

## **Minutes of the Deanery Synod held at St Gabriel's, North Acton**

**on Thursday 10 October 2018**

### **Welcome and worship**

Fr Timothy gave a little history of the parish; although the church has only been here since 1931, there was a worshipping community since 1923. The parish has expanded by 5000, 2900 of which are students and set to expand further when the Old Oak Common development is complete. Melrose Nursery who occupy the Hall have become partners in the church's mission and contributed towards the kitchen re-fit.

A parent & child drop in/worship is to be launched.

A time of worship followed.

### **Deanery News**

Vacancy for Independent Examiner – thanks recorded to Carolyn Fitzpatrick, who had moved away.

No special qualifications needed, straightforward task of checking figures. Speak to Margaret Copley if you are able to help out.

Vacancy on local Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), having oversight of curriculum taught at local level and daily reflection. Other representatives include Christians, other faiths, no faith, teachers and local authority.

Ealing Animal Charities Fair – at Hanwell Methodist Church. Ecology and animal welfare. Copy of leaflet to advertise in parishes.

### **Uncertain times leading up to Brexit**

Julian Duffus, Lay Chair, requested we all show a welcoming embrace to everyone in our community, including those on the outside. Prayer followed.

### **General Synod**

Enid Barron spoke briefly about various items that were debated at General Synod.

Down's Syndrome – many are aborted before birth, which has a negative effect on those with Down's Syndrome. How as a church can we value people with Down's Syndrome?

Food waste – the need to minimise wastage

UK citizenship – costly, some cannot afford

Fixed odds betting machine – pressed to be included in the debate

Sexuality – gay marriage, gender issues

Next Synod 22 February – homelessness, Christian presence on every estate, Travelling Community, legislation debates

Enid encouraged us to look at the General Synod website

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/work-general-synod>

### **Ealing Foodbank**

Janet Fletcher, the Foodbank Manager, detailed the organisation of the Foodbank, supported by the Trussell Trust, with its vision that no one goes hungry. 3 days supply of food, hygiene and cleaning items are given out. It is not designed to cope with long term poverty, but this is what is being seen. As a Christian organisation, of churches working together, prayer is offered to all and volunteers, comfortable

with the Christian ethos, are welcomed. A new café is being opened at the end of February, at the Ealing Green Methodist/URC church. Janet finished by asking if parishes could consider donating; make it our Lent collection; volunteers to pray. More information could be had by emailing Janet.

[info@ealing.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@ealing.foodbank.org.uk)

### **Capital Youth**

Levi Phillips, Creative Lead for Capital Youth, explained the goal of the 5-year funded project was to double the number of young people engaging with existing or fresh expressions of church. A team of 4, they are nurturing youth across the Diocese's 514 parishes, along with Youth Advocates in every Area, who monitor what is happening or needs to happen.

They surveyed the parishes in 2017 and found in our Willesden Area 11 parishes had no young people (age 12 – 18), 52 had between 1 and 10, 13 had between 11 and 20, and 4 parishes had more than 20. The average age a child stops attending church is 14½, although some drop off at high school or when they go to uni. If we have 10 young people we are doing well!

There needs to be a culture change; a vision to see young people welcomed, experiencing God, engaging in faith, in every parish.

4 points to note:

Listening to young people – listen to what they want the church to do, what do they want to do?

Hospitality – do they feel welcomed? They feel they have an equal role to play and prefer to be with adults not artificially separated.

Leadership – get the Bishop & Archdeacon to accept young people are a priority, important

Community – encouraging friendships across age and culture boundaries

Levi promoted the booklet 'Young People and the Church' with cartoons by Dave Walker. About starting with hospitality, welcoming young people. More copies from:

[www.london.anglican.org/welcomeinchurch](http://www.london.anglican.org/welcomeinchurch)

Also, cards of ideas, to cut up and put on a map – explore what you could try.

Various projects across the Diocese are happening at many locations:

Youth Minsters (local parishes awarded funding in order to become a resource and hub of support to the Diocese. In the Willesden Area St Peter's Harrow has been designated as a Youth Minister but Christ Church W4 in the Kensington Area is nearer for some of us. The overall goal for all of the Youth Minsters is to reach and grow large numbers of young people in their context. They are at various locations through the Diocese; in contact with 1200 young people each month; 200-300% growth; 2 youth church plants in development; engage with those on the street.

Zoe Phillips, from Christchurch W4, full time youth worker at Youth Minister organises:

Lift gigs – high energy evangelistic charity; bands hold 3 or 4 gigs/yr, open to all – hot dogs, VIP section, inflatables. Over 200 came to the last one in January. Young people encouraged to bring friends; the Gospel is presented and people asked to respond. 42 did; youth workers and vicars informed and people placed in churches where they will be welcomed. Next gig 26 April at Christchurch, Turnham Green – more information from them, open to all across the Diocese.

Confirmation course – 3 spiritual disciplines to engage with, meet and share, badges. (Similar to Duke of Edinburgh, Scouts, Guides) Making more of the rite of passage, setting up for a life with Jesus Christ.

Youth plant & Prayer group

Samuel Benjamin, apprentice at St Hughes, Northolt a small church in a council estate. With prayer and hard work, the youth had grown in 4 years from 2 or 3 sharing the gospel, with little or no resources, to 30, and 50 or 60 attending events. Sam feels God is really moving. We may not always understand our young people but it is crucial to involve and empower them. Our young people are the church of tomorrow, no

actually the church of today! He had been privileged to watch them grow spiritually, some from drugs and crime, mixing well with all ages in the church. We were asked to encourage our young people to be fired up, think how we can empower them, encourage them to speak to others in school

Petra Metry, Youth Leader St Hughes Northolt, where the youth lead worship. Their youth service 'Charged' is run by the youth, who create logos, flyers, promote on social media, gifts and skills doing various things, stepping into church ministry. They are helped to develop and encouraged to serve the Lord forever; one-to-one mentoring and support. It is an amazing journey, seeing them grow in confidence; God calling on their lives.

So, there is an opportunity for us in our churches to look at what we can do.

Look at training clergy and youth workers; engage with all young people; share stories of success; provide practical resources; empower everyone to take part.

Thanks expressed to Levi, Zoe, Sam and Petra

<https://www.london.anglican.org/mission/youth/capitalyouth/>

A time of quiet followed to enable us to think about one thing we can take away from tonight.

A time of prayer ended the evening

### **Next Meeting**

16 May 2019 St Mary's South Ealing – Archdeacon's Visitation