

Newcastle East Deanery Synod
Thursday 20th June 2019
at St Michael's Church Centre

Present: Clergy: Helen Gill, Robert Lawrance, Jonathan Lawson, Phil Medley, Neal Terry

Laity : Jennifer Brown, Margaret Coldbeck, Sheila Dove, Matthew King, Margaret Legge, Marion Pennie, Louisa Fox

The meeting opened in prayer.

		Action
2.	Apologies: Rae Caro, Jonathan Cooper, Pat Craighead, Rob Fox, Martin Lee, Helen Lunn, Tracy Usher, Sheila Dove, Les Hodson, Marion Pennie , Johanna Smith, Helen Lunn, Avril Taylor, Jennifer Brown, Arthur Barnes, Phil Medley	
3.	Minutes of the Last Meeting There was one correction to the minutes, Margaret Legge had sent apologies. The minutes for the meeting on the 12 th of March were then agreed as a correct record.	
4.	Matters Arising Item 4 Detached Youth Work – nothing further to report. Item 7 Tyne Wear Citizens – This work continues. There were 800 people at the Mayoral Hustings. Tyne Wear Citizens are currently looking at mental health in schools.	
5.	Deanery Development Update Walker has agreed to join MINE – there will be meetings with MINE to discuss how this will be carried forward. There is good momentum. The vicars of St Gabriel's and St Francis have had one conversation about working together, as have the vicars of St Bartholomew's and St Mary Magdalene. No further progress has been made. Attention was drawn to the work of the World Day of Prayer which is ecumenical. A question was asked of the MINE parishes as to how they found working together. They replied don't get downhearted, be missional in intent, don't see it as weakness – there is huge potential in sharing resources and talents, relational – continually work on it Not a forced thing Working and learning together Being able to move across borders – more fluid Strong sense of purpose During the Pathways Mission the Deanery came together at the Ceilidh	
6	Finding Hope Canon John Sadler is currently preparing a paper – he decided it was not appropriate to present it to Deanery Synod at this stage. So Jonathan Lawson from St Gabriels presented a paper to inform Synod's discussion. I have included the full transcript in the minutes <i>Towards the Vocation of a Church.</i> <i>Each of us is unique, each therefore individual, and it is the Christian belief that God made us so and delights in his diverse creation. The language I use about vocation, which is not original to me, is that every one of us has a vocation, which is to be the</i>	

person God made us to be. There are endless reasons why this does not happen, not least the extraordinary desire for conformity, which is a powerful force in the world.

But it's not just individuals that have a vocation, so do communities and institutions. It is language that we rarely use, but I have found it a very helpful way of looking at the world. What is the vocation of this parish? What is the vocation of this Deanery? What is the vocation of this Diocese? What is the vocation of this Country? In other words, what is God calling us to be?

This language also has the advantage of removing the ego from the conversation. How often is it that we describe ourselves in the Church as what we're doing, rather than what God is doing? Agency seems key to me here. If it us, then we get into all the busyness language, and numbers and achievements. If we look at what God is saying, it can become more nuanced, subtle and gentle and perhaps a bit more tentative.

How do we know what God is saying? How do we discern his call and calling? In the film Billy Elliott, which is all about vocation – Billy is interviewed at the Royal Ballet School in London. It all goes rather predictably and disastrously wrong. Just as he's about to leave, upset and fed up, a discerning interviewer asks Billy how he feels when he dances. He replies, 'it's like electricity'. There is discernment before your very eyes. For it is the very things that bring us energy, that brings us to life, that are signs of God nudging us, and it is the things that take life away, that dissipate energy that also remind us when we might not be on the right path.

A church discerning her vocation might then gently ask for the grace for God to show what brings this church community alive – when is there a real buzz? When does it feel that we're being what we were made to be? When is St. Michael's most St. Michael's? And that will be a clue to what God is calling St. Michael's to be.

Can you then imagine a Deanery that can begin to use that language and to describe each of its churches vocations? It takes all the rivalry out of it. It begins to look with God's eyes on the special and different gifts that God has given us in this Deanery, which used together can help grow his kingdom in this place.

Discussion

Thinking about each Church's vocation takes the rivalry out
Not our Parish but God's community
Don't have to be the same to work together

How does MINE work? Each Church has its own services with shared services on the 5th Sunday, MINE youth works across all the Churches. Can look for the best place to do work e.g. with Older People., Clergy meet once a week to pray with more formal meetings every month, Lent Groups are shared.

Each Church hasn't got to do everything

The Byker Nativity is an example of the Churches working together.

A question was asked regarding travel. Public transport is good in the MINE area or they fill cars.

It has been built up over time. The MINE churches have a similar social context.

The Churches in the North of the Deanery need to find their own model.

	<p>Being grouped together means we can share resources and gifts. Each Church doesn't have to do everything. We can recognise when another Church can do it better and that leaves time for other things.</p> <p>We need to take opportunities – recently St Gabriels were approached by a group of Sri Lankans who wanted people to pray with them following the bombings in Sri Lanka.</p> <p>Some communities are insular.</p> <p>Issues around transport – is it practical to get another Parish?</p>	
7	<p>Notices/Information</p> <p>2nd July – there will be a meeting between Christ Church Walker and MINE 3rd July – Deanery Share Review for all clergy, treasurers and anyone else who is interested.</p> <p>Diocesan Synod – there are currently 101 paid clergy posts of which 83.5 are filled and this will need to reduce to 80.</p>	
8	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Monday 8th July – meeting at St Johns Percy Main about New Build in the Region</p> <p>4th July – St Michael's is launching a crowdfunding appeal for money to improve the building</p> <p>Debt Relief Orders – people who are in financial difficulties need £90 to obtain a debt relief order. They are told if they can't afford it they should go to charities. This is something which we could be involved in via the work done at St Silas.</p>	
9	<p>Future Dates for Synod –</p> <p>Tuesday 10th Sept – Synod Meeting 7.30pm – 9pm Thursday 21st Nov – Synod Meeting 7.30pm – 9pm</p>	