

1. **Welcome:** The Area Dean, Revd Mike Smith, warmly welcomed everyone to St Martin's, Horsley, particularly our Speaker Bishop Robert. The Commissioning then followed of Jennifer Fey into lay ministry within the Stroud Team, in particular working with young people. Jennifer's official title will be Local Pioneer, Associate Minister, with the Stroud Team Ministry.
2. **Present/Apologies:** There were 41 Synod members present, as per the Register, with apologies received from: Mrs Mary Tyler, Mrs Hill Brown, Mrs Jane Williams, Mrs Penny Lidstone, Mrs Penny Sumsion, Mrs Ann Greaves, Mrs Audrey Ricks, Mrs Lydia Savage, Mrs Carolyn Heighway, Revd Peter Quinnell, Revd Charles Minchin, Revd Deborah Curram, Revd Pat Freeth, Revd Helen Bailey, Revd Sue Sobczak.
3. **Prayer** – The meeting began with prayer led by The Area Dean.
4. **Minutes of the last meeting** held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at Cainscross Church Hall, were accepted as a true and accurate record.  
**Matters arising** – not already covered elsewhere on the Agenda: there were none.

5. **Speaker: Bishop Robert Springett – 'Breathing Life into the Deaneries'**

+Robert began by giving us a brief outline of his earlier years; born in Chelmsford, he grew up in a family committed to the life of the Church. He discovered, through its liturgy and worship, a sense of the wonder and mystery of God that drew him to a living faith. Leaving home to work as a student volunteer with the Missions to Seafarers first in Rotterdam and then in Fremantle, Western Australia. +R returned to England first to study business, then theology at Lincoln Theological College and Kings College London. Ordained in 1989 he served curacies in Colchester then in Basildon before being appointed Priest in Charge of South Ockendon and Belhus Park then Rector of Wanstead. In 2010 he moved to Gloucestershire to be Archdeacon of Cheltenham.

Celebrating ministry as parishes within the wider church gives us that sense of belonging to the whole - parishes are the bedrock of who we are and a presence in every place, but we have to accept that the world is changing and the Life Vision matters, challenging us as a church to look at faith afresh in the next decade and how we can connect with people today. Journeying Together has taken us to where we are now up to the appointment of +Rachel, we now need to make the vision become reality in our parishes, through effective and inspiring leadership, growing the church spiritually and numerically. +R closed by sharing his excitement of being part of the new Life Vision, stressing the importance of sharing our faith with others, engaging with the life of our communities and the wider world.

A time of questions followed, including:

- **Vision for the Laity** – *That they be confident in their faith and understanding of the scriptures and the place that God has called them to in the life of the church. Sharing leadership with the clergy, working together called by God and inviting others in; equally as important as each other.*
- **Job priorities** – *As suffragan Bishop, +R will have time to be in the parishes and communities of the Diocese, encouraging us to be all that we can be, to grow as a whole church. Pastoral care - visiting clergy out in the parishes, retired clergy, NSM's, Ordinands and their preparation for selection, giving confidence about who we are, visiting church schools, and of course supporting +Rachel wherever possible in her new role.*
- **Christians working in the community** – *Having the confidence to say you are Church of England and engagement with other communities where Christians are active. Having the confidence to say that this is who we are and making those connections. How does our faith engage us in all that we do in our lives? Having confidence in our spirituality as a church – we need to be much more pro-active.*

## 6. Creating a new Vision for the Deanery – Area Dean & Lay Chair

*(Leaflets & reply forms circulated on chairs)* - 6,000 conversations have taken place across the Diocese, with the comments used to identify and discern the 4 main headings and particular priorities within those headings which form +Rachel's new Life vision across the Diocese, which will differ in our own particular situations. Each Heading will have a Sponsor, a Leader and a group of people who are going to be the resource to help us effect things in our own settings. The challenge for us all now is how are we going to make it come alive where we are – every parish needs to think, pray and dream about how they might bring new life into our Deanery. As part of this process, parishes are asked to complete a feedback form and return it to the Area Dean by the end of March. Tell us about what you see as the 'golden opportunity' where you worship. What do we need to do to make it happen? Outcomes from these replies will help form Agenda items for forthcoming Deanery Synod meeting.

A short time followed in small groups, sharing thoughts on what is stopping new ideas/inspirations happening.

Some of the main thoughts coming out of those discussions included:

- Leadership of the future is collaborative.
- Collaboration should be included in the Stroudwater Team profile.
- Confidence – people do not recognize their own gifts. Engage the gifts of all in the parishes – encourage people to share their faith, affirming people to grow their skills/individual confidence.

Clergy identifying the gifts of the people in their congregations.

- On the fringe – connecting with those people 'on the edge'.
- Use of Social Media – Instagram/Twitter/Facebook to connect with the younger generation. A digital media expert is now in place at the Diocese.
- Pick up on +Rachel's campaign on young people and body image and the powerful message linked into social media – keep ourselves informed on current issues. We need to be 'in the world' – the Church needs to reach out/be aware of the media world and the pressure/ isolation/depression facing the younger generation and reflect our concerns in any Deanery Plan.
- Sport – A golden opportunity and huge untapped area to reach young people.
- Ageing population - Many smaller parishes lack the strength and energy to bring in young people and support is needed on how best to achieve this.
- Keep things simple – a leaflet with basic information, perhaps delivered personally – a different way to connect with young people, something given personally can make a difference. Inviting people to deliver them locally, initiating a first contact/connection.
- Funding to support projects available from: Diocesan Stipends Fund, Diocesan Development Fund & Sylvanus Lysons Trust.

**Do please encourage your parish to respond on the form by the end of March.**

## 7. Pastoral Re-organisation update by the Area Dean

**The new Stroudwater Team** officially came into being on the 1st December 2016 and a service to celebrate the inauguration of the new team took place at Eastington Church on 31<sup>st</sup> January, when Readers were re-licensed to the new Team and also Charles Minchin as one of the new Team Vicars. A fantastic Parish Profile for the new Team of 15 parishes is being put together.

**The Stroud Collaborate Team** – Archdeacon Jackie is in the process of arranging a formal pre-vacancy meeting to begin the process of appointing a new Team Reactor.

## 8. Reports

### 8.1 Diocesan Synod – *As circulated*

**8.2 Parish Share 2016** – The Lay Chair thanked everyone for their efforts and hard work – we came in very close to the target for our Deanery (99%).

**Parish Share 2017** – For some parishes the figures were received after their last PCC meeting.

Figures had to be re-calculated for Rodborough, Brimscombe & Woodchester. We are still waiting for commitments from 15 parishes out of 40 – we really do need your commitments urgently, please.

We are heading for a shortfall against our allocated Parish Share. We need to do our very best to contribute what we can if we are to continue to resource mission and ministry, including the new Life initiative within our Diocese.

**Parish Share Officer** – We really do need to find someone to pick up this role, to be that support link to parishes and complete the make-up of the Deanery Standing Committee. Julie Ridgeway has confirmed that she is happy to come and have a further consultation with Treasurers/Churchwardens if people feel it would be useful to help everyone fully understand exactly how Parish Share is calculated. It was felt this would be a good idea – a date will be finalised with the Finance Department asap.

**8.3. Deanery Office Funding** – Detailed sheet circulated outlining the finalised accounts for 2016 and a Budget for the Deanery Office for 2017. Mike Lambert, Interim Deanery Treasurer, thanked parishes for their contributions towards the running costs of the Deanery office for last year. 2017 – Not all the Parish Share pledges have been confirmed yet. With this in mind and keeping as close as possible to the budget, we will be asking for 1.25% of pledged Parish Share this year, a small reduction on last year. A letter will be coming out to Parish Treasurer very shortly. The area Dean thanked Mike on behalf of everyone for all his continued help and support as acting Deanery Treasurer. It was confirmed that the Deanery administration will continue to the end of this year, when we will review requirements, at which time the position with the planned Stroudwater Team admin hub will be clearer.

### **Meeting Dates for 2017**

Deanery Synod in May – We had invited David Runcorn, but unfortunately he is not available for the May date. It was suggested that perhaps someone from the Diocese connected with Digital Media might be a invited to come and talk to us.

<b>Standing/Pastoral Com.10am-12 noon all at The Church Office, Stroud</b>	<b>Deanery Synod all at 7.30 pm</b>	<b>Speaker/Topic</b>
Tuesday 16th May	<b>Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> May</b> St Laurence Church, Stroud	<i>TBC</i>
Tuesday 19th September	<b>Wednesday 4th October</b> at Cainscross Church Hall	<i>TBC</i>

### **9. Chair's Announcements**

- **Standing Committee** – We are looking for a clergy member to join our group that meets three times a year to plan the business of Deanery Synod Meeting. Revd Mike Holloway from The Beacon Benefice has volunteered his services.
- **Revd Rosie Woodall** will be leaving us at Easter to become Chaplain to +Martin at Leicester Cathedral. Our well wishes and prayers go with Rosie.

### **10. AOB**

- **Sylvanus Lysons Trust** - +Robert confirmed that the Trust has £8m of capital, with around £250k available per year to fund good causes within the Diocese. They are looking for good mission-minded projects to support, particularly involving children. Please email +Robert if you would like to know more.

**11. Closing Prayer** - There being no other business, the meeting closed with The Grace.