

STOKESLEY DEANERY

BULLETIN 1

DECEMBER 2021

INTRODUCTION

'Dear Lord God, awaken us, that we may be ready when your dear Son comes, that we may receive him with joy and serve you with pure hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.'

Across the Deanery we are having to deal with an unprecedented situation on a day to day basis, trying to stay positive and look ahead to a better 2022. We hope that you can find health and peace to enjoy the holiday and celebrate with you families and friends.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BULLETIN

Typically, we meet as a Deanery three or four times per year. Yet a key function is to bring parishes more closely together, share what we are doing, support each other in our mission and celebrate successes. The bulletin is intended to support that process. It will be produced whenever there is something relevant and meaningful to communicate and be focused on what is happening in the Deanery and more widely in the Diocese.

If you have anything that you want to publicise or activities that would be of interest to the wider Deanery, please let us know. The contact mailbox is Stokesleydeanery@outlook.com.

DEANERY SYNOD 14 OCTOBER 2021

The impact of COVID has left us unsettled, needing to rebuild our Church communities and regenerate our mission and ministry. At the same time the Diocese has launched the Living Christ's Story programme, intending to shape our Diocese for the years ahead. We have plenty of opportunity to build on our strengths and, with God in our midst, find a way out of our present difficulties.

There are currently three key areas of attention on:

1. Playing an active part in **Living Christ's Story**. The Deanery will play a key role linking Parishes and Diocese. We can do things as a Deanery which are not possible for many at Parish level. We can also have a greater impact on Diocesan thinking and plans. The first thing we will do is to have a coffee and chat session to bring everyone up to date, look at the results of the survey and share thoughts and opinions. So far, the Diocese has sought views directly from parishes. In 2022 it is looking for a response from the Deanery.
2. **Funding the mission**: the 2022 free will offering is on everyone's agenda at the moment. It is a reality that in the 2021 Diocesan budget used in the LCS Consultation document, the cost of stipendiary ministry is £8.47 million and the Free Will Offering and fees provided from the Parishes is £8.55 million. Whilst there is no direct link, it does seem to be the case that if we want to see more, rather than less, paid ministry, the Parishes and Deaneries are going to have to fund it. With our DFA, Martin Bailey, we will be setting up a Deanery Funding group with the aim of sharing ideas, views and opinions and providing information and support across the Deanery wherever it is needed.
3. **The environment**, ecology, global warming, however we look at it, is probably the biggest real world issue we face. As a Church we have a key role to play and it is fantastic opportunity for us to be 'out there' in the community, showing what we can do to care for God's creation. We are already involved and our objective is to have a **Deanery environmental group** to communicate, support and encourage Parishes in whatever activities you choose to be involved in.

Each of these three subjects will be the subject of individual bulletins, providing more information and a few key dates.

WORKING EFFECTIVELY TOGETHER

There is a lot to do at a deanery level, far more than we can deal with at Deanery Synod alone. Information gathering, research, analysis and recommendations have to be completed and circulated so that the Deanery position can be discussed and agreed at Synod.

But most importantly we have to work together so that our individual efforts have greatest impact. For reasons of resources, opportunity or priority, not all parishes are able to be actively involved in everything. The logical solution is to have a group for each initiative, where those that are able and want to contribute can get together. The hardest part is getting started. We will begin with a series of Zoom calls in 2022

Please consider these matters and include them in your prayers. If you or others in your parishes, individually or collectively, want to be involved, simply get in touch with a name and contact and say which group(s) you have an interest in.

stokesleydeanery@outlook.com. or call John directly on 079 900 10368.

WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES

Archbishop Stephen Cottrell, in his address to the October 2021 General Synod highlighted a future:

1. where mixed ecology is the norm in every local context;
2. where the parish system is revitalised for mission from which flows a flourishing of new Christian communities;
3. where every person has the opportunity to encounter the transformation that a life centred on Jesus Christ can bring.

The Archbishop also stressed building on what we already have, recognising that the needs of our communities are changing. From the same source "The overriding aim for the future is that any worshipping member of the Church of England, when asked by their friend where they should go to explore their faith, would be able to recommend an expression of Church locally that would really suit them"

New worshipping communities have been and continue to be created within our Deanery.

- Messy Church
- Eco Church
- Online Church
- Young people activities
- Café Church
- Prayer groups
- Discussion groups
- Learning groups (Alpha etc.)
- Little Fishes
- Choirs, flower guilds, coffee mornings etc.

These and, of course, the services we offer, all provide alternative ways for people to come into contact with Jesus Christ. We cannot offer them all from each Parish, so at each Deanery Synod we will be hearing about one or two of these, where they are taking place and who to contact if you want to learn about how they work.

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