

NORHAM DEANERY SYNOD

MINUTES OF THE 24 SEPTEMBER 2012 MEETING

The meeting was held in Branxton Village Hall. There were 17 present and 8 apologies for absence. Margaret Thomson opened the meeting in prayer; and Eileen Turnbull gave an account of Branxton's small (but enthusiastic!) church community. The church is in good heart, and looking good, ahead of next year's Flodden 500 celebrations. There is a proposal for new interior doors which will carry glass etching commemorating the fallen in the battle.

1. MINUTES OF THE 6 JUNE 2012 MEETING

Accepted and signed as a correct record.

2. MATTERS ARISING

- **Diocesan Synod.** John Ayerst reported that he really enjoys being one of the three Lay members representing the Norham Deanery, and hopes that volunteers will step forward to fill the other two vacant places.

3. GENERAL SYNOD REPORT

John Sinclair reported on the July meeting in York at which it had been intended that decisions would be made on the way ahead for women bishops. However, since it was clear that the required two thirds majorities could not be achieved on the legislation as drafted, there is to be an extraordinary meeting of the General Synod 19-21 November to consider the legislation as subsequently revised.

Other business at the meeting included debates on 'World-Shaped Mission' (particularly concerning the role of mission agencies) and the report on 'Fresh Expressions' in which it was affirmed that 'radical social action and comment are essential elements of the Biblical witness and Christian tradition, and therefore of any ecclesiology'. New Eucharistic Prayers were authorised for use when significant numbers of children are present.

4. DEANERY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Lengthy consideration was given to the proposal by the existing DDG on the way ahead for this group following the discussions at the 6 June meeting. The proposal provides for three groups to work on behalf of the Deanery Synod:

- The **Deanery Pastoral Committee** tasked with co-ordinating discussion on matters concerning pastoral reorganization and configuration of clergy posts.
- The **Deanery Standing Committee** to make decisions about meeting venues and agenda.
- The **Deanery Development Group**, without any decision-making powers, to think strategically and creatively on behalf of the Synod.

Rather than constitute three different groups with different meetings, the proposal allows for the appointment of a DPC which will also act as the DDG – and, in a slimmed-down form, be the DSC.

The proposal stipulates that the composition of the DPC (and DDG) will be the Area Dean, the Lay Chair, the Deanery Secretary, and two members each from the Houses of Clergy and Laity in such a way that each grouping of churches with the Deanery has at least one representative. (The DSC would comprise the 3 officers plus one clergy and one lay representative.)

There was general agreement on the proposal, but a number of amendments need to be made to it before it can be accepted by the Synod. The Area Dean will therefore circulate a revised version for consideration at the 27 November meeting, incorporating the key changes discussed:

- That minutes of all meetings are to be taken and circulated to all Synod members.
- New wording for the role of the DPC.
- Stipulation that it is only the DDG (and not the DPC or DSC) that can co-opt additional members who may, or may not, be members of the Synod (subject to the co-option being ratified at the next Synod meeting).

Any further amendments to the revised version should be submitted in writing to the Deanery Secretary not less than a week in advance of the meeting, for circulation with the agenda.

5. BRIDGE MAGAZINE

It is looking as though there will not be enough support for the Bridge in its current form to justify continuing with it after the end of this year. This is the cause of much regret, given that the Bridge is currently the only Deanery magazine in the Diocese and has been published regularly for over 60 years. However, a 'proper' magazine on the lines of its previous incarnation under John Benn requires huge effort and somebody who is willing to make its editing and production a personal commitment (and even then there is a distribution problem to be overcome). There is definitely a need for some news-sharing process around the Deanery (not least for the reporting of births, baptisms, marriages and deaths). Although websites and emails make this much easier these days, many potential users in the Deanery are not connected to the internet. A decision on the future of the Bridge will have to be made at the 27 Nov meeting. Any proposals for how the Bridge might continue (which must include costings and reference to a named person who is willing to put the proposal into effect) should be submitted in writing to the Deanery Secretary not less than a week in advance of this meeting, for circulation with the agenda.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- **Parish Share meeting.** The meeting of representatives from all Deanery churches to create a new Deanery baseline for Parish Share will take place in Tweedmouth Church Hall at 7.30 2 October.
- **Berwick Harvest Supper.** Alan Hughes extended an invitation to all to attend this event on 6 October.

7. DATE/VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

Tues 27 November at the Piggery Farm Resource Centre, Hunting Hall, Lowick
(Note that this a changed venue; instructions for getting to Hunting Hall will be provided with the agenda.)