

RICKMANSWORTH DEANERY SYNOD: *'We are the body of Christ'*

SYNOD OFFICERS

Rural Dean:	The Revd Deborah Snowball, The Vicarage, Bury Lane, Rickmansworth WD3 1ED	01923 772627
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Treasurer:	Rupert Barnes 4 Rugby Way, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth WD3 3PH	01923 897875
Secretary:	Alex Twells, 12 Greenbury Close, Chorleywood, Rickmansworth WD3 5QT	01923 448167

Minutes of the Synod in St Thomas' Church, West Hyde at 8pm, Tuesday 25th June 2013

Members of the House of Clergy (14 current members)

Present (7): Andy Reid, Michele du Saire, Charles Burch, Robert Riley-Braleley, Simon Cutmore, Mary Kingsley, Charles Parry.

Apologies (3): Deborah Snowball (Rural Dean), David Hall, Miriam Mugan. Others absent: (4)

Members of the House of Laity (35 current members)

Present (21): Duncan Kerr (Lay Chairman), Pauline Brown, Caroline Wainman, David Nobbs, Maggie Goldthorpe, Audrey Timberlake, Fran Bennett, Rupert Barnes, Tony Barton, Jane Brading, Janet Anders, Gilda Conrich, Judith Palfreman, Beryl Baker, Gill Gowing, Suzanne Powell, Ann Badhams, Julie Shepherd, Alan Wills, John Parsons, Alex Twells (Secretary).

Apologies (7): Allan Brown, Linda Clough, Ian Brocklesby, Terence Russoff, Jim Pummell, John Marsh, David Cansdale
Others absent: (7)

Observers

Present (3): Revd Linda Woollacott (Methodist link), Jeannie Poulton (Sarratt), Frances Onians (Chipperfield).

1. Opening Worship

A said Evening Service of the Word was led by Simon Cutmore.

2. Welcome

Duncan welcomed everyone, especially those present who were among the nine new members of synod, including Michele du Saire, newly-installed rector of Sarratt and Chipperfield, whom he introduced. Thanks were given to members of the home parish who had served light refreshments.

Duncan announced that Agenda Items 4 to 9 would be taken before Item 3 (Charles Burch's presentation).

4. Minutes of the Deanery Synod on 26th February (distributed on 5th March)

These were accepted and signed as a true record.

5. Matters arising

a. (Item 5b) . Vacancy in Sarratt and Chipperfield

The Revd Michele Marie du Saire, Assistant Curate at All Saints Leavesden since 2009, had been installed and inducted on 3rd June.

b. (Item 5c) All Saints' Bell.

Mary Kingsley gave an update, ending with confirmation that the All Saints clock chimes would be silenced between 11pm and 6am each night.

c. (Item 6) Ministry of Welcome.

Duncan reminded synod of the importance of this Ministry. Alex underlined this and said, as the Deanery Co-ordinator for Welcome, he had emailed incumbents and others asking for the name of a person in each parish responsible for its wide application therein. So far, about half of the parishes had responded.

d. (Item 7a) Ascension Day Service - feedback.

Duncan reported that about 60 people had attended, fewer than in 2012, but the weather had been cold and wet. Many people present had said how much they enjoyed worshipping and mixing with members of other churches. Robert Riley-Braleley expressed concern that, overall, fewer people in the Deanery might be celebrating Ascension because those local churches which formerly had held evening services had been forced to cancel them. Michele du Saire welcomed any opportunity for church members to experience being members of a wider Church community. 8pm was recognised as the best start time for the Deanery Service. Duncan said that the Clergy Chapter had agreed, by a large majority, to hold another service in 2014, probably in a more central location.

6. Deanery Accounts 2012

These had been prepared by Sally Morgan (the outgoing Treasurer), who was thanked for her work, and had been independently examined by Douglas Paterson, MA, FCA. John Parsons proposed, and Mary Kingsley seconded, that the Accounts be received. The motion was passed unanimously.

7. Deanery Standing and Pastoral Committee

Duncan announced that as a result of Rupert Barnes' having been elected as Treasurer at the previous synod, there was a vacancy for a St Oswald's parish representative on the Deanery Standing and Pastoral Committee. Tony Barton had agreed to stand, and Audrey Timberlake proposed, and Robert Riley-Braley seconded, that Tony be elected. The motion was passed unanimously.

8. Any other business

a. Synod dates until end of 2014

These would be 15th October 2013, and 25th February, 24th June, and 28th October 2014, all Tuesdays.

b. Deanery Autumn Event

Duncan announced that the DSPC was considering the possibility of holding an event in the autumn. If one were planned members would be informed.

c. [Secretary's Note: Diocesan Synod, 15th June

Bishop Alan's presidential address may be read on the diocese's website, as also may the papers relating to the two main items for discussion (a Strategy for Youth Work and 2012 Report & Accounts). He gave an update on Women in the Episcopate, saying that the House of Bishops will bring a motion to the July General Synod requesting the drafting of new legislation for women bishops in time for November, so that the process can be concluded in 2015.

Canon John Kiddle, Diocesan Director of Mission, led a discussion on the initial phase of Mission Action Planning. Progress in parishes generally had been excellent, and many were now into their second Review Year].

9. Next synod (Tuesday 15th October at 7.30pm for 8.00, venue possibly St Andrew's)

The Diocesan Community Care Team would lead a presentation on 'Ministering to Older People'.

3. 'Vocations' - a talk by the Revd Charles Burch, vicar of Bovingdon and Diocesan Vocations Officer

Charles said he would speak only on the specific call to public ministry such as ordination, Readership, mission, Church Army, religious community, etc. There are 230 full-time clergy in the diocese, a figure that has been dropping for 30 years. Bishop Alan is determined that the current number must be maintained, in effect meaning that every five years there will be 20 more than would have been the case. 66% of current clergy are 50+ and by 2028 they will have retired. The recent practice of saying to young people who feel called 'to go away and return after gaining experience in the outside world' needed to be changed; too many never return. As for Readers, the average age is over 60, and changes must be made there too, especially to encourage young Readers. Given the enormous variety of personal circumstances and lifestyles today, flexibility in all training is essential.

Concerning youth vocations, Charles challenged synod to consider

- what young people value (eg a peer network; a mentor; role models)
- what we can do (eg promote the concept in parishes, synod, chapter; identify potential; let them get their hands dirty; support events and networks; offer placement opportunities, mentoring, supervision)
- what practical possibilities exist (use Vocations Sunday: fourth of Easter; find a Young Vocations champion in our deanery; host a young vocations event; meet our local youth ministers/leaders; challenge our parishes to give young people a go)

Charles then gave out six Biblical examples - five from the Old Testament - of people being called by God, and these were compared and contrasted in small discussion groups. How did God's call come to these people? What were they doing? Was the call specific or general? How did they react? What reasons did they give at first for not responding?

It was remarkable that in many ways an individual's response to a call is unchanged eg Me? I'm too young; I'm inexperienced; I'm unqualified; and so on. One difference, however, was that the call then was not only directly put but also capable of being directly responded to and put into effect. Today, there are sessions of questioning, interviewing, testing, examination, etc in order to fit square pegs into square holes, and the process can be dispiriting to the individual concerned.

Charles finished by offering four leaflets produced by the Diocesan Vocations Team: *Seeking the Way, Called to Ministry? Young Vocations*, and *What is a Reader?* Duncan led synod in thanks for his excellent talk.

10. Closing prayers

Before prayers, Mary Kingsley, attending her last synod, thanked everyone for their friendship, support, and prayers during 37 years in the deanery, spread over five parishes. It was with something of a heavy heart that she was taking up a post as an Assistant Priest in the benefice of Bushey, which has three churches.

Closing prayers were then led by Simon Cutmore, and Duncan closed the meeting at 9.30pm.

Distribution: All Synod members, others present, The Ven Jonathan Smith, Jim May (P&A Sec).

(sgd) Rural Dean