

READING DEANERY SYNOD

Minutes of the 9th meeting of the 2011 - 2014 Synod.

Held at Earley St Nicholas Church, Earley on Thursday 14th March 2013 at 20.00 hours

Present:

Clergy	Lay members	Apologies	
The Revd Canon B Shenton (Chair)	Mr Peter Jeal (Chair)	Dr Diana Matthews	The Revd Adam Carlill
The Revd Derek Chandler	Mr Stuart Beck	Mrs Dru Maynard	The Revd Nicholas Cheeseman
The Revd Penny Cuthbert	Mr Derek Benham	Dr Sally-Ann McDowell	The Revd Leon Collyer
The Revd Margaret Dimmick	Mrs Anne Bingham	Prof John Missenden	The Revd Graeme Fancourt
The Revd Pads Dolphin	Mr Mark Burton	Dr Christopher Mott	The Revd Chris Leslie
The Revd David Harris	Mr Michael Charles	Mrs Sue Mott	The Revd Eddie Orme
The Revd Dan Heyward	Mrs Rosemary Cooper	Mr Ian Mullins	The Revd John Rogers
The Revd Pete Jarvis	Mr Ken Deane	Mrs Marian Pitman	The Revd Jon Salmon
The Revd Mark Laynesmith	Mr Robert Dimmick	Mrs Janet Potter	The Revd Jeremy Tear
The Revd Graham Lunn	Mr Mike Eggleton	Mr David Potter	
The Revd Eddie Marquez	Mr David Fulford	Mrs Jenny Searle	Mrs Patricia Brazill
The Revd Vernon Orr	Mr John Goddard	Mr Hugh Simpson	Mr David Cox
The Revd Sean Riordan	Mr Trevor Greaves	Ms Nicki Tinniswood	Ms Chantell Haig
The Revd Denis Smith	Mrs Margaret Jeal	Dr Elaine Watts	Ms Mary Hudson
The Revd Derek Spears	Dr Alison Johnston	Miss Joan Walker	Mrs Sheila Jordan
The Revd Maurice Stanton Saringer	Mr Jim Johnson	Mr Anthony White	Ms Jane Lewis
The Revd Dan Tyndall	Mr Alfred Kolawole	Mr Nicholas White	Mrs Pat Nash
The Revd Neil Warwick	Dr John Ledger		Mr David Paine
			Mr Peter Politzer
			Dr Tony Pretlove
			Mr Les Pullen
			Mr Peter Shirley-Quirk
			Mrs May Smith
			Mr Gordon Summers
			Dr Andrew Taylor
			Ms Helen Terry
			Mrs Sue Varley
			Ms Gillian Wilson
			Mr Brian Wynn

Welcome:

Mr Peter Jeal welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Opening Prayers:

The Revd. Neil Warwick led a short opening worship with reflection through meadow scenes.

Minutes of the last Synod:

Minutes of the Synod held on 26th November 2012, previously circulated were agreed with the following amendments having been received and circulated on the agenda for the March 2013 meeting:

- a) Present: Mr Hugh Simpson
- b) Apologies had been sent by: The Revd Jeremy Tear and Mrs Margaret Jeal

Matters Arising:

None.

Notices:

- a) Area Dean – none.

- b) **Lay Chair** – Mr Peter Jeal was pleased to report the Deanery had achieved 100% payment of its Parish Share and the rebate distributed to churches which had achieved their targets of 20% paid by the end of May, 50% by end of June and 100% by the end of November.
- c) **Treasurer** – Joan Walker outlined the following forthcoming changes:
Gift Aid: This will be totally online from 22nd April this year. It is recommended that parishes make an interim claim during the summer. As from April any amount of £20 or less donated to the church can be aggregated to a total of £5000 per church and can be claimed back over the last two years. More information about this is due out mid March on HMRC <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities.htm>

Staff: From 6th April there will be real time information to HRMC, which means every payment to any employed member of staff must be submitted on line, either on or before the day of payment. It is recommended that a payroll bureau may be the easiest way for churches to do this such as “the independent examiners ltd”. Experience from churches doing this inform us that the cost per individual is minimal and may be as low as £1.50 per employee if the person is below the tax threshold. £10 if a taxpayer.
<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/payerti/getting-started/payee-basics/rti.htm#2>

Supplies: Many churches are now purchasing supplies via the parish resources web site and appreciate the value of this.
<http://www.parishbuying.org.uk/>

Energy: As from September energy supplies will also be able to be purchased from the same source as supplies, the downside of this is that it is not green energy but if there is enough demand then the company will explore and plan to bring in a green energy supply . Because of bulk buying the cost is estimated to be 10% below what any church currently pays. There is a need to sign up by the end of June 2013 even if your current contract ends after that time.
<http://www.parishbuying.org.uk/>

Presentation of Annual Accounts 2012:

Joan Walker presented the accounts as examined and approved by Mr Nick Pitman and previously circulated to members, explaining some points which may not be immediately clear - *Expenditure:* was frugal, in the main due to the generosity of those who gave their time and covered their own expenses. The main expenditure in running the Deanery was the BBQ, which also explains the donation to Earley Scouts as they kindly did the cooking..

Projects fund: no money had been transferred into this fund for 3 years so it felt right that we should input into it during 2012.

Once again we are indebted to donations from the *St Laurence Church Lands Trust and Archbishop Laud Fund* as this money, intended as paying the stipend of the incumbent of St Laurence & the Minster, goes into Parish Share.

Balance Sheet: There were less Quinquennial inspections this year, hence the reduced fees outstanding, plus most churches had paid their fees to the Deanery ahead of the year end and were thanked for this.

The current account looks dramatically less at the end of 2012 as funds had been used to pay the outstanding Parish Share to enable us to gain the Deanery rebate. Approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the money deposited in the Liquidity manager account had been paid out to churches as rebate during January 2013, and in repaying Greyfriars church which kindly paid an amount in 2011 to enable us to get the Deanery rebate at that time, with some being repaid back to the current account. To date it is only retained monies in the Liquidity manager account.

The Revd Mark Laynesmith expressed his thanks for the Deanery gift to the work of the Chaplaincy at Reading University.

Joan proposed adoption of the 2012 accounts, seconded by Mrs Jenny Searle which were approved unanimously.

Presentation of the Reading Deanery Mission and Ministry Plan:

Mr Peter Jeal presented the plan as previously circulated to members, noting that there had been some further minor changes and the need for Synod to approve the plan before it was presented at the Archdeaconry Pastoral Committee meeting on 18th March.

He explained the use of the Church Urban fund statistics currently but, for the future, statistics currently being produced by Experian would be used as these would be updated quarterly; the intention of St Mary Minster to become a Modern Minster; clergy allocations and the likelihood a further decrease in numbers.

The Revd Canon Brian Shenton presented a précis of a larger document he had prepared concerning transforming St Mary's into a Modern Minster. He outlined the history of the Minster and recognized that it would take time to let go of some tasks and take on the new role. For Structure and Governance the Minster would be in the Parish of St Lawrence and developed as a commitment to the town. The guardianship would be with its worshipping community. Its current Parochial Church council would be dissolved and a Management Committee formed. Stakeholders and friends would play a significant role as the Minster sought to show a different commitment to faith in the town.

Mr Peter Jeal assured member of the support from Bishop Andrew and Bishop John. In the future the Area Dean position was likely to be away from the Minster therefore an extra clergy position had been requested to give 50% of time to the parish where the Area Dean was based and 50% as a Parish Development Officer as outreach from the Minster and the Deanery. This was to recognize that parish work outside of the Minster required a greater commitment than that of the small numbers of people within the current parish of St Mary's.

Peter detailed the changes made, most were as a result of feedback from parishes, these included Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham; St Mark and All Saints; St Birinus; St Matthews; the Woodley area and Loddon Reach.

He went on to explain challenges faced in the future starting with the viable church criteria and that Holy Trinity fell into this category. It was not practical to merge with an adjoining parish. so it has been agreed, in conjunction with Bishop Andrew and the Bishop of Ebbsfleet, to close it. It is proposed that the Parish is disbanded and split between All Saints or Greyfriars with the boundary along Oxford roads. The Parishioners will be helped to go to a local Parish appropriate to their worship needs.

The future of Caversham Park Ecumenical Partnership is unknown at this time and will need to be considered, probably later this year.

St John and St Stephen is steadily growing, whilst St Luke with St Bartholomew has just had a new incumbent appointed. Christ Church is struggling financially and in suspension It currently is in an interregnum and recruitment of a priest in charge is in progress. If Christ Church can not achieve growth and financial viability joining with one or more churches may be the way forward for the future.

Although St Giles has a small Electoral Roll it will be the only church in Reading which has passed resolutions A, B and C therefore important to retain.

Woodley Airfield Church became a daughter church of St John, Woodley a long time ago but has remained very small. Its main ministry support is given by the Methodists..

Deanery Synod members then expressed a variety of opinions which generated lengthy discussion including:

- The time frame on the plan is completely wrong
- The plan should be a bottom up approach not top down
- Why the plan was passed by the Deanery Standing Committee when it had not been to parishes for consultation
- Questioning if endorsing it would make it harder to change in the future
- Statistics inaccurate
- The significance of the document to the Diocese

- A plan indicates things to do, the document as it stands is current status therefore not a plan and needs a name change to add Deanery thinking to the wording.
- If Christchurch is joined with St Giles and St Luke with St Bartholomew the geography is wrong
- The Methodist circuit has similar problems but people need to be helped to work together to promote the Gospel.
- Members would have appreciated seeing the whole document relating to the Modern Minster appreciating that it was an appendix to the Plan.
- Should the plan not have priority guidelines over one to five years?

Peter responded that he too would have preferred to have worked on this once the parishes had their own Mission and Ministry plans prepared but had been forced to meet the Diocese time table which was very restrictive. He clarified that it was an ongoing document and not one that was written in stone once for all time. He appreciated the view put forward and answered as may as possible.

After considerable discussion a vote was taken with 2 members in favour the rest against with no abstentions.

Professor John Missenden then proposed that Synod 'note' the document for it to proceed to the Archdeaconry Pastoral Committee but then have it referred back to the Deanery. This was seconded by Robert Dimmick and passed by a majority with six against.

Peter Jeal was thanked for the work he had put into it recognising the need to please parishes and the Diocese.

Presentation of the New Parish share Scheme:

This was postponed to the next meeting due to the overrunning of the previous item.

Date of Next Meeting:

No date has yet been arranged but a date in May is planned and will be circulated as soon as possible.

Signed

(chair)

Date