



Christianity Deanery Synod
Minutes of meeting held at
St Mark's Parish Church
Tuesday 6th June 2017 at 7:30pm

Following refreshments on arrival, the meeting commenced with a welcome and Act of Worship including celebration of the Eucharist presided by Rev. Tors Ramsey. This was followed by a meditation on the character of St Peter, led by Area Dean, Fr. Robin Eastoe.

Apologies:

Laity: Phil Baker (St. Thomas) Amy Down (St. David's)
Lizzy Hewitt (St. David's) Nick Horton (Cathedral)
Heather Morgan (Cathedral) Richard Scott (St. Leonard's)
Nigel Williams (St. James) Gill Yates (St. Margaret's)

Clergy : Rev'd Philip Baker (St Thomas) Rev'd Louise Grace (St Margaret's & St Luke's)
Rev'd Chris Keay (St Thomas) Rev'd Will Sweeney (St Thomas)

Minutes of meeting 2nd February 2017: No matters arising.

Elections:

Chair:

David Smith was willing to stand again and re-elected unopposed.

Secretary:

Newly elected member Yvonne Taylor (Cathedral) was willing to stand, proposed by David Smith, seconded by Sue Matthews and elected unopposed.

Treasurer:

Andrew Withers was willing to stand again and re-elected unopposed.

Standing and Pastoral Committee:

Clergy members retired to deliberate en-camera.

Although three lay members are required to serve, Sue Matthews (Cathedral) and Ashleigh Leighton-Plom (Alphington) were willing to stand and elected unopposed, leaving one lay vacancy.

On their return, the Area Dean announced that clergy members Rev Sheila Swarbrick and Rev Louise Grace were willing and been elected to serve, leaving one clergy vacancy.

Business Items:

The Lay Chair welcomed everyone to this first Synod of the new triennium, thanked members who stood for election and invited newly elected members to introduce themselves.

The Lay Chair also informed Synod that interviews for the vacancies at St David's and St Michael's (Mount Dinham) were taking place on Wednesday 7th June 2017.

Treasurers Report:

Common Fund:

The treasurer informed Synod that all but £25,000 of the Deanery's Common Fund liability had been received from its parishes for the 2016-17 financial year.

Donations:

During the 2016-17 financial year, donations totalling £2,000 have been made from Deanery reserves to children's work in Topsham, a Youth Group project at St Mark's and to Network Church (Christians Against Poverty). The treasurer confirmed there is more money available and formal applications are welcome from any group requiring financial support from the Deanery. The Lay Chair thanked the Treasurer.

Lay Chair and Acting Secretary Reports:

Parish Vacancies:

During the vacancy for Deanery Secretary, the Lay Chair has been fulfilling and reported to Synod on both roles. He confirmed that two candidates had been shortlisted for interview for the vacancies of St David's and St Michael's (Mount Dinham). Shortlisting for the vacancy at Alphington is currently taking place with interviews planned for week commencing Monday 12th June 2017. Interviews for the vacancies at St Mark's and St Sidwells are scheduled for later in June 2017. The vacancy at St Thomas is to be advertised shortly.

Next Dean of Exeter Cathedral:

The Lay Chair confirmed that the vacancy for the next Dean of Exeter Cathedral was advertised in The Church Times on Friday 2nd June 2017. Lay member Anne Foreman (General Synod) also confirmed the appointment panel is chaired by the Lord Lieutenant and comprises Annie Jefferies (Lay Chair, Tavistock Deanery), Preb Simon Franklin (College of Canons), The Very Rev Rogers Govender (Dean of Manchester) and Diocesan Bishop Robert Atwell. Consultations between the Prime Minister's and Archbishops Appointments Secretaries and members of the Cathedral community took place last month in Exeter and it is likely that interviews will be held in early July. However, Anne informed Synod that whilst it is hoped the new Dean will be in post by Advent, we may not know the outcome for several weeks. Briefing papers are available from the Cathedral website.

The Lay Chair asked Synod to pray for all these vacancies.

Member questions were asked about the financial state of the Diocese, particularly whether reserves are being maintained at an appropriate level and there is sufficient money to pay clergy stipends if all the current vacancies are filled.

In response, both the Area Dean and Lay Chair confirmed that Diocesan reserves are at an appropriate level including to cover clergy stipends and to smooth income shortfall from Common Fund so no-one goes short. In the accounts about to be published, the surplus shown is due to illiquid (non-cash) assets.

The Lay Chair also reminded members to ensure their parishes notify the Secretary of their newly appointed members as soon as possible but no later than 1st July.

Area Dean's Report:

The Area Dean stressed the importance of prompt submission of participation forms as agreed by PCC's and submitted to PCC secretaries by early July.

The Area Dean encouraged Synod members to use the 4 week Deanery Prayer Guide on the reverse of the welcome flyer issued on arrival. He also informed Synod that following the meeting with Suffragan Bishop Sarah Mullally (Crediton) and Bishop Ric Thorpe (Islington) to discuss ways of helping parishes to support each other and flourish, Bishop Sarah and Venerable Christopher Futchter, Archdeacon of Exeter will be meeting shortly to further discuss glitches and points of view with all clergy and Church Wardens. The Area Dean confirmed the date of the next Pastoral/Standing Committee meeting on Monday 17th July 2017 commencing at 7:45pm at the home of the Lay Chair.

Any Other Business:

Synod members were informed of the following:

Exeter Bach Society are performing a Jazz Mass 'Bach and The Blues' at St Margaret's Church, Topsham on Saturday 10th June 2017 at 7:30pm.

A Commissioning Service for one Salvation Army and one URC member of the City Centre Chaplaincy team will be held at Southernhay URC on Tuesday 20th June at 7:30pm

A new Business Chaplaincy team called Business Pastors is based at Marsh Barton.

Clergy Member and Hospital Chaplain, Juliet Horwood, informed Synod that volunteers are currently being recruited to the hospital chaplaincy team and asked this to be included in Parish newsletters and magazines.

St Michaels' Lecture: 'Faith in the Prisons' will be given on Wednesday 28th June at 7.30pm by Dr Lindsay Whetter, who has done extensive work in prisons and completed an ethnographic PhD on 'Faith in the Prisons' at the University of Exeter and will be taking an "inside look" on life and faith in English jails. Everyone, of any faith or none, is warmly welcomed and admission is FREE (with a voluntary retiring collection). This will be followed by discussion and light refreshments. For further information, or to discuss disabled access, contact the Lectures' team at stmichaelslectures@outlook.com or dnb201@exeter.ac.uk

The Parish of Central Exeter are holding a series of weekly lunchtime concerts commencing on Thursday 6th July and each Thursday through July. All concerts start at 1.10pm. Free Admission and all welcome. Refreshments from 12noon - £5. Further details on the Parish website.

Next Synod Meeting:

Tuesday 17th October 2017 at St Leonard's Church – 7:30pm start with refreshments from 7pm. Rector, Rev Simon Austen will be leading bible study on discipleship.

Deanery Synod Pastoral and Standing Committee:

Monday 17th July 2017 commencing at 7:45pm

Monday 25th September 2017 commencing at 7:45pm

The meeting closed at 8:45pm with prayer.