

# NORHAM DEANERY SYNOD

## *MINUTES OF THE 11 MARCH 2013 MEETING*

The meeting was held at the Horncliffe Church Hall. There were 11 members present and 7 apologies for absence. After Rob Kelsey opened the meeting in prayer, Margaret Waddell (who is an Elder of the Horncliffe URC) explained the close links between the URC and Anglican church in the village. The URC church has been sold off and the services are now held in the church hall, with a mixed Anglican/URC congregation – an unofficial 'ecumenical partnership' with the blessing of the Bishop and URC Moderator. Rob Kelsey (Horncliffe is in his Norham parish) and the Berwick URC Minister each lead the services once a month. The congregation is small and elderly, but the village community is a lively one.

### **1. MINUTES OF THE 27 NOV 13 MEETING**

Accepted and signed as a correct record.

### **2. MATTERS ARISING**

None

### **3. MEMBERSHIP OF DPC/DDG/DSSC**

Since Alan Hughes has now left, Peter Middlemiss is the Berwick clergy member. John Ayerst is now the Tweedmouth laity member (vice Lorraine Plater). The DSSC has still (at its next meeting) to appoint a further laity member.

### **4. THE LINDISFARNE REGIONAL TRAINING PARTNERSHIP**

Rev Dr Rosie Stacey, who is an OLM working with the parishes in Upper Coquetdale, and who was instrumental in setting up the very successful Faith and Life course in 2011/12 in the Rothbury area, explained the background and tasks of the LRTP (<http://lindisfarnertp.org/>), which was set up 3 years ago. It provides learning opportunities for adult Christians 'from the Tees to the Tweed' training people for ordained and lay public ministries and have a range of programmes for those who want to explore issues of faith. So it encompasses both the Newcastle and Durham diocese areas in partnership with the URC and Methodist churches. It is responsible for all Reader and Ordination training.

Rosie outlined the current church situation in Upper Coquetdale, which is very ecumenical, and with a good community spirit fostered by a local church-produced magazine which is delivered free to all residents. It was through this magazine that she was able to promote the idea of the Faith and Life course and encourage sufficient applications to make it viable. The Farm Crisis Network ([www.farmcrisisnetwork.org.uk](http://www.farmcrisisnetwork.org.uk)) has also been instrumental in bringing people together.

Mary Swindell and Clare Friend, who attended this Faith and Life course and found it enormously beneficial, then shared about how it worked for them; and they strongly encouraged the Norham Deanery to consider setting up a course here. Their course consisted of 8 (all ladies as it happened) from a broad range of ages and church backgrounds. There were 30 evening sessions of 2 hours each, running from September to June; plus 4 occasions when Faith and Life groups from across the region met up together. Tutors travelled to Thropton to lead the sessions, which were in 5 units: Encountering Jesus, Responding to God, Tricky choices in today's world, Sharing

our faith, and Working together. It is a big commitment and inevitably involves deep sharing; but Mary and Clare found it a life-enhancing experience.

Rosie highlighted the Faith and Life information morning to be held in Lowick Village Hall on 16 March to promote the idea of running the course here. She also drew attention to the range of short courses (accredited and non-accredited) provided by LRTP (see their website above for more detail). LRTP's watchword is flexibility: helping to find the right training opportunity for a wide range of people.

## 5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- **Linda Gardham** She will have moved away before the next Deanery Synod meeting; so, in her absence, she was very warmly thanked for all that she has contributed to 'her' churches and the Deanery Synod whilst living in Branxton.
- **Lindisfarne Pilgrimage 13 July** Paul Collins outlined plans for this major event in the Priory on Holy Island. Because there will be an upper limit for numbers, early registration (see <http://www.holyislandpilgrimage2013.info/>) for tickets (cost £2.50) is recommended.
- **Deanery Synod email communication** It was confirmed that the increased use of the Synod's email network to get information out quickly (now that there is no more Bridge) is working well.

## 6. DATES/VENUES OF 2013 MEETINGS

<b>Tues 4 Jun</b>	<b>Ancroft</b> Village Hall
<b>Weds 2 Oct</b>	<b>Holy Island</b> St Cuthbert's Centre
<b>Thurs 28 Nov</b>	<b>Berwick</b> Parish Church Green Room

(Note that the incorrect dates given on the agenda for the 11 Mar 13 meeting must be disregarded.)