fellow workers in Christ,

It is with enormous and deepest pleasure that I welcome you all to the 2018 Annual General Meeting of our much treasured diocese, the UK/N. Ireland Diocese. I am especially happy that this church is able to count on our shared heritage of service to God towards the celebration of His grace in the life our noble diocese at this yuletide season. To God be the glory for evermore amen.

Before I go any further, may I congratulate all for the merger of our two erstwhile dioceses A and B. This on its own is an achievement on our part as a diocese; as it pitches the diocese at the level of a mega church. In terms of numbers of the parishes, this merger has yielded a total of almost 100 parishes; which must offer abundant potential for our successful take off to the next level. I congratulate the Head of Diocese, Venerable Superior Evangelist Amos Fatusin, his lieutenants, the Executive Governing Council, and indeed the whole Diocese for where our journey of fifty years or so has led us.

About ten years ago or so this year I took up the mantle of post of the Secretary to the Board of Trustees (BOT) In this humble capacity, I have been privileged to witness the growth and development of the diocese from close quarters. Also as the humble author of a book of history of Celestial Church of Christ at large and of Celestial Church of Christ in the United Kingdom, which latter reviews in a nutshell the growth of the church from April 1968 to date, I have been privileged to have at least a bird's eye view of the growth and development of this mighty church which it has pleased the Lord to descend to the world for the salvation of the souls of mankind.

In this context I am able to observe just in what sense CCC is one; i.e. the pervading uniformity of its tradition. This is the reason in my view, why, in spite of the schisms, and the court cases, the church has not imploded. It is certainly the key reason that keeps the hope alive of eventually becoming one.

Ours is for a noble cause, a cause that our fathers in the past have lived and died for. From the Pastor Founder Papa Oshoffa to Revd Pastors Bada, Ajose and Papa Ajanlekoko. Their lives were fashioned after the spirit and model of Jesus Christ, living in love, joy, peace,

longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and truth. Their lives are a challenge to us all, to focus on our discipline, matters of love, longsuffering, truth, and unity.

Areas of concern.

1. Harvest Thanksgiving services. I have raised my concerns on this icon of the church tradition before. These include the way half of the year is taken up by this tradition. This is to the detriment of other laudable initiatives. It satisfies our culture to sing, dance and be merry, but at what cost? At what opportunity costs given what alternative worthy causes are crying for our action? We need to be aware of the aggregate cost of hire of halls; cost of transport; environmental pollution such as noise and car parking difficulties. It tends to cost so much that in my view it is only the larger parishes which own their church auditorium which break even. In the absence of any guidelines for the harvests parishes are increasingly not staying true to the original objectives of the festival and in the absence of guidelines and supervision what is going on may soon catch the eyes of the BBC 2 television documentary in the manner of October 12 1994 fashion.

2. Over the years we have been rather complacent, in my view in the way the property has been handled as resource investment, and on a particular occasion the diocese came very near to losing the property to the bank. Otherwise by and large we have kept the property in a good state of repair but the potential to use it for investment has hardly been explored. Rather we have tended to fund our various other expenses as if we could not have survived or funded such other expenses without income derived from Billington Road Property. We will need to remember that given that the property was bought during Pastor Ajose's era or it would be fanciful other factions of our church apart from ours to stake a claim to the property.

Given that property ownership is vested in the Board of Trustees of a charity, it will be suggested that provision be made in our Constitution as will be amended to give the general meeting the final say in major matters, such as sale or remortgaging, appertaining to the property.

3. Budgeting – It will be fitting for the Diocese to move to a budget system, with the Annual Budget approved within the first quarter of the year.

4. Review of our Constitution: Our Articles of Association, Memorandum of Association and Deed of Charitable Trust have not been reviewed for a long time. For example, our Deed of Charitable Trust was last reviewed/updated in 2006. In the process these governing documents tend to say different things on particular subjects, such as how long a Trustee serves; the role of the Pastor in appointing Trustees; and such like. A root and branch review will be required, including areas which are not presently covered, such as the involvement and role of women; provision for review. May I advise that the interest of the Diocese has to be protected in its relations with Lagos. Lagos means well but they cannot be blamed for not possessing a comprehensive understanding of the totality of our life and environment. No doubt we should play our part in supporting the completion of the Imeko Basilica; and yes we should pay our pastoral dues. Otherwise the first claim on the equity should serve the needs of

worshippers in this country which are myriad, and worthy causes in this country in keeping with our core objectives. And please note that when the push comes to the shove the Diocese is on its own. We were on our own on October 12, 1994 during the BBC 2 programme titled 'White Church Black Magic'. We were on our own during the various litigations that have plagued the diocese over the years; and any attempt that Lagos had made to exercise an influence had yielded little positive effect, to put it mildly.

5. Mission for the Church to cleanse the world – Our Church, descended and ordained to cleanse the world, and with a worldwide spread, has no articulated approach of outreach to people outside of those of black West African origin in diaspora. We are even unable to keep black Africans of Franco Phone origin. We are not inclusive and do not appreciate the barriers before others of different race and culture who need to be supported to feel at home. Our 'revivals' which we invariably describe as 'awesome' (and in some respects actually are), are for our own consumption. We are addressing the already converted. They are little compared with the tradition of our Christian fathers – Charles Welsey; Oral Roberts; Pa Moses Orimolade Tunolashe; Our Prophet Pastor Founder SBJ Oshoffa; Pa Benson Idahosa; Pa Obadare. These our fathers actually went out there to reach out to the people, including many who were only later to be converted.

#### **Suggested Way Forward**

It is fortuitous that we have the Diocese carved into 8 Provinces. It is suggested that each of the Province be given an action area to oversee on behalf of the Diocese. In this way we will move the dioceses forward and fast and along many fronts simultaneously at no extra cost. In this approach we will require to include the biggest of our parishes which have not been included in any of the provinces, such as White City, Covenant and Elephant and Castle. They would have to be allocated specific action areas. These Action Areas include but are not limited to:-

**A. Health and Safety. Policies and Procedures, including H & S Training**

**B. Support for society in the area of addiction;**

**C. Support for society in the area of poverty and homelessness**

**D. Safe guarding Matters, responsibility under the law**

**E. Diocesan prayer warriors, serving the public at large**

**F. Conflict Resolution and Management**

**G. Charity; charitable donations and action**

**I. Training; etc etc etc**

**J Investment, possibly involving hire of consultants**

**Above approach should move us fast and away from ground zero. If adopted Provinces will only be required to feed back on the action areas allocated to them, not whether they have held revival and night vigils, which they hold anyway.**

**As I have written in the first paragraphs of this address, that I have been privileged to be the Secretary to the Diocese Board of Trustee for about the last ten years, and given the matter of age, I would like to formally notify the General House that this will be my last address in this capacity as I have decided to resigned from this position. Added to the length of time in the position, which is beyond what the constitution stipulates, and age at over 75; it is also appropriate to give the new administration an opportunity to fill this rather strategic with a new person.**

**May I now seize this opportunity to thank the HOD, Ven Sup Evang Dr Olabode Fatusin; Assist. Venerable Superior Evangelists JO Shebioba, my other fathers, mothers and fellow workers in the vineyard for their invaluable support both spiritually and physically, which had enabled me to carry out the job with the measure of success which we have achieved through the collective effort of all. We are all co stakeholders and we will continue to prosper in our work in unity and love and honesty of purpose. On my part I respect and appreciate and love you all for the opportunity which I have been given to serve. For me, it has indeed been a great honour and privilege.**

**I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and prosperous New Year 2019 in advance.**

**Remain Blessed In Jesus Name amen**