

Report on Deanery Synod 2023/24

Since the last Joint Annual Meeting the Synod has met three times, on 15/6/2023, 4/10/2023 & 5/02/2024

15th June 2023:

This was the first meeting of the new Synod following the triennial elections. The Rt Rev'd Jane Steen, Bishop of Lynn, spoke about Mission, & discussed with Synod why we do it. She spoke of the Diocesan mission strategy, which involves eight projects (there are actually nine of them – this is the C of E!) which are intended to help parishes in their mission. She challenged parishes come up with “one thing we can do for Jesus”. They should let the diocese know what their ‘one thing’ was, the idea being that parishes with the same idea could be put in touch with each other for mutual support. Some funding will be available on application.

4th October 2023:

There were two visiting speakers at this meeting: Robert Culyer of the Diocesan Parish Support Team spoke on Legacies & Rev'd Julia Chamberlin spoke on “Here I Am”.

Robert commented that some charities now advertise extensively in the media, inviting legacies to sustain their work, but a 2020 survey found that only 20% of Anglicans had been invited to consider a legacy to the church. He recommended that PCCs adopt a legacies policy – the C of E has a template that can be adapted to one's own church.

Julia said that her team was there to support parishes in work with children & families. She spoke of the importance of speaking to people to bring them into the church & to engage with members of the congregation we may not usually talk to. She explained that the ‘Here I am’ campaign is designed to help us listen; packs explaining the campaign are available from the diocese.

The Lay Chair (NC) spoke of the role of Deanery Share Ambassador & asked if anyone was interested in taking it on; no takers.

Reports were given by members of the Yare Valley & Lingwood benefices about how they are getting on during their interregnums.

5th February 2024:

Tim Sweeting, Diocesan Secretary, spoke about his role, about the Parish Support Team, which now brings under one umbrella Finance, Admin, Safeguarding etc – the aim being to improve efficiency – and various projects in progress. He reported various things the team is doing to support local churches & said they are aiming to be more supportive & less directional; kindness was a key factor. A lengthy & vigorous question & answer session followed.

Martin reported that the deanery had paid 85% of the parish share asked for 2023. Our own benefice paid a higher proportion of the request than the previous year, but not the full amount.

Sue Shillam gave a report on the last meeting of the Diocesan synod.

There is still no taker for the role of Deanery Share Ambassador.

Updated reports were received from the benefices in vacancy.