

ST ALBANS DEANERY SYNOD

St Albans city parishes

Aldenham – St John the Baptist	Abbey	St Paul
Bricket Wood – St Luke	Christ Church	St Peter
Colney Heath – St Mark	St Luke	St Saviour
Frogmore – Holy Trinity	St Mary, Marshalswick	St Stephen with St Julian
London Colney – St Peter	St Michael with St Mary	
Radlett – Christ Church and St John		
Shenley – St Martin		

ST ALBANS DEANERY STANDING & PASTORAL COMMITTEE

MEETING

held at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 29th September 2020
at St Michael's Parish Centre, St Michael's Street, St Albans, AL3 4SL

PRESENT

Ex officio

Rural Dean

KP -

Lay Co-Chair

MD -

Treasurer

PF -

Secretary

JP -

Parish Reps

Assistant Rural Dean

KH -

AS -

PH -

1 OPENING PRAYERS

The meeting was conducted according to current Government Guidelines on social distancing, room ventilation and hand sanitising. It commenced at 7.30pm with an Opening Prayer led by KP. KP welcomed Standing Committee to St Michael's on St Michael's Day.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from 3 members: -

3 MINUTES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING held on 30th January 2020 and DEANERY SYNOD held on 12th March 2020.

The Minutes of Standing Committee were signed as a true record of the meeting.

One amendment to Minutes of Deanery Synod – venue was St Peter's Church, not St Luke's.

4 DMAP

- X:Site - Revd Canon Mark Slater had provided an update to KP on the X:Site project. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, X:Site cannot be run. He will revisit it when circumstances allow, however, he feels that it may have run its course.
- Funerals meeting on 21st October – KP reported that the Co-Operative Funeral Directors (the Co-Op) in Hatfield Road are willing to meet for round-table discussions. Date set for the meeting is 21st October. KP has sent invitations to all Incumbents, representatives from the Co-Op London Colney will also be there as will Kate Mercer, Cemeteries Superintendent at St Albans Cemetery, Hatfield Road.

Action: PH to email article about The Co-Op Funeral Service to KP for information

- Deanery Website – KP had been unable to access the Deanery website. JP reminded all the of website address, KH checked and was able to load the page. AS confirmed the information currently held on it. It was agreed that data on Hall Hire is likely out of date.

Actions: JP to

- Re-publicise Deanery website to all members**
- Contact Church Administrators – Deanery website to be embedded in each parish website; update Hall Hire information; encourage them to publicise Halls for Hire to wider community**

5 POTENTIAL SYNOD 10th November

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KP reported that, at the recent meeting of Rural Deans, Bishop Michael said there was no point in Deanery Synod meeting if there were more pressing, practical hand-to-mouth matters needing to be dealt with in the parishes.

AS agreed with this rationale, meetings should only be held if there is a specific reason for them. There needs to be an inaugural meeting of Deanery Synod marking the start of the new Triennium, however, November 2020 would be too soon.

It was agreed that DSSC should aim to meet in early January 2021 (subject to guidelines then in place) with a view to convening Deanery Synod in late January/early February.

Deanery Budget would normally be agreed at the November Synod. PF reported that there is £1,921 in the Account and, other than a few small expense claims, Deanery has not spent anything so far this year. Fifteen of the sixteen parishes have paid their lay subscriptions for the year. Christ Church, St Albans has yet to pay.

In 2019 the main costs were for X:Site then there were smaller costs for website maintenance and printing for the Deanery Directory and Deanery Newsletter.

In 2020 there may be the cost of X:Site in February still to pay plus there will be website maintenance costs. It was agreed that there would be no Newsletter for 2020 as there would be no projects/events etc to review. A message to all members of Deanery Synod setting out plans for recovery and how Deanery can support parishes moving forwards would be more appropriate. The Deanery Directory may be updated and circulated but that could not be done until after all APCMs have taken place.

PF queried how the system works for payments from the Diocese for the Rural Dean's expenses. To date, there has been no credit into the bank account. AS said, historically, the full amount would be paid by the Diocese into the Deanery account but then go almost immediately out to the Rural Dean's account. It may be that Mark Slater arranged for the payment to go direct to him. PF will investigate.

AS confirmed that the old NatWest Bank Account is empty of funds and that he has attempted to close the account by completing the necessary online form. NatWest refused the form. DSSC agreed that we leave the account with a £0 balance.

Actions:

- a) **Venue: KP to notify Revd Nick Weir that meeting on 10th November postponed and ask if Holy Trinity would be available and able to host in January/February instead**
- b) **Elections: JP to email booklet "What is Deanery Synod All About?" to all existing Lay Members asking them to circulate within their parish if postponed APCMs have not already taken place. (KP had already circulated this booklet to all Chapter)**
- c) **DSSC membership: to be addressed after elections have taken place**
- d) **Format: KP and KH to continue discussions around introducing short Act of Worship at the start of Deanery Synod meetings.**
- e) **Budget 2021: PF to check with Revd Mark Slater if there are any outstanding bills to be paid for X:Site that took place before lockdown plus if he has any remaining expenses to claim**
- f) **PF to look into Rural Dean expenses payment due from Diocese**
- g) **MD to check with Treasurer at Christ Church regarding missed payment of Lay subscription**
- h) **KP to draft welcome letter to all members of Deanery Synod setting out Deanery's plans for the future**
- i) **JP to email all members that we are unable to determine the level of Lay Member subscriptions at present. This will be decided in January and members notified then.**

6 FUTURE MEETINGS

- DSSC agreed to put potential Speakers on hold. Priority for Deanery is to provide practical support for our parishes. We can approach Speakers when it suits us.

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- Discussion around dates for Synod meetings in 2021 concluded that it is not realistic to set all dates at present. A date for the inaugural meeting of Synod will be decided with the hosting church in late January/early February. At that meeting we can ascertain how members feel and what they think. The number of meetings could be reduced from 3 to 2; specific meetings for Church Wardens/Treasurers/Hall Hire Administrators may be more useful to enable those office holders to share experiences and seek mutual support.

7 PASTORAL MATTERS

Current and Forthcoming Parish Vacancies

- Radlett has been vacant since the end of April officially, however, Javaid Iqbal took sabbatical so left the parish in February.
 - St Paul's – Revd Canon Tony Hurle is retiring. His final service will be taken on Saturday 3rd October.
 - St Mary's, Marshalswick – Fr Grant is retiring at the end of October.
- The three parishes are in very different positions regarding Lay resources and Clergy support.
- Radlett* – part of a Team Ministry so the Team is the first port of call
- St Paul's* – Lay support is good plus they have the Associate Vicar, Andre and Peter Crumpler is being licensed to the parish in a self-supporting capacity.
- St Mary's* – of most concern. KP and Revd Richard Watson, vicar at nearby St Saviour's, will be meeting with the Lay Readers and Church Wardens to offer support. The Lay team have already drawn up a plan of how to manage the Vacancy which KP will help review and develop. Revd Richard Watson has agreed that one of the St Saviour's clergy will officiate one Sunday per month. Revd Canon Dr. Ruth Goatly, currently Associate Vicar at St John's, Boxmoor, retires on 1st November and is licensed PtO from 2nd November. She will officiate on two Sundays per month.

Clergy Appointments

The Diocese has a backlog of vacancies to fill. Radlett is already on the list, St Paul's and St Mary's will be added shortly. Generally the Diocese will advertise vacancies from January – March to coincide with curacies ending and candidates looking for their first appointment as vicar. Interviews would follow in early Spring and successful candidates can then give notice in their current role (as appropriate) before moving to the new parish. They would be installed during the Summer. This timeframe enables vicars with school-aged children to complete the move before commencement of the next academic year.

In some areas, the Diocese is laying-off Clergy so there may well be interest from those affected.

Archdeacon Jane is available to support Lay Teams draft and publicise their Parish Profile and draw up the advertisement for the vacancy.

- Andy Pike was made deacon two weeks ago
- Revd Kirsty Wainwright and Revd Alex Hussey were ordained yesterday, 28th September, at St Peter's Church. Due to Covid restrictions, parishioners were not able to attend however, the Service was streamed live online.

Pastoral Aid Support Grants

Susan Pope, Diocesan Secretary, wrote to all parishes earlier in the year regarding Pastoral Aid Support Grants. These are available to address particular circumstances or acute need. They are not for ongoing support and, specifically this year, they are not for Covid-related issues. Parishes wishing to apply for a PAS Grant were to send this to the Rural Dean, Standing Committee would then assess the application on its merits and, if agreed, pass the request to the Diocesan Secretary.

KP reported that no requests have been received from churches within our Deanery.

Parish Share shortfall write-off requests

No requests have been received. KH noted that St Luke's, Bricket Wood, has historic debt which it would be good to have written-off. KH will look into sorting this.

Actions:

- a) KP to email Diocesan Secretary confirming no requests for PAS Grants have been received.

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- b) KP to email Diocesan Secretary confirming no requests for Parish Share write-off have been received however, St Luke's, Bricket Wood may submit a request for historic debt to be cleared

8 MATTERS ARISING

- The Lay Foundation Course that Canon Tim Bull spoke of has started. There are 47 people from within the Diocese on it with roughly half following the Teacher/Learning stream
- The Diocesan initiative "The Big Conversation" is not happening due to Covid.
- The Archdeacons' inspections have not taken place this year, again due to Covid.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Revd Canon Mark Slater had forwarded an email to KP with revised wording of the Motion carried by Deanery Synod on 22nd October 2019:-
That this Synod, following the motion passed by General Synod in February 2020 that recognises the global climate emergency is a crisis for God's creation and a fundamental injustice, and the call of the Anglican Communion in ACC Resolutions A17.05 and A17.06, which calls on all parts of the Church of England, including dioceses and parishes, to work towards net zero emissions:
 - a) *Requests the Diocese of St Albans to register with A Rocha UK for the Eco-Diocese Programme, and*
 - b) *Requests that the General Synod debate a motion 'in identical terms' requesting that every diocese of the Church of England registers with A Rocha UK for the Eco-Diocese Programme.*

KP was not sure who had been involved in revising and approving the wording. JP to investigate.

- AS noted that Mike Ford has stood down from Standing Committee. He recommended that Mike be officially thanked for all his hard work looking a Communication within the Deanery. KP confirmed that he has already done so.
- JP asked how Deanery will present the outgoing Rural Dean, Revd Canon Mark Slater, with a gift, acknowledging his achievements and all the positive changes he has made? It was agreed that KP obtain a £100 John Lewis voucher using Deanery funds and send this with a Thank You card/letter to Mark.
- PH asked if the Deanery Prayer Diary is to continue? At a time when Deanery is not meeting in person and meetings have been cancelled or postponed, it would be a useful focal point for Lay members. In particular, it would help keep them informed of vacancies and appointments. KP does want to keep it going, it is a matter of who will drive it. He is looking into his administrative support as Rural Dean.

Actions:

- a) **JP to liaise with Rachel Johnston, Diocesan Environment Officer, regarding revised wording.**
- b) **KP to organise Thank You/Leaving gift for the outgoing Rural Dean**

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

14th January 2021 – day after next meeting of Rural Deans. Provisionally at 7.30pm. JP to ask RN if a daytime meeting would suit her better.

11. CLOSING PRAYER

KP asked PH to lead us in prayer. The meeting closed with all saying The Grace.