

READING DEANERY SYNOD

**Minutes of the 7th meeting of the 2014 - 2017 Synod.
Held at Trinity Church, Earley, Chalfont Close, Lower Earley, Reading, RG6 5HZ
on Thursday 1st October 2015 at 20.00 hours**

Present:			
Clergy	Lay members		Apologies
The Revd Stephen Pullin (Chair)	Mr Peter Jeal (Chair)	Mr A Kolawole	<u>Clergy Apologies</u>
The Revd Neil Warwick	Mrs Pat Almond	Mrs Carolyn Lobley	The Revd Pads Dolphin
The Revd Nicholas Cheeseman	Mr Ayo Akintoye	Mrs Margaret Lowe	The Revd David Harris
The Revd Adam Carlill	Mr Eric Anderson	Mrs Katy Lyne	The Revd Mark Laynesmith
The Revd Derek Chandler	Mrs Miriam Barlow	Mrs Jane Masson	The Revd Chris Leslie
The Revd Richard Christopher	Mrs Ann Barnes	Dr Diana Matthews	The Revd Jane Lewis
The Revd Penny Cuthbert	Mr Ron Best	Dr Sally-Ann McDowell	The Revd Eddie Marquez
The Revd Peter Day	Mrs Jane Borgeaud	Prof John Missenden	The Revd Sam McNally-Cross
The Revd Dr Graeme Fancourt	Mr Tony Barlett	Dr Christopher Mott	The Revd Carol Morgan
The Revd Philip Hobday	Mrs Patricia Brazil	Mrs Sue Mott	The Revd Elizabeth Newman
The Revd Nick Jackson	Mr Mark Burton	Miss Ann Peyton	The Revd Vernon Orr
The Revd Nigel Jones	Prof Kevin Colyer	Ms Marion Pitman	The Revd Denis Smith
The Revd Ben Krautzer	Mr David Cox	Mr Ian Shorrocks	
The Revd Liz Ratcliffe	Mr John Cull	Mrs May Smith	<u>Lay members apologies</u>
The Revd Sean Riordan	Mr John Davies	Mrs Ann Soley	Mrs Gill Adams
The Revd John Rogers	Mr Brian Day	Mrs Nicki Tinniswood	Mr Ian Bate
The Revd Jonathan Salmon	Mr Robert Dimmick	Dr Elaine Watts	Mr Graeme Buick
The Revd Mike Smith	Mrs Jane Fulford	Mr Bill Watts	Miss Sandy Catchick
18	Mr David Fulford	Miss Joan Walker	Mrs Rosemary Cooper
<u>NSM – PTO</u>	Mr Leslie Green	Mr Simon Walker	Mr Andrew Day
The Revd Francis Jakemen	Mr Lee Hackness-Smith	Mr Tony White	Mrs Ann Deane
The Revd Margaret Dimmick	Mrs Pauline Harris	Mr Nicholas White	Mr Trevor Greaves
The Revd Bernard Metcalfe (items1-3)	Mr Mark Hinckley	Mr Adam Wingrove	Dr Alison Johnson
2+	Mrs Margaret Jeal	Mrs Hilary Wynn	Mr Steve Jenkins
		48	Dr John Ledger
			Mrs Pat Nash
			Mr Kim Slater
			Mr Gordon Summers
			Mrs Ann Taylor
			Mr Ralph Taylor

In Attendance: Richard Ashfield to speak to item 4

1. Welcome:

Mr Peter Jeal welcomed everyone to the 6th Meeting of the Deanery Synod, especially new members the Revds. Philip and Hannah Hobday and Nicki Tinniswood. He stated that tonight's agenda was a mixed one and would probably be controversial at times.

2. Opening Prayers:

The Revd Jon Salmon welcomed everyone to Trinity Church. He read passages from Psalm 29 and Psalm 34 followed by prayers, in which he included the Revd Denis Smith recovering following a fall, and the singing of two hymns.

3. Retired Clergy:

The Revd Bernard Metcalfe presented some reflections about retirement after a full and busy life as a full-time clergyman and Area Dean. [*comment: he's still a clergyman, just not full-time*]. He described 'Permission to Officiate' (PTO) as a zero hours contract!, adding that expenses were as agreed and available via the Diocesan Website. He had been asked by Neil Warwick to be the Deanery representative for Retired Clergy and his investigation revealed not twelve as originally thought but thirty. A core list of twenty-seven had very different personalities, interests, skills and a wealth of experience. The outcome of which offered a tremendous resource of prayerful ministry and practical assistance to churches. Although considered a privilege to minister some of the retired clergy offered more services than others, a fact later backed up by the Revd Margaret Dimmick who explained that each year they informed the Diocese of the scope and extent of services offered. Bernard was aware that some retired clergy offered their services abroad, one serving in Yemen. He pleaded for PTO clergy not to be taken for granted, especially during interregna, which can be long periods, and to respect change when new incumbents arrive.

Points raised by the Revd Mike Smith were a request for the contact list to be made available and that PTO clergy always inform the local incumbent when they are asked to take a funeral service. He expressed his gratitude when this does happen. It was thought that Funeral Directors did this automatically, hence can be checked.

4. Shared stories

The Revd Stephen Pullin introduced this item as it had been requested at the last meeting of Synod. Permission for Richard Ashfield to speak was sought as he was not a member of Synod, which was given by the meeting.

- i) The Revd Graeme Fancourt introduced his parish (St Luke with St Bartholomew) as serving the area between the Royal Berkshire Hospital, Palmer Park and parts of Reading University. As one of his two churches, St Bartholomew was described as a fabulous building, having sold off its assets of surrounding houses around thirty years ago and its hall now used by the Muslim community.

Miriam Pitman then described how the very small congregation had come to an agreement as to how the church could still be kept as a church whilst paying for itself and being a visible asset to the community. From a decision at the end of April challenges began on 1st May! A professional Theatre company hired the building and the use would include a theatre school. Separate toilets were required for students and staff – not an easy task in a grade 2 listed building. However the Diocese came up trumps in granting a faculty on 21st May, in June the PCC agreed for the work to be done, a license for the theatre college was granted, a draft lease prepared which was signed in July. Contractors were quickly on the scene, drains, plumbing, bathroom furniture fitted and the work completed by the end of August. In the meantime the Greek Orthodox had to find a new home for their stored equipment.

The Theatre college opened on 1st September – quite an achievement.

Mr Leslie Green then informed us of developments from then on. To hold performances then tiered seating was required, a bar, a box office in the church porch, heating, lighting, changing rooms. All of this when church members were aware that the last quinquennial inspection had alerted them to the need for roofing and guttering works to be carried out within five years.

Dr Sally-Ann McDowell told the meeting about issues of finance. Endowments had played a large part but other funds were needed. The Greek and Serbian Orthodox churches were paying a small fee to use the church. A West African church declined to use as there were no toilet facilities at

the time. The income from the Reed Theatre contributed £25,000 but all work done amounted to £32,000 when the Lady Chapel became the new toilets. Income is now by a percentage of event fees by the Theatre company and the bar. Leaflets had been widely distributed and the future plans include a stage and the raising of £1/3 million pounds to set up an arts background programme with its own clergy member.

- ii) Mr Mark Burton, as a member of Emmer Green St Barnabas) presented COGS (Children of God service). This is a missional service held once a month, engaging with people both inside and outside of the church community.

Previously this had been a 'traditional' family service rarely using projector/screen facilities, some children played a participatory role. This has now changed from the 4th Sunday of the month to the first Sunday with lessons learnt from the younger people in the church, it uses the projector/screen and is planned by the laity, which non-categorizes it either as a family or an all age worship service, it is fun filled, accessible to all and not lengthy (usually under an hour). It is experimental and developmental, a learning experience and not afraid to adapt.

The consequence is considering 'what is worship and how does it appear to those outside of the church'. Under church rules the minister may make variations to set services which covers this format. The Parochial Church Council have approved and expressed the desire to be bold and take risks. Currently the church offers Holy Communion services with a shortened Eucharistic prayer. There is a non Eucharist for Baptism services and a 'Common Prayer Book' Holy Communion service at 8am each Sunday.

Mark outlined a service he had prepared and taken to which the feed-back had been positive, as targeted, went well, short, hymns matched the service.

It is recognized that there is room for improvement in areas of the length of intercessions and the need to have readings displayed as when children read not everyone can hear or find it difficult to follow.

- iii) Richard Ashfield, (the Verger at St Mary, Minster) began by the concerns of having the church doors closed for so much of the time. Last December it was agreed to open the church mid-morning to mid-afternoon resulting in over 1,500 visitors either praying seeking help for depression or other problems or simply looking around. Come the New Year an opening time of 21.00 to 02.00 was agreed with the playing of modern music. During this time there was a constant flow of people with over 200 being present at midnight. Encouraged by this an opening between 20.00 and 02.00 for a four week period over Easter took place, not only playing modern music but also offering tea and toast, this time working closely with the Street Pastors. In total over 900 people entered the church. Today's practice is to open on Friday and Saturday nights. Two examples of people who had been helped were given, one a lady taking anti-depressants, who after repeated times of sitting quietly in the Minster has now ceased taking tablets and has started attending church. The second, a man who after bad news at work felt he could not face his family but after time in the Minster, talking and praying felt much stronger and able to face his family.

A further example was in relation to the music which one man questioned but after 45 minutes of wandering around suddenly exclaimed "I get it – WOW". The visitors book further demonstrates appreciation for the church opening at these times with such comments as 'a breath of fresh air' and 'a friendly church even the vicar!'

5. Missional Reflection

The Revd Peter Day had been given the title of 'Mission in partnership with others as a Gospel imperative', which he had changed to 'Mission and Hospitality in partnership with others as a Gospel imperative'.

It had been felt that Synod Meetings lacked theology. Go and make disciples possibly a 'sexy' way of thinking yet this was a Great Commission. Problems with the Great Commission firstly that 'go' is the first word of this in English but Jesus was not speaking in English, neither was Matthew writing in English! In Greek writing the emphasis is more about making disciples whilst performing everyday tasks. Love is a big characteristic, an example being the statement 'see how the Christians love one another' and this was extended to others as they lived and prayed together. Examples of hospitable behaviour in the Bible are providing food and drink,

clothes, prison visiting, and more. Jesus as a visitor becomes the host, loving relationships are formed, neighbours are not just next door but all people. Stars shine all over the world, they are an invitation to come to the light, therefore the Great Commission is the sharing of the Love of God.

6. Finance:- Parish Share 2016:-

Mr Peter Jeal presented this item. The first paper circulated (attached) showed the Parish Share calculate according to the resolution passed by Synod in 2014, i.e. based on clergy numbers, average attendance and electoral roll numbers. Changes in Deprivation Allowance by the Diocese, based on statistics provided by Experian from post-codes, had been made resulting in £900,000 being made available across the Diocese. With 10 parishes considered to be in deprived areas Reading Deanery was given £175,000, thereby reducing the Share by this amount. It was to be a Deanery decision as to how this money was used be it in returning it to parishes or a special project for example. The deprivation allowance was related to the area in which the church was situated which, in our case did not always apply to the wealth of the church.

Realizing significant changes to amounts to be paid by parishes using the previously agreed formula two amendments had been circulated (attached). The first reduces the upper cap from 7.5% to 5% whilst the second introduces a floor level of $2\frac{1}{2}\%$.

Peter invited members to speak under Synod rules of 3 minutes per speaker and a once only opportunity to speak to each amendment.

The Revd Nicholas Cheeseman proposed the first amendment, seconded by the Revd Stephen Pullin which read:

The Parish Share formula, clause E be amended to read: 'Any year increase will be capped at 5% with the exception of parishes on recovery plans.'

Mr Tony White questioned the discrepancy between amounts in previous years to the new draft proposal. Peter explained it was a result of transition from the old formula to the new one, which took in the full cost a clergy provision. Stephen commented about the difference in a business model approach to a theological approach making it harder for some parishes where application of a cap or floor became overly restrictive. A re-balancing was a way of managing the upward spiral together with a possibility of eliminating the 7.5 cap.

The Revd Mike Smith stated his belief in a generous God and the need to have finances in order but information provided had not enabled a satisfactory answer to be given to his Parochial Church Council.

In the absence of the Revd Pads Dolphin, his comments re deprivation allowance were read to the meeting by Joan Walker. The essence of which was that the Reading Deanery gets its deprivation allowance because of the specific areas of deprivation and the Reading Deanery should follow the lead of the Diocese and award the allowance accordingly and no consideration be given to any other use.

A vote was then taken on the amendment to change the cap from 7.5% to 5%.

45 voted for; 9 against and 7 abstentions

The second amendment:

- 1) ***That the share calculation shall impose a floor of $-2\frac{1}{2}\%$ unless there is a special needs situation.***
- 2) ***The Synod refer the method of share calculation to the Parish Share Committee, especially with respect to how deprivation is applied and the guideline to pay full clergy costs. They should present their recommendations in time for approval by Synod before 30th June 2016.***

This was proposed by Mrs Margaret Jeal, seconded by Mrs Anne Barnes.

Mrs Sue Mott questioned the relationship between the cap and floor whilst Dr Christopher Mott commented on the late circulation of papers to which the Revd Stephen Pullin replied with the explanation that the redundant parish share committee would be used in future to produce timely options for synod; draft terms of

reference and proposed timescales would be brought forward at the November synod. The detailed information given to Synod members was an attempt to give confidence in going forward. The floor really only benefitted deprived parishes. What had been put forward related to 2016 only. The Parish Share Committee would be making proposals for 2017. The Diocese initially only released the index of deprivation for the deprived parishes, it was unknown how close other parishes came not to be counted in the ten given. The Diocese has since agreed to furnish the deanery with the full index which will enable the parish share committee to be fully informed when deliberating for 2017.

There was a call for the Parish Share Committee to be identified, members stood as follows:

The Revds Stephen Pullin; Neil Warwick; Nicholas Cheeseman; Mr Peter Jeal; Mr Mark Burton; Mr Mark Hinckley; Mr John Davies; and Miss Joan Walker.

The Revd Graeme Fancourt requested that this committee keep Synod members updated and come up with fair and creative ways of distribution of the allowance.

The Revd Adam Carlill vehemently opposed the amendment as a large allowance was not a problem. He cited the extent to which the allowance had fallen from 27% 17 years ago to nothing now. He appreciated the Diocese calculations were clear and transparent but the Deanery members doing this were amateurs, not being clear or transparent. He suggested that the ten parishes concerned should meet and deliberate amongst themselves how the allowance should be split as others are not involved, it was condescending and humiliating any other way.

Mr Peter Jeal interjected, re-iterating that the money from the Diocese was to the Deanery it was not to the parishes, making it an overall deanery decision as to the use of the money. He pointed out that a church in a poor parish area is not always a poor church, as it may have large investments and many of its members may live outside the Parish. Other Parishes, not in one of the ten listed deprived areas, may have greater need for deprivation allowance.

The Revd Nigel Jones questioned which was the original motion as we were considering amendments, to which he was referred to the first circulated papers which were figures applied to the Synod agreement of 2014 when a 7.5% cap had been agreed.

Mrs Jane Borgeaud stated her confusion as she did not know other churches and with the short time given to consider the papers felt she had to abstain.

Mr Mark Burton felt that the index supplied by the Diocese did not do justice to the 11th church on the list of ten as that church might have missed out by the smallest margin. His own experience of collecting data had shown discrepancy in that given.

A vote was taken with 3 in favour; 35 against and 14 abstentions (some members had left the meeting, which partially explains discrepancy in numbers from the voting on the first amendment) This amendment therefore was lost.

With the first amendment then becoming the substantive motion a further vote was taken showing no objections and 4 abstentions, thereby being passed by a majority vote.

7. Administration

7.1 Minutes of deanery synod meeting held on 10th June 2015

Joan Walker informed the meeting of one amendment received after circulation of the draft minutes which was that the Revd Denis Smith led item 2 and Anne Soley led item 6. This correction had been made. The meeting approve the minutes by a majority show of hands.

7.2 Matters arising: None had been notified but Joan informed the meeting that she had only received 9 responses to the questions asked of all parishes in relation to the Church of the Future. These had been due for submission by 30th September.

7.3 Deanery Notices: these were as noted on the agenda

7.4 Any Other Business: None had been notified

7.5 Dates of Future Meetings 2015:

Notified to be held on Monday 23rd November at St John and St Stephen, Orts Road RG1 3JN

7.6 Dates for meetings in 2016:

Notified to be almost ready for circulation.

7.7 Climate Changes matters:

Joan called up the Revd Liz Ratcliffe, a curate at Christ Church, to speak to this. Liz informed the meeting that she had been asked by Bishop Andrew to project manage events for the day of December 5th. This date chosen as the Climate Change talks will be going on in Paris during this time, thereby showing our support. Liz has ideas for scientific and pastoral events culminating in a Climate Mass in the evening. She called upon anyone interested in helping her to contact her at: liz-ratcliffe@live.com

8. Worship:

The Revd Jon Salmon led the singing of a hymn and prayer

9. Close and depart:

The Revd Neil Warwick called up Synod Lay members from the East Reading Churches to meet to elect their Lay Representative to the Mission and Pastoral Committee before closing the meeting with The Grace at 22.10

Signed _____ (chair) _____ Date _____

East Reading Churches Lay Synod members meeting

Joan chaired this brief meeting.

Mr Leslie Green was proposed by Dr Sally-Ann McDowell, seconded by Marian Pitman

Mrs Hilary Wynn was proposed by Mr Bill Watts, seconded by Mr John Cull

Mr John Davies was proposed by Mrs Margaret Jeal, seconded by Mrs Jane Fulford.

The candidates were asked to leave the group while a vote was taken.

A brief resume of each candidate was given by their respective nominees.

A show of hands gave a majority vote to Mrs Hilary Wynn who was duly informed of the result as were Mr Leslie Green and Mr John Davies.