



Deanery Synod Report for the Annual General Meeting 2018

The Deanery Synod elected representatives for St Mary's are currently Brian Livingstone, Margaret Morrell and Jill Carr. They were elected at the APCM in 2017 and serve for a period of 3 years. Our Vicar is, as are all vicars, an ex officio member of Synod. The Area Dean, Rev. Dominic Black usually acts as chair of the meetings with his deputy the Lay Dean, Mrs Kate Morris. Synod (a Greek word meaning coming together and finding a way) usually meets three times during the year at various Churches throughout the Deanery.

St Barnabas, Linthorpe

The first meeting of the year and the final one of synod before elections took place in April, was held in St. Barnabas Church Hall on 7th February 2017. The Rural Dean reviewed the Deanery Conference held in November 2016 which had been attended by 80 people. He highlighted several points including increased evidence of churches working together and the resources that were needed to facilitate growth. Agenda items included a presentation on Safe Families for Children given by Becky Ward about vulnerable families and the help the organisation could provide. Heather Black reported on the work of Together Middlesbrough and Cleveland and the work they were doing with Middlesbrough Food Bank, Ageing Better Middlesbrough and Singing for the Brain. She added that Together Middlesbrough would be losing financial support from the Church Urban Fund and would need support from Parishes. Stewart Shaller reported on the recent meeting of Diocesan Synod. The recently appointed Vicar of St Hilda of Whitby, Grangetown, Fr. Edward Matthias-Jones gave an interesting resume of how and why he had arrived on Teesside from South Wales. The Lay Chair then described the opportunities and challenges which lay ahead for the Deanery of Middlesbrough.

St Hilda of Whitby, Grangetown

The first meeting of the newly elected Synod took place in St Hilda of Whitby on 6th June 2017. The meeting opened with a form of Evening Prayer for mid-week use, led by Rev Andy Grant and Jo Bowden. It divided into four parts a) traditional evening prayer b) silent prayer c) lighting candles e) intercessory prayer. Following coffee the Area Dean welcomed returning and new Synod representatives. He explained that Deaneries would now focus on being "a local network of Churches, inspiring, influencing and leading mission and ministry" headed by an elected Leadership team consisting of the Area Dean, Rev Dominic Black, Lay Dean, Mrs Kate Morris, the Secretary Mrs Allison Ward, a clergy representative Rev Andy Grant and a lay representative, Mr David Phillips. The DLT would be supplemented by co-option as necessary. Clearly the financial situation would continue to be an issue. As time progresses the Church Commissioners are determined to focus on deprived areas and inject money into growth and renewal with emphasis on the missing 18-40 year olds leaving little or no money for general support. The priorities of the Middlesbrough Deanery are a) Children, young people and families. b) Ministry with older people. c) Church Planting in Brambles Farm, Thorntree and Middlesbrough College. d) Communication e) Prayer and Discipleship.

St. Timothy's Church, Hemlington had requested to join the Middlesbrough Deanery, thus leaving the Stokesley Deanery. They felt closer demographically and from a churchmanship viewpoint to the Middlesbrough Deanery, this was approved unanimously. Maddy Fisher then gave a presentation on the work of Faithfully Ageing Better Middlesbrough and Cleveland which is trying to eliminate loneliness and isolation amongst the elderly. Rev Andy Grant and Rev Andy Bowen talked about Leading your Church into Growth (LYCiG) – various aspects of growth were discussed including prayer, the desire for growth and adapting worship to reflect modern society's needs.

St Cuthbert, Marton

Synod met at St. Cuthbert's Marton on 19th October 2017. Following Evening Prayer led by Rev Andy Grant the meeting was chaired by the Lay Dean Mrs K Morris. The Bishop of Whitby gave a talk entitled "Towards a Diocesan Strategy" reminding Synod that it was an ongoing strategy. The themes were a) Strengthening Prayer b) Worship and witness c) A people renewed in God's Mission with the ongoing plan for 5 years from 2016 a) to reach people b) Move to growth c) Establish sustainable finance. With this in mind he emphasised that the grant to the Diocese was being reduced from £2,000,000 to £1,000,000 with the opportunity to bid for grants to encourage growth. Heather Black reported on activities by Together Middlesbrough and Cleveland which included Feast of Fun bringing healthy meals to 800 children and 300 adults during the summer holidays and for 500 children to experience the countryside at the North Yorks. Moors Centre at Danby (obviously not all at the same time!) She also said there was a Bill being promoted in Parliament that 10% of the sugar tax would be used in deprived areas for holiday activities. The Archdeacon spoke on discipleship saying that part of her mission was to make the Diocese financially sustainable, churches should focus on discipleship, nurturing and bringing people to worship and to embark on their own journey of faith. She presented a model of Discipleship Footsteps which walked through a six-step journey. The Deanery Leadership team was augmented by electing Rev Angela Bailey, Fr. Edward Matthias-Jones, Mr Ste Corner and Mr Ron Marshall. Rev Erik Wilson informed Synod that the Archbishop of York's Deanery Pilgrimage would take place on the weekend of 10th-12th November with an invitation to attend one or more of the events being organised throughout the Deanery. It was hoped to attract not only church going people but also non- attenders.

If there are any questions about this report please ask one of the Synod Representatives to expand on this brief resume of the happenings at Deanery Synod. The full reports are available in the PCC Minutes book.

*The St. Mary's, West Acklam, elected Deanery Synod Representatives are:
Brian Livingstone, Margaret Morrell and Jill Carr*