

RICHMOND AND BARNES DEANERY SYNOD
praying together, learning together, working together

Tuesday 7th June 2022 – 7.30 pm

At ST PHILIP AND ALL SAINTS (THE BARN CHURCH), KEW

MINUTES

1. Welcome and opening prayers led by Rev Dr Melanie Harrington.
2. Introduction and welcome by Rev Alex Barrow. Two new Deanery Synod members were welcomed.
3. Minutes of the last meeting were approved, with the header date updated to 2022. Thanks were expressed to Paula for drawing them up and circulating them.
4. Prayer Vigils and Pilgrimages

A talk by Melanie Nazareth, a member of Christian Climate Action.

Melanie lives in East Sheen and worships at All Saints Church, in the parish of Mortlake with East Sheen. A lawyer by profession, she now spends 1 day a week as a lawyer and is nearly full time as a climate activist. She is a member of the group Christian Climate Action, which has worked closely with Extinction Rebellion for the last 3 years.

Christian Climate Action is a community of Christians supporting each other to take meaningful action in the face of imminent and catastrophic anthropogenic climate breakdown. They draw inspiration from Jesus Christ and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Following the example of social justice movements of the past, CCA carries out acts of public witness, nonviolent direct action and civil disobedience to urge those in power to make the changes needed.

Melanie is motivated by faith beliefs, and her concern for God's Kingdom. We will be held accountable ultimately by God for what we have done (or not done). There is a calling to protect God's Earth, taking faith based non violent direct action through public witness – past examples include prayer vigils at an oil depot, outside a bank, a rolling 24 x 7 vigilance at parliament for 2 weeks and most recently at the Shell AGM. The next will be aligned to the G7 Summit 2022 (which will take place from 26th to 28th June 2022 at Schloss Elmau in the Bavarian Alps) outside the Foreign Office or Parliament on to raise awareness as to how funding and investment can be used positively – for example, debt forgiveness for developing economies might free them to take greater action in the field of environmental stewardship.

The call is now, in the context of Kairos – God's time. Melanie shared some Bible references on Kairos:

- Mark 1:14-15 — Kairos is a time that requires a conversion from people.
- Luke 12:54-56 — Kairos is extraordinary time, requiring interpretation. The capacity to read the signs of the times—the kairos—and respond is an issue of faith.
- Luke 19:44 — Kairos is a dangerous time. It is critical to recognise it, for if you allow it to pass the loss will be immeasurable. There is a burden or responsibility tied up in the recognition of the kairos.

- Romans 13:11-13 — Kairos time is here. It calls for action, conversion and transformation—a change of life.
- 11 Corinthians 6:1-2 — Kairos is not just crisis but opportunity and favour. God assists us in discerning the kairos—a moment of grace.

The community is not just for religious people as everyone has a faith, in humanity, the Earth, or love. A prayer vigil is the integration of action and contemplation. Without action it lacks integrity. Melanie's experience is that it deepens personal commitment to tackle social injustice and heightens her connection to the earth. It is intended to cause a disruption but not a physical one – and internal intellectual and personal disruption.

Prayer vigils progress to pilgrimages, a sacred and spiritual self-expression, collective action, shared dreams and beliefs, strength given by community and solidarity. Pilgrimages tend to take a longer period than vigils. Pilgrimages can initiate a new start of spiritual life and transform self-interest into common good. Christians are witnessing to wider society, making the community accessible to all faiths.

Melanie went on the pilgrimage from London to Glasgow ahead of COP22 and experienced the power of a pilgrimage over 56 days and 500 miles, facilitating community events in all locations on the way on social justice. She found it personally deeply profound and a life-changing event. We need a transformed sustainable resilient community to deal with shocks we are having, with not just words but actions. She has found it hard to translate back to everyday life and her personal journey continues, making sense of everyday life and continuing to walk in faith.

Melanie answered questions from those present:

Vigils are usually at least 24 hours and they have a rota when a vigil will be longer than 24 hours. It is legal to hold a protest on the street. The aim to make as accessible as possible so people who wouldn't want to risk a public reaction (or arrest) can take part, for example, they don't block the whole pavement. Relations with the police are good, they will facilitate the vigil. Many police share that they know why we are doing it, often those who have children say they are glad we are doing it.

Melanie is happy to connect personally with Deanery Synod members and members who wish to do so should confirm to Alex that they are happy for their email to be passed on to her. The link to Christian Climate Action is: <https://christianclimateaction.org/>.

5. Eco Deanery update.

At last meeting Rev Alex Barrow asked members to indicate whether there was an appetite to become an Eco-deanery. The response has been less than fulsome, with some concern expressed that it would distract from what churches are doing. There is no mechanism for enforcing actions such as a move to an ethical bank or renewable energy. Alex and Paula agreed establish and facilitate a forum for sharing best practice. It will continue to be a periodic agenda item.

6. Diocese of Southwark Anti Racism Charter.

It was assumed that people have read the charter, which was circulated with the agenda. A query was raised by Ian Bright (St Mary's, Mortlake) that there are no numeric targets set, whereas other business initiatives such as women on boards etc have metrics and

target dates. It was suggested we should be able to measure how we are doing and where we want to get to. Alex confirmed that Paula and Alex will consider who to put in touch with Ian to be able to table the question at Diocesan Synod of inclusion of numerical targets in UK new vocations, expanding UKME representation.

Deanery Synod has taken note of this document and will commend to the parishes of the deanery to work with locally. Alex asked all to disseminate it with their parishes.

7. A Season of Lay Ministries – 19 June – 10 July.

Noted, following Raewynne Whiteley's talk at last Deanery Synod, all parishes are encouraged to pray for their lay ministers and give thanks for those who serve in this way.

8. Glass Door update.

Kensington Town Hall was the venue for the Glass Door annual reception to thank volunteers and supporters. There is an aspiration to return to 7 nights a week shelter provision cycle this coming winter, and thanks was given for what had been provided over the past winter. A Synod member wondered whether some reluctance by local authority offices to have night shelters was Covid-based or whether there was any push back generally; this was not known.

9. Knife Bin Appeal update.

Paula is seeking an update from Fr. Andrew Moughtin-Mumby (St Peter's, Walworth)

10. Area Dean's Notices.

Bishop Richard Cheetham retires at the end of October after twenty years at Kingston, and will be based at Dorking.

Welcome to Giles Fraser (St Anne's, Kew) and Kate Daymond (St Peter's, Petersham).

Jonathan Haynes will start as Team Vicar at Christ Church, East Sheen (Mortlake with East Sheen Team Ministry) in early September. Jonathan and Melanie Harrington are engaged to be married in July.

Matthew Watts will be joining as a new curate at St Mary's Mortlake (Mortlake with East Sheen Team Ministry).

Charlie Smith (Richmond Team Ministry) and Sylvie Collins-Mayo (Mortlake with East Sheen Team Ministry) will both be ordained priest at All Saints', Kingston on Saturday 2nd July.

Neil Summers from St John the Divine, Richmond retires on 9th October, after over 30 years ministry in Richmond.

11. AOB

- a) Update from last meeting to support training from [StreetDoctors](#), a volunteer organisation that runs first-aid courses to train young people how to save lives (especially knife crime). They would be very willing to provide training in Richmond. Rev Canon Wilma Roest suggested we run a course. The courses are not expensive

(£200, for a group of 10-20 young people), and the deanery probably could meet the cost of the course. It was agreed to pick this up at Deanery Chapter.

b) Posters were made available by St Matthias, Richmond Hill, who are holding an informal service of hymns and prayers (each month) that will be dementia friendly worship, starting 12th June at 3pm.

c) The next meeting of the Deanery Synod will be:

Monday 3rd October 2022 - St Mary the Virgin, Mortlake, 7:15 for 7:30 start

12. Rev Alex Barrow led the closing of the meeting with the Grace.

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