

RICHMOND AND BARNES DEANERY SYNOD

Monday 1st February 2021 – 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 the recent Coronavirus lockdown).
- 2 Introduction and welcome by Marian Mollett:
 - Thanks to Rev Tim Marwood for his prayers, noting that this would be his last Synod before retirement.
 - A particular welcome to those not on the Deanery Synod here to listen to tonight's talk.
 - Third Synod online, sadly, but we have taken the opportunity remote access gives us to welcome a speaker from thousands of miles away.
- 3 Talk by Canon Richard Sewell, Dean of [St George's College, Jerusalem](#). Formerly Team Rector of Barnes. "Zoom gives an amazing opportunity to open up the world at a time when the world is locked down."

Partnership of Southwark and Jerusalem Dioceses

This has arisen as out of long-term commitments between the two dioceses. Bishop Christopher makes regular pilgrimages to the Holy Land and serves on the Catholic Bishop's Conference for the Holy Land. Bishop Richard was on the Executive of St George's College. This partnership opens new opportunities, and we are encouraged to be pro-active in the partnership. Every church and every Christian in the diocese should feel a deep sense of connection with Jerusalem. Richard is very happy to answer any questions via email.

Bishop's Lent Call

The focus this year is on food poverty. Although Israel is not in as dire a situation as many others, there is a lot of poverty. Closure of Israel to pilgrims and tourists since March last year has decimated the economy and lives of individuals. Some government support but many people do not benefit from that. In the West Bank and Gaza, there is no government support due to lack of social infrastructure. The normal routes of family networks supporting people is not working because whole towns and villages have lost their usual sources of income which is entirely

dependent on the tourist trade. The Churches are doing everything they can to support the wider community not just their own people. The money that is raised will go to those most in need not just the Anglican communities. Thank you for anything you can do.

Diocese of Jerusalem

The diocese covers a vast area. Not only the Holy Land and all the sites pilgrims come to see but Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. Only a few congregations in each of those places. There is only one church in Syria and it is too dangerous to have a priest there but the congregation still thrives. The priest in Beirut travels there about once every six weeks. In total, there are 28 parishes and 22 institutions (hospitals, schools and rehabilitation centres). These include

- Al Ahli Hospital, Gaza – Gaza is one of the most deprived and suffering communities in the world. Most people are unable to leave and health care there is very poor. There is no national health service but international support for the hospital means that they can provide free healthcare.
- [Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre](#) – centre for children with disabilities. People with disabilities suffer major stigma and may be hidden. There is a lot of ignorance about what children with disabilities are capable of. There needs to be education as well as rehabilitation and the parents need to be empowered to do developmental work with their children as they often can't come into the centre.
- [Holy Land Institute for the Deaf, Jordan](#) – cares for children who are deaf and often have no speech. A boarding facility. There are also number of Syrian refugees there. They do outreach work to ensure there is better knowledge of what children with hearing and speaking difficulties can do.

Most of the people the Diocese cares for are not Christians because Christians are a small minority in the wider community. It is an important and powerful ministry. The limited resources the diocese has are boosted by substantial support from different parts of the world.

Please pray for all the people of this troubled, difficult but beautiful land, for all peoples of all faiths.

Why would somebody be an Anglican in the Diocese of Jerusalem?

Their family may have been Anglicans, they may have converted from another denomination. There have been Christians there since the time of the disciples. They may have chosen to be an Anglican if they had been to one of the Church schools there or benefited from one of the institutions. Every denomination

imaginable has their headquarters in Jerusalem. The Anglican Church contributes massively to the wider community and people notice that there something authentic in the spirit of Christ in what the Anglican Church does.

What exactly is your job?

80% time spent running the college which includes a lot of administration and international networking (although not so much travelling at the moment). Not called upon for weddings, baptisms or funerals but is a Canon of the Cathedral who takes services and preaches. Time is spent preaching and running services for the college communities. In normal times, the Cathedral would be full of a constantly changing and international congregation – “an amazing crossroads of the Anglican communion”.

What kind of support do you need from us?

Financial. Although well supported, the costs of running the institutions are very high and the money to do this has to be raised from scratch every year. £1 million pounds was lost when Donald Trump decided to stop all Palestinian aid. Also please pray for the Palestinian Christian community as they often feel forgotten. To raise money, go through Southwark Diocese and ask what they would like to do.

What is the dynamic like with the Armenians in Jerusalem?

The college has an Armenian member of staff who is asked about practices within the Armenian Christian community. The Armenians have an important part in Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Armenia was the first country to define itself as a Christian country in the 4th Century. They've had important trade relationships with Jerusalem and play an important part in the life of the city.

What are the practical implications of the covenant between the Dioceses of Jerusalem and Southwark?

It is a very broad covenant which will grow and develop in time. One aspect is to encourage more intentional engagement so that visiting pilgrims may learn a bit more about the Anglican community and mission they do. Also it's hoped that clergy in Jerusalem will have the chance to learn about what it means to be a Christian in London and what challenges there are. And for both dioceses to be enriched by sharing each other's ministry and mission.

Will you explore placements at the College for training clergy?

Olwen Williamson described her three weeks on placement at St George's College during training as the “most wonderful opportunity ever”. Hopefully, a

placement scheme could be included in the partnership. The college already has a nine-month placement from Berkeley Divinity School but short-term placements would be a wonderful idea.

What does it feel like to walk around the old city at the moment?

Heartbreaking. The streets would normally be so busy and vibrant but everything is shut. There has been no access to the old city unless you live there for the past month. Hopefully, the lockdown will finish soon and things will open up again and things may return to normal domestically at least. People are grieving and suffering but are not hopeless. Despite everything Israel has been through in the past 70 years, many people are saying this is the hardest it's ever been. "but we are enriched, enlivened and strengthened. We will come through this stronger. God has not forgotten us. We are not abandoned. We must share and live the love of God".

How much do the various denominations communicate with each other and do they have a joint front?

It's mixed. All the Patriarchs of all the major Churches meet regularly. The Anglican church plays an important role in as the Right Reverend Hosam Naoum (former Dean of the Cathedral and soon to be Archbishop of Jerusalem) is secretary to the Heads of Churches. In that sense they have a united front. For example when the Greek Orthodox Church had some property illegally removed from them, all the Heads of Churches stood by them. Although there are still some historic disagreements, there are deep friendships. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Jerusalem is the most invigorating festival of world Christianity that you could ever imagine. For many years, the Christian community was divided and not in fellowship but that has significantly changed in the last 15 years.

St George's College Lent Course

Individuals or Churches can sign up to the six week Lent course by emailing resources@sgcjerusalem.org. The course is series of six short films looking at the features of the land as a way of understanding our faith. When you sign up, you will receive a pack with all six weeks material and links to the films. It's entirely virtual so people can do it whenever they like. There will also be two webinars to fit into US time but they will be recorded to watch later. The resource is totally free but donations are welcome. For more details see www.saintgeorgescollegejerusalem.com/pilgrim-talks

Marian thanked Richard.

- 4 Rev Wilma Roest talked about [Christ's School](#). A fantastic school which strives for the very best in the children who go to the school, the development of the staff and how they care for the local community. Recently they were ranked 102 out of all the schools in the country (state and independent) for sport by the National Schools Sport Magazine. Which puts them in the top 1%. They work hard to develop a sense of value with all the young people they work with. However, there is a shortage of governors as many governors are coming to the end of their tenure and not staying on and the Chair of Governors sadly died suddenly last year. They need five new governors by the end of this academic year. The pandemic has made it difficult to encourage new governors. Christ's are looking for Foundation Governors who passionately believe in the values of the Gospel who want to get involved in a secondary school who has those values too. It doesn't matter which Church you go to. Wilma has more details about what's involved. Please look around your Churches or think about people who may be interested and put them in touch with Wilma (rector@richmondteamministry.org) or the Senior Clerk to the Governing Body, Mrs Sally Chapman (schapman@christs.school) for more information.
- 5 The [Glass Door](#) meal service from the [Vineyard](#) continues. Guests no longer need to register for the meal and can now just walk in.
- 6 We have sufficient support for the Knife Bin Appeal (raising money from the Churches in the Deanery to place a knife bin wherever it is needed in the Diocese) Progress stopped due to changes of personnel in Southwark and [Word 4 Weapons](#). There is now new head of the Southwark Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation and we have been in touch with her to move the appeal forward.
- 7 Minutes of the last meeting were approved.
- 8 Rev Chris Griffiths will be licensed as the new team vicar to Christ Church, East Sheen on 24th February by Bishop Richard of Kingston via an online service. Details of the service will be circulated for anyone who would like to join. Please pray for Chris and for Christ Church as he begins his ministry.

Between now and the next Deanery Synod we will be saying farewell to Rev Tim Marwood who has been vicar of St Peter's, Petersham for 13 years. He is retiring to Hampton Hill and we will miss him. Tim said that this has been a very supportive and friendly Deanery to belong to and long may it remain so. We have been blessed with some very good Lay Chairs as well as Area Deans. The laity have made a fantastic contribution to this Synod.

We are also saying goodbye Rev Nigel Worn (not present) who has been at St Anne's for 20 years. He is also retiring and his last Sunday will be Pentecost.

9 Jane Powell from St Michael and All Angels, Barnes spoke about contactless giving. After much research, St Michael and All Angels initially ordered a [goodbox](#) last year, but after further investigation into all the relative charges decided to use a CollecTin® from [sprout.co.uk](#). Please do shop around if you are considering a contactless giving system.

10 Rev Alex Barrow closed with a prayer and the Grace.

The next meetings of the Deanery Synod will be on

Wednesday 9th June 2021 - Holy Trinity, Richmond

Monday 4th October 2021 - St Matthias, Richmond

We hope that we will be able to meet in person.