

Hertford and Ware Deanery Synod

Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 11th July 2018 at St Mary's, Ware

Chair . The Revd Mark Dunstan

1. Welcome and Prayer - Mark
2. Main Topic. Working with Children and families across the age-groups:
Margaret Pritchard Houston, Diocesan Children's Mission Enabler.
Notes added below.
3. Present: Canon Jo Loveridge, Revd Mark Dunstan, Revd David Sheppard (New member from St Mary's Ware; welcomed), Revd Angela Lynas, Revd Anne Donaldson, Richard McKay, Joan Thompson and Beresford Thompson (visitors from St Mary's Essendon), Colin Bird, Janet Bird, Tim Crowther, David Goodman, Diana Perkins, Margaret Rank, Mike West, Catriona Baker, Peter Dane, Ian Aitkin, David Scott, Catherine Archer, Lynne Griffiths, Michael Sutcliffe, Colin Taylor, Dorothy Toyn, Katy Little and Bonnie West (visitors from St Mary's Ware). Doug Loveridge, Deanery Secretary.
Apologies: Revd Ysmena Pentelow, Robin Bishop, Revd Nick Sharp, Revd Robert Thompson, Lesley Atterwill, David Whitley, Jill Whitley, Jane Cohen, Dorothy Abel-Smith, Pat Parker, Sue Rogers, Sue Mitchell, Ian Screech.
4. The Minutes of the previous Synod (1 May 2018) were accepted
5. Matters Arising.
6. Diocesan Synod Elections. Three people in each house were elected:
House of Laity . Diana Perkins, Janet Bird, Colin Bird.
House of Clergy . Canon Jo Loveridge, Revd Mark Dunstan, Revd Ysmena Pentelow.
7. Report(s) and Information
 - ❖ Diocesan Synod . Janet Bird: given
 - ❖ Board of Mission and Ministry . unavailable.
 - ❖ General Synod - Simon Baines could not attend.
 - ❖ DBF: Colin Bird, as emailed to members 11 July. Colin underlined that the Diocesan Budget cannot be cut any more, so some Stipendiary posts will need to be cut. Angela Lynas requested a paragraph of information about the Central

ChurchesqFunds. Colin responded that investment income is directed toward Reaching New People.

- ❖ Deanery MAP . Mark Dunstan. Please appraise yourself of the information on the Deanery Website. Our financial target is to ensure that we pay our full Parish Share on time, but it was not so at 30 June. Please ensure your parish is paying. Another goal is the Communication chain, can we ensure that information is going round: the website is vital, still only a small percentage of members has signed up. There are also items for Synod members only.

The Synod has looked at Fresh Expressions in general and specifically at Children's work tonight . our next topic is Improving Worship. The three Diocesan priorities. Mark asked "Does this fire you?", since they would seem to be significant topics for all our churches.

A further question was whether there are Wardens, Treasurers, Intercessors etc who need more guidance? We can put on a quality course for them and you can share the training.

8. GDPR It was confirmed that our closed group means that we are compliant.
9. Any Other Business
10. 9.22 Closing Prayer
11. Next Meeting : 22 October at Christ Church, Ware (in the church . and the main topic will be Worship). This may be the last chance to see CCW in its current form as substantial refurbishment and remodelling is planned in the near future.

Deanery website www.hertfordandwaredeanery.org.uk Please sign on!

Our vision is: to see flourishing, Christ-centred communities inspiring people of all ages and backgrounds to discover God, grow in their relationship with Him and respond to His transforming love through serving others.

Margaret Pritchard Houston's Address. Notes.

The Feeding of the 5000 is the only story in all four Gospels apart from the Passion/Resurrection. It is inter-generational. And the disciples are the problem! It demonstrates a Gospel of abundance . "enough and more than enough". Jesus offers so much. It offers a clear vision of the Kingdom.

Question for discussion: "Children won't show up unless they are brought." What are some of the challenges . and the benefits?

Responses:

- They could come with a friend's parents.
- Children are not allowed/able to go out alone today.
- You have to approach the whole family.
- Parents and children have other interests, other things to do on Sunday morning. Some churches set up meetings at different times or days.
- It is beneficial for older congregations to have diversity.
- And there can be an opportunity to minister to several generations at once.

All-age Worship.

Q. What is/isn't it? Pitfalls?

- All worship is all-age . If it doesn't appeal to everyone something is wrong?
- Yet different things appeal to different ages.
- You can't define a person's needs by age.
- Why not call it Inclusive Worship (why age?)
- It isn't about having a ten minute spot for kids and the rest for adults.

MPH : It isn't only on Sunday mornings. CBeebies style : it should not be a performance for and by the children (they can get stressed and forget it is worship).

Remember the cross: children know life can be hard, may need depth of prayer/worship.

People like us on Synod generally tend towards Word and Emotion; others may well relate to symbol/mysticism and action.

We should ask "What are the people getting from/giving to the service?"

These perceptions are rooted in the Church Report 2016 Inclusion and Equality

There is a perception that church is really for adults.

Have an area in the church for the children to engage with meaningful toys etc connected to faith. Themed bags or boxes. Word searches (we make our own on line). Dress up costumes. Colouring books for meditation. Prayer wall.

There are online church resources re autism from the Diocese of Guildford

Costs are always a concern. But it is about bringing people to know and love God. Building trust with the parents can take time. Who is this person who is talking to my child?