

Dorchester Deanery Synod

Minutes of the second meeting of the eighteenth triennium held on Tuesday 4th May 2021 by Zoom

Present: List kept by Secretary.

Apologies: David Parsons, Charles Cooper, Caroline McMeikin, Sue Allen, Rod Hughes, the Revd Penne Kennedy.

1. **Opening Prayer:**

The Revd Sarah Hillman opened with a prayer. She welcomed all to the meeting including those newly elected via Zoom meetings from their APCMs.

2. **Apologies for Absence:** See above.

3. **Minute of previous meeting 24th November 2020:** These were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Secretary on behalf of the Chair.

4. **Matters Arising:** Post at the Crossways with Woodsford, Tincton and Moreton Benefice has been accepted by The Revd Gemma Donnell who will be licensed at the end of July. Secretary clarified that attendees were not put on the minutes as there were too many names. Usually when the Synod meets face to face everyone signs in but during electronic times she was keeping an electronic list of attendees at meetings.

5. **The Role of Deanery Synod members:** The Revd Sarah Hillman briefly outlined that we meet three times a year. Members of the Deanery Synod are a link between what is going on in the Deanery, PCCs and Parish. Members' feedback to their PCCs and have a Statutory Role to 'consider and make provision for what comes down from General Synod and Diocesan Synod levels'. Members are an active go between shaping a Deanery Plan.

6. **Election of 2021 Representatives to the Diocesan Synod:**

There were four nominations for Lay Representatives.

- Margaret Morrissey Proposed Caroline McMeikin Seconded Susan Allen
- Jill Minchen Proposed Susan Allen Seconded Margaret Morrissey
- David Elliott Proposed Lauretta Kerridge Seconded Janet Ranger
- Jane Pridmore Proposed Margaret Morrissey Seconded Nigel Pridmore

The Secretary confirmed that all Proposers and Seconders were verified as members of Deanery Synod and the four nominations were voted in by the Lay members as uncontested seats at Diocesan Synod.

- The Revd Leila Mather Proposed The Revd Mark Phillips Seconded The Revd Canon Jonathan Still
- The Revd Mark Phillips Proposed The Revd Roger Butcher Seconded The Revd Pene Kennedy
- The Revd Sarah Hillman Proposed The Revd Jean Saddington Seconded The Revd Canon Jonathan Still

The Secretary confirmed that all Proposers and Seconders were verified as members of Deanery Synod and the four nominations were voted in by the Clergy members as uncontested seats at Diocesan Synod.

7. **Coronavirus – Shaping the Church for the Future:** The Revd Sarah Hillman introduced this as our main topic for the meeting referring to the changes we have all experienced and how the voice of God is often heard more clearly in times of disruption than when we are safe and secure. For example St Peter tried to go back to fishing after the resurrection (i.e. what he knew), but God had other ideas and took him onto new things. This could be a moment when instead of feeling despair at what we are losing we can instead see it as a moment of positives and move on to new things.

The Revd Roger Butcher gave a presentation beginning with an explanation of how it is good to not know what the future looks like because that means we are thinking about it. He referred to the language of constrained and unconstrained views and posed the questions what will the Church look like? What have I learned during lockdown? What has the wider Church learned during lockdown? He spoke of digital services making families more inclusive, the Church becoming stronger, the interdependence of people and the natural world. He explained that like a dart board Jesus will still be at the centre but around the edge could be streaming services, engaging in poverty and social needs issues, the environment allowing space to pray, education through spiritual care and expertise, authenticity through spiritual living and scripture and finally openness by learning from one another.

Next Hazel Morgan from Charminster spoke on from a lay perspective. She spoke of the opportunities that Zoom and on-line presentations have given us and awareness throughout the world to support one another during these Covid Times. She referred to the helpful Deanery Booklet 'A Church for Everyone', and explained her vision for inclusivity and by welcoming in those not familiar with Messy Church, Café Church or Breakfast Church. She spoke of the positivity of outdoor services and welcoming people into the church for tea and coffee on a social basis so they could get to know the building. Finally she spoke of the church supporting dire food poverty and making its buildings places of acceptance and love, sadness and lament through sharing the Gospel in a positive and sensitive way.

Synod then broke out into discussion groups for 12 minutes and reported back on what they could take from the two speakers back to their own churches. These included:

- Ecology issues especially looking to children who are very clear on this topic
- Going out into the community – picnics/open air services
- Becoming more open and inclusive – opening for concerts, talks and not just Sundays.
- Accessibility by considering the 'front' we put out
- Leadership showing a willingness to challenge and change ideas or boundaries
- Representing all people not just white
- Engaging with existing congregations
- Not forgetting the Gospel at our core
- Communal worship
- Technology continue using Zoom and on line into the future but also being aware of those not able to use technology and thinking how we can involve them too

The Revd Sarah Hillman then shared 'Beyond the Present' a video prepared by our three Bishops and others. She summarised by saying that the deanery should be a positive way forward and not a burden. It should enhance Mission and Ministry together. She invited members of the Synod to go back and ask their parishes what the Deanery could do to support their church mission and ministry.

8. **Financial Statement:** Mr Michael Clarke (Treasurer) had three items to report.

- Currently the Diocese is promoting a data package which is being trialled at St Peters and may benefit all parishes in the long term.
- APCMs are now happening and could members go back and ask their Treasurers to send a copy of their Parish accounts for the year to Michael to save him chasing them (sj@clarke-eaglelodge.co.uk)
- As a Deanery we have already paid 23% of our Parish Shares this year.

9. **Dates for next and future meetings:** The Secretary reported that the next meeting will be Wed 14th July 2021 due to a Clergy meeting during the day of 7th. Venue to be confirmed. Thursday 4th Nov there will be a Zoom meeting.

10. **Closing Prayer**

The Revd Mark Phillips gave the closing prayer.

Meeting closed at 21:12.