

Stroud Deanery Synod Meeting 11th May 2022

Feedback from breakout group discussions

Feedback to the whole meeting following the group discussions – main points:

- WhatsApp Group for Chapter to share ideas
- Audit of where we are - compared to where we might be in 5 years' time has triggered this work
- Administration, particularly in multi-parish benefices – can we share resources?
- Categorise parishes – Lincoln Diocese example, different levels of church (*mixed feelings of experiences so far*)
- Language - analyse the meanings behind the words
Flexible rather than viable' and 'freed up for mission'
- More shared responsibilities to spread the load and free up clergy to be what God has called them to be

From the sheets handed in:

What excites?

Positive attitude & Collaboration and resource sharing (especially admin)

Very Important

Community

Financial expertise/stewardship resources e.g. grant application navigating!

Troubles/Unclear

Language – hard to understand Meaningful to whom?

Don't want to double-up/ensure Parish, Deanery, and Diocese each have clear areas – don't complicate and end up with even more committees.

e.g. Financial – Deanery level, Prayer/learning groups – Benefice level. Resources – importance of sharing at the right level too.

Nothing about the environment in this

Chapter level Sharing....

Suggestion that Chapter has a WhatsApp Group to share info/ask for help locally

Document ready for PCC's – Not sure – they would need more than top-liner

Our Vision – Opening statement

Positive approach – starting with gifts and talents we have – trusting God to 'Feed the 5000'

Renewal – bringing back our strengths, seeing things afresh for a new world.

Holiness & Service – Holiness very high bar? Risk of holiness being seen as 'holier than you'.

Suggestion – dedication or service, commitment? How about love and commitment or love and service?

Our Vision – central diagram

2nd sentence – flexible instead of 'viable'

3rd sentence – 'released for ministry' or perhaps 'focused on ...' or freed up for mission..

4th sentence – suggestion - 'rejuvenated buildings that serve our communities'

3. Focuses on releasing Clergy, whereas Diocesan Vision is for every member ministry encouragement.

Chapter – What exactly it is?

Diagram – ‘resourced and released for ministry’ – In multi-parish benefices the pressure to ‘keep all the plates spinning’ is huge - more sharing of responsibilities.

- More central administration – sharing resources/perhaps adapting existing systems
- Pastoral care makes a parish vibrant – recognising skills and talents/pulling all the strands together – dialogue and communication is essential.
- Buildings are a big issue – Lincoln model and ‘grades of church’ discussed - number of services maintained and the need to share with other parishes
- Events in church to attract people ‘over the threshold’
- New housing estates in Bussage, Stonehouse and Stroud – planting churches in the right place
- How do we get more people into church, are we expecting them to come us to us do we need to go to them? The importance of getting to know people, connecting, nurturing ‘getting beside people’ – how do we give the Holy Spirit the best chance?
- Leadership is key – the lay sharing responsibility with the clergy to spread the load. Recognising skills and gifts – small capable groups focusing on particular areas to move things forward

Mike Lambert - We should be grateful to all those who have spent so much time in producing the Deanery Mission Plan to date. This includes clergy and laity (and not just immediate church members) who have attended three full-on discussion days, zoom meetings, writing notes from each meeting, and drafting the reports for further discussion and amendment at subsequent gatherings.