

## **St Jude's Church, Southsea Annual Parochial Church Meeting 11th October 2020**

### **Report of Deanery Synod Activity 2019**

#### **Introduction**

Portsmouth Deanery covers 24 parishes comprising Portsmouth Island as well as Paulsgrove, Wymering, Cosham and Farlington parishes to the North. It is headed by our Area Dean, Revd Bob White, Vicar of St Mary's Portsea and supported by 2 Associate Area Deans: Revd Paul Armstead, Vicar of St James' Milton who replaced Revd Mike Duff as Associate Area Dean (following Mike Duff's move from St Jude's Southsea in September) and Revd Paul Gully, Rector of Farlington Parish.

The Deanery Synod is part of the representative structure of the Church of England and "brings together the views of the parishes on common problems and discusses and formulates common policies...It fosters a sense of community and interdependence among the parishes and seeks to promote the whole mission of the church;" It also sends representatives to the Diocesan Synod and votes for members of General Synod.

The Synod met in February and September 2019 at St Andrews, Farlington and St Philip's, Cosham.

During 2019 the following new appointments were made for Parish Clergy in the Deanery:

In March Revd Amy Webb was licensed to St Peter & St Paul's, Wymering and St Philip's, Cosham. In June Revd Allie Kerr was licensed to St Cuthbert's, Copnor and in July Canon Bob White became Priest-in-charge of All Saints Parish.

The following are highlights from matters considered by Synod in 2019:

#### **1. Strategic Development Fund**

In February Simon Whitbread, Diocesan Strategic Programme Manager presented Synod with an update on SDF funding across the Deanery. These funding bids which were aimed at supporting pioneer projects included in the first bid the establishment of Harbour Church and St Margaret's church building and staffing, and in the second bid building improvements to St Alban's and St Georges to support the growth of Harbour Church in these parishes and the development of community projects at St Luke's. Simon outlined further work looking at estates, parish re-organisation and parish boundaries. Synod was given progress reports from representatives from St Luke's, St Margaret's and Harbour Church at the September meeting. In September the Bridgeway project at St Luke's was launched: This aimed to provide a place in which those aged between 14-22yrs can come and talk about mental health, wellbeing and other concerns which has started to be well-used and resulted in some solutions to long-term housing issues.

#### **2. Thy Kingdom Come 2019**

From Ascension, 31<sup>st</sup> May to Pentecost Sunday churches across the Deanery together with churches of all denominations took part in Prayer meetings in different venues leading up to an ecumenical Prayer picnic event on Pentecost Sunday at Portchester Castle attended by approximately 2,500 people who engaged with different patterns of worship and prayer together.

#### **3. Deanery Youth Chaplaincy**

The Deanery Youth Chaplaincy Project supported by Portsmouth Deanery Synod continues to develop under the leadership of Revd Sam Duddles as Youth Chaplaincy Coordinator and Revd Sue Whitelock as Volunteer Coordinator. Paul Whitelock has continued as the Counselling Development Worker.

The Chaplaincy continues to provide a "gentle engagement and steady Christian presence" in schools and colleges with an emphasis on supporting staff and young people and this has a significant impact on the lives of young people. The project has supported Counselling at Portsmouth College, a Breakfast Club and Prayer Room at Charter Academy, reading help at Mayfield School, and "Holy Hanging Out" at Highbury College, a lunchtime opportunity to engage with staff and students. The team has also been asked to

support staff wellbeing at Highbury. The Mayfield School volunteers were short-listed for an award at the ‘Teach Portsmouth’ Awards in October.

The project is supported financially by the Deanery parishes and staffed by volunteers. [St Jude’s PCC has agreed to continue to contribute our share towards this.] Training and development of staff and volunteers for the project has also been funded by the Deanery.

Prayer support and volunteers are always welcome: More information and contact details, including the links to social media can be obtained from the Deanery secretary.

#### 4. Older Persons Project:

Since the retirement of June Phipps as Older Persons Champion in August 2018 there has remained a need for someone to take her place in heading up this project, which seeks to engage with older persons in the community with various needs, including Dementia. At the September meeting Bob White gave a short introduction to Anna Chaplaincy which has become a means of responding to the material, spiritual and loneliness needs of older people. A proposal was made that the Deanery consider funding a network coordinator/ administrator to draw together those involved in ministry to older persons and that a draft job description be discussed at the next Standing Committee meeting.

#### 5. Diocese of Ho, Ghana:

Portsmouth Deanery has a well-established link with the Diocese of Ho, Ghana and Revd Paul Armstead and Revd Paul Gully are Honorary Canons of Ho Diocese. The announcement in September that a replacement car for Bishop Matthias which had been supported by contributions from the Deanery had at last been acquired was greeted with great relief by Synod. It had been suggested that a further ‘Project G’ might take place in 2020 led by Revd Neil Smart to mirror that carried out in 2016 in which a group of young people had taken on a project to paint and refurbish classrooms in a school for children with special needs. There were however a number of reasons why it might not be the right time for this to happen and this has therefore been postponed for the moment. There will be a need to discuss the next steps for our links with Ho Diocese at a later meeting of Synod. Meanwhile there were plans for Bishop Matthias to visit Portsmouth during the Lambeth Conference in 2020, which have now been postponed.

#### 6. Portsmouth Deanery Healing Group:

Our Healing Group has met on four occasions in the last year either at St Jude’s, Southsea or St Nicholas, North End. On these occasions as well as sharing our experiences within our parishes we have discussed a number of aspects of Praying for Healing, sometimes prompted by a short podcast or video. In April training in Healing Prayer Ministry was delivered at St Margaret’s, Eastney, following which a Deanery Healing Service, open to all from churches in the Deanery as well as the local community was held in St Margaret’s Church Hall on 8<sup>th</sup> June. This service built on the experience of our previous Deanery Healing Service held at St Nicholas’ Church in March 2018. Our participation in Deanery Healing Services has encouraged us to feel that this provides a means by which parishes across our Deanery can be supported to reach out in this way to their congregations and communities. Our next Deanery Healing Service was planned for March 2020. In September members of our Healing Group joined others from St Jude’s, St Margaret’s, St Simons, Portsmouth Vineyard and Southsea Methodist Churches in the “Feeding of the Five Thousand” event on Castle Field at which a tent provided a place where Prayer for Healing was offered to those who came. Approximately 40 people received prayer with some experiencing immediate benefit.

#### 7. Finances

Deanery treasurer, Mark Pearce submitted interim Accounts in September 2019 demonstrating a net balance of £4527 with £20,531 held in restricted Funds for specific Deanery Projects.

David Pearson 22/09/20