

Church Administrator: Sally Banks

The Old School, Poyle Road, Tongham

Surrey GU10 1DS

Meeting Notes from Deanery Synod, 13th October 2016.

Introduction

The meeting was hosted at St Peter's Ash, but in the Church Centre as it was nice and warm. Our opening worship took the form of evening prayer, and was led by Revd Keith Bristow. Keith then spoke about encouragements and challenges at St Peters. Encouragements over the past couple of years have included a deepening prayer life, and more Bible study. Recently a leaflet drop was done to the parish, and a new Saturday morning 'tots and toast' session is proving popular with local families with young children, who enjoy the bacon butties. The yew trees in front of the church have been trimmed so that the church is more visible from the road – have a look next time you pass!

Challenges are those familiar to us also: the need to maintain our beautiful old church buildings.

George Newton has started a year's sabbatical, so will be back with us next Summer. The meeting was chaired by James Lee.

Mission in the Deanery

David Willey (St Peter's Farnborough) shared the results of the **Deanery Mapping**, which aims to assess both geographically and demographically what is happening in the Deanery, and what is being missed. With some help, David unrolled an enormous piece of paper showing a hand-drawn map of our deanery, with key areas marked on where mission opportunities have been identified – for example, Saturday mornings up at Farnborough Gate. During this process, clergy have worked together, aiming to make parish boundaries irrelevant as they came up with ideas to reach people who otherwise would have no opportunity to meet with God.

The Transforming Church Transforming Lives vision for the diocese is to be implemented through individual churches' parish development plans. These plans are due to be submitted by Easter 2017.

Virtual Networks

James mentioned that an email would be going out soon to church wardens inviting them to join in the Church Wardens virtual network group via facebook. Rev Roly Olliff from Christ Church, Church Crookham, volunteered to build a Deanery website, and look into sharepoint as a way of sharing resources online.

General & Diocesan Synod update

Shared conversations on human sexuality took place at the last General Synod in July, which James hopes will enable issues to be addressed from February next year in a generous and loving spirit. Conversations were confidential.

Wellesley Vision – Jackie Maw, Pioneer Minister

Jackie and her husband David moved up from Dorset on 10th August, and now live in Wellesley, with their two dogs. Jackie shared that she had recently been diagnosed with breast cancer, and is currently undergoing her second round of chemotherapy, so she is having to pace her work as her health allows. At the moment she is holding fortnightly meetings for prayer and fellowship, and spending time in the community getting to know people as they move in. A recent MacMillans coffee morning raised £340, and was well attended and the cakes particularly enjoyed by the builders! A family ride to the canal centre is also planned.

About 50 homes are now occupied, but most by people doing local moves, meaning that they already belong to community elsewhere in the area – this can make growing community a challenge.

Graingers are a landlord rather than a developer – meaning that they are here to stay, and want to develop a community. They have committed to building two schools, (from Sept 2018) and later on local shops. There will be community spaces also. One of Jackie's roles will be ensuring that Graingers keep to their commitments.

Jackie wants to build not just community but 'communitas', which is relationships built through struggle. Not just a nice place to live with people who are nice to each other – but real relationships which strengthen as people share their burdens and help one another.

There is a model but no plan! Jackie does not know what the church in Wellesley will look like, but the way to get there is:

Listening

Loving service (including Christian practice at the point of need)

Forming community

Evangelism and discipleship

Evolving worship

Loving service is about getting alongside people, and offering Christian hope in a way that is easy for people to join in with. Eg. At the coffee morning, a daisy chain where people can write in prayers or thanksgiving. Be open about our faith, so people don't feel ambushed later! Have integrity: love people because they are precious to God, not because you want them to respond in a particular way.

Please 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

Dates of meetings in 2017

27 Feb – Christ Church Crookham

15 Jun – Church of the Good Shepherd, Farnborough

12 Oct – All Saint's Hawley

Sally Banks

16th October 2016