

Dallington Deanery Synod for the APCM 2021

Since the last APCM, the only Deanery Synod meeting was held on Wednesday 18th November 2020, successfully via Zoom with a good attendance.

The House of Laity unanimously re-elected Mrs Sara Stoner as Lay Chair.

The main speaker was The Right Reverend Will Hazelwood, the recently appointed Bishop of Lewes. Bishop Will opened by explaining the importance of two-way communication and while Zoom has been a boon it can never be a replacement for personal meetings. He also said how exciting the whole learning curve of taking on this new role in a new part of the country was to him. The son of a priest, he rebelled but was then called to return. A deeply parochial background and passion lead him to wanting to be a pastoral Bishop to the clergy and laity, with a particular interest in children's work, the imaginative use of church buildings and the environment. His portfolio is the pastoral care of the eastern area of the Diocese and the Diocese wide care of the retired clergy and the chaplains.

Both good and bad has come from the pandemic, physical closure, isolation, challenges of technology have all been exhausting but there has been a wider sense that everything had not been as secure and 'right' as supposed and this is leading to a greater sense of real values and a 'spiritual burst'. The response from the local church communities has been exemplary. And as our church buildings hold the social memory of our communities going forward, they can remain and develop as the true local heart of the C of E.

Obviously worried he is also intensely hopeful for the future.

Bishop Will also spoke of the intergenerational opportunities offered within a congregation that in the modern family setting is often missing and that this is not just of benefit to the young but also to the older generations. He spoke about the 'Grandma's bench' idea from Kenya where a safe pair of ears from an older member of the congregation could listen in a non-judgemental way to teenagers finding it difficult to communicate with members of their own family, often exacerbated by the false images of life to be found on social media.

A Parish Report was given by Revd Rory Graham for the Parish of Hailsham. Revd Graham spoke of the fear and concern within the community during the first lockdown. A parish 'Zoom team' created 'Life in Lockdown', 3-minute chats on lockdown and the hope that Jesus gives us which has helped a good range of people. There were also Q&A sessions over Zoom. It wasn't easy but it was an enjoyable way to spread the word that there is good news, even now. They are still available on YouTube.

Paulette Barton was re-elected to be the Secretary. There was no Assistant Secretary elected this time. Bryan Gibson was elected as Treasurer and it is hoped a 'shadow' will be appointed soon.

In addition to the joint chairmen, secretary and treasurer the following were appointed to the Standing Committee: Dr Sue Greener was elected as a Lay member and it is hoped another lay person will contact the Rural Dean to offer to be a further Lay member. The

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Revds Ann-Marie Crosse, Rory Graham and Julia Lewis were appointed as the Clergy members of this committee

The Deanery Budget for 2021 was approved.

The elections to Diocesan Synod are about to take place.

The Standing Committee subsequently arranged further Synod meetings for:

Mon 14th June 7:30pm via Zoom on the subject of Rural Ministry and Mission The Revd Yann Dubreuil of Bentley, Binsted & Froyle in the Diocese of Winchester.

Thursday 25th November 7:30pm at Hailsham Parish Church where the speaker will be The Revd Andrew Smith, the Diocesan Generous Giving advisor.

Non-members of the synod are always welcome to attend as observers.

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