

READING DEANERY SYNOD

**Minutes of the 9th meeting of the 2014 - 2017 Synod.
Held at St Nicolas Church, Sutcliffe Avenue, Earley, RG6 7JN
on Thursday 4th February 2016 at 20.00 hours**

Present:			
Clergy	Lay members		Apologies
The Revd Stephen Pullin (Chair)	Mr Peter Jeal (Chair)	Mrs Margaret Lowe	<u>Clergy Apologies</u>
The Revd Neil Warwick	Mr Ayo Akintoye	Mrs Katy Lyne	The Revd Colin Bass
The Revd Dr Graeme Fancourt	Mrs Miriam Barlow	Mrs Jane Masson	The Revd Adam Carlill
The Revd Derek Chandler	Mrs Ann Barnes	Dr Christopher Mott	The Revd Penny Cuthbert
The Revd Dr Peter Day	Mr Tony Barlett	Mrs Sue Mott	The Revd Philip Hobday
The Revd Pads Dolphin	Mr Ian Bate	Mrs Pat Nash	The Revd Jane Lewis
The Revd David Harris	Mr Ron Best	Miss Alison Peyton	The Revd Vernon Orr
The Revd Hannah Hobday	Mr Graeme Buick	Ms Marian Pitman	The Revd Margaret Dimmick
The Revd Nigel Jones	Mr Mark Burton	Mr David Potter	
The Revd Nick Jackson	Miss Sandy Catchick	Mrs May Smith	
The Revd Ben Kautzer	Mr John Davies	Mrs Ann Soley	
The Revd Sam McNally-Cross	Mr Brian Day	Mr Gordon Summers	
The Revd David Pickersgill	Mrs Jane Fulford	Mrs Anne Taylor	
The Revd Liz Ratcliffe	Mr David Fulford	Mrs Nicki Tinniswood	
The Revd John Rogers	Mr Leslie Green	Miss Joan Walker	
The Revd Sean Riordan	Mr Trevor Greaves	Mr Simon Walker	
The Revd Denis Smith	Mr Lee Hawkness-Smith	Dr Elaine Watts	
The Revd Mike Smith	Mrs Audrey Hobbs	Mr Bill Watts	
19	Mrs Margaret Jeal	Mr Tony White	
<u>NSM – PTO</u>	Mrs D John-Wait	Mr Adam Wingrove	
The Revd Francis Jakeman	Mrs Alison Johnson	Mrs Hilary Wynn	
The Revd Chris Leslie	Mr A Kolawole	43	
<u>Lay members apologies</u>			
2	Mrs Gill Adams	Mr John Cull	Mrs Linda Lyle
	Mrs Pat Almond	Mr Andrew Day	Dr Diana Matthews
	Mrs Jane Borgeaud	Mr Robert Dimmick	Prof John Missenden
	Mrs Patricia Brazil	Mrs Pauline Harris	Mr Les Pullen
	Mr Andrew Cobb	Mr Mark Hinckley	Mr Ralph Taylor
	Mrs Rosemary Cooper	Mr Steve Jenkins	Mr Nicholas White
	Mr David Cox	Dr John Ledger	

1. Welcome and Opening Prayers:

The Revd Neil Warwick welcomed all present and led in prayer before announcing that the Revd Graeme Fancourt had accepted the Bishop's invitation to become an Assistant Area Dean, taking over from the Revd Nicholas Cheeseman. Mr John Davies led the meeting in a prayer for Graeme in his new role.

Mrs Miriam Barlow led opening worship, taking text from 1 Corinthians 1 and James 1 which demonstrated God's great wisdom and greatness which far surpassed that of any human. Each member was then requested to write what came to mind when they thought of God's wisdom and secondly where God's wisdom was needed in their lives. Prayer in twos and threes preceded placing the written notes on the Altar.

2. Shared stories

The Revd Neil Warwick introduced Lynn Everett from St Matthews, Southcote, who, with permission of Synod as a non member, presented the development and success of work with children in that parish. Lynn's experience of working with children extended over 25 years, many of these previously being in Greyfriars parish. In her earlier work she recalled an initial meeting of 39 children growing to over 600 meeting in three venues, one being a night club where the 'bouncers' were terrified of the large number of primary school aged children streaming in! This success had been by 20 volunteer adults visiting each child's family each week. There was the one cold, wet day when Lynn questioned why she was doing this only to be encouraged by the young man visitor with her to keep going. It was on this day that, at the first house the door was closed to them as the children had been taken into care as a result of the mother choosing her boyfriend over the children. Very disheartened, realizing that she was unlikely to see the children again, the second house was approached. It was here that the Grandmother had been against the visitors talking to the children but on this occasion they were welcomed in, and offered refreshment. The Grandmother explained that she had been watching them go around the estate each week and decided that they were 'OK' people and could talk to the children.

Having accepted the request of the Revd Pads Dolphin to work in the parish of St Matthew Lynn began a similar scheme of weekly visits. Once again the numbers of children attending church and associated activities such as holiday clubs has grown significantly to over 200. At the 10am service each Sunday many a reluctant parent is brought along by a very keen teenager. To encourage the children as they get older there is 'GAP' which serves Sunday breakfast and has an evening alternate Fridays for the year 6 and upwards. Around 40 children are regular attendees of the 60 registered.

Lynn attributes the success of reaching the children as the initiative is locally based, family influenced, access to schools and she continues to be excited and challenged by the work. In conclusion she highlighted the two weeks in a year when the Revd Pads Dolphin becomes part of the holiday clubs rather than the vicar in entertaining and teaching around 150 children who attend the holiday clubs. She encouraged all parishes to employ a children's worker to reach out to the children in their earlier years rather than wait until the children were in the category of being under the care of a youth worker.

3. Interim Summary of Key Messages in Consolidated Parish Feedback

The Revd Stephen Pullin summarized the past blessings, current and future aspirations, challenges and obstacles faced by parishes as stated in the 105 pages of feedback received with an overall analysis. Parishes had aspirations towards better and a more public use of resources, people, time and buildings whilst sharing theology. The analysis over three spreadsheets was shared by the groups present and is attached to these minutes as appendix 1.

Members of the Mission and Pastoral Committee are now formulating a 50 word summary for each of their areas. These will be reviewed, seeking commonality which, as a Deanery we can develop our Deanery plan and work together in facing challenges, overcoming obstacles and reaching our aspirations. The Revd David Harris led the meeting in prayer for this work.

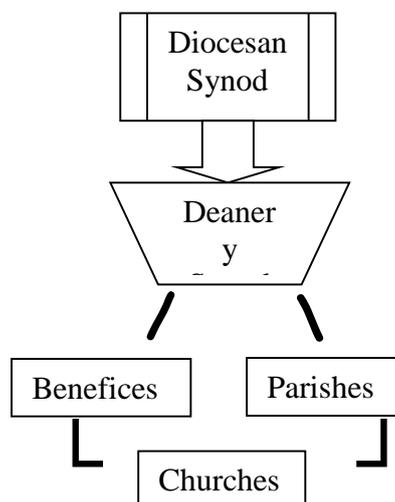
4. Re-thinking Parish Share

4.1 Address

The Revd Mike Smith spoke of the Deanery plan as it related to people and money in proclaiming the kingdom of God to each generation. One estimate of budget expenditure per parish in doing this is between 50 and 70%.

Lessons about giving show that individuals give when they have a focus and relationship. Patterns of giving are known to be related to patterns of attendance but with today's church attendances changing so are the patterns of giving.

He reminded the meeting of our relationship in the context of the parish share:



The Revd Mike Smith continued by presenting four principles which he asked each group to consider, then after consideration for each group member to prioritise each of the principles with an opportunity to include a further principle if desired. The initial findings to be notified to Synod later in the meeting.

The principles:

- i) Mission with Biblical reference John 3.¹⁶
Reminding ourselves that it is not the Church of God which has a mission in the world but the God of Mission who has a church in the world.
- ii) Mutuality with Biblical reference 2 Corinthians 8¹²⁻¹⁴
Thinking through in what ways we can and do support each other
- iii) Generosity with Biblical reference Deuteronomy 16¹⁷
What is our understanding of generosity and how do we apply it.
- iv) Transparency with Biblical reference 1 Corinthians 12
Having a level of openness and understanding

The Revd Smith issued one note of caution regarding the word 'Fairness' what do we mean by this as there are so many interpretations, also it is a word which does not appear in Scripture. Do we really mean 'Justice' which is Biblical?

4.2 Group discussion

Over a thirty minute period Synod members discussed the above principles with a member of the Parish Share Committee facilitating

An outline of each of the group submissions appears at appendix 2 of these minutes.

4.3 Prioritisation

Individually members indicated the order on a 1 to 4 scale the above principles.

4.4 Going forward

