

Joint Deanery Synods Meeting
Wednesday 22nd June 2022 at 7.30pm
at St John the Divine, Rastrick,

The meeting was attended by 29 members of the Halifax and Calder Valley Deanery Synod, with apologies from Clare Dennis (Southowram), Kath Sharman (Mount Pellon), Alan Stears (Minster), Trish Boyd (Minster), Revd Angela Dick (Sowerby Bridge), Revd Canon Hilary Barber (Minster), Revd Nigel Stimpson (King Cross), Revd Caroline Greenwood (Warley and St Hilda's), Aiden Greenwood (Warley), Joan Aspin (Warley), John White (Warley), Andrea Hampshire (Southowram), Daphne Cansdale (Erringdon Benefice).

1 Welcome and introduction

Barbara Smith, the Lay Chair of Brighouse and Elland Deanery, began the meeting by welcoming old and new representatives on the Deanery Synods and also welcomed The Venerable Bill Braviner, Archdeacon of Halifax. Barbara then thanked Revd Michelle Petch for hosting the meeting and also thanked the ladies of St John the Divine for providing refreshments.

2 Opening Prayer

The opening prayer was led by Barbara Smith.

3 "Working together for Mission and Growth"- Archdeacon Bill

Archdeacon Bill, before beginning the main part of his talk, thanked Kathia for her work in the parish and as Area Dean, mentioning that it had been really good to have worked together, albeit for such a short time and that Halifax and Calder Valley's loss is Skipton's gain, the tribute being met with applause from the Deanery representatives. Archdeacon Bill began by giving his impressions of the area we live in, describing the area as stunningly beautiful, that it is an incredible place to live and work and we should remind ourselves of this, that it is a privilege to live in such a place and that it has so much to offer, with urban and rural areas close at hand. Regarding the Diocese, Archdeacon Bill commented that, unlike any other diocese he had worked in, the Leeds Diocese was different in the respect that being made up of three previous dioceses, it is big, with lots of parishes over a large area, using an area system with area Bishops and because of its size, unlike other diocese which might have one member of staff with various roles, the Leeds Diocese, when approached with a particular issue, would have someone, or even a team of people, whose full time job is to deal with that issue. Archdeacon Bill hoped and suggested that the Halifax Archdeaconry would use these resources to their utmost.

Talking of his own role, Archdeacon Bill felt that, first and foremost, he was here to enable and further the Mission of the local church and using an example from the book "Leadership Without Easy Answers" by Ronald Heifetz, Archdeacon Bill talked of the pyramid structure of many organisations, with many people at the bottom serving the level above until you reach the person at the top, which in the opinion of Heifetz, is entirely the wrong way to run an organisation and that the pyramid should be turned on its head and in this way, Archdeacon Bill felt those people at the "coalface" were not there to serve him, but that he is there to help and serve and support them and he stressed that he wanted to be accessible, available and responsive.

When working together with the parishes and the people in them, Archdeacon Bill saw his role as being a "Gateway", offering help and guidance through and over obstacles, he used the faculty system as an example, where his advice and experience might be an aid in deciding what is likely to get recommended or not, or he could be an advocate for an application with the DAC or the Chancellor. Archdeacon Bill also felt his role was to be a "Catalyst", to help cause a reaction, to get things moving more quickly and easier by being alongside and involved in what people are trying to achieve. A third image was of being a "Connector", by helping people to get in touch with the resources they need and enabling contacts to be made so to help people to learn from each other.

Archdeacon Bill, when talking of our role and purpose, talked of Mission and outreach and how it was something which could only be achieved together, as a shared venture and how we are not here to look after an organisation or to prop up the structures in place, they evolved over time and will keep evolving, but that we are here to be a movement of God's love, in God's spirit, in God's Mission. A movement implies change, growth and development and so we should expect things to be changing and there is no reason to be frightened of change, working with change but being rooted in our Faith, in our relationship with God.

Archdeacon Bill finished by expressing his delight, excitement and enthusiasm to be part of God's Church here and looked forward to working together on the journey ahead.

A brief Q and A session followed in which Archdeacon Bill gave examples of outreach and how it was achieved in areas of his involvement and also Revd John Jukes mentioned that he had had a couple of problematic issues recently and gave affirmation that after getting in touch with Archdeacon Bill, he got helpful answers, very quickly. Jane Evans, on the subject of connections, asked how Archdeacon Bill envisioned those connections being made within the Deanery. After giving the definition of the word "Synod", which is the Latin translation of the Greek "Sunodos", sun meaning "together" and hodos meaning "way", Archdeacon Bill felt that successful Deaneries, in his

experience, had made real, intentional efforts in building and fostering relationships between the churches and that being together could enrich our life together. It is important that we recognise that we have a shared or common project and that we are within the same local authority and there might be things we can engage in on the Calderdale level that we can all be involved with, that help to build a sense that we are God's Church, or one Church in several places, engaging with the same agenda.

4 Deanery Notices

Revd Kathia Shoesmith, the Area Dean of Halifax and Calder Valley, gave that Deanery's notices.

Stuart Stobart has been appointed interim priest in charge of St Augustine's, Halifax, remaining also priest-in-charge of Holy Trinity and St Jude, Halifax – licensing in September date TBA

Daniel Miles, Curate at Mytholmroyd and Cragg Vale has been appointed priest-in-charge of St James the Great, Manston (Leeds EA). His final service in the parish is on 17th July and he will be licensed on 22nd September

Angela Dick is retiring on 30th September with her final service at Christ Church Sowerby Bridge on 31st July

Kathia has been appointed as Vicar of Christ Church Skipton and St Mary Carleton. Her final service in the parish will be Sunday 11th September and she will be licensed on Thursday 13th October

Current Vacancies:

Christ Church Mt Pellon – an appointment has not been made so things have been paused for now.

After the notices, Jane Evans reminded the meeting of the HX & CV Facebook page as a useful way of advertising events and encouraged people to link to it. Jane also informed that there will be a written report of the Diocesan Synod circulated to Deanery representatives and would they please pass this on to PCCs as a way of facilitating the connection between Diocese, Deanery and the parishes. From the Diocesan Synod, there has been one thing in particular which has arisen, the Outer Bradford Deanery is bringing a motion to the October Diocesan Synod, a motion regarding the use of individual cups for the Eucharist. Use of individual cups is not permitted in the Church of England but in the light of covid, what is the view of the use of the common cup? What is the view of the use of individual cups? Deanery reps are asked to take this to their PCCs for consideration.

Jane then presented Kathia with flowers and thanked her for everything she had done, not only as the Area Dean of Halifax and Calder Valley but also for being, for quite a long time, the area Dean of Brighouse and Elland. Jane wished Kathia the very best and expressed how she would be very much, missed.

Before the close of the meeting, Barbara Smith thanked Archdeacon Bill for his inspirational talk which would send people away with much to think about.

5 Close with Compline

Jane Evan led the meeting in the Felgild Compline from the Northumbria Community

Date of next Synod meeting for the Halifax and Calder Valley Deanery: Tuesday 25th October 2022 – venue TBC (please note the change of date from the 19th October)