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| 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 | *St Albans city parishes*  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 SYNOD**

**MINUTES** of the Meeting of the Deanery Synod

held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 8th June 2022 at St Peter’s Church, London Colney

**PRESENT**

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| ***Ex officio***  ***Rural Dean***    Vacancy | ***Treasurer***  Pam Fox (PF) | ***Lay Chair***  Meriel Dixon (MD) | ***Secretary***     Julia Pyburn |

**Abbreviations used: DSSC – Deanery Synod Standing Committee DMAP – Deanery Mission Action Plan**

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| **1.** | **Opening Prayers** |
|  | The Lay Chair welcomed Members and Visitors to St Albans Deanery Synod. A new Rural Dean had yet to be appointed following Revd Kenneth Padley’s move to Salisbury Cathedral. Revd Kylie Hodgins, Assistant Rural Dean, was away on Sabbatical.  There were two guest speakers, Maggie Dodd – Anna Chaplain for St Albans; and David White – Diocesan Secretary. Their presentations formed the first part of the meeting followed by Deanery business.  Revd Pat gave the Opening Prayer based on Psalm 84. |
| **2.** | **Introduction to St Saviour’s Church** |
|  | Revd Pat Jones welcomed everybody to St Peter’s and outlined the work which the parish is undertaking to become carbon neutral.  The church building will be 200 years old in 2025 and has 2,000 souls in the graveyard. There is an ongoing dispute over part of the boundary with the Industrial Estate where a wall was taken down without permission.  The church halls were built in the 1980s and re-ordered in 2010. This was a drain on resources. With an older congregation, St Peter’s is reliant on Hall Hire for fundraising.  The PCC have identified issues to be addressed to be carbon neutral   * Zoned heating * Insulation for the Church roof * Churchyard managed sustainably to encourage biodiversity * Smart meters introduced * Double-glazing where possible to replace “toilet glass” installed in the 1940s.   A survey of the graveyard was undertaken to identify the grasses and flowers growing there. These are now listed in a Wildlife Report. A wild orchid is established in the graveyard and flowers each year.  Revd Pat drew attention to the Ascension Window behind the Altar – this is one of the finest features of the church and leaflets are available on its history and giving detailed information.  Outside the church Members and visitors would have seen the “Cascade of Flowers” adorning the entrance. This was a community project with local school groups and was lifted into place on Easter Sunday.  A big fundraising event was planned for the next day.  The Lay Chair thanked Revd Pat for her introduction to St Peter’s. |
| **3.** | **Anna Chaplaincy and Dementia-friendly Services**  See Presentation Slides at https://www.stalbansdeanerysynod.online/ |
|  | Maggie Dodd, a lay member of Deanery, was appointed Anna Chaplain for St Albans in 2021. Most people have heard of Anna Chaplaincy. It is named after the prophetess, Anna, an elderly and steadfast widow mentioned in St Luke’s Gospel who recognised Jesus as the Messiah upon his presentation at the Temple. Anna Chaplaincy is run by the Bible Reading Fellowship (Messy Church etc) and is an ecumenical, community based project. For the first time in the UK there are more people over 60 than under 18 years of age. People are living longer but as they get older, people are not always able to attend church. Anna Chaplains visit people of any faith, no faith and their families at home, in retirement flats and in care homes. It is a person-centred, non-judgemental offering seeking to support and encourage creativity, activities and the pursuit of interests. It is more about “being” than “doing”.  When Maggie was appointed in April 2021, there were about 180 Anna Chaplains. There are now 230 most of whom are themselves over 60 years old.  Memory Worship  Maggie asked people to have a quick chat amongst themselves to discuss what they think would be important for those with dementia.   * Good signposting – name badges, signate (e.g. to Toilets), flexible areas/zones * Simplicity * Familiarity – Memory Worship Box with Prayer Bear, Bible, Candle (electric) * Interactive & Engaging – people with Dementia do not remember things but how they felt; prayer requests; simple activities (e.g. jigsaws); sensory area with things to touch, smell, see, hear * Flexible – say start at 2pm but accept that probably will actually start at 2.20pm * Creativity & Fun * Accessibility – need helpers to assist with the service   People with Dementia may find it hard to come to church, it may become overwhelming. Offering Memory Worship allows them to remain in a familiar environment and the service can be geared to support their needs. It also provides an opportunity to engage with those who are new to the area or have recently moved into a Care Home.  **Q&A**  Q – are Care Homes willing to allow you in or have you met with resistance?  A – due to Lockdown restrictions, visits were not allowed but this has changed within the last 2 months. Care Homes are again looking to offer organised activities, pastoral care and entertainers. CQC Ratings actually grade Homes on the Spiritual Care that they provide.  Q – you said that there are about 200 Anna Chaplains in the UK but there are millions of people with Dementia. How do you decide who to engage with?  A – Anna Chaplaincy is growing. The Bishop of Portsmouth wants each town to have an Anna Chaplain. We realise that we cannot do everything. We have to set boundaries and choose what we can.  Q – Chaplaincy seems to be about Services i.e. for the Faithful  A – The aim is to offer pastoral care, walking alongside, listening and offering support. We can conduct a service for those who wish.  Q – Is a Faith-based service a problem in some Care Homes or Retirement Flats?  A - We respect the space. If there is a “no politics/faith in public areas” policy then we will conduct any services in an individual’s room.  Q – How do you deal with any disruption during a Service?  A – Generally it is ok. That is when it is useful to have other people there to assist.  Q – do you link up with other Agencies/Groups e.g. Good Neighbour?  A – We keep abreast of other groups working in the area so that we can share workload and, if necessary, point people towards an organisation that can offer specific care or support.  Q – How do Care Homes and individuals hear about Anna Chaplaincy?  A – There is a Booklet for Churches; web searches will bring up details for the local Anna Chaplain with links to the central organisation; referrals from Homes and individuals who have used the service.  The Dean – when in Canterbury/Rochester the goal was to provide support for age care by networking, joining the dots. A collaborative approach across parishes, deaneries and ecumenically.  There were no other questions. The Lay Chair thanked Maggie for her insightful and thought-provoking presentation. There was much food for thought on how parishes can adapt their services and areas of worship not just for people with Dementia but for other conditions too e.g. those with Autism.  There was a brief break so that any Visitors wishing to leave could go. Everybody was welcome to stay for the remainder of the meeting but only Members would be allowed to vote on any measures. |
| **4**. | **Attendance & Apologies** |
|  | Attendance – 37 Members recorded. 2 Guest Speakers one of whom is also a Lay Member  Apologies received – 20  Two parishes were not represented – Bricket Wood, St Luke; St Albans, St Saviour.  NB – there are 3 parishes in vacancy – Shenley, St Martin; St Albans, St Luke; St Michael’s with St Mary  No Lay Representatives have been elected to Deanery Synod from London Colney, St Peter’s. |
| **5.** | **Minutes of previous Synod and Standing Committee** |
|  | Minutes of the meeting of Deanery Synod on 8th February 2022 were circulated to members prior to the meeting. Members were asked if they gave an accurate record of the meeting  Proposed – Michael Jameson Seconded – Andy Sharp  Accepted – Unanimous. Signed by the Lay Chair.  Minutes of the recent Standing Committee meeting were received. |
| **6.** | **Introduction to the new Diocesan Secretary – David White** |
|  | David White thanked St Albans Deanery for inviting him to the meeting. He has been to 17 Deanery Synods since February 2022, no two are the same.  His working background is in commercial marketing from the 1980’s moving to the “not-for-profit” sector in 1988. He has been the CEO of NGOs at local, national and international level – healthcare, some Christian, some secular. He worked for Billy Graham’s last mission in England. He was appointed COO for the Anglican Communion which covers 165 countries. The role was based in London but took him all over the Globe. He attended many services, often not understanding any of language that the service was held in yet knowing where he was in the service.  As a boy, he was sent by non-Christian parents to Sunday School in the village where they lived. He was a Christian as an undergraduate and in his 20’s attended a Baptist Church and became Treasurer of it. Until he joined the Anglican Communion and participated in Daily Services, he had never had a Service Book. Throughout his life, he has never worshipped in the parish in which he lives. Currently his home is in Stotfold, Central Bedfordshire and he worships at St Paul’s, Letchworth in Hertfordshire.  Diocesan Secretary – the job title does not describe the role. There is a perception that the Diocesan Office is turreted and fortified, sending out orders and instructions to clergy and parishes. In reality, the Diocesan Office exists to serve the parishes, schools and chaplaincies within the Diocese.  “Diocesan Office” – David White does not like that terminology. The Diocesan Office is a legal structure, it does not exist as an entity, that is only at parish level. He would prefer the term “Parish Support Hub”.  The role of Diocesan Secretary is essentially to lead a team of experts in the strategic and operational running of the Diocese.   * Strategic – Vision and Mission of the Diocese; understanding implementation; viability * Operational – Finance; Communications; Buildings; Pastoral; Mission & Ministry; Director of Vocations   It is a balance of Business vs Ministry  Business – the Diocese has to be commercially viable. It must meet legal, financial and public health requirements. It is in the “faith” business so needs to reach out to people with a clear message, bring them in and maintain the relationship.  Ministry – fundamental to the Diocese’s existence. How to help churches in their mission and ministry? How to support children and the elderly in faith?  David White has a particular interest in supporting opportunities for young people to explore their faith. He has encouraged volunteering experiences for young people and youth work in churches. He has helped to run Adventure Camps for 30 years in Somerset for children and teenagers.  The Lay Chair thanked David White for presenting to Deanery Synod. She opened up the floor for questions.  Q. Parish Share is an absolute pain, it takes up 50% of parish income yet of the 16 parishes in the Deanery, only 15 parishes pay Parish Share. The Abbey is a parish in its own right but it does not pay Parish Share.  A. Very Revd Jo answered rather than David White.  The Financial Forum is split 50/50 on this. It is an inherited system whereby the Abbey does not pay Parish Share. However, in return, the Abbey hosts services for Confirmation, Ordination etc free of charge. The Abbey also provides houses for 5 Clergy. If it were to pay Parish Share it would just be paying the Diocese then to be reimbursed. Although the Abbey does not specifically pay Parish Share, it covers much.  Query – 50% of parish income goes to Parish Share. Does the Abbey pay a proportionate amount?  Q. Does the Diocese try to do too many things? More costs than need?  A. Good question. There are things that have to be done by law – common and ecclesiastical. What are peripheral things? The Diocese is probably doing some things that it does not need to. In the recent review, some things were identified and senior people were picked out for possible redeployment or redundancy. In any such review there has to be a strategic aspect as well as operational. For example, you may identify that, operationally, Person A should not be involved in the Bishop’s Appeal. Strategically, the Bishop’s Appeal is very important so if not Person A, who? St Albans is the 5th largest Diocese in England; the size of the team who run it is not in the top half.  Q. Diocesan Secretary, Archdeacon, Faculty – strange titles, archaic. What would you replace them with?  A. I agree. The quick answer is, I don’t know but I do want to look into it.  Q. During the recent pandemic and resulting financial constraints, how did this impact on staff at Holywell Lodge?  A. In 2020 the Diocesan Office took advantage of the Government Furlough Scheme. Some roles were furloughed as were some Curates. The Bishop’s staff team had daily remote meetings to manage and coordinate communications, online services, food banks and community café’s which were seen as essential services to support people during Lockdown. Financially, it did not impact as badly as expected. Home working changed things completely. The Diocese engaged with people online with training and support.  Q. Strategy – buildings are a major cost. How many buildings are there in the Diocese? How do you see those costs in 5 years’ time?  A. The Diocese owns property – Parsonages, Diocesan Office – and has not looked after them as well as it should have. The Diocese does not own churches, they are owned by Incumbents in trust. Many are Listed Buildings – church assets, community assets.  Carbon Net Zero 2030 – incredibly hard challenge for which we are trying to find funds. The Diocese is committed to being a presence in each community therefore we have to continue to find funds to look after our property stock.  Q. Declining numbers attending church, controversies etc. What gives you a sense of hope?  A. My home. Sunday morning, go to be part of worshipping community. See parents, grandparents, volunteers running groups. It is not perfect but it gives me hope.  More specifically, Ben. I first met him as a 9 year old at Summer Camp. He is now 30 years old, a strong individual committed to growth in faith.  Q. Does the Diocese have a team who do a deep audit of buildings?  A. No. There is a team responsible for Parsonages etc required by the articles of Governance. Ideally, we need a team with economic and engineering expertise to serve parishes and assess what needs to be done to be Carbon Net Zero. Grant support money may be available, the Bishop’s Council is to decide. I don’t think we will be there for 2030 but we urgently need to move towards it for the next generation.  There being no further questions, the Lay Chair thanked David White for his time and insight. |
| **7.** | **Finance** |
|  | Pam Fox thanked all parishes for paying their Deanery contributions, all were received between March and May.  Parish Share – the Review is ongoing with the process due to complete in July. There have been 3 submissions from parishes who wish to have their Share reviewed. |
| **8.** | **Forthcoming Dates** |
|  | Deanery Synod  18th October 2022 – St Albans, St Luke’s. Clergy Welfare. Speaker Richard Farmbrough from the Clergy Support Trust. Looking at the support available for Clergy and their families to ensure their health and wellbeing. Although the support will often be a financial grant, there are other resources on offer too.  Pastoral Matters  29th June – Alex Huzzey will be installed as Vicar at St Luke’s, St Albans  9th August – Sarah Marshall (former member of St Peter’s, London Colney) will be installed as Team Vicar at St Martin’s, Shenley.  There is a vacancy at St Michael’s with St Mary’s following Revd Kenneth Padley’s move to Salisbury.  There will be a vacancy at St Peter’s , London Colney as Revd Pat retires imminently. Please hold Pat and her family in your prayers. |
| **9.** | **Matters Arising from Minutes of the Last Meeting** |
|  | There were no matters arising. |
| **10.** | **Any Other Business** |
|  | Appointments for Governors at Townsend School. Two people are in situ but Deanery Synod needs to vote on the appointments to approve them.  Proposed by Revd Becky Leach Seconded by Andy Sharp Vote carried. |
| **11.** | **Closing Prayers** |
|  | The Lay Chair gave the Closing Prayer before Members and Visitors joined in saying The Grace. |

**Dates of Next Meetings**

**18th October – 7.30pm at St Albans, St Luke’s – Clergy Welfare**