

## APCM Deanery Synod Report 2019/2020

The eighth meeting of the 2017-2020 Triennium was held on 7th May 2019. Bill Seddon, Lay Diocesan Representative at General Synod, discussed the highlights of the February Synod meeting. A motion on the need for reduction in gambling advertising was passed. There were debates on evangelism and discipleship with particular focus on families and youth. Other debates included the Anglican community response to specific groups within our society ( e.g traveller and LGBT+ communities), and the environment and need for parishes to show their green credentials. The Church Representational Rules were in the final approval stage, and one change that this could effect is to the rules of Lay Representation to Deanery Synods, including restriction of tenure.

The ninth meeting of the 2017-2020 Triennium was held on 17th September 2019. It was announced that The Revd Derwyn Williams would assist The Area Dean in the preparations for the visit in 2020 of The Rt Revd Howard Gregory, the Archbishop of “The Church in The Province of The West Indies”. This is due between Wed. 15<sup>th</sup> July and Wed. 22<sup>nd</sup> July, prior to the Lambeth Conference, and will include the Archbishop taking part in 3 days of Deanery activities.

In preparation for St Albans Living God’s Love 2025, all the PCCs and Deaneries in the Diocese will take part in the 2020 Big Conversation, which will help to formulate the plans for the next 5 years of the LGL. One of the main themes will concern what to do about the main gap in the church population, namely children and youth. The main presentation of the meeting related to this problem. Alasdair and Emma Evans discussed the background to the Bridge Church initiative and how it has been successful in running a youth oriented communion service in the Anglican churches in Bishop’s Stortford. The initiative has expanded to provide midweek evening events at Thirst Café in which this secondary school age group can have a safe space for social activities, as well as mentoring and support work all done with a Christian underpinning. More projects are planned, but the achievement so far shows that so much more can and needs to be done.

The Deanery Synod communion service was held at Holy Trinity, Bishop’s Stortford on 12th November 2019.

The eleventh meeting of the 2017-2020 Triennium was held on 11th February 2020. A new Deanery Synod secretary, Sarah Bagnall, was voted in unanimously. It was agreed to amalgamate the Bishop’s Stortford Moral Welfare Fund with the Night Shelter and Outreach Fund, to improve the management and accessibility of the former. The arrangements for the visit in July (14<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>) of the Archbishop of the West Indies, The Rt Revd Howard Gregory, to the Deanery prior to the Lambeth Conference; a draft programme of events has been produced which will involve the whole Deanery.

The Big Conversation 2020 is an initiative from the Diocese to instigate discussions by all PCCs and then their congregations, to reflect on the missing age ranges within our Church, and what can be done to rectify this. The BC event within a parish will be facilitated by someone from outside the Deanery. The outcomes of the Big Conversations will feed into the formulation of the next instalment of Living God’s Love.

Our current lay representatives are Margaret Fox, Vivienne Emmett, Peter Rixson and Graham Savage (who was replaced by Michelle Durnell from the September 2019 meeting). The current Triennium finishes at the May 2020 meeting; election for the representatives for the 2020-2022 Triennium is due at this APCM.

Peter Rixson