

Helmsley Deanery Synod

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HELMSLEY DEANERY SYNOD HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, AMPLEFORTH AT 19th OCTOBER 2005.

Present:

Revd Canon David Purdy
Revd Michael Cartwright
Revd Ron Treasure
Revd Yvonne Yates
Geoffrey Booth
Susan Doktor
David Goodman
Helen Goodman
Carole Lead
John Lindley
Gordon Mellor
Val Moorby
Christine Smith
Hilary Slights
Joan Walker
Josie Thrower
Ian Henley

Joint Chairman

Sec

Apologies:

Revd David Wilbourne
Revd John Warden
Tony Gillham
Lady Carlisle
Sue Binks
Marjorie Ingleby
Nick Morgan
Ann Stewart
Margaret Strickland
Rachel Wilbourne

Joint Chairman

ACTION

ITEMS 1 AND 14. OPENING AND CLOSING PRAYERS.

1. The meeting opened with prayers led by David Purdy and closed with prayers led by Michael Cartwright.

SECRETARY'S NOTE: NOTES ON PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11TH MAY 2005 AND CORRECTION TO AGENDA

2. There were no corrections to or matters arising from the previous meeting. However, the agenda had mistakenly given two conflicting dates for the Archbishop's visit to the Deanery. The correct date was Wednesday 24th May 2006.

ITEM 2. PRESENTATION BY AMPLEFORTH BENEFICE

3. Michael Cartwright gave a comprehensive presentation on the worship and witness of Ampleforth Benefice.

4. There were 4 parishes, Ampleforth, Oswaldkirk, Gilling and Stonegrave with a total population of around 1900 people, an average church attendance of 67 with a parish share of £33,409 resulting in a cost per head of some £500. Interestingly there were more Roman Catholic Churchgoers than Anglican and there were no non-conformist churches. There was much ecumenical activity with joint services for Harvest Festivals, Remembrance, Carols, Christian Unity and others. The 2 primary schools in Ampleforth – St Hilda's C of E and St Benedict's RC were working together and the nursery unit at St Hilda's fed into both schools.

5. In each of the 4 churches in the Benefice, there was a service every Sunday (2 or 3 of which were Eucharists). The vicar was supplemented by 2 readers, one reader in training, a "retired" clergyman and a number of licensed Pastoral Assistants. In addition, there was a mid-week Eucharist in Ampleforth and Morning Prayer at Oswaldkirk. Services were mainly from Common Worship but "1662" was occasionally celebrated in Ampleforth, Oswaldkirk and Gilling. Stonegrave was exclusively "1662".

6. Services were enhanced by a Benefice Choir of 12 choristers which had been established two years previously and whose repertoire was wide ranging. A number of concerts were staged in the churches displaying other choirs and bands.

7. Young people were well catered for. In Ampleforth, St Hilda's C of E Primary School sees the Vicar twice a week and there is a termly service in the church. A thriving Crusaders group nurtures the Christian faith in Ampleforth while, in Oswaldkirk, children enjoy a regular Wednesday Tea-time Club. However, more needed to be done. Plans were being made to hold a church service after school on Tuesdays next term geared for Mum's with young children. A Benefice Children's Day had proved a great success.

8. At Bishop Robert's instigation, links had been developed with Ampleforth College where 10% of the students were Anglican. An Anglican Eucharist is held every term, the Vicar occasionally takes assembly at St Martin's and, in the last two and a half years, 25 confirmands had been prepared.

9. Although positive things were happening, the financial burden was a worry such that within a year or two, the majority of the churches in the Benefice would be in deep water. This was particularly so at Stonegrave whose bank balance had fallen from £15,000 three years previously to almost nothing today. Despite considerable fund-raising efforts, it was feared that financial security could become the over-riding focus of the churches instead of what should be the focus – the spreading of the Gospel of Christ.

10. Ways forward were being considered. More use might be made of Benefice services in which a single church could be full with the other

churches saving on fuel bills but this depended on the willingness of congregations to travel. Furthermore, a single PCC for the Benefice might be of benefit organisationally and financially.

11. Despite such fears, the parishes were alive and well.

ITEM 3. LIGHT SUPPER

12. A sumptuous 'light' supper was enjoyed by everyone and thanks were given to Fr Michael and Jo Cartwright and those from Ampleforth who had provided such a repast.

ITEM 4. GENERAL SYNOD REPORT

13. David Lickess gave an excellent briefing on issues that had been debated at the 2 meetings.

a. **The Rochester Report.** Should there be women bishops? This was a divisive issue but the report was well balanced. Both sides had debated the issue charitably and respectfully with those opposed quoting sacramental and authority concerns. The July meeting had decided by a 70% majority to draw up a legal framework and a committee would determine the procedure. The new Synod was more liberal and it was felt that women bishops would be a reality by 2010.

b. **The Windsor Report.** This dealt with issues of authority and sexual orientation. It was felt that this issue was more divisive than that regarding women bishops with the African clergy bitterly opposed to homosexual bishops and the USA and Canada firmly in favour with England somewhere in the middle. It was hoped that the new Archbishop of York would provide a calming influence on the protagonists.

c. **Other Issues.** Clergy Terms of Service were being reviewed with York Diocese's Revd Cathy Rowling on the committee. *A survey had shown that 70% of clergy believed that Jesus is the Son of God but fewer believed in the virgin birth!* The Church Urban Fund should be directed to rural communities also. Synod was against euthanasia. A group was meeting to consider how moves towards Anglican Methodist Unity can be progressed but tensions over the communion cup, church organisation and feminine equality remained.

14. David Lickess was retiring after 20 years on Synod. David Purdy thanked him on behalf of the deanery synod for his contributions over many years.

ITEM 5. PARISH SHARE 2006.

15. The Treasurer reminded the meeting that the parish share was based on church attendance, income and clergy posts. In addition, there was an adjustment in favour of economically deprived areas - the Socio-Economic Adjustment (SEA). In previous years, Helmsley Deanery had been permitted

to underpay the share, the underpayment accumulating in an Unallocated Suspense Account. It was felt that the SEA adjustment was not sensibly founded such that Helmsley Deanery was unfairly penalised. Arguments in favour of a greater SEA for Helmsley had not been accepted. The Treasurer urged parishes to “do their best”.

16. The meeting felt strongly that the increase was too great a financial burden and was unfair. Kirkdale and Helmsley Parish intended to pay no more than a 5% increase, Kirkbymoorside were minded to follow suit in order to send a signal to the Diocese. Oswaldkirk felt that the money was owed and should be paid but that the SEA needed to be reviewed. It was reported that Archdeacon Paul believed there was a case for a greater SEA for Helmsley.

ITEM 6. Deanery Lent Course

17. it was hoped that as many as possible would support the Deanery Lent Course 2006, the theme of which was “The Way of the Cross. Speakers had been invited from the main traditions and was open to all. The speakers and locations were as follows:

Date	Venue	Speaker	Topic (if known)
9-Mar	Helmsley	Bp John Habgood	Medical Ethics and Genetic Engineering
16-Mar	Kirkbymoorside	Rev'd Stephen Burgess	
23-Mar	Helmsley	Canon Ken Kieran	Topics of Today
30-Mar	Kirkbymoorside	to be determined	
6-Apr	Helmsley	Bp Robert	

18. In addition, the Ryedale Christian Council Lent Groups would meet locally and sought ideas for study and discussion.

ITEM 7. LIVING THE GOSPEL – THE NEXT STEP.

19. There was not much to add to the paper that had accompanied the agenda. Some felt that the review process was ongoing from Phases 1 and 2 while others welcomed the initiative. It was pointed out that money was available for projects with the Kite Fund available to pay for the employment of specialist officers (eg youth workers).

ITEM 8 . REPORT ON YOUTH TRAINING DAY

20. The “Youth in York” day had been of good value. It had been prayerful and lively and had offered useful ideas on how to communicate effectively with young people. The meeting was reminded of the use that could be made of the Deanery Box of resources, which was presently at Helmsley but would shortly go to Appleton-le-Moors. Within the deanery, many were working with small groups of young people and, despite the small numbers, were encouraged to persevere with this valuable work.

ITEM 10. CHURCH TOURISM REVIEW

21. It was agreed that the church tourism initiative was a success both in enhancing the ability of churches to communicate with a wider audience (improvements in signage, 'welcomers' in Helmsley), in spreading the gospel and in providing prayerful havens. Many visitors much appreciated the open churches, the prayerful atmospheres and the care that church members had taken in considering their needs. Such initiatives could turn churches around, as was the case at Bransdale.

ITEM 11. COMMUNION BEFORE CONFIRMATION

22. There was a strong move in the Diocese to permit baptised persons to take communion before their confirmation. *A paper on this subject is attached to these minutes.* Simply, parishes who wish to do so, may admit baptised persons to communion before confirmation provided the suffragen bishop has approved their application to him. It was pointed out that the orthodox church does without an act of confirmation, that the Roman Catholic and Methodist churches admit believers to communion at the age of 8 or 9 and that Holy Baptism is, in itself, a complete rite of admission to the church. However, concern was expressed that a parish which did not wish to participate would have to admit the non-confirmed into communion if they had previously been admitted in another parish; thus creating an unacceptable dual standard. Furthermore, such an arrangement would undermine the act of confirmation.

ITEM 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

23. There was no other business.

ITEM 13. ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEXT MEETING

23. Provisional dates for the next 3 meetings of Synod were: Weds 25 Jan 06, Weds 10 May 06 and Weds 11 October 06.

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Secretary's Note: I include overleaf a revised list of Synod Members for member's information and comment.

IAN HENLEY
Sec

Distribution:

Revd Canon David Lickess
All Deanery Synod Members