

READING DEANERY SYNOD

**Minutes of the 8th meeting of the 2014 - 2017 Synod.
Held at St John and St Stephen Church, Orts Road, Reading, RG1 3JN
on Monday 23rd November 2015 at 20.00 hours**

Present:			
Clergy	Lay members		Apologies
The Revd Stephen Pullin (Chair)	Mr Peter Jeal (Chair)	Dr John Ledger	<u>Clergy Apologies</u>
The Revd Neil Warwick	Mrs Gill Adams	Mrs Margaret Lowe	The Revd Joy Atkins
The Revd Nicholas Cheeseman	Mrs Miriam Barlow	Mrs Katy Lyne	The Revd Adam Carlill
The Revd Derek Chandler	Mr Ron Best	Mrs Jane Masson	The Revd David Harris
The Revd Richard Christopher	Mr Graeme Buick	Prof John Missenden	The Revd Philip Hobday
The Revd Penny Cuthbert	Mr Mark Burton	Miss Alison Peyton	The Revd Nigel Jones
The Revd Peter Day	Miss Sandy Catchick	Ms Marian Pitman	The Revd Mark Laynesmith
The Revd Pads Dolphin	Prof Kevin Colyer	Mr David Potter	The Revd Jane Lewis
The Revd Dr Graeme Fancourt	Mrs Rosemary Cooper	Mr Les Pullen	The Revd Eddie Marquez
The Revd Vincent Gardner	Mr John Cull	Mr Ian Shorrocks	The Revd Vernon Orr
The Revd Hannah Hobday	Mr Brian Day	Mrs Ann Soley	The Revd David Pickersgill
The Revd Nick Jackson	Mrs Jane Fulford	Mr Gordon Summers	The Revd Jonathan Salmon
The Revd Sam McNally-Cross	Mr David Fulford	Mr Ralph Taylor	
The Revd Liz Ratcliffe	Mr Leslie Green	Mrs Nicki Tinniswood	
The Revd John Rogers	Mr Lee Hackness-Smith	Miss Joan Walker	
The Revd Denis Smith	Mr Mark Hinckley	Dr Elaine Watts	
The Revd Mike Smith	Mrs Margaret Jeal	Mr Bill Watts	
The Revd Paul Willis	Mr Steve Jenkins	Mr Tony White	
18	Mr A Kolawole	Mr Nicholas White	
<u>NSM – PTO</u>	Mr Sozzie Kasozimusoke	Mr Adam Wingrove	
The Revd Chris Leslie		40	
	<u>Lay members apologies</u>		
	Mrs Pat Almond	Mrs Ann Deane	Dr Diana Matthews
	Mr Tony Barlett	Mr Robert Dimmick	Dr Sally-Ann McDowell
	Mrs Ann Barnes	Mr Trevor Greaves	Mrs May Smith
	Mr Ian Bate	Mrs Pauline Harris	Dr Christopher Mott
1	Mrs Jane Borgeaud	Mrs Audrey Hobbs	Mrs Sue Mott
	Mr David Cox	Mrs D John-Wait	Mr Kim Slater
	Mr John Davies	Mrs Carolyn Lobley	Mrs Ann Taylor
	Mr Andrew Day	Mrs Linda Lyle	Mrs Hilary Wynn

1. Welcome:

The Revd Neil Warwick welcomed all present, especially Peter Nissen, currently on placement and the Revd Hannah Hobday attending her first Deanery Synod.

2. Opening Prayers:

The Revd Vincent Gardner led an opening prayer followed by the Revd Neil Warwick leading a contemplative act of worship by each member having a X on a slip of paper remembering where they had been that day, who with, and who they had met, praying silently and recalling God is with us at times and in all situations then taking the X and leaving it on the Altar. Mrs Miriam Barlow drew the session to a close with a prayer based on us being chosen, adopted and sealed with the Holy Spirit.

3. Shared stories

i) The Revd Neil Warwick began by informing Synod that the Revd Nicholas Cheeseman has been appointed to the position of Area Director of Ordinands for Berkshire and Oxford, tending congratulations on behalf of Synod

ii) Mr John Davies was scheduled to present, on behalf of St Nicolas Earley, but as head of a banking security company with head-offices based in Brussels his working hours and workload were exceptional following the recent terrorists attacks in Paris and affecting Brussels.

Instead Neil presented, with a reminder that going to church will not change the world but by the church going out there will be change. Six years ago a 'Men's Curry Club' was started by St Nicholas, meeting at the Rajmoni restaurant, not focusing on church members but for anyone who fancied Curry and Beer. The rewards of this have been enquiries into the Christian Faith and one person is now the Church Treasurer although not yet a fully committed Christian. The group has an image of spreading like bush fires.

The ladies who met each other at the school gates started meeting in the home of one of the ladies simply to chat. This group is now the 'Mums and More' some of whom are asking about Confirmation, working in messy church and seeking to be a Missional Community.

The Revd Graeme Fancourt concluded the session in prayer for networking in churches, for all those who undertook basic chores in the care of churches, for groups of all kinds, social activities, and the growth of the Kingdom through the spirit of the people.

iii) The Revd Stephen Pullin advised Synod that there was an error in the latest edition of 'The Door' in that the newly appointed incumbent at Greyfriars was not Dave Gilmore, but was David Gilmore Walker.

4. Feedback from Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee

Minutes of the meeting had been circulated but the Revd Stephen Pullin both summarized and expanded on these describing the format of the meeting, the discussions and indicating future directions. Archdeacon Olivia had been asked to attend the meeting to give some guidance as to how the Deanery should be thinking towards the Church of the Future and prepare for the analysis of the questionnaires returned by parishes. Although taken aback by Archdeacon Olivia's first word – subsidiarity - the remainder of her thoughts were enabling in making sense of this. To achieve almost an 100% return from parishes was a tremendous effort and parishes were to be congratulated on this. The total of 108 pages are now to be analyzed which will take some time. Parishes had responded in different ways, in some instances one person had completed the response, in others a team had been involved but in all cases it was encouraging and inspirational to discover so much activity and know that people really want to be a vibrant Christian presence.

The Deanery has around £20,000 available to be spent strategically where it is most expected to make a difference.

His presentation was accompanied by the following slides:

**Deanery Mission
and
Pastoral Committee**

feedback

THOUGHTS FROM ARCHDEACON OLIVIA

- subsidiarity
- local decisions, scrutinised by Area and Diocesan groups
- Reading MPC behind the curve
- think creatively:
 - exploring different forms of church
 - moving towards mixed economy
 - resourcing: out of 28 stipends, should we pay for alternative roles?
 - lay ministry development
 - encouraging vocations

FEEDBACK

- close to 100% return ... **THANK YOU**
- 108 pages of rich feedback
- impressed by honesty
- very pleased to have been asked
- good to know that every parish has been having the same conversation

WHAT IS GOOD AND EXCITING?

- so much going on
- so many aspirations
- real vision from parishes, nobody sitting back
- diversity is challenging and vibrant
- people are saying they would like to be part of something
- it's got churches talking
- raises expectation
- most people want to move forward, not stand still

WHAT QUESTIONS DOES IT RAISE FOR YOU?

- how do we:
 - learn from one another?
 - solve the problem of... []?
 - deal with biases, process feedback and access diocesan resources?
- how many people were involved in making these responses?
- what:
 - would parishes like back from us?
 - transition skills do we have amongst us?

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF?

- how do we help parishes with focusing and planning?
- parishes thinking big
- information about available resources from diocese (or elsewhere)
- making connections
- generosity

NEXT STEPS

- lots of information to process (108 pages)
- executive summary for each parish
- formal statistical analysis (overall)
- narrative (by deanery area)

AIM

- raw feedback, analysis and summaries to be given to February deanery synod
- identify priorities (current-focused)
- think about 'what-ifs' (future-focused)

5. i) Theological Reflection

Ahead of the Revd Graeme Fancourt giving this presentation concerning the culture and attitude of the Deanery the Revd Stephen Pullin gave the example of a gentleman of rather disheveled appearance appearing in the Minster on several occasions and how people were giving him a wide berth. On one occasion he sat at the piano and gave an exquisite performance to the delight of those present. When he finished his partner appeared and welcomed him back into the family.

Graeme then spoke to Genesis chapter 3 and the discordant nature of passing blame down the line. He questioned what, in communal life, to say to our fractured world. Is the Deanery 'good news'? We have awareness of humanity through Baptism yet continue to form tribes and continue in-fighting.

Graeme then showed a short video about Mrs Beamish, which, although humorous demonstrated to us how we appear to others in our words and actions.

Following this Graeme went on to elucidate how the quality of communal life really does matter and needs to reflect the Gospel. The kingdom of God is with us, the degree of Unity affecting our demonstration of it.

The Deanery is communal life in our churches, not with the Synod or Area Dean directing. The health of one church reflects the health of the Deanery. Just as individual instruments in an orchestra blend together in a performance.

ii) The meeting then discussed in groups the following questions:

- What is my expectation of Deanery?
- What could I change about these expectations that would be good for the Deanery?
- What do I think is my Parochial Church Council and church's attitude is towards the Deanery?
- Would changing that make a difference to the Deanery? If so in what way?
- How can members and meetings of Synod and its Standing Committee help with suggested changes?

With time against report back each group was asked to send a summary of their comments to the Deanery secretary (joanwalker@1birdhill.freeserve.co.uk). At the time of writing the minutes only one group has so far contributed, as follows:

Our group considered the relationship between the Diocese, Archdiocese and Deanery, bearing in mind that Reading is one of the biggest deaneries in the country. It was felt that the deanery had moved on from simply discussing the parish share and had now become more involved e.g. it had discussed the role of women bishops. The deanery enabled views to be pushed bottom/roots up but was also a means of disseminating information down to the churches. Things were beginning to change. Its role was now greater than one of governance. It could be used as a forum to get input from the churches. It was hoped that what was going on in Reading would be forward looking and collaborative. A way needed to be found to help some parishes that felt under siege because they were in financial difficulty.

6. Parish Share Committee

Mr Peter Jeal proposed the Terms of Reference for this Committee as attached to the agenda for the meeting. There being no questions or points raised by those present. The terms of Reference were seconded by Joan Walker and passed by a majority vote.

In order to elect representatives to this Committee members met in groups according to their churches being considered as large, medium or small according to a percentage of their electoral role and Sunday attendance.

Large	Medium	Small
Caversham Thameside & Mapledurham Earley St Nicolas Earley St Peter Earley Trinity CH Lower Earley) Reading Greyfriars Loddon Reach Tilehurst St Michael Woodley St John	Emmer Green St Barnabas Reading St Mark & All Saints Reading St Luke with St Bartholomew Reading St Agnes with St Paul & St Barnabas Reading St John the Evangelist St George & St Mary Magdalen Tilehurst St Catherine Woodley Southlake St James	Caversham Park (LEP) Caversham St Andrew Reading Christ Church Reading Holy Trinity Reading St Giles Reading St Laurence Reading St Mary Reading St Matthew Woodley Emmanuel

The Following members were elected to the Committee:

Large	Medium	Small
The Revd Hannah Hobday Mr Mark Hinckley	Mr Ron Best Mr Mark Burton	The Revd Sam McNally-Cross Mr Gordon Summers

7. Administration

7.1 Minutes of deanery synod meeting held on 1st October 2015

Joan Walker informed the meeting of amendments received after first circulation of the draft minutes which had been made ahead of the final circulation. The meeting approved the minutes by a majority show of hands.

Joan reminded members to sign in to enable correct records to be maintained.

7.2 Matters arising: None had been notified.

7.3 Deanery Notices: Peter, reminded parishes of the importance and need to pay their Parish Share by the end of the year in order to benefit from the rebate scheme.

Joan reminded members to collect material addressed to the parishes.

7.4 Any Other Business: None had been notified

7.5 Dates of Future Meetings 2016:

Thursday February 4th would be the first meeting. Other dates would be notified as soon as available as a complete plan of work for the year was in progress. Offers to host any of the 2016 meetings would be welcome.

8. Worship:

The Revd Neil Warwick led closing worship with the X slips of paper being retrieved from the Altar as a sign of God going with us.

9. Close and depart:

A final blessing was given by the Revd Stephen Pullin with the meeting closing at 21.45

Signed

(chair)

Date

