

Minutes of the meeting of the Whitby Deanery Synod held at the Mission to Seamen, Whitby on Wednesday 18th November, 2015 at 7.30 p.m.

Attendance and Apologies - as per Attendance Register.

Welcome

Mr. David Haddon-Reece the Lay Chairman of Synod welcomed Bishop John, the Bishop of Selby, who was to lead the main discussion.

Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 16th September, 2015, having been circulated were accepted as read and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising

- a) The Secretary reported that he had only received a response re "Developing Deaneries" from Eskdaleside cum Ugglebarnby, so that no formal response had been made to the Venerable Andy Broome of the Deaneries Working Group.
- b) Archbishop's Visit – the Rural Dean the Revd. Barry Pyke outlined the programme for the Archbishop's visit to the Deanery. This would commence on the 1st December at St. Mary's Church and the Archbishop would then be walking round Whitby. On the 2nd December the Archbishop would visit RAF Fylingdales and then Robin Hood's Bay before walking back to Whitby. On the 3rd December the Archbishop would travel by train into Danby and then go to Botton and Ralph's Cross. On the 4th December he will be visiting Mulgrave Estate and meeting farmers on the estate. On the 5th December he will be going to Goathland and then on the trail to Grosmont and then to Egton Bridge. On the 6th December he will be visiting Roxby and then onto Hinderwell and Staithes. The Rural Dean intimated that all members of the parishes in the Deanery were invited to join the Archbishop for all or part of his journey through the Deanery.

Correspondence – there was no correspondence.

Standing Committee Report

The Secretary reported that there had been no meeting of the Standing Committee and there was nothing to report.

General Synod Report

The Secretary gave the apologies of Paul Hutchinson for being unable to attend the meeting and read a written report sent by Paul Hutchinson:-

"There will be four General Synod Representatives in Cleveland Archdeaconry. Among the laity Heather Black (North Ormesby) and Nick Land (Great Syton) and

for the clergy Revd. Adam Gaunt (Loftus) and Paul Hutchinson. Bishop Glyn Webster has been elected as one of the Suffragan Bishops. I would be quite happy to continue coming to Whitby, but Synod members are meeting later and there may be other news.

The new 2015-20 Synod meets for the first time next week on Monday 23rd November, new members have an induction day at Church House, Westminster. On Tuesday morning there is a Eucharist in Westminster Abbey to inaugurate the new Synod in the presence of the Queen followed by a formal opening ceremony that she attends in Church House. On the rest of Tuesday and Wednesday, in addition to normal questions, business will include 3 presentations, one on the forthcoming "Reform and Renewal" programme, one on global warming (by our Archbishop) and one public perceptions of Jesus. Synod will discuss a major report by the Church Buildings Review Group and a motion moved by the Bishop of Durham on the refugee crisis. Synod will also consider charges in the fees paid to Ecclesiastical Judges and other legal officers and here the traditional loyal address given by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The next meeting of the General Synod will be in February and will have a much heavier workload."

Any Other Business

- a) Greater Chapter – the Rural Dean intimated that it would now be appropriate for an appointment to be made of a representative, who could be co-opted to the Synod.
It was proposed by the Rural Dean, seconded by the Revd. Malcolm Jackson
“that an appointment be made of a representative from the Greater Chapter, who should be co-opted to the Whitby Deanery Synod”.
The Resolution was carried unanimously.
- b) David Haddon-Reece intimated that he would be resigning as Lay Chair, when the Revd. Christine Haddon-Reece retired at the end of the year. There would therefore be the need for a new Chairman. The Rural Dean thanked David for all that he had done during his time in office and presented with a small gift of a bottle of whiskey.

Discussion – the Rural Church – led by Bishop John of Selby

Bishop John opened by giving a little of his background history.

He then intimated that there had been a case study in Rural Mission in Yorkshire and indicated that whatever the problems might appear to be, one had to remember that Jesus had said “Do not let your hearts be troubled.”

He intimated that there was much in the rural church that did trouble us and referred to the trust and risk that was involved.

In rural areas there was still a feeling of being in a place, which included the church and its buildings and a parson figure was still relevant. All this means that there still a sense of a place and a notion of home. So it is necessary to feel at home i.e. rooted in God and trusting in Him.

However there is risk and we have to be careful what we do because needs change. He posed a question as to how we approach the problems.

There needs to be a broad focus, which should include Roman Catholics and Non-conformists in discussions.

What is the plan?

There needs to be quality of life, working with others and generous giving.

He then quoted some figures as to the population in settlements in rural areas of less than 10,000 people. These areas are of great importance to the Church of England as two-thirds of parishes and church buildings are in rural areas.

However the composition of rural areas is changing. He posed the question as to whether the rural population would continue to grow. He pointed out that rural church buildings comprise much of the property of the Church and 78% of parishes were rural. It is often overlooked that they also provide a large proportion of Sunday attendance at church.

He suggested there were four focal themes:-

- (1) Growing and assisting new connections of faith and worship.
- (2) Enabling discipleship.
- (3) The wise use of resources.
- (4) Enhancing engagement with families and schools.

There followed a broad ranging discussion when questions were raised on matters of finance as to how the cost of maintaining churches and buildings could be meant, that there should be more emphasis on lay ministry and the use of lay people's gifts and more conversations with other groups and more ecumenical work. It was also felt that there should be more engagement with schools, but the point was raised as to how this could be done.

The meeting closed with the Grace at 9.35 p.m.