

**Minutes** of the meeting of the Whitby Deanery Synod held at All Saints Church, Hawsker on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2014, at 7.30 p.m.

**Attendance and Apologies** – as per Attendance Register.

### **Welcome**

Mr. David Haddon-Reece the Lay Chairman of Synod welcomed all new members to the Synod.

### **Minutes of the last meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2014 having been circulated were accepted as read and signed by the Chairman.

### **Matters Arising**

- a) The future of the rural church and the church in the Whitby Deanery in particular.

It was reported that the paper prepared by Mr. Neil Davidson and Mr. Paul Wood, which had been discussed at the Synod on the 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2014, had been raised at the Diocesan Synod and would be placed on the Agenda for a meeting of the Diocesan Synod in the near future. Mr. Wood also reported that he and Mr. Davidson would meet with the Bishop of Selby, who was in charge of rural affairs in the Diocese and to discuss the matter with him. The Rural Dean and the Lay Chairman had continued visits to the parishes and had met and discussed the future of the Deanery at Commandale. In particular consideration was given to a proposed Minster model, which it seems was the inclination of the Archbishop of York and a number of local clergy and parishioners had spoken raising doubts as to whether this was the way forward.

- b) Archbishop's visits – the Rural Dean reported that the Archbishop had visited the Redcar area and had also been to Whitby, where he had visited the Fishing School and discussed local affairs.

**Correspondence** – there was no correspondence.

### **Standing Committee Reports**

The Secretary reported on the meetings of the Standing Committee held on the 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2014 and 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2014.

Mention was made of the Synod held on the 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2014, which had taken the form of a social event and the Lay Chairman thanked all who had been involved in that event.

Attention was also drawn to the other important matter, which had been discussed at the Standing Committees, which was the proposal to set up a Deanery website. Mr. Michael Lythe, who was taking the lead role in this matter intimated that the basis for

a website had been produced and had asked each parish to let him have a profile of the parish for inclusion on the website.

### **Presentation on Communications and Websites**

The Lay Chairman introduced and welcomed Eleanor Course, the York Diocesan Communications Officer.

Ms. Course intimated that she acted as Press Officer for the Diocese, except for the Archbishop. Her aim was to try to share the good news in churches in the Diocese.

In an increasingly secular world she finds that it is necessary to explain better to the world what the church is about and to increase education about the Christian faith. She urged members of the church to remember that our religion has a lot of interesting things to say. In her experience there was an interest in faith and in faith groups. Furthermore the rural churches often acted as the centre of and the heart of a community. What church members did therefore was very important.

She then intimated that she wanted all members present to jot down their immediate responses to three questions:-

- (a) What were the key messages each person wanted to communicate about their church?
- (b) What did each person want to communicate about their church to tourists/visitors?
- (c) What did each person want to communicate about their church to local residents?

There was then discussion on the responses that people had written.

Ms. Course indicated that she would collate all the responses and send them back to Synod for circulation and further discussion.

Finally she suggested ways in which the messages that needed to be put out could be shared and how this could be done and there was further discussion on this aspect.

Amongst the ways in which the messages could be shared were:- Tourism associations – partnering, tourist attractions and local charities – partnering, community notice boards, events – what do they say about your church and its message, services, the church calendars/times of the year – how could these be used to share your big message, media stories, notice boards/church signs, newsletter, bulletin, website and facebook or twitter.

A copy of the responses to the questions posed by Ms. Course, which had been collated, by Ms. Course is attached to these Minutes.

The Lay Chairman thanked Ms. Course for her interesting and stimulating presentation and the discussion, which had followed.