

Christianity Deanery Synod Minutes

**Meeting on Tuesday 22nd October 2019 at
7.30pm at St James' Church**

Attendance: At least 35 lay members and 18 clergy attended. Apologies were received from 7 lay members and 8 clergy

Welcome David Smith who chaired this meeting welcomed everyone.

Act of Worship Revd Martin Poolton introduced himself and Charlotte and Mike Payne who led a short act of evening prayer. This included a reading of Psalm 8 and Revd Steve Turner closed the service.

Main Focus: 'Using the Psalms in Liturgy' Canon Precentor James Mustard

James began his talk by explaining the origin of his title as Canon Precentor as the canon who sings the responses. He is the one responsible for the department of liturgy. Then he briefly commented on Psalm 8, which had been read during the act of worship, to show the wide range of theological issues and ideas contained in that short psalm. He continued with stressing the importance of the psalms as Jesus prayed them, quoted from Psalm 22 and used Psalm 110 in debate. He discussed the categorisation of the psalms into different types and that they may have been written between 1400 and 200 BC. He noted how in exile without a king or temple the psalms, as their songbook and the sabbath were ways to keep the community together. He referred to Margaret Barker's book "Temple Theology – an introduction" which identifies close links between church practice of worship and temple worship rather than with synagogue worship. He explained how Cranmer had adapted the monastic system of saying all 150 psalms in one week (over the 7 offices) to saying all the psalms in 1 month (over 2 offices). He continued to note how psalms had been turned into hymns, but that church worship tended to do praise but rarely to sing lament and he went onto critique some hymnody. He feared the loss of psalms in much church worship meant a loss of a link with Jesus and church tradition, so he concluded by briefly encouraging different ways of singing/saying the psalms.

There was a short opportunity for discussion with the issue of the 'battering of babies' words of psalms and acknowledging that the psalms have a rawness about them.

David Smith thanked James for an interesting and informative presentation.

Apologies and Minutes of Meeting 27 June 2019 David Smith noted that he had received various apologies. He then asked all the new members of deanery synod to stand and introduce themselves and 3 lay people and 4 clergy did this. He then asked Synod to accept the minutes of the June meeting as there had been no requests for amendments.

Matters Arising None were noted.

General Synod report from July session, written by Anne Foreman, already circulated, was noted.

Diocesan Synod report Anne Foreman has kindly written a report from 19 October meeting which is attached to these minutes. Sheila Swarbrick spoke briefly about it, highlighting the main speaker Canon John Spence from Archbishop's Council who was inspiring. Good News stories from the diocese were from Nick Debney on 'Family Fest'- weekend camping near Ashburton which has grown from 40 in 2016 to 200 in 2019 with older youth attending a Youth Pilgrimage to Walsingham; Rob Fletcher, minister on Whitley estate, Plymouth, finding out about local culture first. Then Jackie Taylor as the new Dean of Women in Ministry spoke on the report of position of women in diocese. Other reports included agreement to Diocesan budget so new Common Fund requests soon, approval of lay representatives from Unlimited Church to Christianity Deanery Synod and numbers of lay representatives on Deanery Synods. Also we were reminded that in 2020 the Deanery Synod representatives will vote for General Synod members so that APCMs should happen early as possible. An advert for the Order of Boniface service on Sat 9 Nov 4pm Cathedral.

Bishops in Mission 20 – 22 March 20 –Sheila reported from the recent meeting to plan this special event in the Archdeaconry when the 3 Bishops are leading on mission. The theme for all 4 events through the diocese is 'Enthuse 2020'. The new Archdeacon, Andrew Beane with the new diocesan mission enabler James Grier are leading this and will call a meeting in November for clergy and lay leaders from archdeaconry to hear ideas.

ONE Exeter meeting Tues 17 Sept report David Smith had attended this meeting of the ONE Exeter network who are bringing together Christian leaders from different churches in the city. He also encouraged churches to receive the ONE Exeter mailing (on Facebook). There were 4 topics

- 1) Gather Network – a national network bringing together various Christian organisations eg Christians Against Poverty, Trussell Trust and foodbanks, Street Pastors which have all grown in the last 10 years and others. (www.gather.global)
- 2) Talk about police liaison with churches in Exeter and how churches can support the police in prayer and by their presence.
- 3) A Churches Together in England speaker about the issues facing that national group.
- 4) Ed Moffatt, diocesan assistant secretary, who works on new housing plans for the diocese and spoke about plans for development of 10,000 new homes around Exeter.

Treasurer's Report Andrew Withers reminded the synod that there are still funds available for grants towards new initiatives within a church. He also stated that the Common Fund contributions were a little down at this stage in the year.

Area Dean's Report David Nixon commented on the following 4 points:

- 1) He had attended the licensing of first Ed Hodges and then Matt Clayton over the summer to lead the resource church at St Matts and he looked forward to working with them.
- 2) He went to the Welcome service for the new Archdeacon of Exeter, Andrew Beane in September. He and David Smith had met Andrew for 90 minutes prior to that service and again after the Archdeaconry Pastoral and Standing Committee meeting to discuss a

Deanery Plan. He said that no work on such a plan could happen before hearing about strategic developments and a Mission Action Plan for the city from the Bishop.

3) The police inspector and neighbourhood police had recently met with David and others as they are concerned that the forthcoming trial of the suspect for the 3 murders in St Thomas and St David's earlier in the year may arouse anxiety for vulnerable people in the city.

4) He commented that the deanery clergy chapter continues to meet with 2 social evenings, other lunchtime gatherings with bible study and a planned quiet day in November. He also welcomed the 3 new deacons - Sarah Cummings at St Thomas, Steve Turner at St James and Phil Wales to the Cathedral and Belinda Speed-Andrews to continue her curacy at St David's.

Lay Chair's Report David Smith reported that he with a small group had completed a shorter deanery prayer walk on Sept 14th before the ordination service, visiting and praying for 20 churches and walking 8 miles.

Churches Together Across Exeter (CTAX) Ash Leighton-Plom, deputy chair of CTAX, advertised the next meeting on Thursday 7 November at The Salvation Army – Exeter Temple, Friars Gate. Refreshments from 6.30pm with the meeting starting at 7pm. There will be 3 speakers from ABIDE, Refugee Support Devon and Exeter City of Sanctuary to talk about local responses to the ongoing refugee crisis. All are welcome.

News from the parishes: Various people advertised events in the next few weeks in their churches including a play about St Thomas a Beckett at St Leonard's on Friday 1st Nov and a TEAR Fund quiz night at St Mark's on Saturday 16th Nov. Also at short notice was an advert for an event organised by the Church Urban Fund called **GRA:CE in Conversation: Does social action help churches grow?** It is on Thursday 7th November, 1:30-4:30pm, at the Riverside Conference Centre in Exeter. Described as an engaging afternoon of short talks, film, and conversation exploring the relationship between church growth, discipleship and social action. All are welcome, clergy and laity, and places are free but booking is necessary. [Book here](#).

More regular events were also mentioned – the monthly Sunday afternoon services called 'Celebrate Together' which are particularly welcoming for those with learning difficulties/brain injuries/limited vocabulary. Contact Sheila Swarbrick sheila.pite@cooptel.net for more information.

On the first Saturday afternoon of each month from September to April in St Stephen's church there are activities for children and carers called 'Stay and Play' from 2pm-3.30pm.

St Petrock's Church has been set up as a prayer space for Prayer for our Country at this time. If you are in town and the door is open, please go in and use the chapel. There are also regular exhibitions in the church for different organisations under the Justice, Peace and Creation theme.

Date of next meeting – Wednesday 5 Feb 20 at St Michael's, Alphington with Ed Moffatt, Diocesan Assistant Secretary, as the speaker on New Housing around Exeter.