

1. **Welcome:** Margaret Sheather, The Lay Chair, warmly welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly any new members with us for the first time; Emma Dunn, and Caroline Hensley from Stonehouse and Jacqueline Natt from Minchinhampton, and also to our speakers for the evening Revd Mike Smith, Diocesan Giving coordinator and Revd Arthur Champion, Diocesan Environment Advisor. Also to Stephen Saville who has been elected to serve on Diocesan Synod on behalf of our Deanery, make our lay contingent now 3 of a possible 8 places.
2. **Present/Apologies:** There were 40 Synod members present, as per the Register, with apologies received from: Peter Hankins, Debbie Bird, Emma Dunn, Joy Murray, Revd Caroline Bland, Revd Steve Jarvis.
3. **Prayer** – The meeting began with prayer led by Revd Brian Woollaston.
4. **Minutes of the last meeting** held on Thursday 14th February 2019 were accepted as a true and accurate record. Point of accuracy – ‘Harold’, rather than Howard Lay – corrected.

Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the Agenda

- Illuminate Funding – Using our funds from the Diocesan Stipends Fund this year - Several benefices are taking part, with their Parish Share commitment being reduced pro-rata with their contribution towards the project, enabling this important work in the Deanery to develop and grow – Regular updates from Barry Voyce are being received and circulated by the office, detailing progress and goals month on month. Revd Kate Stacey is on the Illuminate Team and regularly takes assemblies and helps to organise The Engine Room, connecting with young people who would not otherwise have any contact with the Church. Really positive things happening, from 12 people originally, to around 60 last month, Kate feels it is definitely worth the money!
5. **Speaker – Revd Mike Smith, Diocesan Giving Coordinator – The Giving Toolbox**
(Copies of ‘The Giving Toolbox’ guide circulate – copy attached) – Giving practical help to raise planned giving within a parish or benefice, with sets of resources to help you begin, continue or develop a conversation around the place of Christian giving in the life of your church or benefice. Mike began by working through a ‘Money Quiz’, a lighthearted approach to starting conversations about where you might be as a parish in your approach to giving. The ‘Tools’ are broken down into stages;
Stage one – Encouraging ‘regular’ giving, for those in the early steps of their journey, this is a good place to start. *(Resource includes a full guide to running a programme, templates for invitation letters etc, plus a presentation and script for reaching out to the local community and teaching materials (sermon etc) for use in church – can be adapted for local context)*
Stage Two – Encouraging ‘realistic’ giving – To help parishes begin a discussion on giving as part of Christian life and introduce this concept to those further along the pathway of discipleship – introducing the idea of Christian giving as part of our walk with God with regular simple teaching over a period of weeks. *(Suite of resources including PCC guide-book and sermons etc to give a complete programme to talk about realistic Christian giving as part of being a disciple).*
Stage Three – Encouraging ‘proportionate giving’ – The final set of resources offers a traditional ‘three Sunday programme’ aimed at those already on the path of discipleship or at a stage of Christian development where they are more open to the idea of proportionate Christian giving being part of their commitment to God. *(Resources include a range of materials for local production as well as a handbook for those leading the programme, a presentation to the PCC, templates for the PCC to use to set their vision and budget, sermons and PowerPoints for use in worship and other supporting materials).* All information and details are available on the Diocesan Website.
All lead ultimately to the Parish Giving Scheme, a very successful and simple tool, which means less work for Treasurers, better cashflow, inflation-proof giving, and increased levels of planned giving. Does it work? Yes, giving can be up from between 10% and 40%
Wherever you are, you will find some help to see a way forward – they all lead to generosity towards God.

A Cashless society – some parishes are piloting cashless giving – there are a range of materials on the website

Open Plates – many don't give on a Sunday because they already giving by D/D or S/O – is this divisive? Some parishes provide tokens that can be placed on the plate if they are already including. There followed a short time for group discussion and questions, including:

- It was very helpful to have the three levels explained but in reality people spend more on coffee each week on what they would consider giving to the church. How do we strike more of a balance between useful thinking and reality – it is often helpful to list a budget, challenging peoples understanding of the actual costs involved.
- If the amount you give was given to you, would you notice it?
- It is often down to the clergy to raise the subject of money, which is difficult – it is the normal nature of being a disciple, so do talk about it within your church community.

If you need particular help or have any further questions, Mike can be contacted on:

07840 2620182 Thanks to Mike for his very stimulating and entertaining presentation.

Speaker - Revd Arthur Champion – Diocesan Environmental Officer

'How can your PCC care for God's creation? At the Diocesan Synod meeting on 9th March 2019 the Environmental Policy for the Diocese was updated and adopted, committing to working towards becoming an 'Eco Diocese' by 2020. As part of this commitment, Eco Church is a unique online survey that enables parish churches to both record what they are already doing to care for creation and to take further steps.

The survey covers all areas of church life:

1. Worship and Teaching
2. Management of Church Buildings (if applicable)
3. Management of Church Land (if applicable)
4. Community and Global Engagement
5. Lifestyle

It gently challenges parish churches to review where they are, from the hymns sung, to the food we serve; the energy used and of the ethics of our investments; of the wildlife that finds a home in our churchyards and of the water that flushes our loos; and so on. *Full details on the Diocesan website under Parish Resources, Environment.*

Time for small group discussions around the tables followed to consider the following 3 questions:

1. Your future dreams for your church
2. Can you identify one person on your PCC who might lead such an initiative?
3. Please put registration for Eco Church on your future PCC Agenda.

Please keep this on your PCC Agendas to continue to raise awareness of the issues.

If you have any further questions, please contact **Revd Arthur Champion - Tel: 01242 870402**

Email: - championarthur@gmail.com Our thanks to Arthur for coming along to talk to us to help raise awareness of these challenges, affect all of us.

6. Deanery and Diocesan Life Vision –

Life Priority Groups – A list was circulated with the Agenda of people in our Deanery involved with the different Groups. Over the coming year they will be looking at how the Diocese can support us at Deanery level to make our Life vision real.

Deanery Life Vision – We have been considering how we can share what is going on in our parishes across the Deanery – one suggestion has been to have a portable board at each Synod meeting where pictures/captions/updates could be posted, or perhaps ask you to send in pictures that could then be run as a slide show during coffee; We are aware we need to try to make better use of the Events Page on the Deanery website to share events – or perhaps consider a shared Facebook Page - please let us know if you have further ideas that might help us build a 'sense of shared enterprise'.

7. Reports

7.1 Diocesan Synod – Meeting on 9th March 2019 – Brief report by Margaret Sheather circulated at the meeting (copy attached). We are pleased to announce that Mr Stephen Saville from St Laurence Stroud has been elected to represent our Deanery on Diocesan Synod (3 of possible 8 placed filled) If you are interested, or have questions about what is involved, please

speak to Margaret or a clergy member. Margaret was thanked again for continuing to take on the role of Parish Share Officer for our Deanery– we are still looking for a willing person to take on this role on a more permanent basis, do please let us know if you know of anyone who might consider this position.

7.2 Parish Share 2019 – The most recent report from the Finance Team confirms that giving is coming in very well compared to the commitments made. We still have a gap between what has been committed and the target for our Deanery for the year.

Diocesan Stipends Fund (DSF) – The Inter-Deanery Meeting to allocate the DSF monies for 2020 will take place on the 10th June. We have to ‘bid’ for a share of funds available, demonstrating how the monies might be most helpfully applied to ease the Parish Share in the neediest areas. We have invited Incumbents for their views on where they think support is most needed and 3 submissions have been made. We are meeting next week to formulate our Deanery bid from the responses we have received, ready to present them on 10th June. Parish Share Process- detailed Annual Timeline_– we are awaiting the timeline of dates from the Finance Department which will be circulated to Treasurers as soon as possible. PS allocations for 2020 will come out at the end of August.

7.3 Deanery Office Funding – A big ‘thank-you’ to Mike Lambert for agreeing to officially become our Deanery Treasurer. Mike thanked all those parishes who have so far confirmed their funding of the Deanery Office, this year based on 1.1% of pledged Parish Share. Currently around 70% of parishes have made their contribution – do please check with your PCC and Treasurer that yours has actually been sent. The continued support from the parishes to support the work of the Deanery Office is greatly appreciated.

8. Parish & Benefice Update

- **The Stroudwater Team** – The clergy contingent is now complete with the arrival of Revd Dave Bishop
- **The Bisley Benefice** – The House for Duty vacancy continues at the Bisley Benefice – thoughts are ongoing concerning the long term future of House for Duty posts – there are quite a few vacancies and no one coming forward to fill them. Discussions are taking place with Archdeacon Hilary to discern the best way forward.
- **The Beacon Benefice** – The Advert has been in the Church Times for the last 2 weeks, with interviews set for the 7th July. It has been a very long vacancy so do please keep the process in your prayers.

9. Meeting Dates for 2019

Standing/Pastoral Com.10am-12 noon all at The Church Office, Stroud	Deanery Synod all at 7.30 pm	Speaker/Topic
Tuesday 17th September	Wednesday 9th October <u>Cainscross Church Hall</u>	Archdeacon Hilary Dawson

10. Chair’s Announcements

- **Standing Committee** – There are 2 lay vacancies on this committee following Corinne Aldis and Harold Lay standing down – we need to fill these posts as soon as possible. Time commitment 3 meetings per year – the group plan the business and speakers for Deanery Synod meetings, help manage the Parish Share for our Deanery, and plan our pastoral strategy for the Deanery going forward. If you are interested do please speak to Margaret.
- **Diocesan Synod consultation** on term limits for Deanery Synod lay members - should lay members be limited to serving for 2 terms? Live consultation is ongoing to receive comments and further ideas to the discussions. Sally will circulate the consultation paper if anyone has any further thoughts or ideas they would like to contribute. *(Attached)*

- **THRIVE initiative** – Creating a learning community for leaders, both clergy and lay, across our Deanery, particularly across multi-parish benefices, to provide support and enable new ideas and plans to be developed – ‘making disciples, developing leaders and growing churches’ - working together on how to take forward our strategy for developing mission and ministry, particularly focusing on local ministry. 4 Benefices have signed up and will be taking part in this initiative, working together. Revd Pauline Godfrey leads the training, in conjunction with CPAS. Commitment: 2 full days over 2 years, plus final day for review and commissioning. 4 of our multi-parishes benefices have expressed an interest in becoming involved in the project.
- **Archdeacon Hilary** will be visiting the Deanery, particularly to see clergy, on 3rd/4th June. We are planning a Deanery Service on the evening of the 3rd June at Painswick Church so that everyone can come along and meet her. Do encourage people in your parishes to come along and support this service.
- **Swearing in of Churchwardens** – for those not able to make the Visitation Service on Thursday 9th May, there will be a further opportunity for Churchwardens to be sworn in on Sunday 2nd June, the 9.30am service at St Swithun’s, Leonard Stanley.
- **Safeguarding Workshop – Wednesday 29th May at Minchinhampton Church**, particularly aimed at Incumbents, Churchwardens and parish Safeguarding Officers. Do please encourage people to sign up – we are being asked by the Diocese to make this a priority, as they will be guiding us through the new Parish Safeguarding Handbook. Safeguarding training available locally - on Wednesday 25th September, at St Peter’s Church, Framilode. For further information please check out the Diocesan website.
- **Framilode Riverside Retreats** – Monthly Quiet Days at Framilode Church - 10am – 3pm. £12 to include all refreshments and lunch. To find out more Tel: 01452 741410 - Next date: 3rd July 2019
- **Revd Brian Woollaston** – This is Brian’s last Deanery Synod meeting as he will be retiring in September after 16 years of faithful service in Stroud Deanery. He is much loved and is going to be much missed in The Stroud Team. With warmest wishes for a long and happy retirement.

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