Minutes of a Meeting of Newark & Southwell Deanery Synod
held on Tuesday 5th March 2019 in The Cator Hall, Eakring

Present:  Laity 20, Clergy 9
Apologies: Laity 8, Clergy 2

The Deanery Synod meeting was opened by Revd Mark Adams. He thanked Revd Zoe Burton and the team at Eakring for hosting this meeting.

Revd Zoe Burton led worship.

Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.

Matters Arising

Parish Share - The total parish share in cash terms did go up last year. The challenge is to meet what we agreed this year.

One Life Mission - Michael Wilson asked everyone present to advise of any events and services they have planned for the weekend of the Archbishop’s Mission in September (12-15th). A huge seed planting operation where the diocese will be visited by Bishops from the north. 15 bishops and 3 evangelists will be sent out to the deaneries.

So far we have been allocated Bishop James and his team, who will spend Friday and Saturday with us. We will probably be allocated another bishop too.

Anna Alls - “All Creatures Great and Small” will include dog walks and animal events

Georgie Hadley - The Riverside & Beck & Trent Group will put on a film night (including studies).

Hopefully there will be lots of events taking place. These need to be invitational. Archbishop Sentamu will visit and tell his story too.

An opportunity for us to grow disciples afterwards. The Bishop would like to see 150 nurture groups grow from this.

Any correspondence/questions should be directed to Michael Wilson. Please also send all ideas to him so that the team can collate these.

Mark Adams will not be involved in this event as his son is getting married that weekend.

Growing Healthy Rural Churches

Revd Phil White spoke to members about how Deanery Standing Committee had, following discussions about giving, agreed to look at the wider subject of growing healthy rural churches.

He pointed out that it is not just up to the vicar and that everywhere is unique and different and need the right environment to grow. We need to make the best of what we have got and ask God to help us grow.

Ingredients:

Leadership - empowerment of others in ministry

Passionate about Spirituality - Enthusiasm. Varies according to churches and people

Enable people to exercise their gifts - structure but not overburdened with it or with tradition.

Robert Warren, who wrote “Growing Healthy Churches,” speaks of an outwardly looking focus. Use gifts to serve non church people.

High love quotient - Experience love with them.
Don’t talk - show !

Speak with Revd Phil White if you would like to find out more. He will be doing this exercise in his own churches

Mark thanked Phil and introduced Revd Victoria (Tors) Ramsey,

Tors Ramsey introduced herself as Diocesan Church Growth and Planting Enabler. Previously a vicar in Devon, with two children, moved to Notts in September. Here to encourage churches in their plans to grow and encourage new worshipping communities.
Focus for this deanery is to think more about plans for growth that are already going on and how to move these on further.

Robert Warren came up with “seven marks of a healthy church.” This applies to rural churches with “six marks of a healthy rural church.” Each church is profiled based on the six marks, and then scored.

Discuss what is already going well and what to do next.

What can we do to practically respond to the markers?

- Engage with the exercise
- Think about if it’s worth doing in your church
- How do we respond to becoming more healthy?

When we think about growth it’s easy to think about bums on seats. It’s actually about people who are lost and God’s desire to be found. It’s people who don’t know God who we want to connect with.

Jesus instructs us to go amongst the people of God and do the things you see him doing.

Particular joys and challenges about being in rural communities. Gospel message is the same. Power transforming love.

1. Energised by faith “salvation creates joyful identity.”
2. Outward looking focus. You are the best people to reach your community.

Church of the future will move from being missional to being a loving part of community.

What is it to re-write the stories of our community?

The Rural Services Network are lobbying government at the moment highlighting better rural lives. How does church fit into that? Can church lead on some of these strategies?

Seek to find what God wants
How do we know what God wants?
by listening - prayer - scripture - listen to each other. Prayer spaces

Seeking to know
Can’t grow on our own. When we have fun together, pray together - attractive for others to join.

Do few things and do them well.

Have an idea of what things you’d like to achieve
How are you going to get there?
Creativity. What do you do well?

Be clear and focussed. What is God calling us to do for our context and setting?

Mark thanked Tors for her input and said that he hoped this can be part of an ongoing conversation. A steering group has been set up to look at this and it is hoped that in Synods to come we will be able to continue this conversation.

No Questions received from members

No Resolutions from the parishes

Deanery Notices

Southwell Leaves – The Minster’s magazine editorial team would like to have more deanery input. Maybe a spotlight on parishes around the deanery. If you’d like to write an article please let Louise Riley know. We have had offers for the next few issues.

Archdeacon’s Visitation Services: Tuesday 7th and Wednesday 8th May at 7.30 pm in Southwell Minster

Thank you so much to you all for a marvellous statistics for mission return of 99%. Only one parish in our whole deanery hasn’t returned their figures. That’s wonderful. Thank you. If anyone would be interested in using an App for ease of entering the figures during the year please speak with Louise Riley.

Rvd Georgie Hadley concluded the meeting in prayer and distributed a leaflet “Praying for a Healthy Church.”

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

The next meeting will be on Monday June 10th in St Nicholas, Tuxford.