

Dartford Deanery Synod Report, APCM 9th May, 2021

The Dartford Deanery Synod is the representative forum for the Church of England Churches in the Dartford and Swanley area. It meets three times a year to worship together and promote unity and fellowship in mission and ministry, and to discuss matters of shared concern.

The Deanery Synod sends reps to the Rochester Diocesan Synod and the members also vote for General Synod reps (General synod makes the decisions for the national church). As Area Dean, I chair the Deanery Synod. It has met twice since my last report (which was dated 11/10/2020).

On 14/10/2020 the Dartford Deanery Synod met on Zoom. We used the opportunity to reconnect after lockdown and to update the reps about the rescheduling of General Synod and Diocesan Synod elections. (These were delayed due to the pandemic and will now take place summer 2021 and autumn 2021, respectively.)

And on 10/2/2021 we met on Zoom again. We appointed a new clergy rep to Diocesan Synod, (Rev Carl Chambers) and a lay rep (Mr James Ashmore). These are in addition to our existing reps (Rev Johnny Douglas, Rev Kenneth Clark, Mrs Janice Hennessy and Mr David Pearson). We sought to appoint a lay chair to the Deanery Synod but no one was forthcoming. So, we will go back to our churches to see if we can find someone suitable. We also agreed to stop utilising the 'Praying the Way' prayers resources which have largely fallen into disuse and will look for new ways to activate prayer for the deanery.

Looking to the future, we have meetings scheduled for 16/6/2021 and 13/10/2021. From a previous meeting (12/2/2020) we have carried forward plans to explore possible changes we might wish to see in the way the Church of England runs, with a view to offering proposals to Diocesan Synod and General Synod in due course. That has drifted due, to the pandemic, but we plan to look at that in this year's meetings.

Richard, 29/4/2021