

Approved Minutes of Easington Deanery Synod Meeting held on the 23rd September 2019

Present:

Reverend Canon Jane Grieve Area Dean, Reverend Carol Harris, Reverend Paul Harrison, Reverend Elaine Jones, Father Paul Kennedy, Father Kyle McNeil, Father Mark Mawhinney, Reverend Lucy Moss, Reverend Paul Paterson

Lay Chair Stephen Pickering

Revd Canon David Tomlinson Senior Resource Church Leader, Diocese of Durham

Alice & Ray Armbrister, Neil Armstrong, Loraine Dodds, Matt Finkel, Tracey Fox, Ann-Marie Green, Roger Key, Carol Lines, Carol Maddison, Liz Masshedar, Diane Metcalfe, Roger Muggleton, Alan Roxborough, Jeannette Simpson, Wendy Tempest, Sue Webster, Alan Whitwell, Maureen Wilson, Jane Winter.

1. Opening Worship

Father Paul Kennedy opened the meeting in a time of worship

2. Apologies for absence:

Reverend David Bond, Reverend Muriel Peters

Julie Smith (Haswell St Paul), Anne Smith (Horden St Mary), Kathy McAvoy (Murton Holy Trinity), Joanne Benson (Peterlee St Cuthbert)

3. Welcome

The Chair welcomed the Reverend Canon David Tomlinson to the meeting.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on the 15th July 2019

With several amendments, the minutes were accepted by the meeting.

5. Matters Arising: None

5. Election to Diocesan Synod

Father Paul Kennedy was elected unanimously by the meeting to the House of Clergy.

The Chair asked lay members of the Synod to consider standing for the casual vacancy for our Deanery in the House of Laity.

6. SDF bid and Estates Evangelism/Communities of Hope Reverend Canon Tomlinson

The Strategic Development Funding (SDF) is targeting part of its funds to the work of mission, the finance will allow churches to grow in different ways.

200 of the 240 Durham Diocese's churches have an average number of attenders of 36, of the remaining 40 only 11 have demonstrated growth in 2018.

In this period only 12 churches have closed, which shows how hard people are working to maintain places of worship and witness.

Nationally, churches are disappearing faster in deprived areas. One reason for this might be that the Church of England culture is disconnected from the local culture e.g. the importance or not of: diaries, university education, exuberance versus reserve. We need to value the strengths of our local culture.

In our diocese, we received finance from the SDF for five Resourcing Churches, which were tasked with growing and then planting other church fellowships. The present bid by the diocese for our deanery, is to provide funding for three "Communities of Hope".

The definition of these mission opportunities is:

- They are small (20-50 adults) to maximise the relational potential.
- They grow by replanting and sharing learning with other contexts, rather than expanding beyond this size, like a strawberry plant sending out new plants.
- They are active in evangelising through their social contacts.
- They intentionally nurture discipleship through small groups running on a peer to peer basis, with lay leaders trained locally.
- They develop long term sustainability e.g. nail bar in Leeds, hairdresser in Bristol, this will take time and money and the initial funding will cover a budget for a Sustainability Officer to work with secular partners to attract finance to maintain the local ministry.
- They include a strong element of relational hospitality e.g. sharing food together
- They are established in such away so that they minimize the need for institutional structures (PCCs, Church Wardens, Treasurers, Secretaries etc.) Working alongside the local church and clergy without becoming a drain on the PCC.

The Christian response to people in need tends to be, to try to "fix" them, but sometimes they just need to be heard in a safe place without pressure to conform.

A bid will be submitted to the SDF by 10th October 2019, asking for a little under four million over six years for eight Communities of Hope.

We will hear in December whether the diocese has been invited to submit detailed plans. Revd Tomlinson will guide and support the three Easington Deanery areas of Murton,

Seaham, and Thornley in the formulation of these plans, which will be submitted April/May 2020, and responded to by the SDF in July 2020.

How can the Deanery support these communities? Revd Tomlinson encouraged us to pray, visit, show support by emails etc.

NB There is a pdf copy of Revd David's presentation on our Deanery website.

7. Deanery Plan Update

Revd Jane Grieve, Joanne Benson and Stephen Pickering had a positive response from their recent presentation to the Bishop's Council of the deanery proposals to reduce stipends from 9 to 7 by the end of 2020.

8. Deanery Reorganisation

Paul Stringer will present the Draft Pastoral Scheme to Bishop's Council (BC) hopefully in November. If approved the proposed pastoral scheme will be sent to the PCC's of affected parishes.

Each PCC will have an opportunity to comment and respond, typically within a six-week time frame, following which the BC will meet to hear any representation. Subject to the responses, the BC may recommend that the proposals are sent to the Church Commissioners. The process may take between 6 – 8 months.

9. Parish Share

The Chair thanked those parishes who have already responded to the Bishop's letter. Some have been able to promise the 5% increase, others are facing difficulties.

Parishes are asked to send their annual contribution of £80 for the expenses of the Deanery, to Karen Jones, including any who have not yet sent last year's contribution.

10. Waymark Father Paul Kennedy provided an update

520 Adults and 50 young people are expected to attend the conference.

It will be an intense programme, with prayer, worship, discussion, keynote speakers etc.

One of the aims of the conference is to inform the way forward for the Diocese.

On the Sunday, there will be an opportunity to submit comments. The Waymark Representatives are encouraged to let people know what is happening now, and to share what comes out of the conference. Synod was asked to hold the conference in prayer.

Waymark information is on the Deanery website

11. **Good News**

The recent Wedding Fayre at **Hawthorn St Michael & All Angels** was a wonderful occasion.

Kevin Thornhill had many wedding dresses on display and lots of anecdotes to share.

Some people came wearing their wedding outfits and brought along their wedding albums to share. The church has also just completed installing pew cushions.

There was a service at **Durham Cathedral** to celebrate Lay Ministry, Licensing of Readers, including Linda Dott, commissioning of those completing the Pastoral Ministry Course, including from our Deanery, Tracy Fox, Julie Smith and Christine Wragg.

In our Deanery we also celebrate that Carol Lines is in Year 2 and Julie Smith Year 1 in their Reader Ministry training.

After the theft of lead from the roof of **South Hetton Holy Trinity** the excess of £500 was covered by generous donations from the congregation and the local community.

A stain glass window in **Easington Village St Mary the Virgin** had been broken, however, a Giving Page via Facebook helped to raise more money than was required to undertake repairs.

A cautionary reminder was given by Reverend Paul Paterson, relating to a church in the deanery, which was left open during the day, as we have been encouraged by our insurers to do. Sadly, with the brass put away, nevertheless, a candle and a wooden crucifix were stolen.

Five parishioners went from Seaham and Horden to the Bread for the World conference at Liverpool Hope University at the end of August.

The four-day event was centred on the Eucharist with keynote speakers including Father Thomas Saville CR and the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool.

As well as daily mass, with preaching from the Bishops of Beverley, Wakefield, Burnley and Bishop Roger Jupp, there was lots of time for fellowship and prayer. A very good comedian came to entertain everyone on one of the conference evenings.

12. **USPG**

Diane Thubron would like to thank all those who have supported the Partners in Mission Project during this year.

There have been a variety of initiatives, concerts, lunches, social evenings, pie and pea suppers and collections. Diane has attended most of the events, where not only has a fantastic amount, present total £1830.00 been raised, but the awareness of USPG and the work that has been done, has grown.

Diane hopes that some of the parishes will continue to support USPG over the coming years.

13. **AOB none**

The meeting closed with prayer

The date of the next meeting is 25th November 2019, venue to be confirmed

7pm for 7.15pm