

ST ALBANS DEANERY SYNOD

St Albans city parishes

Aldenham – St John the Baptist
Bricket Wood – St Luke
Colney Heath – St Mark
Frogmore – Holy Trinity
London Colney – St Peter
Radlett – Christ Church and St John
Shenley – St Martin

Abbey
Christ Church
St Luke
St Mary, Marshalswick
St Michael with St Mary

St Paul
St Peter
St Saviour
St Stephen with St Julian

ST ALBANS DEANERY STANDING & PASTORAL COMMITTEE

MEETING

held at 7.30 pm on Thursday 26th September 2019
at St Luke's, Cell Barnes Lane, St Albans, Hertfordshire. AL1 5QJ

PRESENT

1 OPENING PRAYERS

The meeting began at 7.30pm with an Opening Prayer led by RD.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from 5 members: -

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3 MINUTES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING held on 16th May 2019 and MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting with no matters arising.

The minutes of the meeting of Synod held on 12th June 2019 were reviewed.
Minute 9, last line, last sentence: insert "not" between "had" and "been".

4 DISCUSSION ON DEANERY COMMUNICATIONS

Monthly Emailed Newsletter

Members of Synod had expressed a preference for a monthly emailed newsletter.

RD had spoken to xx (St Stephen's). She had quoted £500 an issue for collecting the material and setting it out: we would also need some printed copies which would increase the cost. Agreed that this was too expensive, although it would be a high-quality product.

It was felt that producing a newsletter wasn't a technical problem (and there were known to be people in our congregation who could do this: this will be followed up). The real issue was collecting the news to put in it.

Action: Kenneth Padley

After much discussion, an annual report like the one RD had produced last year was thought to be the best option. Deanery Synod needs to have a presence in the parishes, telling them about projects we are working on, initiatives being taken, support on offer.

Agreed that we would report to Synod that we had been unable to find a cost-effective solution so the idea would be dropped for now unless suitable volunteers could be identified.

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Social Media

zz from St Saviour's joined the meeting to present his proposal on Deanery Communications. He joined in the discussion on use of Social Media beforehand.

St Saviour's has a Facebook page and Twitter account. These are good for informal communications, photos, events etc. The church website is used for more formal matters. KP, when University Chaplain at Bangor, would send out information via email and students posted some of it on Facebook. For X:Site, it was suggested that "www.mumsnet.com" could be very effective for advertising this event and others for Primary and Pre-Primary children. RD cautioned that it can be too effective – St Luke's used it to advertise an event and had to turn over 100 people away on the night.

Chapter – Abi, the Sub Dean at the Cathedral, mentioned at Chapter her perception that there is a movement amongst young people to avoid social media and digital devices. There is a picture emerging that Millennials do not drink and have a passionate commitment to the environment.

zz – Alternative Proposal for Deanery Synod Communications

zz handed out 2-page proposal for autonomous electronic noticeboards to be placed in each Deanery church. They would be updated centrally, automatically.

Parishes do not have any buy-in to Deanery. This would bring Deanery directly to the Parish. PDFs would be held centrally and picked up each night.

KP – the idea is exciting, attractive, inviting. St Michael's currently has one screen with rotating .jpeg files. It would be difficult to find somewhere else to place another one. The church does not have Wi-Fi and it is not something we are looking to set up.

JH – Wi-Fi is best but it could be done via Ethernet.

AS – Electronic boards would be a selling point for the Church Halls.

There was a discussion around costings, technology and what systems churches already have in place.

JH estimates the installation cost would be approximately £350 per parish.

Monitor costs are currently going up as the Pound (£) drops

Raspberry Pi

Power – Electrician needed to wire the monitor etc in correctly

Network – Wi-Fi or Ethernet

JH would be happy to organise the set up in each church.

KP – Who would be accessing the information? The audience would not only be parishioners but visitors and tourists.

AS – Could the system intersperse Parish information with Deanery news?

JH – It may be possible but would be difficult. Administrators responsible for creating "posters" for the noticeboards would need to be taught how to construct them with the correct aspect ratio. Standard A4 and A5 sizing does not work for example, as when these are displayed on the screen stretching occurs and the image becomes distorted.

RD – Deanery needs to advertise the projects we are working on. This idea is really interesting, would like it presented at Deanery Synod in October.

JH – unable to attend as his mother is ill and he is travelling to New Zealand to visit her.

RD – If JH happy, RD will present the idea on his behalf at Deanery Synod.

KP – Presentation to Synod needs to emphasise the importance and versatility of Wi-Fi.

Standing Committee thanked zz for putting this idea forward.

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5 FINANCE

Deanery Bank Account

PF reported that Lloyds Bank offers an account that will suit Deanery needs. She suggested there be 4 signatories – RD, PF, KP and JP. Postal address for the account to be the Treasurer's home address. Any 2 signatories of the 4 could sign cheques. Online banking will be set up.

PF proposed that the Deanery bank account be moved to Lloyds Bank. AS seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

Subscription Levels for 2020

Although a subscription of £30 per lay member (whether the place is filled or not) was floated at Deanery Synod in June, it was agreed that a revised Budget needs to be in place and presented to members.

Action: PF and RD to discuss and draw up Budget

6 BEAUTIFUL BURIAL GROUND PROJECT

Two training sessions took place on 21st September – at St Peter's, London Colney and at St Stephen's, St Albans. JP to write up report and circulate this with the Agenda and other papers for Deanery Synod.

Action: JP

7 MISSION OUTREACH WORKSHOP – Trevor Withers

RD gave out a draft, promotional leaflet for the event which is due to take place on Saturday 23rd November at St Luke's Church, St Albans. The workshop will look at how we communicate our faith in a way that resonates/connects with people today.

The workshop is free but people are asked to book a place as there will be a light breakfast served and catering numbers needed.

KP – Who is it aimed at? The leaflet needs to highlight this and that it is open to everyone, not just members of Deanery Synod.

8 DMAP UPDATE

Funerals Ministry

During meetings with local Funeral Directors, it seemed that they were being allowed to actively promote funerals through the Registrar's Office but not religious services of any faith or denomination. Registrars are only licensed to conduct secular funerals yet they are allowing prayers to be said and hymns to be sung. KP had taken this up with Sandy Walkington, County Councillor. Sandy Walkington spoke with the County Registrar who denied this was the case. KP reported that, to take this further, we would need specific evidence of malpractice.

The new vicar at St Mark's, Colney Heath, Revd Caroline Keightley was installed on 12th September and is already Funeral Directors in her area and giving out the leaflet that Deanery produced.

X:Site

RD will flag at Deanery Synod that more support is needed to help organise and run X:Site. RD is printing and will be circulating promotional material for the next event. The 3:67 project plan and run each session, non-clergy contacts within the parishes are responsible for publicising it.

9 PASTORAL MATTERS

- Revd Caroline Keightley was installed as the new vicar of Colney Heath on 12th September.
- Revd Kirsty Wainwright is the new Curate at St Stephen's with St Julian's.
- Revd Alex Huzzey is the new Curate at St Peter's, St Albans
- Deanery Standing Committee is short 2 members (Javaid Iqbal and David Clout both having stood down since their election).

Action: RD to flag DSSC vacancies at Deanery Synod

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10 AGENDA ITEMS FOR DEANERY SYNOD -

- Presentation by Chris Birch-Evans of STEP – Challenge to Make Connections
- Update on DMAP Project progress
- Deanery Communications feedback report
- Deanery Communications proposal from Jeremy Harding
- Speakers at Deanery Synod
- Pastoral Matters – discussion groups to share good news and challenges
- Biodiversity Project – Burial Ground initiative
- Climate Change – Presentation by Kath Clough of St Luke’s on XR St Albans plus open discussion, possible resolution for Diocesan Synod on what the Church of England is doing about this.
- Standard Items – Minutes of last meeting and Matters Arising; Finance; Synod Reports – Diocesan and General;

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were 2 items

- a) “Dementia Friends”. zx had attended the most recent meeting of the SADC Public Health & Wellbeing Working Group. Louise Bates of the Alzheimer’s Society had presented on promoting a friendly environment for dementia sufferers. Quentin suggested Louise could present to Deanery Synod in 2020. Churches would then sign up to making their premises and polices more dementia-friendly.

Standing Committee agreed to defer this until next year. There are other conditions which could be considered too, for example Autism.

- b) Kath Clough of St Luke’s had asked if Deanery Synod could discuss the climate crisis and our possible response to it. Standing Committee agreed to include this in October’s meeting of Synod.

Action: JP to invite anyone with Environment interest to October Synod.

12. CLOSING PRAYERS

The Rural Dean closed the meeting with all saying The Grace.

Date of next meeting of Standing Committee to be confirmed