

STOKESLEY DEANERY In the Diocese of York

Minutes of the Deanery Synod held at St. Mary Magdalene, Yarm Tuesday, 3rd June, 2025, 7.30 pm

Attendees: Clergy: Revds. Darren Moore (Asst. Area Dean and Chair) Kate Brown, Liz Brown, Emma Cain, Elaine Curry, Jon Dean, Brenda Forrester, Anne Heading, Geoff Jaques, Vanessa Kirby, Laura Wild. **Lay:** John Dickinson (Lay Dean), Liz Taylorson (Secretary) Bob Ardley (Treasurer), Ken Taylor (DFO) Carol McGee, Malcolm Granville, Olwen Hopkins, Frances Brown, Linda King, Judy Hall, Roy Parsonage, David Heading, Astrid Wood, Haley Durant, Linda Smith, Julia Ardley, Jenny James, David Hand, Avril Rhodes, Nick Land, David Yates.

1) Welcome and Prayers (Revd. Darren Moore, Asst. Area Dean)

Elaine Curry (Curate of Ingleby Barwick), Emma Cain (Curate of Yarm) and Olwen Hopkins (rep. for Brookfield) were welcomed to their first Synod.
A short tribute was paid to the late Mandy Robinson, PA to the Bishop of Whitby.
Prayers were said.

2) Apologies for absence

Clergy: Revd Ben Gunter [and Revd. Tessa Stephens is on Sabbatical]. **Lay:** Christine Young, John Rhodes, Sally Hamlin, David Local, Linda Wells, Diana Baker and Margaret Lawrance.

3) Minutes of last meeting (11th March, 2025)

Agreed: Minutes unanimously accepted, proposed by Roy Parsonage, seconded by Revd. Geoff Jaques.

4) Deanery Update

A new minister has been appointed at Great Ayton – Sarah Cliff, formerly Curate at Barnard Castle and currently serving in Blackburn. She will be taking up her new post in the early Autumn.

5) Safeguarding motion

Following extensive debate at the last Synod, this motion has now been discussed throughout parishes and is ready to go ahead, with the approval of Roy Parsonage who submitted the original motion. One emendation is to be made to the finalised motion with the addition of the words 'at National, Diocesan and local levels' to point a., which now reads *Do everything possible to strengthen safeguarding within the church at national, Diocesan and local levels to deal with ...* Please see Appendix One (at the foot of these minutes) for the full text of the revised motion. Next the motion will be sent to the Diocesan Office where it is arranged that it will be submitted to Diocesan Synod on 5th July.

Agreed: Acceptance of the revised wording of the motion was proposed by Roy Parsonage, seconded by Avril Rhodes and unanimously accepted.

6) Carousel Conversations:

Three varied and interesting presentations took place:

(a) Creative Prayer – Revd. Laura Wild

Laura gave examples of how prayer can take different forms and engage all the senses. Examples included using sign language, prayer walks, dance, song as well as symbolic acts and focussing on objects. She encouraged us to experience the prayer stations she had set up, and demonstrated the use of a Jammy Dodger as an aid to prayer!

(b) The SALT (Spirit Awake Leadership Team) – Revd. Brenda Forrester

Brenda introduced the work of the SALT in her parish, explaining that where a traditional PCC addresses the legal aspects of running a parish, SALT deals with the spiritual aspects. Meetings of the team (which include as shared meal) encompass a wide range of those involved in parish work, provide an opportunity for people to come together as a group, share decision making and achievements, and grow as a Christian community.

(c) St. Ambrose ... pray for us! – Revd. Darren Moore

St. Ambrose being the patron saint of Beekeepers! We found out about the hives in the churchyard at Yarm (and the sad demise of Saint Agatha the Queen Bee and her replacement by Saint Barbara) and about the parish plans for the honey and wax produced by the bees. Darren also introduced us to the many saints and Biblical passages connected with beekeeping, including the dead lion on the logo of Lyle's Golden Syrup! We also had the chance to taste some honey..

7) Finance Update – Bob Ardley, Treasurer.

- Income: Requests to Treasurers for payment of the Deanery levies (covering 38 Reps) for 2025 have been made. As of 1/6/2025 levy payments for 23/38 Reps have been received.
- Expenditure: All cheque payments made to date have been cashed: two payments to Nunthorpe PCC for the Deanery Secretary's pay for 2025m01 to 2025m08.
- 15 book-grants to LLM (Readers) and ALMs will be made shortly and will be sent to Incumbents for distribution.
- The opening and closing balances were: 1st Jan 2025 - **£2,808.10**; and 1st June 2025- **£3,288.00**

8) Financial Advisor update – Ken Taylor, DFA.

- We are now in APCM season when reports and accounts will be approved. So far 9 parishes have submitted their accounts to the Diocese (the deadline is 28th June). Also don't forget the Return of Parish Finances (9 parishes have submitted so far) and the Energy Footprint Tool (7 parishes). All treasurers have been sent a reminder today.

- A good meeting of treasurers was held on 19th May attended by 12 treasurers (including 2 new appointees) which is a record! In addition to the usual topics (FWO, giving programmes etc.) we had a useful discussion on grants. Viv Cooling from York produced a useful list of the many grants open to churches for building repairs which several parishes (even small ones) have already found useful.
- A reminder of meetings called by Bishop Barry and Archdeacon Amanda on 12th June (Northallerton) and 23rd June (St. Barnabas, Linthorpe). We are all urged to attend to hear the financial plans for the Diocese going forward from 2026 to the major review in 2031. With other DFAs, Ken went to a preview of the presentations in York and hopes that an increased sense of realism will be introduced in these plans.

9) What's on around the Deanery.

- **Priesting:** on Sunday 29th June Revds. Liz Brown and Emma Cain will be admitted to the Priesthood at St. Francis, Ingleby Barwick at 7 pm. All welcome, and please pray for them.
- **Summer Fair:** St. Francis, Ingleby Barwick, will be holding their summer fair on Saturday, 7th June, 12 noon – 3 pm. Please come and support!
- **Earth Church Launch:** Also at St. Francis, Ingleby Barwick, their 'Earth Church' services will begin at 4.30 on Sunday 8th June and continue on every second Sunday.
- **Men's Breakfast** will take place at St. Margaret's, Brookfield on 12th July starting at 9.30 with a presentation by Gram Seed, 'A life transformed by Jesus'. Please ask Revd. Vanessa Kirby if you would like tickets.
- **St. Margaret's Brookfield is 65 years old** on 6th July and they will be holding a family fun day and a Songs of Praise evening.
- **Churchwardens' admission service** will take place on Wednesday, the 9th July at 7 pm at St. Margaret's, Brookfield.
- **Kirklevington's new organ** will be installed and working by the end of June, and there will be a celebratory recital by Harry Brown.

10) AOB:

Please remind whoever is responsible for your parish Electoral Roll records to send the figures to the Diocesan Office (and Liz at the Deanery Office, please).

11) Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 8th October at St. Augustine's Church Hall, Kirkby in Cleveland.

12) Closing Prayers

The meeting concluded with the Grace.

Appendix One

This Synod:

- Acknowledges and deplores the safeguarding failures of the Church of England in the past and the deep and long-lasting impact of spiritual, emotional, physical and sexual abuse on victims and survivors.
- Notes the recent widespread publicity about the failings of the church at the highest level in dealing with historic abuse cases and sees this as an opportunity for repentance and reform.
- Expresses its concern about the impact of this on the morale of clergy and laity, on the perception of our local churches by their communities and, ultimately, on mission.
- Calls on the Diocesan Leadership Team, in the light of these concerns, to:
 - a) Do everything possible to strengthen safeguarding within the church at national, diocesan and local levels, to deal with (and be seen to deal with) past cases promptly and effectively and to ensure that those who live with the impact of abuse are properly supported.
 - b) Work vigorously to rebuild trust with the parishes, with the deaneries and with the wider community where that has been eroded; and
 - c) Provide direct advice and support to PCCs and parish safeguarding officers to enable them to respond effectively to questions and negative comments about the church's leadership of safeguarding.
- And calls on the York Diocesan Synod to pass a motion in similar terms.