

1. **Welcome:** Revd Pat Freeth, Interim Area Dean, warmly welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Revd Liz Palin, new Team Vicar to The Stroudwater Team and Revd Sue Murray now in place in the Bisley Benefice. Particular welcome also to our speaker for the evening Revd Pauline Godfrey, Diocesan Head of Discipleship and Vocations and Deputy Director of the Department of Mission and Ministry.
2. **Present/Apologies:** There were 43 Synod members present, as per the Register, with apologies received from: Peter Hankins, Elaine Venning, Hazel Stacey, Linda Jarvis, Sarah Rogaly, Jamie Dalrymple-Hamilton, Ian Sullivan, Revd Deborah Curram, Revd Steve Harrison, and Revd Stephen Jarvis.
3. **Prayer** – The meeting began with prayer led by Revd Kate Stacey.
4. **Minutes of the last meeting** held on Wednesday 21st February 2018 at Horsley Church were accepted as a true and accurate record. Thanks you to Sally for producing the Minutes and all the other supporting papers so professionally for this meeting.
Matters arising – Deanery Treasurer – Thanks again to Mike Lambert who continues as interim Deanery Treasurer – We are still seeking to fill this post, so if you know of any potential candidates do please let us know.
5. **Speaker - Revd Pauline Godfrey**
Diocesan Discipleship and Vocations Officer – ‘Whole Life Discipleship’
‘Nurturing confident disciples to live out their faith seven days a week’ – LICC (London Institute for Contemporary Christians) are encouraging us as a National Church to explore this in greater detail. Pauline played a short video of introduction by Neil Hudson looking at how we might engage in mission ‘on the frontline’ in the context of our everyday lives and what as individuals that might be for us in our own particular life setting. What frontlines are represented in your church context? Small shifts in direction can make a huge difference in the long term – not necessarily adding new things but more about doing the things we already do in a slightly different way. Over the last 10 years LICC have been learning from leaders in scores of church all across the country - the following ideas have proved to be helpful to churches of all sizes and traditions:
 - ‘This time tomorrow’ – Ask someone what they might be doing tomorrow, what are the challenges, the opportunities – this values everyday contexts and generates different kinds of conversations, both individually and in groups.
 - Commissioning people – not just in the church but for the everyday lives that they are living – it’s about everyone, and a reminder to everyone that where God has placed us is important.
 - Intercessions – Pray for people in your congregations, connecting to the local community
 - Notice Boards – Perhaps a map showing where people work, recognizing their ‘front-lines’
 - Clergy visiting people in their work place – one of the most helpful ways to affirm wider Christian vocations.
 - Be curious – Ask different questions – what challenges can we pray for in people’s lives? Which, if any, of these small shifts might be possible in your context?Follow this link to visit the Church of England website to find an electronic copy of the booklet ‘Setting God’s people free’ - <https://www.churchofengland.org/SGPF>. Lots of resources are also available on the Diocesan website.
Thanks to Pauline for coming and helping us look more effectively at what we do and giving us lots of ideas to take away and think about.
6. **Deanery Life Vision – ‘Green Shoots’** – Members were invited to bring forward the bad, as well as the good!
 - **The Resource and Training Group** would like to establish where existing Messy Church/Prayer Groups/Alpha courses might be running in the parishes of our Deanery.

Please send your responses to Sally at the Deanery Office. Responses have been received from Bussage, Amberley and Painswick. If you do have groups running please let Sally know asap.

- **Revd Liz Palin, Stroudwater** recommended 'The Filling Station' run by Revd Steve Harrison, 1st Tuesday every month, 7-8.30pm in Standish Village Hall – worship, good speakers, prayer ministry. Next meeting 5th June when Steve Harrison will be speaking. Also, CrossRoads a new initiative on the 4th Sunday each month, 4pm in Leonard Stanley School – Revd John Thompson is now Associate Priest in the Team and is helping run this new initiative, aiming to reach out to those in our communities that are perhaps not currently involved in church.
- **Inter-Deanery Meeting and Diocesan Stipends Fund bid** – We have the opportunity again this year to 'bid' for a share of the DSF monies. Last year we managed to secure 17k, which was used to help off-set Parish Share in the Stroudwater Team whilst it was becoming established. This year's meeting with Lay Chairs, Area Deans, Bishop Rachel, and Colin Rank, of the DBF takes place on 20th June. We are asked to submit our bid beforehand in writing. As a group we then study each bid and work out how the monies will be allocated. Total to be allocated this year 218k.
- **Deanery Mission Shaped Intro Workshop Day** – 23rd June at St Mary's, Woodchester. Revd Peter Francis encouraged everyone to come and find out more – will look at the disconnect between church and culture, to engage with people who would not necessarily turn up to a traditional church service. It will be an opportunity to explore these issues and help us discern what opportunities there might be in our own parishes. Posters and Flyers were available to take away. [Deanery Mission Shaped Intro flyer June 18.pdf](#)
Please book with Sally at the Deanery Office. *Unfortunately, due to lack of responses, this course has now been postponed until the autumn, date still to be confirmed.*

7. Parish & Benefice Update by the Area Dean

- **The Stroudwater Team** – Revd John Thompson is now Associate Priest helping out in the Team
- **Brimscombe, Woodchester & Rodborough** – Revd Peter Francis is now officially 'Rector' for the newly combined team of Brimscombe, Woodchester and Rodborough.
- **The Beacon Benefice** – The Archdeacon has met with the church team and they are moving towards interviews shortly.
- **Nailsworth & Minchinhampton with Box & Amberley** – Both have had pre-vacancy meetings and both are working towards the Parish Profiles. Margaret Sheather and Pat are supporting the process in the absence of Archdeacon Jackie, who is away on sabbatical until 31st July. Nailsworth have a meeting on the 11th June to agree the Parish Profile, moving towards advertising and interviews early in September. Bishop Rachel will be leading the process at Minchinhampton – next meeting 13th June.
Revd Stephen Jarvis, self-supporting Associate Priest at Bisley is now moving across to Nailsworth to work alongside Revd Sue Sobczak.
Please keep these parishes in your prayers as we work towards filling the vacancies over the coming months.

8. Procedures for Clergy vacancies – Draft Motion (As circulated with the Agenda)

Revd John Spiers introduced the draft motion, explaining the background and how we have reached this point. The motion was formulated in conjunction with Peter Hankins, an active and long-standing member of Amberley church from their first-hand experiences and frustrations of protracted vacancy times and the negative affect it can have on a congregations.

The floor was then open for discussion and debate. The following being the main comments:

- Revd Brian Woollaston - The issue is not always time but money, the Diocese save money on a stipend during a vacancy. Also, it is a time to 'detox' from one Vicar to the next, giving a fresh start/clean sheet moving forward.
- Revd John Hunnisett - Vacancies are all different and vary hugely, allowing for a period of adjustment, freedom and some space to just 'change gear'. Can also be a very positive time, empowering people to step-up and embrace new challenges.

- Revd Peter Francis – It has been shown that vacancies over 6 months tend to loose members of a congregation. If we are looking to grow our churches having no Vicar is going to impede that.
- David Groom – Feels we need to include an introduction setting out the reason for our motion:

“For the past several years the Stroud Deanery has functioned with a persistent vacancy level of between a quarter and one third of its allocated clergy complement. Some parishes have experienced ‘interregnum periods’ of up to two years. For financial planning purposes the Diocese assumes a vacancy level of less than one tenth of the total clergy complement with each vacancy lasting for no more than nine months.

The current process used to fill clergy vacancies has failed to satisfy the needs of the Stroud Deanery and also the planning criteria of the Diocese. For these reasons the Synod of the Stroud Deanery wishes to present a Motion for consideration by the Gloucester Diocesan Synod at its next meeting on 20th June 2018.’

Revd John Spiers confirmed that he is happy with the proposed introduction as stated, to be included in the proposed motion.

Synod then voted on the Motion, proposed by Revd John Spiers, and seconded by Croinne Aldis. The result of a show of hands – all in favour, with none against and 2 abstentions.

The proposal was therefore carried, to be forwarded to the Diocesan Secretary Ben Preece-Smith as soon as possible, requesting that it be considered for inclusion at the next Diocesan Synod meeting on 20th June 2018.

9. Reports

9.1 Diocesan Synod – Next meeting not until 20th June 2018

9.2 Parish Share 2017/2018 – The Lay Chair confirmed that we came very close to our target in 2017, although this is not the case this year. There has been some fantastic work in the parishes to make their commitments to the PS requested for this year and as a Deanery and Diocese we are very grateful for their continued support. There are a few places where this has not been the case, with one or two significant short-falls. The target figure for our Deanery is £730k – at the moment we are looking at a shortfall in the region of £45/50k If you feel that you can give more as the year unfolds, any extra would be hugely appreciated. If you know of anyone in your parish who might consider taking on the role of Parish Share Officer do please let us know. They do not need to be an accountant, just have an understanding of figures and be a good communicator.

9.3 Deanery Office Funding –

Mike Lambert the Interim Deanery Treasurer began by announcing some events at St Laurence, as the church celebrates 150 years since its consecration in August 1868:

2nd June - ‘Trial & Treats’ – Gilbert & Sullivan

4th June - Johnny Coppin

22nd June – The Carducci String Quartet

30th June – Organ Recital by Hugh Williams (Director of Music at Bath Abbey)

(Tickets for all available from The Church Office, The Shambles, Stroud)

Thank-you to all those parishes who have paid their contribution towards the Deanery Office for this year, based on 1.25% of their pledges Parish Share. We have received just under 80% so far. Please can you check with your Treasurers that your contribution has been sent to the Deanery Office. Our continued thanks to Sally who keeps the Deanery in order.

10. Meeting Dates for 2018

Standing/Pastoral Com.10am-12 noon all at The Church Office, Stroud	Deanery Synod all at 7.30 pm	Speaker/Topic
Tuesday 18 th Sept	Wednesday 10th October Cainscross Church Hall	<i>Revd David Runcorn Warden of Readers & Assoc. Director of Ordinands</i>

11. Chair's Announcements

- **Elections to Diocesan Synod**

If you would like to stand for Diocesan Synod please fill in the nomination form and hand it to Sally asap- deadline for nominations 1st June.

Time commitments if you are interested in standing – The Diocesan Synod meets 3 times a year, 2 are usually on Saturday mornings in November and February, and the summer one in June is usually an evening meeting that is slightly shorter. Briefing papers are circulated with the Agenda in advance of meetings – If you have a particular interest in a certain area there may be opportunities to become more involved if you would like to. You are involved in endorsing the Diocesan budget, looking at how it is generated and how it is spent.

- GDPR – Please sign the forms available if you are happy to continue to receive communication from the Deanery Office.

(Since the meeting, further advice indicates that as the Deanery is not a legal entity consent forms are not required. We are in the process of putting together a general Deanery facts sheet on data held; what information we hold, why we hold it, and how it is stored and used. Copy available shortly)

- Our best wishes extended to Revd Charles Minchin who will be retiring in September.

12. Closing Prayer - There being no other business, the meeting closed with The Grace.