

Newcastle East Deanery Synod
Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21st September 2021 at
7.30pm using Zoom

Present:

House of Clergy: Yvette Daniel, Robert Lawrance, Helen Lunn, Neal Terry

House of Laity: Jennifer Brown, Alan Douglas, Sheila Dove, Julia Ellison, Louisa Fox, Jenny Germain, Les Hodson, Matthew King, Margaret Legge, Trevor Lennox, Elizabeth Screen, Marie Stern-Peltz, Jenny Trotter, Shane Waddle.

1. Opening Prayers and Welcome

The meeting was opened in prayer by Revd Robert Lawrance.

We record the passing of Eddie Long who had been a long standing member of synod with sadness and gratitude.

2. Apologies for Absence

Jonathan Lawson, Helen Gill, Jennifer Shields, Rob Fox, Phil Medley

3. Minutes of the last meeting (sent out with the agenda)

The minutes were agreed as a correct record

4. Matters Arising

4.1. Would people be interested in a Deanery LLF course? It would consist of 5 sessions in person with 2 leaders and a chaplain. There was enough interest so Robert Lawrance will send out an email to clergy, readers, pcc secretaries and Deanery Synod members inviting people for dates in the Autumn.

5. Finance Update

5.1. Robert shared the update for the end of August as regards Parish Share.

5.1.1. Why has St Silas overpaid? St Silas had received grants from Newcastle City Council meaning that they had money they could give back to the Diocese in recognition that the Diocese had helped St Silas out in the past.

5.1.2. St Anthony's is not expected to pay a share this year because of its current situation.

6. Brief update from each Parish

- 6.1. St Silas are back in Church on Sunday mornings and Wednesday mornings. Still following Covid guidelines, masks encouraged, social distancing, started using hymn books and singing hymns, numbers still quite small 15 or 16, 3 or 4 members are still self-isolating. Intinction used to distribute the elements.
- 6.2. St Michaels are back in Church twice a month for a Eucharist with small numbers. The 4pm afternoon service has restarted but it is still early days.
- 6.3. St Martins have been back since Good Friday, numbers beginning to pick up, still sitting separately, some people returning without masks, choir and congregation singing, distributing in one kind. Just Sunday morning for the moment. Looking at Wednesday. Tea club has restarted which is an important link with community. They are exploring their gifts during the vacancy. Concern was raised that with Rae going a few months ago and Helen reaching the end of her curacy that St Martin's faced being rudderless. Thanks were given to Helen for how well she had held St Martin's together.
- 6.4. Christ Church – Been back at Church for a while on Sundays. Thursday mornings are just starting. Numbers are lower than before pandemic. Masks encouraged. Hymn singing has just been restarted. Communion is in one kind. A new entrance has been built and other building work has been completed during lockdown.
- 6.5. St Gabriels – back to normal services on Sundays and mid week. They are singing again. Communion is taken in both kinds (tincted before service). Masks are recommended but fewer people are wearing them. Numbers slightly down. Martha and Mary's has reopened every week day between 10.30 and 1pm and they are raising money to refurbish the toilets.
- 6.6. St Francis – Sunday service getting back to normal, still distancing, most wearing masks, choir and congregation singing. Parish Breakfast resumed. Communion in one kind, chalice available so if people wish to

- take the wine they can. The Sunday service is staying half an hour later as this seems to suit people. Tuesday night service started. Numbers are increasing. A few activities are restarting-tea and toast and toddler group. The Place of Welcome is continuing. Hall activities are resuming.
- 6.7. St Marys – Since the last Synod, Pat Craighead has retired so St Mary's is now in vacancy. Services on Sunday have been going for a while, still wearing masks. Singing has restarted. Wednesday mornings have just restarted and are lay led by Reader and Reader in training. The vicarage has been let to 4 interns who are working for the Diocese.
- 6.8. St Barts – There was a huge congregation for Martin's last service. There have been a variety of celebrants. The 8am and 10am services are continuing with a number of people wearing masks. Jennifer is leading evensong. Clubs beginning to meet again.
- 6.9. St Oswalds have appointed a lay minister from their own funds. They are looking at Extended Episcopal oversight.
- 6.10. Generally – there are 5 parishes in vacancy.
Training is being offered for Clergy on Post Traumatic Stress based on work by Grolsch-Miller.
We need to think about people who are finding it hard to come back.
All parishes are reporting a lot of baptisms.

7. Discussion

All parishes are being asked to complete a self review under 5 headings:- Leadership and Governance, Mission and Pastoral Care, Development of Lay Ministry, Buildings Fit for Purpose and Generous Giving.

Diocesan Synod looked at Next Steps at its last meeting. Bishop Mark did a video presentation and the Secretary will send a link to this video to synod members.

Change is happening and this is a good time to think about collaboration and relationships.

Robert and Neal have visited 3 PCCs alongside the self review.

7.1. Vocation – what is your Church called to be and to do?

With 4 Churches in vacancy we were reminded to look at our gifts and start from where we are. People don't want to come to a church which is just waiting for a new vicar. Everyone has gifts and a calling.

St Silas is looking at how they can use their building to support their community.

Christ Church is looking at how they can make their building more useful to their community. Concern was raised as to how Council plans for the area would affect the Church.

Friends of St Gabriels was established to encourage people who would like to support the Church but who don't attend often or who have moved away.

7.2. Inclusion – thinking about when we're in Church who is not here?

Ideas such as improving a doorway, providing a lunch, helping people to get back to Church. Thinking about what keeps people away from Church. What is the hook that is going to get people into Church.

Martha and Mary's was established as a stepping stone.

7.3. Eco Church – Eco Agenda, Climate Change. Lot of people very proactive as regards this agenda at St Francis. It is currently a major item on the News. St Gabriels has just started an eco group. Everyone was encouraged to start from where they are and just do a little bit e.g. including an eco prayer during the service. The Arocha website gives lots of ideas.

St Barts and St Gabriel's bees are doing well.

7.4. Robert commended the thoughts for more deliberation. Church is a community which is attentive to God and each Church will be different. Self review should be seen as an encouragement to produce a shared vision, to think outside the box. Are we real?

8. Reminder to vote in the general synod election –

Robert is standing for House of Clergy.

House of laity – there is a hustings on Thursday.

Synod members were encouraged to vote.

Robert was asked about his manifesto and he said he was concerned national church should move in favour of equal marriage, nurture and nourish clergy, importance of change managers, ordained key resource, proper safeguarding, discipline done well, spirituality, lived spirituality, communicate God to world, Church leader climate change agenda.

9. A.O.B. – St Francis are holding an eco event. This coincides with a pilgrimage of young people with a wicker boat. Their destination is COP26 in Glasgow. They reach Newcastle on the 3rd of October. The event will be held at St Francis on Monday 4th October from 3pm to 5pm. There will be an opportunity to see the boat and write pledges. Climate action Newcastle will be there and a Christian Aid Film about rain will be shown. There will be a Taize service in Church at 5pm.
10. The meeting closed with Grace and thanks to members for attending the Synod

Dates for Future Deanery Synod Meetings

Deanery Synod - Thursday 11th Nov at 7.30pm in person. Discuss Finance for 2022.