

MEETING MINUTES: WITNEY DEANERY SYNOD

Thursday 4th June 2015

Northmoor Village Hall

Welcome and Introduction – The Rev'd Toby Wright

Thanks to Michael, Elizabeth and Drew for hosting and for all the work and refreshments

New members:

John Eustace (Kencot), Melanie Poole (Little Faringdon), Shukrananda Gant (Witney).

Also new but unable to attend Judith Warwick (Minster Lovell) and Moray Angus (Westwell). Please ensure that new members are communicated to the Deanery Administrator and a contacts sheet completed.

Acceptance of last minutes (Meeting 16th February 2015). No matters arising.

Proposed: Charles Mathew; Seconded: Ian Griffiths Motion passed.

General Synod Update

The Rev'd Hugh Lee sent his apologies for not being able to attend. There has not been a meeting of General Synod since our last Deanery Synod. He looks forward to joining us in October. He did pass on the below message:

Deanery Synod members should encourage somebody with similar views to their own to stand for election to GS (or stand yourself), as you can be sure that somebody with very differing views from yours will be standing. Nomination papers will be sent to you in mid-July and nominations close on Friday 4th September. It is also important to vote when you receive your ballot paper, which will be issued on Friday 18th September. This time it will be easier to find out more about each of the candidates, as the diocesan website will have helpful information about them.

Inspiration

Indigo Valley Coffee – Andrew Salsbury

Andrew owns the Indigo Coffee company. What started off as providing coffee at his own church moved to sharing with other churches and the company now provides coffee to 1200 churches and is the largest fair trade filter coffee supplier to churches in UK.

The company can provide you with the equipment under 2 different schemes:

1. Loan the equipment free and buy coffee at slightly higher price or
2. Buy the equipment and get the coffee cheaper.

Cost per coffee – 4.5 p for instant if that is what you use and with Indigo Valley Coffee it will stay the same. Currently support churches that serve 20-30 cups of coffee through to one that serves 1000 cups after the service.

As well as using Fairtrade coffee, the company supports projects run by Compassion – specifically to support water projects to get clean water.

Supply tea by Clipper (not quite 100% Fairtrade).

There are different coffee types – the company has a sample box that is sent out if you are interested in trying them. The packs are designed to make 1 thermos.

If you require a coffee system for your church Indigo Valley offer a range of options.

Their website is www.indigovalley.co.uk, phone 0845 0540067 or email Andrew at

andrew@indigovalley.co.uk

Discussion on the Seven Disciplines of the National Reform and Renewal programme

Split into 4 groups to cover the sections. The feedback from the groups is below.

1. Discernment and listening – this is not done enough. Listening to communities at all times not just Sundays. Listening to the stories of the people and communities and close the hurt that may have occurred and move forward from that.
2. Apologetics – talking about faith. Living it but not preaching it
3. Evangelism – Think about the services we have to be attractive to new comers and faithful to those already coming.
4. Make sure service relates to the occasion Email, Facebook, websites etc
5. Ideas – great ideas for growing churches and engaging, but ideas are not necessarily transferable. Contextualize to your patch. Bishops to be better at guiding and leading so there is a more positive example from them with engaging with the real world with the Gospel.
6. Priority. Christian country with good will for the churches. Offer different ways in for the communities we serve.
7. “As the Father has sent me so I send you”. As simple as “do as I do”. That not get stuck in single strategy. To grow from bottom up and keep in love. Do we spend time seeking justice and building peace – need to do more than worry about church numbers. Church will naturally grow if we seek justice and peace. Be alert to meeting people and coming from place of love.

Discernment – how do we as Deanery Synod discern what Holy Spirit is doing and where do we hear (SC: [How to explore this in future – look at discernment and hearing stories of mission and ministry in Deanery](#)).

Update on Deanery Strategic Priorities:

Schools Ministry – The Rev'd Toby Wright

Training for spirituality has happened and we will be setting up bereavement training. The intention is also to invite Fiona Craig to a Foundation Governors evening. Still need to look more carefully what happens at Secondary schools.

Men's Ministry – The Rev'd Andrew Tweedy

Survey of what is going on in churches already with regards to Men's Ministry. Questions covered what fellowship meetings there are, their frequency and who runs them; what outreach activities there are and their frequencies and who organizes and leads them. Found that there is a lot going on in the churches already. By next meeting hope to have proposals.

Vision and Mission Action Planning – John Glanville

In business speak this is a 5 year plan. All parishes and Benefices were invited to complete the Mission Action plan, not quite at 50% return rate and we still want to hear from everyone so we can grow Deanery plan from the bottom up.

Ann Boutflower (Bampton) raised that bereavement is a big issue. The Rev'd Toby Wright explained that we are hosting SeeSaw training for Foundation governors. GraveTalk cafés – discussion around bereavement, preparing for death resources etc. Further information can be found at <https://churchofenglandfunerals.org/gravetalk/> We are also having the Chaplain from John Radcliffe Hospital at the next Deanery Synod meeting.

Bible Study – The Rev'd Ron Curtis

Day of Thanksgiving for the Institution of Holy Communion Corpus Christi. Mark 12 verses 28 to 34

This was discussed in pairs and then people fed back what really struck them about the passage. Various points were raised:

Command to Love.

You are not far from the kingdom of God.

Love your neighbour as yourself

Concept of God very difficult – can relate to Jesus better.

Tri-majesty of God in the reading

“Mind” changed by scribe to “understanding” which is very different.

This is much more important than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices. Old ways going, new approach. New approach to same commandment.

Nothing we do can take away or add to the love of God.

Some people struggle to “like” themselves. How do you use word love? We constrain things in a word, but need to look at bigger meaning. Acceptance and tolerance built into love. Compassion. People that are damaged find that loving themselves is very difficult. Why did the scribes suddenly stop talking?

Business

- Diocesan Elections – The Rev'd Ron Curtis

The Rev'd Andrew Tweedy is now standing as nominated at Synod. Now full house so no need for elections. The representatives

House of Clergy: The Rev'd Andrew Tweedy and The Rev'd Toby Wright

House of Laity: Barbara Eaton, Kevin Rillie and Rachel Vander Elst

- Area Dean's Notices – The Rev'd Toby Wright

As you are aware the process was not successful for appointing a new Bishop of Oxford. There are concerns the amount of time that we have to wait to nominate someone again.

It was suggested that a letter could be written to the Diocese expressing these concerns and that it should be raised at the Diocesan synod. It was also mentioned that more transparency in the process would be helpful.

Mission Grants – we have the funds again this year and the information will be sent out soon. Priority will be given to those projects that focus on the areas proposed by synod of Schools Ministry, Men’s Ministry and Vision and Mission Action Planning. Priority will also be given to those who did not get a grant last year.

Toby Wright is on Sabbatical and Annual Leave from 7th June to 24th September; Ron Curtis will be Acting Area Dean during this period.

Lay Chair’s Notices – Mr. Kevin Rillie

There were no notices

Finance – Mrs. Sue Campbell

Sue’s full report will be sent as supplementary information..

Need to pay 50% of share by June to get the 1% rebate. Any parish that can’t do it please get in touch with Sue Campbell (suemcampbell@gmail.com).

Mark Albert and Cedric Reavley are on the finance committee and have been examining the 2014 accounts. They found that the parish share is an average 50% of the regular income but there is a big range from 67% to 20%. One parish only has 4 planned givers This highlights the importance of stewardship.

The Reserve levels vary greatly between churches. It is recommended that a parish should have reserves of 2-3 months of general expenditure and that the PCC should have a reserves policy.

There has been a request sent out that anyone can pays an extra 5% on top of their parish share. Only 1 parish offered, and they did that despite 60% of their income is needed for their own share.

Next year there will be an increase in the parish share of £20000 just from Diocesan changes. House for duty parishes will have to pay more so will be able to help other parishes less.

The Deanery website (www.witneydeanery.org) will be regularly updated. It does however need information from you.

Other important matters

- Next meeting:
Monday 19th October 2015 – venue tbc – any offers please to admin@witneydeanery.org
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WITNEY DEANERY SYNOD

Attendees:

Rev'd Toby Wright (Area Dean), Ron Curtis (Assistant Area Dean), Kevin Rillie (Lay Chair), Sue Campbell (Treasurer)

Standing Committee: John Glanville, Charles Mathew, Rev'd Drew Tweedy
Mandy Studley (Administrator)

Pamela Barling (Alvescot), Mark Albert & Ann Boutflower (Bampton with Clanfield), Betty Holmes (Brize Norton), Ian Griffiths (Carterton), Barbara Eaton (Cogges), John Eustace (Kencot), Sheila Caygill (Northmoor), Donald Chamberlain (Shilton), Alison Shaw (Standlake), Michael Russell (Taynton), Shukrananda Gant, Helen Meyrick & Phil Platt (Witney),

Rev'd Cedric Reavley (Finance Committee / Burford Benefice), Rev'd Bill Blakey (Carterton & Brize Norton), Rev'd Margaret Dixon & Rev'd Dr. Nick Pike (Cogges, South Leigh & North Leigh)

Apologies:

Sue Meech (Asthall & Swinbrook with Widford), Eileen Wojciechowska (Black Bourton), Rachel Vander Elst & Gaynor Taylor (Burford), Elizabeth Knowles & Mark Kingston (Cogges), Martin Dines, Ian Paul & John Pearson (Ducklington), David MacFarlane (Kelmscott), Anne Hichens (Langford), Melanie Poole (Little Faringdon), Judith Warwick (Minster Lovell), Roderick Craig (North Leigh), Judith Poole (South Leigh), Susie Miles (Standlake), Moray Angus (Westwell), Nick Thompson & Nathaniel Miles (Witney), Philip Rogers (Yelford)

Rev'd David Lloyd (Bampton), James Maddern (Brize Norton & Carterton), Rev'd Richard Coombs & Rev'd Dr. Jonathan Hunter Dunn (Burford), Rev'd Simon Kirby, (Cogges), Rev'd Harry MacInnes, & Rev'd Karen Young (Shill Valley & Broadshire Benefice), Rev'd Alastair Blaine, Rev'd Joy Hance & Rev'd Neil Traynor (Witney)
