

Church Administrator: Sally Banks

The Old School, Poyle Road, Tongham

Surrey GU10 1DS

Meeting Notes from Deanery Synod, 22nd February 2017

Introduction

The meeting was hosted at Christ Church, Crookham, in the newly completed and snug 'Annex'. Our opening worship took the form of evening prayer, and was led by Revd Roland Oliff. Christ Church celebrated their 175th year in 2016, with many events and a visit by Bishop Andrew. It is the only Anglican church for the parish of around 17,000 people, and part of the group of churches including St Peter & St James, and All Saints, Fleet. Following the completion of the recent building work, focus now moves to mission and outreach. Lots of good connections to the local church-aided school, the new estates with lots of families – a good time to be at Christ Church.

George Newton is on a year's sabbatical, so will be back with us next Summer. The meeting was chaired by James Lee, the lay Chair.

Virtual Networks

Roland has built a new Deanery website (as volunteered at our last meeting!), using Wix (the same as we use at St Pauls). Find it at aldershotdeanery.com.

Wellesley - Jackie Maw

Please continue to pray:

- For Jackie's health and strength and inspiration for her work
- For relationships to build
- For people to come and join in from other churches – fortnightly prayer meeting
- For people in the community to join in also
- Pray for dreams and visions, for spiritual dissatisfaction, questioning

Jackie is at mawdiva@gmail.com or 01252 329466

Jens Mankel – Diocesan Church Planting and Fresh Expressions Advisor

Jens gave a very interesting and inspiring talk, which challenged us to think creatively about how we can reach out to those people who don't come to church, and form new worshipping communities.

In the Transforming Church, Transforming Lives vision, Goal 2 is to Increase Believers.

Only 9% of the UK population are Christian; only 1/3 believe in any form of god. Our church tradition only suits a certain sector of the population. We need to think of new ways of 'being church', in addition to the old ways.

Fresh expressions of church are for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church. What does it look like? That depends on the culture you are trying to reach. We had breakout sessions to talk about what characterizes the culture we live in – some ideas:

- Media culture, esp for young; celebrity culture, social media

- Sundays no longer special – people do other things. (Church can be on another day/time)
- Fluid truth – freedom without responsibility; the culture of self
- Changing family dynamics; family breakdown

Church can be at different times, places and can look quite different for different networks eg. Workers, cyclists, youth, beginners.

Think about how we communicate the Gospel. Will people who have no knowledge understand clearly the good news about Christ through the songs we sing and the words we use in our services? People sometimes have to cross cultural boundaries to come to church.

Some good local examples of diversity to reach many: chaplaincy at the leisure centre; prayer meeting before a run. Services for Army/RAF – has its challenges as people are transient. 24/7 prayer is an opportunity to experience God, rather than a talk about Him. Offering prayer has been a good way to connect to people. Even if people don't come to church, many believe in the power of prayer when in need, although they may not be able to rationalize it.

Ways to reach people – go out to them, bring them in to church; go out and create something new and stay.

Jens does training in 'Mission-Shaped Ministry' – he's happy to come and talk or teach. Find him on the PDE Team on the Diocesan website.

Dates of meetings in 2017

15 Jun – Church of the Good Shepherd, Farnborough

12 Oct – All Saint's Hawley

Sally Banks

26th February 2017