

Notes of the Tower Hamlets Deanery Synod Meeting – 13 July 2016

7.15pm at the Royal Foundation of St Katharine

Attended by 11 clergy and 14 laity

Welcome

Andy Rider opened the meeting and welcomed those present. Andy also introduced and welcomed Erin Clark, the new curate at St Matthew's Bethnal Green.

Andy Walton gave a reading and Hayley Clarke led prayers.

Business

Andy reported the following:

- With regard to the Deanery strategy developed in 2014 – better together via collaboration, innovation and learning, Andy is working closer with Mark Aitken at RFSK. Aaron Rodewald, Site and Finance Manager at St Paul Shadwell, is developing a list of traders/suppliers to share in the autumn.
- Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park – Dave Pilkington has been appointed to lead on the development of a worshipping community around the Park.
- The autumn Synod will focus on education and the threats faced by our schools.
- There are no new school governors to report.
- Philip Rice provided the following update:
 - TH Deanery work on housing reform was part of a large amount of input on housing reform and especially on benefits in the House of Lords. The Bishop of Durham was the focus of opposition to the worst features of the Housing Bill, picking up ours and many Christians' concerns in 2016.
 - Gambling reform opportunity for TH Deanery to canvas in support of the Bishop of St Albans in the House of Lords this autumn. The coalition of Christian Concern on regulating high street betting shop terminals. Phillip Rice is co-leading this in the Diocese of London.

Andy then opened up the meeting to the floor, inviting updates from the parishes.

Parish Update

Hayley advised that Matt Wall, previously a curate at St Mary's Stoke Newington, will start as the new team vicar at St Nics in February 2017. Hayley also advised that she had attended a meeting of Lay Deanery Chairs at the Diocese and had found it very interesting. It is part of an initiative to raise the profile of the laity. Hayley will be attending the National Deaneries Network conference in the autumn.

Mark Aitken advised that planning permission had recently been granted for a new building on site. A seven bedroom building will provide a new retreat/reflection facility, which seems to be popular in an urban setting.

Elizabeth Marshall advised that a grant has been received from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a ten year project to develop St Mary's Bow. The church will undergo much needed renovation. Also, to recreate the sense of a hamlet centre (the area used to be a market place) lots of community activities will be developed, some of them possibly virtual in nature.

Judith Blackburn advised that a new member of staff will soon be taking up residence in the Watch House.

Alexandra Lillie advised that a new rector had been installed last week at St Paul Shadwell – Phil Williams. They have also been celebrating the fact that five young members of the church have been accepted to train for ordination.

Barbara Perrot advised that a new carpet will soon be laid at St John on Bethnal Green.

Stuart Lee advised that major refurbishment works have just been completed at St Barnabas. These include redecoration, new flooring and lighting and a new garden. Thanks to St Paul's Old Ford for their hospitality whilst the church was closed.

Andrew Walton reported that the first wedding had taken place at St Peter's Bethnal Green since the restart. The Spear Centre is now also open on site - a free, interactive training course for unemployed 18-24 year-olds. Around 100 young people have taken advantage of the service so far. Lastly, in partnership with the Mission Practice, a parish nurse will be engaged for a year to work with vulnerable people.

Richard Bray reported that a new part-time staff member will be starting soon at St Anne Limehouse.

Bill Chesshyre advised that a new lighting scheme had been installed at Christ Church Isle of Dogs, a new curate has been ordained and, after 16 years, works have started on the building of a new St Luke's.

James Hughesdon reported that the Bow Group have been collaborating on various issues regarding Israel/Palestine.

Cris Rogers is going to Sierra Leone in October.

Janice Millbank reported that all are working hard at All Saints to get the crypt up and running again. There is also hope of a new curate next year.

Allan Ramanoop reported that some members of the community at St George-In-The-East will be leaving soon. A new rector will be installed in September and Tim Clapton and Angus Ritchie were praised for the wonderful job they are doing.

Andy Rider reported that their curate left to take up position at St Pauls Shadwell. They have had a change of ordinands and the Children's Worker has now left. The court case regarding the garden continues – now the longest ecclesiastical court case for many years. On a happier note, the Prince of Wales visited recently to see the crypt.

Conclusion

As previously reported, the theme of the autumn Synod will be education. Andy asked whether there were any other issues that needed attention. The following suggestions were made:

- Health and Social Care
- Young People and Youth Services

Mark Aitkin closed the evening with prayers.

The next Deanery Synod:

Tuesday 11 October 2016 at St Matthews Bethnal Green –

The Church asks Is Education in Crisis?