

Notes of the Tower Hamlets Deanery Synod – 27 March 2017

7pm at the Royal Foundation of St Katharine.

Attended by 13 clergy, 20 laity and 2 speakers.

The meeting was chaired by Andy Rider.

1. Welcome

Andy opened the meeting and welcomed Synod members. Andy was pleased to introduce Revd Luke Miller, the Archdeacon of London, who would be speaking on the London scene. Andy also welcomed the Very Revd Dr David Ison, the Dean of St Paul's and Chair of the Vacancy in See Committee, who was present to sit in on the Deanery's consultation on the new Bishop of London. Andy noted that three Synod members were also on the Vacancy at See Committee, namely Judith Blackburn, Marcus Nodder and Philip Rice.

Evening Prayer was led by Andy.

2. The City, The Diocese and Our Mission – Luke Miller, Archdeacon of London

Luke spoke about the importance of knowing the context of London in order to fully understand the mission field. Luke circulated hard copies of a presentation. Some of the main points, as follows:

- The entire population of Scotland and Wales would fit into London.
- Population density – we think of it as high, but it is low in comparison to many other world and European cities. It is busier during the working day. The population is likely to grow further, so there is a need for the Church to expand in order to stand still.
- In contrast to the rest of the UK, London has a younger population, is more religious (across different religions), is more radical, has a greater diversity and is richer.
- Church attendance is growing but is mid-table compared to other Dioceses across the country.
- In terms of reach, the bias is to white British, the more well-off and older people (the highest attendance is by 76-85 year olds).
- Attendance by 18-24 year olds is very low. There is good engagement with families and young children and also schools, but work needs to continue with teenagers.
- Do we consider evangelism or interfaith the way to engage with our neighbours?
- Particularly in the City Deanery, many young professionals attend church but do not live there. Their working, social and religious lives are where they work not where they live.
- Church planting and Mission Action Plans are working well, going forward, these need to be supported by Mission Business Plans and a preparedness to work with mission business and property developers.

Andy thanked Luke for his presentation, which is circulated with these minutes and available on our website

3. Consultation about the New Bishop of London

Those present split into three groups to consider the five questions identified by the Vacancy in See to guide feedback. The groups came back together and reported as follows.

Q1 – What are the challenges you all face, which you need the new Bishop of London to help you with?

- The decline of the church in the public sphere.
- The need for fresh expression.
- The discrepancies between rich and poor.
- The divisions between the traditions of different parishes.
- Interfaith work, particularly in the London context.

- Understanding the trajectory of London and remaining in touch with trends, upcoming generations, etc.
- Reaching out to different communities who would not normally mix.
- Help for the poor.
- Being more media savvy.
- A vision that can be practised at parish level.

Q2 – Which of these challenges aren't addressed sufficiently in the Diocese's Capital Vision priorities?

- Inequality.
- Options for the poor.
- Help in using resources more efficiently.
- A stronger recognition of women.
- Reaching out to men.
- Encouraging vocations for BAME communities.
- Interfaith.
- Declining numbers.
- We need more clergy, and creativity around how we select clergy.

Q3 – What leadership characteristics, qualities and skills in Bishop Richard's ministry have helped you all the grow in being Christ-centred and outward looking?

- Support of the area structure.
- Good grasp of locations.
- Visionary.
- Intense spirit.
- The embodiment of the Capital Vision priorities: confident; compassionate; creative.
- Good media persona.
- Strong pastoral skills.

Q4 – What, in addition to those characteristics, qualities and skills will his successor require to help you all to grow?

- Needs to be trusted by all stakeholders, eg local people, the poor, the media, celebrities, liveries.
- Leadership – teams and individuals.
- An understanding of the trajectory of London, and specifically the different areas of London.
- A good communicator via various platforms, eg whether via Thought for the Day or social media.
- A strong media presence. Eg, the recent attack on Westminster and the need for the Bishop of London to be present and offer 'London' prayer.
- A thinker outside the box.
- An understanding of people in place.
- An understanding of the validity of mission of all traditions.
- An experience of the ministry of women.
- The promotion of women in leadership and women's ordained ministry.
- Someone who will clearly ordain women priests.
- Engagement with the laity.

Q5 – What particular characteristics, qualities and skills will the new Bishop of London need to fulfil the regional, national and international responsibilities of the role?

- Diplomatic.
- Courageous.
- Have a track record.
- A knowledge of London's journey is desirable.
- A communicator.
- An imagination of what is possible around mission.

- Permission giving but also creating the space for failure.
- Inclusive in the broadest sense.
- Has a vision for young people.

Are there any other important points for the Vacancy in See Committee to know?

- Perhaps rather than asking what we need in the parish from the Bishop, there is a need for a Bishop with a mission vision for London, to which the parishes can commit and support the Bishop in it.

Andy thanked everyone for their contribution & asked that they take the consultation back to the parishes.

David Ison then ran through the recruitment process. The Vacancy in See Committee’s first meeting had been held and a group appointed to draft a statement of needs. Feedback from the consultation will be taken into account and common themes identified. These will be included in the final draft statement for the Committee to consider on 10th June. Six members of the Committee will then be elected to the Crown Nominations Committee. Appointment Secretaries will be consulted. A job description for the Bishop of London will be drawn up and subsequently a shortlist of potential candidates. An announcement on the appointment is unlikely before January 2018.

Full details of the process can be found here:

<https://www.london.anglican.org/directory/vacancy-in-see-committee/>

David was keen to point out that all are welcome to participate in the consultation process, whether via Deanery/PCC, public meetings or by contacting the Committee directly.

4. School Governors

The following school governor appointment were ratified:

Governor	School	Proposed by
Keziah Mann	Christ Church Primary	Andy Rider
Liz Watson	Christ Church Primary	Andy Rider
Philip Mansfield	Raines	Kate Roskell (LDBS and on GB) (Malcolm Hazell Union Baptist Church High Wycombe)
Christopher Coyle	St Saviour’s Primary	Jacqui Buchan (Chair of GB) (Cris Rogers)
Ruth McCurry	St Paul’s with St Luke’s	Bob Gilbert (Chair of GB) (Bernadette Hegarty)
Adey Grummet	St Matthias Primary	Judith Blackburn

5. Conclusion

Andy thanked both speakers and also Mark Aitken for hosting the evening.

Closing prayers were led by Andy and Rev David Ison.

The next Synod – Monday 3 July 2016 at the Royal Foundation of St Katharine

BBQ

Welcome new members

Jim Fitzpatrick MP

Deanery business including Standing Committee elections