

## Standing and Pastoral Committee of the Hertford and Ware Deanery Synod

### Minutes of the Meeting 21 November 2017

Present: Jo Loveridge, Diana Perkins, Catriona Baker, Lyn Paddon, Janet Bird, Colin Taylor, Mike West, Mark Dunstan, Nick Sharp, Doug Loveridge (Secretary).

1. Welcome and Prayer by RD. Lyn Paddon shared the current situation in the parish. 8 children in Sunday School, low congregations, mainly elderly. All three churches are similar. Little is happening at present due to low numbers. Average congregation 17. We are spread between three churches which are very close to one another. They have put out banners for Christmas services. Jo praised the parish for its faithfulness and determination.
2. Pat was not available.
3. Minutes – accepted, one small correction.
4. No extra items
5. Tim Lomax had limited time only, the Bishop's talk was considered very good. More explanation of what is going on with Fresh Expressions (FX) would have been valued. Nick felt more could have been made of this, as FX is really big in the Diocese.  
Janet questioned whether they have launched this a little early - three parishes are working with this, then it should be rolled out further. We can look forward three-four months until the 3 FX parishes are established. Catriona reported that the Revd Alison Jackson of Hoddesdon has been appointed FX person for the area. This was welcomed warmly. Diana asked whether a big meeting at St Andrews is ideal due to the parking situation. It was unfortunately a bad night for parking.  
Viv and Steve Wade of CCW had attended and found it helpful from their evangelistic perspective. Mark reported that some found it helpful, some thought it Old Hat. Although we know what we should do, there remains the question – as posed recently in the Diocese - How do we do that?  
Diana voiced concerned about where the FX money is going, there can be too many meetings. Lyn agreed that it seems to be more for admin and meetings than for mission? Colin felt it was good as far as it went but this is unfinished business. Jo felt that the How should be looked at at our next meeting - can we do this among ourselves, using our MAP and vision? Diana responded that the previous session by 3-4 people had been beneficial. Nick suggested asking the parishes about what they would like to do and what they could offer....  
Mark commented on the Bishop's address – there is a tendency among FX people to be surface level, people dip in and out. Establishing new churches is problematic. As Bishop Michael said, the traditional model of church good at operating at a certain level and so it can be with FXs. Can we look at the kind of ministries we put on – ask people what is going on, how can it be taken forward?  
Nick asked whether members of the SPC and clergy could go to each parish and ask what process they have for Making Disciples, Jo suggested asking PCCs... Jo mentioned the Pilgrim course, currently being used at All Saints, and Nick's Open to Question course – should we be looking at these as vehicles for evangelism? It was also mentioned that John Hookway would be willing to offer a session re CCW's FX church members later in 2018. Catriona liked the idea of asking 3 people across the Deanery who are involved in evangelistic activities to speak. She mentioned an event in Ware, (Escape?) supported by all local churches with music and a speaker. St Mary's Ware has an Enquirers meeting this evening, first session.

6. It was decided to postpone the next Synod meeting until February if we are seeking feedback – the following meeting is 1 May. Mark affirmed that it will be most helpful to give ourselves sufficient time. Agreed – SPC on 6th February, Synod in February (Now 1<sup>st</sup> March). Jo will ask re a date from Margaret Pritchard Houston re Children's ministry, hence the now definite date.
7. Name badges are now available, to be used at future Synod meetings
8. Confirmation noted – St Mary's, Ware 21 February 2018.
9. MAP. Mark has replied to Emma Critchley, nothing further from her at present. Mark says there is currently duplication due to Diocesan additions (15.11, Emma Critchley emailed an updated MAP to Janet Bird); the Bishop wanted Next Steps so that we can look back and feel we have achieved something. This was taken on board. On the document, the steps coincide with the goals – we should go back to the parishes asking how we move forward From the Diocese - FXs, Children, etc : what do you really want and how do we work on this? A Big Project for the year to be identified. Mark says leave out steps 4 and 6.  
Colin says don't leave out finance, this should be one of the priorities. Jo stated that we were resolved after the Treasurers' meeting that they should meet once a year to share the situations. Accepted.  
Jo asked whether there is a question we can send to PCCs to respond to by a certain date. Mark to frame a suitable question, agreed. PCC or Standing Committees to address the Question by the end of January. Agreed.  
Mark also said he and Nick Sharp will consult about the Deanery website. But how much are we prepared to pay, and what do we want on it? Can include a Deanery MAP progress page. Also Deanery info such as Minutes and Agenda can be available – and as people look for it they will find more about the Deanery. Up to £100 was agreed to set up, likely to recur annually for a decent website with back-up when needed. Mark is happy to put this into practice.
10. Watton Grant Application. Now for £6000. Jo and Colin met people from Watton. They had previously applied in 2015 through the Deanery. Colin said that they had a benefactor, who has now retired and says he cannot afford to do this any more. Hence losing c.£3k pa. They have worked hard to improve things. Most money comes through Gift Aid promises. Monthly giving now £700 per month. They are working hard on fundraising. £5k comes from the annual fete. Colin says we should support, but not the 6k, more as it is needed. Janet says the grant isn't possible on those terms.  
Jo said they have paid their Share in full, and are now concerned about next year. Janet added that other churches have that also: is this the right time to say we can't pay next year? Nick added that the Grant is designed for a specific set of problems, and this isn't one of those. Jo hopes to speak to the Bishop/Archdeacon to speak with Patron, who does have rights re choosing Vicar as well as responsibilities.  
Jo mentioned that the parish does have more weddings next year, which should help, perhaps they can pay share; they want grant as a buffer.  
Mark said that it used to be that Watton paid half Share, others the rest. Now with Aston, Watton has that same proportion. Should this be looked at? Proportions mean how much Vicar time you receive. Shouldn't the churches in the parish talk about this? Mark wonders whether they have found 125 people who have agreed to give £1 per month? There is little clarity about this; needs to be understood.  
Jo summarised that the application had come in late and been sent to the wrong place. What do we do? Sympathy from Janet and Mark – we should support them and work closely with them as a Deanery bearing in mind that all churches have difficulties. Janet mentioned

that they claimed the Deanery couldn't help when they haven't asked – Mike said this needs to be addressed: some of their successes have come into the second application, we need to say something about this question. Mark – it will be incumbent on us to watch during the year. Nick – we must be honest that many other parishes are in worse positions. Janet and Lyn wondered whether the Diocese is aware of the scale of the problems, but these grant applications give evidence.

Jo said we will support the Application but point out that we were not consulted, and in the future we will work more closely together – plus re the approach to the Patron. Colin said we should not suggest 6k now, we should see next year. We will look at this again in August/September in order to make an Application at the right time. Mark – they need to know we walk alongside them; there should be a condition that any overpayment is repaid as extra Share.

11. High Cross/Thundridge can go ahead to appoint an Incumbent. Their latest Parish Profile was given to Jo yesterday. It will be a House for Duty priest, if available. Otherwise the parish might need to be added to another parish in the Deanery.
12. External Examiner not yet found for Stanstead Abbots. Jo mentioned the possibility of looking through parish records for a suitable person. Some collation is needed between the churches of the parish. Lyn said it is becoming desperate, as auditing is vital. This has been mentioned to the Archdeacon, and needs to go back again. Mark said the reality of what is required by Charity Commissioners is very high, which has discouraged others. Hunsdon pays £400 for this to be done. Mark said that all these things show that we all need to support and talk to one another more; Lyn has felt rather alone in her Warden's work. Nick wondered whether a financial incentive to existing Treasurers would bring someone in?
13. Next SPC meeting - Tues 6 February, 2.00pm at All Saints Hertford (Meeting Room in the church).