

READING DEANERY SYNOD

Minutes of the 2nd meeting of the 2014 - 2017 Synod. Held in the Morlais Room at St Michael's Church, New Lane Hill, Tilehurst on Tuesday 16th September 2014 at 20.00 hours

Present:

Clergy		Lay members	Apologies
The Revd Nicholas Cheeseman	Mr Peter Jeal (Chair)	Mrs Margaret Lowe	<u>NSM – PTO Apologies</u>
The Revd Joy Atkins	Mr Ayo Akintoye	Mrs Katy Lyne	The Revd Colin Bass
The Revd Derek Chandler	Mrs Anne Barnes	Mrs Jane Masson	The Revd Peter Grosse
The Revd Penny Cuthbert	Mr Tony Bartlett	Prof John Missenden	The Revd Eddie Orme
The Revd Margaret Dimmick	Mr Ian Bate	Mrs Pamela Patman	
The Revd Dr Peter Day	Mrs Jane Borgeaud	Miss Alison Peyton	<u>Lay members</u>
The Revd Dr Graeme Fancourt	Mrs Patricia Brazil	Ms Marion Pitman	Mrs Gill Adams
The Revd Nigel Jones	Mr Graeme Buick	Mr Les Pullen	Mrs Pat Almond
The Revd Jane Lewis	Mr Mark Burton	Mr Chris Rimmer	Mr Orazio Camaioni
The Revd Sam McNally-Cross	Mrs Anne Cheeseman	Mr Kim Slater	Mr David Cox
The Revd John Rogers	Mr Andrew Cobb	Mr Ralph Taylor	Mr Trevor Greaves
The Revd Chris Russell	Mrs Rosemary Cooper	Mr Bill Watts	Mrs Pauline Harris
The Revd Jonathan Salmon	Mr John Cull	Dr Elaine Watts	Dr John Ledger
The Revd Mike Smith	Mr John Davies	Miss Joan Walker	Mrs Carolyn Lobley
The Revd Jeremy Tear	Mr Brian Day	Mrs Alison Whitaker	Dr Diana Matthews
14	Mr Robert Dimmick	Mr Tony White	Dr Sally-Ann McDowell
<u>NSM – PTO</u>	Mrs Jane Fulford	Mr Nicholas White	Dr Christopher Mott
0	Dr Philip Giddings		Mrs Sue Mott
	Mr Mark Hinckley		Mr David Paine
<u>Clergy Apologies</u>	Mrs Margaret Jeal		Mr David Potter
The Revd Neil Warwick	Mr Steve Jenkins		Mrs Janet Potter
The Revd Adam Carlill	Mr Ako Kolawole		Mrs May Smith
The Revd Leon Collyer		39	Mrs Ann Taylor
The Revd Pads Dolphin			Mrs Hilary Wynn
The Revd David Harris			
The Revd Dan Heyward			
The Revd Nick Jackson			
The Revd Chris Leslie			
The Revd Graham Lunn			
The Revd Eddie Marquez			
The Revd Vernon Orr			
The Revd David Pickersgill			
The Revd Sean Riordan			

Welcome:

Mr Peter Jeal welcomed everyone to the 3rd Meeting of the Deanery Synod and clarified the agenda.

Opening Prayers:

Revd John Rogers led the opening prayers focusing on the meeting and its goals. He also promoted the Flower Festival to be held at St Michael's, details of which are on the St Michael's website.

Minutes of the last Synod:

Minutes of the Synod held on 1st July 2014, previously circulated were agreed.

Matters Arising, not covered elsewhere in agenda: none

Notices:

- a) **Assistant Area Deans** – The Revd Nicholas Cheeseman welcomed Sam McNally-Cross as the new Curate based at St Giles..
- b) **Lay Chair** - Peter Jeal announced the Licensing of The Revd Stephen Pullin as Priest-in-charge of St Mary, Minster and Installation as Area Dean which was to take place on Thursday 18th September at the Minster at 7.30pm when all were welcome to attend.
He also reminded parishes of the need to complete their mission returns.
- c) **Treasurer** – nothing to report
- d) **Secretary** – Joan asked for further help in delivering the Deanery Profile booklets and announced the flyers for the Royal County of Berkshire Churches Trust Christmas cards.

Presentation by The Archdeacon of Berkshire

Mr Peter Jeal welcomed the Venerable Olivia Graham as Archdeacon of Berkshire and invited her to address the meeting.

The Archdeacon began by outlining her life from being a child in Kent and experiencing Matins in a country church to finding herself as a teenager in Kenya where, without any training, she was teaching in schools one near the Uganda border where after just two terms she found herself to be the headmistress. Later she worked in Nairobi and undertook training as a Montessori teacher. Back in the United Kingdom she took a degree before returning to Africa firstly based in Djibouti working for UNHCR, then in Somalia, working for OXFAM. Continuing with OXFAM she became a project worker coordinating across 17 countries with a network of national project workers. Marriage came next with her first son being born in Africa. Time then to come back to the United Kingdom and prepare for ordination, with sons two and three being born, the third son just six weeks prior to her ordination. She was then fortunate enough to secure a Non-stipendiary post near Oxford for a year before a curacy in Princess Risborough, followed by positions in Burnham and then a Parish Development Officer position.

In the second part of her address she explained the work and role of an Archdeacon with the title of Venerable probably being one that one grows into rather than immediately claimed. The origins of the post came from the ability to put people on trial in the ecclesiastical courts which today has transferred much more into an human resources function. Responsibilities of the post are wide and varied but for clergy include such matters as clergy housing, covering clergy illness, working with the Bishop in development reviews, preparing Statements of Particulars (contracts of employment) pastoral care, pastoral re-organization, and the filling of vacancies, undertaking duties for the Bishop in his absence such as commissioning, settling disputes/ disagreements, supporting the Deaneries, responding to Media contacts, preaching and trusteeships. She appreciated that Clergy training has experienced a renaissance in the last ten years and goes forward imagining the church of the future. It must be recognized that the traditional church works well but alternatives are required as people do not all fit into one mould. The church is the people not the buildings and she indicated that this aspect would appear in Deanery Plans.

At parish level to work with Churchwardens and help parishes understand the significance of the Parish Share, recognizing that the raising of money is difficult but encouraging vision with the aim to make the church a focus of God's Kingdom.

She also sits on various Diocesan Committees and is the Chair of the Link Committee with Kimberley and Kuruman, south Africa.

Reading Deanery is reputed to be the largest in the country and she gave encouragement to develop the pastoral plan with new perspectives, working with whoever is there be they new or established Christians and drawing out talent as the need is huge and must incorporate multicultural, multi-faiths and churches working together.

Inviting comments/questions two were forthcoming, one stating the desire to work together as demonstrated by the Reading network which has been going for seventeen years and the second asking about her what occupied her when not functioning as Archdeacon to which she replied, a mum, a wife, singing, playing the flute, walking, being a book addict and enjoying her own company.

Peter Jeal expressed the thanks of the Synod for her presentation, after which the Archdeacon left the meeting.

Presentation of New Parish share Scheme – agreement of Formula to be applied.

After introducing the members of the Finance Committee as Peter Jeal, Neil Warwick, Nicholas Cheeseman Mark Burton, Mark Hinckley, John Davies and Joan Walker, Peter Jeal invited Dr Philip Giddings to Chair this session. The following formula was displayed on screen

Parish Share proposals - 2015

It is proposed that the parish share is calculated in the following way:

- A. Each parish pays the basic cost of its stipendiary clergy, which is £43,000
- B. The remainder of the Deanery allocation is split between parishes proportionally according to their relative Electoral Roll (ER) and Usual Sunday Attendance (USA) figures (50% ER/50% USA)
- C. Our poverty allocation (currently £120,000) is split between parishes below the Deanery average deprivation who request an allowance. It will be determined proportionally according to relative deprivation (based on Experian figures).
- D. Parishes with need of recovery support will declare to the Lay Chair by 1st July of the preceding year how much support will be required. The Standing Committee of the Synod will then decide if recovery support will be made. Parishes in receipt of recovery support will be asked to report annually on their agreed recovery goals. The total recovery support required in the Deanery, and a 2% contingency fund to assist with unforeseen requirements will be split between the remaining parishes according to the formula in (B) above.

Notes to the proposal:

It is suggested that the Synod votes on this proposal taking a clause at a time.

- A: this is in line with the previous resolution of the Synod which urged working towards each parish meeting its clergy cost in full - now implemented.
- B: The figure of 50%ER/50%USA is the one used by the Diocese in its allocation of share to Deaneries. The 50/50 ER/USA split is taken as an average of those figures for the previous 5 years. It seems as good as any other for the basis of allocation. Previously the Deanery has used only Electoral Roll.
- C: Parishes will be required to 'opt in' to the deprivation allowance. The possibility of opting in will only be open to parishes below the average level of deprivation in the Deanery. The deprivation allowance will be allocated according to the relative deprivation of the parishes who opt in (based on Experian figures).

It is hoped that churches with congregations that do not reflect the poverty of their parishes may not wish to claim this allowance. This will allow those churches with greatest need to gain the maximum benefit. This is in line with many church mission priorities.

- D: Recovery support will usually take the form of a 5 year plan, though may also include one off emergencies. The allocation of the total of this figure will be between the parishes not in need of recovery support according the proportions calculated by B (50% ER/50% USA). The report of parishes in recovery support will be to the standing committee and will be focused on the goals set out in the recovery plan and how the parish is active in mission.

Synod members were then given the chance to ask any points of clarity, some were raised including 50% ER / 50% USA as applied to Parishes considered to be in poverty.

Does the deprivation apply per parish or benefice, response per parish

What does the stipendiary clergy cost cover – response housing, pension, and stipend.

How long will the formula be applied for – response until subsequently changed by the Deanery Synod, which may or may not be in response to any changes made via the Diocese..

Dr Giddings then notified the meeting that Peter Jeal had proposed sections A, B, C, and D, seconded by Nicholas Cheeseman therefore comments and amendments were welcomed.

Graeme Fancourt liked the proposals but expressed a nervousness about accepting without actual figures, this was a recurring feeling by several members.

Ian Bate stated that his parish could not pay a large increase in Share

Mike Smith stated that he would vote favourably as he saw this as a journey with generosity and the key principles of the rich aiding the poor with time dictating how this would develop allowing for mission and growth.

Jane Lewis expressed concern that increases would be above current salary increases therefore people unable to increase giving.

Derek Chandler asked the position for LEP churches bearing in mind the lack of cooperation with other denominations

Chris Rimmer liked the idea of linking a rich church to a poor church making it a personal matter and thereby witnessing to the community.

Mike Smith was interested to know what happens when a parish defaults on its payment.

John Rogers expressed thanks that by the generosity of the Deanery St Michael's were in a position to have their roof repaired very soon after a renovation of the church.

Kim Slater felt an amendment was required to cover the position when there were more churches in a parish than there were clergy to cover the parishes. As there was general agreement in the room that pastoral care was limited in this situation, with only 4 against on a show of hands Kim was invited to word this and the Finance Committee would work further on it.

Responding to the above, Peter Jeal explained that some churches would see an increase in their Parish Share whilst others would see their costs fall. He felt that a cap was required suggesting 5% or 10% as a maximum to be decided at the November Synod Meeting. At this point he emphasized the importance of completing mission returns as if these were not completed and sent to Church House there was an automatic assumption that the ER and USA had risen by 10% thereby increasing the Parish Share. He estimated that the average increases expected from the Diocese would be between 3% and 5%. The LEP formula is that the denomination providing the clergy member pays 90% of Share whilst other denominations pay the other 10%. Peter went on to say that the proposal is a formal scheme in the light of the experiences of other Diocese which have tried and failed when leaving parishes to decide for themselves what their share should be. He mentioned the collaboration between Greyfriars and St Matthews as a successful one which worked well, but there is no guarantee that this would work elsewhere. Finally where parishes default then a recovery plan is the first consideration an alternative being to merge with another parish, thereby losing a clergy member in the long term.

Philip Giddings gave members time to reflect then called for a show of hands on each clause in the proposal. In each of clauses A, B, C, and D there was an overwhelming majority in favour.

Any Other Business: none

Dates of Next Meetings:

Tuesday 11th November 2014 venue to be announced when a final vote on the Parish Scheme will be made.

Closing Prayers were led by the Revd Nicholas Cheeseman with the meeting closing at 21.40 hours.

Signed
(chair)

Date