

Newcastle East Deanery Synod
Monday 2nd March 2020
at Christ Church, Walker

Present: Clergy: Robert Lawrance, Phil Medley, Stephen Herbert, Helen Gill, Rae Caro, Jon Cooper.

Laity : Louisa Fox, Sheila Dove, Eddie Long, Jenny Trotter, Jenny Germain, Jennifer Brown, Matthew King, Margaret Legge, Wyn Findlay, Marian Pennie, Trevor Lomax

The meeting opened in prayer led by Matthew King.

1.	Apologies: Rob Fox, Martin Lee, Margaret Coldbeck, Elizabeth Screen, Jonathan Lawson, Pat Craighead.	Action
2.	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Robert Lawrance welcomed everyone and reminded Synod that elections are due at Annual Meetings this year. A decision from Diocesan Synod about the length of time that people can serve on Deanery Synod has been deferred for 6 years. Louisa Fox will write to PCC Secretaries reminding them that the elections are due.</p>	
3.	<p>Mental Health – Phil Medley</p> <p>Mental Health is a focus for both Citizens UL and Citizens Tyne and Wear. Three years ago Citizens Tyne and Wear talked to various groups and organisations about their needs and concerns. They identified 3 big issues for the Tyne and Wear area which are Mental Health, Poverty and Hate Crime. Phil said that it was important for the Church to be involved in politics with a small p.</p> <p><i>Phil asked the synod to think about things that concern us as individuals in the area we live in not necessarily our parish. What affects you where you live?</i></p> <p>Discussion took place in groups and was then fed back. Concerns raised included :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new technology, children talking over social media and games and not talking face to face, the new generation is very digitised. • Parents are under pressure to buy costly technology. • Young people say they feel lonely in a crowd • Cyberbullying • People saying that ringing someone can be too confrontational so they rely on texting and emails which can be misunderstood. • Pressures on young children due to constant assessment, too much about what they can do rather than who they are, pressure to achieve the unachievable • Environment, climate emergency, litter • Role of media - extreme views, excluding people from community, fake news • Loneliness • Dementia • Importance of Active Listening <p><i>How are our Churches responding to issues and needs in our communities</i> As Christians we want to listen to the needs in our community. Some of the issues are so big what can we do? Phil had asked two of our Churches to talk about what they were doing.</p>	

Places of Welcome at St Francis presented by Marion Pennie
Places of Welcome – St Francis had received some funding from the Church Urban Fund. Places of Welcome is run by trained volunteers for 2 hours on a Wednesday Afternoon. It is based on 5 Ps
Place – providing a regular meeting
Provision – refreshments
Participation – listen, be, draw out talents of those attending
Presence – actively listening, being, providing love
People –
8 people come who are mostly older women, widows who need to see someone.
Places of Welcome at St Francis is still in the Early Stages

Debt Advice Project – MINE Churches presented by Canon Stephen Herbert
The average household in England has 15-16 thousand pounds of debt not including mortgages. Where people are in poverty they don't have the resources to deal with debt. Issues such as loss of a job, loss of a spouse, mental or physical illness can happen to anyone. Universal Credit doesn't help as there is a 6 week wait for payment and any loan which is made to cover the gap is then taken off the payment. The Debt Advice Project is able to help by showing people there is a way out of debt and things that can be done. The work is done by volunteers. Although it got off to a slow start there is now a waiting list.

Other examples

St Bartholomew – Basement Project has recently restarted with new volunteers working with young people. Bereavement Coffee afternoon once a month, Children's Choir, Holiday Projects.

St Silas – midweek Eucharist and Lunch. People who are lonely come in for lunch and some have started joining in with the worship.

What more could we be doing?

Deanery working together

Warm Hubs

Warm place for the homeless

St Bartholomew's have Church Sitters

Intergenerational conversations

Digital Solutions

St Michaels are using a whatsapp group for prayer requests

Using Social Media positively

Pastoral Work – using pastoral teams – not just clergy

Engage with MPs and Councillors maybe at a Deanery level

Having a presence where people already are e.g. Treetops Sheltered

Accommodation. Treetops has meeting rooms and it was suggested we could have a Deanery Synod there.

Robert Lawrance thanked Phil Medley

Robert Lawrance said that Mental Health is something which affects us all. Churches can help people through being a community. Churches are intergenerational and this is a strength. We need to recognise what we already have and what we are already doing and build on this. Worrying about all the things we ought to be doing can have a paralyzing effect. We need to overcome things that make us less than ourselves.

2.	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 21st Nov 2019 These were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
3.	<p>Matters Arising Item 6 – we still need to appoint a Deanery Finance Officer. Please let Robert Lawrance know if you know of anyone who might be interested.</p> <p>There is a meeting of Treasurers and Incumbents on the 4th of June.</p>	
4.	<p>Notices and News</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chrism Eucharist for the Diocese will be held at St Bartholomew's at 11am on Maundy Thursday. • Tracy Usher who was a curate at St Gabriels has moved on to a second curacy at Holy Trinity Berwick • The Bishop of Newcastle will be at St Mary Magdalene's, Longbenton on Sunday for the opening of the new Accessible Toilet. Evening Prayer at 4pm followed by an afternoon tea. 	
5.	<p>Next Meeting The main topic at the Deanery Synod Meeting on the 16th of June will be the Pastoral Principles which have been trialled at Diocesan Synod. They are a way to talk about difficult things. This will be the last meeting of the existing Synod however it was agreed that members of the next Synod will also be asked.</p> <p>The service for Ascension Day (21st May) will take place at St Gabriel's.</p>	
	The meeting closed with Grace at 8.57	
	<p>Dates of meetings in 2020</p> <p><i>Thursday 21st May Ascension Day Eucharist</i> Tuesday 16th June Wednesday 9th September Thursday 12th November</p>	