

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Deanery Synod Report Jan – Dec 2018

The Deanery Synod met in January, April, June and October in 2018.

The Deanery paid 98.5% of its requested contributions in 2017 – a very high percentage when compared with the diocesan average.

At the January Synod, Carol Richards, the Diocesan Mission Regeneration Advisor gave a talk on '10 Top Tips' for Outreach to New Housing Areas. The suggestions are particularly relevant when people are moving into homes on a new estate of houses, as many are designed to help people get to know their neighbours and introduce the local Church, but some of them will work at any time.

1. Prayer Walk the New Housing Area
2. Conduct a Community Survey
3. Produce and Information Leaflet and Website and use Social Media
4. Visit with a Welcome Pack
5. Blessing of New Homes
6. Hold a Community Event
7. Plan some Children's Activities
8. Advertise an Open Afternoon at the Church
9. Discuss Plans and Issues with Other Groups in the Area
10. Conduct an Environmental Project, such as litter picking, or transformation of waste ground into a garden

Carol also put emphasis on making good use of church festivals, such as Christmas. She gave the example of Beaulieu, just outside Chelmsford, where the local Vicar organised an open-air Christmas Carol Service followed by coffee and mince-pies

At the April Synod, Dot Salmon, the Colchester Episcopal Area Youth Adviser gave a talk summarising the current Diocesan Youth Strategy as well as providing some information about her own background. Before being appointed in November 2017, she spent time with Fellowship Afloat in Tollesbury and CYO in Braintree. She has spent the last five years managing a local learning centre in Hackney, run by IntoUniversity, which supports learning for young people from deprived backgrounds. After presenting a summary of the current Diocesan Youth Strategy, the Synod members discussed how the vision can be implemented in our parishes and deanery.

Some key points arising were:

- a. We need to listen properly to what young people want from the church
- b. We need to find ways of including them - one to one mentoring by church members, who do not necessarily need to be youth workers, is effective in building long term relationships.
- c. Putting on deanery events and enabling young people to attend these and wider initiatives (with lifts etc) can be very positive but every parish needs to consider how links can be maintained.
- d. Dot is available to provide face-to-face Safeguarding Training at local level.
- e. A Diocesan Youth Synod is being planned which will debate the issues arising at the main Diocesan Synod who will be informed of their feedback via the Diocesan Youth Advisers. Recommendations of young people who might wish to represent the Deanery should be sent to Dot.

At the June Synod, there was a presentation by the Rev'd Canon Dr Roger Matthews, Dean of Mission and Ministry. The Dean works closely with Bishop Stephen on the Transforming Presence Agenda and his talk focused on lay and ordained ministries, the way forward and trends. The Transforming Presence (TP) framework is still evolving with emerging priorities not always fitting neatly under the current four headlines. The two that he identified were:

- Church planting (growing new Christian worshipping communities),
- Ministry to families/children/young people.

The Turnaround Project, which started about three years ago, helps with the stewardship/governance of consistently failing parishes through the deployment of interim ministers (18months-3 years) to help parishes recover or reimagine their future. Where implemented this has been a helpful process, though parishes are not always told they are in this project.

He also discussed the fact that the number of people exploring lay ministry has increased in recent years, with training now more local, contextual, and on the job. The forms of lay ministry have also expanded. The number of stipendiary curates being trained by the diocese is to be increased from 10-12 to 16 per year, with similar numbers of non-stipendiary trainees. New curate training in the diocese is to be more flexible with the length tailored to the needs of the trainee. The 2025 forecast for minimum sustainable stipendiary clergy in the diocese is not expected to change from the current 215, though we must address the fact that in the future the national church is set to reduce funding in the next few years.

At the October Synod, Rev'd Tim Goodbody, Area Ordination Adviser for the Stansted Archdeaconry gave a talk on Reimagining Ministry: helping those around us to discover their gifts and calling in the church and in the world.

He asked the Synod to consider what a vocation is in a Christian sense and who has a vocation in church.

A vocation is a calling, and everyone has one; we are called to follow Christ and are all on a journey. He identified signs by which we can recognise a calling, both in ourselves and in others. There is now much more flexibility within the church to support people's vocations and callings, and the Diocese and Deanery both provide training resources.

For anyone who feels the 'niggle' Margaret Davis is the person to contact. She will then start the communication with Tim

The Deanery Service was held at Chrishall on 7^h October, organised by Anand Sodadasi and his team.

Kevin Halsall