

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

Monday 3rd October 2022 – 7.30 pm

At ST MARY THE VIRGIN, MORTLAKE  
(and live-streamed via [Facebook](#))

MINUTES

- 1 Welcome and opening prayers led by Rev Canon Dr Ann Nickson.
- 2 Introduction and welcome by Rev Alex Barrow.
- 3 Minutes of the last meeting were approved with the following points:
  - Southwark Anti-Racism Charter – It was suggested at the last meeting that we should be able to measure how we are doing and where we want to get to. Paula Brackenridge will liaise with Ian Bright (St Mary's Mortlake) to table the question the next Diocesan Synod (Saturday 19th November) of inclusion of numerical targets in UK new vocations, expanding UKME representation.
  - Have we made any progress on the Eco forum idea? – Paula Brackenridge has contacted the eco leads from churches in the deanery (not all churches have responded) and will put them in touch with each other with the purpose of sharing expertise and best practice (eg on solar panels). It is not intended for the forum to formally meet although this may happen. The deanery synod doesn't want to be prescriptive about how the group should work or to set any targets.
  - Street Doctors – No progress yet on the date of a course. Rev Canon Wilma Roest has been pressing Street Doctors for a date, but nothing has come of it yet. A course will definitely be happening.
- 4 Discussion on Ministry Amongst Families.

The 'Do we need a new plan for children's ministry?' study (<https://scriptureunion.ca/wp-content/uploads/Multi-national-Childrens-Ministry-Report-2021.pdf>) has revealed that only two percent of churches in the UK, Brazil, Canada and the US have a clear strategy for children's and family ministry. The study looked at experiences of churches and families during the pandemic. 75% of churches reported that relationships amongst the church community had been good support for church families during the pandemic, BUT less than half of families agreed, with over a third of parents stating that the local church had not supported their faith at home. Many churches said their key aim during pandemic was support, yet this isn't

what parents have indicated, so there is perhaps a clash in definition/approach. As we come out of the pandemic, we have an opportunity to build new relationships with families, to listen to what they want from church.

Three churches in the deanery spoke about what their family ministry looked like: St Mary the Virgin, Mortlake - Rev Canon Dr Ann Nickson said St Mary's had a strong children's ministry before the pandemic including young children and teenagers who happily attended with their families. After two years of not going to church the children had developed other priorities and habits on a Sunday morning, including sport. Keen not to lose key families, they set up "Sporty Church" one Sunday afternoon a month. A service with songs, prayers and interactive talks. The services have a range of themes that will engage children. The parents enjoy worshipping with their children. The services are advertised via an email list, posters not effective as dates can change. Parents advertise the services at schools which reaches out to children not normally part of the congregation. Rev Nickson also noted that many volunteers had disappeared post pandemic.

St Mary Magdalene, Richmond – Rev Charlie Smith said that St Mary's had similar problem, so they set up a monthly service on a Saturday afternoon to cater for families with sporting and other commitments on a Sunday morning. However, the 0-7 age group were the families which came along. This Children's Church has a liturgy, liturgical songs, Bible readings and a talk or activity. A community of young families has been created, some who don't otherwise go to church and some who use this as an alternative to Sunday morning. The parents worship with the children and the spirituality of the children is recognized. Unfortunately, Children's Church doesn't appeal to older children so St Mary's is thinking about how to reach them. Children are still catered for during the Sunday morning service, although there is not leadership for Junior Church every week so each month - 2 Sundays: self led activity tables; 1 Sunday - Junior Church; 1 Sunday - [Godly Play](#) (a way of imagining being in the story with props).

Holy Trinity, Richmond - Rev Eils Osgood highlighted what was important. Firstly, having links to the community which build relationships with families before people step into the church. Eg local church school, Riverbank Trust, toddler groups. Use key festivals to invite people into the church space. It's quite difficult to attract families more if a church doesn't have a critical mass of families. Holy Trinity has an ethos that values children as full members of the body of Christ. They participate fully in the service especially at the monthly All Age Worship services.

Individual group discussions to ponder following questions:

*Thinking about your own conversations with families at church, what helps Christian parents and how can we effectively support families spiritually?*

*How can we encourage and inspire the church to focus more intentionally on children's and family ministries?*

Follow up question:

*Does your church have a formal vision or strategy for family ministry. What does it look like or what might it look like?*

Many conversations were had but little feedback given. Difficulties finding volunteers were mentioned with a suggestion from Holy Trinity Richmond and St Anne's to mentor new volunteers by working together rather than asking them to start off on their own. Safeguarding is also an issue which must be taken seriously.

5 Deanery Leadership Team

Each deanery should have a leadership team, but the nature of that team is entirely up to us. At the moment our leadership team consist of the Area Dean and Deanery Secretary, we could have a youth champion or eco champion or have no particular brief. Do you know of anyone who would like to join the team. This is not restricted to just deanery synod members but can be anyone from your church. The commitment is light, but we need more members on the team to bring more ideas as to how we can use the deanery structure effectively and what the deanery synod should be focusing on.

6 Glass Door

Glass Door are only running three circuits this year which doesn't include Richmond. winter night shelters in churches this year which is a cause for considerable regret. St John the Divine will be running a Soup Kitchen again; some churches in the borough are participating in a Sunday Lunch Scheme (similar to the Vineyard lunches) and the Vineyard continues to support the homeless. Glass Door will no longer be a standing item on the agenda for the time being. Friday 7th October is the annual Glass Door Sleepout with a team from St Mary's, Barnes participating locally and Rev Matthew Watts sleeping out in the Duke of York Square. Sponsorship links were circulated after the meeting. Rev Alex Barrow paid tribute to the wonderful work that Glass Door do and noted that it's not only the food and shelter that make a difference but the personal touch that is appreciated by the guests.

7 Knife Bin

Please be assured that this issue has not vanished! The parish identified after a trawl in the diocese, St Peter's Walworth, remains keen to progress installing a knife bin. The vicar is still trying to find an individual to lead a group which will investigate and solve the practicalities surrounding installation. We all know that for this project to succeed, robust local ownership is essential, so, despite the frustration, it is worth the wait.

## 8 Area Dean's Notices

Welcome to

- a. Rev Jonathan Haynes as Team Vicar at Christ Church, East Sheen. Jonathan was previously curate at St Mary's Putney.
- b. Rev Eils Osgood as Associate Vicar at Holy Trinity, Richmond. Eils was previously Associate Vicar of St John's New Malden.
- c. Rev Matthew Watts curate at St Mary's Mortlake.

Congratulations to Rev Charlie Smith and Rev Sylvie Collins-Mayo on their ordinations.

Farewell to

- a. Rev Martin Calderbank who has moved to Luxembourg.
- b. Rev Neil Summers who has retired after nearly two decades at St John the Divine, Richmond.
- c. Bishop Richard is also retiring after 20 years as Bishop of Kingston.

Rev Stuart Lee is moving from chaplain of Hickeys Almshouses, Richmond next month to non-stipendiary ministry.

Rev James Marston has just been appointed Associate Priest for St Mary's and St Michael and All Angels in Barnes. He will be welcomed at the 10am service at St Mary's on Sunday 4th December and officially licensed at a 6pm service at St Michael's & All Angels later that day.

## 9 AOB

Rev Mpho Tutu van Furth was due to take the funeral of her godfather Martin Kenyon in the Diocese of Hereford last month but was prevented from doing so by the Diocese because she was in a same sex marriage. The funeral was then carried out with Rev Tutu van Furth presiding in a marquee close to the church. Rev Alex Barrow pointed out that this refusal is in line with the Church of England's policy regarding the ministry of clergy in same sex marriages. The Living in Love and Faith project that was undertaken last year is intended to look at such policies and decide whether they should stay the same or be changed. Ian Bright from St Mary, Mortlake, who raised this item, said this treatment of Rev Tutu van Furth and the family of Martin Kenyon leaves him uncomfortable given the hurt caused to the family and the disrespect to Mr Kenyon who was a staunch advocate against apartheid. It would be easy to stay silent about this but maybe by standing up and saying this is not good enough something might change in the future. Rev Alex Barrow encouraged people to engage with the Living in Love and Faith process when thinking about this particular issue and the Church of England's teaching on same sex relations. The Living in Love and Faith project is being taken forward into the autumn at the three meetings of the College of Bishops and on to the February 2023 General Synod. Therefore, if you feel moved by this issue, write to Bishop Christopher.

The deanery website is back with a different address - [richmondandbarnesdeanery.org](http://richmondandbarnesdeanery.org). It contains news of what the churches in the deanery have been doing. Do let us know if there is something that we should be highlighting on the website.

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

The next meetings of the Deanery Synod will be on

**Monday 6th February 2023** – Christ Church, East Sheen

**Wednesday 7th June 2023** – St Mary's, Barnes

**Tuesday 3rd October 2023** – St Michael and All Angels, Barnes