

READING DEANERY SYNOD

Minutes of the 6th meeting of the 2011 - 2014 Synod (Subject to approval by synod).. Held at Trinity Church, Earley, on Thursday 24th May 2012

Present:

| Clergy | Lay members | Apologies | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| The Revd Canon B Shenton | Mr Peter Jeal (Chair) | Mrs Dru Maynard | The Revd Pads Dolphin |
| The Revd Nicholas Chee seman | Mr Eric Anderson | Mr John Missenden | The Revd Chris Leslie |
| The Revd Graeme Fancourt | Mr Ian Bate | Mrs Pat Nash | The Revd Eddie Marquez |
| The Revd. Margaret Dimmick | Mr Derek Benham | Mr David Paine | The Revd Beatrice Pearson |
| The Revd Peter Grosse | Mr Mark Burton | Mr Peter Politzer | The Revd Marion Pyke |
| The Revd Chris Russell | Mr Robert Dimmick | Mr David Potter | The Revd, Sean Riordan |
| The Revd Jon Salmon | Dr Philip Giddings | Dr Tony Pretlove | The Revd Derek Spears |
| The Revd Cannon Jonathan Wilmot | Mr John Goddard | Mrs Jenny Searle | The Revd Stanton Saringer |
| The Revd Neil Warwick | Mr Mike Eggleton | Mr Peter Shirley-Quirk | The Revd Jeremy Tear |
| The Revd Nigel Hardcastle | Mrs Mary Ellaby | Dr Andrew Taylor | The Revd Vernon Orr |
| | Mr Trevor Greaves | Mrs Sue Varley | |
| | Mrs Margaret Jeal | Dr Elaine Watts | Mr Tony Bartlett |
| | Mr Jim Johnson | Miss Joan Walker | Mrs Anne Bingham |
| | Mrs Sheila Jordan | Mr Simon Walker | Mrs Rosemary Cooper |
| | Dr John Ledger | Mr Tony White | Mr David Cox |
| | Ms Jane Lewis | Ms Gillian Wilson | Mr David Fulford |
| | | | Dr Diana Matthews |
| | | | Dr Stephen Slack |
| | | | Mr Gordon Summers |

Also present: Guest Speaker: The Right Revd Andrew Proud,
Andrea Abraham (Webmaster)

Guests of Synod members included: Mrs Sheila Eggleton, Ms Wendy Crosson-Smith, Mrs Jane Fulford, Mr Tom Ranger, and others who did not leave their names.

Welcome:

Mr Peter Jeal welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Opening Prayers:

The Revd. Jon Salmon led the opening worship sharing with the meeting some of his experience at a church leaders conference where 4,300 leaders from 52 countries and 994 churches had met together in the Albert Hall. The overwhelming message from this conference was that God is Love, in its simplicity, transformation, purpose, passion and faith overarching all the world.

Minutes of the last Synod:

Minutes of the Synod held on 9th February 2012, previously circulated were noted to have had two apologies added since circulation were agreed unanimously.

Matters Arising:

Peter Jeal explained the Parish Share rebate which had been achieved for the first time in at least 26 years. In response to a question he detailed how this had been achieved expressing grateful thanks to Greyfriars church for enabling this.

Notices:

- a) **Area Dean** – Informed the meeting of the death of Sister Wynn Rivers whose funeral had taken place two weeks ago. The meeting stood for a period of respectful silence followed by prayer.

- Notified of the retirement of the Revd Nigel Hardcastle and his wife June. Nigel's last service taking place on 25th June but anticipating that Nigel and June would attend the Synod Barbeque on 26th June. Their work had been greatly appreciated in all three parishes in which they had served.
- b) Lay Chair** – Peter Jeal introduced the Revd Margaret Dimmick as the Anglican /Methodist link person and invited Synod members to take the opportunity at the June Synod meeting not only to talk to people they did not know but also to talk to Margaret about the Methodist link.
- Reminded the meeting that nomination forms for synod members to be elected as Diocesan Synod members were available at this meeting, this Synod having 6 clergy and 6 Lay member places.
 - Explained that Sue Nallon had stepped down as Secretary to the Synod and that Joan Walker was undertaking these duties until a new secretary could be appointed at the June Synod meeting. Nomination forms had been circulated and copies also available at this meeting.
 - Requested members of the Pastoral Committee to identify themselves at the end of the meeting to enable a meeting to be set up in the near future.
- c) Treasurer** – Joan presented the 2011 accounts, reminding the meeting that the seemingly large overall balance was due to the Parish rebate being received in December but not paid out to churches until 2012. The Accounts were accepted by an overall majority.
- d) General Synod** – Philip Giddings had come straight from a meeting which had decided that the two amendments to the Women as Bishops measure were not considered sufficiently substantial to warrant referral back to Diocesan Synods, therefore this measure would be presented to General Synod in York in July.

Presentation – Learning from Experiences in Africa

Bishop Andrew gave a fast moving verbal and pictorial presentation of some of his experiences in Ethiopia, to which this brief summary does not really do justice. Ethiopia is a country where 45% of the population are Ethiopian Orthodox, 35% Muslim and the remainder mainly protestant Christian. There are many differing skin colourings and features across the large country. Ephrem the Syrian influenced the Eastern Orthodox thinking so there is a different Christian starting place and Ethiopian Iconography is of high importance, noting that if the eyes are straight the person was good but if in profile than a bad person. Two massive, colourful Christian festivals are held each year, one in January and one in September. Priests undergo 7 years training during which time they learn the scriptures by heart although there is a gradual change to the Western Model of training.

Key Missional principles include: travel light, arrive late, effective leaders are disciples first, a primary task is to disciple people first for real life, the local church is God's hope for the world, mission is the total task God has set his church for the salvation of the world (holistic mission).

Preparation for Initiation (Baptism) and preparation for Ordination include growing the church and this is ably demonstrated across Africa. In Ethiopia 22 clergy and 237 Laity including women have undergone a three year course.

Mission Churches – these are considered to be such when they have a congregation of 50 every Sunday for a six month period. New churches can only be set up if they are more than 2 hours walk from the nearest existing church. The Mother's Union plays a key role in this aspect of work and the setting up of two libraries together with literacy programmes have proved well liked and effective.

Poverty and Food insecurity continue to be a problem. Crops can fail for many reasons and getting emergency food relief to all who need it especially in remote inaccessible areas is a real challenge.

Mission Challenges can be classed under enculturation and acculturation. Resources are limited requiring innovation and the huge distances to be covered pose their own problems. There is always the underlying

political context to be considered as land never colonised, the huge need to drive development together with the great dependency on international aid and suspicion of civil society itself.

Principal lessons learned included Western pride, radical trust in God, to give sacrificially, discipleship for real life, the whole people of God, structuring for mission and buildings must serve the mission

Bishop Andrew was proud of his African name which had been given to him, translated it means 'called to bear fruit'.

Synod Joined Bishop Andrew in saying the Anaphora of St Gregory of Nyssa.

There was time for a few questions from members before the Revd Canon Brian Shenton, on behalf of Synod, thanked Bishop Andrew who then closed the meeting in prayer.

Signed
(chair)

Date