

1. **Welcome & Introduction** – Revd Sue Murray, Area Dean, warmly welcomed everyone to our Deanery Synod. 28 members attended the meeting, as per the Register with Apologies received from: Revd John Spiers, Kathy Lee, Barbara Freeman, Andrew Pemberton, Revd James Turk, Revd Kim Trinder & Alec Jeakins.
2. **Opening Prayer** – led by Revd John Hunnisett.
3. **Minutes** - Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 11th May 2022 at St Laurence Church were accepted as a true and accurate record, with one suggested amendment - full title of Revd 'Canon' Howard Gilbert should be used.

Matters Arising

- **Eco Ambassador for the Deanery** – Revd Simon Howell may have someone lined up to take on this role on behalf of the Deanery. *SW to follow up with Simon*
 - **Holy Land Trip** - Sue Murray recently led a very successful trip to the Holy Land
4. **Green Shoots** – *Good news stories from around the Deanery*
 - Gerry Carter – Eastcombe
Following the closure of St Augustine's, 'Coffee Church' has started up in the Village Hall. Different sort of service, more casual with small groups around tables with music, topic discussions and shared conversations. Well attended so a good start!
 - Canon Howard Gilbert – Minchinhampton
Started a Junior Church Choir a few years ago, which struggled through Covid when numbers dropped down to 8 children. Following a big push with the local school, there are now 24 young people on the books, with 12 in church last Sunday.
 - Val Regal – Paganhill
A recent Healing Service went very well, with a great atmosphere – really worth doing. Year 7 pupils from Archway School are visiting church to learn more about Baptisms and Weddings.
 - Amberley – The Community Shop project is hopefully starting up in the New Year – it has been a great opportunity for community involvement across the board.
 - Minchinhampton – Held a very successful Animal Service during the summer with a wide variety of pets taking part, including sheep and a donkey!
 - Revd Kate Stacey confirmed that St Laurence, Stroud have an Animal Service on Sunday at 4pm – all welcome
 - Bussage School – Instigated by one of the children, Bussage School have just fitted solar panels to their roof.
 - Ann Greaves, Frampton – Frampton church are currently hosting a Poetry Exhibition 'Rising 10' – Lakefield School children are visiting to learn more.
 - Minchinhampton – Currently hosting a giant sculpture of the Last supper, made up of 50,000 keys from computer key boards. Lots of visitors have been to see it – it will be in church until the end of October – well worth a visit!
 - David Groom – Selsley
A new initiative to help broaden the use of the church building, Selsley now hold Cake and Coffee mornings on the 2nd and 4th Saturday each month. A small orchestra has played and they are shortly having a glass blowing demonstration, all helping to encourage involvement with the wider community. A recent bring

and buy coffee morning for McMillan Cancer Support raised over £700. Very positive outreach success story.

- Revd Liz Palin – The Stroudwater Team are holding a Confirmation Service at the end of November. Noted that a number of adults are attending, having reconnected with church following a Wedding or Funeral.
- Talks at Minchinhampton Church – Art and Faith talk by Dr Gerald South and Dr Chloe Reddaway, and coming up on 20th October 'Encounter the Bible through Art' – entry is free with retiring collection.

5. **Deanery Strategic Plan – Next steps**

Copy of our DSP circulated, formulated from all of our consultations and discussions - any further questions or queries were invited. The next step now is to engage with the Archdeacons prior to us presenting to PCCs. We will now begin setting up a Leadership Team, who will start to lead things forward. We would like clergy to nominate 2 people from each of their Benefices/Teams to contribute towards part of that team. The aim is for the Team to meet towards the end of November. The consultant is still working with us if we need further guidance, but suggests that eventually a presentation should be taken around the parishes of the Deanery to engage as widely possible with the process.

6. **Living in Love & Faith – Report on feedback following the extended consultation** – The Lay Chair, who is the Diocesan Advocate in the engagement process, confirmed that this has been a major project of engagement across the whole of the Church of England, with the consultation period running for 18 months. Many attended the Deanery Course, or the one held in the Bisley Benefice, whilst others may have looked independently through the Diocesan website – the site is still live and your thinking and reflections can still be added. The report from the LLF process has now been published, 'Listening in Love & Faith', which can be purchased for £10 through Church House Publishing if you want to buy a copy. The next step is for a team of people and researchers to analyse all the feedback and arrive at a view that they can take forward. The Bishops were intending to hold 3 residential sessions to discern the outcome from the process - the first was cancelled because of the death of Queen Elizabeth, with 2 sessions planned this autumn. Please continue to hold the process in your thoughts and prayers as they work through this complex and demanding phase, ready to present their proposal to General Synod in February 2023.

Small group discussions followed, with a time to share thoughts and responses. A handout was circulated to help guide the discussions; our hopes for the wider life of the Church and how this might take shape in our parishes. Responses included:

- How do we create a space for people to really connect to this; help one another to think theologically, building our confidence through theology?
- What would God want us to do? How do we instigate that discussion and have the confidence to represent our views and also appreciate, listen and learn from the views of others – the importance of being 'kind'.
- Not enough being 'kind' within the conversations and relating the difficult and sometimes confusing views to scripture.
- Some excellent aims and hopes and how we might take this forward.
- Communication is the key – increase in mutual understanding. First steps engage and get involved. Importance and success of pew sheets and making the most of the internet and emails – circulation lists to keep everyone informed and up to date. Having 'good singers' and encouraging everyone to 'join in the Chorus'

Please continue to keep the process in your prayers and thanks to everyone for their time and energy in these discussions. Please let Sally know if you have any further feedback to the DSP document.

7. Parish & Benefice update

- **Bisley Benefice** – House for Duty vacancy – No change, to be considered under the Deanery Strategic Plan
- **The Stroud Team** – Graham Stacey was Licensed last night as Priest in Church of Lower Cam and Coaley and Area Dean designate for Wotton Deanery. Kate continues as Team Rector for the Team, with her office now based at the All Saints Centre in Uplands.
- **Brimscombe, Woodchester & Rodborough** – Associate Priest vacancy – not being pursued at the moment
- **The Beacon Benefice** – Janet Turville announced her retirement at the beginning of September. The vacancy to be advertised next week, with interviews hopefully on 15th November. Please pray that the right person will be moved to apply. Query regarding the time taken to start the whole recruitment process and extended vacancies and our previous motion to Diocesan Synod regarding this ongoing problem. The Lay Chair confirmed the issue had gone to the Mission and Pastoral Group for review, she will raise this at the next week to confirm the position. AD confirmed that legally a post is only vacant once a retirement date is actually announced.

Reports

7.1 General Synod in July – Report as circulated with the Agenda.

7.2 Diocesan Synod – Draft Minutes circulated – Revd Steve Harrison touched upon the main points of interest; The Diocesan Board of Education Annual Report, Finance update from the DBF and ongoing Parish Share challenges, Revd Canon Paul Williams moving to Sandringham.

7.3 Parish Share 2022 – ML confirmed that we are on target to meet the pledged commitments that have been made for this year, against a £70k shortfall from the figure that was requested. There was a meeting of the Parish Treasurers a few weeks ago which had proved very informative and helpful. Brief comparison between PS committed and PS shortfall over the last 6 years, as per the graphics on the report.

7.4 Parish Share 2023 – We are expecting the figures for 2023 imminently – a letter will be going out to all Parish Treasurers once these are available setting out the allocations per Benefice/Team. Please discuss these within your PCC's and confirm your pledges as soon as possible and no later than the end of November. At the Treasurers meeting Archdeacon Hilary confirmed that the Diocese are planning a complete review of the PS system, to come into effect in 2024.

7.5 Deanery Administrator Function – Thank you to all the parishes that have made their contribution towards the funding of our Administrator Sally. There are still a few outstanding – please check with our Treasurers that your parish has paid. Questions were invited from the floor: *Are Deaneries going to be consulted?* - AH welcomed views, suggestions and expertise at the Treasurers meeting - so we wait to see developments.

8. Meeting Dates and venues for 2023 confirmed as:

Standing/Pastoral Com.10am-12 noon all at The Porch Room Minchinhampton	Deanery Synod all at 7.30 pm	Speaker/Topic
Tuesday 24th January	Wednesday 15th February Lakefield School, Frampton-on-Severn	Tbc
Tuesday 25th April	Wednesday 10th May St Laurence Church, Stroud.	Tbc
Tuesday 12th September	Wednesday 4th October Minchinhampton Church	Tbc

9. Chair's Announcements

- **Next meeting of Area Deans** – 3rd November 2022
- **'Ugly Duckling'** – A very useful visual resource: table talk cards etc to encourage group discussions/conversation starter. Further information available on their website.

10. AOB - None

11. Closing Prayer – there being no other business, the meeting closed with prayer led by Revd Kate Stacey.