

RICHMOND AND BARNES DEANERY SYNOD

Wednesday 3rd June 2020 – 7.30 pm

Via ZOOM

MINUTES

- 1 Opening Prayers led by Rev Tim Marwood from St Peter's Petersham (the intended venue for this Synod before our Churches were closed due to the Coronavirus crisis).
- 2 Introduction and welcome by Marian Mollett. She noted that when we last met, we marked the end of our terms on the Deanery Synod and said goodbye to Rev Peter Hart but we are all still here. At the last synod, we also heard about the use of social media for ministry and mission, perhaps with a degree of scepticism. Since then our Churches have had to move into a digital presence and make many more adaptations. She invited us to share what we have learned in the past few months. She particularly thanked the clergy who have had all "stepped so far and so fast in the last few months".
- 3 Discussion on the way our churches have been responding to the current situation – contributions from clergy and lay members of what their churches have been doing to continue to worship and connect with their congregation remotely and how this will inform their mission as churches start to re-open.

Our discussion was based around the following questions:

- How are we reaching people (the young and the old)?
- Who are we having difficulty reaching?
- Have we been able to reach beyond the pre-existing church community?

- What has the reaction been to the efforts our churches have made?
- What do we miss or don't miss from being together?

- What works and what doesn't work online?
- How will the experience of the last 2 months inform our mission once the churches start to re-open?

St Richard's Ham

Liz Kearns said that the St Richard's experience was probably very similar to that of the

other Churches. They managed one service with social distancing measures in place before the Churches were closed. They are fortunate to have a flexible space in which they can move chairs around. They have managed to keep in touch with the congregation members via the internet or letters through the door. They are filming sermons by the vicar and publishing via Facebook or printing the sermons for those who don't have access to the internet. Members of the congregation are filming themselves doing the readings which are also going out on Facebook. They are sharing with St Andrews, Ham (whose vicar is shielding) and reaching out beyond their congregation. They filmed an Ascension Day service from the Church which was a very satisfying experience. They are using Zoom for a weekly Friday coffee morning and Tuesday evening Compline. Other groups are meeting via Zoom. Liz acknowledged how hard the clergy have worked and how far they have reached out.

Christchurch, East Sheen

Sheila Hamilton said that the vicar had been extremely diligent in doing services (available on Facebook) and posting out information.

St John the Divine, Richmond

Mary Ricketts said they started with the vicar recording a sermon, but this moved very quickly to recording a Sunday Service with participation from parishioners doing readings and intercessions. The choir have recently started doing a virtual choir before that they were using hymns from ACNY which are recorded each week by St Martin in the Field choral scholars (www.achurchnearyou.com/hub/asset/hymns-and-choral-music). Not doing a Eucharistic service at the moment but would like to do that as soon as they can and would rather live-stream that than record it.

They have been getting people joining the services via Facebook who are not part of the congregation but are known to them.

Richmond Team Ministry

Mary Ricketts said they have an amazing offering for children – Junior Church every week. Children's worker puts other items up on YouTube. There is "7up" Group for children over seven and Zoomed toddler groups twice a week.

Holy Trinity Richmond

Judi Mathieson online service every Sunday through the website reaching 750 different people since they started including new people.

St Matthias, Richmond

Rev Anne Crawford said that Zoom worship at St Matthias was going really well and each week they seemed to gather someone new. Most screens have multiple people in

them and they just appreciate being together and worshipping together. They have Zoom coffee and weekly Bible studies rather than monthly ones. Zoom has been a “real blessing”.

St Peter’s Petersham

Have been recording and putting together a service with different camera angles achieved using phones and cameras. They have had some positive feedback about the use of recordings rather than live streaming, especially from the housebound and those who travel a lot and want to access the services at a different time. Rev Tim Marwood favoured recordings over live-streaming or Zoom because of the unpredictability of live services over the internet.

St Mary Magdalene, Richmond

Charles Stiller said St Mary Magdalene are releasing a twenty minute recording every Sunday with music, bells, a sermon and prayers and readings from members of the congregation. The 800th Anniversary events are on hold until Easter next year. They are looking at live-streaming but want to be sure about music copyrighting issues. The Sunday video is more intimate and personal. They get about two to three thousand views each week with around a thousand people watch the video from start to end.

St Mary, Mortlake

Janet and Richard Dewhurst said they had missed being in their Church, but it had been wonderful to connect via Zoom for Sunday services and for coffee afterwards. Around 30 people attend the Zoom service. They note that the older members of the congregation are missing but are reaching out to them in different ways. Members of the congregation are doing readings and intercessions and the music has been wonderful with a virtual choir.

How are Churches coping with live-streaming in the Church?

St Anne’s, Kew

Rev Nigel Worn said that St Anne’s record services in the Church and put them out as if they are live. They use an iPhone mounted on a tripod with reasonable results. Marian Mollett and Cate Lyon said that the results were excellent. There is a real sense of connection to the Church and fellowship of worshipping together especially as the recordings are released at the time of the usual Sunday service.

If they move to live-streaming they are looking at a Vodafone Gigacube (www.vodafone.co.uk/gigacube) to combat poor broadband at the Church.

Rev Peter Hart noted that on the Diocesan website there is a page which lists what Churches in the Diocese are doing online (southwark.anglican.org/churchonline). Not all

the parishes in the Deanery are mentioned. Please email daniel.stone@southwark.anglican.org if your Church is missing.

How are Churches reaching people who are not on the internet?

St Mary, Barnes

Rev James Hutchings has been going around the parish and posting things to parishioners especially through Holy Week and the Easter season. In particular, Palm Sunday crosses with a note were posted through peoples' doors.

Many Churches are using telephone trees.

St Richard's Ham

Liz Kearns said a group six people had divided up the congregation between them and were making phone calls and delivering printed material to those who they never see on screen.

Christchurch East Sheen.

Olwen Williamson said that they have had telephone trees for quite a while so before they were locked down they made sure that the information was up to date. The tree includes all the people who live alone and that is split up between members of the pastoral group to contact. Also they have a cycle of prayer where they pray for certain streets in the parish on certain days. On those days they make sure they contact members of the congregation who live on those streets via email, phone or even by putting a note through a door. People are very pleased and sometimes surprised that the Church has remembered them.

Holy Trinity Richmond (and Holy Trinity Barnes)

Karin Boyton said both Churches had been keeping up with people by calling round and people in the same Home Group calling each other. Judy Mathieson said that HTR had been keeping in touch with people by sending cards and those that had been struggling had been given gift vouchers. The different charities from HTR had had problems but are still managing to function.

St Luke's and the Barn Church, Kew

Paula Brackenridge said that the Churches had set up a Dial-a-Sermon for people to ring in and listen to the weekly sermon if they don't have access to the internet. However, no one is using the service. Perhaps because the elderly members of the congregation are managing to access the worship in different ways. They also post paper copies of the weekly worship through the letter boxes of those who they are not reaching otherwise and have a telephone tree.

Opening up the Churches to Nurseries

Judi Mathieson from Holy Trinity said they are looking at opening the Church to other groups including the creche and are doing risk assessments at the moment to be ready. The nurseries at the Barn Church, Kew St Mary, Mortlake and Christchurch, East Sheen are back. The nursery at All Saints, East Sheen, is not back yet and they are canvassing parents for their opinions at the moment. There is a general agreement that there should be a single user of space in the Church halls for hygiene reasons until the summer.

How will our experiences during lockdown inform our ministry moving forward?

Rev Peter Hart noted that there are grants of up to £500 available from the Diocese to buy equipment such as a digital camera to help with streaming.

St Mary, Barnes have applied and received such a grant. The equipment they have decided on costs around £800 (*Canon EOS M50 with EF-M 15-45mm Lens Kit, memory card, external microphone (Boya) and tripod*). Rev James Hutchings said that live streaming will have to continue in some shape or form. Perhaps not the whole service but maybe something more intimate like a podcast that is 10-15 minutes long. He has found recording live services quite time consuming.

St Peter's Petersham have also received a grant. They had been planning to upgrade their broadband in Church so that they could record funerals and memorial services. Rev Tim Marwood said that recording/live-streaming services is here to stay and agrees that it may not be a service recording but some kind of other (shorter) offering.

Paula Brackenridge noted that at the last Deanery Synod we were encouraged to live-stream sermons (a bitesize part of the service) which not only connected people with the Church service if they were not able to be there it also had the potential to attract a new audience via Facebook.

What sort of plans are being made for opening our Churches again for private prayer?

Rev James Hutchings says that we should enable people to pray and not put too many obstacles in their way. He would welcome fuller guidance from the Diocese as would Rev Alex Barrow who also notes that risk assessment paperwork has been circulated. There is a question about how much we might want to do as a Deanery or within our teams in terms of pooling resources. There are questions about staffing the Churches and hygiene. We would not want our Churches to become an unofficial meeting place for groups of people who are not socially distancing. We should keep a record of who is coming in and out for Track and Trace purposes. Rev Peter Hart says that we must be

realistic about how often we should open our Churches. He also notes that the people we may be relying on to staff our Churches are ones who may still be shielding. Can you do a one-way system in your Church?

- 4 Welcare has been busier than ever. Families with issues, especially domestic violence, have been greatly impacted by the current situation. Anna Khan thanked all the Churches for their support, especially St Anne's, Kew who donated a lot of gift vouchers which were given out immediately. They have been giving out a lot of supermarket vouchers and have been accessing funding for computer equipment to help families with online schooling.
- 5 Rev David Guest has a new post in the Diocese of Rochester. He is to be the next vicar of St Bartholomew's, Otford. The exact timing of his move is entirely dependent upon Covid-19 restrictions but is likely to be soon. Congratulations to David.
- 6 Rev Peter Hart closed with the Blessing.

The next meeting of the Deanery Synod will be on

Tuesday 3rd November 2020 - St Mary the Virgin, Mortlake (NOTE CHANGE OF DATE)