



Minutes of Winchester Deanery Synod Thursday, 1st March 2012

Held at St. Lawrence in the Square, Winchester.

The meeting opened at 19:35.

1. **Welcome:** Alan Gordon welcomed everybody to the third meeting of the Synod at St. Lawrence in the Square. Rector : The Reverend Canon Cliff Bannister , Assistant Priest: The Reverend Amanda Goulding. Churchwardens: Tom Nell , John Stanning.

2. **Opening Worship:** The meeting opened with the Rector of St Lawrence's The Reverend Canon Cliff Bannister lead the prayer and psalms.

3. **Parish Profile:** The Reverend Canon Cliff Bannister presented the parish profile. The church now has a new lighting system and sound system. Shortly it will have a new inner entrance door fitted with engraved glass panels (by Tracey Sheppard). There are two churches in the parish, St Lawrence and St Swithun-upon-Kingsgate. There was a church on the site before the Norman Conquest, and it was incorporated into William the Conqueror's palace as the royal chapel. After the palace and chapel were destroyed by fire, St Lawrence Church was rebuilt in about 1150. The church was badly damaged by fire in 1978 and after restoration re-opened in 1980, with seating for about 120 people. St Lawrence is still referred to as the Mother Church of Winchester, for it is the only surviving parish church of Norman foundation within the city walls. When a new Bishop of Winchester is on his way to his enthronement in the Cathedral, it is at St Lawrence Church that he robes and is presented to the Mayor, clergy and citizens.

St. Swithun upon Kingsgate (King's Gate) is one of the ancient gates in the walls of the city of Winchester. The Church above the gate is first mentioned in records in 1264 when it was also destroyed by fire. It was rebuilt and has been much restored over the centuries. Churches built over city gates were common in medieval times, but only a few survive today. St Swithun's Church features in literature as St Cuthbert's in Anthony Trollope's novel "The Warden".

4. **Minutes of previous meeting** – 17th November 2011 – these were accepted as a fair and true record .

5. **Matters Arising** - The Diocesan Synod meeting on 25th February had voted in favour of the Anglican Communion Covenant.

6. **Winchester Street Pastors** - Mark Hibbert-Hingston presented an excellent talk on the work of the Winchester Street Pastors. Street Pastors is a national Christian organisation and operates in 250 towns across the UK. They started working in

Winchester 18 months ago in June 2010. 44 volunteers are now trained as Street Pastor, patrolling the streets of Winchester each Friday and Saturday night. They are supported by 14 Prayer Pastors. The Prayer Pastors are based at City Church in Jewry Street, right in the heart of the city, and the SPs come and go from there. Operating from 10pm to 3.30am the SPs look out for those who are homeless, too drunk to find their way home or are just lost. Armed with space blankets, bottled water, lollipops and fruit pastels they search out those needing their assistance and find taxis to get them home. Since they started violent crime in Winchester has fallen by 40% and overall crime is down 38%. SP are looking for more prayer pastors and to extend the nights they operate to include Thursday nights. There are 20 Street Pastors under training, for commissioning on 24th March. The project is financed mainly by the churches. There is a target to recruit 100 people to give £10 per month.

7. Mission and Pastoral - Revd Alan Gordon introduced the discussion paper prepared on behalf of the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee by Stephen Adam.

Alan reminded Synod members of the background leading to it, with the initial "Deanery Fit for Purpose" discussions some time ago which had raised the questions about how the role and purpose of deaneries could best be developed; more recently, as legally required, the Deanery had established a separate Mission and Pastoral Committee and this Committee had met for an initial discussion with Parish Representatives in September 2011.

The Committee had the responsibility of producing a Pastoral Plan for the Deanery, to be approved by the Deanery Synod in October 2012. The next meeting with Parish Representatives was on 18 April and to help focus the discussion at that meeting it would be very helpful to have the mind of Synod members on the "big picture" – the core values, understandings and vision which we would wish to hold in common as a Deanery and which the Pastoral Plan would articulate in more detail. Hence the paper had been prepared to prompt such a discussion.

Paragraph 3.3 of the paper highlighted significant challenges which we needed to acknowledge honestly if progress was to be made, including such facts as the lack of homogeneity of the Deanery and the level of engagement of parishes and clergy within the Deanery varying (and in some cases being slight). The paper also highlighted the dynamics of the relationship between Christ Church and the other parishes in the Deanery. Comments were invited on the significant issues raised in paragraph 3.3. No Synod member offered any comment at this point.

The Synod then broke into small informal discussion groups to explore what members perceived as possible aspirations and underlying values. The following points were raised as feedback from the groups:

- An aspiration should be to increase the number and maturity of worshipping Christians in our churches.
- The need to share good practice between parishes and help each other.
- Communications within the Deanery need to be clear and understandable "without making assumptions" (the speaker did not indicate what lay behind that qualification).
- The need for a more coherent voice to contribute to the development of the City of Winchester. Reference was made to the Government's localism agenda; secular organizations were well ahead of the churches in making their voices heard and influencing those discussions. Reference was also made to the significant amount of new

housing likely in Winchester District (potentially 4000 houses, including 2000 at Barton Farm) and the opportunities and challenges which developments of such scale would pose for the churches (both Anglican, and other denominations) in seeking to influence the character of this development – how to create a spiritually healthy environment?

- The need for more emphasis on mission and growth, and not on cost cutting; the need to be more pro-active in doing things together with an orientation to mission.
- The need to recognize that we have outgrown current church organization structures – how can we best work across and between churches?
- The need to relate all our “doing” within a theological framework first of all. It was suggested that a Trinitarian focus should be modelled – having a fundamental unity of purpose while recognizing the diversity of the Deanery.
- Some parishes had already been brought together into united benefices – this changed perspectives because already people were working more collaboratively here.
- Our current church structures assumed that the church is the centre of the community. This is no longer the case; the context is changing radically, and the pace of change and development in Winchester in the next decade will be “frightening”. How can the church adapt to these realities?
- The varied levels of engagement with children and young people in our parishes and the priority of such work. Can this be made a focus for mission for the Deanery? How best to work with Christ Church in this area?

Following this feedback, Synod members moved on to discuss other key questions. The importance of being clear about our destination was stressed – what is it that we are seeking to achieve? What are the priorities that we can agree upon? It was thought that Synod should give direction to parishes. There was also a need to consider how to resource ministry effectively, including non parochial ministry.

It was suggested that, to do justice to these important issues, it would be valuable to hold a half day meeting later in the year before the draft Pastoral Plan was firmed up, to try to ensure maximum engagement and involvement by all parishes in the Deanery. This was agreed.

8. **General Synod Report** - Revd David Williams gave a verbal summary of the proceedings of the February session of General Synod. He referred the Synod to a full account of the General Synod proceedings that are readily available on the Church of England website.

9. **Finance report** - Hugh Podger (Deanery Finance Chair) reported that Share collection for 2012 is progressing slowly. In January 2012 fourteen parishes paid nothing at all; although some had good reasons for this. Deanery Shares for 2013 would be determined by the Bishop’s Council on April 23rd and deaneries would have until the end of May to respond with details of Parish Shares.

- 10. Diamond Jubilee & Olympics** - Revd Alan Gordon reported on opportunities for mission arising from the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the 2012 Olympics: The film "More than Gold - Get Ready to Run" was shown. Church members could provide bottled water/ hosting/food or snacks at these events to some of the 200,000 people involved. The Olympics run from 27th July to 12th August while the Para-Olympics run from 29th August to 9th September.

There are also the Olympic Torch Runs starting on 19th May and ending 27th June, including 11th July at King's Worthy. As 60% of the population have some contact with sport the church should be able to join in. There is a 48 page event pack available for churches. On 27th July church bells will ring for three minutes in the morning. (See website – www.morethangold.org.uk.)

It would be best to hold events before the event being celebrated takes place. The Jubilee big lunch takes place on 3rd June (Sunday). On 4th June the beacons will be lit, including one on King's Worthy church. On 5th June there is a big service at St. Pauls.

- 11.** AOB: There was no other business arising.
- 12.** Bishop Timothy will be enthroned on 21/4/2012 at 2:30 in Winchester Cathedral.
- 13.** Diocesan synod elections (Three year term.) take place this year and nominations should be in by June. Details will be on our new website shortly.

The meeting closed at 9:40 with prayer.

Deanery Synod Standing Committee.
10th May 2012