

MINUTES OF THE ROMSEY DEANERY SYNOD – MONDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2017 AT AMPFIELD VILLAGE HALL

Present: House of Clergy	7	Apologies: House of Clergy	2
House of Laity	21	House of Laity	9
Visitors	2		

1. The meeting opened with a reading and prayers, led by the Area Dean.

2. **Vocation, Vocation, Vocation**

- 2.1. The Area Dean introduced the Revd Dr Marcus Throup, Vocations Adviser and Diocesan Director of Ordinands who spoke about vocations in the context of the rapidly-growing, worldwide church. In the UK however, 70% of current clergy will have retired by 2030, so the Church of England has a challenge to increase the number of candidates for ordination by 50% by 2020; the Bishop of Winchester has set the Diocese a target of 100%.
- 2.2. This should not be seen as purely a “numbers game”, but the Church does need to be more proactive, challenging people to consider vocation. The School of Mission has produced a booklet which should be made available in churches and holds Vocations Days periodically. On 7 May there will be an event targeting young people in Romsey Abbey. The results in last year or two have been encouraging.
- 2.3. As regards lay vocations, the Bishop’s Commission for Mission is being piloted in the Diocese and 42 people are currently in training with a licensing service planned for October.
- 2.4. As members of the Deanery we should respond with prayer, considering what ministries our church needs, what we can provide, recognising others’ potential and encouraging them.

Q&A:

What is the Winchester School of Mission?

It is a department of the Diocese including the Bishop’s advisers for vocations, IME, mission, youth and children and spirituality. It is based on Bishop Wykeham’s model from the 14th century, equipping people locally to serve the church, and provides an alternative to going away to college.

Are there age limits for training?

Yes, 51 for ordination (63 for self-supporting ministers) and 63 for licensed lay ministers. But the school is open to all ages for lay training to serve the local church.

How is training funded?

Ordained ministry is funded by the church; lay ministers are usually supported by PCCs but meet some costs themselves. Studying locally reduces the cost and so is efficient for the church as well as the individual.

Are there any trends in those who come forward for training?

Most are in their mid twenties or in their fifties which will create a good mix of youthful enthusiasm and maturity in the church. Often there has been the influence of a role model.

What is the drop-out rate of those coming forward and selected for training?

If a candidate is recommended by their parish clergy and PCC they are unlikely to be turned down. There is a very low drop-out rate for those entering ordination training.

What is the gender split?

There is a fairly even split but the least represented group is young women. A women’s conference is being planned to address this.

What support is offered to those not selected?

They are taken through the report from the selection board – which may recommend things to work on before reapplying. Anyone not selected is encouraged to make use of the Diocesan counselling service.

Does the Winchester Pathway focus on a particular church tradition?

Although the lecturers etc are generally from the evangelical wing, the training is open to all and does not “push” any particular tradition. Broad experience is needed.

Is it open to those from other Dioceses?

Yes, in principle. And candidates from Winchester Diocese may train in other Dioceses.

3. The minutes of previous meeting of Deanery Synod (12 October 2016) were agreed and signed.

4. Matters arising :

Para 5.1: The question was asked what experience there was in the Deanery of churches attending wedding fairs. The Area Dean confirmed that Romsey Abbey has attended several and found them very rewarding.

5. Committee Reports

5.1. General Synod

5.1.1. There has been no General Synod since October, but Jay Greene and the Revd James Pitkin would be attending the forthcoming Synod which would discuss the outcome of “Shared Conversations” (see minutes of October meeting). Jay said she would stand with the liberal wing on this issue, but would welcome views from Synod members which she would be happy to pass on to other Winchester representatives to make sure they were heard. The report is on the Church of England Website

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/3863472/gs-2055-marriage-and-same-sex-relationships-after-the-shared-conversations-report-from-the-house-of-bishops.pdf>

5.1.2. Another report for discussion was “Setting God’s People Free” on the role of laity in the Church. <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/3858033/gs-2056-setting-gods-people-free.pdf>. Any views should be passed to Jay or James.

5.2. Diocesan Synod

5.2.1. Sarah Boothman’s report from the Diocesan Conference in October had been circulated. There had been no further meeting.

5.3. Overseas Mission Committee

5.3.1. The Revd Andrew Ashdown (Chair) and Jane Horne (Treasurer) were on a visit to Uganda and Burundi and would give a presentation at Poppies on Wednesday 5 July at 7.30pm.

5.4. Vision and Strategy Group

5.4.1. At its last meeting, the Group reviewed the pre-Advent Course and Shoebox Service (see report on Deanery Website). It is also monitoring progress with dMAP and pMAPs/bMAPs and will support implementation if needed (e.g. training). Funding is available from the Mission Fund – requests to the Area Dean.

5.4.2. Planning was underway for Bishop Jonathan’s Emmaus Visit (23, 24 and 26 March).

5.4.3. The Revd David Potterton and the Revd Jane Thompson would lead the Deanery’s preparation for “**Thy Kingdom Come**”, from Ascension Day to Pentecost 2017.

5.5. Deanery Consultation

- 5.5.1. The Southern Area Mission and Pastoral Committee has given the Deanery a period of eighteen months (to June 2018) to develop a vision for the future. This would be a time of prayerful consultation and conversations with opinion formers in churches and the wider community about what the church should be and do to act out the Mission of Jesus in the next 10 years. The aim was to start from discerning our vocation and then consider what resources were needed to deliver that.
- 5.5.2. A timetable was circulated, including three consultative meetings on Saturday mornings (10 till 1pm) on 25 March, 13 May and 8 July, and a Deanery Prayer. See Deanery Website for details.
- 5.5.3. Initial findings would be presented to the SAMPC in September followed by further consultation.

5.6. Parish Share

- 5.6.1. Sarah Boothman reported that the Deanery had overpaid by £325 at the end of the year, which was a remarkable achievement reflecting the hard work and commitment of all concerned. Members were asked to convey huge thanks to their PCCs.

6. Deanery Accounts 2016 and Budget 2017

- 6.1. Ian Clark had circulated the draft accounts (including one estimate) and budget which would be formally presented for acceptance in June when they have been finalised and independently examined.
- 6.2. Payment of the 2016 annual Deanery levy has not been received from 4 parishes. A cheque from a 5th parish has been charged to their bank account, but not so far credited to the Deanery Synod account. Parishes were asked to use electronic bank transfers where possible, as they are quicker, cheaper and more secure than cheques.
- 6.3. It is proposed to hold the parish levy for 2017 at current levels (also to be confirmed in June) whilst there are adequate reserves, but it is likely to rise in future years. The size of the 2017 deficit will depend on take up of the offer of grants for mission, and the scale of costs associated with the Deanery Strategic Plan implementation.
- 6.4. Any questions should be referred to Ian by e-mail.

7. Counting regular worshippers

- 7.1. Over-counting the regular worshipping community has implications for parish share allocation. The Revd James Pitkin set out the main criteria:
- 7.1.1. DO INCLUDE anyone aged 18 or over who comes to church regularly and contributes financially.
- 7.1.2. DO NOT INCLUDE anyone
- under 18 years or students;
 - attending less than once a month
 - not contributing financially
 - attending Fresh Expressions only
 - wedding couples who are not resident in the parish
 - no longer attending church (although they used to)
- 7.1.3. Ensure that those attending more than one church in the parish/benefice, or those attending more than one service on the same day are not double counted.

8. Elections to Deanery Synod

- 8.1. A new Deanery Synod will be elected by APCMs in April and will need to elect its officers. The Archdeacons are attending the June Synod so there will be very little time for normal Synod business. Elections of officers will therefore be held immediately after the Deanery Ascension Day service at Romsey Abbey on Thursday 25 May.

9. New Synod Secretary

9.1. As Julie Carlton is stepping down in April to take over as Romsey PCC secretary, a new Synod secretary is needed. The secretary does not have to be a member of a PCC/Synod. An outline of the role (which could be split into two) has been circulated. Members were asked to consider who might be suitable and to encourage them to consider the role. Any questions to the Secretary.

10. The meeting closed with prayer.

Dates for future Synod meetings in 2017:

Wednesday 14 June 2017 – Lockerley Village Hall

Thursday 12 October 2017 – Kings Somborne Village Hall

See more details about other events in the Deanery on the Calendar page of <http://www.romseydeanery.org/>.